



The Daily

Statistics Canada

Wednesday, August 18, 1999

For release at 8:30 a.m.

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- **Consumer Price Index, July 1999** 3
 In July, consumers spent 1.8% more than a year earlier for the good and services contained in the Consumer Price Index basket. Higher transportation costs, including increased prices for gasoline and new vehicles, contributed to the year-over-year advance.

- **Mortality rates in census metropolitan areas, 1994-1996** 6
 A new study analyzing patterns of death in Canada's 25 census metropolitan areas shows that mortality rates among residents in major urban centres in Atlantic Canada and Quebec tend to be relatively high, while those in western Canadian centres tend to be relatively low.

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Health reports Summer 1999

The Summer 1999 issue of *Health reports* contains the following five articles: "Mortality in metropolitan areas," "Health effects of physical activity," "Body mass index and health," "Medications and fall-related fractures in the elderly," and "Dental insurance and the use of dental services."

Health reports provides comprehensive and timely analysis of national and provincial health information and vital statistics derived from surveys or administrative databases. It is designed for a broad audience that includes health professionals, researchers, policy makers, educators and students.

The Summer 1999 issue of *Health reports* (82-003-XPB, \$35/\$116; 82-003-XIE, \$26/\$87) is now available. See *How to order publications*.

For more information, contact Marie P. Beaudet (613-951-7025; beaumar@statcan.ca), Health Statistics Division.



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National Atlas of Canada — hyperlink

In cooperation with Natural Resources Canada, Statistics Canada is making available a direct link from its *Statistical profile of Canadian communities* to the new sixth edition of the *National Atlas of Canada*.

This atlas on the Internet is based on an interactive mapping technology that lets users visualize national scale data directly and quickly. The data, portrayed on maps, enables users to view patterns and trends as they relate to regional differences in Canada. Users also have the capability to create their own maps using atlas data from various government sources. For example, there is access to a wide variety of socio-economic information based on the 1996 Census. The atlas contains data on Canada's age structure, links to resource dependent communities and provides a view of Canada's newest territory, Nunavut. Information on the Canadian family and official languages are planned for release in the fall.

The link to the *National Atlas of Canada* is now available at Statistics Canada's Web site (www.statcan.ca) under *Census* followed by *Statistical profile of Canadian communities*. For more information, contact Anna Jasiak (613-996-2817) or Jacques Ouellet (613-951-8198), Statistics Canada or Jim Levesque (613-992-4342), Natural Resources Canada.

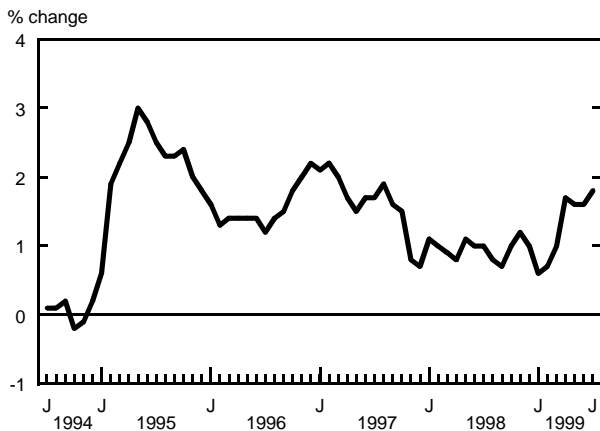
MAJOR RELEASES

Consumer Price Index July 1999

In July, consumers spent 1.8% more than a year earlier for the goods and services in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) basket. This advance followed an annual increase of 1.6% in June. The 12-month percentage changes recorded over the last four months have approached the average annual increases for 1996 and 1997.

Just over one-third of July's annual increase in the CPI can be attributed to higher transportation costs, particularly for private transportation. Higher prices for gasoline exerted the strongest upward pressure on the index, followed by price increases for new vehicles. Public transportation costs also rose, mostly influenced by higher airfares. Once again, consumers continued to pay less for computer equipment and supplies as well as for telephone services during the same period.

