

QUALITY DECLARATION

Building permits, new construction, conversion and demolition

Subject area

Housing, Construction and development

Statistical area

Building permit statistics for residential and non-residential buildings, Housing construction, Conversion and demolition of multi-dwelling buildings

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Quality of the statistics

1 Relevance

Construction and building permit statistics have several areas of use. The statistics are broken down into preliminary quarterly statistics for building permits and dwelling starts and completions, and definitive statistics of completed dwellings that are published annually.

1.1 Purpose and information needs

1.1.1 Purpose of the statistics

The preliminary quarterly statistics shall provide swift information about developments in housing construction and, together with other statistics on e.g. employment and order intake, are an indicator of economic activity for the construction sector.

The annual statistics shall illuminate the addition of new dwellings (completion) in more detail in terms of the design of the dwellings and buildings, and describe regional and municipal variations. The statistics also provide information on changes in the housing stock during the year.

1.1.2 User information needs

The statistics have several areas of use:

The ministries, the Swedish National Board of Housing, Building and Planning, municipalities and county administrative boards use the statistics for forecasting and judging the future need for dwellings. Municipalities and county administrative boards also use the data in construction follow-up and planning.

The statistics can also be used for follow-up and evaluation of different types of support and subsidies, and for impact analyses of regulatory change.

Other areas of use are economic and market assessments.

The data are also included in the National Accounts as gross investment in housing, and for capital stock calculations. New construction is also included in the statistics on households' financial savings (the Savings Barometer).

1.2 Content of the statistics

The statistics include building permits for the new construction and extension of dwellings, buildings for seasonal and secondary use and non-residential buildings.

For dwellings, starts and completions through new construction, extension and conversion are also included.

For demolition of dwellings in three-or-more-dwelling buildings, only demolition starts are measured.

Statistical target characteristics for building permit statistics are granted building permits, and the number of residential dwellings and gross floor area covered by the building permit.

Statistical target characteristics for new construction, extension and conversion and demolition statistics, are residential dwellings, room units and residential floor area. For conversion, the net change in the number of dwellings and residential floor area in converted two-or-more-dwelling buildings is measured. Net change is the difference between the number of dwellings or floor area added or eliminated in conversions or altered use.

Demolition only includes demolition work starts.

1.2.1 Unit and population

The population of interest of the survey is the changes in the housing stock caused by new construction, extension and conversion, and demolition. However, the target population only includes the measures that require building permits. Measures that are not in scope are e.g. ancillary residential buildings that are exempt from the building permit requirement (known as 'Attefall houses'), fitting out an additional dwelling in a one-or-two-dwelling building, or buildings constructed without a permit (illegal builds). For conversion and demolition, only three-or-more-dwelling buildings are included in the survey.

The target unit is dwellings and floor area that are added or eliminated due to the various measures, and this also makes up the observation units.

1.2.2 Variables

The target variables of the statistics are:

Building permits

- The decision date for the building permit (year, month)
- Type of building: Residential building, second home, type of non-residential building (such as office, industrial, educational, healthcare premises). Building type is classified according to use according to Eurostat's Classification of types of construction(CC)
- Type of residential building (one-or-two-dwelling buildings, three-or-more-dwelling buildings, buildings for Residences for communities)
- Total gross floor area for the building permit, m²
- Number of dwellings or buildings for seasonal and secondary use

New construction and conversion, and demolition

- Start (year, month) usually refers to the initial date of starting clearance from the municipality; a more actual date for commencing construction work can be obtained from the developer later on. In this respect, the target variable can differ somewhat from the variable of interest, which refers to a more actual start of construction work. See [2.2 Sources of uncertainty](#)
- Completion (year, month) is measured using an observation variable which is the date of the municipality's final decision
- Form of tenure(lease, tenant-owned or title of ownership)
- Residences for communities
- Type of dwelling (number of rooms, kitchen)
- Original construction period (year of completion for new construction)

Only for new construction statistics

- Type of one-or-two-dwelling building (detached houses or terraced, semi-detached and linked houses)

