



The Daily

Statistics Canada

Friday, May 15, 1998

For release at 8:30 a.m.

MAJOR RELEASES

- **Composite Index, April 1998**
The leading index continued its steady growth of 0.4% in April.

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- **Travel between Canada and other countries, March 1998**
In March, the number of trips between Canada and other countries decreased in all directions: Canadians made 1.5 million international overnight trips (-2.3%), while foreigners visited Canada for at least one night on 1.5 million occasions (-2.7%).

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Basic summary tabulations

1996 Census

This series from the 1996 Census provides summary information for small geographic areas of the country in tabulations using two or more inter-related census variables.

The entire series comprises 66 basic tabulations. Three tabulations on ethnic origin and the visible minority population are released today. Geographies include census divisions and subdivisions; census metropolitan areas, tracted census agglomerations and census tracts; federal electoral districts (1996 representation order); federal electoral districts (1987 representation order) and enumeration areas; and forward sortation areas. All geographies include data for Canada, the provinces and territories.

Prices begin with a flat fee of \$60, plus \$1 for each of the first 100 geographic areas, and 5¢ for each additional area.

For further information on this release, contact your nearest Statistics Canada Regional Reference Centre.



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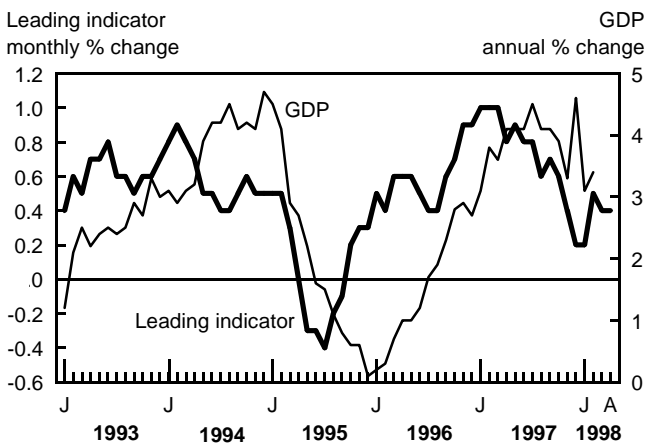
MAJOR RELEASES

Composite Index

April 1998

The leading index grew by 0.4% in April, the same as its downward-revised increase in March. These increases were only about half the average monthly gains posted last year, as most components besides financial markets and business spending have slowed, especially manufacturing.

Leading indicator



The stock market in April continued to add to its advance so far this year. At the same time, business services employment has soared by 84,000 to lead job growth in the four months of the year. This reflects

the surge in construction early in the new year, as repairs from the ice storm added to steady growth in business investment. Non-residential construction posted its best gains in a decade in January and February. Excluding the financial markets component and business services' employment, the leading index would have fallen slightly from its February peak.

New orders fell for a second straight month, after slowing since last autumn, as household spending and exports remained lacklustre even after the ice storm passed. The deceleration in manufacturing was accompanied by a cut in manpower needs, with the average workweek hitting its lowest level in a year and a half.

Household spending remained sluggish. The housing index once again started to sink, off 0.7% in April, as starts of multiple units lost all of the ground gained in March. Starts of single-family homes, a better indicator of the underlying trend in housing, failed to rebound from a 10% drop in March. Lacklustre auto demand continued to hamper retail sales of durable goods, which have eased to 0.4%, down from a high of 1.2% growth two months ago. Furniture and appliance sales were one area that held up well, helped by sharp price discounts.

Available on CANSIM: matrix 191.

For further information, the May issue of *Canadian economic observer* (11-010-XPB, \$23/\$227) will be available next week. See *How to order publications*.

For further information on this release, contact Francine Roy (613-951-3627), Current Economic Analysis Group. □

