

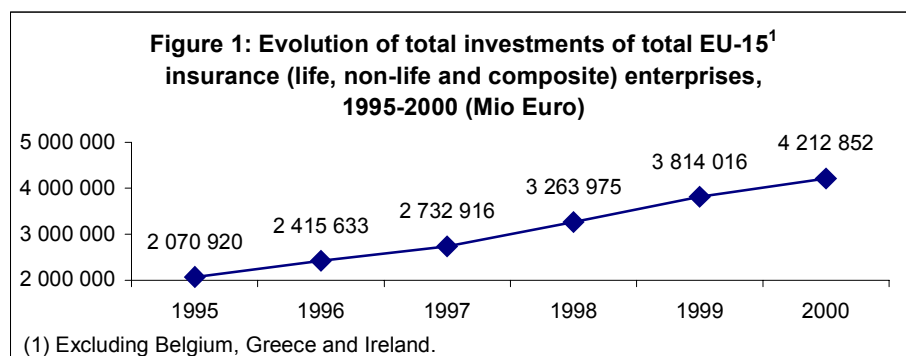
Insurance Services Statistics

Petra Sneijers

*Insurance enterprises are still major actors
in the financial markets*

Insurance enterprises' volume of investment has doubled between 1995 and 2000

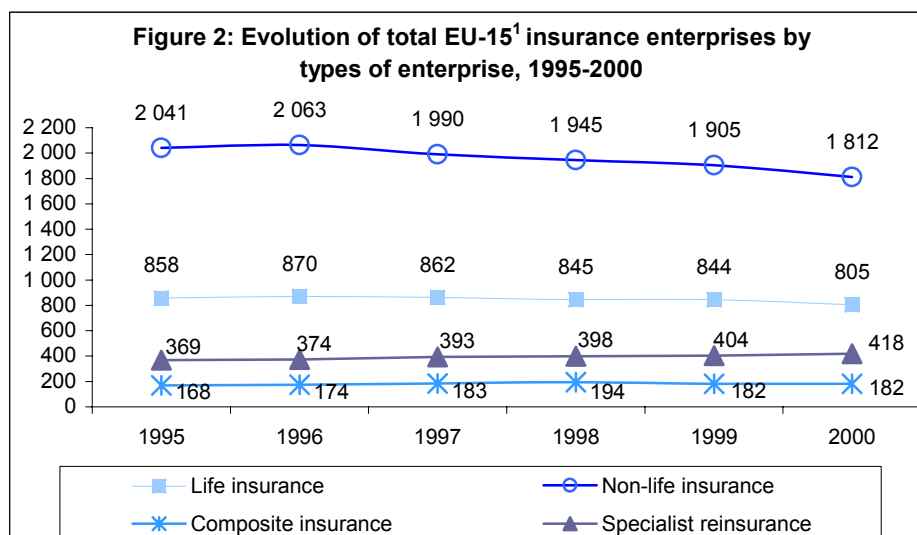
Insurance enterprises are one of the key institutional investors contributing to the development of European financial markets.



From 1995 to 2000, the total investments of insurance companies in the EU doubled and reached 4 213 billion EUR in 2000.

A still restructuring insurance sector

The total number of insurance enterprises declined by 6.4% between 1995 and 2000. Non-life insurance enterprises registered a significant decrease but they are still the most numerous: their population decreased by 11% during the period. Life insurance enterprises declined by 6%. Composite insurance enterprises (i.e. insurance enterprises carrying out life and non-life insurance business) and reinsurance enterprises increased by 8.3% and 13.3% respectively during the same period.



Statistics
in focus

INDUSTRY, TRADE
AND SERVICES

THEME 4 – 43/2002

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In 2000, the 3 217 insurance enterprises active in the European Union were made up of 1 812 non-life insurance enterprises, 805 life insurance enterprises, 418 specialist reinsurance enterprises and 182 composite insurance enterprises representing respectively 56%, 25%, 13% and 6% of the total number of insurance enterprises. Germany is the Member State that registered the highest number of insurance enterprises with 479 enterprises, followed by France (462), the United Kingdom (398), the Netherlands (367), and Luxembourg (344).

