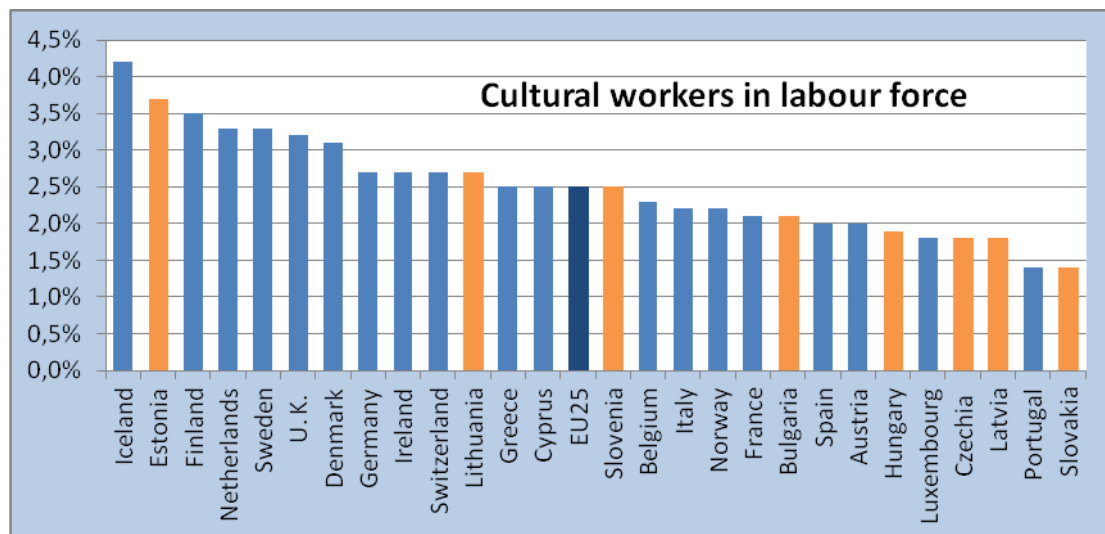


Cultural Employment in Europe

Eurostat is first and foremost expected to search for data that have relevance to areas that are under strict community mandate. E.g. export, import, sales by VAT categories, agricultural production, pollution and the like. Since the Lisbon summit, harmonisation of national statistics has speeded up in the social areas like poverty, education etc. In the cultural field, however, reliable comparable statistics are still a rare commodity. Eurobarometer, the public poll service of the EU has produced interesting data on a number of cultural phenomena, but these are based on occasional surveys and not on the regular and all-inclusive statistical reports of the member countries.

This is why the Eurostat [news release](#) on 26 May 2014 about cultural employment in Europe created exceptional interest. The most important of these figures is the percentage of cultural workers in the total work force of a country: we at the Budapest Cultural Observatory (BO) have put this into a rank list, calculated separate averages for eastern and western countries¹ and put into a graph:



Explanatory example: Slovenia appears to coincide with the average of the EU. Both in the Union and in Slovenia, 2.5% of people with a job work in the cultural sector or have a cultural occupation in another branch of the economy.

The immediate BO reaction is the following. Cultural operations in our region are overstaffed – this is the returning verdict. These Eurostat figures now tell us that on the national level we are understaffed with cultural workers: 2,6% of the work force in the west are cultural workers – against 2,0% in the eight eastern countries.

