

# Net earnings in the European Union – 1998

Ana NOBRE

## Statistics in focus

### POPULATION AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS

THEME 3 – 7/2000

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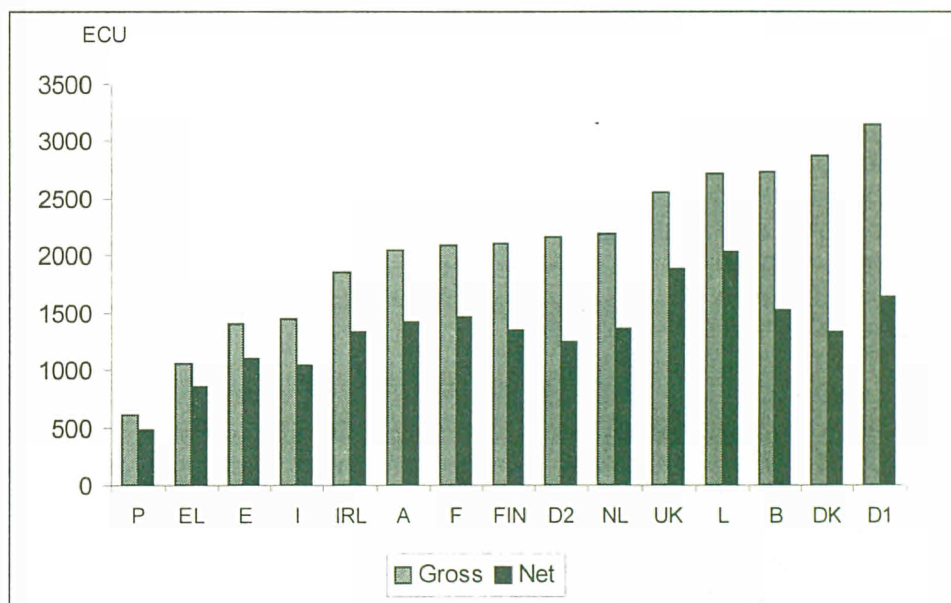
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### Differences in earnings between EU countries tend to be reduced after deductions of taxes and social security contributions

Net earnings represent that part of remuneration that employees can actually spend. Compared with gross earnings, net earnings do not include either social security contributions or taxes but include family allowances. The net earnings depend on the family situation. The statistics on net earnings presented here consider four family types: a single employee with an average salary, a couple without children with two average salaries, a couple with two children with two average salaries and a couple with two children and one average salary.



NL: 1994, I: 1995

Figure 1: Monthly gross and net earnings of a single employee in manufacturing industry, 1998

In 1998, the average gross monthly earnings of a single employee in manufacturing industry ranged from 3156 ECU in Germany (old Länder) to 603 ECU in Portugal, that is a ratio of 5 to 1. In terms of net earnings, i.e. after deduction of taxes and social security contributions, this ratio is 3 to 1: 1645 ECU for Germany and 486 ECU for Portugal. In terms of PPS, the ratio is only 2 to 1 (see page 5).

Figures for the Federal Republic of Germany as it existed until 3<sup>rd</sup> October 1990 (pre-unification) and the new Länder of Germany (including East Berlin) are presented separately as D1 (old Länder) and D2 (new Länder).



**In 1998, net earnings represented 47% to 81% of the gross earnings in the EU for a single worker with an average salary**



NL: 1994, I: 1995

Figure 2: Net earnings as proportion of gross earnings, in manufacturing industry 1998

Salary deductions (total taxes and social security contributions) vary between the EU countries. In 1998, the lowest deductions were in Greece and Portugal for a single employee in manufacturing industry. There, the net earnings represented 81% of the gross earnings, while in Denmark and Germany (old Länder) they represented 47% and 52% respectively.

In the case of a couple with two children and two average salaries, Luxembourg was the country where this type of family has the lowest deductions, followed by Greece and Ireland. A couple with two salaries without children has the highest net earnings compared with the gross earning in Greece (84.3%) and in Ireland (80.2%). In Denmark the same family pays more than 50% in taxes and social security contributions

The smallest gap between gross and net earnings is for a one-income couple with children. In Luxembourg in this type of family the gross and net earnings are similar, because the social security contributions paid by employees are compensated by family allowances. A similar situation exists in Greece and Portugal where the net earnings represented 96% of the gross earnings in 1998.