Five Member States account for 70% of the total number of non-life insurance enterprises: Germany (17.4%), France (16.7%), the Netherlands (14.7%), Spain (10.7%) and the United Kingdom (10.5%). Between 1995 and 2000, the number of non-life enterprises declined in all the Member States except Sweden and Portugal where it increased by 1.8% and 8% respectively

The Member States that register the highest number of life insurance companies across the EU are almost the same as those leading the non-life markets. The United Kingdom (17.6%), Germany (15.3%), the Netherlands (12.5%), Denmark (11.3%) and France (11.1%) represent altogether 67.8% of the total number of life insurance enterprises.

Composite insurance enterprises only exist in 9 Member States and are mainly present in Spain (34.1% of the total number of composite insurance businesses), France (20.9%) and Austria (17.6%). France registered the highest increase in the number of composite insurance enterprises (3 700%) as this type of enterprise was introduced by law in 1995.

Specialist reinsurance enterprises (data is not available for Member States) are very geographically concentrated as 63.2% of them are located in Luxembourg, 10.3% in the United Kingdom and 9.8% in Germany.

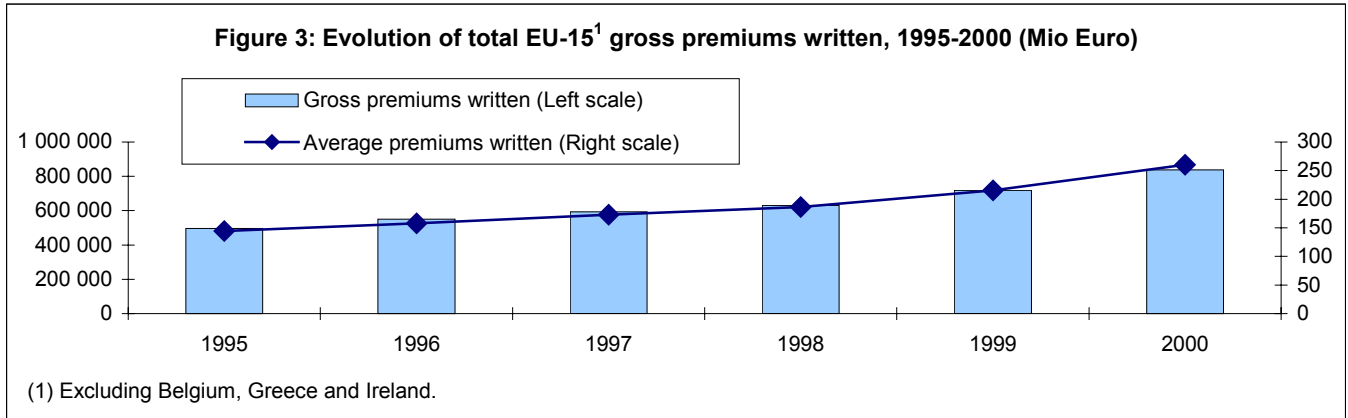
Table 1: Number of insurance enterprises, 2000

	Total insurance	Life insurance			Non-life insurance			Composite insurance			Specialist reinsurance		
		Number	% of EU-15 total	Growth 95/00	Number	% of EU-15 total	Growth 95/00	Number	% of EU-15 total	Growth 95/00	Number	% of EU-15 total	Growth 95/00
EU-15¹	3 217	805	100.0	:	1 812	100.0	:	182	100.0	:	418	100.0	:
EUR-12¹	2 434	534	66.3	:	1 382	76.3	:	159	87.4	:	359	85.9	:
B	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
DK	228	91	11.3	8.3	129	7.1	-15.1	-	-	-	8	1.9	60.0
D	479	123	15.3	-1.6	315	17.4	-6.5	-	-	-	41	9.8	28.1
EL	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
E	308	49	6.1	-15.5	193	10.7	-21.2	62	34.1	-13.9	4	1.0	-33.3
F	462	89	11.1	-35.0	302	16.7	-12.5	38	20.9	3 700.0	33	7.9	65.0
IRL	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	-	-	-	:	:	:
I	206	80	9.9	9.6	99	5.5	-22.7	20	11.0	-9.1	7	1.7	-12.5
L	344	56	7.0	36.6	24	1.3	0.0	0	0.0	:	264	63.2	12.8
NL	367	101	12.5	4.1	266	14.7	-5.0	-	-	-	:	:	:
A	58	5	0.6	-28.6	17	0.9	-19.0	32	17.6	-5.9	4	1.0	0.0
P	51	16	2.0	-5.9	27	1.5	8.0	7	3.8	-12.5	1	0.2	0.0
FIN	159	15	1.9	36.4	139	7.7	-9.7	-	-	-	5	1.2	-50.0
S	157	38	4.7	40.7	111	6.1	1.8	-	-	-	8	1.9	0.0
UK	398	142	17.6	-21.5	190	10.5	-14.0	23	12.6	-23.3	43	10.3	30.3
IS	14	3	-	-25.0	10	-	-28.6	-	-	-	1	-	0.0
N	108	14	-	55.6	94	-	-13.0	-	-	-	0	-	-100.0
EEA¹	3 339	822	-	:	1 916	-	:	-	-	:	419	-	:
CH	188	30	-	-3.2	114	-	18.8	-	-	-	44	-	69.2

