

# 2023



## 21

Sustainable  
development,  
regional and  
international  
disparities

Neuchâtel 2023

## City Statistics – Quality of life in the cities

A brief overview



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
Confédération suisse  
Confederazione Svizzera  
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Confederation

Federal Department of Home Affairs FDHA  
Federal Statistical Office FSO

**Published by:** Federal Statistical Office (FSO)

**Information:** Morgane Bruni, FSO, tel. +41 58 481 97 69

**Editors:** Morgane Bruni, FSO; Barbara Jeanneret, FSO

**Contents:** UNR section, City Statistics

**Series:** Swiss Statistics

**Topic:** 21 Sustainable development, regional and international disparities

**Original text:** French, German

**Translation:** FSO language services

**Layout:** PUB section, Publications and visual design

**Graphics:** PUB section, StatChart

**Online:** [www.statistics.admin.ch](http://www.statistics.admin.ch)

**Print:** [www.statistics.admin.ch](http://www.statistics.admin.ch)  
Federal Statistical Office, CH-2010 Neuchâtel,  
[order@bfs.admin.ch](mailto:order@bfs.admin.ch), tel. +41 58 463 60 60  
Printed in Switzerland

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**FSO number:** 1460-2300

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## What is quality of life?

The concept of quality of life is used to measure the well-being of the population in its various dimensions. Originally developed by the OECD, it has been adapted to Switzerland's specific situation and includes eleven mutually dependent dimensions relating to material living conditions but also to the subjective perception of quality of life, itself a factor in a city's attractiveness.

Each dimension of quality of life is illustrated by one to four indicators taken from the City Statistics data. A brief overview is given here with just one indicator for each dimension. You can find all 29 City Statistics indicators and additional informations on our website [www.citystatistics.ch](http://www.citystatistics.ch) → Quality of life indicators or by scanning the QR code below.



## City Statistics

Based on some 200 indicators, the City Statistics provide information and points of comparison on several aspects of living conditions in European cities and their larger urban zones. Basel, Bern, Geneva, Lausanne, Lucerne, Lugano, St.Gallen, Winterthur and Zurich are the Swiss cities taking part in this project that is also supported by the Federal Office for Spatial Development (ARE), the Federal Housing Office (FHO) and the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO).

City Statistics is a European project with Switzerland's participation and which provides data on living conditions in over 900 European cities. The data collected are available on the database of Eurostat, the European Union's statistical office. Find out more about the City Statistics project at European level on the Eurostat website: [www.ec.europa.eu/eurostat](http://www.ec.europa.eu/eurostat) → General and regional statistics → Regions and cities or by scanning the QR code below.

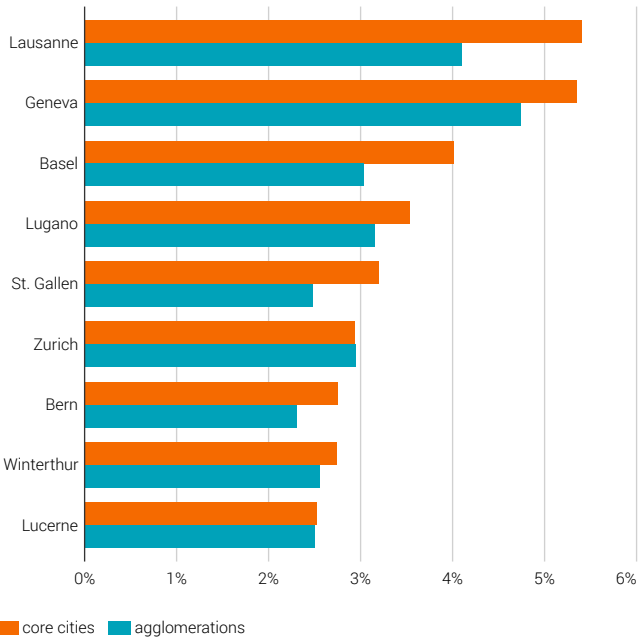


## Income and Jobs

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.

