



The Daily

Statistics Canada

Monday, May 14, 2001

For release at 8:30 a.m.

MAJOR RELEASES

- **New motor vehicle sales, March 2001** 2
New motor vehicle sales were up a modest 0.5% in March compared with February, when they fell sharply.

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NEW PRODUCTS



MAJOR RELEASES

New motor vehicle sales

March 2001

New motor vehicle sales were up a modest 0.5% in March from February, when they fell sharply (-4.0%). With this increase, 126,086 new motor vehicles were sold in March, 644 more than in February. However, March sales were lower than all the monthly results in 2000 except October's.

Despite the March gain, new motor vehicle sales have been slowing since the fall of 2000, following a fairly stable period that began at the start of that year. Previously, new motor vehicle dealers had seen robust growth since late 1998.

Note to readers

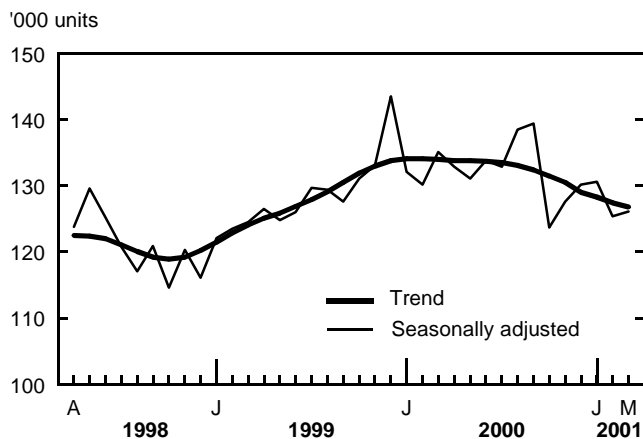
All data in this release are seasonally adjusted. Seasonally adjusted provincial data from January 1991 to the present are available on CANSIM.

Passenger cars include those used for personal and commercial purposes, such as taxis or rental cars. Trucks include minivans, sport-utility vehicles, light and heavy trucks, vans and buses.

North American-built new motor vehicles include vehicles manufactured or assembled in Canada, the United States or Mexico. All other new motor vehicles are considered to have been manufactured overseas.

For reasons of confidentiality, Yukon, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut are included with British Columbia.

Number of new motor vehicles sold was up slightly in March



Preliminary figures from the auto industry indicate a substantial increase in new motor vehicle sales in April, of both passenger cars and trucks.

North American-built cars lost market share

The number of new passenger cars sold recovered a slight 0.4% in March to 66,830 units. This gain followed two consecutive decreases: a sharp drop of 5.7% in February and a 0.7% decline in January. Despite the March increase, new passenger car sales remained lower than throughout 2000.

New passenger car sales have been slowing since the fall of 2000, following a period of generally rising sales that began in late 1998.

North American-built new passenger cars accounted for 73.1% of all new passenger cars sold in March, compared with 76.3% in March 2000. The entry of new manufacturers of overseas-built cars partly explains the loss of market share for North American-built cars.

In March, 59,256 new trucks were sold, up 0.7% from February. This rise partly offset February's 1.9% decline.

The slowing of new truck sales that began in the summer of 2000 appears to have levelled off in recent months. Previously, new truck sales had been generally stable since the summer of 1999.

Most provinces reported sales increases

New motor vehicle sales in March were up from February in most provinces, except Ontario (-2.1%), Quebec (-0.3%) and Manitoba (-0.3%). For each of these three provinces, this was the second consecutive decline.

Newfoundland (+18.6%) recorded the largest sales gain compared with February. The increase followed major declines in February (-10.3%) and January (-6.7%). March's increase stabilized the downward movement seen in new motor vehicle sales in Newfoundland since the summer of 2000. Before that, the province saw generally stable sales that began in the spring of 1999.

The largest March decrease was in Ontario, where sales were down 2.1% from the previous month to 50,868 units. This figure represented 40.3% of all new motor vehicles sold in Canada. March's drop in Ontario continued a downward movement that began in the summer of 2000.

A lacklustre first quarter

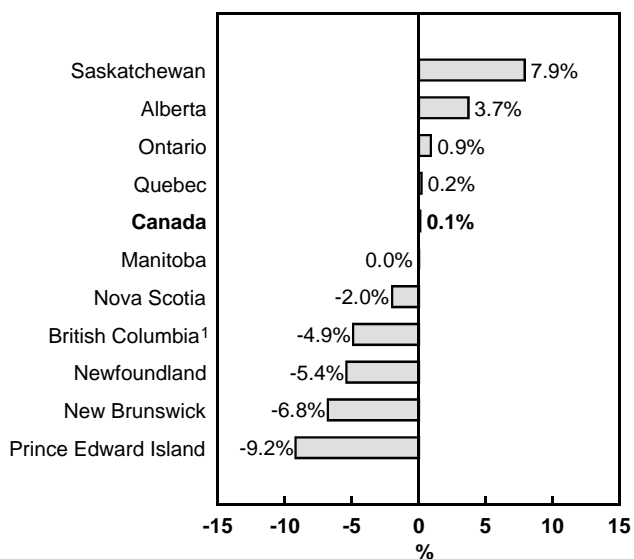
In the first quarter of 2001, new motor vehicle sales remained at much the same level as in the fourth quarter of 2000, advancing only 0.1%. However, this slight gain came on the heels of a 7.1% drop in sales in the last quarter of 2000 compared with the third quarter.

