Facility Management: The profession in profile
In Germany, Austria and Switzerland

Contents

Preface

Facility Management (FM) is not only an exceptionally varied and exhilarating profession but, as a system-relevant industry worth billions, also a crisis-proof career path. Facility Management specifically covers the value-driving factors of real estate, facilities and personal services. As a key enabler of the digital transformation as well as healthy living and working environments in the private and public sectors, FM makes a significant contribution to identifying solutions applicable to major challenges and issues of socio-political and environmental relevance. This is all the more important for our networked world during times of great volatility, in which regulatory requirements and the needs of customers are changing fundamentally and at an ever-faster rate. Answers to these challenges can no longer be found in isolation, but mainly through new collaborative models in business ecosystems.

Leading professional associations, organizations and educational institutions in Germany, Austria and Switzerland have therefore worked in cross-border partnership to incorporate these changing framework conditions into the completely revised profile of the profession presented here. The publication has not only been updated, but also fundamentally refreshed, enriched with an image film and success stories, and thus brought into the new digital age.

We hope you enjoy reading *Facility Management: The profession in profile* and are inspired by the ideas it contains.

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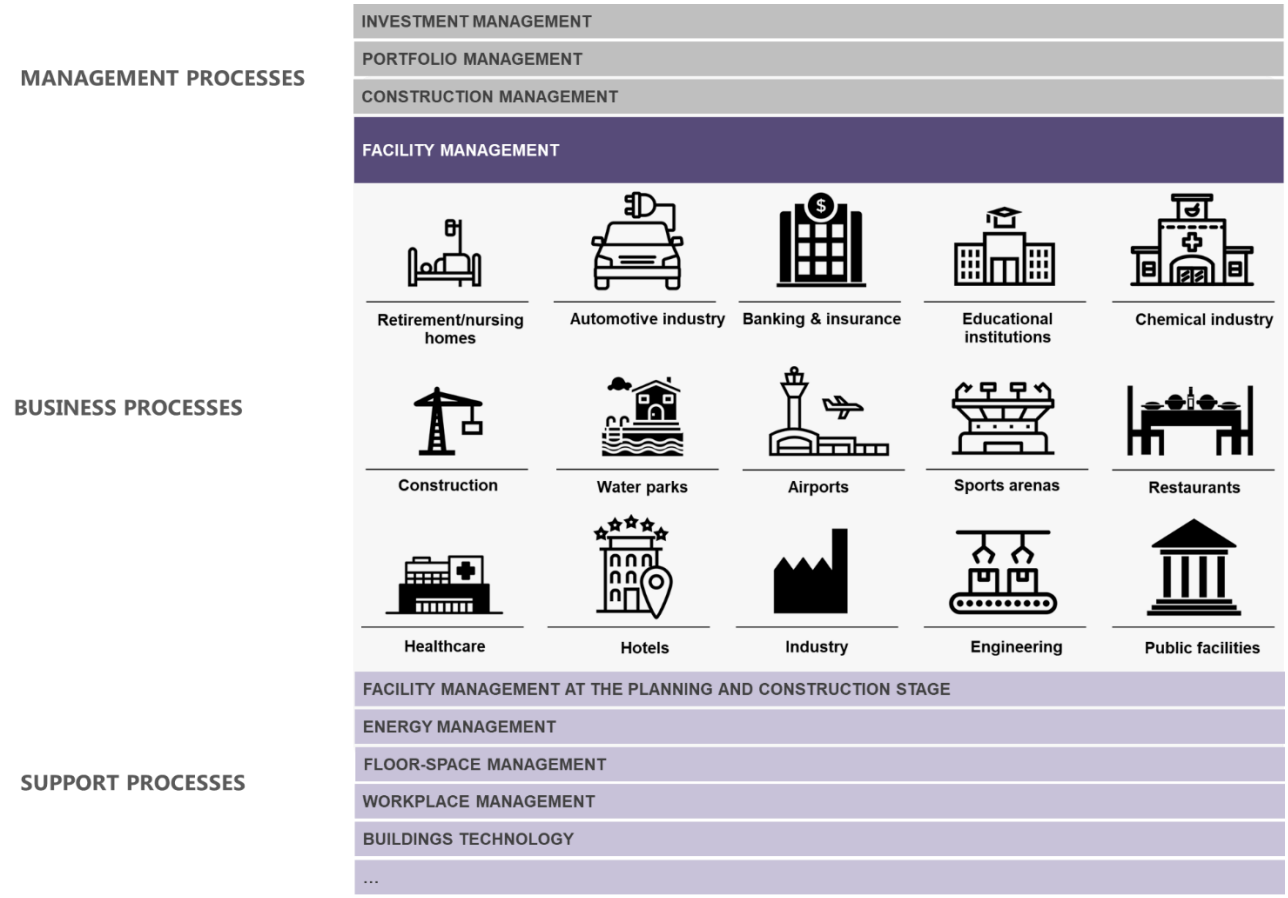
1. Introduction

In times of growth as well as in times of crisis, the demand for qualified and experienced facility managers[1] remains high, and demand is set to continue increasing in the coming years. The systematic focus of companies on their value-creating core processes aimed at boosting competitiveness leads to new and higher demands on the support areas, which are part of the entire value chain and an essential adjunct to the core business. Facility Management defines a company's FM strategy and controls the value and cost development of the real estate and facilities along the entire life cycle. Facility Management (FM) and Facility Services (FS) are provided in different industries and sectors according to property-specific and customer-specific needs at all levels – strategic, tactical and operational – while FS also include strategic components:

Integration of FM/FS into the process model



Source: Authors of publication

A variety of company-relevant and user-centered activities are provided, ranging from individual service packages as FS to the fully integrated FM service spectrum. These include:

