

The Daily

Statistics Canada

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MAJOR RELEASES

- **The labour market for computer programmers, 1992 to 1997** 2
Jobs for computer programmers and systems analysts almost doubled from 1992 to 1997.
There were 267,000 such jobs in 1997, a 92% increase from 139,000 in 1992.

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MAJOR RELEASES

The labour market for computer programmers

1992 to 1997

Jobs for computer programmers and systems analysts almost doubled from 1992 to 1997, according to a new study now available, which will also appear in *Perspectives on labour and income* on June 25. There were 267,000 such jobs in 1997, a 92% increase from 139,000 in 1992. This was in the context of 9% overall employment growth. The unemployment rate for computer programmers in 1997 was about 3%—lower than any national unemployment rate since the mid-1960s.

Factors contributing to this expanding job market are believed to include the rapid growth of the Internet and the spread of internal computer networks (intranets) in large organizations. Programmers have also found work tackling the Year 2000 problem (the issue of modifying computers to avoid complications when the last two digits of the year change from 99 to 00 at the turn of the century).

Most of the data for this study come from the Labour Force Survey.

Experienced programmers in demand

In 1997, 4 out of every 10 programmers were aged 25 to 34, yet only 20% of newly hired workers (in the job one year or less) were under 25. As a result, most of the growth in employment has been among workers old enough to have previous work experience.

Programmers aged 45 and over had the highest proportionate five-year increase in employment. Their numbers grew by 27,000, a 131% increase compared with a 66% increase for the 25-to-34 age group. Most new jobs for those 45 and over are thought to come from transfers from other jobs within firms.

Programmers not wealthy workaholics

The popular image of the workaholic computer programmer is cast into doubt by the data. The growing market for programmers has not created longer workweeks. Programmers worked an average 38.8 hours a week in 1997, about an hour less than in 1992. Programmers were also no more likely than others to work overtime or to hold a second job.

In late 1997, computer programmers and systems analysts earned, on average, about \$300 more per week than workers overall (\$843 compared with \$577). But they earned slightly less than other workers in the natural science, engineering and mathematics occupational group. These other scientific and technical workers earned \$877 per week. Programmers working for large companies earned more than those in small firms.

Programming is an urban occupation

Programming jobs are found mainly in Canada's metropolitan areas—especially Toronto, Montréal, Ottawa-Hull and Vancouver, which accounted for 171,000 of the 267,000 jobs in 1997.

In spite of rapid job growth in Toronto, Montréal and Vancouver, Ottawa-Hull had the highest concentration of software workers in 1997, representing more than 5% of all employed persons in the region.

Between 1992 and 1997, Ontario added the most jobs (+58,000), a growth of 90%. British Columbia had the fastest percentage growth, at 155%. The increase in Atlantic Canada was lower than in the rest of the country.

Self-employment offers new source of jobs

The number of self-employed computer programmers and systems analysts almost tripled over the study period, from 17,000 in 1992 to 58,000 in 1997. These 41,000 new jobs accounted for just under one-third of the growth in the profession.

Most other computer programmers worked in firms of varying sizes. Thirty-one percent worked in organizations with more than 500 employees. Newly hired programmers were more likely to work in small firms.

Of the 128,000 computer programming jobs created between 1992 and 1997, almost 70% were in the business services industry, which supports the perception that contracting out has increased.

For further information on this release, contact Dave Gower (613-951-4616) or Marie-Paule Robert (613-951-4628), Labour and Household Surveys Analysis Division. ■

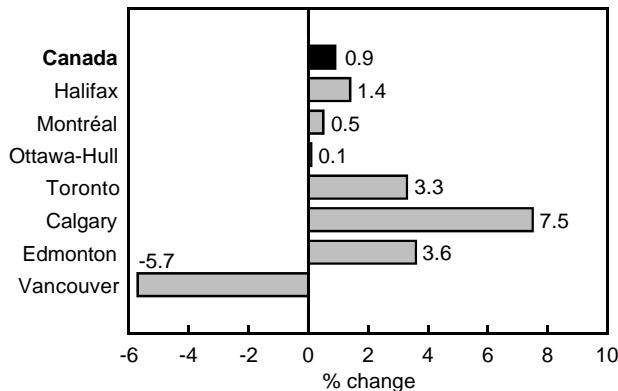
OTHER RELEASES

New Housing Price Index

April 1998

In April, the New Housing Price Index increased 0.9% compared with April 1997.

New Housing Price Indexes
April 1997 to April 1998



From March to April 1998, this index of contractors' selling prices for new houses showed no change, due to counterbalancing changes in the indexes of the surveyed cities.

