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The Daily

Statistics Canada

Wednesday, September 30, 1998
For release at 8:30 a.m.

MAJOR RELEASES

OTHER RELEASES

MAJOR RELEASES

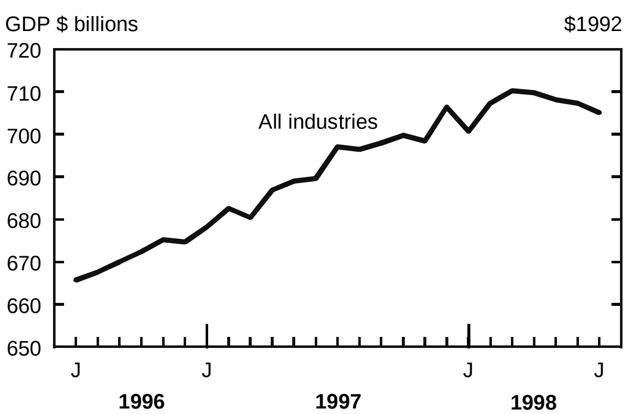
Gross domestic product by industry at factor cost

July 1998

The economy edged down for a fourth consecutive month in July, falling by 0.3%. The latest decline leaves economic activity 0.7% below its March 1998 peak.

July saw widespread weakness in many goods-producing industries. As in June, the direct and indirect effects of several strikes played a key role in reducing activity in the manufacturing, transportation services and construction industries in July. While the continuing effect of an auto strike in the United States had a significant impact on the Canadian auto industry, the rest of the economy still declined 0.1% in July. Continued weak conditions in the oil and gas sector were the major cause behind a drop in mining activity. On a positive note, retail trade bounced back from a steep decline in June, while the communications, utilities and business services industries advanced at a healthy pace.

Economic output continues to fall



Note to readers

The gross domestic product (GDP) of an industry is the value added by labour and capital in transforming inputs purchased from other producers into outputs. Monthly GDP by industry is valued at 1992 prices. The estimates presented here are seasonally adjusted at annual rates.

In December 1997, monthly GDP estimates by industry at 1992 prices were released for the first time, and the data were made available from January 1992. Historical estimates of gross domestic product by industry at 1992 prices are now available from January 1961 in CANSIM: ***matrices 4677-4681****. Historical data from 1961 to 1992 are now available* Gross domestic product by Industry *(15-512-XPB, $95).*

Auto strike causes further decrease in manufacturing output

Manufacturing production fell 1.7% in July as strikes by auto workers in the United States and pulp and paper workers at home intensified. Output of chemicals, fabricated metal products and machinery was also curtailed in July. These decreases were partly offset by a surge in the production of electronic equipment, as well as by increases in output of food and beverages. Overall, July's drop in manufacturing output was concentrated in 16 of 22 major industry groups, which accounted for over 70% of total manufacturing output.

The ripple effects of a strike by GM workers in the United States led to a drop in the production of both motor vehicles (-10.6%) and parts (-15.3%). The strike forced the closure of most of the company's plants in the latter half of June and in almost all of July, and also triggered parallel layoffs among its suppliers. The work stoppage was resolved at the end of July, and most affected facilities had resumed production by the beginning of August.

A new labour dispute in the pulp and paper industry prompted a further reduction in output in that industry's output in July. While pulp and newsprint makers showed the largest declines in output, producers of paper boxes and other converted paper also curtailed supply. The industry as a whole has shown little upward momentum during the last two years, and output is currently 6.1% below year-ago levels.

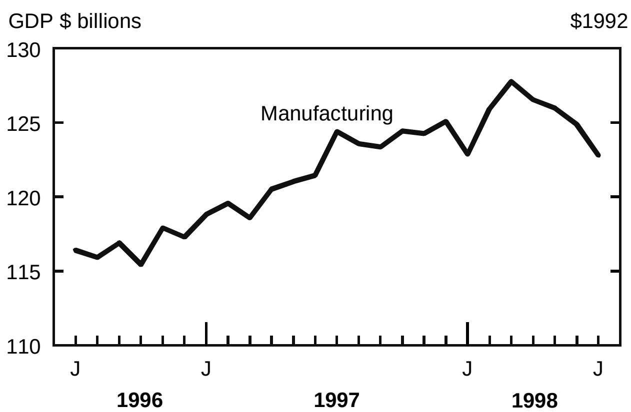
Output of chemical products fell for the fourth consecutive month in July. The latest decline was widespread, but was particularly pronounced among makers of pharmaceutical products, plastics and resins.

