

PERCEPTIONS OF FACILITY MANAGEMENT IN EUROPE

A survey of Finland, Germany and the UK

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Abstract <p>The primary target of the study was to survey how facility management (FM) with its focus areas, definitions and terminology has been defined by professionals in Europe. It also aimed to survey how known and used the European facility management standard was, and what features make a company a facility management company. The EU was descriptively represented through three target countries chosen for the study: Finland, Germany and the UK.</p> <p>The descriptive qualitative research, conducted through individual focused thematic telephone interviews, made it possible to get a deep personal insight into the information on the subject. 15 professionals, five (5) from each country, were interviewed. Each represented one out of five (5) sectors of the field: the service, academic, corporate, consultancy and association sectors.</p> <p>The results revealed both intranational and extranational asymmetries between the professionals' opinions. Thus, a single compact definition of FM could not be drawn up. The definition always depends on the individual impressions of the subject. The term facility management had different meanings on a national basis. Foreign and other terms equivalent to FM were used in all three target countries. The ones most used were "toimitilajohtaminen", "Gebäudemanagement" and "facilities management". Experts believed that, to some extent, there were real facility management companies but did not think that the term could be used of all organizations in the field. According to some, the industry was split into companies that either only provide management services, manage and produce services or manage and subcontract services. The organizations only providing services were considered facility service organizations. The European Standard EN 15221 seemed not to be equally promoted and adopted throughout Europe.</p> <p>To sum up, there were major differences in the understanding of facility management, its focus areas and terminology between the three target nations and also, between experts in the individual countries. In order to obtain a more harmonized perception, further international exchange of knowledge and business activities should take place. The development and integration of the European Standards is also important.</p>		
Keywords Facility management, facilities management, toimitilajohtaminen, Gebäudemanagement		
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Tiivistelmä <p>Tutkimuksen ensisijaisena tavoitteena oli kartoittaa alan asiantuntijoiden näkemykset facility managementin (FM) painopistealueista, määritelmistä ja käsitteistöstä Euroopassa. Tutkimuksessa pyrittiin myös kartoittamaan, kuinka tunnettu ja käytetty eurooppalainen FM standardi oli sekä selvittää, millaiset piirteet tekivät yrityksestä facility management-yrityksen. Tutkimuskohteiksi valittiin kolme maata: Suomi, Saksa ja Englanti.</p> <p>Tutkimus toteutettiin käyttämällä laadullista tutkimusmenetelmää, ja haastattelut tehtiin teemahaastatteluina puhelimitse. Jokaisesta maasta haastateltiin viittä asiantuntijaa, joista kukin edusti yhtä facility managementin osa-aluetta. Nämä osa-alueet olivat: palveluntuottajat, koulutus-ala, palvelun ostajat, konsultointi-ala sekä alan ammatilliset yhdistykset.</p> <p>Tutkimuksen tulokset kaikilta osa-alueilta havainnollistivat selkeästi alan ammattilaisten mielipiteiden eroavuuksia niin maiden sisällä kuin myös maiden välillä. Facility managementille osoitettiin olevan monta määritelmää, sekä sisällöllisesti että kielellisesti, kaikissa maissa. Alasta sekä alan ammatinharjoittajista käytettiin Suomessa sekä Saksassa maan äidinkielelle käännettyjä nimikkeitä. Näistä yleisimpiä olivat "toimitilajohtaminen" Suomessa ja "Gebäudemanagement" Saksassa. Englannissa facilities management oli yleisin käytetty termi. Tutkimus osoitti niin sanottujen facility management yritysten olemassaolon, vaikka nimike ei asiantuntijoiden mielestä kattanutkaan kaikkia alalla toimivia yrityksiä. Osa haastatelluista olisi jakanut alan yritykset kolmeen eri kategoriaan: 1. yritykset, jotka tuottavat ainoastaan johtotehtäviin liittyviä palveluita, 2. yritykset, jotka johtavat sekä tuottavat palveluita ja 3. yritykset, jotka johtavat ainoastaan ulkoistettuja palveluita. Sen sijaan vain operatiivisia palveluita tuottavat yritykset olisivat facility service-nimikkeen alla. Tutkimus osoitti, että eurooppalaista facility management- standardia EN 15221 ei oltu otettu tarpeeksi laajasti käyttöön eikä sen olemassaolo ollut tarpeeksi monen asiantuntijan tietoisuudessa.</p> <p>Opinnäytetyö osoitti, että sekä käsitykset facility managementista, sen painopistealueista, termeistä ja nimikkeistä vaihtelivat sekä maiden sisällä että niiden välillä. Yhtenäisen ymmärryksen saavuttamiseksi tulisi kansainvälistä yhteistyötä ja tiedonvaihtoa keskeisesti lisätä. Myös standardin kehittäminen ja vakinaistaminen olisi aiheellista.</p>		
Avainsanat (asiasanat) Facility management, facilities management, toimitilajohtaminen, Gebäudemanagement		
Muut tiedot		

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1 INTRODUCTION

Managing facilities and real estate to some extent, as a profession itself, is not new and has been practiced in similar and separate forms for many years before. Still, the level of public awareness of the occupation is not very high. Facility management, also abbreviated as FM, in a nutshell is a management method intended to support organizations either internally or outsourced with whatever support services and functions they require. It is also closely related to built environments. As an alone standing business field and standardized term, facility management is a fairly young one. Cultural and historical background as well as local conditions have led to the formation of different perceptions and developments of facility management in Europe. Countries have created their individual definitions and focus areas around facility management due to these aspects. The FM industry in individual countries is made up of companies which act on the basis of these national tendencies. Education in facility management is in some countries more extensive than in others, which could be seen as an indicator of the maturity level of the profession of the nation it is practiced in. The content of the individual degree programs and academic graduate titles depend on the focus areas of FM in a country.

The terminology of the industry is multi leveled since English speaking countries use terms differently than non-English speaking countries. These have created correlative and synonymous descriptive terms in their own language for FM. Multiple definitions of facility management were found in theoretical sources which could indicate the possibility of diverse understanding of FM. A European Standard for facility management was created in 2006 with the intention to harmonize these above mentioned subjects-matters in Europe.

The primary target of the study was to survey how facility management (FM) with its focus areas, definitions and terminology has been defined by professionals in Europe. It also aimed to survey how known and used the European facility management standard was, and what features make a company a facility management company.

The EU was descriptively represented through three target countries chosen for the study: Finland, Germany and the UK.

It was reasonable to presume that there are distinctions in the determination and perception of the field of facilities management in Europe, which was the triggering idea for this study. The above mentioned countries acted as a survey group representing Europe since a study of all countries in the EU would have exceeded the time and resources of a Bachelor's Thesis.

This study tried to provide answers to the issues mentioned above with the following main research questions:

- How is facility management defined in Finland, Germany and UK?
- What features make a company a facility management company?
- How known and used is the FM Standard EN 15221-1 in the target countries?

The descriptive qualitative research, conducted through individual focused thematic telephone interviews, enabled the author to get a deep personal insight into the subject. 15 representative experts of the field, five (5) from each country, were requested to give their personal impressions of the subject via focused thematic telephone interviews. The participants substituted the five (5) main sectors of the facility management industry:

- Academics
- Service providers
- Corporates
- Consultants
- Associations

This document was sectioned into seven (7) theoretical parts covering information on facility management in general and facility management in each target country, descriptive overviews and information on companies working in the industry and information on the European Standard EN 15221-1. Furthermore, elaborations on the research method, data collection and analysis as well as limitations were made.

The outcomes of the research were presented using the themes that emerged during the analysis process. There were four (4) theme groups. Conclusively, general findings were drawn and discussed. Based on these, practical implications and suggestions for future research were presented. The assessment of the research was also done at this point.

The study was of great importance to the understanding of the field for the author, future students of facility management as well as to the development of the profession and the field itself since it presented detailed insights into expert perceptions of the field.

The constituent of this case work was Reality Consult GmbH. Partial results and ideas of this thesis have been presented during the writing process at the Kufsteiner Fachtagungen 2012 with the title: "Mobility versus immobility: What is common and what is uncommon in European Facility Management? - A comparative study of Germany, Finland and UK. They were also presented at the EURO FM conference 2012 in Copenhagen as the plenary session – FM debate of the year with the title: "The Multinational Understanding of FM."

2 FACILITY MANAGEMENT IN GENERAL

The tasks of facility management, later abbreviated as FM, have been practiced by men throughout history and go back as far as when the first civilizations and cities have emerged around 4000-1000 BC. From the beginning on there has been Economy, Politics and Culture of some sort and thus facility management in its primary steps. (Prodgers n.d.) Facility management is said to address a large scale of different issues related to processes, service activities and build spaces. The scope and individual range of deliverables is considered to vary according to customer requirements. Thus, a sole borderline for facility management is difficult to be formed. (EN 15221-1 2006.)

The European Committee for Standardisation has created a basic facility management model, as illustrated below, in order to determine the corner stones of the profession (Op. cit.)

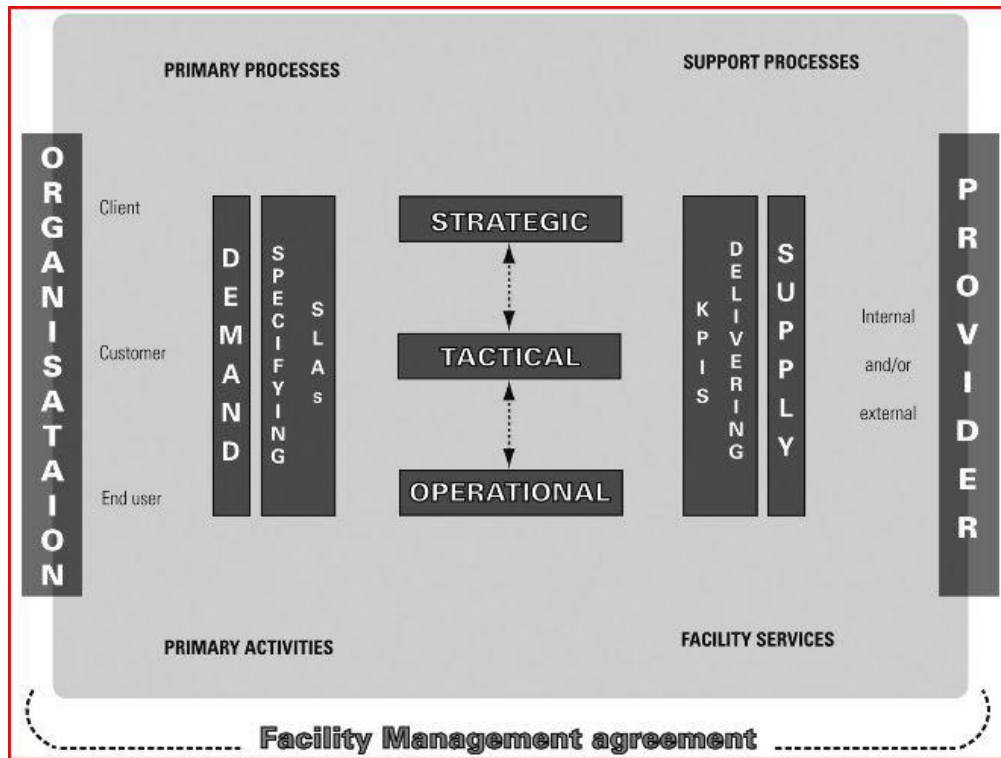


FIGURE 1: Facility management model by CEN: EN 15221, 2006

The accurate birthdate of the profession and industry of facility management itself though, seems difficult for experts to determine but according to Booth (2013): “despite its confused beginning, the critical point of facilities management appears somewhere around the 1980’s”. This was when George Graves founded the first official FM association called the National Facility Management Association (NFMA). The name of the association was changed shortly after to a more common name of: International Facility Management Association. (Euro FM 2013.) Facility management is also said to have its fountainhead in the furniture business since the 70’s.

The symposium called “Facilities Impact on Productivity”, that was launched by the worlds’ biggest furniture manufacturer at the time, the Herman Miller Corporation, introduced the idea of facility management being the management of organizational spaces and facilities. This new idea suggested that spatial features and furnishing could have a major influence on the attainment of organizational productivity goals. (Schulte & Pierschke 2000, 34.)

As young as thirty years of existence facility management as an alone standing profession or even industry is a constantly, yet, rapidly developing new business field. In a short amount of time facility management has enlarged its impact of not-noticed to a discipline many organizations could not imagine existing without. The recognition level of the profession has thus grown immense amounts. (Rondeau, Brown & Lapidés 2006, 1.) However, too often still, the profession of facility management is viewed at narrowly and falsely, both within people in the public and private sector, as well as inside organizations and institutions (Cotts, Roper & Payant 2010, 12-13). This might result from its poor reputation in the past where facilities management was often regarded as only a subprofession such as caretaking, cleaning or maintenance of buildings. In the foretime, it was considered as a secondary discipline of principal professions in the categories of real estate, engineering, architecture and construction, whereas today it is reversed. (Atkin & Brooks 2000, 4.)

Facility management is said to relate to the management of all meaningful equipment that employees could possibly need at their workplaces in order for them to work in the most efficient way. This would include things like properties, gadgets of all kinds, office equipment, communication devices, etc. (Schulte & Pierschke 2000, 35.) Confirming this idea, David Amstrong published an article in 1982 on the principal values of facility management being around “integrating people, place and process”.

In the publication he also introduced the nowadays famous model of the values illustrated below (EuroFM n.d.)

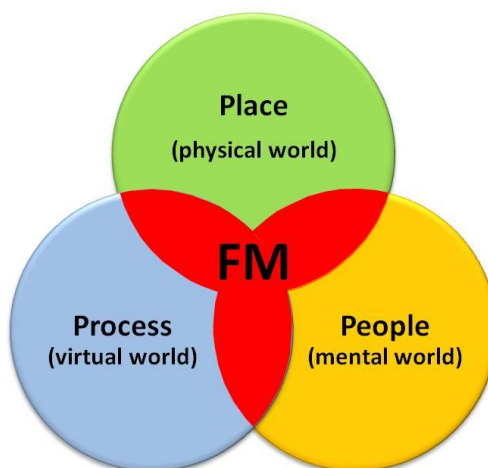


FIGURE 2: Values of FM - people, place, process - by David Armstrong 1982

However, as the European standard (EN 15221-1 2006) points out, that “the basic concept of Facility Management is to provide integrated management on a strategic and tactical level to coordinate the provision of the agreed support services (facility services). This requires specific competencies and **distinguishes** Facility Management from the isolated provision of one or more services.” This statement is of great importance for understanding the main purpose of FM. In other words, facility management is about managing a broad scale of activities but not performing those individual tasks.

Definitions of FM

According to Schulte and Pierschke (2000, 34), there are numerous definitions for facility management, and thus, a uniform determination of FM has not been able to be formed on a national or even international base.

Nevertheless, there have been initiatives for creating a more homogenous definition of facility management on several levels. The International Facility Management Association (IFMA) is the head association of the branch from which different countries have developed their own subsidiary association and definitions of the term.

IFMA determines facility management as follows:

“Facility management is a profession that encompasses multiple disciplines to ensure functionality of the built environment by integrating people, place, process and technology.” (IFMA n.d.)

Another association information source, the Facility Management Institute states:

“The profession of managing and coordinating interrelated ‘people, process and place’ issues and functions within the corporation or organization.” (Schulte and Pierschke 2000, 3)

Compared to each other both these definitions resemble each other, however, have refine distinctions. This could be one aggravating perpetrator for the lack of unity in the perception of facility management.

