



The Daily

Statistics Canada

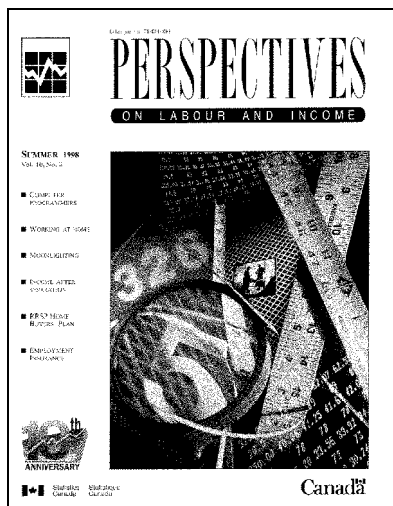
Thursday, June 25, 1998

For release at 8:30 a.m.

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Perspectives on labour and income Summer 1998

"The booming market for programmers", released to the media earlier in June, is the feature article in this issue of *Perspectives on labour and income*.

Also presented is "Income after separation — people without children", which is featured in today's *Daily*. Other articles examine two growing phenomena: working at home and moonlighting.

As well, the RRSP Home Buyers' Plan is examined for the first time. An overview of legislative and policy changes in Employment Insurance since 1940 follows and census labour data for 1996 conclude the issue.

The summer 1998 issue of *Perspectives on labour and income* (75-001-XPE, \$18/\$58) is now available. See *How to order publications*.

For further information, contact Marie-Paule Robert (613-951-4628), Labour and Household Surveys Analysis Division.



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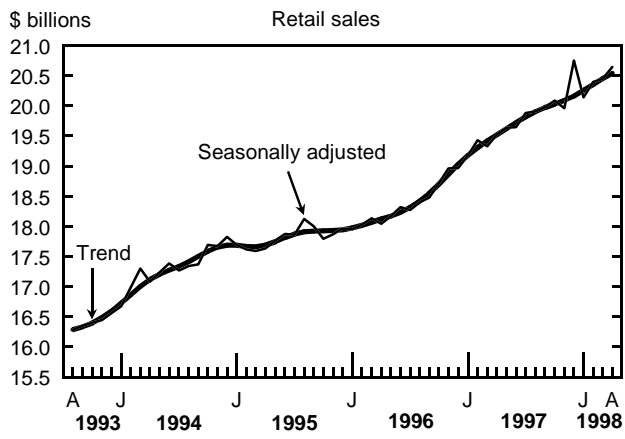
Retail Trade

April 1998

Incentives from motor vehicle dealers drove up retail sales by 1.0% to \$20.6 billion in April. This followed a 0.3% increase in retail sales in March. Retail sales in April were 5.7% higher than the same month in 1997.

Retail sales have generally been rising from the spring of 1995 with a period of strong growth from the fall of 1996 to the spring of 1997. The large run-up in retail sales in the fall of 1996 came from advancing sales in the automotive sector. Since the spring of 1997, however, all sectors have generally been increasing.

Autos drive April advance



Consumers enjoyed lower prices in furniture stores, motor vehicle dealerships and gasoline service stations in April 1998 compared with the same month in 1997. While the year-over-year increase in sales in April 1998 was 5.7%, if prices had remained constant, sales would have risen by 5.9%. Lower prices have dampened year-over-year increases in sales since February 1998.

Increases in retail sales in the fall of 1996 coincided with significant advances in consumer credit. Since February 1997, however, employment has been posting gains and the first quarter of 1998 showed a 1.4% increase in weekly earnings, compared with the previous quarter. Not all of this strength in personal income, however, was spent in retail stores. An increase in the purchase of financial assets in the first

Data revised from January 1991

This month's release reflects estimates derived from a new sample. Effective today, Statistics Canada has also released revised monthly retail trade estimates from January 1991 to March 1998, which are consistent with the new sample estimates. The revised series will not affect the national estimate of gross domestic product.

In December 1997, the sample design of the Monthly Retail Trade Survey was reviewed and changes were made to improve the efficiency of the sample and the reliability of the estimates. This involved updating the sample size and allocation, which were originally determined in 1988, to take into account the most up-to-date information available on the characteristics of retail trade businesses.

