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The Daily

Statistics Canada

Wednesday, May 21, 2003
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MAJOR RELEASES

OTHER RELEASES

NEW PRODUCTS

Perspectives on labour and income
May 2003 online edition

The May 2003 online edition of *Perspectives on labour and income* features two articles on non-wage benefits. "Non-wage job benefits" examines what kinds of jobs come with benefits, such as insurance packages, pension plans, and wellness or employee assistance programs. "Health-related insurance for the self-employed" looks at coverage of the self-employed by extended medical, dental, and disability insurance. Also included is an update on work absences.

The May 2003 online edition of *Perspectives on labour and income*, Vol. 4, no. 5 (75-001-XIE, $5/$48) is now available. See *How to order products*. For more information, contact Henry Pold (613 951-4608; *henry.pold@statcan.ca*), Labour and Household Surveys Analysis Division.

MAJOR RELEASES

Retail trade

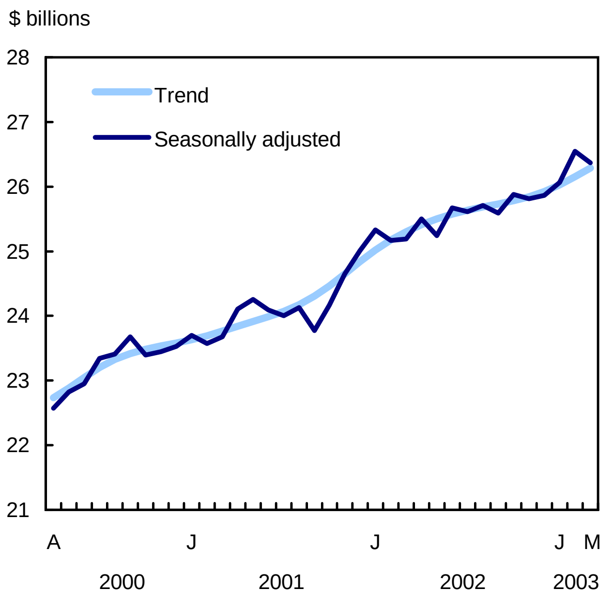
March 2003

Lower consumer spending in the automotive and general merchandise sectors drove total retail sales down 0.7% in March to $26.4 billion. This followed sales increases in February (+1.8%), January (+0.8%) and December (+0.2%). Excluding sales by motor and recreational vehicle dealers, the largest component of the automotive sector, total retail sales remained unchanged in March.

In spite of March's decline, retailers posted their strongest quarterly sales results of the last 12 months. Retail sales advanced 1.8% in the first quarter compared with the fourth quarter of 2002. Retail sales have generally been increasing since the fall of 2001, following the September 2001 slump and a period of essentially flat sales that began in April of that year.

In constant dollars, retail sales fell 0.8% in March, but advanced 1.4% in the first quarter from the fourth quarter of 2002.

First decline in four months in retail sales



March's decline in the automotive (-2.3%) and general merchandise (-1.3%) sectors pulled down an otherwise positive month for retail sales. In fact, sales increased by at least 1% in four of the seven retail sectors in March — drug (+1.3%), furniture (+1.1%), food (+1.0%) and clothing (+1.0%).

> ***Note to readers***
>
> *Estimates from the Monthly Retail Trade Survey are classified according to the 1980 Standard Industrial Classification. Revised seasonally adjusted estimates in current and constant dollars are presented this month only for January and February 2003, instead of the usual three-month period. This was necessary in order to keep the sum of seasonally adjusted monthly estimates for 2002 equal to the sum of unadjusted monthly estimates.*

Lower consumer spending in automotive and general merchandise sectors

Sales in the automotive sector fell 2.3% in March, driven down by lower sales at motor and recreational vehicle dealers (-2.5%) and gasoline service stations (-3.3%). This followed sizable gains in February for both motor and recreational vehicle dealers (+5.0%) and gasoline service stations (+7.3%).

Sales by motor and recreational vehicle dealers previously attained their current level in early 2002, after advancing 18.7% from October 2001 to January 2002. Reduced gasoline sales volumes at the pump were behind March's lower sales at gasoline service stations. Gasoline service stations have generally been reporting increasing sales in terms of dollars since early 2002, after a year of declines.

