



# Infomat

## A Weekly Review

Friday, August 15, 1997

### OVERVIEW

#### ◆ Unemployment rate hits seven-year low

Continued job growth in July brought the unemployment rate down to a seven-year low.

#### ◆ Manufacturers remain optimistic

In July, manufacturers remained positive about employment and production prospects for the coming quarter.

#### ◆ Number of help-wanted ads continues to grow

The Help-wanted Index rose again in July, for the 12th consecutive month. The number of ads was up in eight provinces.

#### ◆ New Housing Price Index rises

The New Housing Price Index posted another increase in June—its fourth consecutive annual increase.

#### ◆ Seniors' income moving up

In 1995, the median total income for seniors (65 years old and over) increased faster than the rate of inflation.

#### ◆ Single parents more dependent on transfers

Lone-parent families were twice as dependent on transfer payments in 1995 as were husband-wife families.

#### ◆ Crime rate falls

Canada's crime rate—a measure of public safety—fell for the fifth consecutive year in 1996.

### Unemployment rate hits seven-year low

The unemployment rate dipped 0.1 percentage points to 9.0% in July—its lowest level since October 1990. Job growth edged up 15,000, with gains in youth employment, services and part-time jobs.

Youth employment rose for the second consecutive month, up 22,000 in July (+1.1%). Despite this increase, youth employment (51.1%) remains 0.3 percentage points lower than a year earlier. For students aged 15 to 24, labour market conditions did not improve much from last summer. Compared with July 1996, employment for students fell 0.9 percentage points to 51.2%, and their unemployment rate rose 1.0 percentage points to 19.4%.

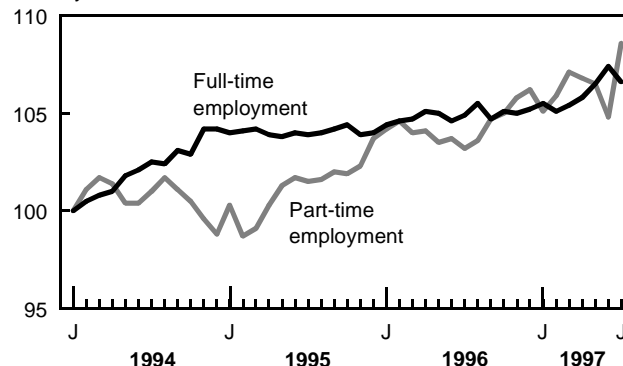
Employment changed little for women aged 25 and over in June and July; however, this group has gained 94,000 jobs since February (split between full- and part-time work). Although employment among adult men dropped in July (–21,000), job gains since February total 134,000, mostly in full-time employment.

July's drop in full-time employment (–79,000) nearly erased the gains made in June. Part-time employment jumped 94,000 in July, negating June's loss of 42,000 jobs. Since February, 66,000 part-time jobs have been added to the economy.

*(continued on page 2)*

### Index of employment

January 1994=100



### ... Unemployment rate hits seven-year low

In July, most job gains were in the service sector, especially retail trade (+32,000). Despite a slip in July, manufacturing employment has increased by about 76,000 since February, consistent with the recent growth in manufacturer's shipments. Elsewhere, employment was up in utilities, while it fell slightly in construction. Private sector employment was little changed, while public sector employment offset June losses with an estimated gain of 21,000.

British Columbia's strong employment growth continued into July, as the province gained 22,000 jobs (+1.2%). Alberta recorded its sixth-straight monthly increase (+8,000). On the Prairies, employment in Saskatchewan held steady for the second consecutive month, while employment fell by 5,000 in Manitoba.

Employment in Quebec and Ontario remained virtually unchanged in July. Ontario's unemployment rate stood at 8.2%. Quebec has gained 66,000 jobs since November, bringing its unemployment rate down from 12.7% to 11.3%.

In the Atlantic provinces, employment was virtually unchanged in New Brunswick. Newfoundland and Nova Scotia also saw little change. Prince Edward Island, which has seen little change since December, gained 1,000 jobs in July.