A parallel production of four months with the new sample indicated a change in the level of sales compared with the previously published estimates. To avoid a break in the series, retail sales estimates have been adjusted, at the trade-group by province/census metropolitan area level, to provide consistent time series. January 1991 was chosen as the starting point because it allowed for a gradual introduction of the new level and coincided with an existing break resulting from the introduction of the GST. The monthly trends in the retail series were minimally affected by this revision. Minor revisions were also incorporated for the year 1997 as part of the regular annual revision process.

The revised monthly retail trade estimates have been loaded on the same CANSIM matrices, replacing the previous estimates. Annual aggregates of the revised series are also available through Statistics Canada's Internet site, see Canadian Statistics, The Economy in Detail.

For more information on the revision or to receive revised estimates, contact Chantal McIvor (613-951-3549; logener@statcan.ca) or Greg Peterson (613-951-3592; petegre@statcan.ca), Retail Trade Section, Distributive

quarter of 1998 led to the first quarterly advance in the savings rate in two years.

Strong advances for motor vehicle dealers

Advancing sales by motor and recreational vehicle dealers (+2.6%) were responsible for two-thirds of April's increase in total retail sales. Excluding motor vehicle dealers, sales advanced by only 0.4% in April. Dealer incentives drove up the number of new motor vehicles sold in April (+5.9%). Motor vehicle dealers had experienced a build-up of inventories in the first quarter of 1998. Motor vehicle dealers enjoyed a surge in sales from the fall of 1996 to the spring of 1997, and with the exception of an incentive driven increase in December, have been weaker since.

Sales in general merchandise stores rose by 0.7% in April. Department stores, which accounts for three-

fifths of sales in this sector, suffered declining sales (-0.4%). While sales declined from March, sales in department stores were 12.3% higher in April 1998 than the same month a year earlier. General merchandise stores have been posting strong growth since the end of 1995.

April's increase in drug store sales (+0.7%) continued a pattern of steady advances. Apart from a pause in the fall of 1996 and the spring of 1997, sales in drug stores have been rising slowly.

Within the food sector, an increase in sales by supermarkets and grocery stores (+0.7%) offset a decline by other, more specialized, food stores (-0.6%) leading to an overall 0.6% increase in the food sector. Food stores have experienced a pattern of general increases since the spring of 1996.

Other sectors slow

Liquor, wine and beer stores faced the strongest decline in retail sales in April (-6.8%), following three months of strong sales. Furniture (-0.7%) and clothing (-0.5%) stores also faced falling sales in April.

The drop in furniture store sales in April followed a weak advance in March (+0.2%). The level of sales in April was 6.3% higher than the same month in 1997. Apart from a weaker performance in recent months, sales in furniture stores have generally been increasing since the spring of 1996.

Despite April's overall decline in clothing store sales, advances were posted by shoe (+1.8%), men's clothing (+0.2%) and women's clothing stores (+0.1%). Apart from a pause in the first half of 1997, sales in clothing stores have generally been rising from the spring of 1996.

Western retailers lead advances in April

Western Canada posted stronger increases than any other region in April (+1.7%). Strong advances in Alberta (+2.6%) and British Columbia (+1.7%) were dampened by slower increases in Manitoba (+0.8%). Sales in Saskatchewan remained unchanged at \$638 million. The strong increases followed a weak first quarter for retailers in Western Canada.

Sales in Ontario rose by 1.4% in April on the strength of the automotive sector. Sales in Ontario started to take off in the fall of 1996, initially based on strength in the automotive sector. From the summer of 1997, these advances have been broadly based.

While not as strong as some other parts of the country, retailers in Atlantic Canada enjoyed improving sales in April (+0.7%). All four Atlantic Provinces experienced increasing sales, with the largest gains in Prince Edward Island (+1.3%) and Nova Scotia (+1.1%). With a pause in the last quarter of 1997, retail sales in Atlantic Canada have been rising from the spring of 1997. The April advance builds on a strong first quarter.

Quebec was the only province to see a decline in retail sales in April (-0.7%). Retail sales in Quebec started to post strong increases in the spring of 1996, about six months before the rest of the country. In the last year, sales in Quebec have leveled off as a result of slower growth in the automotive sector. All other sectors, particularly general merchandise stores are posting positive trends.

Related indicators

Initial estimates indicate a slight increase in the number of new motor vehicles sold in May. Total employment fell by 0.1% in May. The number of housing starts in May declined by 5.2% from April.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 2299, 2398-2417 and 2420.

