



Sustainable Development,  
Regional and International Disparities

1460-1600

City Statistics (Urban Audit)

## Quality of life in the cities 2016



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
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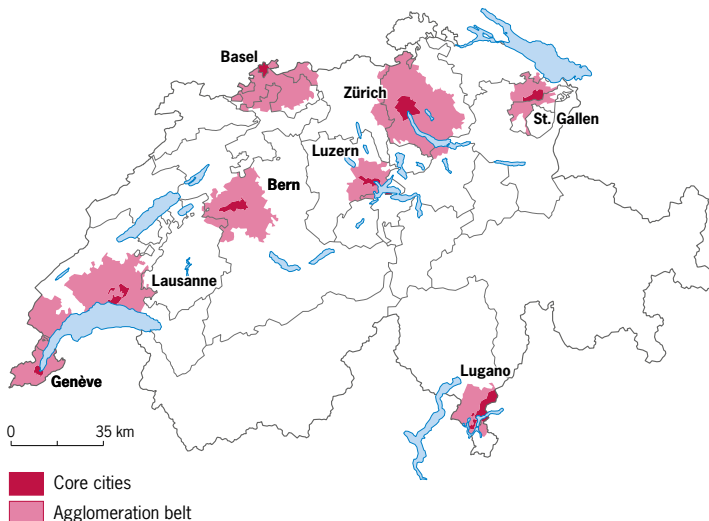
Swiss Confederation

Federal Department of Home Affairs FDHA  
Federal Statistical Office FSO

Neuchâtel 2016

The **pocket statistics** shows various aspects of the quality of life in Switzerland's eight City Statistics cities: Zurich, Geneva, Basel, Bern, Lausanne, Lucerne, St. Gallen and Lugano. The quality of life in the cities is presented with data from the City Statistics (Urban Audit). The indicators may be completed in the future so that a fuller picture of the quality of life can be presented.

## The eight cities of City Statistics in Switzerland



Sources: FSO – Agglomeration definition 2012, City Statistics 2016

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## What is Quality of Life?

With a concept of the quality of life an attempt is made to measure the well-being of the population in its various dimensions. Well-being is determined by both material living conditions and the subjective perception of the quality of life. Among the dimensions of material living conditions are *Income & Jobs* and *Housing Conditions*. The immaterial dimensions of the quality of life include *Health*, *Education*, *Environmental Quality*, *Personal Security*, *Civic Engagement* and *Work-Life Balance*.

The quality of life dimensions are summarised in the “How’s Life?”<sup>1</sup> report, and describe the quality of life in the OECD countries. To take into account particular circumstances of Swiss cities, and to better depict the attractiveness of individual locations, the quality of life dimensions have been expanded to include *Infrastructure & Services*, *Mobility* and *Culture & Leisure*. Additionally, the topics *Economic Context* and *Demographic Context* portray the economic and demographic structure of the cities.

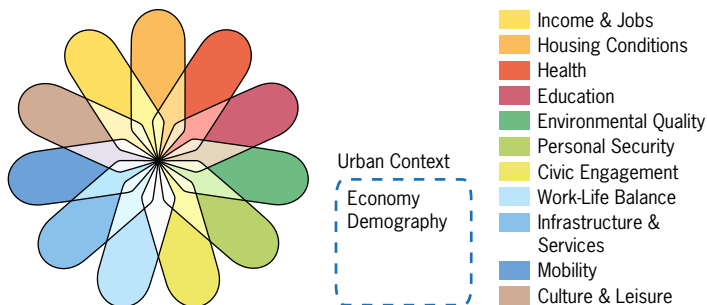
The dimensions vary depending on a city’s or region’s spatial structure. The regional aspect of the quality of life concept is also addressed in the OECD report “How’s Life in Your Region?”<sup>2</sup> These concepts are currently used by Eurostat and the EU regional policies with regard to regional and municipal analyses.

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<sup>1</sup> OECD (2011), *How’s Life?: Measuring Well-being*, OECD Publishing

<sup>2</sup> OECD (2014), *How’s Life in Your Region?: Measuring Regional and Local Well-being for Policy Making*, OECD Publishing, Paris

## Quality of life dimensions



Source: OECD (2014), *How's Life in Your Region?: Measuring Regional and Local Well-being for Policy Making*, OECD Publishing, Paris;  
Design adapted by the FSO

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Quality of life is a multi-dimensional concept in which the dimensions are connected to one another. A good education, for example, can lead to a higher income and in this way positively influence housing conditions.

