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A Weekly Review

Friday, July 14, 2000

OVERVIEW

- **Employment little changed**

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- **Large retailers post another sales increase**

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- **Value of building permits dips**

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- **Strong revenue growth for couriers and local messengers**

  In 1998, couriers and local messengers showed strong growth in revenue but a significant decrease in operating margins. The revenue growth was fuelled by the strong economy and the rapid growth of e-commerce.

- **Farmers' net cash income turns around**

  After declining sharply in 1998, farmers' net cash income turned around in 1999. Both cash receipts and operating expenses reached record levels.

- **The environment: water quality still a major concern**

  Despite considerable efforts to curb pollution, water quality remains a major concern for Canadians. This is just one of many findings from the latest compilation of environment statistics.

Employment little changed

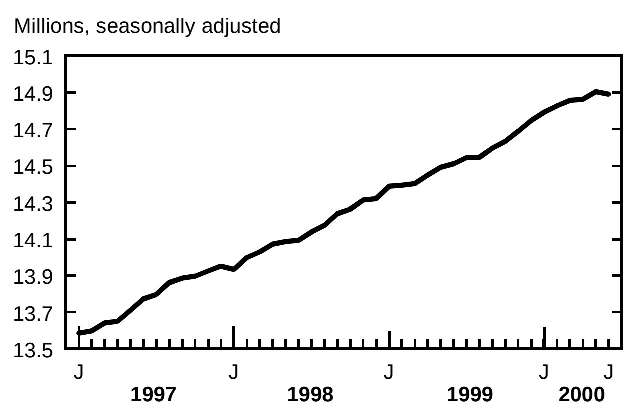
Employment was little changed in June and the unemployment rate remained at 6.6%. Over April, May and June, the average growth in employment was 11,000 per month, slower than the average monthly growth of 44,000 in the preceding six months.

Over the last 12 months, almost all of the 380,000 (+2.6%) increase in employment has been in full-time jobs. As a result, the proportion of workers employed part-time has fallen to 18.2%, compared with 18.7% in June 1999.

Full-time employment fell in June by 25,000, mostly among adult men aged 25 and over (-17,000). Over April, May and June, full-time employment growth slowed compared with the growth in late 1999 and early 2000. The drop in employment among adult men was in part attributable to declines in industries where a large proportion of workers are men, most notably manufacturing, construction, transportation and warehousing. Still, employment among adult men was 152,000 or 2.3% higher in June than in June 1999.

For adult women, employment continued to grow, increasing by 21,000. That pushed year-over-year growth to 167,000, or 3.0%. Adult women's unemployment rate was 5.4%, slightly lower than the rate for adult men (5.8%).

Employment



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... Employment little changed

Employment among youths (aged 15 to 24) dropped by 22,000 in June. Despite this drop, youth employment was 61,000 higher than in June 1999, an increase of 2.8%. The percentage of young people with a job was 55.7%, 1.1 percentage points higher than in June 1999. A large decline in the youth participation rate (-1.2 percentage points to 63.1%) pulled their unemployment rate down 0.7 percentage points in June to 11.8%.

The proportion of students with a summer job in June was 47.9%, compared with 47.4% in June 1999. Summer employment has improved for teenagers but worsened for older students. The employment rate among teenage students increased from 39.9% in June 1999 to 41.8% in June 2000, whereas it fell from 67.7% to 64.1% for students in their twenties.

Manufacturing employment declined in June by 18,000. The strong upward trend that began in mid-1998 has slowed in recent months. In the first six months of 2000, manufacturing employment rose by 8,000, compared with a gain of 53,000 in the last half of 1999. Activity in manufacturing and in the transportation and warehousing sector are related. Over 1999, as manufacturing employment picked up, so too did transportation and warehousing employment, mostly in trucking. While employment growth in transportation and warehousing was strong in 1999, so far in 2000 there has been little change. In June, employment in this industry fell by 11,000.

Employment also dropped in construction in June (-10,000), the fourth consecutive monthly decrease. Even with the recent decline, construction employment is up 36,000, or 4.7% compared with June 1999.

Agricultural employment fell by 10,000 in June. Throughout 1999, the number of people working in agriculture steadily declined; this trend has continued into 2000. Compared with June 1999, employment in agriculture is down 34,000, or 8.3%.

Offsetting some of the losses in June were gains in some service-producing industries. The largest increase was in the management of companies and administrative support services, where employment increased by 18,000. Over the last year, employment in this industry has increased by 39,000, or 7.6%. Employment increased by 15,000 in education services in June, erasing the loss in May.

