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Infomat

A Weekly Review

Friday, November 12, 1999

OVERVIEW

- **Full-time employment continues rapid growth**

  In October, 80,000 jobs were created in the country as full-time employment continued to grow at a rapid pace. The strong gain built upon a marked increase in September. The unemployment rate declined to 7.2%, the lowest rate since March 1990.

- **Manufacturers remain optimistic**

  One in three manufacturers intend to boost production this quarter, and they are more satisfied with unfilled order levels. However, manufacturers anticipate little change in employment this quarter.

- **Second straight decline in building permits**

  In September, the value of building permits issued by municipalities declined for a second consecutive month, falling 1.9%. Nevertheless, the value of permits climbed 2.4% in the third quarter, due mostly to a gain in the non-residential sector.

- **Value of financial services climbs**

  In 1997, the value of the financial services produced in Canada by deposit-accepting intermediaries climbed 15.8%. This growth was primarily due to sustained demand for new electronic financial services, investment banking and fiduciary services.

- **Performance of economy not expected to change much in coming months**

  The performance of the economy is expected to show little change through December. For instance, the annual inflation rate is expected to come in at 2.5% for October, while the monthly growth of gross domestic product is forecast to be 0.3% in both September and October.

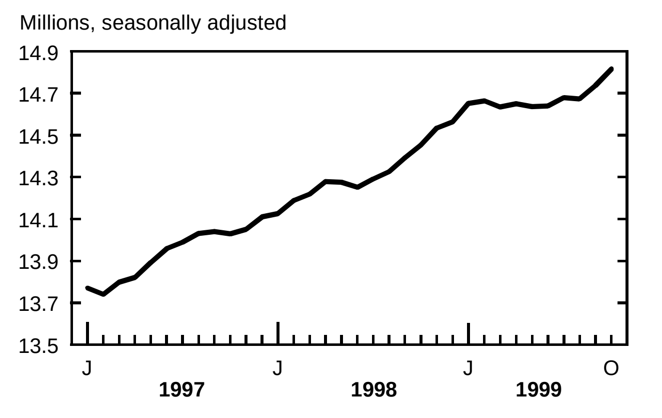
Full-time employment continues rapid growth

In October, 80,000 jobs were created in the country, as full-time employment continued to grow at a rapid pace. This brought the job growth so far this year to 253,000 (+1.7%). The strong gain in October built upon a marked increase in September of 64,000. The number of unemployed fell in October by 47,000 and the unemployment rate declined 0.3 percentage points to 7.2%—the lowest rate since March 1990.

Adults aged 25 and over made most of the job gains in October (+64,000), with the increase for this group concentrated among women (+40,000). Virtually all of the jobs gained by adult women were full time. Despite this growth, their unemployment rate edged down only 0.1 percentage points to 5.8% because of an increase in labour force participation. Among adult men, employment rose by 23,000 as full-time job gains were partly offset by declines in part-time employment. Their unemployment rate declined 0.3 percentage points to 6.0%. As for youths, employment edged up slightly in October (+16,000), with most of the increase in part-time jobs, as their unemployment rate declined to 14.0% (-0.5 percentage points).

Nearly all the employment gains in October occurred in the goods-producing sector (+74,000). Job growth was particularly

Employment



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... Full-time employment continues rapid growth

strong in manufacturing (+55,000). Since October 1998, manufacturing employment has swelled by 205,000 (+9.6%), with the most notable gains occurring at manufacturers of computer and electronic products and among makers of motor vehicles and parts. In construction, employment increased by 19,000, bringing the job gains over the last two months to 36,000. In natural resources (forestry, fishing, mining, oil and gas), 9,000 jobs were created in October, bringing the number since June to 20,000. This recent progress recoups some of the jobs lost since early 1998.

For a second consecutive month, job growth was concentrated in Ontario and Quebec. In Ontario, employment rose by 44,000, bringing the gain over the last two months to 72,000. This recent strength follows six months of little change in employment. The robust employment growth in October in Ontario pushed the unemployment rate there down 0.4 percentage points to 6.0%—the lowest rate since June 1990.