IFMA’s statement focuses more on the build environment itself and the actions that have to be performed in order to assure that it works according to end user's best interest. In other words real estate maintenance that is done in such a way that it benefits the people using it. This would include the physical building, the functionality of the core business of an organization and the technology around it.

Terminology

The term facility management itself is one of the most non- determined terms of new industries that differs in its spelling, definition and context in theory as well as in practice (Schulte & Pierschke 2000, 34). There are two terms that are internationally most used for the profession: facility management and facilities management. In theory this issue of which term should be used is often considered as a matter of personal preference (Atkins & Brooks 2005, 4) although in practice the field clearly shows multiple ways of understanding and usage of these two terms. Another source simply states, that facility management is the term used for the profession in America and facilities management, yet again, in the United Kingdom (Schulte & Pierschke 2000, 34). Some authors have titled their book as “Facility Management” and some as “Facilities Management”, however, they seem to address they same issue with them.

In many non-English speaking countries correlative and synonymous descriptive terms for facility management have been created in the nation's own language. The terminology and translations of FM in Finland and Germany will be addressed in the following chapters of this document.

2.1 Facility management in Finland

The Finnish Facility Management Association (FIFMA), founded in 1993, is currently a subdivision of the European Facility Management Association. The purpose of FIFMA, as stated on their official web pages, is to develop and sustain their members' professional abilities, develop business premise environments and business premise education as well as enhance domestic and international relationships in the field of facility management. This is done by offering networking possibilities and the most current knowledge of the field. (FIFMA n.d.) Their professional opinion about Facility Management is stated as follows:

“The task of facility management is to produce, maintain and develop real estate- and support services in order to fulfill the strategic needs of the core business of a company” (FIFMA n.d.)

The Finnish Facility Management Association has currently 101 members around the country. The information on what type of organization FIFMA represents can be exclusively found in their membership list. A generalization of these companies cannot be made but recapitulatory it can be stated that most often the member organizations come from the educational, real estate, construction or service provider sector. (FIFMAN jäsenluettelo 2001)

Although the Finish Facility Management Association exists and addresses the profession of its international name, Mikkonen (2012) states that the industry is often addressed by the Finnish translation “toimitilapalveluiden johtaminen” rather than with the term facility management itself. Even though these two terms are commonly used as equivalents in the country, she points out that facility management seems to be a more extensive term than its Finnish translation. (Pp. 44, 47) In other sources though, it appears to be used as a straight equivalent to “toimitilajohtaminen” (cf. Siikala 2000, 192).

The Finnish word “toimitila” accurately translated into English means “business premise” and accordingly “toimitilajohtaminen” means “business premise management”. “Toimitilapalvelu” again translated verbally would mean “business premise services”.

Facility management in Finland is often related to real estate and construction, and thus different institutions and representative associations for the property and construction field have been formed. One of the most known and influential confederations in the sector is The Finnish Association of Building Owners and Construction Clients, abbreviated as RAKLI. Since 1977 they have been operating in the property and construction field in Finland. Over time their alignment has, due to shifts in member categories, changed to some extent. From the year 2007 onwards they have been concentrating on representing the interests of residential and commercial properties as well as infrastructural issues and cover with their activities a build environment as a whole. (RAKLI n.d.)

Another important source of information on facility management in the Finnish real estate market is the privately owned non-profit information company called KTI Kiinteistötieto Oy, abbreviated as KTI. It was founded by a composition of Turku School of Economics, the Finnish Real Estate Federation and RAKLI. Thus, they are said to have well founded connections and cooperation with both the Finnish academic and industrial sector. The company has been operating on research issues in the field since 1993 and offers services for multiple purposes in property management. They provide benchmarking, analysis, research and information around the subject. (KTI Finland n.d.)

The English terms seem to add misunderstanding in the field of facility management and thus RAKLI has provided, with the assistance of Sanastokeskus TSK, the industry with a document called “vocabulary of real estate business” where translations of 127 Finnish terms have been made more standardized. The purpose of the document was furthermore to create better communication between national and international conversation partners. (Sanastokeskus TSK 2012, 3.)

The document reveals that facility management and facilities management are seen as equivalent terms of “toimitilajohtaminen” and “tilajohtaminen”. Both the Finnish and English terms are, according to RAKLI, a subordinate practical function of “kiinteistöjohtaminen” or real estate management in English (op. cit. p. 17.):

Real estate management is defined here as a superordinate concept which in practical terms corresponds to operations such as property portfolio management, asset management, property management and facilities management (Op. cit. p. 17).

Nevertheless, the issue of facility management is addressed as follows in the document:

“It is real estate management whose purpose is to manage the acquisition and development of facilities, as well as facility services and user services” (Op. cit. p. 17).

The Finnish term “toimitilapalvelut” is clearly translated as facility services and has only to do with “modifying the characteristics of a facility so as to support the facility user’s activities. Facility services include guarding and landscape maintenance” (Op. cit., 57).

As the above statements have already revealed, the vocabulary of the real estate business in Finland is very complex and terms correlate with each other a lot. This makes even this simplified manual difficult to understand. However, KTI’s separate documents under the heading: “Kiinteistötalouden keskeiset käsitteet” (the essential terms of real estate business) tries to reinforce the existing vocabulary made by RAKLI. However, they only provide a Finnish explanation of the terms. In their document on real estate management and real estate business terminology they explain facility management as a straight equivalent to the Finnish words “toimitilajohtaminen” and “toimitilapalveluiden johtaminen”. According to them, facility management is the user-oriented management of business premises, that includes the management of individual spaces as well as the management of services and systems in close relation to them. Corporate real estate management is explained to be the term used for strategic facility management in Finland. (KTI: Kiinteistötalouden ja kiinteistöjohtamisen keskeiset käsitteet n.d.)

Education in Finland

The educational sector in Finland can be regarded as rather concise since facility management could be studied until 2013 only at three (3) Universities: Jyväskylä University of Applied sciences, Laurea University of Applied Sciences and Turku University of Applied Sciences. From the year 2013 onwards, only the University of Laurea will be offering facility management as an independent degree program due to resource cuttings in the educational sector in Finland. (Hintikka-Mäkinen 2013) Facility management courses will be embedded into other degree programs in the future and will be considered only one study subject of the main curriculum.

For example in Turku University of Applied Sciences, it will be embedded into the bachelor's degree in Business Administration whereas at the Jyväskylä University of Applied Sciences it will be integrated with one bachelor degree in Hospitality Management. This degree program will contain all three previously independent degree programs in Tourism, Service Management and Facility Management. The title of this new program has not yet been decided on but will definitely be taught in Finnish instead of English in the future. (Op. cit.) The director of development at Laurea University Pauliina Nurkka (2013) states that in autumn 2013 there will still be an intake into the degree program in Facility Management at Laurea but after that, nobody seems to know for sure. She assumes that, in 2015, Facility Management will not be offered as a degree program of its own right anymore will probably be embedded into the degree program of Business Management as in Turku. (Nurkka 2013)

According to Antikainen (2009), at Turku University of Applied Sciences Facility Management, or as she puts it "toimitilajohtaminen", has been researched, developed and taught for over ten years. The professionals working for the institution have been active in global networking. She points out that Finnish authorities have finally started to understand the importance of facility management especially from the standardization perspective. (Antikainen 2009.) As an example of the content of a Finnish facility management degree program the FM curriculum of Laurea University of Applied Sciences is used.

The target of a facility managers profession is described as being an “integrated process to support and improve the effectiveness of the primary activities of an organization by the management and delivery of agreed support services” (Solenovo 2005-2013.) The emphasis of skills taught at Laurea are around the management of facility services like cleaning and catering. These are taught through multiple disciplines. Depending on a students' focus areas, subjects like security services, service business management and business information management can be studied through selective courses. (Op. cit.)

The changes in the education of facility management in Finland are important for the development of the maturity level of the industry in the country. They are likely to have a major influence on the perception and execution of the profession in the future. This is due to the fact that other countries, like Germany and UK for example, are expanding the education of FM rapidly as described in the following chapters. This issue could have major impacts on the development of the industry and profession in the whole of Europe.

2.2 Facility management in Germany

The German Facility Management Association (GEFMA), founded in 1989, is described as being the network of professional decision makers in facility management in Germany. It is a sub-division of the European Facility Management Association and has over 850 members in the country alone. Members are described as being eager to promote and develop the field and profession of FM. (GEFMA n.d.)

The association is acting on many levels concerning FM in Germany such as promoting public relations, being counterpart for specialist and economic media as well as being cooperation partner of studies and projects of many kinds. Also in the educational sector the association has its influence since they have defined framework curriculums and specialist catalogs for university education and operational facility management. (Op. cit.)

The operating range of the FM association in Germany seems comprehensive which can be viewed as an indication of the maturity level of facility management in Germany. The German Facility Management Association defines facility management as follows:

GEFMA defines FM as a management discipline which fulfills people's basic requirements at work, supports companies' primary processes and increases return on capital by economic use of facilities and services within the framework of planned, managed and controlled facility processes (GEFMA guideline 100-1 n.d.).

Professional FM involves the permanent analysis and optimization of cost-relevant processes relating to construction-related assets, facilities and services provided in businesses, except the core business. As assets become more and more sophisticated to manage, the challenges on FM are increasing, both in terms of services to be provided and relating the responsibilities involved. (GEFMA n.d.)

According to Schulte and Pierschke (2000), the term facilities management is more used in the spoken German language, whereas, facility management is often used in written forms. They describe facilities management as being a broader term that covers a company with its assets in all forms, whereas, facility management rather concentrates on only one single "shell" of a facility. However, also in Germany translative equivalent terms are used for the English version. These would most commonly be "Gebäudemanagement" (building management) and "Objektmanagement" (object management). Yet, sometimes titles such as "corporate real estate management" or "public real estate management) are used for the profession, which, however, Schulte and Pierschke see as too indistinct. (Pp. 34)

Education in Germany

The educational sector for facility management in Germany consists of at least 15 different training facilities, which in most cases are technical universities, offering courses on the subject. Facility management in those 15 universities is offered as an individual degree program. Additionally it can be studied as a side subject of other departments related to FM. These would often for example degree programs of a subject such as 'Bauingenieurwesen' which could be translated as constructional or civil engineering.

Students in all of those degree programs related to FM graduate as “Bachelor of Science”, “Bachelor of Engineering” or “Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) in Facility Management” depending on the university. (Hochschulen in Deutschland n.d.; Studiengänge n.d.)

2.3 Facility management in the United Kingdom

The British Institute for Facilities Management (BIFM) was founded in 1993 and considers itself as “the body for facilities management in the UK”. The association has more than 13 000 private and organizational members in the country to which it offers support in many issues concerning FM. It provides knowledge, guidelines as well as education around the subject and acts as an interconnection base between members. (BIFM n.d.) On their official website they determine facilities management as follows:

*“Facilities management is the integration of processes within an organization to maintain and develop the agreed services which support and improve the effectiveness of its primary activities”.
(Op. cit.)*

Education in the UK

The educational sector for facility management in the UK can be said to be rather broad since there are more than 15 universities offering facilities management education or education closely related to FM.

Alexander (1996) declares that facilities management has undoubtedly taken its place as a higher academic discipline in universities across the UK. He also states, that the courses offered mostly focus around the subject of constructed environments. (Pp. xvii.) There are courses offered like:

- Construction project management
- Facilities and property management
- Conference and exhibition management
- Building services engineering
- Construction management
- Event management

- Management in the public sector
- Shopping center management
- Facility and environment management
- Event and venue management

The above courses can be absolved on several degree levels like for example a bachelor degree, master of science, postgraduate diploma, master of research, etc. (Study Facilities Management in the UK 2013.)

3 COMPANIES WORKING IN THE FM INDUSTRY

It can be said that the facility management industry is one of the fastest growing business fields of today's markets whose actual monetary size cannot be accurately stated due to the magnitude of the profession. Looking at theoretical sources it seems difficult to determine where the occupation of facility management actually begins and where it ends. The scope of the profession being so vast and loosely determined, consisting of players in both the private as well as the public sector, the complexity of companies already existing in the market or trying to get in is ever growing and mixing up the industry all the more. Thus it is not surprising that more and more companies with any kind of background try to find their way into the money promising industry to get their best gain out of it. (Gribben 2003.)

The term facility management company comes up rather frequently in interviews, articles, company pages and other resources concerning FM. There are for example property services companies like Broll who state about the importance of finding the right facilities management company for oneself which is able to provide the right kind of services for the type of building in question (see Broll Facilities Management).

A facilities management company is, as the CEO of Key Facilities Management International Stan Mitchel (2009) states, an organizational management company who is able to "manage, operate and maintain all the support services" of a client organization while providing these tasks by management experts for the lowest price possible without cuttings in productivity.

Yet, he divides the industry into another agent operating in the field: facilities services organizations. These on the other hand are the companies who are actually focused on performing organizational support services like “cleaning, security, plumbing, electrics, HVAC, pest control, hygiene, decoration etc.” (Pp. 2.) Even though these two forms of companies sound rather similar there are major distinctions in definition between them.

Concerning the skill set that facility management companies or at the bare minimum facility managers have to have, there are deviant opinions in theoretical sources. Some state that the essence of skills until recently lay in managerial capabilities such as “business, social, personal and technical” skills. More commercial skills such as “marketing, purchasing and contracting” have come to the fore more frequently in present times as well. (Alexander 1996, xx.) Others, however, view the necessary skill sets even broader covering areas such as “real estate management, financial management, change management, human resource management, health and safety management and contract management”. However, also the knowledge on individual service performances like “building and engineering service maintenance, domestic services and utilities supplies” are considered important. (Atkin & Brooks 2000, 4.)

Company examples

According to Mikkonen (2012) the industry of facility management in Finland today mostly consists of both big national and international players although also some smaller organizations in the field have emerged.

She points out that the level of services these companies usually offer may vary but often cover almost anything related to user services of a building. These can be services like lobby services, security services, plant services, catering services, caretaker services, etc. A company may cover and provide all of the above mentioned services to a client organization or just one or two of them. It depends on the organization's capabilities providing the service and the customers' requirements. ISS Services Oy, Lassila- Tikanoja Oyj, RTK-service Oy and SOL Services are stated to be currently the biggest organizations in the facility management industry in Finland.

All of these companies are big full-range service providers. Organisations with a more traditional construction background are slowly finding their way into the industry as well by enlarging their service range into facility management. (Pp. 46.) It is obvious that the above paragraph and the explained offerings of companies working in the facility management industry do not match elaborately the description of facility management given by theoretical sources before in this document.

In Germany a company called Lunendonk GmbH is specialized, since 1983, in many kinds of market researches and analyzation of different corporations and sectors. This includes since 2004 also the field of facility management. According to Lunendonk, facility services are a subsidiary discipline of facility management, and thus the company lists each year the 25 market leading facility service organizations in Germany. The leading organizations on the list are Bilfinger Berger Facility Services GmbH, Strabag Property and Facility Services GmbH, Dussmann Service GmbH, Compass Group Germany GmbH, Wisag Facility Service Holding GmbH, Hochtief Solutions AG, Sodexo Beteiligungs B.V.a Co.KG and Cofely Germany GmbH. All of these organizations are big full-range service providers offering mostly operational services. They do, however, also include the management of these services. (Lunendonk-Liste: Fuhrende Facility-Service-Unternehmen in Deutschland 2011 2012; Facility Management/ Industrial Services: Facility Service n.d; Lunendonk GmbH: Get in touch - Stay in touch n.d.)

The organizations working in the field of facility management, gathered through Finnish and German literature, resemble each other. However, it is noticeable that they display more the characteristics of facility service organizations, than facility management companies.

4 FACILITY MANAGEMENT STANDARD

The discipline of facility management covers such a large scope of individual tasks and managerial disciplines, that it seemed natural, that a general determination of the profession, its terminology and focus areas had to be formed.

