



Infommat

A Weekly Review

Friday, December 8, 2000

OVERVIEW

◆ Economic activity stalled in September

Gross domestic product (GDP) was flat in September, ending a four-month string of gains. The focus of the weakness was manufacturing, as a result of a decline in the production of electronic and automotive goods.

◆ Domestic demand boosts quarterly GDP growth

Real gross domestic product (GDP) increased 1.2% in the third quarter. The growth originated from domestic demand, while exports edged down after more than three years of sustained growth.

◆ Unemployment rate holds steady

Employment increased by an estimated 58,000 in November. But while employment grew, so too did the labour force, by a similar amount. This left the unemployment rate unchanged at 6.9%.

◆ Cost of energy drives up prices of industrial products and raw materials

The cost of energy continued to influence the annual growth of both the Raw Materials Price Index and the Industrial Product Price Index in October. The strength of the U.S. dollar also helped boost the prices of industrial products.

◆ Employees see no change in their average weekly earnings

Average weekly earnings for all employees were \$630.57 in September, essentially unchanged from August. Since September 1999, average weekly earnings have increased by 2.9 %.

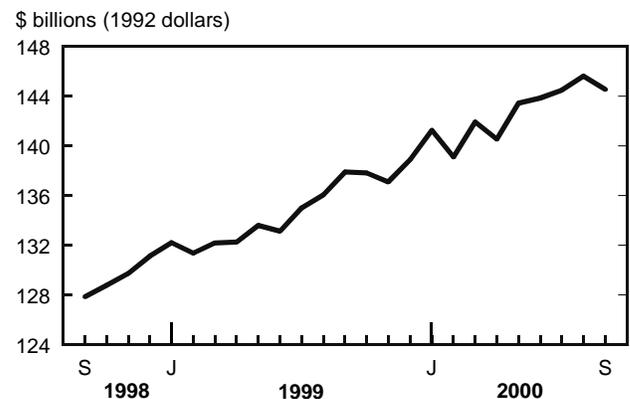
Economic activity stalled in September

Gross domestic product (GDP) was flat in September, ending a four-month string of gains. The focus of the weakness was manufacturing (-0.7%), where production of electronic goods was scaled back for the first time in nine months and automotive goods production fell. Economic activity was weak throughout the goods-producing sector; logging, mining and construction industries either declined or showed little change.

Output in the electrical and electronic industry fell 1.1% in September. The biggest cutbacks were made by producers of telecommunications equipment and electronic components and parts. However, these decreases only partially erased significant gains made in previous months, as production in these two industries was still 44.4% higher than in September 1999. Moreover, higher output of computers and peripheral equipment and fiber optic cables, two other industries that have also experienced tremendous growth in 2000, partly offset these declines.

It was the first time this year that the group of industries providing computer and telecommunications products and services did not significantly boost the economy. These industries, which made up only 7.2% of GDP in the first nine months of 2000, accounted for one-quarter of the gains during this period.

Manufacturing output



(continued on page 2)



... Economic activity stalled in September

In the auto industry, production difficulties on some assembly lines and weakening demand from the United States led to a 0.2% decline in auto assembly and a 3.0% drop in auto parts production.

Output of wood products was down 0.9%, the sixth straight monthly decline. Lumber exports dropped for the fourth time in six months. Production of primary metal products was down 1.2%, declining for the sixth month in a row. A slowdown in drilling activity in the past two months helped constrain demand for steel pipes and tubing. Domestic production may also have been hurt by imports of these goods, which have surged since the middle of 1999. Food and furniture production also declined in September.

The strongest increases in output in September were observed in the chemical products and publishing industries. A surge in the production of pharmaceutical products pushed up the output of chemical products by 1.7%. On the strength of a rebound in publishing activity, the printing and publishing industry saw output rise by 1.5%.

The services-producing side of the economy fared better than the goods-producing side in September, advancing 0.2%. This increase was largely due to continued strong growth in business services (+1.1%) as well as gains in food services and government

Note to readers

Monthly gross domestic product is valued at 1992 prices. The estimates presented here are seasonally adjusted at annual rates.

services. Almost half of the growth in business services activity originated in computer service firms, but companies providing architectural, scientific and engineering services and temporary help agencies also contributed significantly to the overall gain.

