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MAJOR RELEASES

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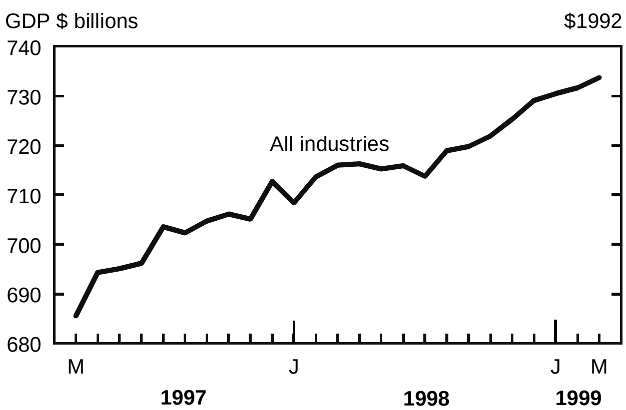
Gross domestic product by industry at factor cost
March 1999

Strong showings in most industrial sectors combined to produce a 0.3% increase in gross domestic product (GDP) in March. The latest increase extended the economy's steady expansion since strikes put the brakes on growth in mid-1998.

Manufacturers raised output significantly in March, more than offsetting a decline in February which was the first in seven months. Increased computer wholesaling and auto retailing kept the trades sector busy, while business service providers continued to expand their activities. Construction activity was little changed after several months of increase, and mining output fell sharply in March.

GDP continued to advance in March



In the first quarter of 1999, GDP advanced 0.8% (3.4% on an annualized basis) as the Canadian economy continued to show strong momentum after a 1.1% gain in the fourth quarter that was buoyed by strike-related rebounds in several industries.

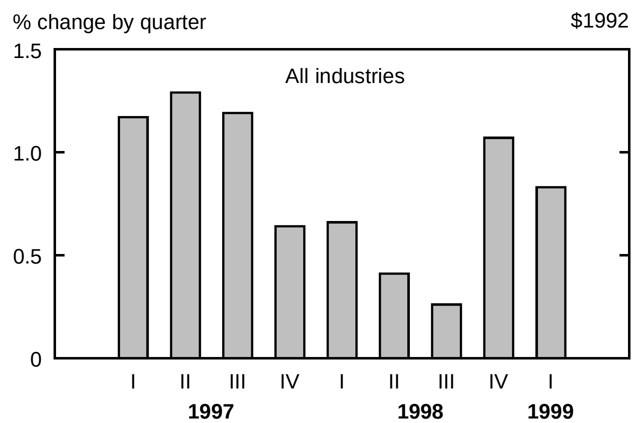
The stimulus of a booming U.S. economy, signs that the worst of Asia's economic crisis may be over, improved consumer confidence and the absence of major work stoppages all played to the Canadian economy's advantage in the first quarter. These factors translated into further growth in manufacturing and wholesaling, a resurgence in retailing and residential construction activity, continued expansion in telephone and business services, and the smallest quarterly decline in mining output in a year.

Note to readers

This release also contains preliminary estimates of Gross domestic product (GDP) at factor cost by industry for the first quarter of 1999. Income and expenditure estimates of GDP for the first quarter will be published on June 10, 1999, with revisions extending back to 1995.

The gross domestic product 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.

Economy still strong after fourth quarter strike rebounds



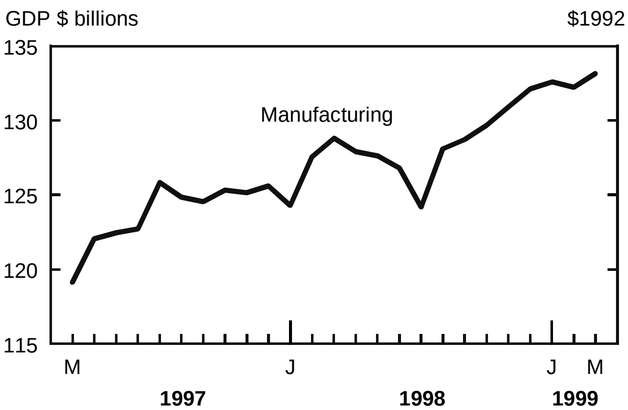
Manufacturing output bounced back from February decline

Manufacturers raised output 0.7% in March, more than reversing a 0.3% decline in the previous month and putting the industry back on a solid growth path after a strike-induced slump in the summer of 1998. Higher production of electronic, transportation and primary metal products was partly offset by declines in the printing and publishing and wood products industries. Thirteen of 22 major industry groups, accounting for more than 80% of total manufacturing production, increased output in March.

