



# The Daily

Statistics Canada

Thursday, March 2, 2000

For release at 8:30 a.m.

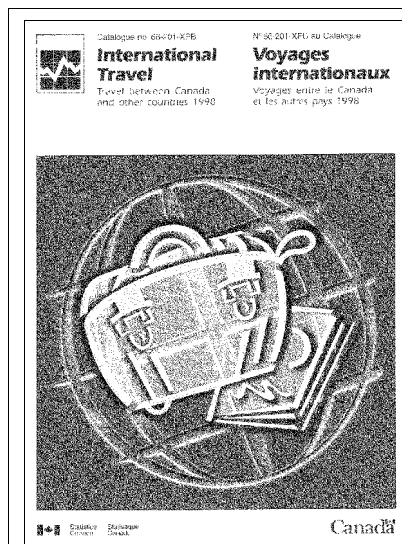
## MAJOR RELEASES

- **Lumber shipments, 1999 and December 1999** 3  
Lumber shipments from sawmills rebounded in 1999, the result of stronger demand in both domestic and international markets. Sawmills and planing mills shipped 68.9 million cubic metres of lumber last year, up 4.9% over 1998, following a 2.0% decline the year before.

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### International travel, travel between Canada and other countries 1998

The 1998 issue of *International travel, travel between Canada and other countries* provides a comprehensive summary of international travel to and from Canada by trip and traveller characteristics.

This publication is an essential reference tool for tourism industry decision makers or researchers, among others. For example, users can find out how the top ten overseas markets to Canada shifted in 1998. The publication also examines how Canadians cut back their travel to most U.S. states, whereas American travellers to Canada increased their trips from most states compared with 1997.

The 1998 issue of *International travel, travel between Canada and other countries* (66-201-XPB, \$42; 66-201-XIB, \$32) is now available. See *How to order publications*.

For more information, contact Michel Campbell (613-951-9169; fax: 613-951-2909), International Travel Section, Tourism Statistics Program.



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## MAJOR RELEASES

### Lumber shipments

1999 and December 1999

Lumber shipments from sawmills rebounded in 1999, the result of stronger demand in both domestic and international markets.

Sawmills and planing mills shipped 68.9 million cubic metres of lumber last year, up 4.9% over 1998. This increase followed a 2.0% decline in 1998, which was the first decrease in seven years.

Two factors contributed to the rebound: a sustained increase in housing starts in both Canada and the United States, and the economic recovery in Asia, which resulted in a higher demand for Canadian lumber.

Robust economic growth in both Canada and the United States stimulated the construction industry last year on both sides of the border. In Canada, housing starts reached 149,600 units, an 8.2% increase over 1998. South of the border, housing starts reached almost 1.7 million units, up 3.2% from 1998.

In 1999, lumber exports climbed to the United States by 14.2% and to Japan by 14.9%. In contrast, exports to Japan in 1998 had plunged 37% from the previous year in the wake of the Asian financial crisis.

Consequently, lumber prices in 1999 were almost 9% higher than in 1998. After peaking in July, prices weakened somewhat in the second half of 1999. However, all year long, the benchmark price for lumber shipped in the Great Lakes region remained above the trigger price established in the Canada-U.S. softwood lumber agreement for the allocation of bonus exports. Although larger quantities of lumber were exported to the United States under the agreement in 1999, access to the booming American construction sector was still limited.

The term "lumber" includes all first-stage wood products sawn from logs by sawmills, such as two-by-fours and wood chips. These products are then transformed into second-stage wood products used in construction, such as particleboard, plywood and trusses.

#### Shipments

	1998	1999	1998 to 1999 % change
	'000 cubic metres		
Lumber	65,697	68,917	4.9
Plywood	1,763	1,939	10.0
Waferboard, oriented strandboard	6,274	7,640	21.8

#### Note to readers

*This release replaces regular monthly releases on sawmills and planing mills, construction-type plywood and particleboard, oriented strandboard and fibreboard.*

### British Columbia benefited the most from Asian recovery

British Columbia, which supplies just under half (46%) of the country's lumber shipments, benefited more than any province in 1999 from the strengthening housing construction sector and the economic recovery in Asia.

Shipments increased 5.9% in British Columbia as a whole, and 9.4% in the province's Coastal region. This contrasts with a provincial decrease of more than 5% in 1998.

Alberta also posted a strong performance with an 8.0% increase in its shipments over 1998. In Quebec, shipments rose 5.3%, which accounted for 26% of the total for 1999, the second largest volume.

The only province to record a decline was Ontario, where shipments fell 2.1% from 1998.

#### Lumber shipments by region

	1998	1999	1998 to 1999 % change
	'000 cubic metres		
<b>Canada</b>	<b>65,696.8</b>	<b>68,916.4</b>	<b>4.9</b>
Atlantic provinces	5,029.5	5,052.3	0.5
Quebec	16,929.1	17,831.4	5.3
Ontario	6,797.3	6,654.9	-2.1
Prairie provinces	6,914.9	7,585.7	9.7
British Columbia	30,026.0	31,792.1	5.9

### Waferboard and oriented strandboard shipments up

Shipments of waferboard and oriented strandboard rose 21.8% to 7.6 million cubic metres on the heels of a 26.9% increase in exports, mainly to the United States.

