



# The Daily

Statistics Canada

Thursday, September 17, 1998

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## MAJOR RELEASES

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- **Canadian international merchandise trade, July 1998** 2  
 Exports inched up 0.6% in July, following a significant decline in June. A 7.6% drop in automotive product exports was mainly offset by record exports of aircraft, other equipment and tools and computers, as well as a strong increase in natural gas exports. The fourth consecutive monthly decline in automotive product imports, which was mainly due to the plant closures in that sector, was the main factor in the 2.1% monthly decline in total imports in July.

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## MAJOR RELEASES

### Canadian international merchandise trade

July 1998

Exports inched up 0.6% in July, after declining 2.3% in June. The continuing decline in automotive product exports (as a result of plant closures) was offset by record exports of aircraft, other equipment and tools and computers, as well as strong natural gas exports.

Imports were down again in July (-2.1%), for the third straight month. The main factor in this decline was the automotive sector, which was down 9.4% from June. Offsetting this decline was a sharp rise in imports of chemical and plastic products, especially herbicides and alumina, as well as strong imports of assembly line machinery and computers.

The trade balance was \$1.6 billion in July, up \$652 million from June.

**Note to readers**

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

to 84.2% in July. Canadian exports to Europe were also up sharply, mainly owing to gains in the aircraft industry. Exports to Japan continued their downward trend and were nearly 50% lower than the record level of December 1996.

After edging down in June, machinery and equipment exports jumped 5.7% in July. Aircraft exports to Europe returned to their usual level after an unusual slump in June. Exports of other equipment and tools increased strongly, especially to the United States, whereas computer exports continued to grow vigorously for the fourth consecutive month.

Energy product exports rose 9.5% in July. A sharp increase in natural gas exports to the United States, in terms of both volume and price, pushed up the entire energy sector.

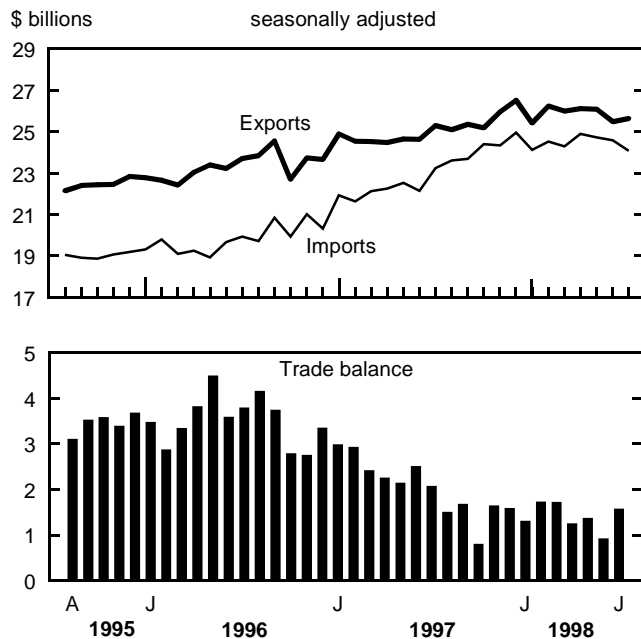
Forest product exports remained stable in July, after recovering slightly in June. A slight increase in lumber exports to Japan (due to a strengthening of prices) managed to offset the steep drop in the volume of newsprint exports to Japan and the United States (mainly due to plant closures in that sector).

Automotive product exports were down in July for the fourth straight month. Plant closures in that sector were the main factor in the drop in exports of automobiles and auto parts. However, after two months of steep declines, truck exports rose again. In July, the problems of closures in the sector were offset by a strong increase in exports of various models to the United States, owing to the elimination of railway congestion since June.

Exports of industrial goods were down slightly in July, mainly due to the steep drop in gold exports — a highly volatile series. However, a continuing growth of fertilizer exports to the United States was noticed, driven by strong American demand.

Exports of wheat remained weak since their peak in late fall 1997. Low prices offered by foreign producers attracted some traditional clients, and forced domestic farmers to divert their production.