Looking at the provinces, employment was little changed in all provinces except Saskatchewan (-4,000) and Prince Edward Island (-1,800). Declines in agriculture and manufacturing led the overall drop in Saskatchewan. Despite June's decline in Prince Edward Island, employment was up 4.1% compared with June 1999. Although employment changed little in Manitoba, the unemployment rate edged down to 4.4%—the lowest rate there since August 1976.

Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) has begun using new regions for the Employment Insurance program. The unemployment rates in the newly defined regions are outlined in Table 18 of ***Labour force information, for the week ending June 17, 2000*** *(print: 71-001-PPB, $11/$103; online at www.statcan.ca: 71-001-PIB, $8/$78), which is now available. For more information on these changes, consult the HRDC Web site at www.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/common/news/insur/00-46.shtml. For further analytical information from the Labour Force Survey, contact Geoff Bowlby (613-951-3325) or Vincent Ferrao (613-951-4750), Labour Statistics Division. See also “Current trends” on page 8.*

Related information on employment insurance

In April (the latest data), the estimated number of Canadians who received the regular type of employment insurance (EI) benefit decreased from March by 1.3% to 465,470 persons. The sharpest declines in beneficiary numbers occurred in Nova Scotia (-4.1%) and the Northwest Territories and Nunavut (-3.6%). Compared with April 1999, the number of beneficiaries across Canada receiving the regular benefit dropped 9.5%. From March to April, the amount paid out as regular benefits fell 5.1% to $583.9 million, while the number of claims for EI filed by the jobless dropped 5.0% to 203,440 claims. For more information, contact Robert Keay (613-951-4090, labour@statcan.ca), Labour Statistics Division.

Labour Force Survey, June 2000
Seasonally adjusted[1]

	Labour force		Employment		Unemployment	
	'000	% change, previous month	'000	% change, previous month	'000	rate (%)
Canada	**15,942.0**	**-0.1**	**14,890.8**	**-0.1**	**1,051.2**	**6.6**
Newfoundland	243.1	-1.6	205.6	-0.8	37.5	15.4
Prince Edward Island	72.2	-1.5	63.8	-2.7	8.3	11.5
Nova Scotia	458.5	0.2	419.8	-0.1	38.7	8.4
New Brunswick	368.8	-0.1	331.2	-0.1	37.6	10.2
Quebec	3,762.5	-0.3	3,446.1	-0.2	316.4	8.4
Ontario	6,180.9	0.1	5,846.7	0.1	334.2	5.4
Manitoba	581.0	-0.1	555.3	0.1	25.8	4.4
Saskatchewan	514.1	-0.3	485.5	-0.9	28.6	5.6
Alberta	1,668.6	-0.1	1,585.3	-0.4	83.3	5.0
British Columbia	2,092.4	-0.1	1,951.5	-0.1	140.9	6.7

[1] *Data are for both sexes aged 15 and over.*

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Large retailers post another sales increase

> *Note to readers*
>
> *The composition of the surveyed group of large retailers changed in 1999. This especially affects the comparisons of sales in the food sector, where several supermarket chains restructured. All comparisons in this article are year-over-year and all data are unadjusted for seasonal factors.*

Large retailers' sales in April totalled $5.9 billion, an increase from April 1999 of 3.9%. April was the first month since January 1998 that health and personal care products posted single-digit sales growth (+7.0%). The slowdown was mostly due to slower sales of cosmetics and fragrances (-8.2%). Healthy sales increases continued for prescription (+19.1%) and over-the-counter (+10.4%) drugs.

Among the major categories, home furnishings and electronics turned in the best sales growth for the large retailers in April. Strong consumer demand continued for big-ticket items. Their sales of home electronics continued to push ahead, rising 16.6%. Furniture sales were up 14.8%, appliance sales advanced 12.0%, and home furnishings (e.g., artwork, linens and floor coverings) rose 6.9%.

Large retailers' sales
Not seasonally adjusted

	April 1999	April 2000	April 1999 to April 2000
	$ millions		% change
All commodities	**5,670**	**5,889**	**3.9**
Food and beverages	2,077	2,159	3.9
Clothing, footwear and accessories	1,129	1,093	-3.2
Home furnishings and electronics	669	757	13.1
Health and personal care products	424	453	7.0
Housewares	259	262	1.1
Sporting and leisure goods	249	269	8.1
Hardware, lawn and garden products	285	284	-0.4
All other goods and services	578	612	5.8

The second best sales performance within the major categories was sporting and leisure goods. Driving the category's growth were higher sales of leisure goods, especially pre-recorded audio and video tapes and discs (+24.0%) and toys and games (+17.5%). However, sales of sporting goods were down except for "other" sporting goods, which include in-line skates, sailboards and tennis equipment (+15.3%) and ski equipment and accessories (+12.1%).