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

**Labour force information** for the week ending July 19, 1997 (71-001-PPB, \$11/\$103; fax version: 71-001-PFB, \$300 annually) is now available. For further information, contact Deborah Sunter (613-951-4740) or Vincent Ferrao (613-951-4750), Household Surveys Division. (See also "Current trends" on page 7.)

## Manufacturers remain optimistic

The results of the July Quarterly Business Conditions Survey show that manufacturers remained positive about employment and production prospects for the coming quarter. They were also slightly concerned about low finished product inventories. Overall, manufacturers were satisfied with the current levels of orders received, with a large proportion indicating that unfilled order levels were normal.

In the July survey, about 93% of manufacturers reported that their current level of orders received was either about the same or increasing when compared with the previous quarter. Only 7% indicated a decline in new orders, a 5-point improvement over the April survey. This left the July balance of opinion at +23, slightly lower than the previous survey. (The July balance was calculated by subtracting the 7% of manufacturers who stated orders received were declining from the 30% who said orders were rising.)

Manufacturers were no longer concerned about high finished product inventories, as shown by the balance of opinion's unprecedented turn above the zero mark (+4). (A positive balance in this category indicates that, overall, manufacturers are concerned about inventory levels being too low rather than too high.) A record 19% of manufacturers indicated that finished product stocks were too low, a 7-point jump over April.

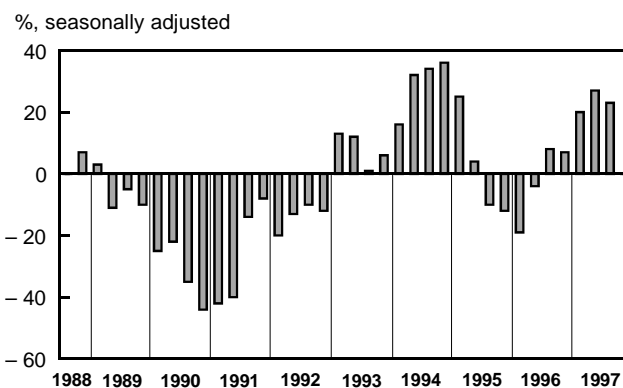
Manufacturers were also more optimistic about production prospects for the next quarter. The balance of opinion gained four points to reach +10 in July. One-quarter of manufacturers were planning to increase production over the next three months. This optimism was expected, given manufacturers' positive feelings about new orders and the indication that finished product

### Note to readers

The Business Conditions Survey is conducted in January, April, July and October; the majority of responses are recorded in the first two weeks of these months. 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 than smaller manufacturers.

Except for the data on production difficulties, data are seasonally adjusted.

### Balance of opinion for current level of orders received



inventories were too low. Discounting the large swing in the January 1997 survey (caused by the end of labour unrest in the transportation equipment industries), the current balance is the most positive since the beginning of 1995.

In July, 80% of manufacturers stated that their current level of unfilled orders was about normal. Ten percent stated the level was higher than normal and another 10% indicated the level was lower than normal, leaving the balance of opinion at zero. This represents an improvement over the -7 posted in April.

(continued on page 3)

### Business Conditions Survey

	1996		1997		
	July	October	January	April	July
Balance of opinion on:					
Production	6	-9	27	6	10
New orders	8	7	20	27	23
Unfilled orders	-5	-4	1	-7	0
Inventories	-13	-13	-9	-6	4
Employment	0	3	1	5	6

### ... Manufacturers remain optimistic

Employment prospects in manufacturing industries climbed slightly between April and July, as the balance of opinion gained 1 point. According to the July survey, 76% of manufacturers expected little change in their employment levels, while 15% anticipated increasing employment in the next quarter.

A shortage of skilled labour continued to impede production for 5% of manufacturers in July, mostly in Ontario and Alberta. For the first time since the end of 1991, a lack of unskilled labour was considered a production problem by 1% of manufacturers, especially in Alberta.

