

Working Time in Spain Survey. 1996

Methodology

Introducción

The Working Time in Spain Survey is a statistical investigation that focuses on almost 20,000 units aiming to reveal the different components of working time, as well as their sectorial and geographical distribution. The survey is part of the 1996 Labour Cost Survey project and is integrated in the same questionnaire within a questions module enquiring on the different components of working time, such as agreed working day schedule, overtime hours and hours not worked due to different reasons. This relevant information enables the calculation of the labour cost per hour worked as a good approximation to unitary labour costs.

The Working Time in Spain Survey aims to measure and assess working time and its different components in terms of the different criteria that modify the classification. It also analyses the relevance of the different items that compose hours not worked in percentage-based terms considering the total number of hours.

Concepts and definitions

Statistical unit or unit of the survey

The statistical unit of the Labour Cost Survey is the Social Security Contribution Account, a concept traditionally used in salary and labour cost surveys, both by the INE and by other organisations with interests in this issue. The Social Security Contribution Account is composed by a group of workers employed by others who develop their labour activity in one or several work places belonging to the same company located in the same province, generally performing the same main activity, with homogeneous characteristics as regards contribution to the Social Security. These aspects allow a fair regionalisation of the data. This unit does not coincide exactly with the company or with the establishment or work place, although in many cases it does coincide with the latter. In some cases, the informant unit does not coincide with the statistical unit or the unit of the survey; instead the company centralises all information on its associated contribution accounts. One of the innovations this survey presents is that it allows centralised companies to provide the information required in a grouped manner, using a single questionnaire for all their contribution accounts.

Reference time scope

The working time statistic garners information on the following reference period of labour activity in contribution centres: calendar year 1996, which also coincides with the so-called fiscal year 1996.

Population Scope and population group

The population scope under study are the Social Security Contribution Accounts, regardless of their size, belonging to companies with 10 or more employees

registered in December 1995. This entails an innovation as regards the 1992 survey, which did not include contribution centres with less than 5 workers.

The population group comprises all workers employed by others regardless of the contract modality and type of working day. It excludes all persons whose remunerations stem mainly from company profits or sales commissions. Therefore, this excludes persons in executive managerial positions and members of the Board of Directors and workers whose remuneration comes exclusively from sales commissions.

Sector scope

The survey analyses contribution accounts whose economic activity is encompassed in the three main sectors: Industry, Construction and Services sector, specifically those centres with economic activities in sections C to K of the National Classification of Economic Activities (NACE-93). More precisely, the sector scope encompasses 48 divisions, in industry, construction, trade, hotels and catering, transports and communications, real estate activities, services rendered to other companies, rents and leases, insurance and financial intermediation.. The survey excludes agricultural, farming and fishing activities, the Public Administration and the Social Security, Defence, Health, Education and Personal services and Extraterritorial institutions.

Territorial or geographical scope

The geographical scope is the whole of the national territory, with information broken down by Autonomous Communities and grouped information for Ceuta and Melilla.

Working time

In general, the working time is defined as the periods of time, measured in hours, that are linked or related to the worker's labour activity. The interest does not focus only on quantification, but also on structure and classification in line with two major criteria:

The first criterion is based on completion, that is to say, whether the different periods of working time have been completed or not.

The second criterion is defined by the paid nature of said periods of working time.

The fact that both criteria are not mutually exclusive adds a certain degree of difficulty to understanding the results, since there are cross-references to both concepts. Moreover, another difficulty appears alongside this one: the repercussions of the implementation of the rules that regulate working time, mainly as regards the concepts effective working day (days actually worked) and lost hours, which do not coincide with the natural meaning of said adjectives.

This survey follows the definitions agreed by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and by the legal Spanish regulations envisaged, mainly, in the Workers Statute.

Using this double criterion, the working time has been classified focusing on periods of time that have not been completed, since the working time that has been completed is obtained by analysing the data on the agreed working day, overtime hours, holidays and public holidays and the information on uncompleted working time.

