



13 February 2024
LABOUR COST INDEX
4th quarter of 2024

THE LABOUR COST INDEX INCREASED BY 9.6% IN THE 4TH QUARTER OF 2024 AND BY 8.2% IN 2024

In the 4th quarter of 2024, the Labour Cost Index (LCI) recorded a year-on-year increase of 9.6%. In the previous quarter, it had increased 8.7%.

The wage costs (per hour actually worked) increased by 9.6%, and the other labour costs (also per hour actually worked) increased by 9.5%, compared with the same period of the previous year.

The year-on-year change of the LCI resulted also from the combined effect of the increase of 6.0% in the average cost per employee and the decrease of 3.3% in the number of hours actually worked per employee. The increase of the average cost per employee was common to all economic activities, with higher increases in Public Administration (6.9%) and smaller in Services (5.1%). With the exception of Public Administration, where the increase was higher, the remaining activities recorded lower increases than those observed in the preceding quarter. The hours actually worked per employee decreased in all economic activities, as in the previous quarter. The largest decrease was observed in Construction (6.0%) and the lowest in Public Administration (2.5%). As a result of these variations, the LCI increased in all economic activities, with the largest increase being recorded in Construction (13.4%).

In 2024, the LCI increased by 8.2%, corresponding to increases of 8.2% in wage costs and 8.1% in other labour costs. The average cost per employee increased by 6.4% and the number of hours actually worked per employee decreased by 1.6%.

1. Labour Cost Index and components

In the 4th quarter of 2024, the LCI, which measures the labour costs per hour actually worked, increased by 9.6% compared with the same quarter of 2023 (it had increased by 8.7% in the preceding quarter).

The wage costs (per hour actually worked) increased by 9.6% (8.7% in the previous quarter) and the other labour costs (also per hour actually worked) increased by 9.5% (8.6% in the previous quarter) (Figure 1)¹.

In the 4th quarter of 2024, the wage costs increased by 13.4% in Construction, 10.0% in Industry, 9.6% in Public Administration, and 9.0% in Services. Compared with the preceding quarter, the increase observed in this quarter was higher in Construction (8.6% in the previous quarter), in Services (7.5%), and in Public Administration (9.2%), and smaller in Industry (10.7%).

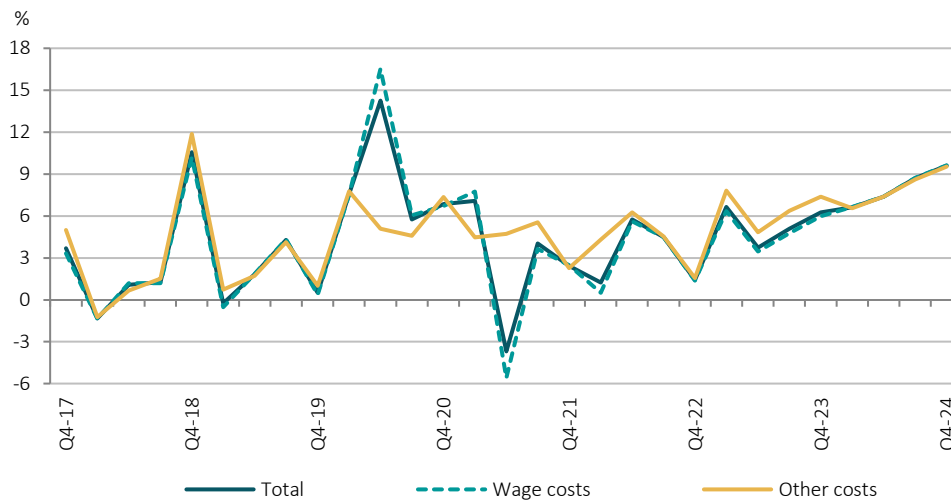
¹ The data analysed in this Press Release are adjusted for working days. The raw data are available in the annex tables and at the Official Statistics Portal.



Non-wage costs were up 13.4% in Construction, 9.9% in Industry, 9.5% in Public Administration, and 8.9%, in Services. Compared with the previous quarter, as in the wage costs, a higher increase was registered in Construction (8.5% in the preceding quarter), in Services (7.3%), and in Public Administration (9.0%), and a lower increase in Industry (10.8%).

Figure 1. LCI year-on-year rate of change by components

(working days adjusted data)



Source: Statistics Portugal, Labour Cost Index – 4th quarter of 2024.

