



Statistics in focus

POPULATION AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS

THEME 3 – 18/2003

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Labour Costs Survey 2000

EU Member States and Candidate Countries

Anne Paternoster

This article presents comparative figures on Labour Costs for 14 of the 15 EU Member States (MS) and 11 of the 13 Candidate Countries (CC) which delivered results for the Community Labour Costs Survey for the year 2000. The list of countries is given in the Glossary.

The Structural Business Statistics survey for 2000 has been used as a complementary source for data on productivity and unit labour costs (see the Methodological Notes).

Hourly labour costs in Industry and Services vary enormously across the Countries

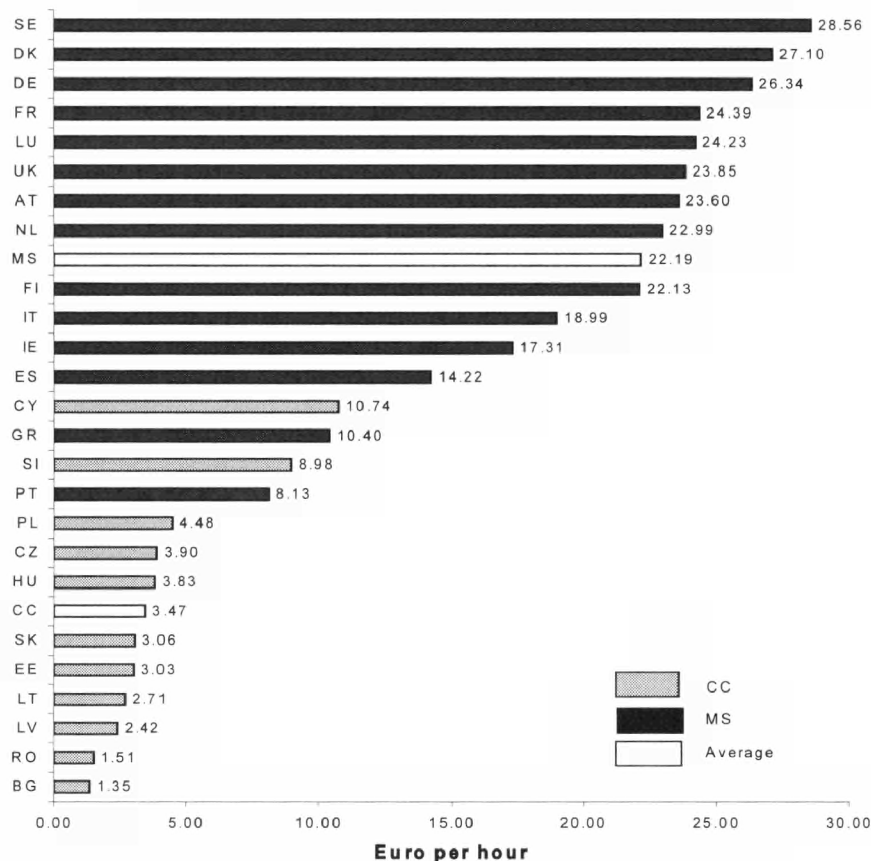


Figure 1: Hourly labour costs in Industry and Services (in Euro), 2000

Figure 1 shows the level of costs per hour worked among the MS and the CC in 2000 in Industry and Services (sections C to K of NACE Rev.1). The average labour costs per hour worked ranged from 1.35 euro (Bulgaria) to 28.56 euro (Sweden).

The EU Member States

In 2000, average labour costs per hour worked in Industry and Services were lowest in Portugal (8.13 euro), Greece (10.40 euro), Spain (14.22 euro), Ireland (17.31 euro) and Italy (18.99 euro) and were highest in Sweden (28.56 euro), Denmark (27.10 euro) and Germany (26.34 euro). In the other 6 MS, the hourly labour costs were close to the EU average of 22.19 euro.



The Candidate Countries

In 2000, among the CC (excluding Malta and Turkey), the average labour costs per hour worked in Industry and Services ranged from 1.35 euro in Bulgaria and 1.51 euro in Romania, 2.42 euro in Latvia and 2.71 euro in Lithuania to 10.74 euro in Cyprus and 8.98 euro in Slovenia. The average for the 11 CC was 3.47 euro, less than one sixth of the average hourly labour cost in the MS.

