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Explanatory note:

The residential building statistics refer to private-sector financed housing, largely excluding government-subsidised low-cost housing, for which information was reported by local government institutions.

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Residential building statistics

19 July 2018

Residential building activity showed diverging trends in the planning and construction phases in the first five months of 2018

Diverging trends were evident in building activity with regard to new private sector-financed housing (see explanatory note) in South Africa in the first five months of 2018. Levels of activity in the planning phase (building plans approved by local government institutions) improved on a year-on-year basis over this period, whereas activity in the construction phase (housing units reported as completed) contracted compared with the same period last year.

Building plans approved for new housing increased by 16,1% year-on-year (y/y), or 3 464 plans, to 25 005 plans in January to May this year, with this growth driven by the segments for houses smaller than 80m² and flats and townhouses, which showed combined growth of 21,5% y/y in the 5-month period.

New housing units reported as being completed contracted by 23,3% y/y, or 3 946 units, to a total of 13 003 units in the first five months of the year. The segments of houses smaller than 80m² and flats and townhouses were the main contributors to the decline in new housing units built in January to May, showing a sharp combined contraction of 30,4% y/y over this period.

The average building cost of new housing completed increased by 5,4% y/y to R7 396 per square meter in the first five months of 2018, compared with R7 018 per square meter a year ago. Residential building costs were up by a 1,1% y/y in real terms, i.e. after adjustment for the effect of inflation, in the 5-month period, based on an average headline consumer price inflation rate of 4,3% y/y over this period. The average building cost per square meter in the three categories of new housing was as follows in January to May 2018:

- Houses of <80m²: R5 611, up by 19,3% y/y.
- Houses of ≥80m²: R7 347, up by 3,8% y/y.
- Flats and townhouses: R8 027, down by 0,9% y/y.

Building activity with regard to alterations and additions to existing houses showed continued strain, with both the building area approved and the building area reported as completed contracting on a year-on-year basis in January to May. The building cost of completed alterations and additions to existing houses increased by 15,6% y/y to R7 193 per square meter in the 5-month period up to May compared with R6 225 per square meter a year ago, with these building costs rising by a real 10,8% y/y.

At a geographical level, the provinces of Gauteng and the Western Cape continued to dominate residential building activity in January to May this year, with a combined share of 71,3% of the national total of 25 005 plans approved and 77,1% of the national total of 13 003 units built in the 5-month period. The metropolitan municipalities of Cape Town, Johannesburg, Tshwane and Ekurhuleni had a combined share of 80,5% of a total of 33 275 new private sector-financed housing units built in the country's major urban areas in 2017. In terms of completed additions and alterations to existing houses in 2017, the City of Cape Town had a share of 55,7% of the total number of 13 319 of such building operations in the major urban areas across the country.

In view of trends in and prospects for the economy, household finances, consumer confidence and property market sentiment in general, residential building activity is expected to remain under pressure in the rest of the year.

Residential building activity¹

1994 - 2018 year-to-date

Segment	Building plans approved		Buildings completed	
	Units	% of total	Units	% of total
Houses of <80m ²	749 972	42.5	592 822	45.7
Houses of ≥80m ²	524 594	29.7	350 481	27.0
Flats and townhouses	489 168	27.7	353 763	27.3
Total	1 763 734	100.0	1 297 066	100.0

¹Private-sector financed

Source: Stats SA

Residential building activity: January - May¹

Segment	Building plans approved						Buildings completed					
	Units 2017	Units 2018		m ² 2017	Building area 2018		Units 2017	Units 2018		m ² 2017	Building area 2018	
		Number	y/y % Δ		m ²	y/y % Δ		Number	y/y % Δ		m ²	y/y % Δ
Houses of <80m ²	7 040	8 922	26.7	337 278	410 701	21.8	6 465	3 788	-41.4	307 916	188 796	-38.7
Houses of ≥80m ²	5 842	5 924	1.4	1 587 627	1 569 342	-1.2	3 866	3 892	0.7	1 066 277	1 009 132	-5.4
Flats and townhouses	8 659	10 159	17.3	984 181	989 867	0.6	6 618	5 323	-19.6	621 453	593 094	-4.6
Total	21 541	25 005	16.1	2 909 086	2 969 910	2.1	16 949	13 003	-23.3	1 995 646	1 791 022	-10.3