Producers of machinery also reduced output in July, recording the fourth decline in the last five months. The construction and other machinery industries had the sharpest declines, partly offset by an increase in the production of farm machinery.

Production of electrical and electronic products surged in July, led by a sharp increase in the telecommunications equipment industry. Output of computers and office machines, electronic components and electrical equipment were also up in July. Overall, the industry has shown remarkable growth in the last two years.

A June decline in output of beverages proved only to be a transitory pause in the strong growth recorded earlier this year. As in previous months, breweries and distilleries were chiefly responsible for the surge in July production.

Strikes slow manufacturing



Auto strike and depressed primary commodity markets hit transportation industry

Activity in the transportation services industry fell 1.6% in July, the victim of continued weakness in manufacturing and depressed primary commodity markets, notably for coal and grains. Rail carriers were hardest hit by the decline in traffic, but trucking companies were also affected by the fall in manufacturing production. The slowdown by rail carriers was partly offset by an end to railcar shortages that led to an increase in the export of trucks that had been produced and accumulated in previous months.

Weak oil and gas sector pulls down mining activity

Activity in the mining sector fell 1.7% in July, as weakness in the oil sector more than offset a moderate rise in metal mine output. A drop in drilling and rigging in July was the largest in almost two years. It extended a string of declines that began near the end of 1997, when the price of oil started to collapse and oil companies first began to pare back their exploration budgets. Oil and gas extraction also receded in July, and has flattened in recent months after maintaining an upward trajectory for the last year.

These declines were partly offset by increased production of metals such as copper, nickel and zinc, where output was roughly even with last year's levels. Output of gold was also up slightly, after a string of declines during the previous eight months. Falling metal prices have forced the closure of some high cost mines. However, the effect of falling commodity prices on domestic producers has been moderated by the depreciation of the Canadian dollar vis-à-vis it U.S. counterpart.

Construction activity held down by trade strikes

Total construction activity was little changed in July, as strikes in various residential and non-residential building trades in Southern Ontario kept many workers off the job. Work on residential building projects edged down in July, after a steep drop in the previous month. Although a two-month strike by drywallers was resolved in June, labour strife spread to other residential building trades (including carpenters, trim fitters, concrete pourers and sheet metal workers) and spilled over into July. This reduced building starts and further delayed the completion of thousands of homes. Looking ahead, housing starts partially recovered in August, rising 11.7%, but fell short of returning to pre-strike levels. July also saw Ontario's crane and heavy equipment operators go on a province-wide strike, the effect of which was to partially offset growth in non-residential and engineering construction elsewhere in the country.

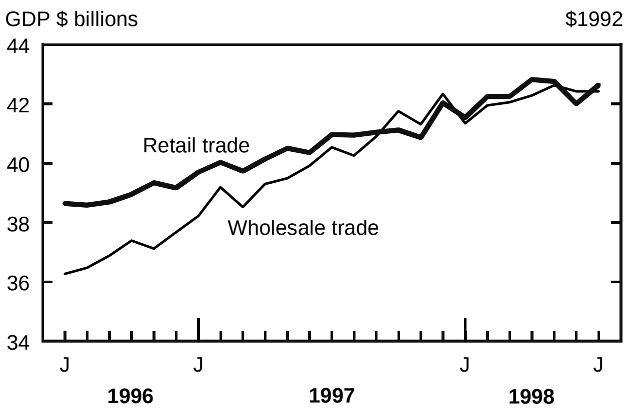
Retail partially recovers, wholesale remains flat

Total retail trade advanced 1.5% in July, rebounding from a weak previous month. June sales had been hurt by industry restructuring as well as by warmer weather that advanced the purchases of some seasonal products such as gardening and recreational equipment. The July rebound did not make up entirely for June's lost sales, however, and left retailing activity just below the peak levels reached in the spring.

Increases were widespread, with department stores, clothing stores, service stations and auto parts dealers, which were hardest hit in the previous month, enjoying resurgent sales. Activity at auto dealerships was muted in July after a period of dealer incentives expired. Overall, dealerships had 46 days' worth of sales in their inventories in July, significantly less than the 55-day quantity they have maintained on average over the last two years.

Wholesalers had a flat month, as repercussions from the auto strike and a decline in sales of non-farm machinery offset an increase by distributors of computers and software.

Retail rebounds, wholesale remains flat



Communications and utilities show widespread gains

Activity in the communications and utilities industries increased 0.5% in July. Output by gas distributors advanced the most, after a period of weakness in April-June brought on by unseasonably warm temperatures. Telephone companies and postal services also responded positively to increased demand.

