

KEY FIGURES September 10, 2026

What Does Israel Publish on Palestinian Building Permits?

Israel's published West Bank record is an enforcement count: 13,481 Palestinian-sector cases, 1997 to 2013. Permit counts exist only for Jerusalem.

LAND AND PLANNING Building Permits Area C State Comptroller Civil Administration East Jerusalem



13,481 illegal-construction cases in the Palestinian sector were recorded for 1997 to 2013 by the State Comptroller of Israel in

its 2016 audit of the Civil Administration's supervision unit, a count the unit made of its own enforcement activity. What Israel publishes for Area C is an enforcement record rather than a permit record: that audit carries no figure for permit applications submitted, approved or refused. The only Israeli figures that separate Palestinian from Jewish permit applications are municipal, and they cover Jerusalem for 2010 to 2014.

Figure	What it counts	Period
13,481	Illegal-construction cases identified in the Palestinian sector, the supervision unit's own count	1997 to 2013
6,605	Illegal-construction cases identified in the Israeli sector, the unit's own count	1997 to 2013
3,813, 28% of the 13,481	Palestinian-sector cases the unit demolished	1997 to 2013
1,807, 27% of the 6,605	Israeli-sector cases the unit demolished	1997 to 2013
1,609 applications, 965 permits	Building permit applications and permits in the east of Jerusalem	2010 to 2014
9,143 applications, 6,003 permits	Building permit applications and permits in the west of Jerusalem	2010 to 2014
About 20,845 dunams, about 0.6% of Area C	Land included in Palestinian master plans, some still in approval	June 2014

Source: State Comptroller of Israel, 2016, in the Judea and Samaria audit and the Jerusalem local planning committee audit. The two sets are separate audits with separate universes.

13,481 Palestinian illegal-construction cases in Area C, 1997 to 2013

The State Comptroller of Israel published the Central Supervision Unit's own enforcement counts for the area: 13,481 cases identified in the Palestinian sector and 6,605 in the Israeli sector across 1997 to 2013. "Identified" means the unit located the case, so each figure measures the unit's own detection over that window and not how much was built. The unit had 57 employees on a 2014 budget of about NIS 17.5 million, on the same audit.

- The counts are the unit's own count of its own activity, relayed by the State Comptroller.
- The unit was established in 1983 under Order 947, which created the Civil Administration.
- The audit covers January to December 2014, with completion checks to December 2015.

Oslo II leaves planning and zoning in Area C with Israel

The Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement of 28 September 1995, in the text published by Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, splits the powers by area. Article XI(2) provides that all civil powers and responsibilities, including planning and zoning, in Areas A and B transfer to the Council, while in Area C "Israel will transfer to the Council civil powers and responsibilities not relating to territory." Article XI(3) defines Area C residually, as the West Bank outside Areas A and B, and Article XVII(2)(d) gives the Council functional jurisdiction in Area C as detailed in Annex III.

- Article XI(3): Areas A and B are the populated areas delineated on map No. 1; Area C is what remains.
- Article XVII(4)(a): Israel, through its military government, has authority over areas not under the Council's territorial jurisdiction.
- The Agreement prints no percentage for the size of any of the three areas.

The only published permit counts are Jerusalem's, none for Area C

The State Comptroller of Israel published application and permit counts for Jerusalem's local planning and building committee, split between the Arab neighbourhoods of the east of the city and the Jewish neighbourhoods of the west, for 2010 to 2014. The full record on those figures, including the replies the Municipality and the District Planner gave the auditors in May 2016, sits in the record on [building permits in East Jerusalem](#). No comparable Israeli publication used here carries application or permit figures for Area C.

