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A Weekly Review

Friday, June 26, 1998

OVERVIEW

- **Export growth slows**

  Exports were virtually unchanged in April, continuing the trend set in the first quarter of 1998. Imports were higher.

- **Manufacturers' shipments stall**

  Manufacturers' shipments declined slightly in April, following a strong performance in March. The motor vehicle industry contributed most to April's decrease.

- **Prices jump to highest level this year**

  In May, the annual inflation rate rose to its highest level so far this year.

- **Composite Index advances on widespread growth**

  The leading indicator continued to advance in May, as the sources of growth were widespread.

- **Men more likely to move out of low-paying jobs**

  Among Canadians who had low-paying jobs in 1993, about one-fifth managed to move into jobs with better pay by 1995. Men have been moving out of low-paying jobs more frequently than women.

- **Number of EI recipients down again**

  Fewer Canadians received regular employment insurance benefits in April. The number of applicants for benefits also declined.

- **Families make do with lower incomes**

  Average family income declined between 1990 and 1995, particularly for lone-parent families. The general decline in income during this period resulted in an increase in the incidence of low income.

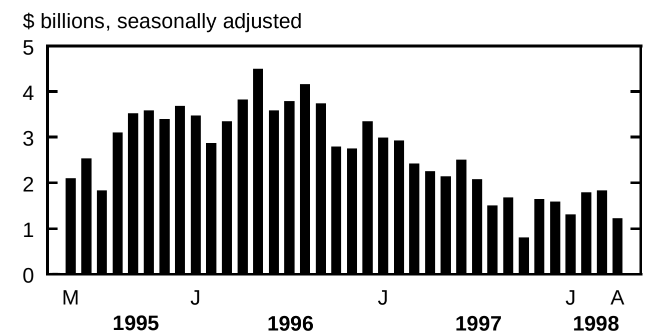
Export growth slows

The value of exports was virtually unchanged in April, continuing the trend set in the first quarter of 1998. Higher demand for aircraft, communications equipment and other consumer goods was offset by a drop in exports of cars, wood pulp, precious metals and ores of all types. Meanwhile, the value of imports grew 2.6%, chiefly because of higher imports of aircraft, steel products and crude oil. The trade balance fell to $1.2 billion in April, down $600 million from March 1998.

Machinery and equipment exports rose 3.4% in April, primarily because of record-setting exports of aircraft and steady growth in exports of railway equipment and television and communications equipment. Exports of automotive products were almost unchanged (-0.6%). A 5.9% decline in car exports due to delays in rail transportation completely neutralized a sharp increase in exports of trucks, other motor vehicles and auto parts. Energy product exports also remained flat in April. Small gains in natural gas and crude oil exports failed to offset lower exports of petroleum and coal products.

After two months of growth, exports of forest products dipped slightly in April. An 8.9% drop in wood pulp exports dragged the entire sector down. There was also a decline in exports of industrial goods, especially metals and minerals. Since the beginning of the year, industrial goods exports have been unable to regain the record level set in November 1997.

Trade balance



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Statistics Canada Statistique Canada

Canada

... Export growth slows

Export growth is being slowed by continued weakness in exports to Japan, which have fallen 49% since January 1997. Softwood lumber has sufferred the largest drop. The downward trend intensified in the first quarter of 1998, as exports of coal and related products dove 83.9%. Exports to other East Asian countries, particularly South Korea and Taiwan, have also dropped. By contrast, exports to the United States and Europe have remained strong, rising 3.5% and 5.3% respectively since November 1997.

Following a steep decline in March, machinery and equipment imports jumped 4.9% in April. Half of this gain was due to a marked increase in aircraft imports from France. The industrial goods sector also rebounded in April, mainly on the strength of substantially higher steel imports. After remaining virtually immobile for three months, imports of agricultural and fishing products, especially fresh vegetables, fruits and berries, edged upward in April thanks to an exceptionally mild spring.

Despite solid growth in imports of coal and other related products, weak prices associated with an ample supply of crude oil on the market pushed energy product imports down once again. Automotive product imports declined slightly in April, as an increase in imports of cars, trucks and other motor vehicles was outweighed by a drop in auto parts imports.

Note to readers

Merchandise trade is one component of the current account of Canada's balance of payments, which also includes trade in services.

With the release of April 1998 data, import and export statistics by commodity have been adjusted for balance-of-payments (BOP) concepts. This change was made because BOP-based data are more reliable, since they include adjustments for known deficiencies in the customs-based data. BOP-based data are consistent with the broader economic measures of the System of National Accounts.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 3618, 3619, 3651, 3685-3713, 3718-3720, 3887-3913, 8430-8435 and 8438-8447.

