Ten Steps to Success

Quality of Life Processes –
A Manual

Working together on the future of societies – and on the definition and improvement of quality of life – needs new processes. Many people want to get involved and take responsibility, but do not often find the right place to do so. Others have opted out of political and social change processes altogether. At the same time, societal challenges remain large.

This small manual presents a powerful ten-step process of shaping the future. It combines insights from quality of life processes in Germany and worldwide, scientific research and own practical experience in the context of "Schöne Aussichten – Forum für Frankfurt" (Positive Futures - Forum for Frankfurt). The goal is to encourage the emergence of new and further development of existing processes in municipalities, states and companies. In 2015, the German federal government begins with the governmental strategy "Gut leben in Deutschland – was uns wichtig ist" (Wellbeing in Germany – what matters to us), which includes some of the steps outlined.

Ten steps can be taken in close conjunction:

1. **Design the process:** Four core elements appear advisable in a quality of life process, but not all have to be used: dialogue, visions, measurement and actions.

2. **Raise resources:** Dialogues, research, the selection of indicators, public relations etc. require extensive work. Time and money must be available.

3. **Lead and harvest the conversations:** Open, structured conversations on quality of life should be conducted specifically with the seldom heard voices.

4. **Research:** Research should be done on topics, on similar processes elsewhere and on the theoretical background.

5. **Formulate visions:** Shared stories and pictures of the future should pose real challenges and should be formulated positively and easy to understand.

6. **Pursue interconnections:** Collaboration across topics and sectors can generate great value from the process.

7. **Compile indicators:** Indicators help to improve the information basis for individual and societal decisions.

8. **Bring actions and projects on the way:** The process should help to use scarce time and financial resources where they improve quality of life the most.

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9. **Publish and make visible:** Multiple communication channels and forms are available. If possible, the whole range should be used.

10. **Prepare the next edition:** Ideally, the process is repeated regularly, data are updated and visions revised.

This text is based on the original German version published in October 2014. The author is grateful for comments and suggestions on this first edition of the manual. They will be included in the second edition.

1. Design the process

In order to allow a lasting improvement in the quality of life of people in a pre-defined geographical or organizational space, at least four core elements are advisable in a quality of life process: Dialogue, visions, indicators and actions. For each element the pros and cons of including it should be considered in the particular context:

Four core elements: Dialogue, visions, indicators and actions

With or without dialogue: Complex social systems such as cities, nations or companies are difficult to analyze. However, with the help of open dialogue with a wide variety of actors, you can detect patterns in these systems. Conducting these open conversations is time consuming and does not suit everyone. Therefore, it is also possible that a small group of people with a good understanding of the system sketches the patterns. But then an additional anchoring of the process in the overall system is needed. In the ideal process, this anchoring happens in part through the dialogues.

The value of meaningful conversations

With or without visions: It seems useful to summarize what was heard in the dialogues in the form of visions, which may be illustrated. In this way one can make a jointly shared understanding of the desired future visible and easier to achieve. However, the term "vision" often produces reservations. This appears to be so especially in Germany, partly for historical reasons. Therefore, either other terms are used or explicit visions are omitted completely. Action-oriented processes also often work without visions (e.g. Santa Cruz County Community Assessment). However, in those cases you can often easily recognize visions through the indicators and the actions.

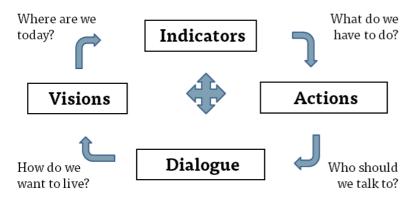**Visions as summaries of the dialogues**

With or without indicators: In general, it is advisable to use indicators in order to measure whether you are moving towards the desired future. However, there are at least three counter-arguments: 1) The selection, compilation and, if necessary, collection of indicators is very time consuming. 2) Many people have no relation to indicators, so these may not have broad appeal and visibility. 3) When indicators are made policy objectives, then they may turn useless as bypass and avoidance strategies are used (Goodhardt's law). In the Dutch city of Borne an effective quality of life process was carried out without indicators.

