



Sustainable Development,
Regional and International Disparities

1460-1400

Urban Audit

Quality of Life in the Cities 2014



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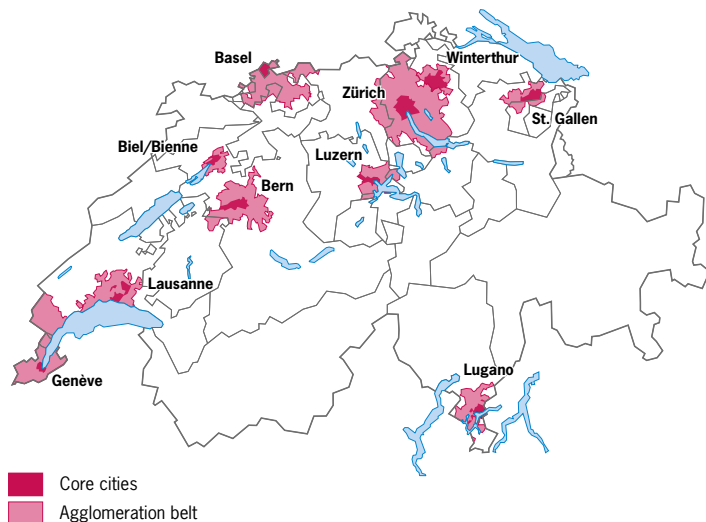
Swiss Confederation

Federal Department of Home Affairs FDHA
Federal Statistical Office FSO

Neuchâtel, 2014

The **pocket statistics** shows various aspects of the quality of life in Switzerland's ten most populated cities: Zurich, Geneva, Basel, Bern, Lausanne, Winterthur, Lucerne, St. Gallen, Lugano and Biel/Bienne. The quality of life in the cities is presented with data from the Urban Audit. The indicators may be completed in the future so that a fuller picture of the quality of life can be presented.

The ten largest cities of Switzerland



Sources: FSO – Fed. population census 2000, Urban Audit 2014

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Contents

What is Quality of Life?	4
Income & Jobs	6
Housing Conditions	10
Health	13
Education	16
Environmental Quality	17
Personal Security	19
Civic Engagement	22
Work-Life Balance	23
Infrastructure & Services	25
Mobility	26
Culture & Leisure	29
Economic Context	32
Demographic Context	34
Additional Information	35

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*.

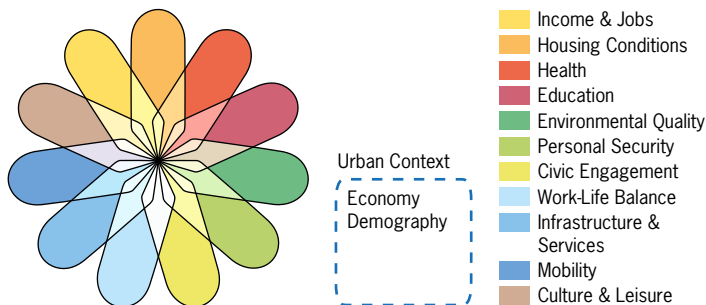
The quality of life dimensions are summarised in the “How’s Life?”¹ report, and describe the quality of life in the OECD countries. To take into account particular circumstances of Swiss cities, and to better depict the attractiveness of individual locations, the quality of life dimensions have been 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?”² These concepts are currently used by Eurostat and the EU regional policies with regard to regional and municipal analyses.

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

² 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.