The greater increase in wage and non-wage costs was, essentially, due to the decrease in the number of hours actually worked per employee.

The LCI increase was explained by the growth of 6.0% in the average cost per employee (it had increased by 6.4% in the preceding quarter) and the decrease of 3.3% in the number of hours actually worked per employee (it had decreased by 2.1% in the previous quarter) (Figure 2).

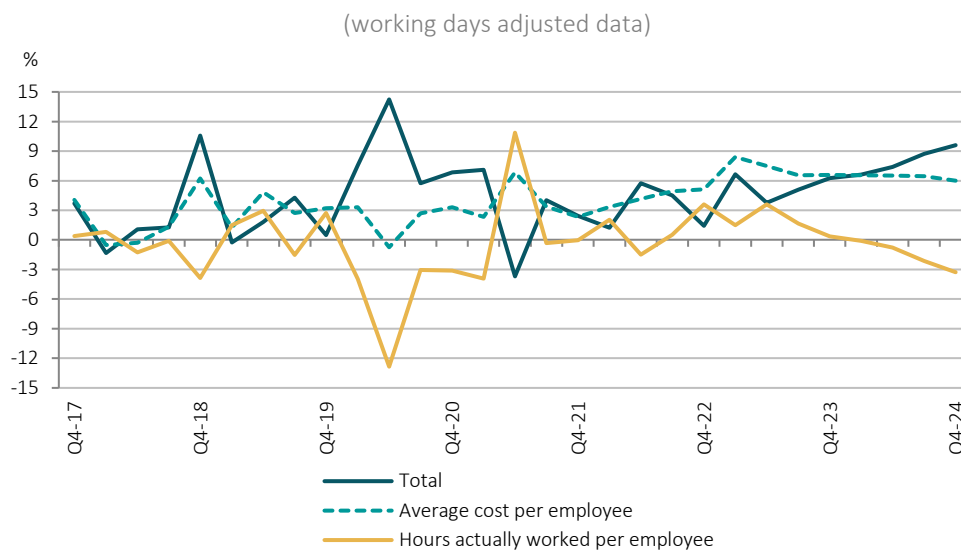
The average cost per employee registered lower increases in all the economic activities, apart from Public Administration (6.9%), which showed a larger increase, reversing, from the 3rd quarter of 2024, the pattern registered since the 1st quarter of 2021, when the increases were smaller than those of the remaining activities. The highest increase was observed in Public Administration (6.9%) and the lowest in Services (5.1%).

The number of hours actually worked per employee decreased in all economic activities, as in the previous quarter. The highest decrease was observed in Construction (6.0%) and the lowest in Public Administration (2.5%).

In 2024, the LCI registered an increase of 8.2% (it had increased by 5.4% in 2023), corresponding to increases of 8.2% in the wage costs (5.1% in 2023) and of 8.1% in the other costs (6.6% in 2023). The average cost per employee increased by 6.4% (7.2% in 2023) and the number of hours actually worked per employee decreased by 1.6% (it had increased by 1.8% in 2023).



Figure 2. LCI year-on-year rate of change by source of variation



Source: Statistics Portugal, Labour Cost Index – 4th quarter of 2024.

2. Sectors of economic activity

In the 4th quarter of 2024, in the subgroup of economic activities belonging to sections B to N (which broadly cover the private sector of the economy), the LCI registered a year-on-year increase of 9.6%.

In the remaining economic activities (sections O to S), which include mostly (but not exclusively) the public sector of the economy, the LCI also recorded a year-on-year increase of 9.6%.

In 2024, the LCI registered an increase of 8.1% in the activities that belong to sections B to N (5.0% in 2023) and an increase of 8.3% (6.1% in 2023) in the activities from sections O to S.

Sections B to N

In the 4th quarter of 2024, in the activities from sections B to N, compared with the same quarter of 2023, it was observed that:

- the wage costs increased by 9.6% and the other labour costs increased by 9.5% (Figure 3);
- the average labour cost per employee increased by 5.6% (Figure 4);
- the number of hours actually worked per employee decreased by 3.7% (Figure 4).

Among the activities from sections B to N, the LCI increased by 9.9% in Industry (sections B to E), by 13.4% in Construction (section F), and by 9.0% in Services (sections G to N).