¹Private-sector financed

Source: Stats SA

Residential building activity by province¹

Building plans approved

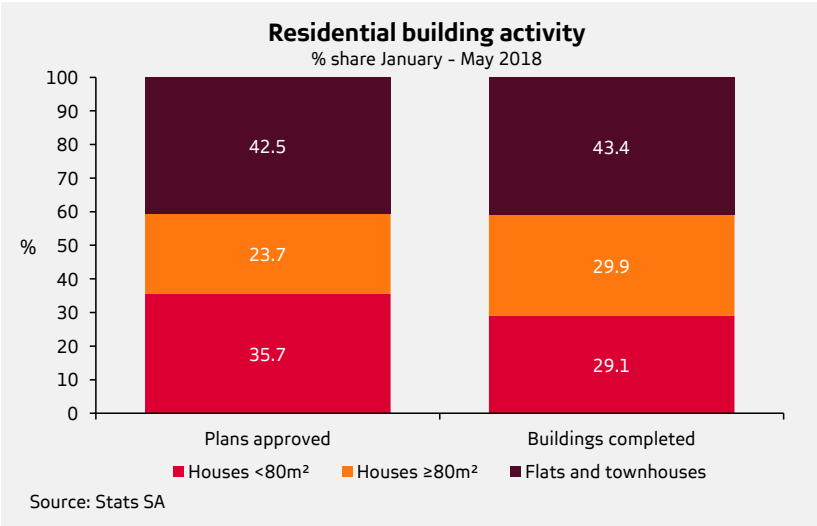
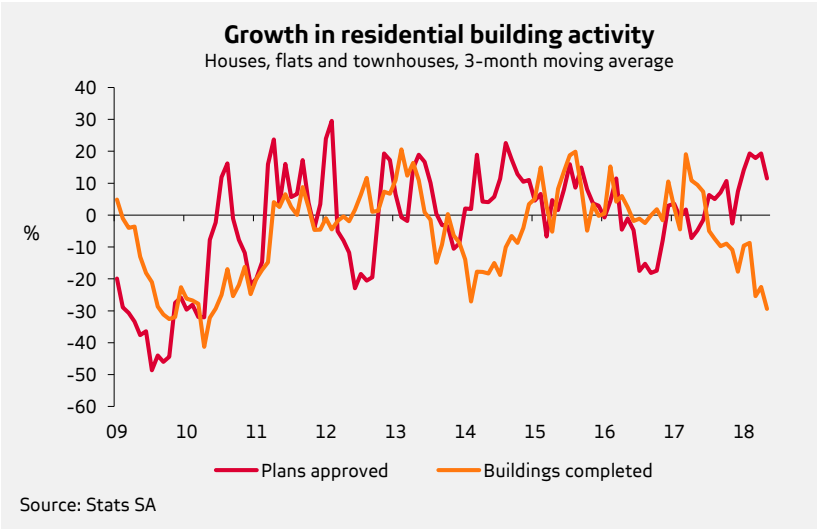
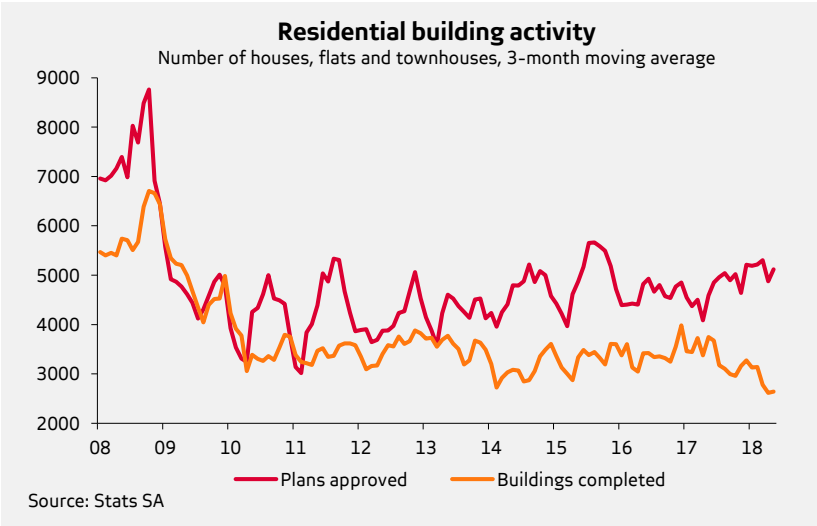
Segment	Period	Variable	WC	EC	NC	FS	KZN	NW	GAU	MPU	LIM	SA
Total new houses, flats and townhouses	Jan-May 17	Number	8 149	1 585	80	683	1 633	1 664	6 293	965	489	21 541
	January -	Number	10 851	2 467	95	592	1 376	1 636	6 976	576	436	25 005
	May	y/y % Δ	33.2	55.6	18.8	-13.3	-15.7	-1.7	10.9	-40.3	-10.8	16.1
	2018	% of SA	43.4	9.9	0.4	2.4	5.5	6.5	27.9	2.3	1.7	100.0
Alterations and additions to existing houses	Jan-May 17	m ²	315 012	109 658	13 967	58 634	158 353	50 057	362 268	46 584	24 756	1 139 289
	January -	m ²	334 307	107 319	15 563	56 277	132 329	51 563	336 775	63 085	18 946	1 116 164
	May	y/y % Δ	6.1	-2.1	11.4	-4.0	-16.4	3.0	-7.0	35.4	-23.5	-2.0
	2018	% of SA	30.0	9.6	1.4	5.0	11.9	4.6	30.2	5.7	1.7	100.0