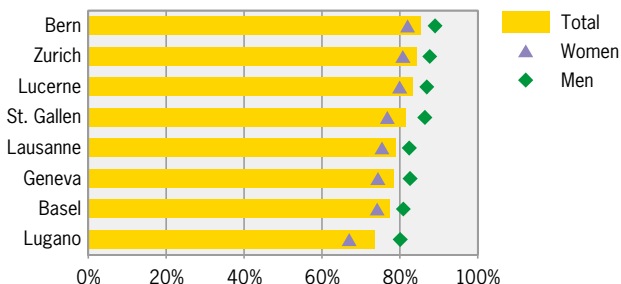
Everyone aspires to a good quality of life but the individual realisation varies greatly. The quality of life is also shaped by the structures and opportunities available in a particular city. In addition to traditional economic factors such as the taxation rate, the quality of life constitutes an important element in a city's attractiveness. For this reason, the quality of life plays an important part in urban development policy as it attracts people and businesses, thus generating capital for development.

## Income & Jobs

Income and jobs allow people to cover their basic needs and provide opportunities to fulfil personal wishes. They allow people to accumulate wealth, helping them to be more resistant in times of economic crisis.

### Economic activity rate, 2015

Share of 15–64 year-olds in the permanent resident population who participate in the labour market



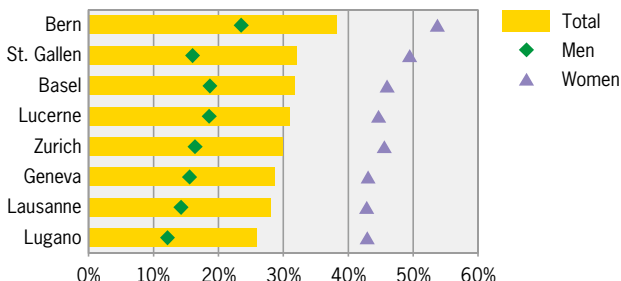
Source: FSO – RS

© FSO 2016

The net activity rate measures labour market participation. A regular income enables people to satisfy their basic and personal needs, i.e. the consumption of goods and services. Citizens' consumption and taxes also contribute to a city's prosperity.

## Part-time employment, 2015

Share of employed persons with a work-time percentage of < 90%



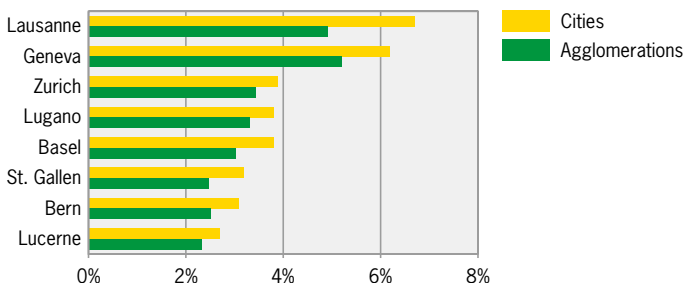
Source: FSO – RS

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Part-time employment can have both positive and negative consequences. Additional time can be used for a better work-life balance and personal fulfilment and leisure. These are positive consequences. Negative consequences are a reduced income, fewer opportunities for promotion, limited possibilities for continuing education and training, as well as lower contributions to occupational pension funds. Part-time employment is also important for gender equality.

## Unemployment rate, 2015

Share or registered unemployed in total economically active population



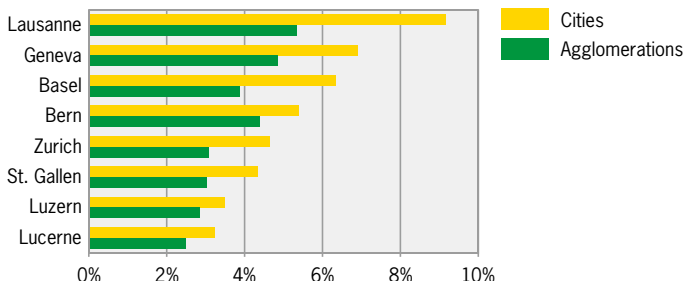
Sources: FSO – RS; SECO

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Unemployment places people at risk of poverty and social exclusion. Long-term unemployment may be experienced as a difficult life situation and can therefore also have an impact on health.

## Social assistance rate, 2014

Share of social assistance recipients among permanent resident population



Source: FSO – Social assistance statistics

© FSO 2016

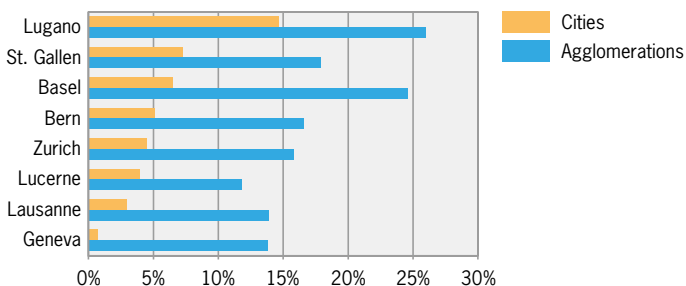
Social assistance ensures basic needs and encourages individual and economic independence. It aims to help social and professional integration as well as to support occupational rehabilitation. It can alleviate temporary situations of crisis and provide a social safety net.

## Housing Conditions

Good housing conditions meet the basic needs of people for safety, feeling of protection, privacy and personal space. They can also allow people to start a family. Housing costs can take up a large part of a household's budget, limiting expenditure on other areas such as leisure, holidays and education.