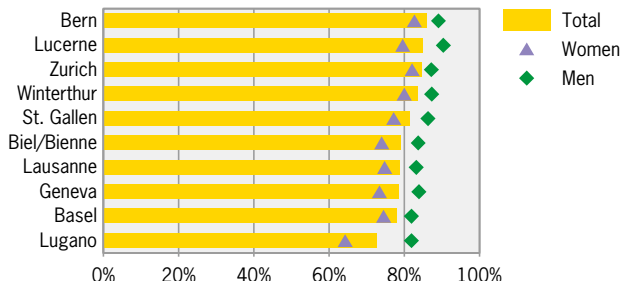
Everyone aspires to a good quality of life but the individual realisation varies greatly. The quality of life is also shaped by the structures and opportunities available in a particular city. In addition to traditional economic factors such as the taxation rate, the quality of life constitutes an important 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, 2013

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



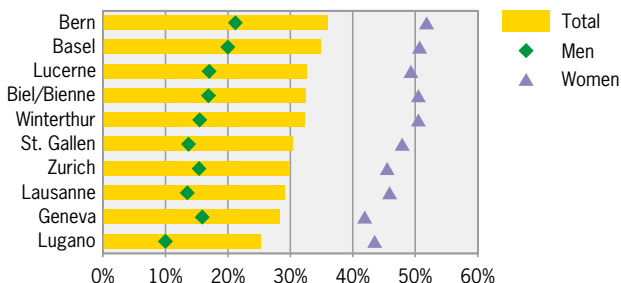
Source: FSO – RS

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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, 2013

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



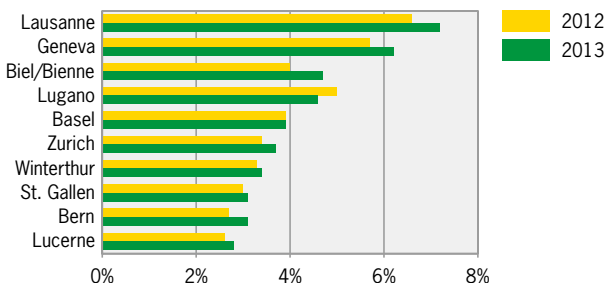
Source: FSO – RS

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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

Share of registered unemployed in total economically active population



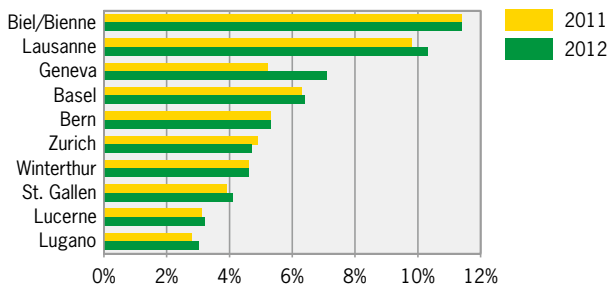
Sources: FSO – RS; SECO

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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.

Social assistance rate

Share of social assistance recipients among permanent resident population



Source: FSO – SHS

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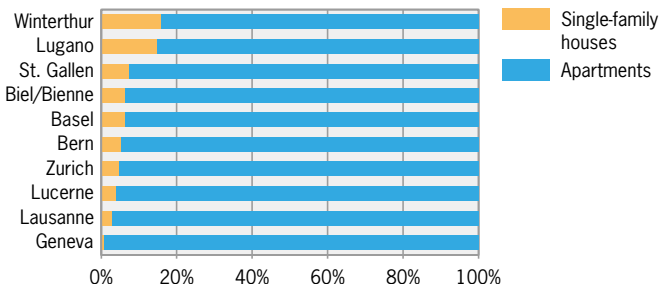
Social assistance ensures basic needs and encourages individual and economic independence. It aims to help social and professional integration as well as to support occupational rehabilitation. It can alleviate temporary situations of crisis and provide a social safety net.

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 and apartments, 2013

Share in total dwellings



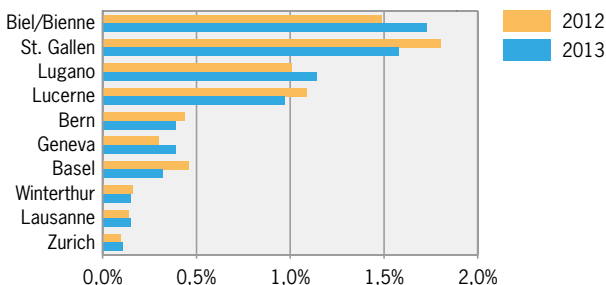
Source: FSO – BDS

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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.