*The April 1998 issue of **Canadian international merchandise trade** (65-001-XPB, $19/$188) will be published shortly. The publication will include tables by commodity and country on a customs basis. Current account data (which incorporate merchandise trade statistics, services transactions, investment income and transfers) are available quarterly in **Canada's balance of international payments** (67-001-XPB, $38/$124). For further information, contact Jocelyne Elibani (613-951-9647 or 1 800 294-5583), International Trade Division. (See also "Current trends" on page 8.)*

Manufacturers' shipments stall

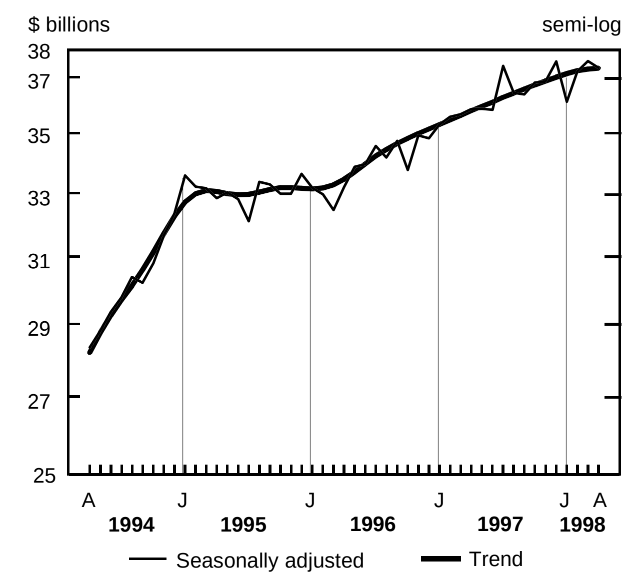
Manufacturing shipments decreased 0.6% to $37.3 billion in April, following a strong performance in March and a partial recovery in February. The decline was led by the motor vehicle industry, which reacted to shifting demand, a shortage of rail cars, and supplier delays. April's performance represents a flattening of the solid growth trend that was sustained from the spring of 1996 until the end of 1997.

Shipments were down in 11 of the 22 major groups in April, representing 53.1% of total shipments. Although the motor vehicle industry (–2.6%) was the largest contributor to the decline in shipments, the motor vehicle parts and accessories (–2.6%) and the primary metals (–2.2%) industries also played a part. The largest offsetting increases were in the clothing (+7.1%) and machinery (+2.3%) industries.

All provinces except Newfoundland and Alberta recorded lower shipments in April. In British Columbia, manufacturers' shipments have been on a downward trend since April 1997. The wood (–20.8%) and the paper and allied products (–14.1%) industries were the major contributors to April's year-over-year decline in British Columbia, while the transportation equipment (+31.6%) and the electrical and electronic product (+23.6%) industries recorded significant increases. In April, manufacturing shipments from British Columbia were 8.9% below their April 1997 peak.

Manufacturers continued to accumulate inventories in April, but at a slower pace (+0.3% to $48.3 billion). The motor vehicle (+5.8%), electrical and electronic parts (+3.6%) and primary metals (+2.1%) industries contributed most to the rise in inventories. Aircraft and parts (–3.1%) and food (–1.8%) recorded the largest offsetting declines. Although inventories have generally been moving upward since the spring of 1996, the trend has been slowing gradually since November 1997. April's decrease in shipments and rise in inventories pushed the inventory-to-shipments ratio up from 1.28 in March to 1.29.

Shipments



The backlog of unfilled orders increased 0.7% to just under $44.0 billion in April, continuing the upward growth trend observed since late 1996. The largest increase in unfilled orders was in the aircraft and parts (+2.8%) industry; the largest offsetting decrease was in the machinery industry (–3.2%).

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... Manufacturers' shipments stall

Available on CANSIM: matrices 9550–9555, 9558, 9559, 9562–9565, 9568–9579 and 9581–9595.

*The April 1998 issue of **Monthly Survey of Manufacturing** (31-001-XPB, $20/$196) will be available shortly. Detailed data on shipments by province are available on request. For further information, contact Jean-Marie Houle (613-951-7200) or Craig Kuntz (613-951-7092; kuncrai@statcan.ca), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. (See also "Current trends" on page 8.)*

Manufacturers' shipments, April 1998
Seasonally adjusted

	$ millions	% change, previous month
Canada	**37,340**	**– 0.6**
Newfoundland	162	15.7
Prince Edward Island	72	– 10.0
Nova Scotia	519	– 3.4
New Brunswick	662	– 2.9
Quebec	8,869	– 0.4
Ontario	20,062	– 0.6
Manitoba	879	– 2.7
Saskatchewan	502	– 3.7
Alberta	2,871	2.4
British Columbia	2,738	– 3.0
Yukon and Northwest Territories	3	– 6.4

Note to readers

Unfilled orders are a stock of orders that will contribute to future shipments, assuming that orders are not cancelled. They are often considered a key determinant of future shipments. However, half the increase in unfilled orders since the beginning of 1997 has been in the aircraft and parts industry, where some orders can be stretched out over several years before they are completed. In addition, large orders in any industry may occasionally have a component that is manufactured in other countries.