However, wholesaling activity declined 0.5% in September, on the heels of a similar-sized decline in the previous month. Unlike in August, distribution of computer and software equipment swung upwards, but it still remained short of June levels. Retailing activity was lacklustre for a second month; it edged up 0.2%, about the same rate of growth as in August.

The September 2000 issue of **Gross domestic product by industry (15-001-XIE, \$11/\$110)** is now available. A print-on-demand version is available at a different price. To purchase data, contact Yolande Chantigny (1 800 877-4623; imad@statcan.ca). For analytical information, contact Richard Evans (613-951-9145; evanric@statcan.ca), Industry Measures and Analysis Division. See also "Current trends" on page 7.

Domestic demand boosts quarterly GDP growth

Real gross domestic product (GDP) increased 1.2% in the third quarter, maintaining the pace seen over the previous six quarters. The growth originated from domestic demand, while exports edged down after more than three years of sustained growth.

Consumer demand gained momentum, with personal expenditures on consumer goods and services growing by 1.3%, the strongest quarterly increase since the second quarter of 1998. Leading the growth were purchases of durable goods, particularly spending on motor vehicles, which jumped 5.1% because of dealer incentives. Sales of new overseas-built passenger cars posted strong growth. Spending on recreational equipment also

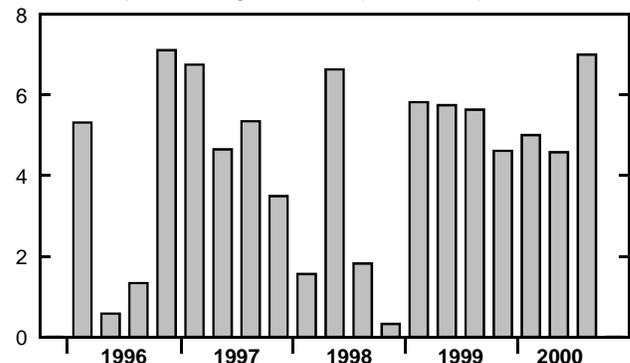
Gross domestic product at 1992 prices¹

| | % change | Annualized % change | Year-over-year % change |
|---------------------------|------------|---------------------|-------------------------|
| First quarter 1999 | 1.2 | 4.8 | 3.7 |
| Second quarter 1999 | 0.8 | 3.3 | 4.3 |
| Third quarter 1999 | 1.6 | 6.5 | 5.2 |
| Fourth quarter 1999 | 1.2 | 5.1 | 4.9 |
| First quarter 2000 | 1.3 | 5.5 | 5.1 |
| Second quarter 2000 | 1.1 | 4.6 | 5.4 |
| Third quarter 2000 | 1.2 | 4.8 | 5.0 |

¹ The change is the growth rate from one period to the next. The annualized change is the growth rate compounded annually. The year-over-year change is the growth rate of a given quarter compared with the same quarter of the previous year.

Personal expenditure on consumer goods and services

Quarter-to-quarter change, \$ billions (1992 dollars)



posted a strong gain of 3.8%, possibly due to consumers delaying their purchases owing to poor weather conditions in the spring and early summer.

Residential investment grew 1.5%, following a 2.4% decline in the second quarter. Urban housing starts increased sharply in Quebec and the Atlantic region, with gains concentrated in starts of multiple dwellings.

Business investment in machinery and equipment remained strong in the third quarter. Machinery and equipment purchases grew a healthy 3.8% after a 7.6% increase in the second quarter. Soaring spending on telecommunications equipment was an important contributor to the increase. Solid advances also occurred

(continued on page 3)

... Domestic demand boosts quarterly GDP growth

in autos, furniture and computers and other office equipment. These increases more than offset a 10.6% decrease in investment in industrial machinery, which had grown steadily throughout 1999. After slowing in the second quarter, investment in non-residential construction was virtually unchanged.

Manufacturers piled up inventories in the third quarter, particularly of durable goods. The accumulation occurred at all stages of production. Electrical products were an important contributor to the buildup, as increasing stocks coincided with softening export growth. Significant accumulation also occurred in transportation equipment other than motor vehicles. Retailers and wholesalers also built up inventories, in tandem with rising sales.

Exports of goods and services edged down 0.1%, marking the end of a string of 14 quarters of uninterrupted growth. Automotive

exports declined for a second consecutive quarter. Exports of energy products declined in volume for a second straight quarter but rose in value as prices continued to increase.