### Unemployment rate, 2021

Share of 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.

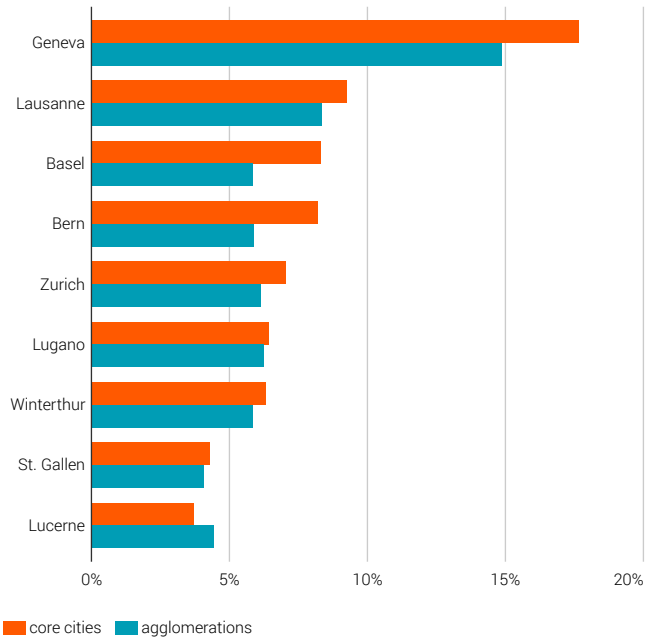
**Other indicators of this dimension:** economic activity rate; social assistance rate; income.

# Housing Conditions

Good housing conditions meet the basic needs of people for safety, feeling of protection, privacy and personal space. However housing costs can take up a large part of a household's budget, limiting expenditure on other areas.

## Overcrowded dwellings, 2021

Share of occupied dwellings with more than one person per room



Source: FSO – BDS

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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 bet. Too many tenants may have a negative impact on health or children's school performance.

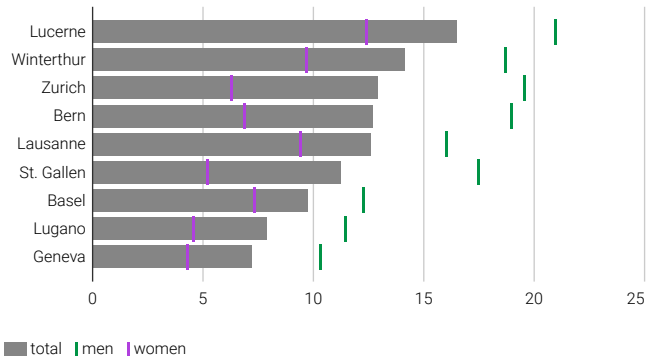
**Other indicators of this dimension:** traffic noise; area of living; dwelling vacancy rate.

# 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.

## Suicide rate

Crude suicide rate per 100,000 inhabitants (excl. assisted suicide), average from 2017 to 2020, in the core cities



Source: FSO – eCOD

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The suicide rate is an indicator of people's level of satisfaction, psychological well-being and their psycho-social situation. People at risk of suicide need a stable social environment as well as professional support.

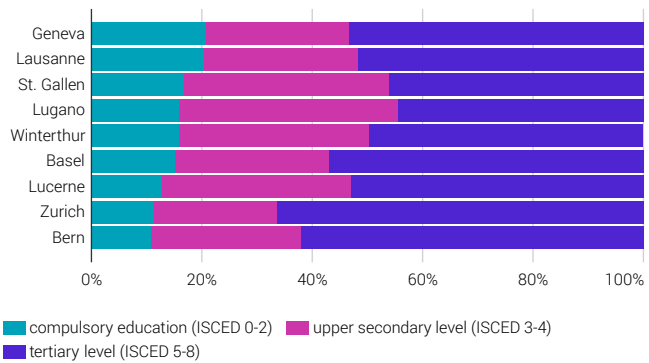
**Other indicators of this dimension:** practising doctors; mortality rate of under 65 year-olds.

