



# The Daily

## Statistics Canada

Tuesday, November 19, 2002  
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### MAJOR RELEASES

- **Canadian international merchandise trade, September 2002** 3  
International merchandise exports to the United States and European Union countries increased in September, offsetting declines in exports to Asia. With exports up 0.8% to \$35.1 billion and imports down 1.3% to \$30.3 billion, Canada's trade surplus rose to \$4.9 billion.

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#### Perspectives on labour and income

November 2002 online edition

The November 2002 issue of *Perspectives on labour and income*, available today, features three articles. "Cumulative earnings among young workers" investigates the combined effect of changes in school attendance, full-time employment rates, and annual earnings on cumulative earnings (the sum of earnings that individuals receive over several years). A related article, "Earnings over time," examines earnings of Canadians from 1982 to 1997 to assess the extent to which variations in wages and salaries over time are caused by permanent or transitory factors. The final article, "Income and wealth," explores the factors influencing the relationship between these two intimately related but not synonymous concepts.

The November 2002 online edition of *Perspectives on labour and income*, Vol. 3, no. 11 (75-001-XIE, \$5/\$48) is now available. See *How to order products*. For more information, contact Henry Pold (613 951-4608; [henry.pold@statcan.ca](mailto:henry.pold@statcan.ca)), Labour and Household Surveys Analysis Division.



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**NEW PRODUCTS**

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## MAJOR RELEASES

### Canadian international merchandise trade

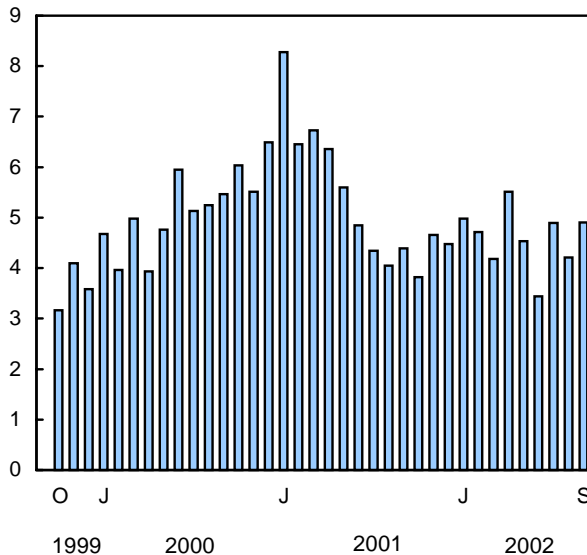
September 2002

An increase in merchandise exports to the United States and European Union countries offset declines in exports to Asia, for an overall rise of 0.8% to \$35.1 billion in September. Imports fell 1.3% to \$30.3 billion, mainly because of lower imports of merchandise from the United States and the European Union, especially in the energy sector. This resulted in an increase of \$693 million in Canada's merchandise trade surplus with the world, which reached \$4.9 billion.

Canadian companies sent \$30.0 billion in goods to the United States in September, accounting for 85% of total exports. Imports from south of the border decreased 2.7% to \$21.5 billion. The trade surplus with the United States rose to \$8.5 billion, a jump of nearly \$900 million.

#### Trade balance

\$ billions



Canada's trade deficit with countries other than the United States widened from \$3.4 billion in August to \$3.6 billion in September.

#### Truck and auto parts exports gain, but car exports sag

Canadian plants exported \$8.6 billion of automotive products in September, down 2.1% from August,

#### Note to readers

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

#### Revisions

In general, merchandise trade data are revised on an ongoing basis for each month of the current year. Customs basis data are revised for the previous data year each quarter. 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 changes to seasonal adjustment factors. Revised data are available in the appropriate CANSIM tables.

the highest level of 2002. Exports of trucks to the United States were up significantly, as manufacturers completed and exported the last of trucks ordered before the new US emission standard law would take effect on October 1. With US companies buying before the deadline, trucks and other motor vehicle exports jumped 2.4% to \$1.7 billion, the largest monthly export volume since March 2000.

Exports of motor vehicle parts to supply auto assembly plants rose 1.9% to \$2.6 billion, the highest level since June 2000. US demand for autos softened and exports declined for the second month in a row. This time exports fell 5.8% to \$4.4 billion.

