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The Daily

Statistics Canada

Friday, October 15, 1999
For release at 8:30 a.m.

MAJOR RELEASES

OTHER RELEASES

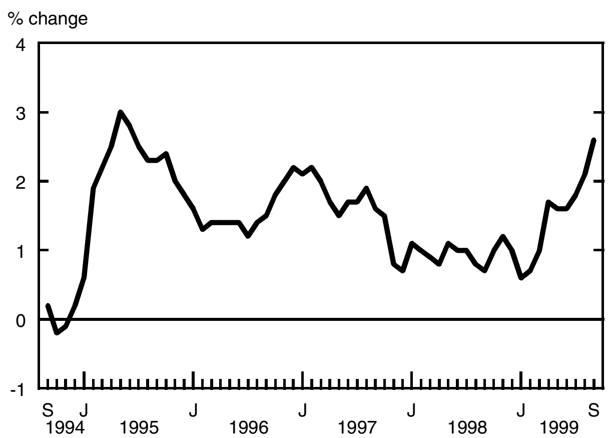
MAJOR RELEASES

Consumer Price Index

September 1999

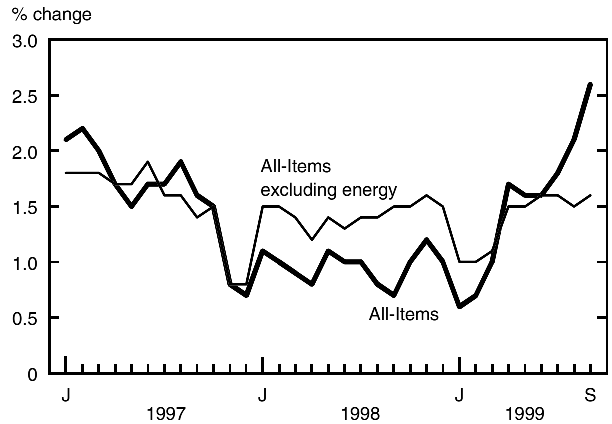
In September, consumers paid 2.6% more than they did a year ago for the goods and services contained in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) basket. September's rise, which follows a 2.1% increase in August, was again primarily due to higher energy prices. Excluding the increase in energy prices, the CPI rose 1.5% in August and 1.6% in September.

Percentage change in the Consumer Price Index from the same month of the previous year



The annual increase in the energy index in September was chiefly the result of accelerated growth in gasoline and fuel oil prices and of rising natural gas prices. Over the last 12 months, higher prices for automotive vehicles and air transportation combined with higher prices for energy to push up the All-items CPI. However, lower prices for computer equipment and telephone services dampened the CPI's upward movement.

Percentage change from the same month of the previous year (All-items excluding energy)



Monthly change in CPI edges up 0.3%

The 0.3% growth in the CPI from August to September was identical to that of the two previous months.

The greatest impact on the All-items index came from rising prices for owned accommodation, university tuition fees, gasoline, footwear and household furnishings. However, prices fell for fresh fruit and vegetables and traveller accommodation, slowing down the CPI's overall growth.

The index for owned accommodation rose 0.7% during September, due mainly to higher homeowners' maintenance and repair costs (+3.7%), mortgage interest cost (+0.4%) and replacement cost (+0.4%).

Every September, tuition fees are taken into account in the CPI. For the 1999/2000 academic year, university tuition fees rose 6.7% on average. For the most part, reductions in university funding by provincial governments explain higher university tuition. Tuition fees are an increasingly important element in university operating budgets.

The gasoline price index rose 2.1% from August to September, slowing down from the 6.3% increase in the preceding month. According to the Raw Materials Price Index, crude oil prices increased 6.6% in August after jumping 15.1% in July.