After remaining unchanged in February, sales in the general merchandise sector declined 1.3% in March. Within this sector, both department stores (-0.9%) and other general merchandise stores (-1.8%) suffered sales losses. Sales in department stores, although volatile, have been generally flat since early 2002, after increasing rapidly in January 2002 and December 2001. Sales in other general merchandise stores remained essentially flat since mid-2002, following a year of general increases.

Sales up in four of the seven retail sectors

Drug stores posted March's largest sales increase (+1.3%), after showing little sales growth since the spring of 2002. Previously, drug stores had been experiencing a period of strong gains that began in the spring of 2000.

After staying away from furniture stores in the previous two months, consumers returned in March, pushing sales up 1.1% from February. Still surfing the housing wave, furniture stores have been showing high sales since the spring of 2002. However, monthly increases were relatively modest over that period, compared with the strong gains observed from October 2001 to January 2002. Sales in furniture stores soared 10.0% in that four-month period.

March's sales advance in food stores (+1.0%) continued a general pattern of strong monthly increases observed since early 2000. About 25.0% of all sales in food stores were non-food items in 2002, compared with 20.0% in 1997.

In March, rising sales in women's clothing stores (+2.4%) and in stores in the "other clothing" category (+0.6%) led to a 1.0% overall sales gain in the clothing sector. Stores in the "other clothing" category sell a variety of women's, men's and children's clothing. Though volatile, retailers in the clothing sector have had generally flat sales since early 2002.

British Columbia posts largest decline

As was the case in most provinces, retailers in British Columbia posted sales declines in the automotive and general merchandise sectors in March. However, the decline in auto sales was more pronounced in British Columbia, where the number of new motor vehicles sold in March dropped 10.5% from February. Total retail sales in that province fell 2.9% in March, cancelling out the gains observed in the previous two months. Sales in British Columbia have generally been increasing since the start of 1999.

In Ontario, retail sales fell 0.5% in March, ending a string of three consecutive monthly gains. March's retail sales decline in Ontario, smaller than the national average, was concentrated in the automotive and general merchandise sectors. The pace of retail sales growth in Ontario has accelerated in recent months, compared with the weaker gains reported throughout much of 2002.

Related indicators for April

Total employment edged down 0.1% in April, reflecting weaker growth in job creation since the start of 2003. Over the first four months of 2003, total employment advanced by 49,000, compared with an increase of 216,000 in the same period of 2002. Housing starts fell 5.7% in April, down for a second straight month, after reaching a 15-year high in February. According to preliminary figures from the auto industry, it is estimated that the number of new motor vehicles sold in April was down approximately 4% from March, a second decrease in two months.

SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) occupied the headlines in April. Supermarkets in the Toronto metropolitan area may have benefited from lower spending in restaurants, but sales for most retailers may have been adversely affected by reduced traffic in stores. Retail sales in the Toronto metropolitan area account for approximately 40% of all sales in Ontario and about 15% nationally.

Available on CANSIM: tables 080-0001 to 080-0005 and 076-0005.

Information on methods and data quality available in the Integrated Meta Data Base: survey numbers, including related surveys, 2406 and 2408.

The March 2003 issue of *Retail trade* (63-005-XIB, $16/$155) will be available soon. See *How to order products*.

For general information or to order data, contact Client Services (1-877-421-3067; 613-951-3549; *retailinfo@statcan.ca*). For analytical information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Paul Gratton (613-951-3541; *paul.gratton@statcan.ca*), Distributive Trades Division.

