

Friday, April 17, 1998 For release at 8:30 a.m.

MAJOR RELEASES

- **Canadian international merchandise trade,** February 1998 Both exports and imports rebounded in February. While exports were up sharply in all sectors except industrial goods and automotive products, imports grew modestly.
- **Travel between Canada and other countries,** February 1998 For the first time in 10 years, Americans made more overnight trips to Canada than Canadians made to the United States.

(continued on following page)

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Canadian Travel Survey

Throughout 1996, Statistics Canada interviewed approximately 200,000 Canadians across the country about their trips in Canada, and about themselves and their households. These interviews represent the largest sample ever in the history of the Canadian Travel Survey, and it is one of the largest domestic travel survey samples in the world.

The survey identifies who is travelling, the types of trips they are taking, and how much they are spending. These findings will help decision-makers in business, government and the tourism industry develop strategies and products for marketing Canada to Canadians.

New in this publication are "Travel Profiles," which highlight the following topics: "The Seasonal Nature of Domestic Travel", "Package Travel—An Untapped Market?", and "Visiting Friends or Relatives—A Market Worth Targeting?"

The Canadian Travel Survey—Review of the 1996 Results (87-504-XPB, \$42 paper; 87-504-XIB, \$32 Internet version, available next week) is now available. See *How to order publications*.

For further information on this release, contact Michèle Lanoue (613-951-6321; *lanomic@statcan.ca*), Culture, Tourism and the Centre for Education Statistics.





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MAJOR RELEASES

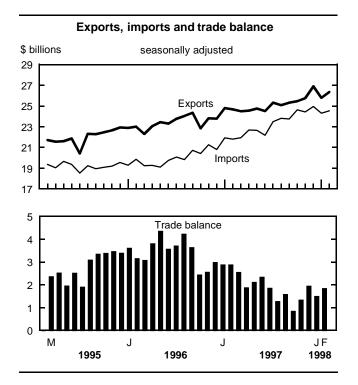
Canadian international merchandise trade

February 1998

After falling about \$1 billion in January, exports rose 2.2% in February. Still, they remained below December 1997 levels. The machinery and equipment sector led the way with a solid performance.

Imports recovered slightly in February, posting a 0.9% gain. Moderate growth in machinery and equipment, energy products, and automotive product imports was partly offset by the declines in imports of industrial goods and agricultural and fishing products.

The trade balance was \$1.8 billion in February, up more than \$300 million from January 1998.



Note to readers

Merchandise trade is one component of the current account of Canada's balance of payments, which also includes trade in services.

Machinery and equipment sector pushes exports higher

After slipping 1.4% in January, machinery and equipment exports jumped 6.6% in February. The increase was largely due to higher exports of television and communications equipment to the Scandinavian countries and railway equipment to the United States and Asia.

Energy exports rose 5.3% in February, following a 10% drop the previous month. The upswing stemmed primarily from the higher volume of coal exports to Japan, Korea and Europe, which were weak in January. Exports of crude oil also rose significantly (+11.2%).

Forestry exports continued their upward trend. Lower prices boosted wood pulp exports to Asia, despite strong competition from the Scandinavian countries. Newsprint exports to United States were also strong.

After declining sharply in January, agricultural and fishing product exports grew 4.8% in February. Exports of chocolate and other Easter products were the major contributors.

Exports in most subgroups in the industrial goods sector declined in February. The steepest drop was in metal ores, as copper and nickel prices were driven down by anemic demand in Asia and by the arrival of new competitors in the market. The only exception to the decline was the metals and alloys subgroup, where exports of gold and metal pipe to the United States were largely responsible for a 4.6% increase.

Machinery and energy sectors lifted imports

Machinery and equipment imports climbed 1.8% in February following January's slight downturn. Strong growth in imports of navigation equipment, laptop computers and locomotives outpaced decreases in imports of generators, drilling machinery and excavation machinery.

Energy product imports soared 15.3% in February, nearly returning to December's levels. Crude oil and aviation fuel posted the largest increases.