- New construction or extension (from the building permit documentation)

Only for conversion

- Net change in the number of dwellings. Calculated as the difference between the observation variables number of dwellings added and eliminated through the conversion measure
- Type of primary conversion measure

Only for demolition

- Reason for demolition

1.2.3 Statistical measures

Building permit statistics for residential and non-residential buildings

- Number of granted building permits
- Number of dwellings in granted building permits
- Gross floor area in granted building permits

New construction of residential buildings

- Number of residential dwellings
- Number of room units
- Residential floor area

Conversion of three-or-more-dwelling buildings

- Net change in the number of dwellings
- Net change in the residential floor area
- Until the end of 2007, the total number of residential dwellings that had undergone conversion measures was also reported

Demolition of three-or-more-dwelling buildings

- Number of dwellings
- Residential floor area

1.2.4 Study domains

Building permits

The classification is type of building (residential building, non-residential building or buildings for seasonal and secondary use) and quarter for building permit decisions. The regional classification is county, major city greater areas, groups of municipalities according to number of inhabitants.

New construction and conversion

The basis for classification in the preliminary quarterly statistics is type of building (for conversion, only three-or-more-dwelling buildings) and quarter of start and completion, respectively. The regional classifications include municipality, county and major city greater areas.

In the annual statistics, the most important study domains are type of dwelling, form of tenure and category of ownership; all are reported according to e.g. municipality, county and major city greater areas. For conversion, annual

statistics are also reported according to year of construction and conversion measure.

Demolition

The annual statistics for demolition starts are reported according to form of tenure on e.g. municipal level. Classification into ownership category, construction period and reason for demolition exists at county level.

1.2.5 Reference times

The data in the preliminary statistics refer to the latest quarter. The annual statistics contain data for the calendar year.

2 Accuracy

2.1 Overall accuracy

The data in the quarterly statistics are preliminary. A lag in the reporting and changes in construction projects occur. Comparisons with previously reported data indicate an underestimation of the number of dwellings, in terms of building permits, start and completion. Discovered errors are gradually corrected and revised in the subsequent publication.

In the annual statistics, accuracy is good for the main variables. Building types can be wrongly classified, especially in the preliminary reporting. This is the case for certain types of residential buildings, intended for tenure by lease or tenant-ownership, where it might be difficult to determine whether it is a case of one-or-two-dwelling buildings, or three-or-more-dwelling buildings. In the majority of cases, rectification ought to occur no later than when the buildings are reported as completed. The boundary between dwellings with a kitchenette and dwellings with a proper kitchen can sometimes cause problems. It sometimes occurs that building design plans, e.g. the distribution of dwelling types, changes during the course of construction, while the reporting refers to the original design.

2.2 Sources of uncertainty

A reporting lag gives a degree of uncertainty in the preliminary statistics as they are underestimated initially. The underestimation is mainly for the last two to three quarters. Variations in the time lag give uncertainty in the upwardly-adjusting model that is to compensate for the underestimation (see 2.2.3 Measurement).

The start date is initially measured using the municipality's starting clearance. This is then supplemented with the actual start from the developer for the projects included in the 'Prices for newly produced dwellings' statistics (not one-or-two-dwelling buildings constructed by private individuals, and buildings for residences for communities). In that case the date shall refer to commenced casting of the basement floor, base plate, etc. The starting clearance date need not mean that the project has commenced, and could differ from the start according to the developer. A building permit that has been granted starting clearance shall commence within two years from the date on which the permit came into force.

In building permits that refer to a one-or-two-dwelling building (a 'detached house') it can occur that one dwelling (dwelling) in the building permit is split off into two dwellings during the course of construction. This does not require a

building permit, because fitting out a second dwelling in a single-dwelling building is permitted merely by notifying the municipality. Only one dwelling from the building permit will be reported. This occurs often together with an ancillary residential building that is exempt from the building permit requirement ('Attefall house'), and the two can then form a tenant-owner association together.

