Implementing the Systems of Performance Management Indicators (Balanced Scorecard) Within Notary Offices From Romania

George Cristian SCHIN
schingeorge@yahoo.com
Margareta RACOVITA
Viorel SUSANU
Dunarea de Jos University of Galati, Romania

Abstract. The article concentrates on the analysis of the results of a research performed in performance management domain applied within notary offices from Romania. The results of the most relevant sections of the research: the level of understanding and knowledge of Balanced Scorecard concept by notaries' public from Romania, main arguments for notaries' public from Romania that desire to implement Balanced Scorecards within notary offices, as well as the success factors that facilitate implementing and using Balanced Scorecard concept within notary offices, involved both a graphical representation, as well as an interpretation from the point of view of integrating the notary services in the problematic of public services management. In the final part of the paper, we formulated a series of proposals for the decision factors from Romanian notary system in order to increase the performances of this domain on medium and long term.

Keywords: notary services, performance management, Balanced Scorecard, key performance indicators

JEL Code: **D73, K39**

1. Introduction

Balanced Scorecard or Performance Scorecard, as tool for performance's evaluation and management, groups financial and non-financial key performance indicators into perspectives, the most frequently used being: financial, clients, internal processes and organizational learning. These four perspectives offer a balance between the objectives on short term and the ones on long term, between the results desired and the factors that lead to those results, as well as between the tangible objectives and intangible effects.

The research regarding the level of applying performance management indicators' system in notary services domain followed up the supply of some results with practical character on the ways in which the notary offices from Romania have implemented Balanced Scorecard systems with which they quantify both organizational performances, as well as individual performances.

2. Methodology of research

Defining the objectives of the study had in view the vision of the notaries' public from Romania regarding the necessity to implement systems of performance evaluation, in strategic, tactic and operational plan.

The main objectives that we assumed within the research refer to:

- The level of knowledge of Balanced Scorecard concept and principles by the notaries' public from Romania;
- The interestingness displayed by the notaries' public from Romania against the organizational performance evaluation integrated systems;
- Implementing systems of Balanced Scorecard type within the notary public offices from Romania;
- The role of the new information and communication technologies in developing Performance Management type applications with a high degree of applicability and predictability in notary public offices from Romania.

The questionnaire used as tool of collecting primary data (Annex no. 1) is made up of 17 semi-open questions that deal with aspects regarding the notoriety of Balanced Scorecard concept within notaries' public, the design, as well as aspects regarding the benefits of implementing Balanced Scorecard systems within notary pubic offices. Data processing was performed through some statistic functions supplied by Microsoft Excel software.

In creating the sample subject to the research, we selected 80 notaries' public from Romania's South East development region, the sampling method being represented by the sampling based on the availability of the subjects to be investigated. Practically, the sample included all notaries that showed the availability to express their opinion regarding performance management approach through Balanced Scorecard method, without existing certain criteria or restrictions.

3. The analysis of research findings

The level of understanding and knowledge of Balanced Scorecard concept by the notaries' public from Romania

The familiarity degree of the respondents regarding Balanced Scorecard concept is a high one. Totally, a percentage of 70% from notaries' public that participated to the research heard of Balanced Scorecard. The role of this filter question is to block further reading of the questionnaire for the 30% from notaries that did not heard of this concept and that are not interested by its applicability in notary activities.

In what concerns the percentages of those persons that have thorough knowledge in what concerns this concept (11%), respectively they use it frequently in their activity (8%), these being relatively low, indicating an incipient stage of adopting Balanced Scorecard in the notary cabinets from Romania.

The percentage of notaries that declare they have average knowledge related to Balanced Scorecard (19%), respectively the percentage of those who heard about this concept, they do not know details, but they are interested by its applicability in the activities which they develop (33%) exceed the threshold of 50%, that proves an average notoriety of Balanced Scorecard concept in notary domain. (Figure no. 1)

