

DEFINITIONS AND GENERAL NOTES

Population and Households

Population

Figures are official mid-year estimates or averages of official end-year estimates. In general, the data refer to the population within present territorial boundaries (either residing in the area or actually present there); armed forces outside the country are included wherever possible. The urbanization level is defined as the percentage of population residing in urban areas in each country according to national definitions.

Households

There are two concepts of household: one is based on the housekeeping unit concept and another on the household dwelling concept.

The housekeeping unit concept specifies a private household as either:

- a one-person household, i.e. a person who lives alone in a separate housing unit or who occupies, as a lodger, a separate room (or rooms) of a housing unit but does not join with any of the other occupants of the housing unit to form part of a multi-person household as defined below; or
- a multi-person household, i.e. a group of two or more persons who combine to occupy the whole or part of a housing unit and to provide themselves with food and possibly other essentials for living. The group may pool their income to a greater or lesser extent. The group may be composed of related persons only or unrelated persons or of a combination of both, including boarders and excluding lodgers.

In the household-dwelling concept the private household is equated with the housing unit. It does not provide direct information on the number of house-keeping units sharing housing units.

Tenure status of households (type of ownership). This includes:

- Household of which a member is the owner of the dwelling;
- Other forms of tenure.

Average size of household

The ratio of population living in households to number of households. Persons not living in households (for example, in military barracks) are excluded.

Dwelling stock, new dwellings and buildings

The following definitions, established jointly by the Conference of European Statisticians and the Committee on Housing, Building and Planning 1/, are used:

Dwelling - A dwelling is a room or suite of rooms and its accessories in a permanent building or structurally separated part thereof which by the way it has been built, rebuilt, converted, etc., is intended for private habitation. It should have a separate access to a street (direct or via a garden or grounds) or to a common space within the building (staircase, passage, gallery, etc.). Detached rooms for habitation which are clearly built, rebuilt, converted, etc., to be used as a part of the dwelling should be counted as part of the dwelling. (A dwelling may thus be constituted of separate buildings within the same enclosure, provided they are clearly intended for habitation by the same private household, e.g. a room or rooms above a detached garage, occupied by servants or other members of the household.)

Room - A room is defined as a space in a dwelling enclosed by walls, reaching from the floor to the ceiling or roof covering, and of a size large enough to hold a bed for an adult (4 sq.m at least) and at least 2 metres high over the major area of the ceiling. In this category should fall normal bedrooms, dining-rooms, living-rooms, habitable attics, servants' rooms, kitchens and other separate spaces intended for dwelling purposes. Kitchenettes, corridors, verandas, lobbies, etc., as well as bathrooms and toilets, should not be counted as rooms.

Dwelling stock - The dwelling stock includes only conventional (permanent) dwellings, whether occupied or not. The simple term "dwelling" is generally used instead of "conventional dwelling". The dwelling stock does not include rustic (semi-permanent) and improvised housing units (e.g. huts, cabins, shanties), mobile housing units (e.g. trailers, caravans, tents, wagons, boats) and housing units not intended for human habitation but in use for the purpose (e.g. stables, barns, mills, garages, warehouses).

Increases in the dwelling stock consist of increases in the number of dwellings due to new construction and increases due to other types of building activity (restoration, extension, conversion). In principle, increases in the number of dwellings without building activity (conversion of one dwelling into two or more dwellings, or of space used for non-residential purposes into one or more dwellings without building activity) are also taken into account, but increases due to these factors are likely to be of little quantitative importance.

In dwelling construction four types of building activity are distinguished, defined as follows:

New construction - The erection of an entirely new structure, whether or not the site on which it is built was previously occupied.

Other building activities -

Restoration - Repairs by which at least one dwelling or other structure is effectively reinstated and where substantial parts of the existing structure are used.

Extension - The enlargement of buildings by which space is added.

Conversion - Structural changes carried out within a building.

Decreases in the dwelling stock consist of the following components:

- dwellings becoming definitely empty (e.g. because they are declared unfit for habitation or because it is evident that they will not again be occupied permanently), whether demolished or not, included in this category are also dwellings which, after having become unfit for habitation, are subsequently restored and effectively reinstated (as indicated above, the restoration of the dwelling should be recorded as an increase in the dwelling stock);
- dwellings fit for habitation but demolished, e.g. to make way for the construction or extension of factories, the construction of new roads or the widening of existing roads;
- dwellings destroyed by fire, floods, subsidence or other catastrophes;
- decreases in the number of dwellings resulting in the conversion of two or more dwellings into one dwelling or of one or more dwellings into non-residential accommodation (with or without building activity).

