DIGIWATER

Dissemination & Exploitation Plan

Document information

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Abstract: This document presents the draft Dissemination & Exploitation Plan of the DIGIWATER project to be used by the DIGIWATER consortium to ensure wide dissemination of the project results and their uptake of the project stakeholders involved in the project and outside the consortium.

Version history

Version	Authored by	Revision date	Changes' description
1.0	Patrick Willems	June 2021	Initial document
1.1	Daan Buekenhout, Laurens Breugelmans	August 2022	Interim update: add social media posts, promo materials

Table of content:

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About DIGIWATER

DIGIWATER is an Erasmus+ Knowledge Alliance project on "Digitalisation of water industry by innovative graduate water education". It aims to:

- STRENGTHEN THE INNOVATION CAPACITY OF THE WATER INDUSTRY: Enhance digital innovations in curricula during education as a basic method for later implementation and application in business like industry, administration, consultancy

- TACKLE THE DIGITAL SKILLS MISMATCH IN THE WATER INDUSTRY: Establish smart specialization for digital water through the upgrade of curricula in partner universities with participation from industry

- IMPROVE SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT OF UNIVERSITIES EDUCATING WATER SPECIALISTS: Improve the orientation of academia towards societal and market needs through internationalization of universities, Digital Water Living Lab and Innovation Camps

It is a two-year project launched in January 2021.

DIGIWATER partners and countries are the following:

Research institutions

- NORWEGIAN UNIVERSITY OF LIFE SCIENCES (NMBU), NORWAY
- UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES AND ARTS (TH OWL), GERMANY
- ISTANBUL TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY (ITU), TURKEY
- KU LEUVEN (KUL), BELGIUM
- UNIVERSITY OF CYPRUS (UCY), CYPRUS
- UNIVERSITATEA "DUNAREA DE JOS" DIN GALATI (UGAL), ROMANIA

SME industries

- SUMAQUA, BELGIUM
- DOSCON, NORWAY
- SMARTECH AUTOMATION SRL (SMARTECH), ROMANIA
- MEMSIS ENVIRONMENTAL TECHNOLOGIES R&D A.S. (MEMSIS), TURKEY
- I.A.CO. ENVIRONMENTAL & WATER CONSULTANTS (IACO), CYPRUS
- STADTENTWÄSSERUNGSBETRIEB PADERBORN (STEB), GERMANY

Sector organization

- EUROPEAN WATER ASSOCIATION (EWA), GERMANY

More about DIGIWATER on the project website: http://waterharmony.net/digiwater/

	The DIGIWATER project has been funded with the support of the European Union.

Note that for any project document, the use of the Erasmus+ logo is compulsory:

In addition, any project-related event or activity should clearly specify that it is funded by EU Erasmus+ Programme. Any publication should include the following sentence:

"The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

More information on this is available on: https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/about-eacea/visual-identity_en.

Introduction

This document presents the draft Dissemination & Exploitation Plan of the DIGIWATER project to be used by the DIGIWATER consortium to ensure wide dissemination of the project results and their uptake of the project stakeholders involved in the project and outside the consortium.

The Dissemination & Exploitation Plan is the first task and milestone of the DIGIWATER Work Package 6 on Dissemination and Exploitation, which has the following tasks, task leaders and milestones:

- **Task 6.1 Dissemination & Exploitation Plan** (KUL)

  Milestone 6.1 Dissemination & Exploitation Plan adopted (M3)

- **Task 6.2 Project website** (NMBU)

  Milestone 6.2 Project webpage launched (M1)

- **Task 6.3 Project promo-materials** (STEB)

  Milestone 6.3 Project promo-materials produced (M18)

- **Task 6.4 Social media marketing** (ITU)

  Milestone 6.4 Project accounts in social networks functioning (M6)

- **Task 6.5 Publications** (EWA)

  Milestone 6.5 Articles published (M36)

- **Task 6.6 Exploitation roundtables and/or board meetings** (EWA)

  Milestone 6.6 Exploitation roundtables and/or board meetings conducted (M36)

