



# The Daily

Statistics Canada

Wednesday, December 2, 1998

For release at 8:30 a.m.

## MAJOR RELEASES

- **Registered retirement savings plans contributions, 1997** 3  
More than 6.1 million Canadians contributed a record \$27.4 billion to registered retirement savings plans during the 1997 tax year. However, the growth in both the contributions and the number of contributors slowed considerably from previous years.

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### **Dangerous goods accident information system** 1997

Statistics Canada, in co-operation with Transport Canada, today releases the Dangerous goods accident information system. This is a database of all reported accidents involving the transport of dangerous goods.

These reports are filed if an accident involving dangerous good results in a release that presents a danger to health, life, property or the environment. Reports are also filed for accidents involving death or injury, or damage to containment due to impact stress or fatigue. The data are presented on an annual basis.

There is great detail available for each accident, ranging from the date, time, and location of the accident to the emergency personnel who responded at the scene. Also, any additional written comments, which were provided with the report, are included on the diskette and are accessible to FoxPro users. The data contained in this database are current up to 1997.

To order the database (50F0002XDB, \$100), contact Carole Stuart, Dissemination Division (613-951-5936; fax: 613-951-4513; [stuacar@statcan.ca](mailto:stuacar@statcan.ca)). For information about the data, contact Jonathan Rose, Transport Canada (613-990-1142; fax: 613-993-5925; [rosej@tc.gc.ca](mailto:rosej@tc.gc.ca)).



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## MAJOR RELEASES

### Registered retirement savings plans contributions

1997

More than 6.1 million Canadians contributed a record \$27.4 billion to registered retirement savings plans (RRSP) during the 1997 tax year. However, the growth in both the contributions and the number of contributors slowed considerably from previous years.

The number of contributors rose 2.7% from 1996, which was the smallest increase since 1991. Similarly, contributions went up only 2.4% compared with a 12.9% increase the previous year. All amounts have been adjusted for inflation as measured by the Consumer Price Index.

From 1991 to 1996, the yearly average growth rate in the number of contributors was 6.1%, more than twice the growth rate from 1996 to 1997. Similarly, the average yearly increase in contributions from 1991 to 1996 was 13.5%, more than five times the growth between 1996 and 1997. Comparisons are made back to 1991, since this was the year when the *Income Tax Act* was amended to make the RRSP contribution limits more equitable between those who contribute to registered pension plans and those who do not.

Part of this slowdown in RRSP growth may be attributed to the fact that starting in 1997, Canadians had to convert RRSPs into income at the age of 69, instead of 71. However, the number of taxfilers that this change affects cannot account for the majority of the differences in the growth rates from this year to previous years.

### Contributors declined in three provinces and two territories

The number of taxfilers who contributed to RRSPs declined in 1997 in both territories and three provinces (Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick). It was only the second occasion since 1991 that any province or territory recorded such a decline.

In certain provinces, these declines may have been in part a result of interprovincial migration of taxfilers. Newfoundland, for example, recorded a 1.5% decrease in contributors, but the number of taxfilers fell 0.8% at the same time. Conversely, Alberta recorded a 4.1% increase in taxfilers along with a 5.0% increase in contributors.

Contributions also declined at the provincial level for the first time since 1991, falling in Newfoundland,

Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Saskatchewan and British Columbia, as well as the two territories.

On the other hand, both contributors and contributions increased in central Canada. In Quebec, the number of contributors rose 4.0% to more than 1.4 million, and they contributed \$6.1 billion, up 7.5%. In Ontario, 2.4 million taxfilers (+2.9%) contributed almost \$11.4 billion (+2.0%).

In both 1996 and 1997, 3 out of every 10 taxfilers (30.0%) contributed to an RRSP. The highest proportion occurred in Alberta where 33.8% of taxfilers made a contribution, followed by 31.6% of taxfilers in Ontario and 31.4% in both British Columbia and the Yukon. Residents of these regions also reported median total incomes above the national median. Not surprisingly, the provinces that reported median total incomes below the national median, most notably the Atlantic provinces, have the lowest participation rates.

Taxfilers in Ontario and British Columbia had the highest median contribution (\$2,900) of any province, followed by those in Alberta at \$2,700. Taxfilers in the Northwest Territories had a median contribution of \$4,000.

Among all taxfilers, the median employment income was \$21,300 in 1997, but jumped to \$35,300 for individuals who contributed to RRSPs.

