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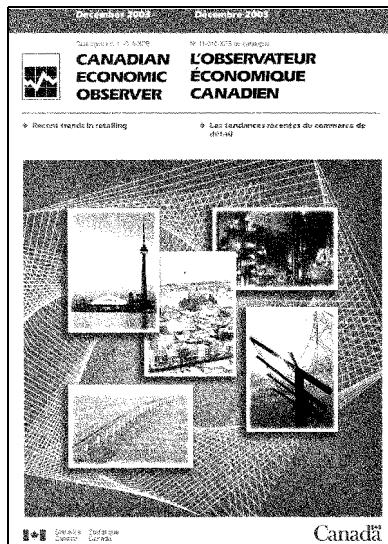
Thursday, December 18, 2003

Released at 8:30 a.m. Eastern time

MAJOR RELEASES

- **Canada's International Transactions in Securities, October 2003** 3
Foreign investors increased their holdings of Canadian securities by \$2.3 billion in October, including both debt securities and stocks. Meanwhile, Canadian investors resumed their purchases of foreign stocks but continued to sell foreign bonds.
- **Productivity performance by industry, 1997 to 2002** 6
Farmers, loggers, wholesalers, retailers and professional services outpaced other major sectors of the economy with respect to productivity gains during the past six years, according to first-ever productivity data that are estimated on the basis of the North American Industrial Classification System.

(continued on page 2)



Canadian Economic Observer December 2003

The December 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 November and presents a feature article titled: "A commodity perspective on recent trends in retailing." 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 December 2003 issue of *Canadian Economic Observer*, Volume 16, no. 12 (11-010-XIB, \$19/\$182; 11-010-XPB, \$25/\$243) is now available. See *How to order products*. To encourage you to try the new electronic version, we are offering free access to the electronic version of the August issue of *Canadian Economic Observer*. This will give you a risk-free opportunity to try out the electronic version. You are also encouraged to send us your feedback on this new medium of delivery by completing the *Readership Survey*.

Visit *Canadian Economic Observer's* page online. From the *Canadian statistics* page, choose *Economic conditions*, and on that page see the banner ad for *Canadian economic observer*. For more information, contact Cindy Bloskie (613-951-3634; ceo@statcan.ca), Current Economic Analysis Group.

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MAJOR RELEASES

Canada's International Transactions in Securities

October 2003

Foreign investors increased their holdings of Canadian securities by \$2.3 billion in October, including both debt securities and stocks.

Meanwhile, Canadian investors resumed their purchases of foreign stocks but continued to sell foreign bonds.

Foreign investors buy the full selection of Canadian securities

The Canadian securities acquired by foreign investors consisted of \$1.5 billion of debt instruments, mainly bonds, and \$0.8 billion of stocks. October's buying of bonds and short-term paper represented a halt to the selling of recent months; the foreign buying of equities was a continuation of what has occurred for most of 2003.

Foreign investment in Canadian debt instruments resumes

After reducing their holdings of Canadian debt instruments over the last four months, foreign investors purchased \$1.3 billion of Canadian bonds and \$0.2 billion of money market paper in October.

New bonds issued in foreign markets by Canadian corporations was the main impetus for a \$3.1 billion foreign investment in corporate sector bonds. This was partly offset by a foreign divestment of \$1.8 billion in bonds issued by Canadian governments and their enterprises. This divestment was largely in outstanding issues of the federal government. In the last five months to October 2003, foreign investors have sold off \$17.1 billion of secondary federal government bonds, completely eliminating the \$17.2 billion they amassed in the previous eight months from October 2002 to May 2003.

For only the third time in the first ten months of this year, foreign investors added to their holdings of Canadian money market paper. In October, they purchased a small \$0.2 billion of money market paper. For 2003 to date, however, foreign investors have reduced their holdings of money market paper by \$3.8 billion.

In October, the gap between Canadian and US short-term interest rates widened for the first time in four months following a small rise in Canadian rates and a small decline in American rates.

