

ENGLISH ONLY

**STATISTICAL COMMISSION and
UN ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR
EUROPE (UNECE)**

**STATISTICAL OFFICE OF THE
EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES
(EUROSTAT)**

**CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN
STATISTICIANS**

Joint UNECE-Eurostat Work Session on Housing Censuses
Organized in cooperation with UNFPA
(Geneva, 26 November 2004)

Session 1 – Invited paper

**COMMENTS ON THE 2000 RECOMMENDATIONS ON HOUSING CENSUSES AND
PROPOSALS FOR THE 2010 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Submitted by UNECE*

1. INTRODUCTION

1. This paper concerns the previous recommendations for the censuses of housing in the ECE region (RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE 2000 CENSUSES OF POPULATION AND HOUSING IN THE ECE REGION).

2. The paper presents previous core topics (and one non-core topic) in brief with comments and some new proposals for the 2010 censuses.

3. The key ideas of the new proposals are the following:

4. First: At the present time, the international statistics concerning dwelling stock are inconsistent when comparing countries to each other (see table in the appendix).

* Paper prepared by Martti Lujanen (Ministry of the Environment, Finland) on request by the ECE Secretariat.

5. In the name of comparability and reliability of the housing statistics between different countries, one should focus on occupied conventional permanent dwellings that includes only dwellings which are used as the main residence by at least one person at the time of the census.
6. All statistics of dwelling stock should be reported first hand by using at least occupied conventional permanent dwellings. Additional statistics could also be reported if they are available (or if reported differently from before).
7. Second: Some of the classifications under the present core topics are not the best ones for describing the subject. In order to improve on these, some new recommendations for reorganizing the old categories of some core topics by arranging and renaming them are given.
8. Third: When reporting information about occupied conventional permanent dwellings, all countries should use the same definitions when measuring, for example, the number of rooms (include the kitchen with the number of rooms) and useful floor space (this should be classified as a core topic) to make the international statistics comparable. In addition, countries could also report different statistics if they are available or reported differently from before.

2. CHARACTERISTICS OF HOUSING UNITS AND OTHER LIVING QUARTERS (page 56 from the RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE 2000 CENSUSES OF POPULATION AND HOUSING IN THE ECE REGION)

2.1. Type of living quarters (core topic 17) (page 56)

9. 236. Living quarters have already been defined generally (paragraphs 229-232). It is recommended that living quarters be classified by type as follows:

1.0 Housing units

1.1 Conventional dwellings

1.2 Non conventional dwellings

1.2.1 Mobile housing units

1.2.2 Semi-permanent housing units

1.2.3 Other housing units designed for habitation

1.2.4 Other housing units not designed for habitation

2.0 Collective living quarters

2.0.1 Hotels, rooming houses and other lodging houses

2.0.2 Institutions

2.0.3 Camps

This classification is basic at the two-digit level but optional at the three-digit level.

10. Conventional dwellings (letter (a) in para. 229) (definition from page 56)

233. Of the main categories of living quarters the most important is the "conventional dwelling". This is generally defined as a room or suite of rooms and its accessories (e.g. lobbies, corridors) in a permanent building or structurally separated part thereof which by the way it has been built,

rebuilt or converted is designed for habitation by one private household all the year round and is not at the time of the census used wholly for non-residential purposes. It should have separate access to the street, direct or via a garden or grounds, or to a common space within the building (staircase, passage, gallery, etc.), but it need not necessarily have a bathroom or toilet available for the exclusive use of its occupants. A "permanent building" is one which was constructed to be structurally stable for at least ten years (see also paragraph 237, subparagraph (b) below), but some countries may wish to define permanence instead in terms of the method of construction or in terms of the building materials used in the country. Detached rooms for habitation which are clearly designed to be used as part of the dwelling should be included, e.g. a room or rooms above a detached garage. A conventional dwelling is counted for census purposes whether or not it is occupied, although some topics and consequently some parts of the tabulation programme apply only to occupied conventional dwellings.

2.2 Occupancy status (core topic 20) (page 59)

11. 243. It is recommended that conventional dwellings be classified by occupancy status as follows:

1.0 Dwellings which are the usual residence of at least one person at the time of the census (occupied dwellings)

2.0 Dwellings reserved for seasonal or secondary use but fit for habitation all the year round (regardless of whether or not they are occupied at the time of the census).

