

The Daily

Statistics Canada

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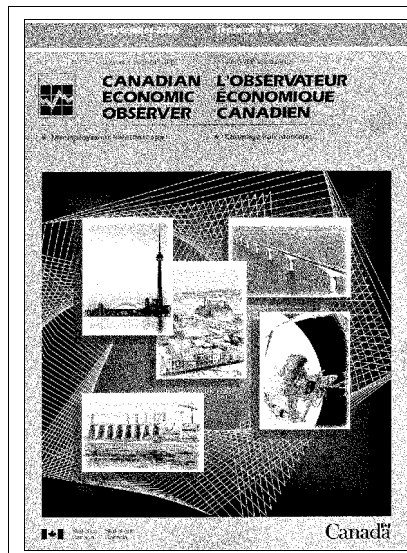
MAJOR RELEASES

- **Retail trade, July 2000** 2
Retail sales advanced for a third consecutive month in July to \$23.3 billion, up 1.3% from June.

OTHER RELEASES

- Steel primary forms, week ending September 16, 2000 6
- Shipments of office furniture products, June 2000 6

NEW PRODUCTS



Canadian economic observer

September 2000

The September issue of Statistics Canada's flagship publication for economic statistics, *Canadian economic observer*, analyses current economic conditions, summarizes the major economic events that occurred in August and presents a feature article on the unemployment kaleidoscope. A separate statistical summary contains a wide range of tables and graphs on the principal economic indicators for Canada, the provinces and the major industrial nations.

The September 2000 issue of *Canadian economic observer* (11-010-XPB, \$23/\$227) is now available. See *How to order products*. For more information, contact Cyndi Bloskie (613-951-3634; ceo@statcan.ca), Current Economic Analysis Group.

MAJOR RELEASES

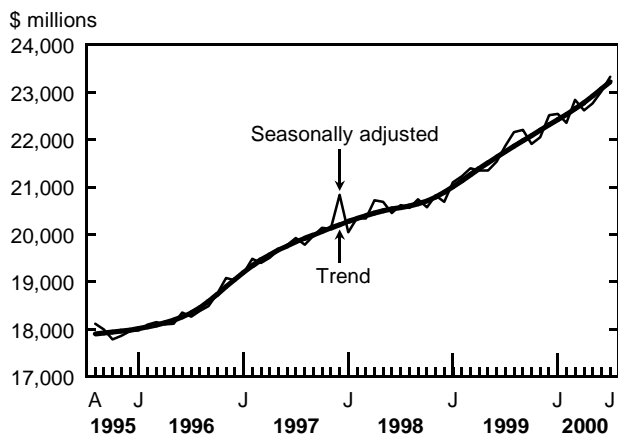
Retail trade

July 2000

Retail sales advanced for a third consecutive month in July to \$23.3 billion, up 1.3% from June. This followed gains of 1.1% in June and 0.6% in May. In constant dollars, retail sales were up 1.4% in July compared with June. Lower prices for motor vehicles in July partly offset the higher prices observed in most of the remaining retail sectors.

Retail sales have gained considerable strength over May, June and July. Despite a weaker performance at the beginning of 2000, retailers have generally seen strong sales since the fall of 1998, following a period of smaller gains in the spring and summer of that year.

Third straight monthly gain in retail sales



Widespread strength in retail sales

All retail sectors contributed to the July increase in sales; the strongest gains were in the furniture, general merchandise and automotive sectors.

Left behind in June (-0.8%), furniture stores bounced back in July, gaining 2.0% to resume the strong upward movement in the furniture sector that began in the spring of 1996. Furniture and household appliances account for approximately 40% of all sales in the furniture sector, and home electronics and computers another 30%.

Sales in general merchandise stores advanced for a fourth consecutive month in July, up 1.9% from June. Within this sector, sales in both department stores (+2.7%) and other general merchandise stores (+0.9%) rose in July. Department store sales have

advanced strongly since early spring, after a period of decline that began in September 1999. At that time, the number of department stores decreased as a result of the restructuring in the industry. Sales in other general merchandise stores have generally been rising since early 1997.

Retailers in the automotive sector (+1.7%) posted their third consecutive monthly gain in sales in July. Sales by motor and recreational vehicle dealers, by far the largest component of the automotive sector, advanced 1.9%. These dealers saw volatile results in the first four months of 2000, then gains in May, June and July. They have made extensive use of attractive financing offers and large cash rebates since the start of the year. Through most of 1999, motor and recreational vehicle dealers enjoyed strong sales advances.

Consumers also rushed into food stores (+1.0%) and clothing stores (+0.8%) in July. This was a second consecutive monthly advance for food stores and a third straight gain for clothing stores. Sales in food stores and clothing stores have generally been rising since early 1996.