New orders represent orders received whether shipped in the current month or not. They are measured as the sum of shipments for the current month (i.e., orders received this month and shipped within the same month) plus the change in unfilled orders. Interpreting new orders as orders that will lead to future demand is inappropriate because the new orders data include orders that have already been shipped. The month-to-month change in new orders may be volatile, particularly if the previous month's change in unfilled orders is large in relation to the current month's change.

Some orders will not be translated into Canadian factory shipments because portions of large contracts can be subcontracted out to other countries.

Prices jump to highest level this year

The annual inflation rate rose in May to 1.1% (from 0.8% in April), its highest level so far this year. This annual rise was primarily due to higher prices for fresh vegetables, telephone services, food from restaurants, tuition, tobacco products and natural gas. Declines in gasoline prices, mortgage interest costs and computer prices partly offset these increases. Between April and May, the Consumer Price Index (CPI) advanced 0.4%, mostly due to a large increase in traveller accommodation rates. Although consumers also paid more for gasoline, fresh fruit and natural gas, they paid less for women's clothing, bakery products and air transportation.

Consumer Price Index, May 1998
% change, previous year, not seasonally adjusted

	All-items	Food	Shelter	Transportation	Energy
Canada	**1.1**	**1.8**	**0.3**	**– 0.3**	**– 2.5**
Newfoundland	0.4	1.8	– 2.2	– 0.7	– 6.0
Prince Edward Island	– 0.8	2.7	– 4.7	– 4.1	– 14.0
Nova Scotia	0.7	2.6	–1.0	– 1.1	– 5.3
New Brunswick	0.7	2.6	– 0.6	– 1.9	– 4.0
Quebec	1.6	2.7	0.8	0.4	– 1.0
Ontario	1.1	1.7	0.4	– 0.2	– 2.7
Manitoba	1.0	– 0.2	0.7	– 0.2	– 1.8
Saskatchewan	1.7	1.0	2.5	1.3	– 1.1
Alberta	1.3	1.5	2.5	– 0.6	– 0.5
British Columbia	0.3	1.2	– 1.6	– 1.1	– 3.8
Whitehorse	1.3	4.2	0.9	0.9	1.8
Yellowknife	0.0	2.1	– 1.4	1.7	– 3.1

Rates for traveller accommodation (hotels, motels, etc.) climbed sharply (+14.0%) between April and May, when several large conventions in major cities pushed up occupancy rates. The Canadian hotel industry is also benefitting from the weak Canadian dollar, which is attracting American travellers, and from the strong North American economy.

Gasoline prices rose an average 2.1% in May. Although this was the second consecutive monthly increase, consumers paid 6.3% less for gasoline than they did a year earlier. Fresh fruit prices jumped 8.5% in May, as unusual weather in parts of the United States continued to disrupt the supply to Canada. Higher natural gas rates in Ontario were primarily responsible for a 2.7% rise in the natural gas index for Canada.

Women's clothing prices declined 2.6% in May; the reduction was widespread in most categories. Prices for this group usually register a modest drop in May. Bakery products cost 3.2% less, due to various specials and promotions. And the air transportation index was down 1.9% in May, when lower fares were offered for many international flights. The cost of air travel was still 10.2% higher than in May 1997, however.

In May, the highest annual inflation rate between May 1997 and May 1998 was recorded in Saskatchewan (+1.7%). Price movements for a number of commodities in this province were higher than the corresponding national changes. Consumers in Prince Edward Island enjoyed the only price decline on a 12-month basis (–0.8%). Weak advances in the annual inflation rate were recorded in both British Columbia and Newfoundland.

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... Prices jump to highest level this year

Between April and May, Manitoba posted the highest average price increase (+0.6%) among the provinces. Prince Edward Island recorded the largest average price decrease (–0.7%).

Available on CANSIM: matrices 9940–9956.

*The May 1998 issue of **The Consumer Price Index** (62-001-XPB, $11/$103) is now available. For further information, contact Prices Division (613-951-9606; fax: 613-951-2848; infounit@statcan.ca). (See also "Current trends" on page 8.)*

Composite Index advances on widespread growth

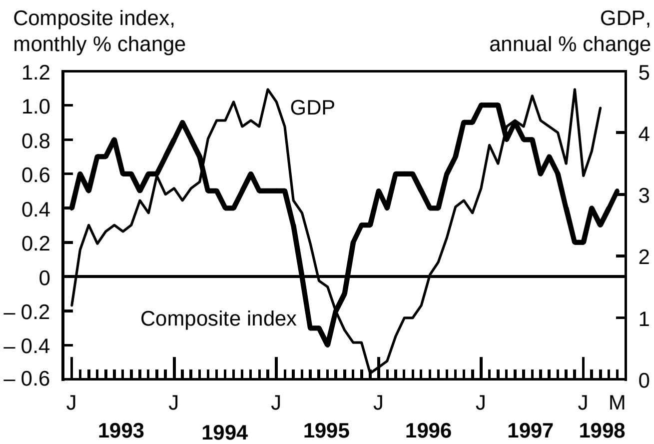
The leading indicator advanced 0.5% in May after growing 0.4% in April. The sources of growth were widespread, as 7 of the 10 components continued to rise. Still, the growth was half what it was at last year's peak, when business and household demand for durable goods was soaring.

