

Statistics in focus

INDUSTRY, TRADE AND SERVICES

THEME 4 –24/1999

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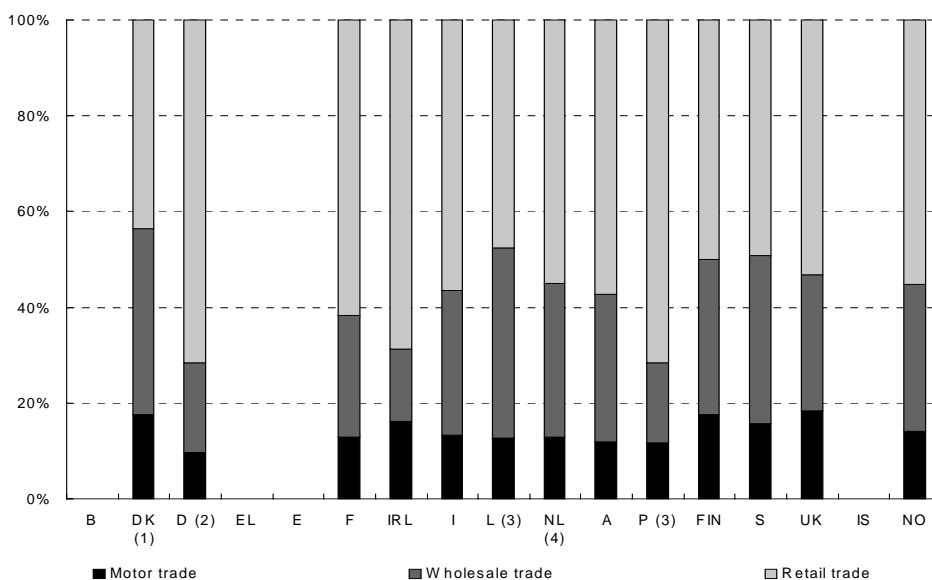
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Distributive trades in the European Economic Area

Trade, one of the largest employers in Europe
- Jan Stensrud

Main Results

- Over 5 million enterprises operate in distributive trades
- Italy has over one million enterprises alone
- More than 22 million persons employed
- Over 15% of total EU employment is found in trade
- German turnover in excess of 1,000 billion ECU in 1996
- Trade accounts for over 12% of EU value added



(1) 1995 data for NACE Rev. 1 Divisions 50 and 51.
 (2) NACE Rev. 1 Division 50: excluding Group 50.2; NACE Rev. 1 Division 51: excluding Group 51.1; NACE Rev. 1 Division 52: excluding Group 52.7.
 (3) Provisional.
 (4) 1995 data; NACE Rev. 1 Division 52: excluding Classes 52.12 and 52.31.

Source: SBS

Figure 1: number of enterprises, 1996



Introduction

Distributive trades are a vital sector of the European economy, acting as an interface between producers and consumers. The industry accounts for around one third of the total number of enterprises within the European economy. Indeed, there are over 5 million enterprises operating within this activity in the EU. Many of these enterprises remain family-run businesses. Employment estimates from National Accounts data put EU employment within distributive trades at over 22 million persons, accounting for more than 15% of

the total number of persons occupied. Value added at market prices within commerce was responsible for more than 12% of European wealth created.

The differences seen in retail formats between countries may be explained due to cultural, demographic and sociological factors. The role of women in the labour force, income levels, the degree of urbanisation, car ownership levels and the supply of local produce all contribute to explain the development of consumption trends.

This short report details the most recent data collected under the Council Regulation concerning structural business statistics (EC, EURATOM) No. 58/97 of 20 December 1996. The data collected cover all enterprises within the distribution business population. An extraction from the database was made during April 1999. The Regulation contains an annex that is specific to distributive trades (Annex 3) which foresees additional information on this important sector of the European economy.

