Friday, November 1, 1996

OVERVIEW

Canadians invest more in foreign securities

Canadian investors, led by mutual and pension funds, purchased a further \$1.1 billion of foreign stocks in August, bringing to almost \$9 billion their investment thus far in 1996.

◆ RRSP contributions reach new high

Canadians contributed a record \$23 billion to registered retirement savings plans in 1995.

Number of employment insurance beneficiaries drops

In August, 695,000 Canadians received regular employment insurance benefits, down 8.1% from the month before. This decline offset July's increase.

Industrial prices unchanged from one year ago

In September, for the fourth consecutive month, the 12-month change in industrial product prices remained near zero.

Manufacturers pay more for raw materials

Crude oil led the increase in raw material prices paid by manufacturers in September.

Employment drops for second consecutive month

The number of employees on business payrolls fell in August, the second straight monthly decline. August's employment drops were concentrated in manufacturing.

Canadians invest more in foreign securities

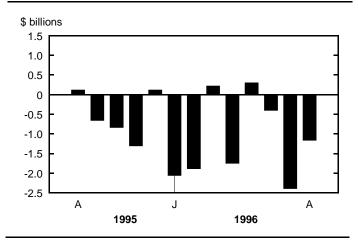
anadian investors, led by mutual funds and pension funds, purchased a further \$1.1 billion of foreign stocks in August, bringing to almost \$9 billion their investment so far in 1996. This is twice the \$4.5 billion invested for all of 1995 and is fast approaching the record \$9.8 billion invested in 1993. Meanwhile, foreign investors sold off a small amount of Canadian securities in August, following the \$3.4 billion disinvestment over the previous two months.

The major portion of August's domestic investment in foreign stocks continued to be directed to overseas stocks (80%), with the balance going to the U.S. market. The gross value in trade in outstanding foreign stocks (buys and sells with non-residents) was \$10 billion, 25% less than the monthly average for the year. Purchases of foreign bonds were flat, following a \$1.5 billion investment in July.

Foreigners invested a small amount in Canadian short-term paper (\$1.3 billion), which was roughly offset by a disinvestment in Canadian bonds (\$1.5 billion). Interest rates in Canada continued to decline with short-term rates becoming increasingly lower than their American counterparts. Canadian long-term rates were still above the U.S. rates, but the differential had narrowed once again.

(continued on page 2)

Canadian investment in foreign securities



... Canadians invest more in foreign securities

After accumulating \$6.6 billion of Canadian stocks in the first seven months of 1996, non-residents sold off a small \$0.2 billion in August. A large share buy-back by a major Canadian company contributed to the foreign disinvestment. New issues of Canadian stock sold in foreign markets declined to \$0.2 billion, well below the amounts sold in the previous three months. Foreign trading in Canadian stocks (sales and purchases) amounted to \$8.6 billion in

August, unchanged from July. Canadian stock prices (as measured by TSE 300 index) registered a sharp 4.3% rise, regaining some of the 6.0% lost over the previous two months.

Available on CANSIM: matrix 2330.

The August 1996 issue of **Canada's international transactions** in securities (67-002-XPB, \$17 /\$170) will be available shortly. For further information, contact Don Granger (613-951-1864), Balance of Payments Division.

RRSP contributions reach new high

anadians contributed a record \$23 billion to registered retirement savings plans (RRSPs) in 1995, an 8% increase from 1994. Despite the growth in contributions, the 1995 total was just 13% of what Canadians were eligible to save on a tax-deductible basis.

The record 5.7 million individuals who made contributions in 1995 represent 29% of all taxfilers. The average overall contribution was \$4,047, compared with \$3,999 in 1994. Nationally, the median RRSP contribution was \$2,400 in 1995, unchanged from the previous year.

Those over the age of 55 made the highest contributions. While comprising 16% of participants, these people accounted for 23% of the total contributions. Conversely, 15% of contributors were under the age of 30, while their contributions represented just 8% of the total. RRSP contributions ranged from an average of \$2,284 for contributors under the age of 30 to \$5,802 for individuals 55 and over.