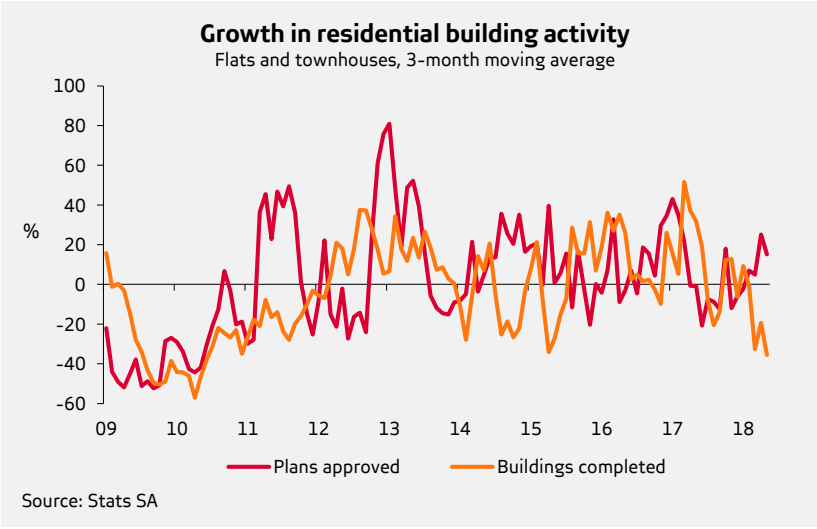
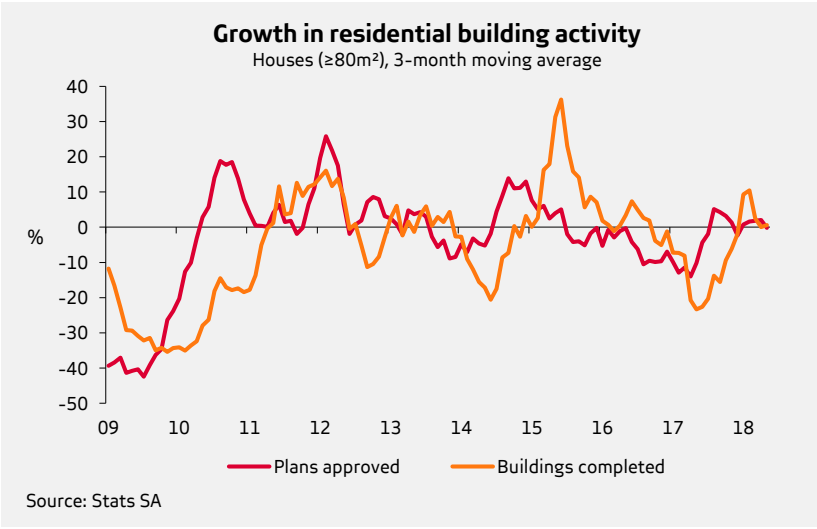
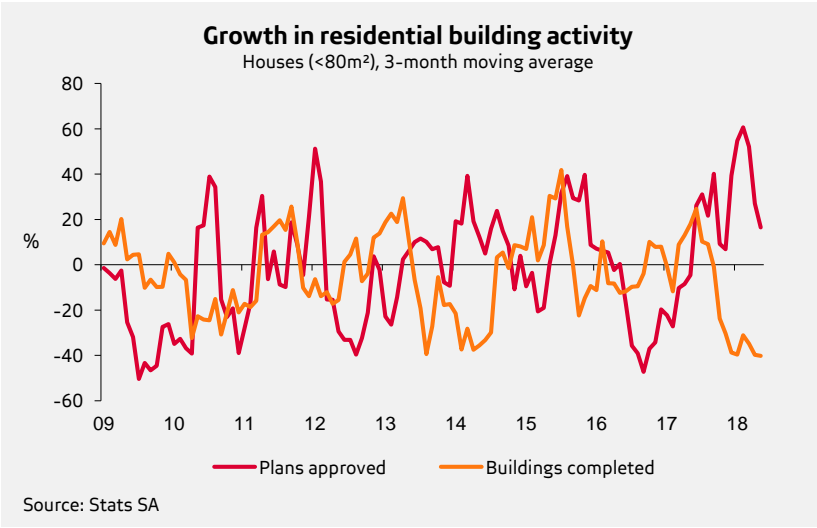
Buildings completed

Segment	Period	Variable	WC	EC	NC	FS	KZN	NW	GAU	MPU	LIM	SA
Total new houses, flats and townhouses	Jan-May 17	Number	5 196	437	40	516	1 031	599	7 947	648	535	16 949
	January -	Number	5 147	318	22	416	630	930	4 881	454	205	13 003
	May	y/y % Δ	-0.9	-27.2	-45.0	-19.4	-38.9	55.3	-38.6	-29.9	-61.7	-23.3
	2018	% of SA	39.6	2.4	0.2	3.2	4.8	7.2	37.5	3.5	1.6	100.0
Alterations and additions to existing houses	Jan-May 17	m ²	219 038	38 114	6 221	7 875	49 103	23 808	89 012	16 644	1 595	451 410
	January -	m ²	166 366	29 441	13 040	10 406	75 811	42 203	95 523	14 165	2 586	449 541
	May	y/y % Δ	-24.0	-22.8	109.6	32.1	54.4	77.3	7.3	-14.9	62.1	-0.4
	2018	% of SA	37.0	6.5	2.9	2.3	16.9	9.4	21.2	3.2	0.6	100.0

¹Private-sector financed

Source: Stats SA





Residential building activity by province and major provincial urban area: 2015–2017