In Industry (9.9%):

- the wage costs increased by 10.0% and the other labour costs increased by 9.9%;
- the average labour cost per employee increased by 6.3%;
- the number of hours actually worked per employee decreased by 3.3%.

In Construction (13.4%):

- the wage costs and the other labour costs increased by 13.4%;
- the average labour cost per employee increased by 6.5%;
- the number of hours actually worked per employee decreased by 6.0%.

In Services (9.0%):

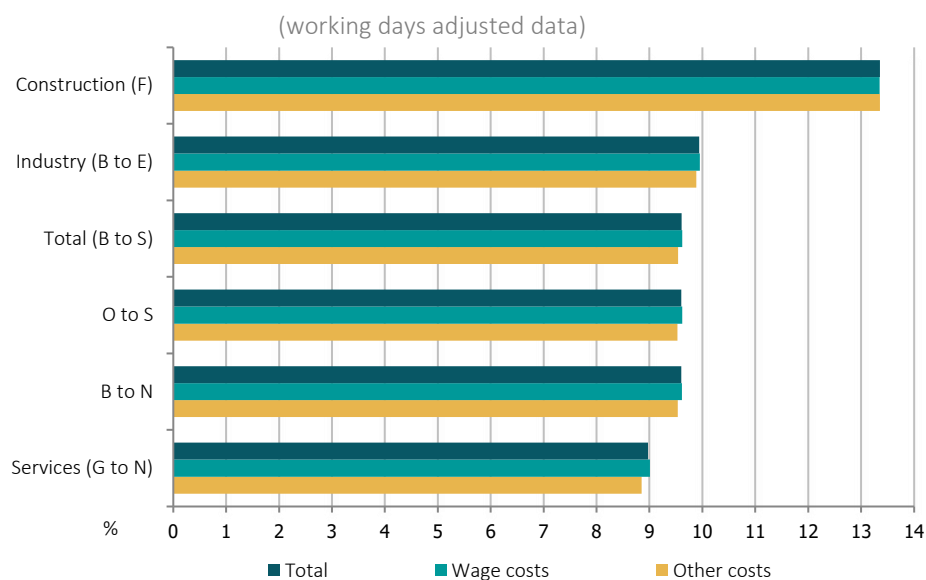
- the wage costs increased by 9.0% and the other labour costs increased by 8.9%;
- the average labour cost per employee increased by 5.1%;
- the number of hours actually worked per employee decreased by 3.5%.

Sections O to S

In the 4th quarter of 2024, in the activities from sections O to S, the LCI recorded an increase of 9.6%. In these activities

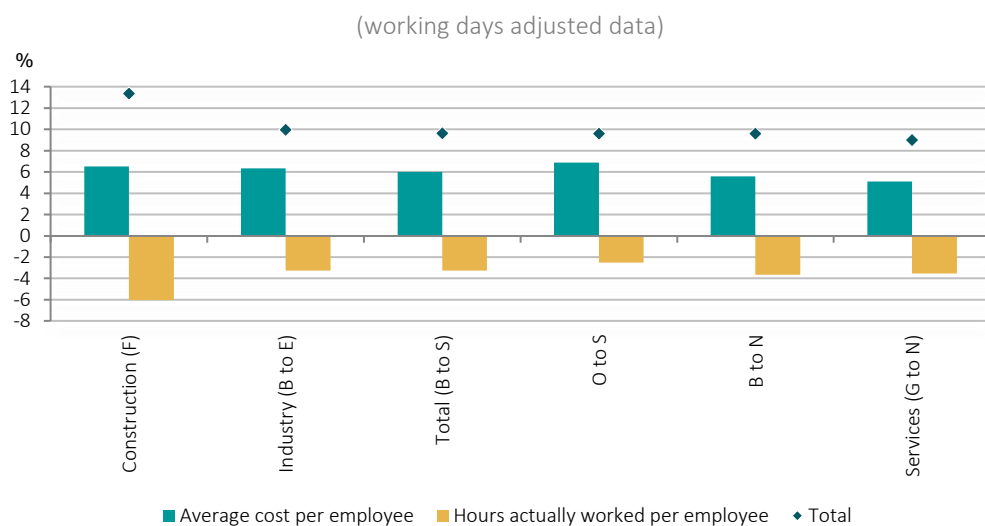
- the wage costs increased by 9.6% and the other labour costs increased by 9.5%;
- the average labour cost per employee increased by 6.9%;
- the number of hours actually worked per employee decreased by 2.5%.