A quarter of taxfilers who contributed to RRSPs in 1995 had employment income higher than \$50,200. The median employment

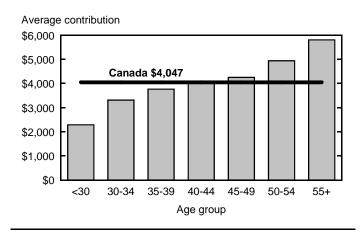
Characteristics of RRSP contributors

Number	Median employ- ment income (\$)	Average age	Female
5,682,990	34,600	42	44
64,230	33,200	42	38
19,870	27,300	43	42
137,560	31,900	42	40
103,440	32,100	42	38
1,330,760	32,700	42	42
2,220,250	36,600	42	45
218,900	31,200	42	44
203,140	29,700	42	42
585,420	34,100	41	43
784,250	35,600	42	44
5,700	43,100	41	48
9,490	53,800	39	44
	5,682,990 64,230 19,870 137,560 103,440 1,330,760 2,220,250 218,900 203,140 585,420 784,250 5,700	employ- ment income (\$) 5,682,990 34,600 64,230 33,200 19,870 27,300 137,560 31,900 103,440 32,100 1,330,760 32,700 2,220,250 36,600 218,900 31,200 203,140 29,700 585,420 34,100 784,250 35,600 5,700 43,100	employ- ment income (\$) 5,682,990 34,600 42 64,230 33,200 42 19,870 27,300 43 137,560 31,900 42 103,440 32,100 42 1,330,760 32,700 42 2,220,250 36,600 42 218,900 31,200 42 203,140 29,700 42 203,140 29,700 42 585,420 34,100 41 784,250 35,600 42 5,700 43,100 41

Note to readers

Data on RRSP contributions are drawn from the tax deductions claimed on 1995 personal income tax returns.

RRSP contributions by age



income for all taxfilers in 1995 was \$21,200, a 4% increase from the previous year. The increase in employment income may be one factor related to the increase in RRSP contributions.

The average contributor was 42, and had a median income of \$34,600. In 1994, this contributor would have been 43 years old, with a median income of \$34,200. The median contribution for women was \$2,000 in 1995, compared with \$2,800 for men. While women represented slightly more than half the tax-filing population, they accounted for 44% of RRSP contributors and 36% of total contributions in 1995. The median contribution for men was higher than for women in all provinces and territories.

Taxfilers in the Yukon and New Brunswick registered the largest increase in RRSP contributions in 1995, at 24% and 15% respectively. The Yukon recorded the largest increase in the number of contributors (+14%).

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

Number of employment insurance beneficiaries drops

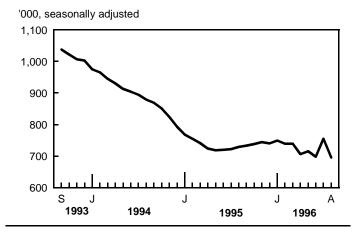
In August, 695,000 Canadians received regular employment insurance (EI) benefits, an 8.1% drop from the month before. This decline offset July's increase. Over the past three months, the number of beneficiaries has remained relatively unchanged. All provinces and territories recorded decreases, except New Brunswick and Newfoundland, with the largest drops occurring in Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

Regular benefit payments increased 0.8% in August to \$778 million, with five provinces and territories reporting increases. The largest percentage monthly increases were recorded in Saskatchewan (+3.7%) and Ontario (+3.5%). Following a significant decline in May, benefit payments have remained relatively flat.