Are we moving into the right direction?

With or without actions: All quality of life processes aim to improve the situation of citizens on a lasting basis. Concrete actions, projects, partnerships etc. that build on visions and indicators are necessary. But not all organizers have sufficient resources available to carry out these projects. Therefore, processes can also end with the publication of the indicators. The hope is that key players adopt the visions and indicators and adjust their actions accordingly. If many discussions with key stakeholders were held in the course of the process and a public visibility was achieved, then there is a chance that policy, foundations and others at least make reference to visions and indicators.

Four elements of a quality of life process

Where are we today? → **Indicators** → What do we have to do?

Visions ← → **Actions**

How do we want to live? → **Dialogue** → Who should we talk to?

Source: Center for Societal Progress, Frankfurt

Depending on your preferred design of the process and on the target group, a name for the process should be found. This can be very time consuming as well. Some concepts could be viewed as already "occupied" or "used" (sustainability, dialogue, etc.) - even if they would fit the intentions well. Others might be considered too technical or too controversial (indicators, vision, etc.).

2. Raise resources

Quality of life processes require a lot of resources. Ideally, a process would last at least a year and employ several full-time employees. They are responsible for the dialogues, research, the selection of indicators, public relations and more to allow good visibility and a broad anchoring in society. Of course, a process can also be smaller with a lot of volunteer work. A small group of committed people in the right place can achieve a lot. Each process must find its own way. Two areas require special attention in resource planning:

Institutionalization and mandate: As soon as financial resources become an issue, the process has to be anchored in an organization with tax and bank account numbers. This organization officially defines the mandate and objectives of the process. Unfortunately the ideal institution does

not exist. Any weakness should be compensated by engaging other resources in the network or through partnerships:

- Government agencies often have the appropriate resources and they have great societal relevance and visibility. However, there is always the danger that the process is too close to the ruling party and as a result does not have broad acceptance.
- Many foundations have resources and political neutrality, but the foundation's mission may not fit to a broader quality of life process.
- Research organizations are politically neutral and generally have the necessary expertise. However, they are not always close to the citizens (which is necessary for the dialogues) or to policymakers (which may be necessary for implementation).
- Civil society organizations rarely have large financial resources and are not always politically neutral.
- Business-related organizations could have sufficient resources, but may not be as open on content as would be helpful for a well-functioning process.

Advisory board and figureheads: Many quality of life processes work with advisory boards or with prominent figureheads to achieve wide impact, visibility and acceptance. However, quality of life processes often enter new ground on content and method. Not everyone wants to be part of this journey into unknown territory. Also, if the population is to be integrated in all its breadth, the impression should be avoided that the advisory board and figureheads control both process and content.

Prominent figureheads?

3. Lead and harvest the conversations

A basic assumption of this manual is that quality of life processes should provide spaces in which many different people can contribute to actively shaping the future. Meaningful conversations and dialogues are entry points into these spaces. The organizers of the wellbeing process have to decide to what extent they want to frame these discussions: The spectrum ranges from the selection out of a list of pre-formulated answers all the way to a free conversation on general questions such as "What is important to you in your life?", "What does quality of life in ... mean to you?" or "What changes would you like to see in the next X years?". Open discussions are more complicated to lead and to harvest, but they can lead to a large, sometimes surprising range of perspectives.

Involve a lot of different people

Trained facilitators with appropriate knowledge of methods, e.g. from the network "The Art of Hosting and Harvesting Meaningful Conversations" should help in the design and facilitation of the conversations. Additional people are needed to facilitate and harvest these conversations. For the harvest, some pre-determined structure is necessary. There is no way

Use facilitators

around producing protocols and evaluations of each conversation. Team meetings are helpful to adjust the structure as needed.

