

## SOFTWARE FOR PROJECT RELIABILITY ESTIMATION AND RISK EVALUATION

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**Abstract.** *The contribution presents a model that is able to simulate construction duration and cost for a building project. This model predicts set of expected project costs and duration schedule depending on input parameters such as production speed, scope of work, time schedule, bonding conditions, maximum and minimum deviations from scope of work and production speed. Construction cost and time models are, in many ways, useful tools in project management. Clients are able to make proper decisions about the time and cost schedules of their investments. Consequently, building contractors are able to schedule predicted project cost and duration before any decision is finalized.*

# 1 INTRODUCTION

The simulation of the construction process (construction activities on the basis of production speed) makes it possible to *monitor the reliability* of expected time schedule and total cost depending on such input parameters as production speed, scope of work, time schedule, bonding conditions, maximum and minimum deviations from scope of work and production speed.

# 2 FIELD OF APPLICATIONS

The simulation model is useful at many levels of project management. The possible fields of application are shown in the table 1.

Tab. 1 Fields of application.

<i>Project phase</i>	<i>User</i>	<i>Field of application</i>
<i>Preparation phase</i>	<i>Client</i>	Decisions about realization of intentions.
	<i>Competitor</i>	Cost assessment and inference of bid price.
	<i>Submitter</i>	Comparative base.
<i>Construction phase</i>	<i>Building contractor</i>	Dynamic schedule.
		Detailed calculation of cost and time schedule of construction activities.
		Optimization of construction process.
	<i>Building contractor &amp; submitter</i>	Decrease of the number of claims among building contractor, building subcontractors and submitter.
		Information source usable in realization of future projects.

# 3 METHODOLOGICAL AND CONCEPTUAL APPROACH

The application software carries out on the basis of production speed, analysis of duration and cost simulations of construction activities. On the basis of a statistical evaluation of enacted simulations a program algorithm calculates the assumed cost and time frames of particular construction activities.

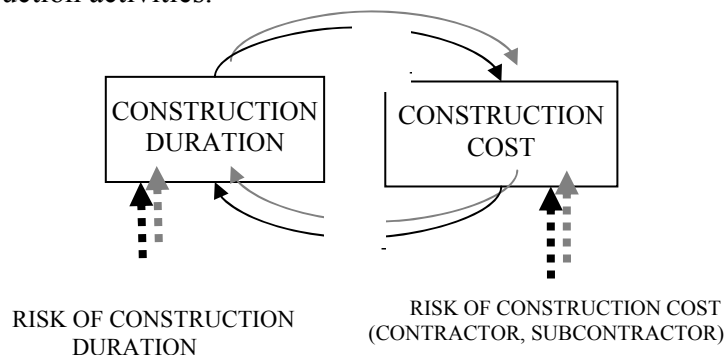


Fig. 1 Interactions between construction duration and construction cost.



meta problem called *Dynamic Harmonogram* (flow-sheet).  $N$  characterizes generally sequential networks  $N_i$  (Beran, 2002). The set expression is given as

$$TAB_{\text{project}} = \{N_i \mid [D = f(Q|risk, v|risk, \therefore D_{\text{connection activities}})] , i= 1,.. \} \quad (1)$$

where  $i$  are partial processes and  $D$  is as set of activity durations, *risk* influence is conditioned externality (see Fig. 1). The notation is completed with conditionality of breach of supposed input parameters of scope of work and production speed. The Module of input data is illustrated in the subchapter 8 *SW support*.

A practical solution of the calculation according to the dynamic progress chart (1) is based on the input of work volume, production speed and a time schedule of particular activities. Time duration in the dynamic progress chart is calculated as the quotient of quantities  $Q$  a  $v$  or more precisely  $D_i = Q_i/v_i$ . Input data included in *Module of input data* in sheet *Connection activities* define bonding conditions among particular production activities. The sheets called *Deviations of project parameters 1 and 2* contain input data about minimum / maximum deviations of scope of work and production speed of particular activities based on expected parameters of the building process.

### 5 SOLUTION AND EXAMPLE

On the basis of an ordinary Excel VBA application the algorithm makes it possible to calculate an instant dynamic progress chart of the building project that includes a time schedule of resources. The dynamic progress chart is in terms of notation (1) completed by