In Quebec, employment increased by 33,000, bringing the job growth over the last five months to 92,000. This recent strength followed weakness in the first half of the year. Despite the new jobs in Quebec in October, the unemployment rate in the province edged up 0.1 percentage points to 9.1% because a large number of people entered the labour force looking for work.

In October, employment also grew in Prince Edward Island (+2,000) and its unemployment rate fell to 13.5% (-1.1 percentage points). Employment levels were little changed in the other provinces in October.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 3450-3471, 3483-3502 and table 00799999.

The full report, ***Labour force information for the week ending October 16, 1999*** *(71-001-PPB, $11/$103), is now available. For further information, contact Geoff Bowlby (613-951-3325) or Vincent Ferrao (613-951-4750), Labour Statistics Division.* *See also “Current trends” on page 7.*

Labour Force Survey, October 1999
Seasonally adjusted[1]

	Labour force		Employment		Unemployment	
	’000	% change, previous month	‘000	% change, previous month	’000	rate (%)
Canada	**15,964.4**	**0.2**	**14,816.1**	**0.5**	**1,148.3**	**7.2**
Newfoundland	250.8	0.6	209.4	0.9	41.4	16.5
Prince Edward Island	71.9	1.8	62.2	3.2	9.7	13.5
Nova Scotia	459.9	-0.2	414.2	-0.5	45.7	9.9
New Brunswick	374.1	-0.2	337.1	0.0	36.9	9.9
Quebec	3,795.4	1.0	3,451.4	1.0	344.1	9.1
Ontario	6,211.2	0.3	5,841.7	0.8	369.6	6.0
Manitoba	590.6	-0.1	558.7	0.4	31.9	5.4
Saskatchewan	514.1	0.3	483.2	-0.2	30.9	6.0
Alberta	1,647.2	-0.6	1,561.5	0.2	85.8	5.2
British Columbia	2,049.2	-0.7	1,896.8	-0.1	152.4	7.4

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

Manufacturers remain optimistic

According to October’s Business Conditions Survey, manufacturers remain optimistic about production prospects this quarter. Manufacturers are also showing greater satisfaction with their levels of unfilled orders, and they are not overly concerned with the levels of finished-product inventory they have on hand.

As in the past two surveys, one in three manufacturers (34%) intends to boost production in the coming quarter. The proportion stating they will decrease production rose from 12% in July to 21%. This left the balance of opinion at +13 (that is 34% minus 21%), down 11 points. Manufacturers of transportation equipment, primary metals and wood contributed to the decrease in the balance of opinion.

In October, 68% of manufacturers stated that their workforce would be little changed in the coming three months. The balance of opinion for employment prospects stood at +4, the same as in the July survey. The October Labour Force Survey indicated that employment in manufacturing had increased by 205,000 (+9.6%) since October 1998.

Some 75% of manufacturers said in October that their level of unfilled orders is about normal, little changed from the July survey. The balance of opinion for unfilled orders stood at +9, a

Note to readers

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

(continued on page 3)

... Manufacturers remain optimistic

satisfaction level last observed in January 1995. The Monthly Survey of Manufacturers revealed that manufacturers had $52.7 billion in unfilled orders on their books in August, 1.6% higher than in July.

As for new orders received, the manufacturers' balance of opinion remained at +20 in October, with 7 out of 10 manufacturers saying that new orders will remain steady at current levels as this quarter progresses. Increased satisfaction with new order levels was reported in the electrical and electronic products industry and in the paper and allied products industry. Lower satisfaction was heard in the transportation equipment, wood and petroleum products industries.

Among the Business Conditions Survey's other findings, the level of finished-product inventories is still not a major concern. Only 11% of manufacturers believe their inventories are too high, while 5% report inventories are too low. Moreover, the balance of opinion stood at -6. That is six points more favourable than in the July survey. A shortage of unskilled labour is a preoccupation for 2% of manufacturers, while skilled labour shortages continue to be a concern for 7%. Some 85% of manufacturers report no production difficulties. That is better than July's 81%.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 2843-2845.

For further information, contact Claude Robillard (613-951-3507, robilcg@statcan.ca), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division.