After dominating growth last year, softening demand for durable goods has slowed manufacturing. And now labour disputes dampen the chances for an imminent turnaround. New orders fell for a third straight month. The ratio of shipments to inventories of finished goods has leveled off at 1.65, below last year's peak. The average workweek in May contracted for the eighth month in a row.

Household spending remained sluggish. Sales of durable goods were pulled down by slower auto sales. The number of jobs in personal services fell by 13,000 in May, for a total drop since January of 25,000. Meanwhile, a gradual recovery in sales of existing homes offset a drop in housing starts. The housing index edged up for a third consecutive month. This upturn in housing helped to boost furniture and appliance sales.

Available on CANSIM: matrix 191.

Composite Index



*For further information on the economy, see the June 1998 issue of **Canadian economic observer** (11-010-XPB, $23/$227), which is now available. For further information, contact Francine Roy (613-951-3627), Current Economic Analysis Group. (See also "Current trends" on page 8.)*

Men more likely to move out of low-paying jobs

About one-fifth (21%) of Canadians who had a low-paying job in 1993 had moved on to something better by 1995, according to data from the Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics. They were able to do so by changing jobs, working longer hours or by receiving a raise.

In recent years, the wage gap between men and women has narrowed. Young women who entered the labour market during the 1990s have generally been more educated and more career-oriented than in previous years. Nevertheless, men have been moving out of low-paying jobs more frequently than women. This study shows that of all men who had low weekly pay in 1993, almost one-third had a better paying job by 1995; in contrast, such a change was observed for only 17% of the women. Even after accounting for the fact that part-time work is more common among low-paid women, they are still not as upwardly mobile. The upward mobility of female lone-parents was even more limited. Of all those who had low earnings in 1993 and were still employed in 1995, only 12% had moved up by 1995.

In general, workers who changed employers were more likely to escape low earnings than those who remained with the company. However, this pattern was not observed for all job changers. Only 19% of employees who found a new job after being laid off moved up, compared with 24% of those who had quit their previous job. This likely reflected the fact that displaced workers were more vulnerable to earnings losses when moving to another

Note to readers

This article summarizes results from a study entitled "The upward mobility of low-paid Canadians, 1993–1995". It is based on a survey of about 2,200 paid workers who were employed in both December 1993 and December 1995, and who had low earnings in December 1993. They ranged in age from 15 to 60, and they had not been enrolled in school full time in either 1993 or 1995.

These workers were considered to have low-paying jobs if their weekly earnings in 1993 were less than $404.16. This amount approximated Statistics Canada's low-income cutoff for a family of two living in an urban area of at least half a million people. A low earner in 1993 was said to have "moved up" in 1995 if weekly earnings were at least $455.25; that is, at least 10% greater than $413.86, the low threshold for 1995 weekly earnings. Although LICOs are often referred to as poverty lines, they have no official status as such, and Statistics Canada does not recommend their use for this purpose.

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... Men more likely to move out of low-paying jobs

job than workers who left a firm voluntarily. Job changers who moved from a non-unionized to a unionized job were particularly successful at escaping low earnings. Between 1993 and 1995, 32% of job changers who did so succeeded in moving out of low-paid work, compared with 20% of other workers.

Individuals with only a high school diploma had much lower chances of moving out of a low-paying job than did university graduates (only 16% versus 34%). Similarly, 33% of highly skilled workers involved in professional, natural and social science occupations moved on to better pay, compared with only 11% of those employed in sales and 12% of those in service-related occupations. Workers in the consumer services industry were less likely than other workers to move up, probably because they had relatively low skills.

Among the different regions of Canada, the study observed that about 1 in 4 workers in Ontario and British Columbia moved out of low weekly earnings in 1995, compared with only 1 in 10 workers in the Atlantic provinces and in Manitoba. Even if favourable economic conditions contributed to the upward mobility of workers in Ontario and British Columbia, such conditions cannot explain all the regional differences. For example, workers in Quebec escaped low weekly earnings more often than they did in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, even though average weekly earnings and employment grew as strongly in those two provinces as they did in Quebec.