### Single-family houses, 2015

Share in total dwellings



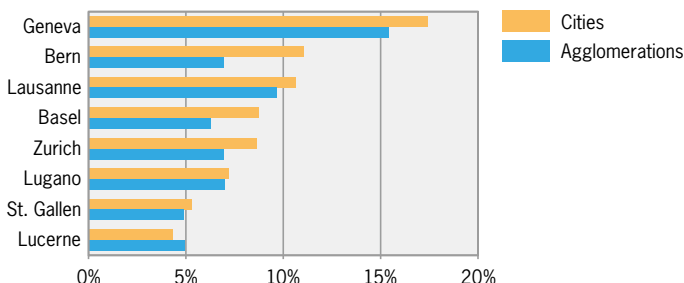
Source: FSO – BDS

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The percentage of single-family houses indicates a city's structure – which may have been partially shaped by history. Single-family houses frequently imply a higher average per capita living space and a private garden. Oftentimes single-family houses have a higher demand of space, that is therefore not available for other forms of land use.

## Overcrowded dwellings, 2015

Share of occupied dwellings with more than 1 person per room



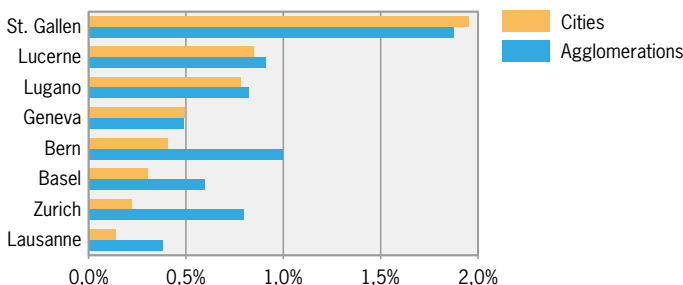
Sources: FSO – BDS, RS

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Having sufficient space is essential to meet people's basic need for privacy and for making home a pleasant place to be. Too many tenants may have a negative impact on health or children's school performance.

## Dwelling vacancy rate, 2015

Share of empty dwellings in total number of dwellings



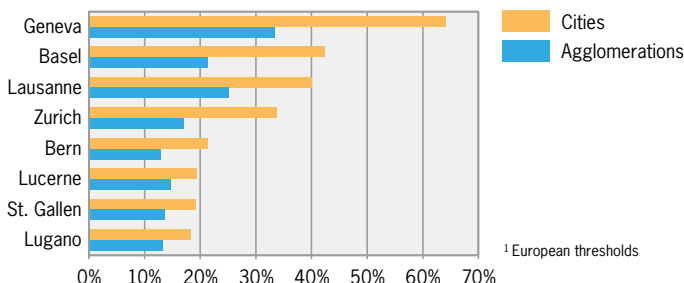
Sources: FSO – BDS, EDS

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A high dwelling vacancy rate makes finding accommodation easier and influences the price of housing on offer. Looking for suitable accommodation can take up a lot of time which would otherwise be spent with family or on leisure activities. An insufficient supply might result in expensive housing or people having to move to another neighbourhood or to the suburbs. This can sometimes lead to a longer daily commute or place a burden on the household budget.

## Traffic noise, 2012

Share of the population disturbed in the night by >55 dB(A)<sup>1</sup> (decibels)



Source: FOEN – SonBase

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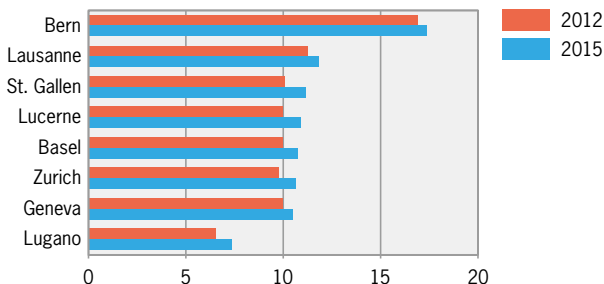
Traffic noise at night is harmful to one's sleep and can negatively affect health and satisfaction with housing conditions. In addition to noise from road traffic, trains and aeroplanes can also be a nuisance but currently data is not available on the city level.

## Health

Health is one of the most valuable aspects of a person's life. It enables active participation in social life and in the labour market. Health is also influenced by a good work-life balance as well as high environmental quality.

### Practising doctors

per 1000 inhabitants



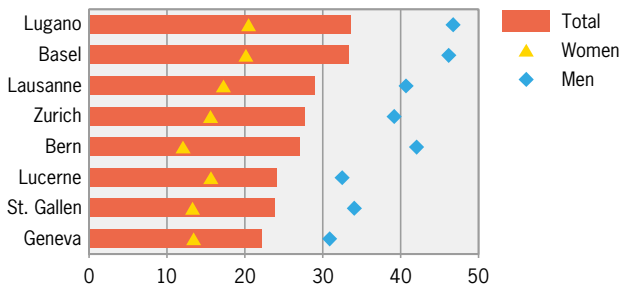
Source: FMH

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The percentage of practising doctors in the resident population gives an indication of the health services available in a city. Certain cities have a central hospital providing health care for the region. These cities therefore tend to have a higher density of doctors.