Manufacturers' expectations and business conditions
Seasonally adjusted

	October 1998	January 1999	April 1999	July 1999	October 1999
	% of manufacturers who said				
Volume of production in next three months will be:					
About the same as in previous three month	44	73	53	52	45
Higher	41	17	32	36	34
Lower	15	10	15	12	21
Employment in next three months will:					
Change little from previous three months	73	73	69	70	68
Increase	14	14	16	17	18
Decrease	13	13	15	13	14
Backlog of unfilled orders is:					
About normal	74	81	78	74	75
Higher than normal	10	7	9	13	17
Lower than normal	16	12	13	13	8
Orders received are:					
About the same	69	75	73	60	70
Rising	18	12	17	30	25
Declining	13	13	10	10	5
Finished-product inventory is:					
About right	80	79	79	82	84
Too low	2	4	3	3	5
Too high	18	17	18	15	11

Second straight decline in building permits

In September, the value of building permits issued by municipalities declined for a second consecutive month, falling 1.9% to $2.9 billion. Gains in non-residential construction intentions failed to offset losses in the residential sector.

In the third quarter, municipalities issued $9.0 billion worth of permits—the highest level since the first quarter of 1990. This 2.4% increase from the second quarter was also the third consecutive quarterly gain. The largest contributor to this gain was the non-residential sector, rising 4.5% from the second quarter to $4.0 billion, whereas the housing sector's permits only increased in value by 0.8% to $5.0 billion.

So far in 1999, construction intentions have recorded their strongest performance of the decade. Municipalities have issued $26.2 billion in building permits, 4.4% above the level for the first nine months of 1998. The housing sector has accounted for the greatest share (+8.2%), whereas the value of non-residential permits has increased slightly (+0.1%).

As for the residential sector in September, the value of permits declined for a second month in a row, falling 7.2% to $1.6 billion. This was mostly due to lower intentions to build single-family dwellings, which decreased 6.9% to $1.2 billion. Intentions to construct multi-family dwellings dropped for a second consecutive month, down 8.1% to $399 million. In the third quarter, both of the residential components increased: permits to build single-family dwellings reached $3.6 billion (+1.0%), while permits for multi-family dwellings totalled $1.4 billion (+0.3%).

(continued on page 4)

... Second straight decline in building permits

In the non-residential sector in September, the value of building permits climbed 5.2% to $1.3 billion. The climb was led by large advances in institutional and industrial projects. Institutional intentions made the largest advance (+27.5% to $386 million). The biggest contributor was permits to construct education buildings. The institutional component has shown three straight quarterly increases in 1999. The third quarter's increase was 2.3% to $1.0 billion.

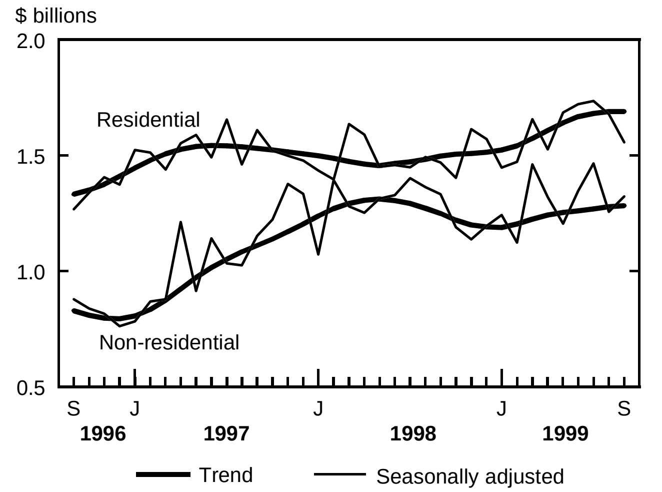
Industrial construction intentions rebounded 24.6% to $301 million in September, following a 41.3% drop in August. All categories of industrial buildings contributed to this increase. In the third quarter, the value of industrial permits gained 22.0% and reached $2.8 billion.

As for the commercial component, the value of permits declined in September by 10.8% to $635 million, a second straight monthly decline. Hotel, restaurant and recreation building projects made the biggest declines. In the third quarter, the value dipped a slight 1.1% to $2.1 billion.

