

REGIONALVERBAND FRANKFURTRHEINMAIN  
DEZERNAT I – FACHBEREICH EUROPA

Reinhard Henke

### **Why we are peri-urban**

We are peri-urban for various reasons. Here is one based on EU NUTS. Just to remember, we are talking about the area of the Regionalverband FrankfurtRheinMain, the regional Authority FrankfurtRheinMain, covering 75 towns and cities, this is called the Ballungsraum Frankfurt/Rhein-Main in the Law (Gesetz zur Stärkung der kommunalen Zusammenarbeit im Ballungsraum Frankfurt/Rhein-Main vom 19. Dezember 2000; “Ballung” means “agglomeration”).

NUTS (Nomenclature des unités territoriales statistiques) is the European reference system to address levels of administration and make them comparable, basically for statistics. It is also widely used for other purposes, including the allocation of funds. One of the shortcomings of the system (or rather of its application) is that it doesn't address functional relations or regional specifics.

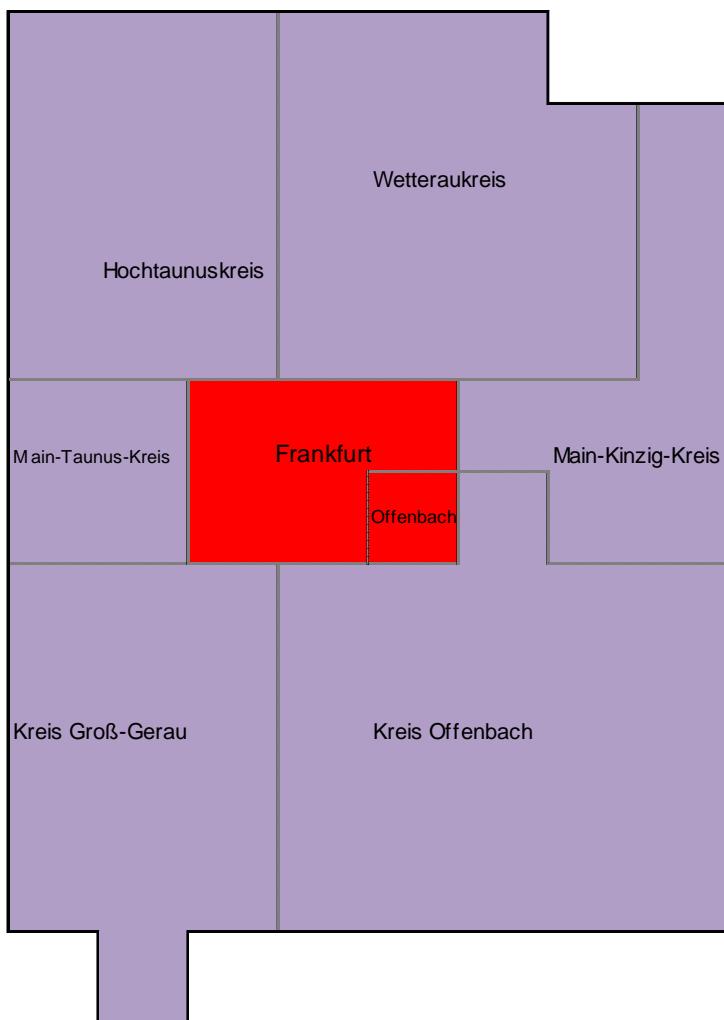
The NUTS system misrepresents German local government. NUTS3 shows “Kreisfreie Städte” (unitary authorities, single tier local government) and “Kreise”, the upper tier where there is two tier local government. It does not show the lower tier local government units, the municipalities. This is not in line with the legal provision of the “Grundgesetz” (the Basic Law, our Constitution) because all municipalities have the same legal status (a high degree of autonomy in local affairs), but NUTS ignores the majority of them: In EU terms they do not exist. (They are LAU2 units; LAU being the national extension to the NUTS system.)

For our region this means that 73 of our 75 towns and cities are invisible on NUTS based maps. I am assuming that all “Kreise” adjacent to our two “Kreisfreie Städte” are peri-urban: They do not count as urban, and they surely aren't rural. As a result of this reasoning our region is largely peri-urban.

## Frankfurt Rhein-Main

### Peri-Urban Areas: The NUTS view

Diagrammatic map, not to scale, based on NUTS (see text for details)



Cities           Kreisfreie Städte (single tier NUTS3)

Peri-Urban           Kreise (NUTS3 blinding out municipalities)