

**Univ.-Prof. Dr.-Ing. Jürgen Ehlbeck**



On September 21, 2023, just before reaching the age of 93, Professor Dr.-Ing. Jürgen Ehlbeck passed away. With his departure, we lose a highly esteemed individual, an outstanding teacher and researcher, and a dear friend.

Jürgen Ehlbeck was born in Altona an der Elbe in 1930. After completing his high school education and an education as bricklayer, he began his studies in Civil Engineering at the Technische Hochschule Karlsruhe in 1953. Following his diploma degree, he took on responsibilities in research and teaching as the first assistant at the newly established Chair of Timber Engineering and Building Construction under Professor Möhler. He played a significant role in the organizational development of the Chair. From 1966, the year he obtained his doctoral degree, until 1980, he served as senior engineer at Professor Möhler's Chair. During this period, he spent a research visit at the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in Blacksburg, Virginia, under the guidance of Professor Dr. E. George Stern.

Upon Professor Möhler's retirement in 1981, Jürgen Ehlbeck declined an offer for a full professorship at the University of Essen and succeeded Professor Möhler as the Chair of Timber Engineering and Building Construction. This also entailed the collegial directorship of the Research Centre for Steel, Timber and Masonry of the University of Karlsruhe. As the head of the institute, he transformed its structure towards a collaborative team approach, evident in the increasing number of

presentations by his staff members at national and international conferences. CIB-W18 Timber Structures, now INTER, was especially important to him. Karlsruhe Timber Construction was significantly involved in the European project STEP (Structural Timber Education Program), tasked with creating teaching materials for students and engineers. These educational materials for timber construction were utilized across Europe and worldwide for many years.

Under Jürgen Ehlbeck's leadership, around 50 research projects were successfully completed. While his primary focus was on mechanical connections in timber construction, he also made significant contributions to the behavior of glued laminated timber, timber composite structures, and the preservation of historical timber structures. Under Ehlbeck's guidance, timber construction research transitioned from deterministic approaches (method of permissible stresses) to probability-based approaches.

He was deeply committed to the practical applicability of his work and the immediate utilization of research findings by the industry. He actively promoted the technology transfer as a member or Chairman of various National, European, and International working groups. He played a key role in shaping the DIN 1052 and worked as an expert advisor for the German Institute for Building Technology in Berlin. Shaped by his intensive involvement, the first European timber construction standard, Eurocode 5, was introduced in Germany in 1995, alongside DIN 1052.

Even after his retirement in 1995, he maintained active contact with the "Karlsruher Holzbau" (Karlsruhe Timber Construction) and was always warmly welcomed at events of his former institute.

In deep respect for his significant contributions to timber construction and with fond memories of his humorous, straightforward, and down-to-earth nature, highly appreciated by both colleagues and his staff, we will honour his memory.

For the Research Centre for Steel, Timber and Masonry and the Chair of Timber Structures and Building Construction at the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology

Hans Joachim Blaß  
Rainer Görlacher  
Philipp Dietsch