



Infommat

A Weekly Review

Friday, February 11, 2000

OVERVIEW

◆ Economic growth regains momentum

In November, after three months of gradual slowing, gross domestic product shot up 0.6%. Over 40% of the surge was due to a rebound in manufacturing.

◆ Strong job growth continues

The strong employment growth of the past three years continued in January. Unemployment remained at December's downward-revised rate of 6.8%—the lowest since April 1976.

◆ Production prospects still quite optimistic

According to January's Business Conditions Survey, nearly 9 in 10 manufacturers plan to either maintain or raise production this quarter. Manufacturers also remain satisfied with their level of new orders and with the amount of finished-product inventories on hand.

◆ Building permits record best annual result of the decade

Four straight quarterly increases pushed building permits to their best annual result of the decade last year. The housing sector had a record year, while the non-residential sector turned in its best performance of the 1990s.

◆ Large retailers' sales climbing

In November, large retailers' sales reached \$6.6 billion, an increase from a year earlier of 4.4%. The only product line with lower sales was clothing, footwear and accessories.

◆ More Canadian films and videos being sold abroad

Canadian film and video productions made major inroads into foreign markets in 1997/98. However, foreign films and foreign videos continued to dominate the market within Canada.

Economic growth regains momentum

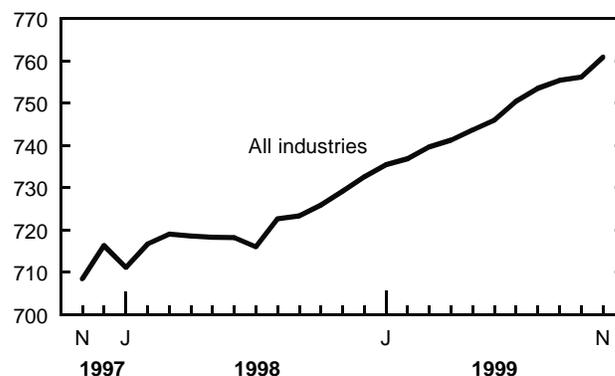
In November, gross domestic product shot up 0.6% on strong export demand and robust full-time employment growth. This marked the 16th consecutive increase, continuing the longest uninterrupted series of gains in over a decade. The economy's strong showing in November followed three months when economic growth gradually lost momentum.

Over 40% of November's increase was due to a rebound in manufacturing (+1.5%), led by large gains in the electrical and electronic products industry. Overall, 19 of 22 major industries intensified their activities in November. These industries accounted for more than 95% of total manufacturing production. Manufacturing of electrical and electronic products surged 3.9%, as demand for telecommunications equipment showed no signs of abating. Production of communications and other related electronic equipment climbed 7.8%, responding to a spike in export demand. Significant production increases were also observed for communications wire and cable and in other electrical equipment industries.

Other manufacturing industries also made considerable production increases. At chemical plants, increased activity was widespread, lifting production by 2.5%. Output of industrial organic

Gross domestic product at factor cost

\$ billions (1992 dollars)



(continued on page 2)



... Economic growth regains momentum

chemicals rebounded, while production of agricultural chemicals, soaps and miscellaneous chemical products rose significantly. Output of food products increased 1.6%, as production of canned and frozen fruits and vegetables rebounded. Makers of miscellaneous food products and flour/cereal products also raised output. The only significant decline was in the fish products industry.

In the auto industry, vehicle assembly rose in November by 2.6%. This recovered some of the ground lost during the previous two months. Auto parts plants trimmed production by 0.1%. It appears that 1999 will go down as a banner year for the auto industry because of strong sales in the United States. In the first 11 months of last year, output of autos and parts was up 19.3% compared with the same period in 1998.

Wholesaling activity in November surged 1.7%. It was the second consecutive increase after a spike in October that was induced by computer sales. Computer sales, the driving force in the wholesale expansion in recent years, were flat in November. Retailing activity rose 0.7%, staging a partial comeback from a sharp drop in October. The bulk of the increase was attributed to higher auto sales. The rest of the retail sector was essentially flat in November.

Activity in the mining sector also surged in November (+1.6%), due to a hefty increase in oil production. November's increase pushed oil output to annual highs in both Atlantic Canada and Western Canada. However, one of the mildest Novembers on record in key gas-heating markets resulted in sharply reduced demand for natural gas. Elsewhere in the sector, output of metal

Note to readers

Monthly gross domestic product (GDP) is valued at 1992 prices. The data here are seasonally adjusted at annual rates.

mines rose slightly. Ongoing weakness at gold mines partly offset higher output at iron and other metal mines. Non-metal mine output fell 3.7%, as potash producers' continuing efforts to curb supply on the market led to further shutdowns. Diamond miners also curtailed production.

