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Throughout the OECD, 30% of the average firm's total labour costs comprises items which are other than direct remuneration. This reissue, first published in 1984, focuses upon these non-wage labour costs, which include; fringe-benefit payments, obligatory social-welfare contributions, holiday entitlements and expenditures on recruitment and training, seeking to make amends for the woeful lack of consideration given to these important factors in previous wage literature.

The book focuses on two major areas of enquiry: firstly, the costs for the cyclical behaviour of employment, and secondly, the role of average working hours per employee in the firm's overall allocation of labour services. The author begins with an empirical survey and costs breakdown, followed by extensive data on Japan, the UK, the USA and West Germany. The ensuing analysis considers the question as to why firms incur the various non-wages, and a comparative static factor demand model is constructed, which accommodates the major cost items.