## Mortality rate of under 65 year-olds

Crude mortality rate due to diseases of the circulatory or respiratory systems per 100,000 inhabitants, average from 2011 to 2014



Source: FSO – eCOD

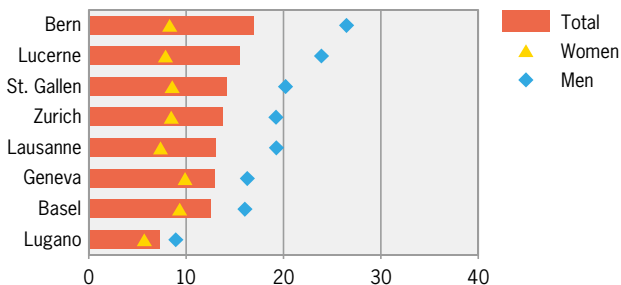
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Deaths under the age of 65 often have many causes, such as genetic factors, accidents, individual health behaviour or the quality of the local environment.

The discrepancy between men and women can be explained by men's greater consumption of tobacco and alcohol as well as a higher occurrence of obesity in men.

## Suicide rate

Crude suicide rate per 100,000 inhabitants (excl. assisted suicide), average from 2011 to 2014



Source: FSO – eCOD

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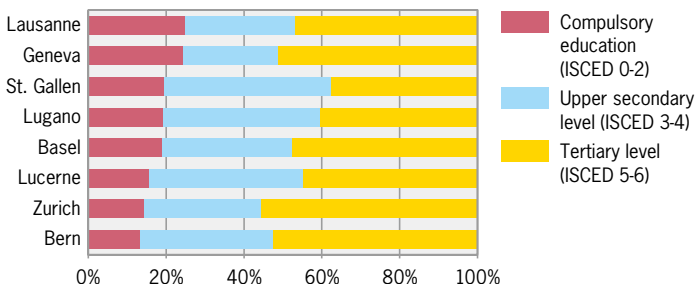
The suicide rate is an indicator for the subjective perception of the quality of life. People at risk of suicide need a stable social environment as well as professional support.

## Education

Education opens opportunities for development and helps people to better cope with social and economic changes. Prospects on the labour market and the possibilities for professional advancement are to a large extent determined by education.

### Educational attainment of the population, 2015

Permanent resident population, between 25 and 64 years of age, by highest completed education or training



Source: FSO – RS

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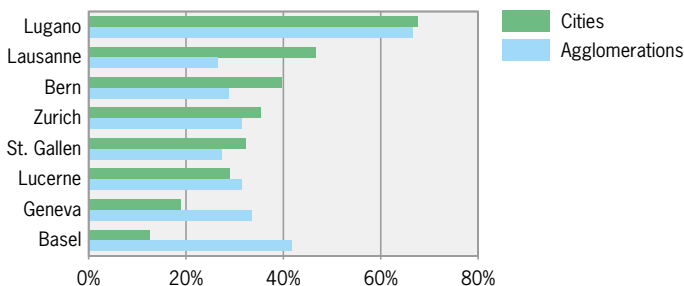
The educational attainment of the population quantifies how many people with particular levels of qualification are available for the labour market. Post-compulsory education reduces the perils of the labour market and increases the chances of having a well-paid job. Opportunities for continuing education are important for life-long learning and can, amongst other things, raise civil awareness and political participation.

## Environmental Quality

Many people appreciate pleasant and natural surroundings in their place of residence and for their leisure time. Both are influenced by the quality of the local environment. An environment that is contaminated with pollutants and noise affects the mental and physical health of the population.

### Wooded and recreational areas 2004/09

Share of total surface area



Source: FSO – Land use statistics

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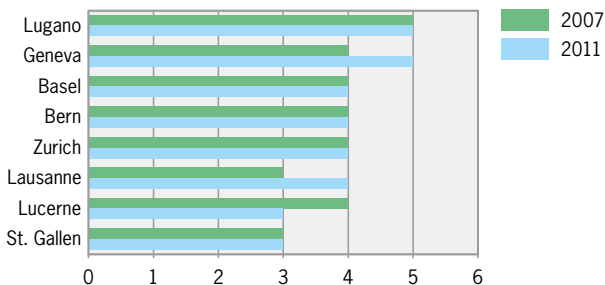
Green areas in cities offer people a place for retreat and recuperation in their immediate surroundings, without having to travel long distances. The share of green areas may also be shaped by a city's history and its institutional boundaries.