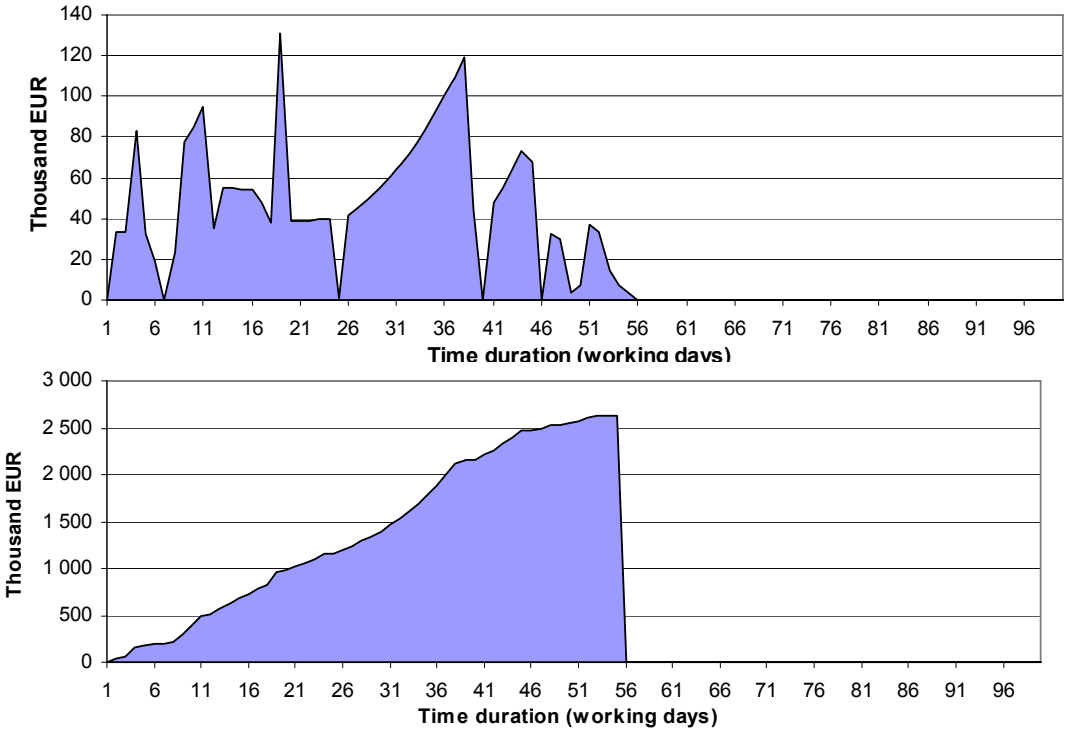


Fig. 2 Required cash flow of capital needed from the start to the end of construction and cumulative need of capital.

means of differences calculated on the basis of a common progress chart. Calculation is based on production speeds and individual activities, which are described in columns *Start* and *End* (Tab. 2), which represent bindings between individual activities. It factually represents relations between declared function  $f(Q|risk, v|risk, \therefore D_{\text{connection activities}})$  from notation (1) and composition of task as a consecutive process on the base of time duration of individual processes  $N[D]$  (Beran, 2005); (Beran, 2002); (Heralová, 2002).

The dynamic progress chart creates a comprehensive methodically uniform model. Among the model's outputs belong information about the start and end terms of production activities and information about cost schedules. The application creates graphic visualization of resources demand in time see Fig. 2.

The question of continuity of project realization is interconnected with cost-cutting management measures of construction cost. The varying construction speed evokes changes in construction costs. The flow of construction costs are a significant indicator of economy of capital employment.