Makers of electrical and electronic products raised output 2.8% in March, thanks to a rebound in the production of computers and peripheral equipment, and continued solid growth in the telecommunications equipment and communications wire and cable industries.

March production of transportation equipment was lifted by increased production of aircraft and parts, which continued to pick up after temporary layoffs in the fourth quarter had depressed output. Output of cars and parts edged up 0.5% in March, showing no sign of falling off after the fourth quarter's spectacular rebound from a strike-induced low in the previous quarter.

Manufacturing output was up after first decline in seven months



Steel mills boosted production for a third consecutive month, leading to a 13.5% increase in output in the first quarter of 1999, and effectively compensating for a sharp decline in the previous quarter. The first quarter surge in production also coincided with a 12.8% plunge in imports during the same period.

Labour strife in publishing led to a 2.2% monthly drop in the output of the printing and publishing industry. The month of March also saw declines in production by platemaking, typesetting and combined printing and publishing companies.

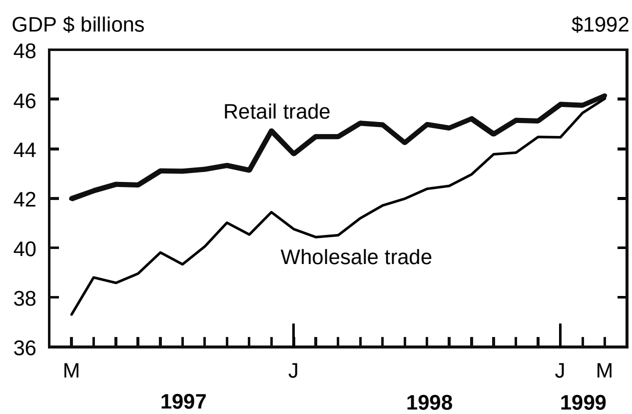
Wood production fell for a second consecutive month, as quota restrictions under the Canada-U.S. softwood lumber agreement forced many sawmills to take downtime in March. This resulted in a first quarter drop in output of sawn lumber (-0.3%), which came at a time when a residential building boom in the United States was driving prices up and causing delays in completions for want of basic building materials. This — coupled with reports that some U.S. importers were postponing large purchases in anticipation of obtaining lower prices when a new quota year beginning in April frees up Canadian exports — resulted in a steep 7.3% quarterly drop in lumber exports. Producers of other wood products had mixed results, with manufacturers of wooden doors and windows increasing output, mostly offsetting a decline in the particle and waferboard industry.

Production of machinery was up slightly in March, but this did little to halt the downward slide the industry has been in since the end of 1997. Indeed, output sank 4.3% in the latest quarter, as producers of all types of machinery curtailed output in the face of weak domestic and foreign demand. Exports of machinery fell for a second consecutive quarter, as sales to U.S. manufacturers (which are only now emerging from a period of stagnation brought on by slumping demand from Asia) remained slow.

Wholesalers were busier in March

Wholesalers had a 1.3% increase in sales activity in March, capping a quarter that saw trade continue to advance at a robust pace. As in previous quarters, wholesale sales were supported by buoyant demand for computer equipment. Distributors of farm machinery and supplies were also busier in the first quarter, after a string of dismal quarters that spanned more than a year-and-a-half. Grain dealers reported the most significant drop in business, as a strike by federal grain handlers hampered shipments.

Wholesalers and retailers were busier in March



Retailers ended resurgent quarter on a positive note

Retail sales advanced 0.5% in March, as most store types enjoyed solid but unspectacular gains. Auto dealers, automotive parts stores and sellers of semi-durable goods reported increased customer traffic, although the "other" retail store category (which includes opticians and pet stores) and department stores experienced a drop in sales.

The March gain, combined with a burst of post-Christmas shopping in January, resulted in a 2.0% advance in the first quarter of 1999. This positive showing marked a departure from a weakening trend that saw a gradual deterioration in activity throughout 1998 (a deterioration largely attributable to faltering auto and department store sales) and which culminated in a decline in sales activity in the fourth quarter — the first in almost three years. The causes of the 1998 slowdown were nowhere in evidence in 1999's opening quarter, as sales of cars and trucks accelerated and department stores reported a healthy advance. Service stations and other general merchandise stores also experienced a pick-up in business in the quarter.

Demand for new technologies continued to spur communications industries

GDP in the communications services industry was little changed in March, but continued to advance strongly in the first quarter as demand for telecommunications services showed no signs of abating. The expansion of the telephone carrier industry, which has grown at an average quarterly rate of 4.8% over the last year, has been driven by a steady increase in cellular and long distance telephone usage.