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



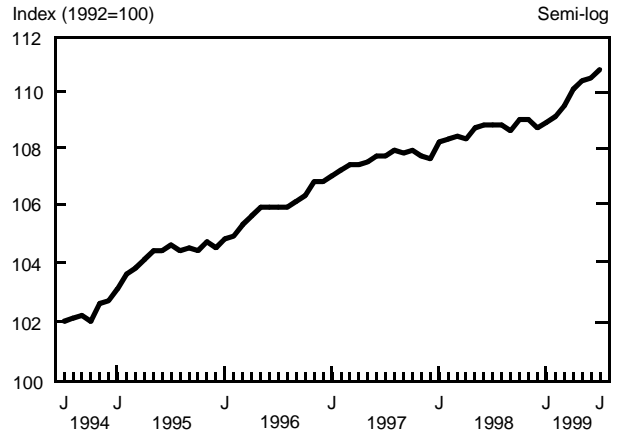
From July 1998 to July 1999, gasoline prices rose 9.6% and consumers paid on average 2.1% more for new vehicles. The rise in prices for new vehicles was a combination of slight increases in manufacturers' suggested prices and smaller and fewer discounts offered by manufacturers.

The CPI increased 0.3% between June and July

Consumer prices increased 0.3% from June to July, the seventh consecutive monthly increase.

Monthly advances in the CPI this year have ranged between 0.1% and 0.5%.

**The Consumer Price Index
 (not seasonally adjusted)**



Higher gasoline prices were the main reason for July's monthly increase in the CPI. Other factors were higher prices for traveller accommodation and air transportation. However, lower prices for new vehicles, food and shoes had a dampening effect on the overall index.

From June to July, the price of gasoline climbed 4.1% after dropping 1.5% between May and June. Gasoline prices are significantly affected by fluctuating prices for crude oil as measured by the Raw Materials Price Index. The crude oil component of this index was up 0.9% between May and June and between April and May.

With the arrival of the peak tourist season, traveller accommodation rates climbed 7.4% from June to July, following an 11.3% increase in May and a 10.6% rise in June.

Air transportation prices climbed 4.3% after falling 0.7% in June. July's increase was partly the result of seasonal increases in demand for travel to transatlantic, Caribbean and domestic destinations.

Automobile prices fell 0.6%, mainly due to discounts offered in July by manufacturers and Canadian dealerships for certain models prior to the fall arrival of next year's models.

After four consecutive monthly increases ranging from 0.2% to 0.4%, the food index dropped 0.2%

between June and July, mainly due to a 3.2% drop in prices for fresh fruit and vegetables and for confectionery products. The price decreases for fresh fruit and vegetables follow good weather conditions and the arrival of local crops on the market.

The 3.4% drop in prices for shoes between June and July reflected promotional sales for all types of shoes.

Provincial highlights

Compared with July 1998, New Brunswick, Manitoba and Alberta each had the largest CPI increases among the provinces at 2.1%. Saskatchewan had the smallest annual CPI increase (+1.2%).

From June to July, the All-items index for British Columbia led the increases among provinces (+0.4%). Over the same time period, the All-items index for Saskatchewan did not change.

Provincial spotlight: Alberta and Prince Edward Island

Over the last 12 months, the 2.1% increase in the CPI for Alberta was more than the 1.8% increase for Canada, while Prince Edward Island's increase of 1.4% was slightly lower.

The year-over-year increase in the CPI for Alberta was mainly due to the increase in the cost of transportation; private transportation costs rose 3.0%, mainly due to price increases for gasoline, automotive vehicle maintenance and repair services, and new vehicles. Inter-city transportation costs rose 11.9%. Higher costs for shelter, especially those for owned accommodation, also contributed to the advance in the All-items index for Alberta. Costs for owned accommodation increased 1.9% in Alberta, higher than

the 1.1% increase for Canada as a whole. On the other hand, Albertans benefited from a much lower increase in the prices of food purchased from stores. These rose only 0.1% while they advanced 1.1% for Canada as a whole.

The most important contributors to the increase in the All-items index for Prince Edward Island were transportation; household operations and furnishings; and recreation, education and reading. Over the last 12 months, the cost of private transportation rose 1.4% in Prince Edward Island while the national level advanced 3.2%. This difference can be explained by the fact that Prince Edward Island had the lowest increase in gasoline prices among all provinces (+1.0%). Residents of Prince Edward Island also benefited from a lower price increase in the food index (+0.3%) than did Canadian consumers overall (+1.3%). On the other hand, prices for household operations and furnishings in Prince Edward Island advanced 2.3% between July 1998 and July 1999, while prices for Canada as a whole rose 1.1% over the same period.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 9934, 9935 and 9940-9956.