Hourly Labour costs: disaggregated results by economic activity

A breakdown by economic activity of hourly costs in Industry and Services is presented in Table 1 (see the Methodological Notes). Financial intermediation (Section J) and Energy (section E) generally have the highest labour costs in the MS and in all CC. In contrast, the Wholesale & retail trades (section G) and Hotels & restaurants (section H) have among the lowest labour costs in the MS. In the CC, the lowest labour costs are found in Construction (section F) and Hotels and restaurants (section H).

Member States	Economic Activity (Nace Rev.1)									
	C to K	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
DK	27.10	32.99	25.94	31.98	26.00	25.22	20.45	28.21	34.90	29.68
DE	26.34	31.57	28.48	35.94	21.19	21.33	13.94		34.70	
GR	10.40	11.96	9.56	16.37	7.76	7.62	10.71	13.27	16.34	11.33
ES	14.22	18.58	15.12	25.58	12.06	12.00	9.97	17.14	26.72	11.85
FR	24.39	19.25	24.01	28.56	20.52	21.10	20.74	18.78	34.47	27.24
IE	17.31	18.46	17.34	29.75	16.60	13.77	10.62	18.10	24.58	21.49
IT	18.99	20.91	18.28	27.20	16.26	16.88	12.81	20.31	32.16	17.91
LU	24.23	19.73	22.10	37.12	16.07	16.66	12.95	25.08	41.91	21.56
NL	22.99	37.79	24.11	33.59	23.19	19.48	14.22	22.11	32.79	23.06
AT	23.60	27.66	24.32	37.65	22.71	20.91	14.05	21.93	34.42	24.81
PT	8.13	7.77	6.94	13.25	6.94	8.10	5.72	11.30	19.01	8.09
FI	22.13	21.71	22.03	25.51	20.84	21.66	14.53	22.97	28.34	22.91
SE	28.56	30.38	28.30	31.86	25.67	26.19	18.85	29.24	42.92	30.78
UK	23.85	31.97	23.50	32.33	23.05	19.68	14.06	22.50	40.11	27.11
MS	22.19	22.72	22.75	30.02	19.09	18.90	14.63	21.09	34.28	23.60
Candidate Countries										
BG	1.35	2.26	1.22	2.51	1.09	0.96	0.89	1.64	2.44	1.12
CY	10.74	12.08	9.02	18.98	9.92	9.82	8.63	12.27	15.84	10.51
CZ	3.90	4.91	3.58	4.78	3.60	3.89	2.94	4.08	6.89	4.18
EE	3.03	4.01	2.81	3.51	2.73	2.68	1.82	3.54	6.66	2.99
HU	3.83	4.93	3.68	5.34	2.86	3.09	2.32	4.33	7.61	4.07
LT	2.71	3.24	2.57	3.40	2.41	2.28	1.74	3.06	4.93	3.00
LV	2.42	2.23	2.18	3.60	2.00	1.78	1.54	3.14	4.89	2.63
PL	4.48	7.36	3.95	5.73	4.01	4.03	3.00	4.98	6.66	4.83
RO	1.51	2.49	1.28	2.32	1.11	1.10	1.01	2.09	3.99	1.31
SI	8.98	11.65	8.19	11.10	7.58	8.73	7.41	10.18	14.34	11.21
SK	3.06	3.85	3.05	2.75	2.95	2.64	2.39	3.35	4.45	3.26
CC	3.47	4.96	3.09	4.18	2.95	3.20	2.62	3.93	6.45	3.89

Table 1: Hourly labour costs, broken down by economic activity, according to NACE Rev 1 (in Euro), 2000