□

Retail sales

	March 2002	December 2002	January 2003[r]	February 2003[r]	March 2003[p]	February to March 2003	March 2002 to March 2003
	Seasonally adjusted						
	$ millions					% change	
Food	**5,467**	**5,708**	**5,759**	**5,778**	**5,838**	**1.0**	**6.8**
Supermarkets and grocery stores	5,070	5,308	5,363	5,369	5,421	1.0	6.9
All other food stores	397	400	396	409	417	2.0	5.1
Drug and patent medicine stores	**1,285**	**1,309**	**1,315**	**1,317**	**1,334**	**1.3**	**3.9**
Clothing	**1,328**	**1,329**	**1,374**	**1,346**	**1,359**	**1.0**	**2.4**
Shoe stores	149	145	153	151	150	-0.2	0.8
Men’s clothing stores	116	105	113	111	111	0.1	-3.6
Women’s clothing stores	398	384	392	385	394	2.4	-1.0
Other clothing stores	665	694	716	699	704	0.6	5.8
Furniture	**1,492**	**1,567**	**1,549**	**1,543**	**1,561**	**1.1**	**4.6**
Household furniture and appliance stores	1,200	1,245	1,226	1,224	1,239	1.2	3.3
Household furnishings stores	292	323	323	320	322	0.8	10.2
Automotive	**10,125**	**10,390**	**10,433**	**10,916**	**10,663**	**-2.3**	**5.3**
Motor and recreational vehicle dealers	6,903	6,825	6,693	7,026	6,849	-2.5	-0.8
Gasoline service stations	1,821	2,116	2,204	2,365	2,287	-3.3	25.6
Automotive parts, accessories and services	1,401	1,449	1,536	1,525	1,527	0.1	9.0
General merchandise stores	**2,792**	**2,828**	**2,883**	**2,884**	**2,847**	**-1.3**	**2.0**
Department stores	1,645	1,660	1,700	1,700	1,685	-0.9	2.4
Other general merchandise stores	1,147	1,169	1,182	1,184	1,162	-1.8	1.3
Retail stores not elsewhere classified	**2,701**	**2,732**	**2,751**	**2,762**	**2,764**	**0.1**	**2.3**
Other semi-durable goods stores	788	800	795	811	791	-2.4	0.3
Other durable goods stores	671	672	683	676	676	0.0	0.8
All other retail stores not elsewhere classified	1,241	1,260	1,274	1,275	1,296	1.7	4.4
Total, retail sales	**25,189**	**25,864**	**26,064**	**26,546**	**26,366**	**-0.7**	**4.7**
Total excluding motor and recreational vehicle dealers	**18,286**	**19,039**	**19,371**	**19,520**	**19,518**	**0.0**	**6.7**
Provinces and territories							
Newfoundland and Labrador	416	437	432	439	443	0.7	6.5
Prince Edward Island	111	111	109	112	110	-1.1	-0.9
Nova Scotia	775	773	760	773	771	-0.2	-0.5
New Brunswick	626	611	604	612	609	-0.5	-2.7
Quebec	5,772	5,894	5,949	6,066	6,073	0.1	5.2
Ontario	9,468	9,779	9,824	10,001	9,947	-0.5	5.1
Manitoba	869	891	889	896	901	0.6	3.7
Saskatchewan	740	771	768	785	795	1.3	7.4
Alberta	3,023	3,120	3,199	3,289	3,246	-1.3	7.4
British Columbia	3,301	3,382	3,433	3,475	3,373	-2.9	2.2
Yukon	33	33	33	36	35	-4.4	6.4
Northwest Territories	39	44	45	45	46	0.9	16.1
Nunavut	17	19	18	18	18	2.9	9.2

r Revised figures.
p Preliminary figures.

Retail sales

	March 2002	February 2003[r]	March 2003[p]	March 2002 to March 2003
	Unadjusted			
	$ millions			% change
Food	**5,523**	**5,111**	**5,616**	**1.7**
Supermarkets and grocery stores	5,127	4,754	5,224	1.9
All other food stores	396	357	391	-1.1
Drug and patent medicine stores	**1,248**	**1,206**	**1,284**	**3.0**
Clothing	**1,123**	**886**	**1,141**	**1.6**
Shoe stores	115	91	117	1.2
Men's clothing stores	89	69	85	-4.3
Women's clothing stores	342	260	336	-2.0
Other clothing stores	576	466	603	4.8
Furniture	**1,349**	**1,194**	**1,405**	**4.1**
Household furniture and appliance stores	1,084	944	1,112	2.6
Household furnishings stores	265	249	293	10.4
Automotive	**9,707**	**8,678**	**10,390**	**7.0**
Motor and recreational vehicle dealers	6,739	5,490	6,871	2.0
Gasoline service stations	1,784	2,048	2,224	24.7
Automotive parts, accessories and services	1,185	1,140	1,296	9.4
General merchandise stores	**2,454**	**2,118**	**2,448**	**-0.2**
Department stores	1,398	1,168	1,399	0.1
Other general merchandise stores	1,056	951	1,049	-0.6
Retail stores not elsewhere classified	**2,299**	**2,050**	**2,286**	**-0.6**
Other semi-durable goods stores	619	567	615	-0.5
Other durable goods stores	550	505	548	-0.4
All other retail stores not elsewhere classified	1,131	978	1,123	-0.7
Total, retail sales	**23,703**	**21,242**	**24,572**	**3.7**
Total excluding motor and recreational vehicle dealers	**16,964**	**15,753**	**17,701**	**4.3**
Provinces and territories				
Newfoundland and Labrador	390	332	409	4.8
Prince Edward Island	96	82	94	-2.3
Nova Scotia	723	615	706	-2.4
New Brunswick	572	474	556	-2.9
Quebec	5,476	4,773	5,715	4.4
Ontario	8,784	7,963	9,153	4.2
Manitoba	835	733	847	1.4
Saskatchewan	684	627	735	7.5
Alberta	2,886	2,638	3,054	5.8
British Columbia	3,169	2,923	3,204	1.1
Yukon	29	27	31	6.9
Northwest Territories	42	40	49	16.3
Nunavut	17	15	19	8.4