Note to readers

Related market information

In October, the gap between Canadian and US short-term interest rates widened for the first time in four months. A 6-basis-points rise in Canadian rates and a small 2-basis-points decline in American rates caused the differential between the two to grow by 8 basis points to 172 basis points in October. Since reaching a recent high of 215 basis points in June, the gap which favours investment in Canada has been reduced.

Both Canadian and American long-term interest rates rose in October, up 21 basis points in Canada and 15 basis points in the US. This resulted in the differential which favours investment in Canada to increase 6 basis-points to 54 basis points in October.

Canadian stock prices recorded their strongest monthly gain of the year with a 4.7% gain in October. This more than negated September's 1.2% decline and brought the S&P/TSX composite index to 7,772.7, up 22.5% from the low close in March. American stock prices recorded a 4.4% gain in October, and are up 24.9% from their low close in February.

The Canadian dollar chalked up its third consecutive monthly gain against the US dollar in October, easily surpassing the recent high closing set in June 2003. After suffering a three cent loss in July, the dollar shot back with advances over the three months totalling US 4.65 cents. October's closing of 75.84 US cents represents an almost 20% gain since the beginning of this year, and represents a decade high close against the American dollar.

The data series on international security transactions cover portfolio transactions in stocks and bonds (both Canadian and foreign issues) and Canadian money market instruments.

Stocks include common and preferred equities, as well as warrants.

Debt securities include bonds and money market instruments.

Bonds have an original term to maturity of more than one year.

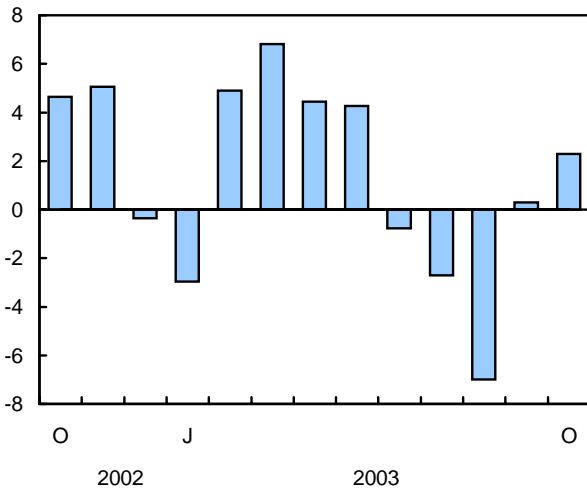
Money market instruments have an original term to maturity of one year or less. Government of Canada paper includes treasury bills and US-dollar Canada bills. Other money market instruments include treasury bills and other paper issued by other Canadian governments or their enterprises, bankers' acceptances, bearer demand notes of banks, commercial paper and other short-term paper.

Foreign investors continue to buy Canadian stocks

Spurred by rising stock prices, foreign investors added a further \$0.8 billion to their holdings of Canadian stocks in October. Canadian stock prices (S&P/TSX composite index) posted their best monthly performance of the year, rising 4.7% in October. In fact, since March 2003 when stock prices fell to their lowest level of 2003, prices have climbed a remarkable 22.5%. Over this same time frame, foreign investors have added \$8.8 billion to their holdings of Canadian equities.

Foreign investment in Canadian securities*

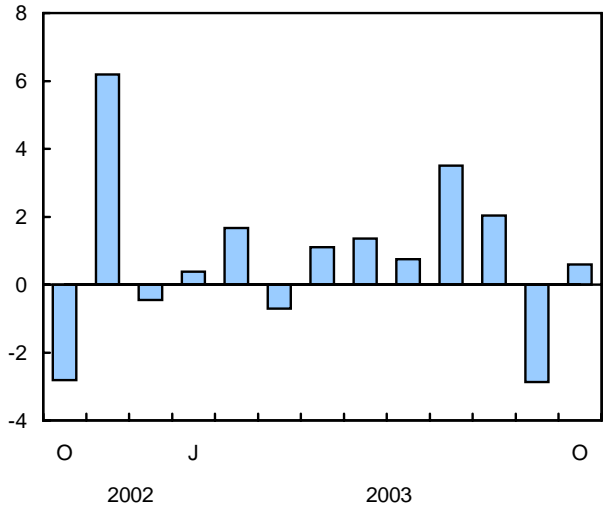
\$ billions



* Includes bonds, stocks and money market paper.