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

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

Value of building permits



Building permits, Third quarter 1999
Seasonally adjusted[1]

	Total		Residential		Non-residential	
	$ millions	% change, previous quarter	$ millions	% change, previous quarter	$ millions	% change, previous quarter
Canada	**9,010.3**	**2.4**	**4,968.3**	**0.8**	**4,042.1**	**4.5**
Newfoundland	79.6	19.7	34.3	-15.1	45.3	73.2
Prince Edward Island	37.9	-0.8	16.8	-12.4	21.1	10.9
Nova Scotia	208.2	-14.6	94.0	-29.6	114.2	3.4
New Brunswick	111.4	-20.5	60.1	-21.1	51.3	-19.9
Quebec	1,437.1	7.5	775.5	7.7	661.6	7.3
Ontario	4,165.2	3.1	2,467.2	1.5	1,698.0	5.7
Manitoba	232.5	6.3	97.5	11.8	135.0	2.8
Saskatchewan	223.0	23.9	69.8	-4.7	153.3	43.5
Alberta	1,281.1	13.7	713.7	7.7	567.4	22.2
British Columbia	1,200.5	-11.4	621.3	-6.9	579.2	-15.8
Yukon	13.9	-15.6	4.3	9.9	9.6	-23.5
Northwest Territories	6.8	-15.2	3.2	101.0	3.6	-44.2
Nunavut	13.1	-56.5	10.5	-22.7	2.6	-84.1

[1] *Data may not add to totals due to rounding. Some percentage changes should be interpreted with caution because of the small numbers involved.*

Value of financial services climbs

In 1997, the value of services produced in Canada by deposit-accepting intermediaries (chartered banks, trust companies, caisses populaires and credit unions) reached $41.5 billion, up 15.8% from the 1996 figure of $35.8 billion. This increase was primarily ascribed to sustained demand for new electronic financial services, investment banking and fiduciary services. However, retail banking services continued to generate most (67.3%) of the deposit-accepting intermediaries' income.

The percentage of non-interest income in the intermediaries' portfolio also increased from 1996 to 1997, rising from 36.5% to 42.5%. The growth in non-interest income, which reflects a 10-year trend, has been partly due to financial reforms that broadened and diversified the intermediaries' range of activities into ones that produce fee and commission income.

The value of retail banking services in 1997 totalled $27.9 billion. Net interest income represented 72.7% of that total, while the remainder (27.3%) was non-interest income. The $27.9 billion total was up 7.5% from $26.0 billion in 1996.

Electronic financial services took off in 1997 and soared 68.2% from the previous year to a value of $1.8 billion. The proportion of these services in the deposit-accepting intermediaries' portfolio increased 1.4 percentage points from 3.0% in 1996 to 4.4% in 1997. Primarily, this growth spurt is linked to greater use of electronic delivery through such means as automatic tellers, debit cards, telephones and computer banking services.

Treasury and investment banking expanded from 1996 to 1997 by 55.2% to $6.3 billion. In 1997, this category represented 15.0% of the total value of financial services, compared with only 11.2% the year before. This gain, which is consistent with a five-year trend, was propelled by the popularity of mutual funds and discount brokerage services. Attractive yields provided by mutual funds have diverted a large part of individual savings away from more traditional deposit instruments.

A sustained demand was seen in 1997 for fiduciary services, which were valued at $2.0 billion, a jump from the previous year of 46.2%. This type of service accounted for 4.9% of the total value of services produced by deposit-accepting intermediaries, a 1.0 percentage point increase over 1996. Of the value generated by this type of service, 82.2% was non-interest income. Over the last few years, deposit-accepting intermediaries have expanded their fiduciary services, especially in estate management and financial planning. Aging baby boomers have contributed to the accelerating demand for this type of service.

Corporate and institutional financing lost ground in 1997.

Note to readers

An annual survey covers the activities of the principal deposit-accepting intermediaries, namely chartered banks, trust companies, caisses populaires and credit unions. The survey is supplemented by data from other sources. Some of the intermediaries were unable to estimate their activities in electronic financial services. This results in an under-estimation of the absolute value of these services and in an over-estimation of the value of their retail banking services. However, this does not affect the quality of the conclusions or the general trends observed from this survey.