As with lumber, shipments of waferboard and oriented strandboard were stimulated by the strength of the construction sector in the United States, because they are not subject to the limits imposed by the Canada-U.S. softwood lumber agreement.

Owing to strong demand, prices of waferboard and oriented strandboard continued to strengthen in the first half of 1999, surpassing the peak reached in the summer of 1998. Because of the growing demand for

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these products, several manufacturers have expanded their facilities to boost production capacity. The strong growth of this sector, combined with the weakness of the Canadian dollar, has prompted large-scale American producers to buy up smaller Canadian firms, increasing the concentration in this industry.

#### **Increase in shipments of construction-type plywood**

Shipments of some other wood products were also up in 1999. The volume of shipments of construction-type plywood rose 10.0% to 1.9 million cubic metres, as exports rose 5.7%. British Columbia produces the vast majority, about 80%, of construction-type plywood.

#### **December 1999: Sawmill production up**

Sawmills produced 5,056.7 thousand cubic metres of lumber and ties in December 1999, a 3.5% increase over a revised 4,884.4 thousand cubic metres produced in December 1998.

Plywood manufacturers produced 156,170 cubic metres of construction-type plywood in December 1999, up 7.9% over the 144,689 cubic metres produced in December 1998.

Oriented strandboard production in December reached 626,211 cubic metres, up 13.1% over a revised 553,438 cubic metres produced in December 1998.

Particleboard production totalled 197,556 cubic metres, up 9.0% from a revised 181,297 cubic metres in December 1998. Fibreboard production rose to 81,748 cubic metres, up 10.5% from 73,997 cubic metres.

**Available on CANSIM: matrices 31 (series 2,3 and 5), 53 and 122 (level 1, series 2 and 8).**

The December 1999 issues of *Sawmills and planing mills* (35-003-XIB, \$9/\$86), *Particleboard, oriented strandboard and fibreboard* (36-003-XIB, \$5/\$47) and *Construction-type plywood* (35-001-XIB, \$5/\$47) are now available. See *How to order publications*.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods and data quality of this release, contact Gilles Simard (613-951-3516; [simales@statcan.ca](mailto:simales@statcan.ca)), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

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## OTHER RELEASES

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### **Steel primary forms**

Week ending February 26, 2000 (preliminary)

Production of steel primary forms for the week ending February 26, 2000 totalled 331 431 metric tonnes, up 2.8% from 322 526 tonnes a week earlier and up 2.9% from 322 127 tonnes a year earlier. The year-to-date production at the end of the week totalled 2 595 646 tonnes, an increase of 7.9% from the 2 405 582 tonnes produced during the same period in 1999.

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](mailto:milsomg@statcan.ca)), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

### **Refined petroleum products**

December 1999 (preliminary)

Data on the production, inventories and domestic sales of refined petroleum products are now available for

December 1999. Other selected data about these products are also available.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality for this release, contact Eleonore Harding (613-951-5708; [hardele@statcan.ca](mailto:hardele@statcan.ca)), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

### **National Construction Wage Rate Survey 1999**

Data for Alberta from the 1999 National Construction Industry Wage Rate Survey, which was sponsored by Human Resources Development Canada, are now available.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality for this release, contact Monique Simard (613-951-2092; [monique.simard@statcan.ca](mailto:monique.simard@statcan.ca)), Small Business and Special Surveys Division ■

## PUBLICATIONS RELEASED

**Construction-type plywood**, December 1999  
**Catalogue number 35-001-XIB**  
(Canada: \$5/\$47).

**Sawmills and planing mills**, December 1999  
**Catalogue number 35-003-XIB**  
(Canada: \$9/\$86).

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

**Electric power statistics**, December 1999  
**Catalogue number 57-001-XIB**  
(Canada: \$9/\$85).

**Private and public investment in Canada**,  
Intentions 2000  
**Catalogue number 61-205-XIB**  
(Canada: \$35).

**International travel, travel between Canada and  
other countries**, 1998  
**Catalogue number 66-201-XIB**  
(Canada: \$32).

**International travel, travel between Canada and  
other countries**, 1998  
**Catalogue number 66-201-XPB**  
(Canada: \$42/\$; outside Canada: US\$42/US\$).

**All prices exclude sales tax.**

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 **The Daily**  
Statistics Canada

Thursday, June 5, 1997  
For release at 9:30 a.m.

**MAJOR RELEASES**


● **Urban transit, 1995** 2  
Despite the emphasis on taking urban transit, Canadians are taking it less and less. In 1995, about 1.5 billion trips were made on some form of urban transit, the lowest level in the past 25 years.


● **Productivity, hourly compensation and unit labour cost, 1995** 4  
Growth in productivity among Canadian businesses was relatively weak again in 1995, accompanied by sluggish gains in employment and slow economic growth during the year.

**OTHER RELEASES**

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## Statistics Canada's official release bulletin

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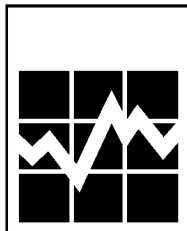
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Statistics Canada

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<b>Balance of international payments</b>	Fourth quarter 1999	February 28, 2000
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<b>Postal code conversion file</b>	October 1999	February 3, 2000
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<b>Production and disposition of tobacco products</b>	January 2000	February 24, 2000
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