**Available on CANSIM: matrices 2843-2845.**

For further information, contact Claude Robillard (613-951-3507; Internet: [robilcg@statcan.ca](mailto:robilcg@statcan.ca)), Industry Division.

## Number of help-wanted ads continues to grow

In July, when the number of help-wanted advertisements in newspapers rose 2%, the Help-wanted Index reached 124. This was the 12th consecutive monthly increase. The Index increased in eight provinces. Since August 1996, the index has increased by 24%. Recent movements in the index are in line with improvements in other economic indicators.

In Ontario, the index advanced 2% to 126, registering its 11th increase in 12 months. The index for Quebec remained unchanged at 110.

**Help-wanted Index, July 1997**  
(1996=100), seasonally adjusted

	Level	% change, previous year	% change, previous month
<b>Canada</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>2</b>
Newfoundland	112	11	2
Prince Edward Island	132	29	- 1
Nova Scotia	115	13	1
New Brunswick	122	24	4
Quebec	110	10	0
Ontario	126	26	2
Manitoba	131	31	2
Saskatchewan	127	26	2
Alberta	150	50	3
British Columbia	118	19	3

### Note to readers

The Help-wanted Index is compiled from the number of help-wanted advertisements published in 22 newspapers in 20 major metropolitan areas. The index is a measure of companies' intentions to hire new workers. These indexes have been seasonally adjusted and smoothed to ease month-to-month comparisons.

Beginning in June 1997, the Help-wanted Index was reweighted using the 1996 Census of Population estimates. The series has been revised historically from January 1981.

In British Columbia, the index grew 3% to 118; it has increased in 12 of the last 13 months. The index for the Prairie provinces gained 3% to reach 141. An increase in the number of help-wanted ads was observed in all provinces in this region. Alberta's index continued to lead the region with its 20th consecutive monthly increase. In Manitoba, the index posted its 12th increase in 13 months. Saskatchewan recorded its 18th increase in as many months.

In the Atlantic provinces, the index increased 1% to 118. The advance was led by New Brunswick (+4%), Newfoundland (+2%) and Nova Scotia (+1%).

**Available on CANSIM: matrix 105 (levels 8 to 10).**

For further information, contact Michael Scrim (613-951-4090; fax: 613-951-4087; Internet: [labour@statcan.ca](mailto:labour@statcan.ca)), Labour Division.

## New Housing Price Index rises

In June, the New Housing Price Index increased by 1.0% compared with June 1996. The index posted four consecutive annual increases from March through June, following a stable month in February and 31 consecutive decreases between July 1994 and January 1997. On a monthly basis, the index rose 0.1% from May to June—the eighth consecutive monthly increase.

Higher consumer confidence and favourable interest rates have contributed to the general improvement in housing markets in recent months. However, despite the general optimism, the competitive nature of housing markets coupled with regional concerns has moderated price increases or caused decreases in some of the cities surveyed.

### Note to readers

On April 1, 1997, the Harmonized Sales Tax (HST) came into effect in Newfoundland, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. In April, the New Housing Price Index, which is a contractors' selling price index, showed monthly declines in all cities that are surveyed in these provinces. It would appear that some sample builders have not yet fully reflected the impact of the HST on the prices of new houses.

The outlook for future housing construction does seem encouraging. Housing construction intentions, as measured by Statistics Canada's building permits data, were up 22.0% for the first six months of 1997 compared with the same period in 1996. As

(continued on page 4)

