

# Sustainable development in communities:



## City indicators for service delivery and quality of life

Currently 70 percent of global GDP is now generated by cities and 53 percent of the total world's population resides in cities. It is estimated that 70 percent of the world's population will be living in cities by 2050. This means the role of cities in enabling more sustainable futures is now more important than ever. Cities are the cultural and economic centres of the world whose progress depends upon effective management and evidence-based policy making.

*Why is this International Standard on city indicators important?*

In this age of urbanization, city indicators can be used as critical tools for city managers, politicians, researchers, business leaders, planners, designers and other professionals to help ensure policies are put into practice that promote liveable, tolerant, inclusive, sustainable, resilient, economically attractive and prosperous cities globally.

Cities need indicators to measure their performance for improving quality of life and sustainability globally. Existing indicators are often not standardized, consistent, or comparable over time or across cities. As part of a new series of International Standards being developed for a holistic and integrated approach to sustainable development and resilience under ISO/TC 268, *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.

This International Standard defines and establishes definitions and methodologies for a set of indicators to steer and measure the performance of city services and quality of life.

## ***What are standardized indicators?***

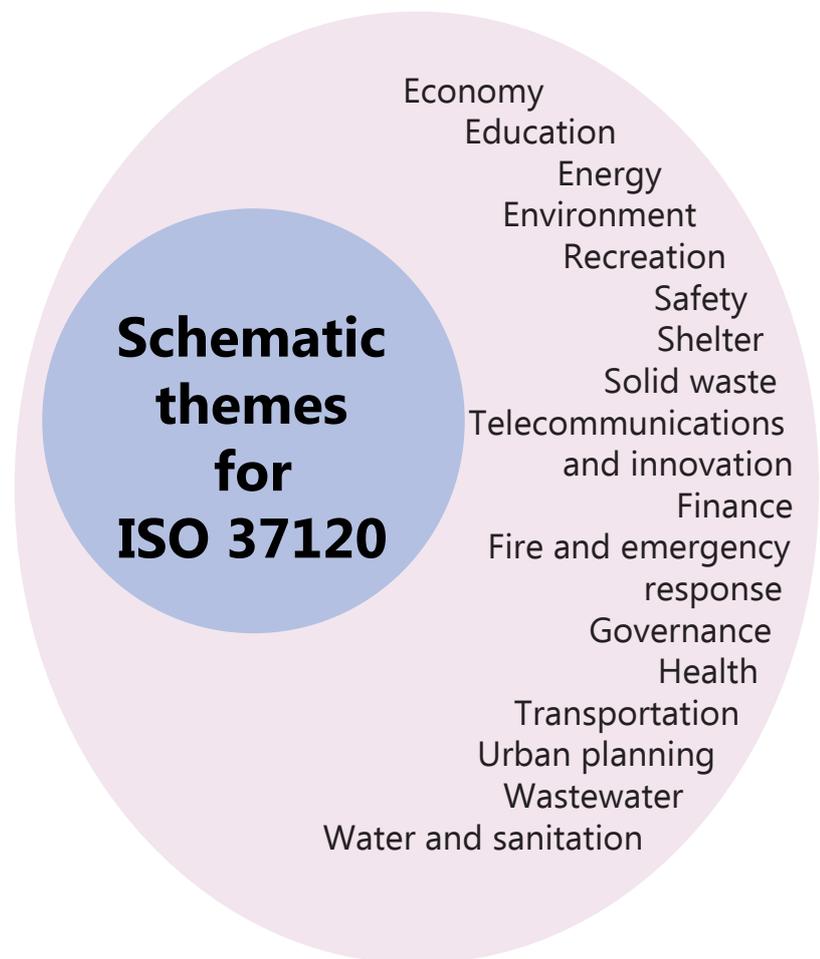
Quantitative, qualitative or descriptive sets of measurements and metrics that provide a globally standardized set of definitions and methodologies.

## ***Who are the users of ISO 37120?***

This International Standard is applicable to any city, municipality or local government that undertakes to measure its performance in a comparable and verifiable manner, irrespective of size and location or level of development.

## ***How can ISO 37120 help cities?***

Standardized indicators enable cities to assess their performance and measure progress over time and also to draw comparative lessons from other cities locally and globally. They also help to guide policy, planning and management across multiple sectors and stakeholders.



## **ISO 37120 – Benefits of standardized indicators:**

- More effective governance and delivery of services
- International benchmarks and targets
- Local benchmarking and planning
- Informed decision making for policy makers and city managers
- Learning across cities
- Leverage for funding and recognition in international entities
- Leverage for funding by cities with senior levels of government
- Framework for sustainability planning
- Transparency and open data for investment attractiveness
- Data is moving fast – big data and the information explosion – ISO can help to give cities a reliable foundation of globally standardized data that will assist cities in building core knowledge for city decision-making, and enable comparative insight and global benchmarking