After two months of declines, automotive product imports edged up in February. Following three straight monthly decreases, imports of trucks and other motor vehicles jumped \$112 million, or 15.3%, in February. Most of the gains were in utility trucks and tractors. A slowdown in domestic passenger car sales, following record figures in the third and fourth quarters of 1997, may account for the slight dip in car imports in February. Imports of auto parts remained virtually unchanged.

Imports of industrial goods continued to fall in February. Two highly volatile sectors—precious metals and metal ores—posted the steepest decreases, following large shipments of gold and iron ore from the United States the previous month. The decline was balanced somewhat by sharply higher imports of herbicides and optical fibres.

Imports of agricultural and fishing products fell slightly in February, chiefly because of substantially lower imports of raw sugar from Australia.

Revisions

Data on a balance-of-payments basis have been revised from 1992 to the current month, following the seasonal adjustment of group 701 (undistributed balance-of-payments adjustments) for the first time. In general, merchandise trade data are revised on a continuing basis for every month of the current year. Factors that create the need for revisions include late receipt of import and export documentation, incorrect information on customs documents, replacement of estimated figures with actual values once available, changes in classification of merchandise based on more current information, and updated seasonal adjustments. Revised data can be obtained by consulting the appropriate CANSIM matrices.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 3618, 3619, 3651, 3685-3713, 3718-3720, 3887-3913, 8430-8435 and 8438-8447.

This release contains a summary of the merchandise trade data to be published shortly in the February 1998 issue of *Canadian international merchandise trade* (65-001-XPB, \$19/\$188). The publication will include tables by commodity and country on a customs basis. Current account data (which incorporate merchandise trade statistics, services transactions, investment income and transfers) are available quarterly in *Canada's balance of international payments* (67-001-XPB, \$38/\$124). See *How to order publications*.

For readers who need the information on a more timely basis, merchandise trade data are also available by fax on the morning of release.

For further information on this release, contact Jocelyne Elibani (613-951-9647 or 1 800 294-5583), Marketing and Client Services Section, International Trade Division.

