



The Daily

Statistics Canada

Wednesday, February 12, 1997
For release at 8:30 a.m.

MAJOR RELEASES

- **Household facilities by income and other characteristics, 1996**
Income levels and children pave the on-ramp to the information highway for most households in Canada. In 1996, the 20% of households with the highest income were four times more likely to have a computer than those in the bottom 20%.

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- **New motor vehicle sales, 1996 and December 1996**
New motor vehicle sales rose 3.3% in 1996. This increase reflects the growing popularity of trucks and strong sales growth in the Prairies.

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MAJOR RELEASES

Household facilities by income and other characteristics

1996

Income levels and children pave the on-ramp to the information highway for most households in Canada. In 1996, the 20% of households with the highest income were four times more likely to have a home computer than those in the lowest 20% (56.6% compared with 13.7%). For single-family households, the gap between the highest and lowest income groups was somewhat smaller. In these households, 58.0% of those in the highest income group had a computer in 1996, compared with 20.2% for the lowest fifth of households.

Recent data from the Household Facilities and Equipment Survey showed that 3.6 million, or 31.6%, of Canada's 11.4 million households had a computer in 1996. That was triple the proportion of a decade ago, when only 1 in 10 households had a computer. About half the households with a modem-equipped computer were surfing the Internet from home last year. However, this represented just 7.4% of all households.

Households in the computer world

1996

| Type of household | Total | Have a home computer | Have a modem-equipped computer | Use the Internet from home |
|---|-------|----------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| estimated number of households ('000) | | | | |
| One person | 2,803 | 416 | 211 | 101 |
| Single-family without children under 18 | 4,271 | 1,297 | 662 | 322 |
| Single-family with children under 18 | 3,774 | 1,685 | 791 | 355 |
| Multi-family | 565 | 204 | 107 | 66 |

The ability of households to access the Internet is dependent on several factors. Internet services must be attractive to households, who in turn must be able to afford the necessary hardware (computer, modem, etc.), as well as any connect fees. Perhaps as important is whether or not households have the required knowledge to use these services.

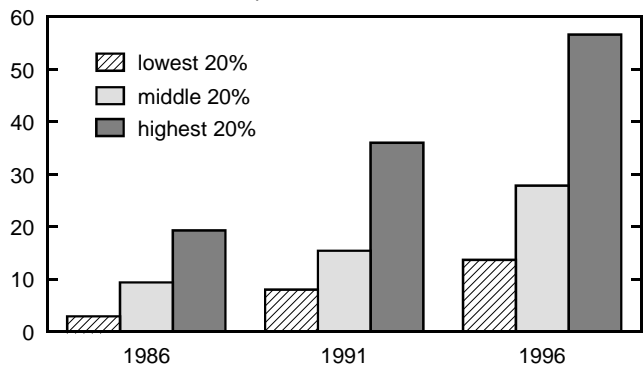
Note to readers

On October 23, 1996, Statistics Canada released data from the Household Facilities and Equipment (HFE) Survey showing, among other things, the rapid growth in the number of Canadian households that are able to travel the information highway. Today, the agency releases data linking 1996 demographic, housing, and facilities information from the HFE survey to 1995 income data from the Survey of Consumer Finances (SCF). Initial 1995 income results were released on December 11, 1996. Both surveys were conducted in the spring of 1996 and used the same sample of households. They represent virtually all private households in Canada, except for those in the Yukon and Northwest Territories and on Indian reserves.

The 1996 SCF and HFE Survey were weighted to population estimates that incorporate an adjustment for under-enumeration in the Census. The data from the 1981 to 1994 surveys have been reweighted to this base. All analysis in this release is based on the new estimates. Detailed analysis of the 1995 income data can be found in Income distributions by size in Canada, 1995 (13-207-XPB, \$44).

Computers in the home: high-income households have a large advantage

% households with a computer



Kids and keyboards — a natural fit

The likelihood of having a computer in the home is also closely related to the presence of children in the family. In 1996, 44.6% of single-family households with children under 18 years of age (about 1.7 million) had a computer, compared with 17.7% a decade ago. The rate was even higher for these households whose income was \$70,000 or more; 65.0% reported having a computer.

Households with children were also more likely to have a modem or to be using the Internet than other types of households. One in 5 (21.0%) had a modem,

and almost 1 in 10 (9.4%) reported using the Internet from home.