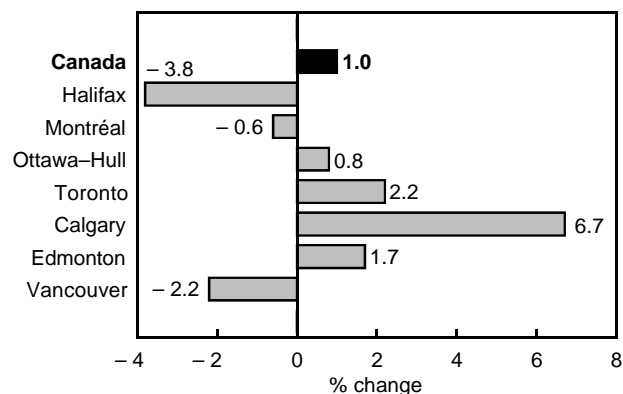
### ... New Housing Price Index rises

well, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation has reported that housing starts were up 26.9% for the first half of 1997 compared with the same period in 1996, while the Canadian Real Estate Association has reported that transactions in the first half of this year were up 17.9% from the same period last year.

**Available on CANSIM: matrix 2032.**

The second quarter 1997 issue of *Construction price statistics* (62-007-XPB, \$24/\$79) will be available in September. For further information, contact Paul-Roméo Danis (613-951-3350, fax: 613-951-2848, Internet: [danipau@statcan.ca](mailto:danipau@statcan.ca)), Prices Division.

**New housing price indexes, June 1996 to June 1997**



## Seniors' income moving up

**M**edian total income for individuals aged 65 and over reached \$15,600 in 1995, an \$800 increase over the previous year. This rate of increase surpassed the rate of inflation as measured by the Consumer Price Index.

The increases in median total income for all age groups from age 55 and over were higher than the rate of inflation. The near-senior age group (55- to 64-year-olds) had a median total income of \$20,800. In the 65-to-74 age group, median total income was \$16,600; for those 75 and over, it was \$14,700.

Individuals 65 and over in Hampstead, Quebec, claimed the country's highest median total income (\$34,300), followed by seniors in Westmount, Quebec (\$32,000), and Deep River, Ontario (\$27,200).

Nearly 12% of all seniors withdrew some money from their registered retirement savings plans (RRSPs) in 1995. These transactions include only withdrawals or RRSP annuity payments

### Median total income of families with a person 65 years of age and over, 1995

	Husband-wife families	Lone-parent families and non-family persons
	\$	
<b>Canada</b>	<b>34,200</b>	<b>15,800</b>
Newfoundland	23,800	12,500
Prince Edward Island	29,900	13,500
Nova Scotia	30,900	14,400
New Brunswick	29,100	13,800
Quebec	30,600	14,100
Ontario	37,900	18,000
Manitoba	32,700	15,600
Saskatchewan	32,400	15,100
Alberta	34,400	15,900
British Columbia	35,500	16,500
Yukon	37,300	15,700
Northwest Territories	29,900	14,600

### Note to readers

*A senior husband-wife family is a married or common-law couple in which the older spouse is 65 years of age or more.*

*Total income includes employment income, investment income, transfer payments, RRSP income and other income (net rental income, alimony, income from a limited partnership and other taxable income not mentioned above).*

*Investment income is the sum of dividends received from taxable Canadian corporations, interest and other investment income.*

*Transfer payments include benefits from private pensions, Unemployment Insurance, Old Age Security and net federal supplements, Canada and Quebec pension plans, Child Tax Benefit program, Quebec Family Allowance, GST credit, Workers' Compensation, Social Assistance and provincial refundable tax credits (Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, British Columbia and the Northwest Territories).*

*Median total income is the amount at which half the families/individuals have a higher total income and half have a lower total income.*

and do not include income generated from the conversion of RRSPs to registered retirement income funds. On average, 55- to 64-year-olds withdrew \$7,595 from their RRSPs, while those aged 65 to 74 withdrew \$6,054 and those 75 and over withdrew \$4,831.

Median total income for senior families also increased faster than the rate of inflation in 1995. The median for senior husband-wife families rose 4.6% to \$34,200. Provincially, this ranged from a high of \$37,900 in Ontario to \$23,800 in Newfoundland. The major source of total family income for senior husband-wife families was private and public pensions (55%), followed by employment and investment incomes, then other income. Investment income grew in importance for the first time since 1990, accounting for 15.6%, up from 14.0% in 1994 but still below 1990's peak of 26%.

