

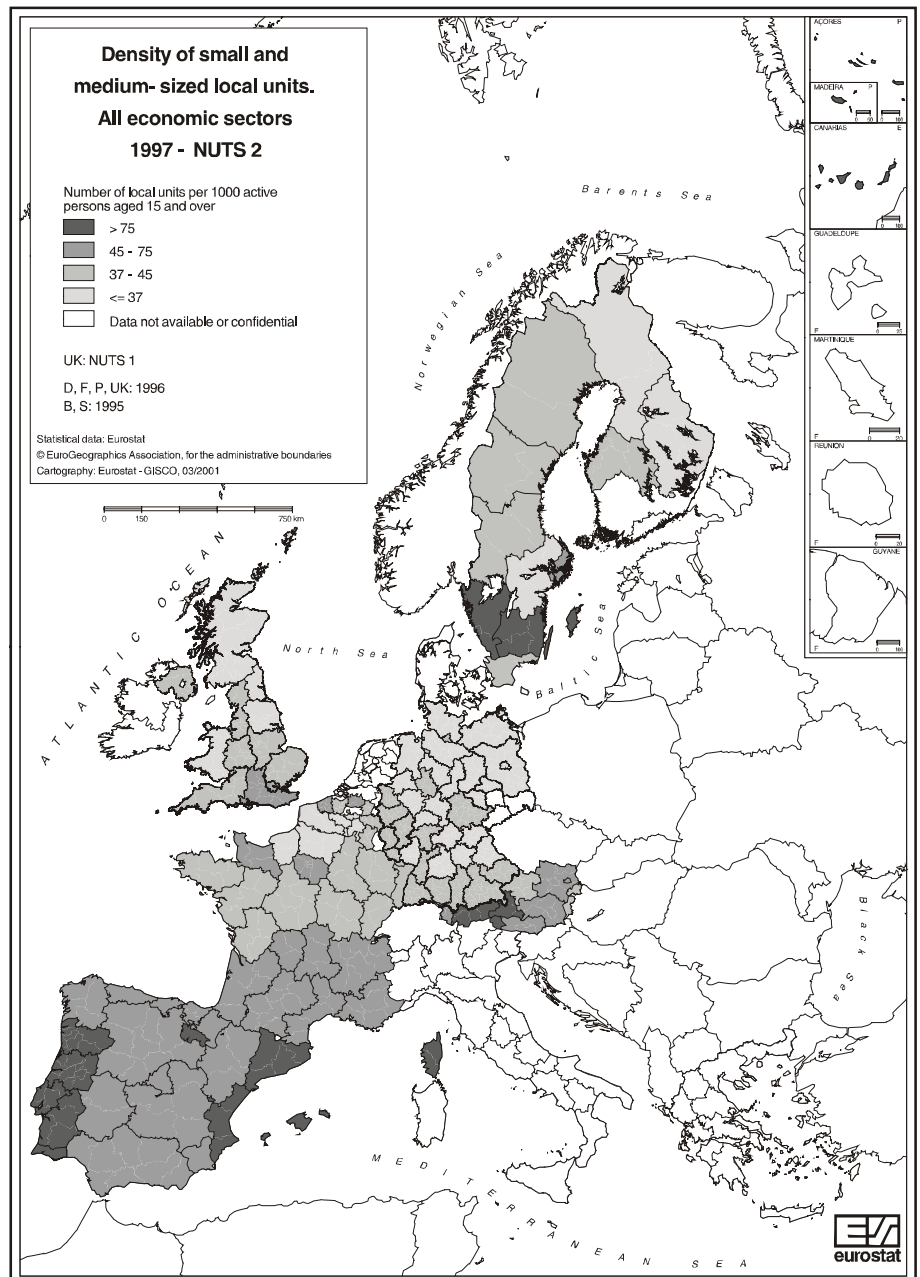
SME REGIO

High density of SMEs in southern Europe

by Aurora Ortega Sánchez

Main results

- Higher density of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the southern regions of the European Union;
- Large enterprises are mainly located in the central regions of Europe;
- Relative low employment rate in regions with low density of large enterprises;
- Regions with the highest R&D business expenditure show a high concentration of large units