Truck sales advanced 4.0% compared with the fourth quarter of 2000, while passenger car sales fell 3.0%. In contrast, truck sales in the fourth quarter of 2000 were down substantially (-10.8%) from the third quarter. During the same period, new car sales declined 3.8%.

Among the provinces, Saskatchewan (+7.9%) and Alberta (+3.7%) posted the largest sales gains in the first quarter of 2001 compared with the previous quarter. For the same period, the Atlantic provinces and the region formed by British Columbia, Yukon, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut saw their sales decline.

Unit sales of new motor vehicles

Fourth quarter 2000 to first quarter 2001



¹ Includes Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut.

Available on CANSIM: tables 790001 and 790002 and matrix 64.

With the release of CANSIM II, users can now obtain the same data as is presented in CANSIM in a table format that is easier to use and more clearly presented.

The March 2001 issue of *New motor vehicle sales* (63-007-XIB, \$13/\$124) will be available soon. See *How to order products*.

For data or 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 Cl rance Kimanyi (613-951-6363; kimacle@statcan.ca), Distributive Trades Division. □

New motor vehicle sales

	March 2000	February 2001 ^r	March 2001 ^p	March 2000 to March 2001	February to March 2001
Seasonally adjusted					
	Number of vehicles			% change	
New motor vehicles	135,094	125,442	126,086	-6.7	0.5
Passenger cars	72,041	66,590	66,830	-7.2	0.4
North American ¹	54,958	48,483	48,862	-11.1	0.8
Overseas	17,083	18,107	17,968	5.2	-0.8
Trucks, vans and buses	63,052	58,852	59,256	-6.0	0.7
New motor vehicles					
Newfoundland	2,064	1,670	1,980	-4.1	18.6
Prince Edward Island	368	331	373	1.4	12.7
Nova Scotia	3,839	3,262	3,439	-10.4	5.4
New Brunswick	3,608	2,895	2,988	-17.2	3.2
Quebec	34,265	31,552	31,452	-8.2	-0.3
Ontario	56,262	51,981	50,868	-9.6	-2.1
Manitoba	3,709	3,289	3,278	-11.6	-0.3
Saskatchewan	2,991	3,069	3,084	3.1	0.5
Alberta	14,502	14,480	15,037	3.7	3.8
British Columbia ²	13,486	12,914	13,587	0.7	5.2
	March 2000	February 2001	March 2001 ^p	March 2000 to March 2001	
unadjusted					
	number of vehicles			% change	
New motor vehicles	155,496	89,159	143,189	-7.9	
Passenger cars	83,491	45,700	75,779	-9.2	
North American ¹	64,126	33,571	55,553	-13.4	
Overseas	19,365	12,129	20,226	4.4	
Trucks, vans and buses	72,005	43,459	67,410	-6.4	
New motor vehicles					
Newfoundland	2,461	1,063	2,323	-5.6	
Prince Edward Island	356	187	339	-4.8	
Nova Scotia	4,405	2,213	3,901	-11.4	
New Brunswick	4,325	2,008	3,525	-18.5	
Quebec	42,162	22,177	38,206	-9.4	
Ontario	63,150	36,165	55,702	-11.8	
Manitoba	4,170	2,298	3,684	-11.7	
Saskatchewan	3,198	2,103	3,354	4.9	
Alberta	15,794	10,232	16,581	5.0	
British Columbia ²	15,475	10,713	15,574	0.6	

^r Revised figures.

^p Preliminary figures.

¹ Manufactured or assembled in Canada, the United States or Mexico.

² Includes Yukon, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut.

OTHER RELEASES

Apartment Building Construction Price Index

First quarter 2001

The composite price index for apartment building construction (1992=100) was 120.8 in the first quarter, up 0.2% over the fourth quarter of 2000 and up 4.5% compared with the first quarter of 2000.

Ottawa and Calgary registered the highest quarterly change (+0.3%), followed by Toronto, Edmonton and Vancouver (+0.2%). Halifax and Montréal registered no change.

Toronto saw the highest year-over-year gain compared with the first quarter of 2000 (+7.6%), followed by Ottawa (+7.0%), Calgary (+5.0%), Edmonton (+4.6%), Montréal (+2.6%), Vancouver (+2.2%) and Halifax (+1.6%).

