

Changing practices of built environment professionals to face sustainability challenge. Analysis of two Scandinavian case studies



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Title of the Paper

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Form of Presentation

- Poster
- Presentation

Short Description (maximum 2500 characters)

Climate change and sustainability concerns have put pressure on the built environment industry to innovate faster. Although innovation in the built environment industry occurs more frequently than generally assumed in terms of skills, practices and know-how, the industry is not well positioned to face sustainability challenges and increasingly strict regulation. Current design, engineering and construction practices suffer from fragmented decision-making, project-based production with scarce incentive to follow up projects outcome, lack of consideration of the involved actors/participants' needs and low interest to design the building as an integrated system of elements. Despite this, relatively few studies reported about how skills, practices and know-how are used to meet the challenges faced by the built environment industry. Starting from the analysis of two cases in Scandinavia, the paper addresses this research gap and looks at projects actors, practices and outcomes to identify new professional approaches in the built environment industry.

A case study describes a networking initiative involving built environment actors, energy professionals and local government aimed at increasing professional competences and promoting the adoption of energy efficiency in buildings. A second case study focuses on the role of architects and designers to stress how communication and negotiation led local planners towards a systemic and holistic building-development project. From this perspective, innovation in the construction sector deeply depends on the diffusion and implementation of new skills and therefore of a multidisciplinary approach. Emerging trends and awareness within building professionals include more attention towards communication, following up, monitoring and stakeholders' involvement.