Figure 3. LCI year-on-year rate of change by index component and economic activity in the 4th quarter of 2024



Source: Statistics Portugal, Labour Cost Index – 4th quarter of 2024.

Figure 4. LCI year-on-year rate of change by index source of variation and economic activity in the 4th quarter of 2024



Source: Statistics Portugal, Labour Cost Index – 4th quarter of 2024.



3. Comparison with the European Union

The latest available information by Member State of the European Union on the LCI year-on-year rate of change reports to the 3rd quarter of 2024 and was published by Eurostat on the 16th of December of 2024 (Figure 5).

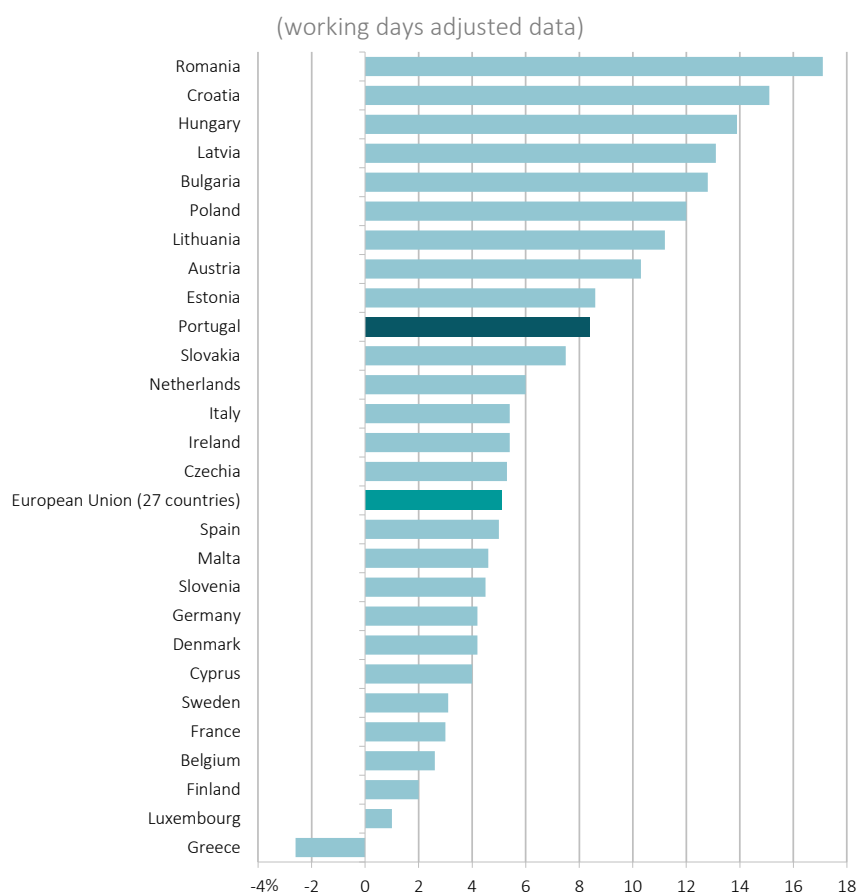
The LCI year-on-year rate of change for the European Union (27 countries) was 5.1%, in the 3rd quarter of 2024.

Fifteen countries, including Portugal, recorded LCI rates of change above the European Union average, with Romania recording the largest LCI increase (17.1%).

In eleven countries, the LCI recorded a lower increase than the European Union average, between 1.0% in Luxembourg, and 5.0% in Spain. Greece recorded a year-on-year decrease of the LCI of 2.6%.

In the 3rd quarter of 2024, Portugal recorded a year-on-year increase of 8.4%².

Figure 5. LCI year-on-year rate of change by European Union Country (27) in the 3rd quarter of 2024



Source: Eurostat, Labour Cost Index – 3rd quarter of 2024.

² This value has now been revised to 8.7% (as described in the technical note, page 11).



