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The Daily

Statistics Canada

Tuesday, February 22, 2005
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MAJOR RELEASES

OTHER RELEASES

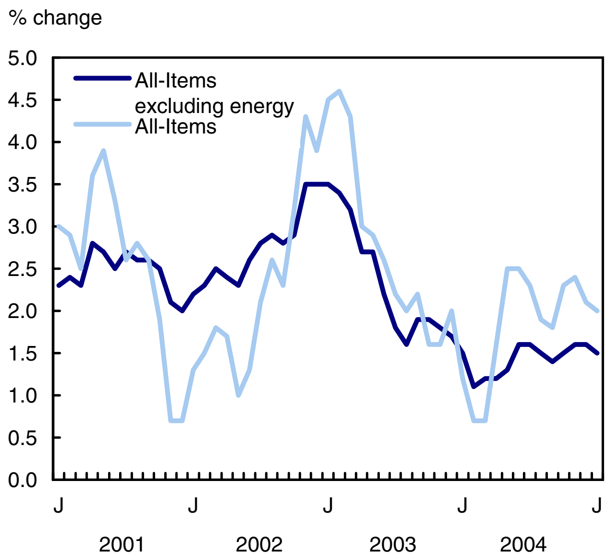
MAJOR RELEASES

Consumer Price Index

January 2005

Consumers paid 2.0% more in January 2005 than in January 2004 for the goods and services included in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) basket. This increase follows a 12-month increase of 2.1% in December.

Percentage change from the same month of the previous year



The CPI excluding energy rose 1.5% from January 2004 to January 2005. The 12-month rise in this index has been relatively stable, fluctuating between 1.4% and 1.6% since June 2004.

The All-items index excluding the eight volatile components identified by the Bank of Canada rose by 1.6% between January 2004 and January 2005, slightly less than in December 2004 when the 12-month increase was 1.7%.

Between December and January, the All-items index dropped 0.1%, after decreasing 0.2% in December. The 2.5% increase in gasoline prices in January moderated the monthly decrease in the All-items in January compared with December.

On a monthly basis, the All-items index excluding the eight volatile components identified by the Bank of Canada was down 0.1%, a decrease identical to that of December.

Gasoline prices remained an important contributor to the 12-month increase in the CPI

In January, the CPI registered a 2.0% increase over January 2004. Upward pressure was exerted primarily by gasoline prices, homeowners' replacement cost, property taxes and prices for restaurant meals.

These increases were moderated by lower prices for computer equipment and supplies, women's and men's clothing, and fresh vegetables.

On average, gasoline prices in January 2005 were 8.6% higher than in January 2004. Manitoba residents experienced the largest increases (+17.3%), followed closely by those of Prince Edward Island (+16.9%). The smallest increases were observed in New Brunswick (+6.7%) and Quebec (+6.9%).

Homeowners' replacement cost, which represents the worn out structural portion of housing and is estimated using new housing prices (excluding land), rose 6.0% over January 2004. This represents the most moderate increase since last March. Costs for construction materials and for transporting these materials, along with a strong demand for labour in the construction industry, were factors that caused prices to rise.

Changes to property taxes (including special charges) that were reflected in the CPI in October 2004 continued to influence the All-items index, with a 4.3% increase over last year.

Consumers paid 2.5% more for restaurant meals between January 2004 and January 2005.

A number of factors exerted a moderating effect on the 12-month All-items index. These include the index for computer equipment and supplies, for which prices dropped by 21.1% since January 2004. This is the most substantial decrease since June 2002.