Equipment of dwellings

The definitions of the various types of equipment distinguished in the classifications are as follows:

Piped water - Dwellings are regarded as equipped with piped water if it is laid on inside the dwelling. Piped water may be provided either from a community scheme or from a private installation.

Fixed bath or shower - Dwellings are counted as equipped with fixed bath or shower if at least one of these types of equipment is installed inside the dwelling.

Flush toilet - Dwellings are counted as equipped with flush toilet if at least one of this equipment is installed inside the dwelling.

Central heating - Dwellings are considered as centrally heated if heating is provided either from a community heating centre or from an installation built in the building or in the dwelling, established for heating purposes, without regard to the source of energy.

Kitchenette - A kitchenette is defined as a separate space of less than 4 square metres or 2 metres wide.

Floor space of a dwelling - Two concepts of floor space of a dwelling are used:

Useful floor space is the floor space of dwellings measured inside the outer walls, excluding cellars, non-habitable attics and, in multi-dwelling houses, common spaces.

Living floor space is the total area of rooms falling under the concept of "room" as defined above.

Dwellings completed by type of investor

The term "investor" refers to the bodies or persons on whose account the dwellings are built (irrespective of whether or not they are owners of the land on which the dwellings are built) and not to those actually erecting them. The most detailed categories of type of investor needed for national purposes are likely to vary between countries according to their social and institutional arrangements. For international purposes, however, categories of national classifications should be converted into the following broader headings:

- Public sector

State and local governments - This category includes both central governmental bodies and governmental bodies on all lower levels (provinces, regions, counties, municipalities).

Other public bodies - These should be defined mainly on the basis of their function and not of their legal status which may be the same or similar to that of private bodies. However, the functions which these bodies exercise should have public aspects. In principle, they are non-profit making organizations providing low-cost housing, and usually operate under special legislation.

- Private sector

Private persons - In this category should fall all individuals undertaking housebuilding for own occupation or for renting and also for possible sale.

Co-operatives - The main function of housing co-operatives is usually to provide their members with accommodation mostly by way of house-building. In principle, housing co-operatives have a non profit making character and operate exclusively for the benefit of their members. The members make a personal contribution, generally in cash. Housing co-operatives do, of course, make use for housebuilding purposes of various types of financial assistance, from public authorities, specialized credit organizations and social organizations.

Other private bodies - This category includes, in principle, organizations operating on a profit-making basis, e.g. private enterprises of any kind, real estate agents. They may provide accommodation for their employees or build houses for renting or sale.

Building - A building is any independent structure comprising one or more rooms or other spaces, covered by a roof, enclosed with external walls or dividing walls, which extend from the foundations to the roof, and intended for residential, agricultural, industrial, commercial, cultural, etc., purposes.

Residential and non-residential buildings - A building should be regarded as residential when the major part of the building (i.e. more than half of its gross floor area) is used for dwelling purposes. Other buildings should be regarded as non-residential.

Construction of dwelling in new residential buildings - Two groups of residential buildings are distinguished:

Houses (Ground-oriented residential buildings) - This category includes all types of houses (detached, semi-detached, terraced houses, houses built in a row, etc.) each dwelling of which has its own entrance directly from the ground surface.

Flats (Other residential buildings) - This category includes all residential buildings other than ground-oriented residential buildings as defined above. Residential buildings are sub-divided according to the number of storeys of the building. For this purpose, all floors above ground level (including the ground floor) are counted as storeys. Floors below ground and attics should be disregarded.

Work completed - Work is completed when the building or other structure is physically ready to be occupied or to be put into use.

New non-residential buildings completed

The following definitions, shown in the United Nations Yearbook of Construction Statistics 2/ are used:

Industrial buildings - All buildings which are used to house the production, assembly and warehousing activities of industrial establishments, i.e. factories, plants, workshops etc.

Commercial buildings - Office buildings and all buildings which are intended for use primarily in wholesale, retail and service trades, i.e. hotels, restaurants, shops, warehouses, public garages etc.

Educational buildings - All buildings which are intended for use directly in the instructional activities, furnishing academic and technical courses, i.e. schools, universities etc. as well as museums, art galleries, libraries etc.