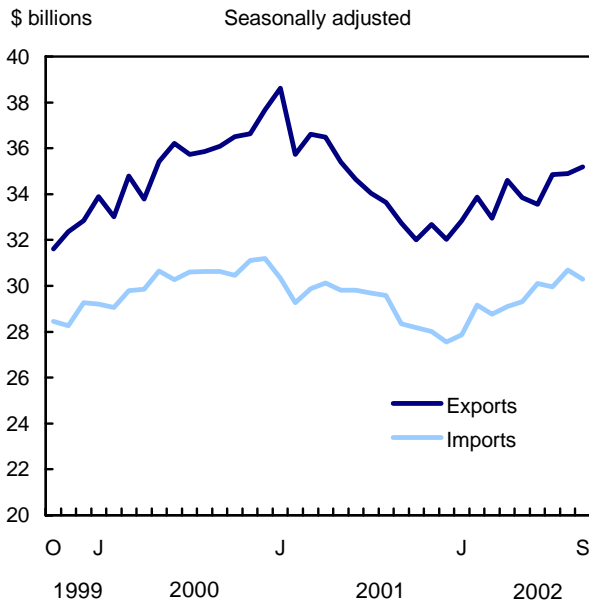
The forestry products sector continued to regain ground, rising 1.0% to \$3.0 billion. In spite of record US housing starts in September, lumber prices fell a further 2.1%, now 22.7% lower than in September 2001.

As well, newly cultivated markets for Canadian lumber in Asia suffered a downturn in weakening Far East economies. As a result, exports of lumber fell 4.4% to \$795.3 million in September, about three-quarters of the level seen before the introduction of countervailing and anti-dumping duties in May.

Newsprint and other paperboard exports increased 3.7% to \$1.1 billion, as strong US demand more than compensated for lower demand from the rest of the world.

In the machinery and equipment sector, exports rose 3.0% to \$8.0 billion. International demand for corporate aircraft perked up, especially in the United States. Aircraft, engines and parts exports rebounded from August with a 1.4% increase to \$1.3 billion. This, coupled with a 4.4% increase in other transportation equipment (mainly replacement tires), resulted in a 2.2% rise in aircraft and other transportation equipment exports to \$1.8 billion in September.

**Exports and imports**



Exports of energy products surged 8.5% to \$4.5 billion. The \$350 million increase in energy exports was mainly the result of a 14.4% jump in shipments of natural gas to the United States. Prices for natural gas rose by slightly more than 10% and volumes picked up by 4% in September. Crude petroleum rose 7.0% to \$1.6 billion, as increased volumes more than offset a slight decline in price.

Agriculture and fishing product exports decreased 7.1% to \$2.5 billion in September. Exports of grains, mainly wheat and canola, suffered as a result of the drought in the Canadian prairies, and were also hampered by rains during harvest. Drops in exports of grains, as well as of fish and meat products, brought exports of the entire agricultural sector down \$190 million.

**Imports of machinery and industrial goods slide**

Merchandise imports fell to \$30.3 billion, down \$408 million from August, which had the highest level of imports so far in 2002. Imports of machinery and equipment, industrial goods and materials and energy all declined in September.

Imports of machinery and equipment, Canada's largest import sector, decreased 1.4% to \$8.9 billion in September. Aircraft and other transportation equipment rose 1.7% to \$1.4 billion.

Other transportation equipment, which includes ships and railway rolling stock, jumped 10.1%

to \$433 million. Aircraft, engines and parts imports decreased 1.7% to \$980 million in September.

Industrial and agricultural machinery imports dropped 8.6% to \$2.3 billion. All other industrial machinery sectors fell, except agricultural machinery, which rose marginally. Imports of engines, turbines and motors returned to normal levels following the exceptional levels reported in August.

Imports of communications equipment, which includes telecommunication equipment and semi-conductors, rose 4.9% to \$1.3 billion along with imports of office machines and equipment, which increased 1.9% to \$1.3 billion.

Imports of industrial goods and materials fell 2.0% to \$5.7 billion. Metals and metal ores imports fell 6.5% to \$1.3 billion on reduced demand for steel and precious metals.

Other industrial goods and materials, which include fabricated materials, declined 1.0% to \$2.3 billion.