Measure	East of the city	West of the city	Total
Applications, 2010 to 2014	1,609, about 15%	9,143, about 85%	10,752
Permits granted, 2010 to 2014	965, about 14%	6,003, about 86%	6,968
Approved housing units	About 20% of the city total	Remainder	Not published as a count

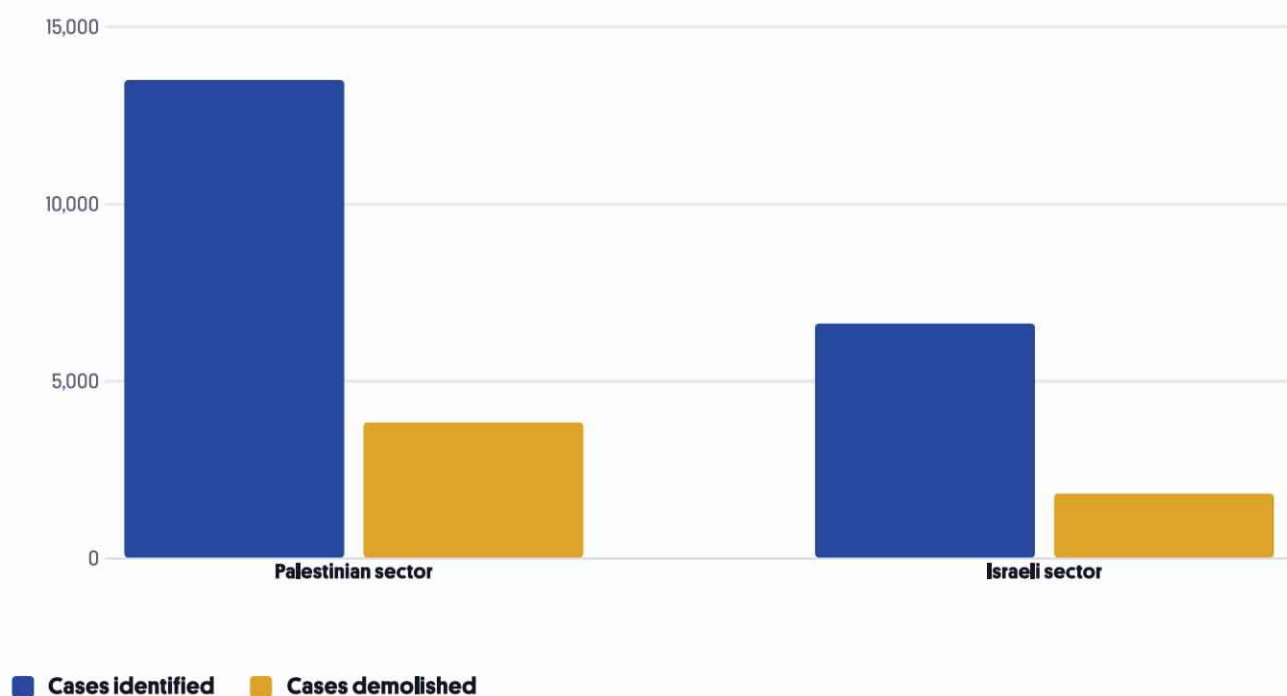
Source: State Comptroller of Israel, 2016, the Local Committee for Planning and Building, Jerusalem Municipality. Applications, permits and housing units are three different universes.

3,813 of 13,481 Palestinian cases ended in demolition, 28%

Of the 13,481 Palestinian-sector cases, the supervision unit demolished 3,813, which the State Comptroller of Israel writes as 28%; of the 6,605 Israeli-sector cases it demolished 1,807, written as 27%. Each share is of that sector's own identifications by the unit, and the two bases differ by more than double. The same audit records that about 0.6% of Area C, about 20,845 dunams, was included in Palestinian master plans, some still in approval, with about 20,000 structures standing in those areas on the Civil Administration's own June 2014 estimate.

Cases identified and cases demolished

CENTRAL SUPERVISION UNIT ENFORCEMENT, 1997 TO 2013



Source: State Comptroller of Israel, 2016. The unit's own count of its own enforcement activity. The two shares, 28% and 27%, are each of that sector's own identifications and rest on different denominators.

