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The Daily

Statistics Canada

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MAJOR RELEASES

OTHER RELEASES

NEW PRODUCTS

MAJOR RELEASES

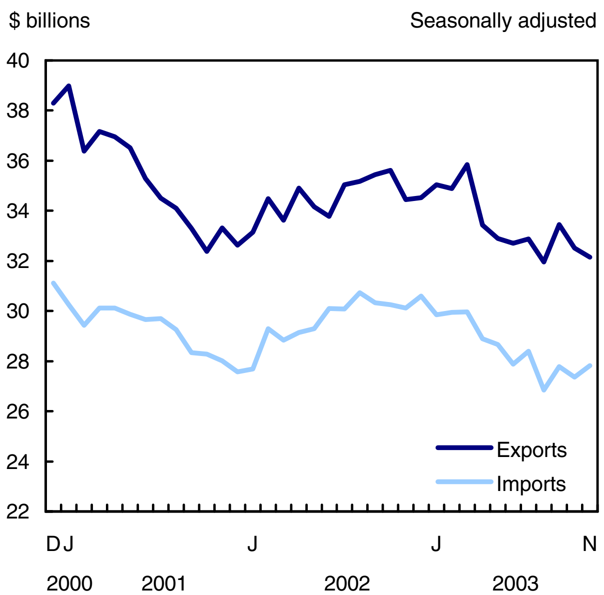
Canadian international merchandise trade

November 2003

In the wake of continued export weakness and a slight rise in imports, Canada's merchandise trade surplus declined in November for the second straight month.

Companies exported $32.1 billion in merchandise, down 1.1% from October, while importing goods worth $27.8 billion, up 1.7%. As a result, the trade surplus fell from more than $5.1 billion in October to just over $4.3 billion in November.

Exports and imports



Canada's exports to the United States were $26.4 billion in November, down a marginal 0.1% from October, the third monthly decline in the last four months. Imports from south of the border were up 1.6%, resulting in a $334-million decline in Canada's trade surplus with the United States to just over $6.9 billion.

Lower exports of metal ores, wheat and agricultural machinery accounted for most of the drop in exports to "other OECD countries," resulting in a widening of the trade balance with all non-US destinations to $2.6 billion.

The export slide that has predominated during 2003 was accompanied by falling prices in the face of an appreciated currency and unsettled United States demand. A strong Canadian dollar appears to be exerting some downward pressure on export prices, which have fallen 8.4% over the last year, as the exporting community adjusts to its valuation.

In spite of Canada's total import values declining 7.6% from November 2002, import prices have plummeted 12.5%, while volumes increased 5.6%. Over the last 12 months, therefore, Canadians have been importing a larger quantity at a much lower price.

Canada's three largest export sectors declined in November; machinery and equipment, automotive products and industrial goods and materials all fell, while all other sectors increased. Import growth was generally widespread with the exception of automotive products, agricultural and fishing products and forestry products.

Export: Largest decline in automotive sector

A setback in Canadian exports of machinery and equipment, automotive products and industrial goods and materials, accounting for 61% of total exports, was large enough to offset increases in all other categories.

The largest drop occurred in automotive products, down 5.7% to $6.9 billion. Decreases were widespread, but the $3.3 billion reported for passenger autos was 8.7% below October levels and represented the lion's share of declines. Production and sales of new motor vehicles were weak throughout North America

Note to readers

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

"Other OECD countries," mentioned in the text, include Australia, Iceland, Mexico, New Zealand, Norway, Switzerland, Turkey, Poland, South Korea, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

Revisions

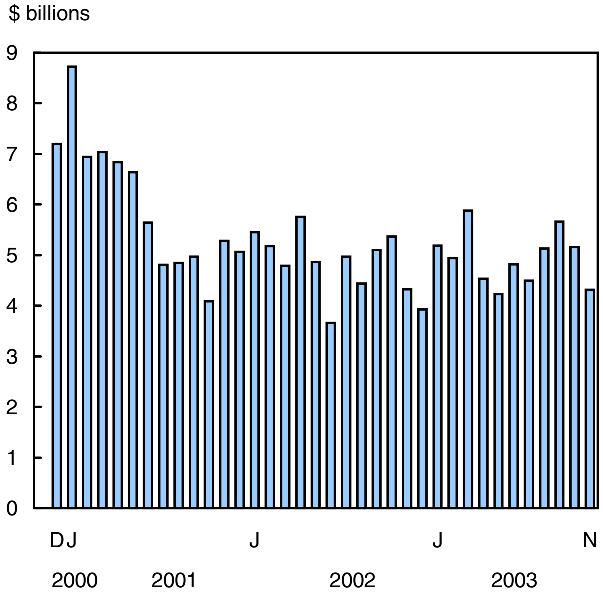
In general, merchandise trade data are revised on an ongoing basis for each month of the current year. Customs basis data are revised for the previous data year each quarter.

