



Infommat

A Weekly Review

Friday, October 3, 1997

OVERVIEW

◆ Activity in shipments resumes

After a two-month pause in activity, a broad-based advance by most industries led to an increase in total manufacturing shipments in July.

◆ Strong growth in economic activity

Gross domestic product at factor cost rose in July after a pause in June. Growth in manufacturing picked up strongly and was widespread throughout the sector.

◆ Foreign buyers snap up Canadian stocks

Foreign buyers snapped up a record amount of Canadian stocks in July. Meanwhile, Canadian residents were huge buyers of foreign bonds.

◆ Raw material prices drop slightly

In August, manufacturers again paid slightly less for their raw materials compared with a month earlier.

◆ Industrial product prices rise

The Industrial Product Price index was up in August. Almost half of the increase was due to the rise in the value of the U.S. dollar.

◆ Expenditures on culture continue to decline

In 1995-96, overall government spending on culture fell for the sixth straight year, after adjusting for inflation.

Activity in shipments resumes

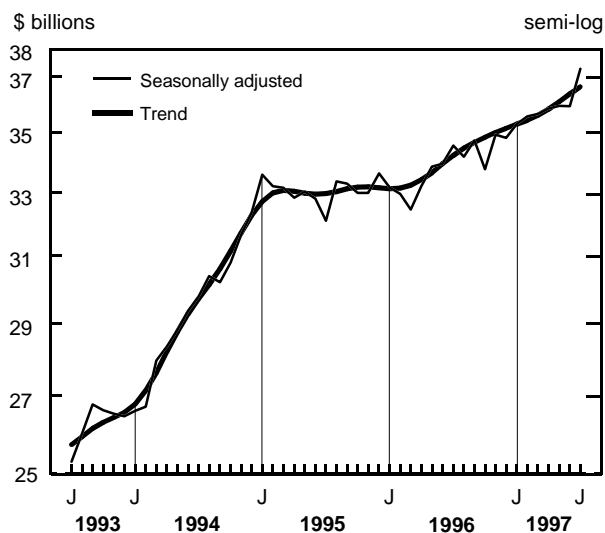
Total manufacturing shipments rose by 3.8% in July to \$37.3 billion. This burst of activity was led by a broad-based advance in most industries and followed a two-month pause. From January to July 1997, shipments increased 7.4% compared with the same period of 1996.

Almost half of July's increase in shipments resulted from temporary factors, including a 9.1% surge in the motor vehicle industry and an 8.4% increase at oil refineries. Growth was widespread, with 19 of the 22 industry groups reporting gains. The electrical and electronic products industry, which was buoyed by a strong performance in telecommunications equipment, posted the largest increase (+9.1%). Shipments of aircraft and parts, motor vehicle parts, machinery, fabricated metal parts and chemicals were also up significantly. These increases were partly offset by declines in the food (-2.1%) and wood (-2.3%) industries.

Manufacturers' inventories dropped for the first time in six months, falling 0.8% to \$46.5 billion. The largest decrease was posted by the motor vehicle industry (-28.6%). Inventories of aircraft and parts and paper and allied products were also down.

(continued on page 2)

Shipments



... Activity in shipments resumes

Gains in wood (+4.4%) and primary metals partly offset these decreases.

The rise in shipments and the drop in inventories pushed the inventory-to-shipments ratio down from 1.31 in June to an all-time low of 1.25 in July. The ratio has been trending downward for almost two years, indicating that growth in inventories during this time has been outpaced by that of shipments.

Manufacturers' backlog of unfilled orders, a key determinant of future shipments, rose 1.5% in July to \$38.7 billion. Increases in unfilled orders since the beginning of the year represent a significant departure from the flat performance in 1996. Once again, orders were raised by an increase in the aircraft and parts

Manufacturers' shipments, July 1997

Seasonally adjusted

	\$ millions	% change, previous month
Canada	37,283	3.8
Newfoundland	120	- 9.8
Prince Edward Island	71	- 1.6
Nova Scotia	511	- 0.5
New Brunswick	675	0.4
Quebec	8,538	2.5
Ontario	20,217	5.6
Manitoba	882	6.2
Saskatchewan	527	11.6
Alberta	279	- 2.0
British Columbia	295	1.2
Yukon and Northwest Territories	3	1.4

Note to readers

Unfilled orders are a stock of orders that will contribute to future shipments, assuming that orders are not cancelled. New orders represent orders received whether shipped in the current month or not. They are measured as the sum of shipments for the current month (orders received this month and shipped within the same month) plus the change in unfilled orders. Not all orders will be translated into Canadian factory shipments, as portions of large contracts can be subcontracted out to other countries.