Composite Index

	Nov. 1997	Dec. 1997	Jan. 1998	Feb. 1998	March 1998	April 1998	Last month of data available
							% change
Composite leading indicator (1981=100)	201.6	202.1	202.5	203.5	204.3	205.2	0.4
Housing index (1981=100) ¹	129.4	128.6	127.2	126.6	126.6	125.7	-0.7
Business and personal services employment ('000)	2,161	2,172	2,187	2,204	2,220	2,236	0.7
TSE 300 stock price index (1975=1,000)	6,770	6,784	6,781	6,821	6,943	7,112	2.4
Money supply, M1 (\$ millions, 1981) ²	37,857	37,957	38,184	38,674	39,067	39,377	0.8
U.S. composite leading indicator (1967=100) ³	223.0	223.2	223.5	223.6	223.9	224.2	0.1
Manufacturing							
Average workweek (hours)	39.5	39.3	39.1	38.9	38.7	38.6	-0.3
New orders, durables (\$ millions, 1981) ⁴	15,022	15,271	15,465	15,524	15,492	15,416	-0.5
Shipments/inventories of finished goods ⁴	1.69	1.69	1.69	1.70	1.69	1.69	0.00 ⁵
Retail trade							
Furniture and appliance sales (\$ millions, 1981) ⁴	1,288.3	1,295.3	1,302.9	1,312.9	1,321.2	1,331.0	0.7
Other durable goods sales (\$ millions, 1981) ⁴	4,361.6	4,382.5	4,401.1	4,454.0	4,490.7	4,509.0	0.4
Unsmoothed composite	202.0	201.6	203.4	207.7	205.5	206.9	0.7

¹ Composite index of housing starts (units) and house sales (multiple listing service).

² Deflated by the Consumer Price Index for all items.

³ The figures in this row reflect data published in the month indicated, but the figures themselves refer to data for the month immediately preceding.

⁴ The figures in this row reflect data published in the month indicated, but the figures themselves refer to data for two preceding months.

⁵ Difference from previous month.

Travel between Canada and other countries

March 1998

In March, the number of trips between Canada and other countries decreased in all directions: Canadians made 1.5 million international overnight trips (-2.3%), while foreigners visited Canada for at least one night on 1.5 million occasions (-2.7%).

Overnight travel decreases between Canada and the United States

In March, for a second consecutive month, Americans made more overnight trips to Canada than Canadians made to the United States. However, both types of travel decreased from the previous month.

Americans made 1.2 million trips of at least one night to Canada in March, 2.5% fewer than in February. Their number of overnight trips reached its most recent low in March 1993, at 941,000, then fluctuated around 1.1 million between mid-1994 and September 1996, and have generally been increasing since.

For most of their trips in March, Americans drove to Canada (745,000 trips), down 3.2% from February. They also flew to Canada for 282,000 overnight trips, down 0.6%; trips of this type peaked at 290,000 in December 1997.

Meanwhile, Canadians made 1.2 million trips of at least one night to the United States in March, 2.7% lower than in February and the lowest since August 1994. The number of such trips has fluctuated between 1.2 and 1.3 million since mid-1994. It peaked at 1.8 million in December 1991, when the Canadian dollar was worth US\$0.88.

The largest decrease in Canadians' overnight travel to the United States in March was their car trips (-3.4%). The trend for this type of travel has been moving downward after it peaked at 1.4 million in December 1991: the number is now 50% lower than it was then.

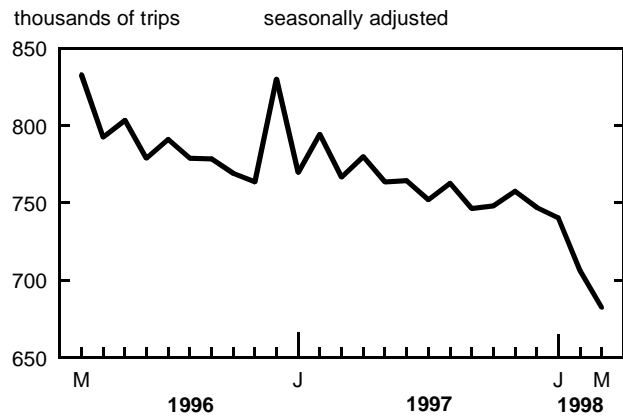
A 2.6% decrease was also registered in Canadians' trips of at least one night by plane to the United States, which numbered 366,000 in March.

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.

Canadians' overnight car trips to the United States have been declining since December 1991



Trips by overseas tourists to Canada at lowest level in three years

The trend in overnight travel to Canada by overseas residents has been moving downward since it peaked at 401,000 trips in February 1997. These travellers made 323,000 trips to Canada in March, 3.4% fewer than in February and the lowest number in the last three years.

Currency values in many of Canada's main European markets (except the pound in the U.K.), as well as the yen, continued to decline in March compared with the Canadian dollar. In addition, the Asian market is still much affected by economic problems.

Meanwhile, the number of trips Canadians made to countries other than the United States (340,000) decreased by 1.0% in March, after having remained fairly stable since November 1997, when it peaked at 346,000.