In the "other goods and services" category, sales of automotive fuels, oils and additives surged 27.7%. That followed an increase of 43.6% in March. Energy prices fell during April, but remained well above where they were in April 1999.

April's sales increase for food and beverage products was affected by the timing of the Easter holiday, as sales of candy and snacks climbed 30.2%. Easter-related sales occurred mostly in April this year, whereas a large portion occurred in March last year.

Sales of hardware, lawn and garden products slipped in April because of colder temperatures in the month, which may have dampened store traffic and consumer interest. Clothing, footwear and accessories sales—the second largest commodity group in the survey—fell because sales were down for women's clothing, men's clothing, accessories, footwear, jewellery and watches.

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.

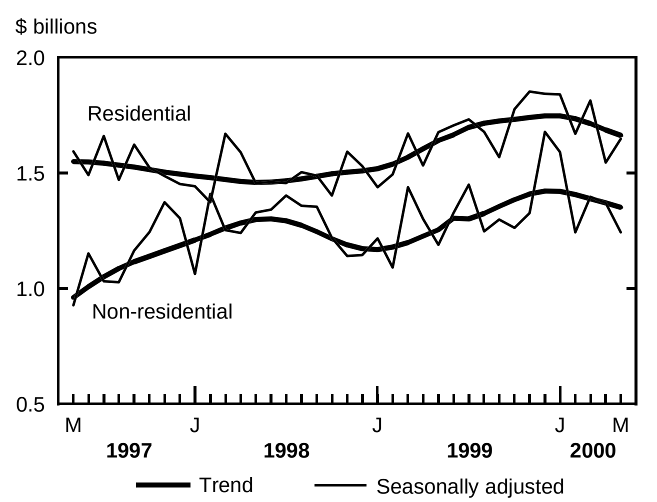
Value of building permits dips

In May, the value of building permits issued by municipalities dipped 0.8% to $2.9 billion. This slight decrease was attributable solely to the non-residential sector, where the value of permits dropped 9.3% to $1.2 billion due to a significant decline in commercial projects. Residential building permits gained 6.7%, rising to $1.6 billion on higher intentions for both multi- and single-family dwellings.

Year-to-date construction intentions totalled $15.4 billion between January and May, up over the same period of 1999 by 9.3%. That was the best showing for the first five months of any year since 1990. The residential and the non-residential sectors both contributed to this advance, climbing 9.0% (to $8.5 billion) and 9.7% (to $6.8 billion) respectively.

In May, the non-residential sector was pulled down by commercial projects (-17.9% to $616 million). The most significant reductions occurred in the trade and services category and hotels and restaurants. Industrial building permits rose 2.0% to $309 million on an increase in permits for factories and plants.

Value of building permits



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... Value of building permits dips

Institutional intentions were virtually unchanged from April (+0.5% to $318 million), led by gains in the medical and hospital category.

Among the provinces, the largest monthly drops (in dollar terms) for non-residential permit values were in Nova Scotia and Quebec. Nova Scotia posted a significant increase in April. In Quebec, all three components declined in May. The largest increase occurred in British Columbia, mainly due to a gain in the institutional component. On a year-to-date basis, Alberta has shown the largest gain, followed by British Columbia. Newfoundland has recorded the largest decline.

The residential sector recovered in May on gains in both dwelling types. The value of building permits for multi-family dwellings surged 20.0% to $441 million. And, after three consecutive monthly declines, intentions to build single-family dwellings rose 2.5% to $1.2 billion. Several factors point to a promising housing market for the next few months. It is likely that the lowest unemployment rate since 1976 combined with increased economic activity, including housing resales, will more than compensate for the effect of higher mortgage rates and higher prices for new housing.

Among the provinces, most of May's overall gain in the value of residential building permits occurred in Ontario and British Columbia. In those two provinces, the advance resulted from gains in both single- and multi-family dwellings. Declines occurred in Quebec and Alberta. It was the fifth consecutive monthly decline in residential intentions in Quebec.