By comparison, for households without children, 30.4% had a home computer in 1996, 15.5% had a modem and 7.5% used the Internet. One-person households were the least likely to be using the Internet (3.6%).

Increasing use of computers in the classroom and higher computer literacy among the young are likely two factors contributing to this trend. According to the 1994 General Social Survey, 81.0% of people aged 15 to 24 were able to use a computer — the highest rate of any age group.

Dual-parent households using leisure and time-saving items

Overall, single-family households with children under 18 years of age had higher ownership rates for most leisure and time-saving items than other types of households. The trend was most pronounced where both parents were present, due not only to their higher incomes and associated purchasing power, but also due to the high proportion of families in which both parents worked.

Time-saving appliances were particular favourites of two-parent households: 93.8% had a microwave and 61.9% had a dishwasher. By comparison, 70.6% of one-person households had a microwave and 25.1% had a dishwasher. Leisure items were also popular for two-parent households with children. In 1996, 95.6% had a VCR, 67.6% had two or more colour televisions, 67.7% had a compact disc player, and 30.0% had a camcorder. Meanwhile, lower incomes and differing lifestyles saw one-person households having fewer of

the entertainment items: 63.8% had a VCR, 36.5% had a CD player, 23.4% had two or more colour televisions, and only 4.7% had a camcorder.

Two-parent households with children under 18 years of age were also more likely than other household types to own a van or truck. In 1996, almost half (48.7%) of these households owned this type of vehicle compared with 14.3% for one-person households.

Two-parent households with children under 18 years of age had an average income of \$61,755 in 1995, considerably higher than the overall household average of \$48,085. According to the Survey of Consumer Finances, both spouses worked in 6 out of 10 husband–wife families.

Data on households by income, province, household type, age of head and other characteristics are presented in *Household facilities by income and other characteristics, 1996* (13-218-XPB, \$35), which is now available. See *How to order publications*.

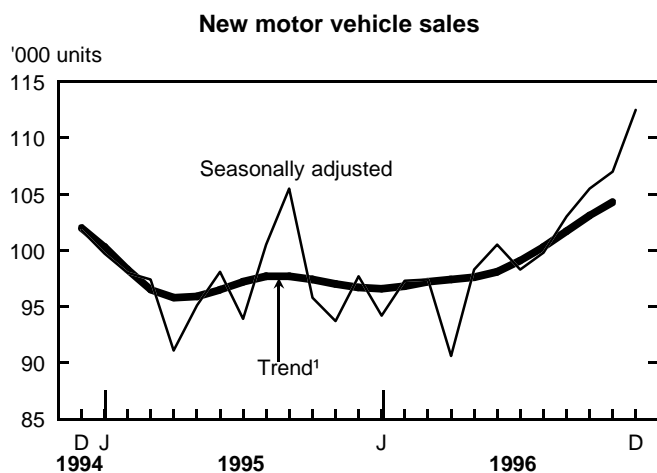
A microdata file containing 1996 facilities and equipment data, along with dwelling and socio-demographic characteristics and 1995 household income will be available in the spring. This file will be carefully reviewed to ensure that it does not contain information that would allow identification of specific households, families or individuals.

For further information on this release or on the availability of special request tabulations and microdata files, contact Réjean Lasnier (613-951-5266) or Donald Dubreuil (613-951-4633), Data Dissemination Unit, Household Surveys Division (Internet: income@statcan.ca). ■

New motor vehicle sales

1996 and December 1996

New motor vehicle sales rose 5.1% from November, a fifth straight monthly increase. After relatively flat sales in the first half of 1996, the trend rose. This growth in the latter half of the year pushed 1996 annual sales up 3.3% from the 1995 level. Despite this increase, sales for 1996 were still below the 1994 level.



¹ The short-term trend represents a moving average of the data.

The increase in annual sales reflects the growing popularity of trucks and strong sales growth in the Prairies. The annual gain was entirely due to a 9.6% increase in truck sales. Truck sales include light and heavy trucks, minivans, sport utility vehicles, vans and buses. Car sales declined for a second year (-1.4%).

Annual sales bolstered by strong growth in the Prairies

Sales of new vehicles rose in most provinces in 1996. While the Prairie provinces recorded the strongest growth, Newfoundland, British Columbia and Prince Edward Island were the only provinces to report declines.