3.0 Vacant dwellings (i.e. dwellings which have no usual residents at the time of the census but are available to become the usual residence of at least one person)

12. *Comments:*

The term conventional dwellings means all conventional dwelling stock including vacant dwellings. The term also treats other dwellings such as dwellings reserved for seasonal or secondary use as part of the dwelling stock.

The definition of vacant dwelling is unclear in practical application and the standard of the information on vacant dwellings can be poor, especially in register-based statistics. Vacant dwellings can also be easily confused with dwellings reserved for seasonal or secondary use when information is compiled. Some countries do not compile information about vacant dwellings at all or the compiled data on vacant dwellings are inaccurate.

Many countries exclude dwellings reserved for seasonal or secondary use from their dwelling stock, especially if these dwellings concern so-called summer houses (even if the dwellings could be inhabited year round).

13. *Proposals:*

It is recommended that that all statistics on the dwelling stock should be reported with priority on the stock composed by occupied conventional permanent dwellings. This means that category 1.0 under point 243 should be reported separately from all other dwelling stock. When counting density standards it is essential that one uses information about occupants, number of rooms, square metres and so on from occupied conventional permanent dwellings only.

Additional statistics could also be reported separately on vacant dwellings and dwellings reserved for seasonal or secondary use, and on non conventional dwellings.

2.3 Type of ownership (core topic 18) (page 58)

14. 239. This topic refers to the type of ownership of the dwellings and not that of the land on which the dwelling stands. Thus, in the case of an owner-occupied dwelling the type of ownership will be the same as the tenure status 1.0 in paragraph 216 (core topic 16).

15. 240. The following classification of dwellings by type of ownership is recommended:

1.0 Owner-occupied dwellings - This category includes all dwellings which are used wholly or partly for own occupation by the owner.

2.0 Other dwellings

2.1 In private ownership

2.2 Owned by the local or central government and/or by housing non-profit associations

2.3 In other types of ownership

This classification is basic for occupied conventional dwellings (i.e. category 1.0 of para 243) at the one-digit level but optional at the two-digit level.

16. *Comments:*

The classification of the type of ownership consists of owner-occupied dwellings and other dwellings. In the classification 'other dwellings', different kinds of dwellings such as rented dwellings (privately and publicly owned) and dwellings owned by cooperatives, among others, are included.

17. *Proposals:*

In order to describe the status of dwellings better, type of ownership should be reorganized to clarify the classification. The new classification could be as follows:

1.0 Owner-occupied dwellings (old category 1.0)

2.0 Rented dwellings

2.1 In private ownership (old category 2.1)

2.2 Owned by the local or central government and/or by housing non-profit associations and/or by other social landlords (old category 2.2)

3.0 Dwellings in cooperative ownership (mainly old category 2.3)

4.0 Dwellings in other types of ownership (rest of old category 2.3)

In this way the classification of type of ownership will also clarify the use of dwellings (tenure status), as well as the type of ownership structure.

2.4 Number of occupants (core topic 21) (page 60)

18. 247. The number of occupants of a housing unit or of living quarters other than housing units is the number of people who usually reside in that housing unit or in those living quarters, including persons who may be temporarily absent at the census but excluding people temporarily present at the census who usually live elsewhere (see paragraphs 30 to 39 above relating to "place of usual residence").

19. *Comments:*

When the main rule is occupied conventional permanent dwellings, the number of occupants would refer to the occupants living in those dwellings.

2.5 Number of rooms (core topic 22) (page 60)

20. 248. A room is defined as a space in a housing unit or in living quarters other than housing units enclosed by walls reaching from the floor to the ceiling or roof covering, or at least to a height of 2 metres above the ground, of a size large enough to hold a bed for an adult (4 square metres at least) and at least 2 metres high over the major area of the ceiling. Thus, normal bedrooms, dining rooms, living rooms, habitable cellars and attics, servants' rooms, kitchens and other separate spaces used or intended for habitation all count as rooms. A kitchenette (i.e. a kitchen of less than 4 square metres or 2 metres wide), corridors, verandahs, utility rooms (e.g. boiler rooms, laundry rooms) and lobbies do not count as rooms; nor do bathrooms and toilets (even if they are more than 4 square metres).

2.6 Kitchen (core topic 23) (page 61)

21. 253. It is recommended that where dwellings are classified by number of rooms they should also be classified by availability of a kitchen. A kitchen is defined as a room (or part of a room) of at least 4 square metres or two metres wide that has been designed and equipped for the preparation of the principal meals and is used for that purpose, irrespective of whether it is also used for eating, sleeping or living.

