



## Spatial divisions - Basic statistical spatial units (USPAT)

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### Description

The first level of basic statistical spatial units (USPAT1) allows a detailed analysis of the territory. These units are stable over time, meaning that they are not affected by municipalities' mergers. In rural areas, they make it possible to distinguish between urbanised areas which generally have more than 250 inhabitants or more than 250 jobs and 20 establishments or more than 125 dwellings belonging to the same municipality. Urban areas with more than 15 000 inhabitants are further subdivided into urban sectors which generally have between 7 500 and 15 000 inhabitants.

Second level basic statistical spatial units (USPAT2) of around 10 000 inhabitants are formed by grouping together USPAT1s or municipalities. These units make it possible to analyse the Swiss territory as a whole on the basis of entities of similar population size. Their size has been defined in such a way as to be able to potentially produce results of surveys with sufficient sample size.

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### Methodology

Methodology used:

This definition is based on uniform statistical criteria throughout the territory (essentially the number of inhabitants, jobs, establishments, dwellings and the continuity of the built-up area). The results were consolidated in collaboration with the cantonal statistical services (on a voluntary basis).

Variables used:

Population and household statistics (STATPOP), FSO

Structural business statistics (STATENT), FSO

Buildings and Dwellings statistic (BDS), FSO

Administrative boundaries of municipalities (Federal Office of Topography swisstopo)

City quarter boundaries, FSO

Zone boundaries of the DETEC National Passenger Traffic Model 2017

swissTLM3D (Federal Office of Topography swisstopo)

Official directory of localities (postcodes) (Federal Office of Topography swisstopo)

Specific statistical sectors of cities and cantons

Harmonised building zone boundaries as at 1.1.2023, according to the Federal Office for Spatial Development (ARE)

Reference period for basic data: 2020-2022

Publication frequency:

See revision policy

Degree of regionalisation: USPAT1 and USPAT2

Revision:

New definition: 2024

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### Revision policy

The FSO periodically updates and revises all the spatial divisions for which it is responsible. In the case of USPAT1, the aim is to keep this spatial division as stable as possible over time. The data are therefore reviewed every ten years. In principle, adjustments to the boundaries will only be considered in special cases, for example when land is exchanged between two municipalities. In the case of USPAT2, stability is less guaranteed, as it is possible for municipalities belonging to different USPAT2 to merge. In such cases, the new municipality is classified.

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### Legal basis

Federal Statistics Act of 9 October 1992 (FStatA)

Multi-annual programme for federal statistics

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## Organisation

Federal Statistical Office  
Environment, Sustainable Development, Territory Section  
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