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

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

The August 1999 Consumer Price Index will be released on September 17, 1999.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods and data quality of this release, contact (613-951-9606; fax: 613-951-1539; infounit@statcan.ca), Prices Division. □

Consumer Price Index and major components
1992=100

	July 1999	June 1999	July 1998	June to July 1999	July 1998 to July 1999
not seasonally adjusted					
	% change				
All-items	110.8	110.5	108.8	0.3	1.8
Food	111.3	111.5	109.9	-0.2	1.3
Shelter	104.8	104.7	103.6	0.1	1.2
Household operations and furnishings	109.2	109.2	108.0	0.0	1.1
Clothing and footwear	104.5	104.5	102.6	0.0	1.9
Transportation	124.9	123.7	120.4	1.0	3.7
Health and personal care	110.5	110.5	108.4	0.0	1.9
Recreation, education and reading	121.6	120.6	119.4	0.8	1.8
Alcoholic beverages and tobacco products	94.7	94.7	92.8	0.0	2.0
Goods	107.8	107.6	105.7	0.2	2.0
Services	114.3	113.9	112.4	0.4	1.7
All-items excluding food and energy	110.8	110.6	109.0	0.2	1.7
Energy	109.9	107.6	104.2	2.1	5.5
Purchasing power of the consumer dollar expressed in cents, compared to 1992	90.3	90.5	91.9		
All-items (1986=100)	141.9				

Consumer Price Index by province, Whitehorse and Yellowknife
1992=100

	July 1999	June 1999	July 1998	June to July 1999	July 1998 to July 1999
not seasonally adjusted					
	% change				
Newfoundland	110.2	110.1	108.7	0.1	1.4
Prince Edward Island	107.0	106.8	105.5	0.2	1.4
Nova Scotia	110.1	110.0	108.5	0.1	1.5
New Brunswick	109.3	109.1	107.1	0.2	2.1
Quebec	108.3	108.1	106.5	0.2	1.7
Ontario	111.2	110.9	109.0	0.3	2.0
Manitoba	115.4	115.2	113.0	0.2	2.1
Saskatchewan	113.6	113.6	112.2	0.0	1.2
Alberta	113.6	113.3	111.3	0.3	2.1
British Columbia	112.0	111.5	110.4	0.4	1.4
Whitehorse	112.9	112.2	111.6	0.6	1.2
Yellowknife	110.1	109.3	108.9	0.7	1.1

Mortality rates in census metropolitan areas

1994-1996

A new study analyzing patterns of death in Canada's 25 census metropolitan areas (CMAs) shows that mortality rates among residents in major urban centres in Atlantic Canada and Quebec tend to be relatively high, while those in western Canadian centres tend to be relatively low.

For the 1994-1996 period, overall mortality rates calculated for all causes of death were generally above the national level in each of the Atlantic region's three census metropolitan areas: St. John's, Newfoundland; Saint John, New Brunswick and Halifax, Nova Scotia. By contrast, overall mortality rates among residents of CMAs in the western provinces tended to be relatively low, often well below national rates.

In 1996, CMAs were home to the majority of the nation's population (62%) and they accounted for well over half (57%) of all deaths in the 1994-1996 period. However, based on available information, it is not possible to conclude that people in one region are any healthier than those in another or that it is better to live in one urban centre than another. Nor is it possible to explore the reasons underlying the death rates in any particular CMA. Ultimately, death rates are the outcome of many factors — socio-economic, environmental, medical and lifestyle — that are beyond the scope of this analysis.

Within the same province, differences between CMAs can be pronounced. And even in a single centre, the death rate for one cause may be well above the national level while the rate for another cause is below.

Rates high in Atlantic CMAs

Mortality rates calculated for the 1994-1996 period on the basis of all causes of death were above the national level in each of the three census metropolitan areas in Atlantic Canada. The only exception was among men in Halifax.

In St. John's, this was the result of high mortality among both sexes for heart disease, cancer (excluding lung cancer) and cerebrovascular disease (stroke), as well as lung cancer for men.

Saint John also had high mortality rates for heart disease and lung cancer, although rates for other cancers and stroke did not differ from the national level.

Halifax residents had high lung cancer mortality rates. Among women in Halifax, the rate for other cancers was also high. However, Halifax women had a low mortality rate for stroke.