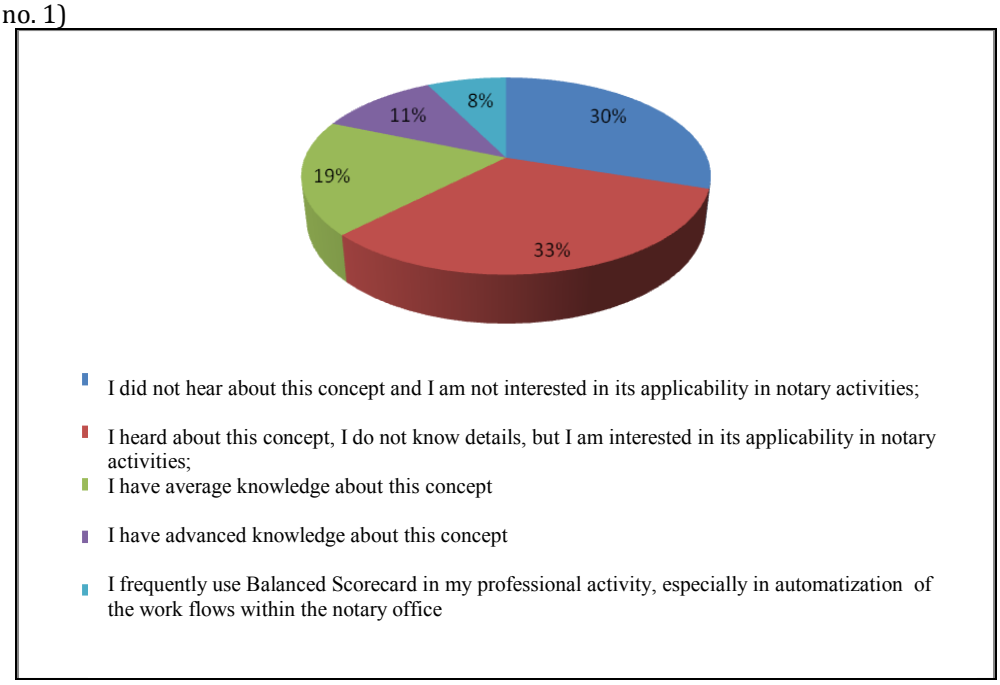

Figure no. 1 – The answers supplied by notaries to the question: „Which is your level of knowledge of Balanced Scorecard concept?"

The significant number of notaries that wish to improve in this domain indicates their interest regarding developing the managerial skills oriented towards assessing the performances of the activities that they coordinate.

What does Balanced Scorecard represent in the view of the notaries included in the sample

From the respondents to this study that have knowledge on Balanced Scorecard concept:

- 32% consider that it is a performance management system;
- 25% consider that it is a report that groups many types of indicators in different perspectives;
- 18% believe that it represents a system of strategy planning and execution.

Reduced percentages had been attributed to correlating the Balanced Scorecard with a method of organizational control (16%), respectively with a managerial technique of continuous improvement of the quality of services provided (9%). (Figure no. 2)

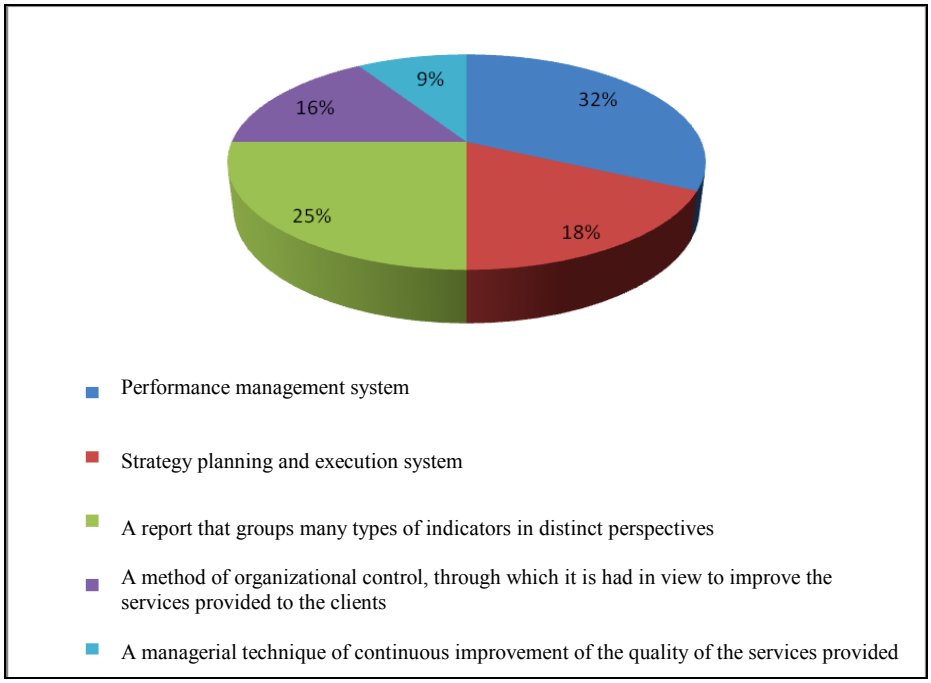

Figure no. 2 – The answers supplied by the notaries to the question: „What does Balanced Scorecard mean?"

The diversity of the answers offered by the notaries that participated to the study reconfirm the diversity of opinions expressed at national, international level in what concerns defining this concept, both by theoreticians and by the representatives of some consultancy companies in Performance Management domain.

