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Infomat

A Weekly Review

Friday, February 22, 2002

OVERVIEW

- **Food, tobacco propel rise in inflation**

  Consumers paid 1.3% more in January than they did a year earlier for the goods and services in the Consumer Price Index basket. Higher prices for food and tobacco were the main source of upward pressure on the all-items CPI.

- **Composite Index posts largest gain in nearly two years**

  The leading indicator rose for the fourth straight month in January, gaining 0.9%. This was the largest advance since April 2000.

- **Tough year for manufacturers in 2001**

  Economic uncertainty, weak demand and stubbornly high finished-product inventories challenged the manufacturing sector throughout 2001, prompting manufacturers to cut both production and employment.

- **Record high new motor vehicle sales in 2001**

  Lacklustre sales of new motor vehicles hit a record in 2001 thanks to exceptional sales in November.

- **International travel improves but still below pre-September 11 levels**

  In December 2001, international travel increased for the second time since August, but remained below levels experienced before September 11.

Food, tobacco propel rise in inflation

Consumers paid 1.3% more in January than they did in January 2001 for the goods and services in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) basket. This rise followed two consecutive year-over-year increases of 0.7%. The all-items excluding energy index rose 2.2% from January 2001.

Higher prices for food and tobacco products were the main source of upward pressure on the all-items CPI. Food prices rose 4.6%, propelled mainly by restaurant meals, fresh vegetables, fresh fruits and beef. The 23.6% increase in cigarette prices was largely the result of tax hikes.

Energy prices were the main source of downward pressure on the all-items CPI. They fell 7.0% from January 2001, primarily due to gasoline (-15.9%) and fuel oil (-25.9%). The main cause of these declines was the price of oil, which hovered between $30 and $31 per barrel in January compared with about $44 in January 2001.

On a monthly basis, the CPI rose 0.3% in January from December 2001. The increase was primarily due to higher prices for fresh vegetables, automotive vehicle insurance premiums, gasoline and natural gas. Electricity prices also raised the all-items CPI, although to a lesser extent. These increases were partly offset by lower prices for travel tours, and clothing and footwear.

Consumer Price Index, January 2002
% change, previous year, not seasonally adjusted

	All items	Food	Shelter	Transportation	Energy
Canada	**1.3**	**4.6**	**1.8**	**-3.3**	**-7.0**
Newfoundland and Labrador	-0.2	3.9	-3.3	-3.8	-13.8
Prince Edward Island	-0.6	4.1	-3.8	-7.1	-19.6
Nova Scotia	0.4	3.7	-2.3	-4.7	-14.7
New Brunswick	1.1	3.8	-1.9	-3.5	-10.1
Quebec	1.4	5.2	0.0	-4.6	-11.9
Ontario	1.2	4.3	2.2	-2.9	-6.4
Manitoba	1.3	4.8	0.7	-2.3	-7.3
Saskatchewan	2.2	4.6	4.5	-2.4	-0.3
Alberta	3.5	5.4	11.1	-3.3	17.4
British Columbia	0.8	4.4	-0.8	-2.3	-11.3
Whitehorse	-0.6	3.0	-2.4	-3.7	-11.8
Yellowknife	1.5	5.6	0.8	0.2	-8.7

(continued on page 2)

Statistics Canada Statistique Canada

Canada

... Food, tobacco propel rise in inflation

Fresh vegetable prices climbed 14.2% in January, as the worst harvests in the United States since 1974 continued to drive up prices. Although fresh vegetable prices were lower in December 2001 than in December 2000, prices in January 2002 were 16.4% higher than in January 2001.

In January 2002, consumers paid 2.5% more for gasoline than in the previous month. This followed decreases of between 4.1% and 10.0% in December, November and October. Gasoline prices increased in all provinces, except Prince Edward Island (-4.4%) and Nova Scotia (-0.6%), and in Whitehorse (-2.2%).

The price of electricity advanced 1.7%, mainly due to an 18.2% surge in the Alberta index. The end of the $40 monthly credit that the Alberta government granted to customers in 2001 explains this increase.

The index for travel tours fell 10.1%. Prices for travel tours are collected each year in January, February and March, when tours are most popular among Canadians. January's demand is the weakest of these three months. Since January prices are compared directly with those of March of the previous year, a price drop is usually measured in January, and this month was no exception.