Table 1. LCI year-on-year rate of change by index component and economic activity (NACE-Rev. 2)
(working days adjusted data)

Economic activity (sections from Nace-Rev. 2)	Q1-2024			Q2-2024			Q3-2024			Q4-2024			2023			2024		
	Total	Wage costs	Other costs	Total	Wage costs	Other costs	Total	Wage costs	Other costs	Total	Wage costs	Other costs	Total	Wage costs	Other costs	Total	Wage costs	Other costs
%																		
Total (B to S)	6.6	6.6	6.6	7.4	7.4	7.4	8.7	8.7	8.6	9.6	9.6	9.5	5.4	5.1	6.6	8.2	8.2	8.1
B to N	5.0	5.0	5.1	8.9	8.9	8.9	8.6	8.6	8.5	9.6	9.6	9.5	5.0	4.8	6.0	8.1	8.1	8.1
Industry (B to E)	5.1	5.1	5.1	10.4	10.4	10.3	10.7	10.7	10.8	9.9	10.0	9.9	5.1	5.0	5.7	9.2	9.2	9.2
Construction (F)	4.4	4.4	4.4	8.9	8.9	8.8	8.6	8.6	8.5	13.4	13.4	13.4	5.2	3.4	11.7	8.9	8.9	8.9
Services (G to N)	5.0	5.0	5.1	8.2	8.2	8.2	7.5	7.5	7.3	9.0	9.0	8.9	4.9	4.8	5.3	7.5	7.5	7.4
O to S	9.6	9.7	9.6	4.9	5.0	4.7	9.2	9.2	9.0	9.6	9.6	9.5	6.1	5.7	7.8	8.3	8.3	8.1

Source: Statistics Portugal, Labour Cost Index – 4th quarter of 2024.

Table 2. LCI year-on-year rate of change by index component and economic activity (NACE-Rev. 2)
(working days non-adjusted data)

Economic activity (sections from Nace-Rev. 2)	Q1-2024			Q2-2024			Q3-2024			Q4-2024			2023			2024		
	Total	Wage costs	Other costs	Total	Wage costs	Other costs	Total	Wage costs	Other costs	Total	Wage costs	Other costs	Total	Wage costs	Other costs	Total	Wage costs	Other costs
%																		
Total (B to S)	10.0	10.0	9.9	7.4	7.4	7.4	7.0	7.1	6.9	2.8	2.8	2.7	6.0	5.7	7.1	6.6	6.6	6.5
B to N	8.4	8.3	8.4	8.9	8.9	8.9	6.9	6.9	6.8	2.8	2.8	2.7	5.6	5.3	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5
Industry (B to E)	8.5	8.5	8.4	10.4	10.4	10.3	9.0	9.0	9.1	3.1	3.1	3.0	5.7	5.6	6.3	7.6	7.6	7.6
Construction (F)	7.7	7.7	7.7	8.9	8.9	8.8	6.9	7.0	6.9	6.3	6.3	6.3	5.7	3.9	12.2	7.4	7.4	7.4
Services (G to N)	8.3	8.3	8.4	8.2	8.2	8.2	5.8	5.8	5.7	2.2	2.2	2.0	5.5	5.4	5.9	5.9	5.9	5.9
O to S	13.1	13.1	13.0	4.9	5.0	4.7	7.5	7.5	7.3	2.8	2.8	2.7	6.7	6.3	8.4	6.6	6.6	6.5

Source: Statistics Portugal, Labour Cost Index – 4th quarter of 2024.

Sections from Nace-Rev. 2

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| B - Mining and quarrying | H - Transport and storage | N - Administrative and support service activities |
| C - Manufacturing | I - Accommodation and food service activities | O - Public administration, defence, and compulsory social security |
| D - Electricity, gas, steam and air conditions supply | J - Information and communication | P - Education |
| E - Water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities | K - Financial and insurance activities | Q - Human health and social work activities |
| F - Construction | L - Real estate activities | R - Arts, entertainment and recreation |
| G - Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motor cycles | M - Professional, scientific and technical activities | S - Other service activities |



Table 3. LCI year-on-year rate of change by index source of variation and economic activity (NACE-Rev. 2)
(working days adjusted data)