On a year-to-date basis, the overall gain for residential permit values resulted from a significant (+14.1%) increase in single-family dwelling intentions. In contrast, multi-family dwelling intentions were down 4.1%. The largest year-to-date gains (in dollar terms) have been posted in Ontario, Alberta and Quebec. Both of the residential components have lifted the intentions in Alberta, whereas the single-family dwelling component has been the sole contributor to the year-to-date increase in Ontario and Quebec. Declines in both single- and multi-family permits have led to lower year-to-date residential construction intentions in British Columbia and New Brunswick.

The May 2000 issue of ***Building permits*** *(online at www.statcan.ca: 64-001-XIB, $19/$186) presents the full report. For general information, contact Joanne Bureau (613-951-9689; burejoa@statcan.ca). For further analytical information, contact Étienne Saint-Pierre (613-951-2025; saineti@statcan.ca), Investment and Capital Stock Division.*

Strong revenue growth for couriers and local messengers

In 1998, couriers and local messengers showed strong growth in revenue but a significant decrease in operating margins. The revenue growth was fuelled by the strong Canadian economy and the rapid growth of e-commerce.

The estimated 11,319 firms that provided courier and local messenger services in 1998 generated operating revenue of $4.3 billion. That was a marked increase of 9.6% over their revised 1997 revenue of $3.9 billion. Couriers showed slightly stronger growth (+9.8%) than local messengers did (+8.6%).

However, it was the small-sized couriers and local messengers (annual revenue of less than $1 million) and the medium-sized enterprises (annual revenue between $1 million and $25 million) who showed the best revenue growth, at 17.1% and 18.5% respectively. By comparison, the operating revenue of large-sized couriers and local messengers rose 7.3%.

The industry's operating expenses increased in 1998, however, by 12.0% to $3.9 billion. That compares with $3.5 billion in 1997. Almost all the major expense categories showed significant increases. The exceptions were property and business taxes. Notably, salaries, wages and benefits increased by $118 million (+8.7%) to $1.5 billion. As well, "other" purchased services—mainly, payments to owner-operators and purchased transportation services—climbed by $208 million or 17.9% to $1.4 billion.

Since the couriers' and local messengers' operating expenses increased faster than their operating revenue, their operating margin fell 13.9% (-$50 million) to $311 million. The operating margin decreased more for couriers (-15.0%) than for local messengers (-11.7%). The decline in operating margin was particularly significant for medium-sized couriers and local messengers (-37.5%).

A feature article analyzing results of the 1998 Survey of Couriers and Local Messengers Industry appears in the Vol. 16, no. 2 issue of ***Surface and marine service bulletin*** *(online at www.statcan.ca: 50-002-XIB, $10/$62), which is now available. To order data, contact Robert Larocque (613-951-2486; laroque@statcan.ca). For further analytical information, contact Robert Masse (613-951-0365; massrob@statcan.ca), Transportation Division.*

Farmers' net cash income turns around

After declining sharply in 1998, farmers' net cash income turned around in 1999. Farmers recorded net cash income last year of $6.4 billion, up 1.9% from 1998. Both cash receipts and operating expenses reached record levels.

Farmers' net cash income declined in Alberta (-9.4%), Saskatchewan (-8.7%) and Manitoba (-1.0%). Rising livestock expenses lowered Alberta's net cash income. Lower prices for grains and oilseeds were responsible for the decline in Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Increases in net cash income ranged from 0.4% in Ontario to 48.3% in New Brunswick.

Farm cash receipts totalled $30.5 billion, above the $28.4 billion average of the previous five years. Growth in livestock receipts and government program payments more than offset falling crop receipts, particularly from grains and oilseeds. Livestock receipts reached a record high of $15.2 billion. Crop receipts declined 4.5% to $13.3 billion, 1.0% below the five-year average.

Fuelled by higher production, the livestock sector has set records every year since 1992, except 1998. Cattle and calf receipts hit a record $6.2 billion (+8.8%). Prices reached their highest level since 1994, as the demand for beef continued to grow in North America and abroad. Hog receipts grew also grew 8.8%, reaching $2.4 billion on the strength of record quantities sold. A record 18.9 million hogs were slaughtered in 1999. Despite low prices during 1998, the hog industry has continued to grow, as has domestic processing capacity.

Crop receipts were dragged lower in the main by prices for grains and oilseeds. Most grains and oilseeds were at their lowest prices since 1994 due to abundant world supplies. Receipts were down significantly last year for canola, soybeans and durum wheat. Corn receipts, however, reached $740 million—up 15.1% from 1998. Record production for two consecutive years boosted deliveries. Potato receipts, which have grown steadily over recent years, hit a record $720 million as both prices and deliveries strengthened.