Remarkable regional variations in labour costs

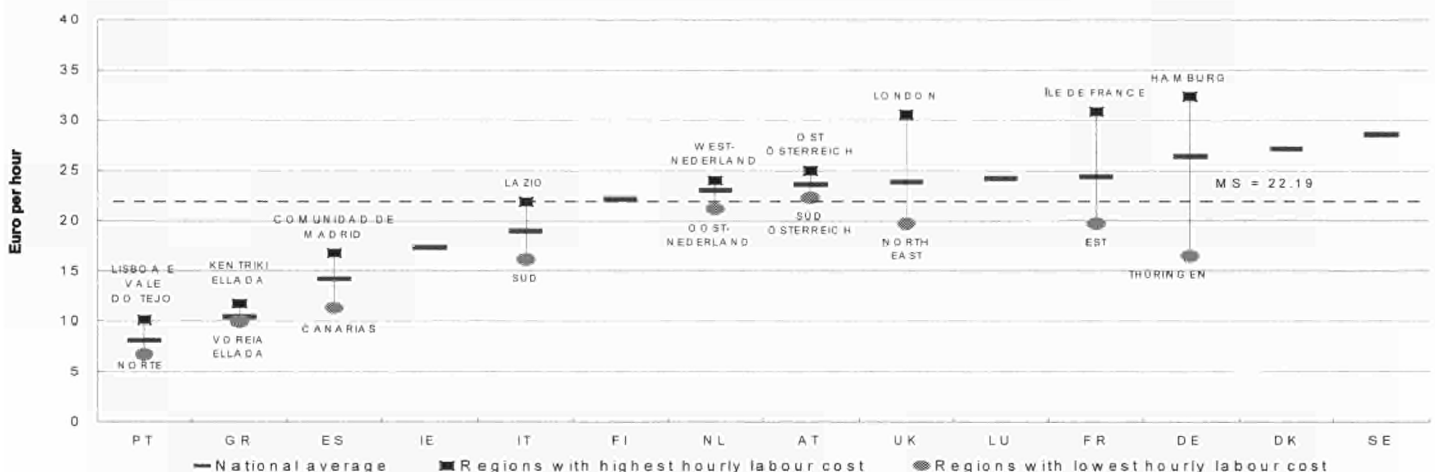


Figure 2: Regional labour costs per hour worked in Industry and Services in MS (in Euro), 2000

A regional breakdown of labour costs is available for 9 of the 10 MS for whom regional data are required (see the Methodological Notes). Figure 2 shows the variation in hourly labour costs in Industry and Services between the regions as well as the national average for each country. (Figure 2 also shows the national average for the other 5 MS from whom regional data are not required.) The regions with the highest and lowest hourly costs are identified for each country. Regions in Portugal have generally the lowest labour costs. The regional variation is widest for Germany, UK and France and smallest for Austria, the Netherlands and Greece. The regions with the highest labour costs are Hamburg in Germany (32.31 euro) and Île de France in France (30.84 euro), the region with the lowest labour costs is Norte in Portugal (6.72 euro).

Monthly labour costs per employee among the Member States also show a wide variation

The level of costs can also be examined in terms of the monthly labour cost per employee (see the Methodological Notes). Table 2 and Figure 3 present the monthly costs per employee, in euro. The overall order of the countries in terms of monthly costs in Industry and Services (sections C-K) is broadly the same as that portrayed in Figure 1 for hourly costs. The main exceptions are the UK (which has a higher ranking in Figure 3) and France (which is ranked lower)

