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The Daily

Statistics Canada

Monday, January 12, 1998
For release at 8:30 a.m.

MAJOR RELEASES

OTHER RELEASES

PUBLICATIONS RELEASED

1996 Census results

On Tuesday, January 13, 1998, *The Daily* will release information from the 1996 Census on Aboriginal People.

Products will include tables from *The nation series*, which provide data for Canada, the provinces and territories, and census metropolitan areas. Data will also be available in electronic profiles for census divisions and subdivisions from the *Area profiles series*.

For further information, contact Media Relations (613-951-4636), Communications Division.

MAJOR RELEASES

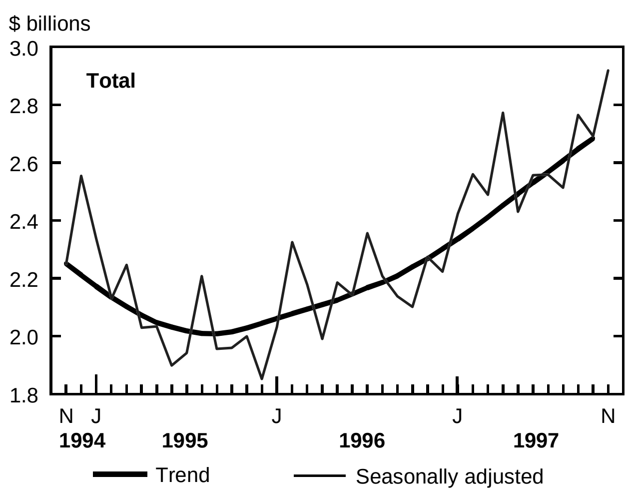
Building permits

November 1997

Municipalities issued building permits worth $2.9 billion in November, the highest monthly level in more than seven years. The 8.4% gain in November was largely on the strength of proposed new industrial construction.

A major project in the mining sector fuelled a substantial gain in building permits in the non-residential sector in November. This, combined with a more modest increase in permits for housing, produced the largest monthly total since April 1990, which was also about $2.9 billion. Overall, building permits rose 8.4% from October.

Total value of permits up 8.4%



The value of permits in the non-residential sector (industrial, commercial and institutional components) jumped 16.7% to $1.4 billion. Non-residential permits went up in 9 of the first 11 months of 1997.

In the housing sector, municipalities issued more than $1.5 billion worth of building permits, up 2.0% from October, as both short- and long-term mortgage rates remained low. The residential sector has done well throughout 1997, posting 7 monthly increases out of a possible 11.

Note to readers

Unless otherwise stated, this release presents seasonally adjusted data, which ease comparisons by removing the effects of seasonal variations.

The monthly Building and Demolitions Permits Survey covers 2,400 municipalities representing 93% of the population. It provides an early indication of building activity. The communities representing the other 7% of the population are very small, and their levels of building activity have little impact on the total.

The value of planned construction activities shown in this release excludes land and engineering projects such as waterworks, sewers and culverts.

The annual rate is a monthly figure that has been seasonally adjusted and multiplied by 12 to reflect annual levels.

Housing sector maintains its pace

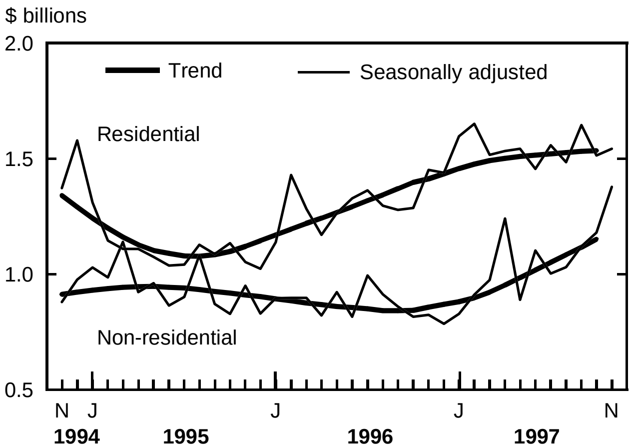
Both residential components contributed to the monthly increase in permits in November. The multi-family component increased 5.1% to $419 million, while the single-family component rose a slight 0.8% to $1.1 billion.

