



The Power of Play: Cultivating Resilience for Business Challenges

ENERGY MARKET

Course Information, Spring 2025

Intensive week April 2025, Riga, Latvia

Teachers:

Toon Larsson – Mälardalen University, Sweden

Aivars Timofejevs – Stockholm School of Economics Riga, Latvia

Freyja Thoroddsen Sigurðardóttir – Reykjavik University, Iceland

Per Strömberg – University of South Eastern Norway, Norway

Jan Kvist Martinsen – Aarhus University Herning, Denmark

Marianne Kallaste – Tallinn University of Technology, Estonia

Tarja Isola – LAB University of Applied Sciences, Finland

Eigirdas Žemaitis – ISM University of Management and Economics, Lithuania

Table of Content

1	<u>INTRODUCTION.....</u>	<u>1</u>
1.1	CULTIVATING RESILIENCE	1
1.1.1	SOCIETAL RESILIENCE.....	1
1.1.2	ORGANISATIONAL RESILIENCE.....	2
1.1.3	INDIVIDUAL RESILIENCE.....	2
1.2	CLIMATE CHANGE	3
1.3	DIGITALISATION	4
1.4	SOFT SKILLS.....	4
1.5	THE POWER OF PLAY.....	5
2	<u>COURSE CONTENT</u>	<u>6</u>
2.1	STRUCTURE OF THE COURSE.....	6
2.2	LEARNING OUTCOMES	6
2.3	TEACHING METHODS.....	7
2.4	GRADING.....	7
2.5	LITERATURE	7
3	<u>GUIDELINES FOR COUNTRY REPORT</u>	<u>9</u>
3.1	SUGGESTED STRUCTURE	9
3.2	REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PAPER.....	10
3.3	FORMAT REQUIREMENTS.....	10
3.4	ORAL PRESENTATION (KEYNOTE; PDF; PREZI; POWERPOINT)	11
3.5	GRADING OF EACH OTHER	11
3.6	DEADLINES	11
3.7	EVALUATION AND GRADING	11
3.7.1	ORAL PRESENTATION EVALUATION CRITERIA	12
3.7.2	WRITTEN CASE REPORT EVALUATION CRITERIA.....	13
4	<u>INTENSIVE WEEK IN RIGA, LATVIA.....</u>	<u>14</u>
4.1	REQUIREMENTS FOR THE INTENSIVE WEEK PROJECT (IWP) REPORT	14
4.2	ORAL PRESENTATION AND PRESENTATION MATERIAL (KEYNOTE; PDF; PREZI; POWERPOINT)	14
4.3	EVALUATION AND GRADING	14
4.4	INTENSIVE COURSE WEEK SCHEDULE.....	14
5	<u>THE ART OF WRITING A GROUP CONTRACT</u>	<u>15</u>
5.1	WORKSHOP PREPARATIONS AND ZOOM MEETING	15
5.2	GROUP CONTRACT	15

1 Introduction

Climate change and its repercussions are recognized as the greatest contemporary challenges. The consequences of global warming are affecting societies throughout the globe and are linked to social unrest, increased inequalities, increased costs for energy and other challenges. The transition to green economy fueled by renewable resources requires **sustainability, resilience and adaptation** of the societies, business, organizations, and individuals. For example, how do organizations manage their infrastructure and variations in risk perception between stakeholders (Brown, Seville, & Vargo, 2017)? How will critical city services be affected (Boyes, Isbell, & Watson, 2014)? How will citizens be affected (Hatvani-Kovacs, Belusko, Skinner, Pockett, & Boland, 2016)? The needs to decarbonize the economy, to satisfy the goals of social justice and equity and the interlinking of the economic and ecological systems and are of vital importance. A sustainable society plans for long term success, and a resilient society plans to accommodate rapid and possibly sudden changes. These bring different, if overlapping, challenges.

The EU is one of the first group of countries to pledge its commitment to achieving a fair transition away from fossil fuels, addressing the social and economic effects of the transition and focusing on the regions, industries and workers who will face the greatest challenges. This policy objective is explicitly embedded within the framework of the EU Green Deal (European Commission, 2021).

A just and inclusive transition to a green economy is not only an ethical imperative but a pragmatic necessity for the well-being of current and future generations. This transition demands a holistic approach that addresses social, economic, and environmental dimensions to ensure that the benefits of sustainable development are equitably distributed between countries and regions as well as within countries. The challenge of achieving a just and inclusive transition to a green economy is a paramount in the face of escalating environmental threats. Climate change disproportionately affects marginalized communities and groups, exacerbating existing inequalities. Without an intentional effort to include all stakeholders in the transition, there is a risk of perpetuating social disparities. Moreover, the urgency of mitigating climate change demands swift action, making it imperative to address this challenge with a sense of global solidarity.

1.1 Cultivating Resilience

Resilience is the process and outcome of successfully adapting to difficult or challenging life experiences, especially through mental, emotional, and behavioral flexibility and adjustment to external and internal demands. Resilience can be looked upon from many different perspectives. In this course we aim to approach resilience from: a societal, an organizational and an individual perspective.

"The term resilience describes the ability to survive and quickly recover from extreme and unexpected disruptions. A high energy system resilience is of utmost importance to modern societies that are highly dependent on continued access to energy services." (Jasiūnas, J., Lund, P. D., & Mikkola, J., 2021)

"A resilient energy system is one where energy makes an optimal contribution to a country's social, economic, and environmental development, and that is able to withstand and recover quickly from any unanticipated shocks and reflects potential impacts of climate change on energy resources in its planning and operations. Sustainable energy is based on three pillars: i) energy security, ii) quality of life and iii) environmental sustainability." (https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2023-03/Resilient%20Energy%20Systems_EN.pdf)

1.1.1 Societal Resilience

Societal resilience, as defined by NATO, is *"the ability of a society to resist and recover quickly from major shocks like armed attacks, natural disasters, health crises, or critical infrastructure failures, combining civil and societal preparedness with military capacity."* (<https://www.nato.int/structur/pdd/2022/220411-ResilienceContentGuidelines.pdf>)

Unexpected crises and risks affect the population both urban and rural. Critical infrastructure dependency, climate change and social dynamics have captured the attention of city decision makers across different disciplines, sectors, and scales. Addressing these challenges mandates an increase in resilience (Marana et.al. 2019).