At least four avenues should be followed to involve people:

- **Seldom heard voices:** Many people feel unheard in the current political decision-making processes and have opted out. Approaching them actively can be a core task of quality of life processes. The experience in such processes usually is: people like to contribute. They know what is important to them. And they can also articulate this well. What is necessary is an appropriately designed space in which they can express themselves freely and feel valued. In addition, access to trusted individuals is needed, who can open doors to these seldom heard voices. Discussions in small, homogeneous groups may be particularly fertile.

- **Large events:** They provide an opportunity to bring together people from different backgrounds and to draw attention to the process. Events from two to three hours are usually attended by more people than full-day events. Time is a scarce resource that has to be respected also during a short event.

- **Online:** These days, no quality of life process can do without online participation. However, the importance of online participation should not be overstated in comparison to face-to-face meetings. First, for example, not everyone wants to see his answers to the question of what is important in their lives posted on a website. Secondly, group discussions regularly bring participants to a deeper level of collective reflection, which then produces new ideas and impulses. This is hardly possible in one-off online projects.

- **Bilaterally:** Many bilateral discussions accompany each quality of life process. Through them the need of the project can be defined more clearly, the external presentation can be sharpened, the network extended, valuable partnerships on content can be prepared and insights are gained. Here as well, the active, targeted approach of relevant individuals is crucial.

The big picture perspective

The number of participants, partners and followers can quickly approach hundreds or even thousands. The project team must keep track of: Who has spoken with whom about what? Who participated in which event? Who contributed online? Who is interested in which topic? Software platforms can offer an inexpensive way to keep track of people and to communicate with them.

4. Research

Research on at least three areas

Throughout its entire course any quality of life process should be accompanied by research. This can be very time consuming as well. The research allows to learn from the experience of others, to not naively make

mistakes, to be taken seriously by the public and by partners, and to capture the breadth of topics. At least three areas should be researched:

a. Topics

Background research on selected topics is crucial. What is the relationship between the results of the dialogues and the current activities in this field? Who are the major players? What experts are out there on the issues identified during the dialogues? What data allow a thorough overview of the topic? Mind maps can be helpful to manage complexity. The research on the topics broadens the basis for the visions and the indicators that are created during later stages of the process.

Follow up on content

b. Other processes

Quality of life processes have been carried out by many other people in different locations in diverse designs. From them you can learn a lot:

Learn from other processes

- **On process:** How did they proceed? Which advantages and disadvantages did their path have? Who were the partners? Why have they committed? Who did they speak with? On what topics? What kind of public relations worked for them? Helpful here is the personal consultation of various parties involved, as published reports often include only success stories.

- **On content:** How were decisions made on content? Which topics were identified? What aspects were dealt with? How were indicators selected? Usually, the end result of visions and indicators is available to the public. The path to these visions and indicators is usually not an easy one and is rarely made visible publicly.

c. Theory and data

A certain theoretical basis is important, but should not be the main point of a participatory process on quality of life. Theories can be helpful in structuring insights generated in the process and help identify important aspects as well as blank spots. Researchers such as Amartya Sen, Martha Nussbaum, Shalom Schwartz, Manfred Max Neef or Seymour Epstein have developed theories on human needs. These were tested empirically by sociologists, psychologists, economists and others. They identified the factors that are most important for life satisfaction in the data.

Theories of human needs

5. Formulate visions

Once the dialogues on quality of life have been harvested, and the research is largely done, the conditions are in place to formulate the visions. Visions serve to make the key messages of the participants visible and to prepare the ground for collective and individual activities. Once the visions are visible, some criticism is likely. Constructive criticism should be used to revise the visions.

Make core messages visible

In order to formulate effective visions, one should consider the following points:

- The **scope** of the vision should be made clear, e.g. "Frankfurt am Main".

- The vision should be formulated for a **fixed time**, e.g "In 2030 …", "In 15 years …".

- The wording should be **short**, easy to understand, with simple sentences and concepts.

- The visions should be **formulated clearly**, without getting lost in detail. In the ideal case, a picture of the preferred future arises in the mind's eye of the reader. Without a lot of additional information illustrators could produce images for the visions. Filmmaker could make a film about them.