Portugal and Italy are the only countries where net earnings expressed as a percentage of gross earnings are higher for a single employee than for a two-income couple with two children.

The highest share of taxes and social security contributions are in those countries with the highest gross earnings. As a consequence, net earnings differ less between countries than gross earnings.

Net earnings in families with children and one salary were increased significantly by family allowances in Greece (more than 15%) and in Austria (12%), Portugal (11%) and Luxembourg (10%).

In Italy and Ireland however, a one-income couple with two children would set net earnings rise by only 2% and 4% respectively, as a result of allowances.

Only in Greece can couples without children benefit from family allowances, which are equivalent to 5% of the gross earnings.

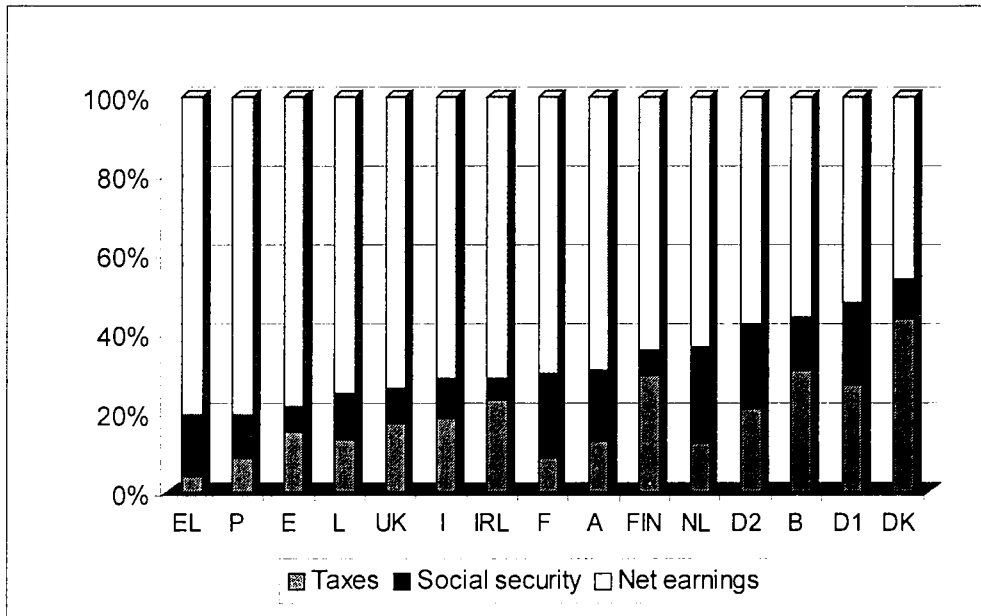
## Income taxes paid: major disparities among the EU countries

The level of personal income tax paid differs considerably among the EU countries. In 1998, single employees with average earnings in manufacturing industry paid the highest taxes in Denmark (44%) followed by Belgium (31%) and Finland (30%). By contrast, in Greece the income tax paid by single employees was at 4%.

The family situation has a considerable effect on the percentage of taxes paid. Among couples with two children, those with two wage-earners usually pay more taxes than those with only one. However this tendency is not observed in Ireland, Austria, Finland and United Kingdom.

In 1998, a one-income couple with two children paid almost no taxes in France (0.3%) and Luxembourg (0%), while an unmarried employee paid 8% in France or 13,0% in Luxembourg. In Greece, Austria, the United Kingdom and Finland the taxes paid were almost the same in both family circumstances, but couples could profit from family benefit allowances.

It is in France and Luxembourg that having children has the strongest effect in reducing taxes for families with two earnings. In the other countries the presence of children is not a factor contributing to a significant reduction in the taxes in the families where both members of the couple have a salary.