Growth in corporate profits softened to 1.0%, continuing the deceleration seen in the second quarter. Significant gains in oil and gas, electrical and electronics and deposit-taking financial institutions were offset by declines in wood and paper, mining and other financial industries.

The third quarter 2000 issue of National Income and Expenditure Accounts, quarterly estimates (13-001-XPB, \$44/\$145) provides detailed data. For more information on products available, contact the client services officer (613-951-3810; iead-info-cdrd@statcan.ca). For analytical information, contact the information officer (613-951-3640), Income and Expenditure Accounts Division.

Unemployment rate holds steady

Employment increased by an estimated 58,000 in November. After a brief pause in June and July, employment rose each month from August to November, resuming the upward trend of the last three years. While employment grew in November, so too did the labour force, by a similar amount. This left the unemployment rate unchanged at 6.9%.

The total number of full-time jobs increased by 79,000 in November, with a gain of 85,000 among adults aged 25 and over. Among women, full-time employment increased by 51,000, while part-time employment declined by 26,000. From August to November, full-time employment grew by an average of 28,000 jobs per month. Among men, full-time employment rose by 34,000 in November, bringing the total increase since July to 50,000, an average monthly increase of 12,000 jobs.

The employment situation of youths aged 15 to 24 was little changed in November. Since July, part-time employment increased by 50,000, while there was little change in full-time.

All of the employment increase in November was in the private sector. Since July, 170,000 jobs have been added in this sector, compared with an overall employment gain of 162,000 during that period. Among public sector employees and among the self-employed, employment declined slightly in November. After many years of growth, self-employment has been declining since February. Losses since then total 173,000 (-6.8%).

November's employment growth occurred in both the goods- and service-producing sectors. In the goods-producing sector, employment in construction rose by 16,000; this brought it to about the same level as at the start of the year. There was also a slight increase in manufacturing employment in November; since July this industry has gained 46,000 jobs.

In the service-producing sector, employment continued to rise in November (+31,000). Since July, the strongest industries have been professional, scientific and technical services, information, culture and recreation services, and manufacturing.

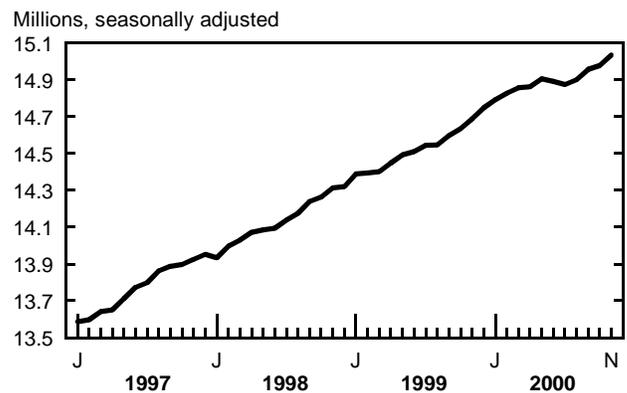
Nearly two-thirds of overall employment growth in November was concentrated in Ontario (+35,000). That growth, which was

Supplementary information on employment insurance

In September, 335,420 Canadians (not seasonally adjusted data) received regular Employment Insurance benefits, a decrease of 9.5% from September 1999. Regular benefit payments (seasonally adjusted) were \$585.2 million, down 4.4% from August and 3.6% from September 1999.

The data from January 1997 to April 2000 were underestimated and are now being revised. In the meantime, users are cautioned against making any comparisons between these data and any monthly or historical data previously released. For more information, contact Justin Lacroix (613-951-4090; fax: 613-951-4087; labour@statcan.ca), Labour Statistics Division.

Employment



primarily in full-time employment, was split between the goods- and service-producing sectors. In Quebec, employment was little changed in November. Following robust growth in the second half of 1999, overall employment in the province has changed little since the start of 2000.

(continued on page 4)

... Unemployment rate holds steady

In Alberta, employment was up slightly in November, continuing the upward trend that began in August. In British Columbia, employment was little changed in November. However, with a decrease of 11,000 persons in the labour force, the unemployment rate fell 0.7 percentage points to 7.0%.

While employment was little changed in Newfoundland and New Brunswick, an increase in the labour force boosted the

unemployment rate in Newfoundland to 17.6% (+1.0 percentage points) and in New Brunswick to 10.5% (+0.8 percentage points). There was little change in employment in the other provinces.

