Statistics in focus

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Contents

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Industrial production in the EU grew at a rapid pace in December 2000

Extract from the Monthly Panorama of European Business 02/2001

Gunter Schäfer

The rate of change for the EU production index compared to the same month of a year before almost doubled between November and December 2000, rising by 3.4 percentage points (the high growth rates for the production index for December 2000 should be viewed with caution, as they may be partly explained by calendar effects).

A similar trend of expanding industrial production was also seen in the euro-zone[1]. Month on month growth for total industry was equal to 2.0% in December 2000, when compared to November 2000. The long-term growth rate comparing the production index with that of the same month of a year before continued to be higher in the euro-zone than in the EU as a whole, with the most recent rate of change equal to 8.0% in December 2000.

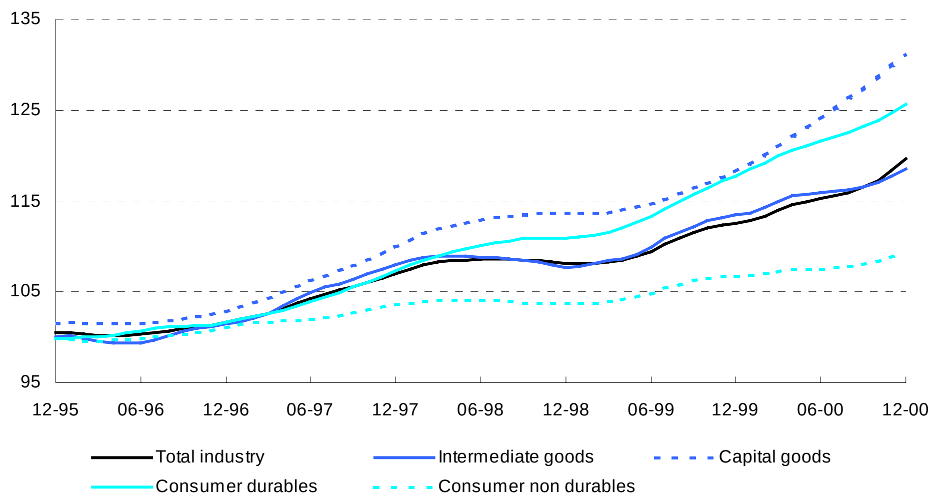

Figure 1: EU-15 production indices for the main industrial groupings, trend cycle series (1995=100)

Data extracted on: 25.02.2001

(1) As a result of the accession of Greece to the euro-zone on 01/01/2000, data for the euro-zone now includes twelve (rather than eleven) of the Member States. For this issue this change only affects data on new car registrations. There are two distinct presentations of euro-zone data: firstly, absolute values and indices are presented using a mixed series with a break in the series as of 01/01/2001; secondly, growth rates are shown with the euro-zone treated as an entity regardless of its composition.

Industrial production trends in the Triad

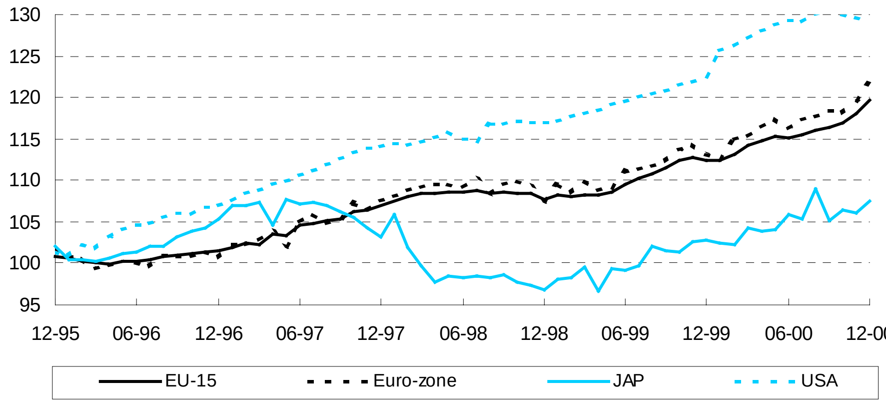

Figure 2: Production index for total industry (1995 = 100)