NL: 1994, 1:1995

Figure 3: Proportion of income tax and social security contributions for a single employee in manufacturing industry, 1998



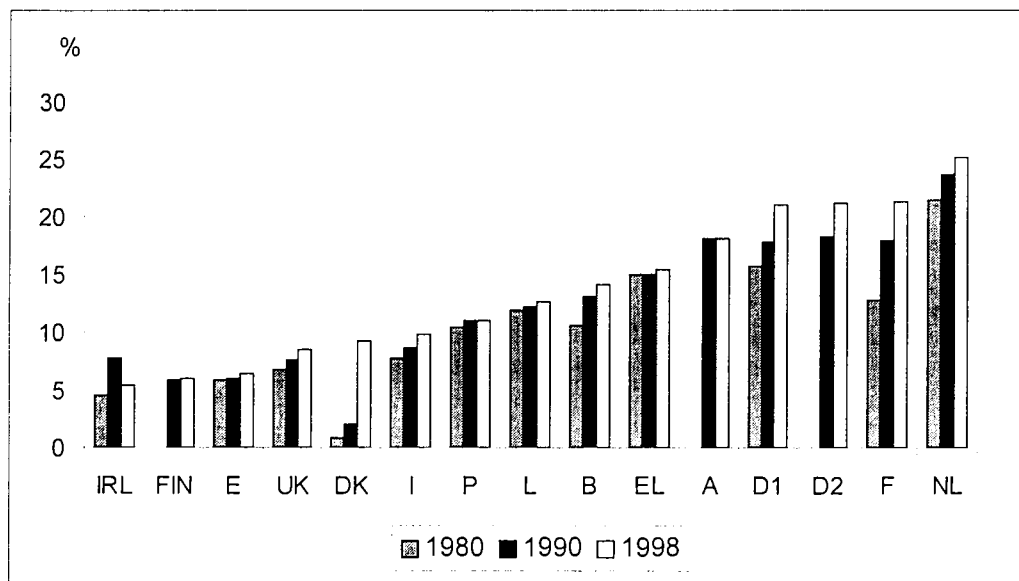
## Different models of funding social protection

The proportion of social security contributions paid by employees varies considerably between the EU countries. Spain, Ireland and Finland are the countries where in 1998 employees paid the lowest social security contributions (about 6%). The highest social security contributions were paid in France and Germany, where a single employee in manufacturing industry contributed 21% of his gross salary, followed by Austria with 18%.

The level of social security contributions does not depend on the family situation in the families examined above.

Between 1980 and 1998, the proportion of social security contributions in all countries remained stable or rose slightly. Ireland was the only country where a noticeable reduction between 1990 and 1998 of the proportion of social security contributions paid by the employees was detected (figure 4).

In Denmark, a new contribution called "Labour market contribution" was introduced in 1994 to finance sickness, unemployment and vocational training insurance; it explains the increase in social security contributions between 1990 and 1998 in this Member State.



NL: 1994, I: 1995, instead of 1998

Figure 4: Employee's social security contributions in manufacturing industry (%)

According to ESSPROS (European System of integrated Social protection statistics), in 1997 for EU-15 as a whole, the main sources funding the social protection system were social contributions which accounted for 62.4% of total receipts, followed by tax-funded general government contributions (32.4%). Social contributions are paid partly by employers and partly by the protected persons (employees, self-employed, pensioners and others).

The systems for funding social protection vary considerably between countries. In some countries with lower social security contributions (either on the employee's side or the employer's) the social protection system is financed mainly through taxes (for example Ireland and Denmark).

Looking at manufacturing industry, The Netherlands, France, Germany and Austria show the highest proportion of employee's social security contributions. According to ESSPROS which covers social security contributions in any activities and are paid by employers, employees, pensioners, etc., The Netherlands, France and Germany are also among countries where the proportion of the funding derived from social contributions is high.

Further information on this topic may be found in Statistics in Focus, Theme 3 – 2/2000 "Social protection in Europe".