Quebec retailers made a comeback

By province, the largest sales gains in July were in Quebec (+2.5%) and Manitoba (+2.4%). Advances were also strong in Alberta (+1.6%), Nova Scotia (+1.4%), Prince Edward Island (+1.3%) and Ontario (+1.2%); in the remaining provinces, sales were essentially unchanged.

Quebec's retail sales advanced in most sectors in June and July, following weaker gains in the first five months of the year. Overall, Quebec's retail sales have been rising since mid-1998.

In Manitoba, the strong July increase came largely from higher sales in the automotive sector. This sector was also mostly responsible for smaller sales gains in Manitoba since the start of 2000. Retail sales in Manitoba grew rapidly in the second half of 1999, following a period of weaker advances that started at the beginning of 1998.

A strong economy in Alberta has been fuelling retail sales in that province since the spring of 1999, after slightly more than a year of stagnant sales. In Ontario, advances in May, June and July added strength to the upward movement seen in retail sales since the summer of 1996.

After a strong 2.3% increase in June, retail sales in British Columbia were unchanged in July. Retailers

in British Columbia have seen rising sales since the fall of 1998.

Related indicators for August

Total employment increased 0.2% in August compared with July, offsetting the slight declines in the previous two months. Preliminary figures from the auto industry indicate a significant gain in the number of new motor vehicles sold in August. Housing starts fell 11.8% in August, following the 22.7% jump registered in July. Lower prices for gasoline and certain fresh fruits and vegetables contributed to a 0.2% reduction in the Consumer Price Index in August compared with July.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 2399 and 2400 (main matrices), 2299, 2397, 2398, 2401-2416 and 2418-2420.

The July 2000 issue of *Retail trade* (63-005-XIB, \$16/\$155; 63-005-XPB, \$21/\$206) will be available soon. See *How to order products*.

Retail sales estimates for August will be released on October 23.

To order data, or for general information, contact the Client Services Unit (1-877-421-3067; 613-951-3549; retailinfo@statcan.ca). For analytical information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Paul Gratton (613-951-3541; gratpau@statcan.ca), Distributive Trades Division. □

Retail sales

	July 1999	April 2000 ^r	May 2000 ^r	June 2000 ^r	July 2000 ^p	June to July 2000	July 1999 to July 2000
seasonally adjusted							
	\$ millions					% change	
Food	4,900	5,096	5,025	5,046	5,096	1.0	4.0
Supermarkets and grocery stores	4,538	4,721	4,653	4,673	4,722	1.0	4.1
All other food stores	362	375	372	373	374	0.3	3.3
Drug and patent medicine stores	1,115	1,129	1,124	1,132	1,138	0.5	2.0
Clothing	1,213	1,225	1,238	1,251	1,261	0.8	3.9
Shoe stores	137	130	133	133	136	1.9	-0.5
Men's clothing stores	128	126	132	133	135	1.4	5.1
Women's clothing stores	377	371	382	382	378	-1.0	0.5
Other clothing stores	571	598	592	602	612	1.7	7.0
Furniture	1,154	1,256	1,261	1,252	1,277	2.0	10.7
Household furniture and appliance stores	936	1,024	1,027	1,021	1,036	1.5	10.7
Household furnishings stores	218	232	234	231	241	4.2	10.5
Automotive	8,596	8,958	9,116	9,270	9,426	1.7	9.7
Motor and recreational vehicle dealers	5,859	5,945	6,033	6,152	6,269	1.9	7.0
Gasoline service stations	1,515	1,772	1,783	1,837	1,852	0.8	22.2
Automotive parts, accessories and services	1,222	1,240	1,300	1,280	1,306	2.0	6.9
General merchandise stores	2,544	2,564	2,570	2,608	2,657	1.9	4.4
Retail stores not elsewhere classified	2,349	2,394	2,432	2,459	2,472	0.5	5.2
Other semi-durable goods stores	718	713	719	734	747	1.8	4.1
Other durable goods stores	581	588	610	616	612	-0.6	5.4
All other retail stores not elsewhere classified	1,051	1,093	1,103	1,109	1,112	0.3	5.9
Total, retail sales	21,872	22,622	22,766	23,017	23,328	1.3	6.7
Total excluding motor and recreational vehicle dealers	16,013	16,677	16,733	16,865	17,059	1.2	6.5
Provinces and territories							
Newfoundland	350	374	371	377	377	0.2	7.8
Prince Edward Island	98	105	103	103	104	1.3	6.1
Nova Scotia	677	700	697	716	726	1.4	7.3
New Brunswick	555	573	572	577	577	0.1	4.0
Quebec	5,068	5,181	5,166	5,245	5,377	2.5	6.1
Ontario	8,376	8,625	8,792	8,840	8,943	1.2	6.8
Manitoba	747	771	780	778	797	2.4	6.7
Saskatchewan	649	664	678	684	687	0.4	5.8
Alberta	2,461	2,631	2,628	2,654	2,697	1.6	9.6
British Columbia	2,819	2,922	2,903	2,969	2,967	0.0	5.3
Yukon	27	29	29	29	28	-3.2	1.2
Northwest Territories	31	32	31	31	32	4.0	4.0
Nunavut	14	15	15	15	15	-2.2	3.8

^r Revised figures.

