

Standard documentation
Metainformation
(Definitions, explanations, methods, quality)

on

PLANNING PERMISSIONS

This documentation applies to the reporting period: Quarterly

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1. Overview

This series only provides information on development subject to the requirement to obtain planning permission. The Planning and Development Acts 1963 – 2000, imposes certain requirements on builders, developers and all other persons who propose to build or develop and specifies that a planning permission must be obtained from the relevant Planning Authority. Essentially most construction activity undertaken by non- State bodies (including individuals) comes within the scope of the Acts. With the co-operation of the officers of the various Planning Authorities (and An Bord Pleanála in respect of appeals) data is collected by the Central Statistics Office in respect of each formal planning permission or approval granted by the Authorities (but not for outline permissions). Local authority building (including housing) is exempt in the case where construction takes place in the Authorities' own area. Therefore, works undertaken by a local authority outside its functional area come within the scope of the Acts, and need planning permission. Planning permission is also needed for development by the State, except where the consultation procedures provided for in the Local Government (Planning and Development) Act, 1993 obtain (e.g. national security, public safety or order, the administration of justice etc.).

2. General Information

2.1 Statistical Category

Use of administrative data from Local Authorities and An Bord Pleanála

2.2 Area of Activity

Construction Statistics

2.3 Organisational Unit Responsible, Persons to Contact

Building Section

Industry and Building Division

Bríd Fitzpatrick is the statistician with responsibility for this area.

The contact details are as follows;

Email: building@cso.ie

Tel: +353 (21) 4535162

2.4 Objectives and purpose; history

The scope of the planning permission data series is governed by the application of the Local Government (Planning and Development) Acts, 1963 to 2000, which impose the requirement that the majority of construction activity obtains planning permission.

This series provides a short term indicator on planning permissions granted.

2.5 Periodicity

This survey is carried out quarterly.

2.6 Client

The government requires this data as a short term indicator of what is happening in the construction industry.

This data is also required by Eurostat.

2.7 Users

- European Union/Eurostat
- Government (Department of Environment)
- Economists
- Tegral
- Eircom
- Economists
- Construction Industry

2.8 Legal basis

Provides variables 411 and 412 of Annex B (Construction) under the Short Term Statistics Regulation (EC) No 1882/2003.

3. Statistical Concepts, Methods

3.1 Subject of the statistics

These statistics provide a short term indicator of the number of planning permissions granted in a quarter.

3.2 Units of Observation/Collection Units/Units of Presentation

88 Local Authorities and An Bord Pleanála send details of all planning permissions granted for the period. An Bord Pleanála is responsible for the determination of appeals and certain other matters under the Planning and Development Acts, 2000 to 2006, and with appeals under the Building Control Act, 1990, the Local Government (Water Pollution) Acts 1977 and 1990 and the Air Pollution Act, 1987.

Each Local Authority and An Bord Pleanála provides each individual planning permission, each permission granted details the planning registration number, the local authority it pertains to, a description of the permission required, the category of development it relates to, the number of units required and the floor area. All variables provided are absolute figures.

In each publication, the number of planning permissions granted and units are presented in absolute figures. Total floor area figures, and average floor area per unit is presented in units of 000's square metres.

3.3 Data sources

All local authorities in the State and An Bord Pleanála.

3.4 Reporting Unit/Respondents

Each individual planning application which has been granted is supplied to Building Section (approximately 10,000 to 15,000 per quarter).

The number of planning permissions granted and units are presented in absolute figures. Total floor area figures, and average floor area per unit is presented in units of '000's square metres. Respondents are all the Local Authorities and An Bord Pleanála.

3.5 Type of Survey/Process

The planning permission data series is governed by the application of The Local Government (Planning and Development) Acts, 1963 to 2000, which impose the requirement that the majority of construction activity obtains planning permission.

3.6 Characteristics of the Sample/Process

3.6.1 Population and Sampling Frame

All local authorities and An Bord Pleanála

3.6.2 Sampling Design

Not applicable.

3.7 Survey technique/data transfer

Returns are received from each local authority and An Bord Pleanála and are compiled and queried if necessary.

Each return is scrutinised for any errors or missing data. Any queries are followed up with the relevant local authority. The data received is then coded by the section, scanned and verified and then imported into the CSO's Data Management System (DMS).

A number of edits are then run on the data using PC-SAS. Any edits that arise are followed up with the relevant local authority and resolved.

