

GII Survey Report

Selection: Belgium.

1) Belgium, 1853 - 1853 (Central Statistics Commission)

Survey ID: 46

197 households

Sample Duration: 1 Year(s)

Notes: Investigation on behalf of the government into the households of working families. The purpose was partly to differentiate between the living standards of urban and rural workers, and partly out of a concern about the general living standards of working classes, 'Designed to embrace all economic facts relating to the existence of the worker, his needs, his habits.' The data was taken by provincial statistical commissions in nine regions under the instruction of the Central Statistics Commission. They were told to take both urban and rural samples and to try to represent the main labour groups. There had been earlier surveys, but this was the first one to employ statistical methods.

With Frédéric Le Play and Ernst Engel, Ducpétiaux is seen as one of the three main contributors to the early development of statistical methodology for examining household budgets. This survey is notable for being the first to apply Quételet's classification of household expenditures into three groups. The groups being: 1. Families of poor workers, dependant in part on public assistance; 2. Families of workers of small means, who do not participate in public assistance; 3. Families of workers who are comfortably off and independent of public assistance.

Expenditures are further broken down into three types of expenditure:

1. Expenses of a 'physical and material' nature: food; rent; clothing; bed clothing; heat; light; furniture; health; sickness-related expenditures; household insurance; taxes; postage; laundry; tools for one's trade; and costs for garden and home production of food.
2. Expenses of a 'religious, moral and intellectual' type, including: church; school; training; books, etc.; contribution to moral, intellectual and charitable organizations; mutual societies and insurances; and saving.
3. Expenses of a 'luxurious and improvidential' type, including: alcoholic drinks, cafès; tobacco; gambling; toilet articles; theatre; fêtes and public recreations; and loans and expenses at the pawn shop.

In general, the vast majority of the spending is on physical needs, with very little on 'Religious, Moral and Intellectual Needs.' Generally, the luxuries are tobacco, cabarets and a small amount of alcohol. Most of the households are perpetually in debt. Each family, unless stated otherwise, is composed of a father, a mother and four children aged approximately 16, 12, 6 and 2 years old respectively. This was deemed by the survey takers to be an average family. The older children would often be working so their wages would contribute to the household. The data given is for the whole household and not equalised in any further way. For some of the provinces the number of children per family, or the number of people in the household where not the assumed 6 person average is given in a separate table which I have merged in with the main data. The family data includes occupation of the householder and the wages of mother, father and children.

The conclusions of the survey (pp. 135-137) are interesting. Ducpétiaux summarises thus:

The right or wrong of the working class status depends on three essential elements that combine reacting on each other. These elements are: The percentage of compensation tied to work or wages; The price of basic commodities; The nature and quantity of food compared to the number of members composing the families.

Selection: Belgium.

Ref ID: 47

Edouard Ducpetiaux, *Budgets economiques des classes ouvrieres en Belgique (Bruxelles, 1855)*

Economic Budgets of Workers in Belgium

2) **Belgium, 1853 - 1891 (Private - Individual, Engel)**

Survey ID: 47

199 households

Notes: Engel's study uses a selection of data from the 1853 and 1891 surveys. Engel's 1857 study, which comprises the first half of the publication cited here, was the first to draw empirical conclusions from grouped household budget data.

In the text of this survey report, Engel linked poor living conditions to the labour unrest which had been prevalent in Belgium, and proposed in his conclusion that industrial peace might be reached when workers could have 20% of their income to spend on leisure, after all physical needs had been met.

Ref ID: 48

Ernst Engel, *Die Lebenskosten belgischer arbeiterfamilien fruher und jetet (1895)*

The cost of living of Belgian working class families now and earlier

3) **Belgium, 1889 - 1890**

Survey ID: 49

124 households

Sample Duration: 1 Year(s)

Ref ID: 278

Sixth Annual Report Of The Commissioner Of Labor, 1890. Cost Of Production: Iron, Steel, Coal, Etc. (Washington D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1891)

Selection: Belgium.

Ref ID: 228

Seventh Annual Report Of The Commissioner Of Labor, 1891. Cost Of Production: The Textiles And Glass (Washington D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1892)

Ref ID: 1269

Michael R. Haines, Codebook: Cost of Living of Industrial Workers in the United States and Europe, 1888-1890, ICPSR 7711

Ref ID: 1270

Frederick W. Moore, 'Review: Sixth Annual Report of the Commissioner of Labor 1890', *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, No. 2 (May 1892), pp. 135-146.