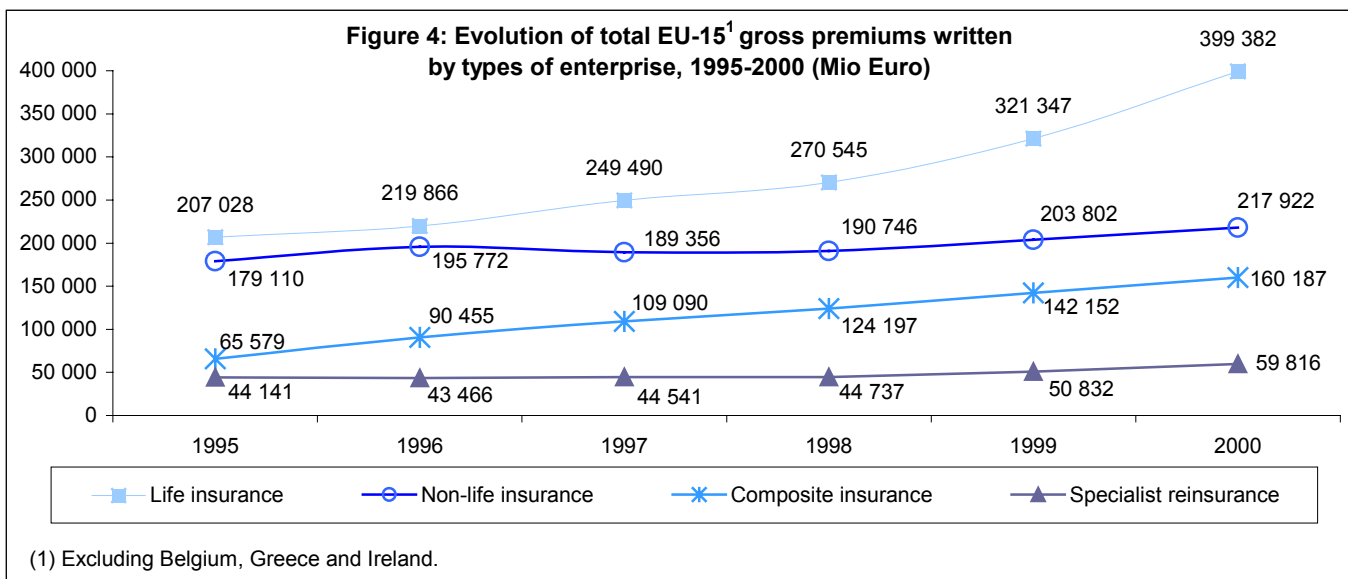
(1) For available data only.

A sharp growth of gross premiums written

The business activity of the insurance sector developed dramatically from 1995 to 2000 thanks to the progression of life insurance business and composite insurance business: their gross premiums written increased by 93% and 144% respectively in the European Union. In 2000, the average premiums written by insurance enterprises reached 260 million EUR, registering an increase of 81% between 1995 and 2000.



This increase in the average premiums written per insurance enterprise reflects several features. The concentration of businesses that occurred during the period and the slow increase in the price of insurance services that were necessary to absorb the consequences of the different natural disasters that occurred during 1999 and 2000 were the mains drivers of this evolution.