	Number of enterprises (thousands)	Number of persons employed (thousands)	Turnover (million ECU)	Production value (million ECU)	Value added at factor cost (million ECU)	Personnel costs (million ECU)	Gross operating surplus (million ECU)	Gross investment (million ECU)
B	:	569.2	195,747.0	:	20,843.1	12,621.7	:	:
DK (1)	73.0	421.6	97,789.4	:	:	:	:	:
D (2)	429.4	4,529.1	1,047,783.3	:	:	:	:	14,763.3
EL	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
E	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
F	636.1	2,805.2	759,736.0	214,433.0	99,148.8	:	25,527.1	12,598.4
IRL	29.2	192.4	33,940.3	7,290.5	4,490.7	:	:	702.6
I	1,199.8	2,798.8	524,958.0	226,991.0	83,551.2	34,111.4	67,332.9	:
L (3)	6.7	35.2	11,780.2	2,348.0	1,469.3	744.9	724.4	:
NL (4)	147.9	1,024.0	226,067.3	135,129.4	:	17,287.6	:	:
A (5)	67.9	521.4	118,959.0	35,903.4	19,303.0	13,229.1	6,073.9	2,925.1
P (3)	175.4	599.9	67,194.2	:	:	4,765.3	:	1,792.5
FIN	47.8	196.5	63,061.1	14,052.0	8,672.8	5,105.6	3,567.2	1,255.5
S	112.7	:	138,774.0	:	18,781.7	13,028.5	5,735.7	2,528.0
UK	388.2	:	791,579.0	:	:	53,739.4	:	13,478.8
IS	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
NO	57.5	317.6	83,983.4	25,145.8	10,476.2	7,320.4	3,155.7	1,535.5

(1) 1995 data.

(2) Excluding NACE Rev. 1 Groups 50.2, 51.1, 52.7.

(3) Provisional.

(4) 1995 data; excluding NACE Rev. 1 Groups 50.1, 50.3, 51.1 and Classes 52.12, 52.31.

(5) 1995 data for personnel costs, value added at factor cost, gross operating surplus and gross investment.

Source: SBS

Table 1: main indicators, 1996

Number of enterprises and number of persons employed

Table 1 presents the main variables collected by the SBS Regulation (structural business statistics). The data give a broad picture of the economic importance of the distributive activity within the European economy. It is of interest to note that despite the fact that the highest number of enterprises exists in Italy, total turnover is much lower than in either France, Germany or the United Kingdom. There were nevertheless almost

as many persons employed within distributive trades in Italy as there were in France.

The highest number of enterprises in commerce was recorded in Italy, with more than one million enterprises or a fifth of the Union total. Next in the ranking in absolute numbers was Spain, followed by France, Germany and the United Kingdom.

The breakdown between motor trade (NACE Rev. 1 50), wholesale trade (NACE Rev. 1 51) and retail trade (NACE Rev. 1 52) shows that retail trade accounted for the absolute majority of distributive trades' enterprises in all but two countries, Denmark and Luxembourg. In comparative terms, the three countries where retail trade accounted for the largest share of enterprises were Germany, Spain and Portugal,

with at least three-quarters of the distributive trades' enterprise population.

National Accounts data show that employment shares in the whole economy were low in the Nordic economies of Denmark, Finland, Iceland and Sweden (between 12% and 13% of the total number of persons employed). The highest shares were recorded in Italy and the Netherlands (over 17% of the total).

The breakdown of employment by activity showed that whilst the largest number of persons employed was found in Germany in

wholesale and retail trade, the United Kingdom had the highest absolute number of persons employed in the activity of motor trade.

In relative terms the lowest share of employment in motor trade was found in the Netherlands (less than 11% of the distributive trades' total). Denmark reported the highest share of persons employed within wholesale trade, more than 40% of the total. Within retail trade all countries reported more than 50% of distributive trade employment, with the exception of Denmark, Finland, Austria and Luxembourg.

In Italy, the average number of persons employed per enterprise was 2.3 in 1996 (for retail trade it was even lower at 2.1). This can be contrasted with the data for Germany and the United Kingdom where figures approaching an average of 10 persons per enterprise were recorded in retail trade, 8.9 in Germany. Furthermore, of the eighteen NACE Rev. 1 Groups where 1995 and 1996 data existed for Germany, all eighteen reported that the average number of persons employed per enterprise was rising between 1995 and 1996, an indication that concentration was continuing to increase.