Canadian investment in foreign securities*

\$ billions Reverse of balance of payments signs



* Includes bonds and stocks.

Canadians turn back to foreign securities with a small investment

After selling a large \$2.9 billion of foreign securities in September, Canadian investors made a small \$0.6 billion investment in October. It was made up of purchases of \$0.9 billion of equities, largely overseas equities, partly offset by a small \$0.3 billion disinvestment in foreign bonds.

In the first ten months of 2003, Canadian investors have added \$5.9 billion to their holdings of foreign bonds, almost double the \$3.4 billion they added in the same period last year. This contrasts sharply with Canadian purchases of foreign stocks amounting to just \$1.9 billion year-to-date, a fraction of the \$15.8 billion they invested in the same ten-month period in 2002.

Available on CANSIM: tables 376-0018 to 376-0029 and 376-0058.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey numbers, including related surveys, 1532, 1534, 1535 and 1537.

The October 2003 issue of *Canada's International Transactions in Securities* (67-002-XIE, \$14/\$142) will be available soon. See *How to order products*.

Data on *Canada's international transactions in securities* for November 2003 will be released on January 19, 2004.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, please contact Donald Granger (613-951-1864), Balance of Payments Division.

□

Canada's international transactions in securities

	July 2003	August 2003	September 2003	October 2003	January to October 2002	January to October 2003
	\$ millions					
Foreign investment in Canadian securities	-2,713	-6,996	304	2,297	16,353	9,563
Bonds (net)	-4,176	-7,682	-601	1,265	19,450	4,808
Outstanding	-5,462	-7,591	985	-1,217	12,146	-948
New issues	3,220	1,977	3,231	3,679	41,030	43,893
Retirements	-2,197	-2,630	-4,672	-1,878	-35,387	-39,825
Change in interest payable ¹	263	561	-145	681	1,660	1,687
Money market paper (net)	-509	-613	-1,214	213	281	-3,765
Government of Canada	-142	-89	410	-12	599	579
Other	-366	-524	-1,624	224	-318	-4,343
Stocks (net)	1,972	1,300	2,119	819	-3,378	8,520
Outstanding	1,636	1,275	1,994	279	-9,101	7,066
Other transactions	336	25	125	540	5,723	1,454
Canadian investment in foreign securities	-3,500	-2,042	2,871	-590	-19,216	-7,812
Bonds (net)	-2,375	-334	2,720	287	-3,384	-5,867
Stocks (net)	-1,124	-1,708	151	-877	-15,832	-1,945

¹ Interest accrued less interest paid.

Note: A minus sign indicates an outflow of money from Canada, that is, a withdrawal of foreign investment from Canada or an increase in Canadian investment abroad.

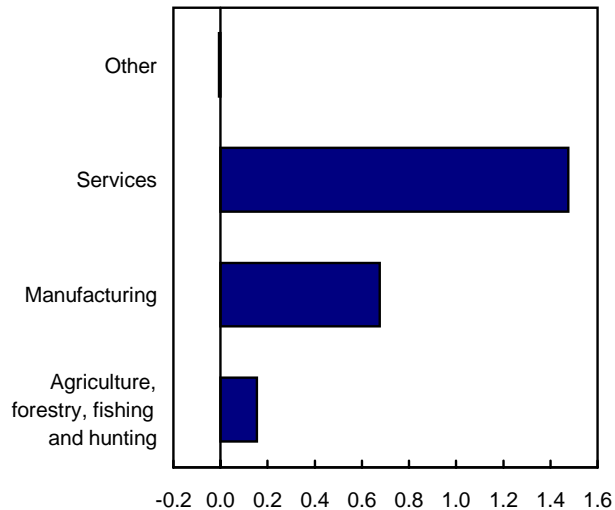


Productivity performance by industry 1997 to 2002

Farmers, loggers, wholesalers, retailers and professional services outpaced other major sectors of the economy with respect to gains in labour productivity during the past six years, according to first-ever data produced on the basis of the North American Industrial Classification System.