Form of tenure is not usually needed for decisions on granting a building permit, and is therefore difficult for municipalities to provide in connection with reporting the building permit. The information is obtained at a later stage through contacts with the developer in the 'Prices for newly produced dwellings' survey. The initial form of tenure can therefore be changed in the preliminary statistics.

For similar forms of conveyance, information regarding buildings residences for communities (e.g. student housing) can be difficult to obtain initially from the granted building permit. Because of this, to start with buildings for residences for communities might be coded as conventional three-or-more-dwelling buildings (in a handful of cases, even as one-or-two-dwelling buildings).

By using comparisons with the statistics for prices and newly produced dwellings, erroneous coding can be found and gradually rectified. The data are prepared no later than when they are reported as completed in the definitive annual statistics.

The distinction between buildings for residences for communities for the elderly and impaired and hospital buildings (not residential or non-residential) is sometimes difficult, and erroneous coding can occur.

Single-dwelling buildings (one-or-two-dwelling buildings) for year-round residency can be coded as a second home, and vice versa.

In the definitive annual statistics for completed dwellings, projects can end up in the wrong year of reporting if completion data does not arrive until after the publication date. Approximately 2-3 percent of all completed dwellings end up in the 'wrong' reporting year in the definitive annual statistics.

2.2.1 Sampling

No sample survey, all units are included in the statistics. The statistical data therefore do not contain any sample uncertainty.

2.2.2 Frame coverage

New construction and conversion use the building permit statistics as a frame.

Individual building permits can be missed in the reporting by the municipalities, in which case they will not be included in the new construction and conversion statistics either.

New construction of ancillary residential buildings that are exempt from the building permit requirement ('Attefall houses') are not included in the new construction statistics because they do not require a building permit and are therefore not within the frame.

2.2.3 Measurement

In their capacity of granters of building permits, all municipalities submit monthly data on granted building permits for new construction, extension that gives rise to new dwellings or a larger non-residential floor area and altered use (conversion) of three-or-more-dwelling buildings that changes the number of dwellings. The collection procedures are according to the new Planning and Building Act, as amended from 2 May 2011, and pertain to building permit data that essentially correspond to much of the data submitted by building permit applicants in their application for a building permit, including plans. All construction projects that require building permits are reported to Statistics Sweden, either through a specific Statistics form online or on paper

The preliminary building permit data are, as a rule, underestimated due to late submissions of reports or forgotten projects. The underestimation for individual quarters is up to 30–40 percent for the number of building permits, and for the cumulative amount over the reporting quarters concerned, the underestimation is 5–40 percent. This makes the data initially difficult to compare with prior periods. In order to create comparability nevertheless for the period concerned, the average underestimation is therefore also calculated based on the same period of the previous year. Current data are then presented in a table, increased by the average underestimation.

In order to capture dwelling starts and completions, follow-up is performed with the municipalities on building permits pertaining to dwellings by means of a list of projects in progress. As a rule, data on starts is not obtained from precise inspections of construction work, but from the developer's approval to start according to the starting clearance. This data sometimes deviates from the start of the actual construction work. Data on completions shall be based primarily on the final decision given to the developer by the municipal building committee in the building permit case.

A handful of municipalities can grant their own date for a more actual start of construction work besides the checkpoints set forth in the Planning and Building Act (starting clearance and final decision) that they usually provide.

For started buildings, the material is integrated with data from the developers for the new construction cost statistics, and more detailed data are obtained from there about the building and the dwellings, e.g. type of dwelling and form of conveyance. Data regarding start date and estimated completion are also obtained from the developer. These data can be compared with equivalent data from the municipalities.

2.2.4 Non-response

The statistics are based on a total population survey and no calculation of non-response is performed. However, in the absence of a source for comparison, the degree of completeness on the publication date is difficult to judge. Subsequent comparisons with e.g. The National Dwelling Register and the Property Tax Register show that individual projects can sometimes be missing or be reported in the wrong year. This is mainly due to factors such as omissions in the reporting of building permits, one-or-two-dwelling buildings being incorrectly coded as buildings for seasonal and secondary use, residences for communities

for the elderly and impaired being coded as hospitals and healthcare buildings, etc.