*Map 1: Density of small and medium-sized local units [1997]
Source: Eurostat, SME database*

Statistics in focus

INDUSTRY, TRADE AND SERVICES

THEME 4 – 17/2001

SECTORIAL PROFILES

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High density of SMEs in the south of the European Union

There are more than 18 million of Small and medium-sized enterprises, SMEs, (with less than 100 employees) in the European Union. This represents 51 small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) per 1000 inhabitants in 1997. These units were not uniformly spread over all European Union regions (see map 1).

5 of the 7 regions with the highest density of SMEs in Europe belong to Portugal. Spain also reported high density of SMEs: all Spanish regions accounted densities above the EU average. 4 Spanish regions are placed in the 15 regions with the highest density of SMEs: La Rioja (78), Cataluña (83), Baleares (103), Canarias (79). France accounted no regions whose density of SMEs is higher than 75 units per 1000 inhabitants. In Austria, SMEs are mainly concentrated in two regions: in Salzburg (79) and in Tirol (85). No

data are available for Italy and Greece. High densities of SMEs can however be expected in these countries.

Hence, regions with a high density of SMEs are concentrated in the south (south of France and southern Member States: Spain, Portugal). As an exception, in the north, two Swedish regions however show a high concentration of SMEs: Småland med öarna (82) and Västsverige (137).

Related to regions with a low density of small structures, two facts are particularly remarkable. First, 4 of the 7 European regions that show the lowest density of SMEs are located in Germany. All these regions show a density lower than 36 SMEs per 1000 inhabitants. Second, the majority of these regions is characterised by an industrial decline or redeployment. Examples are the

North East of the UK (28), the Hainaut region in Belgium (31), regions of the Ruhr valley and former East German regions, or Nord – Pas-de-Calais in France (35).

Looking at the breakdown according to the five major sectors of the economy, trade and hotel and restaurant activities often take the highest proportion in regions with a high density of SMEs. The latter activities are related to tourism which is often run in small structures of trade, hotel and restaurant enterprises. Examples are the Baleares with 103 SMEs per 1000 inhabitants and a share of 19 % for hotels and restaurants, Canarias (77 and 19%), Corse (94 and 17%) and the Mediterranean coast of France - Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur (58 and 13%) and Languedoc-Roussillon (56 and 12%), Tirol (85 and 32%).

Member State	Number of SMEs per 1000 inhabitants	Breakdown by sector in percentage (%)							All sectors
		Industry and energy	Construction	Trade	Hotels and restaurants	Other services (except financial intermediation)			
Algarve	P	195	7	20	41	20	12	100	
Lisboa e Vale do Tejo	P	137	12	16	45	11	17	100	
Västsverige	S	137	16	13	35	5	32	100	
Alentejo	P	126	12	16	48	15	9	100	
Centro	P	125	15	20	45	10	10	100	
Norte	P	118	22	14	44	10	10	100	
Baleares	E	103	10	16	35	19	20	100	
Arnsberg	D	34	22	13	33	9	22	100	
Halle	D	34	16	18	33	9	25	100	
Namur	B	34	13	19	38	12	18	100	
Münster	D	34	19	13	36	9	22	100	
Hainaut	B	31	14	18	41	9	17	100	
Braunschweig	D	31	18	12	35	12	22	100	
North East	UK	28	:	:	:	:	:	:	

Table 1: Regions with the highest and the lowest density of SMEs expressed in number of SMEs per 1000 inhabitants and breakdown by sector [1997]

Source: Eurostat, SME database

The high density of SMEs in the sectors, transport and very high shares of SMEs (52 % in south of Europe can also be characterised by a higher population of SMEs in sectors where in other Member States large enterprises predominate (industrial and energy communications services and financial services). This structural differences are -in particular- evident in the chemical sector when southern European Member States showed and Spain, 42 % in Italy and 68 % in Portugal compared to a ratio for the whole EU of 28 % in 1994).