Beginning in July 1997, the estimated values of shipments, inventories and orders have been revised back to January 1995. These revisions result from benchmarking to the 1995 Annual Survey of Manufacturers (ASM). The benchmarking and revision process adjusts monthly sample estimates in the benchmark year (1995) to the annual ASM levels, updates the sample, uses new and revised data and re-estimates the seasonal adjustment factors.

industry (+3.5%). Electrical and electronic products also recorded an increase, while the machinery industry reported the largest decline (-1.8%).

Available on CANSIM: matrices 9550-9559, 9562-9579 and 9581-9595.

*The July 1997 issue of **Monthly Survey of Manufacturing** (31-001-XPB, \$20/\$196) will be available shortly. For further information, contact Richard Evans (613-951-9834) or Bob Traversy (613-951-9497), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. (See also "Current trends" on page 8.)*

Strong growth in economic activity

Gross domestic product (GDP) at factor cost rose 0.8% in July after a pause in June. Economic activity has increased 0.4% a month on average so far this year, compared with 0.2% for all of 1996.

Manufacturing production grew by 1.7% in July after decelerating rapidly in May and June. Overall, output increased in 19 of the 21 major groups. Gains in electrical and electronic equipment (+4.4%) and a rebound in primary metals (+5.8%) were responsible for more than half of the advance. The gains in transportation equipment and metal, chemical and wood products were also sizeable. However, declines in the fabrication of paper and allied products and foodstuffs restrained growth somewhat.

In the mining sector, output rebounded 3.8% in July after dropping in the previous two months. The recovery in non-ferrous metal mines following the end of the labour dispute, as well as the sizeable gains in crude oil and natural gas production were behind the increase. Elsewhere in the mining sector, drilling activity remained high and advanced even further.

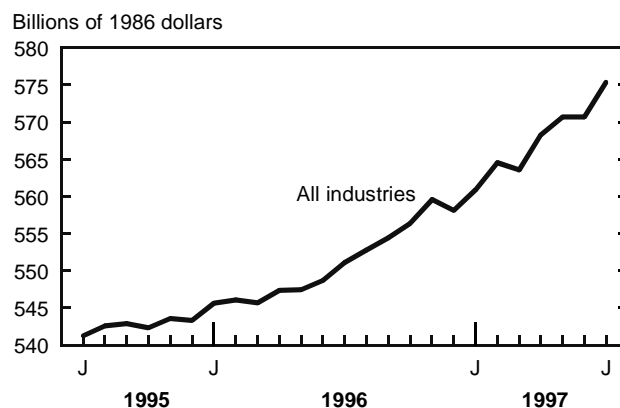
Wholesaling activity rose 1.7%, due primarily to increased sales of machinery and equipment, along with advances in imports and domestic production of industrial and office machinery. Wholesalers of consumer goods also had a good month. Retailing

Note to readers

The gross domestic product (GDP) of an industry is the value added by labour and capital in transforming inputs purchased from other industries into output.

Monthly GDP by industry is valued at 1986 prices. Estimates are seasonally adjusted at annual rates.

Gross domestic product at factor cost



(continued on page 3)

... Strong growth in economic activity

activity grew 1.4% in July after slipping in June. Sales by motor vehicle dealers, which were mostly responsible for June's decline, accounted for a large portion of July's gain.

Construction activity was unchanged in July. A decline in residential construction was offset by more activity on non-residential building projects. In other industries, financial and related services advanced 0.5%, with mutual funds leading the

increase. Business services were mostly responsible for the gain in community, business and personal services.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 4671-4674.

The July 1997 issue of **Gross domestic product by industry** (15-001-XPB, \$15/\$145) will be available shortly. For further information, contact Michel Girard (613-951-9145), Industry Measures and Analysis Division. (See also "Current trends" on page 8.)