According to the European Committee for Standardisation (CEN), the creators of the European Standard, the target of the standard is to obtain a united understanding of facility management in Europe. It is considered a “lead document” that should be attended to in all cases related to FM. Official version of the standard exists, since 2006, in three main languages: English, German and French. (EN 15221-1 2006.)

According to Van Ree (2010), the CEN standard EN 15221-1 is the first part of the standard and declares the terms and definitions of the facility management profession in Europe. Interesting is, that the European standard defines **facilities** management in their document. The definition, however, is given the subheading: **facility** management. They furthermore speak about e.g. facility management agreements and facility management contracts. (EN 15221-1 2006.) It seems, that both terms are used as either equals to each other or plainly randomly in the document. This way of using the terms seems contradictory to any statements made earlier about the standard.

Nevertheless, they explain facilities management as being an “ integration of processes within an organization to maintain and develop the agreed services which support and improve the effectiveness of its primary activities” (op. cit.)

In order to cover all aspects of the industry with standards, Van Ree (2010) points out, that the European Committee for Standardization has been working on additional segregated parts and managed to establish five (5) more. These were published in 2010 and were labeled as follows:

- EN 15221-2 - Agreements
- EN 15221-3 - Quality
- EN 15221-4 - Taxonomy
- EN 15221-5 - Processes
- EN 15221-6 - Space

The Committee is working hard on creating a seventh standard, the EN 15221-7 - Benchmarking, in order to set standards in this area of facility management as well. (Op. cit.)

The Standard is supposed to be applied in all major nations in Europe:

“Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.” (Mitchel 2006)

EuroFM has recently posted a statement on their web pages, that all CEN members have to publish the subsistence of all the six existing standards and relate to them as the “official national standards” (EuroFM n.d.) Thus, as they state, all contrasting national standards have to be retreated so that only a single European standard exists and is available for public viewing (op. cit. n.d.). However, the very same statement was made already earlier by the European Committee for Standardisation in 2006, stating, that all opposed standards have to be retraced by April 2007 (EN 15221-1 2006). This seems to be a radical course of action for diminishing inconsistencies between European definitions of facility management. This again, backs up the presumption and the target of this study.

5 RESEARCH METHOD OF THE THESIS

The research method chosen for this thesis was a descriptive qualitative research approach. The used method is most effective when illustrating attitudes, behaviors or conditions as in this case the personal perceptions of professionals on facility management. (Kane 1997, 13) Qualitative research is used when a phenomenon is fairly new or deeper information on a subject is required to understand it better (Kananen 2011, 41). The method fitted the study best since the target was to get deep insight opinions of the fields leading experts rather than quantitative and measurable answers on the subject.

5.1 Research questions and data collection

The main research questions set for the study were as follows:

- 1 How is facility management determined in Finland, Germany and UK?
- 2 What features make a company a facility management company?
- 3 How known and used is the FM Standard EN 15221-1 in the target countries?

The data collection method used in this study was the one of focused thematic interviewing, which, according to Kananen (2011), is one of the most used techniques in qualitative research. In order to gain a sufficient number of comparative answers, in other words saturation of the data, he states that 12-15 interviews are required in most cases. This is important for adequate understanding of the phenomenon in question. (Pp. 48-53) Thus 15 professional experts, five (5) from each target country in the field of facility management were chosen for individual interviews.

The participants were chosen by their current professional status, having multiple years of experience in the field and based on the company they are currently working for or have been working for. Since the industry of facility management covers so many areas, the interviewees were chosen for descriptive reasons to represent five (5) main categories of FM: the academic sector, service provider sector, corporate sector, consultancy sector and association sector (see appendix 2). For Finland and Germany, representatives of each sector were found. However, for the UK the corporate sector had to be replaced by a person working as a consultant and having a former career in the association sector.

All interviewees were contacted with a formal letter of request via e-mail in their native languages which was Finnish, German or English (see appendix 1). The experts showed great interest in the study and thus the interview dates could be agreed upon in a short period of time. All the 15 interviews were finalized in a time span of two (2) months.

13 interviews were conducted via phone and two (2) face-to-face. In order to promote the reliability and validity of the study, the interview was proposed to be held in English. However, the language in which the interview was held was chosen by each interviewee individually since not everyone was comfortable with answering questions in English. Since some participants asked to view the questions beforehand, the structured interview was presented to all participants electronically prior to the interview date in order to ensure an equal baseline for each person. Nevertheless, all were asked not to pre-prepare answers and to rather answer the questions as spontaneously as possible. Due to the transcription and documentation purposes, all professionals were requested to give their permission to record the interviews, to which everyone agreed. A basic voice recorder was used for this task.

A standardized schedule interview (see appendix 3) with predetermined chronological questions was used to lead the conversation in order to obtain precise answers. The exact wording of the questions, as done in structured interviewing, is important for gaining the same information on the research subject from all the participants. (Kane 1997, 62.) This also ensures the reliability of the answers in the analysis phase later on.

The interview was divided into three different sections, starting from basic information on the topic to more precise questions: 1. General information on the organization, 2. Facility Management and 3. Generalizing Facility Management (see appendix 2). Thus, all the necessary information could be gained from the participants since they were slowly led deeper into the subject of FM. (Kananen 2011, 54-55.)

The interview was made up of open-ended and close-ended questions. There were 20 main questions and 21 sub-questions which were mostly needed to further define the close-ended answers given. The close-ended questions offered the response options of either “yes” or “no” as well as in some parts a numerical scaling of 1-5 (not at all – totally different/ very likely). Kananen (2011) argues that close-ended question should not be used in the focused interview method because of its restrictive nature which does not match the target of a qualitative approach (pp. 55).

Yet, the author disagreed with this opinion since the closed-ended questions with their additional explanations merely added constructive angles to the subject and provided a visual perspective in the presentation of the results later on. This makes the results more understandable for the reader.

5.2 Data analysis

The volume of the research data was rather large since each individual interview lasted approximately one (1) hour. This was due to the amount of questions, language barriers and the difficulty of the topic. In many cases it seemed difficult for professionals to give compact answers on the issue. The total amount of spoken and recorded data consisted of approximately 17 hours. The gathered information from the interviews had to be put into written form as accurately as possible in order to analyze and compare the information.

Since there are many theoretical approaches to transcribing recorded data of any kind, the accuracy level had to be chosen according to the purpose of the research. The level chosen for this research was the “standard language” transcription proposed by Kananen (2011), since it retains quoted opinions of interviewees accurately, however, without notifications about usage of voice or gestures. Each transcription contained the personal information on each participant as well as the sector name they represented.

The participants were given code names, which were used in the presentation phase later on, in order for the reader to understand which answer represented which sector. (Pp. 57.) The code names used for the individual representatives were set as follows in this document:

- Academic sector, FI; academic sector, DE; academic sector, UK
- Service sector, FI; service sector, DE; service sector, UK
- Corporate sector, FI; corporate sector, DE; EuroFM consultant sector, UK (replacing the corporate sector in the UK)
- Consultant sector, FI, consultant sector, DE, consultant sector, UK
- Association sector, FI; association sector, DE; association sector, UK

The final amount of transcribed data resulted in approximately 7-17 pages per interview, depending on the language it was conducted in. Interviews held in Finnish or German had to be translated into English in order for answers being comparable. The original answers were always shown in the transcription and the translation followed directly after. This added reliability and validity to the research results.

In order to compare interviews against each other properly and to see coherences between them, answers from each sector were question-wise listed below one another. This was done for each country separately. Close-ended questions were analyzed through the usage of Exel by the creation of figures. This provided the author as well as it would provide the reader later on a visual impression on some parts of the research.

The interview data was divided into four (4) different topics for comparison and presentation purposes. The themes used in this study are: perception of facility management, understanding of terminology, facility management companies and familiarity with FM standards. The research questions were answered within these topics.

The intention of this study was to specifically survey the perceptions of facility management in Finland, Germany and UK and compare the results on a national base against each other. It was not the profound target of this study to compare impressions of the individual sector groups against each other. The sectors of each country merely provide a somewhat holistic view on opinions on the subject inside the individual countries.

5.3 Limitations

In this paragraph, limitations made to the usage of the available research data are being mentioned. As Kananen (2011) points out, sometimes the gathered research data exceed the information needed to answer the main research questions, which is often not noticed until the analysis phase. Here the researcher had the possibility to choose which data were necessary and meaningful to be presented since not all information had to be used. (Pp. 57.)

Although the whole structured interview, as presented in appendix 3, was conducted with all interviewees not all results were used in this study. Presenting all results of the interviews would have expanded the data far beyond answering the main research questions of this document, however, not providing any meaningful additional information. This issue was realized by the author in the analyzation phase of the research after all interviews had been already made. In order to keep the study comprehensive to the reader this additional information was left out. The first part of the interview: “1. General information on the organization” was used for comparison, documentation and validity purposes of the author only and was due to this not presented directly in the results. The third part: “3. Generalizing Facility Management” was almost completely left out due to the above mentioned reasons. Additionally, question 2.7 of part 2. “Facility Management” was left out, due to the same reasons. Only question number 3.7 with its additional questions (see appendix 3) were used, since it was considered to provide indispensable information.

5.4 Ethical procedures

Ethical issues were taken into consideration in all phases of the study. All participants were informed about the processes related to the research in order for them to decide whether they wanted to participate in the study or not. They were also notified, that all data was being recorded, and answers used as results by quotation in this document. Some respondents chose not to answer specific questions since they did not feel ethically comfortable in doing so. The author chose to use code names with direct answers in this document, in order for the reader not to focus on the individual who made a statement, but rather on the sector that it came from. This was also done in order to protect the reputation of the interviewees.

6 RESULTS

The outcomes of the research are presented in two ways: verbally by quoting interviewee's answers as well as by figures providing visual insight to close-ended questions. Findings on each theme are presented country-wise and resumed after each chapter.

The results part of this document is evidently more voluminous than the theoretical chapters since the quantity of the qualitative answers was extensive. The subject of study seemed difficult for even professionals in the field to address densely, whereby answers resulted in being broadly descriptive. It was of great importance to provide the reader of this document with multiple cited answers, in order to evidently show the complexity of the research subject. It was neither possible, nor sensible, to synthesize all answers since that would have manipulated the image of the findings. The following chapters show, that it is indisputable, that major variation in the perception of facility management, its terminology, focus areas and maturity level are evident and had, thus, to be described extensively.

6.1 Perception of facility management

Finland

The results indicated, that in Finland experts perceived facility management in similar ways. It was described as the management of real estate and core-business supporting functions that can vary in depth and service task range. It seemed to be strongly connected with the physical building itself and services concerning their maintenance as well as space development. Services focusing on the wellbeing and effectiveness of end-users, were mentioned as another point of concern in the Finnish definition of FM.

*“It’s all support functions that support facilitating the core business.”
(Academic, FI)*

“It is a holistic term which includes the development of spaces/premises, all organization of real estate services, organization of business property and user services.” (Service provider, FI)

*“Managed services to the users of the building or real estate.”
(Corporate, FI)*

“Different functions that have to do with business premises <...> and for me it is first and foremost managing services.” (Consultant, FI)

On the other hand, the service provider sector pointed out, that facility management in Finland is often considered as only a subsidiary focus area of the Finnish term “kiinteistöjohtaminen” (real estate management):

“It is kiinteistöjohtamista (real-estate management). Subsidiary terms of kiinteistöjohtaminen (real-estate management) are for example property management, asset management, portfolio management and soft aspects like toimitilajohtaminen.” (Service provider, FI)

Germany

In Germany, facility management was generally perceived as a tool for coordinating various technical and commercial support functions of an organization and its property at a managerial level. It has the superior task of providing an organization with the biggest productivity and monetary vantage possible. This would include the management and design of offices, employee spaces and build properties. Processes related to the issues mentioned were to be developed and managed by facility management. It was also described as being a scientific field of its own. The results showed, that the topic was perceived similarly but described in different ways.

*“It is an organizational science. It’s about of course organizing facilities and <...> organizing facilities is operating the infrastructure, finance and assets and managing people, place and process.”
(Academic, DE)*

“For me three things, that is for once management method, then it is a science and it is of course the doing, the optimization of processes. No doubt a science, the topic exists in Germany since 20 years, from the beginning with the practical doing it has developed a science that deals with facility management in a very theoretical way and tries to develop it further.” (Association, DE)

“Facility Management is the organization and the management of the non-core business processes, although there are both management activities as well as facility security activities to be witnessed. This means that the Facility Management of an organization is there to add the highest value possible to the core business.” (Service provider, DE)

“Facility management is the discipline, the practice of supplying an organization with its needs for build space and workplaces <...> and associated services. The purpose is to increase the productivity of the core business.” (Consultant, DE)

On the other hand, the German corporate side evaluated the term as being more of an operational service, focusing on providing actual technical issues and caretaking of a property, rather than it being a management discipline. It, however, was supposed to have part in the commercial side of a client and provide services in that area if required:

“FM is more than just handling facilities themselves. We use it as an overall description for the technical part mainly. This is all the structures and activities around the technical parts as well as the commercial site. FM is basically still very much technically-oriented, with things like maintenance, technical services and all other things in that category, but with some commercial services to manage for example accounting topics, issuing maintenance services, invoicing etc.” (Corporate, DE)

UK

In the UK, the focus of facility management was seen in three different ways, which showed obscurity even between experts in the country. Yet, from all representatives' answers, the main commonality described in the results was that in the UK FM is strongly seen as a management method. It is used to control the proper operations of business supporting activities to enable an organization to function in its core business, rather than FM performing actual services on its own.

The academic sector believed strongly in the international standard definition of FM and described the main focus areas around it:

“Organizations of all kinds make sure that their facilities and the processes that are involved in managing those facilities actually do meet their strategic objectives. So it’s very much driven by the demands in organizations. But the European definition is one which <...> should be the way in which now everybody in Europe thinks about Facility Management.” (Academic, UK)

On the other hand, the service provider and consultancy sector felt, that the focus of FM was considering only **one real-estate** and the management of operational services rather than it involving a whole portfolio of properties.

“Management of a single building. Managing hard and soft services of a building. The hard services around the emendations, the building, controls and so on and then the soft services around catering, reception and security etc. In other words all of the services required to manage the building.” (Service provider, UK)

“Facility Management is managing a build environment.” (Consultant, UK)

From the EuroFM consultancy point of view though, to which the association agrees to, the focus of FM lies in the coordination and handling of single individual operations that are important for a business to work properly but are not vital to the successful outcome of a company’s main operation.

“Facility Management is to manage a particular discipline in non-core activity so <...> only providing one service.” (Euro FM consultant, UK)

“Management of a non-core activity within an organization.” (Association, UK)

In summary it could be said that the definitions of facility management of the experts in Finland, Germany and UK were similar but not equal. It seemed that there was no one precise definition, wording or focus of the profession of FM.

6.2 Understanding the terminology

The question of which term should be used of the FM industry or which term described the profession the most accurately split even experts' opinions apart. FIGURE 1 shows that amongst the three target countries' opinions were quite diverse. Because there was a difference in meaning for some people the term could be said not to be completely standardized.