Edits are run on a regular basis throughout the quarter.

3.8 Questionnaire (including Explanations)

Not applicable as local authorities return all planning permissions granted. No questionnaire is required for this survey.

3.9 Participation in the survey

Participation is compulsory.

3.10 Characteristics of the Survey/Process and its Results

Each local authority and An Bord Pleanála are required to send details of all planning permissions granted for the period, along with the number of units, a description and floor areas. The number of planning permissions granted, the number of units for which permission is granted and floor areas are aggregated, results are then classified by NUTS2 and NUTS3 regional breakdown, by county and are also classified by type of development and functional category.

3.11 Classifications used

Planning Permissions are classified by type of development (new construction, extension or alteration and conversion), local authority district and by regional authority. A distinction is made between residential and non-residential building and civil engineering.

3.12 Regional breakdown of Results

NUTS2 and NUTS3 regions.

The regional classifications in this release are based on the NUTS (Nomenclature of Territorial Units) classification used by Eurostat. The NUTS3 regions correspond to the eight Regional Authorities established under the Local Government Act, 1991 (Regional Authorities)(Establishment) Order, 1993, which came into operation on 1 January, 1994. The NUTS2 regions, which were proposed by Government and agreed by Eurostat in 1999, are groupings of the NUTS3 regions. The composition of the regions is set out below.

Border, Midlands and Western NUTS Region

- Border** Cavan
- Donegal
- Leitrim
- Louth
- Monaghan
- Sligo
- Midland** Laois
- Longford
- Offaly
- Westmeath

Eastern and Southern NUTS Region

- Dublin** Dublin City
- Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown
- Fingal
- South Dublin
- Mid-East** Kildare
- Meath
- Wicklow
- Mid-West** Clare
- Limerick City
- Limerick County
- North Tipperary

West Galway City
Galway County
Mayo
Roscommon

South-East Carlow
Kilkenny
South Tipperary
Waterford City
Waterford County
Wexford

South-West Cork City
Cork County
Kerry

4. Production of the Statistics, Data Processing, Quality Assurance

4.1 Data capture

Each local authority returns their summary of planning permissions granted and each planning application with floor area by post. Information is not collected on floor areas for alterations and conversions. Each return is checked, and if there is a discrepancy between the stated planning permissions granted and the numbers of planning applications returned, then the local authority is contacted to confirm the figures. The survey form is then scanned and verified. Edits are run and any discrepancies that arise with the data are checked and corrected where necessary. The I.T. tools employed are: The CSO in-house computer system - Data Management System (DMS), also bought in systems: PCSAS, Microsoft Excel and PCAxis.

4.2 Coding

Each planning permission granted is manually coded to type of permission (i.e. new development, extension, alteration and renovation or conversion) and to category of construction. The number of units and floor area are also coded where applicable.

4.3 Data Editing

Range checking is performed on floor areas assigned to categories of construction.

Edit checks are performed to ensure floor areas are not assigned to civil engineering works, such as the building of roads, railways and other structures which do not have floor areas.

Checks are performed to ensure all structures are coded to the correct type of development.

Checks are carried out to ensure that the correct number of units have been assigned to each category of construction and that no floor areas are assigned to alterations and conversions.

4.4 Imputation (for Non-Response or Incomplete Data Sets)

None – Estimates are included where full details of floor area are not available. The estimation method used for missing floor areas is to use the average floor area for that local authority from the previous quarter.

4.5 Grossing and Weighting

Not applicable.

4.6 Computation of Outputs, Estimation Methods Used

Planning permissions are presented by NUTS2 and NUTS3 regional breakdown, and then classified by county, type of development (new construction, extension or alteration and conversion), local authority district and by regional authority. Total floor area for planning permissions granted are also given. The estimation method used for missing floor areas is to use the average floor area for that local authority from the previous quarter.

4.7 Other Quality Assurance Techniques Used

Staff training (including telephone skills).

Staff meet with key people in local authorities and An Bord Pleanála to discuss any quality issues and to clarify permissions reporting.

5. Quality

5.1 Relevance

This series is a reliable indicator of activity in the construction sector, and is required as a short term indicator by the EU.

5.2 Accuracy and Reliability

5.2.1 Sampling Effects, Representativity

None – all areas in the state are covered.