	Number of enterprises (thousands)	Average number of enterprises per 10,000 population (units)	Number of persons employed (thousands)	Average number of persons employed per enterprise (units)	Share of employees in the total number of persons employed (%)	Number of persons employed, share in total distributive trade (%)
Motor trade: NACE Rev. 1 50						
B	:	:	77.1	:	69.8	13.5
DK (1)	12.7	24.3	63.0	5.0	64.5	14.9
D (2)	41.6	5.1	473.6	11.4	:	10.5
EL	:	:	:	:	:	:
E	:	:	:	:	:	:
F	82.5	14.1	418.0	5.1	91.5	14.9
IRL	4.7	13.0	27.1	5.7	81.0	14.1
I	160.7	28.0	419.3	2.6	46.5	15.0
L (3)	0.8	20.4	5.8	6.9	87.6	16.6
NL	21.2	13.7	127.8	6.0	80.8	11.4
A	8.1	10.0	74.9	9.3	92.0	14.4
P (3)	20.4	20.5	99.3	4.9	91.9	16.6
FIN	8.4	16.3	29.0	3.5	85.7	14.7
S	17.6	20.0	:	:	:	:
UK	71.1	12.1	:	:	:	:
IS	:	:	:	:	:	:
NO	8.1	18.5	49.8	6.1	92.2	15.7
Wholesale trade: NACE Rev. 1 51						
B	:	:	216.5	6.0	78.2	38.0
DK (1)	28.3	54.1	169.0	16.5	77.7	40.1
D (2)	80.7	9.9	1,334.5	:	:	29.5
EL	:	:	:	:	:	:
E	:	:	:	5.8	:	:
F	161.1	27.6	942.5	10.2	98.0	33.6
IRL	4.4	12.1	44.6	2.6	92.4	23.2
I	360.9	62.9	941.5	4.6	52.0	33.6
L (3)	2.6	63.6	12.1	7.8	86.5	34.4
NL	52.3	33.9	409.8	9.1	92.2	36.5
A	20.9	25.9	190.9	6.3	94.3	36.6
P (3)	29.4	29.6	185.9	4.8	94.9	31.0
FIN	15.5	30.2	74.4	:	92.7	37.9
S	39.7	44.9	:	:	:	:
UK	110.1	18.7	:	4.8	:	:
IS (4)	1.5	54.9	7.0	6.0	95.2	:
NO	17.6	40.2	104.9	:	95.0	33.0
Retail trade: NACE Rev. 1 52						
B	:	:	275.7	:	64.5	48.4
DK (1)	31.7	60.3	193.9	6.1	86.8	45.0
D (2)	307.1	37.5	2,721.0	8.9	:	60.1
EL	:	:	:	:	:	:
E	:	:	:	:	:	:
F	392.4	67.2	1,444.7	3.7	86.0	51.5
IRL	20.1	55.4	120.7	6.0	81.2	62.7
I	678.1	118.1	1,437.9	2.1	36.0	51.4
L (3)	3.2	76.1	17.3	5.5	83.0	49.0
NL (5)	90.0	58.2	584.9	6.5	79.2	52.1
A	38.9	48.3	255.6	6.6	86.8	49.0
P (3)	125.7	126.6	314.7	2.5	71.9	52.5
FIN	23.9	46.7	93.1	3.9	87.1	47.4
S	55.4	62.7	:	:	:	:
UK	207.0	35.2	:	:	:	:
IS (4)	1.7	62.5	7.7	4.6	:	:
NO	31.8	72.6	162.9	5.1	89.1	51.3

(1) 1995 data for NACE Rev. 1 Divisions 50 and 51.

(2) NACE Rev. 1 Division 50 excludes Group 50.2; Division 51 excludes Group 51.1; Division 52 excludes Group 52.7.

(3) Provisional.

(4) 1995 data.

(5) 1995 data; NACE Rev. 1 Division 52 excludes Classes 52.12 and 52.31.

Source: SBS

Table 2: enterprise and employment indicators, 1996

Figures 2 to 4 show the breakdown of value added and employment between the three types of distribution. These figures are ranked by the share of employment for each NACE Rev. 1 Division. It is interesting to note that the share of value added for wholesale trade in the distributive trades' total exceeds the share of employment for each country (often by a substantial margin). The converse is always true within the activity of retail trade, whilst in motor trade the shares of value added and employment in the distributive trades' total were almost equivalent for each Member State. We may conclude at first sight that the activity of wholesale trade is therefore relatively more labour productive than the other two distributive activities.

However, we may partly explain the low share of value added in retail trade by the high propensity to employ part-time labour within this industry. Indeed, some of the largest differentials between value added and employment existed in Denmark, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, three countries where the share of part-time working is very high. It should be noted that the data presented do not take account of the number of hours worked and the employment data is not adjusted to full time equivalents (i.e. comparable number of hours worked by each person employed), with the result that the magnitude of retail trade employment is over-stated.

