THE REGIONAL DATABASE GERMANY

- SPECIAL DESIGNATIONS OF REGIONAL LEVELS -

1. Governmental Districts / Statistical Regions (NUTS 2)

The hierarchical classification system NUTS provides a unique assignment of spatial reference units in official statistics. In Germany, the NUTS 2 level is aligned to the governmental district level (´Regierungsbezirke´). The governmental districts form an administrative level between the state level and the (rural or urban) district level. They are within the responsibility of the regional administrative authorities, but do not exist in all states. Hence, in order to provide a complete representation of the NUTS 2 level, some former governmental districts and the state level (in congruence with NUTS 1) are additionally referred to. Concerning the Regional Database Germany, these reference units are designated as `Statistical Regions`.

The structure of the German NUTS 2 level in a nutshell:

Total of 38 regions, including:

- 19 governmental districts in:
  - Baden-Wuerttemberg (4),
  - Bavaria (7),
  - Hesse (3),
  - North Rhine-Westphalia (5)
- 10 former governmental districts in:
  - Lower Saxony (4), dissolved in 2005
  - Rhineland-Palatinate (3), dissolved in 2000
  - Saxony (3), dissolved in 2012
- 9 states, including:
  - 3 city states (´Stadtstaaten´) (Berlin, Hamburg und Bremen)
  - 6 area states (´Flächenländer´) (Brandenburg, Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, Schleswig-Holstein, Saxony-Anhalt, Saarland and Thuringia)

2. Rural and Urban Districts (NUTS 3)

Rural and urban districts are responsible as local administrative authorities. The legal status of these districts is regulated through individual district bylaws, which can differ in detail. In this way, three representatives of a special administrative unit – a so-called `municipal union of special kind´ - have been established that essentially take the same responsibilities as the districts:
• Regionalverband Saarbrücken (since 2008, state capital and the associated municipalities of the former district)
• Region Hannover (since 2001, state capital and the associated municipalities of the former district)
• Städteregion Aachen (since 2009, district-free town of Aachen and the associated municipalities of the former district)

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