Elsewhere, business service providers continued to forge ahead (+0.8%), led by strong demand. The gains were especially robust for computer consulting firms and for temporary help and other personnel agencies. Construction activity rose 0.5%, extending the steady growth observed in the previous 12 months. As for utilities, unseasonably warm temperatures in the East and on the Prairies led to a 2.6% drop in electric power generation in November. The mild weather also reduced gas distribution (-6.3%) for a second consecutive month.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 4677-4681.

The November 1999 issue of **Gross domestic product by industry (15-001-XPB, \$15/\$145)** presents the full report. To purchase data, contact Yolande Chantigny (1 800 877-4623, imad@statcan.ca). For further analytical information, contact Richard Evans (613-951-9145, evanric@statcan.ca), Industry Measures and Analysis Division. See also "Current trends" on page 8.

Strong job growth continues

The strong employment growth of the past three years continued in January (+44,000). However, the job gains were matched by an increase in the number of people in the workforce, so the unemployment remained at December's downward-revised rate of 6.8%—the lowest since April 1976. (All Labour Force Survey data have been revised back to January 1976.)

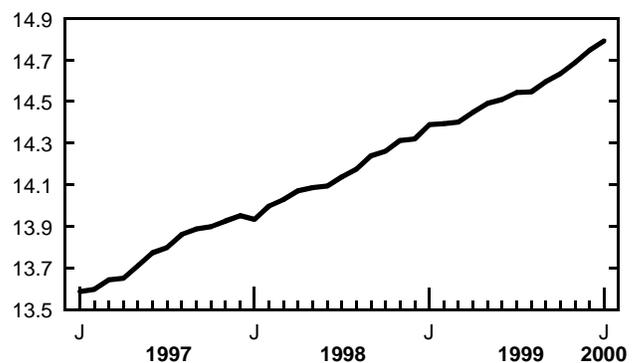
Full-time employment continued to grow in January, bringing year-over-year gains to 442,000 (+3.8%). Part-time employment also increased, but losses through most of 1999 left part-time employment down year-over-year by 39,000 (-1.4%). The strength was also reflected in a 0.3% increase in the number of hours worked in January.

The job gains in January were equally split between paid work in the private sector and self-employment. Since January 1999, the number of private sector employees has increased at a steady pace, for an overall gain of 3.1%. Self-employment is up 2.7% from January 1999, mostly due to gains in the past two months. The number of public employees was unchanged in January, but rose 2.0% from a year earlier.

Goods-producing industries posted a modest increase of 24,000 jobs in January. Small gains were made in manufacturing and in construction, continuing the upward trend in these industries. In the services sector, the transportation and warehousing industry added 12,000 jobs in January, building on strength in 1999. Employment climbed in health care and social assistance (+39,000).

Employment

Millions, seasonally adjusted



January's job growth was concentrated among adult women aged 25 and over (+22,000). Nevertheless, their unemployment rate stayed at 5.5% due to an increase in labour force participation. Among youths (15 to 24), employment edged up, pushing their unemployment rate down 0.6 percentage points to 12.5%—the lowest since August 1990.

In Ontario, employment surged by 21,000, building on the positive performance of the last three years. However, more Ontarians joined the workforce (+30,000), so the unemployment

(continued on page 3)

... Strong job growth continues

rate in the province rose 0.2 percentage points to 5.7%. In Quebec, employment was little changed following steady growth in the last four months of 1999 (+80,000). There was an increase of 4,000 jobs in each of Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Nova Scotia. Nova Scotia's job growth built upon increases in November and December. A rise in labour force participation left Manitoba's unemployment rate unchanged, whereas it caused Nova Scotia's unemployment rate to edge up.

After steady growth in 1998 and little change in 1999, employment in New Brunswick has picked up in the past three months. The province showed a gain of 3,000 jobs in January, pushing the unemployment rate in the province down. In Prince Edward Island, employment increased by 700, continuing the strong upward trend that began last October. So the unemployment rate there fell in January. In Newfoundland, employment fell by 7,000. Despite this loss of jobs, employment was still up from January 1999 by 3%.

In both Alberta and British Columbia, a slight increase in employment was accompanied by a small decrease in labour force participation. The unemployment rate declined 0.2 percentage points to 5.2% in Alberta, while it fell by 0.5 percentage points to 7.3% in British Columbia—the lowest rate for that province since August 1981.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 3450-3471, 3483-3492, 3503 and table 00799999.

