

IEA-SHC TASK59: FACT SHEET

Multidisciplinary planning process:

Enhancing the use of the European standard EN 16883:2017

SIMULATION TOOLS FOR HISTORIC BUILDINGS

This is part of a series of fact sheets meant to facilitate and enhance the use of the European standard EN 16883:2017 Conservation of cultural heritage – Guidelines for improving the energy performance of historic buildings.

This particular fact sheet provides information about building simulation tools to assess energy and hygrothermal performance. Each tool is described briefly. For more detailed information, the reader is referred to the references

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BES tool	Applications	Main limitations	Ref.
EnergyPlus	EnergyPlus is a widespread and accepted tool in the building energy analysis community around the world. This programme models heating, cooling, lighting, ventilation and other energy flows as well as moisture in buildings. EnergyPlus performs sub-hourly calculations and integrates the dynamic performance of technical systems into the whole building energy balance calculations.	The main limitation of EnergyPlus is the lack of a graphical user interface. A complete, simple but flexible user interface is needed to allow faster and more convenient user input. The simulation of thermal bridges and the integration with CFD software are not allowed.	[1]
Design Builder	DesignBuilder is the most comprehensive interface for EnergyPlus. Its current version includes a simplified CAD interface, templates and compact air system configurations for EnergyPlus. An important feature of DesignBuilder is the help window that provides tips and wizards guiding the user through the creation of the thermal model.	A range of common HVAC systems is available in the Design Builder user interface, but do not include detailed information about the components and their topology. The inability to import EnergyPlus input files limits the utility of the program.	[2,3]
Trnsys	TRNSYS is a transient system simulation software with a modular structure that allows to simulate a variety of energy systems with various levels of complexity. It was designed and tailored to simulate complex energy systems by decomposing the problem in simpler and smaller components (called "types"). Models are constructed in such a way that users can modify existing components or write their own, extending the capabilities of the environment.	The major limitation of TRNSYS is to not being able to connect with AutoCad Software tool for importation and exportation of files. Finally, no type related to specific features of historical building exists.	[1,4,5]
WUFI Plus	WUFI plus is a software tool that connects dynamic energy simulation and hygrothermal calculation. It is the most used tool for evaluating moisture conditions in building envelopes. WUFI Plus performs 3-dimensional hygrothermal calculations on building component cross-sections, taking into account built-in moisture, driving rain, solar radiation, long-wave radiation, capillary transport, and summer condensation.	The radiation model in WUFI plus contains only the so called "geosurf factor method" which distributes the incoming radiation on every surface according to factors not editable by the users.	[6,7]
IES VE	IES VE provides an environment for the geometric representation which is evaluated with ApacheSim engine, a CIBSE qualified model tested using the ASHRAE 140. The dynamic tool ApacheSim can be dynamically linked to the Macro FLO dynamic tool for natural ventilation and HVAC Apache dynamic tool to study air leaks and natural lighting. It is possible to include LCA and LCC parameters.	IES VE is a commercial program, so its code is not accessible and the user cannot add any additional simulation modules to enhance either application-oriented or general-purpose modelling capabilities. Analysis of thermal bridges is not considered.	[5-8]
IDA ICE	IDA Indoor Climate and Energy (IDA ICE) is based on a general simulation platform for modular systems: IDA simulation environment. Physical systems from several domains are in IDA described using symbolic equations, stated in either or both of the simulation languages Neutral Model Format (NMF) or Modelica. IDA ICE offers separated but integrated user interfaces to different user categories: simplified, standard or advanced for developers.	Although the program is flexible and easy to use, it can have a long run time, depending on the complexity of the model structure.	[1,5,9,10]

HAM-base	HAMBASE is a Matlab-based tool for the simulation of heat and vapour flows in buildings. It is particularly appreciated in simulation of historical buildings since it allows to develop models of the different phenomena with the desired level of accuracy. Detailed evaluation of thermal bridges is allowed. It also allows to overcome some problems related to the simulation of thick walls.	Basic knowledge of Matlab are required to use this tool. At this moment HAMLab is a research tool. Therefore, it lacks facilities for design oriented users, such as user-friendly interfaces and user guides.	[11]
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Project structure

The project consists of four work packages called “Subtasks”

Subtask B > Multidisciplinary planning process

led by Uppsala University, Sweden

Investigate how existing guidelines for improving the energy performance of historic buildings can be enhanced and complemented in order to better meet the needs of the end user by providing an integrated design platform

Organizational details

Full project title

Deep Renovation of Historic Buildings Towards Lowest Possible Energy Demand and CO₂ Emission (NZEB)

Project sponsor

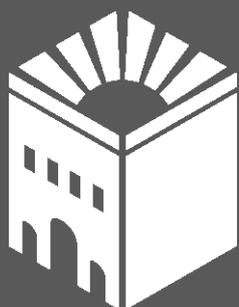
International Energy Agency's
> Solar Heating & Cooling Programme (SHC) Task 59
> Energy in Buildings and Communities (ECB) Annex 76

Duration

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