El beneficiaries receiving regular benefits, August 1996 Seasonally adjusted

	Total '000	% change, previous month	% change, previous year
Canada	695	-8.1	-4.7
Newfoundland	36	0.2	-9.2
Prince Edward Island	9	-6.3	-10.3
Nova Scotia	35	-6.0	-6.1
New Brunswick	39	1.1	-7.6
Quebec	246	-8.8	-3.2
Ontario	175	-6.5	-0.8
Manitoba	17	-13.8	-12.3
Saskatchewan	14	-15.2	-5.1
Alberta	43	-9.9	-15.8
British Columbia	77	-7.0	-5.8
Yukon	1	-1.0	-4.5
Northwest Territories	1	-1.8	13.8

Number of EI beneficiaries paid regular benefits



The total number of regular weeks paid for August also increased slightly (+0.6% to 3 million). The "regular benefits paid" and "number of weeks" series have historically followed similar patterns; this month the two series reported slight increases.

The number of individuals who applied for employment insurance benefits in August was the lowest since June 1981. Applications declined 5.3% to 234,000 in August; this decline may be explained in part by new rules which took effect on July 1, 1996. Nine provinces and territories recorded declines, led by Newfoundland (-16.3%) and the Yukon (-14.7%).

Available on CANSIM: matrices 26 (series 1.6), 5700-5717, 5735 and 5736.

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

Industrial prices unchanged from one year ago

In September, for the fourth consecutive month, the 12-month change in industrial product prices remained near zero. Sharp price declines for some commodities (newsprint, pulp and non-ferrous primary metal products) were offset by increases in others (autos, trucks and other transportation equipment; petroleum and coal products; and lumber and sawmill products). Between August and September, industrial prices inched up 0.2%, with petroleum products and softwood lumber leading the price advance.

Prices for petroleum and petroleum products were increasing at all stages of production and distribution: the price of crude oil rose 9.0% and, at the manufacturer's level, gasoline and fuel oil prices climbed about 3.7%. In the United States, the producer price for gasoline remained almost unchanged, while that for fuel oil increased noticeably. Consumers in Canada paid 1.4% more for gasoline.

Prices for Canadian softwood lumber and ties rose 1.9% in September and stood 23.1% higher than a year ago. Softwood prices were up across Canada, except in the Atlantic provinces and on the coast of British Columbia. In the United States, prices

Note to readers

The industrial product price index (IPPI) reflects the prices producers receive as goods leave their plants. It does not reflect what consumers pay. Unlike the consumer price index, the IPPI excludes indirect taxes and all costs (including transportation, wholesale, and retail) occurring between the time when a good leaves the plant and when the final user takes possession.

Since Canadian export producers often quote their prices in foreign currencies, changes in the exchange rate affect 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 about 0.2%.

for softwood lumber increased as well. Despite these rising lumber prices, the value of Canadian building permits dropped in August. Housing starts, however, did climb in September. In the United States, August saw building permits down for the third time in four months, while September housing starts fell.

In the pulp and paper products category, the price decline for newsprint more than offset the marginal price increase for pulp. In

(continued on page 4)

... Industrial prices unchanged from one year ago

Canada, newsprint prices fell 3.5% in September, while in the United States they were down 4.5%, both in response to high inventory levels. For their part, Canadian pulp prices inched up 0.2%, while in the United States, they slipped 0.3%. Canadian pulp prices, after declining 45.8% between November 1995 and April 1996, had recovered 9.5% by September. Declining inventories

and increased world demand have been responsible for the recovery in pulp prices.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 2000-2008.

The September 1996 issue of **Industry price indexes** (62-011-XPB, \$21/\$210) will be available shortly. For further information, contact Paul-Roméo Danis (613-951-3350; fax 613-951-2848; Internet: danipau@statcan.ca), Prices Division.

Manufacturers pay more for raw materials

rude oil price jumps between August and September were the biggest factor in a 1.5% increase in raw material prices paid by manufacturers. Higher prices for cattle, logs and nickel also contributed to the increase. Lower prices for hogs, grains, oilseeds, copper and gold greatly offset the overall increase. If mineral fuels (90% of which is crude oil) were excluded, raw material prices for September would have fallen 1.6%.