The April 1998 issue of *Retail trade* (63-005-XPB, \$21/\$206) will be available shortly. See *How to order publications*.

For further information on this release, contact Chantal McIvor (613-951-3549; Internet: logener@statcan.ca). For analytical information, contact Greg Peterson (613-951-3592; Internet: petegre@statcan.ca), Retail Trade Section, Distributive Trades Division. □

Retail sales

Trade group	April 1997	Jan. 1998 ^r	Feb. 1998 ^r	March 1998 ^r	April 1998 ^p	March 1998 to April 1998 ^r	April 1997 to April 1998
	seasonally adjusted						
	\$ millions					% change	
Food	4,595	4,766	4,740	4,764	4,793	0.6	4.3
Supermarkets and grocery stores	4,245	4,402	4,373	4,406	4,437	0.7	4.5
All other food stores	351	364	367	358	356	-0.6	1.5
Drug and patent medicine stores	1,019	1,062	1,073	1,069	1,076	0.7	5.6
Clothing	1,098	1,136	1,177	1,171	1,166	-0.5	6.1
Shoe stores	135	140	146	143	146	1.8	8.0
Men's clothing stores	130	132	133	132	132	0.2	1.6
Women's clothing stores	363	367	377	383	383	0.1	5.4
Other clothing stores	470	498	521	514	505	-1.8	7.4
Furniture	953	1,000	1,018	1,019	1,012	-0.7	6.3
Household furniture and appliance stores	761	799	810	813	808	-0.5	6.2
Household furnishings stores	191	201	207	207	204	-1.2	6.7
Automotive	7,645	7,671	7,794	7,823	8,003	2.3	4.7
Motor vehicle and recreational vehicle dealers	5,141	5,187	5,313	5,345	5,485	2.6	6.7
Gasoline service stations	1,374	1,296	1,304	1,286	1,279	-0.6	-6.9
Automotive parts, accessories and services	1,130	1,188	1,178	1,192	1,240	4.0	9.7
General merchandise stores	2,142	2,299	2,342	2,340	2,356	0.7	10.0
Retail stores not elsewhere classified	2,071	2,203	2,249	2,259	2,234	-1.1	7.8
Other semi-durable goods stores	686	699	704	704	705	0.1	2.7
Other durable goods stores	486	542	578	564	568	0.6	16.9
All other retail stores not elsewhere classified	900	962	967	990	961	-2.9	6.9
Total, retail sales	19,524	20,137	20,392	20,444	20,640	1.0	5.7
Total excluding motor vehicle and recreational vehicle dealers	14,383	14,950	15,079	15,099	15,155	0.4	5.4
Provinces and territories							
Newfoundland	304	316	314	312	312	0.1	2.4
Prince Edward Island	81	86	87	87	88	1.3	9.4
Nova Scotia	598	621	631	620	627	1.1	4.9
New Brunswick	479	490	484	498	501	0.6	4.6
Quebec	4,665	4,324	4,888	4,849	4,815	-0.7	3.2
Ontario	7,049	7,563	7,521	7,599	7,706	1.4	9.3
Manitoba	694	743	712	730	736	0.8	6.0
Saskatchewan	630	671	621	638	638	0.0	1.2
Alberta	2,187	2,408	2,315	2,278	2,337	2.6	6.8
British Columbia	2,770	2,846	2,751	2,764	2,811	1.7	1.5
Yukon	26	27	26	26	25	-4.3	-2.2
Northwest Territories	41	44	44	45	45	1.6	10.9

^p Preliminary figures.

^r Revised figures.