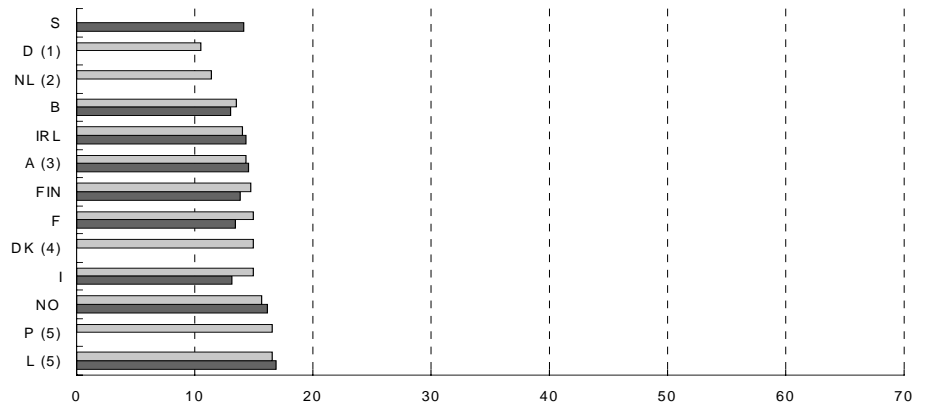


Figure 2: value added and number of persons employed, share in distributive trades' total, motor trade, 1996 (%)

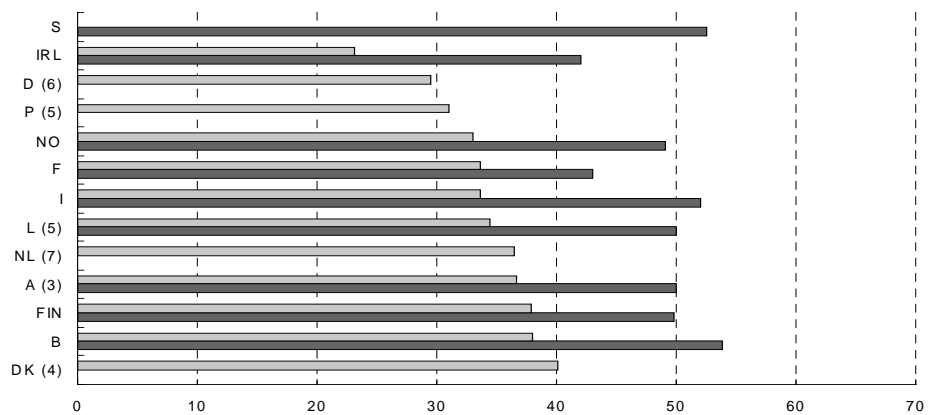


Figure 3: value added and number of persons employed, share in distributive trades' total, wholesale trade, 1996 (%)

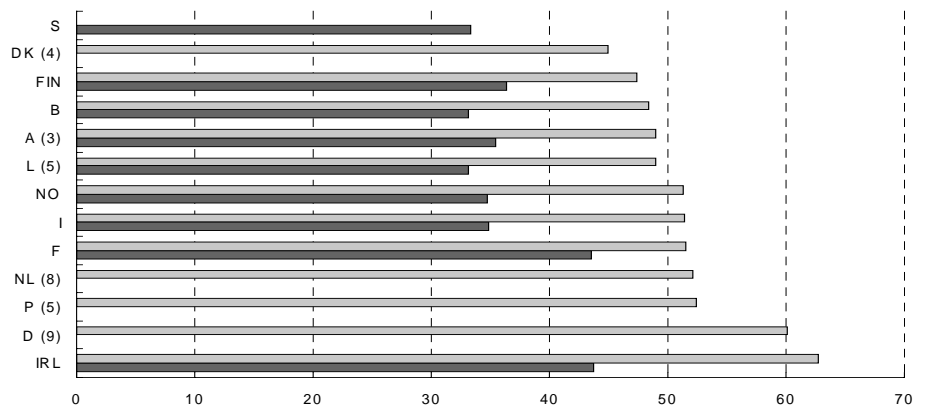


Figure 4: value added and number of persons employed, share in distributive trades' total, retail trade, 1996 (%)

■ Employment ■ Value added

- (1) NACE Rev. 1 Division 50 excludes Group 50.2; Section G also excludes Groups 51.1 and 52.7.
- (2) 1995 data; NACE Rev. 1 Section G excludes Group 51.1, Classes 52.12 and 52.31.
- (3) 1995 data for value added.
- (4) 1995 data.
- (5) Provisional.
- (6) NACE Rev. 1 Division 51 excludes Group 51.1; Section G also excludes Groups 50.2 and 52.7.
- (7) 1995 data; NACE Rev. 1 Division 51 excludes Group 51.1; Section G also excludes Classes 52.12 and 52.31.
- (8) 1995 data; NACE Rev. 1 Division 52 excludes Classes 52.12 and 52.31; Section G also excludes Group 51.1.
- (9) NACE Rev. 1 Division 52 excludes Group 52.7; Section G also excludes Groups 50.2 and 51.1.