Foreign buyers snap up Canadian stocks

Foreign buyers snapped up \$2.3 billion of Canadian stocks in July. At the same time, however, they reduced their holdings of Canadian debt securities by \$1.8 billion. Canadian residents, meanwhile, bought a record \$1.6 billion of foreign bonds.

As Canadian stock prices shot up in July (+0.7%), foreign purchases of Canadian stocks matched the previous record set in May 1996. The buying spree came mainly from the United States and to a lesser extent from Europe.

After buying Canadian bonds in June, foreign residents sold off \$1.4 billion worth in July. New Canadian bonds issued in foreign markets rose to \$5.7 billion; however, these were offset completely by a similar amount of retiring foreign-held Canadian bonds. In total, non-residents reduced their holdings of federal issues by \$3.5 billion in July. Overall, Europeans sold \$4.3 billion of Canadian bonds, while U.S. investors bought \$2.8 billion during the month.

Non-residents reduced their holdings of Canadian money market paper again in July (-\$0.5 billion). Heavy selling by U.S. investors was mostly offset by purchases from European and Asian investors.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 2328-2330, 2378-2380 and 4195.

The July 1997 issue of **Canada's international transactions in securities** (67-002-XPB, \$18/\$176) will be available shortly. For further information, contact Don Granger (613-951-1864), Balance of Payments Division.

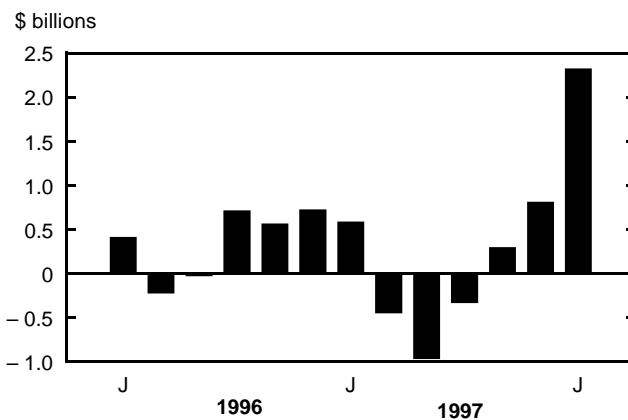
Note to readers

Interest rates: Both Canadian and U.S. short-term rates, which have been relatively flat since November 1996, rose in July. Canadian rates rose some 15 basis points more than their U.S. counterparts, reducing the differential to 200 basis points, continuing to favour investment in the United States. During the same period, U.S. long-term federal government bond yields declined slightly less than their Canadian counterparts, resulting in a differential of zero.

Stock prices: Canadian stock prices, as measured by the TSE 300 Index, shot up 6.8% in July, bringing the gain in the past three months to 15%. U.S. stock prices, as measured by Standard and Poor's Composite 500 Index, were even stronger, gaining 7.8% in July and a full 19% over the same three-month period.

Canadian dollar: The Canadian dollar closed July marginally higher at US72.55 cents, gaining back the small amount it lost in June.

Foreign investment in Canadian stocks



Raw material prices drop slightly

In August, manufacturers again paid slightly less (-0.1%) for their raw materials compared with a month earlier. Lower prices for logs, hogs and copper were almost offset by higher crude oil prices. The Raw Materials Price Index stood at 133.3 in August (1986=100), down from its revised July level of 133.5. Compared with 12 months earlier, raw material prices were down 2.8%. If the mineral fuels category (mostly crude oil) were excluded, raw material prices would have decreased by 1.1% in August.

On an annual basis, crude oil prices were down 7.5% compared with August 1996. This was the fifth consecutive annual decline. The August monthly increase in crude oil prices (+2.4%) was partly due to refinery outages and was somewhat dampened by the news of Iraq's return to the world market.

Wood prices fell by 2.9% in August, as lower log prices were marginally offset by slightly higher pulpwood prices. However, compared with 12 months earlier, wood prices were up 4.1%. In August, log prices were subject to an element of oversupply due to huge log inventories of fir on the U.S. west coast.

Vegetable product prices showed no overall change in August. Higher prices for grains and unrefined sugar were offset by lower prices for coffee and oilseeds. Compared with a year earlier, vegetable product prices were down 11%. Animals and animal product prices fell 1.1% compared with July, with lower prices for hogs and fish contributing to the decline.