r *Revised figures.*
p *Preliminary figures.*

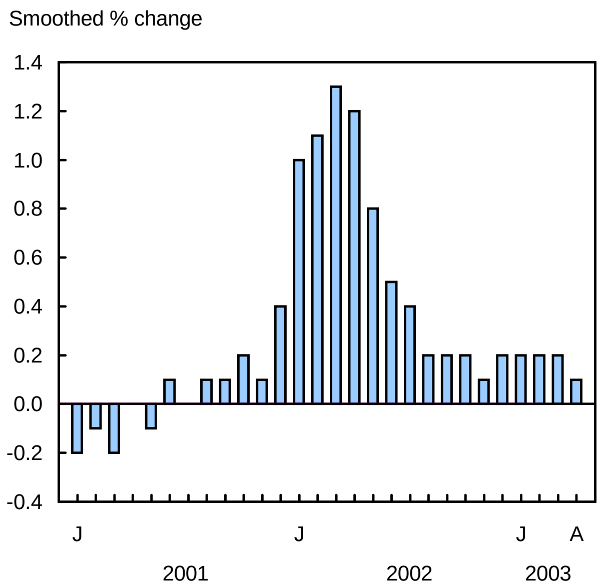
■

Leading indicators

April 2003

The composite leading index rose 0.1% in April after a 0.2% gain in March, continuing the string of small gains that began in the summer of 2002. Household demand continued to grow enough to offset weakness in manufacturing, where export demand has slowed. Overall, four components posted gains in April, the same as in March. Four components fell while two were unchanged.

Composite index



Housing fell again in April after turning down in March, as housing starts retreated from their impressive high set in February. In April, they were situated at about their average level of 2002, which was the best in 13 years. At the same time, growth in services employment decelerated sharply from 0.5% in March to 0.1% in April, as the accommodation and food industry was hard-hit by the SARS crisis, especially in Ontario. Conversely, sales of durable goods snapped out of a nine-month slump, led by autos.

Two of the three manufacturing components fell. New orders for durable goods trended down for a sixth straight month (-0.8%), while the ratio of shipments to stocks returned to its negative trend with a 0.6% decline after a brief one-month upturn. Manufacturers cut their labour requirements again by trimming payrolls, as the average workweek has been stable for nearly a year.

The US leading indicator levelled off after three straight gains. The components related to household demand fell further, as real disposable income posted its first back-to-back losses in February and March since the September 2001 attacks.

Available on CANSIM: table 377-0003.

Information on methods and data quality available in the Integrated Meta Data Base: survey number 1601.

A more detailed analysis of the components is available on Statistics Canada's website (*www.statcan.ca*). From the *Canadian statistics* page, choose *Economic conditions*, then click on the banner ad for *Canadian economic observer*. From that page, choose *Issues of CEO*, then *Composite Index*. For more information on the economy, the April 2003 issue of *Canadian economic observer* (11-010-XIB, $17/$170; 11-010-XPB, $23/$227) is now available. See *How to order products*.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Francine Roy (613-951-3627), Current Economic Analysis Group. □

