



The Daily

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MAJOR RELEASES

- **New Motor Vehicle Sales, March and first quarter 2004** 2
The number of new motor vehicles sold in March advanced 4.1% compared with February. This third consecutive increase brought first quarter sales up to about the same level as in the last quarter of 2003.

OTHER RELEASES

- Study: Public Transit Use Among Immigrants, 2001 5
- Study: Shopping for furniture, 1997 to 2002 5
- Non-residential building construction price index, first quarter 2004 6
- Aircraft movement statistics: Major airports, February 2004 7
- Refined Petroleum Products, January 2004 7

NEW PRODUCTS



MAJOR RELEASES

New Motor Vehicle Sales

March and first quarter 2004

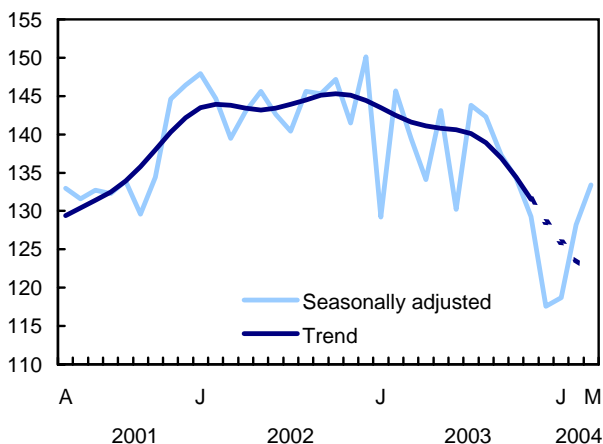
The number of new motor vehicles sold in March advanced 4.1% compared with February. This third consecutive increase brought first quarter sales up to about the same level as in the last quarter of 2003. While the first three months of 2004 posted rising sales, they were still 8.2% lower than in the same three-month period in 2003.

According to preliminary figures for the auto industry, the number of new motor vehicles sold in April rose 2.5%, with most of the increase attributable to passenger cars.

In all, 133,407 new motor vehicles were sold in March, 5,210 vehicles more than in February. Of this increase, two-thirds were trucks. Trucks include minivans, sport-utility vehicles, light and heavy trucks, vans and buses.

New motor vehicle sales posted a third consecutive gain in March

'000 units



The last few trend points could be subject to revisions as more data are added. This is indicated by the dashed line.

New motor vehicle sales followed a downward movement in the second half of 2003. During the first part of 2003, sales fluctuated considerably, but the trend

Note to readers

All data in this release are seasonally adjusted unless otherwise indicated. Seasonally adjusted provincial data back to January 1991 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, data for Yukon, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut are included with those for British Columbia

was relatively stable. Previously, new motor vehicle sales have remained at record levels throughout 2002, following a period of sustained growth in 2001.

Trucks continue to increase their market share

Following a period of declines in the latter part of 2003, new motor vehicle sales rebounded in the first part of 2004, stimulated in part by incentive programs. While both categories of vehicles were targeted, trucks have continued to increase their market share.

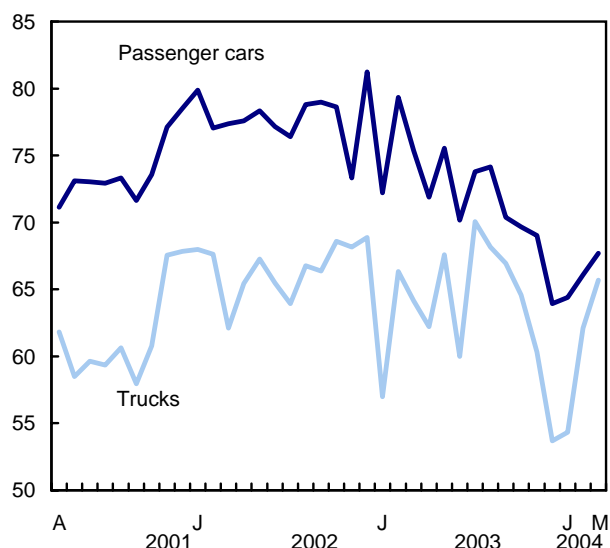
The number of new trucks sold in March rose 5.8% to 65,697 units. In March, trucks captured 49% of the market share of all new motor vehicles, compared with 46% for the same month of 2003. The most recent market share is the highest in the last five years, that is, since March 1999 (49%).

Sales of new passenger cars were 2.5% higher than in February at 67,710 vehicles. This too is the third gain in three months. Both North American-built and overseas-built cars contributed to this increase.