Recent growth (t/t-1)	EU-15	Euro-zone	Japan	USA
09-00	0.4	0.6	-3.5	0.4
10-00	0.4	-0.2	1.3	-0.1
11-00	0.9	1.2	-0.5	-0.3
12-00	1.4	2.0	1.4	-0.5

Table 1: Industrial production, latest growth rates (%)

Industrial production in the EU expanded at a rapid pace (1.4%) in December 2000 compared to the month before. There was a marked acceleration in output growth when compared to that recorded in November 2000, when EU industrial output grew by 0.9% (already a very high figure). The overall picture of the month on month growth rates during 2000 was for an almost continuous upward trend, reflected in the high growth rate of 7.2% when comparing the production index between December 1999 and December 2000.

Industrial production in the USA decreased by 0.5% in December 2000 compared to the month before. This was the third consecutive negative month on month rate with losses of 0.1% and 0.3% in October and November 2000.

In Japan, total industrial production increased by 1.4% in December 2000 when compared to November 2000, marking a continuation of the fluctuating general trend observed since the middle of 1999.

Producer price trends in the Triad

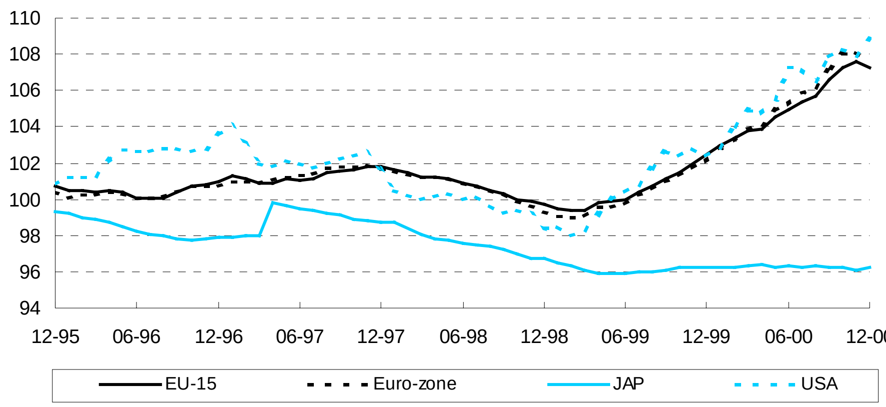

Figure 3: Producer price index for total industry (1995 = 100)

Recent growth (t/t-1)	EU-15	Euro-zone	JAP	USA
09-00	0.9	1.0	-0.1	1.2
10-00	0.6	0.7	0.0	0.5
11-00	0.3	0.1	-0.1	-0.4
12-00	-0.3	-0.4	0.1	0.8

Table 2: Industrial producer prices, latest growth rates (%)

EU producer prices for total industry fell in December 2000 compared to the month before (-0.3%), following an increase of 0.3% in November 2000.

In the euro-zone, the fall in prices in December 2000 was at a slightly faster pace, 0.4%. When comparing the change in prices with the same month of a year before, price increases were still at a high level, largely as a result of increases in the price of refined petroleum products through to the autumn of 2000.

The latest month on month changes for the producer price index in the other two members of the Triad were in line with the changes observed since 1999.