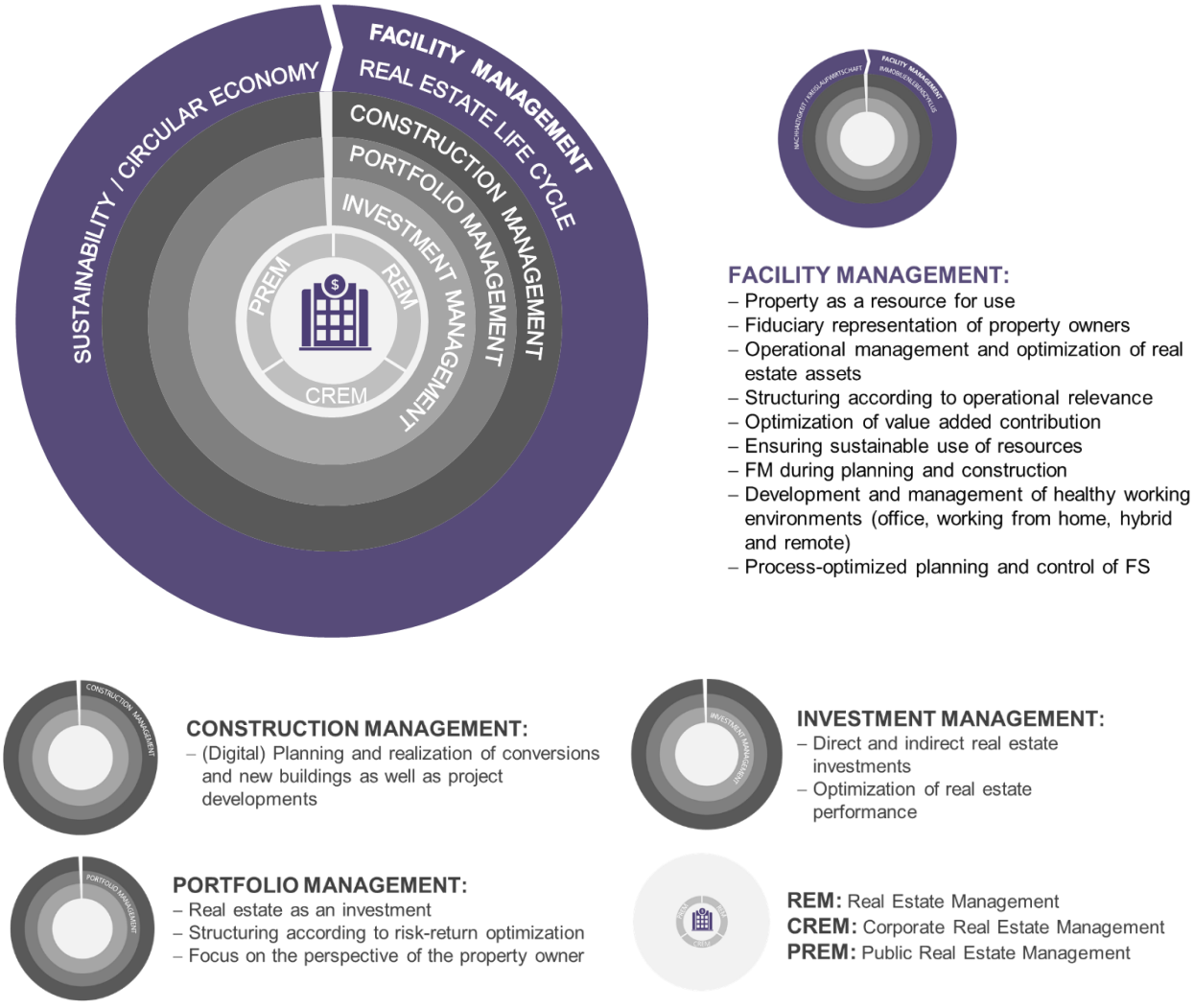
- the sustainable operation of real estate and facilities over the entire life cycle (FM at the planning and construction stages);
- acting as a catalyst for the entire company in driving forward the digital transformation;

[1] The content of the text presented in the original German version was written in accordance with the Gender-sensitive language guidelines of the Swiss Confederation (2023). English personal terms such as manager, provider or professional are considered gender-neutral.

- the development and implementation of sustainability strategies, thereby contributing to the implementation of net zero carbon;
- optimizing digital building systems with building infrastructure and use;
- introducing innovative concepts for the promotion of best working practices, health and well-being;
- the creation and improvement of the work environment, atmosphere, efficiency and productivity by providing services in logistics, catering, cleaning and safety/security.

FM is therefore one of the key management disciplines involved in all aspects of the real estate life cycle.

FM as a management discipline



Source: Authors of publication

2. Maturity and market volume

In the last 20 years or so, large sums have been successfully invested in the development and consolidation of FM in companies, in education and training and in professional associations. In 2023, we can therefore assert with some confidence that FM has become established at the strategy and management level and is now very well positioned as a strategic business partner at company level. The high degree of maturity reflects its economic importance. The strategic significance and importance of the personnel-intensive FM sector are made clear by the following figures and data:

According to Global FM, the worldwide FM market volume in 2022 was around 1,150 billion US dollars. Allied Market Research had already reported a volume of 1,253 billion US dollars for 2020. The KPI figures for the DACH region (Germany, Austria, Switzerland) are as follows:

Country	KPI
Germany	**152** billion EUR market volume **4.5%** of GDP
Austria	**18** billion EUR market volume **4.0%** of GDP
Switzerland	**15** billion EUR market volume **2.0%** of GDP

Detailed breakdown (plus sources):

FM sector	Germany	Austria	Switzerland
Market volume 2022	152.15 billion euros	18 billion euros	15 billion euros
% of GDP	4.52% of 3.3 trillion	4% of 446.9 billion	2% of 771.22 billion
Number of employees	5,000,000	200,000	40.000[2]
Employees as % of total	11.2% of 44.9 million	4.5% of 4.4 million	0.8% of 5.2 million