*For further information, contact Client Services (613-951-9720; fax: 613-951-4745; Internet: [saadinfo@statcan.ca](mailto:saadinfo@statcan.ca)), Small Area and Administrative Data.*



## Single parents more dependent on transfers

Lone-parent families were twice as dependent on transfer payments as were husband-wife families in 1995. Transfer payments represented 31% of total income for lone-parent families and 15% of total income for husband-wife families, unchanged from 1994.

In 1995, lone-parent families received \$10.3 billion in transfers while husband-wife families received \$60.7 billion. There are about six times the number of husband-wife families as there are lone-parent households.

Social Assistance accounted for 42% of transfer payments collected by lone-parent families, which represented 13% of their total income. These payments represented only 1% of total income for husband-wife families. Private pensions accounted for most of the transfer income of husband-wife families: 30% of total transfers representing 5% of their total income.

Lone-parent families' median income increased by \$400 to \$20,900 (+2.0%) in 1995, but fell behind the rate of inflation as measured by the Consumer Price Index. Lone-parent families with

### Note to readers

*Lone-parent families consist of one parent with at least one child. Husband-wife families include married couples and those living common law, with or without children.*

*Total income includes employment income, investment income, transfer payments, RRSP income and other income (net rental income, alimony, income from a limited partnership, and other taxable income not mentioned above).*

*Transfer payments include benefits from private pensions, Unemployment Insurance, Old Age Security and net federal supplements, Canada and Quebec pension plans, Child Tax Benefit program, Quebec Family Allowance, GST credit, Workers' Compensation, Social Assistance and provincial refundable tax credits (Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, British Columbia and the Northwest Territories).*

*The data are from the 1995 taxation family file (TIFF) based on the 1995 T1 tax returns filed in the spring of 1996.*

### Components of transfer payments, 1995

	Lone-parent families	Husband-wife families
	%	
Unemployment Insurance	8.8	15.1
Goods and Services Tax credit	4.9	2.5
Child Tax Benefits	13.6	6.3
Old Age Security	8.7	15.2
Canada/Quebec Pension Plan	9.9	18.3
Other pensions	7.7	29.8
Workers' Compensation	2.3	4.5
Social Assistance	41.9	6.8
Provincial refundable tax credits/ Quebec family allowance	2.2	1.5
<b>Total transfers</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Total transfers as a proportion to total income	30.7	15.4

one or two children saw their median income increase faster than the rate of inflation, but those with three or more children experienced growth below the rate of inflation. The median income of husband-wife families also rose, up 2.5% to \$49,000. This increase was largest among husband-wife families with no children.

Median total income for lone-parent families headed by males increased 2.2% to \$32,200 in 1995, while female lone-parent families saw their median total income rise only 1.1% to \$19,900. Median total income for lone-parent families ranged from a low of \$15,700 in Newfoundland to a high of \$22,800 in Ontario. Among census metropolitan areas, Saint John had the lowest lone-parent median income at \$16,400, while Québec had the highest at \$25,400.

Among husband-wife families in which spouses reported employment income, 69% were dual-earners, with a median employment income of \$54,500. Nearly one-quarter of these families saw women contribute more to family income than men. Men were breadwinners in three-quarters of single-income husband-wife families.

*For further information, contact Client Services (613-951-9720; fax: 613-951-4745; Internet: [saadinfo@statcan.ca](mailto:saadinfo@statcan.ca)), Small Area and Administrative Data.*

## Crime rate falls

Canada's overall crime rate fell 2% in 1996, down for the fifth consecutive year. This placed the incidence of crime per 100,000 people at virtually the same level recorded in 1986. Police reported 2.6 million Criminal Code incidents: 11% were violent crimes and 59% were property crimes. The remaining incidents included mischief, prostitution, arson and bail violations.