In 2000, life insurance business was still the leading insurance business in terms of gross premiums written. It registered the highest amount of gross premiums written at 399.4 billion EUR. Non-life insurance, composite insurance and specialist reinsurance enterprises followed with 217.9 billion EUR, 160.2 billion EUR and 59.8 billion EUR respectively.

Composite insurance businesses registered the highest growth of turnover as it multiplied by 2.4 between 1995 and 2000. This substantial increase is mainly the result of a significant increase in their life business activity. This increase may be explained by the shift in the nature of insurance enterprises (e.g. life insurance enterprises becoming composite insurance enterprises as they create and develop non-life insurance business) as well as by the creation of new insurance enterprises. The other types of insurance businesses have also registered an increase in their gross premiums written: life insurance, specialist reinsurance and non-life insurance businesses registered a growth in their turnover of 93%, 36% and 22% respectively.

Total investments are unevenly spread between the types of insurance enterprises

In 2000, the total investment of the insurance industry (excluding reinsurance enterprises) reached to 4 213 billion EUR. Between 1995 and 2000, this total volume of investment has multiplied by 2.

The total volume of investment is unevenly spread between the different types of insurance enterprises. At EU level, life insurance enterprises are the main investors. They represent 66.8% of the total volume of investment whereas composite and non-life insurance enterprises represent 22.6% and 10.6% respectively. This predominance of life insurance enterprises is found in all the Member States for which data is available except in Austria, Spain, France, Italy and Portugal where composite enterprises are the leaders in terms of volume of investment.

The item "other financial investments" (including shares and other variable-yield securities and units in units trusts, debt securities and other fixed-income securities, participation in investment pools, loans guaranteed by mortgages and other loans) amounted to nearly 2 870 billion EUR in the EU. Investments for the benefit of life-assurance policyholders who bear the investment risk represent the second investment items in terms of percentage of total investment. In the EU, it amounted to nearly 950 billion EUR. This represents 22.5% of the total volume of investment. Between 1995 and 2000, investments for the benefit of life-assurance policyholders who bear the investment risk multiplied by 3.6.

Lands and buildings, investments in affiliated enterprises and participating interests and deposits with ceding enterprises represent less than 15% of the total investment of each type of insurance enterprises.

Table 2: Total (Life, Non-life and Composite) insurance enterprises:

Main investment items, 2000

(Mio Euro)

	Total investments	Change 95/00 ²	Land and buildings	Change 95/00 ²	Investments in affiliated enterprises and participating interests	Change 95/00 ²	Other financial investments	Change 95/00 ²	Deposits with ceding enterprises	Change 95/00 ²	Investments for the benefit of life-assurance policyholders who bear the investment risk	Change 95/00 ²
EU-15¹	4 212 852	:	174 136	:	200 981	:	2 869 828	:	18 576	:	949 092	:
EUR-12¹	2 239 296	:	84 710	:	128 897	:	1 711 776	:	17 224	:	296 690	:
B	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
DK	123 958	1.65	3 610	1.55	15 223	1.54	104 873	1.67	11	0.10	:	:
D	749 370	1.51	21 664	0.91	40 645	1.71	673 850	1.52	2 143	1.29	11 068	3.72
EL	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
E	94 243	2.25	4 106	1.03	6 321	5.07	70 373	1.92	91	0.87	13 351	:
F	780 836	1.89	30 487	1.20	41 142	0.98	570 385	1.82	4 478	1.65	134 343	4.59
IRL	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
I	243 233	2.46	8 282	0.74	27 759	:	144 801	1.76	9 798	1.78	52 593	:
L	23 389	3.95	79	1.56	151	:	8 616	1.82	24	:	14 519	12.85
NL	250 297	1.56	12 967	1.50	7 262	1.13	165 328	1.47	447	1.07	64 294	1.98
A	45 545	1.40	3 283	1.08	1 846	1.41	39 131	1.40	155	0.96	1 130	115.48
P	21 547	2.52	1 140	0.98	763	0.42	17 496	3.27	45	3.95	2 102	9.51
FIN	30 837	2.78	2 701	0.97	3 007	4.98	21 796	2.85	43	0.86	3 290	213.42
S	219 115	2.42	11 326	2.35	9 663	1.56	176 438	2.28	995	:	20 693	9.93
UK	1 630 483	2.56	74 489	2.08	47 198	1.93	876 742	2.21	346	1.37	631 709	3.50
IS	631	1.74	35	1.57	34	0.00	551	1.64	1	:	10	:
N	52 726	1.77	4 973	2.33	1 121	0.00	45 391	1.70	13	:	1 227	:
EEA¹	4 266 209	:	179 144	:	202 136	:	2 915 771	:	18 590	:	950 329	:
CH	151 324	0.92	21 049	1.06	25 606	5.85	94 140	0.68	4 008	:	6 520	:

(1) For available data only.