Note to readers

This report is based on an article entitled "Mortality in metropolitan areas" in the Summer 1999 issue of Health reports, available today. The article examines differences in mortality rates among the country's 25 census metropolitan areas (CMAs) for all causes of death, as well as for leading causes — heart disease, cancer and cerebrovascular disease (stroke).

The data are from Statistics Canada's Vital Statistics Data Base, which compiles information submitted by the offices of vital statistics in each province and territory. Mortality rates were adjusted for age, which means that the rates are comparable across CMAs despite local variations in age distribution.

CMAs are large urban centres consisting of an urbanized core with 100,000 or more inhabitants (based on the previous census) and adjacent urban and rural areas that have a high degree of economic and social integration with the urbanized core.

The data in this analysis should be interpreted with caution. Each CMA is made up of neighbourhoods whose social, economic and health characteristics may vary widely. Consequently, high or low mortality rates in specific parts of a census metropolitan area may be concealed by rates in the rest of the CMA.

In addition, for most diseases, incidence rates provide the best measure of risk. It is unclear how mortality rates can be reliably used as a measure of the risk of disease in particular CMAs.

Cancer main factor in Quebec

Cancer was a major factor in mortality rates in the Quebec CMAs. High overall mortality rates for men in Chicoutimi-Jonquière, Trois-Rivières and Quebec City reflected high rates for lung cancer, which may be partially attributable to high smoking prevalence in the province.

Death rates among men from other forms of cancer were high in Chicoutimi-Jonquière, Quebec City and Montréal. In contrast, death rates from heart disease among men in Quebec's CMAs did not differ significantly from the national level. This was also true for stroke, except in Montréal, where the rate was lower than the national level.

Among women in Quebec, the pattern of mortality rates differed from that for men. The rate for all causes of death was high only in Chicoutimi-Jonquière, which reflected a high death rate from cancers other than lung cancer.

On the other hand, Montréal women had a high death rate for lung cancer. In fact, Montréal was the only CMA in Quebec where lung cancer mortality rates for women were significantly higher than the national rate. In contrast, Montréal women, like men, had a low mortality rate from stroke.

Mixed pattern in Ontario

Mortality rates in some Ontario CMAs were among the highest in the country, while rates in others were among the lowest.

For men, mortality from all causes was high in Sudbury, Thunder Bay, Windsor and London, each of which had high rates from heart disease. Windsor's death rates among men were also high for lung cancer and stroke, as were rates for cancers (other than lung cancer) among men in London.

Toronto had a low overall male mortality rate as well as low rates for each of the leading causes of death.

Among women in Ontario, the mortality rate from all causes was high in Thunder Bay, Sudbury, Windsor, Oshawa, St. Catharines-Niagara, Hamilton and London. Death rates from heart disease were high in Sudbury, Thunder Bay, St. Catharines-Niagara and Windsor. Mortality rates among women from lung cancer were not significantly different from the national rate in any Ontario CMA except Toronto, where the rate was low.

Toronto was the only Ontario CMA that had low overall mortality rates among women in the 1994-1996 period. This reflected low mortality rates for heart disease and cancer.

Mortality often well below national rates in western centres

Mortality rates among residents of urban centres in the western provinces tended to be low, often well below national levels.

Among men, overall mortality was below the national level in Saskatoon, Edmonton, Calgary, Vancouver and Victoria. Except for Edmonton, men in these CMAs had low death rates from heart disease. In contrast, men in Regina and Winnipeg had high death rates from heart disease and those in Winnipeg had high rates from stroke.

Among women, overall mortality rates were low in all western centres except Winnipeg, where the rate did not differ significantly from the national level. Winnipeg was the only western centre with high mortality among women for any of the leading causes of death: heart disease and lung cancer.

In contrast, mortality rates among women for heart disease were low in Saskatoon, Vancouver and Victoria.

The Summer 1999 issue of *Health reports* (82-003-XPB, \$35/\$116; 82-003-XIE, \$26/\$87) is now available. See *How to order publications*.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Heather Gilmour (613-951-6610; gilmhea@statcan.ca), Statistics Canada. ■

OTHER RELEASES

Airfare statistics

Second quarter 1998 (preliminary)

In the second quarter of 1998, the average domestic airfare (all types) paid by passengers was \$197, up 6.8% from the second quarter of 1997. This was the fifth consecutive quarterly increase. The average international airfare was \$364, up 2.4% from the second quarter of 1997 to mark the seventh consecutive quarterly increase in the international sector. Both domestic and international average air fares remained below their record levels of \$204 and \$419, respectively, reached in the third quarter of 1994.