^p Preliminary figures.

Retail sales

	July 1999	June 2000 ^r	July 2000 ^p	July 1999 to July 2000
	unadjusted			
	\$ millions			% change
Food	5,384	5,293	5,303	-1.5
Supermarkets and grocery stores	4,998	4,900	4,914	-1.7
All other food stores	386	394	389	0.8
Drug and patent medicine stores	1,099	1,123	1,100	0.1
Clothing	1,143	1,234	1,160	1.5
Shoe stores	130	144	126	-2.9
Men's clothing stores	115	142	117	1.5
Women's clothing stores	372	387	361	-2.9
Other clothing stores	526	562	555	5.7
Furniture	1,170	1,232	1,262	7.8
Household furniture and appliance stores	945	993	1,017	7.7
Household furnishings stores	226	239	244	8.2
Automotive	9,194	10,741	9,815	6.8
Motor and recreational vehicle dealers	6,207	7,377	6,433	3.6
Gasoline service stations	1,661	1,945	2,012	21.1
Automotive parts, accessories and services	1,325	1,419	1,370	3.4
General merchandise stores	2,418	2,540	2,487	2.8
Retail stores not elsewhere classified	2,595	2,617	2,631	1.4
Other semi-durable goods stores	757	789	778	2.8
Other durable goods stores	602	619	618	2.7
All other retail stores not elsewhere classified	1,236	1,209	1,235	-0.1
Total, retail sales	23,002	24,781	23,757	3.3
Total excluding motor and recreational vehicle dealers	16,795	17,404	17,323	3.1
Provinces and territories				
Newfoundland	382	417	393	2.8
Prince Edward Island	119	117	122	2.6
Nova Scotia	728	789	757	4.0
New Brunswick	602	632	604	0.4
Quebec	5,407	5,710	5,497	1.7
Ontario	8,694	9,563	9,011	3.7
Manitoba	771	831	795	3.1
Saskatchewan	677	725	697	3.0
Alberta	2,541	2,799	2,718	7.0
British Columbia	2,998	3,114	3,078	2.7
Yukon	34	34	33	-2.2
Northwest Territories	34	35	35	1.8
Nunavut	15	15	15	2.6

^r Revised figures.

^p Preliminary figures.



OTHER RELEASES

Steel primary forms

Week ending September 16, 2000 (preliminary)

Steel primary forms production for the week ending September 16 totalled 321 080 tonnes, up 2.5% from 313 203 tonnes a week earlier but down 2.4% from 328 906 tonnes in the same period of 1999. The year-to-date total at the end of the reference week was 12 116 532 tonnes, 5.5% more than the 11 489 301 tonnes produced in the same period of 1999.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Jean-Marie Houle (613-951-4925; houlejm@statcan.ca), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

Shipments of office furniture products

June 2000

Shipments of office furniture products totalled \$1,153.3 million in the six-month period ended June 30, up 21.3% compared with \$951.1 million in the same period of 1999.

Data on manufacturers' shipments of office furniture products for the first six months of 2000 are now available. Data for province of destination as well as exports are also available.

The June 2000 issue of *Shipments of office furniture products* (35-006-XIB, \$11/\$21) is now available. See *How to order products*.

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. ■

NEW PRODUCTS

Canadian economic observer, September 2000
Catalogue number 11-010-XPB (\$23/\$227).

Shipments of office furniture products, June 2000
Catalogue number 35-006-XIB (\$11/\$21).

All prices are in Canadian dollars and exclude sales tax. Additional shipping charges apply for delivery outside Canada.

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Statistics Canada

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MAJOR RELEASES

- Urban transit, 1995 2
Changes in the mode of urban transit; Canadians are using it less and less. In 1996, each Canadian took an average of 800 out of 5 ps 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 1996, accompanied by sluggish gains in employment and slow economic growth during the year.

OTHER RELEASES

- High-wind Index, May 1997 3
- Short-term Expectations Survey 2
- Steel primary forms, week ending May 31, 1997 12
- 522 producer, April 1997 12

PUBLICATIONS RELEASED

11

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