Monthly permits for housing have surpassed $1.5 billion in nine months in 1997. Activity on this scale has not occurred since late 1989 and early 1990. The single-family component, which represents three-quarters of the residential sector, led the way. Between January and November, single-family building intentions jumped 21.9% to $12.4 billion, while multi-family intentions rose 12.5% to $4.6 billion compared with the same period in 1996.

There were other indications of strength in the housing market. According to Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, housing starts between January and November 1997 were up 22.4% over the same period in 1996. In addition, according to the Canadian Real Estate Association, resales were 7.8% higher in the first 11 months of 1997 than in the same period of 1996. Resales were at their highest point in the past 10 years.

Housing intentions in November went up most in Ontario (+5.3% to $698 million) followed by Quebec (+4.7% to $233 million) and Alberta (+3.6% to $242 million). For Alberta, it was a fifth consecutive gain. In contrast, significant declines were registered in British Columbia (-5.6% to $257 million) and Nova Scotia (-16.4% to $27 million).

Residential and non-residential sectors maintain their upward trend



Industrial growth drove the non-residential sector

Growth in industrial construction intentions fuelled the increase in non-residential permits for the second straight month. The value of industrial permits jumped 69.2% to $506 million in November, the highest monthly level since February 1989. The increase was due to a major mining project planned in Alberta.

The commercial and institutional components changed only marginally. While commercial intentions rose 2.2% to $560 million, institutional intentions declined 6.5% to $310 million.

However, the outlook for all non-residential components remains positive. In August, business investment outlays rose across the board. In addition, the economy recently has been increasingly characterized by booming business spending which could translate into demands for future building permits.

At mid-year, the non-residential sector had posted a 13.2% gain compared with the same period of last year and this progression has become more pronounced since then. Hence, the value of non-residential permits issued between January and November 1997 was 20.7% higher than in the same period in 1996. The industrial component led the way with a 31.7% increase to $3.2 billion. Institutional permits were up 33.0% to $2.8 billion, and commercial permits up 10.5% to $5.7 billion.

In Alberta, non-residential permits soared 159.5% to $316 million — the highest increase of any province. The advance in Alberta was on the strength of the proposed mining project. Quebec posted its fourth straight monthly gain (+14.3% to $251 million).

At the same time, the value of non-residential permits fell in British Columbia (-11.0% to $165 million), Ontario (-3.4% to $516 million) and New Brunswick (-23.0% to $12 million).

Available on CANSIM: matrices 80 (levels 3-7, 16-22 and 24-32), 129, 137, 443, 989-992, 994, 995 and 4073.

The November 1997 issue of *Building permits* (64-001-XPB, $25/$248) will be released in January. See *How to order publications*.

The December building permits estimate will be released on February 3. For further information, contact Joanne Bureau (613-951-9689; Internet: *burejoa@statcan.ca*). For analytical information, contact Michel Labonté (613-951-9690; Internet: *labomic@statcan.ca*), Investment and Capital Stock Division. □