5.2.2 Non-Sampling Effects

5.2.2.1 Quality of the data sources used

In general, the data provided by the Local Authorities and An Bord Pleanála is suitable for use by the section. It is sufficiently detailed so that the data can be coded by building section in a consistent manner on a monthly basis. Data is manually coded by the section based on the information given in the template. Monthly data is compiled into quarterly data. All planning permissions are given a unique identifier using a combination of elements that constitute a planning permission, i.e using the type of permission, category of construction, the planning authority it pertains to and the Planning Registration Number.

The template used by most Local Authorities is generally the same, which means the structure of the data is consistent over time and the data is therefore comparable with previous periods.

The system used does not allow for entry of duplicate records. A number of edits are run on the data each month to check for inconsistencies or invalid entries. Any errors or inconsistencies are corrected. See section 4.3 for more details.

5.2.2.2 Register Coverage

All local authority areas are covered. The Local Government Act 1991 (Regional Authorities) (Establishment) Order, 1993, which came into operation on 1 January, 1994, established eight new Regions. The CSO has adopted these in place of the old Planning Regions as the basis of the regional breakdown of planning permissions data.

5.2.2.3 Non-Response (Unit and Item)

Not relevant – data is always received from each local authority.

5.2.2.4 Measurement errors

Measurement errors are not formally calculated; however the following measures have been put in place:

Each return is checked and the relevant Local Authority is contacted if necessary. Also there is comprehensive inter – staff checking, following manual coding of data. It is then checked against a summary form lodged with the copy of permissions from each local authority. Some training has been provided to relevant personnel in the local authorities and An Bord Pleanála. Finally, normal system edit checks uncover most errors.

5.2.2.5 Processing errors

Any errors that arise are checked and rectified each month. All data received from a Local Authority is manually coded and then scanned. If characters are rejected by the scanner, they are keyed manually. All characters keyed are numeric. Those coding the data enter the data clearly so as to minimise as far as possible scanning errors.

Edits are then run on the data following scanning to highlight any errors. A combination of range and consistency checks are performed on the data as outlined in section 4.3. Edits are then re-run after any corrections are made.

5.2.2.6 Model-related effects

Not relevant as all data is received from each local authority.

5.3 Timeliness and Punctuality

This series is published at T+12 weeks.

5.3.1 Provisional results

None

5.3.2 Final results

Final Results are published each quarter for the previous quarter e.g. Data for quarter T will be published at the end of quarter T+1.

5.4 Coherence

While planning permission data only shows planning permissions granted, these figures can be compared with the publication produced by the ESB on house completions and the Department of Environment publication on housing statistics (which includes house commencements).

Comparisons can be made between the CSO series and the series mentioned above from 1970 onwards, however comparisons should not be made with other series prior to that time, due to a break in the series prior to 1970.

When compared, these series give some indications of trends in the construction sector.

5.5 Comparability

Comparisons are made with same quarter last year, and also Table 4 of the paper publication shows all data for each quarter for the previous four years.

Comparisons can be made with data from this release from 1970 onwards, however comparisons should not be made with data prior to that time, due to a break in the series prior to 1970.

5.6 Accessibility and Clarity

5.6.1 Assistance to Users, Special Analyses

All paper publications and background notes are made available on the CSO website and through data base direct. See section 5.6.3.3 for more details.

Specific user requests are acceded to where possible, and where confidentiality issues do not arise.

5.6.2 Revisions

None.

5.6.3 Publications

5.6.3.1 Releases, Regular Publications

Planning Permissions releases are published each quarter.

5.6.3.2 Statistical Reports

- Statistical Yearbook

5.6.3.3 Internet

An electronic form of the current paper publication is available here :

<http://www.cso.ie/releasespublications/documents/construction/current/planperm.pdf>

All historical releases are made available from the Releases and Publications archive :

http://www.cso.ie/releasespublications/pr_constructarchive.htm

All data from the paper publication, along with historical data is also made available on the CSO's database direct. Some additional tables are also available on the databank :

<http://www.cso.ie/px/pxeirestat/database/eirestat/Planning%20Permissions/Planning%20Permissions.asp>

5.6.4 Confidentiality

No individual Planning Permission data is published, only data for the entire local authority area.

6 Additional Documentation and Publications

www.cso.ie

The entry for this statistic under StatCentral (the portal to Ireland's official statistics) is at

<http://www.statcentral.ie/viewStat.asp?id=126>