Sales of both passenger cars and trucks rose in the first three months of 2004, following a pronounced downward movement in the second half of 2003. For passenger cars, this movement began in the fall of 2002. For trucks, which did not show the same weakness, it began much later, in the fall of 2003. Previously, sales of both categories of vehicles were stable during 2002, following an upward movement that began at the start of 2001.

Truck sales are closing in on those of passenger cars

'000 units



Quarterly sales favour trucks

Only new truck sales posted an increase in the first three months of 2004 compared with the previous quarter. During this period, truck sales advanced 2.0% while passenger car sales posted a 2.2% decline, entirely attributable to North American-built cars (-4.0%).

While truck sales rose in the first quarter of 2004, this was not the case in the previous quarter, when they fell substantially (-12.9%). Sales of passenger cars fell 7.0% during the same period.

Sales fluctuate by province

Compared with February, new motor vehicle sales advanced in March in most provinces, except Saskatchewan (-6.4%), Prince Edward Island (-1.3%), New Brunswick (-0.9%) and Alberta (-0.8%). For each of these provinces, the declines followed increases, which were especially sizable in the case of Saskatchewan and, to some extent, Prince Edward Island.

Sales advanced the most in Nova Scotia (+15.9%), followed by the region formed by British Columbia and the territories (+12.4%). In each of these regions, the gain followed a stretch of declining sales.

In Quebec (+8.1%) and Ontario (+1.3%), sales advanced in the first three months of 2004. Previously, sales in Quebec rose throughout most of 2002, then stabilized in the first half of 2003 at a fairly high level. In Ontario, sales have generally followed a downward movement since the start of 2003, after remaining at a high level throughout 2002.

Available on CANSIM: tables 079-0001 and 079-0002.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2402.

The March 2004 issue of *New Motor Vehicle Sales* (63-007-XIB, \$14/\$133) will soon be available.

Data on new motor vehicle sales for April 2004 will be released on June 14, 2004.

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 Clérance Kimanyi (613-951-6363), Distributive Trades Division.

□

New motor vehicle sales

	March 2003 ^f	February 2004 ^f	March 2004 ^p	March 2003 to March 2004	February to March 2004
seasonally adjusted					
	number of vehicles			% change	
New motor vehicles	139,488	128,197	133,407	-4.4	4.1
Passenger cars	75,353	66,077	67,710	-10.1	2.5
North American ¹	52,064	45,633	46,769	-10.2	2.5
Overseas	23,289	20,444	20,941	-10.1	2.4
Trucks, vans and buses	64,135	62,120	65,697	2.4	5.8
New motor vehicles					
Newfoundland and Labrador	2,038	1,804	1,839	-9.8	1.9
Prince Edward Island	405	377	372	-8.1	-1.3
Nova Scotia	3,722	3,300	3,826	2.8	15.9
New Brunswick	3,124	2,895	2,868	-8.2	-0.9
Quebec	36,068	33,052	35,721	-1.0	8.1
Ontario	55,910	49,826	50,481	-9.7	1.3
Manitoba	3,895	3,746	3,768	-3.3	0.6
Saskatchewan	3,535	3,434	3,215	-9.1	-6.4
Alberta	16,271	16,122	15,987	-1.7	-0.8
British Columbia ²	14,520	13,642	15,329	5.6	12.4
	March 2003	February 2004	March 2004 ^p	March 2003 to March 2004	
unadjusted					
	number of vehicles			% change	
New motor vehicles	148,922	94,778	149,624	0.5	
Passenger cars	79,385	46,029	75,550	-4.8	
North American ¹	55,863	31,676	52,775	-5.5	
Overseas	23,522	14,353	22,775	-3.2	
Trucks, vans and buses	69,537	48,749	74,074	6.5	
New motor vehicles					
Newfoundland and Labrador	2,185	1,111	2,019	-7.6	
Prince Edward Island	365	231	355	-2.7	
Nova Scotia	4,002	2,257	4,231	5.7	
New Brunswick	3,559	2,052	3,380	-5.0	
Quebec	39,456	23,007	41,818	6.0	
Ontario	59,863	36,564	57,244	-4.4	
Manitoba	3,927	2,814	3,932	0.1	
Saskatchewan	3,686	2,451	3,463	-6.0	
Alberta	16,654	12,395	17,027	2.2	
British Columbia ²	15,225	11,896	16,155	6.1	

^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

Study: Public Transit Use Among Immigrants

2001

Recent immigrants in Canada are much more likely to use public transit to commute to work than people born in Canada, according to a new study released today.

The difference between recent immigrants and Canadian-born people was seen within all age, sex and income groups.