Main arguments for the notaries' public from Romania who want to implement Balanced Scorecards within notary offices

The reasons invoked by the notaries for arguing the opinion according to which using Balanced Scorecard is benefic, generally, refer to aspects regarding performance, strategy, alignment, communication, resources' allocation, decision process and competitiveness.

Most answers (38%) reflect the fact that the main argument for implementing Balanced Scorecards is represented by measuring, monitoring and improving the performances of the notary office, followed by giving the possibility to develop the skills of notary offices employees (28%). Smaller percentages had been allotted, in order, to clarifying, communicating and implementing the strategy at the level of all departments within notary office (21%) and to facilitating granting bonuses based on the performances of the notary offices' employees (13%). (figure no. 3)

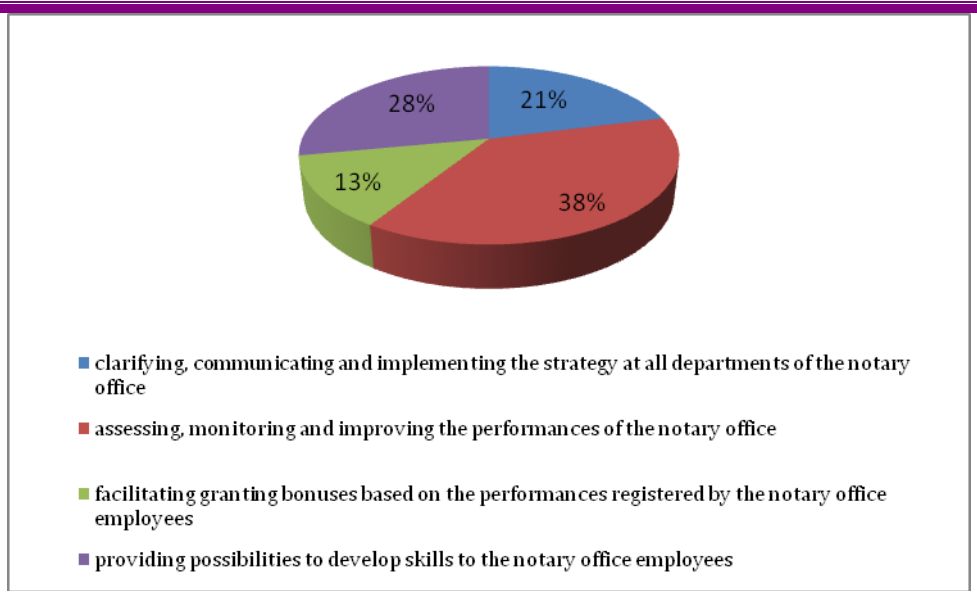

Figure no. 3 – Arguments for implementing Balanced Scorecard systems within notary offices

Concepts specific to Balanced Scorecard system used within notary offices (multiple choice possibility)

The list of performance indicators grouped in those four classical perspectives and the map of organizational office strategy represents the basic components that are found in the largest proportion in Balanced Scorecards implementations within notary offices, 75%, respectively 72%.

We appreciate that the software applications percentage of generating Balanced Scorecard reports within notary offices is quite low (59%), under conditions when information technology plays a decisive role in increasing the competitiveness and implicitly the performance in any domain of activity. The mission adaptable to clients' requirements is promoted on a small scale through the culture of the notary offices analyzed (figure no. 4)

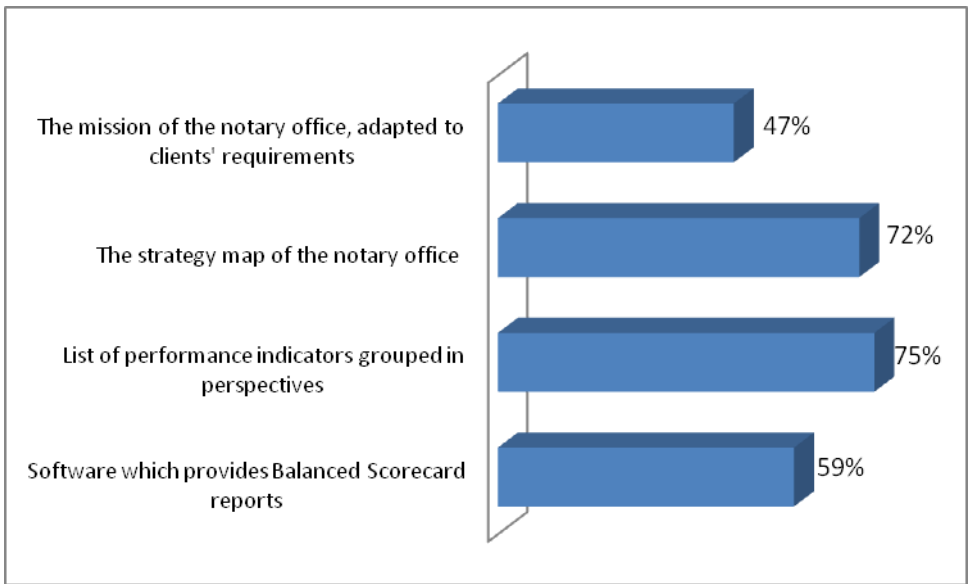

Figure no. 4 – Balanced Scorecard components implemented within notary offices from Romania