4) Belgium, 1891 - 1891 (Government - Other Dept./Office)

Survey ID: 50

188 households

Sample Duration: 1 Month(s)

Notes: Comprehensive survey detailing the household composition, income and expenditure of 188 households in 8 regions of Belgium. Households selected were working families in blue-collar jobs. Includes the job of the head of household, salaries of father, mother and children, and expenditures on all food groups; rent, heat and light; clothes; washing; health and medicine; leisure. The section on food also gives quantities consumed (in Kg/lit per household). The report includes an appendix (pp. 523-559) outlining the history of the role of the Conseils de l'industrie et du travail, which had been established in 1887 to liaise between employers and workers over industrial tension. The history of the Conseils effectively gives a history of the extensive strike and industrial action over pay and living standards in Belgium.

Ref ID: 51

Ministere de l'Agriculture etc., *Salaires et budgets ouvriers en Belgique au mois d'avril 1891* (Bruxelles, 1892)

Selection: Belgium.

Ref ID: 53

M. Gottschalk, 'Budgets ouvriers en 1891 et en 1929', *Revue de l'Inst. de Sociologie* (1931)

Workers' Budgets in 1891 and 1929

5) **Belgium, (circa) 1897 - 1897**

Survey ID: 53

100 households

Ref ID: 54

Charles de Queker, *Cent Budgets Ouvriers à Bruxelles en 1897* (Bruxelles: Impr. N. De Bremaeker-Wauts, 1897)

6) **Belgium, 1906 - 1908 (Private - Individual, B.S. Rowntree)**

Survey ID: 56

69 households

Sample Duration: 4 Week(s)

Notes: Rowntree was primarily concerned with nutrition and also with comparison to Britain. All the budgets were kept for 4 weeks with a few exceptions which are detailed in the tables. The tables also include the location of the household, details about the household composition and the occupation of the head of household. This was investigated by an investigator experienced in the work who gave housewives notebooks and supervised them recording their expenditures. There is detailed textual analysis which is particularly concerned with nutrition and malnutrition. There is more detailed nutrition information including protein intake. The data includes details of household composition and calculates daily calorie availability per equivalent man.

Rowntree concluded that Belgians seek less gratification in their food choices than families in York, and will fill up on bread and potatoes. Thus, although they are poorer, they are less deficient in calories. Rents are very cheap, but wages are also low and Belgian workers have a poor standard of living.

Ref ID: 57

B.S. Rowntree, *Land and Labour: Lessons from Belgium* (London: MacMillan and Co., 1910)

Selection: Belgium.

7) **Belgium, 1908 - 1908 (Academic - Institutional, Slosse and Waxweiler)**

Survey ID: 54

1,065 households

Sample Duration: 2 Week(s)

Notes: Slosse and Waxweiler worked from the Institute of Sociology, Solvay. They were part of the international research movement (including Atwater, Kreusler and Kern, Maquenne and Loeb) which was concerned with both the availability of calories to workers, and also the quality of those calories.

This survey has incredibly detailed food and nutrition data. It focused on male manual workers in the Brussels area as this would be a way of roughly equalising their caloric needs. Contact was made with men through unions and co-operative societies. Men were asked to fill out the quantities of food the household had bought and then note what they had eaten in a questionnaire (this is included in the survey) over 14 days. The data was then averaged out to give a daily 'snapshot'. The individual data gives each man's profession, his total average daily calories, and the proportion of those calories which came from fats, carbohydrates etc.

Ref ID: 55

Auguste Slosse and Émile Waxweiler, *Recherches sur le travail humain dans l'industrie 1. Enquête sur l'alimentation de 1065 ouvriers belges* (Bruxelles: Misch & Thron, 1910)

8) **Belgium, 1908 - 1908 (Board of Trade)**

Survey ID: 55

1,859 households

Notes: This is a comprehensive study which covers 15 industrial towns in Belgium. The focus was the cost of living and remuneration of the working classes, compared with the UK, France and Germany. The data was gathered by distributing forms through local trade unions. The survey is particularly concerned with housing and there is a lot of information about the quality, size and price of local housing stock. There are also prices towards the end of the survey. Concludes cost of living for a working family approx. 9% cheaper in Belgium than in England, principally because rents are much cheaper.