Merchandise trade of Canada

	Dec. 1997	Jan. 1998	Feb. 1998	Dec. 1997 to Jan. 1998	Jan. 1998 to Feb. 1998	Jan Feb. 1997	Jan Feb. 1998	Jan Feb. 1997 to Jan Feb. 1998	Feb. 1997 to Feb. 1998
			seaso	nally adjusted	l, \$ curren	t			
	:	\$ millions		% chang	е	\$ mill	ions	% cha	inge
Principal trading partners									
Exports United States	22,011	21,221	21,826	-3.6	2.9	39,648	43,047	8.6	10.3
Japan	972	752	771	-22.6	2.5	2,415	1,523	-36.9	-35.8
European Union	1,494	1,462	1,459	-2.1	-0.2	2,671	2,921	9.4	9.8
Other OECD countries ¹ All other countries	727 1,697	653 1,704	568 1,736	-10.2 0.4	-13.0 1.9	1,282 3,448	1,221 3,440	-4.8 -0.2	-5.3 -0.5
Total	26,901	25,792	26,360	-4.1	2.2	3,448 49,464	3,440 52,152	-0.2 5.4	-0.5
Total	20,901	25,792	20,300	-4.1	2.2	49,404	52,152	5.4	0.9
Imports									
United States	19,028	18,914	18,915	-0.6	0.0	33,298	37,829	13.6	13.8
Japan	794	792	796	-0.3	0.5	1,332	1,588	19.2	20.4
European Union	2,160	1,849	2,089	-14.4	13.0	3,672	3,938	7.2	15.9
Other OECD countries ¹	1,002	914	914	-8.8	0.0	1,862	1,828	-1.8	-3.5
All other countries	1,976	1,836	1,816	-7.1	-1.1	3,560	3,652	2.6	2.9
Total	24,960	24,306	24,531	-2.6	0.9	43,723	48,837	11.7	12.5
Balance									
United States	2,983	2,307	2,911			6,350	5,218		
Japan	178	-40	-25			1,083	-65		
European Union	-666	-387	-630			-1,001	-1,017		
Other OECD countries ¹	-275	-261	-346			-580	-607		
All other countries	-279	-132	-80			-112	-212		
Total	1,941	1,486	1,829			5,741	3,315		
Principal commodity groupings ²									
Exports									
Agricultural and fishing products	2,023	1,849	1,938	-8.6	4.8	3,679	3,787	2.9	4.5
Energy products	2,508	2,262	2,381	-9.8	5.3	5,595	4,643	-17.0	-12.5
Forestry products	3,052	3,019	3,127	-1.1	3.6	6,032	6,146	1.9	0.8
ndustrial goods and materials	4,681	4,605	4,532	-1.6	-1.6	8,494	9,137	7.6	8.4
Machinery and equipment	5,444	5,368	5,723	-1.4	6.6	9,895	11,091	12.1	14.5
Automotive products	6,283	6,179	6,139	-1.7	-0.6	11,933	12,318	3.2	5.3
Other consumer goods	818	780	828	-4.6	6.2	1,449	1,608	11.0	12.8
Special transactions trade ³	1,136	1,136	1,185	0.0	4.3	1,939	2,321	19.7	20.8
mports									
Agricultural and fishing products	1,390	1,377	1,364	-0.9	-0.9	2,453	2,741	11.7	11.5
Energy products	1,079	889	1,025	-17.6	15.3	2,103	1,914	-9.0	5.0
Forestry products	202	201	202	-0.5	0.5	371	403	8.6	6.8
ndustrial goods and materials	4,923	4,861	4,773	-1.3	-1.8	8,390	9,634	14.8	11.2
Machinery and equipment	8,105	7,935	8,076	-2.1	1.8	13,981	16,011	14.5	15.3
Automotive products	5,348	5,298	5,409	-0.9	2.1	9,431	10,707	13.5	16.6
Other consumer goods	2,710	2,618	2,686	-3.4	2.6	4,607	5,304	15.1	15.0
Special transactions trade ³	474	469	480	-1.1	2.3	1,234	949	-23.1	-20.9

Includes Australia, Iceland, Mexico, New Zealand, Norway, Switzerland, Turkey, Poland, South Korea, Hungary and the Czech Republic.
 Figures not adjusted to balance-of-payments basis.
 These are mainly low-valued transactions, value of repairs to equipment, and goods returned to country of origin.
 Figures not appropriate or not applicable.

Travel between Canada and other countries

February 1998

In February, for the first time in 10 years, Americans made more overnight trips to Canada than Canadians made to the United States. The Canadian dollar stood at less than US\$0.70 on average for a second consecutive month.

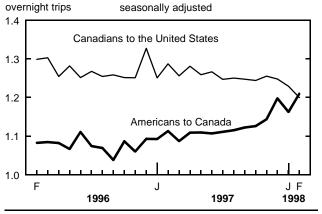
Increase in Americans' overnight trips to Canada

Americans took advantage of their strong dollar in February to take 1.2 million trips of at least one night to Canada. It was a 4.1% increase over the previous month and the highest number of such trips since September 1986, when Expo '86 was held in Vancouver.

The trend in overnight trips to Canada by Americans has been upward since September 1996, after having fluctuated around 1.1 million since mid-1994. The most recent low of 941,000 was reached in March 1993.

The trend in overnight trips to Canada by Americans has been upward since September 1996





American tourists drove to Canada for 774,000 of their trips, up 4.2% from January. It was the greatest number of car trips since February 1987. They also made 5.6% more flights to Canada (285,000) than in the previous month. Trips of this type peaked at 290,000 in December 1997.

Meanwhile, overseas visitors made 341,000 trips of one or more nights to Canada, down 3.1% from January. The value of the currency of many of Canada's main European markets remained weak

Note to readers

Unless otherwise specified, data mentioned in this release are seasonally adjusted (that is, adjusted for variations that repeat annually and for variability caused by the different volumes of travellers associated with different days of the week).