Engineering construction higher in March

Total construction activity was little changed in March, as declines in residential and non-residential building were offset by an increase in engineering construction. Despite the March setback, residential building activity was up 3.3% in the first quarter of the year, driving total construction activity 0.6% higher in the same period. Homebuilders continued to climb back from a mid-year dip caused by strikes and walkouts by several building trades in Southern Ontario, and by a temporary slackening of consumer demand. Non-residential construction continued to trend downward in March, as activity on commercial and industrial projects decreased.

Business services intensified as millennium approaches

Providers of business services were busier in March as the Year 2000 problem continued to spur growth at computer service and consulting firms. There was also healthy growth in demand for temporary help workers, accountants, legal specialists, architects, engineers and scientists. The computer services industry was largely responsible for a 2.0% increase in business services in the first quarter, matching the previous quarter's solid advance.

Diamond production helped stanch quarterly declines in mining

Mining production dropped 1.7% in March, as drilling and rigging activity plumbed multi-year lows and producers of crude petroleum and natural gas cut output for the sixth time in as many months. Higher prices for crude petroleum did little to halt declines in the oil industry, while the reversal for operators of drilling and rigging platforms erased a modest resurgence at the end of 1998.

Mining output in the first quarter edged down 0.6%, the smallest quarterly decline in a year. The mining industry was buoyed by the ramping up of diamond production, but also by signs that the plummeting drilling and rigging activity of the previous year had finally hit bottom.

Other industries

The finance and insurance industry recorded its first negative quarter in four years, largely due to a weaker performance by the banking and insurance industries. The decline in banks was due primarily to a fall in stock market-related activities. Logging fell in the first quarter because of record snowfalls in British Columbia and shutdowns at several sawmills.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 4677-4681.

The March 1999 issue of *Gross domestic product by industry* (15-001-XPB, $15/$145) is scheduled for release in early June.

For analytical information on this release, contact Richard Evans (613-951-9145, *evanric@statcan.ca*). For information regarding the purchase of data, contact Kim Lauzon (1 800 877-IMAD or *IMAD@statcan.ca*), Industry Measures and Analysis Division. □

Gross domestic product at factor cost by industry, at 1992 prices

	Fourth quarter 1997	First quarter 1998[r]	Second quarter 1998[r]	Third quarter 1998[r]	Fourth quarter 1998[r]	First quarter 1999[p]	Fourth quarter 1998 to first quarter 1999	First quarter 1999	First quarter 1998 to first quarter 1999
	seasonally adjusted								
	quarter-to-quarter % change						$ change[1]	$ level[1]	% change
All industries	**0.6**	**0.7**	**0.4**	**0.3**	**1.1**	**0.8**	**6,048**	**731,227**	**2.6**
Goods-producing industries	**0.4**	**0.4**	**0.1**	**-0.5**	**1.1**	**0.8**	**1,967**	**239,362**	**1.5**
Agriculture	2.6	-0.9	1.3	-0.1	-0.8	-0.8	-92	11,743	-0.4
Fishing and trapping	-8.2	5.0	1.7	-10.0	-9.2	5.5	34	657	-12.3
Logging and forestry	0.6	-1.9	-5.9	2.7	4.9	-2.1	-104	4,769	-0.8
Mining, quarrying and oil wells	1.2	-0.1	-1.5	-2.2	-3.1	-0.6	-166	26,576	-7.3
Manufacturing	0.2	1.2	0.4	-0.3	3.0	1.3	1,666	132,475	4.5
Construction	0.7	0.9	-1.1	-1.2	0.5	0.6	236	38,783	-1.1
Other utilities	-0.6	-3.2	2.9	1.6	-3.1	1.6	391	24,357	2.9
Services-producing industries	**0.7**	**0.8**	**0.6**	**0.6**	**1.1**	**0.8**	**4,081**	**491,865**	**3.1**
Transportation and storage	1.5	-0.2	-0.3	-0.4	1.9	-0.5	-153	32,595	0.8
Communications	0.8	2.4	2.1	3.6	4.9	3.8	980	26,708	15.2
Wholesale trade	3.2	-1.1	2.5	2.4	3.3	2.8	1,231	45,187	11.4
Retail trade	1.4	1.2	1.1	0.6	-0.1	2.0	885	45,844	3.6
Finance and insurance	1.2	0.2	0.6	0.5	0.6	-0.6	-247	39,885	1.0
Real estate and insurance agent	0.4	0.6	0.6	0.4	0.2	0.7	575	79,831	2.0
Business services	1.9	2.4	0.9	1.5	2.0	2.0	842	42,865	6.6
Government services	-0.1	-0.1	0.0	0.2	0.3	0.1	35	42,866	0.5
Education	-2.5	2.3	0.0	-1.0	0.8	-0.3	-136	39,967	-0.6
Health and social services	0.4	0.5	-0.2	0.1	0.2	-0.2	-92	48,340	-0.2
Accommodation and food	1.1	2.6	-1.4	-0.5	1.6	0.0	-8	18,789	-0.4
Other services	0.5	1.0	0.2	0.6	0.2	0.6	170	28,988	1.5
Other aggregations									
Industrial production	0.3	0.4	0.5	-0.4	1.2	1.0	1,892	183,409	2.4
Non-durable manufacturing	0.5	0.7	0.8	-0.3	1.1	0.6	345	57,369	2.3
Durable manufacturing	0.0	1.5	0.1	-0.4	4.6	1.8	1,322	75,106	6.1
Business sector	0.9	0.6	0.5	0.4	1.2	1.0	6,159	605,359	3.2
Non-business sector	-0.8	0.8	0.0	-0.3	0.4	-0.1	-111	125,868	0.0