Ref ID: 56

Great Britain Board of Trade, *Cost of Living in Belgian Towns. Report of An Enquiry by the Board of Trade into Working Class Rents, Housing and Retail Prices, together with the Rates of Wages in certain occupations in the Principal Industrial Towns of Belgium* (London: H.M.S.O., 1910)

Selection: Belgium.

9) **Belgium, 1921 - 1921 (Ministry of Labour)**

Survey ID: 58

848 households

Sample Duration: 14 Day(s)

Notes: Each household involved in this survey kept a daily record of the expenditure and consumption of household items, with a particular focus on food and nutrition. Of the 848 households, 673 were of workers, and 175 were of the 'petit bourgeoisie', mostly for purposes of comparison.

The Ministry of Labour were concerned to test Engel's Law with relation to working households. They were concerned about the nutrition of workers, and compared the results of this survey to that of the 1908 nutritional survey undertaken by the Institute of Sociology at Solvay (ref. 54), concluding that the nutritional standards of workers had risen considerably.

Ref ID: 59

Ministere de l'Industrie et du Travail, ' Une Enquete sur la Nature et le cout de l'alimentation des classes labourieuses', *Revue de Travail*, Vol. 23: 690 (Bruxelles, 1922), pp. 690-697.

An Enquiry into the Nature and Cost of Food in the working classes

10) **Belgium, 1928 - 1929 (Ministry of Industry (Labour & Social Welfare))**

Survey ID: 1368

173 households

Sample Duration: 1 Year(s)

Ref ID: 1409

Max Gottschalk, 'Le pouvoir d'achat et la consommation des ouvriers Belges a differentes epoques', *Rev. Internatl. Trav.*, Vol. 25, No. 6 (1932), pp. 1-20.

11) **Belgium, 1928 - 1929 (Ministry of Industry (Labour & Social Welfare))**

Survey ID: 60

1,033 households

Sample Duration: 1 Year(s)

Notes: This is a two part survey undertaken by the Belgian Ministry of Industry and Labour. Parts a and b cover 809 'working class' households, with part b covering 116 of the 809 families in more detail. The 224 'lower middle class' households covered in part c presumably earn more but this is not specified. Part d covers 57 of the lower middle class households in more detail. The survey takers attempted to get regional and occupational coverage, and to select 'normal families' (that is, those with two adults and at least one child).

Selection: Belgium.

Ref ID: 61

'The Belgian Family Budget Enquiry of 1928-1929', *International Labor Review*, Vol. 30, No. 1 (1934), pp. 81-87.

Ref ID: 60

International Labor Review, 'Food consumption of working class families in certain countries', *International Labor Review*, Vol. 28: 870 (1933), pp. 870-876.

Ref ID: 53

M. Gottschalk, 'Budgets ouvriers en 1891 et en 1929', *Revue de l'Inst. de Sociologie* (1931)
Workers' Budgets in 1891 and 1929

Ref ID: 1409

Max Gottschalk, 'Le pouvoir d'achat et la consommation des ouvriers Belges a differentes epoques', *Rev. Internatl. Trav.*, Vol. 25, No. 6 (1932), pp. 1-20.

Ref ID: 1220

Resultats principaux d'une enquete sur les budgets ouvriers et d'employes en Belgique (1928-1929) (The Hague, 1934)

12) **Belgium, 1932 - 1932 (Academic - Individual)**

Survey ID: 62

139 households

Sample Duration: 1 Month(s)

Notes: Professor Guillaume Jacquemyns (1897-1969) was the principal author of three important surveys. He was an economic historian who was mostly based at the Institute of Sociology, Solvay (Brussels). His surveys all used local contacts (often through trade unions) to find data which was then given back to him and evaluated in accordance with the latest social science research methodology.

This survey was an investigation into the household budgets of 139 insured unemployed families, unionized strikers families, and 'workers at work' in five different regions of Belgium. Contacts with workers were made through local trade union bosses. Budgets were all for one month. The Brussels workers had mostly come from the elite workforce. Bruges workers were from the average salary bands. In Antwerp they were particularly interested in former diamond workers and dockers. The Bassin de Charleroi III sample had previously been taken by the same survey-takers in 1929 and is used as a comparison.