A summary, **Labour force information** (online: 71-001-PIB, \$8/\$78; paper: 71-001-PPB, \$11/\$103) for the week ending November 11, 2000, is now available. For more information, contact Vincent Ferrao (613-951-4750) or Jacques Ouellet (613-951-4168), Labour Statistics Division. See also "Current trends" on page 7.

Labour Force Survey, November 2000

Seasonally adjusted¹

| | Labour force | | Employment | | Unemployment | |
|----------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|----------------|------------|
| | '000 | % change, previous month | '000 | % change, previous month | '000 | rate (%) |
| Canada | 16,148.4 | 0.4 | 15,035.6 | 0.4 | 1,112.8 | 6.9 |
| Newfoundland | 249.2 | 1.1 | 205.4 | -0.1 | 43.8 | 17.6 |
| Prince Edward Island | 73.7 | -0.4 | 63.5 | -0.8 | 10.2 | 13.8 |
| Nova Scotia | 464.1 | 0.6 | 420.2 | 0.4 | 43.9 | 9.5 |
| New Brunswick | 378.7 | 1.4 | 338.9 | 0.5 | 39.8 | 10.5 |
| Quebec | 3,749.1 | 0.1 | 3,437.5 | 0.3 | 311.6 | 8.3 |
| Ontario | 6,340.6 | 0.7 | 5,961.8 | 0.6 | 378.8 | 6.0 |
| Manitoba | 583.3 | 0.1 | 555.0 | -0.1 | 28.3 | 4.9 |
| Saskatchewan | 510.8 | -0.3 | 484.8 | 0.1 | 26.0 | 5.1 |
| Alberta | 1,687.8 | 0.7 | 1,604.5 | 0.4 | 83.3 | 4.9 |
| British Columbia | 2,111.2 | -0.5 | 1,964.1 | 0.2 | 147.1 | 7.0 |

¹ Data are for both sexes aged 15 and over.

Cost of energy drives up prices of industrial products and raw materials

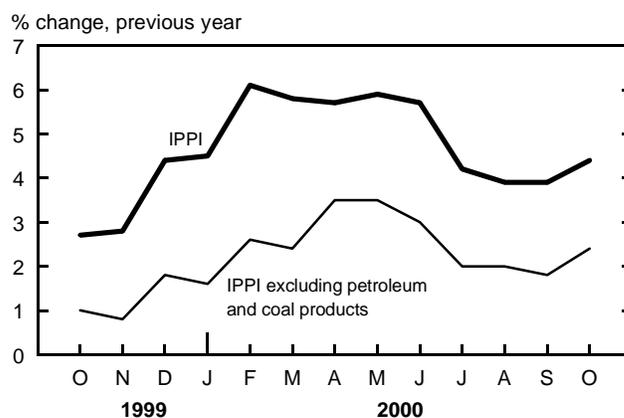
The cost of energy continued to influence the annual growth of both the Raw Materials Price Index (RMPI) and the Industrial Product Price Index (IPPI) in October. The strength of the U.S. dollar also helped boost the prices of industrial products.

Industrial prices gained 4.4% between October 1999 and October 2000. This was greater than September's gain (+3.9%) and goes against the decelerating trend in price growth that had taken place since February. Higher petroleum and coal product prices accounted for nearly half the annual increase in October. Prices for paper and paper products and motor vehicles also contributed to this increase, but falling lumber prices had a dampening effect.

On a month-to-month basis, industrial prices gained 0.6% in October, as higher prices for motor vehicles and paper and paper products, which reflected in part a stronger U.S. dollar, were partly counterbalanced by lower primary metal product prices. Petroleum product prices did not have a significant impact on the monthly change.

Between mid-September and mid-October, the value of the U.S. dollar strengthened substantially against the Canadian dollar.

Industrial Product Price Index



This had the effect of pushing up prices of commodities quoted in U.S. dollars, such as motor vehicles, pulp, paper and wood products. If the exchange rate had remained unchanged, the IPPI would have held steady between September and October. The exchange rate effect also had an impact on the change in the IPPI from October 1999 to October 2000; without that effect, industrial prices would have increased by 3.8% rather than 4.4%.

(continued on page 5)

... Cost of energy drives up prices of industrial products and raw materials

As for raw materials, manufacturers paid 20.4% more for them in October 2000 than they did in October 1999. This represents the largest annual increase since June. However, it remains well below the recent peak of 37.3% in February. Once again, mineral fuels were at the forefront of this price increase.