Non-ferrous metal prices were up 0.7% in August, after declining over the previous two months. Higher prices for aluminum materials, zinc concentrates and gold were greatly offset by lower prices for copper concentrates. Zinc prices showed their strongest gain this year. Compared with August 1996, non-ferrous metal prices remained almost unchanged.

Available on CANSIM: matrix 2009.

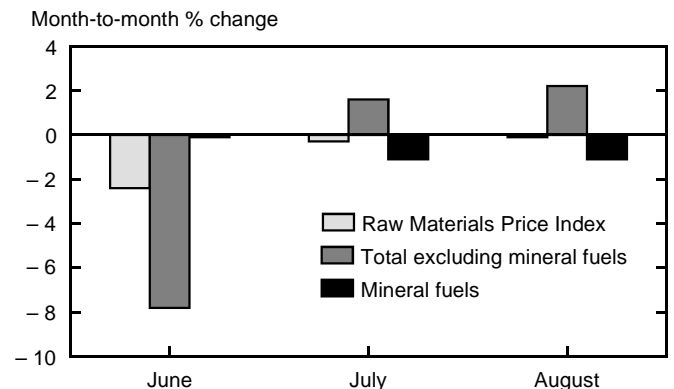
The August 1997 issue of *Industry price indexes* (62-011-XPB, \$22/\$217) will be available at the end of October. For further information, contact Elvira Marinelli (613-951-3350; fax: 613-951-2848), Prices Division.

Note to readers

The Raw Materials Price Index (RMPI) reflects the prices paid by Canadian manufacturers for key raw materials. Many of these prices are set in a world market. Also, unlike the Industrial Product Price Index, the RMPI includes goods that are not produced in Canada.

Conversion of indexes: In September 1997 (revised from July), Statistics Canada will be converting its economic series to 1992=100 as its time reference year. Series for Industrial Product Price Indexes, Raw Material Price Indexes and the Electric Power Selling Price Indexes will be converted. The new series will be on different CANSIM matrices and will have different databank numbers. The existing series, on the 1986 time base, will be terminated with the publication of the August 1997 figures. These indexes will also be updated using a 1992 weighting pattern.

Raw material prices



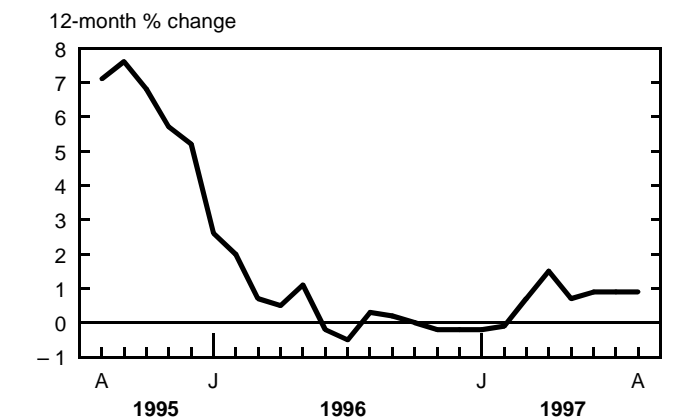
Industrial product prices rise

The Industrial Product Price Index (IPPI) rose 0.7% to 130.8 (1986=100) in August, up from its revised July level of 129.9. Almost half of the increase was due to the rise in the value of the U.S. dollar. The 12-month change in industrial prices remained at 0.9% for a third consecutive month.

In August, the most significant change was the 5.9% jump in the overall price level for gasoline and fuel oil. Compared with August 1996, the overall level was also up 5.9%. Crude oil rose 2.4% in August, but stood 7.5% lower than 12 months earlier. Consumers paid 4.8% more at the gas pumps. Other notable monthly price changes were those for exported motor vehicles, certain non-ferrous metals, and pulp and paper products.

Virtually all of August's change in motor vehicle prices was due to the increase in the value of the U.S. dollar. While domestic prices for automobiles remained unchanged and those for trucks dropped somewhat, export prices increased about 1.5% for both automobiles and trucks.

Industrial product prices



(continued on page 5)

... Industrial product prices rise

Products of three of the base non-ferrous metals posted increases in August: aluminum (+4.4%), nickel (+4.3%) and refined zinc (+14.5%). Increasing demand for jewellery, bars and coins in India, China and the Gulf States contributed to the rise in the price of gold. However, the price decline for items made from copper or copper alloys (–5.2%) partly offset these increases.