As indicated in Figure 1, these Work Package 6 tasks are in support of the other Work Packages and tasks in the DIGIWATER project.
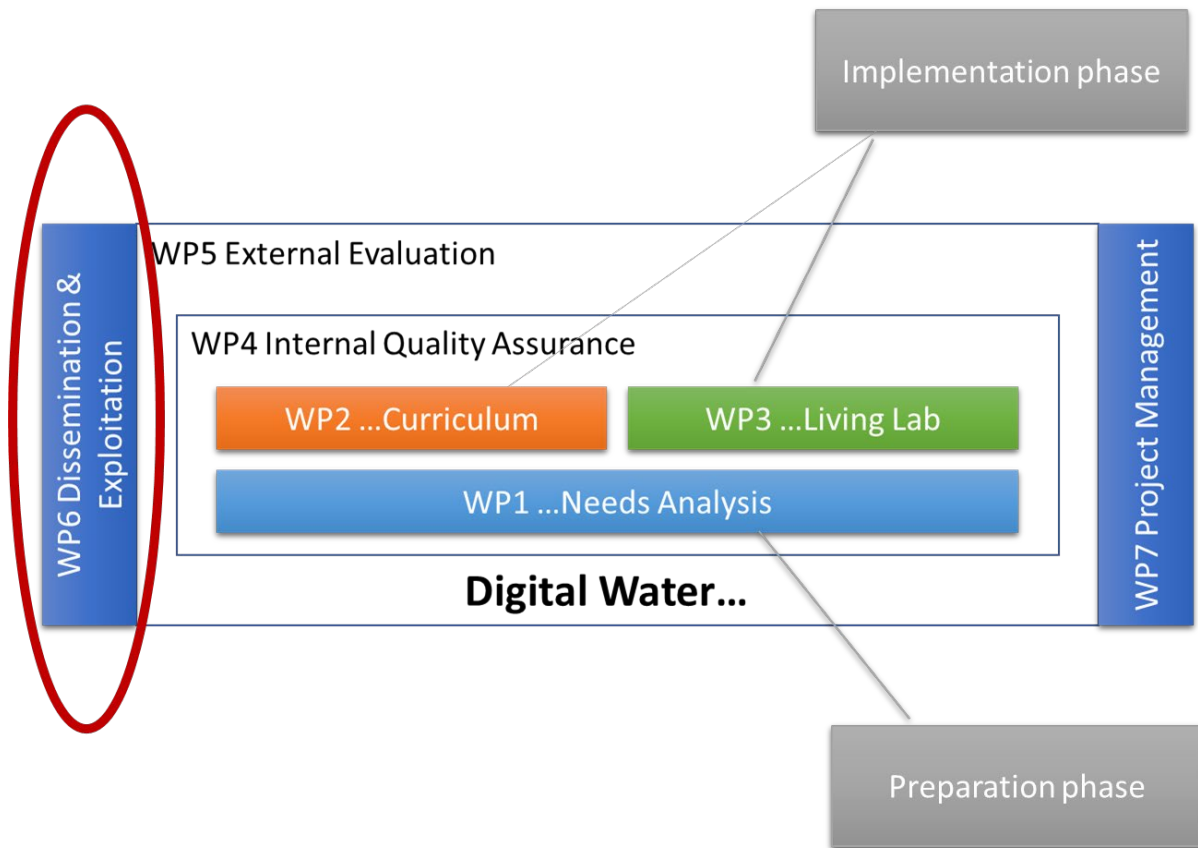
Figure 1. Dissemination and Exploitation as transversal tasks in the DIGIWATER project

The objectives of Work Package 6 are to achieve maximum awareness of the project results, create and implement a sustainable dissemination and exploitation strategy based on involvement at all levels.

KU Leuven will lead this Work Package 6, coordinating the 6 task leaders NMBU, STEB, ITU, and EWA, who will manage and monitor the work progress.