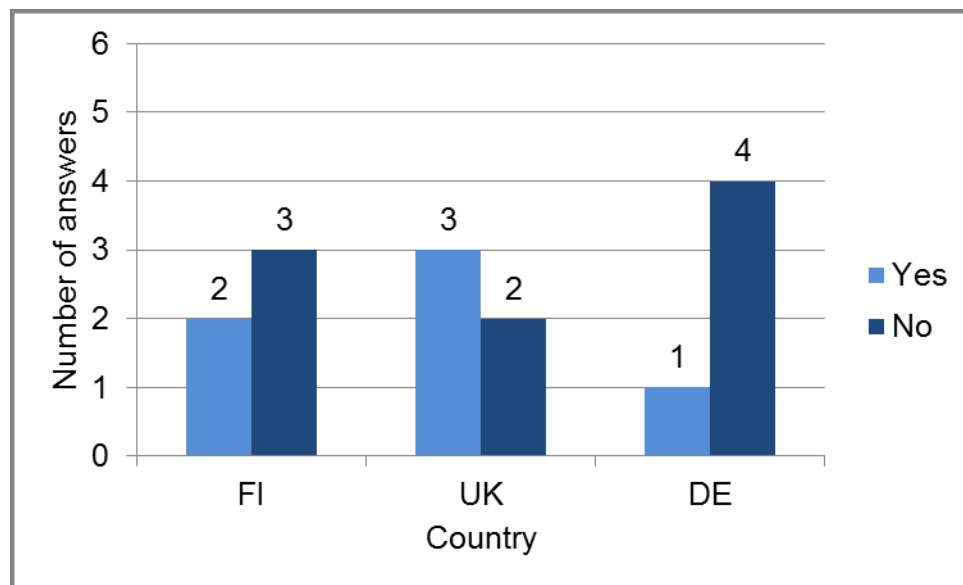


FIGURE 3. Is there a difference between facility management and facilities management?

Finland

The general opinion of the Finnish sample group was that there was no major difference between the two terms. Yet, the academic and the associations' point of view was that there were small differences in-between context and meaning of these two terms. Also here split opinions occurred.

“Facility management has a narrow scope for a defined facility and it is more concrete. Facilities management can also include more intense things like services.” (Academic, FI)

“Facility management is a broader term that covers a larger amount of work assignments. Facilities management is a more condensed term than facility management with a specific function.” (Association, FI)

Germany

The German experts did not see any significant difference between the two terms. The academic point of view was that it was only a matter of the heritage of the word and thus did not interfere with the content of it:

“Facility management is the US term and facilities management is the British.” (Academic, DE)

Still, one distinction in the alignment of these two terms was made from the German corporate side. The focus of facility management was broader and covered both technical and commercial services provided for a client whereas the focus of facilities managements was only on providing strictly technical operations:

“I would describe facilities management as having a more technical background so that it is mainly taking care of technical installation really. Facility management is more global and includes both technical maintenance as well as commercial services.” (Corporate, DE)

UK

In the United Kingdom, the part taking professionals agreed that there were significant differences between the two terms.

The results showed that facility management was perceived as a more narrow scoped profession focusing majorly on taking care of one build property with services devoting to the whole life-cycle of a building.

“Facility management is a term that is used more on the continent and has to do with the management of buildings, infrastructure and assets.” (Academic, UK)

“Facility management is the management of a single building.” (Service provider, UK)

“They are quite significantly different. Facility management is when a facility is regarded as the built envelope<...> so the entire building is the facility.” (Consultant, UK)

Yet, the results in the UK sample group also revealed conflicting opinions, for example that there was no substantial distinction between the two terms but rather a conceptual difference since facilities management was considered to be only the plural of facility management. Thus facility management should be used when talking about the management of only one supporting service:

“No distinction! It’s the same whether you call it facility management or facilities management you are just talking about the plural. Facility management is around one service. People are not clear on the term. They use facility management and facilities management in the same context.” (EuroFM Consultant, UK)

Facilities management was also seen as having a wider range of services offered to clients than facility management and varies depending on customer needs. These services are to be managed in accordance with their main target which is supporting the main business of an organization.

“Facilities management is an organizational discipline and management discipline that focuses on the people and process aspects of the field.” (Academic, UK)

“Facilities management is the management of an industry with a wider range of services. It encompasses additional service lines like consultancy, energy, project management or real estate.” (Service provider, UK)

“Facilities management is the range of services that make up the scope or all extent. That’s supporting an enterprise with whatever support services it thinks are required. So it’s not property management, it’s not building management but it is services that support the enterprise. That can include the build environment, but it’s not the main focus of it.” (Consultant, UK)

“Facilities management is providing non-core activities to a company and more than one service.” (Euro FM Consultant, UK)

According to the results of all target countries, it was clear that the terms facility management and facilities management seemed to have only slight differences in meaning to the participants of Finland and Germany. One term is perceived as either broader or narrower than the other.

However, this emphasized the lack of unity in the two countries. The terms were said to be also used randomly by people in both nations. In the UK, the terms were perceived as significantly different even though when looking at the answers they greatly resembled the ones of Finland and Germany since they explained that facility management covered a narrower scope of services and built spaces than facilities management. Yet, it seemed that the difference had more impact on the use of language in the UK since the terms are used more carefully to explain either the plural or singular of the subject.

For this issue the UK academic sector made a statement already during the interview:

“There is a difference as I see it between the way in which the field is addressed and practiced in Germany and Finland to the way in which we try to address it in the UK in the organizations that we work with. But what’s important now in the European setting is that we all are talking about the same thing when we talk about facility or facilities management.” (Academic, UK)

6.2.1 Use of the term facility management

Even the usage of the two terms was unequally split in the three countries. As the figure shows, facility management is most commonly used in both Finland and Germany whereas the term is not used commonly in the UK. Here facilities management was described to be the more used expression.

However, in non-native English speaking countries, correlative and synonymous descriptive terms are used for the whole FM profession or parts of it.

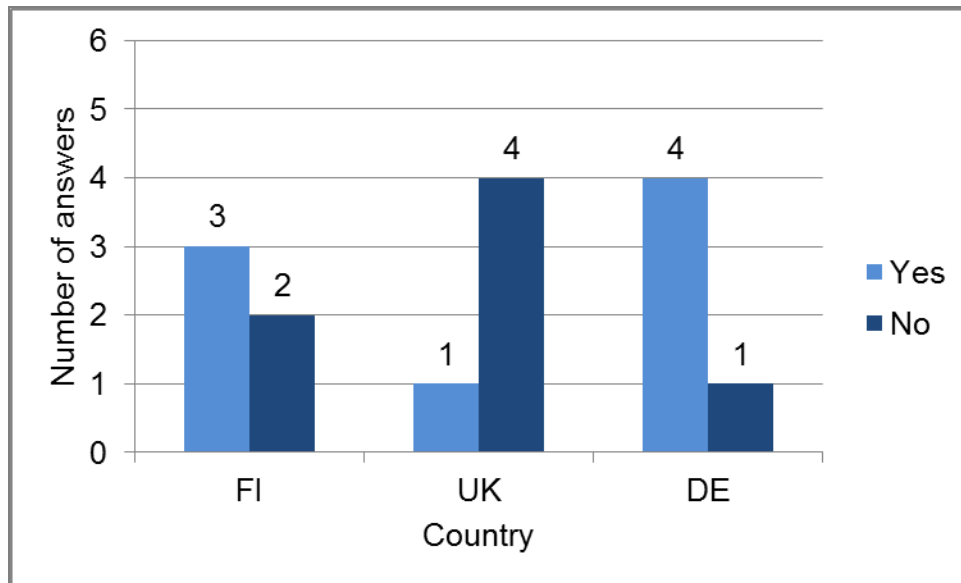


FIGURE 4. Is the term facility management commonly used in your country?

The representative of the association sector in Finland was confident that facility management professionals in the country are, nevertheless, familiar with the international term:

*“People working in the field are familiar with the term though.”
(Association, FI)*

Even though the term seemed to be used by large businesses operating in Germany and the people working for them, the public sector of the country appeared to have their difficulties with the foreign word:

*“In professional circles very well known, accepted. If talking about the broad public or even about economic decision makers, they don’t necessarily know yet what facility management is all about.”
(Association, DE)*

6.2.2 Use of an equivalent term

The following figure shows clearly that the term facility management was not the only term used for the profession or the industry of facility management. In each of the three target countries some other term was used simultaneously or even more frequently than the term submitted by the European Standard.

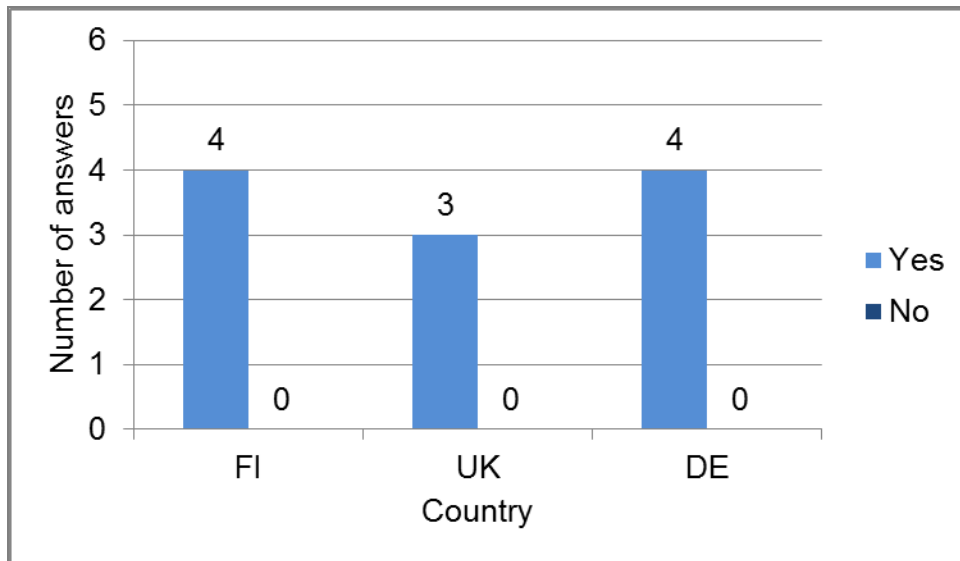


FIGURE 5. Is there an equivalent term used?

Finland

The Finnish participants mentioned seven terms that were used instead of facility management. Four of those were the Finnish translative name used for FM:

”Facilities management, toimitilajohtaminen, toimitilapalveluiden johtaminen, tilajohtaminen and kiinteistöjohtaminen of which toimitilajohtaminen is a subsidiary term of.” (Service provider, FI)

”Toimitilajohtaminen.” (Association, FI)

For the Academic and corporate sector, the correlative term had more to do with running infrastructural issues concerning properties:

”The term real estate management is also used a lot in Finland.” (Academic, FI)

”Corporate real estate management.” (Corporate, FI)

Germany

In the German sample group, both the academic and association sector stated, that the German translation of FM is used frequently since it seemed that the international term is not quite clear to all and harder to understand which makes it difficult to use:

“Big companies use FM, local authorities use Gebäudemanagement.” (Academic, DE)

“In Germany very often still Gebäudemanagement. That is not proper/ legit, not right but in the common comprehension when talking about Gebäudemanagement it is more understandable than facility management <...> because the term is completely unknown.” (Association, DE)

Some other misinterpreted terms used for the business, were stated by the German service sector and corporate side:

*“**Facility services** is used as an equivalent term but in my opinion it has a different meaning than facility management. Facility services should be used when talking about operational tasks.” (Service provider, DE)*

*“It depends how one defines facility management. Partly **janitorial services** are called facility management.” (Corporate, DE)*

“When real estate focused companies talk to one another about the subject of FM it is usually focusing on technical issues and janitorial services.” (Corporate, DE)

UK

For the United Kingdom, the answers stated resembled each other throughout and participants agreed that facilities management was the term that is mostly used for the profession:

“Facilities management.” (Academic, service provider, consultant, association, UK)

The gathered answers above display clearly, that the opinions of the three research target countries deviated from each other, but it also seemed, that there were further disagreements amongst the professionals in the individual countries themselves. Even though English is nowadays classified as a world language the linguistic barriers conclusively seemed to have an impact on the terminology of the FM profession whereby translated or otherwise descriptive terms have come to use.

The UK academic sector pointed out another important issue, that is related to the aspect of the use of terminology, since even if the same terms are used in different countries the understanding and definitions behind them often vary vastly. Thus, communication in the field on an international level might in some cases pose problems, if dialogue partners are not aware of these fine disparities in the content of some terms.

“The equivalent term is facilities management but there is still that question about whether it’s just a matter of terminology or if there is a real difference.” (Academic, UK)

“The German speaking world would always talk about facility management. They will always be giving a prominent to the hard aspects of FM. The management of buildings and the management of assets seem to be core rather than taking an organizational perspective from it.” (Academic, UK)

“I have to adjust my mindset, my language and things that I talk about in recognition that things are different in Europe. There is a different context, a different culture in those countries that needs to be recognized because there is no one formula for the field. It has to respond to local conditions. And that includes the language and also the way in which FM is thought about in those particular countries.” (Academic, UK)

6.2.3 Uniting facility management in Europe

The next figure shows that most participants did believe in a united facility management industry, profession and usage of terminology in Europe.

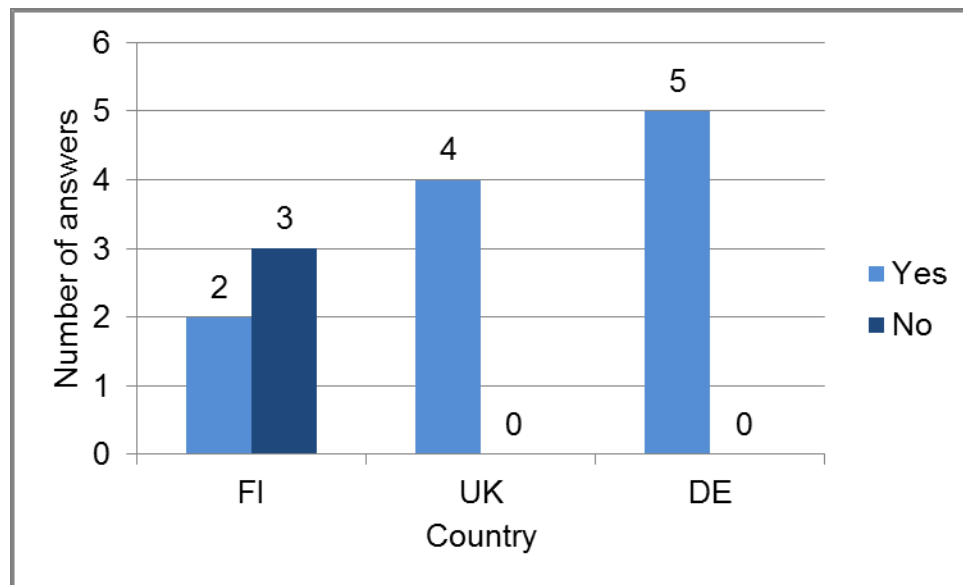


FIGURE 6. Can facility management be united throughout Europe?

Finland

Finland was the only country from the sample group that was less convinced of the idea of a united facility management. The academic, consulting and association sector in Finland did not believe, that neither the industry, nor the profession of facility management will be seen from the same perspectives in the future. They stated, that there are too many cultural and geographical differences between countries in Europe, which will interfere with the plan.

“The terminology can be united but still there will be local and national differences and also cultural differences. So the focus areas cannot be united. The general perception can become more common but the operations will always be a little different.” (Academic, FI)

“There are many cultural differences and also the real estate market development in the various European countries is at very different stages.” (Consultant, FI)

“Different cultures, circumstances, ways of operating, morals. So I don’t believe that at least during my lifetime there will be any major transformations.” (Association, FI)

Yet, the service provider and corporate side had a more positive attitude towards the issue, and believed that there would be enough requisition for unified models since organizations and markets operate more and more globally these days.