Related information: Employment insurance

In November, the latest month of available data, 501,159 Canadians received the regular type of employment insurance (EI) benefit. That was down from October by 2.8% and a 7.9% drop from a year earlier. After remaining relatively stable during the first half of 1999, the number of regular beneficiaries declined for three consecutive months. The only increases in EI beneficiaries occurred in the Northwest Territories, Nunavut and Manitoba. The amount paid out as regular benefits dropped 9.9% in November to \$600.6 million. The number of claims for EI made by the jobless decreased 6.9% to 205,410 claims. For further information, contact Robert Keay (613-951-4090; 613-951-4087; labour@statcan.ca), Labour Statistics Division.

*For details about data revisions, refer to "Improvements in 2000 to the LFS", which is posted at www.statcan.ca. The month's full report, **Labour force information, for the week ending January 15, 2000** (71-001-PPB, \$11/\$103), is now available. For further information, contact Geoff Bowlby (613-951-3325) or Vincent Ferrao (613-951-4750), Labour Statistics Division. See also "Current trends" on page 8.*

Labour Force Survey, January 2000

Seasonally adjusted¹

	Labour force		Employment		Unemployment	
	'000	% change, previous month	'000	% change, previous month	'000	rate (%)
Canada	15,869.3	0.3	14,791.8	0.3	1,077.5	6.8
Newfoundland	245.8	0.0	204.1	-3.4	41.7	17.0
Prince Edward Island	73.5	0.7	64.4	1.1	9.2	12.5
Nova Scotia	462.5	1.0	417.5	0.9	45.0	9.7
New Brunswick	367.0	0.1	332.4	0.9	34.6	9.4
Quebec	3,734.4	0.2	3,428.7	0.1	305.7	8.2
Ontario	6,142.4	0.5	5,795.3	0.4	347.2	5.7
Manitoba	580.0	0.7	549.9	0.7	30.1	5.2
Saskatchewan	514.6	0.7	488.2	0.9	26.5	5.1
Alberta	1,661.5	0.0	1,575.4	0.2	86.1	5.2
British Columbia	2,087.6	-0.2	1,935.9	0.4	151.6	7.3

¹ Data are for both sexes aged 15 and over.

Production prospects still quite optimistic

Manufacturers are quite optimistic about this quarter's production prospects, according to January's Business Conditions Survey. Nearly 9 in 10 manufacturers plan to maintain or raise production this quarter. Specifically, two out of five manufacturers (39%) plan to boost production. The proportion stating they plan to decrease production fell to 14%, down from 20% in October's survey. The most optimistic manufacturers vis-à-vis production prospects are those in the transportation equipment, primary metal and paper and allied products industries.

Satisfaction with the level of orders received remains stable. Some 91% of manufacturers expect new orders will either remain at the current level or increase this quarter. Increased satisfaction with the level of new orders is greatest in the transportation equipment and the primary metals industries.

Employment in manufacturing is expected to remain stable in the current quarter, since 72% of manufacturers say their workforce will be little changed. That percentage is up slightly from 68% in October. The proportion of manufacturers planning to reduce their workforce is 11%, whereas the proportion expecting to hire more workers this quarter is 17%.

The level of finished-product inventories is not a major concern for manufacturers. In fact, 84% indicate that their current level of finished-product inventory is about right. Meanwhile, inventories are too high for 10% of manufacturers, but are too low for 6%.

Note to readers

Most responses to the Business Conditions Survey, which is conducted in January, April, July and October, are recorded in the first two weeks of these months. The survey's results are based on replies from about 5,000 manufacturers and are weighted by a manufacturer's shipments or employment. Consequently, larger manufacturers have a larger impact on the results. Except for the data on production difficulties, the data are seasonally adjusted.

As for their current level of unfilled orders, 81% of manufacturers indicate it is about normal, up 6 points from the October survey. Their overall level of satisfaction toward unfilled orders remains quite high. (Manufacturers had a backlog of \$53.9 billion in unfilled orders in November.)

Fully 88% of manufacturers report an absence of production impediments, up 4 points compared with October. However, a shortage of skilled labour continues to be a concern for 6% of manufacturers. A lack of working capital is a production impediment for just 2% of manufacturers.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 2843-2845.

For further information, contact Craig Kuntz (613-951-7092; kuncrai@statcan.ca), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division.