Large enterprises are mainly located in central regions of Europe

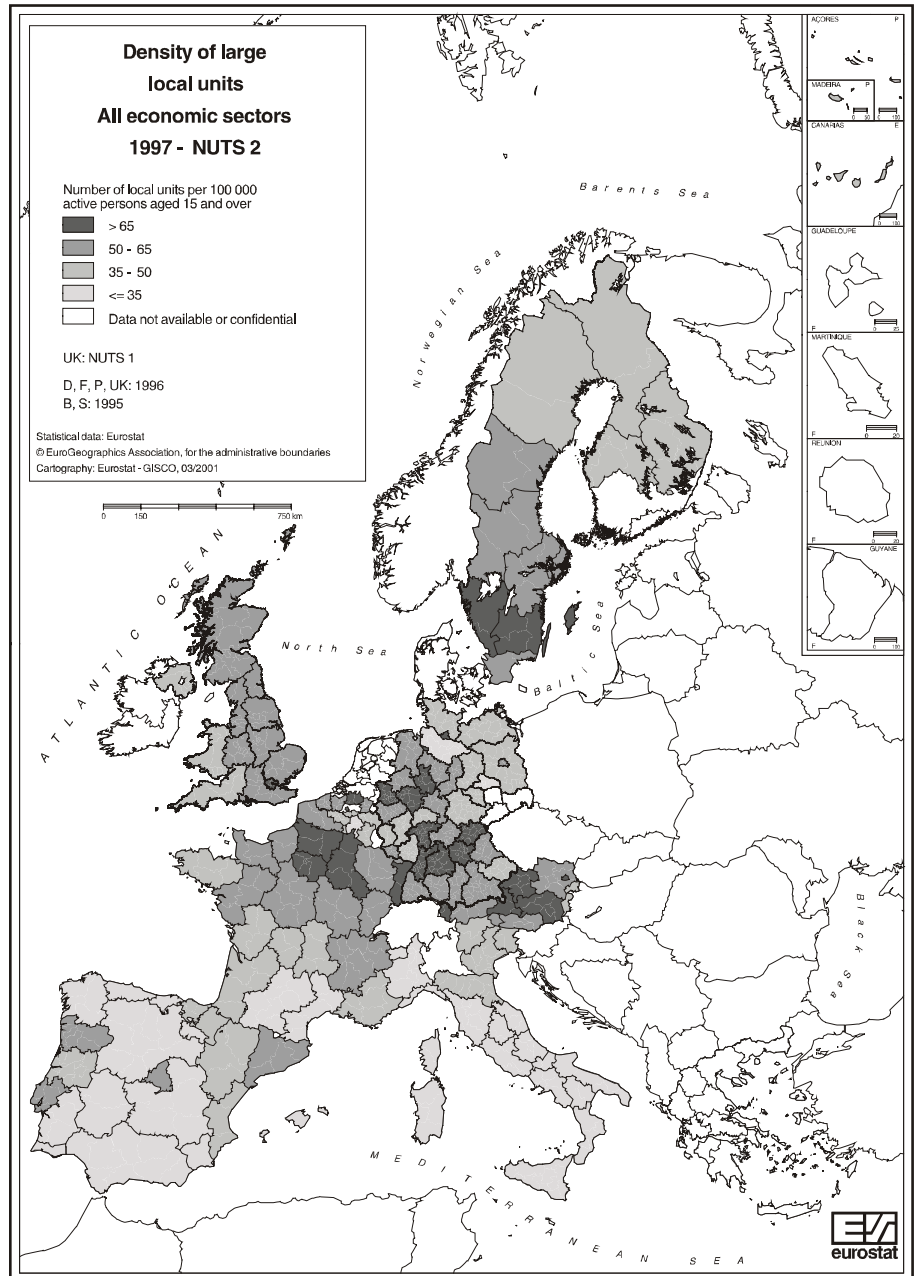
Enterprises with more than 100 employees generate more than one third of the whole employment and almost half of the total turnover.