Ref ID: 63

G. Jacquemyns, *Enquête sur les conditions de vie de chômeurs assurés*, vol. 1, (Liege: G. Thone, 1932)

Investigation into the Living Conditions of the Insured Unemployed

Ref ID: 1410

G. Jacquemyns, *Enquête sur les conditions de vie de chômeurs assurés*, vol. 2, (Liège: G. Thone, 1933)

Ref ID: 1411

G. Jacquemyns, *Enquête sur les conditions de vie de chômeurs assurés*, vol. 3, (Liège: G. Thone, 1933)

Ref ID: 1412

G. Jacquemyns, *Enquête sur les conditions de vie de chômeurs assurés*, vol. 4, (Liège: G. Thone, 1933)

Ref ID: 1413

G. Jacquemyns, *Enquête sur les conditions de vie de chômeurs assurés*, vol. 5, (Liège: G. Thone, 1934)

Selection: Belgium.

13) **Belgium, 1947 - 1948 (Academic - Individual)**

Survey ID: 63

370 households

Sample Duration: 1 Year(s)

Notes: Jaquemyns was concerned with determining the post-liberation standard of living. In an effort to be representative, the survey-takers approached households in various regions through selected organisations like the Worker's Union, League of Christian Woman and Women Communists. It takes into account family allowances and the black market economy. In the text, repeated comparisons to the 1929 survey argue that, in most instances, the standard of living was lower in 1947-48 than in 1929. The survey includes the average consumption units per household and provides comprehensive expenditure data although, while it does give the amount spent on black-market food, it does not break food totals down into food groups. There are two income groups. 'Ouvriers' are in manual jobs and 'employés' in lower middle class white collar professions which can include clerks, shop-workers, managers in factories. The income is not necessarily very different between these groups but the survey finds the workers are continually in debt.

Ref ID: 252

G. Jacquemyns, *L'alimentation dans les budgets familiaux, 1947-1948* (Bruxelles: Parc Leopold, 1950)

The food in family budgets, 1947-1948

Ref ID: 64

G. Jacquemyns, *Les Budgets familiaux d'ouvriers et d'employés, 1947-1948* (Bruxelles: Parc Leopold, 1949)

Family Budgets of Workers and Managers, 1947-1948

14) **Belgium, 1948 - 1949 (Academic - Individual)**

Survey ID: 64

277 households

Sample Duration: 1 Year(s)

Notes: Jaquemyns employed the same methodology as his survey of the previous year. This survey covered 277 households with 390 salaries across all regions of Belgium, and with rural and urban representation.

Ref ID: 65

G. Jacquemyns, *Mode de vie des ouvriers, 1948-49* (Bruxelles: Parc Leopold, 1951)

Selection: Belgium.

15) **Belgium, 1957 - 1958**

Survey ID: 65

288 households

Notes: A report undertaken by the Statistical Office of the European Coal and Steel Community (based in Luxembourg). The purpose was to survey living standards across Europe with the intention of developing 'Statistical integration', or a levelling of wages and living standards across the European Community. The countries surveyed here were Germany (BR) (excluding Saarland), Saarland, Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands. Participants in the survey were paid to keep a housekeeping book for either a week, a fortnight or a month depending on the country. Some families were also interviewed. The survey was managed by local statistical offices.

Ref ID: 66

European Community for Coal and Steel, *Wirtschaftsrechnungen der Arbeiterfamilien der EGKS 1956/57, Serie Sozialstatistik, Nr.1* (Luxemburg: Statistisches Amt Der Europäischen Gemeinschaften, 1960)

16) **Belgium, 1961 - 1962 (Institut National de Statistique)**

Survey ID: 1511

1,579 households

Sample Duration: 1 Year(s)

Notes: This survey was carried out between 22 January 1961 and 20 January 1962 by the government's statistical institute.

1,579 households broken down as follows: 480 households of employees; 764 households of workers; 335 households where the head was not active.

Ref ID: 1792

Institut National de Statistique, 'Enquete sur les budgets de menage 1961-62', *Statistiques Économiques Belges 1960-1970, Vol. 2: Tableaux: 614 (1971), pp. 614-617.*

Ref ID: 1528

Institut National de Statistique, 'Enquete sur les budgets de menage 1961-62', *Statistiques Économiques Belges 1960-1970, Vol. 1: Notices: 209, pp. 209-211.*

Selection: Belgium.

Report Stats:

Selection: Belgium.

Surveys:	16
Reference instances:	30
Total Households:	8,508