



Volume 5. Wilhelmine Germany and the First World War, 1890-1918
Household Income and Expenses (1909)

One of the most striking developments in Wilhelmine Germany was the growing importance of the industrial workplace. These census figures show a decline in the number of independent producers and a rise in the number of workers in large-scale production. An increase in the number of "white collar" workers, including clerks and office assistants, can also be seen.

I. Household budgets of families of workers, white-collar workers, and civil servants¹: Income

Occupation of the head of the household	Number of households	Average income in Marks and (%) ²							
		Total	Husband's earned income	Husband's side income	Wife's income	Childrens' contribution	Rent from tenants	Other cash income	Earnings in kind
All households	852	2,192.08	1,805.35 (82.4)	51.10 (2.3)	60.26 (2.7)	36.79 (1.7)	44.07 (2.0)	174.93 (8.0)	19.58 (0.9)
Among them:									
A. Workers	522	1,835.38	1,507.92 (82.2)	41.05 (2.2)	79.24 (4.3)	44.49 (2.4)	52.98 (2.9)	102.19 (5.6)	7.51 (0.4)
I. Commercial	436	1,865.96	1,536.46 (82,3)	43.05 (2.3)	73.94 (4.0)	42.88 (2.3)	55.96 (3.0)	105.69 (5.7)	7.98 (0.4)
a) skilled	382	1,885.68	1,569.46 (83.2)	44.65 (2.4)	65.57 (3.5)	42.46 (2.2)	52.17 (2.8)	104.77 (5.6)	6.60 (0.3)
b) unskilled	54	1,726.51	1,303.01 (75.5)	31.80 (1,8)	133.19 (7.7)	45.85 (2.7)	82.72 (4.8)	112.20 (6.5)	17.74 (1.0)
II. Workers in trade and commerce	53	1,737.31	1,374.20 (79.1)	27.54 (1.6)	111.18 (6.4)	66.19 (3.8)	45.78 (2.6)	104.18 (6.0)	8.24 (0.5)
III. Workers without a more detailed designation	33	1,588.81	1,345.65 (84.7)	36.32 (2.3)	97.93 (6.2)	30.93 (1.9)	25.31 (1.6)	52.67 (3.3)	- -
B. Private employees	36	2,441.69	2,012.11 (82.4)	32.30 (1.3)	79.69 (3.3)	33.08 (1.4)	25.67 (1.0)	248.63 (10,2)	10.21 (0.4)

C. Teachers	79	3,294.32	2,753.05 (83.6)	180.30 (5.5)	7.03 (0.2)	-	5.69 (0.2)	281.37 (8.5)	66.88 (2.0)
D. Mid-level civil servants	139	2,861.72	2,376.71 (83.1)	27.20 (0.9)	10.19 (0.4)	13.99 (0.5)	34.64 (1.2)	369.11 (12.9)	29.88 (1.0)
E. Lower-level civil servants	67	2,084.31	1,693.96 (81.3)	41.11 (2.0)	24.71 (1.2)	69.77 (3.3)	44.59 (2.1)	171.64 (8,2)	38.58 (1.9)

II. Household budgets of families of workers, white-collar workers, and civil servants¹: Expenses

Occupation of the head of the household	Number of households	Average expenses in Marks and (%) ²					
		Total	Food	Clothing	Housing	Heat and lighting	Other ³
All households	852	2,234.02	1,017.52 (45.5)	282.44 (12.6)	401.27 (18.0)	90.83 (4.1)	441.96 (19.8)
Among them:							
A. Workers	522	1,835.06	955.06 (52.0)	204.67 (11.2)	312.52 (17.0)	77.99 (4.3)	284.82 (15.5)
I. Commercial	436	1,861.56	961.30 (51.6)	206.37 (11.1)	316.41 (17.0)	77.87 (4.2)	299.61 (16.1)
a) skilled	382	1,881.95	969.10 (51.5)	209.78 (11.2)	316.46 (16.8)	79.00 (4.2)	307.61 (16.3)
b) unskilled	54	1,717.31	906.08 (52.8)	182.20 (10.6)	316.12 (18.4)	69.84 (4.1)	243.07 (14.1)
II. Workers in trade and commerce	53	1,752.37	935.10 (53.4)	210.69 (12.0)	300.31 (17.2)	80.65 (4.6)	225.62 (12.8)
III. Workers without a more detailed designation	33	1,617.71	904.58 (55.9)	172.52 (10.7)	280.64 (17.3)	75.38 (4.7)	184.59 (11.4)
B. Private employees	36	2,405.06	983.31 (40.9)	306.44 (12.7)	449.94 (18.7)	83.34 (3.5)	582.03 (24.2)
C. Teachers	79	3,426.76	1,189.30 (34.7)	506.43 (14.8)	719.18 (21.0)	127.17 (3.7)	884.68 (25.8)
D. Mid-level civil servants	139	3,052.03	1,156.50 (37.9)	434.26 (14.2)	549.21 (18.0)	120.01 (3.9)	792.05 (26.0)
E. Lower-level civil servants	67	2,116.35	1,036.97 (49.0)	293.15 (13.9)	384.24 (18.2)	89.45 (4.2)	312.54 (14.7)

¹ The data on the income and expenses of poorer families, which is based on the household budgets that were kept for one year according to standardized budget books by 852 families with a total of 3,952 members, was collected between February 1, 1907 and the end of January, 1908 by the Imperial Statistical Office in Berlin, in collaboration with 26 urban statistical offices, in larger cities of the German Empire. (Of the 852 families that were polled, 701 lived in large cities, 81 in mid-sized cities, and 70 in cities with a population of less than 20,000). The studies were not limited to workers' households, but included also families of salaried employees and civil servants up to an upper income level of ca. 3,000 Marks per year for the head of the household, not counting side income. The polled families varied in size: 421 families with 2-4 persons, 317 families with 5 and 6 persons, 114 families with more than 6 persons.

² The percentages in the various columns are in parentheses.

³ Chart c) provides a further breakdown of the category "Other" in chart b).

Source: Second special edition of *Reichsarbeitsblatt. Erhebung von Wirtschaftsrechnungen minderbemittelter Familien im Deutschen Reich* [Survey of Household Budgets of Families of Lesser Means in the German Reich]. Published by the Reich Office of Statistics, Division for Workers' Statistics. Berlin 1909, pp. 44-45, 48.

Table published in Gerd Hohorst, Jürgen Kocka and Gerhard Ritter, eds., *Sozialgeschichtliches Arbeitsbuch: Materialien zur Statistik des Kaiserreichs 1870-1914* [Social History Workbook: Materials on Kaiserreich Statistics 1870-1914]. Munich: C.H. Beck, 1975, vol. 2, pp. 112-14.

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