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## Long-term pollution index

Population weighted mixed index of air quality, based on concentrations of particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub>), nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) and ozone (O<sub>3</sub>)

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Sources: FSO; FOEN

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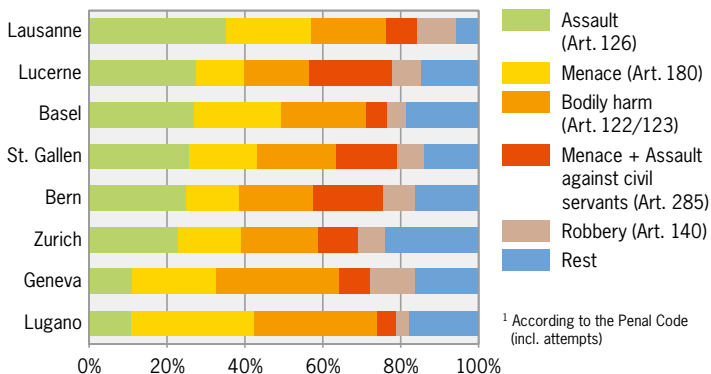
The long-term pollution index shows the average air pollution of towns and cities from level 1 “low” to level 6 “very high”. Chronic pollution by air pollutants such as particulate matter, nitrogen dioxide and ozone has a direct impact on human health and the environment. This may result in respiratory diseases such as bronchitis as well as an increased risk of cancer.

## Personal Security

Security is an important precondition for well-being and the maintenance of good health. Personal security is primarily influenced by crime, the risk of traffic accidents and natural hazards. Crime may lead to a loss of possessions, physical suffering, stress and anxiety.

### Violent crimes, 2015

Share of violent crimes<sup>1</sup> in the main categories



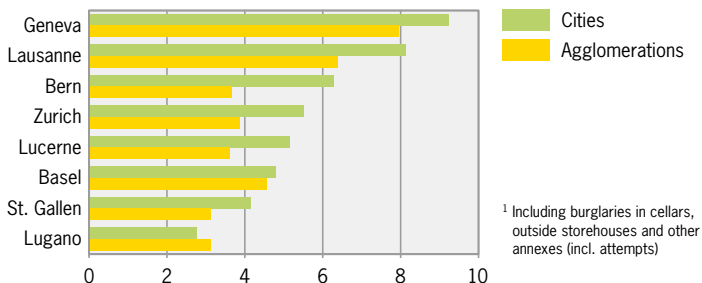
Source: FSO – Police crime statistics

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Crime influences people's feeling of security in their city. A feeling of insecurity might affect daily routines and limits personal freedom.

## Burglaries in dwellings, 2015

Number of burglaries with intrusions<sup>1</sup> in dwellings per 1000 inhabitants



Source: FSO – PCS

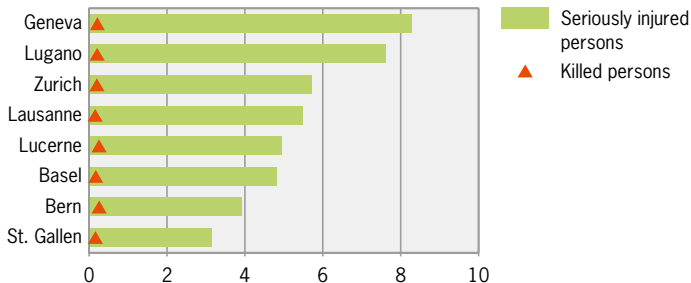
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Burglaries do not only result in damage of property for victims but also often mean that people no longer feel secure in their own homes. Burglaries therefore have a direct impact on the quality of life.

Cities are often a node of human activity depending both on its size and its geographic location (proximity to other cities), which has to be considered independent of its population size when interpreting burglaries and violent crimes.

## Road accident victims

Number of persons seriously injured or killed per 10,000 inhabitants, average from 2011 to 2015



Source: FEDRO – SVU

© FSO 2016

Traffic accidents can reduce the feeling of security on the roads. In addition to health consequences, they can also influence the choice of transportation means.

## Civic Engagement

Civic engagement is essential for democracies. By participating in political and social life, citizens can voice their needs and contribute to political decisions. Involvement in political and social processes leads to better informed citizens and greater acceptance of political decisions. It also allows more effective policy implementation and strengthens citizens' confidence in government and political institutions. Furthermore, civic engagement can increase citizens' personal happiness and satisfaction.

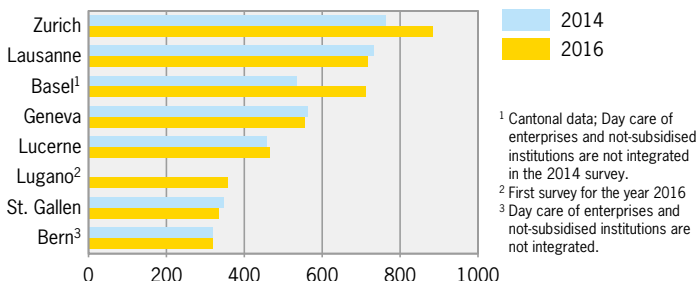
In Switzerland, citizens are not only able to elect their representatives, but, as a result of direct democracy, can also vote on proposals or bills at the federal, cantonal and municipality level. All residents, including those without political rights, can participate in a citizens' forum and consultations. In terms of civic engagement at city level, presently either no suitable data are available or are derived from sources other than official statistics.