Month-to-month comparisons use seasonally adjusted data. Year-over-year comparisons use unadjusted data (the actual traffic counts). An excursion is a same-day trip. A tourist is someone who stays at least one night in a place visited.

in February compared with the Canadian dollar, and Asian economies were still struggling.

The trend in travel of this type has been downward since peaking at 401,000 trips in February 1997, after having been upward from mid-1992 to February 1997.

Overall, foreigners stayed at least one night in Canada on 1.6 million occasions in February, up 2.4%.

Trips of one or more nights to Canada by residents of selected overseas countries

Origin	Feb. 1998 ^p	Feb. 1997 to Feb.
	unadju	1998 sted
		% change
Europe	94	0.8
France	20	-8.8
Germany	12	-8.7
United Kingdom	37	9.9
Other European countries	25	-2.0
Asia	47	-34.7
Hong Kong	7	-49.7
Japan	22	-22.6
South Korea	3	-57.2
Taiwan	5	-12.1
Other Asian countries	10	-41.9
Other countries	24	4.7
Australia	7	17.3
Other countries	17	

Preliminary figures.

- - Amount too small to be expressed.

Decrease in Canadians' overnight travel to the United States

In February, Canadians made 1.2 million trips of at least one night to the United States, down 2.4% from the previous month. The number of such trips peaked at 1.8 million in December 1991, when the Canadian dollar was worth US\$0.88, and has fluctuated between 1.2 and 1.3 million since mid-1994.

The decrease in overnight travel to the United States in February was due to a 4.2% drop in car trips. The number of such trips is now 47% lower than the December 1991 peak of 1.4 million. Overnight trips by plane increased 0.8% in February.

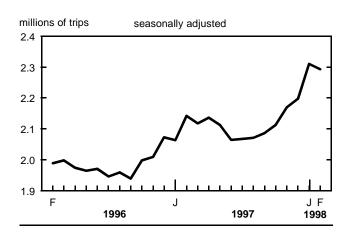
Meanwhile, the number of trips Canadians made to countries other than the United States remained unchanged for a third consecutive month at 345,000, slightly less than the November 1997 peak of 346,000. The trend in trips of this type has generally been increasing since early 1991.

Overall, Canadians made 1.5 million international trips in February, down 1.9% from January.

Slight drop in Americans' same-day car trips to Canada

After seven consecutive monthly increases, including a 5.1% jump in January, Americans' sameday cross-border car trips dropped slightly (-0.8%) in February, to 2.3 million. The number of car excursions by Americans to Canada has generally been moving upward since it hit a low of 1.4 million in January 1994.

Americans' cross-border car excursions dropped slightly in February



Meanwhile, Canadians made 2.6 million same-day car trips to the United States, down 0.2% to its lowest level since February 1988. The monthly number of Canadians' same-day car trips to the United States has been decreasing since November 1991, when they made 5.4 million such trips.

Car excursions between Canada and the United States

	Americans to	o Canada	Canadians to the United States			
	Feb. 1998 ^p			Feb. 1997 to		
		Feb. 1998		Feb. 1998		
		unadjust	ed			
	'000	% change	'000	% change		
Canada	1,773	10.6	1,997	-16.8		
Place of entry / re-entry						
New Brunswick	103	5.6	331	1.5		
Quebec	68	0.2	160	-14.7		
Ontario	1,389	11.0	974	-13.6		
Manitoba	17	2.6	34	-13.8		
Saskatchewan	5	0.5	11	-25.1		
Alberta	6	13.3	9	-11.0		
British Columbia	183	15.7	478	-31.4		
Yukon	2	15.7	1	23.1		

^p Preliminary figures.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 2661-2697, 5780-6046 and 8200-8328.

The February 1997 issue of *International travel, advance information* (66-001-PPB, \$8/\$73) will be available shortly. See *How to Order Publications*.