Industrial production trends in the EU

	01-00	02-00	03-00	04-00	05-00	06-00	07-00	08-00	09-00	10-00	11-00	12-00
EU-15	0.0	0.7	0.9	0.5	0.4	-0.1	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.9	1.4
Euro-zone	-0.5	2.1	0.3	0.9	1.0	-1.1	0.9	0.4	0.6	-0.2	1.2	2.0
B	-0.3	2.1	0.0	0.9	-0.1	0.1	1.1	-0.3	0.6	0.2	1.4	1.1
DK	1.1	-0.3	-1.1	4.4	2.1	-5.5	3.4	1.4	1.3	-1.9	-0.3	5.1
D	0.1	1.9	-0.4	0.0	4.3	-3.8	2.2	0.1	0.8	0.1	0.8	1.5
EL	0.6	1.8	0.8	0.7	-2.4	0.4	-0.7	-0.3	-0.8	1.0	-1.7	:
E	-0.7	2.0	0.1	-1.0	1.8	-1.0	-0.4	2.5	-1.9	-0.9	2.4	-0.8
F	-0.2	0.6	0.3	-0.2	0.1	0.1	1.5	0.0	-0.4	0.6	0.3	0.1
IRL	-14.0	-0.2	4.6	11.2	-3.0	2.6	-1.0	:	:	:	:	:
I	-0.6	1.6	0.4	-0.7	2.5	-0.9	-0.8	1.3	0.1	-0.6	1.1	2.4
L	0.9	-1.1	-2.5	1.0	-0.4	1.6	-0.5	1.0	-3.9	-1.1	5.0	-1.7
NL	-3.6	3.9	1.4	-1.2	-0.1	2.1	-0.7	-0.6	0.0	-2.1	2.7	6.0
A	-1.7	3.8	1.8	0.0	2.2	-2.1	-0.7	2.7	-1.1	2.4	:	:
P	1.2	-3.7	-0.4	0.5	1.3	0.8	1.9	3.7	-1.2	-1.4	0.0	3.4
FIN	-2.4	-0.5	2.1	1.6	0.8	0.0	0.3	1.5	2.4	2.0	0.5	-1.4
S	2.1	2.2	1.7	3.0	-2.5	4.0	-3.0	-1.7	3.3	1.6	1.0	:
UK	-0.4	-0.3	0.7	0.8	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.4	-0.9	0.0	0.1	-0.6
NO	-2.1	2.1	0.8	-3.7	3.2	-3.9	4.7	-2.3	-0.4	3.0	-3.1	:

Table 3:Production index for total industry, latest growth rates, t/t-1 (%)

The latest rates of change for the production index within the main industrial groupings (MIGs) showed that the production index for the consumer durables sector grew by 2.5% in December 2000 (when compared to a month before), surpassing the growth of 1.7% registered in November 2000. These two large positive figures followed a decline of 1.1% in October 2000, and hence the recent evolution of the index was indicative of the fluctuating pattern of change seen during much of 2000.

European production of consumer non-durables continued its upward trend in December 2000, increasing by 1.8% in the EU and by 1.0% in the euro-zone (compared to the month before).

The most recent month on month growth rates in Italy and Germany reflected the high average growth rates for industrial production recorded in the EU during the month of December 2000 (up by 2.4% and 1.5% respectively). The production index was only moderately up in France (0.1%) and down in the United Kingdom (-0.6%), whilst these latter two countries had reported higher positive rates of change in November 2000 (output rising by 0.3% and 0.1% respectively). Italy and Germany both posted a considerable acceleration in their monthly rates (rising by 1.3 and 0.7 percentage points when compared to November 2000).

The differences between Member States were also observed when studying growth between December 1999 and December 2000. Using this measure, the production index rose by 1.8% in the United Kingdom and 3.0% in France, whilst the rates of growth were above 10% in Italy and Germany (13.1% and 10.3% respectively). Italy registered the highest increase of the Member States during the twelve months to December 2000.

Industrial production in Spain decreased by 0.8% in December 2000 compared to the month before. This monthly rate of change was as much as 3.2 percentage points below the rate for November 2000, in line with the erratic trend seen in Spanish industrial output during much of 2000.

There was no uniform trend to the pattern of development of the industrial production index in the remaining Member States. Month on month rates of change varied between -1.7% in Greece (November 2000) and 6.0% in the Netherlands (December 2000). Whilst in Greece and Finland the most recent rates of change indicated a considerable slowdown in output, other countries such as the Netherlands and Denmark reported more rapid growth towards the end of the year.