Other industries

A fall in the volume of stock market activity led to a 0.7% decline in the finance industries. Logging activity suffered another decline, the ninth in as many months. A weakened Canadian dollar boosted the tourist trade (overnight visits from the United States were at record levels in July), lifting the accommodation and food service industries moderately. There was also increased activity in computer and other business service firms.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 4677-4681.

The July 1998 issue of *Gross domestic product by industry* (15-001-XPB, $15/$145) is scheduled for release in early October. See *How to order publications*.

For analytical information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods and data quality of this release, contact Richard Evans (613-951-9145; *evanric@statcan.ca*). For information regarding the purchase of data, contact Kim Lauzon (613-951-9417; *lauzonk@statcan.ca*), Industry Measures and Analysis Division. □

Gross domestic product at factor cost by industry
(1992=100)

	Feb. 1998[r]	Mar. 1998[r]	Apr. 1998[r]	May 1998[r]	June 1998[r]	July 1998[p]	June 1998 to July 1998	July 1998	July 1997 to July 1998
	seasonally adjusted								
	month-to-month % change						$ change[1]	$ level[1]	% change
All industries	**0.9**	**0.4**	**-0.1**	**-0.2**	**-0.1**	**-0.3**	**-2207**	**705,073**	**1.1**
Goods-producing industries	**1.9**	**0.9**	**-0.7**	**-0.5**	**-0.4**	**-1.1**	**-2648**	**231,964**	**-1.1**
Agriculture	-0.7	0.1	0.2	0.2	-0.6	0.1	8	12,010	-1.2
Fishing and trapping	0.5	2.4	2.0	1.8	-4.6	-1.4	-13	887	0.1
Logging and forestry	-0.2	-2.0	-2.4	-4.7	-2.5	-3.0	-108	3,534	-16.8
Mining, quarrying and oil wells	-0.5	0.3	-0.3	-1.5	0.8	-1.7	-491	28,098	-2.2
Manufacturing	2.5	1.5	-1.0	-0.5	-0.9	-1.7	-2089	122,773	-1.3
Construction	1.2	-1.0	-0.8	-0.9	-1.1	0.0	-18	39,843	1.2
Other utilities	5.1	2.8	0.2	0.9	2.3	0.3	63	24,819	-0.3
Services-producing industries	**0.5**	**0.2**	**0.3**	**-0.1**	**0.0**	**0.1**	**441**	**473,109**	**2.3**
Transportation and storage	0.6	0.7	-0.6	-0.7	0.4	-1.6	-477	29,590	-0.9
Communications	-0.2	0.3	1.2	-0.2	0.7	0.6	167	26,472	5.7
Wholesale trade	1.5	0.3	0.6	0.8	-0.5	0.0	10	42,428	4.7
Retail trade	1.7	0.0	1.3	-0.2	-1.8	1.5	636	42,637	4.1
Finance and insurance	0.0	0.8	0.9	-1.4	1.5	-0.7	-255	36,569	0.9
Real estate and insurance agent	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.1	60	75,914	1.9
Business services	1.2	0.1	-0.6	0.4	0.8	0.4	174	42,022	8.0
Government services	-0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	41	40,414	-0.2
Education	0.0	-0.1	0.2	0.1	0.0	-0.2	-63	40,474	-0.3
Health and social services	-0.2	0.1	-0.2	-0.2	-0.2	0.0	23	48,861	0.7
Accommodation and food	-0.1	-1.0	1.0	-1.7	-0.3	0.9	171	19,137	3.6
Other services	0.3	0.2	-0.4	0.4	0.0	-0.2	-46	28,591	1.4
Other aggregations									
Industrial production	2.3	1.4	-0.7	-0.4	-0.2	-1.4	-2517	175,690	-1.3
Non-durable manufacturing	1.4	1.0	-0.3	0.3	-0.5	-1.1	-610	55,653	-0.2
Durable manufacturing	3.4	1.8	-1.5	-1.1	-1.1	-2.2	-1479	67,120	-2.2
Business sector	1.2	0.5	-0.1	-0.3	-0.1	-0.4	-2259	579,173	1.4
Non-business sector	-0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	-0.1	0.0	52	125,900	-0.1

r *Revised figures.*
p *Preliminary figures.*
1 *Millions of dollars at annual rate.*

■

OTHER RELEASES

Domestic sales of refined petroleum products
August 1998 (preliminary)

Sales of refined petroleum products totalled 8 122 800 cubic metres in August, up 1.3% from the same month a year earlier. Sales increased for three of the seven major product groups over the same period in 1997. The increases were recorded for motor gasoline (+143 600 cubic metres or +4.4%), diesel fuel oil (+50 500 cubic metres or +2.6%) and heavy fuel oil (+30 100 cubic metres or +5.6%). The largest decreases were recorded for light fuel oil (-42 500 cubic metres or -21.2%) and "other refined products", which contains products such as asphalt, lubricating oils, petroleum coke and stove oil (-32 100 cubic metres or -3.1%).