1.1.2 Organisational Resilience

Business resiliency is an organization's ability to adapt to changing circumstances while maintaining operations. A resilient business can minimize and manage risk, even in difficult times.

<https://www.investopedia.com/terms/e/enterprise-risk-management.asp>

Resilient organizations understand the need to preserve business processes and workflows to survive unexpected events. The human element is the most challenging preparation businesses need to make. Employees should know how to respond in difficult circumstances.

<https://portercap.com/resilient-business-models/>

1.1.2.1 Building resilient organizations

What five traits of resilience can help organizations thrive under extreme conditions? Deliberately cultivating these attributes can better position your organization to overcome disruptions and usher in a better normal. Businesses that can bounce back from unexpected challenges typically are:

1. **Prepared.** Most successful Chief Customer Experience Officer (hereafter CXO) plan for eventualities, both short- and long-term. More than 85% of CXOs whose organizations successfully balance addressing short- and long-term priorities felt they had pivoted very effectively to adapt to the events of 2020, whereas fewer than half of organizations without that balance felt the same.
2. **Adaptable.** Leaders recognize the importance of having versatile employees, especially after a year like 2020. To that end, flexibility/adaptability was, by far, the workforce trait CXOs said was most critical to their organizations' futures.
3. **Collaborative.** CXOs indicated the importance of collaboration within their organizations, noting that it sped decision-making, mitigated risk, and led to increased innovation. In fact, removing silos and increasing collaboration was one of the top strategic actions CXOs took before and during 2020.
4. **Trustworthy.** CXOs understand the challenge of building trust. More than a third of responding CXOs were not confident their organizations had succeeded in developing trust between leaders and employees. Those who are succeeding are focusing on improving communication and transparency with key stakeholders, as well as leading with empathy.
5. **Responsible.** Most CXOs acknowledge that the business world has a responsibility beyond the bottom line. Eighty-seven percent of surveyed CXOs who said they have done very well at balancing all their stakeholders' needs also felt that their organizations could quickly adapt and pivot in response to disruptive events. That's nearly 50 percentage points more than the proportion of CXOs who said the same at organizations that haven't done well at balancing their stakeholders' needs.

<https://www2.deloitte.com/se/sv/pages/about-deloitte/articles/characteristics-resilient-organization.html>

<https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/se/Documents/about-deloitte/2021-Resilience-Report.pdf>

1.1.3 Individual Resilience

Resilience is a powerful trait that allows *individuals* to navigate the challenges and setbacks of life with strength and adaptability. At its core, resilience is the ability to bounce back from adversity, to persevere in the face of obstacles, and to emerge stronger and wiser from difficult experiences. It involves a combination of emotional, mental, and psychological processes that enable individuals to maintain a positive outlook, regulate their emotions, and problem-solve effectively.

Resilience is not about avoiding or denying negative emotions; rather, it is about acknowledging and accepting them while maintaining a sense of hope and optimism. It is recognizing that setbacks and failures are part of the human experience, but they do not define us. Resilience is about harnessing inner strength, drawing upon support systems, and developing coping strategies that allow us to weather life's storms.

1. **Competence:** Building a Strong Foundation of Skills

Resilience starts with developing a solid skill set that enables you to tackle life's challenges head-on. It's about continuously learning, growing, and expanding your capabilities. By embracing a growth mindset and seeking out opportunities for personal and professional development, you can enhance your resilience. Engaging in activities that push your boundaries and require problem-solving skills nurtures adaptability and fortifies your ability to bounce back.

2. **Confidence:** Nurturing Self-Belief

Confidence is a vital ingredient in resilience. It's the belief in your own abilities, the trust that you can overcome obstacles, and the conviction that you possess the strength to persevere. Building self-confidence involves recognizing and celebrating your achievements, acknowledging your strengths, and reframing setbacks as valuable learning experiences. By setting realistic goals, celebrating small wins, and cultivating a positive self-image, you'll bolster your resilience and face challenges with unwavering self-assurance.

3. **Connection:** Harnessing the Power of Support Networks

We humans are social beings, and strong connections with others are crucial for resilience. Surrounding yourself with a supportive network of friends, family, mentors, or support groups provides a sense of belonging, empathy, and understanding during tough times. Cultivating these relationships not only offers emotional support but also exposes you to diverse perspectives and coping strategies. Don't hesitate to reach out and seek help when you need it – building and maintaining healthy connections is key to enhancing your resilience.

4. **Character:** Embracing Values and Integrity

Resilient individuals possess a strong character founded on ethics and integrity. Your character represents the compass that guides your decisions and actions, especially in challenging circumstances. By embracing principles such as honesty, empathy, and perseverance, you can maintain your resilience and navigate difficult situations with grace and dignity. Developing a strong character involves introspection, understanding your core values, and aligning your actions with those values, even when faced with adversity.

5. **Contribution:** Finding Meaning and Purpose

Finding meaning and purpose in life fuels resilience by providing a sense of direction and motivation during trying times. Engaging in activities that contribute to something greater than yourself – whether through volunteering, helping others, or pursuing a passion – nurtures resilience by reinforcing a sense of purpose and fulfillment. By focusing on making a positive impact in the world, you'll find renewed strength and motivation to overcome obstacles on your journey.