## 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 fulfilment and advancement are to a large extent determined by education.

### Educational attainment of the population, 2021

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



Source: FSO – RS

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The educational attainment of the population shows the distribution of the qualifications obtained during education. Post-compulsory education reduces the perils of the labour market and increases the chances of having a well-paid job.

**Other indicator of this dimension:** young people outside the education system.

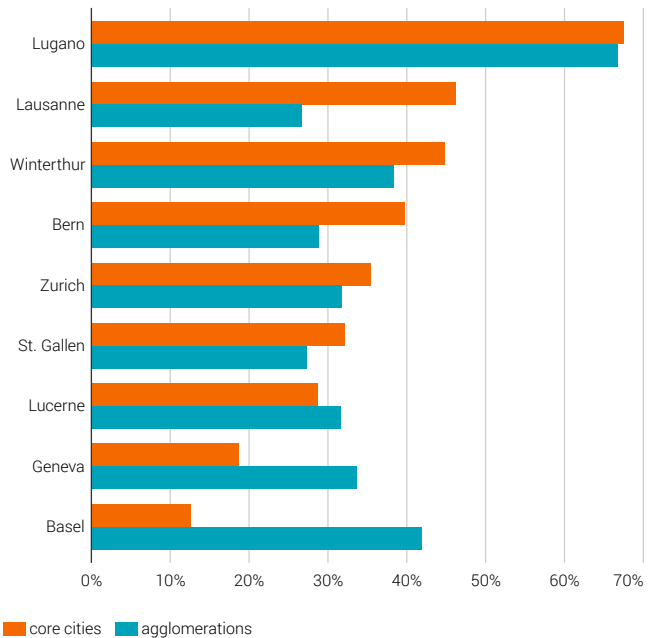


## Environmental Quality

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 2013/2018

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. The share of green areas may also be shaped by a city's history and its institutional boundaries.

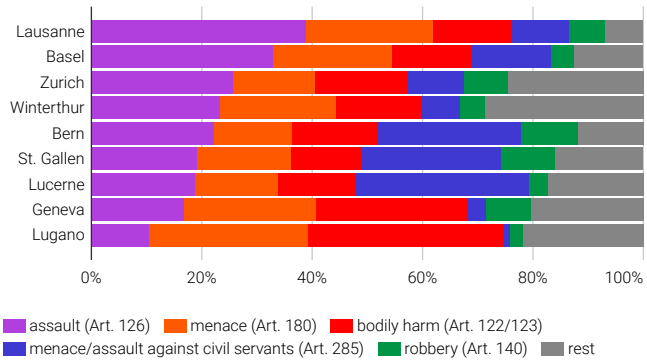
**Other indicator of this dimension:** air quality.

## Personal Security

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. It may also influence residents' feeling of security.

### Violent crimes, 2021

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



<sup>1</sup> according to the Penal Code (incl. attempts)

Source: FSO – Police crime statistics

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Cities are often a node of human activity which has to be considered when interpreting the indicators of this dimension.

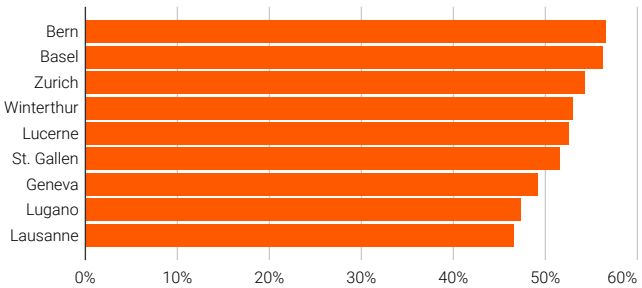
**Other indicators of this dimension:** burglaries in dwellings; road accidents.