No Israeli body publishes Area C permit applications or approvals

Neither the 2016 Judea and Samaria audit nor the 2021 audit of staff officers in the Civil Administration, both published by the State Comptroller of Israel, carries a count of building permit applications submitted, approved or refused in Area C. The 2021 audit sets out the state of the land record on which such applications rest.

- Real estate in Judea and Samaria is registered using hard-copy registers, with no computerised system, on the State Comptroller's 2021 finding.
- Computerisation of those registers had run about 4 years and was not completed at the audit.
- 60% of scanned real-estate transaction files were scanned without the certification of the transfer of rights, which is the basis for registration.
- 314 employees worked in the Civil Administration in 2019, 202 of them Israeli civil servants and 112 Palestinian employees.

Which figures here may not be added together?

The 13,481 and 6,605 are cases the supervision unit identified, which is a measure of its own detection and a floor on

construction, not a count of structures built. The 28% and 27% are cumulative across 1997 to 2013 and each belongs to its own sector's denominator, so they are not per-case completion rates. Jerusalem applications, Jerusalem permits and approved housing units are three separate universes and none may be restated as another. Dividing 20,845 dunams by 0.6% does not yield a published area for Area C, because the share is printed as an approximation.

Questions readers ask

Does Israel publish a permit approval rate for Area C?

No such figure appears in the two audits used here. The State Comptroller of Israel published enforcement counts for the area and no application or approval counts.

Who issues building permits in Area C?

Under the 1995 Interim Agreement published by Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, planning and zoning powers pass to the Council in Areas A and B, while in Area C Israel transfers only powers not relating to territory.

How many Palestinian illegal-construction cases did Israel record?

The State Comptroller of Israel recorded 13,481 cases identified in the Palestinian sector between 1997 and 2013, the supervision unit's own count of its own enforcement.

How many of those cases ended in demolition?

The State Comptroller of Israel published 3,813 demolitions out of the 13,481 Palestinian-sector cases, 28% of that sector's own identifications.

What is the equivalent figure for the Israeli sector?

The same audit recorded 1,807 demolitions out of 6,605 Israeli-sector cases, 27% of that sector's own identifications, on a base less than half the size.

How much of Area C sits inside a Palestinian master plan?

The State Comptroller of Israel reported about 0.6% of Area C, about 20,845 dunams, included in Palestinian master plans in 2016, some of them still in approval.

How many structures stand in those planned areas?

About 20,000, on the Civil Administration's own June 2014 estimate as relayed by the State Comptroller of Israel.

Which Israeli permit figures separate Palestinian and Jewish applicants?

The State Comptroller of Israel published Jerusalem figures for 2010 to 2014: 1,609 applications and 965 permits in the east of the city, against 9,143 applications and 6,003 permits in the west.

Is the West Bank land register computerised?

The State Comptroller of Israel found in 2021 that real estate in Judea and Samaria is registered in hard-copy registers with no computerised system.

How long has computerisation been under way?

The State Comptroller of Israel recorded about 4 years spent on computerising the land registers, not completed at the time of that audit.

How large is the Civil Administration?

The State Comptroller of Israel counted 314 employees in 2019, 202 Israeli civil servants and 112 Palestinian employees, alongside 25 staff officers representing government ministries.

Does the 1995 Agreement state how big Area C is?

No. The text published by Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs defines Areas A and B by lines on map No. 1 and defines Area C as what remains, and prints no share for any of them.

Sources

- Israel and the PLO, 1995. The Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Articles XI, XVII and Annex I. Text published by the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, gov.il. Official or primary record.
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of Land Registration. Annual Report 66b.

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- State Comptroller of Israel, 2021. Staff Officers in the Civil Administration in the Judea and Samaria Region. Annual Report 70C, English abstract. library.mevaker.gov.il. Official or primary record.

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Which Law Applies in the West Bank, and to Whom?

Every figure on this page names the body that published it and the period it covers. Where a figure is a party's own count of its own activity, the page says so and states the standard that produced it. See Sources and method.

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