On average, there were 56 large enterprises (LEs) per 100000 inhabitants in 1997. The distribution of large enterprises was rather uneven across the EU regions.

High densities of large enterprises are observed in the regions of Bruxelles-capitale (108), Ile-de-France (75), London (83), Wien (76) and in several German regions - Stuttgart (76), Freiburg (65), Oberfranken (77), Hamburg (75), Detmold (77) and Düsseldorf (76)-. Two Swedish regions (Västsvrige and Småland med öarna) also accounted 186 and 130 large enterprises per 100000 inhabitants. These values are amongst the highest in the European Union.

Except in Sweden, Italy and Germany, regions hosting the national capitals also show above average densities of large units. This could be explained by the concentration of headquarters of large enterprises in those regions.

However, Sweden, Italy and Germany do not follow this pattern. In Sweden the bulk of the enterprises is concentrated in the south of the country. Germany shows a federal structure with enterprises spread



Map 2: Density of large local units [1997]
Source: Eurostat, SME database

over many German regions. Italy is characterised by its disparity between the southern and northern regions (the ratio spreads between 43 large enterprises per 100 000 inhabitants in Trentino Alto on the one hand and 10-15 in southern Italy).

This dispersion is also observable in Spain in Comunidad de Madrid and Cataluña (with ratios of respectively 63 and 58) while other Spanish regions ranked between 48 and 0 enterprises per 100000 inhabitants.

Austria shows in many regions over-average results of the density ratio observed. This is in particular true for

the regions Oberösterreich, Wien, Salzburg and Vorarlberg.

Regions with a low density of large enterprise structures are often located in southern European regions, mainly in Spain, Italy and Portugal. 4 regions accounted less than 10 large units per 100000 inhabitants: La Rioja (9), Extremadura (8), Calabria (5) and Ceuta y Melilla (0).

Large enterprises mostly are found in the industry and energy sector. For a number of European regions, high shares are also recorded in "Other services". In regions such as Småland med öarna, Oberfranken or

Detmold more than 70 % of the large entities are active in the industry and energy sector. On the other hand other services activities (business services, transport services, etc.) show high shares in a number of Swedish and Italian regions, such as Västsverige, Puglia, Sicilia and Calabria.

Some regions based their development in tourism activities. In this case, the share of hotels and restaurants is significant: Algarve (50% of the large enterprises belong to hotels/restaurants business), Martinique (28%), Guadeloupe (40%), French Guiana (27%), Baleares (60%) and Canarias (36%).

	Member State	Number of large enterprises per 100000 inhabitants	Breakdown by sector in percentage (%)						All sectors
			Industry and energy	Construction	Trade	Hotels and restaurants	Other services (except financial intermediation)		
Västsverige	S	186	52	5	12	4	28	100	
Småland med öarna	S	130	71	3	10	0	16	100	
Région Bruxelles-cap.	B	108	20	7	24	6	43	100	
London	UK	83	:	:	:	:	:	100	
Oberösterreich	A	80	60	12	12	0	15	100	
Detmold	D	77	70	4	16	1	9	100	
Oberfranken	D	77	75	7	11	1	6	100	
Puglia	I	12	58	8	6	3	26	100	
Alentejo	P	11	83	0	4	4	9	100	
Sicilia	I	10	40	16	8	5	31	100	
La Rioja	E	9	:	:	:	:	:	100	
Extremadura	E	8	:	:	:	:	:	100	
Calabria	I	5	38	6	13	6	38	100	
Ceuta y Melilla	E	0	0	0	0	0	0	100	