Residential building activity by province: Buildings completed ¹																
Province	Year	Houses <80m ²			Houses ≥80m ²			Flats			Townhouses			Total		
		Units	m ²	R million	Units	m ²	R million	Units	m ²	R million	Units	m ²	R million	Units	m ²	R million
Western Cape (WC)	2015	5 201	239 134	1 027.8	3 391	812 878	4 941.6	2 493	216 172	1 622.3	592	105 333	680.5	11 677	1 373 517	8 272.2
	2016	4 679	208 163	1 019.0	3 499	810 936	5 089.1	3 537	295 423	2 321.4	768	131 517	925.2	12 483	1 446 039	9 354.7
	2017	5 074	234 573	1 310.0	3 896	901 021	5 980.7	2 611	260 212	2 057.0	1 195	211 143	1 554.0	12 776	1 606 949	10 901.8
Eastern Cape (EC)	2015	854	40 447	130.4	595	119 235	593.6	45	2 149	9.0	102	13 909	74.6	1 596	175 740	807.6
	2016	1 213	55 159	237.4	697	135 595	751.5	176	13 813	82.5	197	21 392	115.0	2 283	225 959	1 186.4
	2017	406	20 901	100.4	581	119 313	707.6	28	2 008	12.7	55	6 370	36.9	1 070	148 592	857.6
Northern Cape (NC)	2015	38	2 111	11.8	179	27 703	157.9	12	861	3.9	42	2 940	16.2	271	33 615	189.7
	2016	5	336	1.9	92	17 709	121.9	0	0	0.0	5	761	5.0	102	18 806	128.8
	2017	2	120	0.8	55	12 929	91.2	0	0	0.0	17	1 928	13.4	74	14 977	105.4
Free State (FS)	2015	2 016	111 621	261.7	288	51 060	243.0	86	5 547	31.7	180	29 143	144.8	2 570	197 371	681.1
	2016	347	19 627	71.5	316	61 255	329.4	281	11 258	75.9	1 099	68 537	387.5	2 043	160 677	864.3
	2017	228	12 993	50.9	194	40 809	254.6	386	14 068	99.9	198	25 439	171.7	1 006	93 309	577.1
KwaZulu-Natal (KZN)	2015	238	14 005	124.5	812	220 437	1 757.7	501	85 327	849.6	498	92 650	651.0	2 049	412 419	3 382.8
	2016	225	13 025	108.7	770	214 403	1 781.5	445	57 721	595.0	317	74 769	617.3	1 757	359 918	3 102.5
	2017	129	7 251	67.6	828	254 122	2 410.1	643	74 101	835.1	729	119 979	1 062.7	2 329	455 453	4 375.5
North West (NW)	2015	71	4 535	18.7	785	170 308	801.0	1 117	80 152	392.9	13	1 353	7.7	1 986	256 348	1 220.2
	2016	441	26 890	101.6	1 110	189 874	896.7	535	33 068	178.4	100	15 374	72.0	2 186	265 206	1 248.8
	2017	352	20 465	92.8	770	150 685	793.2	155	11 744	62.6	261	30 141	160.7	1 538	213 035	1 109.3
Gauteng (GAU)	2015	6 321	315 399	1 234.3	4 920	1 482 103	10 399.4	2 239	158 286	1 376.3	2 960	334 851	2 396.3	16 440	2 290 639	15 406.3
	2016	7 490	371 109	1 566.6	4 601	1 368 550	10 285.2	2 022	143 361	1 408.6	3 811	468 750	3 558.6	17 924	2 351 770	16 818.9
	2017	6 736	337 758	1 519.5	3 752	1 224 364	9 467.8	3 254	229 163	2 327.3	3 952	500 934	3 903.6	17 694	2 292 219	17 218.2
Mpumalanga (MPU)	2015	1 072	52 702	196.9	957	213 599	970.1	188	10 018	45.4	160	10 290	46.3	2 377	286 609	1 258.8
	2016	1 008	50 251	191.2	872	197 935	899.4	115	7 151	35.0	61	4 926	21.8	2 056	260 263	1 147.4
	2017	593	29 454	130.5	487	104 588	566.3	351	29 269	161.6	58	5 352	24.9	1 489	168 663	883.4
Limpopo (LIM)	2015	201	11 381	55.4	234	60 958	295.3	26	1 765	7.9	239	24 669	121.9	700	98 773	480.6
	2016	154	9 463	46.9	277	70 258	340.6	1	127	0.6	261	26 584	133.7	693	106 432	521.7
	2017	644	30 198	87.1	239	63 204	323.6	0	0	0.0	155	18 021	89.3	1 038	111 423	500.0
South Africa (SA)	2015	16 012	791 335	3 061.4	12 161	3 158 281	20 159.5	6 707	560 277	4 339.1	4 786	615 138	4 139.4	39 666	5 125 031	31 699.4
	2016	15 562	754 023	3 344.8	12 234	3 066 515	20 495.2	7 112	561 922	4 697.4	6 619	812 610	5 836.1	41 527	5 195 070	34 373.5
	2017	14 164	693 713	3 359.5	10 802	2 871 035	20 595.1	7 428	620 565	5 556.2	6 620	919 307	7 017.4	39 014	5 104 620	36 528.2

