



The Daily

Statistics Canada

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MAJOR RELEASES

- **Building permits, April 2004** 2
The demand for new dwellings maintained its sustained pace in April as builders took out a new high in the value of residential building permits for a second month in a row.

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NEW PRODUCTS



MAJOR RELEASES

Building permits

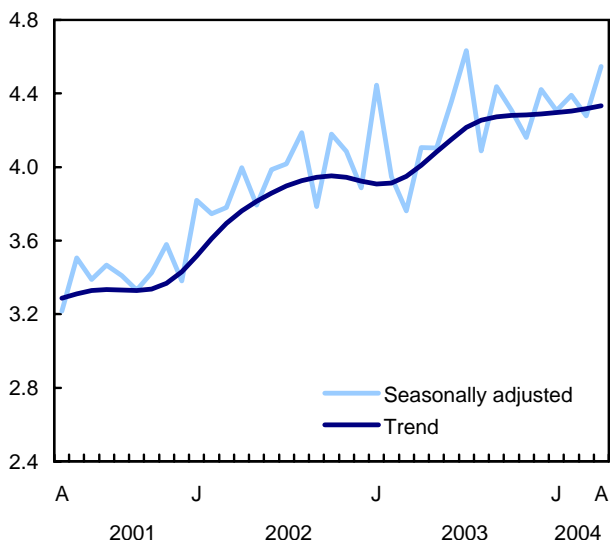
April 2004

The demand for new dwellings maintained its sustained pace in April as builders took out a new high in the value of residential building permits for a second month in a row.

Municipalities issued \$3.12 billion in housing permits, up 4.9% from the previous high of \$2.97 billion in March. The increase came from a spectacular gain of 15.5% in the value of multi-family permits, the value of which surpassed the \$1-billion mark for the first time in a single month.

Total value of permits rose in April

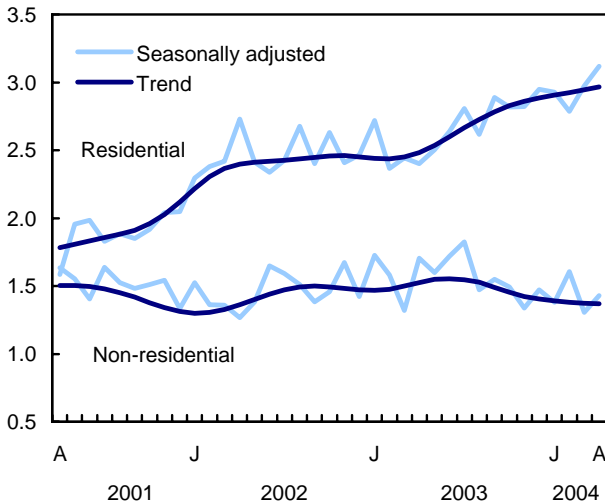
\$ billions



the provinces. The value of residential permits in Ontario hit a record \$1.4 billion. Quebec also posted a sizeable gain in April, rising 8.8% to \$625 million. Following a 39.7% gain in March, Alberta posted the largest declines among provinces (-24.5%).

Value of residential permits reached a record level in April

\$ billions



The value of single-family permits reached \$7.9 billion between January and April, up 11.8% from the same four months last year. Intentions for multi-family dwellings are up a phenomenal 36.1% to \$3.9 billion. In only four months, 79,600 new dwelling units have been approved for construction.

Strength in the housing sector has spread across the country. In every province and territory, the growth in the residential sector was extremely strong on a cumulative basis.

Non-residential projects recover lost ground

The gains in the non-residential sector were led by a 39.7% jump in the value of institutional permits. They reached \$471 million, falling slightly from the five-month high recorded in February.

While it was the second highest value so far this year, it was still 3.6% below the monthly average for 2003. Spending intentions for social services buildings and educational projects in Ontario drove the growth.

The commercial sector shrugged off a 15-month low in March with a 14.7% increase to reach \$743 million

dollars. The average monthly value of permits issued in 2004 remained above levels for the past two years. The rebound was fuelled by recreation, trade and warehousing projects in Alberta, as well as gains in Ontario and Nova Scotia.