The violent crime rate fell 2% in 1996, the fourth consecutive annual decline. Homicide (+6%) and robbery (+2%) increased, while the rates for all other violent crimes decreased. Although minor assaults (which account for 6 in 10 violent crimes) dropped for the third straight year, the rate remained 39% higher than a decade earlier.

Police reported over 1.5 million property incidents, down 15% from 1991. Motor vehicle theft is the one property crime that has continued to rise in recent years: since 1988 it has grown by 79%. The only other property crime to increase in 1996 was residential breaking and entering (+3%).

In 1996, the 4% decline in the rate of young people (12- to 17-year-olds) charged with violent crime was the first decrease since the Young Offenders Act came into effect. In total, police charged 117,773 youths with Criminal Code offences. More than half were charged with property crimes and 19% were charged with violent crimes.

Among the nine largest census metropolitan areas (CMAs), Québec (+5%), Montréal (+3%) and Vancouver (+3%) all reported

*(continued on page 6)*

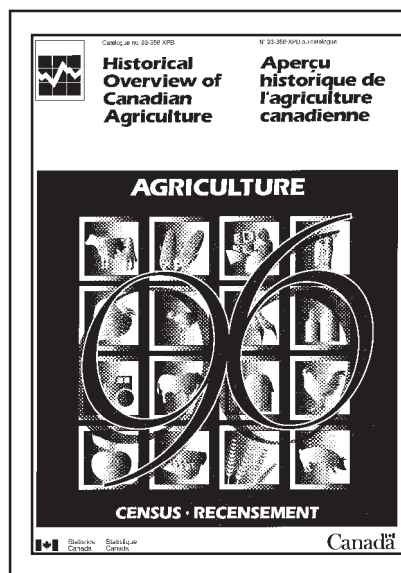
### ... Crime rate falls

increases in their overall crime rates. Although Québec showed the largest increase, it retained the lowest overall crime rate. As with previous years, the highest rate was reported by Vancouver. Five of the CMAs reported declines in violent crime, with Toronto posting the largest drop (–9%). Property crime rates dropped in five of the nine cities, with Ottawa recording the largest decrease (–15%). In 1996, property crime was lowest in Toronto and continued to be highest in Vancouver.

*Available on CANSIM: 2198–2200 and tables 00140103 and 00150202.*

*Juristat: Crime statistics, 1996, Vol. 17, no. 8, (85-002-XPE, \$10/\$93) is now available. For further information, contact Information and Client Services (613-951-9023 or 1 800 387-2231), Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics.*

## New from Statistics Canada



### Historical overview of Canadian agriculture 1996 Census

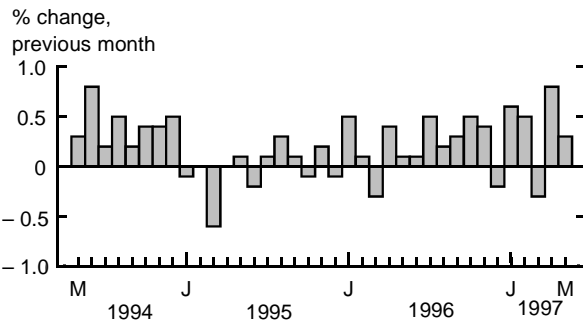
The *Historical overview of Canadian agriculture* is part of the 1996 Census of Agriculture series of products and is an expanded version of the popular publication introduced in 1991. This convenient volume traces trends in Canadian agriculture over the past 75 years—from the first census of the 1920s to the last one of the millennium.

The first section highlights the past 75 years by presenting selected data from each of the 13 censuses conducted between 1921 and 1996. The second section provides counts, totals, averages and percentage changes for an expanded set of variables at the national and provincial levels for the 1976, 1981, 1986, 1991 and 1996 Censuses of Agriculture. The last section focuses on land management practices between 1991 and 1996.