Value of building permits

	Oct. 1997	Nov. 1997	Oct. 1997 to Nov. 1997	Nov. 1996 to Nov. 1997
	Seasonally adjusted			
	$ millions		% change	
Canada	**2,692**	**2,919**	**8.4**	**28.4**
Residential	1,513	1,542	2.0	6.3
Non-residential	1,179	1,377	16.7	67.3
Newfoundland	15	13	-8.4	-38.5
Residential	10	10	-2.6	-41.1
Non-residential	4	3	-23.0	-28.8
Prince Edward Island	7	6	-8.8	-53.4
Residential	3	4	32.9	-53.2
Non-residential	4	2	-43.5	-53.8
Nova Scotia	51	55	8.3	-13.5
Residential	32	27	-16.4	-42.8
Non-residential	18	28	52.5	74.5
New Brunswick	38	30	-20.0	-25.2
Residential	22	18	-17.9	-34.4
Non-residential	16	12	-23.0	-5.7
Quebec	443	485	9.5	21.9
Residential	223	233	4.7	18.8
Non-residential	220	251	14.3	24.9
Ontario	1,198	1,215	1.4	42.6
Residential	663	698	5.3	18.4
Non-residential	535	517	-3.4	97.2
Manitoba	67	64	-5.1	55.2
Residential	27	27	-0.5	14.1
Non-residential	40	37	-8.2	111.0
Saskatchewan	51	60	18.5	65.1
Residential	22	21	-5.5	4.8
Non-residential	29	39	37.2	139.1
Alberta	355	558	57.1	88.9
Residential	233	242	3.6	61.8
Non-residential	122	316	159.5	116.6
British Columbia	459	423	-7.8	-15.9
Residential	273	257	-5.6	-29.4
Non-residential	186	166	-11.0	19.7
Yukon	7	7	2.6	5.1
Residential	3	3	-0.9	-22.5
Non-residential	4	4	5.7	47.7
Northwest Territories	3	3	9.3	5.7
Residential	0	1	428.3	-40.4
Non-residential	3	2	-23.7	83.0

Note: *Data may not add to totals due to rounding.*

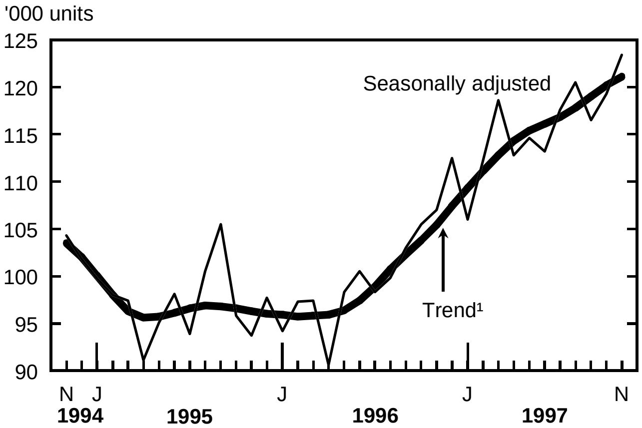
■

New motor vehicle sales
November 1997

Dealers sold 123,355 new motor vehicles in November, up 3.4% over October (seasonally adjusted). Dealers sold the largest number of new vehicles in any month since January 1990. New passenger car sales rose 3.2% following two consecutive monthly declines, while sales of new trucks increased 3.6%. Trucks include minivans, sport utility vehicles, light and heavy trucks and buses.

Compared with November 1996, new motor vehicle sales increased 15.2% (seasonally adjusted). New car (+4.9%) and truck sales (+27.5%) were also higher compared with the same month a year earlier. Although the series is volatile, sales of new motor vehicles have generally been increasing since mid-1996; however, they remain below the levels reached in the late 1980s.

New motor vehicle sales on the move



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

Among the provinces, Alberta (+34.0%) and New Brunswick (+30.8%) experienced the largest increases in new motor vehicle sales in November over the same month in 1996 (unadjusted). Exceptional new passenger car sales were the main contributors to the increase in these two provinces.

Note to readers

North American built new motor vehicles include those vehicles manufactured or assembled in Canada, the United States or Mexico. All other new motor vehicles are considered imports (manufactured overseas).

The Big 3 (General Motors, Ford and Chrysler), Honda, Toyota and the other automakers may sell new motor vehicles manufactured in North America as well as overseas (imported).

Meanwhile, Saskatchewan (+3.4%) and Prince Edward Island (+3.9%) had the lowest increases in year-over-year new motor vehicle sales (unadjusted). A decline in new passenger car sales (-21.8%) tempered sales of new vehicles in Prince Edward Island. In Saskatchewan, the moderate advance in sales is, in part, due to very strong new motor vehicle sales in November 1996. Last year, Saskatchewan led all provinces with a 43.6% increase over November 1995.