In the second quarter of 1998, 86.4% of passengers on domestic scheduled services flew on a discount fare, up from 81.8% in the second quarter of 1997.

The greatest use of discount fares was on international scheduled services, where 90.5% of passengers travelled on a discount, up from 88.3% in the second quarter of 1997.

Preliminary estimates are now available for the second quarter of 1998. Information on the types of fares used by passengers is based on data from four Level I air carriers (AirBC, Air Canada, Canadian Airlines International Ltd. and Time Air) and from Air Alliance, Air Nova, Air Ontario, Inter-Canadien and Ontario Express.

These estimates will appear in the August issue of *Aviation service bulletin* (51-004-XIB, \$8/\$82). A print-on-demand service is available at a different price. See *How to order publications*.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods and data quality of this release, contact Bradley Snider (613-951-0071; snidbra@statcan.ca), Aviation Statistics Centre, Transportation Division. ■

Particleboard, oriented strandboard and fibreboard

June 1999

Oriented strandboard production in June totalled 633 716 cubic metres, an increase of 15.2% from 550 245 cubic metres in June 1998. Particleboard production reached 207 251 cubic metres, up 0.5% from 206 289 cubic metres in June 1998. Fibreboard production in June was 94 711 cubic metres, up 48.1% from 63 947 cubic metres in June 1998.

Year-to-date production of oriented strandboard totalled 3 812 010 cubic metres, a 25.2%

increase from 3 044 631 cubic metres for the same period of 1998. Particleboard production reached 1 200 681 cubic metres, up 4.5% from 1 149 154 cubic metres in 1998. Year-to-date fibreboard production reached 483 432 cubic metres, a 19.9% increase from 403 223 cubic metres during the same period in 1998.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 31 (series 2, 3, 5) and 122 (series 8).

The June 1999 issue of *Particleboard, oriented strandboard and fibreboard* (36-003-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 Don Grant (613-951-5998; grantdo@statcan.ca), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

Construction Union Wage Rate Index

July 1999

The Construction Union Wage Rate Index (including supplements) for Canada remained unchanged from June at 113.6 (1992=100). The composite index increased 1.5% compared with July 1998.

Union wage rates are published for 16 trades in 20 metropolitan areas for both the basic rates and rates including selected supplementary payments. Indexes on a 1992=100 time base are calculated for the same metropolitan areas and are published for those where a majority of trades are covered by current collective agreements.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 956, 958 and 9922-9927.

The third quarter 1999 issue of *Construction price statistics* (62-007-XPB, \$24/\$79) will be available in December. See *How to order publications*.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods and data quality of this release, contact Louise Chaîné (613-951-3350; fax: 613-951-1539; infounit@statcan.ca), Client Services Unit, Prices Division. ■

Selected financial indexes

July 1999

July figures are now available for selected financial indexes including conventional mortgage rates, prime business lending rates, provincial bond yield averages and exchange rates on a 1992=100 time base.

Available on CANSIM: matrix 9928.

These indexes will appear in the third quarter 1999 issue of *Construction price statistics*

(62-007-XPB, \$24/\$79), available in December. See *How to order publications*.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods and data quality of this release, contact Louise Chaîné (613-951-3350; fax: 613-951-1539; infounit@statcan.ca); Client Services Unit, Prices Division. ■

PUBLICATIONS RELEASED

Gross domestic product by industry, May 1999
Catalogue number 15-001-XPB
(Canada: \$15/\$145; outside Canada: US\$15/US\$145).

Particleboard, oriented strandboard and fibreboard, June 1999
Catalogue number 36-003-XIB
(Canada: \$5/\$47).

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

Health reports, Summer 1999
Catalogue number 82-003-XIE
(Canada: \$26/\$87).

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Catalogue number 82-003-XPB
(Canada: \$35/\$116; outside Canada: US\$35/US\$116).

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Thursday, June 3, 1997
For release at 8:30 a.m.



MAJOR RELEASES

- **Urban transit, 1995** 2
Despite the emphasis on taking urban transit, Canadians are using it less and less. In 1995, each Canadian took an average of about 65 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 notably weak again in 1996 accompanied by sluggish gains in employment and slow nominal growth during the year.

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