On a 12-month basis, manufacturers paid 9.0% more for raw materials than in September 1995. However, if mineral fuels were excluded, the 12-month change would have shown no increase.

In September, crude oil prices were 9% higher than in August and 36.7% higher than in September 1995. Low inventories of heating oil reserves in both North America and Europe, along with the UN's suspension of the agreement to allow Iraq to sell oil, accounted for the recent price rises. The latter has left a potential shortfall of approximately 1% of the world oil supply.

Wood prices edged up 0.1% in September. Higher prices for logs were greatly offset by lower pulpwood prices. Compared with September 1995, wood prices have declined 0.6%. Over this period, lower pulpwood prices were mostly offset by higher log prices.

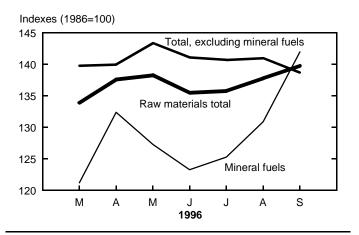
Vegetable product prices fell 2.9% in September, but were still 8.3% higher than 12 months earlier. September's lower prices for grains and oilseeds were marginally offset by higher prices for domestic fruits, coffee and unrefined sugar. Grain prices have been declining over the last four months, as abundant world supplies have weakened export demand. In Canada, the Wheat Board's asking export price for no.1 wheat has fallen from a record US\$292 per tonne in May to US\$187 in September.

Animal and animal product prices dropped 2.3% between August and September. Lower prices for hogs and fish were somewhat offset by higher prices for cattle and hides and skins. Compared with September 1995, animals and animal product prices were up 7.7%. Higher cattle, hogs and poultry prices led the increase.

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.

Raw material prices



Non-ferrous metal prices were down 2.7% in September compared with the previous month. Lower prices for copper concentrates, aluminum materials and gold were marginally offset by higher prices for nickel concentrates. Non-ferrous metal prices were 16.5% lower than in September 1995, due mostly to falling copper concentrate, aluminum material and metal alloy prices.

Available on CANSIM: matrix 2009.

The September 1996 issue of **Industry price indexes** (62-011-XPB, \$21/\$210) will be available shortly. For further information, contact Paul-Roméo Danis (613-951-3350; fax: 613-951-2848; Internet: danipau@statcan.ca), Prices Division.

Employment drops for second consecutive month

he number of employees on business payrolls dropped slightly in August, bringing the last two months' decline to 104,000. This follows a period of stability since January and contrasts with the growth of 1994 and 1995. Employees' weekly earnings, however, continued their upward trend, which

began last November. In August they climbed \$1.52 (+0.3%) to a weekly average of \$590.16.

Quebec was hardest hit, losing 87,000 employees. While most sectors of the economy were affected, the most significant declines were registered by retail trade, business services, and food and accommodation establishments. Ontario also posted large job losses in July and August (-30,000). During the last year, the number of employees in Ontario and Quebec has fallen by 57,000 and 38,000 respectively.

(continued on page 5)

... Employment drops for second consecutive month

Despite an increase in exports, which should benefit manufacturers, August's employment declines were concentrated in this sector. Manufacturing lost 12,500 jobs, following gains in most of 1996. The drop resulted from the combined effect of small losses in Quebec, Ontario and British Columbia. This first decline in several months goes counter to the growth trend observed in manufacturing since 1992.

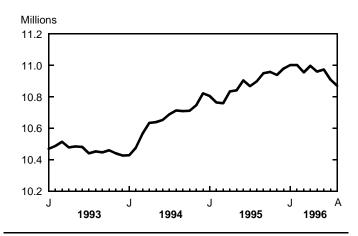
The transportation, communication and other utilities industry posted a fourth consecutive drop, now employing 44,000 fewer employees than in January. Quebec and British Columbia absorbed most of the decline, losing 17,000 and 18,000 employees in this sector respectively.

