

## 12. Construction

The data presented in this chapter regarding building construction comes from ISTAT sources; the Ministry for the Interior has supplied data regarding the procedure for allocating buildings for residential purposes; the research centre “Centro di Ricerche Economiche e Sociali di Mercato per l’Edilizia e il Territorio” has provided data-banks regarding all public works open to tenders in the Sicilian Provinces during the year.

On the basis of the number of building licences issued by local municipal councils, ISTAT releases data every three months regarding the construction of new buildings (residential and non-), or for extension-work on existing buildings. The tables in this chapter show figures for all new dwelling-places and buildings constructed in the Sicilian Provinces in the year 2011 (the last year available).

The data shows that 2,290 new residential buildings were erected in Sicily in the course of the year, representing more than 38.2% of all new constructions (5,995). Analysis of extension-work on buildings intended to be used principally for residential purposes, shows that this was carried out mainly in the Provinces of Messina, Catania, and Palermo, which together accounted for 52.9% of the Regional total (306,000 m<sup>3</sup>, including leave-out). At the same time, as regards the volume of extension-work on non-residential buildings, 85% was carried out in the Provinces of Caltanissetta, Catania, Messina and Ragusa.

Comparing 2011 with the previous year, there was a 30.5% fall in the number of newly-constructed residential buildings; there was also a 5% fall in extension-work on existing buildings. The situation with regard to non-residential buildings was similar, with a quantitative decrease of 115 units (-8.8% over the previous year, 2010). However there was an increase in extension-work on non-residential buildings (+417.4%, from 178,000 to 921,000 m<sup>3</sup>, including leave-out).

According to data for the last available year, 2011, there were 8,034 new dwellings in Sicily, representing a -7.5% fall over 2010; this was due both to fewer dwellings being built in new residential blocks (-7.4%) and habitations built in non-residential buildings, the number of which fell by 8.2% (from 269 to 247). Catania turned out to be the Province with the highest number of dwellings (1,741 and 21.7% of the total for the whole of Sicily), but the Provinces of Palermo (1,513 and 18.8%) and Messina (1,156 and 14.4%) also registered striking figures. In the same year, the overall number of rooms built decreased by -5% accompanied by a -4.2% reduction in the number of accessory rooms (e.g. bathroom, store-room etc.). A total of 54.9% of accessory rooms in Sicily were built in the Provinces of Catania, Messina and Palermo,

with these Provinces also accounting for about 54.6% of all rooms built.

On analyzing the data published by the Ministry for the Interior, with regard to eviction procedures from residential buildings, it can be seen that between 2011 and 2012 the number of writs issued rose overall by 7.4% (from 3,665 to 3,936); 91.4% of these cases were due to non-payment of rent on the part of the tenant, whereas in only 7.4% of the cases was the writ issued because the lease-period had actually terminated. At the Provincial level the highest percentage of legal actions was concentrated in the Province of Palermo (44.8%), which, together with Catania, were the two Provinces in which non-payment of rent was the main cause for eviction orders being issued. On the other hand, in Enna and Ragusa, non-payment of rent constituted the sole reason for eviction orders being issued.

In 2012, with regard to residential dwellings there were 6,636 eviction orders officially presented to the Court administrator, a figure which represented a fall of -5.3% over the preceding year, 2011. There was also a fall in the number of actual evictions carried out (-12%) when compared to the previous year, with the Provinces of Catania and Palermo having the highest percentages, accounting for 65.5% of the Regional total.

From data regarding public works, taken from the research centre Centro di Ricerche Economiche e Sociali di Mercato per l'Edilizia e il Territorio (CRESME), it can be seen that in 2012 in Sicily the number of public works open to tender fell by -2.3%. The funds available, 1,608 million Euros, also constituted a fall of -16.9%, signaling a phase of considerable recession when compared to 2010, a year in which there had been an increase of +43.4%. In 2012 Palermo and Messina were the two Provinces with the greatest number of public works open to tender (20.5% and 18% of the total respectively), followed by the Province of Catania (17.4% of the total); the increase in the actual amounts was substantial in the area of Catania (going from 227 to 436 million Euros, a rise of 92.1%); the latter figure accounted for 27.1% of the total amount for works open to tender in the whole Region.

## *Glossary*

**Building:** roofed structure, skirted by roads or open spaces, or separated from other constructions by main walls (that rise uninterrupted from foundation to

roof); it should have free access to the road and one or two autonomous staircases.

**Building licence:** official authorization to construct or convert buildings, issued by the Mayor on presentation of a project.

**Dwelling:** one or more rooms for dwelling purposes, with a separate entrance from the road, and a landing, courtyard, terrace, balcony or similar.

**Extension work** (to a building): further construction, horizontally or vertically, of rooms in an already existing building, with an increase in the volume of the building.

**New building:** building constructed from scratch, from foundations to roof; this includes those structures that have been completely re-constructed.

**Non-residential building:** building, or part of building, intended mainly or exclusively for uses other than residential.

**Public works (category):** types of work among which public works (road, airport) are classified.

**Residential building:** building or part of building, intended mainly or exclusively for residential use.

**Room (for dwelling):** covered area, enclosed on all sides by walls (in brick, wood, glass etc.), which do not necessarily have to reach the ceiling. Walls that include a large open space (e.g. arches or similar) are to be considered as

dividing walls, except where one of the two divided rooms, because of its small size, is practically an integral part of the other.

**Volume of a building** (including leave-out: estimated volume of extended areas): total volume of the space included between the external walls, the lowest floor and the roofing measured from the outside.

**Work (for public works):** part of a technically distinct work-operation contributing to the construction of new public works, structural improvements or special repairs to an existing building or part of it.

### *Further reading*

#### **Publications**

Italian Statistics Yearbook– 2013 – ISTAT

Eviction orders in Italy: Repossession procedures for buildings to be used

for habitation – 2012 updated – Ministry for the Interior

#### **Internet**

<http://www.istat.it/>

Building permission Statistics– 2011 – ISTAT

Italian Statistical Yearbook– 2013 – Chapter 15: “Construction”

<http://ssai.interno.it/index.html>

Eviction orders in Italy: Repossession procedures for buildings to be used for habitation – Updated 2010 – Ministry for the Interior

Repossession procedures for buildings to be used for habitation – Various years  
-Ministry for the Interior