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Towards a European qualification for Solid Waste Facilities' Managers - SWFM-QF

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1. SWFM-QF Qualification Framework and Info-Training Toolkit Evaluation Process

Over the past year, the project partners have worked hard to develop a new qualification framework for the solid waste facilities' managers and during these last few months, the draft qualification framework underwent an evaluation process. The evaluation process involved the internal and external evaluation of the proposed qualification frameworks and the info-training toolkit.

The purpose of the evaluation process was to collect the comments and feedback of solid waste management experts and stakeholders on the draft version of the draft qualification framework and of the info-training toolkit, in order to produce final versions of the Qualification Framework (QF), and the Info-Training Toolkit (ITT).

The Qualification Framework consists of two pathways:

1. A **common qualification** path covering:
 - Environmental management
 - Financial & Contractual management
 - Health and Safety
 - Human Resources management
 - New Projects management
 - Operational management
2. A **technical qualification** pathway, aimed at the technical management of specific solid waste management plants, subdivided into:
 - Anaerobic Digestion and Mechanical biological treatment
 - Composting
 - Landfill site
 - Recycling
 - Thermal Treatment
 - MSW Sorting Facilities (Transfer Stations)



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In each partner country, around 20 internal evaluators, and 2 external evaluators, were appointed to conduct the appraisal of the QF and ITT. The feedback and outcomes of the evaluation process were summarised in an Evaluation Compilation Report, which took into account the conclusions and suggestions stemming from discussions with stakeholders, the internal evaluation questionnaire results and the external experts reports.

The evaluation process was an opportunity to assess how successfully the ITT and QF addressed the needs of Facilities Managers in the solid waste management industry across the European partner states. Overall, the feedback from the evaluators was very positive, and the process was invaluable in highlighting the potential changes that could be made to improve on the final product.

The partners analysed all the feedback and suggestions from the evaluation process, and implemented the appropriate changes to the qualification framework modules, in order to produce a final version of the QF which would better suit the needs of the solid waste management industry.

The final versions of the QF and ITT will be available in eight languages; English, Greek, Italian, Polish, Lithuanian, Bulgarian, Hungarian and German.

If you would like to get involved, and gain access to the qualification framework and info-training toolkit, then please register on the website, so you can be kept up to date with project progress, news and developments.

(www.swfm-qf.eu)

2. Exploitation Activities

The exploitation strategy of the SWFM-QF project will be laid down in the exploitation plan, a document that will be appended in the Communication and Dissemination Handbook. The main aim is to ensure the effective transfer and the sustainable use of the project results as well as the sustainable enlargement of the project network during and after the project span. Exploitation activities will include both mainstreaming actions to stakeholders and identified decision-makers and multiplication actions of the project's results. The foreseen exploitation strategy will be laid down in a 5 years plan, a document that will be appended in the Communication and Dissemination Handbook. The exploitation plan will identify and describe the exploitable results, the potential users (target groups, end users) aiming to key policy and decision-makers, the activities, the mechanisms and the channels via which the project results will be further exploited.

Considering that the success and future exploitation of the project results lies within the interest of each partner organization, since it directly influences its performance on the market, SWFM-QF partnership will take advantage of the direct involvement of the end user representatives in the project consortium and of the strong market position of all the other partners in order to undertake initiatives ensuring that as many as possible bodies will make use of the project results and start working in cooperation with the SWFM-QF network.













The main goal of the Exploitation Plan is to serve as an on-going, concise work plan for setting out the main exploitation aspects of the SWFM-QF project and to establish suitable actions to make SWFM-QF a successful and sustainable project.

The Exploitation Plan identifies the results of the project in terms of products, experiences, policy lessons and European cooperation and describes the strategy to exploit these products at European, national and regional levels. Exploitation actions will include both

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mainstreaming activities, taking advantage of the participation of the project's partners to networks and links to public authorities and lifelong learning decision makers, and multiplication exploiting the establishment of the SWFM-QF Network.

SWFM-QF partners have already identified potential exploitation activities. The main axes around which the project's exploitation activities have been designed and revolved have as follows:

- Specialisation of generic qualifications modules per solid waste management facility
- Development of educational material per solid waste management facility
- Development and enrichment of existing educational programs
- Planning and organisation of Vocational Training courses
- Participation and Presentation of SWFM-QF outcomes in other projects dissemination events, waste management and VET sectoral events – search for new partnerships
- Replication of the methodology to other professional profiles – Waste Water Treatment Facilities
- Use of the qualifications modules to define the required qualifications for new job positions and personnel hiring
- Close collaboration with related EU projects in order to support their dissemination activities and voice their results;
- Engagement of experts to support the various project activities;
- Publication of the SWFM-QF results and strong online presence by implementing the dissemination and exploitation roadmap.

The SWFM-QF website will be maintained and constantly updated under the responsibility of the Project Coordinator Sigma Consultants for at least five years after the project's completion. Exploitation activities will be announced and presented via the SWFM-QF website. New dissemination channels offered by Internet tools (e.g. Twitter, dedicated groups on professional sites like LinkedIn etc.) and additional national and E.U. networks will be used to further present and disseminate SWFM-QF results, outcomes and deliverables.

3. Final Conference

On the 10th of October the SWFM-QF Final Conference was held in the city of Thessaloniki, with the participation of all project partners and interested stakeholders coming mainly from the area of Central Macedonia, in Greece. The conference was organized in collaboration with the Regional Association of Solid Waste Management Agencies of Central Macedonia which supervises and runs the operation of thirteen municipal solid waste management facilities (mainly sanitary landfill) in that area. Stakeholders originated from VET centres, municipal solid waste management and environmental authorities, waste management companies, experts in solid waste management and qualifications framework.