# Civic Engagement

By taking part in political and social life, citizens express their needs, making a democratic contribution to political decisions. This ensures that citizens are better informed and more easily accept political decisions. Civic engagement strengthens people's trust in institutions and increases the effectiveness of political action.

## Participation in federal votes and elections to Parliament

Average rate from 2018 to 2021, in the core cities



Source: FSO – Statistics of votes and elections

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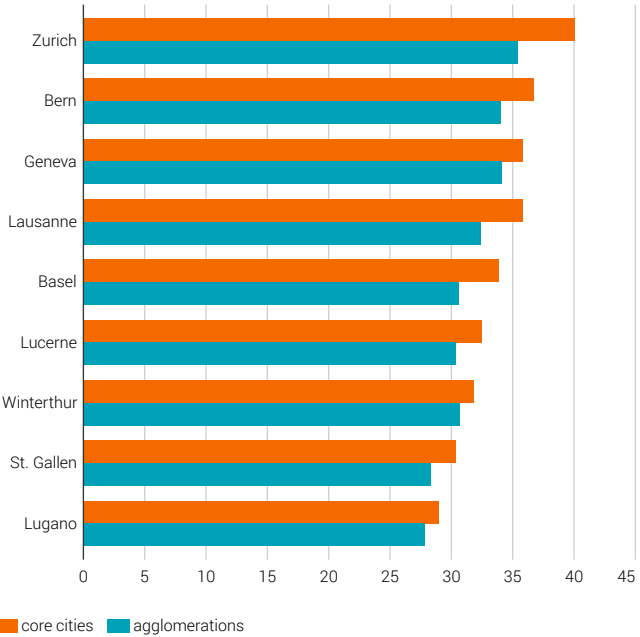
Citizens aged 18 or over have the opportunity several times a year to decide on constitutional texts and bills at federal level.

## 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.

### Length of commute, 2021

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. Particularly long commutes result in extra costs and can lead to stress.

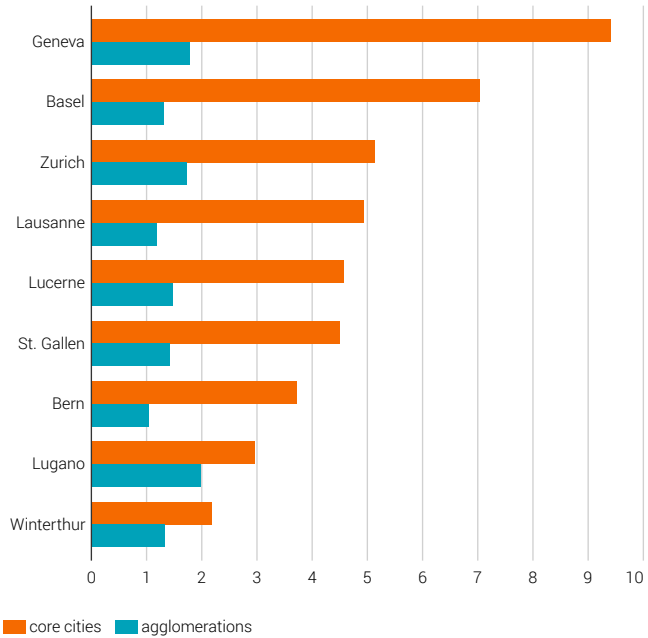
**Other indicators of this dimension:** duration of commute; infant day care.

# 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.

## Public transport stops, 2021

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, connecting residential and employment areas, increases freedom to choose means of transport and may minimise the impact of private motorised transport in the city.