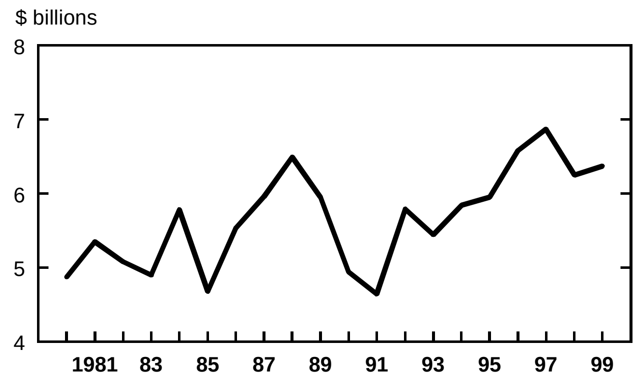
Program payments reached a five-year high of $2.0 billion in 1999 in the wake of low commodity prices and poor growing conditions in some regions. Payments were up 39.5% from 1998 and 41.9% above the previous five-year average, but still below the peak of $3.8 billion reached in 1992.

Farmers' operating expenses in 1999 increased a modest 2.4%. Nevertheless, some items showed significant change. Interest costs climbed 7.2%, due largely to a debt load that has been increasing since 1992. The largest increase was livestock purchases, which surged 32.7% to $1.3 billion. Strong demand for beef, low feed prices and access to large cost-efficient slaughter plants have encouraged the growth of beef production in Western Canada. Livestock purchases in Alberta have more than doubled since 1996. During the same period, cash receipts from slaughter cattle rose by almost $1 billion.

Note to readers

Net cash income measures farm business cash flow (farm cash receipts minus operating expenses) generated from the production of agricultural goods. Net cash income represents the amount of money available for debt repayment, investment or withdrawal by the owner.

Net cash income of farmers



The increase in total operating expenses was tempered by declines in crop expenses, mainly crop and hail insurance (-10.9%), and fertiliser and lime (-4.7%). Also, lower grain prices reduced commercial feed costs. Total rebates to farm operating expenses increased—for the first time since 1993—by $5.5 million. However, they remained less than one-third the level of the early 1990s.

Briefly, total net farm income increased last year by 13.5% to $3.0 billion. This marked the second consecutive increase, following a substantial decline in 1997. (Total net farm income measures agriculture economic production by adjusting net cash income for value of inventory change, depreciation and income-in-kind.)

The 1999 increase resulted from a buildup of farmer-owned grain and oilseed inventories at the end of the year. A record harvest of canola and wheat in 1999 boosted year-end inventories to levels well above their previous five-year averages. Farmers in all provinces except Ontario and Manitoba recorded an increase in total net income.

Agriculture economic statistics supplement *(21-603-UPE, $26/$52) and the January-March 2000 issue of* ***Farm cash receipts*** *(21-001-XIB, $15/$48) present the details. For more information on net farm income, contact Gail-Ann Breese (204-983-3445; gail-ann.breese@statcan.ca) or Bernie Rosien (613-951-2441; bernie.rosien@statcan.ca). For more information on farm cash receipts, contact Kimberley Boyuk (613-951-2510, kimberley.boyuk@statcan.ca), Agriculture Division.*

The environment: water quality still a major concern

Despite considerable efforts to curb pollution, water quality remains a major concern for Canadians, according to *Human activity and the environment 2000*, the latest compilation of environment statistics. The population served by wastewater treatment increased between 1983 and 1996. Even so, in 1996, an estimated 6% of the Canadians served with sewers, 1.3 million people, lived in municipalities where wastewater received no form of treatment—it was released straight into a receiving water body. This proportion was down from 28% in 1983.

During the same period, the proportion receiving tertiary treatment, the highest level of wastewater treatment, increased from 28% to 41%. Thus, not only did more people receive wastewater treatment in 1996 than in 1983, the quality of the treatment they received was substantially better.

However, municipalities still discharge untreated effluent directly into the environment and industries dispose of a variety of chemicals and organic wastes directly or indirectly into water bodies. As well, farm activities lead to run-off of pesticides, fertilisers and manure into groundwater and surface water. In 1995, animal manure on farms contained about 623 000 metric tonnes of nitrogen and 308 000 metric tonnes of phosphate. In the same year, farmers applied nearly 2.3 million metric tonnes of potash, phosphate and nitrogen from commercial fertilisers. Notably, between 1970 and 1995, the nitrogen content of commercial fertiliser applied on farmland jumped 451%.