(2) The proportional change is calculated on available data only. Proportional change: 2000 divided by 1995.

Table 3: Distribution of main investment items in % of total investments by types of enterprises, 2000 (%)

	Land and buildings			Investments in affiliated enterprises and participating interests			Other financial investments		
	Life (%)	Non-life (%)	Composite (%)	Life (%)	Non-life (%)	Composite (%)	Life (%)	Non-life (%)	Composite (%)
EU-15¹	3.49	5.12	5.56	2.89	14.90	5.59	64.43	79.03	73.94
EUR-12¹	3.11	6.29	3.86	3.29	12.31	7.45	78.08	80.50	70.81
B	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
DK	3.08	0.94	-	10.29	35.42	-	86.42	63.55	-
D	2.65	3.73	-	3.99	10.32	-	91.30	85.23	-
EL	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
E	1.02	14.12	5.65	5.11	9.05	7.68	74.22	76.28	74.80
F	3.30	10.39	2.85	2.65	18.50	4.12	76.58	69.52	71.31
IRL	:	:	-	:	:	-	:	:	-
I	0.56	9.28	5.29	3.15	3.73	20.33	54.39	86.63	60.62
L	0.10	3.31	0.00	0.57	1.64	0.00	32.23	95.04	0.00
NL	5.67	1.32	-	2.48	6.20	-	62.72	92.11	-
A	1.64	12.75	7.29	0.28	9.05	4.03	85.74	78.05	86.43
P	1.55	19.58	5.84	2.05	11.05	3.38	76.89	67.64	88.20
FIN	7.27	12.12	-	2.20	26.81	-	74.96	61.02	-
S	5.73	2.76	-	2.93	10.74	-	79.68	84.11	-
UK	3.62	1.24	8.61	1.78	27.91	2.24	45.74	70.42	79.57
IS	8.37	5.38	-	0.00	5.79	-	65.45	88.68	-
N	10.04	5.86	-	0.31	12.84	-	86.93	81.13	-
EEA¹	3.60	5.14	5.56	2.85	14.85	5.59	64.78	79.07	73.94
CH	15.33	10.33	-	7.86	39.80	-	70.53	41.21	-
	Deposits with ceding enterprises			Investments for the benefit of life-assurance policyholders who bear the investment risk					
	Life (%)	Non-life (%)	Composite (%)	Life (%)	Non-life (%)	Composite (%)			
EU-15¹	0.14	0.95	1.09	29.05	-	13.82			
EUR-12¹	0.30	0.90	1.69	15.23	-	16.18			
B	:	:	:	:	-	:			
DK	0.00	0.09	-	0.21	-	-			
D	0.16	0.73	-	1.91	-	-			
EL	:	:	:	:	-	:			
E	0.00	0.55	0.11	19.65	-	11.76			
F	0.88	1.60	0.11	16.58	-	21.62			
IRL	:	:	-	:	-	-			
I	0.01	0.36	8.36	41.88	-	5.40			
L	0.11	0.01	0.00	66.99	-	0.00			
NL	0.15	0.38	-	28.98	-	-			
A	0.00	0.15	0.38	12.34	-	1.88			
P	0.00	1.73	0.09	19.51	-	2.50			
FIN	0.18	0.05	-	15.39	-	-			
S	0.00	2.39	-	11.65	-	-			
UK	0.00	0.43	0.01	48.85	-	9.57			
IS	0.00	0.15	-	26.19	-	-			
N	0.00	0.17	-	2.72	-	-			
EEA¹	0.14	0.94	1.09	28.63	-	13.82			
CH	0.27	8.66	-	6.02	-	-			

"Reading:
At EU-15 level, 3.49% of the total investment of life insurance enterprises are invested in lands and buildings"

(1) For available data only.