Factors influencing revisions include late receipt of import and export documentation, incorrect information on customs forms, replacement of estimates with actual figures, 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.

in November, as incentives subsided and domestic and foreign companies competed for market share, particularly in the sale of passenger cars.

Trade balance



Machinery and equipment exports declined for the second consecutive month, falling 1.8% in November to $7.0 billion. This was 13.3% lower than November 2002. Exports of aircraft, engines and parts have slowed throughout the third quarter and again in November, falling 19.9% to $973 million, but are still posting gains on a year-over-year basis. Aircraft transactions are often conducted in US dollars, which tends to decrease trade values when currency appreciation occurs.

After two months of growth, exports of industrial goods and materials posted a 0.6% drop in November. Weakness was concentrated mainly in metal ores, slipping 20.1% to $426 million. Offsetting these declines was the continued strength in nickel and alloys, up 18.9%, and a gain in exports of other crude non-metallic minerals. Month-to-month changes of this magnitude are not uncommon for these commodity areas.

All other sectors reported export increases in November, led by energy product growth, as crude petroleum gained 9.3% on a small price increase, as harsh winter weather set in along the northeastern seaboard. Electricity exports recouped some of the large drops of recent months, jumping 32.3% to $86 million. However, total energy exports rose only 0.4% as an easing in natural gas prices and sufficient US inventory levels decreased its exports 10.7% and exerted some downward pressure on the energy sector.

After a slight dip in October, exports of forestry product resumed their climb, up 1.4% in November to just under $3 billion. Lumber exports remained relatively unchanged, while other wood fabricated materials (plywood and particle board) pushed its record level to $692 million. The 6.6% monthly increment was the eighth consecutive rise, resulting from strong prices and sustained US housing demand.

Agricultural and fishing products rose 4.9% to $2.5 billion, as most commodities reported export gains, the largest being fish and fish preparations, canola, meat and meat preparations. The export recovery for Canadian beef products has been steady for the last three months since some countries reopened their borders in September.

Rebound in machinery and equipment imports leads growth

Machinery and equipment imports rose 3.6% to over $8 billion in November, after being on a downward trend for most of 2003. Leading the growth was aircraft and other transportation equipment imports, showing their usual volatility, increasing 17.4% to $986 million. Other machinery and equipment, which includes telecommunication and related equipment, edged up 3.4 % to $3.8 billion.

Imports of other consumer goods posted a solid 2.7 % increase to $3.9 billion. Miscellaneous end products were the source of strength and include pharmaceutical products, which were responsible for the rise in November.

A rebound in motor gasoline volume imports in November pushed petroleum and coal product imports up 17.3% to $309 million. This sector was the only contributor to the improvement in total energy imports, ending three months of declines with a 1.8% rise to $1.5 billion. Crude petroleum imports dipped slightly (-0.3%) to just over $1 billion on unchanged prices.

Import increases were not entirely widespread, as Canadian purchases of automotive products dropped 1.0% to $6.1 billion. Both passenger autos and trucks and other motor vehicles declined, offset slightly by some improvement in the parts category. Trucks dropped the most however, down 8.2% to $1.0 billion, followed by cars, down 0.8% to $2.0 billion.

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

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey numbers, including related surveys, 2201, 2202 and 2203.

The November 2003 issue of *Canadian International Merchandise Trade* (65-001-XIB, $15/$151) will be available soon. 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, $32/$100; 67-001-XPB, $41/$133). See *How to order products*.

Merchandise trade data are available in PDF format on the morning of release.

Data on Canadian international merchandise trade for December 2003 will be released on February 13.

For more information on the publications, contact Jocelyne Elibani, (1-800-294-5583; 613-951-9647). To enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Matthew MacDonald (613-951-8551), International Trade Division.