### Participation in RRSP plans

1997

	Taxfilers with RRSP contributions	Median employment income	Median contribution
	%	\$	
<b>Canada</b>	<b>30.0</b>	<b>35,300</b>	<b>2,600</b>
Newfoundland	17.5	31,400	2,000
Prince Edward Island	22.9	27,300	2,000
Nova Scotia	23.0	32,200	2,100
New Brunswick	20.7	32,100	2,000
Quebec	28.1	32,900	2,200
Ontario	31.6	37,600	2,900
Manitoba	29.4	32,000	2,200
Saskatchewan	31.0	30,900	2,400
Alberta	33.8	36,000	2,700
British Columbia	31.4	36,000	2,900
Yukon	31.4	42,700	3,200
Northwest Territories	26.2	51,900	4,000

## Taxfilers aged 45 to 54 had highest RRSP participation rates

In 1997, the average RRSP contributor was 42 years old. Middle-aged taxfilers had the highest rate of participation. About 44% of taxfilers in the age group 45 to 54 contributed to RRSPs, the highest proportion of any age group. Those aged 65 and over contributed the most on average (\$6,750) of any age group.

In 1997, Canadians contributed only 13.5% of their total allowable limits (\$203.6 billion). This left unused room (the total RRSP contribution limit) of more than \$176 billion to be carried over for the 1998 tax year. Added to this unused room will be new room, which represents 18% of 1997 earned income minus the pension adjustments. Room data applicable to the 1998 tax year are also available.

## Percentage of taxfilers with RRSP contributions 1997

Age	0-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
<b>Canada</b>	<b>12.1</b>	<b>35.1</b>	<b>40.0</b>	<b>44.5</b>	<b>35.0</b>	<b>4.8</b>
Newfoundland	4.7	20.0	24.0	28.0	18.3	1.7
Prince Edward Island	8.4	26.0	31.3	35.4	28.0	3.7
Nova Scotia	7.6	27.2	31.7	35.0	25.5	2.9
New Brunswick	7.0	24.1	27.8	32.3	24.6	2.5
Quebec	10.8	33.2	37.6	41.3	30.8	3.7
Ontario	12.0	37.6	42.3	47.1	37.8	5.4
Manitoba	13.2	33.7	40.6	46.9	35.9	4.4
Saskatchewan	15.5	36.1	43.7	47.6	38.2	6.4
Alberta	14.8	37.7	45.1	49.3	38.1	5.8
British Columbia	14.9	36.0	40.6	46.8	38.6	5.1
Yukon	9.5	32.3	38.2	42.7	33.6	6.3
Northwest Territories	8.8	27.0	35.0	37.9	25.0	4.9

Databanks for *RRSP contributors* (17C0006) and *RRSP contribution limit* (room) (17C0011) are available for Canada, the provinces and territories, cities, towns, census metropolitan areas, census divisions, as well as areas as small as forward sortation areas (the first three characters of the postal code) and letter carrier routes.

For further information or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Client Services (613-951-9720; fax: 613-951-4745; [saadinfo@statcan.ca](mailto:saadinfo@statcan.ca)), Small Area and Administrative Data Division.

## RRSP contributors and contributions, by province 1996 and 1997

	1996	1997	1996 to 1997	1996	1997	1996 to 1997
	counts		% change	amounts (\$ '000's)		% change
<b>Canada</b>	<b>5,998,450</b>	<b>6,158,730</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>26,804,800</b>	<b>27,445,132</b>	<b>2.4</b>
Newfoundland	66,890	65,880	-1.5	292,413	276,801	-5.3
Prince Edward Island	21,640	21,410	-1.1	87,830	96,155	9.5
Nova Scotia	143,950	145,170	0.8	625,175	622,085	-0.5
New Brunswick	108,750	108,540	-0.2	449,756	439,606	-2.3
Quebec	1,388,810	1,444,520	4.0	5,679,538	6,102,861	7.5
Ontario	2,357,250	2,425,220	2.9	11,174,001	11,393,317	2.0
Manitoba	227,430	230,480	1.3	874,137	873,880	0.0
Saskatchewan	211,740	211,640	0.0	848,862	825,330	-2.8
Alberta	623,620	654,560	5.0	2,855,310	2,955,850	3.5
British Columbia	832,540	835,760	0.4	3,832,800	3,778,446	-1.4
Yukon	6,150	6,090	-1.0	30,329	29,185	-3.8
Northwest Territories	9,680	9,460	-2.3	54,647	51,616	-5.5

## OTHER RELEASES

**Help-wanted Index**

November 1998

For the fifth consecutive month, the index that measures the number of help-wanted newspaper advertisements remained unchanged at 144 in November (1996=100).