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

Gross domestic product at factor cost by industry at 1992 prices

	Oct. 1998[r]	Nov. 1998[r]	Dec. 1998[r]	Jan. 1999[r]	Feb. 1999[r]	Mar. 1999[p]	Feb. 1999 to Mar. 1999	Mar. 1999	Mar. 1998 to Mar. 1999
	seasonally adjusted								
	month-to-month % change						$ change[1]	$ level[1]	% change
All industries	**0.2**	**0.5**	**0.5**	**0.2**	**0.1**	**0.3**	**2,457**	**733,122**	**2.4**
Goods-producing industries	**-0.2**	**0.6**	**0.7**	**0.2**	**-0.2**	**0.2**	**503**	**239,563**	**0.5**
Agriculture	-0.5	0.1	0.2	-1.5	0.6	0.5	53	11,803	-0.5
Fishing and trapping	-3.7	-7.3	6.1	4.6	2.7	-6.5	-44	634	-16.4
Logging and forestry	3.0	0.5	0.9	-0.6	-2.5	-1.9	-92	4,668	-2.2
Mining, quarrying and oil wells	-2.9	0.7	0.8	-0.2	-0.9	-1.7	-444	26,198	-8.8
Manufacturing	0.7	0.9	0.9	0.3	-0.3	0.7	950	132,980	3.2
Construction	-0.2	0.1	0.3	0.0	0.5	0.1	53	38,887	-0.7
Other utilities	-1.8	-0.3	0.6	1.1	0.2	0.1	27	24,393	0.6
Services-producing industries	**0.4**	**0.4**	**0.3**	**0.2**	**0.2**	**0.4**	**1,954**	**493,559**	**3.3**
Transportation and storage	2.1	0.2	-0.2	-1.4	1.5	-0.2	-62	32,720	0.8
Communications	1.4	1.3	1.6	0.9	2.0	0.1	17	26,898	15.6
Wholesale trade	1.8	0.1	1.4	-0.1	2.2	1.3	598	45,910	13.4
Retail trade	-1.4	1.2	-0.1	1.5	-0.1	0.5	211	45,971	3.3
Finance and insurance	-0.5	0.6	1.0	-0.4	-2.1	1.0	395	39,870	0.3
Real estate and insurance agent	-0.1	0.3	0.3	0.1	0.4	0.3	226	80,078	2.1
Business services	0.3	1.1	0.8	0.3	0.7	1.0	426	43,251	7.1
Government services	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	-0.1	0.1	59	42,896	0.6
Education	1.6	-0.1	-0.1	0.0	-0.4	0.2	69	39,961	-0.5
Health and social services	0.0	-0.2	0.1	0.3	-0.5	-0.3	-162	48,145	-0.5
Accommodation and food	1.7	1.0	-0.7	0.8	-1.6	1.1	203	18,823	0.6
Other services	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1	0.3	0.7	-0.1	-26	29,036	1.6
Other aggregations									
Industrial production	-0.2	0.7	0.9	0.3	-0.3	0.3	533	183,571	1.0
Non-durable manufacturing	-0.1	0.5	0.9	0.0	-0.3	0.2	122	57,391	1.3
Durable manufacturing	1.3	1.3	0.9	0.6	-0.3	1.1	828	75,589	4.8
Business sector	0.1	0.6	0.6	0.2	0.2	0.4	2,498	607,363	2.9
Non-business sector	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.1	-0.2	0.0	-41	125,759	0.0