Annual new motor vehicle sales rise in seven provinces 1996

| | Cars | Trucks | Total |
|----------------------|-------------------------|----------------|------------------|
| | number of vehicles sold | | |
| Canada | 660,769 | 543,788 | 1,204,557 |
| Newfoundland | 9,752 | 6,447 | 16,199 |
| Prince Edward Island | 2,478 | 1,642 | 4,120 |
| Nova Scotia | 20,486 | 12,848 | 33,334 |
| New Brunswick | 15,919 | 14,369 | 30,288 |
| Quebec | 201,011 | 104,330 | 305,341 |
| Ontario | 261,466 | 199,222 | 460,688 |
| Manitoba | 17,289 | 23,987 | 41,276 |
| Saskatchewan | 13,044 | 22,809 | 35,853 |
| Alberta | 49,202 | 84,560 | 133,762 |
| British Columbia* | 70,122 | 73,574 | 143,696 |
| | % change from 1995 | | |
| Canada | -1.4 | 9.6 | 3.3 |
| Newfoundland | -7.7 | -1.5 | -5.3 |
| Prince Edward Island | -5.2 | 2.1 | -2.4 |
| Nova Scotia | 1.0 | 6.6 | 3.1 |
| New Brunswick | -5.7 | 8.8 | 0.6 |
| Quebec | 1.9 | 8.9 | 4.2 |
| Ontario | -2.4 | 7.8 | 1.7 |
| Manitoba | 2.9 | 27.5 | 15.9 |
| Saskatchewan | 6.0 | 22.6 | 16.0 |
| Alberta | -2.5 | 17.8 | 9.4 |
| British Columbia* | -6.5 | 0.7 | -3.0 |

* Including the Yukon and Northwest Territories.

The Prairie provinces (Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta) recorded the strongest growth in vehicle sales with a gain of 11.7%. This increase reflects the growing popularity of trucks in this region. Annual sales of trucks in the Prairies jumped 20.3% from 1995. Over the same period, car sales remained stable; a decline in Alberta offset gains in Manitoba and Saskatchewan.

The Prairie provinces enjoyed a strong economy in 1996. High market prices for oil and natural gas benefited Alberta, while strong market price and yields of grains (in particular, wheat and barley) bolstered the economy in all three provinces. The region also saw employment growth above the national average in 1996.

New motor vehicle sales declined 3.0% in British Columbia. Car sales declined 6.5%, while truck sales were up slightly (+0.7%). This was the province's second annual decline in total vehicle sales. Growth in consumer expenditure in British Columbia appears to have slowed. Based on the data for the first 11 months of 1996, annual retail sales growth in British Columbia should be below the national increase for the first time since 1991. In this province, cumulative sales for 1996

grew 1.4% from the same period last year, compared with a national increase of 1.9%.

Truck sales rose in all provinces except Newfoundland (-1.5%). Despite a decline in car sales at the national level, consumers in Nova Scotia, Quebec, Manitoba and Saskatchewan purchased more cars in 1996.

Trucks were least popular in Quebec

The popularity of trucks (especially minivans and sport utility vehicles) was observed throughout 1996. Truck sales reached a new record in 1996, with 543,790 trucks sold. The trend in truck sales has generally been upward for the past few years. On the other hand, car sales have moved in the opposite direction.

While the growth in truck sales is evident in most provinces, their popularity is most evident in the West. In 1996, 62% of new vehicles sold in the Prairies were trucks, compared with 51% in British Columbia and 43% in Ontario. Trucks were much less popular east of Ontario, with the exception of New Brunswick, where 47% of vehicles sold were trucks. The proportion of trucks sold was 39% in the other three Atlantic provinces and only 34% in Quebec.

Strong sales gain observed in December

New motor vehicle dealers sold 112,520 (seasonally adjusted) new vehicles in December, the highest level since September 1991. On the strength of truck sales, total sales rose 5.1% from November. Truck sales jumped 11.6%, while car sales declined slightly (-0.4%).

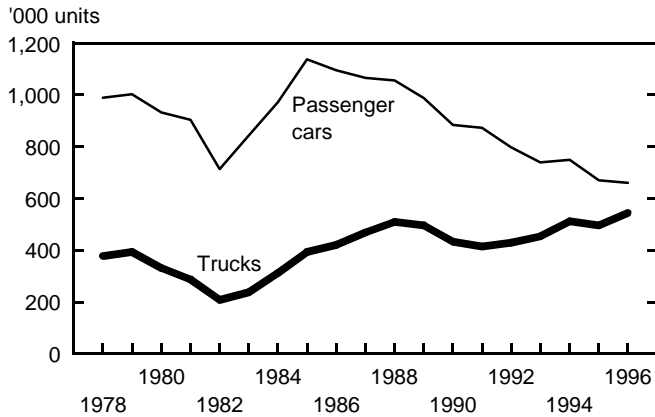
Unadjusted data have been revised back to January 1996. Seasonally adjusted estimates have been revised back to January 1993.