Most provinces indices showed increases, except Alberta (-5.4%), British Columbia (-2.5%), and Saskatchewan (-1.5%).

**Help-wanted Index**

(1996=100)

	Nov. 1998	Oct. 1998	Nov. 1997	Nov. 1997 to Nov. 1998	Oct. to Nov. 1998
seasonally adjusted and smoothed					
				% change	
<b>Canada</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>9.1</b>	<b>0.0</b>
Newfoundland	137	135	131	4.6	1.5
Prince Edward Is- land	156	148	125	24.8	5.4
Nova Scotia	146	140	132	10.6	4.3
New Brunswick	154	153	142	8.5	0.7
Quebec	142	140	118	20.3	1.4
Ontario	153	152	133	15.0	0.7
Manitoba	165	162	145	13.8	1.9
Saskatchewan	133	135	141	-5.7	-1.5
Alberta	141	149	155	-9.0	-5.4
British Columbia	117	120	123	-4.9	-2.5

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

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

For further information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods and data quality of this release, contact Gilles Groleau (613-951-4090; fax: 613-951-4087; [labour@statcan.ca](mailto:labour@statcan.ca)), Labour Division. ■

**Population estimates by age and sex**

July 1, 1998 (preliminary)

Population estimates by age and sex for Canada, the provinces and the territories, as of July 1, 1998, are now available. These estimates by age and sex are based on the 1996 Census counts adjusted for people who were missed in the Census (undercoverage), and those who were enumerated more than once or enumerated when they should not have been (overcoverage). They are consistent with the estimates of the total population released on September 24th. Historical revisions back to 1971 are also provided. The reference date for these annual estimates is July 1. The revised estimates take into account methodological improvements in the estimates of under- and overcoverage introduced in the 1996 Census.

The population estimates for July 1, 1998 are preliminary because the estimates for the components of population change (births, deaths, international and internal migrations) since the 1996 Census are based on data which will be revised.

**Available on CANSIM: matrices 6270-6295, 6303-6341, 6367-6393.**

These estimates will appear in *Annual demographic statistics, 1998* (91-213-XPB, \$67 and 91-213-XIB, \$50).

These estimates may be obtained by contacting your nearest Statistics Canada Regional Reference Centre or Lise Champagne (613-951-2320; fax: 613-951-2307; [chamlis@statcan.ca](mailto:chamlis@statcan.ca)), Demography Division. For information on methodology, contact Daniel Larrivée (613-951-0694; fax: 613-951-2307; [lardani@statcan.ca](mailto:lardani@statcan.ca)), Demography Division. ■

**Short-term Expectations Survey**

The Short-term Expectations Survey results covering the end of the fourth quarter 1998 and the first month of the new year show that little change is expected in the performance of the economy.

In September, the mean forecast for gross domestic product was an advance of 0.3% compared with actual growth of 0.1%. Little change is expected for October and November, with mean monthly growth of 0.2% and 0.1%, respectively.

Forecasts for international trade show that stability is expected over the October through December period.

The forecasted mean trade surplus for these three months is \$1.7 billion, a very slightly increase balance than the actual figure for September of \$1.6 billion. The forecasts for both exports and imports were lower than the actual figures for September.

Forecasters are also expecting a slight increase in the Consumer Price Index between November 1998 and January 1999. Actual inflation has been higher than expected — the forecasted average for October was 0.8% compared with the actual rate of 1.0%.

The unemployment rate fell to 8.1% in October while the participation rate remained steady at

65.2%. Forecasters are adjusting downwards the unemployment rate for the coming three months, with mean forecasts of 8.2% in November, 8.2% in December and 8.3% in January. Participation rates are forecast to remain stable.

The next release will be on January 6, 1998. For further information, to order a set of tables, or to enquire about the concepts, methods and data quality of this release, contact Jenny Grenier (613-951-1020; fax: 613-951-1572; [grenjen@statcan.ca](mailto:grenjen@statcan.ca)), Small Business and Special Surveys Division.