Dwelling vacancy rate

Share of empty dwellings in total number of dwellings



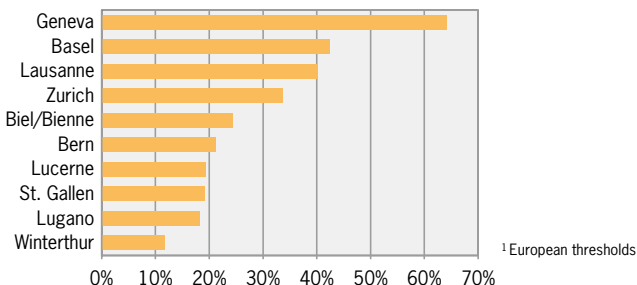
Sources: FSO – LWZ, BDS

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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)¹ (decibels)



Source: FOEN – SonBase

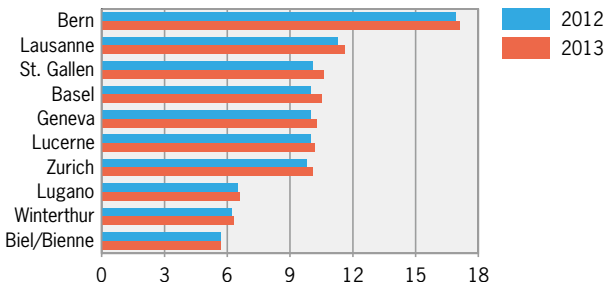
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Traffic noise at night is harmful to one's sleep and can negatively affect health and satisfaction with housing conditions. In addition to noise from road traffic, trains and aeroplanes can also be a nuisance but currently data is not available on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

Practising doctors per 1000 inhabitants



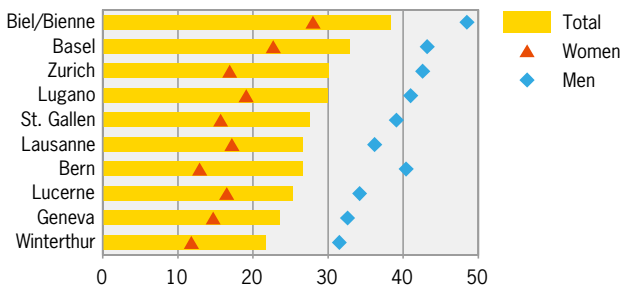
Source: FMH

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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 2009 to 2012



Source: FSO – eCOD

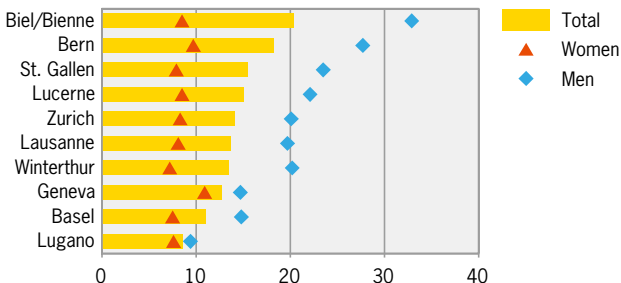
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Deaths under the age of 65 often have many causes, such as genetic factors, accidents, individual health behaviour or the quality of the local environment.

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 2009 to 2012



Source: FSO – eCOD

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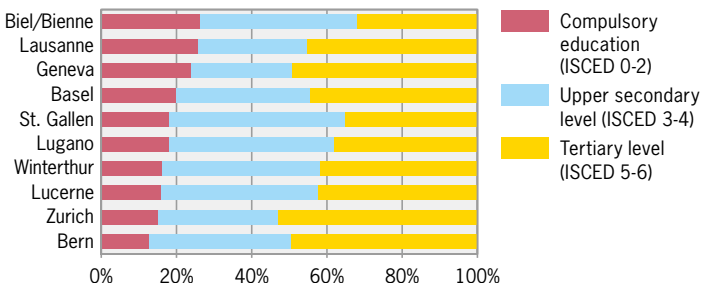
The suicide rate is an indicator for the subjective perception of the quality of life. People at risk of suicide need a stable social environment as well as professional support.