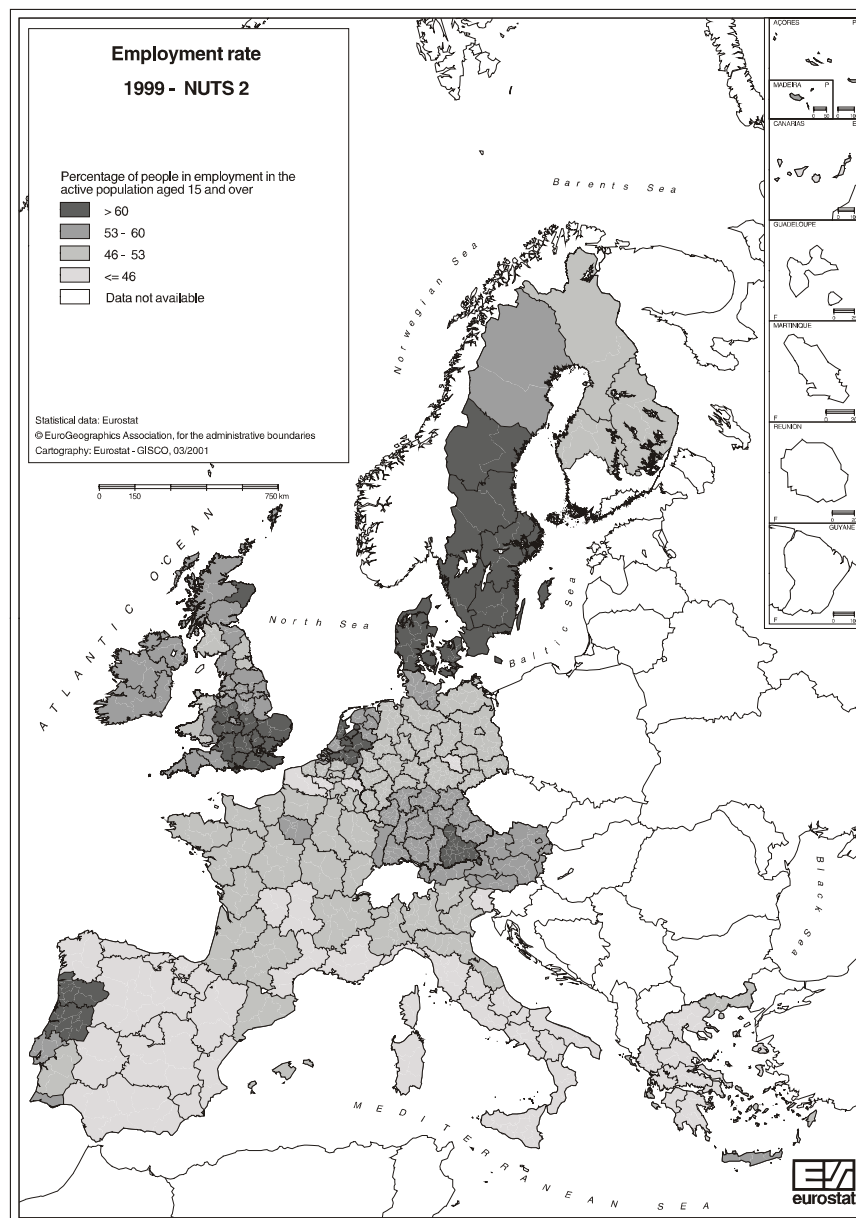
Table 2: Regions with the highest and the lowest density of large enterprises expressed in number of large enterprises per 100000 inhabitants and breakdown by sector [1997],

Source: Eurostat, SME database

Low employment rate in regions with low density of large enterprises

Often, regions with a low employment rate also show a low density of large enterprises but not necessarily a high concentration of SME. That is e.g. the case for Hainaut, in Belgium with an employment rate of 40,5 % in 1999 and only 31 SMEs per 1000 inhabitants. Another example is the region of Halle in Germany with an employment rate of 45,9 % and a density rate of SMEs of 34.