### Short-term Expectations Survey

	Forecasts					Actual figures	
	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Sept.	Oct.
	year/year %						
<b>Consumer Price Index</b>							
Initial forecast	1.2	1.1	1.1	1.0	1.1	0.7	1.0
First revision	1.1	1.0	0.9	1.2	..		
Second revision	0.9	0.8	1.1	..	..		
	seasonally adjusted %						
<b>Unemployment rate</b>							
Initial forecast	8.4	8.5	8.5	8.5	8.3	8.3	8.1
First revision	8.4	8.4	8.5	8.2	..		
Second revision	8.4	8.4	8.2	..	..		
<b>Labour force participation rate</b>							
Initial forecast	65.0	64.9	64.9	65.0	65.1	65.2	65.2
First revision	65.0	64.9	65.1	65.2	..		
Second revision	64.9	65.1	65.2	..	..		
	\$ billion						
<b>Exports</b>							
Initial forecast	26.7	25.7	26.9	27.1	..	27.2	..
First revision	25.7	27.0	27.2	..	..		
Second revision	27.1	27.1	..	..	..		
<b>Imports</b>							
Initial forecast	24.4	24.3	25.0	25.5	..	25.6	..
First revision	24.3	25.1	25.4	..	..		
Second revision	25.1	25.4	..	..	..		
<b>Balance</b>							
Initial forecast	2.3	1.4	1.9	1.6	..	1.6	..
First revision	1.4	1.9	1.8	..	..		
Second revision	2.0	1.7	..	..	..		
	seasonally adjusted month/month %, constant \$1992						
<b>Gross domestic product</b>							
Initial forecast	0.1	0.1	0.1	..	..	0.1	..
First revision	0.0	0.2	..	..	..		
Second revision	0.3	..	..	..	..		

.. Not available.

## **Electric power statistics**

September 1998

Net generation of electricity increased to 41 423 gigawatt hours, up 1.2% from September 1997. Exports decreased 0.6% to 3 957 gigawatt hours and imports increased from 793 gigawatt hours to 1 327 gigawatt hours.

Generation of hydro electricity decreased 4.4% to 23 195 gigawatt hours due to low reservoir levels in Quebec, Ontario and Manitoba. Thermal conventional generation was up 16.3% to 12 894 gigawatt hours, mainly to accommodate higher electricity demand in Ontario. Generation from nuclear sources was down 4.2% to 5 334 gigawatt hours.

Year-to-date net generation at the end of September totalled 404 680 gigawatt hours, down

1.3% from the previous year. Year-to-date exports (34 781 gigawatt hours) were up 3.7%, whereas year-to-date imports (11 407 gigawatt hours) rose 101.3% from the previous year.

### **Available on CANSIM: matrices 3987-3999.**

The September 1998 issue of *Electric power statistics* (57-001-XPB, \$12/\$114) will be available shortly. See *How to order publications*.

For further information, or to enquire about the methods, concepts and data quality of this release, contact André Lefebvre (613-951-3560; [alefeba@statcan.ca](mailto:alefeba@statcan.ca)), Energy Section, Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

## PUBLICATIONS RELEASED

**Production and disposition of tobacco products,**  
October 1998

**Catalogue number 32-022-XPB**

(Canada: \$7/\$62; outside Canada: US\$7/US\$62).

**Gas utilities,** August 1998

**Catalogue number 55-002-XPB**

(Canada: \$17/\$165; outside Canada: US\$17/US\$165).

**Energy statistics handbook,** November 1998

**Catalogue number 57-601-UPB**

(Canada: \$387; outside Canada: US\$387).

**Energy statistics handbook,** November 1998

**Catalogue number 57-601-XDE**

(Canada: \$284; outside Canada: US\$284).

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Statistics Canada

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For release at 9:30 a.m.

#### MAJOR RELEASES



- **Urban transit, 1995** 2  
Despite the emphasis on taking urban transit, Canadians are using it less and less. In 1995, each Canadian took the average of about 10 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 notably weak again in 1996, accompanied by sluggish gains in employment and slow economic growth during the year.

#### OTHER RELEASES

- **Help-wanted Index, May 1997** 3
- **Short-term Expectations Survey** 2
- **Steel primary forms, value ending May 31, 1997** 12
- **Egg production, April 1997** 13

#### PUBLICATIONS RELEASED

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### Statistics Canada's official release bulletin

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