Manufacturers' expectations and business conditions

Seasonally adjusted

	January 1999	April 1999	July 1999	October 1999	January 2000
% of manufacturers who said					
Volume of production in next three months will be:					
About the same as in previous three month	73	53	52	46	47
Higher	17	32	36	34	39
Lower	10	15	12	20	14
Employment in next three months will:					
Change little from previous three months	73	69	70	68	72
Increase	14	16	17	18	17
Decrease	13	15	13	14	11
Backlog of unfilled orders is:					
About normal	81	78	74	75	81
Higher than normal	7	9	13	17	11
Lower than normal	12	13	13	8	8
Orders received are:					
About the same	75	73	60	69	62
Rising	12	17	30	25	29
Declining	13	10	10	6	9
Finished-product inventory is:					
About right	79	79	82	85	84
Too low	4	3	3	4	6
Too high	17	18	15	11	10

Building permits record best annual result of the decade

Municipalities issued \$36.0 billion in building permits last year, an 8.4% increase above the 1998 level and the best annual result of the decade. The residential sector surpassed its 1998 level by a wide margin (+11.2% to \$20.0 billion) and also set a new annual record for the decade. Single-family dwelling intentions contributed the most to this outstanding performance (+10.3% to \$14.3 billion), though multi-family dwellings also improved (+13.4% to \$5.7 billion).

The records set in 1999 for both planned residential building projects and house resales reflected low variations in mortgage rates and steady employment growth. Sixteen months of uninterrupted economic growth did not hurt either. The housing market is expected to remain strong in 2000 despite slight increases in new housing prices in the past few months and the possibility of more interest rate hikes.

Eight provinces saw improvements in their residential construction intentions in 1999. The largest increases occurred in Ontario and Quebec, where more than half the gains were concentrated in the Toronto and Montreal metro areas. In 1999, the only residential sector declines were in Alberta (especially Calgary) and British Columbia (the Vancouver area).

The non-residential sector, following strong performances in 1997 and 1998, kept its momentum going in 1999 with a 5.2% rise to \$16.0 billion—the best showing since 1989. Municipalities issued \$3.8 billion in institutional permits (+18.7%)—next to

December's building intentions

The value of building permits increased for a third straight month in December (+9.4% to \$3.5 billion). Non-residential permits recorded their best monthly result of the 1990s with a remarkable 15.6% surge to \$1.6 billion. Residential permits also contributed strength by rising 4.6% to \$1.9 billion for a third consecutive advance.

In the non-residential sector, all three components showed increases. The commercial component led the way with its best monthly result of 1999 (+21.6%). The building projects were mainly office buildings and warehouses. The industrial component rose 7.2% on plans to build factories and plants. The institutional component was up 8.8% due to medical and government building. Ontario, Saskatchewan and Quebec contributed the most (in dollars). Alberta was the only province where all three components declined.

On the residential side, the overall gain was due entirely to the multi-family dwelling component (+16.4% to \$599 million). Permits to build single-family dwellings were almost unchanged (-0.1% to \$1.3 billion). Quebec showed the strongest monthly gain (in dollar terms). The largest losses were recorded in Nova Scotia and Manitoba.

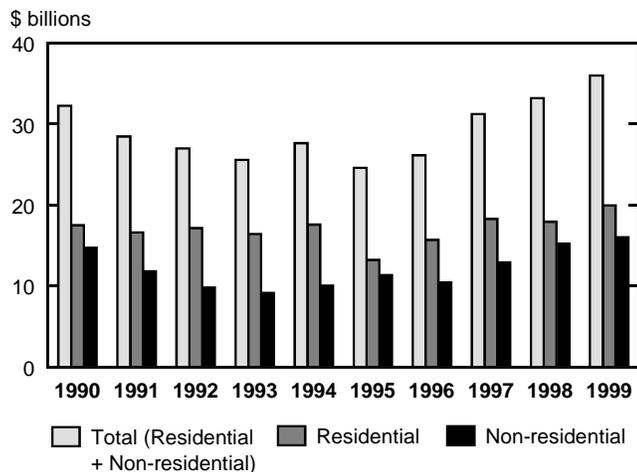
1991, the second best showing ever. This rise was mostly evident in the education category. The commercial component reached its highest level since 1989 (+4.7% to \$8.5 billion). Warehouses and office building projects showed the largest increases. The industrial component changed direction last year, sliding down 4.9% to \$3.8 billion after two straight annual increases. Weakness was seen in intentions to build factories and plants, as well as for utilities and transportation projects.

Last year, the most significant rise in non-residential permits (in dollar terms) occurred in Ontario. The largest decline happened in Alberta. In Ontario, the Toronto area again contributed strongly to the province's overall increase. Projects in municipalities located outside metropolitan areas contributed significantly, too. In Alberta, the Calgary region accounted for most of the province's decline.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 80 (levels 3-7 and 33-48), 129, 137, 443, 989-992, 994, 995 and 4073.