For further information on this release, contact Luc Dubois (613-951-1674, fax: 613-951-2909, *duboluc@statcan.ca*), International Travel Section, Culture, Tourism and the Centre for Education Statistics.

Travel between Canada and other countries

	Dec. 1997 ^r	Jan. 1998 ^r	Feb. 1998 ^p	Jan. 1998
	1997	1998.	1990-	to
				Feb 1998
		seasonally	adjusted	
		'000		% change
Canadian trips abroad Same-day car trips to the United States	2,730	2,569	2,564	-0.2
Total trips, one or more nights	1,593	1,574	1,544	-1.9
United States ¹	1,248	1,229	1,199	-2.4
Car Plane	751 390	748 378	717 381	-4.2 0.8
Other modes of transportation	107	102	101	-1.0
Other countries ²	345	345	345	-0.1
Travel to Canada Same-day car trips from the United States	2,198	2,310	2,293	-0.8
Total trips, one or more nights United States ¹	1,554	1,514	1,551	2.4
Car	1,198 753	1,162 743	1,210 774	4.1 4.2
Plane	290	270	285	4.2
Other modes of transportation	155	150	151	0.9
Other countries ²	356	352	341	-3.1
	Feb. 1998 ^p	Feb. 1997	JanFeb. 1998 ^p	JanFeb. 1997
	1930	to	1990	to
		Feb. 1998		JanFeb. 1998
		unadju	sted	
	,000	% change	'000	% change
Canadian trips abroad				
Same-day car trips to the United States	1,997	-16.8	4,086	-15.0
Total trips, one or more nights	1,233	-3.9	2,678	-0.5
United States ¹	834	-7.9	1,773	-4.4
Car	351	-13.5	792	-7.6
Plane	436	-2.2	886	-0.8
Other modes of transportation Other countries ²	46 399	-11.9 5.6	95 905	-9.1 8.3
Fravel to Canada				
Same-day car trips from the United States	1,773	10.6	3,524	12.5
Total trips, one or more nights	791	5.3	1,459	5.7
United States ¹	626	11.3	1,142	10.4
Car	387	13.7	692	13.4
Plane	187	8.8	358	7.3
Other modes of transportation Other countries ²	52	3.6	92	1.7
Other countries -	165	-12.4	318	-8.4

r Revised figures.

р

Revised rigures. Preliminary figures. Estimates for the United States include counts of cars and buses, and estimated numbers for planes, trains, boats and other methods. Figures for other countries exclude same-day entries by land only, via the United States. 1

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OTHER RELEASES

Export and import price indexes February 1998

Current- and fixed-weighted export and import price indexes (1992=100) on a balance of payments basis are now available. Indexes are listed from January 1992 to February 1998 for the five commodity sections and the major commodity groups (62 exports and 61 imports).

Current- and fixed-weighted U.S. price indexes (1992=100) are also available on a customs basis. Indexes are listed from January 1992 to February 1998. Included with the U.S. commodity indexes are the 10 all-countries and U.S.-only Standard International Trade Classification (SITC) section indexes.

Indexes for the five commodity sections and the major commodity groups are also now available on a customs basis.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 3618-3619, 3651, 3685-3713, 3718-3720, 3887-3913, 8430-8435 and 8438-8447.

The February 1998 issue of *Canadian international merchandise trade* (65-001-XPB, \$19/\$188) will be available shortly. See *How to order publications*.

For further information on this release, contact Jocelyne Elibani (613-951-9647 or 1-800-294-5583), Marketing and Client Services Section, International Trade Division.

Construction Union Wage Rate Index

March 1998

In March, the Construction Union Wage Rate Index (including supplements) for Canada remained unchanged from February at 110.9 (1992=100). On a year-over-year basis, the index increased 3.1% compared with the March 1997 index.

Union wage rates are published for 16 trades in 20 metropolitan areas for both the basic rates and the rates including selected supplementary payments. Indexes on a 1992=100 time base are calculated for the same metropolitan areas and are published for those where a majority of trades are covered by current collective agreements.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 956, 958 and 9922-9927.

