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## **Working Cultures and Human Resources in the Construction Industry of the Balkan Peninsula**

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### **Abstract**

Factors such as characteristics of the human resources, labour conditions, labour relations and others are referred to as "working cultures". The basic goal of the current paper is to identify and discuss main existing characteristics of the "working cultures" that appear in the Balkan. Moreover to consider how attractive such characteristics are for the development of construction projects in the area.

Based on the analysis, the research concluded that Balkan countries include a variety of labour "fields" under continuous evolution. A S.W.O.T. analysis (from the point of view of a foreign employer and employee) led to the conclusion that these countries appear to have interest both for the potential employer and employee.

### **Keywords**

Working cultures, human resources, Balkans, construction industry.

## **1. Introduction**

The term "working cultures" refers to the employees and includes the following main characteristics: labour force, labour organization, labour environment, labour conditions and labour relations. The study of the "working cultures" in various levels is essential for a formed and successful business action. [Naniopoulos A. (1998), Rahtz N. (1998), Naniopoulos A.-Christidis P. (2000)]

Labour force concerns social characteristics (age, sex, nationality etc) as well as the work contract (full time, part time, regular), the source of employment and the number of employees proportional to the field of the market and the category of the profession. Labour organization consists of the work systems, the operational flexibility and the organizational structure. The basic characteristics of the labour environment are health and safety, the human factor in the work field and the natural conditions. Labour conditions include hours (basic working hours, shifts system, overtime) and pay-systems (basic salary, economical motivation, supplementary fees, privileges), process of employment and welfare status (pension, sickness allowance etc). In labour relations the existence of unions, consultation, conflicts and strikes are examined.

### **1.1 Industrial relations (associations) in the Balkan countries.**

The construction sector has always been featured by strong union consciousness and action. The hard working environment in the construction industry resulted to