- Visions should be **formulated positively**. Attractive aspects of life get more, better or greater. Well-crafted visions lead to a feel-good effect amongst readers.

- The vision should represent **real challenges** for the community and every single person, without becoming unrealizable utopias. One should not shy away from a clear distance to the current situation and from ambitious targets.

- The vision should be **shared jointly**. This is based on the results of the dialogue with citizens. As a control, you can ask, for example: for whom would this not be a desirable future?

6. Pursue interconnections

Connect topics

One added value of broad-based quality of life processes is the opportunity to work across topics and sectors. In recent decades, increasing specialization has brought great insights and results in individual topics and subtopics. But now it seems to be time to reconnect with each other towards a more holistic approach of quality of life. Many good ideas and a lot of potential for the improvement of quality of life lie at the interfaces between the topics. In current structures such projects often get little attention because nobody feels responsible.

Foster collaboration

Quality of life processes have the potential to allow connections that reduce silo mentality and promote interagency cooperation. This applies at all levels in organizations, in cities, and at the national level. Of course, this is not easy, as many groups and individuals want to maintain or expand their current role and visibility. In order to reduce this resistance, support from above (leaders) and from below (employees, the public, etc.) is helpful.

The interconnections can appear in many different forms. Some examples:

- **Dependencies:** The mental and physical health of people depends on what happens in all other areas: how are education, transport, work, environment, etc. organized? The health implications of activities of the other fields are not always thought through.

- **Synergies:** A greater sense of security in public transport may increase its use and thus reduce road congestion and help the environment. Relevant topics: security, mobility and environment.

- **Trade-offs:** Negative correlations should be made visible. While the improvement of energy efficiency of buildings reduces energy consumption (desired development), it may simultaneously increase the rental rates (undesirable development for tenants).

- **Potentials:** Specific projects to improve quality of life can unfold much more effectively if they take advantage of the potentials in neighboring topics. Schools are often a potential – but overburdened – partner. And what about spreading advice on energy-saving through sports associations?

- **Scaling:** On some specific issues there may be wonderful small projects that could achieve much more impact through a transfer to other topics. In the environmental sphere, there are projects such as waste prevention or community gardens. Quality of life processes can help to expedite the transfer to other areas (economy, housing, etc.).

- **Crosscutting issues:** The design and use of public space is important for health, living together, transport, recreation, environment and many other issues (also in companies). As a separate topic "public space" would probably not be appropriate in a quality of life process. But its importance can nevertheless receive new attention.

7. Compile indicators

Through their indicators, quality of life processes can help to improve the information basis for individual and societal decisions: Where should scarce time and financial resources be used in order to allow the largest increase in quality of life? Indicators are also important to measure whether decisions actually had the desired effect (evidence-based policy). Of course, indicators can never measure the actual state of a system comprehensively. But they can indicate deeper problems, as for any doctor the body temperature is an important indicator, which may suggest the need for further investigations.

Improve the information basis

The selection of indicators should be based on clear and comprehensible rules. A proposal:

- **Relevant to the quality of life of people and compatible with the vision:** Each indicator should have a reference to what people said is important to them.

- **Outcome-oriented:** Expenditure on education and health are generally not good indicators because the same money can lead to different results.

- **"Good" or "bad" direction should be clear.** Based on what people said and on the accompanying research, it should be clear what the desired direction for the development of each indicator is.

- **Modifiable:** More sunshine in Frankfurt in November may be desirable. But it is not feasible.

- **Understandable for the general public:** Some indicators are understandable only for experts. This should be avoided or at least simplified.

- **Summarizing:** Five to ten indicators should be able to cover the width of a topic area, without getting lost in detail.

- **Width of the topic area:** Indicators should reflect different aspects of the topics and they should ideally cover the perspectives of different population groups and social spheres.

- **Numbers available in real time:** If the numbers are available only with a delay of four or five years, the indicator is probably not suitable for a quality of life process that is based on the current needs of the population.

- **Time series available:** If numbers are only available for one point in time, the indicators can be helpful for a comparison with the desired future situation. However, this is not enough to detect any trend developments from the past.