In 1996, government spending on pollution abatement and control totalled just over $5.4 billion, or 0.7% of GDP. During the 1990s, most of the growth in this spending was due to sewage collection and disposal projects.

Spending on pollution abatement and control is relatively small as a proportion of total government expenditures. Since the late 1980s, it has accounted for between 2.3% and 2.9%. However, such spending has generally been increasing at a greater pace than total government spending. For example, from 1970 to 1996, total government expenditures increased an average of nearly 9% a year, while government spending on pollution abatement and control rose an average of nearly 12% a year. Meanwhile, the business sector invested $4.9 billion in 1996 on environmental protection.

Note to readers

This article is drawn from Human activity and the environment 2000, Statistics Canada’s latest compilation of environment statistics. The publication provides a comprehensive assessment of how Canadians are interacting with the environment. It also includes extensive data on a variety of topics such as natural resources, ecosystems, science and technology, and environmental practices.

The new report also looks at Canadians’ use of energy resources. Between 1958 and 1997, total annual consumption of energy increased more than 3.5 times. On a per-capita basis, energy consumption doubled over the past four decades. In 1958, each Canadian consumed slightly less than 167 gigajoules of energy; by 1997, that had doubled to almost 334 gigajoules. (A 30-litre gasoline fill-up contains about one gigajoule of energy. There are 1 000 megajoules in a gigajoule.)

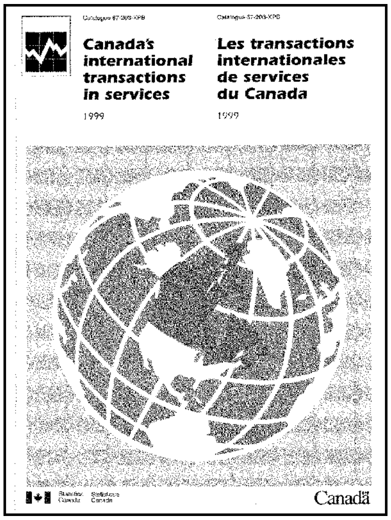
However, energy consumption for every dollar of inflation-adjusted gross domestic product (GDP)—a measure of the energy intensity of the economy—declined during this 40-year period. In 1961, it took about 15.0 megajoules of energy to produce a dollar of economic output. This indicator began to drop following the 1974 oil crisis. A second oil price hike in 1979 led to further reductions in energy consumption. Oil prices dropped dramatically in 1986, after which energy consumption per dollar of real GDP stabilised at around 12.5 megajoules.

In 1958, crude oil accounted for 52% of all energy consumed in Canada and natural gas only 13%. By 1997, the share of crude oil had dropped to 39%, while the share of natural gas had almost tripled to 35%.

During the last 40 years, Canada has moved from consuming more energy than it produced to being a significant net producer of energy. Moreover, the country became a net energy exporter in 1967. Since then, primary energy production has grown to outstrip consumption by more than 50%. Natural gas replaced crude oil as the most important primary energy source in terms of production in the late 1980s. By 1997, it represented more than 45% of total primary energy production.

Human activity and the environment 2000 *(11-509-XPE, $75, including CD-ROM) is now available. For further information, contact Murray Cameron (613-951-3740; camemur@statcan.ca) or Martin Lemire (613-951-5739; lemimar@statcan.ca), Environment Accounts and Statistics Division.*

New from Statistics Canada



Canada’s international transactions in services
1999

This publication covers the latest annual details of Canada’s trade in services, including transactions in travel, transportation, and commercial and government services. The data have been expanded to break out total estimates for telecommunications, environmental and commercial education services, and to show eight more trading partners. This now brings the number of individual countries covered in this way to 55.

Canada’s international transactions in services, 1999 *(print: 67-203-XPB, $40; online at www.statcan.ca: 67-203-XIB, $30) is now available. For more information, contact Hugh Henderson (613-951-9049; hendhug@statcan.ca) or Denis Caron (613-951-1861; caroden@statcan.ca), Balance of Payments Division.*

Average fair market value/purchase price for new homes
1993-98

This new report contains data from the GST/HST New Housing Rebate File (1993-98). It includes tables of average fair market values and average rebates. Annual breakdowns are available by province, census metropolitan area or census agglomeration and the component census subdivisions of each.