Intentions in the industrial component lost the ground they gained in March, falling 32.7% to \$217 million. The decline followed a boost from a major manufacturing permit issued in Quebec in March. This plunged the sector to a monthly low not seen since March of 2002 (\$190 million).

The non-residential sector continues to be hit by mixed economic indicators, though positive undertones have dominated lately. The Canadian composite leading index has been buoyed by strength south of the border, with the US leading indicator recording its 11th consecutive advance in April. The Monthly Survey of Manufacturers reported increased shipments in 19 of 21 manufacturing industries, accounting for 98% of total shipments. On the commercial side, retailers reported record-high sales for both March and the first quarter of 2004.

Provincially, Ontario experienced the biggest gain in non-residential permit value, climbing 26.4% to \$628 million. Commercial and institutional building permits regained ground given up in March when Ontario led the decliners.

On a year-to-date basis, municipalities have issued \$5.7 billion in non-residential building permits, down 9.7% from the first four months last year.

All three components have failed to match last year's pace. But the commercial sector is down only 1.3% to \$3.1 billion on a cumulative basis. The institutional sector is down 16.8%, while the industrial sector is off 19.7%.

Available on CANSIM: tables 026-0001 to 026-0008, 026-0010 and 026-0015.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2802.

The April 2004 issue of *Building Permits*, Vol. 48, no. 4 (64-001-XIE, \$15/\$156) is now available. See *How to order products*.

The May 2004 building permit estimates will be released on July 7.

To order data, contact Brad Sernoskie (613-951-4646 or 1-800-579-8533; bdp_information@statcan.ca). For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Étienne Saint-Pierre (613-951-2025), Investment and Capital Stock Division.

□

Value of building permits, by province and territory

	March 2004 ^r	April 2004 ^p	March to April 2004	January to April 2003	January to April 2004	January–April 2003 to January–April 2004
	seasonally adjusted					
	\$ millions		% change	\$ millions		% change
Canada	4,278.7	4,548.1	6.3	16,261.9	17,525.0	7.8
Residential	2,971.9	3,117.6	4.9	9,929.8	11,804.1	18.9
Non-residential	1,306.8	1,430.5	9.5	6,332.1	5,720.8	-9.7
Newfoundland and Labrador	41.4	38.7	-6.4	110.0	159.3	44.8
Residential	28.0	33.0	17.9	76.9	124.7	62.1
Non-residential	13.4	5.7	-57.2	33.1	34.7	4.6
Prince Edward Island	12.6	18.7	48.2	46.8	56.8	21.5
Residential	10.6	8.2	-22.9	30.9	38.2	23.4
Non-residential	2.0	10.5	426.1	15.8	18.6	17.8
Nova Scotia	79.9	118.7	48.6	304.1	344.5	13.3
Residential	62.3	78.7	26.3	189.7	228.9	20.7
Non-residential	17.5	40.0	128.1	114.5	115.6	1.0
New Brunswick	65.0	62.9	-3.2	189.6	230.4	21.5
Residential	49.4	42.3	-14.2	133.3	180.4	35.3
Non-residential	15.7	20.6	31.5	56.3	50.0	-11.2
Quebec	973.6	900.0	-7.6	3,136.3	3,904.5	24.5
Residential	574.9	625.4	8.8	1,968.3	2,533.2	28.7
Non-residential	398.7	274.6	-31.1	1,168.0	1,371.3	17.4
Ontario	1,704.1	2,042.8	19.9	7,670.4	7,440.2	-3.0
Residential	1,207.1	1,414.4	17.2	4,480.9	4,889.7	9.1
Non-residential	497.0	628.4	26.4	3,189.5	2,550.5	-20.0
Manitoba	90.8	81.8	-9.9	434.2	330.3	-23.9
Residential	57.1	54.5	-4.4	159.9	208.6	30.5
Non-residential	33.8	27.3	-19.1	274.3	121.7	-55.6
Saskatchewan	57.1	77.8	36.3	262.2	231.0	-11.9
Residential	35.1	42.2	20.2	122.3	135.3	10.7
Non-residential	22.0	35.7	62.0	139.9	95.7	-31.6
Alberta	658.9	635.1	-3.6	2,117.6	2,263.2	6.9
Residential	488.8	368.8	-24.5	1,378.2	1,531.4	11.1
Non-residential	170.1	266.3	56.5	739.5	731.8	-1.0
British Columbia	587.0	563.0	-4.1	1,970.8	2,521.9	28.0
Residential	452.1	444.7	-1.6	1,378.4	1,914.1	38.9
Non-residential	135.0	118.3	-12.3	592.4	607.9	2.6
Yukon	3.5	1.6	-54.9	12.5	8.7	-30.8
Residential	3.2	1.6	-51.4	5.9	7.4	26.2
Non-residential	0.3	0.0	-100.0	6.6	1.2	-81.3
Northwest Territories	3.0	5.2	75.4	7.3	21.2	188.8
Residential	2.8	3.1	11.6	5.1	10.1	96.1
Non-residential	0.2	2.1	1,155.4	2.2	11.2	403.4
Nunavut	1.8	1.7	-8.7	0.0	12.9	...
Residential	0.6	0.7	14.7	0.0	2.3	...
Non-residential	1.2	0.9	-21.3	0.0	10.7	...

