

Introduction

OBJECTIVES, SCOPE AND STRUCTURE OF THE PUBLICATION

This publication gives a comprehensive picture of the structure, development and characteristics of European business and its different activities: from the manufacture of food, beverages and tobacco to real estate, renting and research and development services. It presents the latest available statistics from a wide selection of statistical sources describing for each activity: output and employment; country specialisation and regional distribution; gross operating and tangible investment expenditure, productivity and profitability; the importance of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs); labour force characteristics; external trade etc.

The publication covers what is referred to as the [business economy](#), which here is the sum of industry, construction and services (NACE Sections C to K). It does not cover agriculture, forestry and fishing, nor the public administration and largely non-market services such as education and health. Note that because of the lack of standard business statistics, financial services is kept separate from the other sectors, and comparisons are made throughout the publication against a benchmark called the [non-financial business economy](#) (as defined by NACE Sections C to I and K).

In this publication the business economy is divided into 23 main sectors. The first chapter provides a general overview of the EU-27's business economy, with comparisons made across the main sectors. In addition, some information of a cross-sectoral nature is presented, such as research and development, business demography, the importance of foreign controlled enterprises, etc.

The overview chapter is followed by 23 sectoral chapters, consisting of an overview of the activity in question, followed by a number of subchapters that analyse its component activities. The chapters and subchapters present a standard set of information complemented by sector specific information that highlights aspects of specific concern and distinguishing features. Each chapter concludes with a statistical annex presenting a selection of the most important indicators. The analyses focus on the EU-27, but available data for Norway are included in the statistical annex at the end of each chapter.

DATA SOURCES

The main part of the analysis contained within European business is derived from structural business statistics (SBS), including the core business statistics which are disseminated regularly, as well as information compiled on a multi-yearly basis and the latest results from development projects on topics of specific interest. EU-27 aggregates include estimates that are rounded, which means that there may be a difference between totals and sub-components. Note that a combination of available rounded and non-rounded estimates (for example to fill gaps in data availability) could generate estimates which are not a good proxy of the true value.

Other data sources which are used extensively throughout the publication include short-term statistics (STS), the labour force survey (LFS), PRODCOM (statistics by product) and external trade (the last two are only used for industrial chapters). In addition, use has also been made of specialist sources for particular areas, notably transport, energy, research and development, environment, tourism and information society statistics, as well as national accounts.

This edition of European business has also benefited from the co-operation of a wide variety of professional trade associations (representative organisations for various activities) and other non-official bodies. Tables and figures based on data from these non-official sources are presented in shaded boxes.

TIME FRAME

The majority of the data presented within this edition of European business was extracted from Eurostat databases during May 2007, complemented by an extraction in June and July for certain specific data sources. The text was written during the second and third quarters of 2007. Data are generally available up to the 2004 reference year for structural business statistics, and up to 2006 for the other official sources.

CHANGES COMPARED WITH THE PREVIOUS EDITION

Following the accession of Bulgaria and Romania, data for the 27 Member States are now consistently being presented, with the EU-27 total as a benchmark.

This edition of European business continues the efforts made in recent years to focus increasingly on official statistics, and to broaden and deepen the analysis as the European statistical system continues to make advances. A particular effort has been made in this edition to include, where available, data at the most detailed activity level (NACE four digit or class level) and to facilitate further comparisons across the different activities of the business economy (chapters and subchapters) covered by SBS.

A number of changes in the structure and organisation of the chapters have been made when compared with the 2006 edition, essentially to try to follow more closely the NACE classification and to re-align chapter definitions with those activities covered by the SBS Regulation.

- Chapter 10 (transport equipment): two subchapters on motor vehicles and motor vehicle parts and accessories have been merged into a single subchapter; the two larger miscellaneous other transport equipment activities, namely ships and boats, and railway equipment, have been separated as two new subchapters, with a miscellaneous subchapter retained for the remaining other transport equipment manufacturing activities;
- Chapter 14 (recycling and water supply): this chapter has been renamed as waste management and sewerage have been removed;
- Chapter 20 (transport services): one subchapter has been split in two, separating pipelines from road and other land transport;
- Chapter 21 (communications and media): the subchapter on audiovisual services has been removed from the publication.

DEDICATED WEBSITE

Within Eurostat's website several dedicated sections are available which provide more information on selected topics. The 'European business' dedicated section provides access to a selection of publications, data and background information describing European business, compiled by Eurostat's structural business statistics unit. It includes a presentation of the statistics by topic (including special topics such as globalisation, SMEs, foreign controlled enterprises, etc), with specific links to publications, data, methodology, policy documents, etc. All the chapters of European business: facts and figures in PDF format and MS Excel files containing the data used in the tables and figures can be downloaded from here, free of charge. The structural business statistics dedicated section is located directly under the theme 'Industry, trade and services' on the Eurostat website or by using the following link:

http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/pls/portal/url/page/PGP_DS_EUROBUS/PGE_DS_EUROBUS_01.

There are also dedicated sections available for:

Short-term business statistics:

http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/pls/portal/url/page/PGP_DS_QPEB/PGE_DS_QPEB_01;

Statistics by product:

http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/pls/portal/url/page/PGP_DS_PROD.COM/PGE_DS_PROD.COM;

External trade:

http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/pls/portal/url/page/PGP_DS_COMEXT/TAB1.

MORE STATISTICS AVAILABLE ON-LINE

The publication presents only a selection of the most important data available. Readers who are interested in knowing more about a certain topic or sector, or accessing a longer time-series, or downloading the freshest data are encouraged to consult the data available on Eurostat's website. These data are available free of charge at: <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu>.