Source: SBS

	B	DK (2)	D	EL	E	F	IRL	I	L (3)	NL (4)	A	P (3)	FIN	S (5)	UK	IS (6)	NO
Motor trade																	
50	77.1	63.0	:	:	:	418.0	27.1	419.3	5.8	127.8	74.9	99.3	29.0	56.0	:	:	49.8
50.1	34.5	27.8	311.5	:	:	218.4	9.5	78.3	3.3	82.3	:	:	7.3	23.1	:	:	18.1
50.2	25.4	18.3	:	:	:	100.8	7.1	225.1	0.5	16.3	:	:	10.2	16.0	:	:	12.0
50.3	10.6	5.1	81.8	:	:	57.2	:	41.0	0.6	16.3	:	:	6.1	6.0	:	:	4.5
50.4	1.8	0.4	9.2	:	:	12.3	:	17.7	0.1	2.2	:	:	0.3	0.8	:	:	0.5
50.5	4.8	11.4	71.2	:	:	29.3	8.7	57.2	1.4	10.7	:	:	5.1	10.1	:	:	14.8
Wholesale trade																	
51	216.5	169.0	:	:	:	942.5	44.6	941.5	12.1	409.8	190.9	185.9	74.4	166.7	:	7.0	104.9
51.1	16.2	5.9	:	:	:	60.0	1.8	275.6	0.6	:	:	:	4.5	7.6	:	:	3.5
51.2	7.0	10.5	52.8	:	:	54.4	1.3	25.4	0.4	33.5	:	:	1.6	5.9	:	:	4.6
51.3	36.8	22.4	228.9	:	:	176.1	9.8	165.1	2.8	66.7	:	:	6.9	20.4	:	:	15.6
51.4	58.0	33.8	342.8	:	:	183.5	8.6	210.4	1.9	94.1	:	:	14.1	38.1	:	:	21.4
51.5	43.5	37.4	357.4	:	:	195.2	8.8	146.3	2.8	78.6	:	:	15.7	44.5	:	:	20.9
51.6	47.4	53.2	276.8	:	:	267.6	9.5	80.9	3.2	114.2	:	:	26.3	49.0	:	:	35.7
51.7	7.5	5.8	75.7	:	:	5.7	4.7	37.8	0.4	22.7	:	:	5.4	1.2	:	:	3.2
Retail trade																	
52	275.7	193.9	:	:	:	1,444.7	120.7	1,437.9	17.3	:	255.6	314.7	93.1	166.8	:	7.7	162.9
52.1	80.3	79.5	873.1	:	:	503.8	57.8	329.2	4.4	213.3	:	:	45.0	64.0	:	:	59.9
52.2	34.7	16.9	178.7	:	:	102.1	10.2	188.5	2.1	66.0	:	:	3.3	11.1	:	:	8.8
52.3	18.0	8.9	250.4	:	:	141.1	6.7	84.4	0.9	20.0	:	:	7.1	10.6	:	:	7.5
52.4	125.3	81.7	1,200.9	:	:	569.2	43.0	667.1	9.2	279.4	:	:	34.1	72.7	:	:	80.1
52.5	2.8	1.3	7.7	:	:	11.9	0.6	4.0	0.1	5.5	:	:	0.5	0.6	:	:	0.7
52.6	10.7	1.9	210.2	:	:	85.9	0.8	124.0	0.5	32.7	:	:	1.3	4.3	:	:	3.2
52.7	3.8	3.7	:	:	:	30.7	1.5	40.8	0.2	7.7	:	:	1.8	3.5	:	:	2.6

(1) NACE Rev. 1 classification: 50.1: sale of motor vehicles; 50.2: maintenance and repair of motor vehicles; 50.3: sale of motor vehicles parts and accessories; 50.4: sale, maintenance and repair of motorcycles and related parts and accessories; 50.5: retail sale of automotive fuel; 51.1: wholesale on a fee or contract basis; 51.2: wholesale of agricultural raw materials and live animals; 51.3: wholesale of food, beverages and tobacco; 51.4: wholesale of household goods; 51.5: wholesale of non-agricultural intermediate products, waste and scrap; 51.6: wholesale of machinery, equipment and supplies; 51.7: other wholesale; 52.1: retail sale in non-specialised stores; 52.2: retail sale of food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores; 52.3: retail sale of pharmaceuticals and medical goods, cosmetic and toilet articles; 52.4: other retail sale of new goods in specialised stores; 52.5: retail sale of second-hand goods in stores; 52.6: retail sale not in stores; 52.7: repair of personal and household goods.
(2) 1995 data for NACE Rev. 1 Divisions 50 and 51.
(3) Provisional.
(4) 1995 data; NACE Rev. 1 Group 52.3 excludes Class 52.31.
(5) Number of employees instead of number of persons employed.
(6) 1995 data.