Sources: Germany gefma Branchenreport FM 2022

Sources: Austria Arbeitsmarktstatistik, Statistik Austria

Sources: Switzerland Statista, Lünendonk, Schweiz - BIP | Statista

[2] Refers only to the number of employees working for the ten largest FM providers

3. Tasks, levels of responsibility, competences and roles

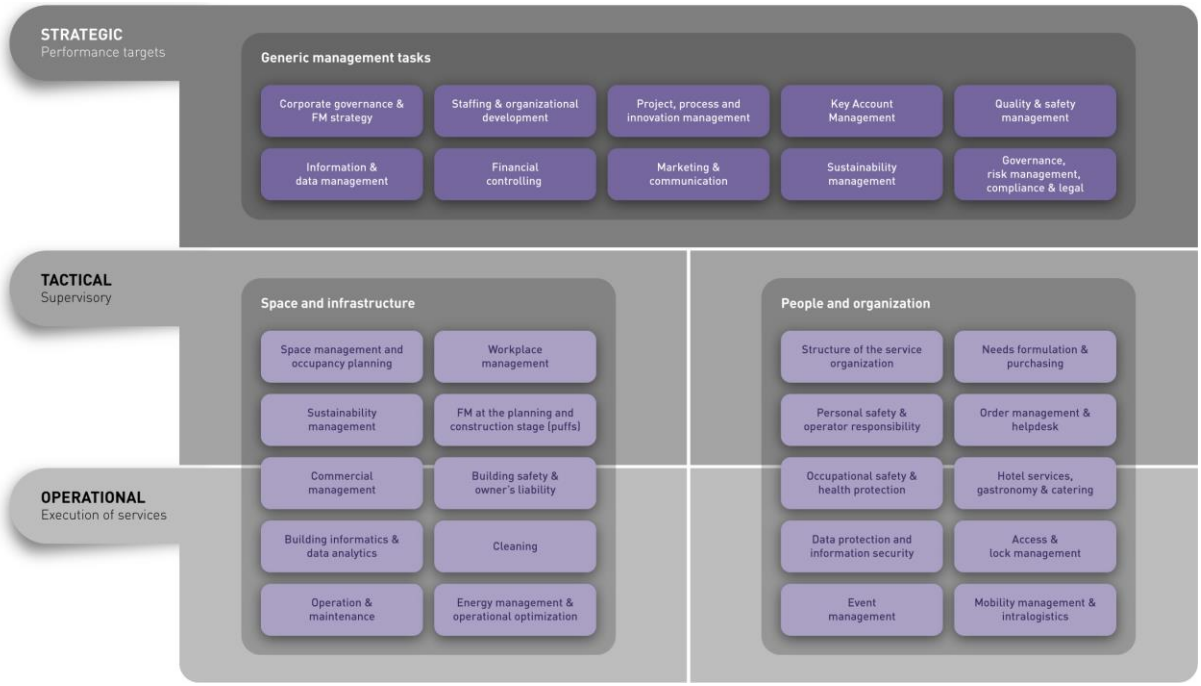
Efforts aimed at professionalizing the FM sector are significantly advanced by the ongoing improvement of training offers, the creation of industry standards and products by the professional associations and, in particular, by the further development of international (International Organization for Standardization, ISO), European (European Standards, EN) and national standards:

The ISO standard 41001 (2017) defines FM as follows: **"An organizational function which integrates people, place and process within the built environment with the purpose of improving the quality of life of people and the productivity of the core business".**

3.1 Task areas

Despite standardized role and process models, FM and FS services are still provided on a contextual basis, because requirements vary according to country, sector and organization. This publication therefore aims not to describe generally applicable task areas for the entire DACH region, but rather to provide a general outline of the diverse task areas and process models by means of individual examples, all of which must be specifically adapted for the individual companies.

Generically simplified FM process map



Source: Authors of publication

3.2 Levels of responsibility

3.2.1 The strategic level

At the strategic level, the unit responsible for FM – usually senior management – assumes company-wide process responsibility for the provision of technical infrastructure systems that meet requirements and for the associated services. This makes a fundamental contribution to the long-term achievement of the goals of the core business in the following ways:

- by defining the requirements for achieving the long-term goals and content of FM;
- by providing and securing appropriate infrastructure systems;

- by developing efficient management strategies;
- by defining (quality) standards for floor space usage, for provision of equipment, for processes and services;
- by recruiting and training FM personnel;
- by ensuring compliance with laws and directives, such as occupational health and safety, liability of property owners and responsibility of operators.

The above-mentioned tasks are associated with exceptionally high demands on HR responsibility and operational planning, on leadership qualities as well as coordination and integration skills.

3.2.2 The tactical level

Below the strategic level, where company-wide responsibility lies, comes the tactical level, where the prime considerations are floor space and infrastructure as well as people and organization. Facility management professionals do not perform operational tasks (e.g. maintenance and cleaning) themselves, but plan, organize, manage and direct them. Central tasks here are:

- operational measures for the achievement of strategic objectives;
- the management of day-to-day service tasks and quality assurance;
- the management of FM projects and FM processes;
- the execution and implementation of agreements through leadership of the company's own FM team or management of external service providers.

3.2.3 The operational level

The operational level is covered by employees who provide a wide range of facility services based on the contractually agreed framework conditions. These include:

- workplace management,
- energy and media supply,
- operation/maintenance,
- intralogistics,
- cleaning,
- building and grounds maintenance (including winter maintenance),
- catering arrangements for employees,
- security/safety services.