Leading indicators

	November 2002	December 2002	January 2003	February 2003	March 2003	April 2003	Last month of data available
							% change
Composite leading indicator (1992=100)	179.4	179.8	180.2	180.6	180.9	181.1	0.1
Housing index (1992=100)[1]	128.5	128.6	128.6	131.4	130.4	128.9	-1.2
Business and personal services employment ('000)	2,566	2,584	2,597	2,610	2,624	2,627	0.1
S&P/TSX stock price index (1975=1,000)	6,443	6,445	6,437	6,512	6,530	6,534	0.1
Money supply, M1 ($ millions, 1992)[2]	111,438	110,974	111,054	110,533	109,944	109,645	-0.3
US composite leading indicator (1992=100)[3]	110.0	109.9	110.0	110.1	110.2	110.2	0.0
Manufacturing							
Average workweek (hours)	39.2	39.2	39.2	39.2	39.2	39.2	0.0
New orders, durables ($ millions, 1992)[4]	22,044	21,960	21,820	21,480	21,165	20,998	-0.8
Shipments/inventories of finished goods[4]	1.80	1.80	1.80	1.78	1.78	1.77	-0.01[5]
Retail trade							
Furniture and appliance sales ($ millions, 1992)[4]	1,795	1,802	1,809	1,822	1,836	1,840	0.2
Other durable goods sales ($ millions, 1992)[4]	7,661	7,682	7,641	7,635	7,617	7,661	0.6
Unsmoothed composite leading indicator	179.9	181.1	181.1	181.3	181.0	180.9	-0.1

1 *Composite index of housing starts (units) and house sales (multiple listing service).*
2 *Deflated by the Consumer Price Index for all items.*
3 *The figures in this row reflect data published in the month indicated, but the figures themselves refer to data for the month immediately preceding.*
4 *The figures in this row reflect data published in the month indicated, but the figures themselves refer to data for the second preceding month.*
5 *Difference from previous month.*

■

OTHER RELEASES

Non-wage job benefits

2000

Access to non-wage benefits is uneven — high wage earners are six times more likely to receive them than low earners. High levels of education and work experience are also important factors, according to a report published today in the online version of *Perspectives on labour and income*. The cost of non-wage benefits has increased steadily in the past half-century, and now accounts for more than one-third of total labour costs.

However, while benefits are more and more commonplace, not all employees have access to them. According to the Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics, 46% of the nation's 13.7 million employees in 2000 belonged to a registered pension plan. Only 2% reported having an employer-sponsored group RRSP to which the employer contributed.

About one-half of all employees had all three types of employer-sponsored insurance: extended medical, dental, and life/disability. One-third had access to at least one type of personal or family support program.

The study shows that jobs that are high-wage, unionized, full-time, permanent or in large firms were more likely to offer all types of non-wage benefits to employees. Workers with higher education levels and more work experience were more likely to be in these high-wage, high-benefit jobs.

Conversely, certain groups of employees were doubly disadvantaged with less access to non-wage benefits and lower hourly wages. These groups include employees with less than high school education, and those in part-time, temporary or non-unionized jobs.

The median hourly wage in public administration was $20.20. About 69% of the employees in this sector had insurance coverage, and 82% were covered by a registered pension plan. In contrast, the one million workers in the food and accommodation services industry had median hourly earnings of $7.60. Only 13% of these employees had insurance coverage, and just 10% had pension coverage.

Other industries with insurance and pension plan coverage rates at least 10 percentage points below the average were wholesale and retail trade, construction, and primary industries such as fishing, forestry, agriculture and mining.

A second report available today in *Perspectives* analyses coverage rates among self-employed people aged 15 to 69 with respect to extended health, dental and disability insurance plans. It found that in 2000, 41% of the nearly 2.1 million self-employed Canadians had no coverage in any of the three health-related insurance plans. Most cited cost as the main reason for non-coverage. Only about 17% — mostly well-educated and with high employment income ($60,000 or more) — had coverage in all three plans.

A large proportion of the self-employed acquire coverage in health and dental plans by piggybacking on the employer-sponsored plan of a spouse or close relative. For those not so lucky, the expensive approach of direct purchase appears to be the most feasible option.

Almost 7 in 10 self-employed workers in the accommodation and food service industry had no coverage, likely because they could not afford it.

The articles "Benefits of the job" and "Health-related insurance for the self-employed" are available in the May 2003 online edition of *Perspectives on labour and income*, Vol. 4, no. 5 (75-001-XIE, $5/$48). See *How to order products*.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Katherine Marshall (613-951-6890; *katherine.marshall@statcan.ca*) or Ernest Akyeampong (613-951-4624; *ernest.akyeampong@statcan.ca*), Labour and Household Surveys Analysis Division. ■

Provincial and territorial gross domestic product — Erratum

2002

Because of a technical problem that occurred during the processing, some of the annual labour data consistent with the System of National Accounts were reported incorrectly in the April 28 issue of *The Daily*. These data were part of the release entitled "Provincial and territorial gross domestic product, 2002."