Old and new targets

In addition, a balance should be found between indicators that are already used as targets of key stakeholders (e.g. bicycle share, share of renewable energies), and indicators that are not (yet) in the center of attention. With a view to possible future developments one should take into account whether the indicator is available for individual population groups and/or smaller geographic units.

Initiate new measures

If important indicators are not yet available, the project team should consider how this can be changed. Own data collection can be useful and is part of many local quality of life processes. Since it can be time consuming and expensive, an alternative would be partnerships with universities or the press.

8. Bring actions and projects on the way

Broad-based quality of life processes should help to use scarce time and financial resources where they do the most to improve quality of life. Concrete actions and projects are therefore necessary. This phase of the process should be taken into account all the way from the beginning. Project ideas will probably already be generated in the dialogues. Putting them into practice is possible even without formulated visions or finished indicator systems.

Deploy resources for quality of life

Implementation of the projects can be done by different people and the contribution of the organizers of the overall process varies from case to case. Projects may arise without the organizers ever hearing about them. In other cases, they bring different actors together. And some projects they might take on themselves or in partnership with others.

Different actors

Possible criteria for the selection of projects include these:

- All projects should live the agreed vision(s) and thus make a contribution to the desired future. Ideally, it is even clear which indicators are positively affected by the project.

- It should be possible to implement the projects. It should be clear, which actors and what resources are necessary for implementation. Some projects require a lot of money and need a powerful institution. Others can be brought to life by volunteer efforts.

- Many projects are likely to have wide appeal and effect. But niche projects can be helpful as well if they cover a high demand of a specific group.

- Some projects are likely to arise from the interconnections of several topics. This could also include that existing projects from one topic are strengthened through links to other topics.

The ideas for projects should be generated from the overall quality of life process and then followed up. Presumably there will be three different approaches:

Ideas for projects emerge

- Some projects are created from scratch. The connections and insights from the overall process bring these projects off the ground.

- Many wonderful projects that live the visions already exist even without the overall process. They should get extra attention, get larger and have more impact.

- Wonderful projects are also in place in other cities (or companies) and can be identified as part of the research process. It should be checked whether they are applicable elsewhere.

In order to promote the implementation of the projects, partnership agreements (Tasmania), sponsorships (Jacksonville), "Local Heroes" (Santa Cruz County) or other measures may be helpful. A concrete example of the interplay between the topics work/business, education and transport

Partners, sponsors and heroes

comes from Vancouver, where the Community Foundation decided in the wake of the Vital Signs project to award a grant for public transport to poorer citizens in outlying districts so that they can pursue educational and job opportunities throughout the city.

9. Publish and make visible

Quality of life processes are meaningless if they are carried out behind closed doors and no one learns about them or uses the results. On the other hand, it is an illusion to expect that all people in a city know within a short period time about an emerging process and want to be actively involved.

Increase visibility

It is important that the visibility of the process is an issue from the beginning and ideally increases steadily as more new people pay attention. An elaborate strategy for public relations during the entire process including key messages and target group analysis is helpful. The approach taken has to match the available resources.

Many communication channels are available. If possible, the entire spectrum should be used:

Use the full spectrum

- A dedicated website is mandatory. It serves at least as a business card, but ideally as a platform for the exchange on the process and on content. The effort can be scaled easily.

- A newsletter is also standard. With an appropriate platform in the background, commitment of time and money remain manageable.

- Facebook and Twitter are suitable for short information about current activities. They reach especially the younger audience and offer an opportunity for feedback.

- Letters and postcards are a great way to reach many people. In the process in Tasmania intermediate results were sent to all households, including pre-paid reply cards.

- Press work is important because the traditional media such as newspapers, television and radio still have a wide reach. Blogs should also be taken into account.

- Events are essential for a true encounter of people on the subject of quality of life. The spectrum ranges from small team meetings via thematically focused events all the way to major events in exhibition halls.

- Flyers, posters, swing cards etc. generate further attention. But preparing, printing and distributing them can be very expensive.

