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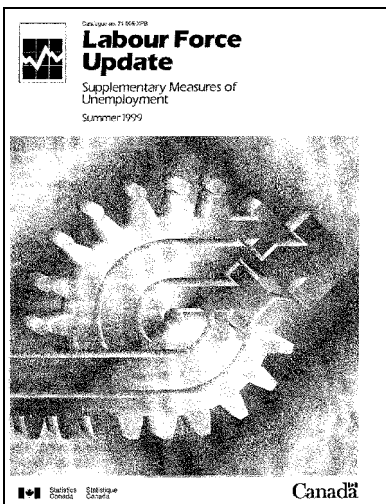
Tuesday, September 21, 1999

For release at 8:30 a.m.

MAJOR RELEASES

- **Canadian international merchandise trade, July 1999** 3
Exports passed the \$30 billion mark in July, with the 1.8% increase comparable to the growth in June. Imports continued to climb for the sixth consecutive month, increasing 0.3% from June.

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Labour force update: Supplementary measures of unemployment Summer 1999

The Summer 1999 issue of *Labour force update* introduces a set of supplementary measures of unemployment. These measures provide a broader understanding of labour-market conditions for specific groups and shed further light on the extent of labour under-utilization.

Each quarter, *Labour force update* features the latest information and relevant trends relating to a particular labour-market issue. Informative commentary, charts and analytical tables provide concise and up-to-date information and offer a useful starting point for further research.

The Summer 1999 issue of *Labour force update* (71-005-XPB, \$29/\$96) is now available. See *How to order publications*. You can also visit *In depth* on Statistics Canada's Web site (www.statcan.ca). For more information, contact Jeannine Usalcas (613-951-4720; fax: 613-951-2869; usaljea@statcan.ca), Labour Statistics Division.



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PUBLICATIONS RELEASED

MAJOR RELEASES

Canadian international merchandise trade

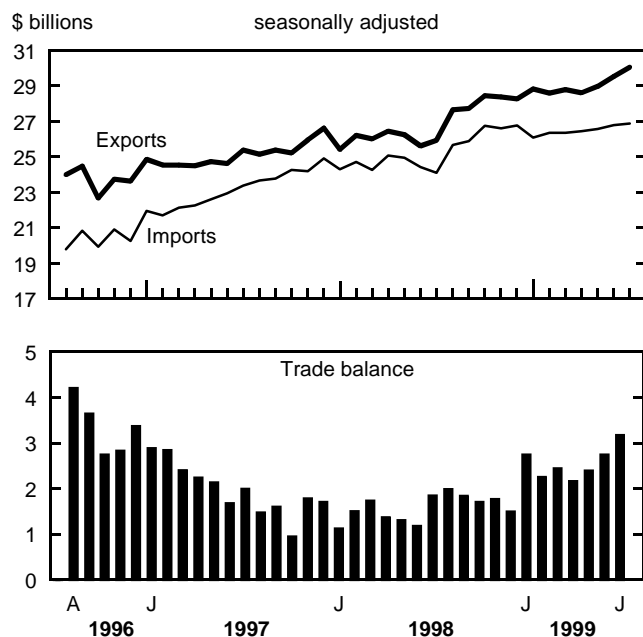
July 1999

Exports passed the \$30 billion mark in July, with the 1.8% increase comparable to the growth in June. Imports continued to climb for the sixth consecutive month, increasing 0.3% from June.

Exports continued their upward trend primarily as a result of strong activity in the lumber, natural gas and crude oil sectors. Overall growth was dampened by a steep drop in car exports.

Imports remained robust in July, reaching \$26.9 billion. This value was 11.5% higher compared with that of July 1998, mainly as a result of marked increases in imports of cars (+49.2%) and automotive parts (+38.1%). An increase in production capacity and buoyant domestic sales in 1998/99 largely explain this strong annual increase.

Exports, imports and trade balance



The trade balance grew more than \$400 million from a revised surplus of \$2.7 billion in June to \$3.2 billion in July. Strong forest product exports combined with almost non-existent imports of these

Note to readers

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

products increased the trade surplus in the forest sector, pushing the total trade balance upward.

Forest products pushed exports up

For the first time since July 1996, the forest product sector was the main contributor to the monthly increase in exports. Although all sub-sectors rose, lumber showed the strongest growth, with increases resulting from both higher prices and volumes. Strong construction activities in the United States reduced Canadian lumber inventories, pushing prices upward in July by 8.9%. In addition, some producers had postponed their lumber exports until July, which is the beginning of the second quarter for quotas.

Energy exports rose markedly, mainly because of an increase in exports of electricity, natural gas and crude oil to the United States. The strong demand for natural gas in the United States to produce electricity for air conditioning, as well as an explosion in a California refinery, reduced U.S. inventories. This put additional pressure on already rising prices in the energy sector, owing to the management of OPEC's supply.