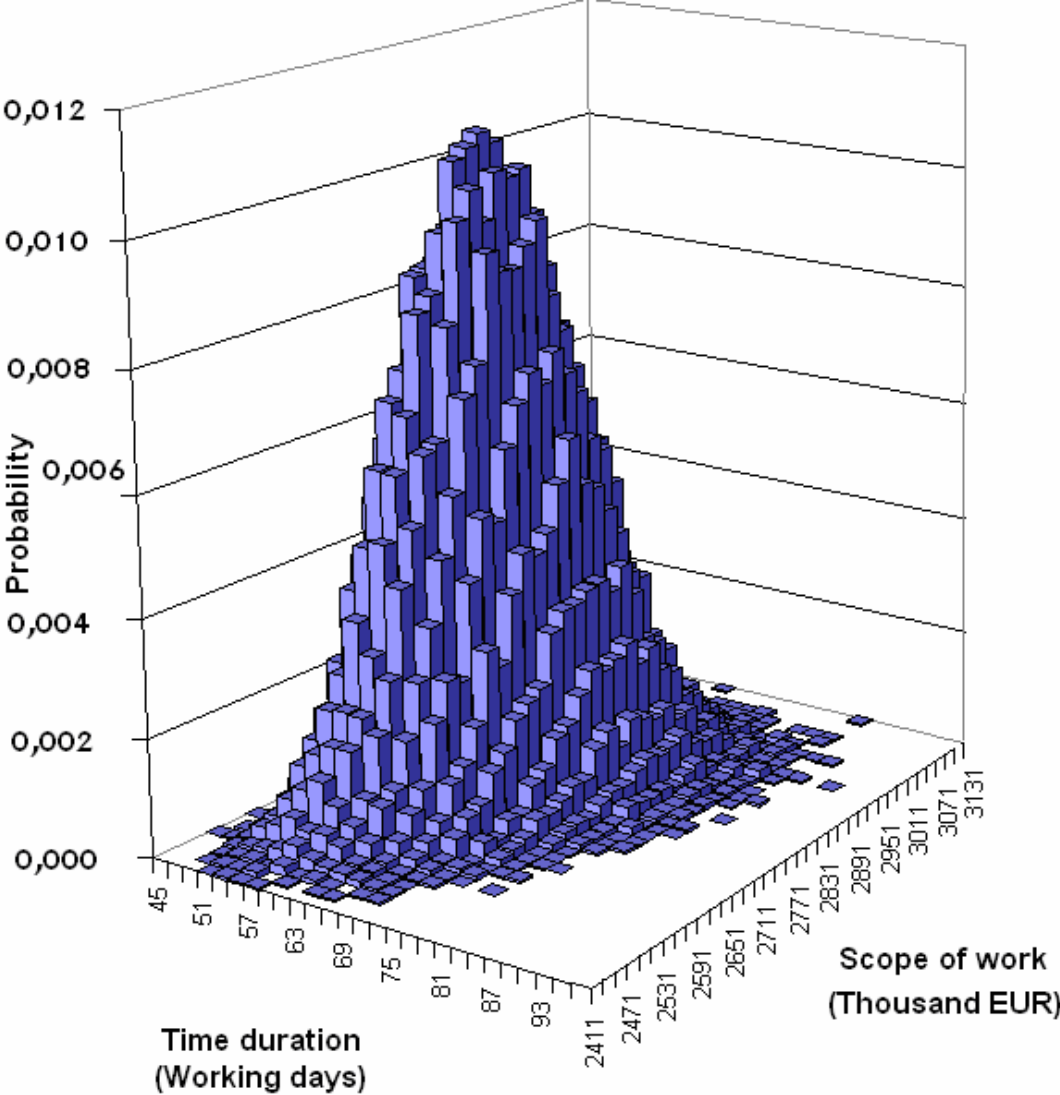


Fig. 3 Example of 3D probability bar chart as expression on the basis of (1).

The described calculation and software application is useful for evaluation of bid proposals of investment projects. The approach carries out two dimensional simulation. The projects described in propositions *time* and *costs*, will be labeled as a predefined project. The discrete probabilistic variables ( $T; C$ ) obtain values ( $t_i; c_j$ ). We will write  $\mathbf{P}(T= t_i; C= c_j) = p_{ij}$ .

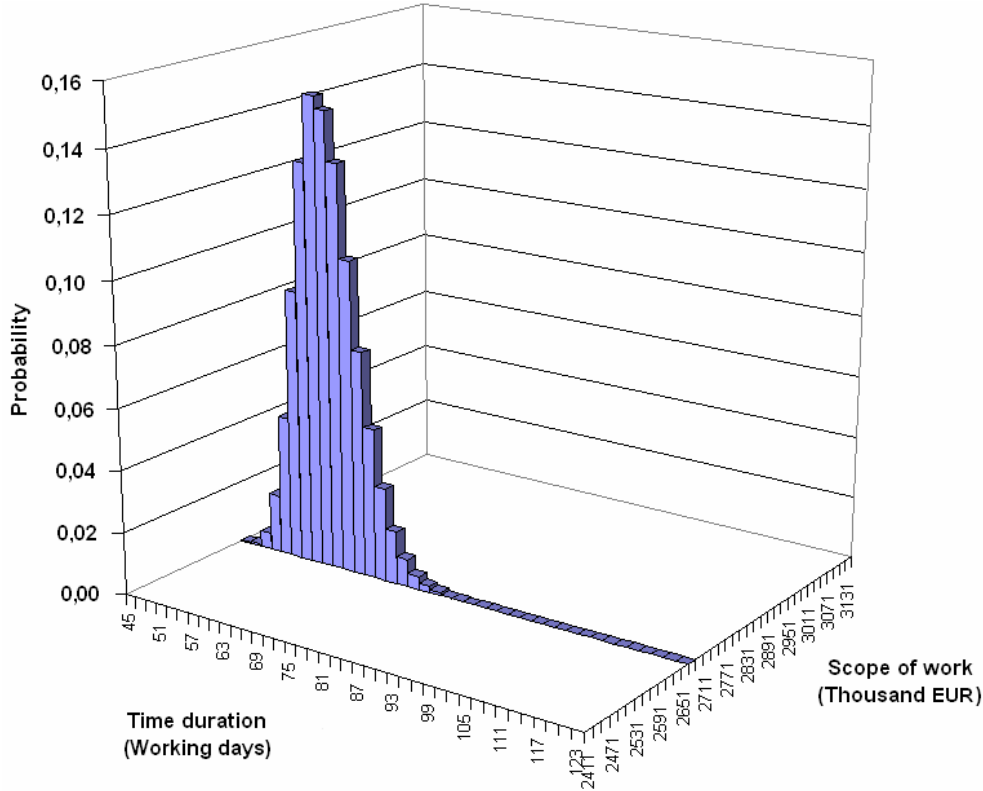


Fig. 4 Probability 3D bar chart for construction project with fixed cost scope  $C$ .

On this basis of predefined projects data the additive input information about *minimum and maximum deviations* (see subchapter 8. *Software Support*). SW application carries out simulation of the presumed development of the examined construction phase, the construction project as a whole, or just to a set of construction activities. It is possible to identify the effects of changes, read management changes, on the scope of particular jobs (construction activities) and their probability (reliability) of proposed (read contracted) finishing deadline  $t_{fin}$  and proposed contracting limit of cost  $c_{fin}$ . In general we are looking for acceptable

$$F(t_{fin}; c_{fin}) = \sum_t \sum_c \mathbf{P}(T < t_{fin}; C < c_{fin}) \quad \text{for chosen project activities } A_k \quad (2)$$

or their activity sets  $A_k, A_l, \dots, A_x$ , functionality-designed into network.