Overseas vehicles gaining market share

In November 1997, consumers purchased 46.5% more imported new motor vehicles than in November 1996 (unadjusted). In comparison, sales for North American built new motor vehicles rose 12.0%. As a result, imported new motor vehicles claimed 12.7% of Canadian sales, up from 10.0% in November 1996.

The market share for imported new motor vehicles has generally declined from late 1993 to early 1996. Following a relatively flat year in 1996, the market share for imported vehicles improved in 1997.

Early indications

Automotive industry sources point to a significant sales increase in December.

Available on CANSIM: matrix 64.

For analytical information, contact Jason Randall (613-951-5668; Internet: *randjas@statcan.ca*) Retail Trade Section, Distributive Trades Division. For further information on this release, contact Serge Dumouchel (613-951-2210). □

New motor vehicle sales

	Nov. 1996	Oct. 1997[r]	Nov. 1997[p]	Nov. 1996 to Nov. 1997	Oct. 1997 to Nov. 1997
	seasonally adjusted				
				% change	
New motor vehicles	**107,039**	**119,307**	**123,355**	**15.2**	**3.4**
Passenger cars	58,111	59,086	60,965	4.9	3.2
North American[1]	50,255	49,455	50,879	1.2	2.9
Imports	7,856	9,631	10,085	28.4	4.7
Big Three automakers	34,567	34,470	37,332	8.0	8.3
Other automakers	23,544	24,616	23,633	0.4	-4.0
Trucks, vans and buses	48,929	60,221	62,391	27.5	3.6

	Nov. 1996	Nov. 1997[p]	Nov. 1996 to Nov. 1997	Market share Nov. 1996	Market share Nov. 1997
	unadjusted				
			% change	%	
New motor vehicles	**97,327**	**112,385**	**15.5**		
Passenger cars	50,552	52,300	3.5		
North American[1]	43,914	43,607	-0.7	86.9	83.4
Imports	6,638	8,693	31.0	13.1	16.6
Big Three automakers	28,990	31,240	7.8	57.3	59.7
Other automakers	21,562	21,060	-2.3	42.7	40.3
Trucks, vans and buses	46,775	60,085	28.5		
North American[1]	43,662	54,489	24.8	93.3	90.7
Imports	3,113	5,596	79.8	6.7	9.3

r *Revised figures.*
p *Preliminary figures.*
1 *Manufactured or assembled in Canada, the United States or Mexico.*

■

OTHER RELEASES

New Housing Price Index
November 1997

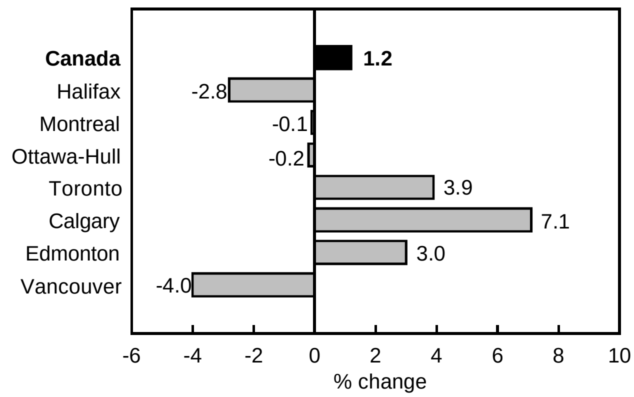
In November 1997, the New Housing Price Index increased 1.2% compared with the same period a year earlier. From October to November 1997, this index of contractors' selling prices for new houses increased 0.4%.