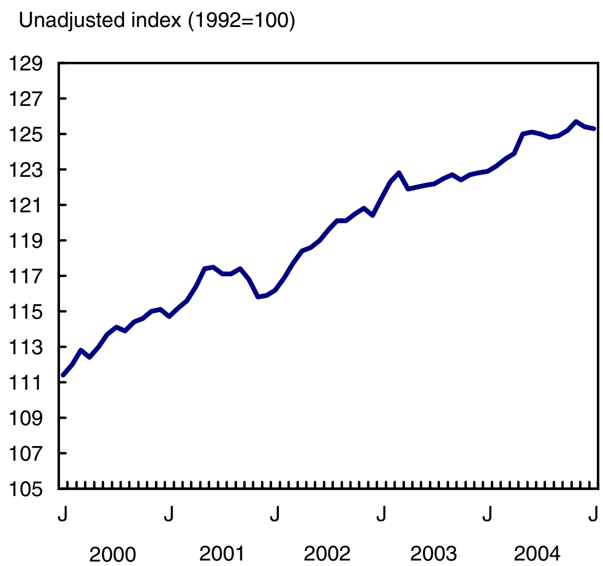
Decreases were noted in the indexes for women's (-5.2%) and men's clothing (-2.6%) compared with January 2004.

The drop in prices for some fresh vegetables also exerted downward pressure on the index. Overall, prices for fresh vegetables were 5.3% lower than in January 2004 under the influence of prices for lettuce (-6.7%) and "other fresh vegetables" (-10.1%).

Slight decrease in the CPI from December to January

The CPI dropped by 0.1% between December and January, from 125.4 to 125.3 (1992=100). Lower prices for travel tours, fresh vegetables and the purchase and leasing of automotive vehicles accounted for most of this reduction. Higher prices for gasoline and non-alcoholic beverages nonetheless exerted a mitigating effect on this decrease.

The Consumer Price Index



The index for travel tours was down 13.6% in January 2005, with all provinces posting decreases. The most substantial reduction was recorded in Ontario (-17.9%), while the index for Manitoba showed the smallest decrease (-6.8%). Prices for travel tours are collected every year in January, February and March while they are at a premium among Canadians. Of those three months, January is the month with the lowest demand. Since January prices are directly compared with those of March of the previous year, the index usually falls in January.

Fresh vegetable prices were down 10.8% in January. This situation is unusual for the month of January and represents only the second such reduction in the past 20 years. Lower prices for tomatoes (-33.1%) and "other fresh vegetables" (-2.6%) accounted for most of this decrease. Supply has picked up after the squeeze caused by the hurricanes in the east and the wet weather in the west of the United States.

The index for the purchase and leasing of automotive vehicles dropped 1.1% from December 2004 to January 2005. This monthly reduction was caused by an increase in the financial incentives offered by some automotive vehicle manufacturers in January.

After two consecutive monthly decreases, gasoline prices were up 2.5% in January. More important price increases in Ontario (+5.2%) and Quebec (+3.5%) triggered this rise. Increases of less than 1.0% were noted in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and British Columbia, while price reductions were posted in all of the other provinces.

In the wake of specials offered during the holiday season, prices for non-alcoholic beverages returned to normal, posting a 7.6% increase in January 2005.

The decrease in the CPI and the seasonally adjusted CPI were identical from December to January

Seasonally adjusted, the CPI decreased by 0.1% from December 2004 to January 2005.

Downward pressure came from the seasonally adjusted indexes for food (-0.7%); recreation, education and reading (-0.2%); as well as clothing and footwear (-0.4%).

The indexes for health and personal care remained stable in January.

The indexes for transportation (+0.3%); shelter (+0.1%); alcoholic beverages and tobacco products (+0.5%); and household operations and furnishings (+0.1%) served to offset partially the downward pressure on the All-items index.

All-items index excluding the eight most volatile components

The All-items index excluding the eight volatile components identified by the Bank of Canada increased by 1.6% between January 2004 and January 2005. The main contributors to this increase were homeowners' replacement cost (+6.0%), property taxes (+4.3%), and prices for restaurant meals (+2.5%). The increase was attenuated by lower prices for computer equipment and supplies (-21.1%), women's clothing (-5.2%) and men's clothing (-2.6%).