□

Merchandise trade

	October 2003[r]	November 2003	October to November 2003	November 2002 to November 2003	January to November 2002	January to November 2003	January–November 2002 to January–November 2003
	seasonally adjusted, $ current						
	$ millions		% change		$ millions		% change
Principal trading partners							
Exports							
United States	26,467	26,436	-0.1	-8.3	318,176	304,203	-4.4
Japan	719	738	2.6	-19.3	9,377	9,055	-3.4
European Union	2,163	2,130	-1.5	13.4	20,836	22,040	5.8
Other OECD countries[1]	1,265	927	-26.7	-19.5	11,434	11,449	0.1
All other countries	1,900	1,914	0.7	15.1	19,966	20,986	5.1
Total	**32,514**	**32,146**	**-1.1**	**-6.7**	**379,787**	**367,733**	**-3.2**
Imports							
United States	19,212	19,515	1.6	-9.9	233,977	219,830	-6.0
Japan	796	789	-0.9	-18.3	10,576	9,760	-7.7
European Union	2,668	2,767	3.7	-4.3	32,791	32,075	-2.2
Other OECD countries[1]	1,570	1,649	5.0	6.0	17,681	18,036	2.0
All other countries	3,114	3,108	-0.2	2.4	30,842	33,682	9.2
Total	**27,359**	**27,827**	**1.7**	**-7.6**	**325,866**	**313,380**	**-3.8**
Balance							
United States	7,255	6,921	...	...	84,199	84,373	...
Japan	-77	-51	...	...	-1,199	-705	...
European Union	-505	-637	...	...	-11,955	-10,035	...
Other OECD countries[1]	-305	-722	...	...	-6,247	-6,587	...
All other countries	-1,214	-1,194	...	...	-10,876	-12,696	...
Total	**5,155**	**4,319**	**...**	**...**	**53,921**	**54,353**	**...**
Principal commodity groupings							
Exports							
Agricultural and fishing products	2,430	2,548	4.9	1.0	28,318	26,693	-5.7
Energy products	4,587	4,605	0.4	-1.3	44,531	56,630	27.2
Forestry products	2,921	2,963	1.4	-2.0	34,093	31,628	-7.2
Industrial goods and materials	5,619	5,584	-0.6	-1.1	64,377	60,413	-6.2
Machinery and equipment	7,127	6,998	-1.8	-13.3	89,458	82,154	-8.2
Automotive products	7,351	6,931	-5.7	-11.5	89,604	80,474	-10.2
Other consumer goods	1,350	1,407	4.2	-5.3	16,186	15,688	-3.1
Special transactions trade[2]	592	578	-2.4	-13.2	7,285	6,622	-9.1
Other balance of payments adjustments	535	532	-0.6	-1.3	5,933	7,429	25.2
Imports							
Agricultural and fishing products	1,732	1,731	-0.1	-4.7	19,955	19,779	-0.9
Energy products	1,484	1,510	1.8	-1.0	14,956	17,802	19.0
Forestry products	249	243	-2.4	-8.3	2,878	2,773	-3.6
Industrial goods and materials	5,242	5,254	0.2	-7.6	62,985	59,685	-5.2
Machinery and equipment	7,757	8,039	3.6	-11.7	97,077	90,307	-7.0
Automotive products	6,186	6,122	-1.0	-8.5	74,221	69,895	-5.8
Other consumer goods	3,802	3,904	2.7	-2.3	42,442	42,553	0.3
Special transactions trade[2]	408	509	24.8	2.8	5,461	4,915	-10.0
Other balance of payments adjustments	500	514	2.8	-5.2	5,895	5,670	-3.8

r *Revised figures*
1 *Includes Australia, Iceland, Mexico, New Zealand, Norway, Switzerland, Turkey, Poland, South Korea, Hungary, Czech Republic and Slovakia.*
2 *These are mainly low valued transactions, value of repairs to equipment, and goods returned to country of origin.*
... *Figures not appropriate or not applicable.*

■

OTHER RELEASES

Employment Insurance Coverage Survey

2002

The proportion of unemployed Canadians potentially eligible for Employment Insurance benefits increased slightly in 2002, according to data from the Employment Insurance Coverage Survey.