Health buildings - All buildings which are primarily engaged in providing hospital and institutional care, i.e. hospitals, infirmaries, sanatoria etc.

Other buildings - Buildings which are not included in any of the above classifications i.e. public, religious, amusement, sport, recreational and community buildings, non-residential farm buildings etc.

Floor area of buildings

The sum of the area of each floor of the building measured to the outer surface of the outer walls including the area of lobbies, cellars, elevator shafts and in multi-dwelling buildings all the common spaces. Areas of balconies are excluded.

Volume of buildings

The total volume included between the outer surface of the outer walls measured from the level of the lowest story to the roof of the building.

Value of construction

Value of buildings - The following definitions are used:

Construction completed - the value actually paid for the completed buildings. The value of land is not included.

Construction authorized and started - tender or estimated value of the buildings upon completion.

Value of construction put in place - The following definitions are used:

Value of construction put in place - The value of construction put in place is the value of work carried out on projects completed during the inquiry period, plus the value of work under construction at the end of the inquiry period minus the value at the beginning of the period. It includes construction work done as a main contractor and on own-account, plus work done as a subcontractor (minus the payments to sub-contractors for work done).

New construction - The erection of an entirely new structure, whether or not the site on which it is built was previously occupied. Data for extensions are generally included under new construction.

Improvements - This term refers to construction work by which the utility of buildings or other structures is increased or at least renewed, i.e. construction work which materially extends the normal life of structures. Construction improvement consists of three major types:

- additions (extensions) to the living space within the dwelling; these include the enlargement of buildings by which space is added. Additions also include the raising of a roof or digging of a basement.

- alterations, renovations and major replacements within or to the dwelling; alterations include structural change or improvements made within or on the structure. These extend from the installation of a new electrical outlet, to the remodeling of a kitchen or bath, to the complete renovation of an entire building. Alterations also include adding equipment which had not been present before the installation, such as putting in a central air conditioning system. Major replacements include the replacement of entire building systems or major items of equipment. Examples include: roof, siding, heating equipment, hot water heater, electrical wiring, plumbing fixtures, windows, doors, and so forth.

- improvement on property outside buildings, and major replacements. These include new, additions, alterations or major replacements to structures on the property. Examples of these structures are adding room(s), a porch or deck, or an attached garage, walks or driveways, fences, recreational facilities (pools, tennis courts, and the like) and detached garages and sheds. This category of improvements also includes terracing or leveling the grounds.

Repairs and maintenance - This includes construction work on buildings and other structures which does not, in principle, result in extending their normal life, but only prevents their abnormal deterioration and keeps them in a state of normal functioning. Examples include: painting, furnace cleaning, and replacing a deteriorated roof shingle.

Civil engineering - All construction not classified under building construction, that is, construction of railways, roads, bridges, highways, airports, water and sewage, dams and irrigation, etc.

Building firms

The estimates presented in these tables are governed by the following concepts:

Firms - The data relate to a "kind-of-activity" of similar units (establishments or enterprises) engaged in construction activity during the reference year. In economic inquiries, the establishment is the unit which engages under a single ownership or control in one, or predominantly one, a kind of economic activity at a single physical location. In construction inquiries, the standard definition of establishment is modified in practice to eliminate the restriction as to location. The enterprise is the legal entity to which one or more establishments belong.

Employee - Any person engaged, other than working proprietors and unpaid family workers. Included are all persons who work in or for the statistical unit "firm", and for which work they receive pay.

Value of output - The value of output at current prices is the

a) value of construction put in place;

b) value of sales of products from industrial units, and

c) sales value (ex-statistical unit) of goods sold in the same condition as purchased. In general, the valuation is in producers' prices (market prices), including all indirect taxes and excluding all subsidies.

Employment and unemployment - The following definitions and limitations should be kept in mind:

Employment - The scope of the series varies from one country to another and international comparability is consequently subject to reservations. These differences are due to varying definitions or classifications of what is considered as "construction industry"; the methods of collecting statistics, the labour force considered (i.e. total employed labour force or employees in employment), the section of the construction industry. Unless otherwise stated, all data are averages.

Unemployment - Unless otherwise stated, statistics relate to the wholly unemployed - i.e. to persons out of work and seeking employment. Loss of working time through sickness, accident and industrial disputes is generally excluded. International comparisons of these data are subject to reservations; the series vary greatly in completeness and reliability, depending upon their economic scope or coverage (i.e. definition of the construction industry or of the occupations falling under this heading), the source of the data, the methods of compilation employed, and the definition of "unemployed" adopted. In the main, the statistics are limited to employees and are annual averages.