6. **Coping:** Developing Healthy Strategies for Navigating Challenges

Coping mechanisms are essential tools for resilience, allowing you to effectively manage stress and adversity. Developing healthy coping strategies involves identifying and practicing techniques that promote emotional well-being and mental strength. This can include activities like exercise, mindfulness, journaling, seeking therapy, or engaging in hobbies that bring joy and relaxation.

7. **Control:** Embracing What You Can Influence

Resilience is also about recognizing the elements within your control and letting go of what you cannot change. While there are circumstances beyond our influence, focusing on what we can control empowers us to respond effectively. Identifying and taking charge of the controllable aspects of a situation allows us to channel our energy and resources toward finding solutions. It's about adapting our mindset, adjusting our actions, and seeking alternatives when faced with obstacles. By embracing a sense of control over our choices, reactions, and decisions, we strengthen our resilience and build a solid foundation to face adversity head-on.

<https://www.naluri.life/community/articles/thriving-through-challenges-a-guide-to-the-7-cs-of-resilience>

1.2 Climate change

A rapid reduction in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and a substantial decrease in fossil energy carriers' consumption are imperative to achieve established environmental objectives. Upholding planetary boundaries necessitates a significant reduction in factors that exert adverse impacts on the environment (Steffen et al., 2015). To illustrate, GHG emissions must exhibit a 45% reduction by 2030 relative to 2010 levels, culminating in achieving net-zero emissions by approximately 2050 to align with the 1.5 °C target (IPCC, 2018). Contrarily, the present scenario is characterized by an annual increase in global fossil CO₂ emissions, escalating by 1.5% from 2008 to 2017 (Quéré et al., 2018).

Also one should keep in mind that EU has set the goal to reduce the use of fossil fuels and achieve the goal that by 2050, 90% of all energy should come from renewable sources. This is a very ambitious plan that demands intensive work and also innovative solutions. As one of the ways to enhance the achievement of

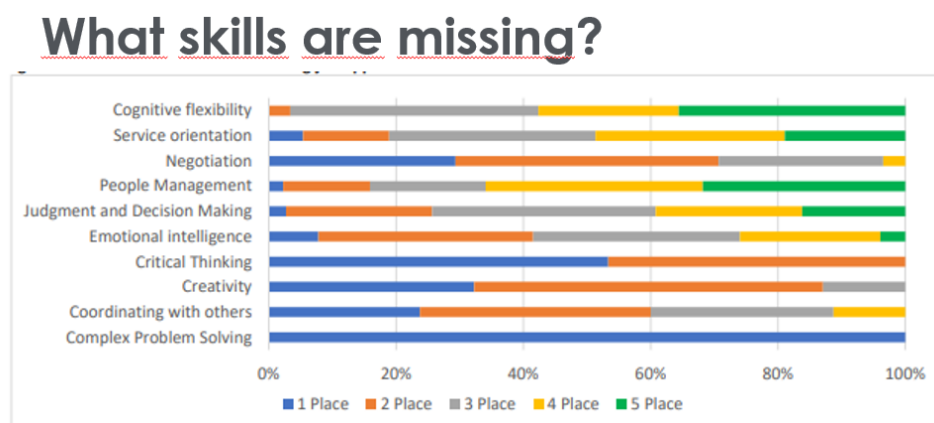
those goals gamification should be considered. Having this in mind the current course to a very large extent will be based on game that allows students to learn new approaches to the market volatility and develop smart and innovative solutions to achieve the goals.

1.3 Digitalisation

A key facet of the transition is the integration of digitalization, which can play a pivotal role in facilitating a smoother and more comprehensive shift towards a greener future and more efficient use of energy as well as transition to the use of renewable resources. Digital technologies can enhance the efficiency of resource management, optimize energy consumption through Internet of Energy (IoE) where producers, system operators and consumers trade increasing shares of distributed energy resources (Giulietti et al, 2019), and streamline sustainable practices. Smart grids, IoT devices, and data analytics can contribute to the creation of more responsive and adaptive systems, minimizing waste and maximizing resource utilization. Additionally, digital platforms can empower communities by providing access to information and resources, fostering inclusivity in decision-making processes. By harnessing the power of big data and artificial intelligence, policymakers can make informed decisions, ensuring that the transition is not only green but also just and inclusive, considering the diverse needs and vulnerabilities of different populations and groups of citizens. However, the human factor here still remains crucial. So, it is important to further nurture the development of skills and abilities to manage and lead the digitalization and changes related to it. Especially aiming at decreased dependency on energy and diversification of the energy supply are crucial preconditions to improve societal resilience.

1.4 Soft skills

Soft skills that are also sometimes called social skills, are becoming increasingly important for employability, productivity as well as personal resilience. It is becoming more evident that digital transition and digitalization do not decrease but rather increase the importance of soft skills. Several sources admit the increased importance of soft skills e.g. Forbes¹ admits that “The newest wave of technology, work will become more, not less, human. Workplaces will automate manual, repetitive tasks that can be automated, but people will still be critical for the tasks that rely on distinctly human skills that computers can’t yet replicate. The people who will be most successful in the workplace of the future will be those who cultivate soft skills that relate to how you think, work, and relate to other people.” Despite the increasing importance of soft skills, it is evident that there exists a serious gap between the supply and demand. Soft skills are in high demand from the companies for their employees but at the same time this skill is not sufficiently developed between the employees. Nor is it being purposefully taught by either companies or other organizations. The research that was conducted within the project ESSENCE2 showed that soft skills are demanded by the companies, currently they are missing for the employees, and they are not taught to close the gap³. The research was conducted in 12 EU countries and showed the following results:



Source: research conducted within ESSENCE project: <https://projectessence.eu/>

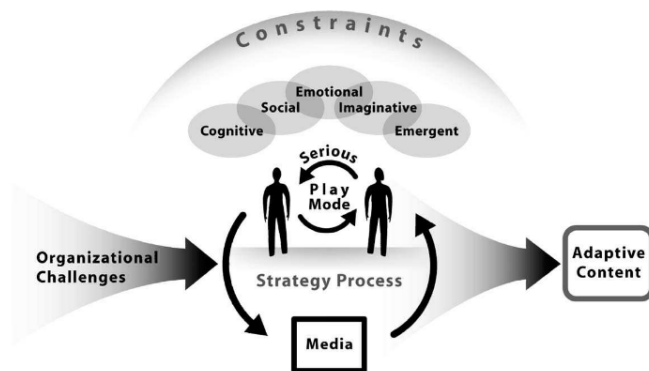
¹ <https://www.forbes.com/sites/bernardmarr/2022/09/12/top-16-essential-soft-skills-for-the-future-of-work/?sh=66d0f88d6151>

² The research was conducted during period 2021-2022, more about the project: <https://projectessence.eu/index.php>,

³ https://projectessence.eu/mapping-docs/2021%2009%2007_ESSENCE_IO2_Complete_ENG.pdf

From the table above it is evident that there are certain soft skills that are demanded but currently not provided. This would lead to the expectation that those skills would be taught by the companies internally. Again, that is not the case and 73% of companies that participated in the survey concluded that there is no teaching of soft skills for the existing or the new employees. The above-described situation can be called paradoxical: soft skills are needed and valued by the employers, they are lacking for the employees, and nothing is done to bridge that gap. This paradox is taken into account and addressed in relation to resilience since soft skills are important for ability to adapt, create, co-operate, solve problems etc in relation to improved resilience both personal and organisational.

1.5 The Power of Play



Play enhances the ability to comprehend meaning within different contexts, recognize social norms, and communicate and act accordingly. Research indicates that play fosters the logical thinking and cognitive skills essential for individuals to engage effectively with their environment.

One objective of play is for participants to discuss the business landscape, examining the connections between various

stakeholders—such as manufacturers, customers, retailers, end consumers, and the company’s multiple subsidiaries—and understanding the dynamics of those relationships.

It's important to note that play operates within an imaginative framework where experiences differ from everyday reality. Play is seen as an activity that leverages imagination, intertwines cognitive, social, and emotional aspects of experience, and deliberately applies the benefits of play to tackle organizational and business challenges. Through play, participants realize that each challenge demands more adaptive strategies, suggesting that play can function as a process constraint with potentially beneficial outcomes (Roos, JI, et.al. 2004).

2 Course content

This NordBiz Intensive Course is a unique course and in 2025 it will focus on cultivating and developing resilience to deal with societal, organizational and individual challenges. With the power of play, students will also develop and learn soft skills that in turn will improve capability to improve the resilience. The course is a cooperation within the NordBiz network – universities from Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway and Sweden. **The aim of the course** is to introduce a Nordic-Baltic perspective to the concept of resilience, with the focus on the main challenges, and how to apply innovative solutions to solve main challenges. The course will give the students the possibility to work in a multicultural environment and create their own network of future contacts. The course will contribute to the insight on different levels, society, all kinds of organisations, public and non-governmental as well as business and finally individuals. Also, as a result, the ideas, principles, and practises of cultivating resilience and related soft skills later could be transferred to the companies and organisations working in various industries. The first course will be focused on energy markets since they are considered as very vulnerable for external shocks thus the resilience of this industry is of the utmost importance for societal resilience in general.

After the course, the students should have a thorough understanding of challenges as well as opportunities that are created due to rapid changes in society and organisations. In addition, this understanding also includes comprehension of what the neglecting of these challenges might lead to and how to avoid any negative impacts on the society.

2.1 Structure of the course

The course consists of two different parts:

1. **Country report:** At the beginning of the course, the students will prepare a country report at their home university. The country report should focus on deeper analyses of an industry in their own country. It should in part be description of the industry, in part an analysis of the challenges it faced recently and in the upcoming years. The report should also come up with suggestions what skills (including soft skills) will be required for the organisations, consumers and the society to overcome these challenges. This analysis will be conducted within the context of resilience, with consideration taken to a just and inclusive transition. The findings in the report will be presented and graded during the first part of the intensive week.
2. **Intensive week project (IWP):** During the intensive week, the students will be working in multicultural groups participating in a game-based experience spanning several sessions during the week. Soft skills will be tested and developed, and they will get a better understanding of the challenges regarding resilience on an individual, organisational and societal level. Apart from the game itself, the students will also report their, learnings, findings and experiences and reflections and skills development through surveys and a written report providing comments on feasibility of those skills for the real work. The report will be submitted and graded by the end of the week and the outcome of the game itself does not affect the grade. The most important aspect of the report is description and reflection regarding the development of the students' competence, understanding of resilience, and strategic change that occurred while playing the game.

2.2 Learning Outcomes

After the course the student should be, for the selected context, be able to:

1. Understand the complex market interactions among different stakeholders and sectors.
2. Interpret the content of the sustainable development goals (SDG) and their application in practice.
3. Demonstrate an understanding about the concept of resilience and its relation to sustainability.
4. Analyse existing societal and business challenges and provide recommendations for improvement.
5. In collaboration with peers, analyse and present the findings and/or outcomes from the course, as well as conducting peer review of another groups work.
6. Evaluate and make decisions based on limited information within a given timeframe.

2.3 Teaching Methods

At the beginning of the course, the students will prepare a country report at their home university. During the intensive week students and teachers from eight different countries/universities meet for project work and tutoring, workshops/seminars, presentations, guest lectures and social activities. The teaching methods will include supervised research on local energy markets, reading and reflection of scientific articles, playing the game and groupwork and argumentation during the intensive week.

2.4 Grading

Part	Weight
Country Report	40% (learning outcomes 1-6)
Presentation Country Report ⁴	10% (learning outcome 5)
Intensive Week Project (IWP)	50% (learning outcomes 1 + 4-6)

2.5 Literature

The literature list below is mandatory⁵ and part of the literature review for the country report as well as supportive material for the intensive week. Please refer to at least **five** (5) of these articles/sources in your report. Adding additional sources are also welcome.