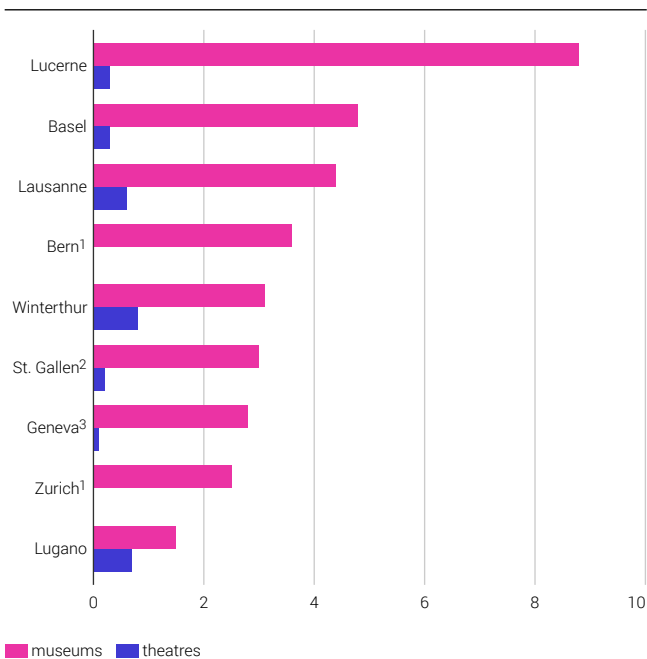
**Other indicators of this dimension:** price of monthly public transport ticket; choice of transportation mode to work.

## 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 demand, 2021

Number of visitors per inhabitant, in the core cities



<sup>1</sup> theatres: not yet available

<sup>2</sup> provisional data

<sup>3</sup> only theatres with regular subsidies from the city

Sources: FSO – Swiss museums statistics and City Statistics

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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.

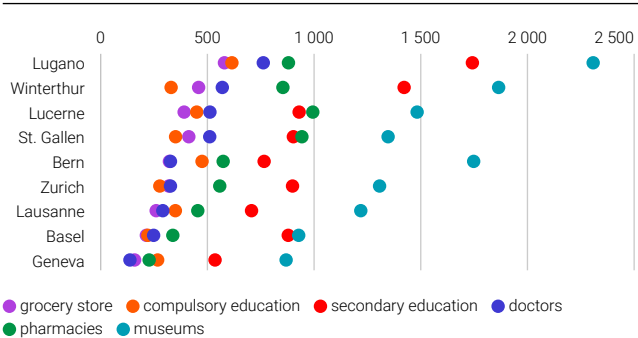
**Other indicators of this dimension:** cinema seats; museums, theatres, cinemas.

## Infrastructure & Services

Infrastructure & Services 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.

### Accessibility of services for the population, 2018

Mean distance<sup>1</sup> to the closest service, in the core cities



<sup>1</sup> distances calculated based on road network, in meters

Source: FSO – Services for the population

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## Additional information

**Data:** in City Statistics, data from the Population and Households Statistics (STATPOP), the structural business statistics (STATENT), the Buildings and Dwellings statistic (BDS), and the structural survey (RS) from reference year t are surveyed as December or at 31 December of year t-1 in order to comply with Eurostat directives.

For data taken from the Structural Survey (RS), it should be noted that this is a sample survey with varying confidence intervals that can be found on the FSO website, along with the data.

**Perimeter:** the perimeter for the agglomerations corresponds to the FSO's 2012 definition.

The Federal Statistical Office (FSO) leads the City Statistics project for Switzerland and implements it in collaboration with:

Federal Office for Spatial Development (ARE)

Federal Housing Office (FHO)

State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO)

Statistisches Amt des Kantons Basel-Stadt

Statistik Stadt Bern

Office cantonal de la statistique du canton de Genève (OCSTAT)

Service d'urbanisme de la ville de Genève

Office d'appui économique et statistique (OAES),

Service de l'économie, Lausanne

Ufficio di Statistica della Città di Lugano

LUSTAT Statistik Luzern

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### FSO number

1460-2300

The information in this publication contributes to the measurement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



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