22. *Comments:*

A room is defined as a space if it is more than 4 square metres and at least 2 metres high. It does not need to have a window in it. The room size varies between countries and some countries count a space as a room only if it has a window.

Kitchen is counted as a room in the definition. However, despite the definition some countries in their statistics do not count kitchen with the number of rooms in a dwelling or they count it as a room when it is over a certain size which is larger than for other rooms.

23. *Proposals:*

It should be evaluated whether the room size of 4 square metres and the room height of 2 metres are sufficient enough. The room size could be raised up to, for example, 6 square metres. The question about a window in a room should also be evaluated.

There has to be a consistent way to report the number of rooms to keep the international statistics comparable to each other. Kitchen should be included with the number of rooms in the same way as all other spaces that fit the definition of room.

If kitchen has not been included with the number of rooms in previous reports, the old way of reporting can still be done in tandem with the new recommendation.

The reporting of the statistics should primarily concern occupied conventional permanent dwellings because that information is needed when defining, for example, living standard. The information reported should at least include the average number of rooms in occupied conventional permanent dwellings.

2.7 Useful and/or living floor space (non-core topic 39) (page 61)

24. 251. Some countries may wish to collect information on the useful floor space and/or on the living floor space of dwellings (and possibly other housing units). The definitions of these topics used for census purposes should preferably be the same as those recommended in the Programme of Current Housing and Building Statistics for Countries in the UN/ECE Region (Statistical Standards and Studies No. 43). Useful floor space is defined in that document as the floor space measured inside the outer walls excluding non-habitable cellars and attics and, in multi-dwelling houses, all common spaces; living floor space is defined as the total floor space of rooms falling under the concept of "room" as defined in paragraph 248 above.

25. *Comments:*

The useful floor space is the floor space of a dwelling that includes all spaces of the dwelling, including bathrooms and so on, while the living floor space is the space measuring only the space of the rooms that fall under the definition of room when counting the number of rooms. The useful floor space excludes all common spaces, such as, corridors in multi-dwelling houses.

Nowadays the definitions used in measuring the floor area vary between countries.

26. *Proposals:*

The question as to whether useful floor space should be a core topic should be raised, and this should primarily concern occupied conventional permanent dwellings. The useful floor space is more important category to report than the living floor space, because living floor space excludes spaces in a dwellings such as bathrooms, toilets, walk-in closets and so on.

The useful floor space should include only the space delimited by the insides of the walls which enclose each dwelling, excluding non-habitable cellars,attics and stairways.

2.8 Water supply system (core topic 24) (page 62)

27. 257. Information on water supply system should be collected where appropriate for all housing units and other living quarters, though in some countries it may be derived from other topics (e.g. from the availability of toilet facilities or of bathing facilities). The following classification of housing units by type of water supply system is recommended:

1.0 Piped water in the housing unit

1.0.1 From a community scheme

1.0.2 From a private source

2.0 No piped water in the housing unit

2.1 Piped water available within the building but outside the housing unit

2.1.1 From a community scheme

2.1.2 From a private source

2.2 Piped water available outside the building

2.2.1 From a community scheme

2.2.2 From a private source

2.3 No piped water available

This classification is basic at the one-digit level but optional at the two and three-digit levels. A community scheme is one which is subject to inspection and control by public authorities. Such schemes are generally operated by a public body but in some cases they are operated by a co-operative or a private enterprise.

28. ***Proposals:***

The water supply system should be reported first hand by using at least occupied conventional permanent dwellings.

2.9 Toilet facilities (core topic 25) (page 63)

29. 259. Information on toilet facilities should be collected for all housing units and other living quarters. The following classification of housing units by type of toilet facilities is recommended:

1.0 Flush toilet in the housing unit

2.0 No flush toilet in the housing unit

2.1 Flush toilet available within the building but outside the housing unit

2.1.1 Private (i.e. for the exclusive use of the occupants of the housing unit)

2.1.2 Shared (i.e. shared with occupants of another housing unit or other units)

2.2 Flush toilet available outside the building

2.2.1 Private

2.2.2 Shared

2.3 No flush toilet available

This classification is basic at the one-digit level but optional at the two and three-digit levels.

30. **Proposals:**

Toilet facilities should be reported first hand by using at least occupied conventional permanent dwellings.