About 680,000 people, or 55.4% of unemployed individuals, were potentially eligible to receive employment insurance benefits, up from 53.2% in 2001.

Coverage and eligibility of the unemployed for Employment Insurance benefits

	2001[r]	2002	2001 to 2002
	'000		
All unemployed	1,160	1,228	
	%		% change
As a proportion of all unemployed			
Potentially eligible	**53.2**	**55.4**	**2.2**
Eligible - Received or will receive employment insurance benefits	41.3	42.3	1.0
Eligible - Did not receive but eligible based on reported hours worked	2.7	4.2	1.5
Not eligible based on reported hours worked	9.3	8.9	-0.4
Not potentially eligible	**46.8**	**44.6**	**-2.2**
Left job for reason not deemed valid by the Employment Insurance Act	14.4	14.2	-0.2
No insurable employment	5.0	5.5	0.5
Has not worked in previous 12 months	27.4	25.0	-2.4
Eligible as a proportion of potentially eligible	**82.6**	**83.9**	**1.3**

1 *Average number of unemployed for the months of March, June, October and December.*
r *Numbers revised slightly since the 2001 release.*

Of these individuals who were potentially eligible, an estimated 571,000, or 83.9%, accumulated enough hours of paid work to make a claim. This was the highest ratio of unemployed effectively eligible for employment insurance benefits since the survey began in 1997.

The most common reason for not being covered by the Employment Insurance program was still the lack of employment during the previous 12 months. However, in 2002, only about 25% of unemployed individuals were not potentially eligible for this reason. This proportion has been declining steadily since 1997 when it was 34.7%.

In 2002, nearly two-thirds (63.3%) of mothers with a child up to 12 months of age received maternity or parental benefits at some point during their pregnancy, or after the birth or adoption of their child. This was up substantially from 54.9% in 2000.

Two factors may have contributed to this increase: the lowering of the eligibility criteria to 600 hours of insurable employment, and an overall increase in the proportion of mothers with insurable employment. This proportion reached 74.4% in 2002, up from 69.6% in 2000.

(In January 2001, the number of weeks of parental benefits that either parent could take increased from 10 to 35 weeks. At the same time, the number of insurable hours required to qualify was reduced to 600 from 700. Results for 2002 are compared with 2000, the year preceding the implementation of extended parental leave.)

The impact of the extension of the parental benefit program is clearly reflected in the duration of the leave taken for the birth or adoption of a child. Among paid workers, the average duration of the leave or planned leave increased from seven months in 2000 to 10 months in 2002.

Similar data are not available for self-employed mothers since the survey does not gather information on the return intentions of self-employed still on leave at the time of the interview. However, one in three self-employed mothers had already gone back to work two months after the birth of their child, compared with only 5% of paid workers.

In 2002, 11.4% of fathers claimed or intended to claim parental benefits. The mother's desire to stay with her child was the most frequently reported reason for the father's not taking parental leave. Nearly one-half the mothers who themselves received maternity-related benefits reported that reason. Another 17% said it was easier for them to take the time off work, while 14% said it was more financially advantageous if they, not their husband, stayed home.

Note: The Employment Insurance Coverage Survey has been conducted for Human Resources Development Canada since 1997. The survey is conducted in four cycles each year, in April, July, November and January. In 2000, the survey was expanded to help monitor the effect of the extended parental benefit program. In 2002, a total of 2,616 unemployed and 1,233 mothers of a child less than one year old were surveyed.

The survey permits a systematic assessment of the categories of workers and their eligibility and access to the Employment Insurance benefits program.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 4428.

To order custom tabulations, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Client Services (1-888-297-7355; 613-951-7355; fax: 613-951-3012; *ssd@statcan.ca*), Special Surveys Division.