Value of services produced *is the sum of net interest and non-interest income. This is not to be confused with service charges.*

Retail banking *covers all financial services to individuals and to small- and medium-sized businesses through a traditional branch network.*

Electronic financial services *cover services to individuals, businesses and institutions through networks of banking machines, telephone banking centres and the Internet.*

Investment banking *covers services to individuals, corporations and institutions such as securities brokerage, mutual fund management, corporate and risk capital financing and other investment services.*

Fiduciary services *refer to all services provided when acting as a trustee or agent and the performance of services such as record keeping, custodial and performance evaluation services for personal trusts, pension funds, corporate and institutional investments and group RSPs.*

Net interest income *is the difference between interest income and expenses. Interest income covers all interest from loans, titles and deposits of deposit-accepting intermediaries. Interest expenses cover interest paid on deposits, subordinated debentures and other interest costs.*

Non-interest income *covers all sources of revenue other than interest charges. Some examples are revenue from brokerage and other securities services, credit services, net investment securities gains and losses, trading income, deposit and payment services charges, mutual fund management, card services, foreign exchange non-trading and insurance.*

For further information, contact Patrick Huot (613-951-0583, huotpat@statcan.ca), Industrial Organization and Finance Division.

(continued on page 6)

Performance of economy not expected to change much in coming months

According to the Short-term Expectations Survey of economic forecasters, the performance of the economy is expected to show little change in the pending September-to-December data.

Starting with the annual inflation rate (as measured by the Consumer Price Index), the surveyed analysts' average forecast is for a rate of 2.5% in October and a 2.4% rate for both November and December. In September, the actual inflation rate (2.6%) was slightly higher than their average forecast (2.1%)

Turning to gross domestic product, the average forecast of monthly growth for August was 0.4%, slightly lower than the actual growth of 0.5%. The surveyed analysts now expect slightly slower growth to have occurred in September and October. Their average forecast for each month is a growth rate of 0.3%.

Meanwhile, the average forecast for international trade calls for a small change in the merchandise trade surplus in the period from September to November: surpluses of $3.7 billion in both September and October and $3.8 billion in November. The average forecasts anticipate a slight increase to occur in both exports and imports over the same period.

As for unemployment, the actual seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in September was 7.5% and the participation rate was 65.4%. The forecasters anticipate an unemployment rate of 7.5% to persist in October, November and December. But that 7.5% rate turns out to have been an overestimate for October, because it actually dropped to 7.2% that month. Very slight increases are expected in the participation rate. The average forecasts are 65.4% in October, 65.5% in November and 65.6% in December. The actual participation rate for October was a bit higher than expected at 65.5%.

For further information, or to order a set of tables, contact Jamie Brunet (613-951-6684, fax: 613-951-1572, jamie.brunet@statcan.ca), Small Business and Special Surveys Division.

New from Statistics Canada

Dangerous goods accident information system
1998

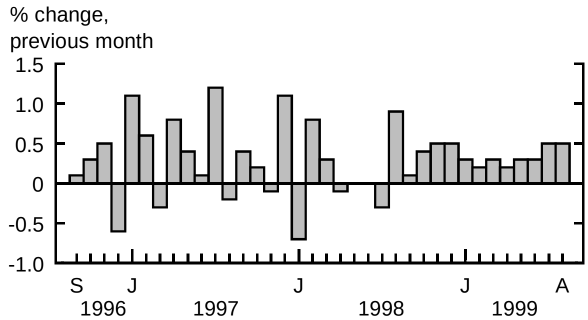
Statistics Canada, in co-operation with Transport Canada, has released the 1998 edition of the *Dangerous goods accident information system*, a database of all the reported accidents involving the transport of dangerous goods. These reports are filed if an accident involving dangerous goods results in a release that presents a danger to health, life, property or the environment. Reports are also filed for accidents involving death or injury, or damage to containment due to impact stress or fatigue.