## Work-Life Balance

A good work-life balance influences well-being, contributes to productivity in the workplace and helps people to remain healthy and happy.

### Care of infants

Children cared for with pre-school age (0–3 year-olds), per 1000 children in this age group

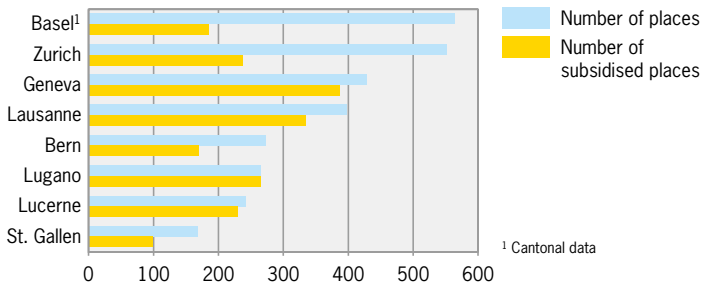


Source: FSO

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## Availability of child care for infants, 2016

Total and subsidised places for children of pre-school age (0–3 year-olds), per 1000 children in this age group



Source: FSO

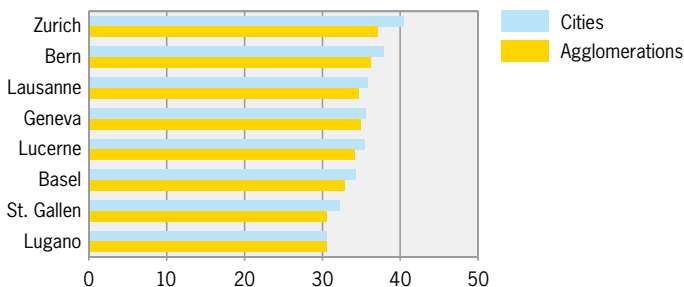
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External childcare enables families to reconcile professional obligations with family commitments.

However, the data do not show, how many of the children in day care come from the respective city. A high number of children in day care per resident children could also be explained by childcare provided for children whose parents work in a certain city but who do not live there. This applies particularly to children in day care of enterprises.

## Length of commute, 2015

Average length of journey from home to work, in minutes



Source: FSO – RS

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Commuting time is often considered as lost time as it can be used for neither family nor leisure activities. Particularly long commutes result in extra costs and can lead to stress.

## Infrastructure & Services

*Infrastructure & Services* is a measure of life quality that is spatially defined and codetermines a location's attractiveness. Infrastructure and services can vary quite considerably from city to city, having an impact on the material aspects of quality of life. This includes, for example, residential and workplace infrastructure with an attractive environment, good accessibility, and also tax incentives. In addition, the accessibility and range of services such as day nurseries, culture and mobility are important for the personal quality of life.

Data concerning the accessibility and range of services can be found in the chapters *Mobility* and *Culture & Leisure*. In addition to infrastructure and services, a location's attractiveness is also determined by the economic structure. This is described in the chapter *Economic Context* (page 34).

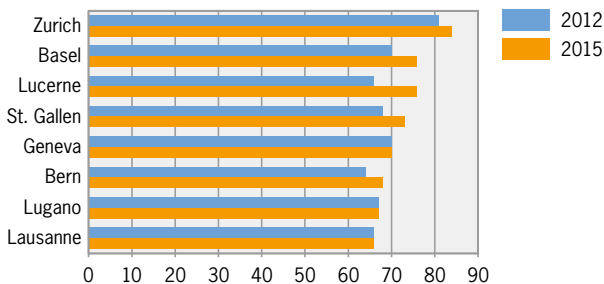
## Mobility

Mobility is often necessary for work and leisure activities. For many people a good transportation network is important to satisfy needs such as shopping, education and recreation.

Connecting residential areas and employment premises with public transportation is part of a sustainable, urban mobility management. As such it makes a considerable contribution to the quality of life.

### Price of a monthly public transport ticket

For journeys of 5 to 10 km in town centre, in CHF



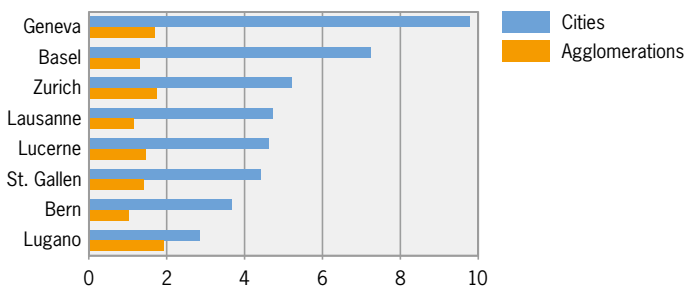
Source: City Statistics Partner

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The price of a monthly public transport ticket describes the costs an individual has to pay for using public transportation.