2.2.5 Data processing

Municipalities deliver data through a questionnaire. The data are registered and verified. The reporting agent is contacted regarding any deviations discovered.

It is not always possible for the municipality to provide data on the form of conveyance. In that case, this is coded as assumed based on the developer. The data can therefore sometimes be incorrect in the preliminary statistics. The information is then retrieved directly from the developer through the survey Prices for newly produced dwellings. The data are thus revised in the preliminary statistics.

The same can apply to data regarding type of building and residences for communities, although as a rule these can be provided by the municipality and do not need to be coded as buildings for Statistics Sweden, but can nevertheless be incorrect and in that case revised following contact with the developer.

See also 2.2 *Sources of uncertainty* for further information.

2.2.6 Model assumptions

This source of uncertainty does not affect the quality of the statistics.

2.3 Preliminary statistics compared with final statistics

The preliminary quarterly statistics are underestimated. The underestimation for individual quarters is up to 30–40 percent, and cumulatively over the reporting quarters concerned (e.g. quarters 1–3) the underestimation is 5–40 percent.

In the preliminary statistics, figures are reported increased by the average lag for prior years in order to adjust for projects that arrived late, or missed projects, at national level.

Older data in the preliminary statistics are then revised as new data are published.

3 Timeliness and punctuality

3.1 Production time

The production time for the quarterly statistics is six to eight weeks, and two to three months for the annual statistics.

3.2 Frequency

Data are collected continually during the year. On a quarterly basis, preliminary data are published on granted building permits, and dwelling starts and completions.

On an annual basis, data regarding completed dwellings are published by form of conveyance, ownership category, dwelling type and, for conversion, also by conversion measure and construction year.

3.3 Punctuality

The results are published periodically as scheduled.

4 Accessibility and clarity

4.1 Access to the statistics

The statistics are distributed through the relevant product page on www.scb.se and in the Statistical Database.

The preliminary quarterly statistics for started dwellings and the annual statistics for completed dwellings are published as a statistical news bulletin.

4.2 Possibility of additional statistics

Primary material in the form of annual registers for the past year is saved and available. Special processing can be performed as commissioned. Older years are archived at the National Archives of Sweden.

4.3 Presentation

Building permit data are in the Statistical Database as of the first quarter of 1996, and new data are issued quarterly. The statistics are also presented as two tables, in which the preliminary statistics are increased by the average lag.

Preliminary statistics for new construction and conversion are published quarterly in the Statistical Database for started and completed dwellings. The statistics are also presented as a number of tables in which the preliminary statistics are increased by the average lag. An Excel file with new construction by form of tenure is also published on the product page.

The definitive annual statistics for new construction and conversion, as well as demolition, are published in a number of tables with different breakdowns in the Statistical Database. The statistics are also presented as diagrams with longer time series for new construction from 1939 and conversion from 1989.

4.4 Documentation

Production of the statistics is described in Production of the statistics (StaF). Detailed information about microdata is described in the Detailed contents of the statistics (MetaPlus). Both sets of documentation are available at www.scb.se/BO0101, under the heading Documentation.

Equivalent documentation for conversion and demolition is available under: www.scb.se/BO0102

Equivalent documentation for building permits is available under: www.scb.se/BO0701.

5 Comparability and coherence

5.1 Comparability over time

Building permits have been collected and presented from 1996 with an unchanged structure and content to date.

For new construction, comparability for the main variables (dwelling and area) is good over time.

Methods to retrieve the measurement dates, mainly for starts but also for completions to some extent, can vary somewhat over time. These may have been retrieved in different ways and have slightly different content depending on the period's prevailing construction rules, subsidy possibilities and oversight responsibility of municipalities and authorities.

For conversion before 2008, form of tenure for the projects that did not receive government support has been derived from the form of ownership.

5.2 Comparability among groups

In the preliminary statistics, comparisons between regions for later periods may be difficult due to the lag, as this varies between different municipalities. This is problematic mainly in terms of lower regions (e.g. municipality). The data are then regularly revised, and comparability improves.