3.3 Competences

The diversity of tasks in FM goes hand in hand with a wide variety of professional, social, methodological and personal competences. We elaborate on some of the professional/social competences below. Methodological and personal competences flow into the new FM Competence Wheel, which includes many elements of digital transformation competence. Specialized professional staff (vertical competence building) and diversified professional staff (horizontal competence building) in FM and FS are in demand in a wide range of industries and companies. However, their areas of responsibility have changed considerably in recent years in the course of the digital transformation, whereby the mental attitude towards problem-solving strategies and openness to new things (mindset) play a key role. People who work in FM and possess some or all of the hard/soft skills generically shown in the **FM Competence Wheel** are best equipped to meet current and future challenges:

FM Competence Wheel

Source: Authors of publication

3.3.1 Professional competences

As a generalist management discipline, FM also encompasses a wide variety of competence requirements due to the diversified fields of activity. A comprehensive overview is provided by gefma 610. The technical competences and organizational/HR competences form the basis for creative, autonomously organized solutions to challenges of the most diverse kind. Essential qualities here are:

- strategic skills such as interdisciplinary thinking, user orientation and value enhancement for the company with regard to the development and implementation of corporate strategies in FM,
- specialized knowledge in the areas of planning and operation as well as the renovation and conversion of buildings and other facilities. The competences in particular demand here are in the areas of construction and building technology, security/safety technology, building automation, standards, responsibility of operators, management of floor space, energy management, operational hygiene and organization of facility services, as well as in cross-divisional IT.

The increasingly stringent quality requirements make it necessary for Facility Managers to have a deeper knowledge of their clients' business processes. The consequence is that, in certain industries, specialized FM/FS services are in demand. In this respect, it is necessary to focus on the requirements not only of individual economic sectors (healthcare, pharmaceutical industry, automotive industry, insurance companies, banks etc.), but also of the public sector and of research institutions.

3.3.2 Digital transformation competence

Professional skills in the use of technologies such as Internet of Things (IoT), Big Data, Artificial Intelligence (AI), Building Information Modelling (BIM) and cybersecurity as well as in the aforementioned implementation of the Digital Transformation in FM and real estate are key competences for future Facility Managers. Technological advances combined with cultural changes have greatly changed the way work, learning and Human Resources are managed.

3.3.3 Workplace management

Having the right configuration and supply of work infrastructure is of great importance. The traditional office is becoming more flexible and is mainly used for communication and upholding corporate identity. Consequently, fixed workplaces are being replaced by environments for activity-based working. Four modern forms of work have emerged:

- the traditional office (office space provided by companies);
- the hybrid office (technical equipment for both face-to-face and digital meeting participation);
- working from home;
- remote working (while travelling between locations, in so-called ‘third places’ such as co-working spaces or in public infrastructures).

With hybrid office forms, the infrastructure (classic office and remote workplace) as well as the building technology and all individual facility services (FS) are amalgamated into a highly motivational working environment. In this way, FM makes a significant contribution to a high level of employer attractiveness. At the same time, the concomitant merging of work and private life presents a challenge. Resilience has become an even more important factor, as the absenteeism rate due to illness has increased in many companies. Video conferencing has its advantages and complements physical contact, although it can never replace it. The work that needs to be done on company premises (e.g. to improve social exchange and communication, to hold strategy meetings or innovation workshops) has to be defined on a team-specific basis. The infrastructure in terms of layout planning, room dimensions, choice of furniture, color scheme and materials/fabrics as well as offsetting arrangements requires optimal design and implementation. However, not only modern office environments but also workplaces at home must satisfy ergonomic criteria in order to ensure healthy and efficient working practices. This applies in particular to people with disabilities (diversity and inclusion criteria).

3.3.4 Sustainability competence

The climate crisis, as manifested in the increased occurrence of phenomena such as heat/drought disasters, famines, tornadoes, floods, earthquakes etc., causes great suffering and damage running into billions of euros. The problems caused by greenhouse gases can only be solved by humanity working together on a global scale. All UN member states are under an obligation to implement the 17 ambitious Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a core element of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The binding EU directive on Corporate Sustainability Reporting (CSRD) due to come into force in 2024 defines the requirements in the area of Environment, Social & Governance (ESG) which companies must declare annually. Major levers for the reduction of greenhouse gases are the circular economy, energy savings and the switch to renewable forms of

energy. FM therefore plays a pivotal role in the consideration of sustainability aspects, as it is here that sustainability in companies and organizations is ensured. These new requirements imposed by the European Union towards achieving climate targets lead to new Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and benchmarks in the real estate sector. Here are a few examples to illustrate future requirements for FM in the area of energy modernization of a nation's building stock: Green Deal, European Climate Law, 2030 EU Climate Target Plan and Fit for 55, Renovation Wave (the renovation of 35 million buildings by 2030 and creation of 160,000 green jobs). Smart Readiness Indicator (SRI) and Energy Performance Certificates (EPC), Whitepaper Energieeffizienz und Klimaschutz (Whitepaper on Energy Efficiency and Climate Protection published by IFMA Austria) and ESG Sustainability Criteria (EU Taxonomy, EU Taxonomy Compass, Explanation).

