



INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL FOR RESEARCH AND INNOVATION IN BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION

INFORMATION

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Around the Task Groups and Working Commissions

TG23 – Culture in Construction

Introducing the New Joint Coordinator: Dr. Wilco Tijhuis



At its meeting in Budapest, Hungary on 7 and 8 October 2002 the CIB Programme Committee officially appointed Dr.ir. Wilco Tijhuis as Joint Coordinator of TG23.

Curriculum Vitae

Since 1997 Wilco is a part time Ass.-Professor in Construction Management & Construction Process at University of Twente, Faculty of Business, Public Administration and Technology, Dept. of Construction Process Management, in Enschede, The Netherlands (www.sms.utwente.nl).

He holds a B.Sc.-degree in Structural Engineering (1987), and studied at Eindhoven University of Technology from which he holds a M.Sc.-degree in Construction Management (1992) and a M.Sc.-degree in Real Estate-Development (1992). He also holds a Ph.D.-degree in International Construction

Procurement at Eindhoven University of Technology (1996).

Parallel to and in-between his studies he has been working for larger construction and project-development companies in The Netherlands and abroad, within functions of work-preparation, project management and -development. Part of his Ph.D-thesis was the development of a model, known as the NEDU-matrix: A scheme in which contact, contract & conflict was designed and proven to be related with culture, construction-process & technology; especially against the background of international construction process and procurement.

Wilco's Research-experiences are in several (inter)national collaborative construction research projects in e.g. Germany, The Netherlands, South Africa, Hong Kong, France, Finland, etc. He publishes regularly, and is often being invited to participate on



(inter)national symposia, conferences and workshops/courses, to give speeches and lectures, etc.

Since 1997 he is also one of the managing partners in the company WT/Consult BV – International Construction Process & Development, in Rijssen, The Netherlands (www.wtprojects.com), with activities/references and participations in The Netherlands and abroad, e.g. Germany, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, China, USA, etc.

His practical experiences are specific in international construction-processes and concepts, especially on strategic and rationalization/recovery level. Activities in international business are well-related to multicultural construction-issues, e.g. in development, coördinating and rationalizing/training processes and concepts within specific projects and strategies.

Coordinator's Statement

The Task Group has existed a few years now, setting a mile-stone in the field of culture-issues in construction. It has been successful in the definition and recognition of 'culture', putting it on a serious research-level in a strong 'technology-driven' field of industry, the construction-business.

Globalisation and Culture

As one of the results of globalisation, the internationalisation in construction research and industry still goes on. Although some may expect that this may lead to one global (construction) community with a decrease of differences and difficulties in international construction, this seems to become only partly true, or even be completely wrong! Due to the work of TG23 and others we can see an important key-factor in this: The main issue of construction research and industry still stay the 'people's factors'; and these immediately are connected to culture-issues, i.e. behaviour, background, etc. Thus, 'globalisation' often seems to take place on a local scale with local cultural influences, leading to a sense of 'glocalization'.

Research and Industry

In a technology-driven environment as construction is, the mentioned 'people's factors' often are recognized as being 'soft' and only seem to act just as 'background-levels' for processes and projects. But, as TG23 mainly focuses on the culture-issues, it should be clear that we are not only focussing on the 'soft' side, but try to get understanding of the behavioural mechanisms in processes and projects. These mechanisms often lead to serious conflicts, disturbing the progress (and reducing the pleasure...!) in construction totally. Being able to get really insight in specific differences will lead to improve people's understanding of behaviour, stimulating the improvement of processes and projects, resulting into a more successful (and pleasant...!) way of working into construction. This leads to one of our main approaches: Improving insight-information of real-life projects and processes in a broad scope, leading to

understanding, developing, implementing, testing and improving theoretical frameworks, on an international level. Good collaboration between academics and industry are essential in these issues! And in addition to that: We often can learn from other industries outside the construction-business!

TG23 and CIB

The behavioural mechanisms are actual in all fields of construction, e.g. represented in the several CIB-themes. So, TG23 can add valuable knowledge and experiences to the discussions and practice of other research-themes within CIB's scope of research. I therefore invite members of other working commissions and task groups to participate into research on 'culture-issues' within our Task Group 23, keeping in mind one of the common goals of CIB: Improving construction industry by adding research-value to the daily practice. On an international scale, but with understanding local practices. So that 'culture' really will get 'part of the deal'!