Uncompleted Working Time

The survey uses this concept to gather a series of epigraphs in accordance with the casuistry under investigation, comprising different reasons which will be described further on.

The uncompleted working time makes a difference between paid time, that refers to periods of time for which the worker -although s/he has not performed the labour activity- will receive payment, and unpaid time, which refers to the opposite case.

Uncompleted paid working time

The most important components are:

Organisational, economic and production-based reasons (with or without employment regulation): The work contract can be suspended temporarily, requested by the company, due to organisational, economic and production-based causes, with a view to overcoming crisis situations affecting the normal development of the company activity. This may be due to a period of economic recession or because the company needs to reorganise its production or market-based structure. The final goal must always be to guarantee the survival of the future company.

Adopting said measure may suppose the temporary cessation of the rendering of the service or of the production of goods (suspension) by the worker, who will stop receiving a salary, and will at most receive an unemployment benefit from the INEM, although it may also suppose a decrease of the standard working day (reduction) cutting the number of hours worked a day, week or of the agreed period of time, during which said production service is rendered. Therefore, the survey considers:

Reduced hours, which is the sum of hours lost as regards the hours agreed for the total number of workers affected by a collective reduction of the working day.

Suspended hours, which is the total number of hours suspended multiplied by the number of workers affected by a collective suspension of the labour relationship.

Temporary incapacity, comprising hours the worker did not attend the work place due to a common cold or a professional condition, or accident, regardless of whether it was work-related or not.

Maternity, total number of hours for the total number of employees, except trainees, who were on maternity leave. Said leave amounts to 16 weeks, although in cases of adoption, the maximum duration ranges from 6 to 8 weeks.

Personal leave, which are hours not worked due to marriage, birth, changing house, death or serious disease of a family member.

Other leaves, which are hours granted by the company for reasons such as personal rewards or other paid leaves.

Hours lost in the work place, which is the total number of hours not worked due to reasons not attributable to the worker or the employer: occasional lack of work, breakdown of machines, lack of raw material, atmospherical accidents, interruption of the motive power or other causes of force majeure. Legally, workers can recuperate the hours that were not worked at a rhythm of one hour a day, after prior

communication to the company and on the condition that there are no stipulations stating the opposite. This component only considers hours that were not recuperated and which, therefore, can be actually considered as not worked.

Trade union representation, hours spent by the workers' representatives performing trade union tasks. Members of the workers' council and centre delegates have a time credit in terms of the size of the company. In this epigraph, the only elements of said time credit considered are the hours in which workers actually stopped working to perform representation tasks. In this section, it is also necessary to consider paid leaves granted to trade union representatives who take part in the negotiation commissions for collective agreements that are not included in the time credit.

Other hours that are not worked, total number of hours of leave granted as a consequence of breastfeeding, fulfillment of an unavoidable duty, vocational training during working hours, attendance to exams or doctor's appointments. Women who are breastfeeding are allowed one hour absence. This hour can be divided into two fractions or can be used to cut half an hour from the stipulated working day. The father of the child may also apply for this leave.

Uncompleted unpaid working time

Including two epigraphs:

Labour conflict, which is the total number of hours lost due to strikes, regardless of the scope -local, sector or company-based- or the total or partial intensity of the same.

Other reasons, which is the total amount of hours not worked and not paid due to sanctions, work absenteeism, lockouts, unpaid leave or legal custody. Lockout refers to cases in which the employer closes the workplace due to a group conflict that entails foreseeable violence or damage, illegal occupation of the centre or existence of irregularities that prevent the normal production process. Legal custody refers to a reduction of the working day for those employees who request this measure when having to look after a child under 6 years old or a physically or mentally handicapped person who does not work. Said reduction can range between 1/3 and half of the working day, and will entail a proportional decrease of the salary.