The December 1999 issue of **Building permits** (64-001-XIB, \$19/\$186) can be downloaded at www.statcan.ca. For general information, contact Joanne Bureau (613-951-9689; burejoa@statcan.ca). For further analytical information, contact Sébastien LaRoche-Côté (613-951-2025; sebastien.larochelle-cote@statcan.ca), Investment and Capital Stock Division.

Value of building permits



(continued on page 6)

... Building permits record best annual result of the decade

Building permits, 1999

Seasonally adjusted¹

	Total		Residential		Non-residential	
	\$ millions	% change, previous year	\$ millions	% change, previous year	\$ millions	% change, previous year
Canada	35,995.5	8.4	19,960.6	11.2	16,034.9	5.2
Newfoundland	330.7	30.9	165.9	16.1	164.8	50.1
Prince Edward Island	143.3	23.4	71.8	26.0	71.5	21.0
Nova Scotia	910.4	42.9	478.9	25.6	431.5	68.7
New Brunswick	483.9	0.6	274.5	15.2	209.4	-13.7
Quebec	6,112.2	9.4	3,185.8	16.6	2,926.4	2.5
Ontario	16,738.6	19.5	9,733.2	21.3	7,005.4	17.1
Manitoba	895.7	-13.2	382.2	4.2	513.5	-22.8
Saskatchewan	715.6	6.3	267.9	0.8	447.7	10.0
Alberta	4,856.8	-12.5	2,782.1	-6.2	2,074.7	-19.8
British Columbia	4,666.6	-1.5	2,560.7	-5.8	2,105.8	4.1
Yukon	48.6	21.8	17.9	-15.2	30.7	63.3
Northwest Territories	43.9	-45.3	14.2	-65.5	29.6	-24.3
Nunavut	49.3	..	25.4	..	23.9	..

.. Figures not available.

Note: Data may not add to totals due to rounding. Some percentage changes should be interpreted with caution because of the small numbers involved.

Large retailers' sales climbing

In November, large retailers' sales reached \$6.6 billion, an increase from a year earlier of 4.4%. As the table shows, sales climbed in all the major product lines except clothing, footwear and accessories (-1.1%). Within health and personal care products, which had the fastest sales growth rate at 13.3%, most of the growth was due to increased sales of prescription drugs (+30.2%) and over-the-counter drugs (+25.7%).

Among hardware, lawn and garden products, the fastest growth occurred in sales of cut flowers and potted plants (+31.6%), outdoor power equipment (+27.7%), and other hardware and building products (+14.2%). Sales of hardware supplies rose 9.0%, while sales of hand and power tools were up 8.8%. In home furnishings and electronics, artwork and other home decorating products (includes Christmas decorations) had the biggest percentage jump in sales (+21.0%), followed by telephones and home office electronics (+15.1%), major appliances (+14.6%) and computer software (+14.4%).

As for housewares, sales were led by cleaning supplies (+13.5%). Sales of other non-electric household supplies such as brooms, flashlights and batteries were up 13.8%. However, tableware sales dropped 2.8%.

The large retailers' lower sales in the clothing, footwear and accessories category were attributable to restructuring among department stores, as well as to unseasonably warm temperatures in November. Interestingly, sales of women's clothing increased, but sales of men's clothing fell.

Note to readers

These results were affected by changes in the composition of the group of large retailers surveyed—some food stores left the group—and most of Eaton's stores were closed in November. All data are unadjusted for seasonal factors. The comparisons are year-over-year.

Large retailers' sales

Not seasonally adjusted

	November 1998	November 1999	November 1998 to November 1999
	\$ millions		% change
All commodities	6,306	6,581	4.4
Food and beverages	1,975	1,999	1.2
Clothing, footwear and accessories	1,442	1,426	-1.1
Home furnishings and electronics	1,005	1,092	8.6
Health and personal care products	426	483	13.3
Housewares	284	308	8.3
Sporting and leisure goods	384	404	5.4
Hardware, lawn and garden products	184	204	11.0
All other goods and services	607	666	9.7

To order data, or for general information, contact Client Services (613-951-3549 or 1 877 421-3067; retailinfo@statcan.ca). For further analytical information, contact Catherine Draper (613-951-0669; drapcat@statcan.ca), Distributive Trades Division.