Retail sales

Trade group	April 1997	March 1998 ^r	April 1998 ^p	April 1997 to April 1998
	unadjusted			
	\$ millions			%
				change
Food	4,397	4,459	4,725	7.4
Supermarkets and grocery stores	4,060	4,129	4,363	7.5
All other food stores	337	331	362	7.1
Drug and patent medicine stores	994	1,035	1,057	6.3
Clothing	1,009	949	1,071	6.2
Shoe stores	136	106	142	4.7
Men's clothing stores	113	97	118	4.2
Women's clothing stores	348	312	364	4.7
Other clothing stores	412	433	447	8.4
Furniture	867	920	918	6.0
Household furniture and appliance stores	686	733	731	6.5
Household furnishings stores	181	187	188	3.8
Automotive	8,737	7,716	8,824	1.0
Motor vehicle and recreational vehicle dealers	6,273	5,466	6,350	1.2
Gasoline service stations	1,294	1,208	1,217	-6.0
Automotive parts, accessories and services	1,170	1,041	1,257	7.4
General merchandise stores	1,919	1,948	2,161	12.6
Retail stores not elsewhere classified	1,828	1,781	2,040	11.6
Other semi-durable goods stores	608	529	646	6.1
Other durable goods stores	424	422	506	19.3
All other retail stores not elsewhere classified	795	830	888	11.8
Total, retail sales	19,751	18,808	20,796	5.3
Total excluding motor vehicle and recreational vehicle dealers	13,487	13,342	14,446	7.1
Provinces and territories				
Newfoundland	301	282	312	3.5
Prince Edward Island	75	75	83	10.9
Nova Scotia	592	557	630	6.5
New Brunswick	475	443	499	5.1
Quebec	4,842	4,466	5,054	4.4
Ontario	7,106	6,922	7,674	8.0
Manitoba	683	673	730	6.9
Saskatchewan	637	577	633	-0.6
Alberta	2,213	2,117	2,346	6.0
British Columbia	2,760	2,630	2,763	0.1
Yukon	25	23	24	-1.2
Northwest Territories	42	43	47	13.9

^r Revised figures

^p Preliminary figures



Income after separation — people without children

1987 to 1993

One year after the separation of couples with no children at home at the time of the breakup, men overall experienced slight income gains (+2%) and women reported losses of 16%. Nevertheless, half of these men saw their incomes decline, while 39% of the women actually saw increases.

These and other findings complement a study published in the summer 1997 issue of *Perspectives on labour and income*. That study, which looked at income after separation among couples with children at home, showed a median 23% decline in women's income in the first year after separation and a 10% increase in men's.

The absence of children at home was not the only distinction between the two groups. The "childless" couples were by and large much older. Although 41% of men and 31% of women were at least 50 years of age at the time of the breakup, this was true of only 7% of men and 3% of women with children.

People in new couples had better income

Some 37% of men and 29% of women formed new unions as soon as a year after the breakup. Five years after the separation, these percentages had risen to 58% and 50%, respectively. Forming a new couple had a substantial effect on incomes, especially for women. The incomes of men who formed new unions in the first year after separation increased by 6%. This contrasts with a median decline of 2% for the 59% of men who remained unattached — a spread of 8 percentage points. The median increase for women who formed new unions was also 6%. However, incomes fell a substantial 27% — a spread of 33 percentage points — for the 59% who remained on their own.

Women who remained on their own had incomes well below pre-separation levels even five years after the breakup (-18%). Nevertheless, even in this population, 38% had experienced at least some gain in income after five years.

Note to readers

This report is based on the article "Income after separation — people without children", published today in Perspectives on labour and income. It complements a prior study published in the 1997 summer issue, which focused on income after separation of people with children.

Only the income of separated persons was considered in both studies. This means that any partitioning of assets and debts that may have come about following the end of the marriage has not been taken into account. That exclusion may be particularly important in the case of couples without children at the time of separation, because they are considerably older than the other group.

Income is measured as after-tax income of all members of the family, expressed in 1993 dollars and adjusted for the number of family members. Support payments have been included in the income of recipients (only women) and deducted from the incomes of payers (only men).

The sample for this study consists of separated persons who, at the time of the breakup, did not live with any children they may have had. Some did live with children afterwards.

Support payers have more, recipients have less

Because of the limited involvement of children in the current study, the incidence of support payments to former spouses was much lower than that noted in the earlier study. In that group (couples who had children at the time of separation) 44% of men paid support payments and 35% of women received them. In contrast, this study found that only 13% of men paid support and 7% of women received it.

Ironically, support payers appeared to fare better than the majority of separated men. One year after separation, their median income gain was 8%, compared with 2% for non-payers. Similarly, support recipients experienced a median loss much greater than that of separated women generally (39% versus 16%). This may be because men who were payers had higher incomes than the rest of the men in the study population.

For more information, contact Ernest B. Akyeamong, (613- 951-4624), or Marie-Paule Robert, (613-951-4628), Labour and Household Surveys Analysis Division. ■

OTHER RELEASES

Permanent layoffs, quits and hirings 1978 to 1995

There continues to be a high rate of worker turnover in the Canadian economy. Roughly one in five workers separate from their company each year.