Year-to-date sales of refined petroleum products were up 1 031 000 cubic metres or 1.7% over the same period in 1997. Sales increased for four of the seven major product groups. The gain for motor gasoline (+747 700 cubic metres or +3.1%) was mainly due to the favourable weather and lower retail prices. The increase for heavy fuel oil (+707 000 cubic metres or +15.3%) was due to the greater use of the product for electricity generation. These two product groups accounted for almost half of the total. Sales of light fuel oil fell, as a result of unseasonably mild temperatures during the 1997/98 heating season (-627 300 cubic metres or -17.1%).

Sales of refined petroleum products

	Aug. 1997[r]	Aug. 1998[p]	Aug. 1997 to Aug. 1998
	thousands of cubic metres		% change
Total, all products	**8,018.3**	**8,122.8**	**1.3**
Motor gasoline	3,286.6	3,430.2	4.4
Diesel fuel oil	1,917.8	1,968.3	2.6
Light fuel oil	200.6	158.1	-21.2
Heavy fuel oil	542.0	572.1	5.6
Aviation turbo fuels	592.5	579.2	-2.2
Petrochemical feedstocks[1]	426.7	394.9	-7.5
All other refined products	1,052.1	1,020.0	-3.1
	Jan. to Aug. 1997[r]	Jan. to Aug. 1998[p]	Jan.-Aug. 1997 to Jan.-Aug. 1998
Total, all products	**59,968.1**	**60,999.1**	**1.7**
Motor gasoline	24,147.4	24,895.1	3.1
Diesel fuel oil	13,923.8	14,152.4	1.6
Light fuel oil	3,669.0	3,041.7	-17.1
Heavy fuel oil	4,617.8	5,324.8	15.3
Aviation turbo fuels	3,921.6	4,050.4	3.3
Petrochemical feedstocks1	3,280.9	3,231.1	-1.5
All other refined products	6,407.6	6,303.6	-1.6

r *Revised.*
p *Preliminary*
1. *Materials produced by refineries that are used by the petrochemical industry to produce chemicals, synthetic rubber and a variety of plastics.*

Available on CANSIM: matrices 628-642 and 644-647.

The August 1998 issue of *Refined petroleum products* (45-004-XPB, $21/$206), will be available in November. See *How to order publications.*

For further information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods and data quality of this release, contact Michel Palardy (613-951-7174; *palamic@statcan.ca*), Energy Section, Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

Asphalt roofing
August 1998

Production of asphalt shingles totalled 3 922 502 metric bundles in August, a 13.1% increase from 3 469 362 (revised) metric bundles produced a year earlier.

Year-to-date production amounted to 28 765 808 metric bundles, a 6% decrease from 30 587 826 (revised) metric bundles produced during the same period in 1997.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 32 and 122 (series 27).

The August 1998 issue of *Asphalt roofing* (45-001-XPB, $7/$62) 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 Don Grant (613-951-5998; *grantdo@statcan.ca*), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

Electric power statistics
July 1998

Net generation of electricity increased to 44 109 gigawatt hours, up 1.1% from July 1997. Exports increased 2.6% to 5 025 gigawatt hours, and imports increased from 490 gigawatt hours to 1 237 gigawatt hours.

Generation of hydro electricity decreased 0.2% to 26 058 gigawatt hours due to lower generation by industrial producers. Thermal conventional generation was up 5.0% to 11 860 gigawatt hours to meet higher demand for electricity in Ontario and Manitoba. Generation from nuclear sources was down 0.5% to 6 191 gigawatt hours. Higher imports and lower exports helped to compensate for Ontario's loss of generating capacity in order to meet its domestic demand.

Year-to-date net generation at the end of July 1998 totalled 316 121 gigawatt hours, down 2.5% from the previous year. Year-to-date exports (25 339 gigawatt hours) were up 1.8%, whereas year-to-date imports (9 045 gigawatt hours) rose 105.9% from the previous year.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 3987-3999.

The July 1998 issue of *Electric power statistics* (57-001-XPB, $12/$114) will be available shortly. See *How to order publications*.