¹Private-sector financed

Source: Stats SA

Residential building activity by major provincial urban area in 2017: Buildings completed ¹																
Municipality	Province	Houses <80m ²			Houses ≥80m ²			Flats			Townhouses			Total		
		Units	m ²	R million	Units	m ²	R million	Units	m ²	R million	Units	m ²	R million	Units	m ²	R million
Cape Town	WC	4 920	227 250	1 274.6	2 589	569 733	3 846.8	2 516	252 476	2 008.9	791	120 001	901.6	10 816	1 169 460	8 031.9
Buffalo City	EC	122	8 210	48.1	149	29 016	164.7	28	2 008	12.7	25	2 225	12.8	324	41 459	238.2
Mandela Bay	EC	237	10 091	38.4	231	46 640	259.7	0	0	0.0	28	2 941	23.3	496	59 672	321.5
//Khara Hais	NC	1	44	0.3	24	5 594	37.7	0	0	0.0	15	1 333	8.7	40	6 971	46.7
Sol Plaatjie	NC	0	0	0.0	25	6 124	47.7	0	0	0.0	2	595	4.8	27	6 719	52.5
Mangaung	FS	83	4 841	30.4	96	20 002	138.1	386	14 068	99.9	147	19 700	139.2	712	58 611	407.6
Ethekwini	KZN	94	5 275	57.4	354	111 933	1 291.7	529	61 779	726.4	573	87 672	826.1	1 550	266 659	2 901.6
Tlokwe	NW	43	2 531	13.5	192	35 055	202.9	46	3 838	23.2	84	6 000	39.7	365	47 424	279.3
Rustenburg	NW	275	15 714	69.1	330	43 050	206.8	74	5 806	29.0	156	20 665	103.3	835	85 235	408.2
Johannesburg	GAU	1 646	84 097	374.6	594	233 896	1 782.6	0	0	0.0	348	105 783	766.0	2 588	423 776	2 923.3
Tshwane	GAU	1 423	77 183	303.2	1 653	540 813	4 875.0	2 319	173 120	1 960.0	1 993	216 729	1 972.5	7 388	1 007 845	9 110.7
Ekurhuleni	GAU	2 669	129 121	650.8	1 034	306 241	2 085.9	868	51 055	339.7	1 416	149 301	1 019.7	5 987	635 718	4 096.1
Emalahleni	MPU	140	8 001	37.6	153	26 413	123.7	154	17 970	83.0	16	1 742	8.0	463	54 126	252.3
Govan Mbeki	MPU	140	7 174	32.5	42	6 564	37.8	0	0	0.0	0	0	0.0	182	13 738	70.3
Mbombela	MPU	18	1 048	7.3	135	42 840	269.8	189	10 895	76.8	0	0	0.0	342	54 783	353.9
Steve Tshwete	MPU	129	5 733	20.3	128	24 713	115.8	0	0	0.0	0	0	0.0	257	30 446	136.2
Polokwane	LIM	141	8 507	44.2	156	41 550	231.3	0	0	0.0	79	11 463	58.9	376	61 520	334.4
Modimolle	LIM	501	21 540	42.2	24	6 469	35.9	0	0	0.0	2	413	3.2	527	28 422	81.3
Total		12 582	616 360	3 044.6	7 909	2 096 646	15 754.0	7 109	593 015	5 359.7	5 675	746 563	5 887.7	33 275	4 052 584	30 046.0
Total (% of SA)		88.8	88.8	90.6	73.2	73.0	76.5	95.7	95.6	96.5	85.7	81.2	83.9	85.3	79.4	82.3

¹Private-sector financed

Source: Stats SA

**Residential additions and alterations
completed by province¹**

Province	Year	Additions & alterations to existing houses		
		Number	m ²	R million
Western Cape (WC)	2015	7 357	472 421	2 290.1
	2016	8 198	543 063	2 798.7
	2017	8 864	573 759	3 327.8
Eastern Cape (EC)	2015	1 070	76 428	326.8
	2016	1 024	61 679	304.4
	2017	1 559	91 389	495.6
Northern Cape (NC)	2015	344	26 375	152.2
	2016	497	38 762	279.9
	2017	268	18 437	138.4
Free State (FS)	2015	473	32 331	148.8
	2016	507	33 872	157.5
	2017	610	38 008	193.2
KwaZulu-Natal (KZN)	2015	1 857	147 678	1 317.9
	2016	1 855	137 488	1 242.9
	2017	1 521	127 750	1 317.0
North West (NW)	2015	1 193	86 462	356.4
	2016	1 091	69 030	297.2
	2017	451	32 827	156.1
Gauteng (GAU)	2015	2 182	207 521	1 384.6
	2016	2 502	258 151	1 817.2
	2017	2 743	258 531	1 915.1
Mpumalanga (MPU)	2015	1 231	107 460	457.4
	2016	989	77 191	325.5
	2017	368	28 465	137.5
Limpopo (LIM)	2015	46	4 075	18.5
	2016	69	6 081	29.3
	2017	42	3 979	19.9
South Africa (SA)	2015	15 753	1 160 751	6 452.7
	2016	16 732	1 225 317	7 252.7
	2017	16 426	1 173 145	7 700.6