Sustainability and resilience

- Sustainable development goals report, <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2023/>
- Adekola, J., & Clelland, D. (2020). Two sides of the same coin: Business resilience and community resilience. *Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management*, 28(1), 50-60.
- Morais-Storz, M., Stoud Platou, R., & Berild Norheim, K. (2018). Innovation and metamorphosis towards strategic resilience. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research*, 24(7), 1181-1199.
- Saad, M. H., Hagelaar, G., Van Der Velde, G., & Omta, S. W. F. (2021). Conceptualization of SMEs' business resilience: A systematic literature review. *Cogent Business & Management*, 8(1), 1938347.
- Winnard, J., Adcroft, A., Lee, J., & Skipp, D. (2014). Surviving or flourishing? Integrating business resilience and sustainability. *Journal of strategy and management*, 7(3), 303-315.
- He, C., Li, J., Wang, W., & Zhang, P. (2024). Regional resilience during a trade war: The role of global connections and local networks. *Journal of World Business*, 59(5), 101567.
- Hernantes, J., Maraña, P., Gimenez, R., Sarriegi, J. M., & Labaka, L. (2019). Towards resilient cities: A maturity model for operationalizing resilience. *Cities*, 84, 96-103.
- Marana, P., Eden, C., Eriksson, H., Grimes, C., Hernantes, J., Howick, S., ... & Serrano, N. (2019). Towards a resilience management guideline—Cities as a starting point for societal resilience. *Sustainable Cities and Society*, 48, 101531.
- López González, D. M., & Garcia Rendon, J. (2022). Opportunities and challenges of mainstreaming distributed energy resources towards the transition to more efficient and resilient energy markets. *Renewable & Sustainable Energy Reviews*, 157. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rser.2021.112018>
- Nur Budi Mulyono, Mutual Support in Energy Sector: Toward Energy Resilience, *Procedia Computer Science*, Volume 60, 2015, Pages 1041-1050, ISSN 1877-0509, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.procs.2015.08.149>.

Soft skills

- European Skills Agenda, <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1223&langId=en>
- Future of Jobs Survey, World Economic Forum website: <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/fandd/2020/12/WEF-future-of-jobs-report-2020-zahidi.htm>
- Future of skills. Employment in 2030 Report website: <https://futureskills.pearson.com/research/assets/pdfs/technical-report.pdf> Balcar, J. (2016).
- Is It Better to Invest in Hard or Soft Skills? *Economic and Labour Relations Review*, 27(4), 453-470. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1035304616674613>

⁴ Students are expected to review and prepare comment on another group's country report and presentation – see review order in 2.6 and assessment criteria in 2.7

⁵ The list is not final and will be revised prior to the course.

- Schislyaeva, E. and Saychenko, O. (2022). Labor Market Soft Skills in the Context of Digitalization of the Economy. *Social Sciences* 11: 91. <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci11030091>
- A Tool For Teaching Students How To Make Healthy Decisions, from <https://www.projectschooolwellness.com/the-d-e-c-i-d-e-model-a-tool-for-teaching-students-how-to-making-healthy-decisions/>

Play

- Goi, C. L. (2019). The use of business simulation games in teaching and learning. *Journal of Education for Business*, 94(5), 342-349.
- Iturriaza, M., Labaka, L., & Sarriegi, J. M. (2017). Serious Games: an efficient tool for the learning about city resilience. *7th REA Symposium*.
- Roos, J., Victor, B., & Statler, M. (2004). Playing seriously with strategy. *Long range planning*, 37(6), 549-568.

Useful videos and Tedex Talks

- How failure cultivates resilience
https://www.ted.com/talks/raphael_rose_how_failure_cultivates_resilience?utm_campaign=tedsread&utm_medium=referral&utm_source=tedcomshare
- The lifetime stakes of teen mental health
https://www.ted.com/talks/roselinde_kaiser_the_lifetime_stakes_of_teen_mental_health?utm_campaign=tedsread&utm_medium=referral&utm_source=tedcomshare
- 3 secrets of resilient people
https://www.ted.com/talks/lucy_hone_3_secrets_of_resilient_people?utm_campaign=tedsread&utm_medium=referral&utm_source=tedcomshare
- New age soft skills required post the pandemic, Shivani Manchanda
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mWujDYhigLg>
- 6 Steps to Improve Your Emotional Intelligence, Ramona Hacker,
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D6_J7FfgWVc
- How your brain's executive function works -- and how to improve it, Sabine Doebel,
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qAC-5hTK-4c>
- Smart green world? Making digitalization work for sustainability | Tilmann Santarius | TEDxTUBerlin
https://www.youtube.com/embed/INkaGLMIm_Q
- Sustainability In The Digital Age | Dirk Messner | TEDxBonn
<https://www.youtube.com/embed/VpFgNZSwm-A>
- Digitalization: Silver Bullet Or Trojan Horse For Our Climate Crisis | Nick Nuttall | TEDxBonn
<https://www.youtube.com/embed/nYXGZTKMMm4>
- Digital Transformation for Sustainability. | Sanjeev Kumar | TEDxKanke
<https://www.youtube.com/embed/dBr0D5dwlbQ>

3 Guidelines for Country Report

One purpose of the country report is to give an overview of recent developments of energy markets and industry in general in relation to various external shocks. This should include some analysis of historical development in the field as well as current practices applied by the companies to adapt to the new challenges.

The analysis should include (but are not limited to), for example:

1. General analysis of the trends in the country in relation to sustainability and resilience.
2. Short description of the case company/ies.
3. Analysis of the strategy/ies developed and implemented by the company.
4. Market data on price developments, energy sources etc., to provide a sufficient understanding of the contexts the companies are operating in.
5. Analysis of the main challenges the companies are facing and how those challenges were addressed.
6. Analysis and suggestions on the internal improvements the company should make in order to ensure further improved resilience.