The results of particular simulations

$$\mathbf{P}(T; C) = \mathbf{P}(\text{simTAB}_{\text{project}}(T; C)) \quad (2a)$$

for example mentioned further is  $T \in \langle 45; 89 \rangle$  and  $C \in \langle 2411; 3131 \rangle$ . Simulation data are continuously recorded on the basis of (1), (Beran, 2002). The simulation is based on the time schedule given in Table 2. Obtainable is the ranging of 50 000 simulations into 30x30 categories. When a simulation is finished, the recorded data serve as a basis for statistical analysis of construction processes. Data file serves for final analysis and inter alia is the basis

for modified 3D visualization similar to Fig. 3. The calculation of expected or fixed probability starts, ends and reserves given are the results in Fig. 4 and Fig. 5.

In Tab. 3 are structured data of the comprehensive simulation example. The particular points are calculated as a construction bid proposal described underneath by simulation study shows, how far the intended finishing date and cost are actually competitive and realistic.

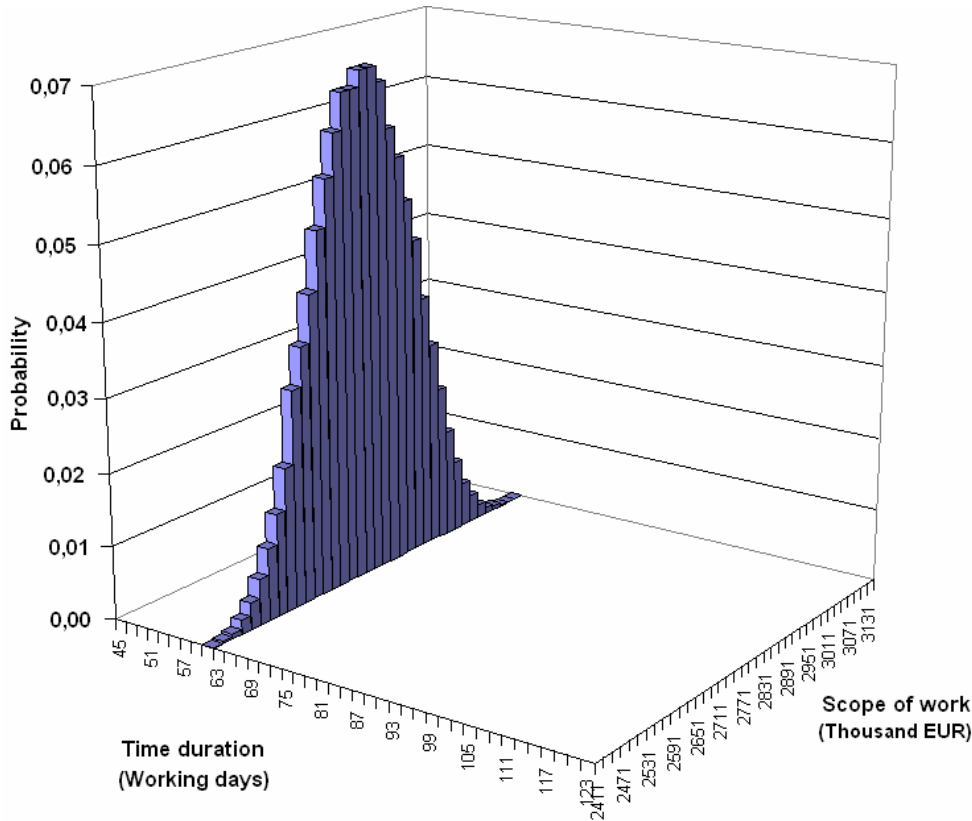


Fig. 5 Probability 3D bar chart for construction project with fixed time duration  $T$ .

$$\mathbf{P}(T_{(45,89)}; C_{(2411,3131)}) = \mathbf{P}(\mathit{simTAB}_{\text{project}}(T; C)) =$$

$$\mathbf{P}(\mathit{sim}\{N_i \mid [D = f(Q|risk, v|risk, \therefore D_{\text{connection activities}})] ,$$

$$\text{for subprojects or sub activities } i= 1,.. \} ) \quad (2b).$$

The construction project (Tománková, 2003) is proposed in time schedule and scope of work as given in 3D bar chart. The ellipse in Table 3 shows the shift of probability in time and costs. Using this approach it is possible to specify more exactly the results of simulations. Occurrence frequencies of particular scenarios of building project bid are comparable. The highest values of simulation frequencies in 3D bar graph lead to probabilities of potential success scenarios for the construction project. In this case the building project will be realized with satisfied commercial probability within the range of 57 to 59 days and its construction cost is given in the range of 2 731 to 2 751 thousand EUR.

Within the framework of simulation of building project it is common that the calculation finds out the unique regular solution. The example of 3D probability bar chart with unique regular solution is shown in Figure 3.

In case of complicated bonding conditions and other additional interdependences among particular activities, the solution of the simulation may not be unique.

Tab. 3 The example of 3D bar chart, that illustrates the result of 50 000 simulations.