The January 2002 issue of ***The Consumer Price Index*** *(Internet: 62-001-XIB, $8/$77; paper: 62-001-XPB, $11/$103) is now available. For more information, call Louise Chaîné (1-866-230-2248; 613-951-9606) or Joanne Moreau (613-951-7130), Prices Division. (See also "Current trends" on page 6.)*

Composite Index posts largest gain in nearly two years

The Composite Index continued to strengthen in January 2002, rising 0.9% after advancing 0.4% in December. This was the fourth straight gain, and the largest since April 2000.

Seven of the leading indicator's 10 components grew, two more than in December. All components related to household spending contributed to January's gain.

Housing drove most of the growth late in 2001. The housing index posted its largest increase in more than 10 years, soaring 5.0%. Housing starts received an additional boost from unseasonably warm weather, along with low interest rates.

Personal services also improved further. Employment in restaurants and accommodation rose 60,000 since its September trough, as travellers from abroad increased in number. More Canadians stayed home at a time when the Canadian dollar touched new lows. Rebates in the auto sector continued to boost sales of durable goods.

Those components that fell originated in manufacturing. New orders for durable goods continued their year-long downward trend. At half its level of the previous year, the demand for information technology did not snap out of its lethargy. The average work week posted a third straight decline.

The United States' leading indicator registered the largest gain in more than two years. Still, its growth was less than that of Canada; only four of the 10 components in the U.S. increased.

For further details on the economy, consult the February 2002 issue of ***Canadian economic observer*** *(paper: 11-010-XPB, $23/$227). For analytical information, contact Francine Roy (613-951-3627), Current Economic Analysis Group. (See also "Current trends" on page 6.)*

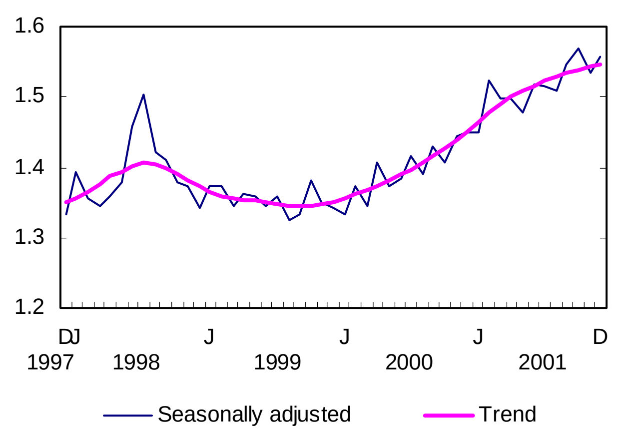
Tough year for manufacturers in 2001

Economic uncertainty, weak demand and stubbornly high finished-product inventories challenged the manufacturing sector throughout 2001, prompting manufacturers to reduce both production and employment. These factors led to the significant declines observed since the fourth quarter of 2000.

Throughout 2001, manufacturers curtailed production and employment in an attempt to reduce inventories, but levels fell slowly, declining 4.5% since peaking at $65.8 billion in November 2000. Following strong increases of 11.5 % in 1999 and 9.2% in 2000, shipments fell 5.2% in 2001. Inventories declined 3.0%, unfilled orders dropped 7.2%, and new orders declined 6.3% in 2001. Employment declined 4.8%.

Plant slowdowns and closures, contract cancellations, and falling industrial prices were among several factors influencing the manufacturing sector. Sixteen of 21 industries, representing 72% of total shipments, reported declines. Shipments of computer and electronic products plummeted 32.1%, wiping out most of the gains of 2000. Falling global demand, production over-capacity

Inventory-to-shipment ratio



and persistently high finished-product inventories contributed to the industry's abrupt downturn.

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... Tough year for manufacturers in 2001

The transportation equipment industry fell 8.8%; specifically, motor vehicles dropped 14.8% and motor vehicle parts decreased 10.9%, as lower demand and excessive retail inventories hampered the motor vehicle sector. Shipments in the paper (-7.4%) and primary metals (-5.4%) industries also declined sharply. A 6.5% increase in food manufacturing, as well as higher chemical product shipments (+3.1%) slightly offset the overall decline.

In December 2001, manufacturers' shipments fell 1.8% to $40.4 billion, the third significant decrease in four months. Shipments have dropped 12.3% from their peak of $46.0 billion in October 2000. In contrast, manufacturers' inventories, which slipped 0.4% in December, have declined only 2.9% since October 2000. The decrease in inventories marked the seventh consecutive decline, and the longest string of declines since the recession of the early 1990s.