Producer price trends in the EU

	02-00	03-00	04-00	05-00	06-00	07-00	08-00	09-00	10-00	11-00	12-00	01-01
EU-15	0.4	0.4	0.1	0.6	0.4	0.4	0.2	0.9	0.6	0.3	-0.3	:
Euro-zone	0.5	0.5	0.3	0.7	0.4	0.5	0.3	1.0	0.7	0.1	-0.4	:
B	1.6	1.2	0.0	1.2	0.3	-0.3	2.3	1.8	1.2	-0.6	-1.7	:
DK	0.7	0.5	0.6	1.0	0.4	-0.2	0.7	0.9	0.3	-0.1	-1.2	:
D	0.2	0.0	0.4	0.6	0.3	0.7	0.3	0.9	0.5	0.2	-0.3	0.8
EL	1.1	1.2	-0.3	0.8	0.9	0.4	0.2	2.7	0.7	-0.1	-1.2	:
E	0.8	0.7	0.2	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.2	1.0	0.5	-0.1	-0.2	:
F	0.5	0.7	0.2	0.7	0.4	0.3	0.4	1.2	0.7	0.0	-0.8	:
IRL	0.1	0.5	0.9	0.7	0.5	0.5	0.2	0.6	0.7	-0.2	0.1	0.3
I	0.6	0.7	0.1	0.9	0.5	0.5	0.1	0.9	0.6	0.4	-0.1	:
L	-0.4	1.1	1.6	0.3	0.9	-0.1	-0.1	-1.4	0.2	0.7	0.2	0.2
NL	0.7	0.6	0.6	0.8	0.5	1.3	0.3	1.1	1.2	0.3	-0.6	:
A	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
P	0.4	2.3	1.3	-0.1	2.1	1.5	-0.4	1.3	2.9	0.7	-1.1	:
FIN	0.9	0.8	0.0	1.3	0.6	0.5	0.4	1.3	0.6	0.2	-0.6	-0.9
S	0.0	-0.1	-0.1	0.8	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.4	0.7	0.5	-0.2	:
UK	0.0	-0.3	-0.9	-0.1	0.3	0.1	-0.1	0.5	0.4	1.2	0.3	-0.5
NO	1.8	1.2	-2.7	4.2	1.4	-0.4	1.0	3.4	0.1	0.6	-4.6	-1.3

Table 4: Producer price index for total industry, latest growth rates, t/t-1 (%)

Within the four main industrial groupings in the EU, the intermediate goods sector was the only one to report a reduction in producer prices on the basis of a month on month comparison (down by 1.3% in December 2000).

Nevertheless, the intermediate goods sector continued to report the highest price increases amongst the main industrial groupings on the basis of a comparison with the same month of a year before, as prices rose by 9.1% between December 1999 and December 2000, although this was well below the 13.0% increase that was recorded in October 2000.

The upward trend of the producer price index has slowed since autumn 2000 across the EU. However, in Germany and Ireland price increases returned to higher rates (up by 0.8% and 0.3% respectively in January 2001 when compared to a month before).

The fastest decline in prices was recorded in Belgium, with a reduction of 1.7% in December 2000, followed by Denmark, Greece (both down by 1.2%) and Portugal (down by 1.1%) - all for December 2000. Nevertheless, these countries (except for Denmark) were amongst those that continued to record some of the highest price increases when comparing the index between December 1999 and December 2000: Portugal (13.4%), the Netherlands (9.4%), Belgium (7.2%) and Greece (6.8%).

Within the five largest Member States the most pronounced decline in prices was recorded in France, where total industry prices were down by 0.8% in December 2000 compared to a month before. There were moderate rates of change in Italy (-0.1%) and Spain (-0.2%) - both December 2000 - whilst prices fell by 0.5% in the United Kingdom in January 2001.

Measuring the change compared to the same month of the previous year, industrial prices were growing in all of the larger Member States, although usually at a slower pace than in the autumn of 2000. The latest increases ranged from 0.9% in the United Kingdom (between January 2000 and 2001) to 6.2% in Italy (between December 1999 and 2000).