- Presentations provide the opportunity to give additional visibility to the process and the results.

- Project publications summarize the results – in print or online.

Many or even all forms of expression should be used: Texts should be written in a simple, non-technical language. Charts of the indicators should be easy to understand. Illustrations of the process and of the results are helpful. Pictures sometimes say more than a thousand words - but only if they are well chosen. Videos provide easy access for many people.

10. Prepare the next edition

Well-made quality of life processes have a lasting effect even if they formally end after one or two years: the many personal encounters during the process continue to contribute in various places. The visions have changed the social discourse as the press and other key stakeholders often refer to them – even if the source may not always be mentioned. The indicators will ideally get such a high relevance and visibility that many players refer to them. And finally, the concrete projects that were initiated during the process continue to prosper.

On top of all these effects, in an ideal situation the process is repeated regularly, data are updated and visions revised. This should be taken into account throughout the first edition: Participants should enjoy participation, the value of the process should be visible and important players become more and more familiar with the process and its content. Specifically, the following steps after the end of the first edition appear conceivable and reasonable:

- The projects generated in the process should be leveraged and connected. The big picture perspectives created through the over-all process can provide useful additional insights for individual projects. In addition, existing and new projects can be linked more clearly through partnerships in various topics.

- The publication of indicators should be updated once a year or every other year. Significant changes and new priority areas for actions should be noted. A publication event is a good opportunity to facilitate re-encounters between people.

- Every five years or so, the entire process should start again. Intensive conversations on quality of life should be facilitated again. If the first edition was a success, access to the different social groups is now easier than in the first round. The results of the dialogues can be compared with the contents of the first edition. Visions and indicators will be adjusted accordingly.

Ideally, the indicators from the process are used for evaluating the success of each project. Do the projects cause the expected improvement in quality of life? Were scarce time and financial resources really used where they have a particularly large impact on quality of life? Where there any undesirable side effects?

Sources:

The ten steps outlined here are derived from the research of the Center for Societal Progress since 2010, from many valuable discussions, from our own experience in facilitating the process "Schöne Aussichten – Forum für Frankfurt" (Positive Futures - Forum for Frankfurt), from several English-language manuals, and one German Publication:

Graham, Scott (2008): Tools for Action. A Resource Guide for Designing a Community Indicator Project. Social Planning and Research Council of British Columbia. The focus lies on the experience of the Vital Signs process of the Community Foundation in Vancouver. This is a very action-oriented process, where dialogues initially took second stage (but later received greater importance in the process).

Hall, Jon and Dennis Trewin (2010): Developing Societal Progress Indicators: A Practical Guide. OECD Statistics Working Paper No. 35. The statisticians are strong on the theoretical basis and the quality of the indicators.

Köckler, Heike (2005): Zukunftsfähigkeit nach Maß. Kooperative Indikatorenentwicklung als Instrument regionaler Agenda-Prozesse. In this book, attention is paid to the added value that is created through the process of developing indicators in a cooperative way.

Meadows, Donella (1998): Indicators and Information Systems for Sustainable Development. A Report to the Balaton Group. Great focus on the participatory process of selecting of indicators.

Mguin, Nina and Nicola Bacon (2010): Taking the Temperature of local communities. The Wellbeing and Resilience Measure. The Young Foundation. Based on a sophisticated model, a lot of content is defined in advance. Dialogue is not a main focus.

Redefining Progress and Earth Day network (2002): Sustainability Starts in Your Community. A Community Indicators Guide. Indicators with a focus on the natural environment are developed first and then discussed.

Studies from the Center for Societal Progress (mostly in German):

- **Die Kraft gesellschaftlicher Visionen (2013):** The synthesis paper from our research project on the power of societal visions.

- **Bessere Zukunft mit Visionen (2012):** The theoretical background paper on visions by Juliane Pohl.

- **Tasmania Together (2011):** A policy-initiated process, which was unfortunately ended.

- **Indikatorenprojekt Jacksonville (2011):** One of the most famous local processes, presented by Matthias Verbeck.