A strong rise in exports of computer and controlling equipment pushed the machinery and equipment sector upward in July. Aircraft exports declined slightly but, at more than \$1 billion, they remain very high and should continue to rise as a result of strong demand for new models.

The sharp drop in canola and seafood exports was completely offset by strong exports of wheat and barley. Exports of Canadian slaughter animals declined 13.0% in July. The U.S. Customs duties imposed on Canadian slaughter animals seem to have had an impact. (July was the first month in which duties were applied.)

Iron and steel by-product exports returned to more normal levels, following a strong increase in June. This, coupled with a drop in mineral exports, pushed down the entire industrial goods sector in July. Strikes and extended summer mine shutdowns reduced nickel exports, while copper oversupply continued on world markets, leaving prices depressed.

The automotive products sector dropped sharply in July, partly as a result of a \$180 million decrease

in passenger car exports. However, at more than \$7.6 billion, automotive exports remain more than 50% higher than in July 1998. The increase in production capacity and overtime in certain plants to meet demand explain this year-over-year advance.

Imports continued to rise

Automotive product imports rose in July for the third consecutive month. Although all sub-sectors advanced, imports of passenger cars and, to a lesser degree, of automotive parts, experienced the strongest gain. A very strong domestic demand forced certain manufacturers to increase overtime in July.

Imports of industrial goods advanced after three consecutive monthly declines. The increase in organic and plastic products imports, as well as gains in imports of basic metal products by automobile manufacturers pushed the entire industrial goods sector upward, despite lacklustre performance in metal and mineral imports.

After three months of increases, machinery and equipment imports declined in July. Fewer plane imports as well as lower imports of assembly-line machinery and metal-working machinery by automobile manufacturers contributed to this drop. In addition, office equipment imports fell, especially those for processors, printers, scanners, and laptops.

Revisions

In general, merchandise trade data are revised on an ongoing basis for each month of the current year.

Factors influencing revisions include late receipt of import and export documentation, incorrect information on customs forms, replacement of estimates with actual figures (once available), changes in classification of merchandise based on more current information, and seasonal adjustments. Consult the appropriate CANSIM matrices for revised data.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 3618, 3619, 3651, 3685-3713, 3720, 3887-3913, 8430-8435 and 8438-8447.

This release contains a summary of the merchandise trade data to be published shortly in *Canadian international merchandise trade* (65-001-XPB, \$19/\$188; 65-001-XIB, \$14/\$141). The publication will include tables by commodity and country on a customs basis. Current account data (which incorporate merchandise trade statistics, service transactions, investment income and transfers) are available quarterly in *Canada's balance of international payments* (67-001-XPB, \$38 /\$124). See *How to order publications*.

On the morning of release, readers may obtain merchandise trade data on a more timely basis by fax.

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

Merchandise trade

	June 1999 ^r	July 1999	June to July 1999	July 1998 to July 1999	Jan. to July 1998	Jan. to July 1999	Jan.-July 1998 to Jan.-July 1999
seasonally adjusted, \$ current							
	\$ millions		% change		\$ millions		% change
Principal trading partners							
Exports							
United States	25,297	26,137	3.3	20.3	150,259	174,694	16.3
Japan	808	636	-21.3	-16.4	5,590	5,396	-3.5
European Union	1,574	1,470	-6.6	0.6	10,371	10,150	-2.1
Other OECD countries ¹	585	483	-17.4	-23.5	4,414	3,824	-13.4
All other countries	1,253	1,311	4.6	-4.2	11,200	9,238	-17.5
Total	29,516	30,037	1.8	15.8	181,836	203,298	11.8
Imports							
United States	20,329	20,708	1.9	12.6	131,719	142,573	8.2
Japan	870	847	-2.6	2.5	5,682	5,899	3.8
European Union	2,454	2,234	-9.0	8.2	14,609	15,658	7.2
Other OECD countries ¹	1,032	1,032	0.0	17.0	6,408	7,080	10.5
All other countries	2,084	2,043	-2.0	6.1	13,352	14,182	6.2
Total	26,771	26,863	0.3	11.5	171,771	185,394	7.9
Balance							
United States	4,968	5,429	...	...	18,540	32,121	...
Japan	-62	-211	...	...	-92	-503	...
European Union	-880	-764	...	...	-4,238	-5,508	...
Other OECD countries ¹	-447	-549	...	...	-1,994	-3,256	...
All other countries	-831	-732	...	...	-2,152	-4,944	...
Total	2,745	3,174	...	...	10,065	17,904	...
Principal commodity groupings							
Exports							
Agricultural and fishing products	2,159	2,167	0.4	9.2	14,517	14,746	1.6
Energy products	2,421	2,652	9.5	25.0	13,978	15,273	9.3
Forestry products	3,144	3,423	8.9	18.0	20,181	22,298	10.5
Industrial goods and materials	4,718	4,677	-0.9	-3.4	33,816	32,384	-4.2
Machinery and equipment	7,035	7,249	3.0	4.1	45,304	48,035	6.0
Automotive products	7,781	7,595	-2.4	51.7	40,534	54,775	35.1
Other consumer goods	1,139	1,126	-1.1	5.6	7,005	7,939	13.3
Special transactions trade ²	612	612	0.0	18.4	2,790	4,253	52.4
Other balance-of-payments adjustments	507	537	5.9	0.0	3,715	3,594	-3.3
Imports							
Agricultural and fishing products	1,445	1,467	1.5	1.6	9,902	10,278	3.8
Energy products	842	798	-5.2	31.7	5,198	5,152	-0.9
Forestry products	224	229	2.2	10.1	1,432	1,562	9.1
Industrial goods and materials	4,987	5,042	1.1	0.1	34,607	35,168	1.6
Machinery and equipment	9,033	8,942	-1.0	5.4	57,354	61,776	7.7
Automotive products	6,208	6,270	1.0	42.1	36,783	43,157	17.3
Other consumer goods	3,032	3,078	1.5	6.0	19,435	21,168	8.9
Special transactions trade ²	491	527	7.3	-4.5	3,727	3,590	-3.7
Other balance-of-payments adjustments	508	510	0.4	13.8	3,333	3,541	6.2