2.10 Bathing facilities (core topic 26) (page 64)

31. 262. It is recommended that the following classification of housing units by the availability of bathing facilities be used:

1.0 Fixed bath or shower in the housing unit

2.0 No fixed bath or shower in the housing unit

2.1 Fixed bath or shower available within the building but outside the housing unit

2.1.1 Private

2.1.2 Shared

2.2 Fixed bath or shower available outside the building

2.2.1 private

2.2.2 shared

2.3 No fixed bath or shower available

This classification is basic at the one-digit level but optional at the two and three-digit levels. A fixed bath or shower is one which has fixed connections to both a water supply and a waste pipe leading outside the building.

32. **Proposals:**

Bathing facilities should be reported first hand by using at least occupied conventional permanent dwellings.

2.11 Type of heating (core topic 27) (page 64)

33. 263. The following classification of housing units by type of heating is recommended:

1.0 Central heating

1.1 From an installation built in the building or in the housing unit

1.2 From a community heating centre

2.0 No central heating

2.1 Stove

2.2 Fireplace

2.3 Other

3.0 No heating at all

34. This classification is basic at the one-digit level but optional at the two-digit level. A housing unit is 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 housing unit, established for heating purposes, without regard to the source of energy. Some countries may wish to include additional sub-categories in this classification so as to obtain information which can be used for energy planning (see also non-core topic 43).

35. **Proposals:**

Type of heating should be reported first hand by using at least occupied conventional permanent dwellings.

3. CHARACTERISTICS OF BUILDINGS CONTAINING DWELLINGS (page 66)

3.1 Type of building (core topic 28) (page 66)

36. 272. Conventional dwellings should be classified by the type of building in which they are located as follows:

1.0 Dwellings in residential buildings

1.1 In one -dwelling houses

1.1.1 Dwellings in ground-oriented houses

1.1.2 Dwellings in other houses

1.2 In two-dwelling houses

1.2.1 Dwellings in ground-oriented houses

1.2.2 Dwellings in other houses

1.3 In three-or-more dwelling houses

1.3.1 Dwellings in ground-oriented houses

1.3.2 Dwellings in other houses

2.0 Dwellings in non-residential buildings and in buildings consisting mainly of living quarters other than housing units (e.g. hotels)

2.0.1 Dwellings in non-residential buildings

2.0.2 Dwellings in buildings consisting mainly of living quarters other than housing units

This classification is basic at the two-digit level and optional at the three-digit level.

273. It would also be useful to extend the basic classification optionally in other ways, such as:
 (a) by distinguishing detached, semi-detached and row houses; or
 (b) by distinguishing dwellings in farm buildings from those in non-farm buildings.

37. **Comments:**

The classification of the type of building is in principle logical. However, for example, the large class of apartment buildings is hidden under category 1.3.2 in the classification.

The classification also has categories like 1.1.2 which probably does not describe any type of dwelling. For example, if a dwelling is located in a school building, it should then be classified as a dwelling in a non-residential building (category 2.0).

The term ground-oriented is also logical as such, but it is probably not the best possible description, or the most widely used or well-understood term. Different kinds of optional classifications are suggested in point 273, yet even here the notion of apartment building is not mentioned.

38. **Proposals:**

It would be better to reorganize the classification under point 272 as follows:

- 1.0 Detached houses (old category 1.1.1)
- 2.0 Semi-detached houses (old category 1.2.1)
- 3.0 Row houses (terraced houses) (old category 1.3.1)
- 4.0 Apartment buildings (blocks of flats) (old category 1.3.2)
- 5.0 Dwellings in other buildings

In this way the original classification of point 272 would only be renamed and the class of apartment buildings would also be well noted.

It might also be worthwhile to subcategorise apartment buildings by the number of floors.

If necessary, the classification can be done in such a way that ground-oriented houses form a common category. Then the classification would be the following:

- 1.0 Ground-oriented houses (categories 1.1.1, 1.2.1 and 1.3.1)
- 2.0 Apartment buildings (blocks of flats) (1.3.2)
- 3.0 Dwellings in other buildings.

3.2 Period of construction (core topic 29) (page 68)

39. 276. The following classification of dwellings by the period in which the construction of the building containing them was completed is recommended:

- 1.0 Before 1919
- 2.0 1919 - 1945
- 3.0 1946-1960

4.0 1961-1970

5.0 1971-1980

6.0 1981 - 1990

7.0 1991-1995

7.1 1991

7.2 1992

7.3 1993

7.4 1994

7.5 1995

8.0 1996 and later

8.1 1996

8.2 1997

8.3 1998

8.4 1999

8.5 2000 and later.

This classification is basic at the one-digit level, and optional at the two-digit level.