The 1993-98 issue of ***Average fair market value/purchase price for new homes in Canada: New data from GST administrative records*** *(online at www.statcan.ca: 64-507-XIE, $26) is now available. For more information, contact David Brown (613-951-1583; david.brown@statcan.ca), Tax Data Division.*

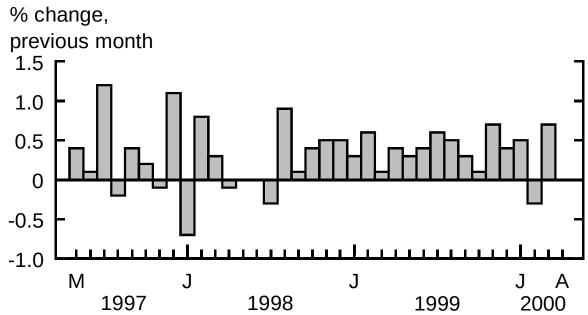
Extraction system of agricultural statistics on CD-ROM
2000

The *Extraction system of agricultural statistics on CD-ROM* offers an extensive collection of the most requested physical and financial data on farming. This disc enables extraction of data by census agricultural region, farm type and revenue class. The 2000 version contains a full year of new data, as well as an online user guide and reference manual. The CD-ROM format makes it easy to reorganize your report, perform calculations, create graphs, view selected tables on-screen, print them or export them for use in other applications. Whether your interest is dairy production in Quebec or off-farm income in Saskatchewan, this product provides desktop access to all the data.

Extraction system of agricultural statistics on CD-ROM *(21F0001XCB, $625) is now available. An update can be purchased for $295. A 50% educational discount is also available. To order, contact your nearest Statistics Canada Regional Reference Centre or call 1 800 267-6677. For more information, contact Linda Brazeau (613-951-5027; linda.brazeau@statcan.ca), Agriculture Division.*

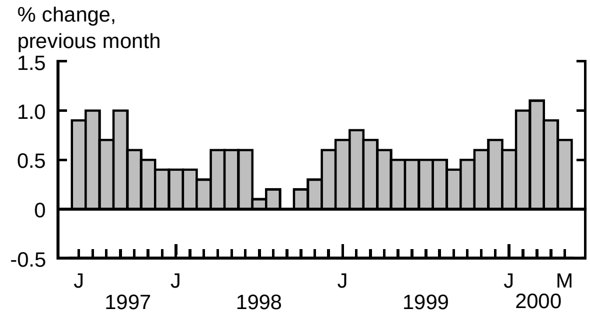
Current trends

Gross domestic product



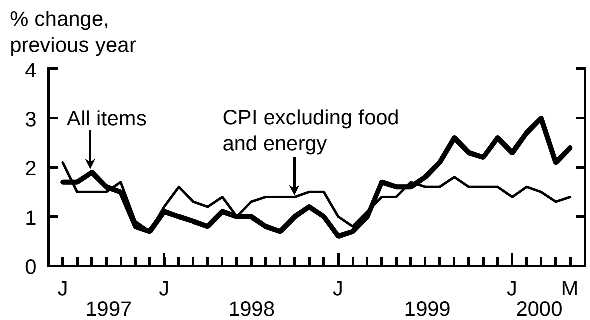
After a strong performance in March, gross domestic product was little changed in April.

Composite Index



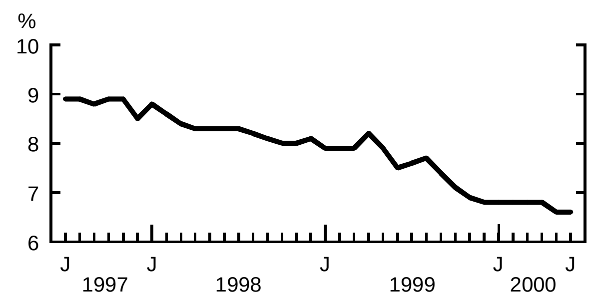
The growth of the leading indicator continued to moderate to 0.7% in May due to gyrations in the stock market.

Consumer Price Index



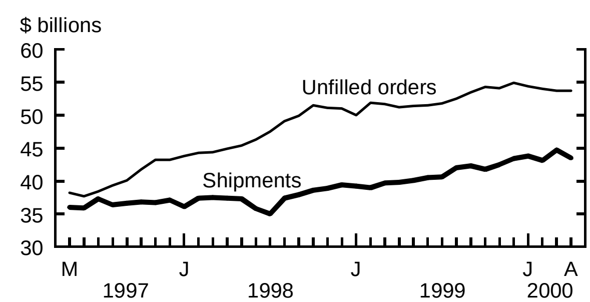
Consumer prices for goods and services were 2.4% higher in May 2000 than they were a year earlier. Excluding food and energy, prices rose 1.4%.