^r Revised figures.

... Figures not appropriate or not applicable.

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

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

OTHER RELEASES

Labour force update: Supplementary measures of unemployment

The Labour Force Survey (LFS) is introducing a set of supplementary measures of unemployment to provide a broader understanding of labour market conditions for specific groups. These measures, outlined in the summer 1999 edition of *Labour force update*, available today, supplement Statistics Canada's official unemployment rate, which averaged 8.3% in 1998.

These supplementary measures, which shed further light on the extent of hardship and under-utilization of labour, will be updated annually in the winter edition of *Labour force update*. Monthly data are also available on request.

Supplementary measures of unemployment were first introduced in 1983, and were produced until 1995. In 1996, a redesign of the LFS questionnaire resulted in a break in several of these measures, and the program was temporarily suspended.

With two years of data from the new questionnaire, it is now possible to re-introduce them. They address the concerns most frequently expressed about measuring labour market under-utilization. However, they are neither comparable with the earlier set nor are they an exhaustive set.

The two lowest supplementary measures are indicators of long-term unemployment. The first shows the proportion of the labour force that has been out of work one year or more. In 1998, it was 1.1%. The second measure looks at people unemployed three months or more. In 1998, they represented 3.3% of the labour force.

The third supplementary rate is an estimate of the Canadian unemployment rate using the American classification methods of calculation. Because both countries follow standards set by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and ask similar questions to determine labour force classifications, direct comparisons of the unemployment rates are often made. Nevertheless, differences in measurement do exist, contributing to some of the gap between the two rates. Removing these differences makes comparisons more meaningful.

If the Canadian unemployment rate in 1998 had been calculated on the same basis as the American

rate, it would have been 7.6% instead of 8.3%. (This compares with the official U.S. average of 4.5% for 1998.)

The next supplementary rate is the first to factor in people not normally included among the unemployed. This rate adds 'discouraged searchers' to the official rate, that is, people not looking for work because they believe no jobs are available. For 1998, this new measure increases the unemployment rate by half a percentage point over the official rate to 8.8%.

Another rate adds to the official unemployed a group of people who are considered on the margins of the labour force. They are not searching for work, but are available for work and are waiting for employment. They are either waiting to be recalled from a previous employer, or they have applied for a job and are waiting for replies. Also included are those who have lined up a job to start in five weeks or more. Including these people increases the unemployment rate to 9.0%.

There is also a rate that includes with the unemployed a portion of those who are involuntary part-time workers. It expresses the number of involuntary part-timers and the labour force as full-time equivalents to better reflect the quantity of hours lost to under-employment. This produces an unemployment rate of 10.6% for 1998, 2.3 percentage points higher than the official rate.

Finally, the most comprehensive and highest of the supplementary rates includes all of the groups in the three preceding rates — discouraged searchers, those waiting for recall, replies, long-term future starts and the under-utilized portion of involuntary part-timers. This gives an unemployment rate for 1998 of 11.5%, 3.2 percentage points higher than the official rate.