Despite recent losses, the number of employees in education has generally remained stable for several years. In August, there were 916,000 employees in this sector, the same number as in

Average weekly earnings, August 1996 Seasonally adjusted

	Industrial aggregate \$	% change, previous month	% change, previous year
Canada	590.16	0.3	2.6
Newfoundland	539.17	0.2	1.7
Prince Edward Island	497.58	-1.0	5.1
Nova Scotia	495.43	-0.6	1.0
New Brunswick	510.85	0.0	0.2
Quebec	553.94	1.3	0.9
Ontario	629.01	-0.2	2.8
Manitoba	520.16	1.6	2.4
Saskatchewan	522.22	1.1	5.5
Alberta	589.63	0.8	6.9
British Columbia	614.79	0.2	2.4
Yukon	689.41	-0.1	1.8
Northwest Territories	746.01	0.0	4.4

Employment



August 1992. However, Ontario has registered a declining trend since January, losing 19,000 jobs. In contrast, the number of employees in the other provinces has been stable, with the exception of Quebec, where employment has declined by 10,000 since April.

Average weekly earnings in August were 2.6% higher than in August 1995. While strong growth was reported for employees in finance, insurance and real estate, and business sectors, those in public administration and education saw weekly earnings decline over this period. Employees in transportation, communication and other utilities have seen little growth since August 1995.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 4285-4466, 9438-9452, 9639-9664 and 9899-9911.

The August 1996 issue of **Employment, earnings and hours** (72-002-XPB, \$31/\$310) will be available shortly. For further information, contact Stephen Johnson (613-951-4090; fax: 613-951-4087; Internet: labour@statcan.ca), Labour Division.

New from Statistics Canada

Financial performance indicators for Canadian business

The publication *Financial performance indicators for Canadian business* contains information on the financial performance and balance sheets of Canadian businesses. It is an authoritative reference for accountants, management consultants, business advisors, financial analysts and commercial lenders. It is available in print or on diskette (MS Word or Excel).

The publication contains 15 key financial performance indicators, such as rates of return, profit margins and debt-to-equity, as well as 26 "common-sized" balance sheet accounts. It groups the ratios into three themes: profitability, solvency and operating efficiency.

Volume 1 covers medium and large firms (revenues of \$5 million to \$75 million and over \$75 million) for more than 160 financial and non-financial industries based on 1995 data. Volume 2 covers small and medium firms (revenues of under \$25 million) for more than 240 non-financial industries based on 1993 data. Volume 3, which is new, covers more than 600 industries for small and medium firms for 1993, 1994 and 1995.

Financial performance indicators for Canadian business is now available (volume 1: 61F0058XPE, \$170; volume 2: 61F0059XPE, \$190; volume 3: 61F0060XPE, \$210). They are available as a set for \$395, a \$175 savings. Other combination prices are: volumes 1 and 2, \$280; and volumes 2 and 3, \$320. Single industry tables cost \$50. To order, contact Gail Sharland (613-951-9843) or the Statistics Canada Regional Reference Centre nearest you. For further information, contact Gail Sharland (613-951-9843), Industrial Organization and Finance Division, or the national enquiries line (1-800-263-1136).

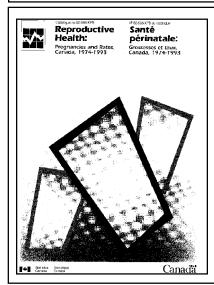
New from Statistics Canada (Continued)

Centre for education statistics

At its August 1996 meeting, the Canadian Education Statistics Council (CESC) agreed to a proposal from Statistics Canada for a Centre for Education Statistics to be established at Statistics Canada. The CESC comprises provincial and territorial ministers responsible for education and the Chief Statistician of Canada. The Centre's purpose is to develop a comprehensive program of pan-Canadian education statistics in order to support policy decisions and to ensure that accurate and relevant information regarding education is available to Canadians.