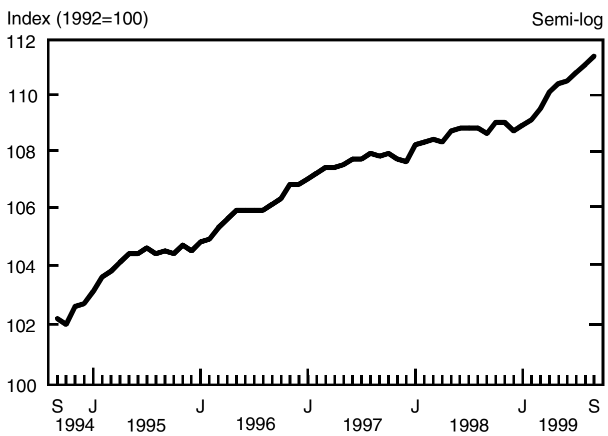
Prices for household furnishings rose 0.6% from August to September. The increase was almost completely due to higher prices for furniture, reflecting the end of a period of widespread sales.

The footwear index rose 4.0% during September, following a 2.3% increase in August. Although prices on average rose for all footwear categories, women's footwear showed the sharpest increases.

Fresh produce prices fell 7.3%, after dropping 8.1% in August and 3.2% in July. These decreases reflect price reductions that are common at this time of the year, due to the availability of local crops.

Traveller accommodation costs were down 2.4% in September, marking the end of peak tourist season.

The Consumer Price Index (not seasonally adjusted)



Provincial highlights

Between September 1998 and September 1999, increases in the All-Items indexes for provinces ranged from a low of 2.0% in British Columbia to a high of 3.9% in Nova Scotia.

From August to September 1999, changes ranged from an increase of 0.2% in Newfoundland and Ontario to an increase of 0.9% in Prince Edward Island.

Provincial spotlight: New Brunswick and Manitoba

Over the 12-month period ending in September 1999, the CPI for Manitoba rose 2.7%, a rate slightly higher than the 2.6% increase posted for Canada as a whole. Over the same period, the CPI for New Brunswick moved up by 3.2%, well above the average increase for Canada.

In Manitoba, advances in the transportation and shelter indexes explained a large portion of the overall annual increase of 2.7%. Higher prices for gasoline, automotive vehicles and intercity transportation were the main contributing factors in the rise of the transportation index. The growth in the shelter index was mainly the result of increased costs for owned accommodation. Property taxes were up 5.0% in Manitoba while they increased 2.3%, on average, in Canada.

Clothing and footwear, household operations and furnishings, food purchased from restaurants and tuition fees all recorded price increases higher than the All-items index for the province. Other notable increases were recorded for health and personal care, and other recreational services. The overall change in Manitoba's CPI was offset to some degree by a 6.4% drop in natural gas prices. This contrasts with the 8.4% increase for Canada as a whole. Prices also decreased, on average, for recreational equipment and services, bakery and other cereal products, dairy products and eggs, pork and processed meat.

In New Brunswick , the 12-month increase in the All-items index was also mainly the result of advances in the transportation and shelter indexes. A large hike in the price of gasoline was the dominant factor in the sharp upward movement in the index for transportation. Much of the advance in the shelter index resulted from higher prices for fuel oil and electricity. Prices for fuel oil went up 20.8% in New Brunswick over the last 12 months, while they increased 8.7%, on average, for Canada.

Consumers in New Brunswick also experienced a 2.2% increase in food prices while these prices were up 1.4% in Canada as a whole. The CPI for New Brunswick was also driven up by an above average rise in clothing and footwear prices associated largely with men's and women's wear. Other major price increases were noted for traveller services and the purchase and operation of recreational vehicles.

Prices declined for recreation equipment and services, bakery and other cereal products, home entertainment equipment and services, served alcoholic beverages, sugar and confectionery items and fresh vegetables. For Canada as a whole, prices increased in all but two of these categories.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 9940-9970.

Data are available at 7 a.m. on Statistics Canada's Web site (www.statcan.ca).

The September 1999 issue of the *Consumer Price Index* (62-001-XPB, $11/$103) is now available. See *How to order publications*.

The October 1999 Consumer Price Index will be released on November 19.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, call

(613-951-9606; 613-951-1539; *infounit@statcan.ca*),
Prices Division.