The price of pulp rose 1.2% in August. Among pulp products, newsprint prices advanced 2.1%, while the price of fine papers increased 1.3%. In the United States, the current period of prosperity has resulted in more print media advertising, which has boosted demand for newsprint and fine papers.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 2000–2008.

The August 1997 issue of *Industry price indexes* (62-011-XPB, \$22/\$217) will be available at the end of October. For further information, contact Elvira Marinelli (613-951-3350; fax: 613-951-2848), Prices Division.

Note to readers

The Industrial Product Price Index (IPPI) reflects the prices that producers in Canada receive as the goods leave the plant gate. It does not reflect what the consumer pays. Unlike the Consumer Price Index, the IPPI excludes indirect taxes and all the costs that occur between the time when a good leaves the plant and the time when the final user takes possession of it, including the transportation, wholesale and retail costs.

Canadian producers export many goods. They often quote their prices in foreign currencies, particularly for motor vehicles, pulp, paper, and wood products. A rise or fall in the value of the Canadian dollar against the U.S. dollar therefore affects the IPPI. A 1.0% change in the value of the Canadian dollar against the U.S. dollar has been estimated to change the IPPI by approximately 0.2%.

Conversion of indexes: In September 1997 (revised from July), Statistics Canada will be converting its economic series to 1992=100 as its time reference year. Series for Industrial Product Price Indexes, Raw Material Price Indexes and the Electric Power Selling Price Indexes will be converted. The new series will be on different CANSIM matrices and will have different databank numbers. The existing series, on the 1986 time base, will be terminated with the publication of the August 1997 figures. These indexes will also be updated using a 1992 weighting pattern.

Expenditures on culture continue to decline

In 1995–96, overall government spending on culture fell for the sixth straight year (when adjusted for inflation). Federal, provincial, territorial and municipal governments spent a combined total of \$5.82 billion on culture, down 0.4% from the previous year, and down 1.3% after adjusting for inflation.

For the second year in a row, federal spending on culture increased in 1995–96. The federal government allocated \$2.92 billion to culture, up 1.7% from the previous year. All of the increased spending was in the operations and capital budget, which accounted for 87% of federal spending on culture. Grants, contributions and other transfers to artists and cultural organizations fell for the third consecutive year.

Note to readers

Government spending on culture falls into three main categories: operating expenditures, capital expenditures, and grants and contributions. Spending is primarily financed through government appropriations, but also through other sources such as advertising revenues.

Unless otherwise stated, all values are expressed in current dollars with no adjustment for inflation. The data from provincial–territorial cultural departments and agencies are based on a financial year from April 1, 1995 to March 31, 1996. Municipal data are based on a financial year from January 1 to December 31, 1995.

Government expenditures on culture

	1989–90	1994–95	1995–96	1994–95 to 1995–96
	\$ millions			% change
Federal	2,891	2,875	2,923	1.7
Provincial/Territorial	1,690	1,863	1,789	– 4.0
Municipal ¹	1,080	1,427	1,420	– 0.5
All levels of government ² (current dollars)	5,376	5,849	5,823	– 0.4
All levels of government ² (1986 constant dollars)	4,779	4,527	4,469	– 1.3

1. Municipal spending is on a calendar-year basis; for example, 1995–96 represents the period from January 1 to December 31, 1995.

2. These totals exclude inter-governmental transfers and thus cannot be derived by adding the three figures above.

Federal spending on broadcasting, the largest cultural industry, increased in 1995–96 compared with 1994–95, while spending on other cultural industries (notably film and video production, book and periodical publishing, and the sound recording industry) declined. Federal spending on heritage activities was almost unchanged.

Provincial and territorial government spending on culture posted its third consecutive annual decline in 1995–96. Spending fell to \$1.79 billion, down 4% from 1994–95. The provinces and territories cut their spending on operations and capital projects, as well as on grants, contributions and other transfers to artists and cultural organizations. Most cultural sectors were affected by the drop in spending. Alberta and Newfoundland reported the largest cuts in spending, but outlays increased in the Northwest Territories, the Yukon, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island.