Large declines in seasonal import volumes of energy products drove an 11.7% decrease in petroleum, coal and crude petroleum to \$1.4 billion in September.

Automotive products imports remained virtually unchanged from August. Imports of passenger autos increased 1.6% to \$2.3 billion, the highest monthly value on record, as European and Asian-built vehicles experienced strong demand among Canadian consumers.

Motor vehicle parts imports fell 0.1% to \$3.8 billion. Trucks and other motor vehicles imports returned to normal levels, falling 3.1% from August's record \$1.0 billion.

Consumer goods imports rose 1.0% to \$3.9 billion, matching July's record level. Imports of apparel and footwear rose 1.7% to three-quarters of a billion dollars in September.

The miscellaneous consumer goods group, which includes such items as pharmaceuticals, medical devices and seasonal items, edged up to \$3.2 billion. Gains in miscellaneous end products such as pharmaceuticals more than offset declines in all other consumer goods categories.

**Available on CANSIM: tables 226-0001, 226-0002, 227-0001, 227-0002, 228-0001 to 228-0003 and 228-0033 to 228-0040.**

**Information on methods and data quality available in the Integrated Meta Data Base: survey numbers, including related surveys, 2201, 2202 and 2203.**

This release contains a summary of the merchandise trade data to be published shortly

in *Canadian international merchandise trade* (65-001-XIB, \$14/\$141; 65-001-XPB, \$19/\$188). 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-XIB, \$29/\$93; 67-001-XPB, \$38/\$124). See *How to order products*.

Merchandise trade data are available by fax on the morning of release.

An annual review of 2001 is included in the International Trade Division's annual publications *Exports, merchandise trade* (65-202-XPB, \$258) and *Imports, merchandise trade* (65-203-XPB, \$258), which are already available.

For more information on the publications, contact Jocelyne Elibani, (613-951-9647; 1-800-294-5583). To enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Daryl Keen (613-951-1810), International Trade Division. □

**Merchandise trade**

	August 2002 <sup>†</sup>	September 2002	August to September 2002	September 2001 to September 2002	January to September 2001	January to September 2002	January–September 2001 to January–September 2002
Seasonally adjusted, \$ current							
	\$ millions		% change		\$ millions		% change
<b>Principal trading partners</b>							
<b>Exports</b>							
United States	29,694	29,988	1.0	7.9	269,582	260,180	-3.5
Japan	890	709	-20.3	-2.5	7,279	6,960	-4.4
European Union	1,497	1,780	18.9	-2.5	17,094	16,044	-6.1
Other OECD countries <sup>1</sup>	889	985	10.8	30.5	7,984	8,171	2.3
All other countries	1,936	1,728	-10.7	5.4	15,980	15,271	-4.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>34,905</b>	<b>35,190</b>	<b>0.8</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>317,923</b>	<b>306,625</b>	<b>-3.6</b>
<b>Imports</b>							
United States	22,102	21,509	-2.7	5.6	194,294	190,660	-1.9
Japan	973	1,067	9.7	32.5	7,881	8,669	10.0
European Union	3,057	3,026	-1.0	-1.5	26,365	26,727	1.4
Other OECD countries <sup>1</sup>	1,639	1,770	8.0	20.0	14,132	14,423	2.1
All other countries	2,927	2,917	-0.3	10.8	24,191	24,771	2.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>30,698</b>	<b>30,289</b>	<b>-1.3</b>	<b>6.8</b>	<b>266,864</b>	<b>265,248</b>	<b>-0.6</b>
<b>Balance</b>							
United States	7,592	8,479	...	...	75,288	69,520	...
Japan	-83	-358	...	...	-602	-1,709	...
European Union	-1,560	-1,246	...	...	-9,271	-10,683	...
Other OECD countries <sup>1</sup>	-750	-785	...	...	-6,148	-6,252	...
All other countries	-991	-1,189	...	...	-8,211	-9,500	...
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,208</b>	<b>4,901</b>	<b>...</b>	<b>...</b>	<b>51,059</b>	<b>41,377</b>	<b>...</b>
<b>Principal commodity groupings</b>							
<b>Exports</b>							
Agricultural and fishing products	2,662	2,472	-7.1	-8.5	23,031	23,027	0.0
Energy products	4,112	4,463	8.5	32.6	45,824	35,018	-23.6
Forestry products	3,014	3,044	1.0	-3.5	30,088	27,551	-8.4
Industrial goods and materials	5,906	5,819	-1.5	1.0	50,425	52,117	3.4
Machinery and equipment	7,801	8,032	3.0	4.4	75,799	70,981	-6.4
Automotive products	8,790	8,606	-2.1	13.4	69,867	74,105	6.1
Other consumer goods	1,409	1,546	9.7	15.5	11,972	12,969	8.3
Special transactions trade <sup>2</sup>	644	634	-1.6	-1.7	6,188	5,907	-4.5
Other balance of payments adjustments	568	573	0.9	16.5	4,728	4,951	4.7
<b>Imports</b>							
Agricultural and fishing products	1,875	1,889	0.7	9.8	15,109	16,346	8.2
Energy products	1,559	1,377	-11.7	-2.5	14,322	11,765	-17.9
Forestry products	272	269	-1.1	12.6	2,186	2,349	7.5
Industrial goods and materials	5,868	5,749	-2.0	2.4	52,147	51,538	-1.2
Machinery and equipment	9,009	8,881	-1.4	2.2	86,653	78,961	-8.9
Automotive products	7,145	7,144	0.0	19.8	54,300	60,635	11.7
Other consumer goods	3,907	3,947	1.0	9.2	32,142	34,423	7.1
Special transactions trade <sup>2</sup>	519	500	-3.7	-9.9	5,200	4,482	-13.8
Other balance of payments adjustments	545	534	-2.0	0.6	4,804	4,750	-1.1