Source: SBS

Table 3: number of persons employed by activity, 1996 (thousands) (1)

	Turnover (million ECU)	Average turnover		Main indicators as a share of turnover (%)				
		Per enterprise (thousand ECU)	Per person (thousand ECU)	Production value	Value added at factor cost	Personnel costs	Gross operating surplus	Gross investment
Motor trade: NACE Rev. 1 50								
B	33,458	:	406.5	:	8.1	5.1	3.0	:
DK (1)	11,377	890	180.6	:	:	:	:	:
D (2)	120,015	2,880	253.4	:	:	:	:	1.9
EL	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
E	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
F	99,026	1,200	236.9	26.0	13.5	:	2.8	1.7
IRL	6,722	1,420	248.2	15.0	9.6	:	:	1.1
I (3)	92,094	570	219.6	39.2	11.9	4.8	8.6	2.2
L (4)	2,185	2,576	375.0	16.0	11.4	5.7	5.7	:
NL (5)	6,933	:	:	21.8	:	7.3	:	:
A (6)	17,737	2,190	:	30.5	15.8	10.5	5.3	1.9
P (4)	13,132	640	132.2	:	:	6.5	:	1.3
FIN	9,394	1,120	:	19.6	12.8	7.6	5.2	2.7
S	22,145	1,255	:	:	12.0	8.1	3.9	2.2
UK	131,610	1,850	:	:	:	6.0	:	0.8
IS	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
NO	16,185	1,990	324.8	23.1	10.5	7.4	3.1	2.1
Wholesale trade: NACE Rev. 1 51								
B	118,663	:	500.6	:	9.5	5.8	3.6	:
DK (1)	61,988	2,190	366.9	:	:	:	:	:
D (2)	599,535	7,600	467.1	:	:	:	:	1.2
EL	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
E	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
F	409,550	2,540	434.5	27.0	10.4	:	2.4	1.1
IRL	15,817	3,616	354.7	20.3	11.9	:	:	1.8
I (3)	276,978	767	294.2	47.4	15.7	5.4	13.1	2.0
L (4)	7,018	2,656	579.4	17.3	10.5	4.8	5.7	:
NL (5)	164,574	3,560	401.6	19.4	11.9	6.5	5.5	1.5
A (6)	68,411	3,270	358.3	28.2	13.6	9.3	4.3	2.3
P (4)	35,182	1,190	189.3	:	:	6.3	:	3.2
FIN	34,938	2,255	469.4	20.5	12.4	6.9	5.5	1.9
S	79,920	2,010	:	:	12.3	8.2	4.1	1.7
UK	422,521	3,837	:	:	:	5.2	:	1.1
IS (1)	1,610	1,090	:	:	17.3	:	:	:
NO	46,512	2,640	443.6	31.2	11.1	7.4	3.7	1.7

(1) 1995 data.
(2) NACE Rev. 1 Division 50 excluding Group 50.2; Division 51 excluding Group 51.1.
(3) NACE Rev. 1 Division 51 excluding Classes 51.11, 51.13, 51.15, 51.25 for investment, 1995 data.
(4) Provisional.
(5) 1995 data; NACE Rev. 1 Division 50 excluding Groups 50.1, 50.3; Division 51 excluding Group 51.1.
(6) 1995 data except for turnover and production.

Source: SBS

Table 4: turnover and main indicators, 1996

	Average turnover		Main indicators as a share of turnover (%)					
	Turnover (million ECU)	Per enterprise (thousand ECU)	Per person (thousand ECU)	Production value	Value added at factor cost	Personnel costs	Gross operating surplus	Gross investment
Retail trade: NACE Rev. 1 5 2								
B	43,627	:	:	:	15.8	9.2	6.6	:
DK	24,611	776	126.9	31.1	:	12.2	4.6	2.7
D (2)	328,233	1,060	121.2	:	:	:	:	1.7
EL	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
E	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
F	251,160	639	173.9	31.1	17.2	:	5.1	2.5
IRL	11,401	567	94.4	26.9	17.2	:	:	3.0
I (3)	155,886	229	108.4	38.3	18.7	9.4	14.9	3.8
L (4)	2,577	810	149.3	30.4	18.9	11.1	7.7	:
NL (5)	54,561	606	89.8	31.6	19.9	11.3	8.7	2.8
A (6)	32,812	843	128.4	34.2	20.8	14.5	6.3	2.8
P (4)	18,880	150	60.0	:	:	8.9	:	2.7
FIN	18,728	783	201.2	26.9	16.8	10.6	6.2	1.8
S	36,709	662	:	:	17.1	12.7	4.3	1.9
UK	237,447	1,147	:	:	:	10.2	:	3.2
IS	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
NO	21,287	660	130.7	32.5	17.1	12.7	4.4	1.8

(1) 1995 data.