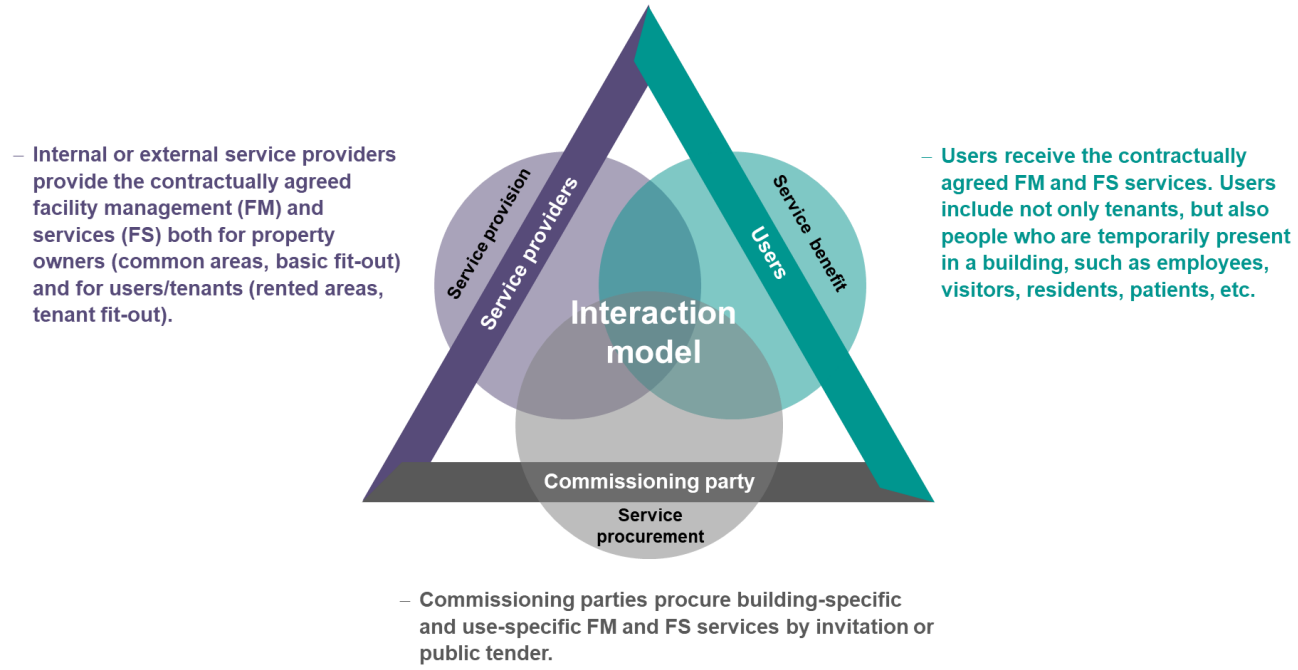
3.3.5 Social competences

Despite the high degree of digitalization and use of technical components, FM is primarily a 'people business' in which transformation competences and adaptability are called for. Diversity, variety and inclusion are key factors behind the success of teams drawn from different areas of expertise. Strong communication and cooperation skills, customer focus and the ability to work in a team are important prerequisites at the interface with diverse stakeholders. In addition, social skills and mutual esteem are essential elements in dealing with people from different countries, languages, cultures, ages and levels of experience. But assertiveness, willingness to take risks and negotiation skills are also important personal qualities in circumstances where projects have to be implemented with limited resources.

3.4 Roles within an organization

One of the many attractions of working in the FM sector is its versatility. There are no 'typical' FM roles as such, as they vary according to the context, e.g. property owner, property user, service provider or adviser, all with different emphases. Regardless of whether FM professionals work in corporate or property organizations, for facility service providers or their subcontractors, their range of responsibilities will include the following elements: provision of resources and return on investment, satisfying needs and requirements and fulfilment of performance. In the three DACH countries, there are three central roles in FM which, in collaborative business relationships, preferably function alongside each other and yet represent different interest groups:

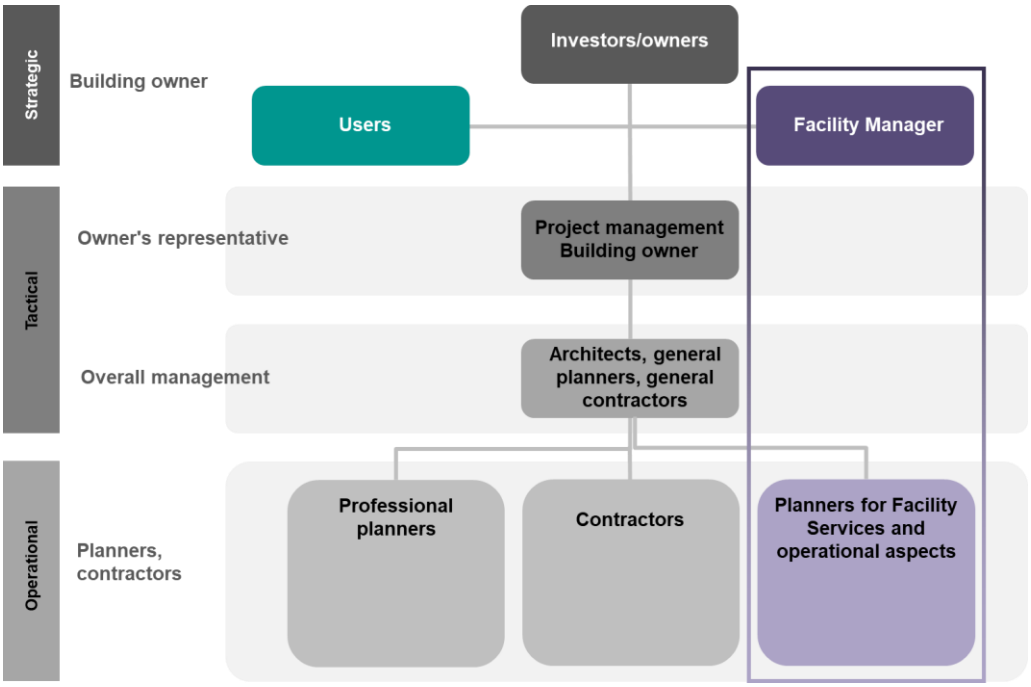
Interaction model



Source: Authors of publication

The preceding definitions refer to the operational phase of real estate. Additional differentiation applies in construction projects. Here, FM has an important dual role to play: firstly, the Facility Manager in his or her FM capacity at the planning and construction stages ensures that the future requirements and specifications of the users/clients are taken into account (e.g. life cycle and investment considerations, quality assurance), and secondly the Facility Manager as the commissioning party who implements these requirements in collaboration with the specialist planners, as this schematic diagram shows:

Generic organization of building projects



Source: Based on ‘Prozess- und Leistungsmodell’ (ProLeMo) published by crb and IFMA Switzerland in 2021