New housing price indexes
(1986=100)

	Nov. 1997	Nov. 1996 to Nov. 1997	Oct. 1997 to Nov. 1997
		% change	
Canada total	**133.4**	**1.2**	**0.4**
House only	123.8	1.8	0.6
Land only	165.7	0.3	-
St.John's	122.5	-2.5	-0.2
Halifax	118.0	-2.8	0.2
Charlottetown	114.1	-1.8	-1.0
St John-Moncton-Fredericton	108.8	-4.5	-0.1
Quebec City	133.8	0.7	0.2
Montréal	137.3	-0.1	-0.1
Ottawa-Hull	119.6	-0.2	0.1
Toronto	141.5	3.9	1.1
Hamilton	131.5	4.4	0.2
St. Catharines- Niagara	129.6	5.2	0.4
Kitchener-Waterloo	124.7	2.5	0.5
London	142.5	1.3	-
Windsor	134.3	1.7	-
Sudbury-Thunder Bay	134.8	-1.8	-0.4
Winnipeg	121.0	1.3	-
Regina	141.6	4.7	1.0
Saskatoon	118.4	1.6	-
Calgary	156.3	7.1	0.6
Edmonton	149.3	3.0	-
Vancouver	122.6	-4.0	-0.3
Victoria	106.0	-2.6	-0.3

\- *Nil or zero.*

New housing price indexes
November 1996 to November 1997



The largest monthly increases were noted in Toronto (+1.1%) and Regina (+1.0%) as some builders passed on increases in construction costs to home buyers in these improving markets. Smaller increases were noted in several other Canadian cities as builders reacted to higher consumer confidence.

Available on CANSIM: matrix 2032.

The fourth quarter 1997 issue of *Construction price statistics* (62-007-XPB, $24/$79) will be available in March 1998. See *How to order publications*.

For further information on this release, contact Elvira Marinelli (613-951-3350; fax: 613-951-2848; Internet: *danipau@statcan.ca*), Client Services Unit, Prices Division. ■

Steel primary forms
November 1997

Steel primary forms production for November 1997 totalled 1 270 867 metric tonnes, down 4.0% from 1 323 410 metric tonnes during the same period in 1996.

Year-to-date production reached 14 129 369 metric tonnes, up 6.2% from 13 304 074 metric tonnes a year earlier.

Available on CANSIM: matrix 58 (level 2, series 3).

The November 1997 issue of *Primary iron and steel* (41-001-XPB, $7/$62) will be available shortly. See *How to order publications*.

For further information on this release, contact Andy Shinnan (613-951-3515; Internet: *shinand@statcan.ca*), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

PUBLICATIONS RELEASED

Production and shipments of steel pipe tubing, November 1997
Catalogue number 41-011-XPB
(Canada: $7/$62; outside Canada: US$7/US$62).

Telephone statistics, 1996
Catalogue number 56-203-XPB
(Canada: $42; outside Canada: US$42).

Retail trade, October 1997
Catalogue number 63-005-XPB
(Canada: $21/$206; outside Canada: US$21/US$206).

All prices exclude sales tax.

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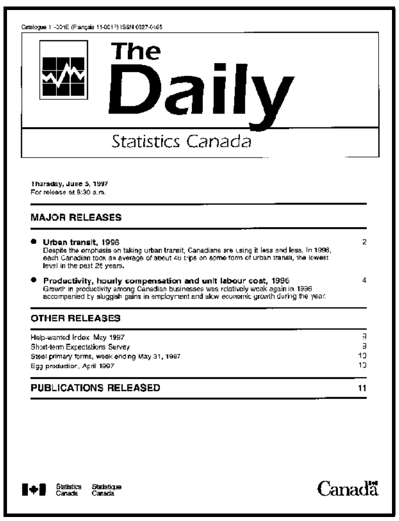
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Thursday, June 5, 1997
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MAJOR RELEASES

- **Urban transit, 1996** 2
  Despite the emphasis on taking urban transit, Canadians are using it less and less. In 1996, each Canadian took an average of about 46 trips on some form of urban transit, the lowest level in the past 25 years.
- **Productivity, hourly compensation and unit labour cost, 1996** 4
  Growth in productivity among Canadian businesses was relatively weak again in 1996 accompanied by sluggish gains in employment and slow economic growth during the year.

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PUBLICATIONS RELEASED 11

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