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

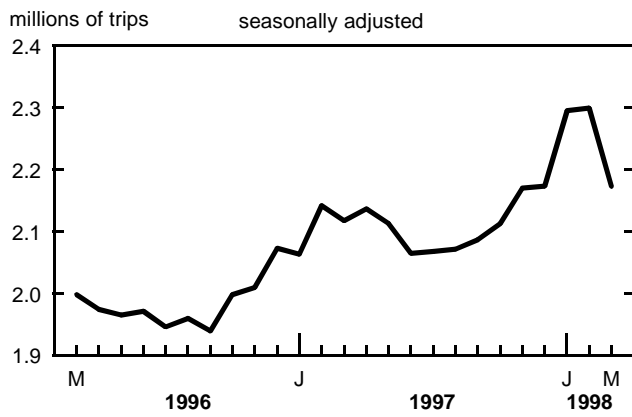
	March 1998 ^P	March 1997 to March 1998
	unadjusted	
	'000	% change
Europe	99	-9.9
France	14	1.2
Germany	15	-16.9
United Kingdom	41	-11.8
Other European countries	29	-8.1
Asia	57	-37.3
Hong Kong	7	-45.7
Japan	27	-33.5
South Korea	3	-56.3
Taiwan	6	-28.1
Other Asian countries	14	-35.9
Other countries	28	-6.0
Australia	8	5.7
Other countries	21	-9.8

^P Preliminary figures.

Drop in Americans' same-day car trips to Canada

In March, Americans' same-day cross-border car trips to Canada fell 5.5%, the largest drop since hitting the low of 1.4 million trips in January 1994. The drop in March brought the number such car excursions to 2.2 million. The number of such trips had been on the rise for the seven months before March.

Americans' cross-border car excursions to Canada dropped in March



Meanwhile, Canadians made 2.5 million same-day car trips to the United States, down 1.0% to its lowest level since March 1987. The monthly number of same-day car trips by Canadians to the United States has been decreasing since November 1991, when Canadians made more than twice as many trips as in March.

Car excursions between Canada and the United States

	Americans to Canada		Canadians to the United States	
	March 1998 ^P	March 1997 to March 1998	March 1998 ^P	March 1997 to March 1998
	unadjusted			
	'000	% change	'000	% change
Canada	1,846	-2.1	2,433	-17.5
Place of entry/re-entry				
New Brunswick	108	-0.9	386	-1.2
Quebec	72	-3.8	194	-17.1
Ontario	1,432	-4.2	1,168	-17.5
Manitoba	20	3.1	43	-8.1
Saskatchewan	4	5.2	13	-14.6
Alberta	7	3.3	9	-14.7
British Columbia	201	14.9	619	-25.9
Yukon	2	16.3	1	-17.2

^P Preliminary figures.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 2661-2697, 5780-6048 and 8200-8329.

The March 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

	Jan. 1998 ^r	Feb. 1998 ^r	March 1998 ^p	Feb. 1998 to March 1998
seasonally adjusted				
	'000			% change
Canadians' trips abroad				
Same-day car trips to the United States	2,565	2,560	2,536	-1.0
Total trips, one or more nights	1,563	1,527	1,492	-2.3
United States ¹	1,219	1,184	1,152	-2.7
Car	740	706	682	-3.4
Plane	376	376	366	-2.6
Other modes of transportation	103	101	104	2.3
Other countries ²	344	343	340	-1.0
Travel to Canada				
Same-day car trips from the United States	2,295	2,299	2,173	-5.5
Total trips, one or more nights	1,512	1,535	1,493	-2.7
United States ¹	1,162	1,201	1,171	-2.5
Car	743	769	745	-3.2
Plane	270	284	282	-0.6
Other modes of transportation	148	149	144	-3.1
Other countries ²	350	334	323	-3.4
	March 1998 ^p	March 1997 to March 1998	Jan.- March ^p to 1998	Jan.-March 1997 to Jan.-March 1998
unadjusted				
	'000	% change	'000	% change
Canadians' trips abroad				
Same-day car trips to the United States	2,433	-17.5	6,519	-15.9
Total trips, one or more nights	1,760	-12.2	4,438	-5.5
United States ¹	1,270	-16.4	3,043	-9.8
Car	663	-24.3	1,455	-16.0
Plane	540	-4.1	1,425	-2.1
Other modes of transportation	68	-17.2	163	-12.6
Other countries ²	490	1.0	1,395	5.6
Travel to Canada				
Same-day car trips from the United States	1,846	-2.1	5,370	7.0
Total trips, one or more nights	832	-6.6	2,291	0.9
United States ¹	647	-1.8	1,789	5.6
Car	379	-5.9	1,071	5.7
Plane	212	8.2	570	7.6
Other modes of transportation	56	-6.8	148	-1.7
Other countries ²	184	-20.1	502	-13.1

^r Revised figures.