More Canadian films and videos being sold abroad

In 1997/98, Canadian film and video productions made major inroads into foreign markets—exports surpassed the \$100-million mark for the first time. However, foreign films and videos continued to dominate the domestic market. The industry as a whole earned record revenues of \$1.8 billion (+13% from 1994/95), thanks to a continuing surge of Canadian productions abroad, as well as to strong sales of foreign film and video productions in Canada.

Distributors' foreign sales of Canadian film and video productions reached a record \$101.2 million. (That excludes Canadian productions distributed directly to foreign sources by film and video producers.) When the foreign sales of non-Canadian films are added in, total export sales in 1997/98 reached \$132.1 million, up 38% from 1994/95. These sales to foreign clients accounted for more than half (57%) of the distribution revenues from Canadian-content productions in 1997/98, compared with only one-third at the beginning of the 1990s.

In the domestic market for films and videos, foreign productions dominated in 1997/98, accounting for 90% of the \$818.8 million in total sales. That proportion has remained virtually constant throughout the 1990s. Foreign domination was even stronger in the theatrical market, where foreign movies accounted for 98% of distributors' revenues of \$276.7 million. The 2% share of revenue for Canadian movies was down from 3% in 1994/95.

That same dominance was also evident in both the conventional-TV and pay-TV markets. In the conventional-TV market, foreign productions represented 84% of the \$340.1 million in distribution revenues. The 16% share for Canadian productions was up from 11% in 1994/95. In the pay-TV market, however, the trend for Canadian-content productions went in the opposite direction. In 1997/98, their 16% share of the \$59.8 million in distribution revenues was down from 24% in 1994/95.

With respect to the home-video market, foreign productions were the overwhelming favourites of consumers in 1997/98,

Note to readers

Film distributors are companies primarily engaged in distributing film and video productions to theatres, television stations and commercial exhibitors. **Videos** include videocassettes, videodiscs and DVD.

Home-video market refers to the rental or sale of videos for showing films and videos on household playback machines.

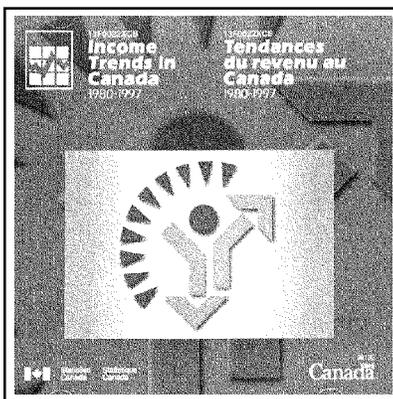
Pay-TV market refers to the showing of films and videos on pay and specialty channels for which the viewer must pay either a direct or an indirect fee. **Conventional-TV market** refers to the showing of film and videos on ordinary broadcast television. **Theatrical market** refers to the showing of films at commercial movie theatres and drive-ins.

accounting for 99% of domestic wholesale sales of \$812.2 million. The domination that foreign films have in cinemas and their hefty publicity budgets may be spilling over into the home-video market to the benefit of foreign-content videos.

In 1997/98, Canadian-content productions significantly increased their share in the non-theatrical market of educational institutions, governments and private companies. That year, they captured 36% of the \$17.1 million in sales in this market, up from 26% in 1994/95. The non-theatrical market has been a shrinking one. Its total revenues have declined by 12.8% over the same three years. However, in dollar terms, receipts from Canadian productions climbed 22% to \$6.2 million.

*Selected data from the Film and Video Distribution and Wholesaling Survey are available in table format (87F0010XPE, \$50). A summary of these data will appear in **Canada's culture, heritage and identity: A statistical perspective** (print: 87-211-XPB, \$31; online at www.statcan.ca: 87-211-XIB, \$23), which will be available at a later date. To order tables, or for further information, contact Fidel Ifedi (613-951-1569; fax: 613-951-9040; ifedfid@statcan.ca), Culture, Tourism and the Centre for Education Statistics.*