On a month-to-month basis, the prices of raw materials rose 0.5% in October. The rise in prices for mineral fuels and animal and vegetable products was partly offset by a decrease in non-ferrous metal prices.

Manufacturers received 0.9% more for their finished goods in October than in September. This was the strongest monthly growth rate since March. The autos, trucks and other transport equipment category was responsible for the bulk of the increase. On an annual basis, prices for finished goods rose 3.3%, reflecting rising prices for petroleum products as well as autos, trucks and other transport equipment.

Stronger prices for paper and petroleum products boosted input prices both on a monthly and annual basis. Prices for intermediate goods gained 0.5% between September and October and were 5.2% higher than in October 1999.

Industrial product and raw materials price indexes, October 2000

| | Index (1992=100) | % change, previous month | % change, previous year |
|--|---------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Industrial product price index (IPPI) | 129.1 | 0.6 | 4.4 |
| IPPI excluding petroleum and coal products | 126.0 | 0.6 | 2.4 |
| Intermediate goods | 130.4 | 0.5 | 5.2 |
| Finished goods | 127.2 | 0.9 | 3.3 |
| Raw materials price index (RMPI) | 150.5 | 0.5 | 20.4 |
| RMPI excluding mineral fuels | 123.2 | 0.2 | 4.1 |
| Mineral fuels (crude oil) | 210.0 | 1.1 | 50.5 |
| Vegetable products | 116.2 | 3.5 | 4.8 |
| Animals and animal products | 118.0 | 1.1 | 5.4 |
| Wood | 141.9 | 0.0 | 4.3 |
| Ferrous metals | 116.2 | -1.5 | -3.7 |
| Non-ferrous metals | 118.7 | -3.2 | 2.9 |
| Non-metallic minerals | 121.9 | 0.0 | 3.0 |

The October 2000 issue of *Industry price indexes* (62-011-XPB, \$22/\$217) will be available in December. For more information, contact the Client Services Unit (613-951-3350; fax: 613-951-1539; infounit@statcan.ca), Prices Division.

Employees see no change in their average weekly earnings

Average weekly earnings for all employees were \$630.57 in September, essentially unchanged from August. Since September 1999, average weekly earnings have increased by 2.9%. Over the same period, average weekly earnings for salaried employees increased 5.2%, and those for employees paid by the hour rose 2.8%.

Average hourly earnings for employees paid by the hour were \$15.76 in September, down 4 cents from August. These employees worked an average of 31.5 hours per week, up 0.1 hours from August; their average paid overtime hours were unchanged.

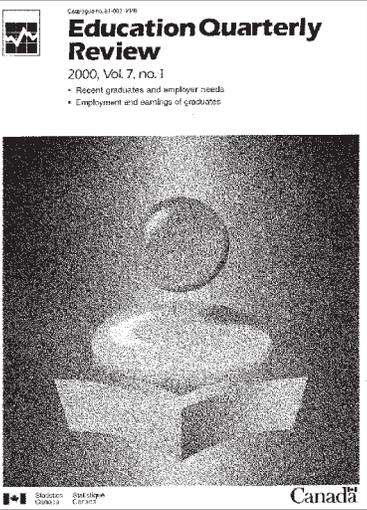
Payroll employment increased substantially in September (+ 58,400). This was the second month in a row with strong employment gains. The largest gains in payroll employment were in business services, wholesale trade and construction. All provinces and territories gained employment in September except Saskatchewan, which saw a small loss. Employment gains were largest in Quebec and Ontario.

Average weekly earnings, all industries, September 2000 Seasonally adjusted

| | \$ | % change, previous month | % change, previous year |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Canada | 630.57 | 0.2 | 2.9 |
| Newfoundland | 560.14 | 0.6 | 3.1 |
| Prince Edward Island | 498.78 | 0.3 | 3.9 |
| Nova Scotia | 528.98 | -0.4 | 2.6 |
| New Brunswick | 562.40 | 0.6 | 4.3 |
| Quebec | 587.26 | 0.2 | 2.6 |
| Ontario | 674.50 | 0.3 | 2.7 |
| Manitoba | 568.37 | 0.8 | 5.2 |
| Saskatchewan | 564.83 | 0.5 | 3.5 |
| Alberta | 646.65 | 0.2 | 3.9 |
| British Columbia | 635.37 | 0.2 | 2.0 |
| Yukon | 698.99 | -0.2 | -2.0 |
| Northwest Territories and Nunavut | 836.42 | -0.3 | 6.8 |

The September 2000 issue of *Employment, earnings and hours* (72-002-XPB, \$32/\$320) presents the month's industry data and other labour market indicators in detail. For more information, contact Jean Leduc or Robert Frindt (613-951-4090; fax: 613-951-4087; labour@statcan.ca), Labour Statistics Division.