The overall approach is to create a detailed dissemination & exploitation plan for the project based on the analysis of stakeholders in WP1 and ensure for each of these stakeholder groups efficient dissemination through the project website, promo-materials, social media and publications and to facilitate the uptake of the project results by the stakeholders through presentations, also at roundtables and board meetings of the regional/national agencies for higher education and in quality management boards.

The dissemination, exploitation and communication process

According to European Commission, the dissemination process is a planned process of providing information on the quality, relevance and effectiveness of the project results to key actors. It should consider the questions on TO WHOM and WHERE to disseminate, WHAT to disseminate, WHO to disseminate, WHEN to disseminate, HOW to disseminate, and WHY to disseminate (expected achievements). This should be organized considering the skills of all DIGIWATER consortium partners in relation to communication and dissemination activities.

This process is being specified in this dissemination and exploitation plan. The plan is being developed very early in this project and will be updated throughout the project based on the evaluation of its impacts. Different types of dissemination and exploitation materials will be produced, which will be kept up-to-date and matching with the image of the project and its evolution.

The dissemination and exploitation will be conducted on two levels:

- The partners-based level: It refers to the internal dissemination activities within the DIGIWATER partner institutions which are classified as important. The teaching staff members involved in the project activities will be requested to disseminate the knowledge and experiences to their colleagues at organized meetings, study visits and workshops beyond the DIGIWATER framework. Also, a special attention will be paid to promoting new curricula in the partner universities and the developed life-long learning courses for professionals in the water sector.

- The general level: External dissemination activities will target non-partner universities, the wider community, bodies and agencies in the water sector and the general public with the aim to promote the project and its outcomes. The main tools of external dissemination are the project website and presentations, promo materials, through social media channels, publications and at roundtables and board meetings of the regional/national agencies for higher education or in quality management boards.

These target groups, beneficiaries and tools will be described in the next sections.

Target groups and beneficiaries

In Work Package 1, target groups and beneficiaries of the DIGIWATER project were identified. They consist of students; young water professionals; water educators and researchers at a local and European level, both in academia and industry; industrial stakeholders of the water sector; commercial sector; public agencies (e.g. environmental protection agencies and

climate change agencies, water utilities and town planning authorities etc.) at regional and European level; policymakers in education, environment and climate change; developers of quality assurance standards for higher education at regional to the European level.

These defined groups of stakeholders, to whom the project outcomes will be of interest, will be targeted with specific methods of communication to ensure the maximum benefit to the European and International communities.

From the DIGIWATER WP1 stakeholders' survey on "digital water needs", we learned that there is a high need for enhanced digital water transformation from Academia to the Government and the Enterprises sector, including training of the personnel in supporting the digital water transformation. Important barriers at this moment are the lack of specialized human resources in the Academia sector, the current management policies in the Government sector, and the hardware/software and network deficiencies and data limitations in the Enterprise sector. The survey has highlighted the need for better preparing the newly recruited water specialists for entering the water industry, as well as the need for an accessible and user-friendly database in the Government and the Enterprise sector. Advanced monitoring technologies and intelligent equipment are mostly needed by the Academia sector. Academics are moreover highly interested in upgrading their current curricula, which will lead to better preparing the future water specialists for entering the water industry.

These dissemination and exploitation needs will be met in this project through a set of communication actions, including key messages for specific target audiences, with reference to the communication tools and actions as defined next.

- Project newsletters will be written and distributed via email and through the web at least twice a year to all project partners to inform them of the progress of the planned project activities so that all partners will be aware of what is happening in the project, even in the areas in which they are not directly involved.

- In order to inform the potential students of the project content and new curricula development, electronic information brochures will be prepared and distributed. In addition, special attention will be paid to promoting new curricula in the partner universities and the developed life-long learning courses for professionals in the water sector.

- Promotions will be organized for non-partner universities using roundtables and info days in order to promote training and master studies in the field of digital water.

- Effective dissemination will also be achieved by including students in the dissemination process. The students who are participating in the DIGIWATER activities

will be the best and most efficient dissemination channel, as ambassadors to the project.