Labour productivity in the crop and animal production sector grew at an annual average rate of 5.8% from 1997 to 2002, the fastest pace in any sector. This was nearly three times the national average increase of 2.3%.

Sectoral sources of aggregate labour productivity growth (percentage point contribution), 1997-2002



The 1997-2002 period was characterised as a period of productivity revival, mainly during the first four years. Over the 1997-2000 period, Canada experienced strong economic growth partly because of the information and communication technology revolution. This productivity recovery was followed by a slowdown in 2001 and a slight recovery in 2002. During this last part of the period, the Canadian business sector was affected by the bursting of the speculative bubble in high tech industries.

In distant second place was the wholesale trade sector, where productivity grew at an annual average rate of 4.5%. And in third place was the forestry and logging sector, with an increase of 4.1%.

Note to readers

For the first time, productivity data are being published on the basis of the North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS).

The NAICS classification system is the result of a cooperative effort on the part of statistical agencies in the United States, Canada and Mexico. It is designed to provide common definitions of the industrial structure of the three countries, and a common statistical framework to facilitate the analysis of the three economies.

The NAICS differs from the previous classification system known as the 1980 Standard Industrial Classification in that it is based more on supply side or production-oriented principles. In contrast, the 1980 SIC was based on nature of the products produced by industries.

This release reports results for the six-year period 1997-2002. Results by industry for 1961 to 1996 will be available next year.

Labour productivity, measured as total output for every hour worked, is an important source of a nation's standard of living, measured as gross domestic product per person.

Multifactor productivity is a comprehensive measure of production efficiency. Its growth is measured as the increase in output minus the growth of combined inputs of labour and capital.

Labour productivity, measured as total output for every hour worked, is an indicator of a nation's standard of living. Rising productivity helps control inflation by allowing companies to produce more without raising prices.

Productivity in Canada's key manufacturing sector grew at an average rate of 2.8% between 1997 and 2002, just above the national industry average.

Reasons for growth in productivity varied from sector to sector. For example, the substantial gain in the crop and animal production sector occurred because output rose at the same time as employment fell, largely because the sector became more capital intensive. Companies that use more technology tend to be more productive.

In the case of wholesale trade, gross domestic product (GDP) in the sector rose at a torrid average of 6.4% each year from 1997 to 2002, while employment increased only moderately.

In manufacturing, output increased 4.4% on average each year, mostly because factories became more capital intensive while employment basically remained stable.

Nearly all industries post gains in labour productivity

Between 1997 and 2002, nearly all industries posted productivity gains. In the manufacturing sector, output per hour increased in the majority of industries.

On average, productivity advanced 5.0% a year or more in four manufacturing industries: primary metal manufacturing; computer and electronic products; wood products; and chemical.

Another seven industries experienced annual productivity growth in the range of 2.0% to 4.0%. Among these industries were rubber and plastic products (+4.0%); transportation equipment (+3.9%); and non-metallic mineral products (+3.6%).

In the mining sector, mining and oil and gas extraction registered rapid productivity gains of about 4.0% between 1997 and 2002. In the services sector, waste management posted the fastest rapid productivity gains (+4.9%), followed by wholesale trade (+4.5%), professional services (+3.9%) and repair and maintenance (+3.4%).

Labour productivity in the business sector as a whole increased at an annual average rate of 2.3% during this six-year period. The services sector accounted for nearly two-thirds of this growth, the manufacturing sector 29% and agriculture and forestry 7%.

Multifactor productivity grew in a majority of industries

Labour productivity reflects the efficiency of labour resources in generating output. There are many factors that affect labour productivity: the amount of capital available, changes in technology and management expertise. Multifactor productivity is a measure that reflects technological change more directly.