The Consumer Price Index and major components

1992=100

	Sept. 1999	Aug. 1999	Sept. 1998	Aug. to Sept. 1999	Sept. 1998 to Sept. 1999
	not seasonally adjusted				
				% change	
All-items	**111.4**	**111.1**	**108.6**	**0.3**	**2.6**
Food	109.8	110.4	108.3	-0.5	1.4
Shelter	105.6	105.0	103.6	0.6	1.9
Household operations and furnishings	109.5	109.1	108.5	0.4	0.9
Clothing and footwear	107.2	106.3	104.4	0.8	2.7
Transportation	127.0	126.4	119.9	0.5	5.9
Health and personal care	110.6	110.5	108.5	0.1	1.9
Recreation, education and reading	122.4	121.7	119.0	0.6	2.9
Alcoholic beverages and tobacco products	94.6	94.6	93.2	0.0	1.5
Goods	108.4	108.3	105.1	0.1	3.1
Services	114.9	114.4	112.6	0.4	2.0
All-items excluding food and energy	111.3	110.9	109.3	0.4	1.8
Energy	115.4	113.8	102.6	1.4	12.5
Purchasing power of the consumer dollar expressed in cents, compared with 1992	89.8	90.0	92.1		
All-items (1986=100)	142.7				

The Consumer Price Index by province, Whitehorse and Yellowknife

1992=100

	Sept. 1999	Aug. 1999	Sept. 1998	Aug. to Sept. 1999	Sept. 1998 to Sept. 1999
	not seasonally adjusted				
				% change	
Newfoundland	110.8	110.6	107.6	0.2	3.0
Prince Edward Island	108.2	107.2	105.4	0.9	2.7
Nova Scotia	111.6	111.1	107.4	0.5	3.9
New Brunswick	110.5	110.0	107.1	0.5	3.2
Quebec	108.7	108.4	106.2	0.3	2.4
Ontario	111.8	111.6	109.0	0.2	2.6
Manitoba	116.2	115.7	113.2	0.4	2.7
Saskatchewan	114.4	114.0	111.9	0.4	2.2
Alberta	114.9	114.3	111.0	0.5	3.5
British Columbia	112.2	111.8	110.0	0.4	2.0
Whitehorse	113.1	113.0	111.5	0.1	1.4
Yellowknife	110.3	110.1	108.2	0.2	1.9

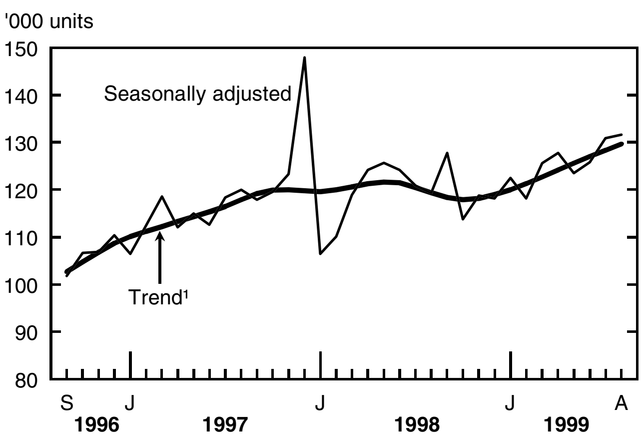
■

New motor vehicle sales
August 1999

The number of new motor vehicles sold in August was up 0.5% from July, the third increase in as many months (+4.1% in July and +1.8% in June). A total of 131,552 new motor vehicles were sold in August. (All figures are seasonally adjusted unless otherwise indicated.)

New motor vehicles sales have been growing vigorously since October 1998, with the number sold increasing 15.6% from October 1998 to August 1999. Before that, new motor vehicle sales had been relatively stable during the rest of 1998, punctuated by some large monthly fluctuations.

New motor vehicle sales



[1] The short-term trend represents a moving average of the data.

Passenger cars lead sales growth

August's increase in new motor vehicles sales was due entirely to an advance in the number of new passenger cars sold (+1.8%). Truck sales were down 0.9%.