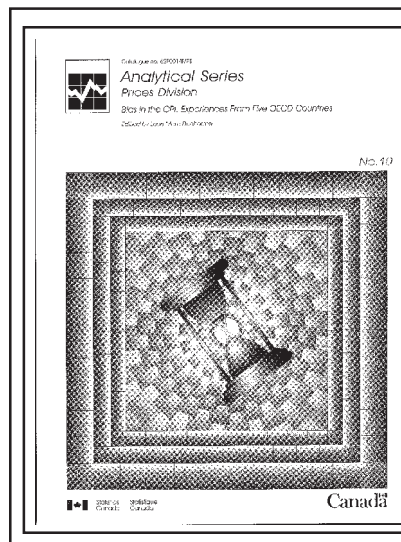
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... Expenditures on culture continue to decline

Municipal spending on culture declined by 0.5% to \$1.42 billion in 1995, ending 10 straight years of increases. The decrease was largely attributable to reduced spending in Quebec. On a per capita basis, municipal cultural expenditures were greater than the national average (\$48) in British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Ontario.

Canada's culture, heritage and identity: A statistical perspective (87-211-XPB, \$31) will be available soon. Data from the Government Expenditures on Culture Surveys (87F0001XPB, \$50) are now available in table format. For further information, contact Norman Verma (613-951-6863; fax: 613-951-9040), Culture, Tourism and the Centre for Education Statistics.

New from Statistics Canada



Bias in the CPI: Experiences from five OECD countries

The debate over measurement bias in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) is not new. It was initially raised by the "U.S. Advisory Commission to study the Consumer Price Index," better known as the Boskin report. Although the issue of measurement bias has been around for several decades, circumstances make the current debate special.

The new publication *Bias in the CPI: Experiences from five OECD countries* examines the experience of five different countries. Although most statistical agencies recognize that their CPIs are not perfect measures of inflation, some agencies from OECD countries have consistently developed research agendas designed to improve its measurement.

Bias in the CPI: Experiences from five OECD countries is now available. For further information, contact Louis Marc Ducharme (613-951-0688; fax: 613-951-2848; Internet: ducharl@statcan.ca), Prices Division.

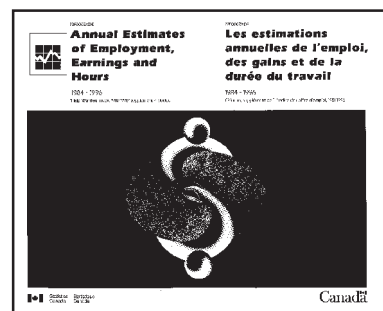
Annual estimates of employment, earnings and hours 1984–1996

Annual estimates of employment, earnings and hours, 1984–1996 is now available in electronic format. Once again, it has been produced using easy-to-load, user-friendly Adobe Acrobat software.

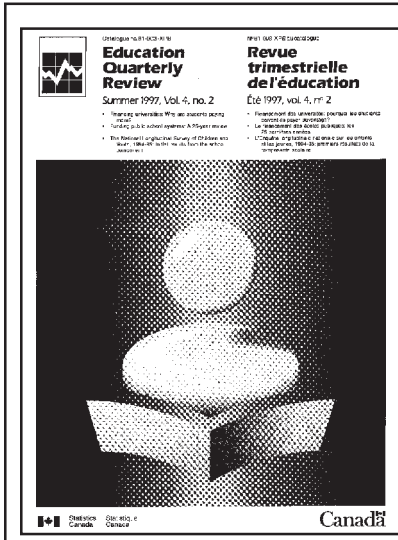
Accessing employment, earnings and hours data is easy. Users can browse the information on screen and print any or all pages, import the data into the spreadsheet of their choice, or download the product from the Internet immediately.

Annual estimates of employment, earnings and hours, 1984–1996 contains data tables for over 280 industries at the national, provincial and territorial levels, with information such as employment, average weekly and hourly earnings, average weekly hours and total weekly payrolls. Also included is the *Help-wanted Index, 1981–1996* supplement.

Annual estimates of employment, earnings and hours 1984–1996 (diskette: 72F0002XDE, \$120; Internet version: 72F0002XIE, \$120; diskette and paper: 10-3000XKB, \$150;) is now available. For further information on this product, or to order, contact the Client Services Section (613-951-4090; fax: 613-951-4087; Internet: labour@statcan.ca or order@statcan.ca), Labour Division.