<sup>†</sup> Revised figures.

... Figures not appropriate or not applicable.

<sup>1</sup> Includes Australia, Iceland, Mexico, New Zealand, Norway, Switzerland, Turkey, Poland, South Korea, Hungary, Czech Republic and Slovakia.

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

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## OTHER RELEASES

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### Registered retirement savings plan contributions

2001

Fewer Canadian taxfilers contributed less money to their registered retirement savings plans (RRSPs) in 2001. However, the declines came on the heels of record-high levels for both contributions and contributors in 2000.

In total, 6,241,050 taxfilers contributed just over \$28.4 billion in 2001. In 2000, 6,291,170 taxfilers had contributed almost \$29.3 billion. Data came from income tax returns filed in the spring of 2002.

The median contribution declined from \$2,700 in 2000 to \$2,600 in 2001. (The median is the point at which half of taxfilers are below and half are above.)

To be eligible to contribute to an RRSP, a taxfiler must have unused room. This consists of either new room as a result of qualifying income from the previous year, generally employment income, or unused room from earlier years.

For the tax year 2001, 83% of those who filed taxes had unused room. Of these, about 34% made contributions. However, the total contributions of \$28.4 billion represented only about 9% of the total room available to all filers.

Contributions declined in all provinces and territories except for Northwest Territories (+4.1%) and Nunavut (+1.9%). The largest declines were in the eastern provinces.

The number of contributors also declined, except for small increases in Quebec, Alberta, Northwest Territories and Nunavut. About 36% of those with room

in Alberta made contributions, as did 35% in Ontario and 34% in Quebec, Manitoba and British Columbia; these were the highest among the provinces and territories.

The decline in contributions and contributors occurred even though employment income increased slightly in 2000, when employment income determined new room for 2001 contributions. Median employment income in 2000 was \$23,905, up 0.4% after adjusting for inflation.

In 2000, large pay equity payments were made to federal government employees and this probably resulted in increases in RRSP contributions in that year. Because these were one-time payments, this may also explain some of the decline in contributors and amounts contributed for tax year 2001.

### Information on methods and data quality available in the Integrated Meta Data Base: survey number 4106.

The databanks *RRSP contributors* (17C0006, various prices), *RRSP contribution limit* (17C0011, various prices) and *Canadian taxfilers* (17C0010, various prices) are available for Canada, the provinces and territories, cities, towns, census metropolitan areas, census divisions, federal electoral districts and areas as small as forward sortation areas (the first three characters of the postal code), and letter carrier routes. See *How to order products*.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Client Services (1-866-652-8443; 613-951-9720; fax: 1-866-652-8444 or 613-951-4745; [saadinfo@statcan.ca](mailto:saadinfo@statcan.ca)), Small Area and Administrative Data Division.