One implication of the study is that Canada's population growth, which is based on immigration, will place somewhat greater demands on public transit systems than growth based on natural increase.

The study, which examines the use of public transit to commute to work in Canada's largest metropolitan areas, also found that the use of public transit is high among immigrants no matter how far away they live from the downtown core.

This means that the shift in the geographic concentration of immigrants from urban cores to more outlying areas, which is happening in some metropolitan areas, could have implications for the location of public transit services.

The study showed that in Toronto, 36% of recent immigrants commuted on public transit compared with only 21% of Canadian-born people.

The pattern was similar in other large metropolitan areas. In Montréal, 49% of recent immigrants commuted on public transit, twice the proportion of only 21% among Canadian-born individuals. In Vancouver, 21% of recent immigrants commuted on public transit, compared with 11% of Canadian-born workers.

Commuting rates tended to be lower in families with higher income for recent immigrants and Canadian-born workers alike. However, within income groups, recent immigrants remained more likely to use public transit in their commute. In Toronto, over one-third of commuters with family income between \$40,000 and \$59,999 used public transit compared with only one-quarter of their Canadian-born counterparts in this income group. Patterns were similar for other income groups.

The study found that immigrant commuting rates become closer and closer to those of Canadian-born people the longer immigrants live in Canada.

For example, in Winnipeg, 25% of recent immigrants commuted on public transit. This rate dropped to nearly 15% among immigrants who had arrived more than 20 years earlier. This was about the same rate as seen among Canadian-born commuters in Winnipeg. Trends were similar in other metropolitan areas.

Recent immigrants remain more likely to commute on public transit than immigrants who arrived in Canada more than 20 years earlier even after controlling for differences in their background characteristics including their age, family income and country of origin.

This could suggest two conclusions: Either transit use by immigrants becomes more like that of the Canadian-born the longer they live in Canada for some other reason, or newer groups of immigrants have a higher likelihood of using public transit than past groups. The report suggests that both of these effects are important.

Note: Results in this study are based mainly on 2001 Census. The Census collected information on public transit use for commuting trips only. Recent immigrants are defined as immigrants who arrived in Canada during the 10 years prior to the Census (that is, during the years 1991 to 2001 inclusive). A transit strike was ongoing in Vancouver at the time the 2001 Census was in the field. This strike will undoubtedly have affected the number of commuters reporting that they usually used public transit to get to work in that area. However, the fact that recent immigrants were more likely to commute on public transit than others would likely be unaffected by the transit strike. Income refers to the pretax post-transfer income of economic families.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 3901.

The research paper *Public Transit Use Among Immigrants* (11F0019MIE2004224, free) is now available online. To access the Analytical Studies Research Paper Series, select *Studies* on the left side bar from the home page, then, under *Browse periodical and series*, choose *Free and for sale*. Under *Series* select *Analytical Studies Branch*.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Andrew Heisz (613-951-3748; Andrew.Heisz@statcan.ca), Business and Labour Market Analysis. ■

Study: Shopping for furniture 1997 to 2002

Cash registers were sizzling in furniture and appliance stores during Canada's red-hot housing market, according to a new report.

In 2002, retail stores recorded \$24.5 billion in sales of home furnishings and electronics, up 8.1% from 2001.

Sales of major appliances rose 14.2%, the strongest growth to date.

Part of this staggering growth was because of Canada's robust housing market and low borrowing costs. Housing starts hit a record 15-year high in 2003 following strong growth in 2002, mirroring the stellar performance of existing home sales.

An estimated 472,886 households bought a home in 2002, spending \$1.3 billion on furniture. These homebuyers made up only 4% of the total household population. However, they accounted for over 8% of the total household spending on furniture.

On average, homebuyers spent twice as much on furniture in 2002 as homeowners who did not move. Furthermore, homebuyers who owned their previous home spent nearly three times more than their non-moving counterparts did on household appliances.

And too, these homebuyers did not stop shopping for furniture right after their move. Data show that three years later, they still spent more than homeowners who didn't move.

This new report analyzes spending by homebuyers on furniture, using the 2002 Survey of Household Spending. It also looks at retail sales growth in furniture and appliance stores using the Monthly Retail Trade Survey and the Quarterly Retail Commodity Survey.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey numbers, including related surveys, 2008, 2406 and 3508.

The analytical article *On the Move with Homebuyers: Shopping for Furniture* (11-621-MIE2004012, free) is now available online in the *Analysis in Brief* series. From the *Our products and services* page, under *Browse our Internet publications*, choose *Free*, then *Trade*.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Jane Lin (613-951-9691), Distributive Trades Division. ■

Non-residential building construction price index

First quarter 2004

The composite price index (1997=100) for non-residential building construction in the first quarter was 122.4, up 2.2% from the fourth quarter and 4.1%

from the first quarter of 2003. The year-to-year percentage change was the highest measured since an increase of 5.7% in the first quarter of 2001.