The data for each accident are very detailed, ranging from the date, time and location to the emergency personnel who responded at the scene. Also, any additional written comments that were provided with the accident report are included on the diskette and are accessible to FoxPro users.

To order the most current (1998) database called ***Dangerous goods accident information system*** *(diskette: 50F0002XDB, $100), contact Carole Stuart (613-951-5936, fax: 613-951-4513, stuacar@statcan.ca), Dissemination Division. For further information about the data, contact Jonathan Rose (613-990-1142, fax: 613-993-5925, rosej@tc.gc.ca), Transport Canada.*

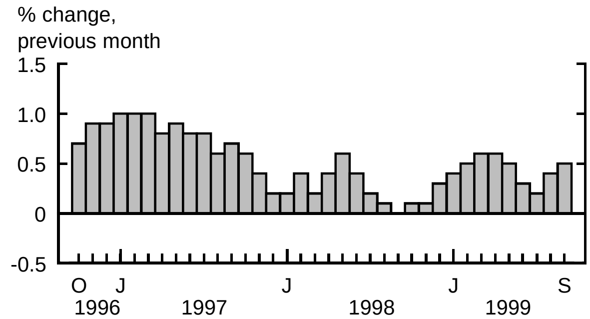
Current trends

Gross domestic product



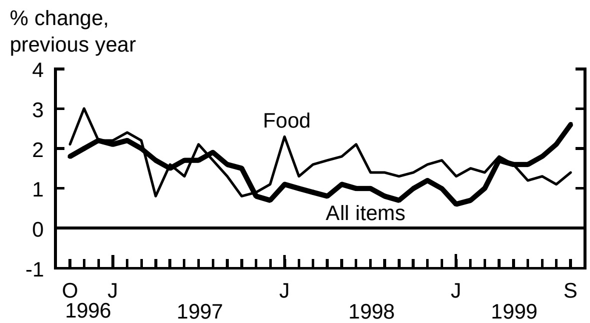
Economic activity continued to advance briskly in August (+0.5%). This extended the expansion to 13 months – the longest uninterrupted string of advances in more than a decade.

Composite Index



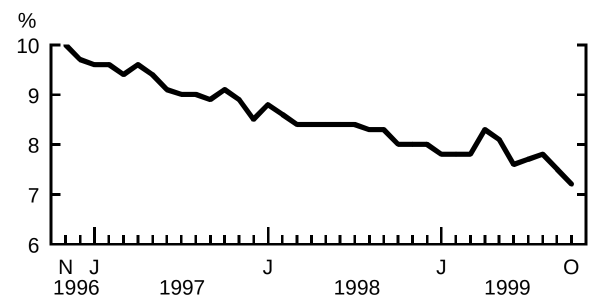
The growth of the leading indicator continued to improve in September, rising to 0.5%. It marked one of the rare times in the past two years where the growth extended to 9 of the index's 10 components.

Consumer Price Index



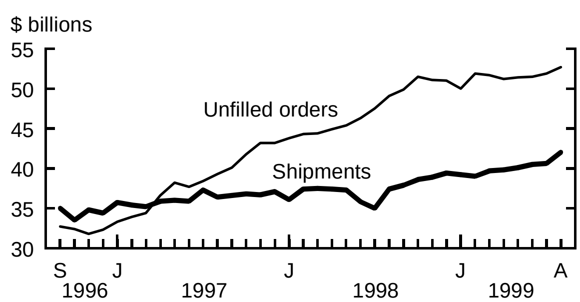
Consumers paid 2.6% more for goods and services in September 1999 than they did a year earlier. Food prices rose 1.4%.

Unemployment rate



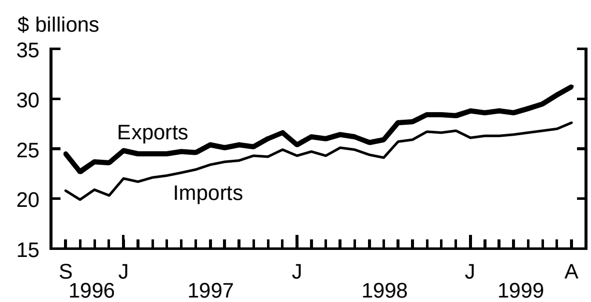
In October, the unemployment rate fell 0.3 percentage points to 7.2%, its lowest level since March 1990.