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

■

International travel account

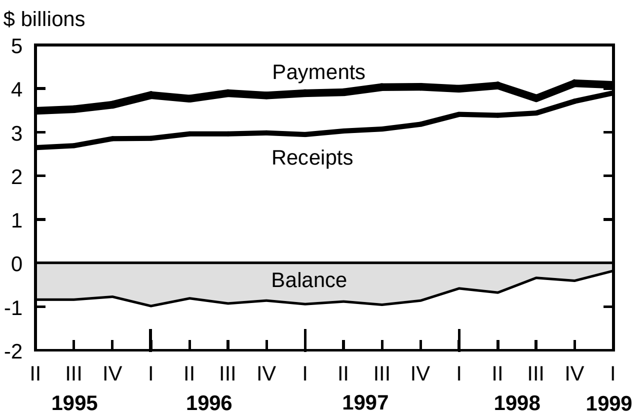
First quarter 1999 (preliminary)

The international travel account deficit fell to $182 million during the first quarter of 1999, its lowest level in more than a decade, on the heels of record spending by American travellers in Canada.

Between January and March, Canadians spent $182 million more outside the country than foreigners spent here, down from $411 million in the fourth quarter of 1998. The first quarter deficit was the lowest since early 1988 when it reached $364 million.

Canadians spent nearly $4.1 billion outside the country during the first quarter of 1999, while foreigners spent $3.9 billion in Canada.

Canada's international travel account deficit down to lowest level in over 10 years



Travel deficit with the United States lowest in more than a decade

The increase in spending by United States residents travelling to Canada was the main contributor to the decline in Canada's overall deficit with the other countries of the world. American travellers spent a record $2.4 billion in Canada during the first three months of 1999, up 4.6% from the previous quarter. At the same time, Canadian spending south of the border declined 2.3% to just under $2.5 billion.

The result was a deficit with the United States of only about $11 million in the first quarter of 1999, down from $177 million in the previous quarter and the lowest level in the last 10 years. The booming U.S. economy, strong American consumer confidence and the cheaper Canadian dollar were likely major factors in the record American spending on this side of the border.

> ***Note to readers***
>
> *Unless otherwise stated, quarterly data in this release are seasonally adjusted. Amounts are in Canadian dollars and are not adjusted for inflation.*
>
> *Receipts represent spending by foreigners travelling in Canada, including education-related spending and medical-related spending. Payments represent spending by Canadians travelling abroad, including education-related spending and medical-related spending.*
>
> *Overseas countries are countries other than the United States.*

During March alone, Americans made a record 1.4 million overnight trips to Canada, exceeding the number of Canadians travelling to the United States. The number of overnight trips by Americans visiting Canada has been exceeding the number of Canadians travelling to the United States since February 1998.

Record spending by travellers between Canada and overseas countries

Despite the 2.3% decrease in the number of overnight trips to overseas countries, Canadians spent a record $1.6 billion in overseas countries, up 1.2% from the previous record set in the fourth quarter of 1998. Meanwhile, spending by residents of overseas countries in Canada rose 6.0% to a record $1.5 billion. The number of overnight trips by overseas residents increased 4.6% from the previous quarter to 1.1 million.

Consequently, Canadians spent $171 million more in overseas countries during the first quarter of 1999 than overseas residents spent here, the ninth consecutive quarterly deficit with overseas countries. This level was a sharp decline from $234 million in the previous quarter.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods and data quality of this release, contact Johanne Plante (613-951-1910; fax: 613-951-2909, *planjoh@statcan.ca*), International Travel Section, Culture, Tourism and the Centre for Education Statistics. For data requests, contact Carol Moskaluk (613-951-9169; fax: 613-951-2909; *moskcar@statcan.ca*). □

International travel account receipts and payments

	First quarter 1998[r]	Second quarter 1998[r]	Third quarter 1998[r]	Fourth quarter 1998[r]	First quarter 1999[p]	1997[r]	1998[r]
	seasonally adjusted[1]						
	$ millions						
United States							
Receipts	2,101	2,064	2,143	2,342	2,449	6,921	8,650
Payments	2,498	2,591	2,278	2,519	2,460	10,259	9,885
Balance	-397	-526	-136	-177	-11	-3,337	-1,235
All other countries							
Receipts	1,306	1,320	1,290	1,369	1,451	5,300	5,285
Payments	1,497	1,476	1,493	1,603	1,622	5,613	6,070
Balance	-191	-156	-203	-234	-171	-313	-785
Total							
Receipts	3,407	3,385	3,433	3,711	3,900	12,221	13,935
Payments	3,995	4,067	3,772	4,121	4,082	15,871	15,955
Balance	-588	-682	-339	-411	-182	-3,651	-2,020