On the other hand, regions with a high employment rate often are characterized by a high density of enterprises, both SMEs and large enterprises. That is the case for Smaland med öarna (S) with an employment rate of 64.7 % and a density of SMEs of 82 per 1000 inhabitants and of large companies of 130 per 100000 inhabitants. Another example is Vastsverige in Sweden with respective results of 64,3 %, 137 and 186.



Map 3: Employment rate (%) [1999]
Source: Eurostat, REGIO database

R&D business expenditure: a matter of large units

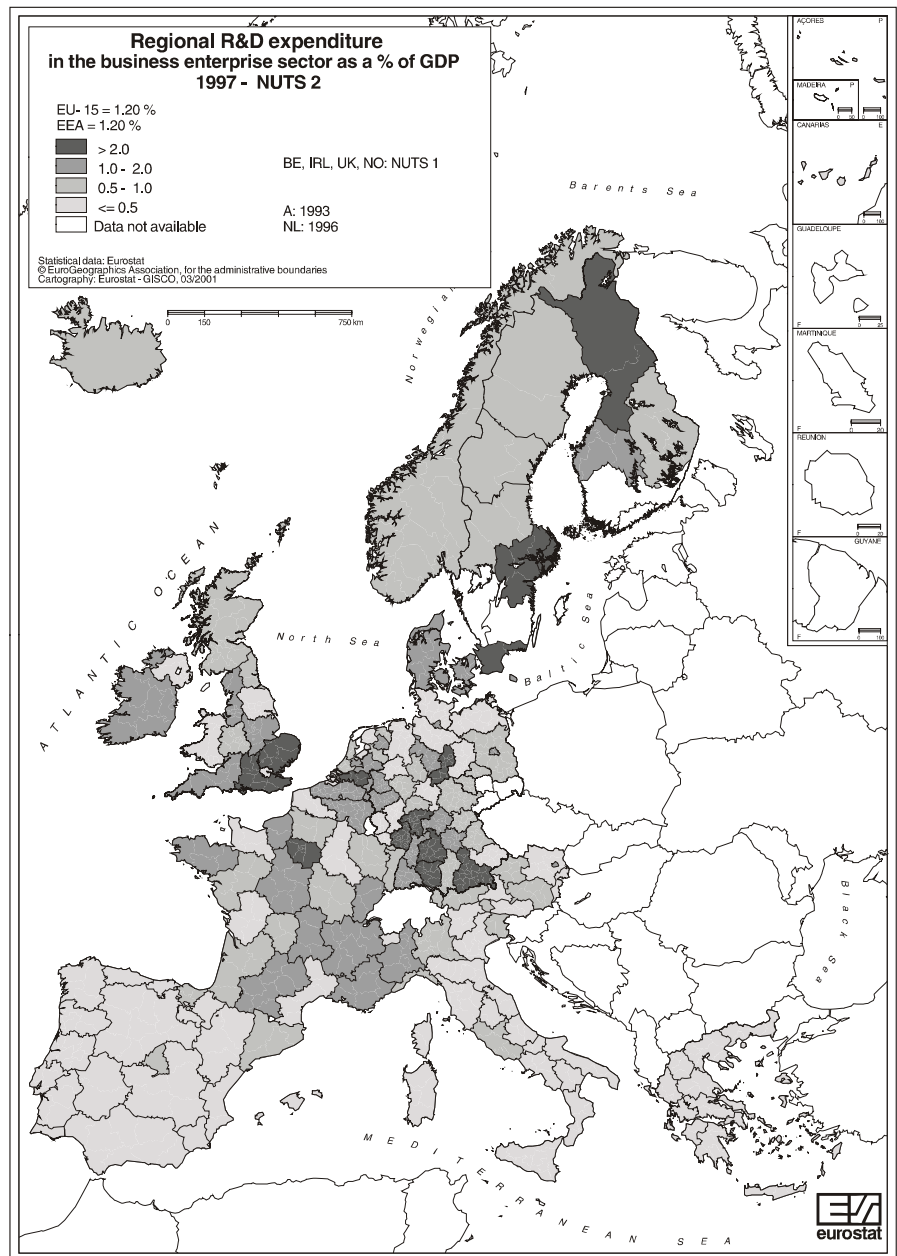
Research and Development (R&D) business expenditure in European regions shows two patterns.