**Exports, imports and trade balance**



### Exports recover slightly in July but remain below May level

Despite the problems in the automotive sector, exports to the United States as a proportion of total exports continued to rise, going from 83.3% in June

### Imports continue to decline, pushed down by the automotive products sector

Automotive product imports fell again in July by nearly a half billion dollars, leaving the figure for the month at 14.3% below the level observed in July 1997. Although every subsector felt the decline, auto parts were the hardest hit. Plant closures were responsible for much of the drop in imports.

After rising vigorously in June, energy product imports fell 11.7% in July. This volatility is almost entirely due to the decreased volume of crude oil imports, since petroleum product and coal imports recovered from last month's losses.

The industrial goods sector made a small gain in July after declining for two consecutive months. The main components of this increase were major imports of alumina (used to make aluminium) due to European and North American demand for aluminium, and herbicide imports from the United States.

Machinery and equipment imports were unchanged in July after rising strongly in the second quarter. Sizeable imports of assembly line machinery and computers offset the decline in aircraft imports, as well as a return to more normal seasonal levels for imports of electronic equipment and other communications equipment.

### Revisions

There has been a major correction to the June 1998 exports figure. A large shipment of precious metals and alloys, originally included in the June 1998 export statistics, was removed after it was discovered that the transactions took place between non-residents.

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 the late receipt of import and export documentation, incorrect information on customs documents, replacement of estimated figures with actual figures (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 *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*.

Readers wishing to receive merchandise trade data on a more timely basis may obtain them by fax on the morning of release.

For further information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods and data quality of 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**

	May 1998	June 1998	July 1998	May to June 1998	June to July 1998	Jan. to July 1997	Jan. to July 1998	Jan.-July 1997 to Jan.-July 1998	July 1997 to July 1998
seasonally adjusted, \$ current									
	\$ millions		% change		\$ millions		% change		
<b>Principal trading partners</b>									
<b>Exports</b>									
United States	21,722	21,258	21,583	-2.1	1.5	138,941	150,348	8.2	5.4
Japan	806	781	718	-3.1	-8.1	7,512	5,423	-27.8	-26.2
European Union	1,462	1,387	1,491	-5.1	7.5	9,632	10,187	5.8	2.6
Other OECD countries <sup>1</sup>	560	602	524	7.5	-13.0	4,615	4,166	-9.7	-12.2
All other countries	1,523	1,455	1,315	-4.5	-9.6	12,298	10,808	-12.1	-26.9
Total	26,074	25,483	25,631	-2.3	0.6	172,998	180,933	4.6	1.3
<b>Imports</b>									
United States	19,012	18,670	18,284	-1.8	-2.1	118,531	130,939	10.5	2.6
Japan	833	829	845	-0.5	1.9	4,748	5,699	20.0	21.1
European Union	2,133	2,223	2,095	4.2	-5.8	13,891	14,810	6.6	5.2
Other OECD countries <sup>1</sup>	886	910	881	2.7	-3.2	6,487	6,432	-0.8	-8.6
All other countries	1,859	1,952	1,975	5.0	1.2	12,190	13,323	9.3	11.6
Total	24,723	24,583	24,079	-0.6	-2.1	155,847	171,203	9.9	3.6
<b>Balance</b>									
United States	2,710	2,588	3,299	—	—	20,410	19,409	—	—
Japan	-27	-48	-127	—	—	2,764	-276	—	—
European Union	-671	-836	-604	—	—	-4,259	-4,623	—	—
Other OECD countries <sup>1</sup>	-326	-308	-357	—	—	-1,872	-2,266	—	—
All other countries	-336	-497	-660	—	—	108	-2,515	—	—
Total	1,351	900	1,552	—	—	17,151	9,730	—	—
<b>Principal commodity groupings</b>									
<b>Exports</b>									
Agricultural and fishing products	2,073	2,009	1,968	-3.1	-2.0	13,953	14,340	2.8	-3.0
Energy products	2,084	1,961	2,147	-5.9	9.5	15,796	13,941	-11.7	-0.7
Forestry products	2,860	2,868	2,867	0.3	0.0	20,496	20,246	-1.2	-0.6
Industrial goods and materials	4,810	4,873	4,792	1.3	-1.7	32,043	33,490	4.5	-0.1
Machinery and equipment	6,438	6,447	6,813	0.1	5.7	38,538	44,729	16.1	18.1
Automotive products	5,894	5,405	4,993	-8.3	-7.6	40,289	40,904	1.5	-15.7
Other consumer goods	1,017	1,050	1,053	3.2	0.3	5,925	6,983	17.9	25.5
Special transactions trade 2	388	377	492	-2.8	30.5	2,287	2,730	19.4	46.9
Other BOP adjustments	509	492	506	-3.3	2.8	3,671	3,568	-2.8	-9.1
<b>Imports</b>									
Agricultural and fishing products	1,427	1,456	1,443	2.0	-0.9	8,881	9,868	11.1	7.0
Energy products	737	792	699	7.5	-11.7	6,197	5,278	-14.8	-18.0
Forestry products	214	212	209	-0.9	-1.4	1,358	1,433	5.5	4.9
Industrial goods and materials	4,962	4,898	5,018	-1.3	2.4	30,645	34,438	12.4	11.5
Machinery and equipment	8,164	8,444	8,462	3.4	0.2	51,050	57,480	12.6	8.9
Automotive products	5,356	4,849	4,392	-9.5	-9.4	33,894	36,197	6.8	-14.3
Other consumer goods	2,829	2,860	2,876	1.1	0.6	16,573	19,327	16.6	17.8
Special transactions trade 2	517	570	493	10.3	-13.5	4,059	3,655	-10.0	-7.5
Other BOP adjustments	518	501	487	-3.3	-2.8	3,192	3,527	10.5	3.0