Fifteen of 21 industries, representing 84% of total shipments, lost ground in December. Some of the industries reporting decreases were the chemical products industry, fabricated metal products, paper manufacturing, and petroleum and coal products. Partly offsetting the overall decrease in shipments, wood products rose for the first time in six months (+4.0%).

Manufacturers' shipments, December 2001
Seasonally adjusted

	$ millions	% change, previous month
Canada	**40,364**	**-1.8**
Newfoundland and Labrador	181	0.6
Prince Edward Island	108	11.0
Nova Scotia	672	0.5
New Brunswick	982	4.4
Quebec	9,690	-0.8
Ontario	21,397	-2.3
Manitoba	913	-3.0
Saskatchewan	573	-1.0
Alberta	3,210	-4.3
British Columbia	2,635	-1.5
Yukon, Northwest Territories h and Nunavut	3	-27.7

Declining for the fifth consecutive month, unfilled orders dropped 1.5% to $46.8 billion. New orders declined 2.5% to 39.7 billion, the lowest since April 1999. The inventory-to-shipment ratio leaped to 1.56, nearing October's nine-year high.

In 2001, Ontario's shipments dropped 6.3% due to cutbacks in the transportation equipment and computer and electronic products industries. In Quebec, shipments of computer and electronic products fell by almost half, pulling down shipments 5.2%.

Lower pulp and paper prices contributed to a 9.7% decline in British Columbia. Strong shipments by food and machinery manufacturers largely offset decreases in the computer and electronic products, petroleum and coal products and paper industries in Alberta, which slipped a moderate 0.3%.

Pulled down by electrical equipment components and appliances, Saskatchewan reported a 4.5% decline in shipments. Manitoba's shipments rose 0.6%, supported by higher values for the chemical products, transportation equipment and furniture industries.

A strong increase in the non-durable goods sector boosted shipments in New Brunswick (+7.3%), Nova Scotia (+0.7%), and Prince Edward Island (+1.6%). Newfoundland reported lower shipment values in 2001, down 0.9%.

The December 2001 issue of the ***Monthly Survey of Manufacturing*** *(Internet: 31-001-XIB, $15/$147) will soon be available. To order data, or for general information, contact the dissemination officer (1-866-873-8789; 613-951-9497; manufact@statcan.ca). For analytical information, contact Russell Kowaluk (613-951-0600; kowarus@statcan.ca), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. (See also "Current trends" on page 6.)*

Record high new motor vehicle sales in 2001

Lacklustre sales of new motor vehicles hit a record in 2001 thanks to exceptional sales in November. Incentives continued to be the driving force behind new motor vehicle sales at the end of last year.

Boosted by financing programs in the fourth quarter, total sales of new motor vehicles increased 0.7% from 2000, the previous record year. Higher new motor vehicle sales in 2001 were entirely due to passenger cars.

Rebounding sales in November ended the lag witnessed throughout 2001. In fact, cumulative sales from January to October were 1.3% lower than in the same period of 2000. In all, 1,597,949 new motor vehicles were purchased in 2001, an all-time record. However, the advance in 2001 falls short of the 3.0% and 7.9% gains in 2000 and 1999, respectively.

Of total sales, 868,634 were new passenger cars, 2.3% more than the previous year, but short of the 5.3% growth recorded in 2000. Overseas-built cars accounted for all of the increase in new passenger car sales. Their sales advanced 19.4%, but sales of North American-built cars declined 3.3%.

Note to readers

At the end of each calendar year, seasonally adjusted monthly figures are revised to equal the sum of the unadjusted estimates. All annual comparisons use the sum of unadjusted monthly estimates. All data in this article are seasonally adjusted, unless otherwise indicated.

Passenger cars *include those used for personal and commercial purposes, such as taxis or rental cars.* ***Trucks*** *include minivans, sport-utility vehicles, light and heavy trucks, vans and buses.* ***North American-built*** *new motor vehicles include vehicles manufactured or assembled in Canada, the United States or Mexico. All other new motor vehicles are considered manufactured overseas.*

(continued on page 4)

... Record high new motor vehicle sales in 2001

New truck sales reached 729,315, down 1.2% from 2000, when an increase of 0.4% was recorded. Overseas-built trucks advanced 18.1% in 2001, but those built in North America declined 3.2%.