For the country report, students are encouraged to **conduct primary research** for example, by doing some interviews (see more in 2.2). Data should be collected about the country in general as well as case company/ies. This should be complemented with desk research based on other secondary sources as well as data provided by the company or institution (if relevant). The country report should account for different perspectives (micro and macro) and viewpoints.

The purpose of the country report is to provide a deep understanding of the current trends in energy markets and how companies adapt to those trends and utilize them to improve the sustainability, resilience as well as well productivity and wellbeing of their employees. This should be done by using the literature and sources provided in chapter 1.6. but students also are encouraged to add additional relevant and new sources.

3.1 Suggested structure

Part I: Introduction

Justification of the choice of topic (topicality and novelty); objective of research; research problem; research question(s); research tasks; method(s) of research; object of research; short description of sections.

Part II: Context and country analysis (e.g. PESTEL analysis)

1. Reflect on the recent developments in the country.
2. Analyse and discuss various factors and challenges the country is facing and how those are related to the energy market.

Part III: Company description

1. Describe the case company e.g. the structure, markets (B2B, B2C) latest developments.
2. Collect and analyse the main data that describe the energy markets the company is operating in and provide some reflections on the main current trends and expected developments.
3. Describe and analyse the challenges the company is facing and the strategies developed and implemented to deal with those challenges. Pay attention to any innovations or novel approaches company is utilising.

Part IV: Discussion and conclusion:

1. Summarize the main findings about the markets and the company.
2. Answer the research questions formulated in the introduction.
3. Provide recommendations for further improvements in the strategy and operations focusing on the improved resilience

3.2 Requirements for the paper

Please make sure that your work is also based on previous research including (at least five of) the articles that have been assigned (see 1.6 for the literature list). Additional conceptual insights would be beneficial for the report. You are expected to argue for your choices throughout the report. You must explain the concepts but also use them in the analysis. Use the literature as a framework for the descriptions and give references to the course literature and other literature you find relevant.

To collect information about the markets you should use both primary and secondary data collected from the market representatives. You can choose whichever method (quantitative or qualitative) for data collection you want, but you must clearly argue for your choice of the method in the introduction of your report.

Primary data: You should collect primary data from the energy market. Writing the paper, you should collect, analyse and use primary data (interviews/focus groups/observations), which give sufficient information to reflect the facts and respondents' viewpoints. All data (interview transcriptions, statistics, diagrams etc.) should be attached in an appendix to the report.

Secondary data: Desk research (including any published articles, databases, books, reliable internet sources). Wikipedia is not allowed as a source, go to the original sources. References should be provided for all the sources that are used.

The report should be possible to understand by a person who has not attended the course and who is not familiar with the theories and concepts of digitalization and soft skills development. The country report will be presented by the groups during the intensive week in Riga. The country report and the oral presentation will be graded by the teachers during the intensive week (see evaluation criteria).

3.3 Format requirements

- Number of words: 5000-7000 (relevant figures and tables shall be included in the main text while appendixes [interview transcriptions, raw data] are excluded). Figures and tables are a way of saving space; however, the text shall be well structured, clearly written with clear argumentation.
- 1 ½ line spacing
- 2,5 cm margins

Your country report should comply with formal academic standards. It means that you are expected to document what you are writing – either by referring to the groups' own research or by referring to the course literature and other literature that you find relevant. You should reference all information that you use in your report, including unpublished work, such as thesis, and published work and materials found on the Internet. Make sure your references are clear, consistent and correct throughout the report. **Please notice: Copying information and making it as part of your work (i.e. plagiarism) without giving reference is not allowed and will result in a failing grade.** Citations should be made with a clear notion (quotation marks) and with a reference to the original text including page number. In this course, we prefer that you use APA style: <https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/references/examples>

Check into the *authenticity* and *reliability* of your sources and evaluate them according to authenticity, time, context, etc.

The use of AI (artificial intelligence) is not welcome but also not prohibited. In case AI is used the students must clearly and explicitly state how it was used in the introduction of the report.

An alphabetical and extensive bibliography (i.e. list of references) should be added to your report, containing all textbooks, monographs, edited books, articles, electronic journals, websites etc. that have been used by the group.

3.4 Oral presentation (Keynote; PDF; Prezi; PowerPoint)

The students make presentations during the intensive week in Riga, Latvia.

Presentation requirements:

- Time of presentation: 15 min / peer review and questions 10 min = 25 min per one group.
- All students must be active in the presentation.
- Attire should be "Business professional".
- **Country report presentation** must be uploaded **to the TEAMS** no later than **April 4th at 16:00** (CET time). No changes are allowed after submission of the presentation.

3.5 Grading of each other

Each group creates a table where you as a group give each member individual grades (both for the group that writes the country report and for the group during the intensive week). Use the words "Poor", "Fair" "Good" and "Excellent" and motivate and argue why it is relevant to your group contract. All members of the group must sign the document and give it to the teachers/supervisors during the intensive week. If you as an individual student don't agree with your fellow students, you can make a reservation in the text and motivate your position. Group grades are given for both the country report and the intensive week report.

Earlier we have had cases of problems with free riders in the course. Therefore, we want all groups to create and reflect on how you will work and what consequences for example social loafing can have on individual students (see details in chapter 4).