**RRSP contributors  
2001**

	Number of contributors	2000 to 2001 % change	Contributions \$ thousands	2000 to 2001 % change	Median contribution \$
<b>Canada</b>	<b>6,241,050</b>	<b>-0.8</b>	<b>28,438,914</b>	<b>-3.0</b>	<b>2,600</b>
Newfoundland and Labrador	62,070	-3.7	259,743	-8.8	2,200
Prince Edward Island	20,690	-3.3	79,549	-9.5	2,000
Nova Scotia	139,190	-3.5	574,546	-8.6	2,100
New Brunswick	105,600	-3.5	422,116	-10.4	2,000
Quebec	1,548,010	1.0	6,484,184	-1.2	2,400
Ontario	2,462,280	-1.2	11,969,530	-3.0	2,800
Manitoba	221,850	-2.9	852,208	-6.9	2,100
Saskatchewan	184,950	-2.9	737,172	-4.5	2,400
Alberta	680,100	0.7	3,262,503	-0.7	2,800
British Columbia	800,780	-2.1	3,717,815	-3.2	2,900
Yukon	5,990	-1.6	28,922	-2.9	3,100
Northwest Territories	7,190	2.9	36,995	4.1	3,500
Nunavut	2,350	4.9	13,631	1.9	4,400

**Travel between Canada and other countries  
September 2002**

The number of Canadians travelling to the United States and overseas countries rose in September for the fourth straight month. Travel to Canada also increased in September for the second consecutive month.

In September, Canadians made 1.6% more trips to the United States than in August. Travel to Canada also increased, up 1.0% from August to September. Although travel abroad by Canadians rose 9.2% from September 2001, it was still 13.1% below August 2001 levels. Likewise, travel to Canada in September was 15.4% higher than in September 2001, but 12.3% lower than in August 2001. (Unless otherwise specified, the data are seasonally adjusted).

In September, an estimated 3.7 million people visited Canada, up 1.0% from August. The number of overseas visitors rose 2.4% to 324,000, and the number of visitors from the United States increased 0.9% to almost 3.4 million.

Travel to Canada from the United States advanced for the second straight month, the result of a significant increase in same-day car travel. The number of same-day car trips from south of the border rose 5.4% to nearly 1.9 million. Americans made 1,329,000 overnight trips to Canada in September, a slight decrease of 0.5% from August.

Trips by Canadians to the United States and overseas countries increased 1.6% in September to an

estimated 3.3 million. Canadians made over 2.9 million trips to the United States, up 1.7% from August. Travel to overseas countries rose 1.2% to 405,000 trips.

Canadians took 1,153,000 overnight trips south of the border in September, up 5.1% from August. Overnight travel by car (+6.9%) and plane (+1.9%) both increased. Canadians made over 1.7 million same-day car trips to the United States in September, up 2.2%.

Six of Canada's top 12 overseas markets showed increases in same-day and overnight trips to Canada in September. Hong Kong had the highest monthly increase (+13.9%), followed by Japan (+12.9%), China (+6.2%), Germany (+3.8%), Italy (+2.6%) and France (+1.7%). The Netherlands (-5.5%) recorded the largest monthly decline.

**Available on CANSIM: tables 427-0001 to 427-0006.**

**Information on methods and data quality available in the Integrated Meta Data Base: survey number 5005.**

The September 2002 issue of *International travel, advance information*, Vol. 18, no. 9 (66-001-PIE, \$6/\$55) is now available. See *How to order products*.