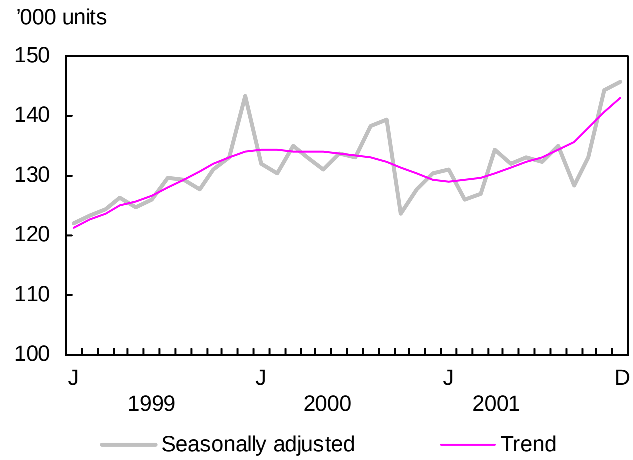
Although more new motor vehicles were sold in 2001, sales revenues were almost unchanged from 2000, down a marginal 0.1% to $46.9 billion. As shown by the widespread use of incentives, a highly competitive marketplace may have resulted in more new vehicles sold, but nearly unchanged revenue. The flat revenue was the combined result of a decrease in revenue for trucks (-1.6%) and an increase for passenger cars (+1.8%).

Trucks accounted for 54.8% of the $46.9 billion in revenue from all new motor vehicle sales. This is because trucks had an average unit value of $35,261, compared with $24,370 for passenger cars.

Alberta was the most dynamic province, reporting a 7.0% gain in sales. Furthermore, Alberta reported the strongest advances for both cars (+10.8%) and trucks (+4.8%). New Brunswick (-6.4%), Prince Edward Island (-5.4%), Ontario (-2.0%) and Nova Scotia (-1.9%) saw the only decreases in 2001. These provinces posted the largest declines in new truck sales, and also reported lower new passenger car sales, except for a slight increase in Nova Scotia (+0.1%).

New motor vehicle sales in December were 0.9% higher than in November. Sales totalled 145,665 automobiles, an increase of 1,298. Passenger car sales rose 1.7%, while truck sales declined 0.1%. The monthly gain was the third in a row, following increases of 8.6% in November and 3.5% in October.

New motor vehicle sales



The December 2001 issue of ***New motor vehicle sales*** *(Internet: 63-007-XIB, $13/$124) is now available. For data or for general information, contact the Client Services Unit (1-877-421-3067; 613-951-3549; retailinfo@statcan.ca). For analytical information, contact Clérance Kimanyi (613-951-6363; clerance.kimanyi@statcan.ca), Distributive Trades Division.*

New motor vehicle sales, 2001
Seasonally adjusted

	Total	Passenger cars	Trucks	Total	Passenger cars	Trucks
	Number of vehicles			% change, previous year		
Canada	**1,597,949**	**868,634**	**729,315**	**0.7**	**2.3**	**-1.2**
Newfoundland and Labrador	24,650	14,576	10,074	3.3	5.5	0.3
Prince Edward Island	4,635	2,630	2,005	-5.4	-2.6	-8.9
Nova Scotia	43,310	26,029	17,281	-1.9	0.1	-4.8
New Brunswick	38,183	20,366	17,817	-6.4	-3.5	-9.5
Quebec	397,759	258,768	138,991	1.9	3.7	-1.4
Ontario	647,292	355,308	291,984	-2.0	-1.3	-2.9
Manitoba	43,298	19,716	23,582	1.5	5.9	-1.9
Saskatchewan	38,352	15,498	22,854	4.6	8.6	2.0
Alberta	187,864	71,476	116,388	7.0	10.8	4.8
British Columbia[1]	172,606	84,267	88,339	2.9	7.1	-0.9

[1] *Includes Yukon, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut.*

International travel improves but still below pre-September 11 levels

Foreign travel to Canada is returning to levels near those last experienced before September 11. As for fewer trips by Canadians travelling to the United States, September's events, combined with a weak Canadian dollar, may explain the decline.