For further information, or to enquire about the methods, concepts and data quality of this release, contact André Lefebvre (613-951-3560; *alefeba@statcan.ca*), Energy Section, Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

Electric power selling price indexes
May to August 1998

Electric power selling price indexes (1992=100) are now available from May to August 1998.

Available on CANSIM: matrix 1880.

The August issue of *Industry price indexes* (62-011-XPB, $22/$217) will be available at the end of October. See *How to order publications*.

For further information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods and data quality of this release, contact Robert Gamson (613 951-3350; fax: 613-951-3519), Client Service Unit, Prices Division. ■

Employment Insurance coverage
1997 to 1998

Data are now available for user specified tabulation requests from the Survey of Employment Insurance Coverage. This survey was conducted on a cost recovery basis for Human Resources Development Canada. The survey, conducted in four different months, during 1997 and 1998, asked respondents who were potential recipients of Employment Insurance benefits a series of questions on their application for and receipt of Employment Insurance benefits. The survey also asked questions about sources of income, sufficiency of income and job search intensity.

For further information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods and data quality of this release, contact Stephan Roller (951-4625), Special Surveys Division. ■

New variable in international trade statistics: Weight (in kilograms)
1988 to 1998

The International Trade Division can now provide users with weight data (in kilograms) for exported and imported commodities from 1988 to 1998. The weight data will be at the six-digit level of the Harmonized System of Coding and Commodity Description (HS6) for imports and exports and at the HS8 level for exports only.

Weight in kilograms can now be supplied along with other variables such as Value, Commodity, Mode of Transportation, Port of Clearance or Port of Exit, Province of Origin and Country of Origin.

This much-needed variable, combined with other variables such as value, significantly increases the usefulness of international trade data. This is particularly the case in the transportation sector, where this information will assist in infrastructure studies, policy development and decision-making and market analysis.

The obtain the new weight data, or to enquire about the concepts, methods and data quality of this release, contact Jocelyne Elibani (951-9786 or 1 800 294-5583), International Trade. ■

PUBLICATIONS RELEASED

Gross domestic product by industry, 1961-1992
Catalogue number 15-512-XPB
(Canada: $95; outside Canada: US$95).

All prices exclude sales tax.

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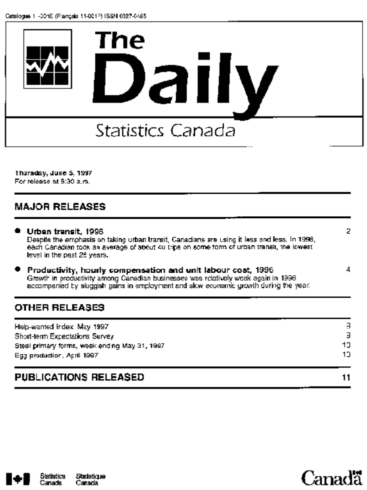
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The Daily

Statistics Canada

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MAJOR RELEASES

- **Urban transit, 1996** 2
Despite the emphasis on taking urban transit, Canadians are using it less and less. In 1996, each Canadian took an average of about 46 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 relatively weak again in 1996 accompanied by sluggish gains in employment and slow economic growth during the year.

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RELEASE DATES: OCTOBER 1998

(Release dates are subject to change.)

Release date	Title	Reference period
6	**Building permits**	August 1998
7	**Help-wanted Index**	September 1998
8	**Field crop reporting series : September crop production estimates**	September 1998
9	**Labour Force Survey**	September 1998
13	**New Housing Price Index**	August 1998
14	**New motor vehicle sales**	August 1998
14	**University enrolment and graduation**	1997/1998
15	**Service indicators**	Q2 1998
19	**Monthly Survey of Manufacturing**	August 1998
19	**Travel between Canada and other countries**	August 1998
20	**Canadian international merchandise trade**	August 1998
20	**Wholesale trade**	August 1998
21	**Consumer Price Index**	September 1998
21	**Composite Index**	September 1998
21	**Employment Insurance**	August 1998
22	**Retail trade**	August 1998
22	**Livestock statistics**	1998
23	**Canada’s international transactions in securities**	August 1998
27	**Financial performance indicator for Canadian business**	1997
28	**Industrial Product Price Index**	September 1998
28	**Raw Materials Price Index**	September 1998
28	**National longitudinal Survey on Children and Youth**	1998
28	**Employment, earnings and hours**	August 1998
29	**Health reports**	Autumn 1998
30	**Real gross domestic product at factor cost by industry**	August 1998

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