From December 2004 to January 2005, the All-items index excluding the eight volatile components identified by the Bank of Canada slid 0,1%, primarily under the influence of the drop in prices for travel tours (-13.6%) and for the purchase and leasing of automotive vehicles (-1.1%). The return to regular prices for non-alcoholic beverages (+7.6%) was the main factor exerting a moderating effect on this decline.

Energy

The energy index climbed 7.3% between January 2004 and January 2005, mainly as a result of higher gasoline prices (+8.6%). Higher prices for fuel oil (+20.5%), electricity (+3.5%) and natural gas (+6.5%)

as well as for fuel, parts and supplies for recreational vehicles (+6.7%) also contributed to pushing up the energy index.

On a monthly basis, the energy index rose 1.2%, mainly owing to higher gasoline prices (+2.5%). Prices for natural gas (+2.5%) and for fuel, parts and supplies for recreational vehicles (+1.0%) also exerted upward pressure on the index. However, lower prices for electricity (-0.7%) and fuel oil (-0.6%) had somewhat of a dampening effect on these increases.

Available on CANSIM: tables 326-0001, 326-0002, 326-0009, 326-0012 and 326-0016 to 326-0018.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2301.

More information about the concepts and use of the CPI are also available online in *Your Guide to the Consumer Price Index* (62-557-XIB, free).

Available at 7 a.m. online under *Today's news releases from The Daily*, then *Latest Consumer Price Index*.

The January 2005 issue of the *Consumer Price Index*, Vol. 84, no. 1 (62-001-XIB) $9/$83; 62-001-XPB, $12/$111) is now available. See *How to order products*.

The February 2005 Consumer Price Index will be released on March 23.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, call Rebecca McDougall (1-866-230-2248; 613-951-9606; fax: 613-951-1539; *infounit@statcan.ca*), Prices Division.

□

Consumer Price Index and major components
(1992=100)

	January 2005	December 2004	January 2004	December to January 2005	January 2004 to January 2005
	Unadjusted				
				% change	
All-items	**125.3**	**125.4**	**122.9**	**-0.1**	**2.0**
Food	126.8	127.2	123.7	-0.3	2.5
Shelter	122.4	122.3	118.7	0.1	3.1
Household operations and furnishings	115.3	115.3	114.9	0.0	0.3
Clothing and footwear	100.0	100.8	102.3	-0.8	-2.2
Transportation	146.3	145.8	142.2	0.3	2.9
Health and personal care	119.0	119.1	117.7	-0.1	1.1
Recreation, education and reading	125.5	126.9	125.3	-1.1	0.2
Alcoholic beverages and tobacco products	145.1	144.5	140.8	0.4	3.1
All-items (1986=100)	160.5				
Purchasing power of the consumer dollar expressed in cents, compared with 1992	79.8	79.7	81.4		
Special aggregates					
Goods	119.8	120.1	117.9	-0.2	1.6
Services	131.4	131.4	128.5	0.0	2.3
All-items excluding food and energy	122.6	122.9	121.1	-0.2	1.2
Energy	149.1	147.3	138.9	1.2	7.3
All-items excluding the eight most volatile components[1]	125.5	125.6	123.5	-0.1	1.6

1. *Excluded from the All-items CPI are the following eight volatile components, as defined by the Bank of Canada: fruit, fruit preparations and nuts; vegetables and vegetable preparations; mortgage interest cost; natural gas; fuel oil and other fuel; gasoline; inter-city transportation; and tobacco products and smokers' supplies. The Bank of Canada further adjusts this series to obtain their measure of core inflation, which also excludes the effect of changes in indirect taxes. For data and information on core inflation, please consult the Bank of Canada Web site (www.bankofcanada.ca/en/inflation/index.htm).*

Consumer Price Index by province, and for Whitehorse, Yellowknife and Iqaluit[1]
(1992=100)