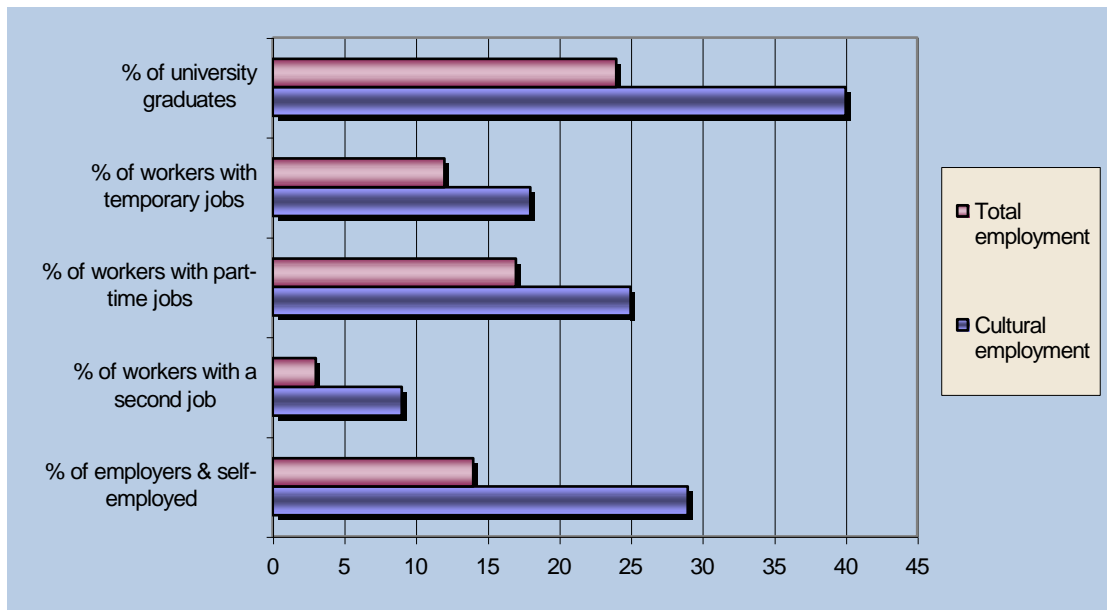
Since Poland is bigger than the actual eight in this survey, if Poland turned out to have over 3% cultural employment (similarly to Denmark or Sweden, for example), the difference between the eastern and western averages would immediately disappear, leaving us with other lessons to look for. Polish statistical agencies: kindly appease our curiosity!

¹ "Eastern" countries: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia and Slovenia. Poland and Romania were not included in the Eurostat report.

"Western" countries: the fifteen old EU members plus Iceland and Norway. Cyprus was not included in these averages.

The means of the 7 new eastern and the 15 old western EU members were also calculated. They differ very little from the "eastern" and "western" averages shown here.

Eurostat displayed data on the internal characteristics of cultural employment, relating these to the overall figures of the work force. They found the following:



Explanatory example: 24% of the entire work force in the EU have a higher education grade, while this ratio in the cultural jobs is 40%.

We find that cultural workers are above the average in each of the selected categories. They are higher educated, their jobs are less certain, cover a shorter time per week, are combined with other occupations and these more of these people have no boss.

If one adds up these percentages arrives at a figure higher than 100% because they are not exclusive, many cultural workers belong to several categories at the same time. Even absolute accumulation cannot be excluded: you may know a freelance artist with a diploma who does art on a part time and temporary basis, and has a second job, too.

Using the basic figures of Eurostat, BO related the various sub-categories of cultural workers to the entire number of jobs in a country. We hope to have arrived at data suitable for valid comparisons. The five tables below contain rank lists of countries, indicating western and eastern averages as well. The percentages in the tables are a combination of the two figures in the second diagram by respective category and by country.