For general information, contact Client Services (1-800-307-3382; 613-951-7608; fax: 613-951-2909; [cult.tourstats@statcan.ca](mailto:cult.tourstats@statcan.ca)). To enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Frances Kremarik (613-951-4240; [frances.kremarik@statcan.ca](mailto:frances.kremarik@statcan.ca)), Culture, Tourism and the Centre for Education Statistics. □



**Travel between Canada and other countries**

	August 2002 <sup>r</sup>	September 2002 <sup>p</sup>	August to September 2002	September 2001 <sup>r</sup> to September 2002	September 2002	September 2001 to September 2002
	Seasonally adjusted			Unadjusted		
	'000		% change		'000	% change
<b>Canadian trips abroad<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>3,295</b>	<b>3,349</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>-13.1</b>	<b>3,286</b>	<b>8.1</b>
To the United States	2,894	2,943	1.7	-14.3	2,942	9.0
To other countries	401	405	1.2	-2.8	345	1.0
Same-day car trips to the United States	1,713	1,749	2.2	-20.4	1,747	5.7
Total trips, one or more nights	1,498	1,559	4.1	-2.1	1,485	10.8
United States <sup>2</sup>	1,097	1,153	5.1	-1.9	1,140	14.1
Car	643	687	6.9	5.0	722	11.0
Plane	355	361	1.9	-12.8	279	31.4
Other modes of transport	100	105	4.6	-1.9	139	2.0
Other countries <sup>3</sup>	401	405	1.2	-2.8	345	1.0
<b>Travel to Canada<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>3,659</b>	<b>3,696</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>-12.3</b>	<b>3,987</b>	<b>10.3</b>
From the United States	3,342	3,372	0.9	-12.7	3,525	11.3
From other countries	316	324	2.4	-8.3	463	3.4
Same-day car trips from the United States	1,779	1,875	5.4	-19.9	1,905	13.4
Total trips, one or more nights	1,647	1,644	-0.2	-2.7	1,865	8.1
United States <sup>2</sup>	1,336	1,329	-0.5	-1.0	1,416	9.4
Car	865	859	-0.7	-0.3	858	7.1
Plane	328	317	-3.3	-4.4	333	23.9
Other modes of transport	143	153	7.2	1.9	224	0.5
Other countries <sup>3</sup>	311	315	1.2	-9.4	449	4.1
<b>Most important overseas markets<sup>4</sup></b>						
United Kingdom	55	55	-0.3	-27.4		
Japan	33	38	12.9	-5.3		
France	25	26	1.7	-14.1		
Germany	24	25	3.8	-14.9		
South Korea	14	14	0.0	3.9		
Mexico	14	13	-1.7	-3.9		
Australia	14	13	-1.9	-0.7		
Hong Kong	9	11	13.9	-0.9		
Netherlands	9	9	-5.5	-6.8		
China	8	9	6.2	10.1		
Taiwan	9	9	-1.4	-10.6		
Italy	8	8	2.6	-8.4		

<sup>r</sup> Revised figures.

<sup>p</sup> Preliminary figures.

<sup>1</sup> Totals exceed the sum of "same-day car trips" and "total trips, one or more nights" because they include all of the same-day trips.

<sup>2</sup> Estimates for the United States include counts of cars and buses, and estimated numbers for planes, trains, boats and other methods.

<sup>3</sup> Figures for other countries exclude same-day entries by land only, via the United States.

<sup>4</sup> Includes same-day and one or more night trips.

**Monthly Survey of Large Retailers**  
September 2002

Every major commodity group posted sales increases in September from September 2001, with the exception of the food and beverage commodity group. Total sales for the group of large retailers stood at \$6.7 billion, up only 3.8% from September 2001. This was the lowest year-over-year increase since September 2001, when sales were weakened by the events of September 11. (All data in this release are unadjusted for seasonality and all percentages are year-over-year changes.)

Food and beverage sales contracted for the first time in 2002 (-0.8%), pulled down by falling sales of fresh

meat and poultry (-5.1%), bakery products (-3.1%) and deli-prepared products for take-out (-4.9%).

Sales of clothing, footwear and accessories barely edged up (+0.2%) from September 2001, and clothing sales in department stores were particularly weak. Sales of men's clothing dropped 2.4%, and sales of children's clothing declined 2.5%. Women's clothing sales, however, went up 1.6%.

Sales in the home furnishings and electronics category increased at a much slower pace in September (+6.0%), the weakest year-over-year growth so far in 2002. However, within this commodity group, low interest rates and a still strong home buying

market helped sustain sales of home indoor furniture, which grew 11.8% from September 2001. Household appliances (+3.5%) and home furnishings sales (+4.8%) also rose.