- To meet the goal of increasing the public and state authorities' awareness for the significance of the digitalization of the water sector, brochures and leaflets will be distributed aimed to provide all relevant project information to interested stakeholders, as well as to publish information about DIGIWATER through social media and in articles.

- Press releases will be created and disseminated within project partners networks and DIGIWATER website and social media platforms for DIGIWATER key events and achievements.

- NMBU, EWA and the other project partners will mobilise their links with several professional organisations, associations and network to facilitate effective project dissemination and exploitation through their channels and events: Water Europe; IWA (YWP) (specialist group member); Network for Water in European regions and cities (NetwercH2O); European Water Partnership, UIIN (University-industry innovation network).

- Presentations of the project outcomes will be given at regional and international conferences, and relevant conferences identified for that.

A more detailed plan for these activities will be developed in the next months, based on the timing for the tasks on the development of the different communication tools and actions as defined next.

Project website (NMBU)

Aims:

A dedicated website will be set-up (including an open access and restricted area). One of the website pages will focus on the description of the project content, objectives and information on the involved partners.

The restricted part of the website will enable exchange of documents and information between the partners. This will support dissemination within the consortium, provide up-to-date information on the progress of the work packages and enable sharing of documents such as Work Package reports and project management reports.

Also the promotion activities (articles, publications, newsletters etc.) will be included.

Outcomes:

A website will be designed and updated regularly to serve as the main communication channel to the project's partners and target audiences. The website will be public (open access) communication channel and will host newsletters as well as project results adopted for each target group. The website will be used for communication of regular project updates and news from the partners' community. A restricted area will be created on the website that will host specific projects information for partners. This restricted area will be used for the exchange of documents and information between the project partners.

Planning:

The project webpage is being updated when new deliverables are available.

Results:

A first version of the website has been setup at the start of the project: http://waterharmony.net/digiwater/

Project promo-materials (STEB)

Aims:

A project brand (logo and visual identity), including presentation and document templates, will be developed. DIGIWATER partners are invited to use consistently this project logo and these templates. This reinforces the image of the project and the perception of a project that falls under professional quality standards. Partners are required to use the DIGIWATER project logo and including the Erasmus+ logo and disclaimer when publishing dissemination materials for the project.

A project flyer and a roll-up will be designed and distributed/displayed at events to promote the project.

Promotional materials will be made available for the project partners such as bags, leaflets with project midterm and final results, project brochure, pencil, folder, poster, roll-up reflecting visual identity of the project.

Following the positive experience from the previous Water Harmony Erasmus+ project that shown more than 70% of similar target audience reacted/remembered short videos rather than printed materials or online text, partners will develop short video teasers about the project and disseminate online and during the project meetings.

Outcomes: Partners will print promotional materials such as bags, leaflets with project midterm and final results, project brochure, pencil, folder, poster, roll-up reflecting visual identity of the project, video.

Planning:

Promotional material will be distributed to participants within the innovation camps.

Daniel: add more detailed plan + steps

Results:

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Figure 2 DIGIWATER business card design with QR code to the website

Figure 3 DIGIWATER roll-up design with the project partners

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Social media marketing (ITU)

Aims:

It has been concluded in several Erasmus+ projects that social media are the most effective channel to access students and young teachers/researchers. Therefore, this project will develop and implement social media marketing plan to promote project and disseminate its results in social networks.

The plan will include analysis of social network according to the geographical targeting of the partner countries, creation of project profiles optimised for search, building connections with users' groups and other projects/organisations, collecting data about project visibility in social networks (conversion rates, reach, mentions, sentiment, total shares).

Project pages will be created on Research Gate, LinkedIn (to spread information about the project to the experts in innovations, entrepreneurship and digitalisation in the water industry), …

To reach the student population, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram will be used. A DIGIWATER alumni social networking group will be created not only to create a sustainable network but also for sharing of information, marketing of the project and project material beyond the project partners.

Key words will be used such as digitalization, serious games, readiness that will be used in dissemination materials.