Classes	Scope of work (Thousand EUR)																															Total								
	2411	2431	2451	2471	2491	2511	2531	2551	2571	2591	2611	2631	2651	2671	2691	2711	2731	2751	2771	2791	2811	2831	2851	2871	2891	2911	2931	2951	2971	2991	3011		3031	3051	3071	3091	3111	3131		
45					1																																		5	
47					2	4	1	1	5	1	2	1	1	2	2	1	1																						26	
49	1	2	4	6	10	6	14	17	17	19	19	25	18	20	21	14	8	13	7	5	5	3	2	1	1													258		
51	1	3	5	8	19	23	33	42	42	68	68	71	74	69	81	67	41	64	60	30	31	19	10	7	9	2											940			
53	2	3	6	10	24	41	64	81	101	138	136	157	180	170	191	158	146	122	94	113	84	86	56	43	30	16	8	8									2 270			
55	1	5	2	13	34	53	77	110	135	201	224	268	313	317	336	307	287	267	253	205	177	127	127	75	56	34	23	10	6	5							4 386			
57	1		8	20	26	63	87	111	182	240	299	351	378	446	450	454	478	477	458	383	341	268	283	205	141	111	87	52	28	23	9	3	2	1			6 457			
59	1	2	12	28	46	87	110	156	245	298	342	421	433	480	535	543	562	542	469	402	397	351	204	250	174	129	92	58	31	17	10	6	2	1			7 516			
61		4	9	21	33	50	98	140	212	257	313	319	410	491	514	485	522	515	520	480	434	382	298	253	197	141	87	60	28	22	10	3	1	2			7 310			
63	1	1	8	10	23	47	56	93	137	178	210	279	355	378	465	447	445	462	480	415	383	348	315	278	221	170	112	83	53	32	15	2	2			1 6 532				
65		1	6	8	10	22	40	56	106	137	130	210	259	251	308	341	364	351	374	353	334	280	277	245	168	154	97	65	41	22	13	12	3	1			5 049			
67	1	3	3	4	12	20	32	58	69	97	155	190	194	224	219	233	270	304	282	255	232	208	169	161	108	83	51	29	25	11	5	2	1				3 637			
69		1	2	1	2	6	7	22	34	39	62	74	96	106	114	156	170	171	179	181	169	188	158	115	107	96	52	54	31	23	8	3	2	1			2 428			
71					2	6	4	17	13	25	24	44	52	74	81	101	119	113	118	127	104	115	91	84	58	54	29	22	12	5	6	2	3				1 507			
73					1	4	1	7	9	13	24	23	29	37	36	59	70	65	60	65	49	53	34	35	22	16	13	3	2	2								852		
75							1	2	2	2	7	11	14	12	20	25	25	33	39	36	38	44	32	28	29	20	8	11	2	1								442		
77					1		2		1	1	1	5	4	5	6	16	14	13	15	12	17	23	14	15	11	14	5	1	5	1								213		
79												2	1	1	7	2	5	5	5	9	10	6	7	12	8	4	3	5	5	3	1								102	
81															2	1	1	1	2	4	2	4	2	4	5	3	9	3	2	2	1							1 52		
83																			1	3																			11	
85																																								6
87																																								0
89																																								1
Total	5	15	32	95	183	314	496	701	989	1 483	1 752	2 082	2 480	2 800	3 082	3 327	3 329	3 439	3 441	3 331	3 009	2 798	2 480	2 196	1 764	1 416	1 075	739	487	305	191	88	43	22	9	0	2	50 000		

The Figure 6 and the Figure 6a present the building project; in which input parameters contain specific interdependence within the first activity (ground works). Compare these results to Fig. 3. In the event that the first activity should take more than 25 days, the building

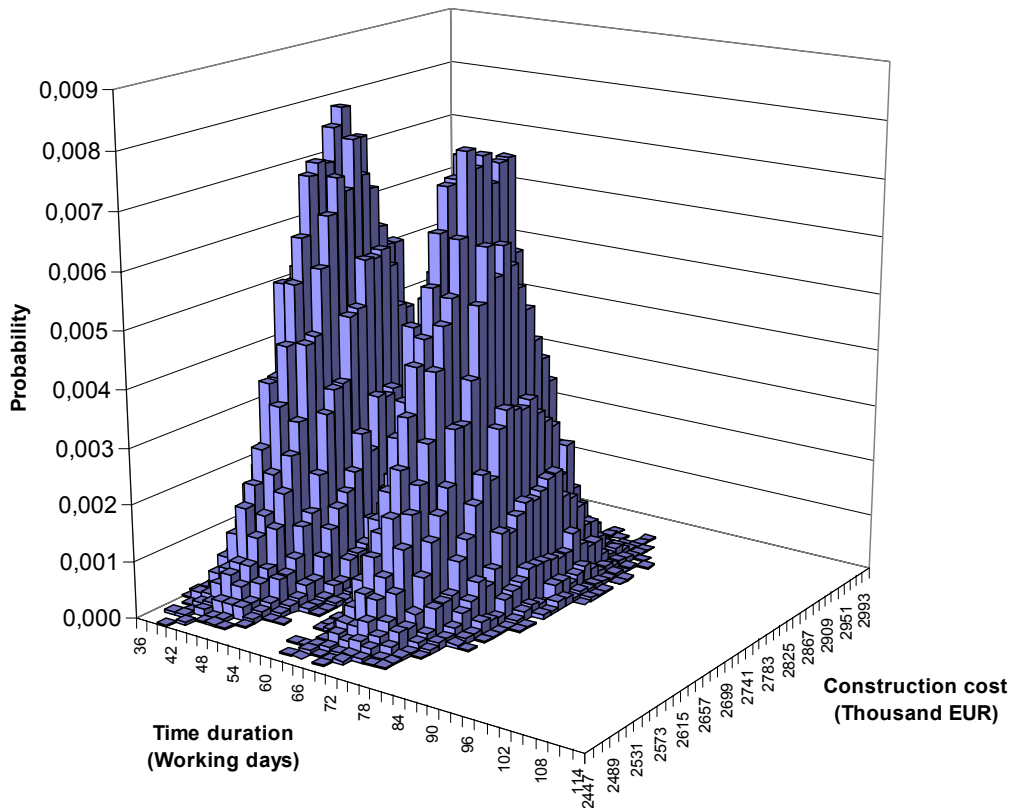


Fig. 6 Example of 3D probability bar chart with heterogeneous solutions.



ground machines must be without delay dislocated on another major activity (another building project). This situation causes slippage of dates within the range of 21 days. After that period ground works could be resumed.