Available on CANSIM: matrix 64.

The December 1996 issue of *New motor vehicle sales* (63-007-XPB, \$16/\$160) will be available shortly. See *How to order publications*.

For further information on this release, contact Serge Dumouchel (613-951-2210). For analytical information, contact Sylvain Tremblay (613-951-4166; Internet: lozimar@statcan.ca), Retail Trade Section, Industry Division. □

Gap between car and truck sales decreases



New motor vehicle sales

| | Dec. 1995 | Nov. 1996 ^r | Dec. 1996 ^p | Dec. 1995 to Dec. 1996 | Nov. to Dec. 1996 |
|-----------------------------|---------------|---------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| seasonally adjusted | | | | | |
| | | | | % change | |
| New motor vehicles | 97,703 | 107,039 | 112,520 | 15.2 | 5.1 |
| Passenger cars | 55,210 | 58,111 | 57,898 | 4.9 | -0.4 |
| North American ¹ | 47,206 | 50,255 | 50,664 | 7.3 | 0.8 |
| Imports | 8,004 | 7,856 | 7,234 | -9.6 | -7.9 |
| Big Three automakers | 36,115 | 34,567 | 35,036 | -3.0 | 1.4 |
| Other automakers | 19,095 | 23,544 | 22,862 | 19.7 | -2.9 |
| Trucks, vans and buses | 42,493 | 48,929 | 54,622 | 28.5 | 11.6 |
| | Dec. 1995 | Dec. 1996 ^p | Dec. 1995 to Dec. 1996 | Market share | |
| | | | | Dec. 1995 | Dec. 1996 |
| unadjusted | | | | | |
| | | | | % | |
| New motor vehicles | 79,813 | 95,867 | 20.1 | | |
| Passenger cars | 41,589 | 44,686 | 7.4 | | |
| North American ¹ | 35,663 | 39,150 | 9.8 | 85.8 | 87.6 |
| Imports | 5,926 | 5,536 | -6.6 | 14.2 | 12.4 |
| Big Three automakers | 27,307 | 27,326 | 0.1 | 65.7 | 61.2 |
| Other automakers | 14,282 | 17,360 | 21.6 | 34.3 | 38.8 |
| Trucks, vans and buses | 38,224 | 51,181 | 33.9 | | |
| North American ¹ | 36,212 | 48,688 | 34.5 | 94.7 | 95.1 |
| Imports | 2,012 | 2,493 | 23.9 | 5.3 | 4.9 |

¹ Manufactured or assembled in Canada, the United States or Mexico.

^r Revised figures.

^p Preliminary figures.



OTHER RELEASES

Machinery and equipment price indexes

Fourth quarter 1996

The overall Machinery and Equipment Price Index (1986=100) was at a preliminary level of 122.0 in the fourth quarter of 1996, unchanged from the previous quarter and up 2.2% from the fourth quarter of 1995. The 0.3% quarterly increase for the domestic component was offset by the import movement of -0.2%.

Among the industry divisions, the largest contributors to the overall quarterly price movement were agriculture (+1.4%), community, business and personal services (+1.1%) and manufacturing (-0.3%).

Comparing the fourth quarters of 1995 and 1996, manufacturing (+2.2%), agriculture (+3.8%) and transportation, communication, storage and utilities (+1.8%) were the largest contributors to the annual price increases.

Machinery and equipment price indexes

(1986=100)

| | Fourth quarter 1996 ^P | Third to fourth quarter 1996 | Fourth quarter 1995 to fourth quarter 1996 |
|---|--|--|--|
| | % change | | |
| Machinery and Equipment Price Index | 122.0 | 0.0 | 2.2 |
| Industry | | | |
| Agriculture | 147.8 | 1.4 | 3.8 |
| Forestry | 133.1 | 0.1 | 1.4 |
| Fishing | 118.1 | -0.3 | -0.3 |
| Mines, quarries and oil wells | 120.9 | -0.7 | 2.0 |
| Manufacturing | 126.1 | -0.3 | 2.2 |
| Construction | 124.0 | -0.7 | 1.9 |
| Transportation, communication, storage and utilities | 114.9 | -0.3 | 1.8 |
| Trade | 112.9 | 0.2 | 1.4 |
| Finance, insurance and real estate | 105.8 | 0.1 | 1.0 |
| Community, business and personal services | 107.8 | 1.1 | 2.7 |
| Public administration | 119.5 | -0.2 | 1.5 |

^P Preliminary figures.