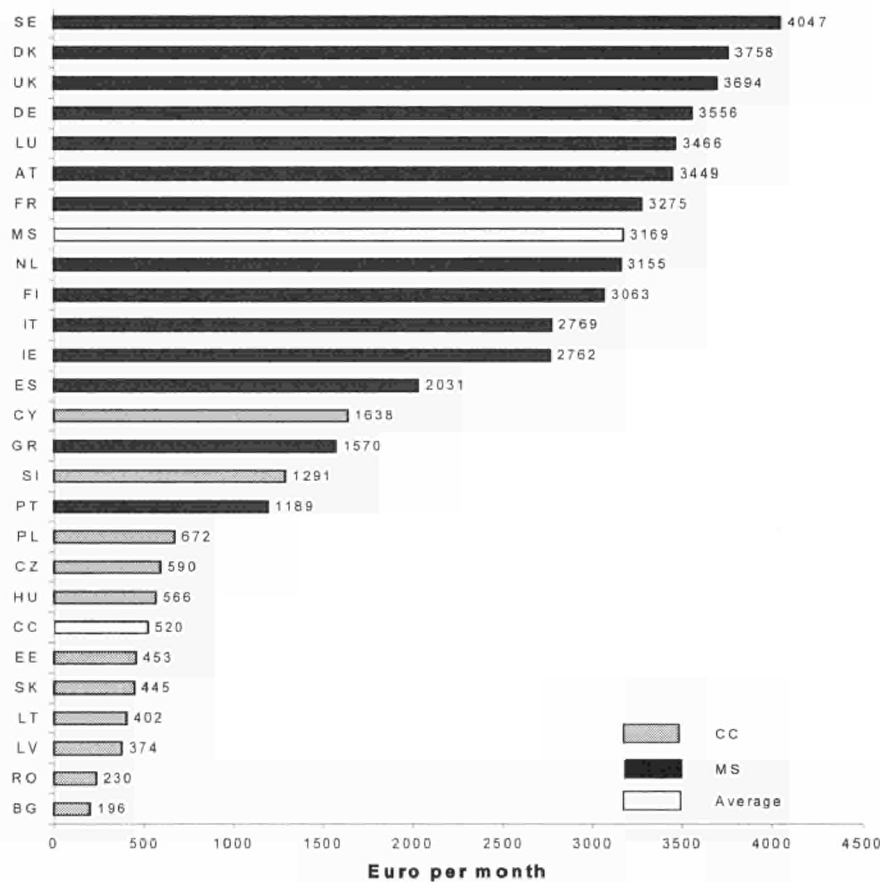


Figure 3: Monthly labour costs in Industry and Services (in Euro), 2000

The differences in the country rankings as between Figures 1 and 3 can be explained by differences in the average number of hours worked per month. In the UK, the average monthly hours worked (155 hours) are above the EU average (143 hours); this explains the higher UK ranking in Figure 3. In contrast, in France, the average hours worked per month is the lowest in Europe (134 hours); this explains the lower French ranking.

Member States	Economic Activity (Nace Rev.1)									
	C to K	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
DK	3758	4781	3580	4424	3661	3559	2781	3945	4647	4068
DE	3556	4431	3769	4815	2943	2943	1986	.	4748	.
GR	1570	1834	1433	2519	1114	1158	1568	2054	2490	1712
ES	2031	2480	2158	3507	1718	1735	1437	2445	3593	1715
FR	3275	2354	3214	3415	2863	2892	3025	2596	4495	3664
IE	2762	3247	2719	4301	2971	2229	1804	3008	3578	3276
IT	2769	3050	2648	3669	2354	2580	1927	2934	4451	2695
LU	3466	3004	3115	5171	2338	2395	1877	3604	5914	3123
NL	3155	5335	3245	4463	3157	2692	2000	3267	4351	3135
AT	3447	3920	3534	5371	3223	3084	2138	3261	4948	3623
PT	1189	1124	990	1851	1035	1216	859	1733	2412	1269
FI	3063	3054	2986	3433	2851	3046	2563	3035	3750	3361
SE	4047	4067	4007	4610	3656	3835	2702	3991	5777	4367
UK	3694	5465	3664	4761	3929	3064	2180	3685	5481	4077
MS	3169	3000	3195	4017	2780	2749	2186	3186	4644	3399
Candidate Countries										
BG	196	311	173	343	160	149	135	238	366	167
CY	1638	2067	1402	2600	1459	1537	1283	1991	2238	1592
CZ	590	697	532	711	542	604	464	631	1066	659
EE	453	526	415	530	405	407	281	539	1011	468
HU	566	717	536	761	436	474	353	624	1159	623
LT	402	491	378	505	333	350	266	466	751	458
LV	374	347	328	545	305	284	243	482	773	411
PL	672	1024	599	839	604	619	459	724	979	722
RO	230	366	191	339	182	174	167	309	623	220
SI	1291	1535	1172	1554	1133	1270	1074	1453	1984	1635
SK	445	535	428	403	434	399	363	494	664	496
CC	520	704	457	608	451	495	405	581	966	598

Table 2: Monthly labour costs per employee, broken down by economic activity, according to NACE Rev I (in Euro), 2000

Across Europe, Average Hours Worked per month vary from 134 to 160

Figure 4 shows the level of hours worked per month among the MS and the CC in 2000 in Industry and Services. Among the MS, the average monthly hours worked per full-time equivalent employee (see the Methodological Notes) ranged from 134 (France) to 160 (Ireland). Among the CC, the average hours worked varied much less: from 144 hours in Slovenia to 154 hours in Latvia. The EU average hours worked per month (143) was some 4% lower than the CC average (150). The average number of hours worked in 11 of the MS was lower than the CC average. Ireland, the UK and Greece were the three exceptions.