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, 2013

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



Source: FSO – RS

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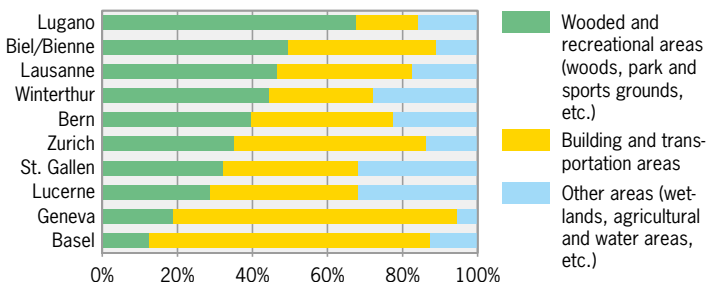
The educational attainment of the population quantifies how many people with particular levels of qualification are available for the labour market. Post-compulsory education reduces the perils of the labour market and increases the chances of having a well-paid job. Opportunities for continuing education 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.

Land use 2004/09

Share of total surface area



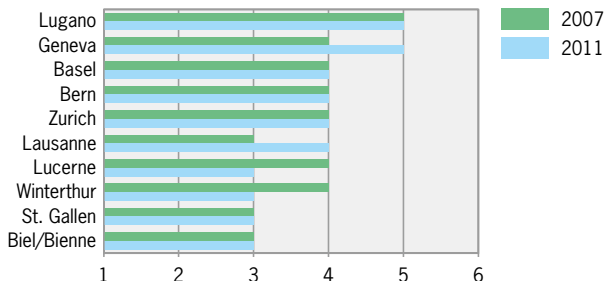
Source: FSO – AREA

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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.

Long-term pollution index

Population weighted mixed index of air quality, based on concentrations of particulate matter (PM10), nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and ozone (O₃)



Sources: FSO; FOEN

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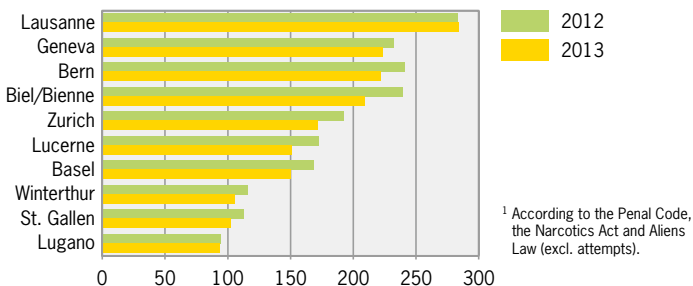
The long-term pollution index shows the average air pollution of towns and cities from level 1 “low” to level 6 “very high”. Chronic pollution by air pollutants such as particulate matter, nitrogen dioxide and ozone has a direct impact on human health and the environment. This may result in respiratory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

Registered offences

Number of offences¹ per 1000 inhabitants



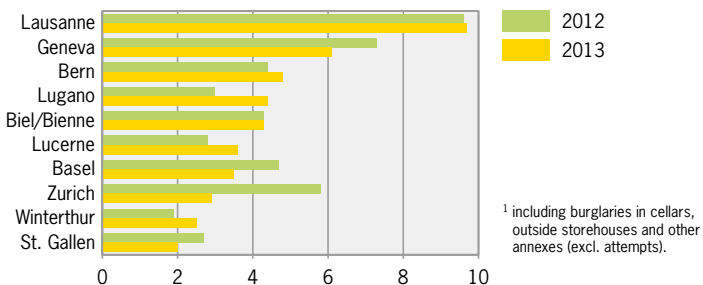
Source: FSO – PCS

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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