### Sales by commodity for the group of large retailers

Commodities	Aug. 2002 <sup>r</sup>	Sept. 2001	Sept. 2002 <sup>p</sup>	Sept. 2001 to Sept. 2002
	Unadjusted			
	\$ millions		% change	
Food and beverages	2,411.0	2,183.7	2,166.9	-0.8
Clothing, footwear and accessories	1,383.8	1,285.3	1,288.2	0.2
Home furnishings and electronics	1,063.4	955.8	1,012.7	6.0
Health and personal care products	655.7	549.0	607.0	10.6
Housewares	354.8	313.1	323.1	3.2
Sporting and leisure goods	345.6	263.8	297.8	12.9
Hardware and lawn and garden products	259.5	207.9	212.7	2.3
All other goods and services	908.6	723.2	820.7	13.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,382.4</b>	<b>6,481.9</b>	<b>6,729.3</b>	<b>3.8</b>

<sup>r</sup> Revised figures.

<sup>p</sup> Preliminary figures.

The health and personal care product category continued to thrive in September, up 10.6% from September 2001. Continued double-digit growth in prescription drug sales and strong consumer purchases of toiletries and personal products (excluding cosmetics and fragrances) helped drive sales in this commodity group.

Consumers increased their purchases of sporting and leisure goods 12.9% in September. Sales of toys and games were particularly brisk (+22.1%), the best year-over-year performance in two years. Sales of pre-recorded videotapes, DVD and compact discs remained very strong (+20.9%), in large part because of the DVD release of summer blockbusters. Within the sporting and leisure commodity group, the sporting goods component posted a relatively moderate sales gain of 5.8%.

Hardware and lawn and garden product sales grew modestly, up 2.3% from September 2001. There were, however, large differences in sales performance within this commodity group. For the group of large retailers, hardware and home renovation products sales (which account for more than half of the total sales in this commodity group) edged up 0.7%, with declining consumer purchases of paint, wallpaper and related

supplies (-12.4%) and hardware (-13.9%). On the other hand, the lawn and garden furniture, equipment and supplies component climbed 5.4%, with surging sales (+18.9%) of lawn and garden related products and of cut flowers, indoor potted plants and related floral supplies (nursery stock excluded).

**Note:** The Monthly Survey of Large Retailers provides a breakdown of sales on the basis of commodities at the national level for a group of about 80 large retailers. Monthly sales data for more than 100 commodities are available. The survey includes large retailers mainly in the food, clothing, home furnishings, electronics, sporting goods and general merchandise sectors. These retailers represent about 38% of total retail sales, excluding recreational and motor vehicle dealers.

**Available on CANSIM: table 080-0009.**

For general information or to order data, contact Client Services (1-877-421-3067; 613-951-3549; [retailinfo@statcan.ca](mailto:retailinfo@statcan.ca)). To enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Norman Fyfe (613-951-8308; [norman.fyfe@statcan.ca](mailto:norman.fyfe@statcan.ca)), Distributive Trades Division. ■

### Construction Union Wage Rate Index October 2002

The Construction Union Wage Rate Index (including supplements) for Canada remained unchanged in October from the revised September level of 122.2 (1992=100). The composite index increased 1.9% from the revised October 2001 index.

Union wage rates are published for 16 trades in 20 metropolitan areas for both the basic rates and rates including selected supplementary payments. Indexes (1992=100) 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: tables 327-0003 and 327-0004.**

The fourth quarter 2002 issue of *Capital expenditure price statistics* (62-007-XPB, \$24/\$79) will be available in March 2003. See *How to order products*.

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

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## Refined petroleum products

September 2002 (preliminary)

Data on the production, inventories and domestic sales of refined petroleum products are now available for September. Other selected data about these products are also available.

For general information or to order data, contact the dissemination officer (1-866-873-8789; 613-951-9497; [energ@statcan.ca](mailto:energ@statcan.ca)). To enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Gerry Desjardins (613-951-4368; [desjiger@statcan.ca](mailto:desjiger@statcan.ca)) or Randall Sheldrick (613-951-4804; [shelran@statcan.ca](mailto:shelran@statcan.ca)), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

## Export and import price indexes

September 2002

Current- and fixed-weighted export and import price indexes (1997=100) on a balance of payments basis are now available. Price indexes are listed from September 1997 to September 2002 for the five commodity sections and the major commodity groups (62 exports and 61 imports).