^p Preliminary figures.

¹ Estimates for the United States include counts of cars and buses, and estimated numbers for planes, trains, boats and other methods.

² Figures for other countries exclude same-day entries by land only, via the United States.

OTHER RELEASES

Steel wire and specified wire products

March 1998

Shipments of steel wire and specified wire products totalled 72 676 metric tonnes in March, up 2.1% from 71 174 tonnes in March 1997.

Data on production and export markets for selected commodities are also available.

Available on CANSIM: matrix 122 (series 19).

The March 1998 issue of *Steel wire and specified wire products* (41-006-XPB, \$7/\$62) will be available shortly. See *How to order publications*.

For further information on this release, contact Etienne Saint-Pierre (613-951-9837; saineti@statcan.ca), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

Shipments of rolled steel

March 1998

In March, shipments of rolled steel totalled 1 340 436 metric tonnes, up 13.8% from 1 177 994 (revised) tonnes in February 1998 and up 13.0% from 1 186 280 tonnes in March 1997.

Year-to-date shipments at the end of March 1998 totalled 3 698 132 (revised) tonnes, a 5.1% rise from 3 519 002 tonnes the previous year.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 58 and 122 (series 22-25).

The March 1998 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; shinand@statcan.ca), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

Plastic film and bags

First quarter 1998

Data on the shipments of plastic film and bags are now available for the first quarter of 1998.

The first quarter 1998 issue of *Shipments of plastic film and bags manufactured from resin* (47-007-XPB, \$10/\$33) will be available shortly. See *How to order publications*.

For further information on this release, contact Nicole Charron (613-951-3510; charnic@statcan.ca), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

Business services industries

1995

Data on business services industries are now available for 1995. These data provide information such as revenue, salaries and wages, profit margin, the percentage distribution of revenue by type of service, expenditures, and client base for selected industries.

Data are available for the following business services: rental and leasing of machinery and equipment (including industrial machinery and equipment, audio-visual equipment, office furniture and machinery, and other machinery and equipment); automobile and truck rental and leasing services; and photography.

For further information on this release, contact Randy Smadella (613-951-3472), Services Division. ■

Unincorporated small business database

1993

Data are now available for 1993 from the unincorporated small business database. This database is the result of linking the small business profiles with the 1993 segment of the longitudinal administrative databank.

For further information on this release, contact Jan Patenaude (613-951-0231) or Client Services (613-951-9720; fax: 613-951-4745; saadinfo@statcan.ca), Small Area and Administrative Data Division. ■

PUBLICATIONS RELEASED

Infomat - A weekly review, April 24, 1998
Catalogue number 11-002-XIE
(Canada: \$3; outside Canada: US\$3).

Infomat - A weekly review, April 24, 1998
Catalogue number 11-002-XPE
(Canada: \$4/\$145; outside Canada: US\$4/US\$145).

Gross domestic product by industry, February 1998
Catalogue number 15-001-XPB
(Canada: \$15/\$145; outside Canada: US\$15/US\$145).

Railway carloadings, March 1998
Catalogue number 52-001-XPB
(Canada: \$11/\$103; outside Canada: US\$11/US\$103).

Oil pipeline transport, February 1998
Catalogue number 55-001-XPB
(Canada: \$12/\$114; outside Canada: US\$12/US\$11).

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Thursday, June 5, 1997
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- **Urban transit, 1995** 2
Despite the emphasis on taking urban transit, Canadians are using it less and less. In 1995, each Canadian took an average of about 65 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 nominal growth during the year.

OTHER RELEASES

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- **Short-term Expectations Survey** 3
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RELEASE DATES

May 18 to 22

(Release dates are subject to change.)

Release date	Title	Reference period
19	Monthly Survey of Manufacturing	March 1998
20	Canadian international merchandise trade	March 1998
20	Wholesale trade	March 1998
21	Retail trade	March 1998
21	Port activity	1997
22	Quarterly financial statistics for enterprises	First quarter 1998
22	Canada's international transactions in securities	March 1998