The upward mobility of low-paid Canadians, 1993 to 1995 *(75F0002MPE, 98-07, $10 for a paper copy, free on the Internet) is now available. To order a copy of the study, contact Client Services (613-951-7355; toll-free: 1 888 297-7355; dynamics@statcan.ca), Income Statistics Division. For further analytical information on this study, contact René Morissette (613-951-3608) or Marie Drolet (613-951-5691), Business and Labour Market Analysis Division.*

Number of EI recipients down again

In April, an estimated 536,520 Canadians received regular employment insurance (EI) benefits, a 1.9% decline from March. Six of the provinces and territories posted decreases in the number of EI beneficiaries in April.

EI beneficiaries receiving regular benefits, April1998
Seasonally adjusted

	Total	% change, previous month	% change, previous year
Canada	**536,520**	**– 1.9**	**– 4.9**
Newfoundland	33,290	– 0.9	0.0
Prince Edward Island	9,150	2.5	5.4
Nova Scotia	29,110	1.7	– 6.7
New Brunswick	37,360	0.1	13.2
Quebec	193,640	– 1.1	– 3.6
Ontario	119,730	– 3.9	– 18.3
Manitoba	12,180	– 5.7	– 5.0
Saskatchewan	9,260	– 2.2	0.2
Alberta	28,270	4.4	3.9
British Columbia	69,420	2.3	3.8
Yukon	1,360	6.2	11.6
Northwest Territories	1,080	– 0.3	– 1.5

Note to readers

The discrepancy between the estimated number of regular beneficiaries and regular payments data can be explained in part by differences in their reference periods. The number of beneficiaries is a measure of all persons who received employment insurance benefits for the week containing the 15th day of the month. Regular benefit payments is the total of all monies received by individuals for the entire month.

Regular benefit payments dropped 6.3% to $679.9 million in April. Led by Ontario (–10.5%) and Newfoundland (–8.5%), a total of 10 provinces and the Northwest Territories recorded declines. Nova Scotia saw little change in benefit payments, whereas the Yukon recorded a 2.3% increase.

The number of applicants for EI benefits fell 1.8% to 223,000 in April. Claims were down in eight provinces; the most significant decline was in Newfoundland (–10.4%). Despite some irregular changes, the number of persons submitting EI claims has hovered in the range of 219,000 to 250,000 since June 1996.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 26 (series 1.6), 5700–5717, 5735 and 5736.

For further information, contact the Client Services Unit (613-951-4090; fax: 613-951-4087; labour@statcan.ca), Labour Division.

Families make do with lower incomes

According to the 1996 Census, average family income in 1995 was $54,583, a 4.8% decline from 1990 after adjusting for inflation. Family income declined between 1980 and 1985, and increased significantly during the recovery of the late 1980s. Overall, the level of income in 1995 was 2.8% higher than in 1980. Average family income dropped for all age groups and in all census metropolitan areas except Windsor and Victoria.

The largest proportion of Canadians lived in husband–wife census families in 1995. These families had an average family income of $58,763, down 4% from 1990. During this period, average income for lone-parent families recorded twice the decline of that for husband–wife families. Male lone-parent families reported a decline of 10% to $40,974—the largest decrease. Among female lone-parent families, which accounted for four out of five lone-parent families, average income declined 6.5% to $27,721 in 1995.

The general decline in incomes between 1990 and 1995 resulted in an increase in the incidence of low income. In 1995, 16% of economic families were below Statistics Canada's low-income cutoffs, up from 13% in 1990. Similarly, 42% of unattached individuals were below the cutoffs, compared with 40% in 1990. While the number of all families increased 6% during this period, the number of low-income families increased 32%. All types of families recorded increases in the incidence of low income between 1990 and 1995.

One in four children under 6 years of age lived in a low-income family in 1995, compared with one in five in 1990. The number of children younger than 15 living in low-income families increased by 321,200, to about 1.3 million in 1995. At the opposite end, the proportion of people aged 70 and over in a low-income situation declined by about 2 percentage points. However, one in five seniors still had an income below the cutoffs.

The incidence of low income among visible minorities was significantly above average. About 36% of members of the visible minority population were in a low-income situation in 1995, compared with 20% of the general population. And the same phenomenon was observed among the Aboriginal population. In 1995, 44% of this group lived in a low-income family.

Although the average total income of low-income families increased slightly (+1.2%), the composition of their income changed. In 1990, employment income for these families accounted for 43% of their total income. By 1995, that had declined to 39%. This development was accompanied by an increase in the proportion of government transfer payments, which rose from 51% to 55%. The largest change occurred in female lone-parent families. The share of employment income among these families declined from 33% to 25%, whereas government transfer payments increased from 60% to 66%.

For more information, contact Abdul Rashid (613-951-6897), Labour and Household Surveys Analysis Division.

Note to readers

The income data are from the 1996 Census, which collected information on income obtained in 1995. Income from previous censuses have been adjusted for changes in the price of goods and services using the Consumer Price Index. All income data are presented in 1995 constant dollars.