— Figures not appropriate or not applicable.

<sup>1</sup> Includes Australia, Iceland, Mexico, New Zealand, Norway, Switzerland, Turkey, Poland, South Korea, Hungary and the Czech Republic.

<sup>2</sup> These are mainly low valued transactions, value of repairs to equipment, and goods returned to country of origin.

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## OTHER RELEASES

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### Export and import price indexes

July 1998

Current- and fixed-weighted export and import price indexes (1992=100) on a balance of payments basis are now available. Price indexes are listed from January 1992 to July 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. Price indexes are listed from January 1992 to July 1998. Included with the U.S. commodity indexes are the 10 all countries and U.S. only standard international trade classification 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: 8430-8435, 8438-8443 and 8444-8447.**

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

For further information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods and data quality of this release, contact Jocelyne Elibani (613-951-9647 or 1 800 294-5583), Marketing and Client Services Section, International Trade Division. ■

### Steel primary forms

Week ending September 12, 1998 (preliminary)

Steel primary forms production for the week ending September 12, 1998, totalled 286 608 metric tonnes, down by 5.2% from the week-earlier 302 324 tonnes and down 3.1% from the year-earlier 295 825 tonnes. The cumulative total at the end of the week was 11 405 367 tonnes, a 6.4% increase compared with 10 720 600 tonnes for the same period in 1997.

For further information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods and data quality of this release, contact Greg Milsom (613-951-7093; [milsomg@statcan.ca](mailto:milsomg@statcan.ca)), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

### Railway carloadings

Seven-day period ending September 7, 1998

Carloadings of freight (excluding intermodal traffic) during the seven-day period ending September 7, 1998, decreased 9.3% to 4.3 million tonnes from the same period last year. The number of cars loaded also decreased 8.5%.

Intermodal traffic (piggyback) tonnage totaled 312 000 tonnes, an 11.4% increase from the same period last year. The year-to-date figures show a decline of 2.4%.

Total traffic (carloadings of freight and intermodal traffic) decreased 8.2% during the period. This brought the year-to-date total to 174.2 million tonnes, a decrease of 2.1% from 1997.

All year-to-date figures have been revised.

For further information, or to enquire about the methods, concepts and data quality of this release, contact Robert Laroque (613-951-2486, fax: 613-951-0009; [laroque@statcan.ca](mailto:laroque@statcan.ca)), Transportation Division. ■

### Public sector employment

1997 (revised) and second quarter 1998 (preliminary)

Employment in the public sector fell by 1.1% in the second quarter of 1998 compared with the same period in 1997.