Table 1: Average monthly earnings of employees in manufacturing industry, 1998

	B	DK	D1	D2	EL	E	F	IRL	I	L	NL	A	P	FIN	UK
<b>Single worker, average salary</b>															
Gross earnings (PPS)	2761	2266	2989	2048	1285	1724	1994	1895	1821	2682	2069	1957	845	1862	2272
Taxes(%)	30.6	43.6	26.9	21.2	3.8	15.1	8.5	23.1	18.6	13.0	11.8	12.8	8.5	28.0	17.5
Social security(%)	13.5	9.9	21.0	21.2	15.6	6.4	20.8	5.4	9.9	12.0	23.6	17.8	11.0	7.6	8.7
Family allowances(%)															
Net earnings(%)	55.9	46.6	52.1	57.6	80.6	78.5	70.7	71.5	71.5	75.0	61.9	69.4	80.5	64.3	73.8
Net earnings (PPS)	1521	1248	1488	1124	1083	1344	1360	1334	1303	1969	1280	1344	681	1147	1591
<b>Single worker, 80% of the average salary</b>															
Gross earnings (PPS)	2209	1813	2391	1638	1028	1379	1595	1516	1457	2146	1655	1566	676	1489	1818
Taxes(%)	27.6	41.3	23.5	17.6	3.2	13.4	6.7	17.4	16.3	9.2	6.2	9.8	6.5	26.0	16.2
Social security(%)	13.5	10.2	21.0	21.2	15.6	6.4	20.8	5.1	9.9	12.0	26.2	17.8	11.0	6.0	8.3
Family allowances(%)															
Net earnings(%)	58.9	48.4	55.5	61.2	81.2	80.2	72.5	77.5	73.8	78.8	65.3	72.4	82.5	68.0	75.5
Net earnings (PPS)	1302	878	1327	1002	834	1106	1157	1175	1075	1691	1081	1134	558	1009	1372
<b>Single worker, 125% of the average salary</b>															
Gross earnings (PPS)	3452	2833	3737	2560	1606	2155	2493	2368	2277	3353	2586	2447	1057	2327	2840
Taxes(%)	34.0	46.8	30.7	24.5	4.2	17.0	10.9	27.7	21.0	17.4	17.4	15.3	11.5	32.4	18.6
Social security(%)	13.5	9.6	19.4	21.2	15.6	6.4	19.7	5.7	9.9	12.0	20.4	17.8	11.0	6.0	8.9
Family allowances(%)															
Net earnings(%)	52.7	43.6	49.9	54.3	80.2	76.6	69.4	66.6	69.1	70.6	59.0	66.9	77.5	61.6	72.4
Net earnings (PPS)	1818	1236	1863	1390	1287	1651	1729	1578	1574	2366	1526	1637	819	1429	2057
<b>Couple without children, two average salaries</b>															
Gross earnings (PPS)	5179	4385	5209	3781	2570	3447	3988	3578	3314	4697	3739	3643	1691	3570	4088
Taxes(%)	31.0	43.3	25.0	20.0	4.9	15.1	8.5	14.5	22.9	9.3	9.3	12.0	17.5	27.5	16.1
Social security(%)	13.5	10.0	21.0	21.2	15.6	6.4	20.8	5.3	10.0	12.0	24.7	17.8	11.0	7.6	8.5
Family allowances(%)					5.0										
Net earnings(%)	55.5	46.7	54.0	61.3	84.5	78.5	70.7	80.2	67.1	78.6	63.5	70.3	71.5	64.9	75.4
Net earnings (PPS)	2877	2050	2814	2319	2171	2706	2819	2867	2225	3694	2375	2559	1209	2318	3080
<b>Couple with two children, two average salaries</b>															
Gross earnings (PPS)	5179	4385	5209	3781	2570	3447	3988	3578	3314	4697	3739	3643	1691	3570	4088
Taxes(%)	29.7	43.3	24.7	19.7	4.9	14.0	5.3	14.5	22.3	5.0	9.8	12.0	16.5	27.5	16.1
Social security(%)	13.5	10.0	21.0	21.2	15.6	6.4	20.8	5.3	10.0	12.0	25.9	17.8	11.0	7.6	8.5
Family allowances(%)	4.2	3.9	4.1	5.6	7.5		2.5	2.3		6.9	3.9	7.0	5.8	4.8	3.0
Net earnings(%)	61.0	50.6	58.4	64.7	87.0	79.6	76.4	82.5	67.7	90.0	65.7	77.3	78.3	69.7	78.4
Net earnings (PPS)	3161	2219	3040	2447	2235	2744	3048	2950	2244	4225	2455	2815	1323	2489	3203
<b>Couple with two children, one salary</b>															
Gross earnings (PPS)	2761	2382	2989	2048	1285	1724	1994	2169	2030	2682	2069	2165	845	1989	2463
Taxes(%)	17.3	36.1	16.1	7.6	3.8	8.5	0.4	15.5	16.9	0.0	6.6	12.7	4.5	28.9	16.6
Social security(%)	13.5	9.7	21.0	21.2	15.6	6.4	20.8	5.6	9.9	12.0	24.7	17.8	11.0	7.7	8.8
Family allowances(%)	7.9	7.1	7.1	10.3	15.0		4.9	3.8	2.3	12.1	7.0	11.8	11.5	8.6	5.0
Net earnings(%)	77.0	61.4	70.0	81.5	95.6	85.1	83.8	82.7	75.5	100.1	73.0	81.4	96.0	72.1	79.6
Net earnings (PPS)	2127	1462	2091	1669	1228	1467	1671	1794	1533	2685	1510	1762	812	1434	1959

