



**February 2012**

**Around the Commissions**

**W112 - Culture in Construction**

**Report on Developments in Construction Culture Research:  
Overview of Activities of CIB W112 'Culture in Construction'**

by  
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**Background**

Attention to culture as an influencing topic within construction business-environments has become an increasingly serious topic, because today's world is increasingly globalizing, resulting in a continuous growth of multi-cultural human interactions. The capability of handling the culture-issue within construction processes is a kind of risk-management tool: using it can reduce the risk for dissatisfaction of all parties involved, by reducing the risk of behavioural miscommunication.

Hereafter follow a summarised overview of how CIB has so far addresses this issue of Culture in Construction. The full and more detailed overview can be downloaded [here](#).

**The Start in 2000: Task Group TG23 - Culture in Construction**

One of the first workshops of TG23, in 2001 in Enschede in The Netherlands was entitled: 'Culture in Construction: Part of the Deal?' It brought together academics as well as practitioners from several disciplines: Construction, Sociology, Economics and Business sciences. In the end it lead to the conclusion that 'culture is indeed part of the deal' but it needs a sound structure within which it can be categorized more into detail, leading to the development of some form of tool for handling culture within the actual business-environment. See separate news articles about the 2001 [conference](#) and about its [proceedings](#).



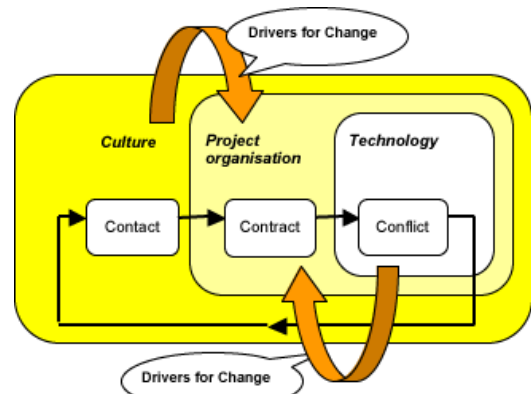
In addition to above proceedings the Task Group published the following publication in 2002:

- CIB Publication - No 275: Perspective on Culture in Construction. The purpose of this publication was to give readers a variety of perspectives on culture and the way the topic of culture is being treated amongst the international community of researchers in construction management. See separate news articles about this [publication](#).



The need for developing improved research models is still an important goal. It will lead to a better understanding and insight for academics about culture-related topics, and also the better management and coordination for construction-professionals.

An example of analyzing the 'culture-issue' within a specific construction environment, is the 3C-model™.



The 3C-model™, representing the interconnected relationship between culture (contact), project-organization (contract) and technology (conflict) [Tjihuis, 1996; 2001].



## Next Step in 2006: Establishment of Working Commission W112 - Culture in Construction

Within W112, there is a community of enthusiastic researchers and practitioners, who aim:

- to learn, to exchange, to investigate and to experience developments and improved insights about business-cultures and its influences within the wide range of construction-related themes.

This has led for example to the following publication:

- The recently internationally published book 'Culture in International Construction: see [here](#). This book focuses not only on academics and students, but especially also on practitioners of industry within the managerial, strategic and operational context. It focuses on multi-cultural and multi-national construction business-environments. It describes and analyzes actual theories for business-culture related topics, illustrated with clarifying examples from daily construction industry within an international scope. Several lessons learnt are presented, based on the thorough descriptions and analyses of business-cases within construction and development related situations. The book has been published by Routledge / Taylor & Francis / Spon Press, from United Kingdom and USA, in July 2011.



Conferences organised by W112 include the following:

- In 2006, W112 organized its own first conference, in conjunction with other CIB Working Commissions, in Dubai on the theme: Sustainable Development through Culture and Innovation. See separate news articles about the 2006 [conference](#) and about its [proceedings](#).
- The next large event was the conference in Shanghai, which took place in 2008, on the theme: Securing High Performance through Cultural Awareness and Dispute Avoidance. It was good to see that the Chinese and Asian participants at this conference were committed to learn and exchange more from the culture-topic. See separate news article about the 2008 [conference](#) and about its [proceedings](#).
- More recently, W112 at the 2010 CIB World Building Congress in Salford, UK, was



responsible for a special congress session together with Task Group TG59 - People in Construction. The proceedings from this session can be downloaded [here](#).

- The latest CIB W112 event was held in September 2011 in conjunction with the 1st International Construction Business and Management Symposium - ICBMS in Kuala Lumpur. This conference was organized and hosted by Prof. Dr. Christopher Preece and Dr. Mohamad Syazli Fathi. Participants came from all over the world, with especially those participating from the Asian and Pacific region. Interesting exchange of views, theories and practices in the field of business-cultures took place, leading to a better understanding of multi-cultural and cross-border activities and practices within international construction industry. For a detailed overall conference report see [here](#).

### Current Strategy of W112

For the coming years the Commission will focus on:

- Understanding business-culture as a 'driver' for building a better world
- Maintain and extend practice-data ('inventory')
- Better understanding theoretical backgrounds
- Integration practice/research internally/externally
- Strengthen W112's relations with other (CIB)-groups
- Publications & Public Relations.

This approach makes the awareness of culture's influences still stronger in becoming 'part of the deal' within construction related topics and environments. The culture-issue influences several parts of the (human) environment. Within the construction industry, with its strong impact on the (human) environment, cultural influences can be found before, during and after the whole construction process, and between all stakeholders and shareholders involved, directly and indirectly. Consequently the focus for W112 is the construction-industry's business-environment, as being 'the' core-business of CIB.

### Additional Information

For additional information about CIB W112 contact the Coordinators: Wilco Tjihuis [w.tijhuis@utwente.nl](mailto:w.tijhuis@utwente.nl) and Anita Liu [amliu@hku.hk](mailto:amliu@hku.hk).



You can find more information on the activities of CIB W112 in the CIB online Database "Commissions": see [here](#). In the shown search engine type "W112" in the field "Commission number" and press "Find records".