Current- and fixed-weighted US price indexes (1997=100) are also available on a customs basis. Price indexes are listed from September 1997 to September 2002. Included with the US commodity indexes are the 10 all-countries and US-only Standard International Trade Classification section indexes.

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

**Available on CANSIM: tables 228-0001 to 228-0003 and 228-0033 to 228-0040.**

**Information on methods and data quality available in the Integrated Meta Data Base: survey numbers, including related surveys, 2201, 2202 and 2203.**

The September 2002 issue of *Canadian international merchandise trade* (65-001-XIB, \$14/\$141; 65-001-XPB, \$19/\$188) 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 Jocelyne Elibani (1-800-294-5583; 613-951-9647), International Trade Division. ■

## Cumulative earnings among young workers

1973 to 1999

Young male workers in Canada had much lower cumulative earnings during the 1990s than their counterparts did during the 1970s and early 1980s, according to a new study.

The decline in cumulative earnings between the two time periods was even more pronounced among young immigrant workers. On the other hand, the earnings of young female workers who were born in Canada actually increased.

This study used data from the Survey of Consumer Finances and the Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics to examine the extent to which changes in cumulative earnings can explain changes in median wealth.

From 1973 to 1984, Canadian-born men aged 26 to 35 in 1984 received \$289,500 in wages and salaries. However, from 1988 to 1999, their counterparts received only \$246,500, a gap of more than \$40,000.

In contrast, Canadian-born women the same age amassed \$171,600 from 1988 to 1999, about \$20,000 more than their counterparts in the previous 12-year period.

Several explanations can be advanced for the decline among young men. First, young men now stay in school longer than they did during the mid-1970s, thus decreasing the number of years in which they receive significant wages.

Secondly, once out of school, they are less likely to have a full-time — and therefore, relatively well-paid — job than in the past. In addition, those who did work on a full-year, full-time basis earned less annually during much of the 1980s and 1990s than their counterparts did previously.

Young immigrants fared worse. From 1973 to 1984, immigrant men aged 26 to 35 cumulated about \$319,000 in wages and salaries, roughly \$30,000 more than their Canadian-born counterparts. However, while cumulative wages and salaries of Canadian-born men in that age group declined \$40,000 between the two periods, they dropped more than \$75,000 for immigrant men. Immigrant men aged 36 to 45 experienced a sharper decline.

The study found that the decline in cumulative earnings was likely a major factor underlying a decline in median wealth of young families. While the growth in student debt also played a role, its contribution was much more limited.

As measured by median wealth, the typical young family in the late 1990s had fewer assets than its counterpart in the mid-1980s. Having fewer assets reduces the ability of a family to absorb financial shocks

in the event of a permanent layoff or the decision of one of its members to quit a job.

The decline in cumulative earnings may also have affected the decision of some young families to buy a home or have children. From 1986 to 1996, home ownership fell among families headed by young immigrants, and the average age of mothers at the birth of their first child rose from 25.7 to 27.1.

**Information on methods and data quality available in the Integrated Meta Data Base: survey numbers, including related surveys, 3502 and 3889.**

The article "Cumulative earnings among young workers" is available in the November 2002 online edition of *Perspectives on labour and income*, Vol. 3, no. 11 (75-001-XIE, \$5/\$48). See *How to order products*.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact René Morissette (613-951-3608; [rene.morissette@statcan.ca](mailto:rene.morissette@statcan.ca)), Business and Labour Market Analysis Division.

A related article "Earnings over time" is also available. It examines administrative data on the earnings of Canadians from 1982 to 1997 to assess the variation in wages and salaries over time, and to determine the extent to which these fluctuations were caused by permanent or transitory factors. For more information, contact Ross Finnie (613-951-3962; [ref@qsilver.queensu.ca](mailto:ref@qsilver.queensu.ca)). ■

**Quarterly telecommunications statistics**

Second quarter 2002

The second quarter 2002 issue of *Quarterly telecommunications statistics*, Vol. 26, no. 2 (56-002-XIE, \$21/\$40) 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 Heidi Ertl (613-951-1891) or Jo Anne Lambert (613-951-6673), Science, Innovation and Electronic Information Division. ■

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## NEW PRODUCTS

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