

Erasmus+

Strategic Partnership Project

FMgoesDIGI

Project's Background

Today's industrial world focusses on the digital transformation – not only in a national context but also in respect of an international applicability/transferability. Whereas companies and organizations focus on the digitalisation of their core business processes, the discipline of Facility Management has to mirror digitalisation into the area of support processes/facility service processes. Current studies revealed, that digitized facility service provision is largely able to generate added value as it supports the recipient to implement optimized processes as well.

From an European perspective, different levels of development in the digitalisation of facility service provision may hamper the transferability of solutions in digitalisation in the field of FM. In this context, universities try to answer the question how to educate the Facility Management Professionals of tomorrow, to meet the upcoming demands of internationalisation and digitalisation in the field of Facility Management.

Digital transformation is an unfolding revolution. The Internet of Things (IoT), robotic process automation (RPA), artificial intelligence (AI), smart sensors and monitoring, and digitization are not only dramatically changing core business processes in companies and organisations (e.g. industrial production) but also supporting service processes such as the provision of workplaces and user-centric facility service processes.

“Digital” is no longer merely a descriptor for technology companies. Digital – disruptive - technologies have also radically altered how, when, and where people work, redefining the workplace and changing how real estate and facilities (e.g. offices, manufacturing sites, warehouses, distribution and retail space) are operated and used. In this way, these technologies are transforming the management of facility service processes and the Facility Management industry in significant ways.

Thus, FM goes digital and becomes Digital Facilities Management (DFM), which is based on the use of integrated systems to automate FM functions. Consequentially DFM started with the digitization of buildings and building automation. Enormous research activities and the strong political interest in the field of BIM – Building Information Modelling - represent this actual development and describe the starting point of the digital transformation in FM.

However, this involves not only the adoption of digital technologies to perform and enhance FM-functions but also finding ways to provide additional services for occupants and tenants, including accommodating the needs of a diverse digital workforce – on or off the premises. DFM must also enable “friction-free” processes and business models, eliminating intermediaries and adopting “asset-light” operating models, using digital platforms to engage on-demand resources, including labour.

Digitized facility service processes also give companies the information to make data-driven decisions about how to manage and use space. Concluding – the digital transformation creates an opportunity for FM to take on a more strategic role; embracing new technology to improve support services.

In an international context it is acknowledged that Europe is – compared to USA or PR China - in a weak strategic position. USA and China are in terms of digital transformation in the lead. European universities already started individually developing digital solutions in managing facility service processes. However, national solutions will not be able to boost the strategic position. Only joined efforts on the basis of strategic partnerships will enable to close the strategic gap, the skills' gap and

to eliminate the mismatches between current competencies and competencies needed in the near future. Therefore European universities must intensify their cooperation in research on European digital solutions. In this context, universities need European platforms to initiate strategic partnerships to exchange/merge their knowledge and experiences and create common skillsets of their current and future students – lined with an international/European mind-set.

Project's focus

- Inforce international exchange to develop European digital solutions in the context of an increasing competition
- Enlarge the use of digital learning methods and encourages lecturers to use them
- Develop new concepts for the digitalization of service process management in FM.

Project's tasks/aims

- Conducting and publishing an international/European study on technology trends in the digitalisation in Facility Management and their impact on future qualifications and skills of Facility Management Professionals
- Creating a new curricular for digitalisation of services processes in Facility Management
- Development of training workshops for professors and academic staff to integrate digital methods in their lectures and to include them in new curricular
- Implementation of new teaching and learning materials
- Dissemination of new curricular throughout the member universities within national and international FM industry networks/associations

How can you benefit?

- Support our surveys and benefit from our research results, based on a sound data basis
- Discuss with us at different occasions (roundtables, workshops etc.) the findings of the study and share your views, experiences or findings with us
- Contribute to development processes for academic curricular, gain insight in new contents and test teaching and learning materials