Economic activity (sections from Nace-Rev. 2)	Q1-2024			Q2-2024			Q3-2024			Q4-2024			2023			2024		
	Total	Average cost per employee	Hours actually worked per employee	Total	Average cost per employee	Hours actually worked per employee	Total	Average cost per employee	Hours actually worked per employee	Total	Average cost per employee	Hours actually worked per employee	Total	Average cost per employee	Hours actually worked per employee	Total	Average cost per employee	Hours actually worked per employee
	%																	
Total (B to S)	6.6	6.6	-0.1	7.4	6.5	-0.8	8.7	6.4	-2.1	9.6	6.0	-3.3	5.4	7.2	1.8	8.2	6.4	-1.6
B to N	5.0	6.6	1.6	8.9	6.9	-1.8	8.6	6.2	-2.1	9.6	5.6	-3.7	5.0	7.7	2.5	8.1	6.3	-1.5
Industry (B to E)	5.1	6.8	1.6	10.4	6.9	-3.1	10.7	6.7	-3.6	9.9	6.3	-3.3	5.1	7.6	2.4	9.2	6.7	-2.1
Construction (F)	4.4	6.4	2.0	8.9	7.1	-1.6	8.6	6.7	-1.8	13.4	6.5	-6.0	5.2	8.7	3.4	8.9	6.7	-1.9
Services (G to N)	5.0	6.6	1.6	8.2	6.9	-1.2	7.5	5.9	-1.5	9.0	5.1	-3.5	4.9	7.5	2.5	7.5	6.1	-1.2
O to S	9.6	6.2	-3.2	4.9	6.1	1.3	9.2	6.8	-2.4	9.6	6.9	-2.5	6.1	6.4	0.3	8.3	6.5	-1.7

Source: Statistics Portugal, Labour Cost Index – 4th quarter of 2024.

Table 4. LCI year-on-year rate of change by index source of variation and economic activity (NACE-Rev. 2)
(working days non-adjusted data)

Economic activity (sections from Nace-Rev. 2)	Q1-2024			Q2-2024			Q3-2024			Q4-2024			2023			2024		
	Total	Average cost per employee	Hours actually worked per employee	Total	Average cost per employee	Hours actually worked per employee	Total	Average cost per employee	Hours actually worked per employee	Total	Average cost per employee	Hours actually worked per employee	Total	Average cost per employee	Hours actually worked per employee	Total	Average cost per employee	Hours actually worked per employee
	%																	
Total (B to S)	10.0	6.6	-3.2	7.4	6.5	-0.8	7.0	6.4	-0.6	2.8	6.0	3.2	6.0	7.2	1.4	6.6	6.4	-0.4
B to N	8.4	6.6	-1.5	8.9	6.9	-1.8	6.9	6.2	-0.6	2.8	5.6	2.8	5.6	7.7	2.2	6.5	6.3	-0.3
Industry (B to E)	8.5	6.8	-1.6	10.4	6.9	-3.1	9.0	6.7	-2.1	3.1	6.3	3.2	5.7	7.6	2.0	7.6	6.7	-0.9
Construction (F)	7.7	6.4	-1.2	8.9	7.1	-1.6	6.9	6.7	-0.2	6.3	6.5	0.2	5.7	8.7	3.0	7.4	6.7	-0.7
Services (G to N)	8.3	6.6	-1.6	8.2	6.9	-1.2	5.8	5.9	0.0	2.2	5.1	2.9	5.5	7.5	2.1	5.9	6.1	0.0
O to S	13.1	6.2	-6.1	4.9	6.1	1.3	7.5	6.8	-0.8	2.8	6.9	4.0	6.7	6.4	-0.1	6.6	6.5	-0.5

Source: Statistics Portugal, Labour Cost Index – 4th quarter of 2024.

Note: The name of the activities can be found in the previous page.



TECHNICAL NOTE

With the publication of the results for the 1st quarter of 2020, Statistics Portugal started to include, in the LCI calculation, regarding the information related to the labour costs obtained from administrative sources, data corresponding to the universe of about 386 thousand entities (instead of the sample of around 3 800 entities), which declared earnings for a total of 4.2 million workers. In 2023 (definitive data), the information gathered from administrative sources corresponds to the universe of approximately 445 thousand entities which declared earnings to Social Security and to *Caixa Geral de Aposentações*, for a total of around 4.6 million workers. The information on hours actually worked continues to be obtained by direct inquiry from the entities that belong to the LCI sample (5 040 entities in 2024), and no changes were introduced at this level. For the O, P and Q sections of NACE-Rev. 2 estimates of the number of hours actually worked per employee from the Labour Force Survey are used.