In the definitive statistics, comparability is good between the different groups and regions.

Building permit statistics are produced in all EU Member States, and can be compared. According to EU Regulation No 1165/98 concerning short-term statistics, the statistics shall include certain set data and be produced quarterly at minimum.

5.3 Other coherence

The building permit statistics are technically coordinated with the housing construction statistics in their production. This means that the statistics for building permits for housing can be compared with the statistics for dwelling starts and completions.

The conversion statistics are based on building permits for conversion and altered use and, together with the new construction statistics, they provide information regarding changes in the stock. The conversion statistics are however not comparable with the building permit statistics which only report building permits for new construction and extension.

The housing stock reports statistics on the number of dwellings in the stock, which includes newly produced dwellings. The housing stock is based on the National Dwelling Register, which is an administrative register included in the property register of the National Land Survey. A change in the housing stock between two years is however not the same as new dwellings in one year according to the new construction and conversion statistics. The change in the stock can depend on several factors other than just new construction and conversion, such as turning buildings for seasonal and secondary use for seasonal use into homes for permanent use, registration of previous non-response, correction of prior errors, etc. Also, data regarding e.g. form of tenure and ownership category can differ between the new construction and conversion statistics, and the housing stock.

The building permit statistics are technically coordinated with the 'Prices for newly produced dwellings' statistics in their production. These statistics are to report the price that the developer pays for the production of new dwellings and reports according to the start year. The number of dwellings in this survey can differ from the number in the new construction statistics, because not all new

construction is included in the population of the price survey, non-response occurs, etc.

The same applies to the 'Fees and rents' survey, which reports rents and vacancies in new leases, and fees and sales for tenant-owned units for a given year for completion.

5.4 Numerical consistency

The numerical consistency is good.

General information

A The classification Official Statistics of Sweden

These statistics are included in the Official Statistics of Sweden.

With regard to statistics included in Official Statistics of Sweden (SOS), special rules apply for quality and accessibility, see the Official Statistics Act ([2001:99](#)) and the Official Statistics Ordinance ([2001:100](#)), and the Statistics Sweden Regulations on the Quality of the Official Statistics ([SCB-FS 2016:17](#)).

B Confidentiality and the handing of personal data

In the special task of agencies for producing statistics, confidentiality applies according to Chapter 24, Section 8 of the Public Access to Information and Secrecy Act ([2009:400](#)). With regard to personal data, that is, information that can be directly or indirectly attributed to a living person, the Official Statistics Act ([2001:99](#)), the Official Statistics Ordinance ([2001:100](#)) and the EU General Data Protection Regulation ([2016/679](#)) apply.

C Storage and elimination

Included in RA-MS 2007:64 and shall not be anonymised, but is instead handed over to the National Archives of Sweden.

D Obligation to provide information

There is an obligation to provide information under the Official Statistics Act ([SFS 2001: 99](#)) and under the Statistics Sweden Regulations ([SCB-FS 2011:23](#)).

E EU regulation and international reporting

In 1998, the European Council adopted a regulation concerning short-term statistics (Regulation No [1165/98](#)). The regulation contains requirements for compulsory reporting of data regarding building permits. Reporting is monthly. There are no EU regulations regarding new construction statistics or conversion and demolition.

F History

Collection of statistics for building permits commenced in January 1996.

Statistics regarding new housing construction have been published in some form since the early 20th century. To start with by the Swedish Board of Health and Welfare, to be transferred to the Royal Housing Board in 1949. The statistics have been with Statistics Sweden since 1966. Various planning and statistical agencies, as well as building rules may have affected the collection and structure of the statistics over the years.

The statistics regarding conversions have been produced since 1975. From the beginning, in the form of modernisation statistics showing several types of conversion and renovation measures, including the cost of conversions. In that housing subsidies ceased in 2008, only the net change in dwellings through conversion is reported. This is based on building permits for altered use.

Demolition statistics have been produced since 1949.

G Contact details

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