First, there is a correlation between the density of large enterprises and R&D business expenditure: regions with high R&D business expenditure also show high concentration of large units. Stuttgart (with a R&D business expenditure ratio of 4,24 % and 76 large enterprises per 100000

inhabitants), Ile-de-France (2.26% and 75) and Stockholm (4.23% and 6) Table 3: Regional R&D expenditure, of enterprises as a % of GDP [1997], Source: Eurostat, ZRD2 database

L ; are together with a limited number of other regions exceptions to this correlation Both concentrate large enterprises (83 and 71) but their level of R&D expenditure is comparably low (0.47% and 0.4%). These particular results are possibly due to the economic sectors which are concentrated in those regions (e.g. financial services sectors in London or the sector of agriculture in the Champagne-Ardennes). Some of those sectors do have a priori low R&D business expenditure rates.

	Member State	Regional R&D expenditure of enterprises as a % of GDP
Stuttgart	D	4.24
Stockholm	S	4.23
Eastern	UK	3.41
Oberbayern	D	3.32
Tübingen	D	3.29
Braunschweig	D	2.96
Rheinessen-Pfalz	D	2.89
Ionia Nisia	EL	0.02
Voreio Aigaio	EL	0.02
Algarve	P	0.02
Baleares	E	0.01
Notio Aigaio	EL	0.01
Calabria	I	0.00
Açores	P	0.00



Map 4: Regional R&D expenditure in the business enterprise sector as a % of GDP [1997], Source: Eurostat, ZRD2 database

A second important observation is that regions with a high concentration of SMEs often show low rates of R&D business expenditure.

Southern European regions of France, Spain and Italy show the density of SMEs, such as Algarve, Corsica and Baleares, show even a very low rate of R&D expenditure economic activities carried out in those regions (such as agricultural or tourism activities).

➤ ESSENTIAL INFORMATION – METHODOLOGICAL NOTES

Databases used

This Statistics in Focus (SiF) is based on the annual enterprise statistics **SME** domain (Small and medium-sized enterprises, Theme 4), **REGIO** (Regional statistics, Theme 1) and **ZRD2** (R&D, Theme 9).

SME covers main economic indicators on small and medium-sized enterprises. SME data have been collected following a voluntary basis, which means that methodologies are not completely harmonised.

The data are broken down by NUTS regions and by standardised size classes. The size class boundaries are expressed in terms of employees (salaried employment): this allows to separate the sole proprietorships (size class zero) from the rest of the enterprise population, as they employ by definition only non-salaried staff, consisting of the entrepreneur and often family members or persons working under a very small contract.

REGIO is the domain of NewCronos relating to the main aspects of economic life in the European Union at regional level (NUTS).

ZRD2 domain contains data on R & D personnel and R & D expenditure by region at NUTS 2 level.

Specific definitions

Micro-enterprise: a micro-enterprise has fewer than 10 employees.

Small and medium-sized enterprise: a medium-sized enterprise has **fewer than 100 employees**.

Large enterprise: a large enterprise has **more than 100 employees**.

NUTS regions

The regional level refers to the geographical breakdown in the Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics (NUTS) (Regions, 1997 Statistical Yearbook; European Communities).

The current NUTS nomenclature subdivides (NUTS 99) the territory of the European Community into 78 NUTS 1 regions, **211 NUTS 2 regions** and 1093 NUTS 3 regions.