Government employment fell 1.2%. Provincial government employment was down by 0.6% despite a 0.4% gain in employment in universities, colleges and trade institutions. All other components of government employment reported negative growth. Significant decreases included a 2.7% drop in federal government employment and a 1.5% drop in local government employment.

Federal government employment declined in all provinces except New Brunswick (+1.3%). Employment in the local government sector, which includes school boards, decreased by 13,953. Most of this weakness in employment was due to declines in Quebec (-5,298 or -2.4%) and Ontario (-4,734 or -1.3%).

The growth reported in the university and colleges and trade institutions was due mainly to employment increases in Ontario and Alberta. Employment in Ontario universities and colleges advanced by 1,500 or 1.7% while the increase in Alberta was 830 or 3.3%.

Employment in the government enterprise sector remained virtually unchanged with a decline of 0.3%. Increased employment in government enterprises at the local (+1.5%) and provincial levels (+0.1%) was offset by a decrease of 1.6% at the federal level.

**Available on CANSIM: matrices 2720, 2860, 2863, 2864 and 2866.**

The annual publication *Public sector employment and wages and salaries 1996* (72-209-XPB, \$44), is now available. See *How to order publications*.

Data are also available through custom tabulation. For general inquiries on the Public Institutions Division's products and services, contact Susan Stobert, (613-951-4354; fax: 613-951-0661) Data Dissemination, Public Institutions Division. For further information on the concepts, methods and data quality of this release, contact Robert Sauvé (613-951-8306) Public Employment Section, Public Institutions Division.

### Public sector employment Second quarter 1998<sup>P</sup>

	Federal government	Provincial and territorial government	Local government	Total government	Second quarter 1998 / second quarter 1997	Government business enterprises	Second quarter 1998 / second quarter 1997	Total public sector	Second quarter 1998 / second quarter 1997
					% change		% change		% change
<b>Canada</b>	<b>333,732</b>	<b>1,308,236</b>	<b>922,115</b>	<b>2,564,083</b>	<b>-1.2</b>	<b>257,258</b>	<b>-0.3</b>	<b>2,821,340</b>	<b>-1.1</b>
Newfoundland	7,405	30,659	13,081	51,145	-0.1	3,968	10.6	55,113	0.6
Prince Edward Island	3,078	8,651	3,146	14,875	-0.9	1,119	-1.0	15,994	-0.9
Nova Scotia	23,842	48,733	25,980	98,554	-1.1	8,161	-1.1	106,715	-1.1
New Brunswick	12,712	54,463	5,947	73,122	1.4	6,596	-1.7	79,718	1.1
Quebec	67,130	388,576	219,445	675,151	-2.3	64,860	-1.8	740,011	-2.2
Ontario	131,380	360,529	365,621	857,531	-1.7	96,487	0.3	954,017	-1.5
Manitoba	15,229	61,671	40,024	116,924	-0.1	12,722	-1.7	129,646	-0.3
Saskatchewan	9,301	54,596	35,337	99,234	0.0	13,531	-1.7	112,766	-0.3
Alberta	24,385	125,297	93,704	243,385	0.0	16,227	0.8	259,612	0.1
British Columbia	34,358	164,188	116,883	315,430	-0.3	32,968	1.3	348,398	-0.2
Yukon Territory	893	3,723	415	5,031	4.4	x	x	5,031	4.4
Northwest Territories	1,107	7,149	2,532	10,788	-0.9	x	x	10,788	-0.9
Exterior	2,912			2,912	-3.8			2,912	-3.8

<sup>P</sup> Preliminary data

<sup>x</sup> Indicates confidential data

**Note:** Federal government includes military. Provincial and territorial government includes provincial and territorial general government, universities and colleges and health and social services Institutions. Local government includes school boards.

## PUBLICATIONS RELEASED

**Touriscope, international travel, advance information**, Vol. 14, no. 7  
**Catalogue number 66-001-PPB**  
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Editor: Duncan Currie (613-951-1103, [currdun@statcan.ca](mailto:currdun@statcan.ca))  
 Head of Official Release: Chantal Prévost (613-951-1088, [prevcha@statcan.ca](mailto:prevcha@statcan.ca))

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