Generally, it can be observed that there is a tendency of using the different concepts described above in regard to Balanced Scorecard. Naturally, the majority of the respondents associate using Balanced Scorecard with the list of performance indicators grouped in perspectives, form in which Balanced Scorecard concept was promoted by Robert Kaplan and David Norton. Afterwards, during the last 20 years, the concept evolved and as much as it is reflected by the results of this question, it is

associated with the mission and vision, organizational destination, map of strategy, list of initiatives, reporting with the help of specialized software programs and results' evaluation.

Success factors that facilitate implementing and using Balanced Scorecard concept within notary offices (multiple choice possibility)

Communicating the objectives of the Balanced Scorecard project implementation within notary offices is mentioned preponderantly as being a success factor in implementing and using Balanced Scorecard (91%). Another important success factor is the support from notary cabinets managers (81% from respondents). Other aspects considered as success factors in implementing and using Balanced Scorecard are: efficient organizing of the implementing process (75%), respectively increasing the performances of the notary office through informatics administration of the indicators specific to Balanced Scorecard perspectives (69%) (figure no. 5). Although the notaries questioned had the possibility to add also other critical success factors, they contented with the questionnaire's predefined variants of answer.

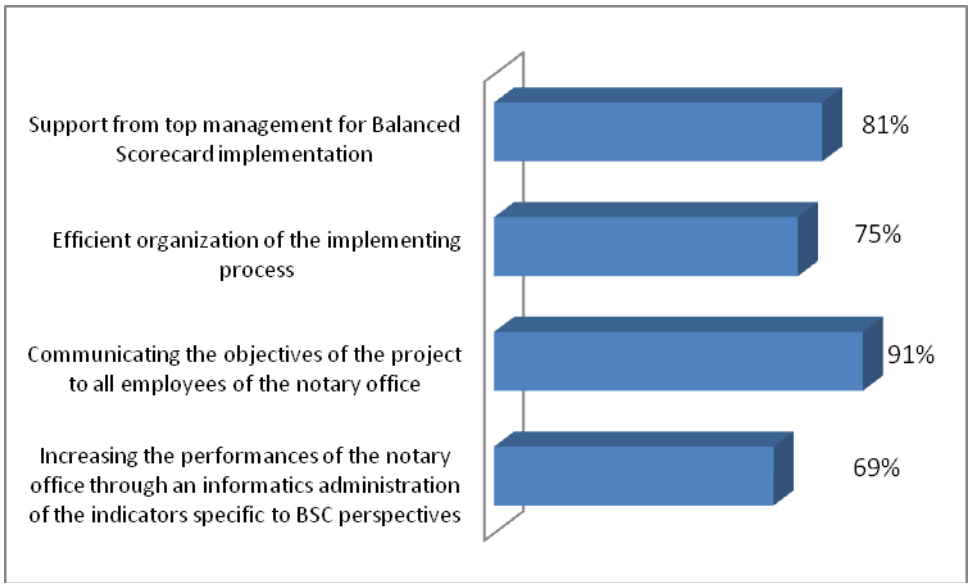

Figure no. 5 – Ranking the critical success factors that facilitated implementing Balanced Scorecard concept within notary offices

Since all organizations, no matter the domain where they develop their activities, have their own operational and managerial control system, it is especially important to integrate Balanced Scorecard system to the existing control and reporting systems.

4. Conclusions

The majority of notaries are satisfied with the advantages given by implementing Balanced Scorecard system in their notary offices, fact that proves the correlation with the answers given to the question regarding the report between investments and benefits of implementing the system.

With the help of Balanced Scorecard informatics systems, the notary cabinets managers can have at any moment a report regarding the status in which there are found the diverse notary documents, the persons that deal with them, the degree of complying with the dead lines, the revenues achieved, etc. Also, a Balanced Scorecard software application can be used in order to allocate tasks for the personnel of the notary cabinet and in order to follow up their fulfillment. Integrating the application in a groupware system contributes to making efficient the collaborative working processes at the level of the notary cabinet.

Through performance management systems, there can be generated work flows for every type of notary service, so that all notary documents automatically go through all stages required by law and by internal regulations of the cabinet (completion, check, recording, archiving, etc), so that the final document that goes to the notary to be correct and sent in due time. At the same time, the process of workflows automation determines a significant costs' reduction.

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