Katrin Kowalczyk

Division G I 1

Cross-sectoral and sustainability-related strategic and general aspects of Environment, Building and Urban Development Policy

German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety
Subplenary C – “Cities and Standards”

*De-mystifying standards, the role of reference frameworks and standards for urban sustainable development*
Standards and reference frameworks – „friend or foe“?

*Depends on who you ask.*
Finally, clear performance data for comparing the world’s cities

The phrase “ISO standard” is something you might find on the base of a light bulb, under your computer keyboard or in the owner’s manual for your refrigerator. It means that these products are made in a way that complies with international standards of quality and compatibility. There are ISOs for financial management, electrical engineering, chemical technology — you name it.

But now, the first-ever set of ISO standards for world cities has been created. And the implications are dramatic. City policymakers will have objective standards to compare their services and performance with other cities around the world. And just as significant, the people of cities — civic, business organizations, ordinary citizens — will be able to access the same new global standards. This means they can ask city leaders tough questions, stoking debate about their own city’s performance on the basis of verified measures ranging from education to public safety to water and sanitation.

What is ISO 37120?

As part of a new series of International Standards being developed for a holistic and integrated approach to sustainable development and resilience under TC268 Sustainable Development of Communities, ISO 37120 establishes a set of standardized indicators that provide a uniform approach to what is measured, and how that measurement is to be undertaken. This International Standard does not provide a value judgement, or numeric thresholds on what a particular city should choose as appropriate targets for the indicators. ISO 37120 defines and establishes definitions and methodologies for a set of indicators to steer and measure the performance of city services and quality of life.
Can we use
• number of firefighters/policemen
• hospital beds/inhabitant
• number of trees planted/year as means to determine quality of life in a city?
... back to the question:
What can/should standards and reference frameworks do (and what not)?

• Standards allow monitoring
• But: Can you (should you?) compare cities? (qualitative vs. quantitative, benchmarking/ranking)
• Important: question of legitimacy
some examples

Global Cities Registry™ for ISO 37120

The WCCD Global Cities Registry™ is the internationally recognized list of cities that are certified against ISO 37120 in accordance with the WCCD certification system.

The data for all cities listed has been independently verified and deemed to be in conformity with ISO 37120 according to the WCCD. All cities in the Global Cities Registry™ have provided third-party verified data to the WCCD Open Data Portal, allowing for city-to-city comparisons, cutting-edge visualizations and customized trend analysis.

Once certified, cities will be added to the WCCD Global Cities Registry™ for a period of one year. Cities must apply for certification and registration on an annual basis.

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<th>Identification Number</th>
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<th>Certification Level</th>
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Example from Germany:
German Indicator report/ National Sustainability Strategy

https://www.destatis.de/DE/Publikationen/Thematisch/UmweltoekonomischeGesamtrechnungen/Umweltindikatoren/IndikatorenPDF_0230001.pdf?__blob=publicationFile
SDGs

https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?menu=1300
outlook & example from Germany: “IMA Stadt“

Interministerial working party
on sustainable urban development from a national and international perspective

(decision by the State Secretaries’ Committee on SD)

aim: support municipalities and regions in implementing the SDGs
**Interministerial working party**

*Lead: BMUB*

**Plenary**

*Chair: BMUB*

Members: all interested ministries, national (and international) local authority organisations, plus guests, where appropriate

**Working Group I**

Implementation of SDGs with urban reference at municipal level, sustainability management

**Working Group II**

International Urbanisation

**Working Group III**

Research & Innovation

**Working Group IV**

Smart Cities and Sustainable Development

**Secretariat**

BMUB plus scientific partner

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**I. Adoption of rules of procedure and work plan (“roadmaps”), commissioning of working groups**

**II. Discussion of results of working groups and subjects according to work plan (hearings)**

**III. Resolution, final report to the State Secretaries’ Committee on Sustainable Development**

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**Report with concrete proposals re SDG implementation and their link to national sustainability goals; examination, possibly concept/establishment national dialogue process for municipalities, measures to optimise the sustainability management of municipalities**


**Research and Innovation for sustainable urban development, based on priorities of the agenda for research and development of the „National Platform Future City“. Aim: better transfer of results to reality, coordination, improved design of research funding**

**Concept/Establishment of a Smart Cities Dialogue Platform (risks/opportunities). Aim: Smart City Charters**

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**Dialogue process on best practice**

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**Smart Cities dialogue platform**
Working Group I = implementation of SDGs, sustainability management, governance
initiative A

project B

ministries’ concerned

cities’ views

competition C

local authorities’ views

IMA
Thank you for your attention.

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