Apartment Building Construction Price Index (1992=100)

	First quarter 2001	First quarter 2000 to first quarter 2001 % change	Fourth quarter 2000 to first quarter 2001
Composite	120.8	4.5	0.2
Halifax	111.8	1.6	0.0
Montréal	118.3	2.6	0.0
Ottawa	123.4	7.0	0.3
Toronto	127.5	7.6	0.2
Calgary	123.2	5.0	0.3
Edmonton	121.4	4.6	0.2
Vancouver	118.6	2.2	0.2

Note: The apartment building construction price indexes provide an indication of new construction cost changes in seven major urban areas across Canada (Halifax, Montréal, Ottawa, Toronto, Calgary, Edmonton and Vancouver). Besides each of the urban areas' indexes and the composite index, there are further breakdowns of cost changes by trade groups within the building (structural, architectural, mechanical and electrical). These price indexes are derived from surveys of general and special trade-group contractors who report on the categories of costs (material, labour, equipment, taxes, overhead and profits) relevant to the detailed construction specifications included in the surveys.

Available on CANSIM: tables 3270002 and matrix 9932.

With the release of CANSIM II, users can now obtain the same data as in CANSIM, but in a table format that is easier to use and more clearly presented.

The first quarter 2001 issue of *Construction price statistics* (62-007-XPB, \$24/\$79) will be available in June. See *How to order products*.

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

Sawmills and planing mills

March 2001

Sawmills produced 5 627.8 thousand cubic metres of lumber and ties in March, a decrease of 15.6% from 6 671.6 thousand cubic metres produced in March 2000.

Year-to-date production was 17 268.8 thousand cubic metres, down 5.9% from 18 345.5 thousand cubic metres produced in the same period of 2000. Estimates for 2000 and 2001 have been revised.

Available on CANSIM: table 3030009 and matrices 53 and 122 (series 2).

With the release of CANSIM II, users can now obtain the same data as in CANSIM, but in a table format that is easier to use and more clearly presented.

The March 2001 issue of *Sawmills and planing mills* (35-003-XIB, \$9/\$86) will be available soon. See *How to order products*.

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

Aircraft movement statistics

March 2001 (preliminary)

Aircraft movement statistics for the 43 Nav Canada air traffic control towers are now available. In March 2001, the number of take-offs and landings at these airports was 417,556, down 4.6% from the March 2000.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Jim Hines (613-951-0134; fax: 613-951-0010; aviationstatistics@statcan.ca), Transportation Division. ■

Finding and using statistics

An updated version of *Finding and using statistics* is now available. This guide is a resource for finding and using Statistics Canada data. Also included is a section on current issues, activities and programs, and future directions at Statistics Canada. Originally published in the 1980s and revised in 1994, the guide has been completely redesigned for electronic format.

Finding and using statistics (11-533-XIE, free) is now available on Statistics Canada's Web site (www.statcan.ca). From the *Products and services* page, choose *Free publications*, then *Statistical Methods*.

For more information, contact Mary McCoy, (613-951-1603; mccomar@statcan.ca), Library and Information Centre. ■

Dairy statistics

March and April 2001 (preliminary)

Monthly dairy statistics for March and April are now available.

Available on CANSIM: tables 30007-30012, 30029, 30033, 30034 and 30046 and matrices 3428, 5632-5638, 5650-5661, 5664-5667 and 5673.

With the release of CANSIM II, users can now obtain the same data as in CANSIM, but in a table format that is easier to use and more clearly presented.

The January–March 2001 issue of *The dairy review* (23-001-XIB, \$27/\$89; 23-001-XPB, \$36/\$119) will be available soon. See *How to order products*.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Anna Michalowska (1-800-465-1991; 613-951-2442; fax: 613- 951-3868), Agriculture Division. ■

NEW PRODUCTS

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Catalogue 11-001E (F) (English) 11-533-XIE (11-533-0007-01-01)

The Daily
Statistics Canada

Thursday, June 3, 1997
For release at 9:30 a.m.

MAJOR RELEASES

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

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Statistics Canada

Statistics Canada's official release bulletin

Catalogue 11-001E.

Published each working day by the Communications Division, Statistics Canada, 10-H, R.H. Coats Bldg., Tunney's Pasture, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0T6.

To access *The Daily* on the Internet, visit our site at <http://www.statcan.ca>. To receive *The Daily* each morning by E-mail, send an E-mail message to listproc@statcan.ca. Leave the subject line blank. In the body of the message, type "subscribe daily firstname lastname".

Editor: Tom Vradenburg (613-951-1103, tom.vradenburg@statcan.ca)
Head of Official Release: Madeleine Simard (613-951-1088), madeleine.simard@statcan.ca

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