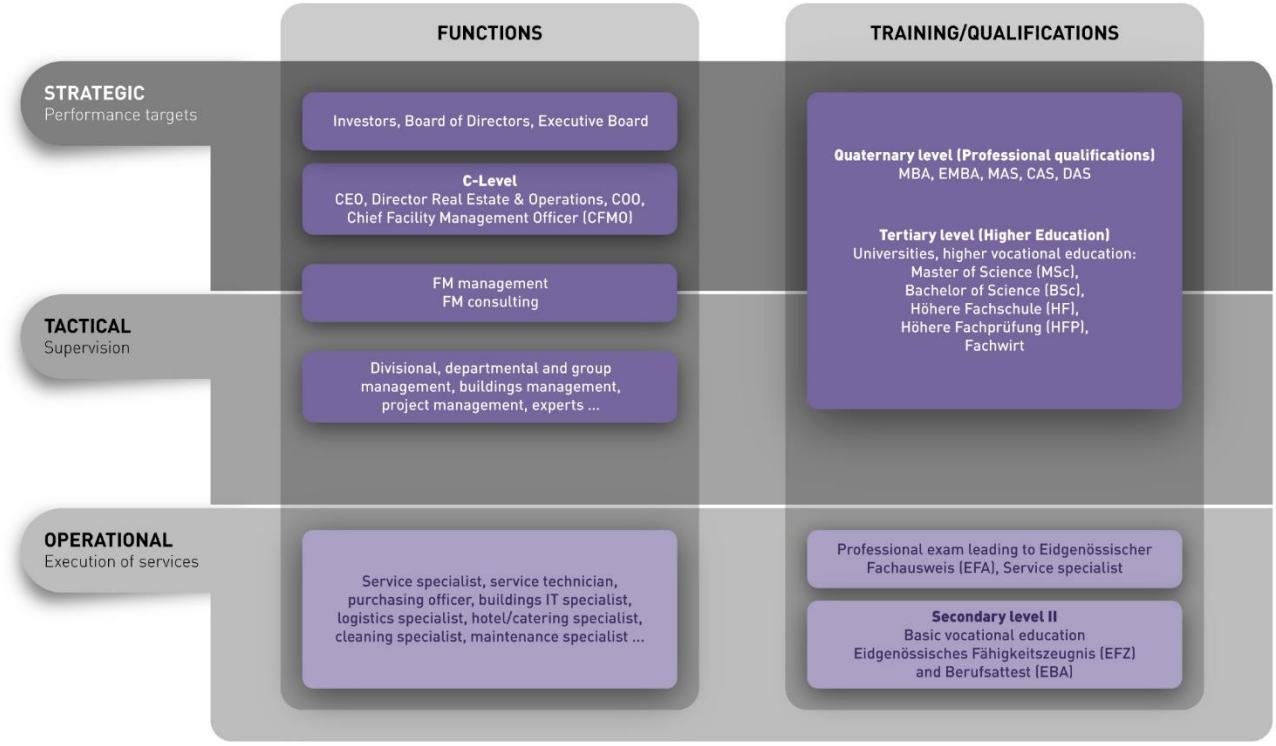
In all three DACH countries, a number of new focus topics are emerging for those responsible for operations and construction projects. These are derived from overriding objectives such as climate protection, resource economy, efficient use of space, digitalization etc., where the relevant competences are in great demand.

One tool for describing the roles and services in FM is Funktions- und Leistungsmodell im FM (Function and Service Model in FM) developed in 2020 by RealFM, SVIT FM Switzerland and Facility Management Austria (FMA). This is explained by means of application guidelines in a separate document. Depending on the size of the company and its core business, FM combines countless roles horizontally as well as vertically at the strategic, tactical and operational levels. This is because the FM professional has a varied set of technical, organizational and financial qualifications in his or her CV. As digitalization continues its steady advance, additional roles and tasks are constantly emerging. This makes FM even more attractive as a profession. Because of the diversity of roles and requirements, there is overlap with other professional fields in real estate and infrastructure management. Cross-entry from related professions such as civil engineering and architecture, industrial engineering, business administration, technology, IT and many others therefore becomes easier.

4. Career opportunities and success stories

The multitude of different professions in FM and FS allows for a correspondingly large selection of exciting career opportunities throughout the construction, real estate and FM industry. Aspiring professionals can gain a foothold in countless companies, industrial enterprises, public infrastructures, administrative bodies and consulting firms as shown in this YouTube video FM – a Career of Choice or in this video The Next Generation of FM on the Global FM website.

Career opportunities



Source: Authors of publication

Success Stories

Here are three examples of FM professionals working in different fields.

Claudia Schriber
Universitätsspital Zürich, Switzerland

Qualifications	BSc in Facility Management, CAS in Project Management, CAS in Leadership
Work experience	8 years
Job title	Head of Department: Facility Services
Responsibilities	Personnel, technical and financial management of the Facility Services department (approximately 180 employees), based on the USZ standards and hygiene requirements.

Annabella Bolsenkötter
Spie Efficient Facilities GmbH, Germany

Qualifications	Bachelor of Engineering – Technical Facility Management; further study and training in Energy Consulting and Leadership
Work experience	4 years
Job title	Property manager for six administrative buildings in Berlin (property management and technical maintenance)
Responsibilities	Managing the technical aspects of the buildings, i.e. maintenance planning and implementation, coordination of subcontractors, control and coordination of building security and cleaning, advising on energy optimisation, supporting construction and renovation plans with regard to subsequent operation, personnel management and responsibility.

Johannes Messner-Haidenthaler
Ing-Günter Grüner GmbH / pit-cup GmbH, Austria

Qualifications	Master of Social and Economic Sciences
Work experience	14 years
Job title	Managing Partner
Responsibilities	Corporate management of an IT group of companies with a focus on software for the entire life cycle of real estate. Strategic management, Finance, Human Resources and Legal department

5. Education

Opportunities for training and further education are as comprehensive and diverse as the FM industry itself:

- Germany: gefma: Bildung und Wissen
- Austria: AMS Weiterbildungsdatenbank, FMA - Ausbildungsdatenbank
- Switzerland: FM Bildungslandschaft, SBFI: Bildungssystem Schweiz

5.1 Undergraduate degree (Bachelor's)

In the German-speaking countries, a number of independent/undergraduate Bachelor's degree courses in FM have now become established. In six, seven or eight semesters, students at traditional universities, universities of applied sciences and dual-study universities earn a Bachelor's degree

(Bachelor of Science, Bachelor of Engineering or Bachelor of Arts) worth 180, 210 or 240 ECTS credits. Courses of study at universities of applied sciences generally include an internship.

