

A / INTERNATIONAL COST COMPARISON

The figures in the table (below) come from a survey of cost per m² that EC Harris carried out across its offices worldwide.

Although it has been assumed for the purposes of the survey that all buildings are constructed to western European specification standards, there will always be differences in specification for the same building constructed in different countries. Even within western Europe,

insulation and heating requirements will be very different in countries as diverse as Sweden, Italy or Spain. Where buildings are constructed to local standards, using local techniques, costs can be substantially cheaper than those given here.

Procurement and contractual arrangements can also have a substantial effect on costs, while the cost and efficiency of site labour remains one of

the key drivers. However, the link between labour rates and construction prices is not always direct. Unskilled labour, which, in Third World countries is often earning less than US\$5 per day is very often inefficient, with low productivity.

Sourcing of materials can have a profound effect on prices, with the high costs of imported M&E plant, in particular, often completely wiping out the advantages of low labour costs. ☹