Outcomes:

Accounts in social networks and engaging content to be disseminated through the project accounts: images, videos, posts, project news, infographics, e-materials based on curriculum and its content.

Planning:

1) Firstly, the project pages were created.
   - e-mail: digiwater.erasmusplus@outlook.com
   - LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/groups/9072370/
   - ResearchGate: https://www.researchgate.net/project/DIGIWATER-Digitalisation-of-water-industry-by-innovative-graduate-water-education
   - Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/digiwaterEplus/
   - Twitter: https://twitter.com/digiwaterEplus
   - Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/digiwater.Eplus/
2) The project website added to the accounts.

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3) An invitation link will be sent to the project partners. A network will be established for the project.

4) The Public report RD_2021_01, which is the result of the WP1 work package, will be shared in all platforms.

5) In order to increase the visibility of the report, figures and discussions of the results will be added as a post once a week (M7).

6) The need for digitalisation in the water sector will be emphasized through related news.

7) The Digital Water curriculum design workshop will be shared for two weeks. Depending on the meeting type (online or face-to-face), different images will be shared.

8) The reports that R2.1.2 (M9), R2.1.3 (M13), R2.1.4 (M14), R2.2.1 (M15), R2.2.2 (M16), R2.2.3 (M18), R2.2.5 (M19), R2.3.1 (M19), R2.3.2 (M25), R2.3.5 (M34), R2.2.6 (M36) to be prepared within the scope of WP2 will be shared within the week they are published.

9) The final reports of the innovation camp, R3.1 (M9), R.3.2, R.3.2.2 (M18, M28) and final report R3.4 (M36) will be shared.

10) According to R2.3.2 photos from trainings will be shared on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.

11) All photos, online or real time meetings, trainings videos, infographics, e-materials and publications will be disseminated.

12) News from sources such as Water Europe, Water JPI, IWA, Network for Water in European regions and cities (NetwercH2O), European Water Partnership, UIIN (University-industry innovation network) that promote digitalization in the water sector will also be shared.

13) The activity of the accounts, such as the number of likes and shares, and the increase in followers, will be compiled specifically for the platforms in a social media report.

Ershahin: add more detailed plan + steps

Results:

Figure 4 Example social media post: meeting in Norway

Table 1: Statistics of social media accounts and sharings (August 2022)

Channel	Net Followers Gain/Loss	# of Posts	Engagement Rate	Click-throughs	Mentions
Instagram	+42	2	43%	-	0
Facebook	+6	2	20%	72	0
Twitter	+15	4	11.4%	299	0
LinkedIn	+83	3	82%	291	1
Research Gate	+1	0	-	-	-

Publications (EWA)

Aims:

During the course of the project, the project results will be published in the most appropriate journals, industrial papers and newsletters alongside communicating results at leading European conferences. The publications are foreseen in engineering education journals and water technology and industrial magazines. They will increase the awareness of the potential and applicability of the digital water curriculum and will promote digital water curriculum and subject in general.

Outcomes:

Publications in engineering education journals and water technology and industrial magazines.

Planning:

…

Olsen: add more detailed plan + steps

Exploitation roundtables and board meetings (EWA)

Aims:

Partners will participate in roundtables and board meetings of the regional/national agencies for higher education or in quality management boards. Such meetings are organised regularly, and some partners have experience of participation in those, therefore we plan one such participation per country. At this meetings partners will present project developments with relevance to the meeting topic – curriculum, quality assurance etc.

Outcomes:

Reports that summarise the exploitation roundtables and board meetings.

Planning:

…

Olson: add more detailed plan + steps

Key Performance Indicators

The Dissemination and Exploitation Plan will be evaluated based on the following KPIs, to be achieved by the end of the project:

- ✓ D&E plan ready
- ✓ Project website visitors >1000
- ✓ Promo-materials produced >5 types
- ✓ Number of promo-video views >1000
- ✓ Connections to project accounts in social networks >300
- ✓ Number of reads in open access >50
- ✓ Number of events >3, number of participants >50