Between 1997 and 2002, multifactor productivity rose in a majority of industries, albeit not as rapidly as labour productivity. Nonetheless, industries that reported rapid labour productivity gains were generally those with the highest multifactor productivity growth.

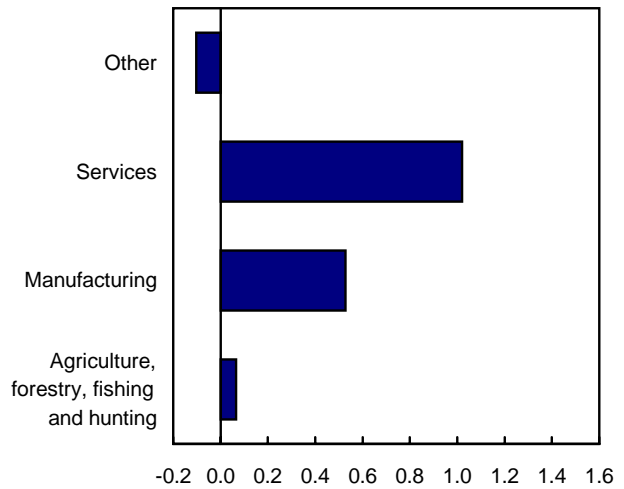
Wholesale trade led the industries in the Canadian business sector with an annual average gain of 3.6% in multifactor productivity, followed by retail trade with 3.1%.

Other industries, such as crop and animal production, information and cultural industries, waste management, and manufacturing experienced growth rates in multifactor productivity of slightly more than 2%.

Between 1997 and 2002, multifactor productivity at the total manufacturing level increased at an average annual rate of 2.3%. Within manufacturing, there was significant variation among industries in the average annual rates of change.

For manufacturing industries, the average annual rates of change in multifactor productivity ranged from a decline of 0.1% a year in machinery to an increase of 5.5% a year in wood products.

Sectoral sources of aggregate multifactor productivity growth (percentage point contribution), 1997-2002



For the business sector as a whole, multifactor productivity rose at an annual average rate of 1.5% between 1997 and 2002. The services sector accounted for 68% of this growth, the manufacturing sector 35%, and agriculture and forestry, 4%. The remaining sectors, such as mining, oil and gas extraction and construction, made a negative contribution (-7%).

Available on CANSIM: tables 383-0013, 383-0014 and 383-0015.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 1402.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Faouzi Tarkhani (613-951-5314; faoutar@statcan.ca) and Jean-Pierre Maynard (613-951-3654; fax: 613-951-3292; maynard@statcan.ca), Micro-economic Analysis Division.

□

Productivity performance of Canadian industries
1997 to 2002

	Average annual growth rate in %	
	Labour productivity	Multifactor productivity
Business sector	2.3	1.5
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	5.1	2.2
Oil and gas extraction	4.1	..
Mining (except oil and gas extraction)	4.0	..
Construction	1.2	..
Manufacturing	2.8	2.3
Food	2.2	2.0
Beverage and tobacco product	1.7	0.2
Textile and textile product mills	0.3	0.0
Wood product	7.1	5.5
Chemical	6.6	4.2
Plastics and rubber products	4.0	3.5
Non-metallic mineral product	3.6	3.7
Primary metal	5.2	3.7
Machinery	0.4	-0.1
Computer and electronic product	5.6	0.9
Electrical equipment, appliance and component	3.0	1.5
Transportation equipment	3.9	3.2
Furniture and related product	1.6	2.0
Miscellaneous	0.4	1.2
Wholesale trade	4.5	3.6
Retail trade	3.5	3.1
Transportation and warehousing	1.4	-0.3
Information and cultural industries	2.0	2.6
Professional, scientific and technical services	3.9	..
Finance, insurance, real estate and rental and leasing	1.6	..
Administrative and support services, waste management and remediation services	0.2	0.0
Waste management and remediation services	4.9	2.4
Accommodation and food services	1.8	1.9
Other services (except public administration)	2.7	..
Repair and maintenance	3.4	4.4

.. Figures not available.