^r Revised data.

^p Preliminary data.

... Figures not applicable.

Note: Data may not add to totals as a result of rounding.

Value of building permits, by census metropolitan area¹

	March 2004 ^r	April 2004 ^p	March to April 2004	January to April 2003	January to April 2004	January–April 2003 to January–April 2004
seasonally adjusted						
	\$ millions		% change	\$ millions		% change
St. John's	32.7	28.6	-12.4	78.6	117.0	48.8
Halifax	46.6	79.6	70.8	158.5	191.4	20.7
Saint John	7.3	9.7	33.9	30.0	33.2	10.5
Saguenay	6.9	9.6	38.0	43.3	26.6	-38.6
Québec	98.5	101.2	2.8	316.2	418.7	32.4
Sherbrooke	28.7	17.2	-40.2	67.0	74.8	11.7
Trois-Rivières	15.1	15.6	3.2	47.2	47.9	1.4
Montréal	427.8	497.5	16.3	1,661.5	2,088.9	25.7
Ottawa–Gatineau (Ontario and Quebec)	167.3	154.6	-7.6	732.2	694.1	-5.2
Ottawa–Gatineau (Quebec part)	50.1	34.6	-30.9	148.6	154.7	4.1
Ottawa–Gatineau (Ontario part)	117.2	120.0	2.4	583.6	539.4	-7.6
Kingston	13.8	12.4	-10.3	58.2	50.4	-13.3
Oshawa	99.4	93.4	-6.1	346.5	292.9	-15.5
Toronto	831.6	1,010.4	21.5	3,803.6	3,677.6	-3.3
Hamilton	68.4	79.7	16.6	411.6	282.7	-31.3
St. Catharines–Niagara	45.1	46.7	3.6	152.8	184.9	21.0
Kitchener	54.1	58.9	8.9	317.5	312.2	-1.7
London	53.0	73.7	39.1	254.7	301.5	18.4
Windsor	32.5	48.8	50.0	207.4	172.7	-16.7
Greater Sudbury	4.9	6.4	29.4	27.3	15.9	-42.0
Thunder Bay	6.7	8.2	21.9	32.7	27.4	-16.2
Winnipeg	55.5	56.7	2.1	295.3	211.5	-28.4
Regina	20.8	22.3	7.3	97.5	78.1	-19.9
Saskatoon	17.1	22.5	31.2	89.0	70.7	-20.6
Calgary	289.8	307.7	6.2	951.5	995.3	4.6
Edmonton	169.3	169.5	0.1	537.1	615.0	14.5
Abbotsford	20.9	9.1	-56.6	62.7	54.5	-13.0
Vancouver	340.9	329.2	-3.4	1,128.0	1,512.2	34.1
Victoria	36.0	39.8	10.6	155.9	162.7	4.4

^r Revised data.

^p Preliminary data.