5.2 Postgraduate degree (Master's)

Postgraduate, consecutive FM study programs build on a first professional degree and lead to the academic titles Master of Science in FM, Engineering/Business Administration and Master of Arts. The standard duration of a Master's program is 2, 3 or 4 semesters earning 60, 90 or 120 ECTS credits respectively. These study programs count as part of basic academic entitlement and are financed by the state.

5.3 Continuing education (Master of Advanced Studies)

In addition to the consecutive Master's programs described above (enrolment for which generally requires a Bachelor's degree), there are further Certificate and Master's programs that are usually completed part-time, such as Master of Advanced Studies (MAS) or (Executive) Master of Business Administration (E)MBA. These further education programs require qualified work experience and often earn a lower number of ECTS credits compared with consecutive programs. They also entail higher fees, as they are not subsidized by the state.

5.4 Country-specific qualifications

5.4.1 Germany

There are accredited FM study programs at around 20 higher education institutions, which are also certified by gefma according to the professional quality criteria of gefma 610 and/or gefma 616 guidelines. The majority of these are Bachelor's and Master's programs as well as individual Certificate study programs.

Non-students in particular are enabled by providers of vocational education and training as well as professional associations in FM to obtain additional qualifications by taking subject-specific examinations. These are independently developed and approved by the providers and the professional associations.

In particular, gefma Fachwirt (Business Administrator) Facility Management and gefma Servicekraft (Service Provider) Facility Management have established themselves as additional qualifications. On the basis of the gefma Guidelines 620 Fachwirt FM (full-time or part-time) and 630 Servicekraft FM, professionally qualified persons can acquire the final certificate. This is currently available from five gefma-certified training providers. Already, more than 4,300 specialist business administrators and service providers have graduated from these quality-certified advanced training courses for property management. Furthermore, gefma is resolutely pursuing the establishment of an independent training profession with interdisciplinary competences for operative services, which is urgently needed in FM.

In addition to the gefma training levels on the part of RealFM, the certified Facility Information Manager – FIM (RealFM e. V.) is now also becoming highly relevant. The blended learning course for training Facility Information Managers (FIMs) comprises a total of four modules and a practical case study. The job description was developed in conjunction with the BIM2FM Guide for the 'Application of BIM Methodology in the Operation and Use Phase' in the life cycle of real estate.

5.4.2 Austria

In addition to academic programs such as the FM & Real Estate Management Bachelor's program at FH Kufstein, part-time four-semester FM Master's programs (MBA, MAS) can be completed in Austria, provided the relevant professional experience can be demonstrated. Furthermore, there are numerous degree programs related to FM that offer the possibility of specialization. Examples are Architecture, Civil Engineering and Business Informatics. Operational FM and FS are also increasingly being taught in the secondary sector, such as the higher technical schools. Knowledge about FM and the connections with other trades is likewise taught in the training of apprentices (e.g. in electrical engineering). The Vienna University of Technology imparts basic knowledge about FM and digital transformation with a focus on management of real estate and FM (RE/FM) in its Architecture, Civil Engineering, Mechanical Engineering and Industrial Engineering degree programs. In addition, there is an Executive MBA FM offer with a focus on Workplace Management, ESG and Digital Transformation. The University for Continuing Education in Krems offers a Master of Science Facility and Property Management. Courses are also offered at the Berufsförderungsinstitut (BFI) and Wirtschaftsförderungsinstitut (WIFI).

5.4.3 Switzerland

The tertiary level of advanced vocational education and training includes federal examinations and colleges of higher professional education (Höhere Fachschulen). The federal examinations and the colleges of higher professional education are both aimed at workers who wish to deepen their professional knowledge, take on a management function or become a company director. At the federal level, professional examinations lead to a Swiss federal certificate of proficiency. Higher professional examinations usually build on a professional examination and lead to a federal diploma (e.g. Management in FM and Maintenance HFP). Exam preparation can be completed at Strickhof, IAI Synergis, WBZ, GBSSG, ABZ-Suisse among others. In colleges of higher professional education, the training courses (part-time or full-time) are somewhat broader in scope than the federal examinations. Full-time courses last at least two years, while the duration of part-time courses is usually three years. BFF Kompetenz Bildung Bern is the only college of higher professional education that offers a degree in Facility Management HF. The Zurich University of Applied Sciences (ZHAW), together with its Institute for Facility Management (IFM), is the only Swiss university to offer tertiary-level training opportunities in a combination of Real Estate and FM with Bachelor's and Master's degrees as well as academic continuing education (MAS, DAS, CAS).

5.5 International qualifications

IFMA offers globally recognized certification opportunities for the development and advancement of FM competencies: Essentials of Facility Management, Facility Management Professional (FMP), Sustainability Facility Professional (SFP), Certified Facility Manager (CFM), FM trainings.

5.6 Online courses and further training

Nanodegrees, Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCS), general online courses, video lectures, MicroMaster, Professional Certificate – online learning is booming and enjoying ever greater popularity. A host of international course platforms such as Coursera, Udacity, Udemy, Edx, iversity/Springer offer a comprehensive selection of further education options. Frequently, students enroll for individual courses and then switch to a full online degree program. Other reputable providers in the online education sector are FutureLearn, Skillshare, MasterClass, Pluralsight, Harvard Business School, LinkedIn Learning, Lecturio, University of the People, Kajabi, elopage and the Swiss Distance University of Applied Sciences. Some of these organizations focus on monetizing their proprietary expertise by recording, sharing and charging for video courses recorded in house. There are also dedicated search portals for online courses, such as Edukatico and distancelearningportal. Even if only limited FM-relevant content is currently offered there, this is sure to change fundamentally in the near future due to the increasing demand for individualized and modular online knowledge transfer.