The overall rate at which workers permanently separate from their employers (including quits, layoffs and other separations) has been generally stable since 1978, although it tends to fall in recessions, as quits fall more than permanent layoffs increase.

Quits and layoff rates have varied considerably by industry. Goods-producing industries generally have had higher temporary layoff rates than service industries. Permanent layoff rates were highest in the primary and construction industries, while quit rates were highest in the low-wage consumer services.

Between 1978 and 1995, worker turnover was higher in small than in large firms. In particular, permanent layoffs were observed less often in large firms. The permanent layoff rate in large firms was one-quarter of that in small firms in 1994. However, the hiring rate was almost three times higher in small firms in 1994.

Although affected by cyclical variation, permanent layoffs remained relatively high in both recessions and expansions, as workers moved from firms in decline to those that were expanding. As well, an industry's employment growth (or loss) was not a good predictor of the layoff rate. There is no correlation between permanent layoff rates and overall job creation at the industry level.

The publication *Permanent layoffs, quits and hirings in the Canadian economy, 1978 to 1995* (71-539-XPB, \$35; or 71-539-XIB \$26) is now available. See *How to order publications*.

For further information on this publication, contact Garnett Picot (613-951-8214; picot@statcan.ca), Business and Labour Market Analysis Division. ■

Steel primary forms

Week ending June 20, 1998 (preliminary)

Steel primary forms production for the week ending June 20, 1998, totalled 322 556 metric tonnes, down 0.1% from the week-earlier 322 717 metric tonnes and up 4.8% from the year-earlier 307 901 metric tonnes. The cumulative total at the end of the week was 7 710 963 metric tonnes, a 6.1% increase compared

with 7 267 840 metric tonnes for the same period in 1997.

For further information on this release, contact Huguette Montcalm (613-951-9827; monthug@statcan.ca), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

Railway carloadings

Seven-day period ending June 14, 1998

Carloadings of freight (excluding intermodal traffic) during the seven-day period ending June 14, 1998, decreased 7.2% to 4.5 million tonnes from the same period of last year. The number of cars loaded decreased 6.7%.

Intermodal traffic (piggyback) tonnage totalled 321 000 tonnes, down 7.1% from the same period of last year. The year-to-date figures are down 5.1%.

Total traffic (carloadings of freight and intermodal traffic) decreased 7.2% during the period. This brought the year-to-date total to 117.6 million tonnes, up 1.2% from the previous year.

All year-to-date figures have been revised.

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

Crushing statistics

May 1998

Oilseed processors crushed 254,984 metric tonnes of canola in May. Oil production totalled 108,103 tonnes while meal production amounted to 157,226 tonnes.

The May crush decreased 14% from the April crush of 297,076 tonnes. In the first 10 months of the 1997/98 crop year, processors crushed a record 2,733,231 tonnes of canola, up from 2,251,959 tonnes in the same months of 1996/97.

Available on CANSIM: matrix 5687.

The May 1998 issue of *Cereals and oilseeds review* (22-007-XPB, \$15/\$149) will be released in July. See *How to order publications*. For further information on this release contact Rick Burroughs (613-951-2890; burrric@statcan.ca) or Les Macartney (613-951-8714; macales@statcan.ca), Grain Marketing Unit, Agriculture Division. ■

Software development and computer services industry

1996

Data for the software development and computer services industry (1996) are now available for Newfoundland only. Information on total revenues,

revenues by type of service, expenses by category and revenue by class of customer are included.

For further information on this release, contact Paula Thomson at (902-426-6103), Statistics Canada Regional Reference Centre in Halifax. ■

PUBLICATIONS RELEASED

Permanent layoffs, quits and hirings in the Canadian economy, 1978-1995, May 1998
Catalogue number 71-539-XIB
 (Canada: \$26; outside Canada: US\$26).

Permanent layoffs, quits and hirings in the Canadian economy, 1978-1995, May 1998
Catalogue number 71-539-XPB
 (Canada: \$35; outside Canada: US\$35).

Public sector employment and wages and salaries, 1996
Catalogue number 72-209-XPB
 (Canada: \$44; outside Canada: US\$44).

Perspectives on labour and income, Summer 1998
Catalogue number 75-001-XPE
 (Canada: \$18/\$58; outside Canada: US\$18/US\$58).

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