(2) NACE Rev. 1 Division 50 excluding Group 50.2; Division 51 excluding Group 51.1; Division 52 excluding Group 52.7.

(3) NACE Rev. 1 Division 51 excluding Classes 51.11, 51.13, 51.15, 51.25 for investment, 1995 data.

(4) Provisional.

(5) 1995 data; NACE Rev. 1 Division 50 excluding Groups 50.1, 50.3; Division 51 excluding Group 51.1; Division 52 excluding Classes 52.12, 52.31.

(6) 1995 data except for turnover and production.

Source: SBS

Table 4 (continued): turnover and main indicators, 1996

Turnover

The share of the different NACE Rev. 1 Divisions in distributive trades' total turnover does not follow the pattern so far seen for the majority of indicators. Wholesale trade accounted for by far the largest share of turnover in every Member State. The measurement of turnover often proves difficult, as many items within wholesale trade are re-traded and may subsequently be counted several times within the statistics presented.

Average turnover per enterprise was (as we would expect) lower in countries with a large number of small enterprises. For example, the lowest figure for 1996 was recorded in Portugal (0.38 million ECU per enterprise for the whole of distributive trades). At the other extreme, it was no surprise to find that the highest average turnover per enterprise was in the United Kingdom (2.04 million ECU per enterprise).

Turnover per person employed ranged between 112 thousand ECU per head in Portugal and 334

thousand ECU per head in Luxembourg (for those countries providing data for the whole of distributive trade for 1996).

Whilst the range of figures for motor trade followed a similar trend, turnover per head was generally higher in the activity of wholesale trade and lower in retail trade. Finland recorded the highest ratio in retail trade, Luxembourg in wholesale trade and Belgium in motor trade. In wholesale trade seven countries reported average turnover per person employed above 400 thousand ECU.

Personnel costs, productivity and investment

Value added as a share of turnover ranged from 12.5% in Luxembourg and Norway to over 15.5% in Austria and Italy for the whole of distributive trade. Looking in more detail at the breakdown of this ratio between the different activities, we find that the highest ratios were usually seen in retail trade and the lowest ratios in motor trade. Value added as a share of turnover rose to as high as 20.8% in Austria in retail trade, whilst the lowest ratios in motor trade were recorded in Belgium and Ireland, less than 10%. Personnel costs usually accounted for less than 10% of

total turnover across motor trade and wholesale trade (the only exceptions to this rule were Austria and Spain for motor trade). However, within the activity of retail trade, personnel costs accounted for a share in excess of 10% in all Member States (except Belgium, Italy and Portugal). Hence, within retail trade we find again that labour is of greater importance as an input compared to capital. It should be noted that data for personnel costs are measured in terms of the cost of employees and not the total number of persons employed. In Italy where less than

half of the workforce were employees, the figures given will under-estimate the real cost of labour as the self-employed and family workers without a salary are not included in the calculation.

In terms of labour productivity (measured by value added per person employed), Luxembourg and Finland had the highest values for the whole of distributive trades. By activity, wholesale trade recorded the highest labour productivity, with Luxembourg again leading the ranking, generating more than 60 thousand

value added per head. In retail trade, value added per person employed was much lower, the highest figures being recorded in Finland (nearly 34 thousand ECU per head). Wage adjusted labour productivity measures value added divided by personnel costs. We may "correct" the personnel costs by multiplying through by the

number of persons employed over number of employees, so that the "true" size of the labour force is taken into account. This is particularly useful for correcting distributive trades' data, due to the large number of self-employed and family workers in the labour force. Using this adjusted figure we find that wholesale trade generally

continued to report the highest labour productivity, whilst retail and motor trade had very similar ratios. The highest wage adjusted labour productivity was again found in Luxembourg for wholesale trade (as was the case for the measure of value added per person employed).