The Level I territorial units consist of a whole number of Level II units and the territorial units in Level II consist of a whole number of Level III units. The following countries are regarded as belonging to several levels: the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg (1, 2 and 3), Denmark (1 and 2), and Sweden and Ireland (1).

SME regional data are collected at NUTS 1 and NUTS 2 levels.

Sectors

Industry and Energy (NACE Rev 1 C Mining and quarrying, D Manufacturing and E Energy, Electricity, gas and water supply)

Construction (NACE Rev 1F Construction)

Trade (NACE Rev 1 G Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles, motorcycles and personal and household goods) Hotels and restaurants (NACE Rev 1H Hotels and

restaurants)

Other services (except financial intermediation (NACE Rev 1 I Transport, Transport, storage and communication and K Real estate, renting and business activities)

Download NUTS and NACE Rev.1 from the web: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/eurostat/ramon>

Number of units

For SME regional tabular data, the unit used is the local unit. The local unit is an enterprise or a part thereof (e.g. a workshop, factory, warehouse, office, mine or depot) situated in a geographically identified place. At or from this place economic activity is carried out for which (save for certain exceptions) one or more persons work (even only part-time) for one and the same enterprise.

Also, other statistical units have been used. Data for Portugal and the United Kingdom are for enterprises. This results, in particular, in overestimation of numbers of units in the Lisbon region, with underestimation in other Portuguese regions. Data for Germany and France are for establishments.

Number of employees

The number of employees is defined as those persons who work for an employer and who have a contract of employment and receive compensation in the form of wages, salaries, fees, gratuities, indemnities, piecework pay or remuneration in kind. The number of employees includes part-time workers, seasonal workers, persons on strike or on short-term leave, but excludes those persons on long-term leave.

Employment rate

Employment rate is the employment / population ratio that represents persons in employment as a percentage of the population of working age (labour force + inactive people). The labour force comprises all people aged 15 and over who are employed or unemployed but not inactive (pupils, students, people in compulsory military service, retired people).

Research and Development - R&D

Research and experimental development (R&D) comprise creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of man, culture and society and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise new applications (Frascati Manual, § 57). This term covers three activities: basic research, applied research, and experimental development.

Intramural expenditures are all expenditures for R&D performed within a statistical unit or sector of the economy, whatever the source of funds (Frascati Manual, § 335). It includes current expenditure such as employment costs or expenditure on materials, plus capital expenditure on, for example, buildings or equipment.

Business enterprise sector includes (Frascati Manual, § 145):

- all firms, organisations and institutions whose

primary activity is the market production of goods and services (other than higher education) for sale to the general public at a price intended approximately to cover at least the cost of production;

- the private non-profit institutes mainly serving them.

Please find more information on the web:

http://forum.europa.eu.int/irc/dsis/coded/info/d_ata/essai/coded_domains_en.htm

SME data

For the purpose of this SIF, the following NACE sections have been removed: Mining and quarrying (section C); Financial intermediation (section J); Education (section M); Health and social work (section N) and Other community, social and personal service activities (section O).

In Germany, data are not available for the following sectors: Recycling (division 37); Electricity, gas and water supply (section E).

In France, data are not available for the following NACE divisions: Water transport (division 61), Post and telecommunications (division 64) and Research and development (division 73).

Data used are from the regional data domain of the SME database with the exception of the UK. UK regional data were obtained directly from UK official sources (i.e. Department of Trade and Industry SME Statistics Unit, Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) Statistics for the United Kingdom, 1997; Office for National Statistics, Regional Trends 33, 1998 Edition).

In the chapter concerning regional density of SMEs (map1 and table 1), two Members States (Germany and Spain) did not supply some data broken down by sector for confidentiality reasons .

In the analysis of regional density of LEs (map2 and table 2), two Members States (Germany and Spain) did not supply some data broken down by sector for confidentiality reasons.

Density ratios are calculated taking into account working population (active persons aged 15 and over).

Further information:

➤ Databases

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Domains: sme, regio and zrd2

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