
Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union 


**STRENGTHENING WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT
IN THE WESTERN BALKANS**

**COMMUNICATING WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT IN WESTERN
BALKANS:
BEST PRACTICES AND LESSONS LEARNED**



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University of Nis  www.swarm.ni.ac.rs

Strengthening of master curricula in water resources management for the Western Balkans HEIs and stakeholders
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The importance of communicating management of water resources



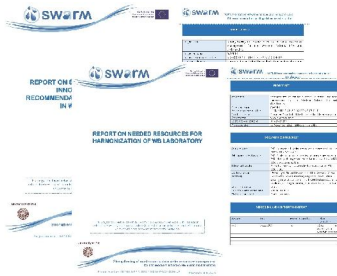
Source: PCORI Dissemination and Implementation Framework, February 2015

One of **KEY ACTION** in implementing the **SWARM** Erasmus+ project >

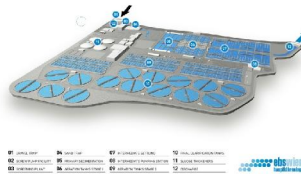
“Effective (and efficient) dissemination of the contemporary achievements in the field of Water Resource Management”

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The SWARM project adopted the strategy **TO OPENLY PRESENT**



- the project results – **THE REPORTS**,
- new achievements,
- experiences of good foreign practice.



MOTIVATION! ... WHY ?

- to serve the purpose of knowledge transfer
- to contribute to the development of WRM in WB countries and beyond.



Promotional and educational media contents (all kinds of them) devised as an agent for presenting contemporary advancements and innovations in the field.



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Defining strategy and agenda of activities within the SWARM project regarding WRM

DUAL FOCUS >

- on target groups of WRM professionals (local authorities, SME and agencies in the water sector)
- on the general public (bearing in mind the importance of water topics for the communities and society, in general).

DUAL APPROACH >

direct (personal, institutional) contact with WRM professionals

promotion through diverse media channels targeting wider community and public

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The necessity of adjustments of activities due to **COVID-19 pandemic crisis**

The project activities have had to be adjusted, by the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic crisis!

- **Numerous online and virtual events** added to the project agenda.
- Limited the possibility for the live (field) activities;
- Provoked to switch the focus on the production of media content and online events.
- **Many previously locally conceived events and activities became viral and open to the online community worldwide.**



Implemented activities

The activities performed within the **SWARM project** in the period of three years could be divided into three major categories >>>

I category targeted the WRM professionals

II category involved the interactive (and virtual) events

III category - “promotional activities”

I category (target> the WRM professionals)



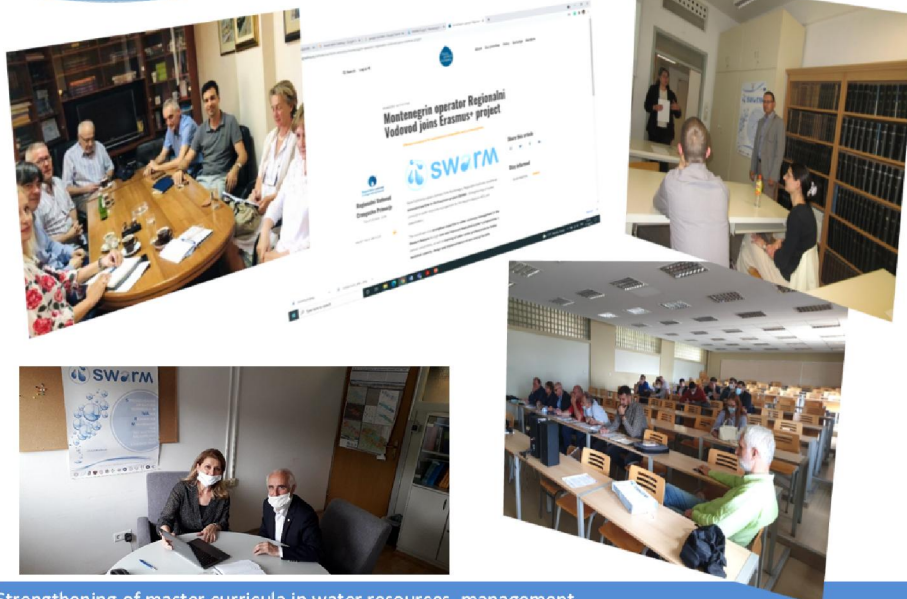
The activities included >>>

- personal and direct contact with WRM professionals
- compiled a database of WB WRM enterprises
- visits and meetings with WRM representatives and enterprises
- round tables and etc.

Characteristics > an open and semi-structured agendas

Opportunity

- to share experiences and
- to understand the needs of professionals working in practice.



I category (target> the WRM professionals)

The SWARM project activities included
5 study visits to wastewater treatment plants in the EU countries:



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II category

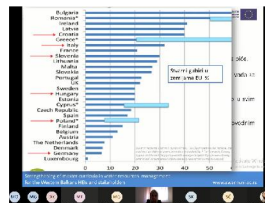
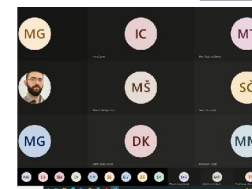
(target> WRM professionals, sectorial companies, scientists, students, NGOs from WRM & related fields)



These events included >>>

- 6 three-day trainings within EU partner institutions (in total 92 teaching staff trained);
- a day long webinar “Webinar - Frontiers in Water Resources Management” on 5 May 2020 with 6 panellists and 75 participants from 28 countries;
- 3-day long online training on WRM, from 8 to 10 of June 2021 with 174 participants and 45 water-related companies from 6 WB countries; and
- Inter-project coaching meeting with 18 panellists and 57 participants for 16 countries.

Characteristics > structured agendas but still interactive



III category

(target> the general public and local communities)



These included >>>

- self (project)-managed media contents (official project website, official FB page, YT channel, newsletters...)
- printed material (posters, roll-ups, leaflets, brochures, booklets, etc.)
- third-party managed media contents (participated, as guests, in local and national media programs and services).

Characteristics >

- the project website is the official source of the project results;
- social media contents communicate in direct, relaxed and unofficial manner



CONCLUSIONS

having the experience of three years of SWARM project realization >>>

- Many professionals in the water sector are ready to expand their knowledge and learn from best practices
- Young professionals to be encouraged to take advantage of contemporary services (social media, computer programs, etc.) to make progress within the field (knowledge transfer, networking, etc.).
- The lack of funding may reduce the interest of WRM professionals in new educational activities and innovative solutions in WRM;
- Ready-made products and services are more appreciated.
- A language barrier and lesser motivation is indicated for older and more experienced participants.

CONCLUSIONS

having the experience of three years of SWARM project realization >>>

- Future advancements in local practices and education may be strengthened by networking of professionals and academics from the same and related fields within both, WB and EU countries
- New ideas and knowledge emerge through the exchanged experiences between the professionals coming from different backgrounds (educational and locational)
- It is very important to communicate information and ideas in a clear and simple way, to avoid misleading and deceptions



Thank you!