This specific condition is the cause of heterogeneous solution of the simulation. It is difficult to find the solution of this building project by using standard statistical methods. It is convenient to take advantage of visualization techniques and particular simulation calculations.

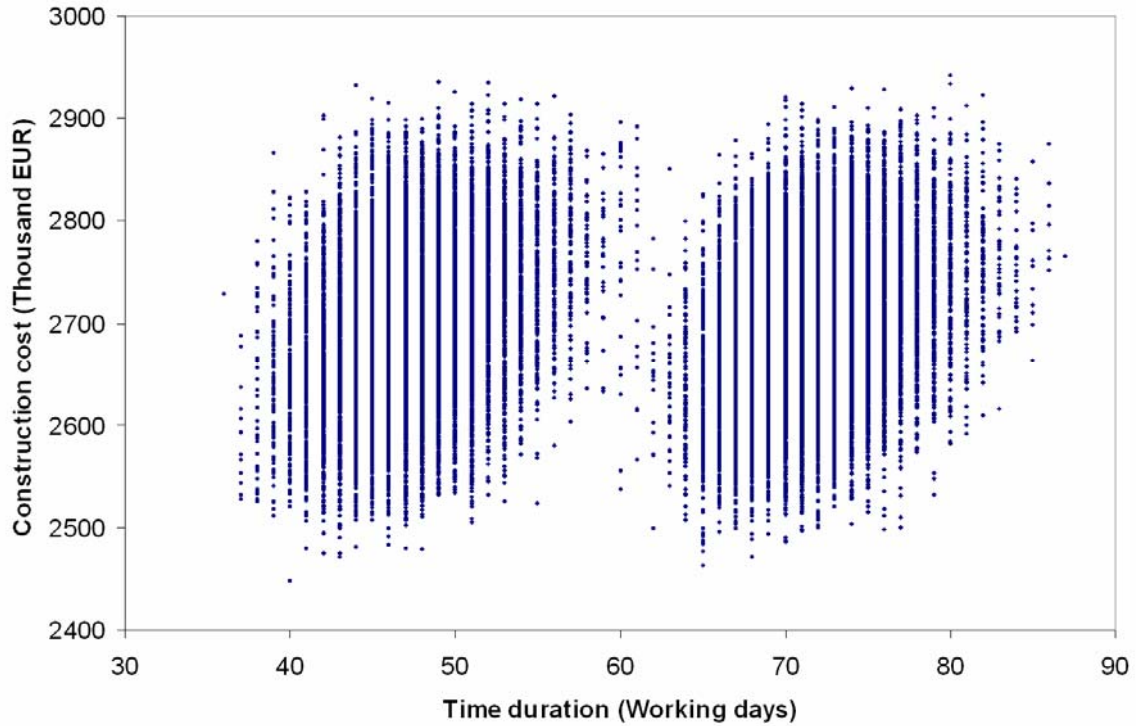


Fig. 6a Example of graph with interdependences among time duration and construction cost.

Important information regarding the proposal of a future project time schedule is specified by tests of potential scenarios of the project development with current fixing of certain parameters of the building organizational model. It is possible to obtain important information about critical parameters of the planned project, for example by fixing of deviations work of scope of work of particular activities see  $Q$  in notation (1).

It is common practice to present the probability of the total construction time of a building project without a cost viewpoint (Fig. 5). A better expressed project cost is presented as a respected fixed value that will be stable and independent of project duration. Addressing this notion the proposed approach of simulation of interrelated values *time* and *cost* in Fig. 4 is more comprehensible and complex as information in Fig. 5 where

$$\sum_T \mathbf{P}(a \leq T \leq b) = F(t_b) - F(t_a) \quad (3)$$

or as for calculation with fixed scope of work

$$\sum_T \mathbf{P}(45 \leq T \leq 89) = \mathbf{P}(\text{simTAB}_{\text{project}}(T)) \quad (3a).$$

A similar situation develops if we fix alternation of time schedules for the project. Scope of work given as  $C$  is specified as

$$\sum_C \mathbf{P}(x \leq C \leq y) = F(c_y) - F(c_x) \quad (3b)$$

for data simulated in Tab. 3 we display in Figure 6.

$$\sum_C \mathbf{P}(2411 \leq C \leq 3131) = \mathbf{P}(\text{simTAB}_{\text{project}}(C)), \text{ for calculation with fixed time ration (3c).}$$

In Fig. 6 we may follow changes of project cost for fixed on duration of observed project.