The investment behaviour of insurance companies highlights their role as institutional investors. It is important to underline that differences in asset evaluation methods still remain within the EEA countries. For example, investments are recorded at market value in the United Kingdom and at book value in France. This is particularly important to consider when describing financial investments.

Shares and other variable-yield securities, units in units trusts, debt securities and other fixed-income securities, participation in investment pools, loans guaranteed by mortgages and other loans (henceforth other financial investments) altogether account for more than 65% of the total investment portfolio of insurance companies in the EU. This portfolio profile is found for all types of insurance enterprises in all the Member States except the United Kingdom and Luxembourg: British and Luxemburgish life insurance companies preferred investment is investments for the benefit of life assurance policyholders who bear the investment risk.

**Table 4: Total (Life, Non-life and Composite) insurance enterprises:
Breakdown of other financial investments, 2000**

(Mio Euro)

	Other financial investments	Shares and other variable-yield securities and units in unit trusts	Debt securities and other fixed-income securities	Participation in investments pools	Loans guaranteed by mortgages	Other loans	Other (incl. deposits with credit institutions)
EU-15¹	2 869 828	984 011	1 600 738	5 133	102 738	65 733	84 022
EUR-12¹	1 711 776	387 444	1 095 343	4 383	95 730	60 919	40 503
B	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
DK	104 873	37 937	65 896	0	395	199	445
D	673 850	188 151	371 903	:	64 442	11 459	10 441
EL	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
E	70 373	3 335	50 315	3 823	643	860	11 397
F	570 385	107 602	447 284	0	251	10 817	4 431
IRL	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
I	144 801	21 295	120 478	0	996	152	1 880
L	8 616	878	7 225	0	1	36	476
NL	165 328	43 423	56 117	560	28 352	27 132	9 743
A	39 131	12 475	15 308	0	781	10 224	343
P	17 496	3 766	12 308	0	32	24	1 365
FIN	21 796	6 518	14 406	0	232	215	426
S	176 438	79 936	90 894	0	219	1 708	3 682
UK	876 742	478 694	348 604	750	6 394	2 907	39 392
IS	551	192	137	0	199	23	0
N	45 391	15 170	25 896	0	1 518	1 566	1 241
EEA¹	2 915 771	999 373	1 626 771	5 133	104 455	67 322	85 262
CH	94 140	40 922	14 469	0	19 689	9 086	4 346

