

## **Systems for sustainability assessment of neighborhoods – possibilities for design and implementation**

Thomas Lützkendorf, Maria Balouktsi  
Sustainable Management of Housing and Real Estate,  
Department of Economics and Business Engineering, Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT)  
thomas.luetzkendorf@kit.edu

The principles of sustainable development must always be adapted to the specific object of assessment and integrated into the sphere of work and responsibility of the relevant stakeholders. This also applies to the issue of sustainable urban development. Here, there is a current need for the identification of relevant levels of action and the development, testing and use of appropriate tools. One possible approach is the subdivision of the complex system - the city - into manageable units - the neighbourhoods. In recent years, national and international sustainability assessment systems have been developed and used for neighbourhoods. For the case of new neighbourhood development projects a sustainability assessment is used both as a design tool as well as a signal of quality. The focus is on certifying that a quality level has achieved as defined by the assessment benchmarks. However, such an approach encounters criticism in the different municipalities in terms of existing neighbourhoods - the risk of a negative assessment resulting in stigmatisation seems to be too high. These problems can be overcome by following an alternative approach. It is recommended to use for existing neighbourhoods sustainability assessment systems in such a way that they support the processes of sustainable neighbourhood development. In this case, the assessment systems are used to analyse in a structured way the current situation in the neighbourhood, to formulate goals adapted to the specific situation and to measure success. In this paper, the important issues and trends in the field of sustainability assessment of neighbourhoods and their development are presented. It is shown that it is possible to build on earlier tools to support urban and district development, particularly in Germany. The authors present specific possibilities of a performance- or process-oriented approach.