Number of burglaries¹ in dwellings per 1000 inhabitants



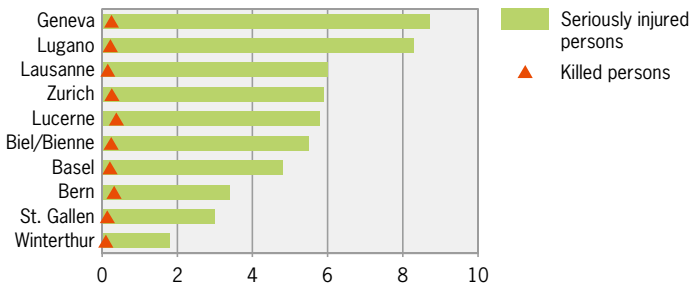
Source: FSO – PCS

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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.

Road accident victims

Number of persons seriously injured or killed per 10,000 inhabitants, average from 2010 to 2013



Source: FEDRO – SVU

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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.

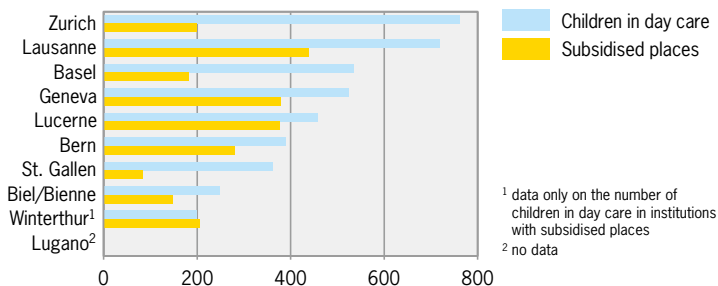
In Switzerland, citizens are not only able to elect their representatives, but, as a result of direct democracy, can also vote on proposals or bills at the federal, cantonal and municipality level. All residents, including those without political rights, can participate in a citizens' forum and consultations. 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.

Infant day care, 2013

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



Source: FSO

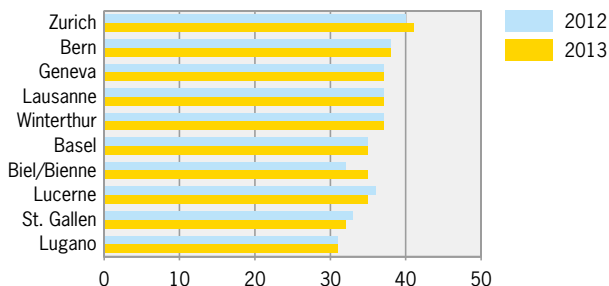
© FSO 2014

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 employers' day nurseries.

Duration of commute

Average time of journey from home to work, in minutes



Source: FSO – RS

© FSO 2014

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 32).

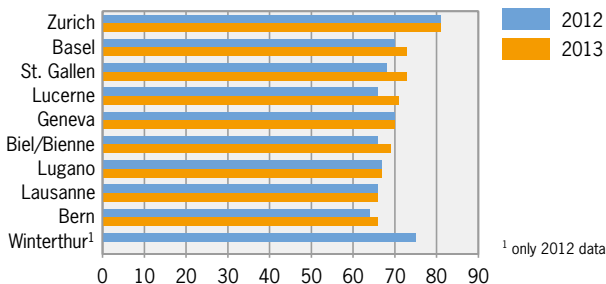
Mobility

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 from 5 to 10 km in the city centre, in Swiss francs



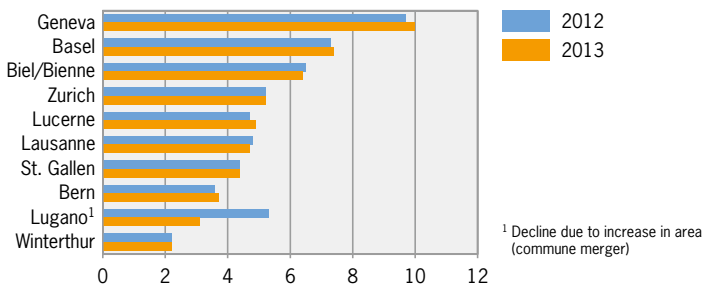
Source: Urban Audit Partners

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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 transportation stops