The corrections were mainly concentrated in the hours worked series by sector from 1997 to 2002 as well as overall hours in the territories for 2002.

Below is the table on hours worked for all jobs with the corrected numbers.

Available on CANSIM: tables 383-0009 and 383-0010.

Information on methods and data quality available in the Integrated Meta Data Base: survey number 1402.

We apologize for any inconvenience these errors may have caused to our readers.

For more information, contact Jean-Pierre Maynard (613-951-3654); fax: 613-951-3652; *maynard@statcan.ca*), Micro-economic Analysis Division.

Hours worked for all jobs

	2002	1999	2000	2001	2002
	'000	% change			
Canada	**27,881,631**	**3.2**	**2.4**	**-0.1**	**1.5**
Newfoundland and Labrador	386,311	4.5	1.4	0.8	2.7
Prince Edward Island	131,576	5.4	3.0	3.0	2.6
Nova Scotia	770,630	2.5	-1.0	0.1	1.3
New Brunswick	630,075	3.1	1.4	0.0	0.8
Quebec	6,210,843	4.8	2.4	-2.1	2.5
Ontario	11,123,530	4.5	2.8	0.4	1.1
Manitoba	1,063,328	3.3	0.3	0.6	1.7
Saskatchewan	875,325	0.1	-0.2	-3.5	-0.2
Alberta	3,193,294	-0.2	3.3	5.0	1.0
British Columbia	3,396,611	0.5	2.9	-2.0	2.3
Yukon	27,417	1.7	3.0	-2.1	-1.0
Northwest Territories	46,422	..	4.7	9.4	6.0
Nunavut	18,104	..	5.0	3.2	4.5

.. *Figures not available.*

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NEW PRODUCTS

The Consumer Price Index, April 2003, Vol. 82, no. 4
Catalogue number 62-001-XIB ($8/$77).
Available at 7 a.m. Thursday, May 22

The Consumer Price Index, April 2003, Vol. 82, no. 4
Catalogue number 62-001-XPB ($11/$103).
Available at 7 a.m. Thursday, May 22

Wholesale trade, March 2003, Vol. 66, no. 3
Catalogue number 63-008-XIB ($14/$140).

Exports by commodity, March 2003, Vol. 60, no. 3
Catalogue number 65-004-XMB ($37/$361).

Exports by commodity, March 2003, Vol. 60, no. 3
Catalogue number 65-004-XPB ($78/$773).

Perspectives on labour and income, May 2003, Vol. 4, no. 5
Catalogue number 75-001-XIE ($5/$48).

All prices are in Canadian dollars and exclude sales tax. Additional shipping charges apply for delivery outside Canada.

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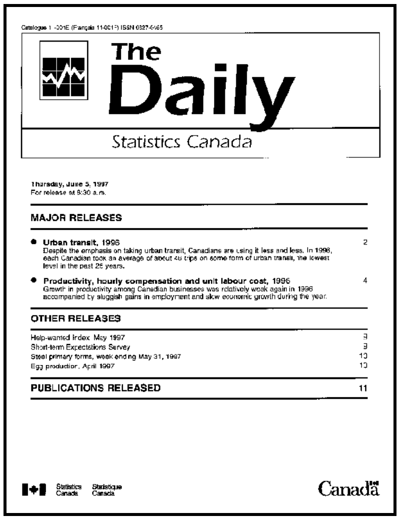

Catalogue 11-001E (Français 11-001F) ISSN 0827-0465

The Daily

Statistics Canada

Thursday, June 5, 1997
For release at 8:30 a.m.

MAJOR RELEASES

- **Urban transit,** 1996 — 2
  Despite the emphasis on taking urban transit, Canadians are using it less and less. In 1996, each Canadian took an average of about 46 trips on some form of urban transit, the lowest level in the past 25 years.
- **Productivity, hourly compensation and unit labour cost,** 1996 — 4
  Growth in productivity among Canadian businesses was relatively weak again in 1996 accompanied by sluggish gains in employment and slow economic growth during the year.

OTHER RELEASES

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PUBLICATIONS RELEASED — 11

Statistics Canada Statistique Canada

Canada

Statistics Canada's official release bulletin

Catalogue 11-001-XIE.

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10-H, R.H. Coats Bldg., Tunney's Pasture, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0T6.

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