NL: 1994, I: 1995

The levels of gross and net earnings are expressed in PPS (Purchasing Power Standard) to allow the elimination of differences in price levels between countries. PPS are obtained by means of a conversion rate called Purchasing Power Parity (PPPs). The PPPs are the rates of currency conversion that equalise the purchasing power of different currencies. This means, that a given sum of money, when converted into different currencies at the PPP rates, will allow to buy the same basket of goods and services in all countries.

Table 2: Gross earnings of employees in manufacturing industry (ECU)

	B	DK	D1	D2	EL	E	F	IRL	L	A	P	FIN	UK
	<b>Single worker</b>												
1996	2636	2748	3123	2093	995	1331	2064	1672	2692	2028	580	2108	1815
1997	2638	2739	3078	2103	1095	1360	2051	1866	2681	2009	595	2104	2234
1998	2723	2875	3156	2163	1061	1405	2099	1865	2716	2053	603	2175	2558
	<b>Single worker, 80% of the average salary</b>												
1996	2108	2198	2499	1674	796	1065	1651	1337	2154	1622	464	1686	1452
1997	2110	2191	2462	1683	876	1088	1641	1493	2144	1607	476	1683	1788
1998	2179	2300	2524	1730	849	1124	1679	1492	2173	1643	483	1740	2047
	<b>Single worker, 125% of the average salary</b>												
1996	3294	3434	3904	2616	1244	1664	2580	2090	3366	2534	724	2635	2268
1997	3298	3424	3848	2629	1369	1700	2563	2333	3351	2512	744	2630	2793
1998	3404	3594	3945	2703	1327	1756	2624	2330	3395	2567	754	2719	3198
	<b>Couple without children, two averages salaries</b>												
1996	4927	5306	5406	3867	1990	2662	4128	3133	4654	3778	1159	4040	3256
1997	4939	5298	5354	3881	2191	2720	4101	3380	4691	3741	1190	4030	4025
1998	5109	5562	5499	3992	2122	2810	4198	3520	4757	3822	1207	4171	4603
	<b>Couple with two children, two averages salaries</b>												
1996	4927	5306	5406	3867	1990	2662	4128	3133	4654	3778	1159	4040	3256
1997	4939	5298	5354	3881	2191	2720	4101	3380	4691	3741	1190	4030	4025
1998	5109	5562	5499	3992	2122	2810	4198	3520	4757	3822	1207	4171	4603
	<b>Couple with two children, one salary</b>												
1996	2636	2910	3123	2093	995	1331	2064	1881	2692	2239	580	2257	1974
1997	2638	2893	3078	2103	1095	1360	2051	2100	2681	2218	595	2257	2426
1998	2723	3022	3156	2163	1061	1405	2099	2134	2716	2272	603	2324	2773

Table 3: Net earnings of employees in manufacturing industry (ECU)