New from Statistics Canada



Education quarterly review

November 2000

Education quarterly review, Statistics Canada's flagship publication for education statistics, analyzes current issues and trends in education. The November 2000 issue contains two reports, one analyzing graduates' employment and earnings, and the other examining whether recent college, bachelor's and doctoral graduates were overqualified for their main job.

The November 2000 issue of **Education quarterly review**, Vol. 7, no. 1, (online: 81-003-XIE, \$16/\$51; paper: 81-003-XPB, \$21/\$68) is now available. The study "Holding their own: Employment and earnings of postsecondary graduates" is available as a free preview article of this publication on the In depth page of Statistics Canada's Web site (www.statcan.ca). For more information, contact Jim Seidle (613-951-1500; jim.seidle@statcan.ca), Centre for Education Statistics.

Understanding measurements of farm income 2000

The bulletin *Understanding measurements of farm income* is a manual for users of farm income statistics. This publication explains the concepts and methodology behind the various estimates of farm income published by Statistics Canada. In each case, the form of availability and appropriate uses are discussed. In addition, the methods behind the forecasts of farm income prepared by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada are included, along with an explanation of their relationship to Statistics Canada's farm income accounts.

The publication **Understanding measurements of farm income** (21-525-XIE, free) is now available on Statistics Canada's Web site (www.statcan.ca). On the Products and services page, choose Free publications, then Agriculture. For more information, contact the User Services and Marketing Unit (1-800-465-1991; fax: 613-951-3868; agriculture@statcan.ca), Agriculture Division.