New from Statistics Canada — concluded



Education quarterly review Summer 1997

The summer 1997 issue of *Education quarterly review* presents three articles on important issues in education: "Financing universities: Why are students paying more?," "Funding public school systems: A 25-year review," and "The National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth, 1994-95: Initial results from the school component."

Each issue of *Education quarterly review* also includes a series of social, economic and education indicators for Canada, the provinces and territories, and the G-7 countries.

The summer 1997 issue of Education quarterly review (81-003-XPB, \$21/\$68) is now available. For further information, contact Jim Seidle (613-951-1500; fax: 613-951-9040; Internet: seidjim@statcan.ca), Culture, Tourism and the Centre for Education Statistics.

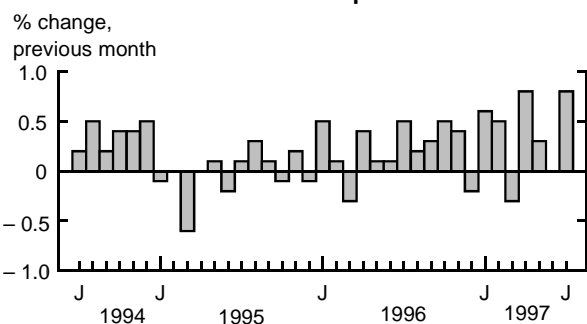
Migration 1995-96

Statistics Canada recently released data on migration for 1995-96. Produced annually, these migration data are a unique source of information on small areas and are ideal for supporting market analyses and policy decisions. They are available for census divisions and census metropolitan areas.

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

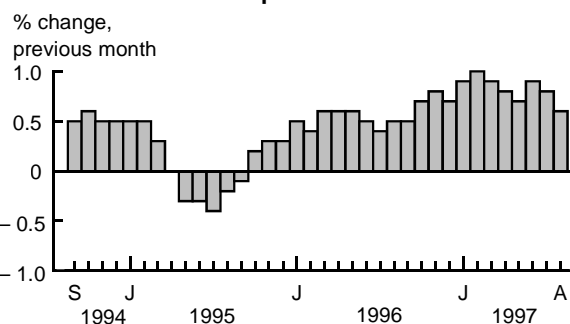
Current trends

Gross domestic product



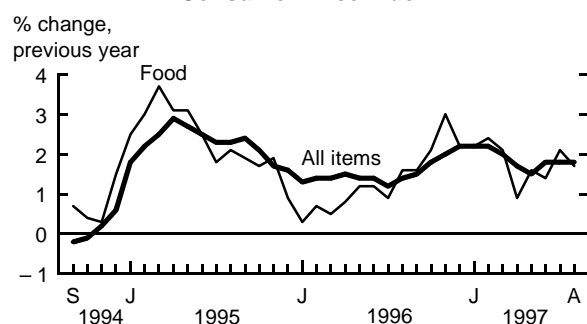
Real gross domestic product at factor cost rose 0.8% in July.

Composite Index



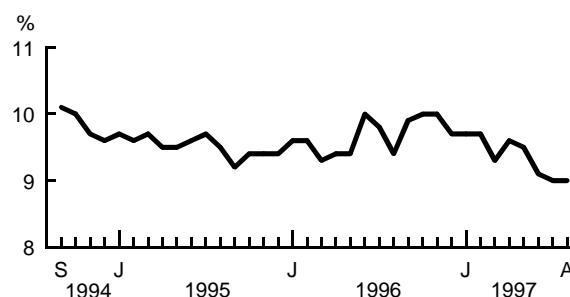
The Composite Index grew by 0.6% in August.

Consumer Price Index



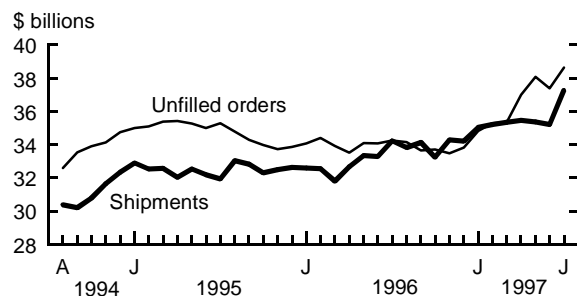
Consumers paid 1.8% more for goods and services in August 1997 than the year before. Food prices rose by 1.7%.