- **Santa Cruz – Projekt zur Gemeinschaftsbewertung (2011):** The Santa Cruz county community assessment project is strong on numbers and on actions, presented by Ines Seidel.
- **Progress Index 2010 and 2011**, with many theoretical insights (edition 2010) and the analysis of national and local processes (2011 edition).

Annex: Quality of life processes in Germany

A. Proposals from the working group „Prosperity, quality of life and progress"

In 2012 the working group „Prosperity, quality of life and progress" led by the director of the Center of Societal Progress in the Federal Chancellor's Dialogue on Germany's Future made eight proposals. Three of them are:

Citizens' Dialogue on quality of life: We suggest that the Federal Government should start a citizens' dialogue on working out a common – and simultaneously pluralist – idea for a desirable and realistic future for the Federal Republic of Germany and a shared understanding of quality of life, together with methods for ensuring it is improved in the long term.

„Germany worth living in" reporting system: The topics worked out in the Citizens' Dialogue will be input into the reporting system, which can be adapted and extended over the course of time in the light of new insights.

Quality of life progress report: We propose that the Federal Government should publish an interdepartmental opinion in an annual „quality of life progress report" regarding the most important policy areas to do with quality of life and their long-term improvement. The individual governmental activities over previous years and the planned activities are presented with their effect on various areas of life for current and future generations.

Source: https://www.dialog-ueber-deutschland.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/EN/
2013-05-29-deutschlandforum-short.pdf (From page 108)

B. Governmental strategy "Wellbeing in Germany – what matters to us"

The Governmental strategy "Wellbeing in Germany – what matters to us" is an innovative public consultation approach. In 2015 the Federal Government will ask people across Germany what is important to them in life. This will be the basis for a new system of indicators, a report and a plan of action on wellbeing in Germany. The director of the Center of Societal Progress is a member of the scientific advisory board.

Source: www.dialog-ueber-deutschland.de/DE/30-IDF/10-Hintergrund/hintergrund_node.html

C. Positive Futures – Forum for Frankfurt

"Schöne Aussichten – Forum für Frankfurt" ("Positive Futures – Forum for Frankfurt") is a platform to improve the future of the city of Frankfurt am Main. Participants with different backgrounds come together to shape a vibrant and livable city. In a long-term process, visions for the year 2030 are formulated on the basis of what citizens' say is important to them. Indicators help compare the current situation to the preferred future. Concrete projects are implemented. The process started in early 2014 and is hosted by the Center for Societal Progress.

http://www.schoeneaussichtenffm.de/english

About the "Zentrum für gesellschaftlichen Fortschritt" (Center for Societal Progress)

Objective: The Center for Societal Progress develops new ways and methods that can help improve the quality of life of people – with a special focus on Germany. We build bridges between disciplines, topics, institutions and individuals.

People: Founder and honorary director of the think tank is Dr. Stefan Bergheim. He holds a doctoral degree in economics, held a teaching position at St. Gallen University and has led the working group "Prosperity, quality of life and progress" in the Federal Chancellor's Dialogue on Germany's Future 2011/12. The interdisciplinary Ideenrat, the volunteer staff of the center, four additional board members and a large informal network share the common goal of developing new ideas for societal progress.

Products: Our "Progress Index" provides a measure of quality of life beyond gross domestic product. Our "Progress Studies" provide sound and clearly understandable analyses relevant to cross-cutting issues around quality of life, education, health and work. The event series "Progress Factory" combines dialogues with work on quality of life. The process "Positive Futures – Forum for Frankfurt" tests a quality of life process in practice.

Resonance: Since June 2009, the Center for Societal Progress is the first German correspondent in the OECD's global project on progress. In March 2010, it was named a "Selected Landmark 2010" in the "365 Landmarks in the Land of Ideas". The first issue of the Progress Index was reported in late 2010 in many newspapers.

Financing: As a nonprofit organization, we provide our knowledge and products to the public free of charge. Funding for our work comes from membership fees and donations from dedicated individuals, foundations and corporations. The organization does not receive taxpayers' money.