Pre-defined tables

There are a number of ways for users to access/extract data. The most simple is to use what are referred to as pre-defined (automatically updated) tables, presenting selected indicators. Pre-defined tables are available for practically the full range of subjects for which Eurostat has data, not just business statistics. For structural business statistics there are a set of pre-defined tables which provide an overview of business structures in the countries and/or for the EU as a whole, as well as tables which provide selected data for specific sectors: industry and construction, distributive trades, services and financial services. Most tables contain data by country and years; these are only available with a limited activity breakdown. They are complemented by some tables which show a more detailed activity breakdown only for the EU-27 aggregate.

http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/pls/portal/url/page/PGP_QUEEN/PGE_QUEEN_TREE?screen=welcomeref&open=/basic/YEARLIES_NEW/D&language=en&product=EU_MAIN_TREE&root=EU_MAIN_TREE

Complete database

Open table access allows users to access the complete database with the most recent data available for the different topics, and based on that define their own specific data extraction. This option should be used by those who wish to make their own selection of statistics. The data that is returned when querying the database may be extracted in a variety of formats:

- as an HTML page for an Internet browser;
- as a tab delimited file for a spreadsheet application, or;
- a flat text file for a database application.

Structural business statistics (SBS)

Structural business statistics are available as part of the industry, trade and services domain (theme 4) of the Eurostat data tree (available on the Eurostat website). The following description of the SBS data set concentrates on access through what is termed the horizontal view, within which one branch presents Structural Business Statistics. The first heading of this branch concerns Annual enterprise statistics, the first table (European business) presents the majority of the important indicators used in the publication across a full range of NACE divisions. Thereafter the tables are structured by activity, again these include the main structural variables (such as value added and employment), as well as derived indicators (including apparent labour productivity, average personnel costs and wage adjusted labour

productivity). However, the list of indicators is considerably longer than the main indicators that are used within European business and the NACE breakdown is often more detailed. As the data are split according to activity, users who wish to obtain data across all NACE will need to make a number of extractions. Note that the data under the heading annual enterprise statistics do not include much information for financial intermediation (NACE Section J), as specific tables are provided for credit institutions, insurance services, and pension funds.

The next entry in the SBS data tree is for annual enterprise statistics broken down by size class. As with the annual series, the first table is a summary table of size class information that covers all NACE divisions. Thereafter, the tables present information structured by activity and reference year with the additional breakdown according to enterprise size classes based on the number of persons employed per enterprise. Again, if users wish to obtain data across all NACE, or for a lengthy time-series, then a number of extractions may have to be made.

The next heading in the SBS data tree contains the information that was used to construct maps that are presented in the overview of each chapter, in other words annual regional statistics.

The link below takes the user into the Eurostat database at the point where the SBS data tree can be expanded, from where tailor-made extractions can be made, specifying all of the dimensions of the data request, including the countries, time periods, indicators, and units.

http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/pls/portal/url/page/PGP_QUEEN/PGE_QUEEN_TREE?screen=welcomeref&open=/intrse/sbs&product=EU_MASTER_industry_trade_services_horizontal&depth=2

Special topics of structural business statistics

In addition to those tables which are documented above, there is also more specific SBS information on a collection of particular topics, such as:

- Business demography
- Business services
- Demand for services
- Distributive trades: breakdown of turnover by product
- Factors of business success
- Foreign control of enterprises
- Intangible investment and subcontracting
- Inter-enterprise relations
- Iron and steel
- Purchases of energy products
- Statistics on environmental protection
- Trade: other multi-yearly statistics

http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/pls/portal/url/page/PGP_QUEEN/PGE_QUEEN_TREE?screen=welcomeref&open=/intrse/sbs_spec&product=EU_MASTER_industry_trade_services_horizontal&depth=2

Short-term business statistics

The information on short-term business statistics (STS) is also available as part of the industry, trade and services domain within the Eurostat website. The data are structured under three main headings: industry; construction; and trade and other services.

Within the industry domain the data is broken down according to the indicators specified in the STS Regulation. There are tables presented for indices of production, turnover, new orders, labour input (number of persons employed; volume of work done/hours worked, gross wages and salaries), and producer prices (output prices). A number of tables exist for each of these indices, with monthly, quarterly and annual frequencies often available, while there may be different presentations for certain indices (gross or working day adjusted, seasonally adjusted, trend cycle).

The structure of the tables presented for construction follows very closely the structure used for industry, with separate tables for indices of production, new orders, labour input, construction costs for new residential buildings, and building permits (number of dwellings and area).

The structure of the tables for distributive trades and other services is somewhat different, as the information is initially divided according to the activity under analysis, with separate tables for motor trade, wholesale trade, retail trade and other services.

http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/pls/portal/url/page/PGP_QUEEN/PGE_QUEEN_TREE?screen=welcomeref&open=/intrse/ebt&product=EU_MASTER_industry_trade_services_horizontal&depth=2.

PRODCOM

Information on product statistics (PRODCOM) is also available as part of the industry, trade and services domain, under a separate heading called Statistics by product. This set of data is quite particular insofar as the link presented takes the user to an MS Access application rather than the standard interface used for most Eurostat data. The application presents the user with the choice of extracting external trade or PRODCOM data (annual or monthly). The interface permits the selection of the country, PRODCOM code (PRCCODE), volume or value data (measurement unit), period, and indicator (production, imports or exports). The application also allows for exports and imports to be extracted at the same time.

<http://fd.comext.eurostat.ec.eu.int/xtweb/>.

The data can also be downloaded in MS Excel format from the PRODCOM dedicated section:

http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/pls/portal/url/page/PGP_DS_PROD/COM/PGE_DS_PROD/COM/PGE_DS_PROD/COM_01.