Employment trends in the Triad and Member States

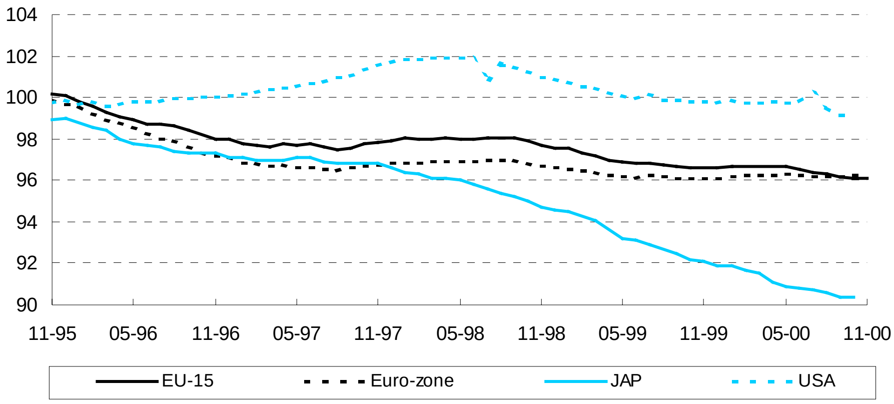

Figure 4: Employment index for total industry (1995 = 100)

Recent growth (t/t-1)	EU-15	Euro-zone	JAP	USA
08-00	-0.1	0.0	-0.1	-0.6
09-00	-0.1	0.1	-0.2	-0.4
10-00	-0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
11-00	0.0	0.0	:	:

Table 5: Industrial employment, latest growth rates (%)

Industrial employment in the EU remained unchanged in November 2000 compared to a month before (0.0%), following a series of gradual month on month reductions that were observed since June 2000. As a result of these recent trends, the rate of decline calculated on the basis of a comparison with the same month of a year before fell to -0.6% in November 2000. In the euro-zone the industrial employment index was stable in November 2000 when compared to October 2000, and it grew by 0.1% when compared to November 1999 - the third consecutive month that such a rate was recorded.

In both of the other two Triad members the employment index showed no change (0.0%) in October 2000 compared to the month before. When looking at the change between October 1999 and October 2000, industrial employment in the USA fell by 0.7%, whilst the Japanese rate of decline was equal to 2.0%, a slight improvement when compared to the rate for September 2000 (-2.3%).

	I-00	II-00	III-00	IV-00	07-00	08-00	09-00	10-00	11-00	12-00
EU-15	-0.7	-0.3	-0.5	:	-0.5	-0.5	-0.5	-0.5	-0.6	:
Euro-zone	-0.2	0.1	0.0	:	-0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1	:
B	1.1	1.3	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
DK	-1.8	1.0	-2.3	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
D	-0.9	-0.1	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.4
EL	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
E	2.6	3.2	3.5	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
F	0.6	1.0	1.4	1.7	:	:	:	:	:	:
IRL	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
I	-1.6	-2.2	-2.4	:	-2.6	-2.5	-2.2	-2.7	:	:
L	1.1	1.3	1.3	:	1.5	1.1	1.3	1.6	1.9	:
NL	0.2	0.2	0.3	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
A	-0.7	0.2	0.8	:	0.8	0.8	0.7	1.1	:	:
P	-2.8	-2.3	-2.1	:	-2.0	-2.1	-2.1	-2.0	-1.3	:
FIN	3.3	2.2	-0.2	-0.1	:	:	:	:	:	:
S	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
UK	-2.8	-2.2	-2.4	:	-2.3	-2.5	-2.5	-2.6	-2.7	:
NO	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:

Table 6: Employment index for total industry, latest growth rates, compared to a year before (%)