In December 2001, travel to and from Canada increased for the second consecutive month, and for the second time since August. Travel by overseas visitors and overnight travel by U.S. visitors to Canada grew most strongly compared with November. An estimated 3.8 million travellers arrived in Canada in December, up 5.1% from November. The number of trips by residents of overseas countries jumped most sharply, up 11.3%. (Unless otherwise specified, data are seasonally adjusted.)

The number of American travellers rose 4.5%. Americans took 1.4 million overnight trips to Canada, up 8.4% from November. Both overnight car trips (+9.9%) and plane trips (+9.2%) jumped significantly. Overnight car trips have actually returned to pre-September 11 levels; they increased 6.9% compared with August. Americans took 1.9 million same-day car trips to Canada in December, up 4.7% from November. This was the second consecutive monthly rise and the second increase since August.

Canadians took 998,000 overnight trips south of the border, down 0.5%. A 4.0% drop in Canadian overnight air travel to the United States is one of the main factors behind this decrease. Overnight car travel to the United States rose a slight 0.6%. Canadians made 1.7 million same-day car trips to the United States, up 3.1% from November, also marking the second consecutive monthly rise and the second increase since August.

The number of trips by overseas residents to Canada rose for the second consecutive month, jumping a significant 9.8%. The majority of the top 12 overseas markets showed significant increases in same-day and overnight trips to Canada in December. Taiwan gained most (+108.1%), followed by Israel (+38.7%), Japan (+33.4%), and South Korea (+25.4%). Only Germany (-1.2%) and France (-0.5%) showed decreases. Seven of the top overseas markets returned to pre-September 11 levels, showing volume increases ranging from 1.7% to 38.3% compared with August. Overnight travel by overseas residents returned to pre-September 11 levels, up 0.2% from August.

Canadians made 3.2 million international trips in December, up 2.8% from November. Travel to the United States rose 2.4%, and travel to overseas nations climbed 5.9%. Canadians took 374,000 overnight trips to overseas countries in December, 5.9% higher than in November.

*The December 2001 issue of **International travel** (Internet: 66-001-PIE, $6/$55) is now available. For more information, contact Sylvie Bonhomme (613-951-5366; sylvie.bonhomme@statcan.ca) or Client Services (1-800-307-3382; 613-951-7608; cult.tourstats@statcan.ca), Culture, Tourism and the Centre for Education Statistics.*

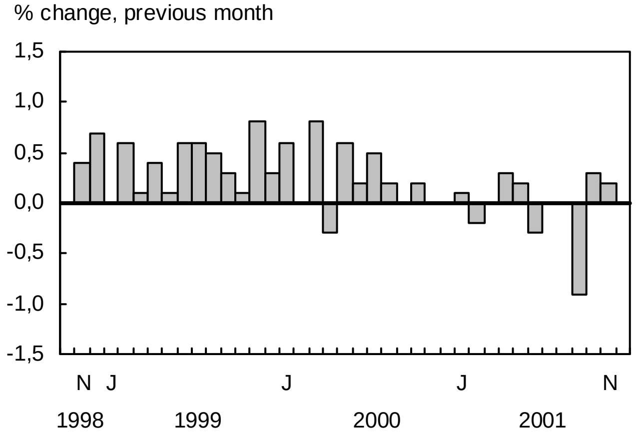
Travel between Canada and other countries, December 2001
Seasonally adjusted

	December 2001[p]	November to December 2001	August[r] to December 2001
	'000	% change	
Canadian trips abroad	**3,163**	**2.8**	**-17.1**
to the United States	2,789	2.4	-18.2
to other countries	374	5.9	-7.8
Travel to Canada	**3,763**	**5.1**	**-9.9**
from the United States	3,413	4.5	-10.9
from other countries	350	11.3	1.8
Most important overseas markets			
United Kingdom	70	0.8	-7.1
Japan	34	33.4	-8.8
Germany	30	-1.2	3.7
South Korea	14	25.4	9.6
Australia	14	16.4	2.5
Mexico	13	19.2	-2.5
Taiwan	9	108.1	-10.5
Israel	8	38.7	38.3