¹Private-sector financed

Source: Stats SA

**Residential additions and alterations completed
by major provincial urban area in 2017¹**

Municipality	Province	Additions and alterations to existing houses		
		Number	m ²	R million
Cape Town	WC	7 424	493 261	2 809.3
Buffalo City	EC	161	12 607	67.9
Mandela Bay	EC	1 202	66 305	353.4
//Khara Hais	NC	127	8 344	56.4
Sol Plaatjie	NC	138	10 034	78.9
Mangaung	FS	87	6 634	44.4
Ethekwini	KZN	1 192	100 795	1 166.6
Tlokwe	NW	266	18 745	92.6
Rustenburg	NW	12	1 161	5.3
Johannesburg	GAU	834	84 916	600.6
Tshwane	GAU	886	79 209	715.9
Ekurhuleni	GAU	626	55 509	379.0
Emalahleni	MPU	95	6 895	32.0
Govan Mbeki	MPU	32	3 098	17.3
Mbombela	MPU	40	5 344	31.8
Steve Tshwete	MPU	171	11 479	48.7
Polokwane	LIM	26	2 426	12.6
Total		13 319	966 762	6 512
Total (% of SA)		81.1	82.4	84.6

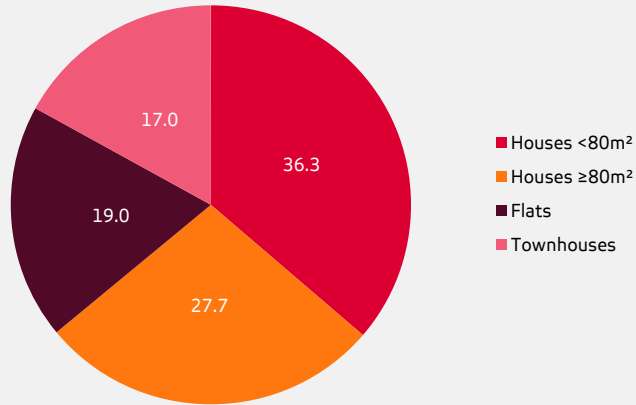
¹Private-sector financed

Source: Stats SA

Residential buildings completed: National

% share of total number of 39 014 units in 2017

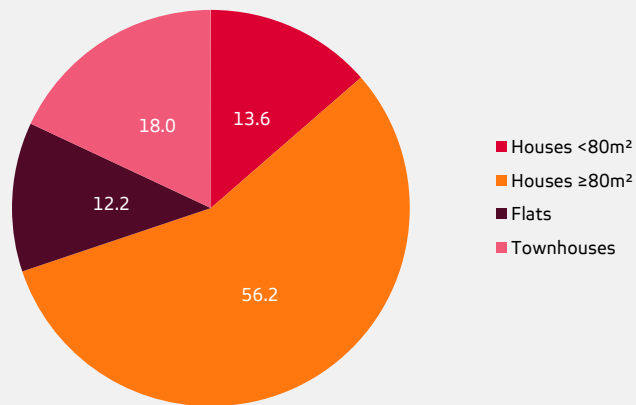
Source: Stats SA



Residential buildings completed: National

% share of total building area of 5.1 million square metres in 2017

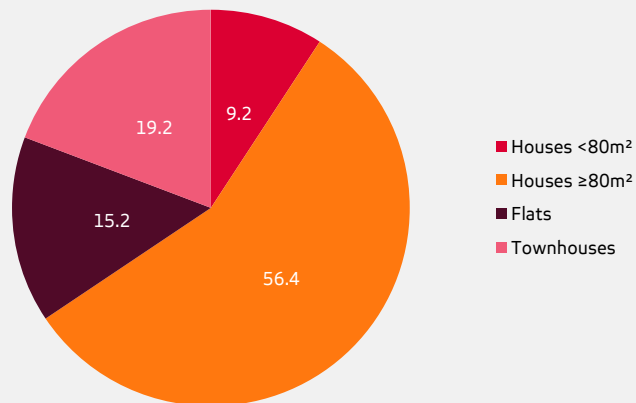
Source: Stats SA



Residential buildings completed: National

% share of total value of R36.5 billion in 2017

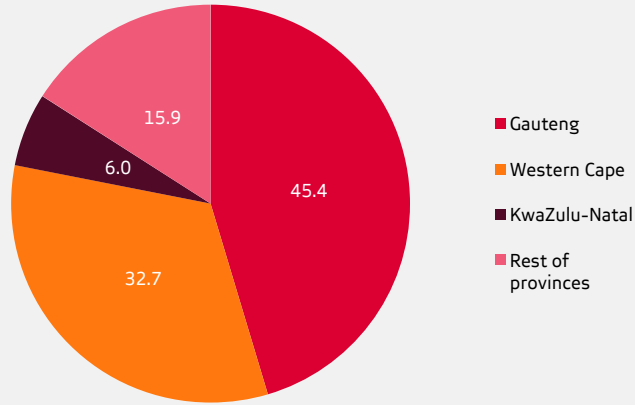
Source: Stats SA



Residential buildings completed: Provinces

% share of national number of 39 014 units in 2017

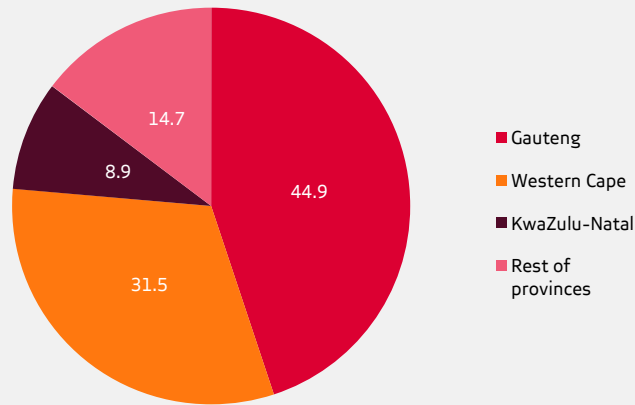
Source: Stats SA



Residential buildings completed: Provinces

% share of national building area of 5.1 million square metres in 2017

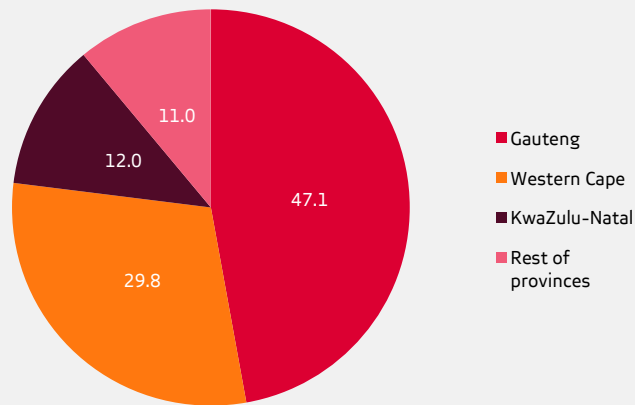
Source: Stats SA