A total of 67,847 new passenger cars were sold in August, an increase of 1,188 vehicles from July. This is the third straight monthly increase, after those of July (+3.1%) and June (+0.6%). Passenger car sales have been moving upward since the fall of 1998, after a period of relative stability beginning in the second half of 1997.

Truck sales dipped to 63,705 units in August, a drop of 550 trucks from July. This decline (-0.9%) followed two consecutive months of substantial growth in July (+5.1%) and in June (+3.1%). Truck sales have been rising since early 1999, following a period of general declines during 1998.

Note to readers

Passenger cars include those used for personal and commercial purposes (such as taxis or rental cars). Trucks include minivans, sport-utility vehicles, light and heavy trucks, vans, coaches and buses.

North American-built new motor vehicles include vehicles manufactured or assembled in Canada, the United States or Mexico. All other new motor vehicles are considered imports (manufactured overseas).

Data on the average amount spent on new vehicles are derived from figures not adjusted for seasonality. The average price of new vehicles is estimated from data reported by companies that primarily sell light vehicles; these data exclude figures reported by heavy truck and bus companies.

For reasons of confidentiality, Yukon, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut have been included with British Columbia.

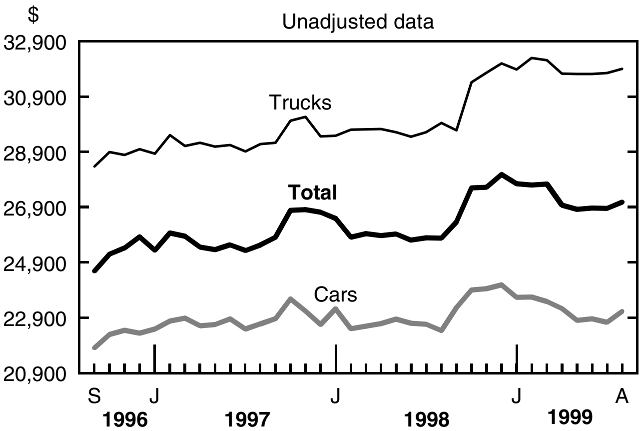
Average price of new motor vehicles on rise

Consumers paid an average of $27,071 (not seasonally adjusted) for a new motor vehicle in August, a 5.0% increase from a year earlier. Over the same one-year period, the average price of a new truck (excluding most heavy trucks and buses) rose faster (+6.5%) than the average price of a new passenger car (+3.1%).

Every fall, there is a sudden jump in the average price of new motor vehicles, primarily because of the flood of new models on the market. Since the fall of 1998, the shift in demand from passenger cars to trucks, which cost more on average, has accentuated this price movement. Moreover, the choice of models and options, and changes in standard equipment have each influenced, to a different degree, the increase in average price.

The average price of new trucks rose in the fall of 1998 and the winter of 1999, but has stabilized since the decline observed this past April. On the other hand, the average price of new passenger cars has been moving generally downward since the beginning of the year, following an increase in the fall of 1998.

New motor vehicles: average price



Strong sales in Eastern Canada

The number of new motor vehicles sold in August was up 13.6% compared with the same month a year earlier (not seasonally adjusted). In each province east of Manitoba, sales were at least 10.0% higher than in August 1998.

In Western Canada, over the same one-year period, Saskatchewan posted the largest gain (+6.9%), while Alberta (+1.2%) and Manitoba (+1.0%) had much smaller increases. Sales were virtually unchanged in British Columbia (+0.1%). Slow truck sales in August were responsible for the lacklustre sales growth in Alberta, Manitoba and British Columbia.

Available on CANSIM: matrix 64.

The August 1999 issue of *New motor vehicle sales* (63-007-XIB, $13/$124) will be available at a later date. See *How to order publications*.

For data or general information, contact the Client Services Unit (613-951-3549; 1 877 421-3067; *retailinfo@statcan.ca*), Retail Trade Section, Distributive Trades Division. For analytical information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods and data quality of this release, contact Clérance Kimanyi (613-951-6363; *kimacle@statcan.ca*).