The creation of the Centre is viewed as a major step in improving the production and availability of statistical information in this very important field. The work of the Centre will be a collaborative undertaking between the provinces, the territories, the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, and Statistics Canada. Key partners in the education field will be consulted during the process of establishing a strategic plan for the Centre's program of work

For more information, contact Sange de Silva, Director, Culture, Tourism and the Centre for Education Statistics (613-951-9027) or Douglas Hodgkinson, Coordinator, Canadian Education Statistics Council (250-356-5962).



Reproductive health: pregnancies and rates

1974 to 1993

The publication *Reproductive health: pregnancies and rates*, Canada, 1974 to 1993 contains numerous tables, which provide a wide range of statistical data on pregnancies from 1974 to 1993. It is an extremely useful resource for medical researchers and demographers, as well as others who require vital statistics of this nature.

The publication provides estimates of pregnancies, pregnancy rates, and outcomes, including live births, induced (therapeutic) abortions and fetal loss. It also includes tables on age-specific numbers and rates of pregnancies and outcomes for Canada and the provinces and territories.

Reproductive health: pregnancies and rates, Canada, 1974 to 1993 (82-568-XPB, \$32) is now available. For further information, contact Surinder Wadhera (613-951-3415) or Wayne Millar (613-951-1631), Health Statistics Division.

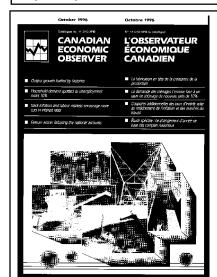
Savers, investors and investment databank

1995

The 1995 edition of the databank on savers and investors is now available. Today's release looks at the savings and investment income reported by Canadians on their 1995 personal income tax forms. New for this year are data by age and sex.

Produced annually, these data are a unique source of information on small areas and are ideal for supporting market analyses and policy decisions. Data are available for provinces and territories, cities, towns, census metropolitan areas and census divisions, as well as forward sortation areas (the first three characters of postal codes) and letter carrier walks (groupings of postal codes).

This databank will be of particular interest to researchers, policy planners, financial institutions and marketers. For further information, contact Client Services (613-951-9720; fax: 613-951-4745; Internet: saadinfo@statcan.ca), Small Area and Administrative Data Division.



Canadian economic observer

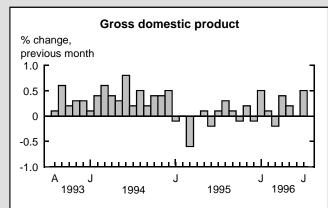
October 1996

The October 1996 issue of *Canadian economic observer*, Statistics Canada's flagship publication for economic statistics, presents a monthly summary of the economy, the major economic events in September, and a feature article entitled "The effect of rebasing on GDP". A statistical summary contains a wide range of tables and graphs on the principal economic indicators for Canada, the provinces and the major industrial nations.

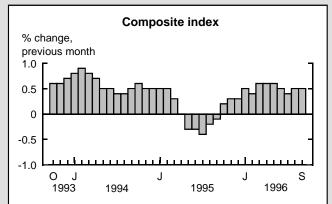
The *Historical statistical supplement* is also available for the first time ever in electronic format at an additional cost. Built right into this diskette product, the Windows-based Adobe Acrobat Reader lets you view, print and transport CEO's extensive range of data and graphics into the software of your choice.

The October 1996 issue of Canadian economic observer (11-010-XPB, \$22/\$220) is now available. To order the Historical statistical supplement 1995/96 on diskette (11-210-XDB, \$50), contact Cynthia Bloskie (613-951-3634; fax: 613-951-5403). For further information, contact Cynthia Bloskie (613-951-3634) or Francine Roy (613-951-3627), Current Economic Analysis Group (Internet: ceo@statcan.ca).