Vancouver's index rose 3.5% from the fourth quarter, followed by Calgary (+2.6%), Edmonton (+2.5%), Toronto (+1.9%), Halifax and Ottawa-Gatineau, Ontario part (both +1.8%) and Montréal (+1.7%).

Vancouver also had the highest change (+4.7%) from the first quarter of 2003, followed by Halifax (+4.5%), Toronto (+4.4%), Edmonton (+4.0%), Ottawa-Gatineau, Ontario part (+3.9%), Calgary (+3.8%) and Montréal (+3.5%).

Note: Non-residential building construction price indexes provide an indication of changes in construction costs in six census metropolitan areas or CMAs (Halifax, Montréal, Toronto, Calgary, Edmonton and Vancouver) and the Ontario part of the Ottawa-Gatineau CMA. Three construction categories (industrial, commercial and institutional buildings) are represented by selected models (a light factory building, an office building, a warehouse, a shopping centre and a school).

Non-residential building construction price indexes¹ (1997=100)

	First quarter 2004	First quarter 2003 to first quarter 2004	Fourth quarter 2003 to first quarter 2004
		% change	
Composite	122.4	4.1	2.2
Halifax	113.2	4.5	1.8
Montréal	119.4	3.5	1.7
Ottawa-Gatineau, Ontario part	124.0	3.9	1.8
Toronto	127.6	4.4	1.9
Calgary	123.0	3.8	2.6
Edmonton	121.3	4.0	2.5
Vancouver	113.5	4.7	3.5

1. Go online to view the census subdivisions that comprise the census metropolitan areas.

Besides the census metropolitan areas and composite indexes, a further breakdown of the changes in costs is available by trade group—structural, architectural, mechanical and electrical—within the building types. These price indexes are derived from surveys of general and special trade group contractors. They report data on various categories of costs (material, labour, equipment, taxes, overhead and profit) relevant to the detailed construction specifications included in the surveys.

Available on CANSIM: tables 327-0039 and 327-0040.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey numbers, including related surveys, 2317 and 2330.

The first quarter 2004 issue of *Capital Expenditure Price Statistics* (62-007-XPB, \$26/\$85) will be available in July 2004.

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

Aircraft movement statistics: Major airports

February 2004

The February 2004 monthly report, Vol. 1 (TP141, free) is available on Transport Canada's website (<http://www.tc.gc.ca/pol/en/Report/tp141e/tp141.htm>).

Note: The TP 141 monthly report is issued in two volumes. Volume 1 presents statistics for the major Canadian airports (i.e., those with NAV CANADA air-traffic control towers or flight service stations). Volume 2 presents statistics for the smaller airports (i.e., those without air-traffic control towers). Both volumes are available free upon release on Transport Canada's website.

For more information about this website, contact Michel Villeneuve (613-990-3825; villenm@tc.gc.ca)

or Sheila Rajani (613-993-9822; rajanis@tc.gc.ca), Transport Canada.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2715.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Kathie Davidson (613-951-0141; fax: 613-951-0010; aviationstatistics@statcan.ca), Transportation Division. ■

Refined Petroleum Products

January 2004

Data on the supply and disposition and domestic sales of refined petroleum products for January 2004 are now available.

Available on CANSIM: tables 134-0001 to 134-0004.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2150.

The January 2004 issue of *Refined Petroleum Products*, Vol. 59, no. 1 (45-004-XIB, \$18/\$166) 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 the dissemination officer (1-866-873-8789; 613-951-9497, energ@statcan.ca), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

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Catalogue number 45-004-XIB (\$18/\$166).

Financial and Taxation Statistics for
Enterprises, 2002
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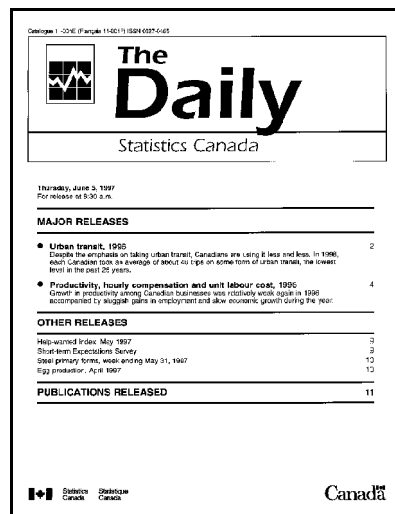
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