International recommendations as regards garnering statistics on hours worked establish the concepts of "effective" and "lost" work hours that, alongside the agreed working day and the overtime hours are defined hereunder and complete the series of items on working time envisaged in this survey.

Agreed working day, hours legally established either verbally, via an individual contract or a collective agreement, by the worker and the company. The agreed working day is measured by the average number of hours per worker and year which are not considered in the hours corresponding to standard holidays or weekly days off. This survey only considers agreed hours in the standard working day, in other words, it does not include overtime hours.

Overtime hours, all hours worked outside the agreed working day. This includes all hours, both structural overtime hours and those performed due to causes of force majeure, such as non-structural or voluntary overtime hours. Hours workers in the transport sector spend at the company constitute a special case, since they refer to the time the worker is in the company even when not rendering effective labour:

delays, on call, journeys without services, lunch en route and similar situations. For survey effects, these hours are considered overtime hours. Therefore, workers can exceed the maximum legally established limits of 80 overtime hours per worker per year. The maximum time allowed is 20 hours over the standard working week.

Overtime hours can be paid in cash, i.e. paid overtime hours, at the same rate as a normal hour or at a greater rate depending on the terms envisaged in the agreement, or with time off, i.e. overtime hours compensated with paid time off.

Effective working day, hours that were actually worked, both during normal working time and during overtime hours, considering the periods of time which have not been completed but are considered effective time in virtue of the valid regulations. These periods of unworked time that are considered effective are those caused by technical reasons (that can never be attributed to the worker), and those included in the section Hours lost in the work place, and the time corresponding to short breaks for coffee, drinks or sandwiches. Thus, the effective working time does not only include periods dedicated to the production of goods and/or services, but also considers other criteria established by international agreements and national practices. The effective working day is calculated as follows:

$$JE = JP + HEXT - (HNR - HPLT)$$

In which:

JE, Effective working day

JP, Agreed working day

HEXT, Overtime hours

HNR, Uncompleted hours

HPLT, Hours lost in work place

Hours lost, the total number of hours not completed, except those attributable to technical reasons, in other words, those lost in the work place. Therefore:

$$HP = HNR - HPLT$$

Design and selection of the sample

Survey framework

The survey stems from the Central Company Directory (CCD), updated in December 1995, which was used to locate companies with 10 or more employees that performed the activities under study.

Subsequently, this directory is cross-referenced with the General Register of Social Security Contribution Accounts, provided by the Social Security General Treasury, updated in December 1995; framework, has the advantage of being continuously updated, as well as the fact that the unit is the actual unit of the survey. This cross-reference is performed to filter code NACE -93 of the latter directory.

Finally, the Social Security Contribution Accounts Directory from companies with 10 or more employees and classified in the economic activities divisions under study is used to obtain the final sample of contribution accounts for the survey.

Sampling plan and estimators

The type of sampling used corresponds to a stratified random sampling with optimum allocation, whose units are contribution accounts. The stratification criterion is created considering three variables: Autonomous Community (18 in total, Ceuta and Melilla are considered together), economic activity as regards the NACE-93 division (48 divisions) and size of the units (seven strata sizes).

Survey units, in other words, contribution accounts are stratified in terms of the number of workers, as follows:

Stratum No. of employees

- | | |
|---|-----------------|
| 1 | from 1 to 4 |
| 2 | from 5 to 9 |
| 3 | from 10 to 19 |
| 4 | from 20 to 49 |
| 5 | from 50 to 99 |
| 6 | from 100 to 199 |
| 7 | 200 and more |

The latter stratum was researched exhaustively. The final sampling size was determined at 19,624 contribution accounts.

The estimators used to estimate the variable "average number of hours" are separated ratio estimators. The raising factor is corrected in terms of the number of workers and the effective response.

Since the working time survey is a questions module included in the questionnaire of the 1996 Labour Cost Survey, further information can be found in said survey, which includes a vaster methodological explanation.