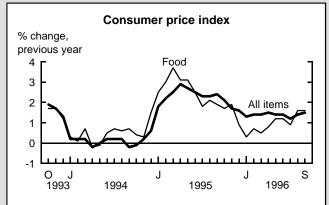
Current trends



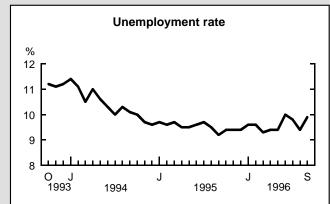
Real gross domestic product at factor cost increased 0.5% between June and July.



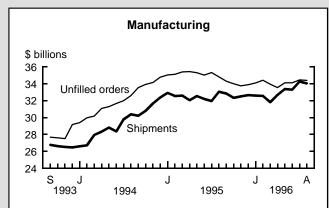
The composite index grew by 0.5% between August and September.



Consumers paid 1.5% more for goods and services in September 1996 than the year before. Food prices rose by 1.6%.



In September, the unemployment rate climbed 0.5 percentage points to 9.9%.



Manufacturers' shipments slipped 0.7% in August to \$34.0 billion. The level of unfilled orders fell 0.2% to \$34.4 billion.



In August, the value of merchandise exports rose 2.7% from July to \$23.2 billion. Imports fell 2.7% to \$19.1 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)	August*	552.0	0.2%	1.7%
Composite index (1981=100)	September	180.6	0.5%	5.4%
Operating profits of enterprises (\$ billion)	Q2 1996	22.1	-1.6%	-6.4%
Capacity utilization (%)	Q2 1996	82.7	0.3†	-0.9†
DOMESTIC DEMAND				
Retail trade (\$ billion)	August	17.9	-0.4%	0.3%
New motor vehicle sales ('000 units)	August	97.3	0.7%	-3.3%
LABOUR				
Employment (millions)	September	13.7	-0.3%	1.0%
Unemployment rate (%)	September	9.9	0.5†	0.7†
Participation rate (%)	September	64.8	0.0†	0.2†
Labour income (\$ billion)	June	35.7	0.3%	2.1%
Average weekly earnings (\$)	August*	590.16	0.3%	2.6%
INTERNATIONAL TRADE				
Merchandise exports (\$ billion)	August	23.2	2.7%	7.0%
Merchandise imports (\$ billion)	August	19.1	-2.7%	1.9%
Merchandise trade balance (all figures in \$ billion)	August	4.0	1.1	1.1
MANUFACTURING				
Shipments (\$ billion)	August	34.0	-0.7%	3.0%
New orders (\$ billion)	August	34.0	-1.8%	4.4%
Unfilled orders (\$ billion)	August	34.4	-0.2%	-1.2%
Inventory/shipments ratio	August	1.31	0.01	-0.05
PRICES				
Consumer price index (1986=100)	September	135.9	0.1%	1.5%
Industrial product price index (1986=100)	September*	129.7	0.2%	0.0%
Raw materials price index (1986=100)	September*	139.8	1.5%	9.0%
New housing price index (1986=100)	July	131.5	-0.1%	-2.2%

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

Infomat A weekly review

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^{*} new this week

[†] percentage point

Publications released from October 25 to 31, 1996

Division /title of publication			Price: Issue/Subscription		
	Period	Catalogue number	Canada (Cdn.\$)	United States	Other countries
				-	US\$
DEMOGRAPHY					
Quarterly demographic statistics	April-June 1996	91-002-XPB	10/32	12/39	14/45
EDUCATION CULTURE AND TOURISM Education quarterly review	Fall 1996	81-003-XPB	20/66	24/80	28/93
• •	Faii 1990	81-003-ALB	20/00	24/80	20/93
HEALTH STATISTICS Reproductive health: pregnancies and rates	1974 to 1993	82-568-XPB	32	39	45
INDUSTRY					
Crude petroleum and natural gas production Energy statistisc handbook	July 1996	26-006-XPB	18/180	22/216	26/252
electronic version paper version	October 1996 October 1996	57-601-XDE 57-601-UPB	275 375	330 450	385 525
• •	October 1996	37-001-UPB	373	430	323
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