Manufacturing



Manufacturers' shipments rose a sharp 3.5% in August to $42.0 billion. The backlog of unfilled orders increased 1.6% to $52.7 billion.

Merchandise trade



In August, the value of merchandise exports climbed 2.7% from July to $31.2 billion. Imports increased 2.3% to $27.6 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)	August	752.6	0.5%	4.1%
Composite Index (1981=100)	September	217.4	0.5%	4.8%
Operating profits of enterprises ($ billion)	Q2 1999	37.2	1.6%	..
Capacity utilization (%)	Q2 1999	83.8	0.5†	1.0†
DOMESTIC DEMAND				
Retail trade ($ billion)	August	22.1	1.2%	7.0%
Department store sales ($ billions)	September*	1.59	0.9%	12.0%
New motor vehicle sales (thousand of units)	August	131.6	0.5%	10.3%
Wholesale trade ($ billion)	August	30.6	1.4%	10.6%
LABOUR				
Employment (millions)	October*	14.82	0.5%	2.5%
Unemployment rate (%)	October*	7.2	-0.3†	-0.8†
Participation rate (%)	October*	65.5	0.1†	0.2†
Average weekly earnings ($)	August	610.42	-0.1%	0.8%
Help-wanted Index (1996=100)	October	162	1.3%	11.9%
INTERNATIONAL TRADE				
Merchandise exports ($ billion)	August	31.2	2.7%	12.8%
Merchandise imports ($ billion)	August	27.6	2.3%	7.6%
Merchandise trade balance (all figures in $ billion)	August	3.6	0.2	1.6
MANUFACTURING				
Shipments ($ billion)	August	42.0	3.5%	12.2%
New orders ($ billion)	August	42.8	4.5%	9.6%
Unfilled orders ($ billion)	August	52.7	1.6%	7.3%
Inventory/shipments ratio	August	1.27	0.03	-0.10
PRICES				
Consumer Price Index (1992=100)	September	111.4	0.3%	2.6%
Industrial Product Price Index (1992=100)	September	123.1	0.5%	3.1%
Raw Materials Price Index (1992=100)	September	125.5	3.5%	16.1%
New Housing Price Index (1992=100)	September*	101.3	0.2%	1.2%

Note: *All series are seasonally adjusted with the exception of the price indexes.*
* *new this week*
† *percentage point*
.. *figures not available yet due to a survey redesign*

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A weekly review

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

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The first (official) release of all statistical information produced by Statistics Canada occurs in *The Daily* (www.statcan.ca), available at 8:30 a.m. *The Daily* presents highlights from new data releases, along with sources, links and contacts for further information. It also contains schedules of upcoming major news releases and announces the Agency's new products and services.

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Publications released from November 4 to 10, 1999

Division/Title of publication	Period	Catalogue number	Price: Issue/Subscription Canada (C$)	Outside Canada (US$)
INDUSTRY MEASURES AND ANALYSIS				
Gross domestic product by industry	July 1999	15-001-XPB	15/145	15/145
Provincial gross domestic product by industry	1984-1998	15-203-XIB	39	
INTERNATIONAL TRADE				
Exports by commodity	August 1999			
Microfiche		65-004-XMB	37/361	37/361
Paper		65-004-XPB	78/773	78/773
INVESTMENT AND CAPITAL STOCK				
Capital expenditures by type of asset	1997	61-223-XIB	32	
LABOUR STATISTICS				
Labour force information, week ending October 16, 1999	October 1999	71-001-PPB	11/103	11/103
MANUFACTURING, CONSTRUCTION AND ENERGY				
Asphalt roofing	September 1999	45-001-XIB	5/47	
Cement	September 1999	44-001-XIB	5/47	
Coal and coke statistics	August 1999	45-002-XPB	12/114	12/114
Electric power statistics	August 1999			
Internet		57-001-XIB	9/85	
Paper		57-001-XPB	12/114	12/114
Energy statistics handbook	October 1999	57-601-UPB	387	387
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