Number of stops per km²



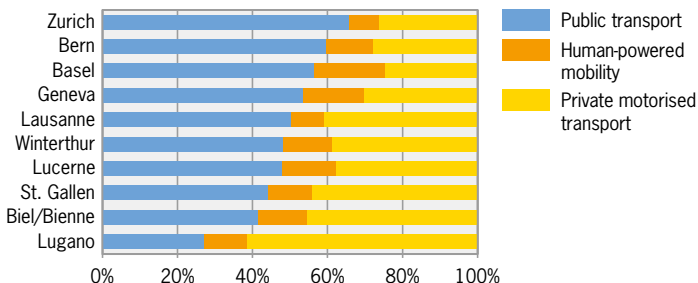
Sources: FSO – AREA; ARE – HAFAS

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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, 2013

For commuting between work and home



Source: FSO – RS

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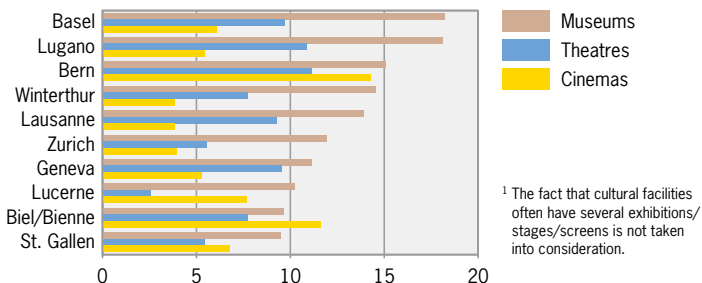
A reduction of private motorised transportation helps to improve the quality of the environment and influences personal security in road traffic.

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, 2012

Number of museums, theatres and cinemas per 100,000 inhabitants¹



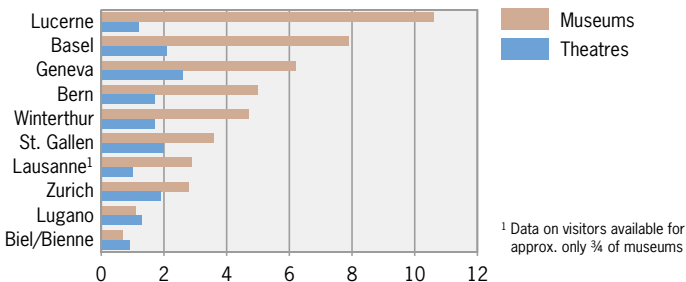
Sources: FSO – SSCin; Urban Audit Partners

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

Cultural demand, 2012

Number of visitors per inhabitant



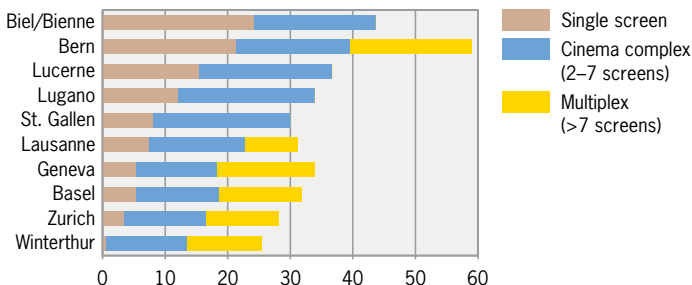
Source: Urban Audit Partners

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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, 2012