*A **census family** is a now-married couple (with or without never-married sons or daughters of either or both spouses), a couple living common-law (again with or without never-married sons or daughters of either or both partners), or a lone parent of any marital status, with at least one never-married son or daughter living in the same dwelling. Families of now-married and common-law couples together constitute **husband–wife** families.*

***Total income** comprises the income an individual receives from all sources, including wages and salaries, farm and non-farm self-employment, government transfer payments, investment income, retirement pensions and other money income. The **total income of a census family** is the sum of the total incomes received during the calendar year preceding the census.*

***Low income** refers to economic families and unattached individuals who have incomes below Statistics Canada's low-income cutoffs (LICOs), 1992 base. These cutoffs were selected on the basis that families and unattached individuals with incomes below these limits usually spend more than 54.7% of their income on food, shelter and clothing, and are therefore considered as living in straitened circumstances. Since the publication of LICOs 25 years ago, Statistics Canada has emphasized that they are quite different from measurements of poverty and that their use as such is not endorsed.*

To apply to incomes in 1990 and 1995, LICOs were adjusted to compensate for changes in the Consumer Price Index. Given that the survey from which LICOs were determined excluded the Yukon, the Northwest Territories and Indian reserves, all estimates given exclude those areas.

*The concept of an economic family is used to establish LICOs rather than a census family. An **economic family** consists of all persons in a household who are related to each other by blood, marriage, common-law or adoption. An **unattached individual** is a person 15 years of age or over who is living alone or living in a household where he/she is not related to anyone else.*

New from Statistics Canada

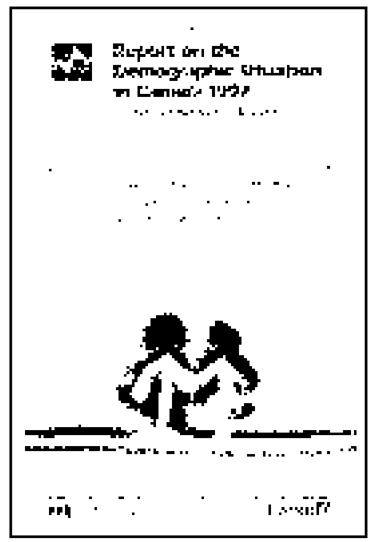
Perspectives on labour and income
Summer 1998

"The booming market for programmers" is the feature article in this issue of *Perspectives on Labour and Income*. Also presented is "Income after separation: People without children". Other articles examine the growing phenomena of working at home and moonlighting.

As well, the RRSP Home Buyers' Plan is examined here for the first time. And there is an overview of legislative and policy changes in Employment Insurance since 1940. A look at census labour data for 1996 concludes the issue.

*The Summer 1998 issue of **Perspectives on labour and income** (75-001-XPE, $18/$58) is now available. For further information, contact Marie-Paule Robert (613-951-4628), Labour and Household Surveys Analysis.*

Report on the demographic situation in Canada
1997



The *Report on the demographic situation in Canada, 1997*, takes stock of the Canadian population. The first part of this report goes over the most recent demographic trends in the various regions of the country and compares Canada with other industrialized nations. It analyses trends in population growth and its components, inter-provincial and international migration, marriage and divorce.

The report's second part assesses the socio-economic conditions of seniors according to their living arrangements. The study uses data from the 1991 Census to analyze their level of education, sources of income, and family and economic status..

*The **Report on the demographic situation in Canada, 1997** (91-209-XPE, $31) is now on sale. For further information about Part I of the report, contact Alain Bélanger (613-951-2326); for information on Part II, contact Jean Dumas (613-951-2327), Demography Division.*

Market research handbook
1998

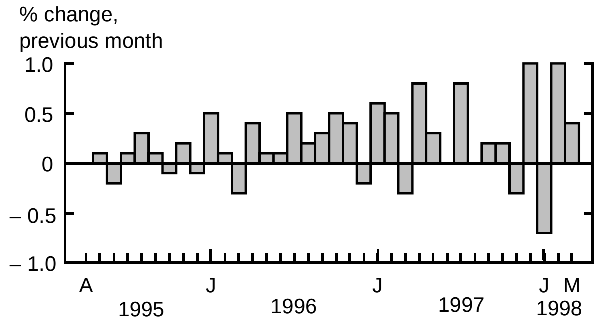
Since 1975, the *Market research handbook* has been an authoritative source of socio-economic information reflecting key characteristics of local and national markets in Canada. By providing accurate and timely statistics on the changing demographics, standards of living, and economic characteristics of Canadian society, the handbook helps businesses locate target markets, track their market share, and assess their competitive position.