## Public transport stops, 2015

Number of stops per km<sup>2</sup>



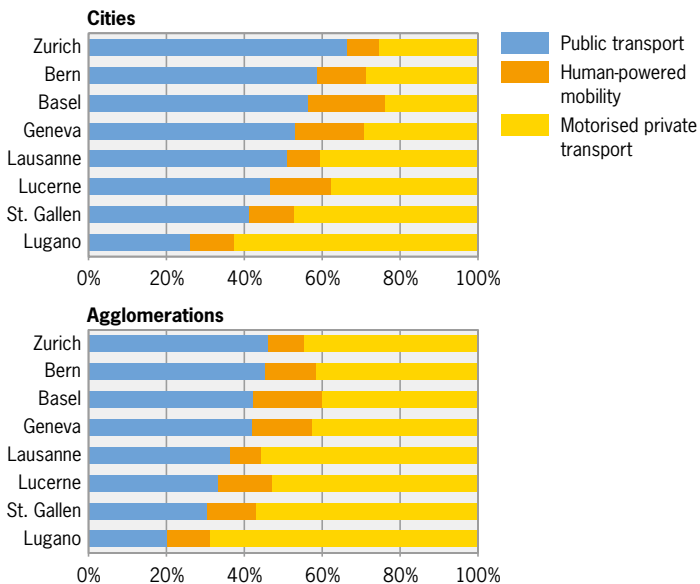
Sources: FSO – AREA; ARE – HAFAS

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The number of stops per square kilometre is an indicator for the density of a transportation network. A well-developed public transportation network increases the freedom of choosing the means of transportation and influences a switch from private motorised transportation to public transportation.

## Choice of transportation mode, 2015

For commute



Source: FSO – RS

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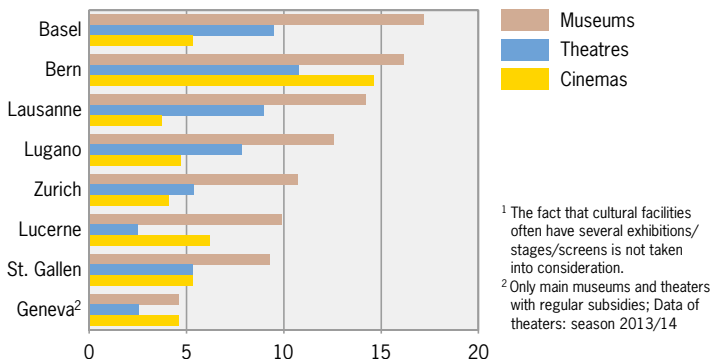
A reduction of private motorised transportation helps to improve the quality of the environment and influences personal security in road traffic.

## Culture & Leisure

Cultural offers enable the maintenance of social contacts, the development of networks and offers possibilities for recreational activities. Culture and leisure also includes clubs and sport facilities.

### Cultural offering, 2015

Number of museums, theatres and cinemas per 100,000 inhabitants<sup>1</sup>



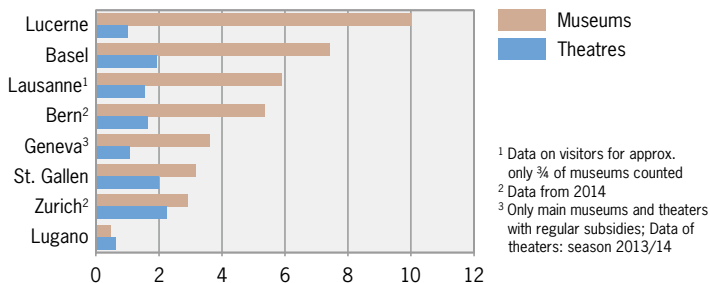
Sources: FSO – SSCin; City Statistics Partner

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The offer of museums, theatres and cinemas indicate a city's possibilities for cultural leisure activities.

## Cultural demand, 2015

Number of visitors per inhabitant



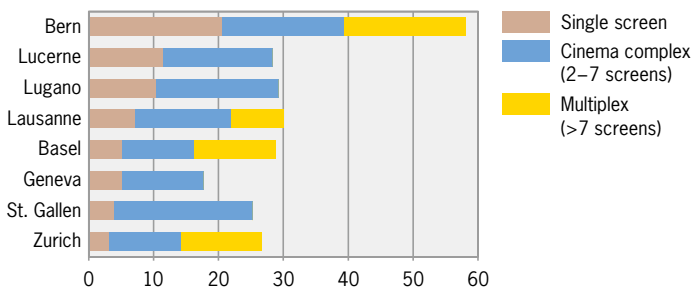
Source: City Statistics Partner

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Special museum exhibitions and theatre performances are often highlights in everyday life. These are usually located in cities and attract visitors from beyond their administrative boundaries.