The largest monthly increase was noted in Halifax (+1.5%), followed by Saskatoon (+0.6%) and Calgary (+0.5%), as some builders passed their increased construction costs on to buyers of new homes. Smaller increases were noted in several other cities, as builders reacted to improving market conditions. However, these increases were offset by significant monthly decreases in the indexes for Victoria (-1.2%), Vancouver (-1.1%) and Sudbury-Thunder Bay (-0.7%), along with smaller decreases in several other city indexes. Generally, contractors attributed these decreases to competitive market conditions.

Available on CANSIM: matrix 9921.

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

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

New Housing Price Indexes (1992=100)

	April 1998	April 1997 to April 1998	March 1998 to April 1998
Canada	99.9	0.9	-
House only	100.2	1.4	-
Land only	101.7	0.5	-
St. John's	96.5	0.2	-0.3
Halifax	108.5	1.4	1.5
Charlottetown	101.4	-2.0	-0.1
Saint John-Moncton-Fredericton	93.8	-2.0	-0.2
Québec	98.8	0.7	-
Montréal	102.5	0.5	-
Ottawa-Hull	97.1	0.1	-
Toronto	101.5	3.3	0.4
Hamilton	102.2	4.0	0.3
St. Catharines-Niagara	99.3	3.3	-
Kitchener-Waterloo	99.7	2.7	0.1
London	97.7	0.6	-
Windsor	105.3	0.9	-
Sudbury-Thunder Bay	100.4	-3.0	-0.7
Winnipeg	111.9	0.8	-
Regina	123.3	5.3	0.3
Saskatoon	112.5	2.9	0.6
Calgary	121.6	7.5	0.5
Edmonton	107.2	3.6	0.4
Vancouver	88.2	-5.7	-1.1
Victoria	80.3	-4.6	-1.2

- Nil or zero.

Continuing education in universities 1996/97

For a second year in a row, the number of registrations in university continuing education (non-degree, non-credit courses) has declined. Registrations fell from 350,298 in 1995/96 to 327,181 in 1996/97, a drop of 6.6%.

Enrolments decreased in every province except Alberta. Higher registrations in sports and recreation and in liberal arts courses increased Alberta's enrolment by 4.7%.

Registrations in university non-degree, non-credit continuing education courses

	1995/96 ^r	1996/97	1995/96 to 1996/97
	% change		
Canada	350,298	327,181	-6.6
Newfoundland	4,089	3,300	-19.3
Prince Edward Island	2,227	2,159	-3.1
Nova Scotia	21,717	18,700	-13.9
New Brunswick	5,859	4,938	-15.7
Quebec	46,216	44,722	-3.2
Ontario	94,671	91,786	-3.0
Manitoba	21,415	20,496	-4.3
Saskatchewan	24,512	20,045	-18.2
Alberta	51,569	53,996	4.7
British Columbia	78,023	67,039	-14.1

^r Revised data.

Nationally, the most popular field of study was the social sciences, accounting for 24.2% of all continuing education registrations, followed by general (15.8%), health professions and occupations (14.7%) and the humanities (14.0%).

Professional and career development continues to be the primary course objective for continuing education courses. Seventy-one percent of registrations were in professional and career development courses, while 29% were in general interest and academic ones. Fewer courses were provided under contract to

associations and government, while more professional and career development courses were contracted to business and industry.

The most common method of instruction remains the traditional classroom setting. While this type of instruction stayed stable, smaller gains were made in correspondence and other distance education courses in 1996/97.

The average tuition fee for a university continuing education course was \$360, a 13% increase over the previous year.

Each year, universities are asked to report registrations in non-degree, non-credit continuing education programs. The Continuing Education Survey collects information on field of study, course objective, qualifications sought, method of instruction, contract indicator, course length and course fees. Continuing education data are available for two periods: from 1985/86 to 1990/91 and from 1992/93 to 1996/97.

For further information on this release, contact Nicola Paterson (613-951-1526), Culture, Tourism and the Centre for Education Statistics.

To obtain tables, or for general inquiries, contact Daniel Perrier (613-951-1503), Culture, Tourism and the Centre for Education Statistics.

Continuing education in university non-degree, non-credit courses 1996/97

Major field of study	Registrations		Course objective		Average course length	Average Tuition
	number	% of total	Professional/ career	Other		
					number	hours
Total	327,181	100.0	232,816	94,365	29.0	360
General	51,602	15.8	14,907	36,695	25.4	218
Education, physical education, recreation and leisure	38,703	11.8	29,920	8,783	40.6	319
Fine and applied arts	14,099	4.3	3,480	10,619	20.0	177
Humanities and related	45,657	14.0	26,838	18,819	50.2	510
Social sciences and related	79,301	24.2	75,201	4,100	28.3	502
Agriculture and biological sciences	14,802	4.5	8,663	6,139	39.8	240
Engineering and applied sciences	9,840	3.0	8,715	1,125	20.9	550
Health professions and occupations	47,940	14.7	46,224	1,716	13.0	186
Math and computer sciences	25,237	7.7	18,868	6,369	17.8	313

Steel primary forms

April 1998

In April, production of steel primary forms totalled 1 421 432 metric tonnes, an 8.3% increase from 1 313 008 tonnes in April 1997.