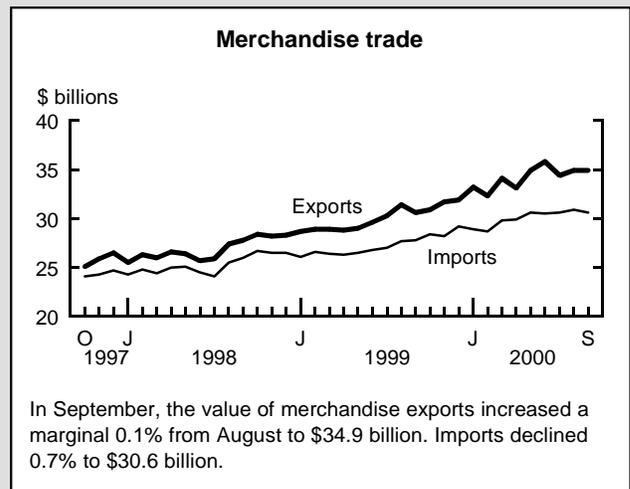
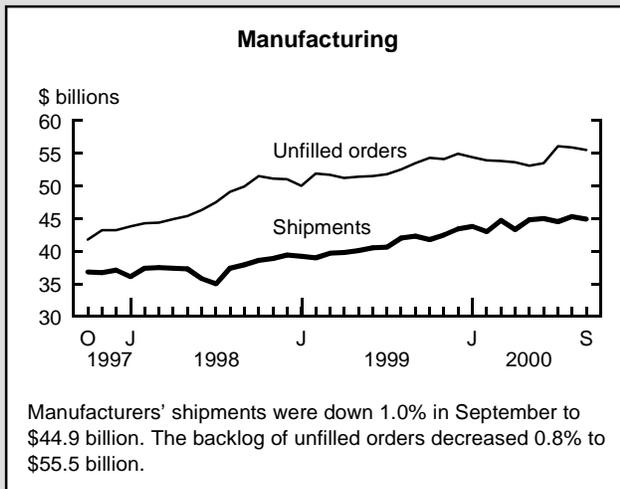
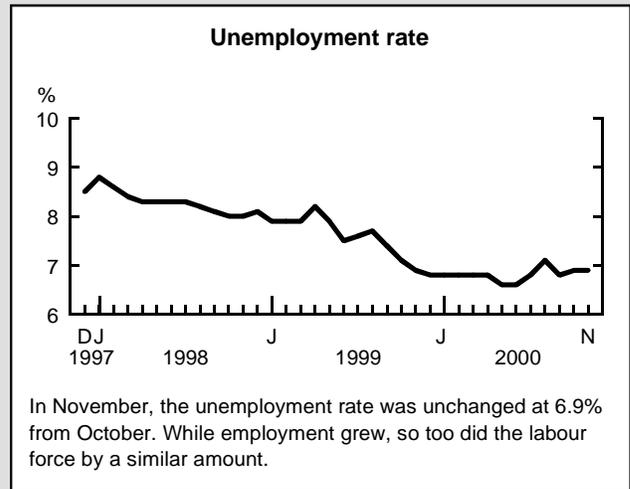
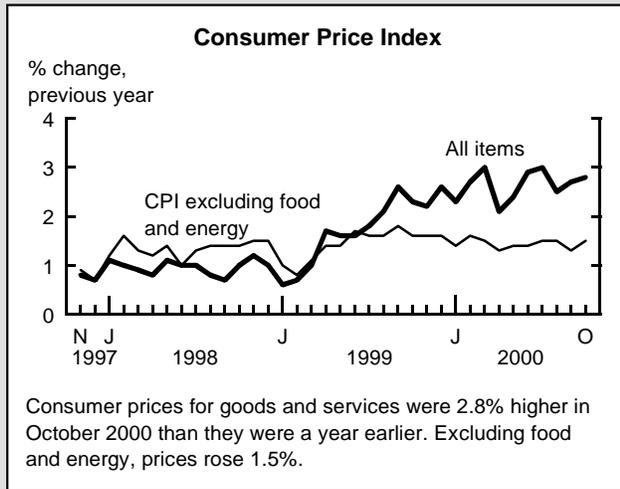
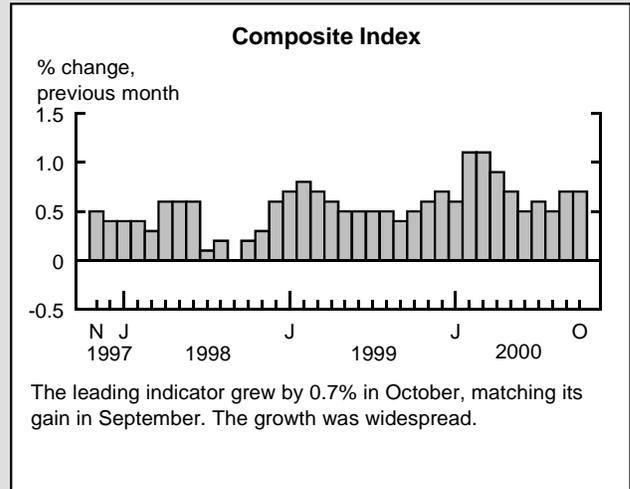
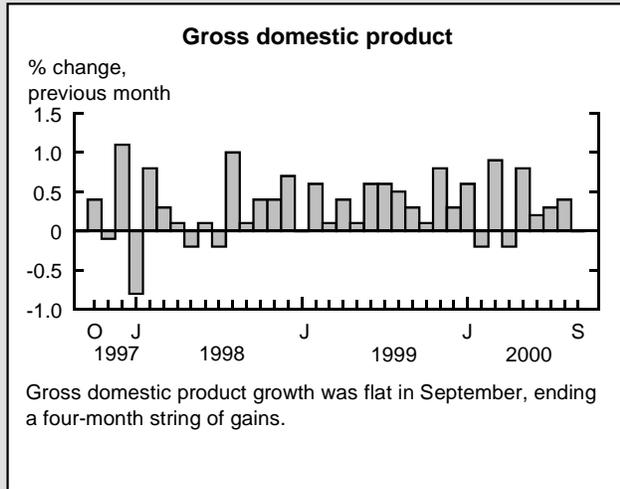
Environment industry: Business sector 1998

The environment industry is made up of businesses operating in a variety of industries that produce goods and services that are used or can be used to measure, prevent, limit or correct environmental damage to water, air and soil, as well as problems related to waste, noise and ecosystems. The industry also produces "eco-efficient" technologies that decrease material inputs, recover valuable by-products and reduce energy consumption.