*The Historical overview of Canadian agriculture (93-358-XPB, \$49) is now available. For more information, contact the User Services Unit (1 800 465-1991; Internet: villros@statcan.ca), Census of Agriculture. To order this publication, contact your nearest Statistics Canada Regional Reference Centre or call our national order line at 1 800 267-6677.*

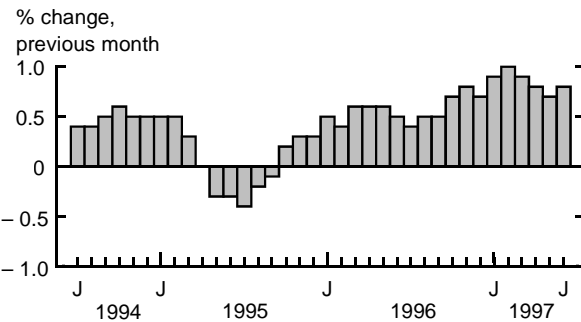
## Current trends

### Gross domestic product



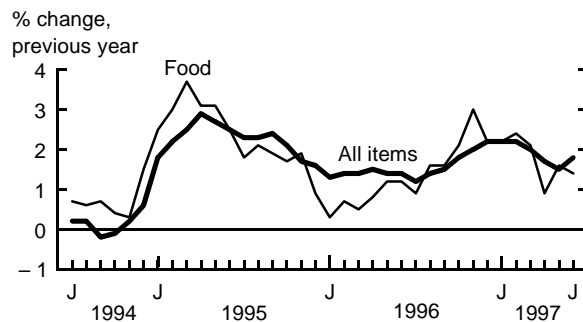
Real gross domestic product at factor cost rose a further 0.3% between April and May.

### Composite Index



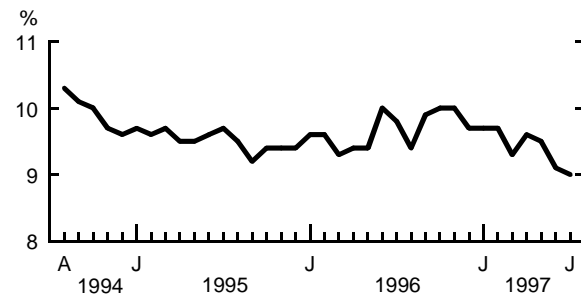
The Composite Index grew by 0.8% in June.

### Consumer Price Index



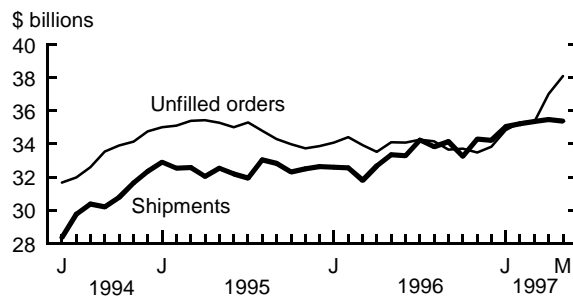
Consumers paid 1.8% more for goods and services in June 1997 than the year before. Food prices rose by 1.4%.

### Unemployment rate



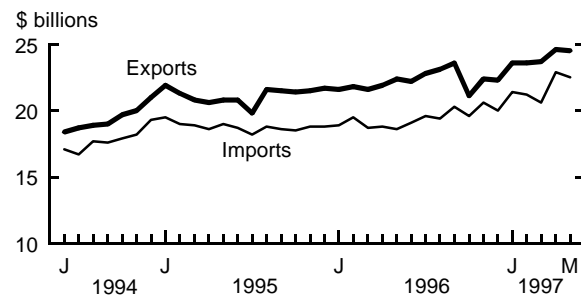
In July, the unemployment rate dipped 0.1 percentage points to 9.0%.

### Manufacturing



Manufacturers' shipments fell 0.2% in May to \$35.4 billion. The level of unfilled orders increased 2.4% to \$38.1 billion.

### Merchandise trade



In May, the value of merchandise exports decreased 0.1% from April to \$24.5 billion. Imports fell 1.6% to \$22.5 billion.