“Because there has been the desire to create integrated models and the European ministries council addresses these kinds of things.” (Service provider, FI)

“Service providers are global nowadays and I’m optimistic that this will be the reason why this is going to unify the terminology and understanding. European Union directives will be unified.” (Corporate, FI)

Germany

All participants from the German sample group agreed, that facility management could be, at least to some extent and some areas, united throughout Europe and even globally. However, also here the results displayed, that experts have diverged opinions on why it would be possible and in which areas of FM. It was assumed by three interviewees, that the European alignment and integration would have great impact on the unification since FM has already, at least in Europe, similar requirements. Generally the answers represented the idea, that as history has shown, all ways of operating, trends and standards have been copied throughout Europe at some point in time, and thus, that would happen also with facility management.

“The requirements are very similar across Europe at least across central and western Europe. They might use different terms but basically they share the same values and understanding. This is true also for a global basis.” (Academic, DE)

“I think it simply correlates with the European alignment and integration.” (Service provider, DE)

“The European integration will be a factor.” (Consultant, DE)

The corporate and association sectors on the other hand believed, that especially the FM market would prove difficult to be unified, due to very differing focus areas, which could be explained by distinctions in local requirements of countries. These issues related to local behaviors and conditions would affect also other areas of FM. This prevents facility management from being completely united, even though, many areas will probably be seen and done equally.

“Yes but only partially. The issue of standardizing market understanding will be difficult since markets still have fundamentally different focus areas.” (Corporate, DE)

“There will be alignment on the issue. There will still always be the subject of local markets, local behavior and other issues related to local conditions and they cannot be erased completely. But generally speaking it will be standardized.” (Association, DE)

UK

The results from the participants in the UK indicated, that almost all sectors agreed, that at least to some extent the profession and industry of FM will be more unified in the future. The Academic point of view was, that the terminology will probably be united. Yet, it was not presumable, that the market understanding would be united. It had not changed much before due to too big differences in the understanding of the market, even though, the growing industry of FM will always try to achieve that.

“Certainly I hope so. Much more the terminology I guess, the perception still might take time to change. Market understanding because the markets are to me still quite separate markets throughout Europe with a different kind of understanding so that’s not going to move very easily and has not moved very easily.” (Academic, UK)

“The industry will always be looking to do that because they are always looking for a bigger market. So why wouldn’t you want a bigger European market?” (Academic, UK)

The consultant and association sector agreed, that through international cooperation between organizations in Europe, best practices and information in the field will be adopted and shared, and thus, new united ways of operating will evolve.

“Internationally even not just Europe. Because of communications and exchange of information and best practice will be on the set.” (Consultant, UK)

“Each country will learn best practice from each other. More companies are looking for global and European solutions and there is bound to be a merging of the model.” (Association, UK)

The EuroFM consultant suggested, that commonality could be achieved only if the European Standard was promoted and taken into use more throughout European organizations:

“It will be difficult. It needs standards to be adopted across Europe. If it is adopted and organizations use it as a basis of learning in order to get the terminology. Then we will get a commonality across Europe.” (EuroFM Consultant, UK)

The answer of the service provider sector is not shown in the figure, since it was elusive to analyze and no clear tendency towards a “yes” or “no” answer could be drawn. The answers of the service sector showed, however, that some parts of FM like perception, terminology, market understanding and focus areas could possibly be united in Europe to some extent, and due to international client demands, already have been. Clients demand to get the same service they got in one country to have delivered in the same framework in another country, yet, with local variations. It is pointed out, that a global standard cannot take into consideration these local and cultural differences between nations, and should thus, be rather viewed as a framework that allows distinctions in service delivery.

“If I look FM perception and terminology and market understanding and focus areas I would say yes.” (Service provider, UK)

“In terms of perception, market understanding and focus areas it can be united. I think there are some bigger challenges around that local and cultural difference.” (Service provider, UK)

“And now clients are procuring what we would be calling a master service agreement. In other words that’s a framework. That would be applied globally but would allow local variations. So that shift to move from a global standard to a global framework which allows a shift of local variation.” (Service provider, UK)

“I think there will be always differences in country's execution. One size does not fit all.” (Service provider, UK)

The UK and German sample groups were more positive about uniting facility management in Europe than Finland. Participants from the Finnish sample group saw too many hindering obstacles in the field, due to local and cultural differences between European countries. German professionals agreed to the existence of local conditions, but did not perceive them as problematic. The local conditions and cultural differences were said to always stay evident, whereby a greater sense of flexibility would have to be accepted in the field.

The following figure visualizes how likely the professionals thought unification could happen and what should be done to promote the issue.

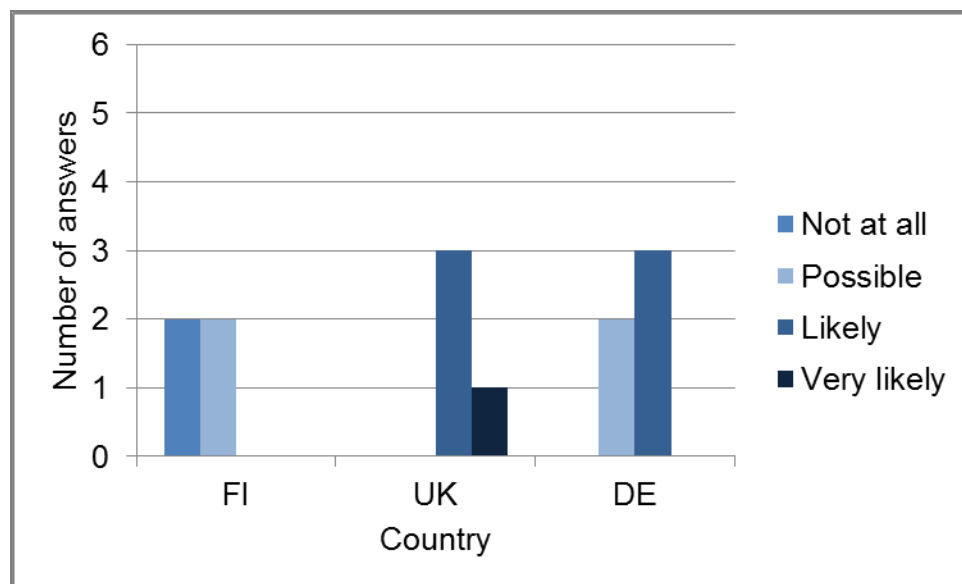


FIGURE 7. How likely will facility management be united throughout Europe?

Finland

The academic and association sector in Finland did not anticipate changes happening in the near future, and thus, no measures were considered important to be taken. The service provider and corporate sector though, perceived it as possible, through growing cooperation between organizations operating in the field as well as through academic collaboration between international universities. Also the globalization was suggested to have its input on the field in a positive matter, since international organizations will at least to some extent unify the terminology and understanding. Thus, it could be assumed, that the European directives will have to be unified.

“The operators in the industry have to invest in the development of the cooperation and that kind of development work.” (Service provider, FI)

“It will happen on its own since the world gets more global. Add student exchange of facility management and cooperation projects between universities of applied sciences. The users of this branch are young people and they are more international so the tools and working environment they use help to develop FM.” (Corporate, FI)

Germany

Results from German professionals suggested, that it would be likely, that facility management will develop further towards being standardized in Europe. The answers showed disparities in the measures that should be taken for achieving unification. Increasing European integration in all fields, mutual learning and sharing of information were the most mentioned methods, that would lead to collective development. It was also proposed, that more international exchange of business activities and cooperation should occur. The globalization of organizational activities will demand common understanding, processes and service levels however taking into consideration local conditions. This would mean, that space for flexibility would have to be left.

“We have to take into account that FM by definition is a local business. The only reason why it would make sense to have a common understanding are all the international organizations which have to run according to corporate standards on the worldwide basis.” (Academic, DE)

“We evolve collectively and towards each other.” (Service provider, DE)

“Learning through exchange of business activities will be important and improve the issue.” (Association, DE)

Promotion and further development of the European Standard was also seen as an important factor. Specific areas of the Standard, such as fixed service levels and legal provisions should be developed, since they would ensure consistent performance. However, legal parameters might prove difficult to be standardized, due to national differences in statutory regulations.

“Further promotion and development of standards since there is still capability for that.” (Corporate, DE)

“Service levels can be standardized which would ensure uniform performance.” (Corporate, DE)

“The standardization of legal provisions will have an impact.” (Association, DE)

In order to unite facility management throughout Europe, the consultant and association sectors suggested, that also the educational side should be included since today’s students form the base of professionals in the field in the future.

“Internationalization of education. More exchange of international experiences and that knowledge has to be integrated into the education of FM.” (Consultant, DE)

“More exchange on the subject on an educational level.” (Association, DE)

UK

The results showed, that the academic, EuroFM consultancy and association sector in the UK agreed, that it seems likely that facility management would be united, at least to some extent throughout Europe. The participants were, however, disunited about the measures that should be taken in order to achieve the set goal.

The consultant sector saw it as a matter of natural development of the industry which would be lead by the supply and demand of future services as well as economic and political issues. Thus, there is no need for any specific measures to be taken.

“It will happen as a natural development. I don’t think anybody needs to take any measures specifically to make it happen. It’s a pure supply and demand issue and an economic and political one. It’s not something the market can engineer.” (Consultant, UK)

The academic, EuroFM consultant and association sector believed, that each country will learn best practice from each other through more active communication and exchange of international information. Universities should start teaching standards as well as create an international FM educational standard, whereby a common platform could be created.

“More common learning across barriers.” (Academic, UK)

“The European standard should be picked up by universities. It should be taught and it should be further developed.” (EuroFM consultant, UK)

“There should be greater cooperation within Europe on best practice and there should be development of a European education standard.” (Association, UK)

Some on the other hand argued, whether facility management should be united at all, due to too many cultural and local differences that affect organizational behavior, education and service requirements that cannot and should not be dispersed.

“One size does not fit all. The customer decides what they want and FM has to go along. It depends always on the culture of the country.” (Service provider, UK)

“The subject matter is too wide and the cultural differences are big, so it is not possible to standardize everything. FM is not a profession as such, as many want it to be, where there is only one skill set to learn. It is a managing training and I don’t think all education should be standardized since differences are needed.” (Consultant, UK)

“We need to be careful in moving forward towards a united European market and approach. It is not helpful to see FM as a market in terms of the need to customize the service to the organization and <...> it’s certain that you need to be sensitive to local conditions and to act locally as much as thinking on a European basis.” (Academic, UK)

“Big corporates want the same service wherever they are in Europe. There should be greater recognition of the local conditions there and certainly social sustainability as well as the environmental issues about local sourcing and things. I don’t hear enough about that in the arguments for a single market.” (Academic, UK)

6.3 Facility management companies

The Interviewees of all the three countries said that facility management companies exist but could not clearly define what they provide.

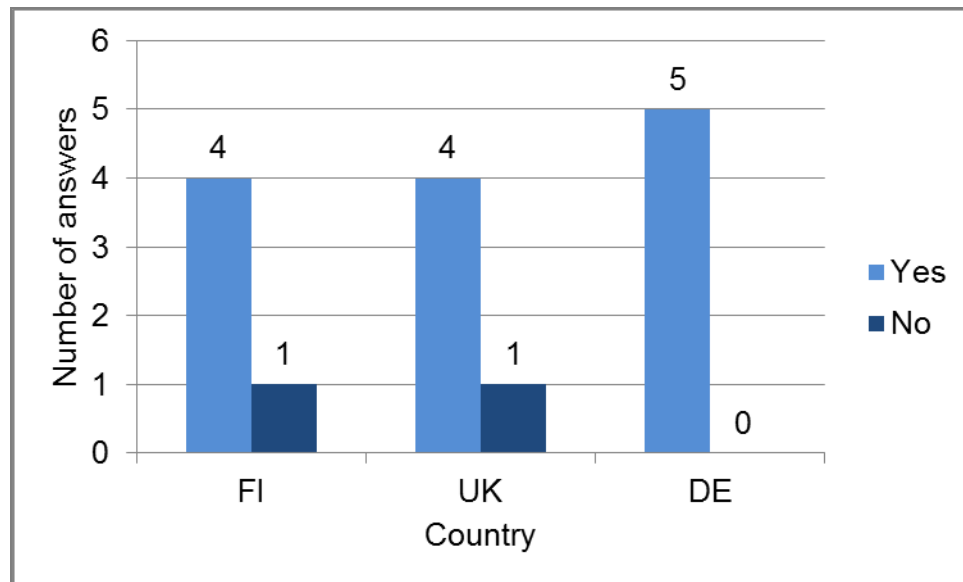


FIGURE 8. Do facility management companies exist?

Finland

The results showed that from the Finnish point of view, facility management companies did exist. They were said to provide non-core services that add operational value to the end-users of client organizations.

“Because there are like more and more service providers in the field and in the industry.” (Academic, FI)

“Companies that clearly market themselves with the words facility management or facilities management services offering company.” (Service provider, FI)

“Some of them, but not very many. If I think about a facility management company I think of a company that does only the management and outsources all other services.” (Corporate, FI)

“They provide services that support the core business of a company.” (Association, FI)

The Finnish consultancy sector yet did not agree with the other experts' opinions since they believed that FM industry is divided into multiple players who all have their own tasks. It was stated that some only provide services and some only coordinate them without delivering services themselves:

“There are companies who produce services and there are management companies, there is a difference there.” (Consultant, FI)

Germany

As for the FM field in Germany all participants agreed that facility management companies do exist, and the term is commonly understood and accepted in the industry.

“Because the market accepts companies who name themselves this way even though these companies may not conform to a strict definition like EN 15221. I think that we should not be so strict with the theoretical definition.” (Consultant, DE)

“If I am asked for a facility management company I associate a precise perception of this company.” (Association, DE)

They viewed facility management companies equally as organizations that provide the management of a full range of non-core supporting services to client organization whilst also covering the management of real-estate and service operations.

*“It’s not only the services it is also the management of facilities.”
(Academic, DE)*

“I assume that because there are companies, facility management companies, who provide the whole facility management as a full service provider.” (Association, DE)

“A FM Company for me is basically a service deliverer in the areas of technical and commercial maintenance of a building and operational management.” (Corporate, DE)

“A facility management company is a company that provides non-core supporting services and they also cover managerial themes. A facility management company covers multiple tasks in different areas and to some extent these facility management activities can be fulfilled by one or many different companies. Also consulting services that focus on optimizing non-core processes are included.” (Service provider, DE)

The term was said to be used wrongly in the field since the organizations that provide only operational services market themselves as facility management companies even though the term facility management service provider would describe them more accurately. The term and its meaning were said to be used and changed by people to their own benefit which could be seen as a major reason for the variety of definitions and perspectives in the field.

“Most of them which call themselves a facility management company are facility service providers.” (Academic, DE)

“The subject of facility management is constantly enlarging and the definition of the term invigorating. Essential market players are expanding the term and using it for their benefit.” (Corporate, DE)

“Among internal service contractors the topic is less addressed with FM companies but more with the term internal service provider.” (Association, DE)

*“A service provider who produces only cleaning services should not be considered directly as a facility management company. It’s then moreover a cleaning company or a facility services company.”
(Service provider, DE)*

UK

According to the results, most experts from the sample group in the UK did agree that facility management companies in some variation do exist. The consultant sector simply explained the reason for their existence as follows: “There are many companies in the UK that call themselves facility management companies” (Consultant, UK). Yet, he was not able to give a detailed characterization of such a company. Furthermore, it seemed that the opinions about what these companies provide were sectioned into two categories as far as the professionals from the UK were concerned: organizations that either provide services at a strategic, tactical or operational level or companies that offer a whole range of non-core supporting services instead of just one single service.