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

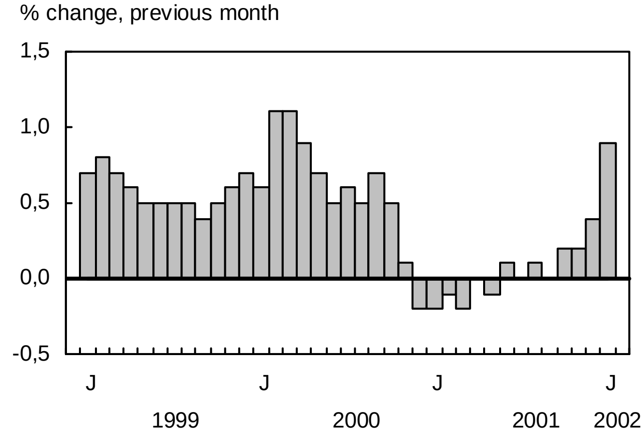
Current Trends

Gross domestic product



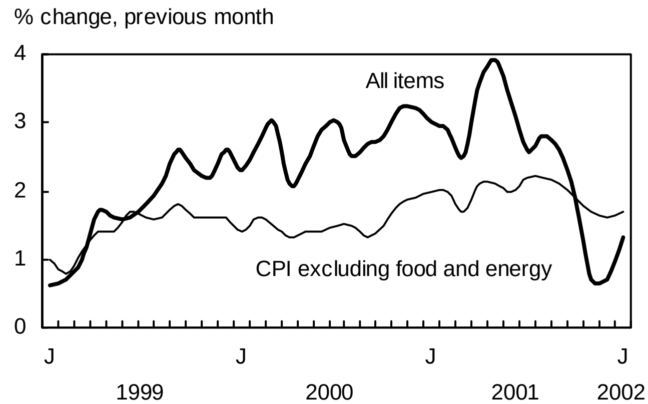
Total economic activity advanced 0.2% in November, after rising 0.3% in October.

Composite index



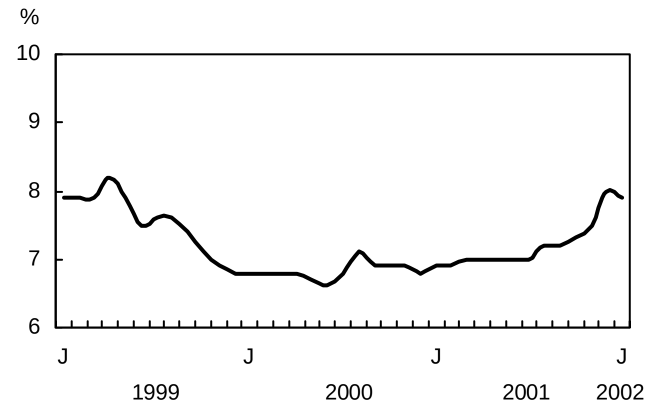
The leading indicator gained 0.9% in January, due mainly to strength in household spending.

Consumer price index



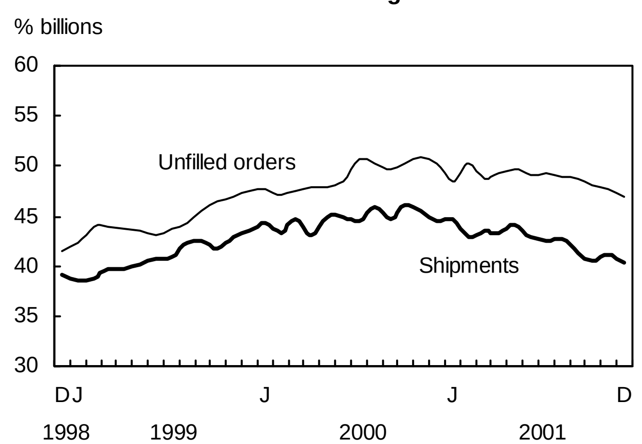
Consumer prices for goods and services were 1.3% higher in January than they were a year earlier. Excluding food and energy, prices rose 1.7%.

Unemployment rate



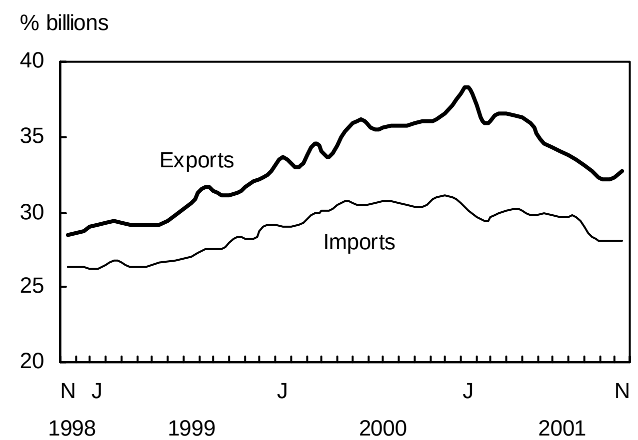
In January, the unemployment rate dipped 0.1 percentage points to 7.9%.