Residential buildings completed: Provinces

% share of national value of R36.5 billion in 2017

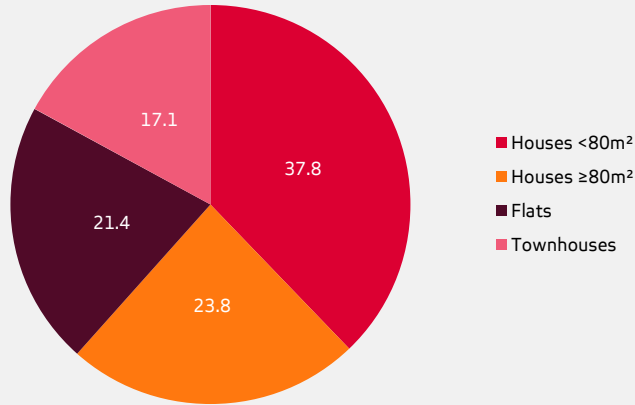
Source: Stats SA



Residential buildings completed: Major urban areas

% share of total number of 33 275 units in 2017

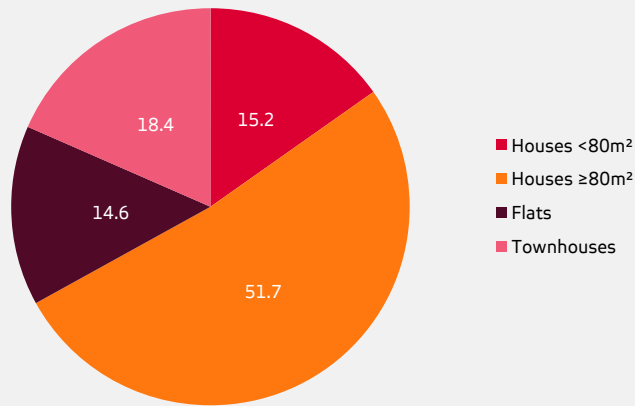
Source: Stats SA



Residential buildings completed: Major urban areas

% share of total building area of 4.1 million square metres in 2017

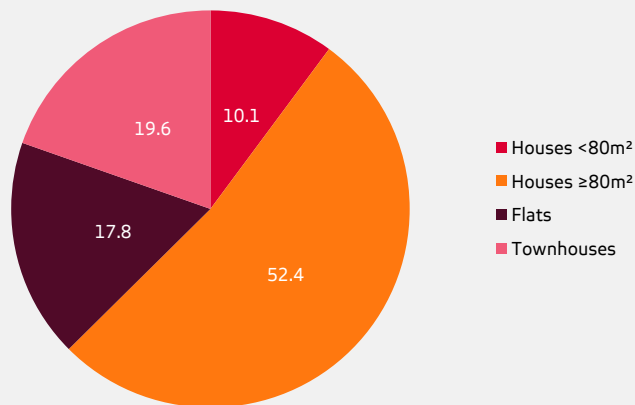
Source: Stats SA



Residential buildings completed: Major urban areas

% share of total value of R30.0 billion in 2017

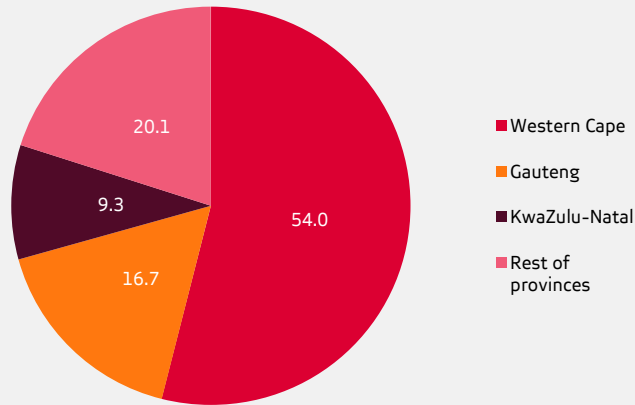
Source: Stats SA



Alterations to existing houses completed: Provinces

% share of national number of 16 426 houses in 2017

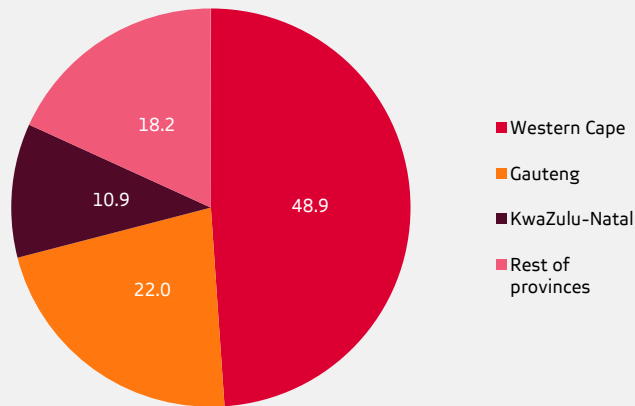
Source: Stats SA



Alterations to existing houses completed: Provinces

% share of national building area of 1.2 million square metres in 2017

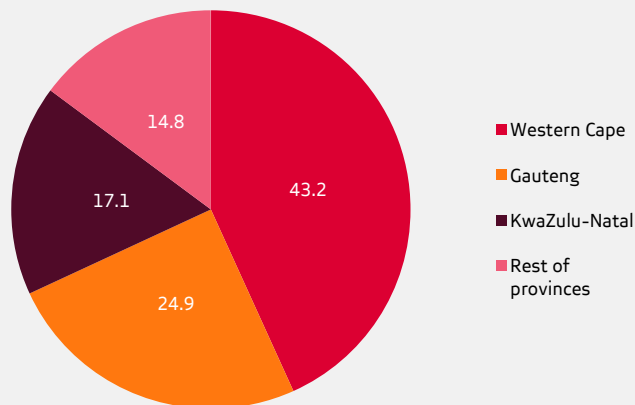
Source: Stats SA



Alterations to existing houses completed: Provinces

% share of national value of R7.7 billion in 2017

Source: Stats SA



Major provincial municipalities and urban areas

Province	Major municipalities	Main cities and towns within municipal boundary
Western Cape (WC)	Cape Town	Bellville, Blue Downs, Brackenfell, Cape Town City Centre, Durbanville, Eersterivier, Fish Hoek, Goodwood, Gordon's Bay, Gugulethu, Khayelitsha, Kraaifontein, Kuilsrivier, Langa, Mfuleni, Milnerton, Mitchells Plain, Nyanga, Parow, Plumstead, Simon's Town, Somerset West, Strand
Eastern Cape (EC)	Buffalo City	Beacon Bay, Bisho, East London, Gonubie, King William's Town, Mdantsane, Zwelitsha
	Nelson Mandela Bay	Despatch, Port Elizabeth, Uitenhage