Available on CANSIM: matrix 2023-2025.

The fourth quarter 1996 issue of *Construction price statistics* (62-007-XPB, \$23/\$76) will be available in March. See *How to order publications*.

For further information on this release, contact Sandra Shadlock (613-951-9606; fax 613-951-2848; Internet: shadsan@statcan.ca), Client Services Unit, Prices Division. ■

Railway carloadings

December 1996

Carload freight (excluding intermodal traffic) loaded by railways in Canada totalled 18.5 million tonnes in December, a 3.0% increase from December 1995. The carriers received an additional 1.7 million tonnes from U.S. connections during December.

Intermodal (piggyback) tonnage of 1.3 million tonnes represented a 13.6% increase from the same month last year. The year-to-date figures show a 3.7% increase.

Total traffic, consisting of carload freight and intermodal traffic, rose 3.7% during the reference month, bringing the year-to-date total to 249.4 million tonnes, a 1.1% decrease from the previous year. Receipts from U.S. connections increased 2.8% during the same period.

Cumulative data for 1996 and 1995 have been revised.

Available on CANSIM: matrix 1431.

The December 1996 issue of *Railway carloadings* (52-001-XPB, \$10/\$100) will be available shortly. See *How to order publications*.

For further information on this release, contact Angus MacLean (613-951-2528; fax: 613-951-0579), Surface Transport Unit, Transportation Division. ■

Particleboard, oriented strandboard and fibreboard

December 1996

Oriented strandboard production in December totalled 425 710 cubic metres, a 36.5% increase from 311 927 cubic metres (revised) in December 1995. Particleboard production reached 166 062 cubic metres, up 4.2% from 159 412 cubic metres (revised) in December 1995. Fibreboard production in December was 37 496 cubic

metres, up 143.3% from 15 411 cubic metres (revised) in December 1995.

For January to December 1996, year-to-date oriented strandboard production totalled 4 684 949 cubic metres, up 38.9% from 3 373 659 cubic metres (revised) produced a year earlier. Year-to-date particleboard production was 2 072 249 cubic metres (revised), up 7.1% from the 1 934 823 cubic metres (revised) from a year earlier. Year-to-date fibreboard production reached 468 778 cubic metres (revised), up 60.8% from 291 609 cubic metres (revised) during the same period in 1995.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 31 (series 2, 3, 5) and 122 (series 8).

The December 1996 issue of *Particleboard, oriented strandboard and fibreboard* (36-003-XPB, \$6/\$60) will be available shortly. See *How to order publications*.

For further information on this release, contact Bruno Pépin (613-951-3516; Internet: pepibru@statcan.ca), Industry Division. ■

PUBLICATIONS RELEASED

Household facilities by income and other characteristics, 1996

Catalogue number 13-218-XPB

(Canada: \$35; United States: US\$42; other countries: US\$49).

Food industries, 1994

Catalogue number 32-250-XPB

(Canada: \$38; United States: US\$46; other countries: US\$54).

Footwear statistics, quarter ended December 1996

Catalogue number 33-002-XPB

(Canada: \$8/\$24; United States: US\$9/US\$29; other countries: US\$11/US\$34).

Steel wire and specified wire products,

December 1996

Catalogue number 41-006-XPB

(Canada: \$6/\$60; United States: US\$8/US\$72; other countries: US\$9/US\$84).

Production and shipments of steel pipe and tubing, December 1996

Catalogue number 41-011-XPB

(Canada: \$6/\$60; United States: US\$8/US\$72; other countries: US\$9/US\$84).

Building permits, December 1996, microfiche version

Catalogue number 64-001-XMB

(Canada: \$25/\$135; United States: US\$30/US\$162; other countries: US\$35/US\$189).

Building permits, December 1996, paper version

Catalogue number 64-001-XPB

(Canada: \$24/\$240; United States: US\$29/US\$288; other countries: US\$34/US\$336).

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