New from Statistics Canada



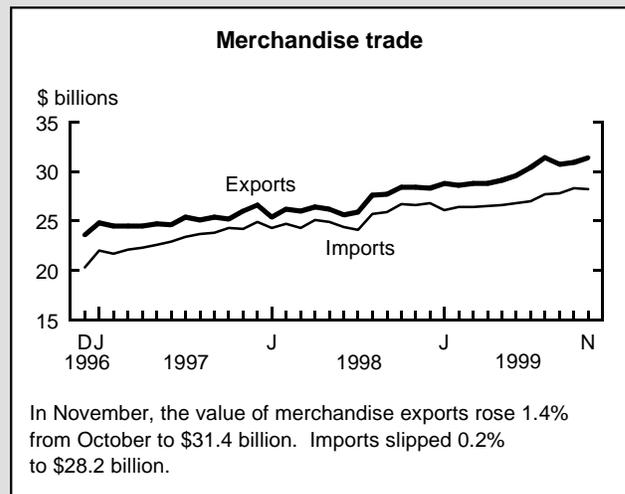
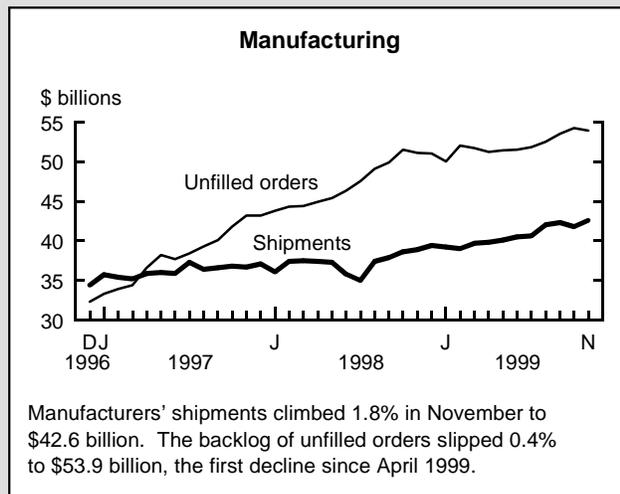
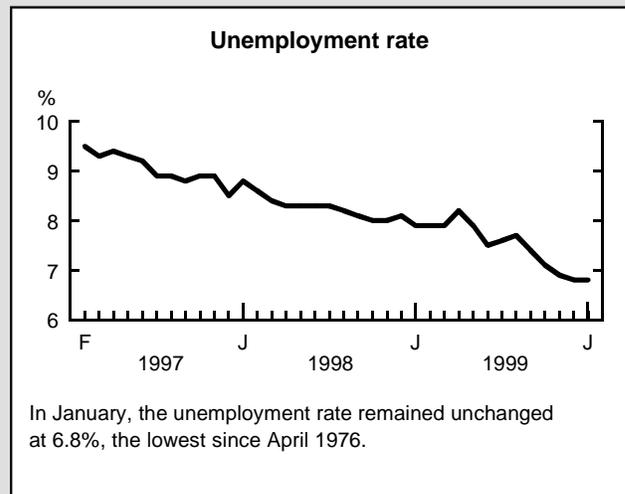
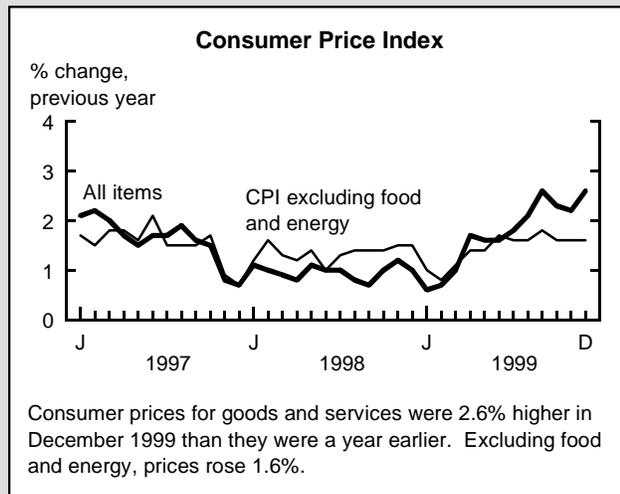
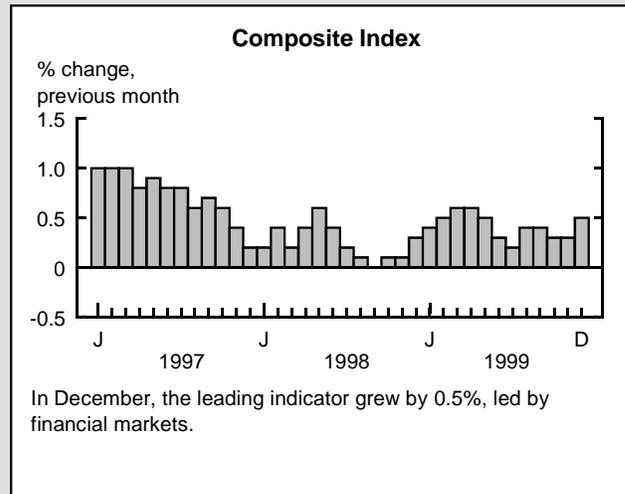
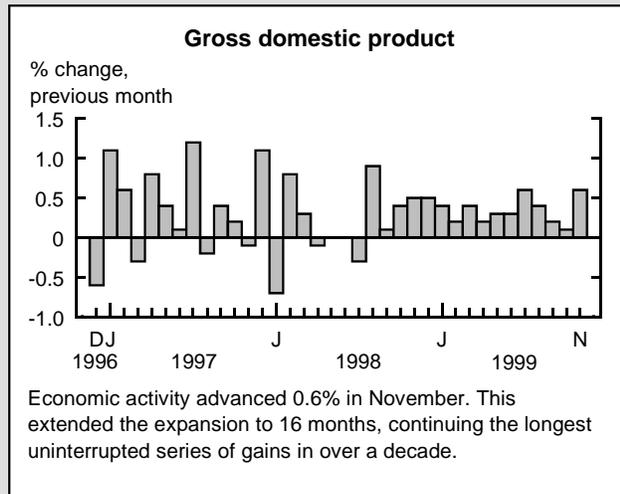
Income trends in Canada on CD-ROM 1980 to 1997