6. Networks

6.1 Professional associations in the DACH countries

People join professional associations for a variety of reasons, but participation is worthwhile in every respect. The opportunity to exchange ideas with other professionals is generally the main motivation. By contributing knowledge and personal experience, members can actively shape the further development of the industry. The resulting increase in competence is in turn reflected in the changing job profiles and their requirements. In addition to the development of regulations, guidelines, quality standards and white papers for the further professionalization of the sector, such associations also offer a platform for vital (personal) networking. This takes place, for example, through participation in cross-sectoral or professional events that offer access to leaders at management level and thus to a large number of renowned companies. Digitalization and especially social media have significantly expanded the reach in this regard. In topic-specific task forces and market-oriented communities of interest, members research, develop and promote FM themes. In regionally based working groups, associations and networks, they also undertake future-oriented projects. Some of the major associations and institutions are listed below:

International	Germany	Austria	Switzerland
– EuroFM	– gefma	– FMA	– fmpro
– IFMA	– RealFM	– IFMA Austria	– IFMA Switzerland
– IFMA EMEA	– gif	– MFA Österreich	– SVIT FM
– GlobalFM	– Die Möglichmacher	– IG Lebenszyklus Bau	– RICS Switzerland
– RICS	– RICS Deutschland	– REUG	

7. FM2030: Current developments and prospects

In the future, the real estate industry and FM will probably be shaped by three current developments. Particularly noteworthy are:

1. new working environments and services to promote employee productivity, health and well-being;
2. digital transformation of real estate and service delivery;
3. sustainability, i.e. requirements of the United Nations in the area of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and Environmental, Social, Governance (ESG) of the EU.

The economy is currently vulnerable to many uncertainties and subject to constant change. The COVID pandemic has had a major impact on the way work is done and has been a real accelerant for 'smart work': working from home, remote working and so-called 'third-place' working became the norm virtually overnight. This has many advantages, such as a reduction in commuting times and the relief of pressure on public transport at rush hours as well fewer hours of congestion. These were socio-politically relevant side-effects of the pandemic that had the consequence of employees working less in the office and videoconferencing more from home. This resulted in more time, more flexibility and more personal responsibility, which was very much appreciated by employees and which they would be reluctant to relinquish.

In cooperation with the IT and HR departments, FM has a key role to play in the implementation of these new work practices. The way we work together and the corporate culture in which we work is a central success factor in employer branding and the ability to attract skilled workers in the future. This is because younger generations in particular place high demands on prospective employers and managers. Digitalization and new expectations of the working world due to work-life blending, including the four-day week, part-time and home working, lead to new approaches in HR management, for example 'Digital Leadership', 'Holacracy' and 'Top Sharing'. Not only should these expectations be taken seriously, but companies would do well to rethink and redesign their own working practices. After all, well-qualified employees choose the companies they want to work for and not the other way around. The ethical use of new digital technologies such as IoT, Big Data and AI facilitates new ways of working. Furthermore, audience-centricity and flexibility (service on demand) are central to the combined provision of digital and physical services. Facility managers are both responsible for and lead the digital transformation so that the company can adapt to the new circumstances.

It is up to the Facility Managers to drive the digital transformation and to use the resulting potential for the benefit of employees.

Another area is the efficient use of resources and, indeed, sustainability in general. Around 40 to 45 percent of all CO_2 emissions are directly or indirectly related to the construction and operation of real estate. Sustainability laws, guidelines and optimization requirements therefore have massive implications for the real estate sector. In order to achieve net zero carbon targets, FM will be expected to implement innovative solutions. In the future, the typical building will not only be a consumer of energy but, in the best-case scenario, even an energy generator, which will help to achieve the EU's goal of climate neutrality by 2050 (Green Deal) or by 2045 in Germany. The Green Deal is the basis of the Austrian government's 2020 program to ensure that the nation's building stock goes climate-

neutral by 2040 (Path to a Climate-Neutral Energy Future). Switzerland is implementing the goal of net zero greenhouse gas emissions with its Climate Strategy 2050. New technological opportunities lead to various innovations that promote digital-ethical values, for example the European research project 'Artificial-Intelligence-Augmented Cooling System for Small Data Centers' (ECO-Qube), in which buildings are heated with the waste heat from IT servers and artificial intelligence → **Digitalization meets decarbonization**.

Despite all the attention paid to technology, people are paramount. It is therefore of central importance to focus on the well-being and satisfaction of employees. Especially in the health care sector (hospitals and homes), the demands are constantly increasing. Energy-optimized properties that make employees ill do not solve problems but rather create new ones. The EU Taxonomy Regulation places high demands on European companies in connection with all areas of sustainability. ESG is becoming a key factor for sustainable corporate success, and companies would therefore be well advised to develop and introduce a comprehensive ESG strategy now, as has been shown by the Lünendonk study 'ESG: Current and Future Value Contribution of Facility Management' (published November 2022).

Facility Managers must become more involved and acquire relevant ESG competences in order to meet the high expectations of sustainability, social responsibility and good business practice.

In summary, FM has the strategically relevant responsibility and scope to act on behalf of the company in the following areas:

- developing and operating healthy and safe workplaces;
- enhancing organizational agility and flexibility;
- increasing effectiveness, efficiency and thus productivity;
- developing and implementing sustainability strategies and measures;
- driving the digital transformation as an enabler and, last but not least,
- optimizing the costs of real estate and facilities in a lifecycle-oriented manner in accordance with the property portfolio management strategy.

So, as the Facility Manager of the future, it is your duty to lead your company in the direction of sustainability and ensure that world in which our children grow up is a world worth living in.

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