Number of cinema seats per 1000 inhabitants by type of cinema



Source: FSO – SSCin

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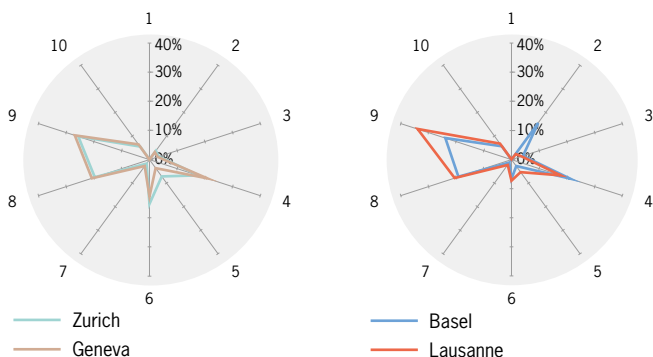
Different types of cinemas allow to make inferences on the selection of films available in a location. Since the 1990s, single screen cinemas have decreased at the expense of multiplex cinemas. Cinema complexes and especially multiplexes are often built together with restaurants and shops, allowing the 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, 2013

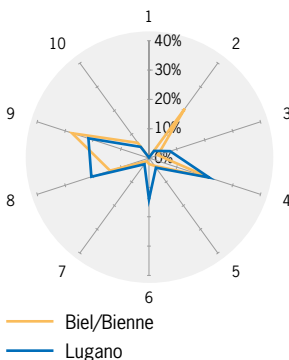
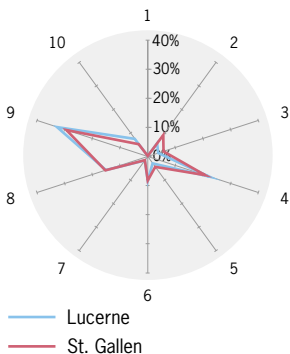
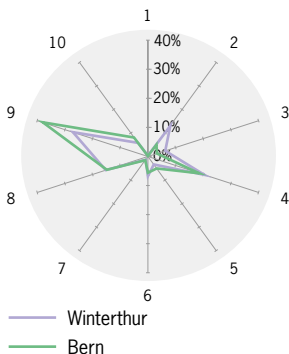
Distribution of employees by economic categories (NOGA)



- 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, 2013

Distribution of employees by economic categories (NOGA)



Source: FSO – STATENT

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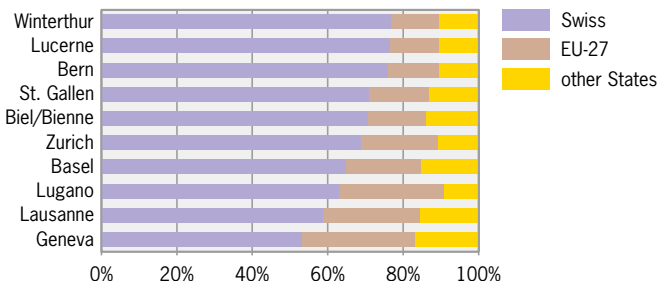
Each star diagram shows the economic profiles of two cities of similar size.

Demographic Context

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

Nationalities, 2013

Permanent resident population by nationality



Source: FSO – STATPOP

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Demographic context, 2013	Permanent resident population	Population density, inhabitants per km ²
Zurich	380 777	4 333
Geneva	189 033	11 866
Basel	165 566	6 925
Lausanne	130 421	3 152
Bern	127 515	2 470
Winterthur	104 468	1 535
Lucerne	79 478	2 735
St. Gallen	74 111	1 881
Lugano	61 837	814 ¹
Biel/Bienne	52 351	2 466

¹ Due to Lugano's merger with seven rural communes on 14.04.2013

Sources: FSO – STATPOP, AREA

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Additional Information

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 2013 is shown with the municipality boundaries as of 01.01.2014 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 → Data

The pocket statistics contain the latest data available up to the editorial deadline of mid September 2014.

Switzerland conducts the Urban Audit under the auspices of the Federal Statistical Office (FSO) and the Federal Office for Spatial Development (ARE), together with its ten most populated cities Zurich, Geneva, Basel, Bern, Lausanne, Winterthur, Lucerne, St. Gallen, Lugano and Biel/Bienne.

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