Labour force update: Supplementary measures of unemployment (71-005-XPB, \$29/\$96) 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 Geoff Bowlby (613-951-3325; fax: 613-951-2869; bowlgeo@statcan.ca), Labour Statistics Division. □

Supplementary measures of unemployment 1998

	rate (%)	% point change from the official unemployment rate (1998)
Counting only those unemployed 1 year or more (52 weeks and over)	1.1	-7.2
Counting only those unemployed 3 months or more (12 weeks and over)	3.3	-5.0
Rate made comparable to the U.S. official rate	7.6	-0.7
Official rate (consistent with ILO standards)	8.3	...
Official rate plus discouraged searchers	8.8	0.5
Official rate plus those waiting for recall, replies and long-term future starts	9.0	0.7
Measures both unemployment and under-employment (involuntary part-time) in full-time equivalents	10.6	2.3
Official rate plus discouraged searchers, those waiting for recall, replies, long-term future starts and the underutilized portion of involuntary part-timers	11.5	3.2

... Not appropriate or not applicable.

Export and import price indexes July 1999

Current- and fixed-weighted export and import price indexes (1992=100) on a balance of payments basis are now available. Price indexes are listed from January 1992 to July 1999 for the five commodity sections and the major commodity groups (62 exports and 61 imports).

Current- and fixed-weighted U.S. price indexes (1992=100) are also available on a customs basis. Price indexes are listed from January 1992 to July 1999. Included with the U.S. commodity indexes are the 10 all-countries and U.S.-only standard international trade classification (SITC) section indexes.

Indexes for the five commodity sections and the major commodity groups are also now available on a customs basis.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 3618, 3619, 3651, 3685, 8430-8435 and 8438-8447.

The July 1999 issue of *Canadian international merchandise trade* (65-001-XPB, \$19/\$188; 65-001-XIB, \$14/\$141) will be available shortly. See *How to order publications*.

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

Railway carloadings

Ten-day period ending August 31, 1999

Non-intermodal traffic loaded during the 10-day period ending August 31, 1999 increased 8.8% to 6.7 million tonnes compared with the same period last year. The number of cars loaded increased 11.4%.

Intermodal traffic tonnage totalled 522 000 tonnes, a 20.0% increase from the same period of 1998. The year-to-date figures increased 13.3%.

Total traffic increased 9.5% during the period. This brought the year-to-date total to 167.4 million tonnes, a decrease of 1.5% from the previous year.

All year-to-date figures have been revised.

For more 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. ■

Deliveries of major grains

August 1999

Data on August grain deliveries are now available.

Available on CANSIM: matrix 976-981.

These delivery data are contained in the August issue of *Cereals and oilseeds review* (22-007-XPB, \$15/\$149), which will be available in November. See *How to order publications*.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality for this

release, contact Karen Gray (204-983-2856; karen.gray@statcan.ca), or Susan Anderson (613-951-3859; sue.anderson@statcan.ca), Grain Marketing Unit, Agriculture Division. ■

Late fetal and perinatal mortality in Canada 1997

In 1997, 2,143 stillbirths of 20 weeks or more gestation were reported for residents of Canada (6.1 per 1,000 total births), compared with 2,121 in 1996 (5.8 per 1,000) and 2,321 in 1986 (6.2 per 1,000). For stillbirths of 28 weeks or more gestation (late fetal deaths), the rates per 1,000 total births were 3.2 in 1997, down from 3.4 in 1996 and 4.2 in 1986.

The perinatal mortality rate, expressed as the sum of late fetal deaths plus early neonatal deaths (under 1 week) per 1,000 total births was 6.6 in 1997, compared with 6.7 in 1996 and 8.4 in 1986. These figures show a continuation of the long-term trend of declining late fetal and perinatal mortality rates in Canada.

Births and deaths, 1997 (84F0210XPB, \$20) is now available. To order, contact Client Services (613-951-1746; fax: 613-951-0792; macdgar@statcan.ca), Health Statistics Division.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods and data quality of this release, contact Russell Wilkins (613-951-5305; fax: 613-951-0792), Vital Statistics Data Unit, Health Statistics Division. ■

PUBLICATIONS RELEASED

Wholesale trade, July 1999
Catalogue number 63-008-XIB
(Canada: \$14/\$40; outside Canada: US\$14/US\$40).

Labour force update, supplementary measures of unemployment, summer 1999
Catalogue number 71-005-XPB
(Canada: \$29/\$96; outside Canada: US\$29/US\$96).

All prices exclude sales tax.

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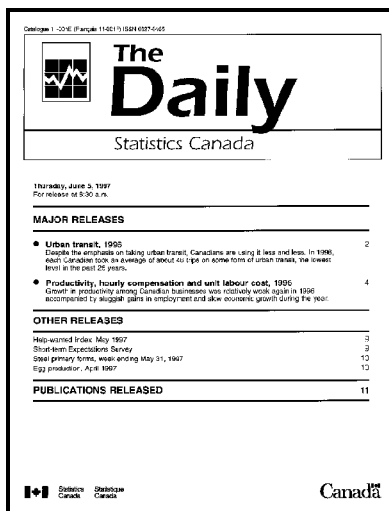
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