The 1998 edition contains the latest data from the 1996 Census and a wide range of other surveys, and it incorporates a number of features designed to make it more user-friendly. Features include a new user's guide, the addition of annotated charts to reveal salient trends, help lines for each of the data sources, and references to CANSIM, Statistics Canada's Canadian Socio-economic Information Management System, accessible at *www.statcan.ca.*

*The **Market research handbook** (63-224-XPB, $125) is now available. For more information, contact Jenny Grenier (613-951-1020), Small Business and Special Surveys Division.*

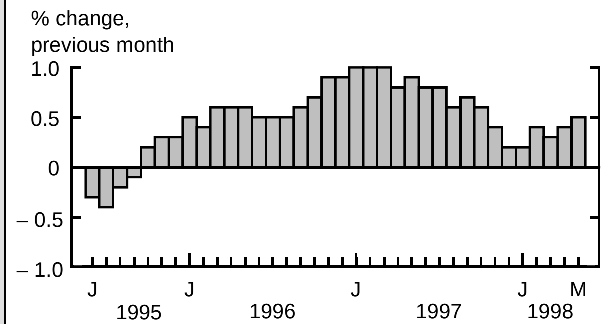
Current trends

Gross domestic product



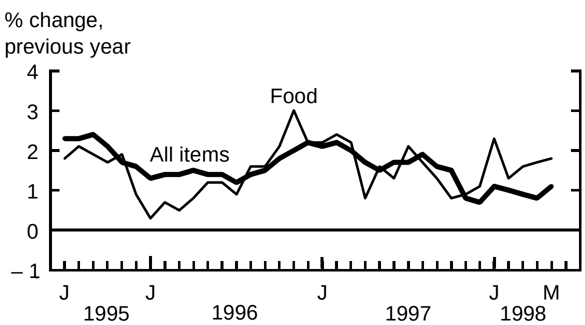
Real gross domestic product at factor cost grew 0.4% in March.

Composite Index



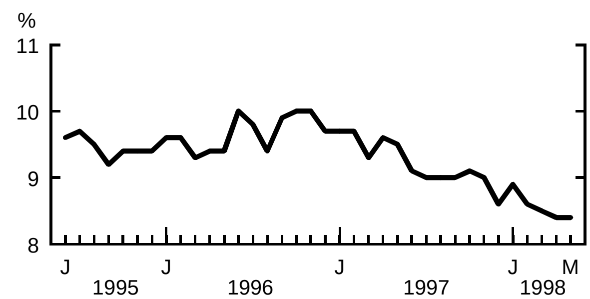
The Composite Index grew by 0.5% in May.

Consumer Price Index



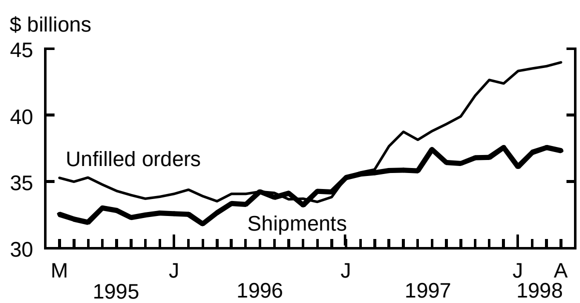
Consumers paid 1.1% more for goods and services in May 1998 than the year before. Food prices rose by 1.8%.

Unemployment rate



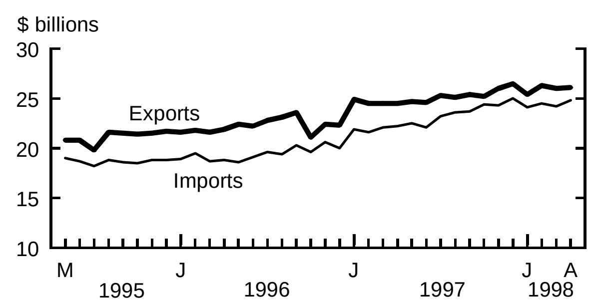
In May, the unemployment rate remained stable at 8.4%.

Manufacturing



Manufacturers' shipments decreased 0.6% in April to $37.3 billion. The level of unfilled orders increased 0.7% to just under $44 billion.

Merchandise trade



In April, the value of merchandise exports were up a slight 0.1% from March to $26.1 billion. Imports climbed 2.6% to $24.8 billion.