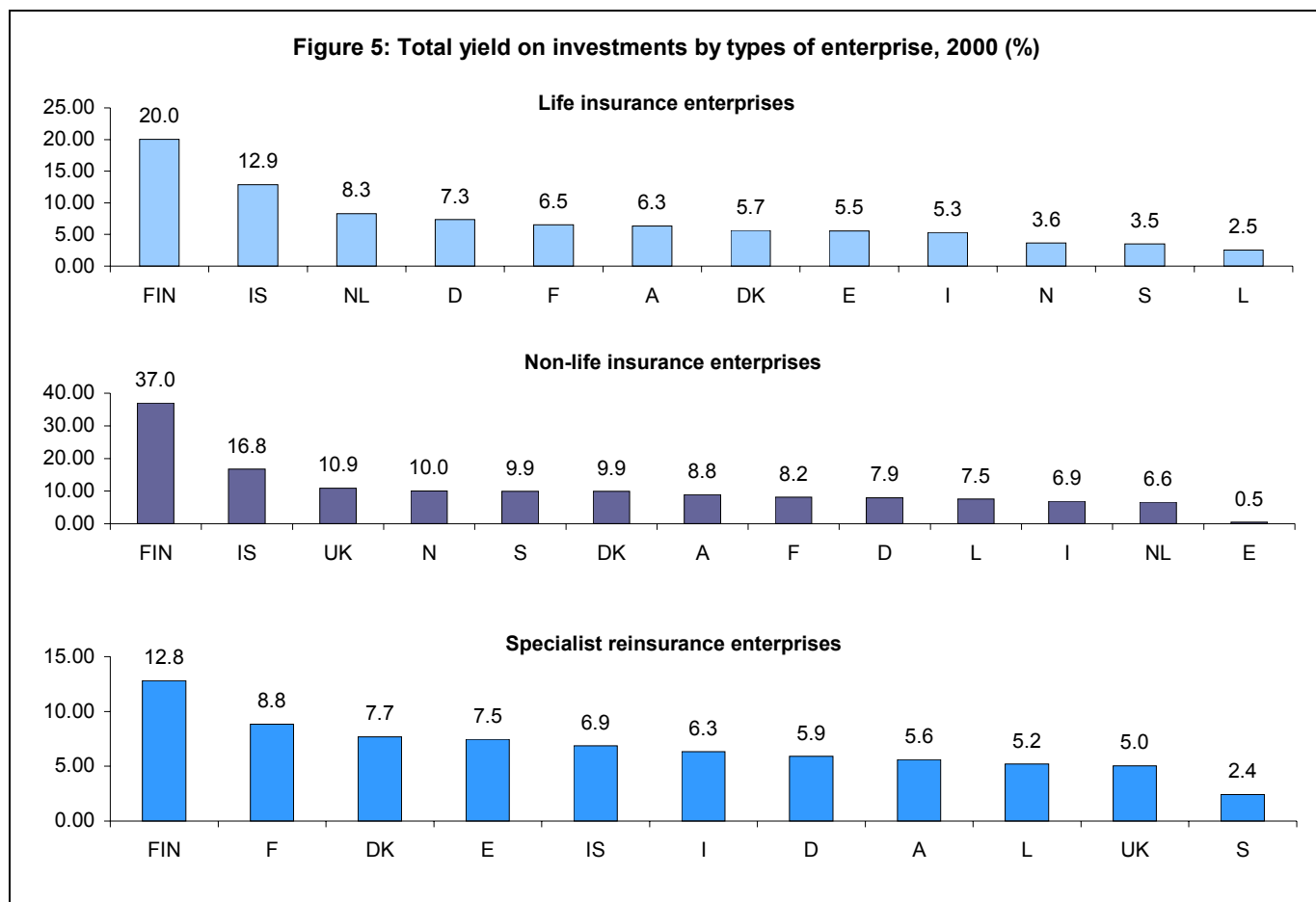
(1) For available data only.

Debt securities and other fixed-income securities, shares and other variable-yield securities and units in units trusts represent around 90% of the financial investment of insurance enterprises. They amounted to 1 600 billion EUR and 984 billion EUR respectively. Debt securities and other fixed-income securities is the preferred investment item in all the Member States except the United Kingdom, where shares and other variable-yields securities are preferred.

In 2000, debt securities and other fixed-income securities represented the main item of the financial investments of insurance enterprises: they accounted for 56% of their financial portfolio. Shares and other variables-yields securities and units in units trusts were the second item with 34.2% of financial investment.

In 2000, the United Kingdom was the Member State where the total amount of investment in financial assets was the most substantial: it reached 877 billion EUR. British insurance enterprises are the largest investors in shares and other variable-yield securities and units in units trusts as well as in debt securities and other fixed-income securities with a total amount invested of 479 billion EUR and 349 billion EUR respectively. German and French insurance enterprises follow with 674 billion EUR and 570 billion EUR respectively invested in financial assets.

The total yield on investment (i.e. investment income together with capital gains compared with total investment) provide insights about the profitability of the amounts invested in the market. It depends on the financial management of insurance enterprises as well as on the performance of the different financial markets.



The total yield on investment of European life insurance enterprises ranged from 2.5% in Luxembourg to 20% in Finland¹ in 2000. It is remarkable that the total yield on investment of European life insurance decreased in 10 countries out of 12 for which data is available between 1999 and 2000. Only Finland and the Netherlands have registered an increase in the total yield on investment between 1999 and 2000.

Non-life insurance enterprises registered total yields on investment that ranged from 0.5% in Spain to 37% in Finland.

The total yield on investment of specialist reinsurers ranged from 2.4% in Sweden to 12.8% in Finland.

The performances of insurance enterprises are heterogeneous within the European Union and according to the different types of insurance enterprises. For all the countries for which data is available except the Netherlands and Spain, the total yield on investments of non-life insurance enterprises is above the total yield on investment of life insurance and specialist reinsurance enterprises. This may be explained by the different nature and the different terms of the risk insured by these different types of insurance enterprises.

¹ In Finland, the investments are carried in the Balance sheet according to the historical or the market value, whichever is the lower one.

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