“Companies whose sole purpose is to provide services to clients to allow them to focus on their core business and we take away all the services to allow them to operate.” (Service provider, UK)

*“Yes if in the UK we can say facilities management companies, then yes they do exist. A company who provides services in strategic, tactical or operational terms around facilities management.”
(Association, UK)*

It was yet again pointed out that also here national terminology would be important to keep in mind since as seen in the previous results, facilities management was understood as the plural of facility management, which had little to do with the actual content of the word:

“When a company outsources their non-core activities they can do it on one or two ways: they can go to a facility management company and buy individual services or they can go to a facilities management company and buy the whole bundle of services. The terms are mixed up and used wrongly, it is not clear to people, they just want somebody to provide their non-core services.” (EuroFM Consultant, UK)

The academic sector in the UK stated that many companies that provide only operational services too often market themselves as facility management companies even though it is very clear, especially according to the distinctions made in the European standard, that facility management is a management discipline practiced either within an organization or by an outsourced representative company.

“There are companies that believe that their business is facility management. There is a separation in the European standard between the operational delivery of facility services and the field of facilities management. That shows those people that think it’s the operational delivery of services, that they are not a facilities management company and that they deliver facility services. Facilities management is practiced by managers within organizations or it is representing organizations.” (Academic, UK)

To the question whether the term is appropriate enough for those companies the responses were split. The sample group in Finland and Germany would not agree that the term suits all companies in the field whereas the UK participants accept the term.

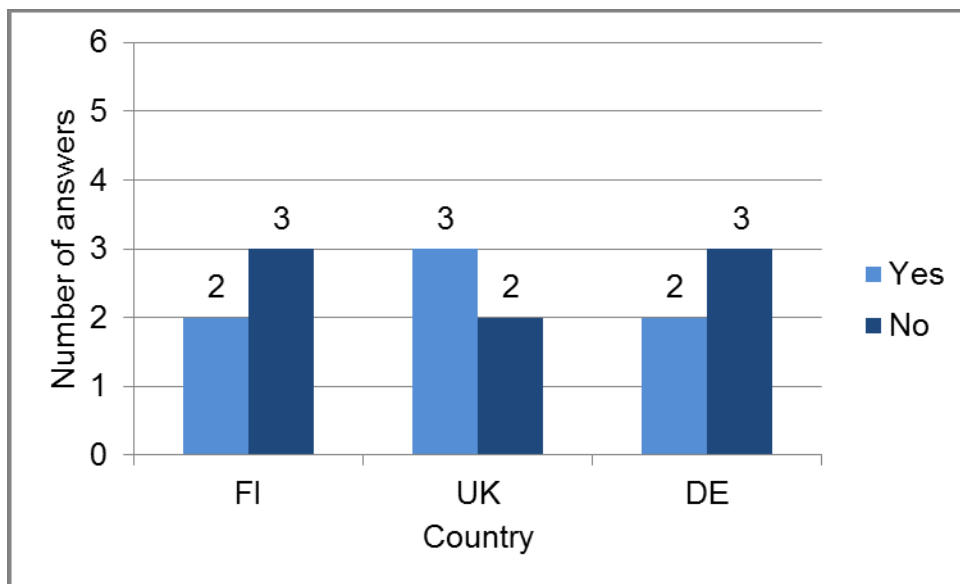


FIGURE 9. Is the term facility management company appropriate?

Finland

From the service provider and consultancy point of view in Finland the term facility management company is not correct since they believed that the industry is separated into several players, who all have their own area of expertise and product range they offer to clients. The FM industry seemed, according to the results, be divided into service producers, service buyers and service managers.

"There are three different classifications of companies in the FM industry: purely management companies like for example Ovenia, Cordel, then companies who provide as well as manage services like for example ISS, Coor and L&T and thirdly only single service providers like small cleaning and security companies." (Service provider, FI)

"It depends on the part/role/capacity how the company is involved in facility management: are they a service provider, a service buyer or a service manager." (Consultant, FI)

The academic sector pointed out that facility management is often just one part of the service portfolio of an organization in the FM industry and that the operation scale of a company could exceed the actual duties of facility management. It was also pointed out by the association sector, that the foreign terms cause misunderstandings in Finland since they are not well enough known amongst people. Organisations in the FM industry in Finland should use precise Finnish terms to market their companies. Often facility management companies are thus understood as single service providers only.

Experts were accordingly, if their answer was that facility management companies do exist, asked to recite organizations that in their opinion represented the category best. Organisations mentioned the most by the Finnish participants were big total service providers like SOL, Sodexo, ISS and Coor. Other companies mentioned additionally were Cordel, L&T, Orion, etc.

Germany

The results from the German sample group described that the experts mostly perceived the term facility management appropriate for some companies but certainly not all. It depended greatly on the service portfolio, company size and corporate structure whether a company deserves to use the term. Yet, there were said to be players on the market who use the term inappropriately, which causes delusive understanding of facility management companies. If a company provides mainly facility management sub-activities like for example grounds keeping, cleaning and caretaking, but does not offer the organizational management of them, then it should not be called a FM company.

The FM industry seemed according to experts, be divided into management organizations and service providers.

“Unfortunately the term is used randomly on the market and used when spoken of both only the management and only the services.” (Service provider, DE)

“The term is appropriate but does not fit all companies.” (Consultant, DE)

Yet the association sector stated, that only full-range service providers offering the delivery of services, their management and other commercial services are to be considered FM companies:

“Well for me a facility management company, at least in Germany, are the big system providers and full-range suppliers. Those who really offer management and service at the same time.” (Association, DE)

The German sectors mentioned organizations like Hochtief, Gegenbauer, RGM, HSG Zander, Sodexo, Jones Lang LaSalle, Strabag, and Bilfinger Berger most often. Still the academic sector stated that companies like ISS, Johnson Controls, etc. are definitely not facility management companies.

UK

In the UK the interviewees felt that facilities management company would be an appropriate term for organizations, who offer bundles of services and management related to them, services in strategic management or consulting services in facilities management. Organisations offering only the delivery of one service or multiple services, without the managerial level, were considered as facility service companies. Nevertheless, respondents agreed that the term facilities management is often used incorrectly on the market to describe companies not belonging to the above mentioned categories.

“A facilities management company is a generally understood term and people know what that company will do, they might deliver it in different ways but that’s the nature and the maturity of the market. There are management suppliers, <...> and consultants who provide consultancy services in facilities management. A deliverer of a service, that would not be a facilities management company.”
(Association, UK)

“It’s appropriate for companies who offer a wide range of services but not for small companies offering just one service only.” (Consultant, UK)

The academic sector pointed out a totally different opinion to why the term would not be appropriate for most companies in the field. He stated that the term is used wrongly, because facilities management is more of a “strategic discipline within organizations” (Academic, UK) which is often produced by big accountants, management consultants or big property agents whose core business does not lie in facilities management. They have developed facilities management services as an extension of their main line of business. That is why these businesses should not be called FM Companies.

For the UK result showed, that organizations like Johnson Controls, ISS, CBRE represent facilities management companies the best. Other organizations mentioned were companies like Jones Lang La Salle, Hochtief, Sodexo, Circo, etc.

The general Impression drawn from the results in this chapter was that experts in all three target countries conceive something different under the term FM Company.

It seemed that there are three main categories of facility management companies: companies who either only provide management services, manage and produce services or manage and subcontract services. Yet, organizations only providing services, were generally considered as facility service or facilities services companies.

6.3.1 Skills and offerings of FM companies

Finland

Finnish respondents felt that facility management companies should have experience and know-how in multiple areas of the profession. The most common aspect between respondents' answers was, that the skills needed focus majorly on the organization and development of services, that attentively concentrate on the end-user needs. This would include the organization and development of different spaces available. It was seen as equally important that services were managed with the best know-how of the industry and to the most beneficial outcome for a client organization.

“Knowledge of service strategies, customer relationship management, management skills and service development skills.” (Academic, FI)

“Know-how in facility management, know-how on cost-effectiveness and quality in services, space organization and development skills, coordination and development skills of user-services and customer focused processes.” (Service provider, FI)

“The best know-how of the industry they are working in and the ability to develop the core business to the clients benefit.” (Association, FI)

The corporate and consultant sector agreed to the fact that the skill sets mentioned before are to be considered relevant, but thought that additional areas of knowledge were required. They believed that the focus should also lie on the constructed structures themselves. This would mean that companies working in the FM industry should have skills in the caretaking of the overall technical functionality and maintenance of a property, in order to assure faultless usage of it to tenants and guests.

It should also be a prevention method of expensive repair works in the future. The skills in life cycle management of a building were thus seen as very important as well.

“Knowledge to take care of the real estate itself <...>, understand the technical services and maintenance <...>, take care of the life cycle of the building <...> and manage construction project services to the owners.” (Corporate, FI)

“Knowledge of real-estate maintenance and an understanding of their client’s business idea.” (Consultant, FI)

Companies working in the field of facility management should offer, according to Finnish respondents’, services that allow an organization to work in its core business without having to deal with supporting functions. These supporting services should be provided in the most effective way and to the lowest price possible. Yet, also here based on the results, no clear definition of what these companies should offer was made. This can be reasoned due to different client requirements to whom FM companies should provide tailored services, rather than fixed service packages that are offered to all customers. This, as the respondents’ stated, would not benefit client’s real needs and would merely add unnecessary costs.

“It depends strongly on what the client actually needs and the services should be offered to them according to their requirements. They should always first do a customer inquiry on the real service needs and then provide those services as the customer wants them rather than offering a ready package of services to each customer.” (Service provider, FI)

“It is quite varied what they offer. Cost effective services.” (Consultant, FI)

The Finnish association sector though seemed to have a clearer perspective on what these companies should offer and stated them as follows:

“Cleaning, catering, security, real estate maintenance services and any kind of office services.” (Association, FI)

Germany

German respondents felt that facility management companies should have experience and know-how especially in different managerial areas related to controlling activities around real estate, services, assets, personnel and projects. However, the results showed that the opinions also on this subject were diverse. The academic sector expected management skills around the build environment like: real-estate finance, asset management, building life-circle management and building operations. This was related to the fact that in Germany detailed knowledge on technical issues are expected. It was clearly stated, that these organizations do not have to provide services themselves since they can provide the client with outsourced services. Nevertheless, they have to have the skill of organizing these services. Other important skills such as project management, knowledge of sustainability issues and construction works were additionally seen as necessary.

Also the corporate sector expected the skills and know-how of a facility management company to have a foremost technical and real estate maintenance focus. They were supposed to have knowledge about current DIN standards and the ability to work accordingly. Knowledge of the infrastructure and life-cycle of technical equipment as well as repair and maintenance were also counted in.

“Real-estate finance, asset management, building life-circle management, building operations. They should know how to organize services but they don’t have to produce the services themselves because they can outsource them. They don’t have to have the knowledge on how to perform separate services. Know-how on sustainability and project management skills. Knowledge of construction works.” (Academic, DE)

“First and foremost they have to have a technical focus and be acquainted with the current DIN standards and incorporate them. They have to have knowledge about the whole infrastructure of a building and the life-cycle of technical equipment. They have to cover also the subject of maintenance and repair services such as planning building works.” (Corporate, DE)

However, the service sector as well as the association sector on the other hand, expected mostly skills in service activities, process optimization and know-how on individual operational disciplines.

“Knowledge on technical service or maintenance, cleaning, housekeeping, gardening, these activities as well as organizing and managing interdisciplinary comprehensive services. Concurrently also knowing all the legal parameters and correspondingly knowing how to use them adequately.” (Service provider, DE)

“The companies should <...> be capable to analyze, optimize and improve all processes. They have to have the knowledge on the operational services like e.g. cleaning, security, building services engineering and things like that.” (Association, DE)

This is contradictory to the opinions of the academic sector, who clearly stated, that knowledge of individual disciplines and their performance was **not** vital know-how for a facility management company.

The consultancy sector thought that management skills in general and well founded management systems are the most important areas of know-how within a facility management company. Since FM is a people business, many respondents agreed that it is also essential for the companies to have customer focused service attitudes as well as skills in human resource management. This would require proven and defined processes in all their activities.

“First and foremost management skills and well founded management systems. Secondly a service attitude is needed.” (Consultant, DE)

“Human resource management is something a FM company should have. Facility management is, for a service industry, a very personnel focused industry.” (Association, DE)

“It is a people business so human resource management skills are important.” (Academic, DE)

According to the answers, commercial know-how was perceived as an additional skill of a facility management company but it did not seem as important as other skills mentioned before.

“Commercial services do also count to the skill set they have to have. They have to be able to do all kinds of accounting, billing of utility costs, etc.” (Corporate, DE)

“Appropriate commercial know-how is rather important too.” (Service provider, DE)

Yet again it was stated that it would be difficult to determine exactly what a facility management company would have to provide since it always depends on client requirements. Opinions on the service offerings of such companies varied between respondents. Nevertheless, all sectors agreed that they did not have to provide construction works.

“It always depends on which services a company that outsources facility management, wants to outsource.” (Service provider, DE)

The academic sector expected a facility management company to provide management services in real-estate finance, assets, building life-circles, building operations and project management.

The service and consultancy sector expected to get services all around the maintenance of a property as well as all around the organization of non-core processes. The management of classical operational services like maintenance, gardening, housekeeping, etc. that fall into the category of property management could be expected. Also administrative tasks like accounting, utilities statements, budget preparations, wage accounting, marketing activities and exhibition management could be expected.

The corporate sector agreed to the former but additionally expected assistance in all technical issues such as maintenance of technical construction, maintenance planning, budgeting, optimization and modernization. Both the academic and service provider sectors agreed upon the fact, that a FM company does not have to produce these operational services by itself since they can be outsourced.

The association sector expected additionally a FM company to consult the client in which services it would need and would accordingly perform the implementation. Unlike the other sectors, the association sector expected the company also to perform and manage these services itself.

UK

Considering the skill set a facility management or a facilities management company, as it is called in the UK, has to obtain, the professionals had opposite opinions. The academic sector explained that many companies working in the field of FM, calling themselves facilities management companies, have their core strength in operational and technical knowledge as well as service delivery. Yet, many of these companies lack customer orientation. They offer full-range service packages to their customers without having familiarized themselves with the core-business or business field of the client, and thus, are not able to provide the services actually required by the client. These ready service packages are said to be easier to sell, but seem on the other hand, to make it more difficult for customers. Organizations described above were stated not to be considered facilities management companies.

Two sectors stated that actual facilities management companies should have defined strategic management skills in order to provide the right service solutions and development ideas for customers. According to the academic sector, they don't have to have knowledge of the actual operational services or their delivery, and they definitely do not provide these services themselves. Thus, only skills in outsourcing are vital. They should also have knowledge on their customers' strategic visions in order to provide solutions on a tactical level.

*“So important skills are skills in managing quality, value and risk, procurement skills, change management skills and they are all management disciplines that are needed in those companies which would be recognized more as a facilities management company.”
(Academic, UK)*

“We need strong management capabilities too. Because it's not really about facilities it's about management and that's becoming more and more important to FM organizations.” (Service provider, UK)

On the contrary, the four other sectors in the UK sample group expected these companies to have knowledge in a range of individual operational services, their delivery and management in such a way that also issues such as sustainability and legal parameters of the industry were covered.

“Catering, cleaning, and security we need to have well defined and clearly articulated products and processes around how we can deliver those services.” (Service provider, UK)

“It’s not a single service they have to have skills in but rather it would be a whole range of services like electrical maintenance, cleaning, security, reception, mail room etc.” (Consultant, UK)

“Knowing your industry from a regulatory and sustainability point of view is important.” (EuroFM consultant, UK)

“For example in cleaning, mechanical and electrical maintenance you would expect them to have a good knowledge and experience within those areas.” (Association, UK)

However, each customer would decide what the actual non-core services needed for their organization would be and would expect facilities management companies to provide them accordingly:

“The client dictates what is non-core to their business and then they expect the facilities management company to have knowledge and expertise in that area.” (Association, UK)

All sectors agreed that a facilities management company has to have profound know-how of the industry and its clients. Also human resource management was said to be a skill needed by FM companies, which would include the continuous development of personnel.

