



Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government

Changes to Energy Performance of Buildings Certificates, Quarterly Statistics

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) has previously informed users of potential changes to the Energy Performance of Buildings Certificates (EPBC) quarterly statistics. This note provides more information.

The EPBC release is classified as Experimental Statistics. Experimental Official Statistics are defined in the Code of Practice for Statistics as “new official statistics undergoing evaluation”. They are published in order to involve users and stakeholders in their development and as a means to build in quality at an early stage.

The statistics are based on Energy Performance Certificates issued for domestic buildings. The certificates are lodged on the Energy Performance of Buildings (EPB) Register for England and Wales.

On 20 September 2020, the Energy Performance Buildings Certificates register moved to www.gov.uk and is now run by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). Prior to this, the register was managed on the Ministry’s behalf by Landmark. The migration of data between the old and new service took longer than expected and Statistical Releases for quarter 3 and quarter 4 2020 were delayed. To account for this, the current release provides data tables for both quarters, but focuses primarily on quarter 4 comparisons. For more information, please refer the [new register website](#).

Benefits of moving to a new register

The new register service provides a cloud-based register and delivers an improved user experience by applying Government Digital Service (GDS) standards and best practice. Its development has taken a user-centred approach and there is now one service for residential and non-residential which provides improved usability and clearer links from GOV.UK.

The process to ‘find an assessor’ has been simplified and to encourage citizens to improve the energy efficiency of their property the new, digital EPC is easier to access and simpler to understand. The most commonly used data, such as the description of the property, is presented upfront. The Energy Efficiency Rating and cost-saving data has been given more prominence along with details on non-financial benefits such as comfort and health.

For Energy Assessors and accreditation schemes it provides an improved lodgement method, access to more reporting and quicker and cheaper updates.

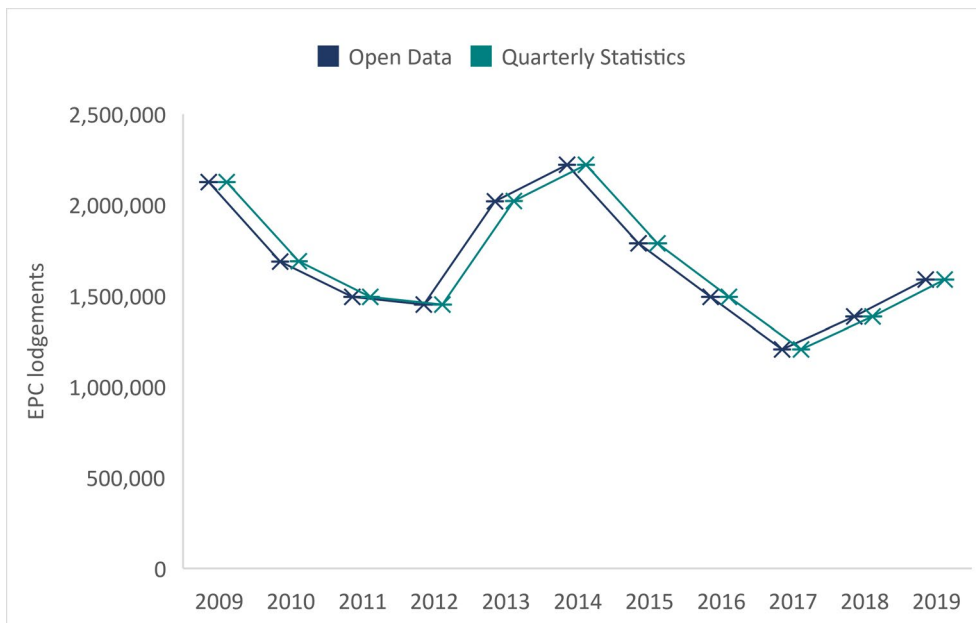
How this impacts the statistics

While MHCLG is now in a position to publish statistics on EPCs issues for domestic buildings, the publication of non-domestic EPCs and Display Energy Certificates (DECs) for public buildings will be delayed until the next scheduled release on 29th April 2021. Moreover, the geocoding of regional and local authority level data will be delayed until the same date.

As proposed in previous releases, this statistical series is now aligned with the data published on [Open Data Communities](#). This will impact the statistics in the following ways:

- The time series for all live tables will now start from Quarter 4 2008 rather than Quarter 1 2008. There were a number of inconsistencies in the early lodged data which led to implausibly high CO₂ emission rates and heating costs. Removing these data will ensure the statistics are based on more reliable data and the comparisons made are more robust.
- The full time series from 2008 to 2020 has been updated with data from the Open Data Communities. Comparisons of the statistical series to the Open Data Communities data showed that the volume of EPC lodgements in the Open Data series was consistently lower than the quarterly statistics, but for the domestic data, still within the set threshold of 5% difference. These differences can be explained by:
 - Opt outs – Building owners and occupiers, where an EPC has been created, have the right to have the EPC data marked as non-disclosable by postcode search and not published in Open Data. However, because the data was aggregated for the quarterly statistical release, opt-outs were included and increased the overall lodgement numbers. The number of opt-outs when compared to the total number of lodgements is relatively small and will not have a significant impact on lodgement numbers.

Figure 1: EPC lodgements for domestic dwellings, comparison between quarterly statistics and open data, 2009 to 2019



Percentage differences ranged from 0.01% and 0.02%, suggesting that the data in both series are broadly similar over time.

What this means for users

Data may look lower from Quarter 3 2020 onwards due to the alignment with the open data and the removal of opted-out EPCs. Users should take this into account when making comparisons across time. This alignment of the two MHCLG publications on Energy Performance Certificates will make it easier for users to cross compare datasets and interpret trends.

As MHCLG works on developing the EPB Register, energy performance of buildings certificates statistics will continue to be published as Experimental statistics for approximately 12 months. The precise timescale will depend on data quality and how quickly systems can be automated. We would welcome any feedback to improve the statistics during this experimental phase EPBStats@communities.gov.uk