The expected time duration of total construction project is given by its mean value

$$\mathbf{E}[T_{\text{project}} | C = \text{const.}] = \sum_T t_i P(T = t_i) = \bar{t} \quad (4)$$

Accordingly it is possible to quantify expected scope of work of total construction project by its mean value

$$\mathbf{E}[C_{\text{project}} | T = \text{const.}] = \sum_C c_i P(C = c_i) = \bar{c} \quad (5)$$

## 6 THE SEARCH FOR RELIABLE CONSTRUCTION COST AND TIME DURATION

The simulation model is able to calculate, on the basis of input level of probability, the adequate construction cost and time duration of a project. The reciprocal view attends to finding out the adequate level of probability for construction cost and activity durations.

There are two ways that lead to the calculation of adequate level of probability. The first way consists in fixation of one variable parameter and investigation of changes in remaining parameter. The second way consists in simultaneous investigation of deviations of both parameters.

The approach used in this paper is based on expression (1) and Table 4 (discreet probability density table) enables on data of Table 3 calculate the level of probability as cumulative density function

$$F(T; C) = \sum_T \sum_C \mathbf{P}(T = t_i; C = c_i) \quad (6),$$

where  $t_i$  a  $c_i$  runs through the set of all possible values of  $T$  and  $C$  and

$$\sum_T \sum_C \mathbf{P}(T = t_i; C = c_i) = 1 \quad (6a).$$

The Fig. 6b shows extracted data from expression (6) or Table 4 as histogram.

On closer investigation of results of particular simulations there was found a dependence between level of probability and construction cost and time duration. In the following figures are shown bilateral interactions of mentioned project parameters.

Tab. 4 Example of calculation of level of Discrete Probability Distribution (DPD).

Classes	Scope of work (Thousand EUR)																															Total							
	2411	2431	2451	2471	2491	2511	2531	2551	2571	2591	2611	2631	2651	2671	2691	2711	2731	2751	2771	2791	2811	2831	2851	2871	2891	2911	2931	2951	2971	2991	3011		3031	3051	3071	3091	3111	3131	
45					1																																		5
47					2	4	1	1	5	1	2	1	1	2	2	1	1								2														26
49		1	2	4	6	10	6	14	17	17	19	19	25	18	20	21	14	8	13	7	5	5	3	2	1	1												258	
51		1	3	5	8	19	23	33	42	42	68	68	71	74	69	81	67	41	54	60	30	31	19	10	7	9	2											940	
53		2	3	6	10	24	41	64	81	87	110	130	140	140	140	158	145	122	94	113	84	86	56	43	30	16	8	8										2 270	
55		1	5	2	13	34	53	77	97	110	140	212	257	313	319	410	491	514	485	522	515	520	480	434	397	351	294	250	174	129	92	58	31	17	10	6	5	1	4 386
57		1		8	20	26	63	87	107	127	157	212	257	313	319	410	491	514	485	522	515	520	480	434	397	351	294	250	174	129	92	58	31	17	10	6	5	6 457	
59		1	2	12	28	46	87	110	140	180	212	257	313	319	410	491	514	485	522	515	520	480	434	397	351	294	250	174	129	92	58	31	17	10	6	2	1	7 516	
61			4	9	21	33	50	98	140	212	257	313	319	410	491	514	485	522	515	520	480	434	397	351	294	250	174	129	92	58	31	17	10	6	2	1	2	7 310	
63		1	1	8	10	23	47	56	93	137	178	230	279	355	378	465	447	445	462	480	415	383	348	315	278	228	170	112	83	53	32	15	2	2			1	6 532	
65		1		6	8	10	22	40	56	106	137	130	210	259	251	308	341	364	351	374	353	334	290	277	245	168	154	97	65	41	22	13	12	3	1			5 049	
67			1	3	3	4	12	20	32	58	69	97	155	139	194	224	219	233	270	304	262	255	232	208	169	161	106	83	51	29	25	11	5	2	1			3 637	
69			1	2	1	2	6	7	22	34	39	62	74	96	106	114	156	170	171	179	181	169	186	158	115	107	96	52	54	31	23	8	3	2	1			2 428	
71					2	2	6	4	17	13	25	24	44	52	74	81	101	119	113	118	127	104	115	91	84	58	54	29	22	12	5	6	2	3			1 507		
73					1	4	1	7	9	13	23	29	37	36	59	70	50	70	65	60	65	49	53	34	35	22	16	13	3	2	2							852	
75								1	2	2	2	7	11	14	12	20	25	25	33	39	36	38	44	32	28	29	20	8	11	2	1							442	
77							1		2		1	1	1	5	4	5	6	16	14	13	15	12	17	23	14	15	11	11	14	5	1	5						213	
79										1				2	1	1	7	2	5	5	5	9	10	6	7	12	8	4	3	5	5	3						1	102
81															2	1	1	1	2	4	2	4	2	4	5	3	9	3	2	2	1							1	52
83																		1	3																				11
85																																							6
87																																							0
89																																							1
Total	5	15	32	95	183	314	496	701	989	1 483	1 752	2 082	2 480	2 800	3 082	3 327	3 329	3 439	3 441	3 331	3 009	2 798	2 480	2 196	1 764	1 416	1 075	739	487	305	191	88	43	22	9	0	2	50 000	