## Cinema seats by type of cinema, 2015

Number of cinema seats per 1000 inhabitants by type of cinema



Source: FSO – SSCin

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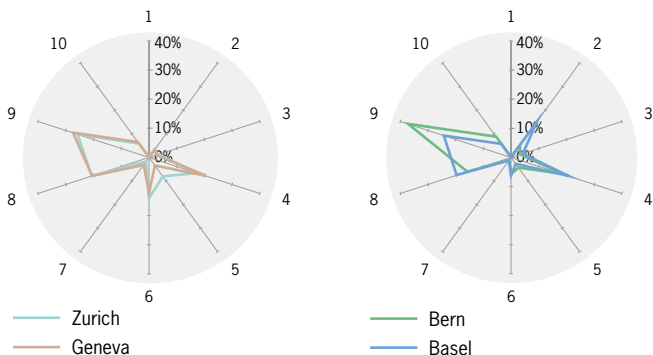
Different types of cinemas allow to make inferences on the selection of films available in a location. Since the 1990s, single screen cinemas have decreased at the expense of multiplex cinemas. Cinema complexes and especially multiplexes are often built together with restaurants and shops, allowing the easy combination of various leisure activities in one place.

## Economic Context

The economic context can be shaped actively by the city and influences businesses to make investments or create jobs. It therefore influences a city's economic structure and its attractiveness as a location.

### Economic structure, 2015

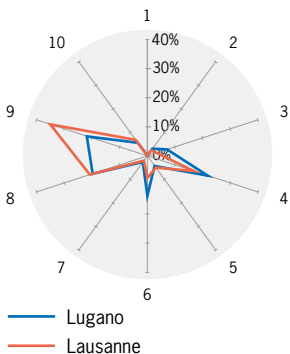
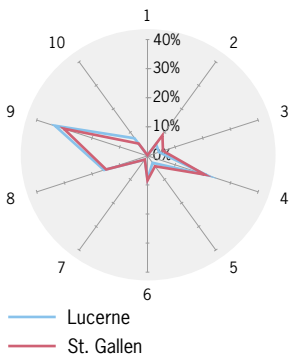
Distribution of employees by economic categories (NOGA)



- 1 Agriculture, forestry and fishing
- 2 Manufacturing/energy and water supply, mining
- 3 Construction
- 4 Wholesale and retail trade, transportation and accommodation
- 5 Information and communication
- 6 Financial and insurance services
- 7 Real estate activities and housing
- 8 Professional, scientific, administrative and technical services
- 9 Public administration and defence, education, human health and social work activities
- 10 Art, entertainment and recreation, other services

## Economic structure, 2015

Distribution of employees by economic categories (NOGA)



Source: FSO – STATENT

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Each star diagram shows the economic profiles of two cities of similar size.

## Demographic Context

The demographic context provides an overview of a city's population composition.

### Nationalities, 2015

Permanent resident population by nationality



Source: FSO – STATPOP

© FSO 2016

## Demographic context, 2015

	Permanent resident population	Population density	Youth dependency ratio	Old-age dependency ratio
		Inhabitants per km <sup>2</sup>	< 20/ 20–64 year-olds	65+/ 20–64 year-olds

### Cities

Zurich	391 359	4 451	25	24
Geneva	194 565	12 214	27	25
Basel	168 620	7 070	25	31
Lausanne	133 897	3 236	30	24
Bern	130 015	2 519	24	27
Lucerne	81 057	2 785	24	30
St. Gallen	75 310	1 912	27	27
Lugano	63 668	838 <sup>1</sup>	29	35

### Agglomerations

Zurich	1 315 669	1 008	30	26
Geneva	570 222	1 063	35	26
Basel	537 051	772	30	33
Lausanne	402 883	521	34	25
Bern	406 852	521	29	32
Lucerne	224 720	774	30	29
St. Gallen	164 881	518	32	28
Lugano	150 459	495	31	34

<sup>1</sup> Due to Lugano's merger with seven rural communes on 14.04.2013

## Additional information

In this pocket statistics data of the cities corresponds to the perimeters of the core cities.

The municipality of Lugano merged with seven other municipalities in 2013, increasing Lugano's permanent resident population by approx. 6000 inhabitants (+10%) and its surface area by 4400 ha (+137%). All data for 2015 is shown with the municipality boundaries as of 01.01.2016 and all data for 2012 with the municipality boundaries as of 01.01.2013. This development has to be considered when interpreting the results.

For data from the Structural Survey (RS), it should be noted that this is a sample survey with varying confidence intervals. These intervals are not shown for the sake of readability, but can be found on the FSO website, along with the data: [www.urbanaudit.ch](http://www.urbanaudit.ch) → Data

The pocket statistics contain the latest data available up to the editorial deadline of mid September 2016.

Switzerland conducts the Urban Audit under the auspices of the Federal Statistical Office (FSO) and the Federal Office for Spatial Development (ARE), State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) together with its eight cities Zurich, Geneva, Basel, Bern, Lausanne, Lucerne, St. Gallen and Lugano.

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