3.6 Deadlines

You should submit a draft version of the country report to the TEAMS folder no later than March 3rd - to receive comments/feedback from teachers (see feedback list to the right). Comments by teachers will be sent to the group no later than March 7th . The feedback from teachers should be used for finalizing of the report. The final version of the country report - no later than April 4 th at 16.00 (CET time).	Reviewer	Gives feedback to	Authors
	Denmark	gives feedback to	Estonia
	Estonia	gives feedback to	Finland
	Finland	gives feedback to	Latvia
	Latvia	gives feedback to	Lithuania
	Lithuania	gives feedback to	Norway
	Norway	gives feedback to	Sweden
	Sweden	gives feedback to	Denmark

The final version of the country report (including appendices) shall be sent to Aivars Timofejevs: aivars.timofejevs@sseriga.edu and be uploaded to the MS TEAMS folder "NordBiz – Intensive course 2025 – General - Country reports final"- no later than **April 4th at 16.00** (CET time). Students will present their reports during the intensive course **April 7th** and therefore your presentation material must be uploaded to the TEAMS folder "NordBiz – Intensive course 2025 – General – Country report presentation"- no later than **April 6th at 16.00** (CET time)

3.7 Evaluation and grading

Grades are given by the teachers, both for the written reports (Country report and Intensive week report) and the oral presentations. Each student group should also peer-review another group, according to the review list in 2.6 above. The student group will read the country report handed in (TEAMS folder) on **April 4th** and **prepare a review report with constructive criticism and questions** to be discussed/asked after each group has made their Country Report Presentation.

3.7.1 Oral Presentation Evaluation Criteria

Score		Criteria	Excellent 100%	Good 75%	Fair 50%	Poor 25%
Given	Max					
	20	Organization	20 Consistently clear, concise, well organized. Points were easy to follow because of the organization. Transitions between sections smooth and coordinated.	15 Usually clear, concise, well organized. Most of the presentation was easy to follow. Transitions between sections usually coordinated.	10 Not always clear or concise. Organization was adequate, but weak. Occasionally wandered and was sometimes difficult to follow. Transitions between sections weak.	5 Often unclear and disorganized rambled too much. The presentation was confusing and difficult to follow. Transitions between sections awkward.
	10	Creativity	10 Very creative and original. Imaginative design and use of materials. Novel visual aids or methods.	8 Exhibited some originality and creativity.	5 Routine treatment, minimal thought given to originality or creativity.	3 Lacked creativity. Very ordinary and mundane.
	15	Visual aids	15 Simple, clear, easy to interpret, easy to read. Well-coordinated with content, well designed, used very effectively. Excellent example of how to prepare and use good visual aids.	11 Usually clear, easy to interpret, easy to read. Generally well-coordinated with content, design was okay, generally used effectively. Demonstrated some understanding of how to use visual aids.	8 Marginally acceptable, too complex, crowded, difficult to read or interpret. Adequate coordination with content. Used only adequately. Showed little understanding of how to prepare and use visual aids.	4 Poor quality visual aids (or none), hard to read, technically inaccurate, poorly constructed. Poor coordination with content. Used poorly. The presenter did not seem to know how to prepare or use visual aids effectively.
	20	Stage presence	20 Excellent stage presence. Confident, used notes well, at ease, excellent gestures, good audience, attention, good eye contact.	15 Good stage presence. Fairly confident, used notes fairly well, good gestures, acceptable audience attention and eye contact.	10 Adequate stage presence. Read parts, fumbled with notes, several distracting mannerisms, minimal gestures, minimal eye contact, too many um=s.	5 Poor stage presence. Unprepared, awkward, shuffled papers, poor eye contact, lots of um=s, turned from audience to read overheads, shuffled feet, fidgeted. Poor gestures.
	20	Topic knowledge	20 Displayed an excellent grasp of the material. Demonstrated excellent mastery of content, application and implications. Excellent research depth.	15 Displayed a general grasp of the material. Demonstrated good mastery of content, application and implications. Good research depth.	10 Displayed some grasp of the material. Demonstrated adequate mastery of content, application and implications. Research not very deep.	5 Displayed a poor rasp of the material. Demonstrated a superficial handling of content, application and implications. Little depth of research.
	15	Summary	15 Clear, concise, major points emphasized, clear recommendations, strong conclusion or call for action.	11 Referred to main points, recommendations weak or missing, weak conclusion or call for action.	8 Vague mention of major points, no recommendations, weak conclusion, weak or no call for action.	4 No summary, no recommendations, no conclusions, no call for action.
	% of 100					

3.7.2 Written Case Report Evaluation Criteria

Score		Criteria	Excellent 100%	Good 75%	Fair 50%	Poor 25%
Given	Max					
	15	Structure	15 Outline is clear and logical. Reader can easily follow line of reasoning. Logical connection of points.	11 Outline is generally clear. Sentence flow is generally smooth. A few minor points confusing or not clearly connected.	8 Reader can follow presentation with effort. Structure not well thought out. Points are not clearly made.	4 Outline is very confused and unclear. Reader cannot follow it or deduce the main points presented.
	10	Style	10 Level is appropriate for description of scientific results. Text is free of errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling. Flows smoothly.	8 Level is generally appropriate. Writing is generally error-free, but some errors in language or grammar may occur.	5 Enough errors in style or grammar occur that they become distracting. Voice may change randomly. May appear disjointed.	3 Writing style is consistently at an inappropriate level. Errors are frequent and distracting, so that it is hard to determine meaning. No logical connection of ideas or flow of sentences.
	25	Critical perspective	25 Show considerable critical thinking about information acquired from various sources. Able to critically discuss and independently evaluate information and to come to own conclusions.	19 Generally shows critical thinking skills. Able to provide some critical evaluation /discussion of information. Generally appropriate conclusions are drawn from it. Some assertions may lack support. May contain some minor mistakes, no significant errors are made.	13 Show some critical thinking. Lack of consistency in critical evaluation of information and viewpoints. Discussion and independent conclusions are inadequate. Significant logical errors are present.	6 Significant lack of critical thinking and perspective. Little independent thinking and conclusions. Authors accept viewpoints of others without critical consideration. Abundant logical errors.
	25	Content	25 Introduction contains pertinent background information. Given tasks and questions are thoroughly analysed and elaborated. Results and conclusions are logically constructed and summarized. Information is consistently accurate.	19 Gives general information about the topic, but some relevant information may be missing, or significance is not clearly explained. Description of results is generally clear. No significant errors made.	13 Insufficient information on background, relevance, significance is given. Some information is accurate, but enough errors are made to be distracting.	6 Provides little or no information on background and significance. Information is inaccurate or with many errors. Discussion is very difficult to follow. Reader learns little.
	10	Use of figures and tables	10 Strong supplement to the text. Information is clearly presented. If taken from other sources, appropriate reference is given. Can stand alone without reference to text.	8 Provide good supplementary information, but may be somewhat lacking in clarity, appropriate reference, or explanation.	5 Difficult to understand. Do not stand alone; text must be consulted to figure out what is being presented. Inadequately referenced.	3 No figures or tables are used, or they are so poorly prepared that they detract from the presentation or do not illustrate the points made in the text.
	15	References	15 Appropriate scientific articles are properly used, cited and listed in the text for argumentation, discussion and reference.	11 Appropriate references are used and cited, but some may be incomplete or in incorrect style.	8 Minimal number of references are used. Style is incorrect and/or incomplete.	4 No references provided.
	% of 100%					