Construction in the EU

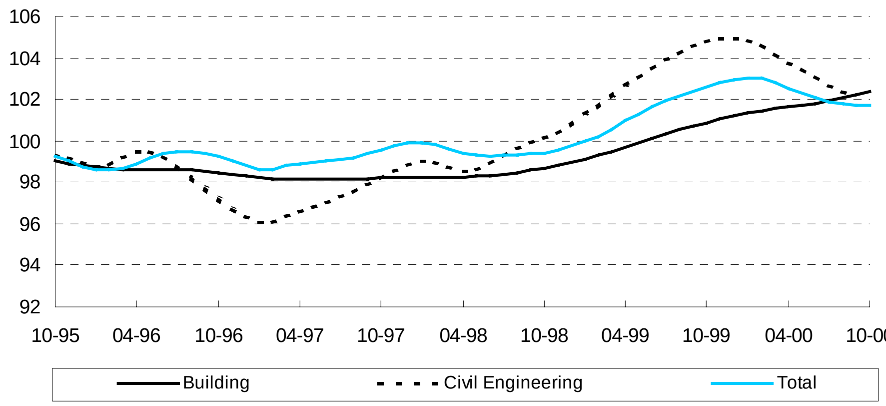

Figure 5: Construction output in the EU (1995 = 100)

The production index for construction in the euro-zone rose on the basis of a month on month comparison by 2.5% in December 2000. Output in the construction sector rose by 4.2% in the euro-zone in the twelve months to December 2000.

The number of building permits issued in the EU was falling by 2.1% in July 2000 when compared to July 1999. More recent data was available for some Member States, which indicated a continuation of the downward trend. In the United Kingdom 3.4% less building permits were issued in November 2000 than in the same month of the previous year.

EU input prices for new residential buildings increased by 0.2% in October 2000 compared to the month before, at a similar pace to that displayed during much of 2000. Prices increased by 3.2% between October 1999 and October 2000 in the EU.

Within the euro-zone construction input prices remained unchanged (0.0%) in November 2000, when compared to a month before. The month on month growth rate for input prices in the euro-zone diminished steadily during the course of the second half of 2000.

Retail trade and new car registrations in the EU

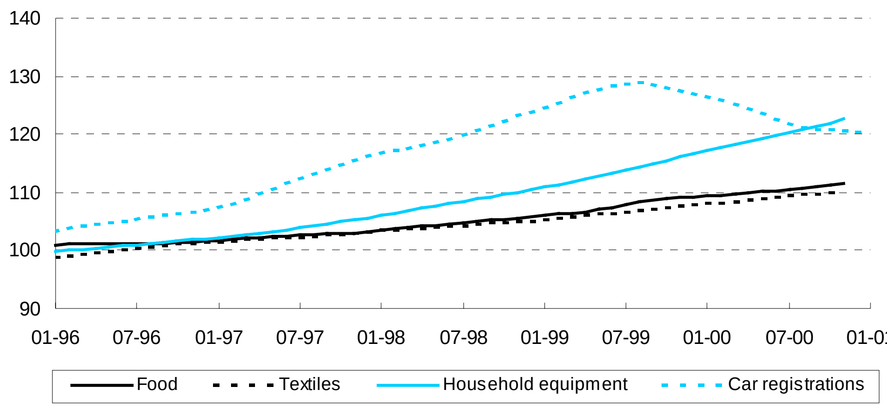

Figure 6: Retail sales turnover and new car registrations in the EU (1995 = 100)

Retail sales volumes in the EU were 0.3% higher in November 2000 than in October 2000, in line with the general upward trend observed during 2000. In the twelve months to November 2000, retail sales increased by 1.9%. In the euro-zone the growth of retail sales was somewhat slower (as had been the case throughout most of 2000), with sales growth equal to 1.3% compared to the same month of the year before in December 2000, whilst compared to the month before sales volumes in the euro-zone rose by 0.3%.

The most rapid growth was reported in Ireland (9.4%, October 2000), Luxembourg and Belgium (5.8% and 5.4% respectively) - both November 2000.

The number of new car registrations in the EU went up by 1.6% in January 2001 compared to a month before, following a decline of 1.9% in December 2000. However, using a comparison of one month with the same month of the previous year the rate of change continued to follow a negative evolution, down 0.6% in January 2001 - the eighth negative rate in succession. The downward trend was also evident in the euro-zone, where new car registrations fell by 0.8% in January 2001 compared to January 2000.