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

Note: Data may not add to totals as a result of rounding.



OTHER RELEASES

Survey of Information Technology Occupations 2002

The economic downturn in the high-tech sector in 2001 was so severe that most companies virtually stopped hiring new employees, according to first results of the Survey of Information Technology Occupations. As a result, most employees were holding on to their existing jobs.

Data show that about four out of every five information technology (IT) employers (or 81%) did not hire any employees during the six months before the survey was conducted in late 2002. In fact, in the public sector, 85% of IT employers reported that they didn't have any jobs to fill, nor did 93% of their counterparts in the private sector.

Only a small fraction of companies did any hiring in the six months prior to the survey. For example, just 16% of companies in computer systems design in the private sector hired one employee, and only 4% hired three or more. In the federal government, only 12% of employers hired one individual, and only 2% hired three or more.

This apparent stability in the IT sector followed a collapse in demand in 2001 for high-tech products and services that led to a number of high-profile layoffs.

At the peak of the high-tech boom in the first quarter of 2001, computer and telecommunications industries employed 650,000 people, according to the Labour Force Survey. A year later, this had dropped by a tenth to 586,000, and the unemployment rate in the sector had jumped from 3.9% to 6.6%. After this sharp decline in 2001, employment in high-tech industries stabilized somewhat in 2002 and into 2003, according to the Labour Force Survey.

As a result, many employers in 2002 were preoccupied with keeping their company afloat, while many employees were worrying about holding onto their jobs.

In the private sector, employees had been holding onto their jobs since four out of every five employees (84%) reported that they had held their current position for more than one year. Overall, employees in the IT sector reported as of late 2002, they had been working at their job for four years on average. Among employees in public administration in the provinces and territories, the average was slightly higher at 4.8 years. In the federal public administration, it was slightly lower, at 3.8 years.

Note: The national Survey of Information Technology Occupations, conducted in 2002 on behalf of the Software Human Resource Council (SHRC), is the first to shed light on the IT labour market in both the public and private sectors. IT employers and employees were surveyed separately, but simultaneously. The employer survey consisted of questions on occupation profile, hiring and recruitment, employee retention, and training and development. The employee survey had questions on the occupational history of IT employees, salary, education, training, and skills. The target population consisted of private-sector locations with at least six employees, and with at least one employee working in IT, as well as public-sector divisions with at least one IT employee.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2939.

For more information on the survey, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Lucie Cloutier (613-951-1634; lucie.cloutier@statcan.ca), Small Business and Special Surveys Division.

The SHRC intends to produce five reports in late 2004. The reports will contain information on skills; education and training; hiring and retention; income and working conditions; and occupational profiles for Canada and regions. For more information on the reports, contact Lee Jacobs (613-237-8551 ext.146; l.jacobs@shrc.ca), Software Human Resource Council. ■

Domestic travel

Fourth quarter 2003 and annual 2003

Travel in Canada by Canadian residents fell 8.3% to 172.2 million trips in 2003 after reaching a six-year high of 187.9 million trips in 2002.

The size of the decrease in domestic travel was smaller than the one recorded in international travel to Canada (-13.3%) during 2003.

Tourism in Canada suffered a difficult year in 2003 as a series of adverse events, such as the war in Iraq, the outbreak of SARS, the power outage in Ontario and the forest fires in British Columbia, affected international travel to Canada.

Travel to foreign countries by Canadian residents remained virtually unchanged in 2003 at 39.2 million of trips.

Overall, domestic trips accounted for 82% of the 211.1 million trips within Canada in 2003 compared with 81% in 2002.

Trips made by Canadians within their own province in 2003 reached 151.2 million, or 88% of all trips made by Canadians in Canada. They were down 8.1% compared to 2002.

Canadians were also less inclined to make interprovincial travel in 2003 (21.0 million trips), down 10% from the previous year.

Pleasure trips (67.4 million) and trips made to visit friends or relatives (61.4 million) represented 75% of all domestic trips in 2003. They were down by 9.5% and 6.0%, respectively.

