

[Related BLS programs](#) | [Related articles](#)**ABSTRACT**[October 1994, Vol. 117, No. 10](#)

Manufacturing costs, productivity, and competitiveness, 1979-93

Edwin R. Dean

Associate Commissioner for Productivity and Technology, Office of Productivity and Technology, Bureau of Labor Statistics

Mark K. Sherwood

Economist, Office of Productivity and Technology, Bureau of Labor Statistics

With unit labor costs as a gauge, U.S. competitiveness within the G-7 countries improved in the last decade and a half. A fuller story regarding competitiveness could be told using multifactor productivity and all input costs. This article examines the relationship that exists among productivity, costs, and prices, illustrating it with data produced by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The first half of the article studies the relationship using the traditional measures of unit labor costs, labor compensation per hour, and labor productivity. The second half examines the more general concepts of unit total costs, output prices, prices of all inputs, and multifactor productivity and relates these concepts to competitiveness.

▶ [Read excerpt](#) ▶ [Download full text in PDF \(754K\)](#)

Related BLS programs

[Industry Productivity](#)[Multifactor Productivity](#)[Quarterly Labor Productivity](#)

Related *Monthly Labor Review* articles

[Manufacturing multifactor productivity in three countries.](#) July 1995.[Manufacturing prices, productivity, and labor costs in five economies.](#) July 1995.

Multifactor productivity in manufacturing industries. October 1992.

Manufacturing productivity and labor costs in 14 economies. December 1991.

Within *Monthly Labor Review Online*:

[Welcome](#) | [Current Issue](#) | [Index](#) | [Subscribe](#) | [Archives](#)Exit *Monthly Labor Review Online*:[BLS Home](#) | [Publications & Research Papers](#)