Year-to-date production at the end of April 1998 reached 5 492 163 tonnes, up 10.6% from 4 967 048 tonnes a year earlier.

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

The April 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. ■

Particleboard, oriented strandboard and fibreboard

April 1998

In April, production of oriented strandboard totalled 511 328 cubic metres, up 5.6% from 484 379 (revised) cubic metres in April 1997. Particleboard production reached 199 938 cubic metres, a 1.3% rise from 197 437 cubic metres in April 1997. Fibreboard production totalled 72 378 cubic metres, 35.9% higher than 53 244 cubic metres in April 1997.

From March to April 1998, year-to-date production of oriented strandboard totalled 1 965 568 cubic metres, an 8.9% increase from 1 803 539 (revised) cubic metres for the same period last year. Year-to-date particleboard production reached 779 137 cubic metres, an 8.7% increase from 716 562 cubic metres in April 1997. Year-to-date fibreboard production totalled 260 118 cubic metres, climbing 34.3% from 193 617 cubic metres during the same period in 1997.

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

The April 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. ■

Industrial chemicals and synthetic resins

April 1998

Chemical firms produced 188 865 metric tonnes of polyethylene synthetic resins in April, a 0.4% increase from 188 055 tonnes in April 1997.

From January to April 1998, production totalled 771 042 tonnes, up 5.0% from 734 294 tonnes a year earlier.

Production data are also available for 3 other types of synthetic resins and for 24 industrial chemicals.

Available on CANSIM: matrix 951.

The April 1998 issue of *Industrial chemicals and synthetic resins* (46-002-XPB, \$7/\$62) will be available shortly. See *How to order publications*.

For further information on this release, contact Suzette DesRosiers (613-951-9836; desrosi@statcan.ca), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

Electric lamps

April 1998

Light bulb and tube manufacturers sold 21.3 million light bulbs and tubes in April, a 10.9% decrease from 23.9 million in April 1997.

Year-to-date sales at the end of April 1998 totalled 98.8 million light bulbs and tubes, down 5.4% from 104.4 million a year earlier.

The April 1998 issue of *Electric lamps* (43-009-XPB, \$7/\$62) will be available shortly.

For further information on this release, contact Laurie Vincent (613-951-3523; vincwil@statcan.ca), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

Railway carloadings

April 1998

In April, carload freight (excluding intermodal traffic) loaded by railways in Canada totalled 21.1 million metric tonnes, a decrease of 1.4% from April 1997. The carriers received an additional 1.9 million tonnes from U.S. connections during April.

Intermodal (piggyback) tonnage in April totalled 1.5 million tonnes, down 6.5% from the same month last year. The year-to-date figures showed a decrease of 5.3%.

Total traffic (carload freight and intermodal) decreased 1.8% during April. The 1998 year-to-date total was 86.6 million tonnes at the end of April, an increase of 3.7% from the previous year. Receipts from United States connections rose 6.5% during the same period.

Year-to-date data for 1997 and 1998 have been revised.

Available on CANSIM: matrix 1431.

The April 1998 issue of *Railway carloadings* (52-001-XPB, \$11/\$103) will be released shortly.

For further information on this release, contact Robert Larocque (613-951-2486; fax: 613-951-0009; larocque@statcan.ca), Transportation Division. ■

Airport activity

Third quarter 1997 (preliminary)

Preliminary data on airport activity are now available for the third quarter of 1997.

The May 1998 issue of *Aviation service bulletin* (51-004-XIB, \$8/\$82) will be available shortly. See *How to order publications*.

For further information on this release, contact Rolf Hakka (613-951-0068), Aviation Statistics Centre, Transportation Division. ■

PUBLICATIONS RELEASED

Cement, April 1998
Catalogue number 44-001-XPB
 (Canada: \$7/\$62; outside Canada: US\$7/US\$62).

Building permits, April 1998
Catalogue number 64-001-XIB
 (Canada: \$19/\$186; outside Canada: US\$19/US\$186).

Canada's international transactions in securities, March 1998
Catalogue number 67-002-XPB
 (Canada: \$18/\$176; outside Canada: US\$18/US\$176).

All prices exclude sales tax.

Catalogue numbers with an -XIB or an -XIE extension are Internet versions; those with -XMB or -XME are microfiche; and -XPB or -XPE denote a paper version.

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MAJOR RELEASES
 • **Urban transit, 1995** 2
Despite the emphasis on taking urban transit, Canadians are using it less and less. In 1996, each Canadian took an average of about 40 trips on some form of urban transit, the lowest level in the last 25 years.
 • **Productivity, hourly compensation and unit labour cost, 1996** 4
Growth in productivity among Canadian businesses was noticeably weak again in 1996, accompanied by sluggish gains in employment and slow economic growth during the year.

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