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

Latest monthly statistics

	Period	Level	Change, previous period	Change, previous year
GENERAL				
Gross domestic product ($ billion, 1992)	March	711.0	0.4%	4.4%
Composite Index (1981=100)	May*	205.8	0.5%	6.1%
Operating profits of enterprises ($ billion)	Q1 1998	27.3	– 6.0%	2.6%
Capacity utilization (%)	Q1 1998	86.0	0.3†	2.6†
DOMESTIC DEMAND				
Retail trade ($ billion)	April*	20.6	1.0%	5.7%
New motor vehicle sales (thousand of units)	April	124.8	5.9%	10.8%
LABOUR				
Employment (millions)	May	14.3	– 0.1%	2.8%
Unemployment rate (%)	May	8.4	0.0†	– 1.0†
Participation rate (%)	May	65.1	0.0†	0.2†
Labour income ($ billion)	March	38.2	0.0%	3.9%
Average weekly earnings ($)	March	607.76	0.0%	1.9%
INTERNATIONAL TRADE				
Merchandise exports ($ billion)	April*	26.1	0.1%	6.4%
Merchandise imports ($ billion)	April*	24.8	2.6%	11.7%
Merchandise trade balance (all figures in $ billion)	April*	1.3	– 0.5	– 1.0
MANUFACTURING				
Shipments ($ billion)	April*	37.3	– 0.6%	4.2%
New orders ($ billion)	April*	37.6	– 0.3%	0.2%
Unfilled orders ($ billion)	April*	44.0	0.7%	16.8%
Inventory/shipments ratio	April*	1.29	0.01	0.00
PRICES				
Consumer Price Index (1992=100)	May*	108.7	0.4%	1.1%
Industrial Product Price Index (1992=100)	April	119.0	0.7%	– 0.8%
Raw Materials Price Index (1992=100)	April	111.6	1.4%	– 12.4%
New Housing Price Index (1992=100)	March	99.9	0.1	1.0%

Note: *All series are seasonally adjusted with the exception of the price indexes.*
** new this week*
† percentage point

Infomat

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Division/Title of publication	Period	Catalogue number	Price: Issue/Subscription Canada (C$)	Outside Canada (US$)
AGRICULTURE				
Food consumption in Canada, Part 1	1997			
Internet		32-229-XIB	25	25
Paper		32-229-XPB	33	33
Production of poultry and eggs	1997	23-202-XIB	29	29
BUSINESS AND LABOUR MARKET ANALYSIS				
Permanent layoffs, quits and hirings in the Canadian economy	1978-1995			
Internet		71-539-XIB	26	26
Paper		71-539-XPB	35	35
CANADIAN CENTRE FOR JUSTICE STATISTICS				
Juristat: Legal aid in Canada, Vol. 18, no. 10	1996/97			
Internet		85-002-XIE	8/70	8/70
Paper		85-002-XPE	10/93	10/93
Juristat: Violence committed by strangers, Vol. 18, no. 9	1996			
Internet		85-002-XIE	8/70	8/70
Paper		85-002-XPE	10/93	10/93
Legal aid in Canada: Resource and caseload statistics	1996/97			
Microfiche		85F0015XMB	26	26
Paper		85F0015XPB	33	33
DEMOGRAPHY				
Report on the demographic situation in Canada: Effects of the social environment of elderly persons on their socio-economic condition	1997	91-209-XPE	31	31
DISTRIBUTIVE TRADES				
Wholesale trade	April 1998	63-008-XIB	14/140	14/140
HOUSEHOLD SURVEYS				
Income after tax, distributions by size in Canada	1996	13-210-XPB	31	31
INDUSTRY MEASURES AND ANALYSIS				
Gross domestic product by industry	March 1998	15-001-XPB	15/145	15/145
INTERNATIONAL TRADE				
Imports by commodity	April 1998			
Microfiche		65-007-XMB	37/361	37/361
Paper		65-007-XPB	78/773	78/773
LABOUR AND HOUSEHOLD SURVEYS ANALYSIS				
Perspective on labour and income	Summer 1998	75-001-XPE	18/58	18/58
MANUFACTURING, CONSTRUCTION AND ENERGY				
Mineral wool including fibrous glass insulation	May 1998	44-004-XPB	7/62	7/62
Monthly Survey of Manufacturing	April 1998	31-001-XPB	20/196	20/196
Particleboard, oriented strandboard and fibreboard	April 1998	36-003-XPB	7/62	7/62
Pulpwood and wood residue statistics	April 1998	25-001-XPB	8/73	8/73
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY REDESIGN PROJECT				
Telephone statistics	April 1998	56-002-XIB	8/70	8/70
SMALL BUSINESS AND SPECIAL SURVEYS				
Market research handbook	1998 edition	63-224-XPB	125	125
SPECIAL SURVEYS				
International Adult Literacy Survey: A New Brunswick Snapshot	1994	89-565-XPB	45	45
SYSTEM OF NATIONAL ACCOUNTS				
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Key release calendar: July 1998

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13	14 **What is happening to earnings in equality and youth wages in the 1990s?**	15 **Monthly survey of manufacturing**, May 1998 **New motor vehicle sales**, May 1998	16 **Consumer Price Index**, June 1998 **Travel between Canada and other countries**, May 1998	17 **Canadian international merchandise trade**, May 1998 **Composite Index**, June 1998
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27	28	29 **Industrial Product Price Index**, June 1998 **Raw Materials Price Index**, June 1998 **Employment, earnings and hours**, May 1998	30	31 **Real gross domestic product at factor cost by industry**, May 1998

Note: *Release dates for Canadian international merchandise trade, the Consumer Price Index and the Labour Force Survey are fixed; dates for other data series may change.*