Amongst the Member States there were an increasing number of car registrations in Luxembourg (13.1%, in the twelve months to January 2001), France (12.7%), Italy (2.7%), Germany (2.4%), Sweden (1.7%) and the United Kingdom (1.5%).

Business cycle at a glance

	Industrial production	Industrial producer prices	Industrial new orders	Industrial employment	Construction	Building permits	Retail trade	Car regis-trations
EU-15	↗↗ 12-00	↗↗ 12-00	↗ 11-00	↘↘ 11-00	→ 10-00	↘ 07-00	↗↗ 11-00	→ 01-01
Euro-zone	↗↗ 12-00	↗↗ 12-00	↗ 11-00	→ 11-00	↗↗ 12-00	↘ 07-00	↗↗ 11-00	↘ 01-01
B	↗↗ 12-00	↗↗ 12-00	→ 11-00	↘ 11-00	↗ 12-00	→ 10-00	↗↗ 11-00	↘ 01-01
DK	↗ 12-00	↗ 12-00	↗↗ 12-00	↘↘ 09-00	:	→ 09-00	↗ 10-00	↘ 01-01
D	↗↗ 12-00	↗↗ 01-01	↗↗ 12-00	→ 12-00	↗↗ 12-00	↘↘ 07-00	↘↘ 12-00	→ 01-01
EL	↘ 11-00	↗↗ 12-00	:	:	:	:	↗ 10-00	↘ 01-01
E	→ 12-00	↗↗ 12-00	:	↗ 09-00	↗ 09-00	:	↗ 12-00	↘ 01-01
F	↗ 12-00	↗↗ 12-00	:	↗↗ 12-00	↗ 12-00	→ 12-00	:	→ 01-01
IRL	↗↗ 07-00	↗ 01-01	:	:	:	↗ 03-00	↗↗ 10-00	↘ 01-01
I	↗↗ 12-00	↗↗ 12-00	→ 11-00	↘↘ 10-00	↗ 06-00	:	→ 11-00	→ 01-01
L	↘ 12-00	↗ 01-01	:	↗↗ 11-00	→ 11-00	↗ 11-00	→ 10-00	↗ 01-01
NL	↗↗ 12-00	↗↗ 12-00	→ 12-00	↗↗ 09-00	↗ 12-00	↘↘ 08-00	↗↗ 11-00	↗↗ 01-01
A	↗ 10-00	:	↗↗ 10-00	→ 10-00	→ 10-00	:	↗↗ 11-00	→ 01-01
P	→ 12-00	↗↗ 12-00	:	↘↘ 11-00	:	→ 11-00	↗ 11-00	↘↘ 01-01
FIN	↗↗ 12-00	→ 01-01	:	→ 12-00	↘↘ 09-00	↘ 10-00	↗ 11-00	↘↘ 01-01
S	↗↗ 11-00	↗↗ 12-00	:	:	:	:	→ 12-00	↘ 01-01
UK	↘↘ 12-00	↗↗ 01-01	→ 12-00	↘↘ 11-00	↘↘ 09-00	→ 05-00	↗↗ 12-00	→ 01-01
NO	↗ 11-00	↘ 01-01	:	:	:	:	:	↗ 01-01

Table 7: Business cycle at a glance, seasonally adjusted series, latest month available (%)[1]

Growth rates[2]: ↗↗ High growth; ↗ Moderate growth; → No change; ↘ Moderate decline; ↘↘ Large decline

(1) Producer prices: gross data.

(2) The growth rates compare the last three months with the previous three months period in relation to the standard deviation of each individual series since January 1995: high growth: $>\sigma$; moderate growth: $0.3\sigma \rightarrow \sigma$; no change: $-0.3\sigma \rightarrow 0.3\sigma$; moderate decline: $-\sigma \rightarrow -0.3\sigma$; large decline: $<-\sigma$

Further information:

Reference publications

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Databases

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