With the publication of the results for the 1st quarter of 2023, the Labour Cost Index (LCI) series were rebased to the year 2020 (2020=100), in line with Eurostat's procedure for the Labour Cost Index, whenever more up-to-date data of the (quadrennial) Labour Cost Survey become available. This procedure does not change, by definition, the year-on-year changes already published. However, this opportunity was taken to fully adjust the method for calculating the indices to the methodology adopted by Eurostat, resulting in small differences from the figures previously published.

The back series for all indices, from the 1st quarter of 2008, are available at the Official Statistics website.

The LCI is a short-term indicator that measures quarterly developments in labour costs per hour actually worked (hourly average cost) incurred by the employer. The index is calculated by dividing the average cost per employee by the number of hours actually worked per employee. For this reason, the evolution of these two variables (labour costs and hours worked) contribute to explaining the development of the LCI.

Labour costs incurred by the employer correspond to that reported by the entities to the Social Security (*Declaração Mensal de Remunerações*) and to the *Caixa Geral de Aposentações (Relação Contributiva)* include the following:

Wage costs:

- Base wage
- Regular bonuses and allowances
- Irregular bonuses and allowances (holiday bonus, Christmas bonus, end-of-year bonuses/distribution of profits, other irregular bonuses and allowances)
- Payment of overtime

Other costs:

- Severance payment
- Employers' legal costs (social security contributions, insurance against accidents and occupational disease)



- Collectively agreed, contractual and voluntary costs (supplementary pension/invalidity benefit, health insurance, life/personal accident insurance, and social benefits paid directly to employees in case of absence on account of sickness)

Quarterly data collection on the hours worked in the enterprises is carried out through an electronic questionnaire (Computer Assisted Web Interviewing – CAWI).

By economic activity, the LCI covers Sections B to S of NACE-Rev. 2.

The LCI is a Laspeyres index.

For more detailed information about the LCI calculation, please see the [methodological document](#) (only in Portuguese) for this statistical operation.

INFORMATION SELECTED FOR PUBLICATION

This Press Release analyses changes in the total LCI and respective items: 1) wage costs versus other costs; and 2) average costs per employee versus number of hours actually worked per employee.

Given that the LCI is seasonal, data are presented as year-on-year rates of change, which compare index levels in the current quarter with those for the same quarter a year earlier. The series of index figures are available on the Official Statistics website.

With the purpose of eliminating the effects of a different number of working days in similar quarters of different years (Easter and other movable feasts), the series analysed are adjusted for working days. The raw figures, not adjusted for these effects, are available in the annex tables and on the Official Statistics website.

Due to rounding, the sum of the components may not equal to the corresponding totals.

This Press Release was prepared with the data received up to the 31st of January of 2025. The response rate of the LCI survey on hours worked was 94%.

REVISIONS

The Data published in this Press Release concerning the last quarters were subject to the usual revisions. These revisions are the result of the inclusion of information relating to the previous quarter sent late by some enterprises of the sample survey on hours worked and from the update of information obtained through administrative sources, namely data from the *Declaração Mensal de Remunerações* reported by enterprises to Social Security.

The impact of these revisions, measured by the difference between the year-on-year rates of change now available and those published for the 3rd quarter of 2024 in the Press Release [“Labour Cost Index – 3rd quarter of 2024”](#), is presented in the following table:



Revision of the LCI year-on-year rates of change published in the 3rd quarter of 2024

Economic activity (sections from Nace- Rev. 2)	Working days adjusted data					Non-adjusted working days data				
	Total	Component of the index		Source of variation of the index		Total	Component of the index		Source of variation of the index	
		Wage costs	Other costs	Average cost	Hours actually worked		Wage costs	Other costs	Average cost	Hours actually worked
	Per hour actually worked			Per employee		Per hour actually worked			Per employee	
p.p.										
Total (B to S)	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.0	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.0
B to N	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.0	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.0
Industry (B to E)	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.2	0.0	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.2	0.0
Construction (F)	0.0	0.0	0.0	-0.2	-0.3	0.0	0.1	0.1	-0.2	-0.2
Services (G to N)	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.0	0.4	0.3	0.5	0.4	0.0
O to S	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.0	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.0

Source: Statistics Portugal, Labour Cost Index – 3rd quarter of 2024.

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Eurostat – Statistical Office of the European Union

LCI – Labour Cost Index

NACE-Rev. 2 – Statistical Classification of Economic Activities in the European Communities, Revision 2

Next quarterly press release -14th May of 2025