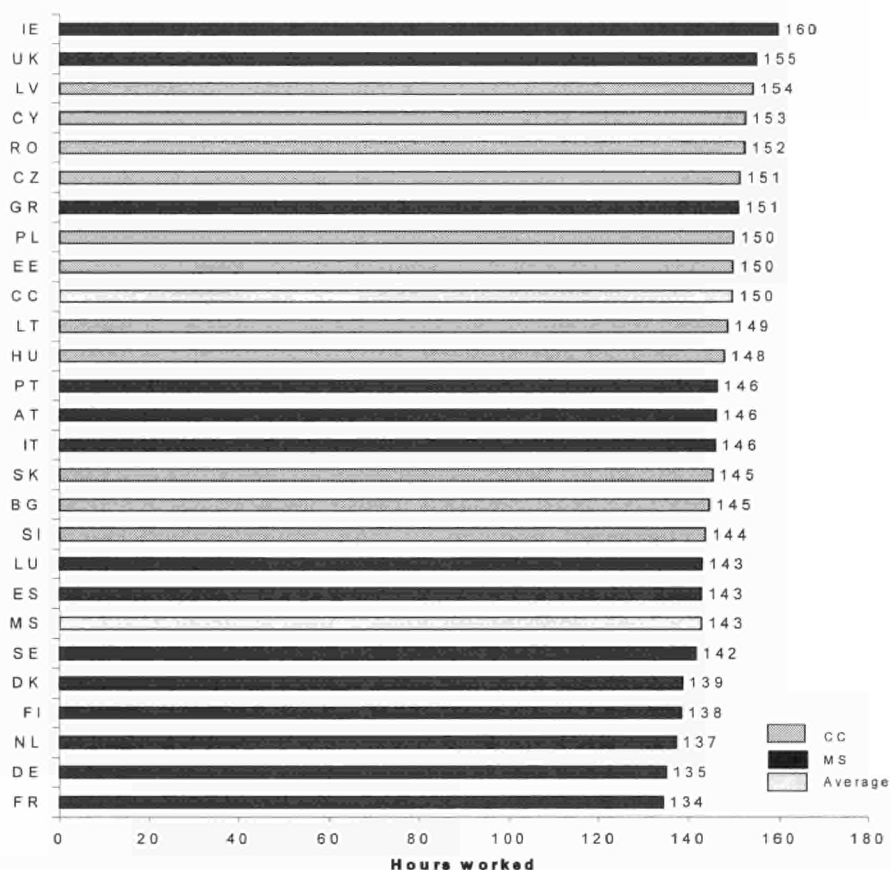


Figure 4: Hours worked per month per full-time equivalent employee in Industry and Services, 2000

Hours worked per month: disaggregated results by economic activity

A breakdown by economic activity of the average monthly hours worked in Industry and Services is given in Table 3.

The EU Member States

At the EU level, as indicated above, the average number of hours worked in Industry and Services was 143. Among individual economic activities, the lowest hours worked per month were in section C – Mining and quarrying (132) and the highest in section I – Transport, storage and communication (151).

The Candidate Countries

Over all the CC, as indicated earlier, the average number of hours worked in Industry and Services was 150 hours. On the whole, the average number of hours worked was lowest in section C – Mining and quarrying (142 hours) and highest in section H – Hotels and restaurants (155 hours).

Member States	Economic Activity (Nace Rev.1)									
	C to K	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
DK	139	145	138	138	141	141	136	140	133	137
DE	135	140	132	134	139	138	142	137	137	137
GR	151	153	150	154	144	152	146	155	152	151
ES	143	133	143	137	143	145	144	143	134	145
FR	134	122	134	120	139	137	146	138	130	134
IE	160	176	157	145	179	162	170	166	146	152
IT	146	146	145	135	145	153	150	144	138	150
LU	143	152	141	139	145	144	145	144	141	145
NL	137	141	135	133	136	138	141	148	133	136
AT	146	142	145	143	142	148	152	149	144	146
PT	146	145	143	140	149	150	150	153	127	157
FI	138	141	136	135	137	141	176	132	132	147
SE	142	134	142	145	142	146	143	137	135	142
UK	155	171	156	147	170	156	155	164	137	150
MS	143	132	140	134	146	145	149	151	135	144
Candidate Countries										
BG	145	138	142	137	147	155	150	145	150	149
CY	153	171	155	137	147	157	149	162	141	151
CZ	151	142	149	149	151	155	158	155	155	158
EE	150	131	148	151	148	152	154	152	152	156
HU	148	145	146	143	152	154	152	144	152	153
LT	149	152	147	149	138	154	152	152	152	153
LV	154	155	151	151	153	159	157	154	158	156
PL	150	139	152	146	151	154	153	145	147	150
RO	152	147	149	146	164	159	166	148	156	168
SI	144	132	143	140	149	145	145	143	138	146
SK	145	139	140	147	147	151	152	147	149	152
CC	150	142	148	146	153	154	155	148	150	154

Table 3: Monthly hours worked per employee in 2000, broken down by economic activity, according to NACE Rev.1.