Building materials

Data on masonry material relate, in principle, to bricks and small concrete blocks (solid, hollow, perforated and shaped). Concrete blocks cover those made of normal and light-weight concrete. The data related to thermal insulation material are, in principle, restricted to mineral and glass wools, foamed plastics, soft fibre board, etc.

In general, data related to cement refer to all hydraulic cements used in construction.

Gross domestic product and gross fixed capital formation

The following definitions, shown in the United Nations System of National Accounts and supporting tables 3/, are used:

Gross domestic product at purchasers' values or producers' values - The producers' value of the gross outputs of resident producers, including the distributive trades and transport, less the purchasers' values of their intermediate consumption (in other words, the producers' values of the value added of the resident producers) plus import duties. Also equal to the total of the gross expenditure on the final uses of the domestic supply of goods and services valued at purchasers' values less imports of goods and services valued c.i.f.; or the sum of the compensation of employees, consumption of fixed capital, operating surplus and indirect taxes, net, of resident producers and import duties.

Gross fixed capital formation, Total - The outlays (purchases and own-account production) of industries, producers of government services and producers of private non-profit services to households, on additions of new durable goods (commodities) to their stocks of fixed assets less their net sales of similar second-hand and scrapped goods. Excluded are the outlays of government services on durable goods for military use. Included are acquisitions of reproducible and non-reproducible durable goods, except land, mineral deposits, timber tracts and the like, for civilian use; work in progress on construction projects; capital repairs; outlays on the improvement of land and on the development and extension of timber tracts, plantations, vineyards, etc. which take considerably more than a year to become productive, until they become productive; the acquisition of breeding stock, draught animals, dairy cattle and the like; and the transfer costs in connection with purchases and sales of land, mineral deposits, timber tracts, etc.

Gross fixed capital formation in residential buildings - Value of work put in place on the construction of residential buildings, including major alterations in and additions to such buildings, but excluding the value of the land before improvement. Expenditures in respect of the installation of new permanent fixtures are included.

Gross Fixed capital formation in non-residential buildings - Value of work put in place on the construction of non-residential buildings and structures, including major alterations and additions to such buildings and structures, but excluding the value of the land before improvement. Included are outlays on the installation, alteration and improvement of fixtures, facilities and equipment which are integral and unmovable parts of the structures.

Prices, costs and rents

Wholesale price indices of building materials

In general, the series are part of the general wholesale price index. In the main the wholesale price indices, shown under the heading "total", refer to a representative list of building materials, weighted by the gross value of domestic consumption or of sales. The indices for individual materials are, as a rule, based on unweighted prices.

Input and output price indices for housing construction

In general, the indices relate to the cost for residential construction. The index on materials refers to all construction materials, and the index on wages to all types of contract construction. They do not include the price of land.

Input price indices - Price indices of materials, wages, and possibly some other input factors such as taxes, architects' fee, interest charges, weighted on the basis of a standard house. These indices, therefore, only give an approximation of the price index of output, because price changes for certain other input factors, and for changes in profits and productivity, are not taken into account.

Output price indices - These indices relate to the actual cost based on either a) the prices for the various units of the different work categories, (such as cubic metres of masonry work, square metres of roofing or painting), weighted on the basis of a standard house; or b) the price (per cubic metre or other unit) of such currently built houses which are more or less the same in size, concept and quality; or c) the combination of prices for materials and labour, overhead, profits and output per man.

Consumer price and rent indices

The indices for "Total" refer to the total of the consumers' prices, excluding rent; the rent index is the component of the general consumers' price index. For some countries successive revisions of the consumers' price index have taken place in the course of the period for which figures are shown; for this reason it has been necessary to link these successive series of indices.

^{1/} European Programme of Current Housing Statistics (ST/ECE/HOU/29; ST/CES/7), Statistical Standards and Studies - No. 7, United Nations, New York, 1966. Sales No. 66.II.E/Mim.42 and Programme of Current Housing and Building Statistics for countries in the UN/ECE region, Statistical Standards and Studies - No. 43, United Nations, New York, 1993. Sales No. 94.II.E.3.

^{2/} Yearbook of Construction Statistics 1973 - 1980, United Nations, New York, 1982.

^{3/} Studies in Methods, Series F, No. 2, Rev.3, Statistical Office of the United Nations, New York.