Eligibility of mothers for maternity and parental benefits and duration of leave

	2000	2002
Mothers with child aged 12 months or less	314,000	329,000
As a proportion of total		
With insurable employment (%)	**69.6**	**74.4**
Received maternity or parental benefits (%)	54.9	63.3
Did not claim or receive maternity or parental benefits (%)	14.6	11.1
Without insurable employment (%)	**30.4**	**25.6**
Not worked in two years (%)	20.7	14.2
Other (includes self-employed) (%)	9.7	11.5
Mothers who received maternity or parental benefits as a proportion of mothers with insurable employment (%)	**79.0**	**85.1**
Mothers with known return plans or already returned to work[1]	**184,000**	**203,000**
Average duration of planned leave (in months)	7	10
Median duration of planned leave (in months)	6	11
0 to 4 months (%)	15.0	12.9
5 to 8 months (%)	67.8	17.5
9 to 12 months (%)	12.4	52.7
More than 12 months (%)	4.8	16.9
Spouse or partner claiming or intending to claim parental benefits	**9,000**	**34,000**
Percentenge of mothers with spouse claiming or intending to claim benefits (%)	3.0[E]	11.4

1 *Excludes mothers who have not worked in 2 years and self-employed mothers for whom the survey did not collect planned duration of leave.*
E *Use with caution.*

■

Export and import price indexes
November 2003

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 January 1997 to November 2003 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 January 1997 to November 2003. 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, 228-0003 and 228-0033 to 228-0040.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey numbers, including related surveys, 2201, 2202 and 2203.

The November 2003 issue of *Canadian International Merchandise Trade* (65-001-XIB, $15/$151) 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. ■

Farm product prices
November 2003

Prices received by farmers in November for grains, oilseeds, specialty crops, fruits, vegetables, cattle, hogs, poultry, eggs and dairy products are now available.

The Quebec slaughter steer price in November was $80.06 per hundredweight, up 26% from October, but still 14% below the November 2002 level of $93.45 per hundredweight. The Canadian cattle sector came to a virtual halt on May 20, 2003 when a cow in Alberta tested positive for bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE or mad cow disease). The loss of crucial export markets resulted in an oversupply which depressed prices.

The November canola price in Saskatchewan, at $340.65 per tonne, was up 2% from October, but 16% below the November 2002 price of $405.08, which was the peak for that year.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 3436.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Gail-Ann Breese (204-983-3445; fax: 204-983-3122; *gail-ann.breese@statcan.ca*), Agriculture Division. ■

Steel primary forms — weekly data

Week ending December 27, 2003 (preliminary)

Steel primary forms production for the week ending December 27 totalled 265 403 metric tonnes, down 14.2% from 309 201 tonnes a week earlier but up 17.0% from 226 784 tonnes in the same week of 2002.

The year-to-date total as of December 27 was 15 607 049 tonnes, down 0.8% from 15 739 266 tonnes in the same period of 2002.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2131.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact the dissemination officer (1-866-873-8789; 613-951-9497; *manufact@statcan.ca*), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

International scheduled air passenger origin and destination statistics

Fourth quarter 1998 and annual 1998 (preliminary)

In the fourth quarter of 1998, 5.8 million passengers travelled between Canada and a foreign country on a scheduled flight, an increase of 813,000 passengers (+16.4%) from the fourth quarter of 1997.

A record 23.6 million passengers travelled between Canada and foreign countries on scheduled flights in 1998, up 5.6% from 1997. This followed a 5.2% gain in 1997 and an 18.5% increase in 1996.

More detailed information will appear in the next issue of *Aviation: Service Bulletin*, Vol. 36, no. 1 (51-004-XIB, $9). See *How to order products*. A print-on-demand service is also available.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Lisa Di Piétro (613-951-0146; *lisa.dipietro@statcan.ca*), Transportation Division. ■

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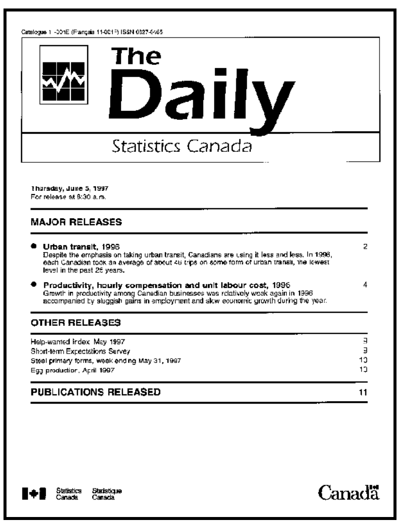

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Statistics Canada

Thursday, June 5, 1997
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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 46 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.

OTHER RELEASES

Help-wanted Index, May 1997	9
Short-term Expectations Survey	9
Steel primary forms, week ending May 31, 1997	10
Egg production, April 1997	10

PUBLICATIONS RELEASED 11

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