Labour costs per employee tend to be correlated with labour productivity: unit labour costs vary much less

Figure 3 and Table 2 showed that the levels of labour costs per employee vary considerably across Europe, particularly when one compares the CC with the MS. While these differences reflect the costs of labour in each country, they do not take into account the differences in labour productivity between the countries. The definition of labour productivity used here is given in the Methodological Notes. Speaking broadly, lower levels of labour costs per employee are associated with lower levels of labour productivity, and vice versa. This can be seen by expressing labour costs per employee as a percentage of value added per employee. This ratio is often referred to as "unit labour costs". Figure 5 shows the unit labour costs in 13 MS for which 2000 survey data is available for manufacturing from Structural Business Statistics (SBS).

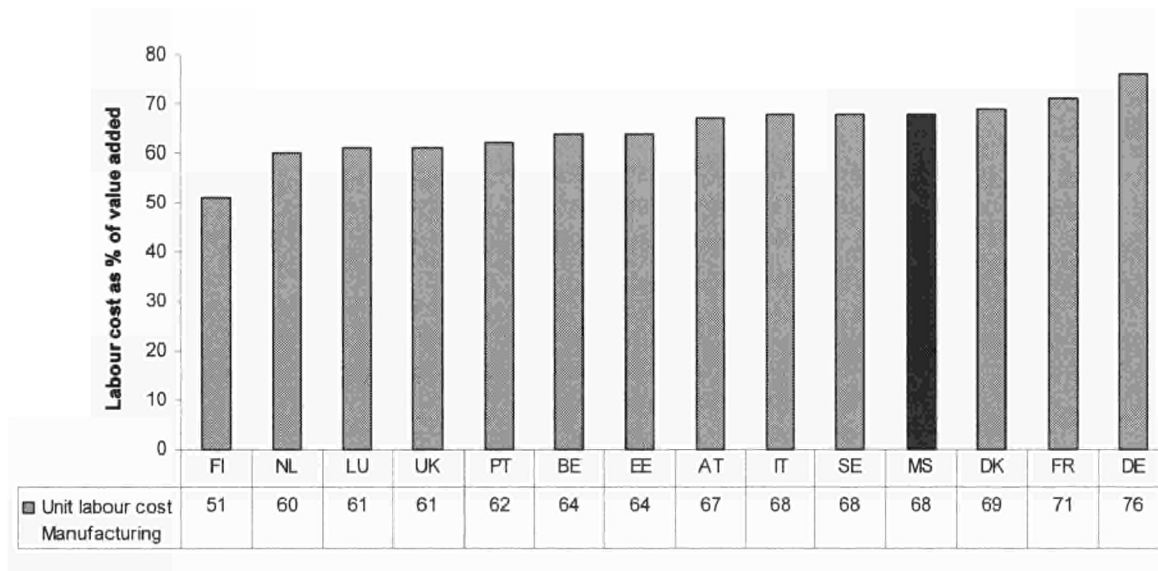


Figure 5: Unit labour costs in the MS in Manufacturing, 2000 (source: SBS)

Reflecting the strong correlation between labour costs and value added per employee, Figure 5 illustrates that the variation in unit labour costs between the countries is rather confined. The EU average percentage for the 13 MS featured is 68%, most countries falling within the range of 60-70%. Figures for Greece and Ireland are not available.

It can be seen that the ranking of monthly labour costs in Figure 3 shows little correspondence with the ranking of the countries in Figure 5. In particular, among the 13 MS, Portugal and Spain have the lowest monthly labour costs per employee whereas Sweden and Denmark have the highest monthly costs per employee. Yet, in Figure 5, the unit labour costs for these four countries all fall into a narrow range from 62 to 69 %.