	First quarter 1998[r]	Second quarter 1998[r]	Third quarter 1998[r]	Fourth quarter 1998[r]	First quarter 1999[p]	1997[r]	1998[r]
	unadjusted[1]						
	$ millions						
United States							
Receipts	1,149	2,200	3,734	1,568	1,350	6,921	8,650
Payments	2,909	2,795	2,155	2,026	2,866	10,259	9,885
Balance	-1,760	-595	1,579	-459	-1,516	-3,337	-1,235
All other countries							
Receipts	820	1,371	2,100	994	904	5,300	5,285
Payments	1,621	1,400	1,657	1,392	1,761	5,613	6,070
Balance	-801	-28	443	-399	-857	-313	-785
Total							
Receipts	1,968	3,571	5,834	2,561	2,255	12,221	13,935
Payments	4,530	4,195	3,812	3,419	4,628	15,871	15,955
Balance	-2,562	-623	2,022	-857	-2,373	-3,651	-2,020

r *Revised figures.*
p *Preliminary figures.*
1 *Data may not add to totals due to rounding.*

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OTHER RELEASES

Characteristics of international travellers
1998

Tourism businesses enjoyed a record-breaking year in 1998. Buoyed by strong American tourism, almost 19 million international tourists came to Canada in 1998, the highest annual level in the 26 years that travel data have been collected.

In total, 18.8 million international tourists made overnight trips to Canada during 1998, up 6.8% from 1997. The majority, about 14.9 million, came from the United States, up 11.1%. This strong increase in American overnight travel offset a 7.1% decline in overseas visits to Canada, which fell from 4.2 million in 1997 to 3.9 million in 1998.

Overnight American travel to Canada in 1998 represented the highest level recorded, breaking the previous 13-year record set in 1986 — the year of the World Exposition in Vancouver. Furthermore, the number of Americans visiting Canada surpassed the number of Canadians travelling to the United States by 1.5 million travellers, the first time this has occurred since 1988. A booming United States economy, strong American consumer confidence and a cheaper Canadian dollar were key factors in the growth in American tourism.

Tourism from the United States increased in almost all regions of Canada during the summer of 1998. Ontario recorded the largest increase in American visitors (+12.4%), followed closely by British Columbia (+11.9). American travellers made fewer overnight visits to the Yukon and Northwest Territories (-5.4%) during 1998.

American overnight visitors injected $6.7 billion into the Canadian economy in 1998, up 25.2% over the previous year. They spent about $450 per trip, up 12.5% from a year ago. Americans spent $925 million or 38.7% more on other expenses, for example shopping and souvenirs, the highest increase of all the spending categories. The low value of the Canadian dollar no doubt encouraged many visitors to shop in Canada. The majority of their tourism spending ($2.7 billion) went towards accommodation, up 29.8% compared with 1997.

American travellers continued to take more flights to Canada (+12.4%), maintaining the trend that began with the implementation of the Open Skies agreement. Air travel has climbed steadily from 2.4 million trips in 1994 to approximately 3.6 million in 1998. The vast majority of Americans still drove to their Canadian destinations (9.4 million), an 11.9% increase over 1997.

In terms of overseas travel, the 3.9 million visitors from countries other than the United States spent $4.5 billion in 1998, 1.2% less than in 1997. The reduction in Asian travel to Canada deepened in 1998 with 19.0% fewer visitors. This followed an 8.9% decline from the previous year. Overnight visits from Europe declined marginally (-2.2%) despite the appreciation of many European currencies against the Canadian dollar. Travel from Central and other North America jumped 14.3% in 1998, largely due to influxes (16.7%) of Mexican tourists to Canada.

Much of the decline in overseas visitation was due to a 14.1% drop in the number of visitors travelling to Canada via the United States. Direct overseas arrivals, which now represent 63% of all overseas traffic, decreased just 2.4% in comparison. These visitors are a significant market for Canada, as they tend to stay longer and spend more per trip than those arriving from the United States.

Provincially, the strongest gains in overnight visits from countries other than the United States in 1998 occurred in Alberta (+19.1%) and British Columbia (+16.2%). However, 1998 levels still remained well below those recorded in 1996 for these two provinces. Large influxes in travellers from the United Kingdom, Germany and France were largely responsible for the growth in overseas visitors.

Meanwhile, overnight trips by Canadians to the United States declined 11.2% to 13.4 million in 1998, the lowest annual level since 1987. On the other hand, Canadians made a record 4.2 million overseas trips (+5.9%), preferring traditional European destinations such as the United Kingdom, France and Germany.