40. ***Proposals:***

The classification of the period of construction is probably more precise than really needed.

41. ***Recommendations:***

The classification of the period of construction should have fewer categories. A better categorization could follow the one used in the ECE's Questionnaire for Housing Statistics (QUEST/HOUSING/7/03-04/Rev.1):

1.0 Before 1919

2.0 1919-1945

3.0 1946-1970

4.0 1971-1980

5.0 1981-1990

6.0 1991-2000

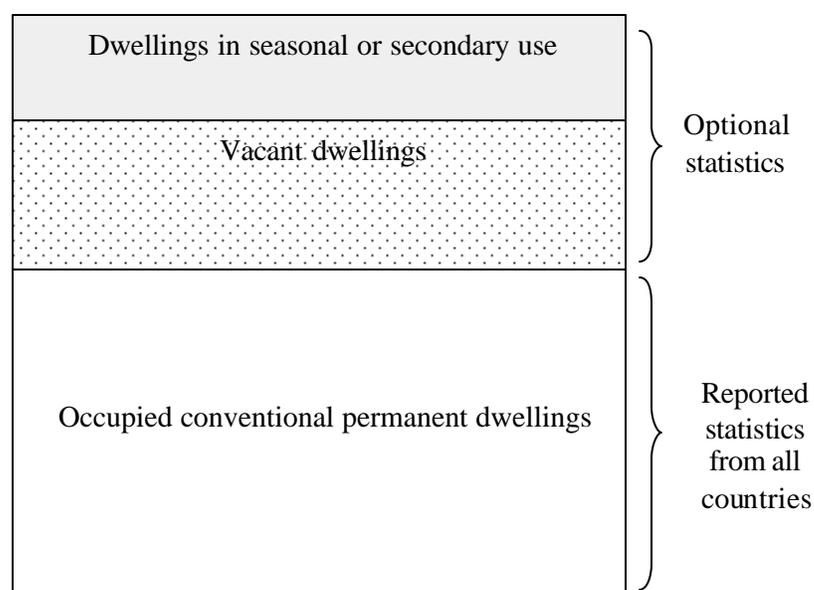
7.0 2001 and later

8.0 Unknown.

The main idea of the proposals presented above is to make the core topics used in housing statistics in different countries comparable to each other. The best way to do this at the present time is to report statistics with priority on occupied conventional permanent dwellings. They are already a part of the term dwelling stock, but unfortunately the definition of this term varies between countries.

Since occupied conventional permanent dwellings are already included in the term dwelling stock, there should be no difficulties in reporting these statistics. At the same time, the comparability to the old data collected in previous censuses could also be maintained without problems. Additional or extra information concerning other concepts included in the term dwelling stock could also be reported if wanted.

Figure 1.1. Composition of dwelling stock (conventional dwelling) and the new way of reporting statistics.



Finally, one has to recognise that population and housing censuses include only part of the whole of housing statistics.

This raises a question on the method of collecting housing information, which is considered in the methodology part of the RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE 2000 CENSUSES OF POPULATION AND HOUSING IN THE ECE REGION (page 2). The trend in collecting data is moving from traditional questionnaires to registers (e.g. for the use of administration) or even to sample surveys (e.g. consumption surveys). This trend is one of the main reasons to stress the priority of collecting information based on occupied conventional permanent dwellings.

Thus, the essential task is to create an overall system to gather information in which differently collected data form an appropriate entity and in which sufficient data to accomplish needed sample surveys exist.

APPENDIX:**Table 1. Types of accommodation included in dwelling stock (source: Housing Statistics in the European Union 2003, p. 36)**

+ = yes - = no	Summer homes	Second homes	Collective homes	Hotels	Caravans	Ships	Vacant dwellings	Non- permanent habitation
Belgique/België	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	+
Danmark	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-
Deutschland	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ellas	+	+	-	-	-	-	+	-
España	+	+	-	-	-	-	+	+
France	+	+	-	-	+	+	+	-
Ireland	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	+
Italia	+	+	-	-	-	-	+	-
Luxembourg	-	-	+	+	+	+	-	-
Nederland	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-
Österreich								
<i>Census</i>								
<i>1981/1991/2001</i>	+	+	-	-	-	-	+	-
<i>Micro census</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Portugal	+	+	-	-	-	-	+	+
Suomi/Finland	-	+	-	-	-	-	+	+
Sverige	-	-	+	-	-	-	+	-
United Kingdom	+	+	-	-	-	-	+	-
