

PREFACE

With ever-expanding global markets, international labor statistics have assumed a greater role in assessing the relative performance of individual economies and in influencing both national and international policy decisions. However, direct comparisons of statistics across countries can be misleading, because concepts and definitions often differ. To improve the comparability of international labor statistics, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) [International Labor Comparisons](#) (ILC) program adjusts data to a common conceptual framework.

The BLS 2011 edition of *Charting International Labor Comparisons* features 2009 data, as well as trends over time, for the main indicators published by ILC: [gross domestic product](#), [labor force](#), manufacturing

[hourly compensation costs](#) and [productivity](#), and [consumer prices](#). To increase country and indicator coverage, data from other organizations also are included. (Notes are provided at the end of each section to detail sources used and to furnish helpful definitions.)

This edition of *Charting International Labor Comparisons* updates the previous edition, with a revised set of countries and indicators. Country coverage varies by chart and is based primarily on data available from the ILC program. In recent years, ILC has improved its coverage of emerging economies; as a result, country coverage for many indicators has been expanded.

For the latest ILC key indicators by country, see [Country at a Glance](#).

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