This release presents a brief overview of data now available from the International Travel Survey. The tables upon which this analysis is based, and various statistical profiles and micro data files of characteristics of international travellers for the fourth quarter and full year 1998 are now available on request. To order one or more of these products, contact Carol Moskaluk (613-951-9169; fax: 613-951-2909; *moskcar@statcan.ca*).

For further information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Laurie McDougall (613-951-6766; fax: 613-951-2909; *mcdolau@statcan.ca*), International Travel Section, Tourism Statistics Program. ■

Crude oil and natural gas

March 1999 (preliminary)

In March, crude oil production was 10.8% lower than the same month a year earlier, the fifth consecutive monthly year-over-year decrease. The March 1999 drop was mainly attributable to decreases in production of crude oil in Alberta and Saskatchewan. Exports, which accounted for 52.7% of total production, fell 13.0% from the year earlier level. For the first quarter of 1999, production of crude oil was down 9.2%.

Crude oil and natural gas

	March 1998	March 1999	March 1998 to March 1999
	thousands of cubic metres		% change
Crude oil and equivalent hydrocarbons[1]			
Production	11,096.1	9,900.7	-10.8
Exports	5,989.6	5,213.8	-13.0
Imports[2]	3,946.5	3,970.9	0.6
Refinery receipts	8,243.4	8,544.6	3.7
	millions of cubic metres		% change
Natural gas[3]			
Marketable production	14,086.9	13,869.8	-1.5
Exports	7,642.9	8,130.0	6.4
Canadian domestic sales[4]	6,991.2	7,355.0	5.2
	January to March 1998	January to March 1999	Jan. - Mar. 1998 to Jan. - Mar. 1999
	thousands of cubic metres		% change
Crude oil and equivalent hydrocarbons[1]			
Production	32,099.6	29,158.2	-9.2
Exports	19,202.0	16,124.3	-16.0
Imports[2]	11,279.6	12,022.9	6.6
Refinery receipts	23,870.5	25,165.7	5.4
	millions of cubic metres		% change
Natural gas[3]			
Marketable production	41,493.6	40,992.2	-1.2
Exports	22,621.5	23,489.6	3.8
Canadian domestic sales[4]	21,903.0	23,082.6	5.4

1 *Disposition may differ from production due to inventory change, industry own-use, etc.*
2 *Crude oil received by Canadian refineries from foreign countries for processing. Data may differ from International Trade Division (ITD) estimates due to timing differences and the inclusion of crude oil landed in Canada for future re-export in the ITD data.*
3 *Disposition may differ from production due to inventory change, usage as pipeline fuel, pipeline losses, line-pack fluctuations, etc.*
4 *Includes direct sales.*

Natural gas production was down 1.5% from March 1998. Canadian domestic sales were up 5.2%, the fifth consecutive monthly year-over-year increase. Exports continued to increase, posting a 6.4% gain from March 1998.

Year-to-date exports of natural gas were up 3.8% over the same period in 1998. Year-to-date Canadian sales rose 5.4% from the year earlier level. The increase is mainly attributable to higher sales to all sectors (residential, industrial and commercial) as a result of colder weather during the first three months of 1999.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 530 and 539.

The March 1999 issue of *Crude petroleum and natural gas production* (26-006-XPB, $19/$186) will be available in June. See *How to order publications*.

For further information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods and data quality of this release, contact Gerry Desjardins (613-951-4368; *desjger@statcan.ca*) or Michel Palardy (613-951-7174; *palamic@statcan.ca*), Energy Section, Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

Electric power statistics

March 1999

Net generation of electricity decreased to 48 314 gigawatt hours, down 1.4% from March 1998. Exports decreased 32.1% to 2 314 gigawatt hours, and imports increased from 1 302 gigawatt hours to 1 622 gigawatt hours.

Low water reservoir levels led to a 5.4% decrease in generation of hydro electricity to 29 045 gigawatt hours, despite colder weather across Canada. To compensate, thermal conventional generation was up 7.2% to 12 508 gigawatt hours. Generation from nuclear sources was up 1.9% to 6 761 gigawatt hours. Higher domestic demand and lower generating capability resulted in increased imports and decreased exports.

Year-to-date net generation at the end of March 1999 totalled 146 539 gigawatt hours, up 0.2% from the previous year. Year-to-date exports (6 550 gigawatt hours) were down 30.9%, whereas year-to-date imports (5 058 gigawatt hours) rose 29.3% from 1998.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 3987-3999.