The first quarter 1998 issue of *Construction price statistics* (62-007-XPB, \$24/\$79) will be available in June. See *How to Order Publications*.

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

Particleboard, oriented strandboard and fibreboard February 1998

In February, production of oriented strandboard totalled 439 448 cubic metres, a 4.9% increase from 418 909 (revised) cubic metres in February 1997. Particleboard production reached 183 494 cubic metres, up 10.3% from 166 404 cubic metres in February 1997. Fibreboard production totalled 60 434 cubic metres, 41.9% higher than 42 568 cubic metres in February 1997.

For January to February 1998, year-to-date production of oriented strandboard totalled 942 385 cubic metres, a 9.9% increase from 856 765 (revised) cubic metres for the same period last year. Year-to-date particleboard production reached 369 136 cubic metres, up 11.1% from 332 207 cubic metres in February 1997. Year-to-date fibreboard production was 117 272 cubic metres, climbing 30.6% from 89 783 cubic metres during the same period in 1997.

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

The February 1998 issue of *Particleboard, oriented strandboard and fibreboard* (36-003-XPB, \$7/\$62) will be available shortly. See *How to order publications*.

For further information on this release, contact Gilles Simard (613-951-3516, *simales@statcan.ca*), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

Construction Type Plywood

February 1998

In February, Canadian firms produced 155 407 cubic metres of construction type plywood, a 7.9% increase from 144 055 cubic metres in February 1997.

For January to February 1998, production totalled 302 419 cubic metres, an increase of 3.0% from the

293 560 cubic metres produced during the same period in 1997.

Available on CANSIM: matrix 122 (level 1).

The February 1998 issue of *Construction Type Plywood* (35-001-XPB, \$6/\$60) will be available shortly. See *How to Order Publications*.

For more information on this release, contact Ted Brown (604-666-3694), Pacific Region, Statistics Canada.

Selected Financial Indexes

March 1998

Data from March 1998 are now available for the Selected Financial Indexes (1992=100).

Available on CANSIM: matrix 9928.

The first quarter 1998 issue of *Construction Price Statistics* (62-007-XPB, \$24/\$79) will be available in June. See *How to Order Publications*.

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

PUBLICATIONS RELEASED

Infomat- A Weekly Review, April 17, 1998 (internet version) Catalogue number 11-002-XIE (Canada: \$3; outside Canada: US\$3).

Infomat- A Weekly Review, April 17, 1998 Catalogue number 11-002-XPE (Canada: \$4/\$145; outside Canada: US\$4/US\$145).

Gross Domestic Product by Industry, January 1998 Catalogue number 15-001-XPB (Canada: \$15/\$145; outside Canada: US\$15/US\$145). Canadian Travel Survey, Review of the 1996 Results (paper version) Catalogue number 87-504-XPB (Canada: \$42; outside Canada: US\$42).

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The Daily	7
Statistics Canada	
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MAJOR RELEASES	
 Urban transit, 1995 Despite the emphasis on taking urban transit, Garactiens are using it less an electri Caractien took as average of about 40 trps on some form of urban tran treval in the toest 25 years. 	d less. In 1998, nat, the lowest
 Productivity, hourly compensation and unit labour cost, 199 Growthin productivity among Canadian businesses was rotatively wook agais accompanied by sluggish gains in employment and akw econemic growth due 	n in 1996
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RELEASE DATES

April 20 to 24 1998 (Release dates are subject to change.)

Release date	Title	Reference period
20	Monthly Survey of Manufacturing	February 1998
21	Consumer Price Index	March 1998
21	Wholesale Trade	February 1998
21	Composite Index	March 1998
22	Retail Trade	February 1998
22	Health Reports: Smoking	Spring 1998
22	Employment Insurance	February 1998
23	Canada's International Transactions in Securities	February 1998
24	Livestock Statistics	March 1998