

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 building licences issued by local town councils, ISTAT issues 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 dwellings and buildings constructed in the Sicilian Provinces in the year 2007 (the last year available). The data shows that 3,730 new residential buildings were built in Sicily in the course of the year, a total representing over 70% of all new constructions (5,098). Analysis of extension-work on buildings intended to be used principally as dwellings, clearly shows that these are concentrated in the Provinces of Catania, Messina and Trapani, which together accounted for 51.4% of the Regional total (638,000 m³, including leave-out). At the same time, 68.2% of the volume of work carried out in the Provinces of Catania, Messina and Agrigento was carried out as extension-work on non-residential buildings. Comparing 2007 with the previous year, the number of newly-constructed residential buildings in 2008 fell slightly (-0.4%); at the same time there was a 26.3% increase in extension-work on existing buildings, which was at variance with the negative trend of the two previous years (-11% in 2006, -17% in 2005). The situation with regard to non-residential buildings was different, with the fall in numbers (-14.9%) and volume (-4.3%) being accompanied by a substantial -60.5% reduction in extension-work (from 1,588,000 to 628,000 m³, including leave-out); up to 2006 the latter had always registered increases. According to data for the last available year, 2007, there were 14,761 new dwellings in Sicily, representing a 2.4% increase over 2006, due largely to dwellings built in new residential

blocks (+3%). On the other hand, the number of habitations built in newly constructed non-residential buildings fell by 19.8% (from 364 to 292). At the Provincial level the highest figure was recorded for Catania (3,213, and 21.8% of the Regional total); the Province of Trapani also registered impressive figures (2,264, representing 15.3% of the total), followed by the Province of Palermo (2,078 and 14.1% of the total). The overall number of rooms built increased in the same year, there being a 3.9% rise in the number of rooms and a 1.1% increase in accessory rooms (e.g. bathroom, store-room etc), rebutting the negative trend of 2006. A total of 51% of accessory rooms constructed in Sicily were built in the Provinces of Catania, Trapani and Palermo, with the same provinces accounting for about 50% of all rooms built in Sicily.

On analysing the data published by the Ministry for the Interior, with regard to eviction procedures from residential buildings, it can be seen that between 2008 and 2009 the number of writs issued increased by 3% overall (from 3,744 to 3,855); 84% of this increase was as a result of non-payment of rent on the part of the tenant, whereas in only 15% of the cases had the lease-period actually terminated. At the Provincial level the greatest percentage of legal actions was concentrated in the Province of Palermo (41.4%), whilst in both Catania and Ragusa non-payment of rent constituted the sole reason for eviction orders.

In 2009, there were 7,469 eviction orders presented to bailiffs, which represented a 10% increase over the preceding year, 2008. There was also a rise in the number of actual evictions (+11.3%) when compared to the previous year, with the provinces of Catania and Palermo having the highest percentages, accounting for 62.8% 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 2009 in Sicily, the number of public works open to tenders was more or less the same (+1%) as in 2008, when there had been an appreciable change in trend (-20.5%) when compared to the previous year. The amounts of money available, 2,357 million Euros, provide a rosier picture in that they represent a 26% increase over the previous year, 2007, when there had been a sharp decrease of 57.9%.

Palermo and Messina were again the two Provinces with the greatest number of public works open to tender (21% and 16% of the total respectively), followed by the province of Catania (+15% of the total), whilst there was a considerable increase (from 80 to 850 million Euros) in the total amount available in Caltanissetta; the latter figure accounted for 36% of the total amount for works open to tenders 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: onerous authorisation 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-built.

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 considerable open space (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– 2010 – ISTAT

Eviction orders in Italy: Concession procedures for buildings to be used for habitation
– 2009 updated – Ministry for the Interior

Internet

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

Building permission Statistics– 2007 – ISTAT

Italian Statistical Yearbook– 2010 – Chapter 15: “Construction”

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

Eviction orders in Italy: Concession procedures for buildings to be used for habitation
– Updated 2009 – Ministry for the Interior

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