“We need to be experts in the field we operate.” (Service provider, UK)

“I think they have to be experts in their field. (EuroFM consultant, UK)

“They should have a good general experience about client’s requirements. They should be investing in continuing professional development for their people.” (Association, UK)

Results showed that facilities managers are not directly involved in the construction process of a building but would merely be working together with the management of an organization, planning the tactical and strategic meanings of the building for the company and its end users in the future. Knowledge in construction and real estate management were thus seen as important, however, too often neglected skills.

It could be said that the issue of what a facilities management company actually offers was unclear to the experts in the UK. It was said to vary strongly upon client expectations and requirements. Since services of any kind are not tangible products, it seemed difficult to uncover what these companies should or do provide. Nevertheless, the academic sector pointed out that whatever a facilities management company offers to customers, it has to be transparent and understandable. It was said to be crucial that a FM company adapts to the organizational culture of the host organization and provides the services to customers that it promised.

“Services aren’t commodities in the same way as you buy things buy manufactured objects of the shelf. They should offer the expertise, the competences and well-developed processes.” (Academic, UK)

“It depends on the company. They need to offer all the skills and knowledge around the discipline they are providing. They have to come up with service management solutions.” (EuroFM consultant, UK)

“They should offer the resources and expertise to deliver specification. It always depends on what the client needs and wants. All of that can be considered facilities management.” (Association, UK)

The service provider and consultancy sector, however, seemed to have a clearer impressions on what they expected of facilities management companies. They ought to deliver high quality integrated services through well managed staff and contracts.

“The main aim of an outsourced organization is to have high quality service delivery. I think it’s also around management in terms of people management and contract management. (Service provider, UK)

“Everything must be delivered by them. It could be anything from reception, to security, to cleaning it could include provision of assets in terms of security systems as well.” (Consultant, UK)

The following figure shows that the interviewees mostly thought, that FM companies, that meet their expectations, already exist. In Finland it seemed, that there would be still room for improvement.

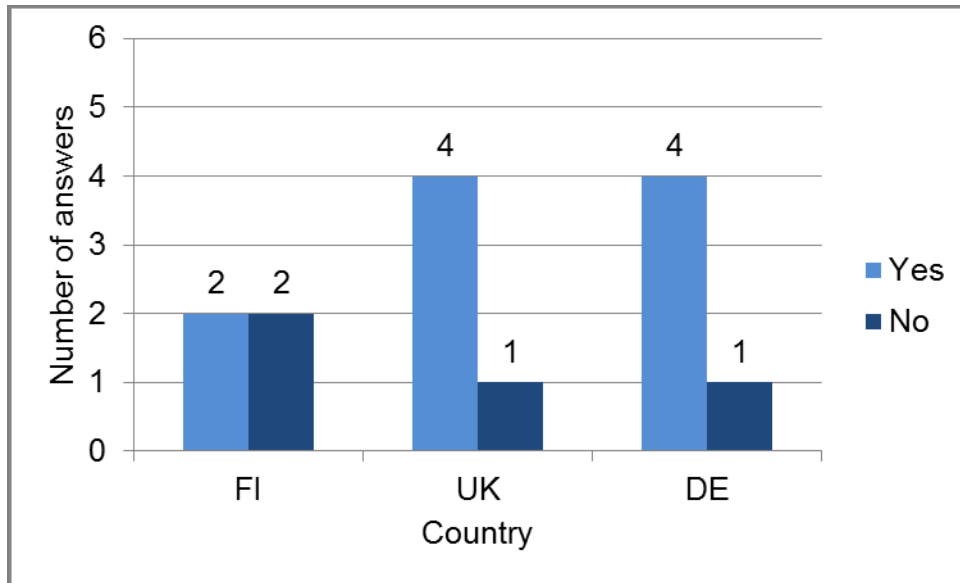


FIGURE 10. Are there companies fulfilling your expectations?

Finland

The opinions between the Finnish experts were split. The corporate and association sector's opinion on the question was that the industry does offer some organizations that are according to their preferences.

"KJ kiinteistöjohto is making many business parts and they have the capability to do all things." (Corporate, FI)

"Securitas, Sodexo, there are successes and failures." (Association, FI)

On the other hand, the academic and consultancy sector in Finland were not that optimistic on the subject, since for them firstly the companies offering FM are not clearly promoting the service depth of their organization and often focus only on interacting on an operational level with the customer.

Secondly, there was a problem arising from the customer side, since often they were not sure what to demand from a facility management company.

“Most companies focus too much on acting on the operational level and the clients don’t know what they should demand from the companies. In such it is not only the companies who are not fulfilling expectations but the customers also don’t quite know what to ask for. Conflicts between what the customer wants and what the service provider provides arise often, since the customer is not sure about what he needs and thus the service provider can’t deliver correctly.” (Academic, FI)

“The way companies report about their operations is not transparent enough. It seems that they are not clear about what they offer themselves yet.” (Consultant, FI)

Germany

Four sectors of the German sample group thought, that there are companies in the industry of facility management, that meet their requirements. The most frequently mentioned organizations were Wisag, Hochtief, Strabag and HSG Zander. Other companies mentioned were YIT, Gegenbauer, RGM, Sauter, Johnson Controls and John Lang La Salle.

The academic sector, however, felt that there are no such companies in the industry since the scope of requirements would be too big to be covered by individual company:

“No! Look at the list of requirements. There can’t be one company who can provide all of them. The FM companies are split into different functions.” (Academic, DE)

He also stressed that companies such as ISS and Johnson Controls are definitely not Facility Management companies.

UK

Also in the UK sample group four sectors felt, that there were companies in the industry, that fulfilled their expectations of a facilities management company. Only the academic sector seemed dissatisfied with the companies working in the industry since these organizations are said to too strongly push their own interests and want to keep their marketing visible when working for a client organization. This should, according to the academic sector, not be the case and the workers of the organization should moreover merge into the clients' organization labeling. For example workers of an outsourced organization should wear the client organization labels instead of their own companies. Another point of concern with these organizations working in the field, was the lack of ability to innovate and creation of customized services to customers. This was said to be due to the lack of management skill in innovation and change. They merely offer standardized services as full-range providers to all which, however, is not expected by clients.

*“The expectations are that you have got innovation managers within the service provider organization even if they are delivering facilities services. They expect that there are people in there who have the expertise in managing change and innovation. But those are the most complaints that you hear: that lack of management skill.”
(Academic, UK)*

Most mentioned companies by the other sectors, however, were organizations like ISS, CBRE, John Lang La Salle and MCore. Other companies like Circo, Interserve, Sodexo, Rentkill Initial, Johnson Controls and OCS were additionally mentioned.

6.4 Familiarity with FM standards

Experts in all three countries were asked the basic question about whether they knew a FM standard called the EN 15221-1 existed. Since all interviewees were experts in their own field of the industry, it was assumable that all answers would be positive. However, as the following figure shows, not all had even heard of the European Standard. This in the light of the research seems rather alarming.

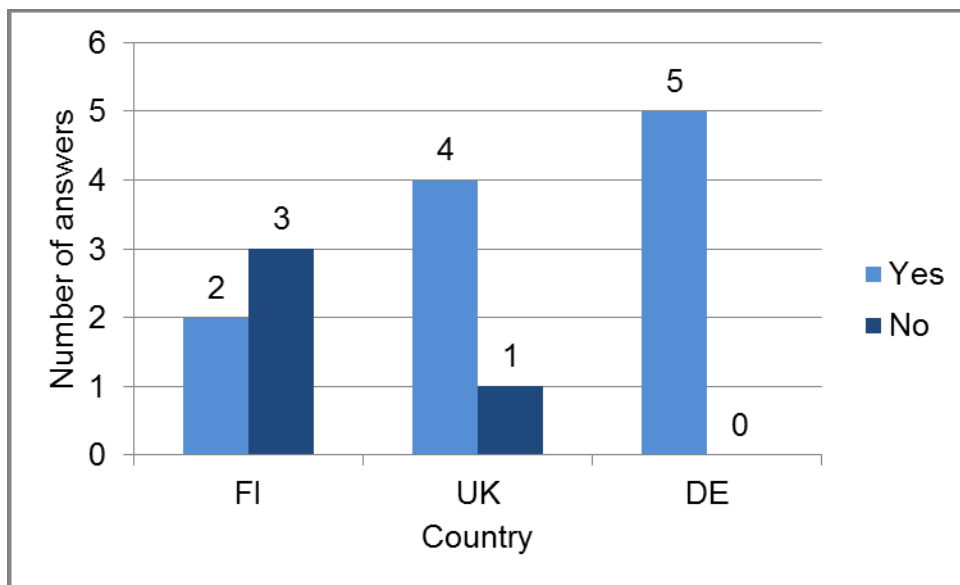


FIGURE 11. Have you heard of EN 15221-1?

The reasons for some interviewees not being aware of the standard seemed to be the lack of equal promotion of the standard in the European Union and the different sectors in the FM industry, especially in the three target countries. Most notably in Finland, the result was surprising since only the academic and service provider sector had heard of EN 15221-1. The other participants did not know of the existence of a FM standard at all or could not connect the standard they had heard of somewhere to the name EN 15221-1. In the UK though, only the service sector did not know the standard in question. All German sectors were aware of the existence of the European Standard.

The above outcomes of the sample groups showed that there are major differences in the awareness level of the standard between countries as well as the individual sectors inside the nations. However, the awareness of a European Standard alone does not display how well it is known in the target countries, not to mention of what extend it is used. The next paragraph addresses the knowledge level of the interviewees of the topic.

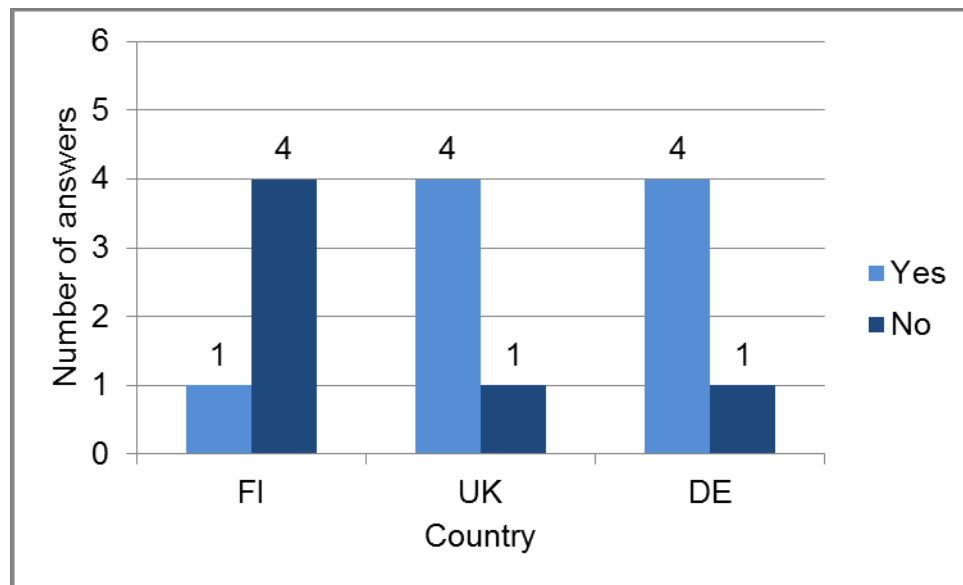


FIGURE 12. Are you familiar with EN 15221-1?

The figure shows that even if the experts had heard of the standard, many still had not familiarized themselves with the actual content of it. Especially in Finland, the content is foreign to most participants.

FIGURE 10. displays only the answers of the participants who were familiar with the standard and could thus give their opinion on the issue.

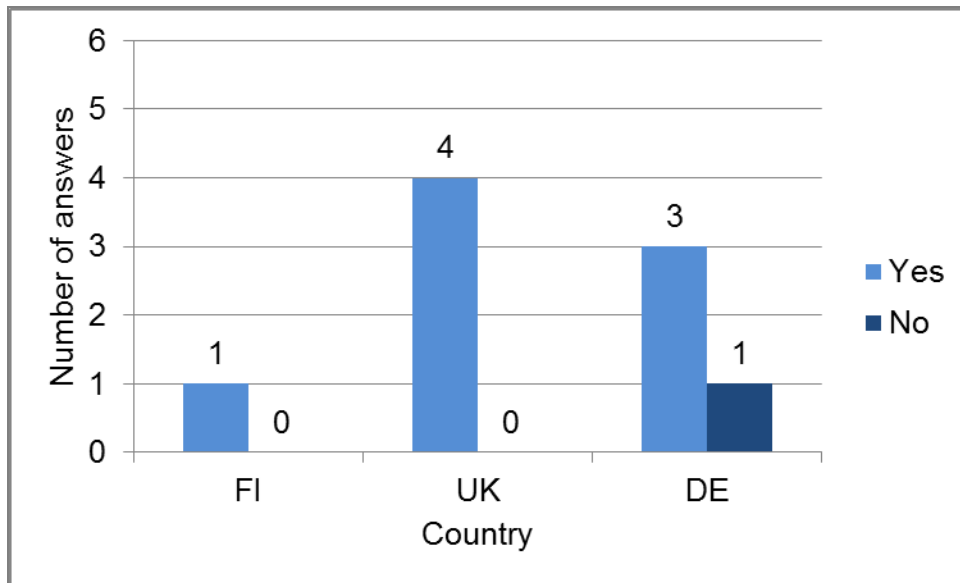


FIGURE 13. Do you agree with EN 15221-1?

The participants who were acquainted with the contents and terms of the European FM standard, nevertheless, mostly agreed with its statements and conditions. Only one interviewee, the academic sector in Germany, was not fully satisfied with the standard since to his opinion it was not complex and up to date enough stating “It’s too simple and a little bit old fashioned.”

(Academic, DE)

6.5 Reliability and validity

The issues of reliability and validity of an empirical study are of great importance since they provide information on the quality, usability and repeatability of the performed research. These aspects were taken into consideration in this study. Yet, as the target of this study was to survey personal opinions of people on the subject of facility management, it is evident that human perceptions change over time. This could affect the outcomes of this research if it would be conducted again in the future. Also the changes in the industry itself could affect the matter.

Nevertheless, the reliability of this study was insured by accurate recording, transcription and documentation of all research data and processes (Silverman 2004, 285).

To ensure validity of the interview and its results only experts with a certain status, multiple years of experience in the field and overall good knowledge base on the subject were chosen. The interview was also tested beforehand with several professionals in the industry and improvements were made accordingly. Cited answers of respondents additionally increased the validity of this study.

7 DISCUSSION

7.1 Assessment of the research

This study covered the subject at hand broadly and had to be even limited in the analysis and evaluation phases. This was due to the nature of the research since the target was to gather information on a social phenomenon through personal opinions of professionals in the field. This presented the author with some problems. It proved difficult to determine how many questions would be needed in order to get enough information to thoroughly answer the set research questions. The author could not anticipate how extensive and far-fetched the answers would be.

In order to assure an adequate information base, questions closely related to the subject of the research were included. These questions were mostly covered in the third part of the questionnaire: "3. Generalizing Facility Management" (see appendix 3). In the analysis phase, however, these questions mostly proved to be unnecessary since they did not provide any further valuable information on the main research questions. Thus they were left out.

The amount of spoken and recorded data constituted another obstacle in the process since the transcription of the data had to be done claiming a lot of time.