New motor vehicle sales

	Aug. 1998	July 1999[r]	Aug. 1999[p]	Aug. 1998 to Aug. 1999	July to Aug. 1999
	seasonally adjusted				
				% change	
New motor vehicles	**119,273**	**130,914**	**131,552**	**10.3**	**0.5**
Passenger cars	61,833	66,659	67,847	9.7	1.8
North American[1]	48,825	51,206	52,793	8.1	3.1
Overseas	13,008	15,453	15,053	15.7	-2.6
Trucks, vans and buses	57,440	64,255	63,705	10.9	-0.9

				Market share	
	Aug. 1998	Aug. 1999[p]	Aug. 1998 to Aug. 1999	Aug.1998	Aug.1999
	unadjusted				
			% change	%	
New motor vehicles	**110,404**	**125,410**	**13.6**		
Passenger cars	59,444	67,042	12.8		
North American[1]	45,287	49,788	9.9	76.2	74.3
Overseas	14,157	17,254	21.9	23.8	25.7
Trucks, vans and buses	50,960	58,368	14.5		
North American[1]	44,972	52,586	16.9	88.2	90.1
Overseas	5,988	5,782	-3.4	11.8	9.9

r *Revised figures.*
p *Preliminary figures.*
1 *Manufactured or assembled in Canada, the United States or Mexico.*

■

OTHER RELEASES

Passenger bus industry

1998 (preliminary)

Over 1.43 billion urban transit passenger trips were made in 1998, up from the 1.36 billion trips in 1994, which was the lowest level since the 1980s. However, 1998 ridership remains well below the 1.53 billion trips made in 1990. According to the 1996 Census, approximately 10% of urban workers used public transportation, while 81% used personal vehicles and the rest either walked or cycled to work.

Urban transit companies are also making more money. In 1998, excluding subsidies, gross revenues reached $1.81 billion, a 3% increase from the $1.76 billion earned in 1997.

After reaching a level of more than 30 million trips in 1981, carriers providing scheduled services suffered declines in intercity travel, dropping to 12.3 million passengers in 1995. In 1997 and 1998, however, the number of passengers carried increased to 13.9 million.

Gross revenues in 1998 were $240 million, down slightly from $241 million in 1997. Intercity carriers compete with all other modes of intercity travel, especially the automobile. According to Statistics Canada's Canadian Travel Survey, approximately 90% of all intercity travel in Canada is by car. The bus accounts for 2.7%, the airplane 4.5% and rail 0.5%.

One of the fastest growing segments of the bus industry is charter services. These companies had gross revenues of $304 million in 1998, up from $269 million in 1997. Companies that provide school bus services under contract also increased their revenues from $1.02 billion in 1997 to $1.14 billion in 1998.

Overall, the bus industry spent $5.13 billion in 1998, a decrease of just under 2% from the $5.23 billion spent in 1997. Approximately 69% of expenditures were incurred by urban transit companies.

Note: This release is based on preliminary information from bus companies with annual revenues over $200,000. The bus industry comprises urban transit systems, scheduled intercity, school bus, charter, sightseeing and shuttle services. Final data will appear in the 1998 annual report (Passenger bus and urban transit statistics, 53-215-XIB, $30), expected to be released by the end of 1999.

The material in this release are contained in the *Surface and marine transport: Service bulletin* (50-002-XIB, $10/$62), which will be available shortly. See *How to order publications.*

For data or general information, contact Robert Larocque (613-951-2486; fax: 613-951-0009; laroque@statcan.ca). To enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Harold Kohn (613-951-0162; *kohnhar@statcan.ca*), Transportation Division ■

Road motor vehicles: Registrations

1998 (preliminary)

Total road motor vehicle registrations increased 2.7% to 18.0 million in 1998, up from 17.5 million (revised) in 1997. Of the total, 59.1% were registered in the most populated provinces of Ontario and Quebec.

Passenger automobiles were the largest component with 77.2% of the total registrations in 1998, followed by truck and truck tractors with 20.2%. The remaining 2.6% consisted of buses, motorcycles, mopeds and all other road motor vehicles such as ambulances, hearses and fire trucks.

