

Housing Starts

AUGUST 1998



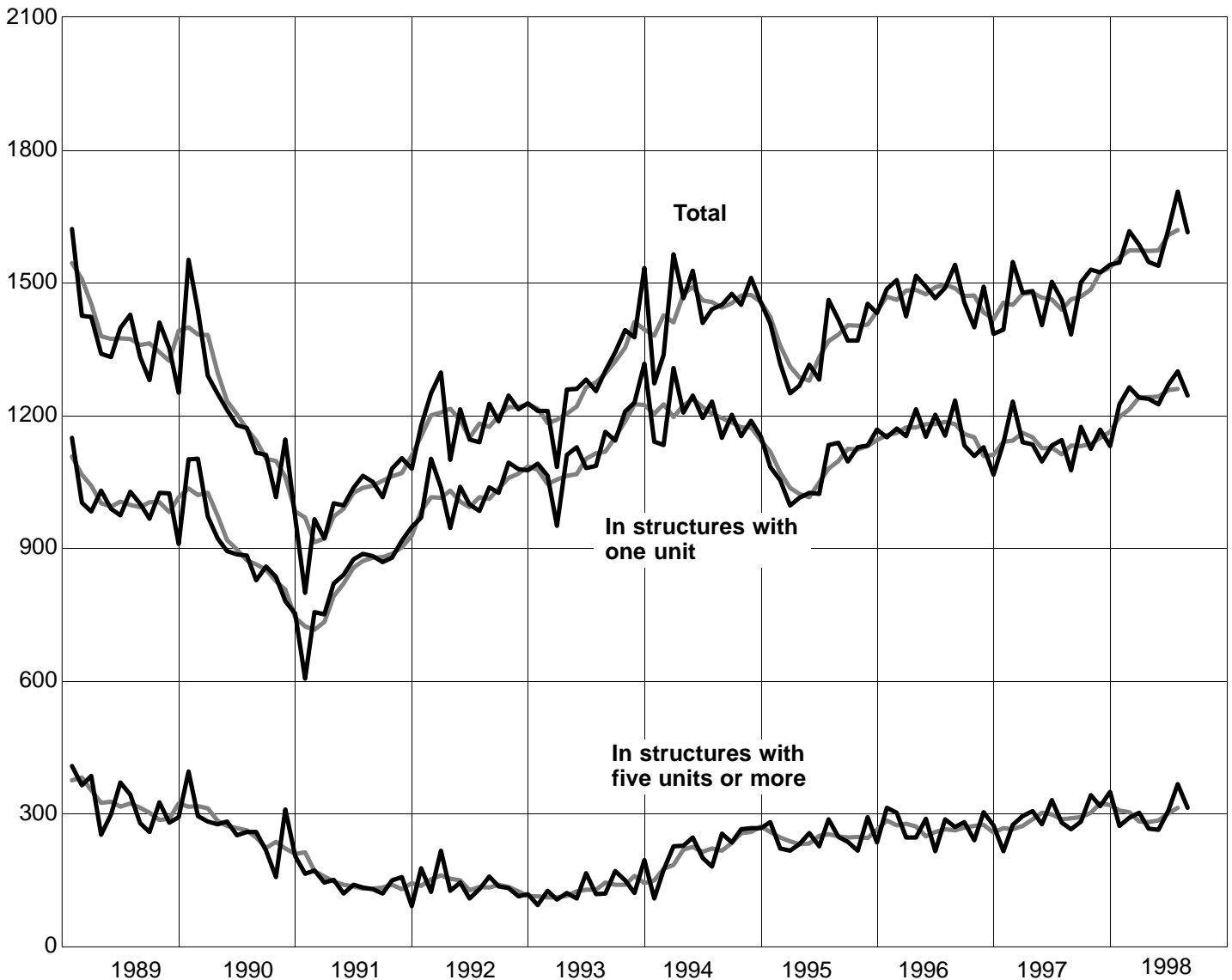
U.S. Department of Commerce
 Economics and Statistics Administration
 BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

C20/98-8
 Issued October 1998

New Privately Owned Housing Units Started

Seasonally adjusted annual rate in thousands

— Seasonally adjusted annual rate
 — 4-month moving average



Note: Total includes units started in structures with two to four units.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Housing Starts.

HOUSING STARTS AND BUILDING PERMITS

Privately owned housing starts in August 1998 were at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 1,613,000; this is 5 (± 6) percent below the revised July rate of 1,706,000, but 17 (± 6) percent above the August 1997 rate of 1,383,000.

Single-family housing starts in August 1998 were at a rate of 1,245,000. This is 4 (± 5) percent below the July figure of 1,299,000. The August rate for units in buildings with five units or more was 313,000. The August rate for units in buildings with two to four units was 55,000.

During the first 8 months of this year, 1,074,800 housing units were started compared with 977,300 units for the same period in 1997. This is a increase of 10 (± 2) percent.

New privately owned housing construction was authorized in August in the 19,000 permit-issuing places at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 1,616,000; this is 2 (± 1) percent above the revised July rate of 1,581,000 and 11 (± 1) percent above the August 1997 figure of 1,445,000.

Single-family authorizations in August 1998 were at a rate of 1,173,000. This is unchanged (± 1 percent) from the July figure. Authorizations of units in buildings with five units or more were at a rate of 370,000 in August. This is 11 percent above the July figure of 334,000. The August rate of permit-authorized units in buildings with two to four units was 73,000.