The handling, understanding and analyzation of the written data seemed at first very difficult but could be well mastered through the categorization and thematisation of the questions and answers. Again, however, as mentioned in the chapters before, it was neither possible nor sensible to synthesize all answers since that would have manipulated the image of the findings.

Overall, the findings gave good insight on the issues of facility management and presented extensive answers to all three research questions. The presumption made at the beginning that distinctions in the determination and perception of the field of facilities management in Europe exist, was validated by the research findings.

7.2 General findings

Facility management

According to this study facility management is perceived in multiple ways in the three target countries Finland, Germany and UK whereby it could be assumed to be also the case throughout Europe. One general definition could not, even by the experts, be formed. It seems that the precedence of the holistic view of facility management strongly varies according to the personal background of the respondent.

The general impression seems to be that facility management in Finland is around the management of non-core operational services related to the maintenance and development of spaces and design of end-user services. Whereas in Germany it is conceived as the management of real estate and operational services around their technical maintenance and providing customers with build space in order to increase their productivity. However in the UK facilities management, as the profession is addressed in the country, is moreover a management method focusing on coordinating strategic and tactical implementation of non-core operational services to customers. Real estate is conceived more as build environment that supports those activities. Consultancy services seem equally accepted as part of facility management.

Terminology

The terminology of facility management has, depending on the country it is used in, multiple conceptions and approaches. Especially in Finland and in Germany translations are used since they are said to be better understood on a national basis. However, these translations often alter the content of the original term, and thus, cause variations in perception. Nevertheless, in both countries facility management as a term was said to be predominantly used. As far as the UK is concerned, the profession and industry on the other hand are rather addressed with facilities management.

Outcomes show that most participants of all three target countries do not perceive a substantial disparity between the meanings of facility management and facilities management. The available theory backs this impression up. It must be, however, stated that some remote parties from Finland and Germany conceive the other term as either broader or narrower than the other. This issue was noticeable also in theoretical sources. In the UK the terms are perceived as significantly different, even though the distinctions closely resemble the ones of the two other countries since it was explained that facility management covers a narrower scope of services and build spaces than facilities management. Both concepts are, however, said to be used randomly throughout the business field in Finland and Germany, whereas in the UK they are used more precisely to describe one or the other. In theory both terms seem to be used indiscriminately. It is obvious that even these minor differences cause confusion in the industry both internationally and nationally.

Theoretical sources additionally implement the use of a further term that is often used in a symmetrical context, which at least for the author, causes confusion. That is the term of facility services, which in many theoretical sources, seemingly addresses the “doing” of facility management. A good example of that is the Lunendonk List, which lists the 25 biggest facility management players in the market. However, when the list is observed closely, it can be noticed that the organization stated in the list, as they are also called in the document itself, are facility service companies.

Facility management companies

Experts in all three target countries agreed that facility management companies, in one form or the other exist, however, it proved difficult for them to clearly define what these companies consist of, considering their skills sets or offerings. This part of the research turned out to be the most difficult part for both the interviewees and the author. It seems that professionals in all three target countries conceive something different under the term FM Company. It seems that there are three main categories of facility management Companies: companies who either only provide management services, manage and produce services or manage and subcontract services. Yet again the skills a facility management company has to master split opinions in all three target countries apart. They range from different managerial skills, individual maintenance and end user service disciplines know-how to technical and constructual knowledge. Commercial know-how in many levels is requested as well. The service or services these companies have to offer range accordingly. Reliability and customer focused processes are being seen as indispensable. Yet, organizations only providing services, are generally considered as facility service or facilities services companies. The most known and accepted facility management companies named by the experts, however, were big full-range service providers, who, based on many theoretical sources, also call themselves facility service companies. This can be said to be contradictory to the answers of the interviewees. In the light of this study it could be determined, that the expectations of many interviewees do not accurately meet the provider descriptions of the field. However, this aspect seems to be generally accepted.

European Standard

The European Standard EN 15221 was according to the theory set out to generalize the understanding, focus areas and terminology of facility management in Europe. The standard was supposed to be adopted throughout all major nations in Europe. It was also assumed, that issues around facility management would gradually start to harmonize since general terms, definitions and focus areas were agreed upon.

However, the standard did not exist until 2006 which could be speculated to have had an impact on the different developments in alignments of facility management. Also cultural backgrounds enact a part in the issue. However, the standard seems not to be equally promoted and adopted in Europe, as the results of the three target countries reveal. Four participants of the overall sample group had not even heard of the standard or did not know of its existence. Especially in Finland this was the case. The awareness of a united standard, however, can be said not to be enough, for yet again many involved parties nonetheless had not familiarized themselves with the content of it. Thus also the established criteria, set out in the standard, were not adopted. Nevertheless, in favor of the standard, the interviewees who were familiar with the content majorly agreed with its overall statements and conditions. Thus, it could be assumed that the objective of the European standard has to this date not been fully reached. This issue is significant for the formation of the maturity level of a business field in general and maybe stated as a possible reason for diverse perceptions of facility management, its industry and focus areas.

7.3 Implications for practice and future research

This study provided necessary information on the current state of the perception of facility management in Europe and could thus act as a guidebook for further research on the subject . Since the subject of the thesis was extensive, it was only natural that not all areas of facility management could be covered deeply enough due to the limitations of time and resources.

It would be advisable to further study the definitions, focus areas and even perceptions in individual countries as well as on a European or even international level. This could make the profession as well as industry more comprehensible for all the separate participants in the business field as well as for newcomers. This study can be considered especially helpful for students of facility management in order to understand the magnitude of the industry but also to comprehend the different variations of it in Europe.

This would make them more aware of the issues covered in this document and maybe even make them take action in researching or developing them further.

CONCLUSIONS

To sum up, the subject of facility management is not clearly definable and is perceived in multiple ways in Europe. This has an impact on the communication, service delivery and perception of facility management in general. That on the other hand results in the profession being practiced in different ways in Europe, with companies not knowing what exactly to offer their clients and the clients not comprehending what to demand or expect of the companies in the field. It is clear that the issues mentioned confuse all players involved in the field again in the individual countries and between them. Thus, it seems that major full-service providers have taken on the field with the promise of offering “everything” to clients yet, nobody actually is able to state what that “everything” is or should be. However, some professionals simply state that this is not at all what facility management neither was originally nor should be about. Individuals have their own opinions on the subject which seems in most cases be due to their cultural and professional backgrounds and even the reason of interest in the subject in the first place. Definitions, terms, conditions and service deliverables seem to be modified according to one’s own preference and best interests. So it could be stated that facility management can so to speak cover all or nothing depending on how one perceives it. Surprisingly, this fact seems generally accepted in the industry. On the other hand, this tendency may result in the development of facility management in a direction it was not supposed to head. This would be the directions of providing operational services only. To add to the confusion, experts in all three countries stated that the main focus of facility management is not the delivery of services but the management of them. Yet, many participants referred to the biggest facility service providers in the field when asked to name specifically facility management companies known to them.

It seems clear that the field of facility management will demand further development and harmonization in order to achieve a common baseline and understanding of all the areas related to facility management on a national, European and international basis.

This in the light of the growing globalization will be of great importance and can only be achieved through mutual comprehension, development, education and activity around the subject of FM. The exchange of knowledge, best practices, business activities and added international cooperation can be also considered key issues in the standardization of facility management both in Europe and in the rest of the world. However, it is considered extremely important that cultural and local conditions as well as legal parameters are taken into consideration and that enough space for flexibility is left. This is something that especially big global companies working in the field have to accept and respect in order for nations to be able to mature collectively in the field and profession of FM. Just as much as clients have to understand that in order to preserve this flexibility it is not possible to expect the same services regardless the client's location. On the other hand, service levels can and should be agreed upon on a European basis. That could be an additional contribution to the European standard since there seems to be space for further development. If the standard is achieved to be, promoted and adopted equally in Europe and throughout all the sectors of facility management, the field will to a great extent become a more balanced business field in the future.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Interview request send to participants via e-mail

English

Dear Mr. ### / Mrs. ###,

my name is Riina Hendriks and I am studying facility management at the Jyväskylä University of Applied Sciences. At the moment I am working at Reality Consult GmbH as a Junior Consultant.

At the moment I am writing my Bachelor's Thesis on the topic: "Differences in the facility management perception, market understanding and focus areas in Europe, concentrating on Germany, Finland and UK." My research will be based on interviews. These interviews are conducted for research purposes, to show and prove possible differences in the perception of facility management in Europe. Participants from each of the following groups are interviewed personally (in each of the three countries):

- Academics
- Service providers
- Corporates
- Consultants
- Associations (like BIFM, FIFMA, IFMA, GEFMA, etc.)

I think your opinions and personal views would be very valuable for my research. Would you kindly give me the opportunity to interview you via telephone? If yes, please indicate a suitable date and time for conducting it (NOTE: The interview is depending on the answers of the interviewee going to take about 45 min- 1 hour).

Thank you already for your time! Hopefully I hear from you soon.

Yours sincerely,
Riina Hendriks

Finnish

Hei,

nimeni on Riina Hendriks ja olen kolmannen vuoden facility management opiskelija Jyväskylän Ammattikorkeakoulussa. Suoritän tällä hetkellä työharjoitteluani Saksassa Reality Consult GmbH:lla ja kirjoitan samalla lopputyötäni.

Lopputyöni aihe on: "Differences in the facility management perception, market understanding and focus areas in Europe, concentrating on Germany, Finland and UK." Tutkielmaani varten pyrin haastattelemaan erilaisia alla mainittuja asiantuntioita puhelimitse:

- Academics
- Service providers
- Corporates
- Consultants
- Associations (like BIFM, FIFMA, IFMA, GEFMA, etc.)

Uskon että teidän näkökantanne aiheesta olisi tärkeä tutkielmaani varten. Lomakkeen on tarkoitus tutkija asiantuntioden henkilökohtaiset mielipiteet facility managementista ja lopputulos tulee näyttämään, kohtaavatko palvelu tarjoijien ja ostajien odotukset sekä mielipiteet. Tutkielman tulos tulisi siten myös olemaan mielenkiintoinen yrityksellenne.

Siten pyytäisinkin ystävällisesti lupaa kutsua teidät osallistumaan haastatteluuni.

Kiitos jo etukäteen ajastanne!

Ystävällisin terveisin,

Riina Hendriks

Germany

Sehr geehrter Herr/ Frau ####,

mein Name ist Riina Hendriks und bin Studentin an der Jyväskylän University of Applied Sciences in Finnland. Seit fast 8 Monaten absolviere ich mein Praktikum bei der Reality Consult GmbH in Frankfurt.

Ich schreibe derzeit meine Bachelor Thesis zu dem Thema „Differences in the facility management perception, market understanding and focus areas in Europe, concentrating on Germany, Finland and UK“. Hierzu werde ich Telefoninterviews für mein qualitatives Research mit folgenden Gruppen führen:

- Academics
- Service providers
- Corporates
- Consultants
- Associations (like BIFM, FIFMA, IFMA, GEFMA, etc.)

Für das Interview sollten ungefähr 45 Minuten- 1 Stunde eingeplant werden, je nach Umfang der Antworten. Der Fragebogen soll persönliche Meinungen und Wahrnehmungen herausfinden, um festzustellen, wie facility management in Europa verstanden wird.

Ich würde es sehr schätzen, Ihre Meinung zu diesem Thema zu hören. Dürfte ich Sie dazu per Telefon (oder wahlweise Skype) befragen? Ich werde Sie in Kürze telefonisch nochmal kontaktieren.

Mit freundlichen Grüßen,

Riina Hendriks

Appendix 2: List of interviewees

Finland

Malm, R. 2011. Facilities Unit Manager. YIT Kiinteistötekniikka Oy Finland. Interviewed via phone on 17.8.2011.

Nenonen, S. 2011. Research Manager at Helsinki University of Technology. Interviewed via phone on 12.8.2011.

Puromäki, M. 2011. Vice Chairman of Finnish Facility Management Association. Interviewed via phone on 3.8.2011.

Salo, J. 2011. Director of Corporate Real-Estate Management and Corporate Services. Elisa Oy. Interviewed via phone on 19.8.2011.

Westrén-Doll, J. 2011. Osastonjohtaja | Director of the Facility Management department. Granlund Oy. Interviewed via phone on 12.8.2011.

Germany

Hoffmann, G. 2011. Corporate Real-Estate Manager. R + V Versicherung GmbH. Interviewed via phone on 20.9.2011.

Hohmann, J. 2011. Professor in the school on Civil Engineering. Technical University in Kaiserslautern. Interviewed on 22.8.2011

Kuhlmann, E. 2011. General Secretary. German Facility Management Association. Interviewed via phone on 17.8.2011

Prischl, P. 2011. Managing Director. Reality Consult GmbH. Interviewed on 3.8.2011.

Staiger, J. 2011. Head of Facility Services. YIT Germany GmbH. Interviewed via phone on 6.9.2011

UK

Alexander, K. 2011. Director. The Center for Facilities Management Manchester. Former professor at Universities. Interviewed via phone on 13.9.2011.

Fielder, I. 2011. Chief Executive Officer. British Institute of Facilities Management. Interviewed via phone on 19.9.2011.

Prodgers, L. 2011. Managing Director. Agents4FM International. Interviewed via phone on 17.8.2011.

Raisbeck, K. 2011. Consultant. Johnson Controls Inc. Interviewed via phone on 28.9.2011.

Tantrum, W. 2011. Former Chairman of the European Facility Management Association. Director of New World Sustainable Solutions Limited. Interviewed via phone on 8.9.2011.

Appendix 3: Interview questions

Differences in the facility management perception, market understanding and focus areas in Europe, concentrating on Germany, Finland and UK.

This interview is conducted for research purposes, to show and prove possible differences in the perception of facility management in Europe. Participants from each of the following groups are interviewed personally (in each of the three countries):

- Academics
- Service providers
- Corporates
- Consultants
- Associations (like BIFM, FIFMA, IFMA, GEFMA, etc.)

Pre-assumption:

There are differences in definitions, focus areas and market comprehension in facility management in Europe. This has an impact on the establishment of a common facility management market understanding, which should not be neglected, since a common understanding is important in this business field.

Answers are asked to be given spontaneously and based on personal impressions/ perceptions.

If YES has been answered, the participant is asked to rate the answer on its relevance from 1-4 (1 being the lowest and 4 the highest grade). Each question has its own key that explains the scaling.

1. General Information on the organization

1.1 Name of the organization:

1.2 Representatives name and position:

1.3 Business field:

1.4 Turnover (last year):

1.5 Number of employees/ members:

1.6 Country of main activities:

3.4 If you look back some years, how was FM seen the in your country? :

Has the branch developed? : a) Yes: b) No:

How has it developed? :

Why has it developed as it has? :

Has the terminology developed? : a) Yes: b) No:

How has it developed? :

Why has it developed as it has? :

3.6 Starting from where we are today, how will the FM market develop in your country? :

Will it develop? : a) Yes: b) No:

How will it develop? :

Why will it develop in this way? :

Is the perception going to move towards the one of UK, DE and FI? :

a) Yes: b) No:

3.7 Can the FM perception/ terminology, market understanding and focus areas be united throughout Europe? :

a) Yes: b) No:

Reasons: a) b)

How likely do you think this will happen in the (near) future? :

1 2 3 4

(1= not at all 2= possible 3= likely 4= very likely)

What measures should be taken? : (free answer)

Is there any further information you would like to add about the main differences, reasons or development of FM in Europe? : (free answer)

Thank you for your Cooperation!

If you are interested in the results of this research, please do not hesitate to contact me! If you do wish to receive the results, please add your contact details [HERE](#). I will get in contact with you and send them to you as soon as the research is concluded.