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

## Latest monthly statistics

	Period	Level	Change, previous period	Change, previous year
<b>GENERAL</b>				
Gross domestic product (\$ billion, 1986)	May	569.8	0.3%	4.0%
Composite Index (1981=100)	June	195.1	0.8%	9.6%
Operating profits of enterprises (\$ billion)	Q1 1997	25.5	3.3%	10.5%
Capacity utilization (%)	Q1 1997	85.0	0.6†	2.9†
<b>DOMESTIC DEMAND</b>				
Retail trade (\$ billion)	May	19.3	0.5%	7.6%
New motor vehicle sales (thousand of units)	May	114.9	1.8%	16.8%
<b>LABOUR</b>				
Employment (millions)	July*	14.0	0.1%	2.3%
Unemployment rate (%)	July*	9.0	– 0.1†	– 0.9†
Participation rate (%)	July*	64.7	– 0.1†	– 0.1†
Labour income (\$ billion)	May	37.34	0.6%	4.7%
Average weekly earnings (\$)	May	604.56	0.8%	3.0%
<b>INTERNATIONAL TRADE</b>				
Merchandise exports (\$ billion)	May	24.5	– 0.1%	4.5%
Merchandise imports (\$ billion)	May	22.5	– 1.6%	17.0%
Merchandise trade balance (all figures in \$ billion)	May	2.0	0.3	– 2.2
<b>MANUFACTURING</b>				
Shipments (\$ billion)	May	35.4	– 0.2%	6.0%
New orders (\$ billion)	May	36.2	– 2.4%	6.8%
Unfilled orders (\$ billion)	May	38.1	2.4%	11.7%
Inventory/shipments ratio	May	1.30	0.01	– 0.05
<b>PRICES</b>				
Consumer Price Index (1986=100)	June	138.0	0.2%	1.8%
Industrial Product Price Index (1986=100)	June	130.4	– 0.2%	1.0%
Raw Materials Price Index (1986=100)	June	134.2	– 2.3%	– 1.0%
New Housing Price Index (1986=100)	June*	132.9	0.1%	1.0%

**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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## Publications released from August 8 to 14, 1997

Division/Title of publication	Period	Catalogue number	Price: Issue/Subscription	
			Canada (C\$)	Outside Canada (US\$)
AGRICULTURE				
Historical overview of Canadian agriculture	1921 to 1996	93-358-XPB	49	49
DISTRIBUTIVE TRADES				
Department store sales and stocks	May 1997	63-002-XPB	17/165	17/165
Department store sales and stocks	June 1997	63-002-XPB	17/165	17/165
HOUSEHOLD SURVEYS				
Labour force information	week ending July 19, 1997	71-001-PPB	11/103	11/103
INDUSTRY MEASURES AND ANALYSIS				
Gross domestic product by industry	May 1997	15-001-XPB	15/145	15/145
Industrial monitor on CD-ROM	August 1997	15F0015XCB	258/995	258/995
INVESTMENT AND CAPITAL STOCK				
Building permits:				
microfiche version	June 1997	64-001-XMB	25/140	25/140
paper version	June 1997	64-001-XPB	25/248	25/248
MANUFACTURING, CONSTRUCTION AND ENERGY				
Footwear statistics	Q2 1997	33-002-XPB	8/25	8/25
Industrial chemicals and synthetic resins	June 1997	46-002-XPB	7/62	7/62
Oil pipeline transport	May 1997	55-001-XPB	12/114	12/114
Oil and fats, Vol. 48, no. 6	June 1997	32-006-XPB	7/62	7/62
Particleboard, oriented strandboard and fibreboard, Vol. 33, no. 6	June 1997	36-003-XPB	7/62	7/62
Production and shipments of steel pipe and tubing	June 1997	41-011-XPB	7/62	7/62
Steel wire and specified wire products	June 1997	41-006-XPB	7/62	7/62
PRICES				
Consumer prices and price indexes	Q1 1997	62-010-XPB	25/83	25/83
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY REDESIGN PROJECT				
Federal scientific activities	1997-98	88-204-XPB	78	78

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