SWFM-QF Final Conference comprised three separate sessions. During the first one, SWFM-QF partners presented project's results and outcomes. During the second session invited speakers, representing project's target groups, exhibiting expertise on solid waste management and professional qualifications presented current evolutions on the abovementioned fields. Invited speakers represented CEDEFOP, the Greek competent authority for national and European qualifications framework, ERASMUS+ managing authority in Greece, educational institutes activated in solid waste management. During the third session, invited speakers, stakeholders' representatives together with the project partners discussed for the further exploitation and sustainability of SWFM-QF project results and delivered products. Several exploitation actions - proposals were expressed and will be

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included in the SWFM-QF Exploitation Plan. VET centres expressed their will to use project's results to organize VET courses. ERASMUS+ programme representative explained potential funding opportunities for further specialization of project deliverables that will be addressed to targeted end-users.

All presentations and other informational material (agenda, photos) regarding the SWFM-QF Final Conference can be accessed via the project's website: <http://www.swfm-qf.eu/> SWFM-QF project partners would like to thank all participants of SWFM-QF Final Conference for their valuable contribution to its successful organization and fruitful results.

4. "Developing an EU Standardised Approach to Vocational Educational Training Awards in Healthcare Waste Management" EU-HCWM Project



The EU-HCWM project aims to provide a unified approach to the development of National Occupational Standards and Vocational Educational Training Programmes for Healthcare Waste Management across the EU Member States.

This will be achieved through the development of a new healthcare waste management qualification framework, and e-learning platform.

The project will last three years; starting from January 2014, and ending in December 2016. During this time, the project aims to achieve 5 key outputs, which will contribute to the development of a healthcare waste training package, suitable for use across the EU.

The key outputs from the project activities are:

- An assessment of the current VET availability across the EU countries, represented by the partner countries.
- The development of a standardised EU vocational training programme for healthcare workers.
- The development of associated training materials for the training programme
- The development of an e-learning platform to deliver the training programme
- An EU wide network of waste and healthcare professionals will be established

The project, coordinated by ICERMS Ltd (UK), is made up of 12 organisations, including two pan-European organisations, from 11 European countries (Germany, Greece, Spain, Italy, Austria, Poland, Albania, Macedonia, Slovenia, Belgium and the UK).

It is an exciting project, and we invite institutions, industry associations, companies, individuals and training institutions to participate as stakeholders by joining the EU-HCWM LinkedIn group (www.linkedin.com/groups/euhcwm-7472255). Group members will receive project newsletters, and can gain greater access to the project outputs, including the qualification framework, and training materials.

More information about the project and other informative material can be found through the official EU-HCWM project website (<http://www.hcwm.eu>).

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5. EU funding opportunities: THE ERASMUS+ Programme

Launched in Greece last January 2014, the Erasmus+ (2014-2020) is the new 16 billion euro Programme replacing the former Lifelong Learning Programme of the European Union.

The Erasmus+ aims to boost skills and employability, as well as modernising Education, Training, and Youth work. The general objective of the Erasmus+ is to contribute to the achievement of:

- the objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy (i.e. to reduce early school leaving and increase attainment in tertiary education);
- the objectives of the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020);
- the sustainable development of Partner Countries in the field of higher education;
- the overall objectives of the renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010-2018);
- the objective of developing the European dimension in sport, in particular grassroots sport, in line with the EUwork plan for sport;
- the promotion of European values in accordance with Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union (i.e. values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities).

In particular for the VET sector, the Erasmus + will help vocational education and training institutions to build strategic partnerships with other organisations and businesses to establish close links between education and training and the world of work.

VET providers, enterprises, social partners, industrial associations, policy making and decision making organisations are invited to submit projects under the annual call for proposals. The new programme and deadlines for 2015 have just been published.

Please check the <http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus>

6. SWFM-QF project final results

SWFM-QF project succeeded to:

- identify the structure and contents of the professional activities and qualifications for the SWFM occupation in the European market and the specificities linked to the waste management sector
- explore and compare the Vocational Educational Training (VET) processes whereby these qualifications are acquired
- detail the proposed qualifications with regard to the respective required learning outcomes, and for every learning outcome depicting knowledge, skills, competences descriptors in alignment with level 6 of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), implementing an extensively interactive collaborative approach incorporating also stakeholders involvement
- create a harmonized training frame – the Info-Training Toolkit – for the different developed SWFM qualifications modules
- establish multi-national network – the SWFM-QF Network – with the engagement and active involvement of key stakeholders from all project's short and long term target groups. SWFM-QF members along with the experts from the waste management and VET


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sectors evaluated and validated all the developed qualifications modules and the contents of the Info-Training Toolkit

All the project results are uploaded and can be accessed via SWFM-QF webpage at <http://www.swfm-qf.eu/>

The SWFM-QF website will be maintained and constantly updated for at least five years after the project's completion.

The SWFM-QF project outcomes will be beneficial in raising transparency for required competences and mobility of professionals in the environmental protection business sector introducing an innovative clearly defined methodology for the creation of the Solid Waste Facility Manager job profile for EQF Level 6, based on the actual needs of the labour market, across different countries in Europe.

7. SWFM-QF 5th meeting

During the 8th and 9th of October the Final Coordination meeting was held in Thessaloniki, Greece. It was successfully organized by the Sigma Consultants Ltd. During the meeting the project progress, results and exploitation activities were presented and discussed in details.

Meeting's photos and presentations can be found at the project's website:

<http://www.swfm-qf.eu/main/?p=9280&lang=en>