Unemployment rate



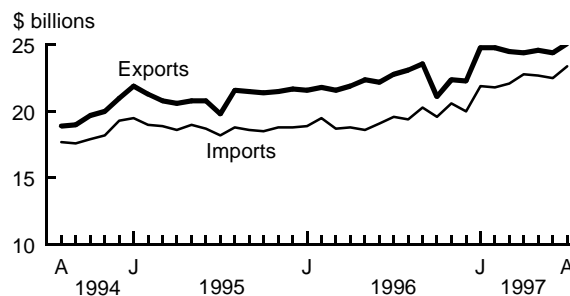
In August, the unemployment rate held at 9.0%.

Manufacturing



Manufacturers' shipments rose 3.8% in July to \$37.3 billion. The level of unfilled orders increased 1.5% to \$38.7 billion.

Merchandise trade



In July, the value of merchandise exports rebounded 2.8% from June to a record \$25.1 billion. Imports rose 5.2% to reach a record level of \$23.4 billion.

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

Latest monthly statistics

	Period	Level	Change, previous period	Change, previous year
GENERAL				
Gross domestic product (\$ billion, 1986)	July*	575.4	0.8%	4.4%
Composite Index (1981=100)	August	197.7	0.6%	10.1%
Operating profits of enterprises (\$ billion)	Q2 1997	26.5	0.5%	13.9%
Capacity utilization (%)	Q2 1997	84.8	0.9†	2.8†
DOMESTIC DEMAND				
Retail trade (\$ billion)	July	19.5	1.3%	8.0%
New motor vehicle sales (thousand of units)	July	117.1	3.3%	19.0%
LABOUR				
Employment (millions)	August	14.0	0.4%	2.1%
Unemployment rate (%)	August	9.0	0.0†	- 0.5†
Participation rate (%)	August	64.9	0.2†	0.1†
Labour income (\$ billion)	June	37.32	0.1%	3.9%
Average weekly earnings (\$)	June	599.55	- 0.5%	1.8%
INTERNATIONAL TRADE				
Merchandise exports (\$ billion)	July	25.1	2.8%	5.5%
Merchandise imports (\$ billion)	July	23.4	5.2%	16.4%
Merchandise trade balance (all figures in \$ billion)	July	1.7	- 0.5	- 2.0
MANUFACTURING				
Shipments (\$ billion)	July*	37.3	3.8%	7.9%
New orders (\$ billion)	July*	37.8	7.2%	9.0%
Unfilled orders (\$ billion)	July*	38.7	1.5%	12.5%
Inventory/shipments ratio	July*	1.25	- 0.06	- 0.06
PRICES				
Consumer Price Index (1986=100)	August	135.7	0.1%	1.8%
Industrial Product Price Index (1986=100)	August*	130.8	0.7%	0.9%
Raw Materials Price Index (1986=100)	August*	133.3	- 0.1%	- 2.8%
New Housing Price Index (1986=100)	July	132.9	0.0%	1.1%

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

Published by the Communications Division, Statistics Canada, 10th floor, R.H. Coats Bldg., Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0T6.

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Catalogue: 11-002E. Price: Canada: \$4.00 per issue, \$145.00 per year. Outside Canada: US\$4.00 per issue, US\$145.00 per year. All prices exclude sales tax.

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Publications released from September 26 to October 2, 1997

Division/Title of publication	Period	Catalogue number	Price: Issue/Subscription	
			Canada (C\$)	Outside Canada (US\$)
CULTURE, TOURISM AND THE CENTRE FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS				
Education quarterly review	Summer 1997	85-003-XPB	21/68	21/68
DISTRIBUTIVE TRADES				
Retail chain and department stores	fiscal year ended March 31, 1996	63-210-XPB	39	39
Wholesale trade	July 1997	63-008-XPB	19/186	19/186
MANUFACTURING, CONSTRUCTION AND ENERGY				
Asphalt roofing	August 1997	45-001-XPB	7/62	7/62
Crude petroleum and natural gas production	June 1997	26-006-XPB	19/186	19/186
Production and disposition of tobacco products	August 1997	32-022-XPB	7/62	7/62
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY REDESIGN PROJECT				
Telephone statistics	July 1997	56-002-XPB	10/93	10/93
TRANSPORTATION				
Service bulletin: Aviation, Vol. 29, no. 9		51-004-XPB	11/109	11/109

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