Business and convention trips recorded the largest year-over-year decline (-17.0%) in 2003, down to 19.6 million. In the last six years, the highest annual number of business and convention trips recorded was 26.5 million in 2000.

Decreases in the number of nights spent in commercial (-10.7%) and non-commercial (-8.9%) establishments resulted in a 9.6% decline of overnight stays in all types of accommodation in 2003.

During the year, Canadian travellers in Canada were away from home 278 million nights or an average of 3.2 nights per trip.

Spending on domestic travel, which reached \$28.4 billion in 2003, dropped 8.0% compared with 2002. However, when taking inflation into account, spending actually decreased by 9.0% to \$25.4 billion (in 1997 dollars).

Annual declines were recorded in all expenditure categories, with expenditures on food and beverages showing the smallest decrease (-6.8%) and recreation and entertainment, the largest (-9.1%).

In 2003, average spending (\$166) and average distance (287 km) travelled for all trips were relatively

unchanged from the previous year. In comparison, average spending per overnight trip was \$261, while the average distance travelled for all overnight trips was 424 km.

Domestic trips taken in the fourth quarter of 2003 fell 6.4% from a year earlier, to 38.9 million trips. December is the month in the fourth quarter that recorded the smallest year-over-year decrease in domestic travel, 0.9% compared with 9.9% in November and 9.4% in October.

The fourth quarter had a relatively small impact on the annual domestic travel results, accounting for 23% of all trips taken during 2003.

Spending on domestic travel accounted to \$6.5 billion in the fourth quarter, while the total number of overnight stays by Canadian travellers in Canada in all types of accommodation was 52.9 million.

Note: Domestic travel is defined as any trip of 80 kilometres or more one way, taken by a Canadian resident to a Canadian destination. Data for trips by Canadian residents abroad and by foreigners to Canada come from the International Travel Survey.

Available on CANSIM: tables 426-0001 to 426-0006.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 3810.

For general information or to order data, contact Client Services (1-800-307-3382; 613-951-7608; fax: 613-951-2909; cult.tourstats@statcan.ca). To enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Lizette Gervais-Simard (613-951-1672; fax: 613-951-2909; gervliz@statcan.ca), Culture Tourism, and the Centre for Education Statistics.

For additional context and perspective on the tourism industry, contact Scott Meis (613-954-3909; fax: 613-954-3826; meis.scott@ctc-cct.ca), Canadian Tourism Commission. □

Canadian travel within Canada

	2002	2003	2002 to 2003 % change
	trips (millions)		
Total trips	187.9	172.2	-8.3
Intraprovincial trips	164.6	151.2	-8.1
Interprovincial trips	23.3	21.0	-10.0
Same day trips	92.7	85.9	-7.3
Overnight trips	95.2	86.3	-9.4
Visiting friends or relatives	65.3	61.4	-6.0
Pleasure	74.5	67.4	-9.5
Personal ¹	24.5	23.8	-2.5
Business and convention	23.6	19.6	-17.0
	nights (millions)		
Total nights	308.0	278.5	-9.6
Non-commercial nights	186.6	170.1	-8.9
Commercial nights	121.4	108.4	-10.7
	expenditures (\$ millions)		
Total expenditures	30,926	28,455	-8.0
Transportation	11,646	10,665	-8.4
Accommodation	5,152	4,711	-8.6
Food and beverage	7,431	6,928	-6.8
Recreation and entertainment	2,118	1,924	-9.1
Other ²	4,579	4,227	-7.7
	expenditures (\$ millions, 1997)		
Total expenditures	27,968	25,444	-9.0
Transportation	10,655	9,591	-10.0
Accommodation	4,692	4,402	-6.2
Food and beverage	6,582	5,983	-9.1
Recreation and entertainment	1,910	1,711	-10.4
Other ²	4,129	3,757	-9.0

1. Includes trips for which the purposes were not stated.

2. Includes clothing and other purchases.

■

Farm product prices

April 2004

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

In April, the slaughter steer price in Quebec was \$78.41 per hundredweight, up 2% from March 2004 and down 24% from April 2003 when it reached \$102.94. The Canadian cattle sector came to a virtual halt on May 20, 2003 when a cow in Alberta tested positive for bovine spongiform encephalopathy (or mad cow disease). The loss of crucial export markets resulted in an oversupply, which in turn depressed prices.