Manufacturing



Manufacturers' shipments fell 1.8% in December to $40.4 billion. The backlog of unfilled orders declined 1.5% to $46.8 billion.

Merchandise trade



In November, the value of merchandise exports rose 1.3% to $32.7 billion. Imports declined 0.3% to $28.1 billion.

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 ($ billions, 1997)[1]	November	933.7	0.2%	-0.3%
Composite Index (1992=100)	January*	168.9	0.9%	1.3%
Operating profits of enterprises ($ billions)	Q3 2001	37.6	-14.4%	-24.0%
Capacity utilization rate (%)[2]	Q3 2001	79.4	-2.5†	-7.0†
DOMESTIC DEMAND				
Retail trade ($ billions)	November	24.6	1.4%	5.2%
New motor vehicle sales (thousands of units)	December	145.7	0.9%	11.9%
Wholesale trade ($ billions)	December*	32.5	0.3%	1.8%
LABOUR				
Employment (millions)	January	15.2	0.5%	0.7%
Unemployment rate (%)	January	7.9	-0.1†	1.0†
Participation rate (%)	January	66.4	0.1†	0.3†
Average weekly earnings ($)	November	670.84	0.19%	1.94%
Help-wanted Index (1996=100)	January	125	-0.8%	-27.3%
Regular Employment Insurance beneficiaries (in thousands)	December*	557.2	0.0%	16.9%
INTERNATIONAL TRADE				
Merchandise exports ($ billions)	December*	32.0	-1.2%	-13.8%
Merchandise imports ($ billions)	December*	27.5	-1.8%	-11.4%
Merchandise trade balance (all figures in $ billions)	December*	4.5	0.1	-1.6
MANUFACTURING				
Shipments ($ billions)	December*	40.4	-1.8%	-9.5%
New orders ($ billions)	December*	39.7	-2.5%	-9.9%
Unfilled orders ($ billions)	December*	46.8	-1.5%	-6.9%
Inventory/shipments ratio	December*	1.56	0.02	0.11
PRICES				
Consumer Price Index (1992=100)	January	116.2	0.3%	1.3%
Industrial Product Price Index (1997=100)	December	105.4	-0.8%	-2.3%
Raw Materials Price Index (1997=100)	December	101.8	-1.4%	-12.8%
New Housing Price Index (1992=100)	December	107.3	0.2%	2.8%

Note: *All series are seasonally adjusted with the exception of the price indexes.*
* *new this week*
† *percentage point*
[1] *1997 replaces 1992 as the base year used in determining prices for gross domestic product by industry. Also, valuation has been changed from factor cost to basic prices.*
[2] *Calculation of the rates of capacity use is now based on the 1997 North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS), which has replaced the 1980 Standard Industrial Classification.*

Infomat
A weekly review

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SUBJECT AREA Title of product	Period	Catalogue number	Price ($) (issue/subscription)
CULTURE, TOURISM AND THE CENTRE FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS			
International travel, advance information	December 2001	66-001-PIE	6/55
DISTRIBUTIVE TRADES			
New motor vehicle sales	December 2001	63-007-XIB	13/124
MANUFACTURING, CONSTRUCTION AND ENERGY			
Coal and coke statistics	September 2001	45-002-XIB	9/85
Coal and coke statistics	October 2001	45-002-XIB	9/85
Coal and coke statistics	November 2001	45-002-XIB	9/85
Natural gas transportation and distribution	October 2001	55-002-XIB	13/125
Particleboard, oriented strandboard and fibreboard	December 2001	36-003-XIB	5/47
Pipeline transportation of crude oil and refined petroleum products	September 2001	55-001-XIB	9/86
Pulpwood and wood residue statistics	December 2001	25-001-XIB	6/55
SCIENCE, INNOVATION AND ELECTRONIC INFORMATION			
Innovation analysis bulletin	January 2002	88-003-XIE	free
Science statistics, Vol. 26, no. 1		88-001-XIB	6/59
TRANSPORTATION			
Canadian civil aviation	1999	51-206-XIB	31

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