Tables 1-5

	Graduated cultural workers % of all		Temporary cultural workers % of all		Part-time cultural workers % of all		Cultural workers with 2nd job % of all		Self-employed cultural workers % of all
Estonia	2,22	Finland	0,84	Netherlands	1,85	Iceland	1,22	Iceland	1,47
Lithuania	2,13	Sweden	0,73	Iceland	1,72	Denmark	0,62	Netherlands	1,06
Iceland	1,85	Spain	0,68	Switzerland	1,22	Lithuania	0,49	Italy	1,03
Cyprus	1,63	Slovenia	0,65	Denmark	1,12	Sweden	0,46	U. K.	0,90
U. K.	1,38	Netherlands	0,63	Sweden	0,92	Netherlands	0,46	Sweden	0,89
Denmark	1,33	France	0,61	Finland	0,84	Switzerland	0,38	Germany	0,81
Finland	1,33	Greece	0,53	U. K.	0,83	Latvia	0,34	Austria	0,78
Netherlands	1,29	Portugal	0,49	Germany	0,81	Norway	0,29	Greece	0,78
Sweden	1,25	Germany	0,49	West	0,70	Finland	0,28	Ireland	0,76
Belgium	1,17	West	0,49	Ireland	0,65	West	0,23	West	0,76
Bulgaria	1,13	Italy	0,42	Norway	0,64	Greece	0,23	Switzerland	0,73
Ireland	1,08	Belgium	0,39	Austria	0,52	U. K.	0,22	Belgium	0,67
France	1,07	Switzerland	0,38	France	0,50	Germany	0,22	Finland	0,67
West	1,03	Norway	0,37	Belgium	0,48	France	0,21	Denmark	0,53
Spain	1,02	U. K.	0,32	Estonia	0,48	Portugal	0,18	Czech Rep.	0,52
Norway	0,99	Denmark	0,31	Lithuania	0,41	Austria	0,18	Slovenia	0,50
Switzerland	0,97	Czech Rep.	0,27	Slovenia	0,38	Belgium	0,16	Spain	0,50
Germany	0,97	Austria	0,22	Italy	0,37	Italy	0,15	Cyprus	0,50
Greece	0,93	Iceland	0,21	Greece	0,35	Estonia	0,15	France	0,42
East	0,89	East	0,21	Spain	0,32	East	0,13	Norway	0,42
Slovenia	0,85	Hungary	0,21	Luxembourg	0,29	Czech Rep.	0,13	Portugal	0,38
Hungary	0,82	Latvia	0,16	Cyprus	0,28	Cyprus	0,13	Hungary	0,36
Austria	0,64	Cyprus	0,13	Czech Rep.	0,22	Spain	0,12	East	0,35
Latvia	0,63	Estonia	0,07	Portugal	0,21	Ireland	0,11	Luxembourg	0,29
Czech Rep.	0,59	Slovakia	0,07	East	0,21	Hungary	0,10	Bulgaria	0,25
Italy	0,59	Lithuania	0,05	Latvia	0,18	Slovakia	0,08	Slovakia	0,25
Luxembourg	0,56	Luxembourg	0,02	Slovakia	0,03	Slovenia	0,08	Lithuania	0,22
Slovakia	0,48			Bulgaria	0,001	Luxembourg	0,05	Estonia	0,19
Portugal	0,35					Bulgaria	0,02	Latvia	0,11

Explanatory example: In the last table the 0.50 of Slovenia again coincides with the EU average. Out of 200 people with a job in that country, one is a self-employed cultural operator.

The 0.50 was gained by the following way. Eurostat states that 20% of the workforce is self-employed, which means 4.02 thousand people. From the figures of 20,1 thousand cultural jobs representing 2.5% one arrives at a total of 804 thousand jobs in Slovenia. 4.02 is half % of 804.

(A technical note: the Eurostat news release provided two basic clues: absolute number of cultural workers and their ratio in the work force of the respective country, both figures with one decimal. The application of the rounded percentage value of Eurostat may cause slight distortion in the figures in the tables. Eventual errors almost never affect the order of the rank lists and certainly not the essence of the tables.)

East and west

As mentioned earlier, fewer we are but more qualified: 45% of cultural workers in east-central Europe have a diploma, against 40% in the west. The greatest difference was found in the proportion of part time workers in culture: 8,1% in the east, 26,9% in the west. Conclusion, explanation? That would take too many 'on the one hand' and 'on the other' clauses.

Exercises like the above are needed for telling whether the constructs of *east* and *west* are still meaningful. Aren't we prisoners of defunct categories? Why not north and south, for example? Indeed, Estonia and Lithuania are on the higher sections of the rank lists – similarly to Nordic countries (but strangely not Latvia). Estonia is on the top with 2,2% of graduated cultural workers in the entire workforce, and here an old (southern) member, Portugal is at the far end with 0,35% only.

Western countries, however, show greater consistency, keep closer together, and thus confirm being put in one big cluster. Eastern states produce wider variance: Estonia and Lithuania are near the last positions with regard to the ratio of self-employed and temporary cultural workers.

Before these figures take us too deep into the analysis of national characters, one must remember that real harmonisation of cultural statistics in the EU still takes a long way. The most striking divergences are likely to be due to the differences in naming and interpreting phenomena, before they are counted.