

Editor's Introduction –  
Special issue on Architecture of  
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In November 2003, the fifth Dutch National IT Architecture Conference in (Nieuwegein, The Netherlands, EU) was held. These annual conferences are organised by The Netherlands (IT) Architecture Forum (<http://www.naf.nl>), which aims to further the use of architecture in an IT context, including enterprise architecture, organisational application architecture, software architecture, etc. The National Architecture Forum provides a platform comprising over 30 organisations in three classes of organisations:

**Academia** – Free University of Amsterdam, University of Twente, University of Nijmegen, Leiden University, Delft University of Technology, Eindhoven University of Technology, The Open University, Telematics Institute, Professional University of Rotterdam.

**IT services providers** – ATOS-Origin, Cap Gemini Ernst & Young, CIBIT, LogicaCMG, Deloitte & Touche, HP, IBM, META Group Netherlands, Oracle Ordina, PinkRocade, SERC, Sogeti, Gartner Netherlands, Sun Microsystems Netherlands, Unisys Netherlands, ISES International.

**Users of IT services** – ABN-AMRO, Belastingdienst, Bloemenvailing Aalsmeer, Defence Telematics Organisation, Essent, ING, Gartner, Shell, Stichting Pensioenfonds ABP, Wehkamp

The National Architecture Conference was first organised in the 1999. From the outset, the congress has been a joint effort between IT service providers, users of IT services, and academia. The congresses aim to bring together practitioners and researchers who are interested in the role of architecture in IT.

To further academic involvement in this conference, it was decided to produce a special issue of IJCIS associated to the conference. Initially a total of seven papers were submitted for this special issue, involving submissions from both academia and industry. These submissions ranged in topic from enterprise architecture and information (system) architecture to software architecture. Of these submissions, three papers were selected to be invited for a contribution to the IJCIS special issue.

The article by J. Hoogervorst discusses some of the challenges confronting modern day businesses, and the potential role which an Enterprise Architecture can play in meeting these challenges. In the article on the Graal project, by P. van Eck, H. Blanken and R. Wieringa, the authors explore a framework for architecture alignment, based on evaluations of usage of enterprise architectures in industrial practice. Finally, the contribution by H. Jonkers et al., reports on a generic set of modelling concepts that can be used for modelling enterprise architectures. This work is based on the results of a large Dutch national research consortium, involving industrial and academic partners.