	B	DK	D1	D2	EL	E	F	IRL	L	A	P	FIN	UK
	<b>Single worker</b>												
1996	1488	1307	1656	1235	806	1048	1440	1148	1970	1438	472	1324	1329
1997	1481	1291	1603	1212	884	1068	1438	1309	1951	1401	479	1357	1631
1998	1522	1338	1645	1245	856	1103	1484	1333	2038	1426	486	1399	1888
	<b>Single worker, 80% of the average salary</b>												
1996	1270	1087	1409	1049	650	860	1181	995	1663	1196	387	1117	1089
1997	1254	1075	1365	1030	712	873	1180	1133	1649	1169	393	1144	1336
1998	1284	1114	1400	1058	689	902	1218	1156	1712	1190	398	1179	1545
	<b>Single worker, 125% of the average salary</b>												
1996	1783	1523	1922	1457	1000	1280	1764	1333	2308	1740	561	1577	1628
1997	1747	1510	1911	1427	1098	1302	1764	1520	2283	1687	576	1620	1999
1998	1793	1568	1967	1467	1063	1345	1820	1552	2397	1718	585	1669	2316
	<b>Couple without children, two averages salaries</b>												
1996	2636	2536	2974	2329	1784	2095	2879	2202	3601	2711	829	2561	2438
1997	2761	2508	2892	2283	1851	2137	2876	2458	3603	2639	839	2624	3000
1998	2837	2600	2971	2449	1793	2206	2968	2821	3741	2685	863	2708	3468
	<b>Couple with two children, two averages salaries</b>												
1996	2925	2735	3199	2553	1733	2117	3113	2276	4145	2988	868	2768	2540
1997	3050	2711	3133	2524	1906	2159	3112	2475	4140	2909	918	2826	3121
1998	3118	2815	3210	2584	1846	2237	3208	2902	4279	2954	944	2908	3606
	<b>Couple with two children, one salary</b>												
1996	1974	1802	2211	1738	955	1131	1729	1499	2655	1873	517	1604	1563
1997	1965	1793	2166	1729	1048	1152	1708	1756	2645	1819	570	1636	1910
1998	2098	1854	2207	1762	1015	1196	1759	1765	2719	1848	579	1675	2206

## ➤ ESSENTIAL INFORMATION – METHODOLOGICAL NOTES

Net earnings are calculated from gross earnings, after deduction of taxes and social security contributions payable by employees and, where appropriate, after addition of family allowances.

The calculations of net earnings are based on the average earnings of the total number of employees in the manufacturing industry.

Gross earnings comprise the remuneration in cash paid on a regular basis. The data has been adjusted to take account of bonuses not paid regularly in each pay period.

Taxes include taxes on earned income. They are calculated on the assumption that gross earnings represent the only source of income and there are no special grounds for tax relief other than those associated with the family situation laid down in the standard cases selected. Indirect taxes are thus not taken into account.

Social security contributions are calculated on the basis of the employee contribution rates laid down by law or collective agreement and which are deducted by the employer.

Family allowances are those for dependent children taken together with other allowances for which the worker is entitled, irrespective of who pays them. Social welfare benefits are not included in these allowances.

Figures for the Federal Republic of Germany as it existed until 3<sup>rd</sup> October 1990 (pre-unification) and the new Länder of Germany (including East Berlin) are presented separately as D1 (old Länder) and D2 (new Länder) owing to the difference in the level of earnings between the former Federal territory and the new Länder and East Berlin.

Until further notice, data for Sweden are not available.

In the absence of a survey on net earnings Eurostat has tried, in co-operation with the appropriate statistical services in the Member States, to quantify as accurately as possible by means of estimates the levels of and trends in the net earnings of manual workers and starting - 1992 - of total employees in the manufacturing industry (NACE D).

The data presented here form the outcome of calculations based on gross average earnings taken from Eurostat harmonised earnings statistics. Certain assumptions have been made and thus the figures must be interpreted with caution. The calculations do not take into account the existence of other taxes or social benefits.

Data for manual workers by gender are also available. These statistics with complete methodology may be consulted from Eurostat's New Cronos database accessible via Eurostat datashops.

The Statistics in Focus on *Net earnings in the European Union 1998* was produced with the help of Mrs. Malgorzata Dziembala, a doctoral student from the University of Economics in Katowice, Poland.



# Further information:

## Databases

New Cronos, Domain Earning

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