The March 1999 issue of *Electric power statistics* (57-001-XPB, $12/$114) will be available in early June. 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. ■

Coal and coke statistics

March 1999

Fewer deliveries to port and lower domestic demand drove down coal production for the eighth consecutive month in March. Coal production totalled 6 467 kilotonnes, down 7.2% from March 1998. The year-to-date production figure stood at 18 347 kilotonnes, down 6.4%.

Exports in March decreased 15.4% from March 1998 to 3 079 kilotonnes. Exports to Japan (the largest consumer of Canadian coal) decreased 18.4% to 1 949 kilotonnes during the same period. Year-to-date figures show total exports of 8 099 kilotonnes, 5.9% below last year's level.

Imports of coal for the first quarter of 1999 totalled 1 793 kilotonnes, down 9.2% from the previous year.

Coke production in March 1999 decreased to 274 kilotonnes, down 0.5% from March 1998.

Available on CANSIM: matrix 9.

The March 1998 issue of *Coal and coke statistics* (45-002, $12/$114) will be available in early June. 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. ■

Railway carloadings

Seven-day period ending May 14, 1999

Non-intermodal traffic loaded during the seven-day period ending May 14, 1999, increased 3.1% to 4.7 million tonnes compared with the same period last year. The number of cars loaded increased 3.6%.

Intermodal traffic tonnage totalled 375 000 tonnes, a 2.9% increase from the same period of last year. The year-to-date figures show an increase of 11.9%.

Total traffic increased 3.1% during the period. This brought the year-to-date total to 93.5 million tonnes, a decrease of 3.3% from 1998.

All year-to-date figures have been revised.

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

PUBLICATIONS RELEASED

Consumer prices and price indexes, July-September 1998
Catalogue number 62-010-XIB
(Canada: $19/$62).

Science statistics: Service bulletin: Scientific and technological activities of provincial governments, 1990-1991 to 1998-1999
Catalogue number 88-001-XIB
(Canada: $6/$59).

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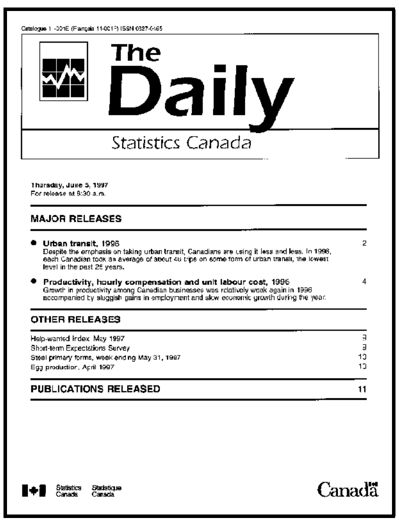
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Statistics Canada

Thursday, June 5, 1997
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- **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.

OTHER RELEASES

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Egg production, April 1997 10

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RELEASE DATES: JUNE 1999

(Release dates are subject to change.)

Release date	Title	Reference period
June 1999		
2	**Help-wanted Index**	May 1999
4	**Labour Force Survey**	May 1999
4	**Port activity**	1998
7	**Building permits**	April 1999
7	**Industrial capacity utilization rates**	First quarter 1999
8	**Canadian social trends**	Summer 1999
8	**The bus industry**	1995-1997
9	**Impact of parental divorce on adolescents. Death and Divorce**	
9	**Perspectives on labour and income**	Summer 1999
9	**Statcan Canism directory disc**	June 1999
10	**National economic and financial accounts**	First quarter 1999
10	**Balance of international payments**	First quarter 1999
10	**New Housing Price Index**	April 1999
11	**Family violence: A statistical profile**	1997-1998
11	**Shelters for abused women**	1997-1998
14	**Canadian Travel Survey**	1998
14	**New motor vehicle sales**	April 1999
14	**Travel between Canada and other countries**	April 1999
16	**Monthly Survey of Manufacturing**	April 1999
17	**Canadian economic observer**	June 1999
17	**Canadian international merchandise trade**	April 1999
17	**Wholesale trade**	April 1999
18	**Consumer Price Index**	May 1999
21	**Retail trade**	April 1999
23	**Canada's international transactions in securities**	April 1999
23	**Composite Index**	May 1999
23	**Employment Insurance**	April 1999
24	**Alternative measures for youth in Canada**	1998
25	**Industrial Product Price Index**	May 1999
25	**Raw Materials Price Index**	May 1999
29	**Field crop reporting series: Seeded area, principal field crops**	1999
29	**Employment, earnings and hours**	April 1999
30	**Real gross domestic product at factor cost by industry**	April 1999