The April non-board wheat price in Manitoba was \$143.84 per metric tonne, up 6% from March's price and 3% below the April 2003 price of \$148.44.

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: 204-983-7543; gail-ann.breese@statcan.ca), Agriculture Division. ■

Domestic sales of refined petroleum products

April 2004 (preliminary)

Sales of refined petroleum products totalled 7 624 500 cubic metres in April, up 3.0% from April 2003. Sales increased in five of the seven major product groups, with diesel fuel oil up 94 600 cubic metres or 5.4%. Motor gasoline rose 114 200 cubic metres

or 3.7 % and heavy fuel oil was down 158 600 cubic metres or 25.4%.

Sales of regular non-leaded (+3.5%) and sales of premium (+6.9%) rose, while mid-grade (-2.0%) fell from April 2003.

Year-to-date sales of refined petroleum products at the end of April reached 32 572 000 cubic metres up 4.1% from the same period of 2003. Sales rose in five of the seven major product groups with the largest increase in diesel fuel oil (412 000 cubic metres or 5.6%).

Preliminary data for domestic sales of refined petroleum products are no longer available on CANSIM.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2150.

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.

Sales of refined petroleum products

	April 2003 ^r	April 2004 ^p	April 2003 to April 2004
	'000 of cubic metres		% change
Total, all products	7 404.9	7 624.5	3.0
Motor gasoline	3 119.4	3 233.6	3.7
Diesel fuel oil	1 768.3	1 862.9	5.4
Light fuel oil	439.2	419.6	-4.5
Heavy fuel oil	623.8	465.2	-25.4
Aviation turbo fuels	442.1	510.1	15.4
Petrochemical feedstocks ¹	326.6	385.6	18.1
All other refined products	685.6	747.4	9.0

	January to April 2003 ^r	January to April 2004 ^p	January–April 2003 to January–April 2004
	'000 of cubic metres		% change
Total, all products	31 297.3	32 572.0	4.1
Motor gasoline	12 567.0	12 930.8	2.9
Diesel fuel oil	7 369.5	7 781.5	5.6
Light fuel oil	2 732.7	2 606.6	-4.6
Heavy fuel oil	2 665.1	2 407.0	-9.7
Aviation turbo fuels	1 817.3	1 993.0	9.7
Petrochemical feedstocks ¹	1 431.9	1 525.2	6.5
All other refined products	2 713.9	3 409.2	25.6

^r Revised figures.

^p Preliminary figures.

1. Materials produced by refineries that are used by the petrochemical industry to produce chemicals, synthetic rubber and a variety of plastics.

Construction Type Plywood

March 2004

Data on construction type plywood for March are now available.

Available on CANSIM: table 303-0005.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2138.

The March 2004 issue of *Construction Type Plywood*, Vol. 52, no. 3 (35-001-XIB, \$6/\$51) 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; manufact@statcan.ca), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division.

NEW PRODUCTS

Construction Type Plywood, March 2004, Vol. 52,
no. 3
Catalogue number **35-001-XIB** (\$6/\$51).

Building Permits, April 2004, Vol. 48, no. 4
Catalogue number **64-001-XIE** (\$15/\$156).

All prices are in Canadian dollars and exclude sales tax. Additional shipping charges apply for delivery outside Canada.

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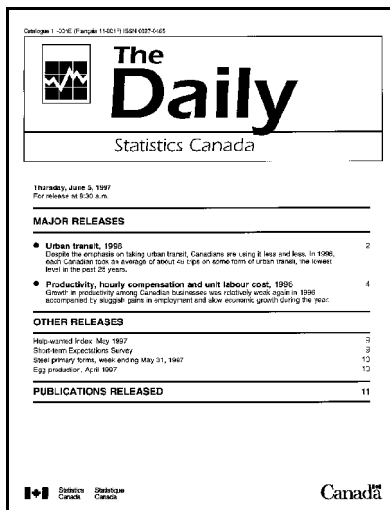
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