Northern Cape (NC)	//Khara Hais	Dagbreek, Gelukspruit, Karos, Louisvale, Sprigg, Upington
	Sol Plaatje	Kenilworth, Kimberley, Modderivier, Ritchie, Riverton, Spytfontein
Free State (FS)	Mangaung	Bloemfontein, Botshabelo, Thaba Nchu
KwaZulu-Natal (KZN)	Ethekwini	Amanzimtoti, Botha's Hill, Cato Ridge, Clermont, Drummond, Durban, Hillcrest, Inchanga, Kingsburgh, Kloof, KwaDabeka, KwaMakhutha, KwaMashu, Mount Edgecombe, Mpumalanga, New Germany, Pinetown, Queensburgh, Tongaat, Umdloti, Umhlanga, Umlazi, Verulam, Westville
North West (NW)	Tlokwe	Potchefstroom
	Rustenburg	Marikana, Rustenburg
Gauteng (GAU)	Johannesburg	Alexandra, Eikenhof, Eldorado Park, Ennerdale, Fourways, Florida, Grasmere, Halfway House, Honeydew, Johannesburg, Kyalami, Lawley Estate, Lenasia, Midrand, Modderfontein, Randburg, Randjiesfontein, Rivonia, Roodepoort, Sandton, Soweto, Van Wyksrust
	Tshwane	Akasia, Atteridgeville, Babelegi, Bon Accord, Centurion, Diloppe, Doornrandjies, Erasmia, Ga-Mokone, Ga-Rankuwa, Garsfontein, Hammanskraal, Irene, Klippan, Mabopane, Mamelodi, Onderstepoort, Pinedene, Pretoria, Pretoria North, Soshanguve, Temba, Tswaiing, Valhalla, Winterveld, Bronkhorstspuit, Ekangala, Tierpoort, Welbekend
	Ekurhuleni	Alberton, Bedfordview, Benoni, Boksburg, Brakpan, Daveyton, Duduza, Edenvale, Germiston, Katlehong, Kempton Park, KwaThema, Nigel, Springs, Tembisa, Thokoza, Tsakane, Vosloorus
Mpumalanga (MPU)	Emalaheni	KwaGuqa, Witbank
	Govan Mbeki	Bethal, Evander, Leandra, Secunda
	Mbombela	Hazyview, KaNyamazane, Nelspruit, White River
	Steve Tshwete	Hendrina, Mhluzi, Middelburg
Limpopo (LIM)	Polokwane	Polokwane, Seshego
	Modimolle	Haakdong, Mabaleng, Modimolle, Palala

Source: Stats SA