

EUROSTAT: HOURLY LABOUR COST RANGE ACROSS EU MEMBER STATES IN 2014

On 30 March 2015, Eurostat, the statistical office of the EU, published a news release regarding the average hourly labour cost across the EU and the euro area. These preliminary estimations for 2014 cover enterprises with 10 or more employees.

Main findings

Eurostat estimates that in 2014, hourly labour costs in the whole economy (excluding agriculture and public administration) were at 29.20 € in the euro area and at 24.60 € in the EU. Nevertheless, these values mask a significant difference in hourly labour cost between EU Member States. The Member States with the lowest labour costs are **Bulgaria** (3.80 €), **Romania** (4.60 €), **Lithuania** (6.50 €) and **Latvia** (6.60 €). The highest labour costs are estimated to be 40.30 € in **Denmark**, 39.10 € in **Belgium**, 37.40 € in **Sweden** and 35.90 € in **Luxembourg**.

Between 2013 and 2014, hourly labour costs have risen by 1.4 % in the EU and by 1.1% in the euro area. The largest increases in the euro area were recorded in **Estonia** (+6.6%), in **Latvia** (+6.0%) and in **Slovakia** (+5.2%). The only decreases were in **Cyprus** (-2.8%), **Portugal** (-0.8%) and **Ireland** (-0.2%). Regarding the Member States outside the euro area, the largest increases were registered in **Romania** (+6.0%), **Lithuania** and **Poland** (both +3.5%) and **Hungary** (+3.3%), and the smallest in **Denmark** (+0.9%) and the **United Kingdom** (+1.3%). The only decrease was in **Croatia** (-0.8%).

Labour costs per hour were highest in the industry (25.50 € in the EU and 32.00 € in the euro area), then the services (24.30 € and 28.20 € respectively) and finally construction (22.00 € and 25.80 € respectively).

The labour costs are made up of wages and salaries and non-wage costs like employers' social contributions. The share of non-wage costs in the whole economy was at 24.4% in the EU and at 26.1% in the euro area, varying between 6.9% in **Malta** and 33.1% in **France**.