Passenger automobile registrations increased 2.8% to 13.9 million in 1998. Trucks and truck tractor registrations rose 2.6% during the same period to 3.6 million.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 356, 359, 360, 363, 364, 367, 368, 371, 372, 375, 376, 379, 381 and 382.

The 1998 issue of *Road motor vehicles: Registrations*, (53-219-XIB, $21) will be available at a later date. See *How to order publications*.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Robert Larocque (613-951-2486; fax: 613-951-0009; *laroque@statcan.ca*), Transportation Division. ■

Steel primary forms

Week ending October 9, 1999 (preliminary)

Steel primary forms production for the week ending October 9, 1999, totalled 269 891 tonnes, down 0.5% from the week-earlier 271 241 tonnes and up 4.8% from the year-earlier 257 464 tonnes. The cumulative total at the end of the week was 12 399 862 tonnes, a 1.2% decrease compared with 12 544 748 tonnes for the same period in 1998.

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

Cement

August 1999

Manufacturers shipped 1 350 533 tonnes of cement in August, up 4.6% from 1 291 184 tonnes (revised) in August 1998 and down 1.5% from 1 371 772 tonnes in July 1999.

Year-to-date shipments totalled 7 970 672 tonnes, up 5.3% from 7 573 002 tonnes (revised) during the same period in 1998.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 92 and 122 (series 35).

The August 1999 issue of *Cement* (44-001-XIB, $5/$47) is now available. See *How to order publications*.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods and data quality of this release, contact Étienne Saint-Pierre (613-951-9837; *sainteti@statcan.ca*), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

Dairy statistics

August and September 1999 (preliminary)

Monthly dairy statistics for August and September are now available.

These data will be included in the third quarter 1999 issue of *The dairy review* (23-001-XPB, $36/$119; 23-001-XIB, $27/$89), which will be released in November. See *How to order publications*.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods and data quality for this release, contact Anna Michalowska (613-951-2442; 1 800 465-1991; fax: 613-951-3868), Agriculture Division. ■

PUBLICATIONS RELEASED

Infomat - A weekly review, October 15, 1999
Catalogue number 11-002-XIE
(Canada: $3/$109; outside Canada: US$3/US$109).

Infomat - A weekly review, October 15, 1999
Catalogue number 11-002-XPE
(Canada: $4/$145; outside Canada: US$4/US$145).

Cement, August 1999
Catalogue number 44-001-XIB
(Canada: $5/$47; outside Canada: US$/US$).

Refined petroleum products, May 1999
Catalogue number 45-004-XPB
(Canada: $21/$206; outside Canada: US$21/US$206).

Industry price indexes, August 1999
Catalogue number 62-011-XPB
(Canada: $22/$217; outside Canada: US$22/US$217).

All prices exclude sales tax.

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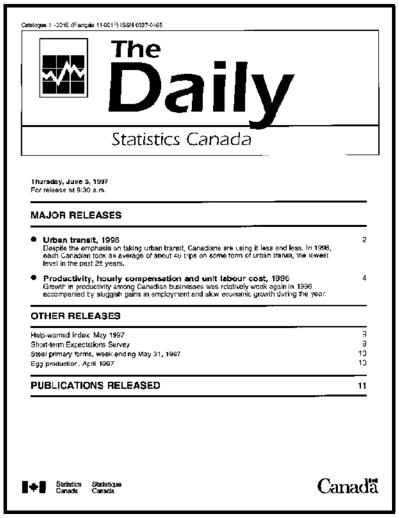
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Statistics Canada

Thursday, June 5, 1997
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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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Canada

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RELEASE DATES: OCTOBER 18 TO OCTOBER 22

October 18 to October 22

(Release dates are subject to change.)

Release date	Title	Reference period
18	**Deposit-accepting intermediaries: Activities and economic performance**	1997
19	**Composite Index**	September 1999
19	**Employment Insurance support to families with newborns**	1976-1998
19	**Travel between Canada and other countries**	August 1999
20	**Canadian international merchandise trade**	August 1999
20	**Wholesale trade**	August 1999
21	**Retail trade**	August 1999