Glossary

MS – At the time this article was written, the following 14 of the 15 EU Member States had delivered their results for the 2000 Labour Cost Survey: Denmark (DK), Germany (DE), Greece (EL), Spain (ES), France (FR), Ireland (IE), Italy (IT), Luxembourg (LU), Netherlands (NL), Austria (AT), Portugal (PT), Finland (FI), Sweden (SE), United Kingdom (UK).

CC - The following 11 Candidate Countries participated in the 2000 Labour Cost Survey: Bulgaria (BG), Cyprus (CY), the Czech Republic (CZ), Estonia (EE), Hungary (HU), Lithuania (LT), Latvia (LV), Poland (PL), Romania (RO), Slovenia (SI) and the Slovak Republic (SK).

The two remaining CC, Malta and Turkey, were not in a position to undertake a Labour Cost Survey for the year 2000.

➤ ESSENTIAL INFORMATION – METHODOLOGICAL NOTES

This is the third SiF article giving results for the 2000 Labour Cost Survey 2000 (see the reference publications for details of the previous two SiFs). This SiF now incorporates data from Italy, together with revisions for Denmark, France, Germany and Ireland. Belgium has not yet delivered its survey results.

The four-yearly Community labour costs survey is carried out for employees with direct contracts with their employer.

The latest survey refers to the year 2000, results for which are required for enterprises with 10 or more employees in economic activities covered by sections C-K of NACE Rev.1, the statistical classification system employed in the European Community. Each section is composed of a range of economic activities, and the labour costs given here correspond to the average costs in each section. For Germany, sections K and I were not obligatory for the year 2000.

Sections of the statistical classification of economic activities (NACE Rev.1)

C	Mining and quarrying	H	Hotels and restaurants
D	Manufacturing	I	Transport, storage and communication
E	Electricity, gas and water supply	J	Financial intermediation
F	Construction	K	Real estate, renting and business activities
G	Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and personal & household goods		

All MS are required to provide regional data at the NUTS 1 level ("NUTS" refers to the nomenclature of territorial units for statistics). However, as the NUTS 1 level corresponds to the national level for all the CC and five of the MS, a regional breakdown is required from only 10 MS. The regional results given here relate to 9 MS: Germany, Greece, Spain, France, Italy, Netherlands, Austria, Portugal, and United Kingdom. Belgium has not yet delivered its survey results.

The Labour Cost Survey collects data on hours paid and hours worked. Subsequent definitions of hourly labour costs are using the latter.

No adjustments were made on labour costs for differences in price levels between countries (Purchasing power effects).

Definitions:

Total labour costs is the sum of wages and salaries, employers social contributions *plus* a small element of other labour costs.

Hourly labour costs is annual labour costs divided by the number of hours worked during the year.

Monthly labour costs per employee is annual labour costs divided by 12 and by the average number of employees during the year (converted into full-time units).

Monthly hours worked per employee is the annual number of hours worked divided by 12 and by the average number of employees during the year (converted into full-time units).

Average hourly labour costs for MS and CC, presented in Table 1 and Figure 1, are calculated by dividing the sum of the annual labour costs by the sum of the annual hours worked in the relevant countries.

Average monthly labour costs for MS and CC, presented in Table 2 and Figure 3, are calculated by dividing the sum of the annual labour costs by 12 and by the sum of the number of employees (expressed in full-time equivalents) in the relevant countries.

Average monthly hours worked for MS and CC, presented in Table 3 and Figure 4, are calculated by dividing the sum of the annual number of hours worked by 12 and by the sum of the number of employees (expressed in full-time equivalents) in the relevant countries.

Labour productivity or **valued added per employee** is defined as the value of output less the value of intermediate consumption (i.e. inputs) divided by the average number of employees during the year converted into full-time equivalents. Essentially, productivity is the value generated by any unit engaged in a productive activity

Unit labour cost is the ratio between labour cost per employee and labour productivity or value added per employee, including self-employed, and can be estimated by the equation :

$$(\text{Labour costs/Employees})/(\text{Value-added/Total employed})$$

Further information:

➤ Reference publications

Title	Labour Costs Survey 2000 - Candidate Countries	Price	EUR
Catalogue No	KS-NK-02-023-EN-N		
Title	Labour Costs Survey 2000 - Member States	Price	EUR
Catalogue No	KS-NK-03-007-EN-C		
Title	Employment in the market economy in the European Union - an analysis of the Structural Business Statistics	Price	EUR 20.00
Catalogue No	KS-51-03-318-EN-N (pdf)	Price	EUR 20.00
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