OTHER RELEASES

Demographic statistics

As of October 1, 2003 (preliminary)

Preliminary postcensal population estimates as of October 1, 2003 are now available for Canada, the provinces and the territories.

Available on CANSIM: tables 051-0005, 051-0006, 051-0008, 051-0009, 051-0017, 051-0020 and 053-0001.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey numbers, including related surveys, 3231, 3232, 3233, 3601 and 3605.

The third quarter 2003 issue of *Quarterly Demographic Statistics* 91-002-XIB, \$9/\$27) and (91-002-XPB, \$11/\$36 will be available soon. See *How to order products*.

To obtain data, contact Colette O'Meara (613-951-2320; fax 613-951-2307; colette.o'meara@statcan.ca), Demography Division or the nearest Statistics Canada Regional Reference Centre. For information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Denis Morissette (613-951-0694; fax 613-951-2307; denis.morissette@statcan.ca), Demography Division.

Canada's population¹

	July 1, 2002 ^{Pr}	October 1, 2002 ^{Pr}	July 1, 2003 ^{PP}	October 1, 2003 ^{PP}	2002	2003
					% change	
Canada	31,361,611	31,448,767	31,629,677	31,714,637	0.3	0.3
Newfoundland and Labrador	519,270	519,731	519,570	520,170	0.1	0.1
Prince Edward Island	136,998	137,256	137,781	137,941	0.2	0.1
Nova Scotia	934,392	935,408	936,025	936,878	0.1	0.1
New Brunswick	750,183	750,649	750,594	750,460	0.1	0.0
Quebec	7,443,491	7,457,736	7,487,169	7,503,502	0.2	0.2
Ontario	12,096,627	12,145,439	12,238,300	12,280,731	0.4	0.3
Manitoba	1,155,492	1,157,356	1,162,776	1,164,135	0.2	0.1
Saskatchewan	995,490	995,115	994,843	995,003	0.0	0.0
Alberta	3,114,390	3,125,527	3,153,723	3,164,400	0.4	0.3
British Columbia	4,114,981	4,123,659	4,146,580	4,158,649	0.2	0.3
Yukon	30,123	30,423	31,060	31,371	1.0	1.0
Northwest Territories	41,434	41,549	41,872	42,040	0.3	0.4
Nunavut	28,740	28,919	29,384	29,357	0.6	-0.1

^{Pr} Updated postcensal estimates.

^{PP} Preliminary postcensal estimates.

¹ These estimates are based on the 2001 census counts adjusted for net undercoverage.

Monthly Survey of Large Retailers

October 2003

Every major commodity group increased year-over-year sales in the month of October for the group of large retailers. This was the third time in the last twelve months that all the major commodity groups posted increases. The strongest sales growth was seen in hardware, lawn and garden products, health and personal care products, and furniture, home furnishing and electronic products.

The value of goods sold by the group of large retailers amounted to \$7.7 billion, an increase of 5.6% from October 2002.

Hardware, lawn and garden products were up 9.6%, posting the strongest sales growth in October for the group of large retailers. The strongest upward movements were seen in outdoor power equipment

sales, which jumped 34.0%, and in lawn and garden related product sales, which rose 17.5% compared with the previous year.

Sporting and leisure good sales were up 3.9% in October, following a year-over-year decline in the previous month. Sales of toys, games and hobby supplies, which account for one-quarter of sporting and leisure good sales, rose 4.9% compared with October 2002. After five months of negative year-over-year growth, pre-recorded CDs, DVDs video and audio tapes eked out an increase of 1.5%. Sales were likely aided by the publicity surrounding a significant drop in CD prices by several music distributors during the month.

Food and beverage sales rose 5.8% compared with October 2002. This was somewhat stronger than the average growth of 4.5% so far in 2003. Bakery

products led the way with an 11.3% increase, which would be partially attributable to a 6.0% increase in price on a year-over-year basis. Sales of fresh fruits and vegetables, and delicatessen goods were also up considerably for the group of large retailers.

