

2021



21

Sustainable
development,
regional and
international
disparities

Neuchâtel 2021



City Statistics – Quality of life in the cities

A brief overview



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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 28 City Statistics indicators and additional informations on our website www.urbandiaudit.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 → General and regional statistics → Regions and cities or by scanning the QR code below.

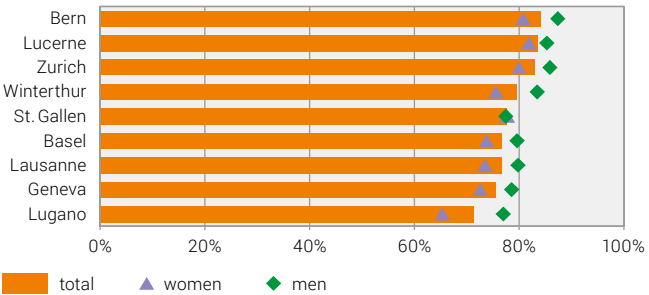


Income & Jobs

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, 2019

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



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.

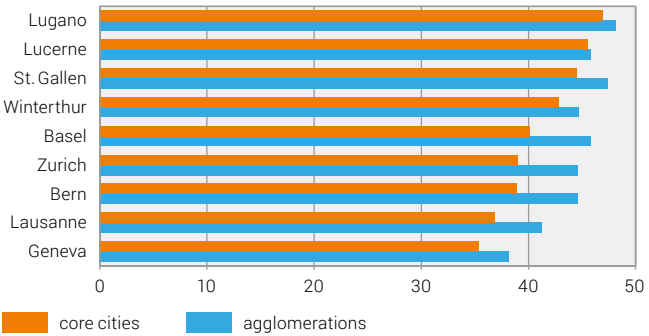
Other indicators of this dimension: part-time employment, social assistance rate, unemployment rate

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.

Area of living, 2019

Area of living accommodation in conventional dwellings, m²



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 be. The amount of time a person spends in their home is quite considerable. This indicator takes into consideration all residential housing.

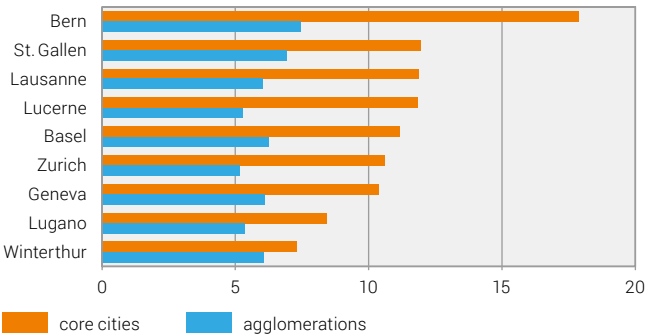
Other indicators of this dimension: traffic noise, overcrowded dwellings, dwelling vacancy rate

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.

Practising doctors, 2019

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.

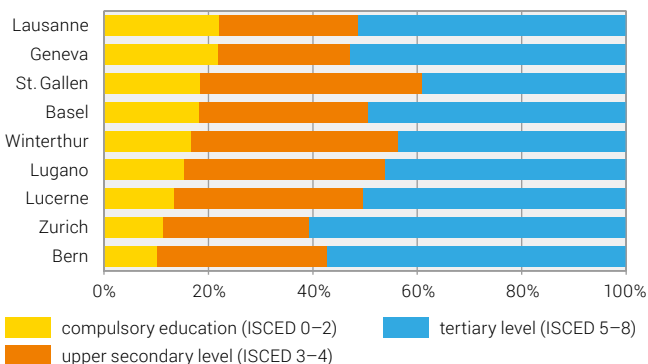
Other indicators of this dimension: mortality rate < 65 years, suicide rate

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, 2019

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.

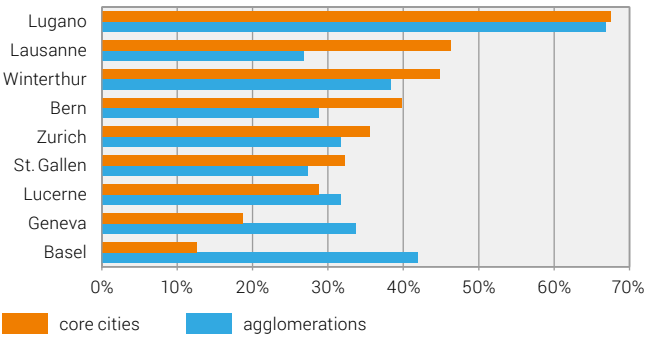
Other indicator of this dimension: early school leavers

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 – AREA

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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.

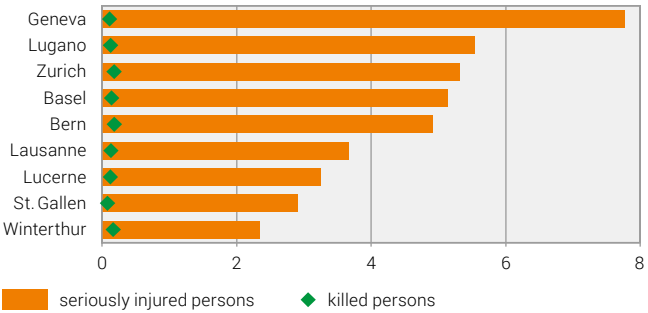
Other indicator of this dimension: air quality

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.