Businesses comprising Canada's environment industry derived \$14.3 billion from activities directly related to the environment in 1998. This total accounted for 58% of their total revenues; the remaining 42% came from revenues derived from activities not directly related to the environment.

The report **Environment industry: Business sector, 1998** (16F0008XIE, free) is now available on Statistics Canada's Web site (www.statcan.ca). On the Products and services page, choose Free publications. A paper version of this publication is also available for a fee. For more information, contact the Information Officer (613-951-0297; fax: 613-951-0634), Environment Accounts and Statistics Program.

Current trends



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

Latest statistics

| | Period | Level | Change, previous period | Change, previous year |
|---|-----------|--------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| GENERAL | | | | |
| Gross domestic product (\$ billion, 1992) | September | 792.6 | 0.0% | 4.1% |
| Composite Index (1992=100) | October | 167.6 | 0.7% | 9.0% |
| Operating profits of enterprises (\$ billion) | Q3 2000 | 52.6 | 0.1% | 15.7% |
| Capacity utilization (%) | Q3 2000* | 86.9 | -0.1† | 1.5† |
| DOMESTIC DEMAND | | | | |
| Retail trade (\$ billion) | September | 23.5 | 0.4% | 6.0% |
| Department store sales (\$ billions) | October* | 1.57 | 4.9% | 0.4% |
| New motor vehicle sales (thousand of units) | September | 142.5 | 1.8% | 7.8% |
| Wholesale trade (\$ billion) | September | 31.6 | -0.9% | 4.8% |
| LABOUR | | | | |
| Employment (millions) | November* | 15.04 | 0.4% | 2.4% |
| Unemployment rate (%) | November* | 6.9 | 0.0† | 0.0† |
| Participation rate (%) | November* | 66.2 | 0.2† | 0.7† |
| Average weekly earnings (\$) | September | 630.57 | 0.2% | 2.9% |
| Help-wanted Index (1996=100) | November* | 181 | 1.7% | 9.0% |
| INTERNATIONAL TRADE | | | | |
| Merchandise exports (\$ billion) | September | 34.9 | 0.1% | 14.1% |
| Merchandise imports (\$ billion) | September | 30.6 | -0.7% | 10.4% |
| Merchandise trade balance (all figures in \$ billion) | September | 4.3 | 0.2 | 1.4 |
| MANUFACTURING | | | | |
| Shipments (\$ billion) | September | 44.9 | -1.0% | 6.1% |
| New orders (\$ billion) | September | 44.4 | -1.6% | 2.8% |
| Unfilled orders (\$ billion) | September | 55.5 | -0.8% | 3.8% |
| Inventory/shipments ratio | September | 1.34 | 0.02 | 0.04 |
| PRICES | | | | |
| Consumer Price Index (1992=100) | October | 114.6 | 0.2% | 2.8% |
| Industrial Product Price Index (1992=100) | October | 129.1 | 0.6% | 4.4% |
| Raw Materials Price Index (1992=100) | October | 150.5 | 0.5% | 20.4% |
| New Housing Price Index (1992=100) | September | 103.7 | 0.2% | 2.4% |

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

* new this week

† percentage point

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A weekly review

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Products released from November 30 to December 6, 2000

| SUBJECT AREA Title of product | Period | Catalogue number | Price (\$) (issue/subscription) |
|---|----------------|---------------------|------------------------------------|
| AGRICULTURE | | | |
| Cereals and oilseeds review | September 2000 | 22-007-XIB | 11/112 |
| Cereals and oilseeds review | September 2000 | 22-007-XPB | 15/149 |
| Field crop reporting series, Vol. 79, no. 8: November estimate of production of principal field crops | 2000 | 22-002-XIB | 11/66 |
| Field crop reporting series, Vol. 79, no. 8: November estimate of production of principal field crops | 2000 | 22-002-XPB | 15/88 |
| BALANCE OF PAYMENTS AND FINANCIAL FLOWS | | | |
| Canada's international transactions in securities | September 2000 | 67-002-XIB | 14/132 |
| Canada's international transactions in securities | September 2000 | 67-002-XPB | 18/176 |
| CANADIAN CENTRE FOR JUSTICE STATISTICS | | | |
| Juristat, Vol. 20, no. 12: Public attitudes toward the criminal justice system | 1999 | 85-002-XIE | 8/70 |
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