	Personnel costs (million ECU)	Value added at factor cost (million ECU)	Value added per person employed (thousand ECU)	Personnel costs per employee (thousand ECU)	Share of wages and salaries in personnel costs (%)	Wage adjusted labour productivity (%)	Gross investment in tangible goods per person employed (thousand ECU)
Motor trade: NACE Rev. 1 50							
B	1,695.6	2,715.9	35.2	31.5	73.5	111.8	:
DK	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
D (1)	:	:	:	:	:	:	4.7
EL	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
E	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
F	:	13,359.2	32.0	:	:	:	4.1
IRL	:	642.1	23.7	:	:	:	2.8
I (2)	4,438.5	10,933.4	26.1	22.8	67.8	114.5	4.8
L (3)	124.0	248.4	42.6	24.3	:	175.4	:
NL (4)	2,691.4	:	:	26.1	:	:	:
A (5)	1,867.9	2,807.2	37.6	27.2	77.3	138.1	4.6
P (3)	849.6	:	:	9.3	:	:	1.7
FIN	717.9	1,203.0	41.5	28.9	77.6	143.6	8.7
S	1,784.4	2,652.5	:	31.9	69.6	:	:
UK	7,844.7	:	:	:	89.7	:	:
IS (5)	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
NO	1,200.1	1,697.2	34.1	26.1	84.6	130.5	6.8
Wholesale trade: NACE Rev. 1 51							
B	6,899.8	11,227.3	51.9	40.8	74.7	127.2	:
DK	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
D (1)	:	:	:	:	:	:	5.2
EL	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
E	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
F	:	42,647.0	45.3	:	:	:	4.9
IRL	:	1,886.2	42.3	:	:	:	6.3
I (2)	15,073.2	43,459.4	46.2	30.8	66.7	150.0	5.7
L (3)	334.2	734.7	60.7	31.9	:	190.2	:
NL (4)	10,630.3	19,651.2	48.0	28.1	88.5	:	6.1
A (5)	6,575.4	9,646.4	49.6	35.8	77.8	138.4	8.5
P (3)	2,227.3	:	:	12.6	:	:	6.0
FIN	2,400.6	4,315.9	58.0	34.8	78.3	166.7	8.9
S	6,573.5	9,865.2	:	39.4	69.5	:	:
UK	21,774.5	:	:	:	87.8	:	:
IS (5)	:	277.8	39.6	:	:	:	:
NO	3,427.2	5,140.3	49.0	34.4	81.9	142.4	7.7
Retail trade: NACE Rev. 1 52							
B	4,026.2	6,899.9	25.0	22.6	76.6	110.6	:
DK	2,993.3	:	:	17.8	94.5	:	3.5
D (1)	:	:	:	:	:	:	2.1
EL	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
E	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
F	:	43,142.6	29.9	:	:	:	4.4
IRL	:	1,962.4	16.3	:	:	:	2.9
I (2)	14,599.7	29,158.4	20.3	28.2	66.7	72.0	4.1
L (3)	286.7	486.1	28.2	20.0	:	140.7	:
NL (4)	6,149.4	10,884.2	18.6	13.3	88.3	:	2.7
A (5)	4,785.8	6,849.3	27.0	21.7	78.0	123.9	3.7
P (3)	1,688.4	:	:	7.5	:	:	1.6
FIN	1,987.1	3,153.9	33.9	24.5	77.4	138.2	3.7
S	4,670.6	6,264.0	:	28.0	69.3	:	:
UK	24,120.2	:	:	:	90.8	:	:
IS (5)	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
NO	2,693.1	3,638.7	22.3	18.6	86.4	120.4	2.4

(1) NACE Rev. 1 Division 50 excludes Group 50.2; Division 51 excludes Group 51.1; Division 52 excludes Group 52.7.

(2) NACE Rev. 1 Division 51 excludes Classes 51.11, 51.13, 51.15, 51.25 for gross investment in tangible goods per person employed; 1995 data.

(3) Provisional.

(4) 1995 data; NACE Rev. 1 Division 50 excludes Groups 50.1, 50.3 for value added and gross investment; Division 51 excludes Group 51.1; Division 52 excludes Classes 52.12, 52.31.

(5) 1995 data.

Source: SBS

Table 5: personnel costs, productivity and investment indicators, 1996

Further information

This report is released at the same time as a complementary report on distributive trades within the Central European Countries (CECs).

Eurostat and DG XXIII also release a yearbook and CD-ROM on commerce, called "Distributive Trades in Europe", the publication is foreseen for late 1999.

For users interested in the main facts and figures, a tri-lingual pocket-book will be released at the same time.

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