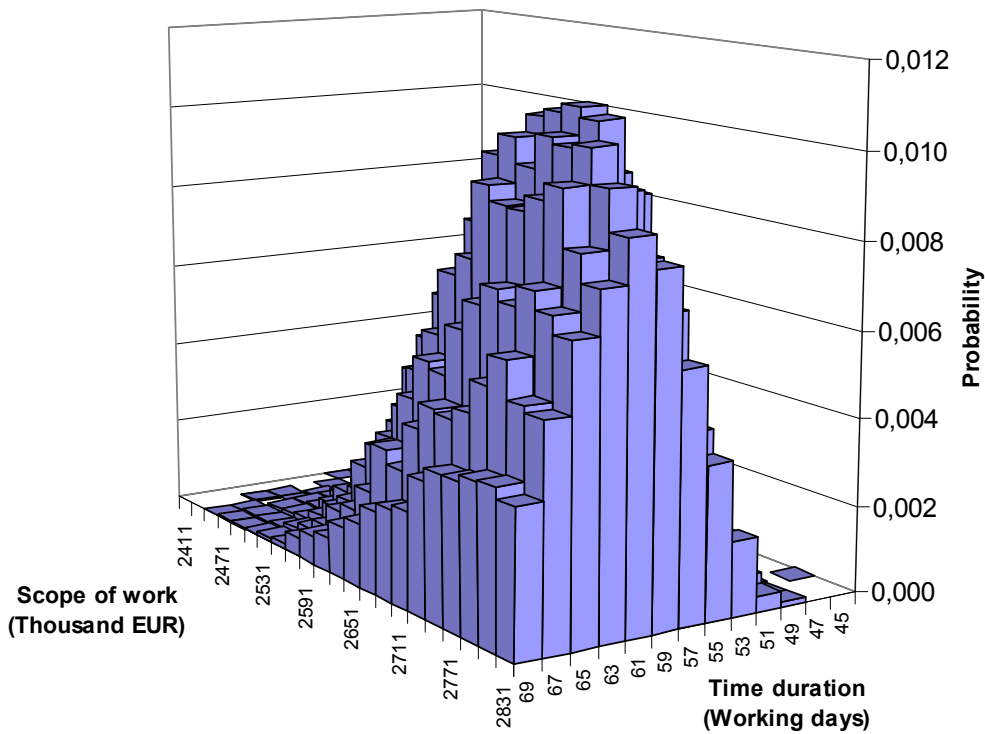


Fig. 6b Bar chart 3D for DPD on level of probability  $F(T; C) = 0,7476$ .





Tab. 6 Module of input data – Basic page

**Module of input data** [X]

Basic page | Project parameters | Connection activities | Deviations of project parameters 1 | Deviations of project parameters 2 | Settings

**File**

Data file:

Export file:

Record export file

**Project parameters**

Project name:

Client:

Designer:

Construction time:  Preliminary price:

Built-up area [m2]:  Enclosure [m3]:

Number of simulations:

OK Cancel

Tab. 7 Module of input data - Project parameters

**Module of input data** [X]

Basic page | Project parameters | Connection activities | Deviations of project parameters 1 | Deviations of project parameters 2 | Settings

**Project parameters**

Activity	Scope of work	Production speed	Speed index
Ground works	130	30	1
Water connection	200	20	1
Sewerage connection	170	50	1,2
Electricity connection	90	90	1
Bottom construction	500	35	1,05
Dumping place	50	50	1
Overhead construction	900	35	1,05
Roof	330	40	1,1
Inside parget	60	30	0,9
Facade rendering	70	30	0,9
Completing works	50	8	1

Number of simulations:

OK Cancel

Tab. 8 Module of input data - *Connection activities*

**Module of input data** [X]

Basic page | Project parameters | **Connection activities** | Deviations of project parameters 1 | Deviations of project parameters 2 | Settings

Activity	with connection to		with connection to		with connection to		with connection to		with connection to	
	Activity	Type	Activity	Type	Activity	Type	Activity	Type	Activity	Type
1. Ground works		0								
2. Water connection	1	0								
3. Sewerage connection	1	0								
4. Electricity connection	2	0	3	0						
5. Bottom construction	3	0								
6. Dumping place	1	1	1							
7. Overhead construction	4	0	5	0	6	0				
8. Roof	7	0								
9. Inside parget	8	0								
10. Facade rendering	9	0								
11. Completing works	9	0	10	2						

Note: Type of bonding condition: 0 = End - Start, 1 = Start - Start, 2 = End - End.

Number of simulations: 50000. simulations

OK Cancel

Tab. 9 Module of input data - *Deviations of project parameters*

**Module of input data** [X]

Basic page | Project parameters | Connection activities | **Deviations of project parameters 1** | Deviations of project parameters 2 | Settings

Activity	Deviation of scope of work		Deviation of production speed	
	Minimum	Maximum	Minimum	Maximum
Ground works	-0,1	0,9	-0,2	0,5
Water connection	-0,05	0,3	-0,1	0,2
Sewerage connection	-0,1	0,35	-0,15	0,3
Electricity connection	-0,1	0,35	-0,1	0,2
Bottom construction	-0,1	0,25	-0,15	0,4
Dumping place	-0,15	0,3	0	0
Overhead construction	-0,1	0,2	-0,1	0,3
Roof	-0,1	0,15	-0,05	0,2
Inside parget	-0,1	0,1	-0,05	0,1
Facade rendering	-0,1	0,15	-0,05	0,15
Completing works	-0,2	0,3	-0,15	0,25

Number of simulations: 50000. simulations

OK Cancel

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