Unemployment rate



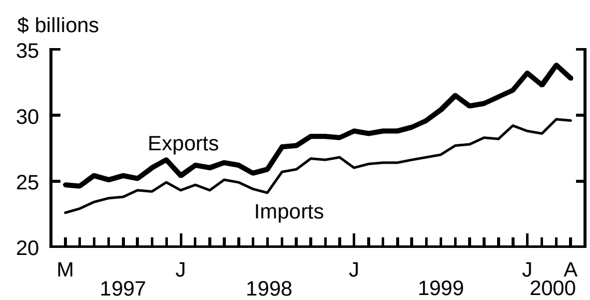
In June, the unemployment rate remained at 6.6%, the lowest rate since March 1976.

Manufacturing



Manufacturers' shipments fell 2.8% in April to $43.5 billion. The backlog of unfilled orders decreased a slight 0.1% to $53.7 billion.

Merchandise trade



In April, the value of merchandise exports dropped 3.0% from March to $32.8 billion. Imports were off 0.3% to $29.6 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 ($ billion, 1992)	April	774.6	0.0%	4.3%
Composite Index (1992=100)	May	162.7	0.7%	8.4%
Operating profits of enterprises ($ billion)	Q1 2000	53.3	12.3%	37.5%
Capacity utilization (%)	Q1 2000	87.6	1.1†	4.3†
DOMESTIC DEMAND				
Retail trade ($ billion)	April	22.6	-1.2%	5.7%
Department store sales ($ billions)	May	1.49	-0.2%	-0.3%
New motor vehicle sales (thousand of units)	April	133.2	-1.1%	4.2%
Wholesale trade ($ billion)	April	31.6	-0.2%	8.5%
LABOUR				
Employment (millions)	June*	14.89	-0.1%	2.6%
Unemployment rate (%)	June*	6.6	0.0†	-0.9†
Participation rate (%)	June*	65.7	-0.1†	0.2†
Average weekly earnings ($)	April	622.31	-0.1%	2.5%
Help-wanted Index (1996=100)	June	169	0.0%	6.3%
INTERNATIONAL TRADE				
Merchandise exports ($ billion)	April	32.8	-3.0%	14.0%
Merchandise imports ($ billion)	April	29.6	-0.3%	12.6%
Merchandise trade balance (all figures in $ billion)	April	3.2	-0.9	0.7
MANUFACTURING				
Shipments ($ billion)	April	43.5	-2.8%	9.3%
New orders ($ billion)	April	43.4	-2.3%	10.7%
Unfilled orders ($ billion)	April	53.7	-0.1%	4.9%
Inventory/shipments ratio	April	1.33	0.05	0.02
PRICES				
Consumer Price Index (1992=100)	May	113.0	0.5%	2.4%
Industrial Product Price Index (1992=100)	May	127.2	0.3%	5.6%
Raw Materials Price Index (1992=100)	May	141.9	6.1%	24.9%
New Housing Price Index (1992=100)	May*	103.0	0.3%	2.4%

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

Infomat
A weekly review

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Division/Title of publication	Period	Catalogue number	Price ($) (issue/subscription)
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Internet		22-007-XIB	11/112
Paper		22-007-XPB	15/149
Production of eggs	May 2000	23-003-XPB	110
DEMOGRAPHY			
Quarterly demographic statistics	Q1 2000		
Internet		91-002-XIB	8/25
Paper		91-002-XPB	10/33
INDUSTRY MEASURES AND ANALYSIS			
Gross domestic product by industry	April 2000	15-001-XIE	11/110
INTERNATIONAL TRADE			
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Paper		65-004-XPB	78/773
INVESTMENT AND CAPITAL STOCK			
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LABOUR STATISTICS			
Labour force information, week ending June 17	June 2000		
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Paper		71-001-PPB	11/103
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Pipeline transportation of crude oil and refined petroleum products	April 2000	55-001-XIB	9/86
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Supply and disposition of crude oil and natural gas	March 2000	26-006-XPB	19/186
PRICES			
Consumer price index	June 2000	62-001-XPB	11/103
TRANSPORTATION			
Surface and marine transport service bulletin, vol. 16, no. 2		50-002-XIB	10/62

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