During the first 8 months of this year, 1,065,200 housing units were authorized by permits in the 19,000 places compared with 964,500 units for the same period in 1997. This is an increase of 10 (± 1) percent.

In interpreting changes in housing starts and building permits, note that month-to-month changes in seasonally adjusted statistics often show movements which may be irregular. It may take 4 months to establish an underlying trend for total starts, 3 months for building permit authorizations, and 2 months for mobile home shipments.

Except for those in mobile home shipments, the statistics in this report are estimated from sample surveys and are subject to sampling variability as well as nonsampling error including bias and variance from response, nonreporting, and undercoverage. Estimated average relative standard errors of preliminary data are shown in the tables. Whenever a statement such as "2 (± 3) percent above" appears in the text, this indicates the range (-1 to +5 percent) in which the actual percent change is likely to have occurred. All ranges given are 90-percent confidence intervals and account for only sampling variability. If a range contains zero, it is uncertain whether there was an increase or decrease; that is, the change is not statistically significant. For any comparison cited without a confidence interval, the change is statistically significant. Explanations of confidence intervals and sampling variability appear in the appendix to the April 1998 Current Construction Reports, C20/98-4. On average, the preliminary seasonally adjusted estimates of total housing starts and building permits are revised about ± 1 percent.

Housing starts and building permits data do not include mobile home units. Mobile home statistics are shown in Table 5.

HISTORICAL DATA

Historical data on housing starts and residential permit authorizations are available from Residential Construction Branch, Manufacturing and Construction Division, Bureau of the Census, Washington, DC 20233-6900. Telephone 301-457-4703.

A list of tables and special supplements is shown below:

Title	C20 issues				
New privately owned housing units started, by purpose of construction (quarterly and annual data).....	98-7	98-4	98-1	97-10	97-7
Total time from start of construction to completion of private residential buildings (annual data)	98-3	97-3	96-3	95-3	94-3
Total time from authorization of construction to start for private residential buildings (annual data)	98-3	97-3	96-3	95-3	94-3
New privately owned housing units, by intended use and design at time of start (annual data)	98-2	97-2	96-2	95-2	94-2
New mobile homes (quarterly and annual data)	98-6	98-5	98-3	97-12	97-9

Table 6. Seasonal Indexes Used to Adjust Housing Units Started

Period	United States implicit index ¹	In structures with—						All units			
		1 unit				2 to 4 units	5 units or more	North-east	Midwest	South	West
		North-east	Midwest	South	West						
1998											
May	111.8	113.0	120.4	110.4	107.3	107.2	111.1	111.2	119.5	109.8	109.8
June	118.2	123.0	135.1	113.9	124.4	126.5	102.6	123.0	128.7	110.8	119.5
July	109.5	123.6	122.3	103.4	110.6	105.9	104.6	119.2	116.8	104.4	106.7
August ^P	109.0	114.7	116.1	106.1	106.0	102.4	110.5	111.0	120.1	104.2	108.8

^PPreliminary. ^RRevised.

¹The implicit seasonal index is the ratio of the unadjusted number of housing units started in the United States to the seasonally adjusted national total of housing units started. It provides an indication of the overall seasonality for the particular month.

Note: These seasonal indexes include trading-day adjustment factors.

Table 7. Seasonal Indexes Used to Adjust Housing Units Authorized in Permit-Issuing Places

Period	United States implicit index ¹	In structures with—						All units			
		1 unit				2 to 4 units	5 units or more	North-east	Midwest	South	West
		North-east	Midwest	South	West						
1998											
May	106.8	117.8	121.5	105.6	106.9	103.1	96.0	114.1	115.6	104.0	101.0
June	120.0	127.7	130.1	117.5	123.4	121.6	110.6	127.9	122.6	114.1	124.5
July	111.3	119.8	119.4	107.9	112.5	105.3	108.8	116.5	115.2	108.8	113.6
August ^P	105.3	107.8	109.5	102.1	104.8	102.9	107.7	108.1	111.5	99.8	103.1

^PPreliminary. ^RRevised.

¹The implicit seasonal index is the ratio of the unadjusted number of housing units authorized by building permits in the United States to the seasonally adjusted national total of housing units authorized. It provides an indication of the overall seasonality for the particular month.

Note: These seasonal indexes include trading-day adjustment factors.

Table 8. Seasonal Indexes Used to Adjust New Mobile Home Placements, Dealers' Inventories, and Manufacturers' Shipments

Period	New mobile homes placed for residential use					New mobile homes on dealer lots at end of period					Mobile home shipments
	United States implicit index ¹	North-east	Midwest	South	West	United States implicit index ¹	North-east	Midwest	South	West	
1998											
March	106.6	76.0	76.0	116.6	103.9	101.4	101.4	102.1	100.6	103.9	101.9
April	100.4	89.3	89.3	103.7	99.6	101.6	107.6	105.8	100.1	106.2	107.8
May	109.0	108.4	108.4	109.8	104.7	100.8	106.3	107.5	98.9	102.7	100.6
June ^P	117.0	121.8	121.8	116.5	114.2	100.2	104.6	104.9	98.9	101.9	110.3
July	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	97.5

NA Not available. ^PPreliminary (does not apply to shipments).

¹The implicit seasonal index is the ratio of the unadjusted United States estimate to the seasonally adjusted United States estimate. It provides an indication of the overall seasonality for the particular month.

Note: These seasonal indexes include trading-day adjustment factors.