Ethics in the Built Environment and Anti-Bribery Management Systems

Summary

All professional societies and associations active in the built environment encourage their members to implement compliance programmes, follow due diligence rules and – more and more - anti-corruption standards. Up to now internationally there were no general anti-corruption standards existing, but since 2016 the ISO 37001 Anti-Bribery Management Systems is in force as an A-standard. This is a very powerful standard. If implemented into the companies management system, together with a certification, it can help to secure the existence of it even in cases of obvious corruption.

Students and young engineers will envisage cases of corruption or bribery at least when entering the professional world of engineers, which means when being employed by a – building – company. During their study time normally there is no direct and sound educational path towards ethical behaviour, not to mention a way, how to avoid cases of corruption.

The author started trying to change this situation within the powerful European Socrates Intensive Projects by mapping out a three years summer course “Ethics in the Built Environment (EiBE)” in the year 2001. This course has been carried out successfully at three different places (Oldenburg, Porto, Prague) including 12 universities and involving more than 100 students [1].

Nowadays it is the “Global Infrastructure Anti-Corruption Centre (GIACC)”, which has worked out and published a “University Anti-Corruption Course” and which is available from the respective website of GIACC [2].

EiBE

The EiBE-project aimed to build up an English-language module, which should find its place in the civil engineering education as an obligatory teaching part. The set-up of the module is oriented to different Professional Codes of conduct, as those from the “European Council of Civil Engineers (ECCE)”. The “World Council od Civil Engineers (WCCE)” and different building companies, and especially from the German guidelines VDI 3780, as worked out from the “Association of German Engineers (VDI)”, see figure 1.

The charm of these guidelines as a basis for understanding ethical rules is the fact that all technical actions are common, even to young engineering students, and well-known as part of their daily work. Following just these actions would mean, that “they do their job in an ethical way”. So, the students had to explain in different groups their chosen “action” by words, graphics, visual and acoustic materials, and role playing games. The common supporting relationship and the respective contradictional relationships are worked out.

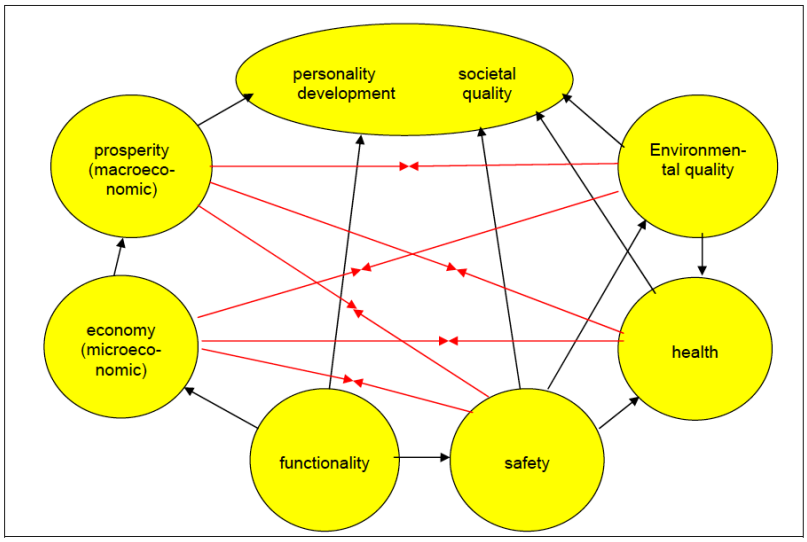

Fig. 1: Ethical values in technical actions [1]

According to the different actions a semester plan for an module “Ethics in the Built Environment” has been worked out as described in table 1.

1. week	General introduction into the subject, definitions
2. week	Ethics and philosophical development
3. week	The importance of value systems, in general life and in technology
4. week	Values in technical action: functionality
5. week	Values in technical action: economy
6. week	Values in technical action: prosperity
7. week	Values in technical action: safety
8. week	Values in technical action: health
9. week	Values in technical action: environmental quality
10. week	Values in technical action: personality development and social quality
11. week	Correlation between values, types and phases of evaluation of technology
12. week	Special problems in the built environment
13. week	The civil engineer and the public
14. week	Chances of ethical rules as part of a/the building company’s firm structure and strategy
15. week	International context and in-depth revision
(16. week	Examine, assessment, ..., if needed, possible, wanted)

Table 1: Proposed semester plan for EiBE, according to the Bologna regulations

Each group showed its results in different ways by choosing also different topics. Some examples are given as follows:

The students from the Czech University in Prague show that safety obviously is strongly connected with commercial or financial interests, fig. 2. Together with students from Kaunas, Lithuania they described the problems of working in a healthy professional environment as shown in fig. 3.

Fig. 2: Safety versus financial interest

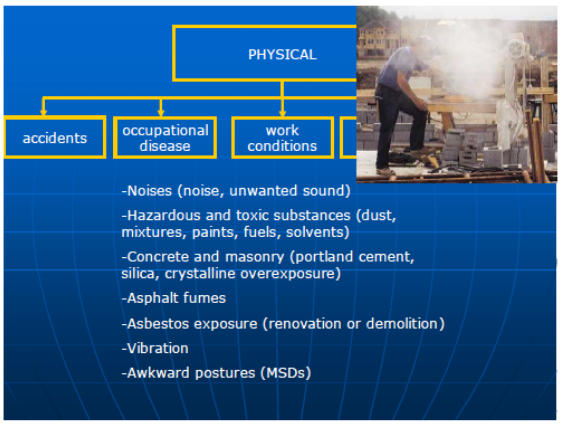

Fig. 3: Health problems on the building site

The students group from Universidade Valencia, Spain, found it necessary to start a comprehensive vocabulary, and by this finding a common language on the different building sites across Europe, see fig. 4.

Vocabularies have been made also in other languages according to the participating groups and universities.

Spanish	English
analisis del proyecto	analysis of the project
acometida	attack
balanza	balance
beneficios	benefits
empresa constructora	building company
industria de la construccion	building industry
cliente	client
competencia	competence
concepto de valores	conception of values
conflicto de interes	conflict of interests
relacion competitiva	competitive relations
efficacia	efficiency, effectiveness etc.

Fig. 4: Vocabulary Spanish - English

GIACC

GIACC is a not-for-profit organisation, which is very active in the field of anti-corruption. The founder of it, together with his wife, has also been the chairman of the ISO 37001 standard working group. GIACC has a number of affiliates and sister associations worldwide. This university course is the newest work of this group, and uses partially ideas of EiBE. The course is constructed as a module to be taught during one semester. The structure is tailored to fit the semester durations. So, a so-called seminar each week takes place for the duration of 12 weeks. Within this time the programme works with 8 sections, which are dedicated to special overarching topics, see table 2.

SUMMARY CONTENTS	
SECTION	**TITLE**
1.	Introduction to Course
2.	What is corruption?
3.	How corruption occurs on infrastructure projects
4.	Why corruption occurs on infrastructure projects
5.	The cost of corruption
6.	Dealing with corruption
7.	Hypothetical Case Study: The Galaxy Highway
8.	Detailed case studies of real life corruption cases

Tab. 2: Anti-corruption university course summary contents

Within the course a number of real case studies were worked out, e.g. those of Rolls-Royce, UK, Odebrecht and Petrobras, BR, or Siemens, DE. The course finishes with an exam, which can be signed additionally by GIACC.

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Bibliography

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[2] www.giaccentre.org