Road accident victims

Number of persons seriously injured or killed per 10 000 inhabitants, average from 2015 to 2019, in the core cities



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 in the long term.

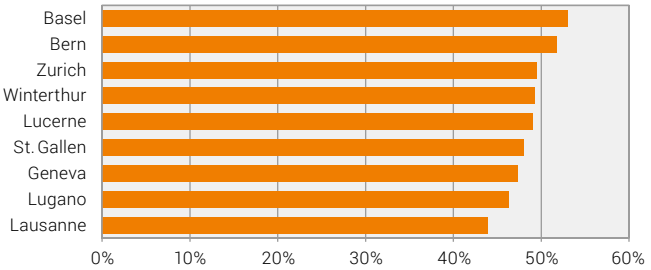
Other indicators of this dimension: violent crimes, burglaries in dwellings

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 rate at federal votations and elections to the parliament

Average from 2016 to 2019, in the core cities



Source: FSO – Statistics of votes and elections

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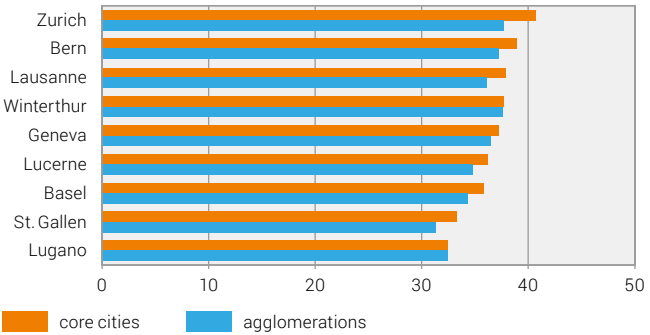
Residents aged 18 or over have the opportunity several times a year to decide on constitutional texts and bills at federal level.

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, 2018

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.

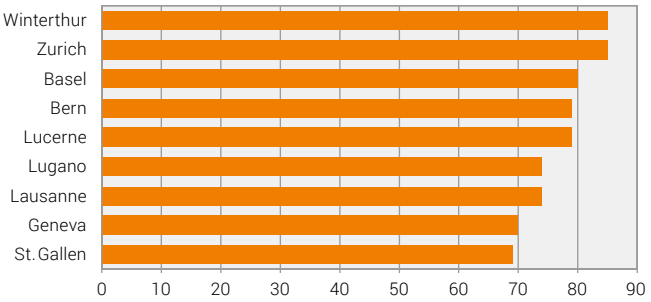
Other indicator of this dimension: infant day care

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.

Price of a monthly public transport ticket, 2019

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.

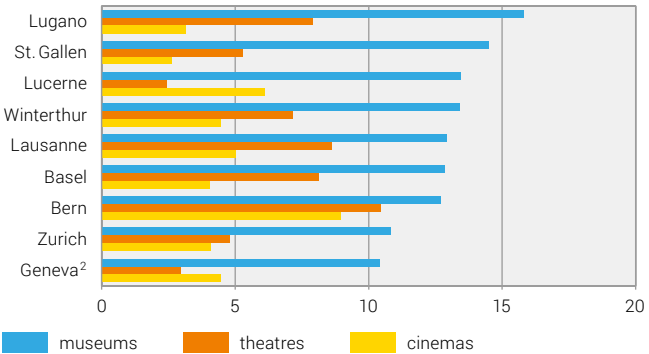
Other indicators of this dimension: choice of transportation mode to work, public transport stops

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, 2019

Number of museums, theatres and cinemas per 100 000 inhabitants¹, in the core cities



¹ The fact that cultural facilities often have several exhibitions/stages/screens is not taken into consideration.

² only theatres with regular subsidies

Sources: FSO – SSCin; Swiss museums statistics; City Statistics Partner

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

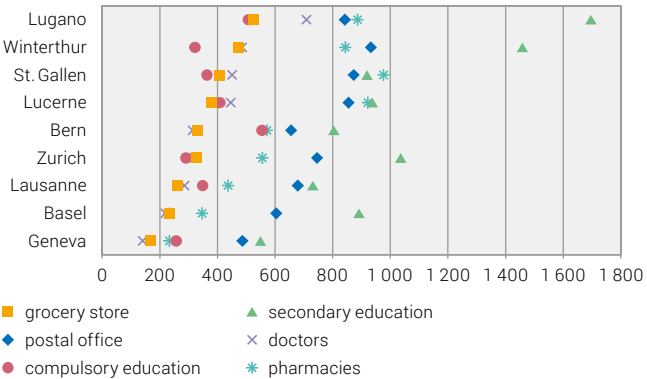
Other indicators of this dimension: cinema seats, demand of museums and theaters

Infrastructure & Services

Infrastructure & Services is a measure of life quality 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.

Accessibility of services for the population, 2015

Mean distance¹ to the closest service, in the core cities



¹ distances calculated based on road network, in metres

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.

Switzerland conducts the City Statistics (Urban Audit) under the auspices of the Federal Statistical Office (FSO), 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 de Genève (OCSTAT)

Service d'urbanisme de la ville de Genève

Office d'appui économique et statistique (OAES),
Service de l'économie, Lausanne

Città di Lugano

LUSTAT Statistik Luzern

Fachstelle für Statistik des Kantons St. Gallen

Stadt St. Gallen

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