Sales by commodity for the group of large retailers

Commodity ¹	September 2003 ^r	October 2002 ^r	October 2003 ^r	October 2002 to October 2003
	Unadjusted			
	\$ millions		% change	
Food and beverages	2,234	2,373	2,510	5.8
Health and personal care products	683	661	724	9.5
Clothing, footwear and accessories	1,321	1,449	1,454	0.4
Furniture, home furnishings and electronics	1,101	1,088	1,175	8.0
Housewares	338	347	371	6.9
Hardware, lawn and garden products	233	210	230	9.6
Sporting and leisure goods	289	346	360	3.9
All other goods and services	842	845	905	7.0
Total	7,039	7,319	7,729	5.6

^r Revised figures.

^p Preliminary figures.

¹ New commodity order starting this month.

Clothing, footwear and accessory sales were virtually unchanged in October compared to October 2002 for the group of large retailers. One main reason behind this levelling out in sales is the decline of prices across the board. Women's clothing prices declined 2.6%, and men's clothing was 1.3% less expensive than a year earlier. Children's clothing prices dropped 7.8%, and the cost of footwear was down 1.1%. If prices were unchanged, clothing, footwear and accessory sales would be posting modest sales increases.

Note: This survey includes large retailers mainly in the food, clothing, home furnishings, electronics, sporting goods, and general merchandise sectors. These retailers represent approximately 28% of total annual retail sales, or 38% excluding recreational and motor vehicle dealers. All data in this release are unadjusted for seasonality and all percentages are year-over-year changes.

Available on CANSIM: table 080-0009.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 5027.

A data table is also available online in the *Canadian Statistics* module.

For general information or to order data, contact Client Services (1-877-421-3067; 613-951-3549; retailinfo@statcan.ca). To enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Elton Cryderman (613-951-0669), Distributive Trades Division. ■

Construction Union Wage Rate Index November 2003

The Construction Union Wage Rate Index (including supplements) for Canada remained unchanged in November compared to the revised October level of 128.2 (1992=100). The Composite index increased 2.1% compared with the revised November 2002 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 on a 1992=100 time base 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.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2307.

The fourth quarter 2003 issue of *Capital Expenditure Price Statistics* (62-007-XPB, \$26/\$85) will be available in April 2004. See *How to order publications*.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods, and data quality for this release, contact Rebecca McDougall (613-951-3357; infounit@statcan.ca, fax: 613-951-1539) Client Services Unit, Prices Division. ■

Cereals and Oilseeds Review October 2003

Data from the October issue of the *Cereals and Oilseeds Review* are now available. This month's issue contains the annual summary of concepts, methods and sources.

The November situation report, an overview of current market conditions, both domestic and international, is also included in the October issue of *Cereals and Oilseeds Review* (22-007-XIB, \$12/\$120; 22-007-XPB, \$17/\$160), which will be available in January 2004.

For general information, contact Client Services (1-800-465-1991; agriculture@statcan.ca). To enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Les Macartney (613-951-8714) les.macartney@statcan.ca, Agriculture Division. ■

NEW PRODUCTS

Canadian economic observer, December 2003,
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Catalogue number 11-010-XIB (\$19/\$182).

Canadian economic observer, December 2003,
Vol. 16, no. 12
Catalogue number 11-010-XPB (\$25/\$243).

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Statistics Canada

Thursday, June 3, 1997
For release at 8:30 a.m.



MAJOR RELEASES

- **Urban transit, 1996** 2
Despite the emphasis on taking urban transit, Canadians are using it less and less. In 1996, each Canadian took an average of about 20 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 modestly weak again in 1996, accompanied by sluggish gains in employment and slow economic growth during the year.

OTHER RELEASES

- **Help-wanted index, May 1997** 3
- **Short-term Expectations Survey** 2
- **Steel primary forms, week ending May 31, 1997** 12
- **Egg production, Apr. 1997** 12

PUBLICATIONS RELEASED 11



Statistics Canada's official release bulletin

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