4 Intensive Week in Riga, Latvia

During the intensive week April 6 to 10, students will play the simulation game in multicultural teams. There will be a total of 8 groups with 3-4 students in each group. Each group will work with one case. The cases are artificial (not real) and are developed by the teaching staff. The cases are related to different segments of energy markets but they all can produce electricity.

The course to large extent is organized as a game that is based on certain information and assumptions that are provided to the students by the teaching staff. During the play the students will have to trade, negotiate, decide and develop strategies on how to act on the market in order to make a profit and manage risks. The game contains a certain challenges and unexpected turns students have to deal with. In other words the game is very close to the real life situations that are demanding various competencies as well as resilience. Solving the challenges will demand some ability to cope with pressure, think critically, assess the consequences etc. During the path of the game students will develop soft skills like empathy, critical thinking, creativity and some more. These abilities will determine the personal resilience that in turn will improve competitiveness and employability on the labor market.

4.1 Requirements for the Intensive Week Project (IWP) report

The intensive week project (IWP) will be presented as a written report: 3000 words (references and appendixes excluded); Times New Roman; 12 pt.; 1 ½ line spacing; 2,5 cm margins. The report should comply with the same formal academic standards as presented in 2.3 above. The written report should be handed in to the teachers according to the schedule.

The report is based on what happened during the game-sessions and will be prepared by the groups in instalments throughout the week. The final report is in part a summary of what happened, in part analysis and reflection of the events.

More information about the report will be distributed after the final game-session. The instructions cannot be given before the game, since that might skew the participants expectations about the sessions.

4.2 Oral presentation and presentation material (Keynote; PDF; Prezi; PowerPoint)

The oral presentation will be conducted according to the schedule where the groups present their IWP to the teachers and the companies' representatives. The oral presentation should comply with the same formal academic standards as presented in 2.4 above. The presentation material will also be handed over to the involved stakeholders so that they will be able to go deeper to find more information later. It is important that you show references to the empirical material and literature in both the reports. The presentation should be uploaded in Teams before the first presentation of the day.

4.3 Evaluation and grading

The teachers will grade the written report and the oral presentation during the intensive week with the same criteria as for the Country report (see 2.7.1-2). Also, the company representatives and/or stakeholders will grade the report and the oral presentation regarding the practical usefulness of your work for the case.

4.4 Intensive Course week schedule

The schedule of the intensive course week will be published later.

It is going to be a lot of work, but also lots of fun! On Monday evening we are going to have an **international kitchen**. Therefore, we want all participants (students and teachers) to **bring** unique food and beverages from their home country. More information to come.

Details for social activities in the evenings will be added closer to your arrival.

5 The art of writing a group contract



The **purpose** of this workshop session is to introduce you to **Social Skills and Team Building**.

Academic studies often imply working together with **other students** in different constellations. To make it as successful as possible it is important to **know yourself** and to have some **understanding** of how other people might think, act and communicate. If we are aware of that it becomes easier both to interact with other people and to handle difficult situations. It also makes it easier to appreciate that people are different and that this is often an asset when working together. This applies in all contexts – when studying, in working life and life as a whole. **Make sure you develop your self-awareness and collaboration skills during your studies.**

5.1 Workshop Preparations and ZOOM meeting

It is **crucial** that you come **prepared** for the workshop. You must carry out the following **personality test** before we meet on Tuesday February 4, 2025:

- Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania: 15.00 – 18.00
- Sweden, Norway, Denmark: 14.00 – 17.00
- Iceland: 13.00 – 16.00

<https://www.16personalities.com>

Please print/bring/save your results (letter combination and description) to the workshop prepared to discuss with your group members!

During the workshop we will have discussions in a ZOOM room. Some discussions will be with the whole group and for other discussions you will be sent out to breakout rooms to discuss with your group.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://mdu-se.zoom.us/j/66662552383?pwd=R8QEOGzaKeKJjtZ6iLQfZsTIAh1tJ.1>

Password: PtP2025

Be ready to share and practice your social skills!

5.2 Group Contract

The main objective of setting up a group contract is that everyone in the group should agree on objectives and policies for the future work. The production of a group contract leads to discussion and reflection on issues that are important to the group's work and pleasure. When developing the group contract, it is important that everyone in the group is actively involved, and the contract reflects all team members' views and wishes. A template for the group contract will be provided during the workshop.

Note: the idea of self reflection and self awareness can also be transferred to the intensive week when you are divided into multi-cultural groups. You can use your results from the personality test to discuss with your new group members when you meet them in Riga.

Scan the signed original agreement and send it in pdf format **after the workshop on February 4th** to Aivars Timofejevs: aivars.timofejevs@sseriga.edu.