

# PREFACE



**W**ith 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 [International Labor Comparisons \(ILC\)](#) program of the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) adjusts data to a common conceptual framework.

The 2012 edition of *Charting International Labor*

*Comparisons* features 2010 data, and data trends over time, for the main indicators published by ILC: [gross domestic product](#), [labor force](#), manufacturing [hourly compensation costs](#) and [productivity](#), and [consumer prices](#). Country coverage varies by chart and is based primarily on data available from the ILC program; however, to increase country and indicator coverage, this chartbook also uses data from other organizations. (Notes are provided at the end of each section to detail sources used and to furnish helpful definitions.)

For the latest ILC key indicators by country, see the [Country at a Glance](#) feature at [www.bls.gov/ilc](http://www.bls.gov/ilc).

## Contact ILC

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