In order to make informed proposals and sound decisions during times of budget challenges, it is more crucial than ever to understand income trends. *Income trends in Canada on CD-ROM* presents nearly two decades of accurate and reliable income statistics in the simplicity and convenience of a CD-ROM. It includes information on income (from employment and other sources), taxes, the impact of government transfers on family income, differences in earnings between women and men, income of seniors, income inequality and low income. The overall picture is here for Canada, the provinces and 15 metropolitan areas. This single disc contains everything you need to know about income trends from 1980 to 1997, which covers two recessions and recovery periods.

*The 1980 to 1997 edition of **Income trends in Canada on CD-ROM** (13F0022XCB, \$195). Information about this product is available in **Income trends in Canada—User's guide** (75F0002MIE), which is posted at www.statcan.ca. Look under "Products and services",*

"Downloadable research papers", "Income, expenditures, pensions, assets and debts", and then "Income". For more information, contact Client Services (613-951-7355 or 1 888 951-7355; income@statcan.ca), Income Statistics Division.

Current trends



Note: All series are seasonally adjusted except the Consumer Price Index.

Latest statistics

	Period	Level	Change, previous period	Change, previous year
GENERAL				
Gross domestic product (\$ billion, 1992)	November	760.9	0.6%	4.3%
Composite Index (1981=100)	December	219.6	0.5%	5.2%
Operating profits of enterprises (\$ billion)	Q3 1999	39.8	7.6%	30.5%
Capacity utilization (%)	Q3 1999	86.0	1.8†	3.6†
DOMESTIC DEMAND				
Retail trade (\$ billion)	November	22.0	0.6%	6.1%
Department store sales (\$ billions)	November	1.44	-7.2%	2.6%
New motor vehicle sales (thousand of units)	November	132.7	3.1%	11.7%
Wholesale trade (\$ billion)	November	31.4	1.3%	11.3%
LABOUR				
Employment (millions)	January*	14.79	0.3%	2.8%
Unemployment rate (%)	January*	6.8	0.0†	-1.1†
Participation rate (%)	January*	65.7	0.1†	0.1†
Average weekly earnings (\$)	November	616.04	0.4%	1.5%
Help-wanted Index (1996=100)	January	168	2.4%	13.5%
INTERNATIONAL TRADE				
Merchandise exports (\$ billion)	November	31.4	1.4%	10.5%
Merchandise imports (\$ billion)	November	28.2	-0.2%	6.1%
Merchandise trade balance (all figures in \$ billion)	November	3.1	0.5	1.4
MANUFACTURING				
Shipments (\$ billion)	November	42.6	1.8%	9.3%
New orders (\$ billion)	November	42.3	-0.4%	9.8%
Unfilled orders (\$ billion)	November	53.9	-0.4%	5.5%
Inventory/shipments ratio	November	1.30	-0.01	-0.03
PRICES				
Consumer Price Index (1992=100)	December	111.5	0.1%	2.6%
Industrial Product Price Index (1992=100)	December	124.1	0.6%	3.9%
Raw Materials Price Index (1992=100)	December	134.0	3.6%	33.9%
New Housing Price Index (1992=100)	December*	102.0	0.2%	1.7%

Note: All series are seasonally adjusted with the exception of the price indexes.

* new this week

† percentage point

Infomat

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Editor: Tim Prichard (613) 951-1197; prictim@statcan.ca
Head of Official Release: Chantal Prévost (613) 951-1088; prevcha@statcan.ca

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