	January 2005	December 2004	January 2004	December to January 2005	January 2004 to January 2005
	Unadjusted				
				% change	
Newfoundland and Labrador	123.9	124.1	120.9	-0.2	2.5
Prince Edward Island	125.3	126.4	121.8	-0.9	2.9
Nova Scotia	127.0	127.5	123.6	-0.4	2.8
New Brunswick	125.2	125.2	122.5	0.0	2.2
Québec	121.6	121.5	119.2	0.1	2.0
Ontario	126.2	126.5	124.2	-0.2	1.6
Manitoba	129.2	129.9	125.6	-0.5	2.9
Saskatchewan	130.6	130.9	127.1	-0.2	2.8
Alberta	131.7	132.2	129.8	-0.4	1.5
British Columbia	123.6	123.5	120.8	0.1	2.3
Whitehorse	121.3	122.3	118.9	-0.8	2.0
Yellowknife	121.8	122.2	118.1	-0.3	3.1
Iqaluit (Dec. 2002=100)	102.0	102.2	100.0	-0.2	2.0

1. *View the geographical details for the city of Whitehorse, the city of Yellowknife and the town of Iqaluit.*

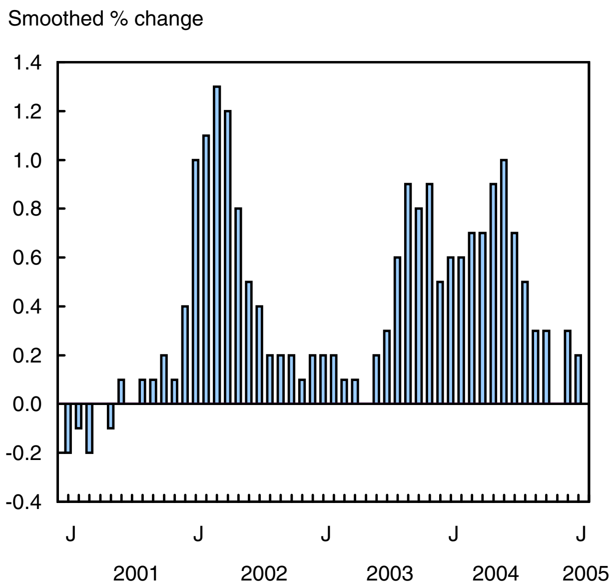
■

Leading indicators

January 2005

The composite leading indicator continued to firm in January, up 0.2% after a 0.3% gain in December and no growth in November. Growth was distributed in the same manner as in December, with steady gains by household spending supported by manufacturing and services. Seven components rose in January, one more than in December, while the rate of decline of the US leading indicator continued to moderate.

Composite index



Durable goods sales continued to spearhead the growth in household spending. Encouraged by lower prices, demand posted a fourth straight increase. For all of 2004, durable goods prices fell for the fifth straight year. The 1.6% drop in 2004 was the largest on record back to 1962, led by lower import prices. Spending was particularly strong for recreational goods and computers (where prices tumbled almost 20% last year). Furniture and appliance demand rose 0.5%, also encouraged by falling prices. Sales have trended up every month since early in 2000. These gains help explain why trade jobs led overall employment gains late in 2004 and into January.

The housing index dipped 2.2% in January, partly as housing starts in Western Canada were hampered by unusually cold weather. Severe weather also hurt housing starts in January 2004, but quickly recovered thereafter. Existing home sales edged up 0.2% in January, a reflection of the rising trend of housing demand.

The US leading indicator fell for the fourth month in a row, although at a slower rate than in the previous two months. The stock market gained strength. The consumer-related components improved after strong gains in disposable incomes, and consumer confidence hit a six-month high. Canada's exports to the United States rose in December, snapping five months of decline.

Manufacturing in Canada responded to the widespread improvement in demand. New orders rose slightly, while the ratio of shipments to stocks of finished goods was flat for a second straight month. The average workweek also posted a second consecutive increase for the first time since early in 2000, while factory employment rose at its fastest clip since November 2003.

Available on CANSIM: table 377-0003.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 1601.

For more information on the economy, consult the February 2005 issue of *Canadian Economic Observer*, Vol. 18, no. 2 (11-010-XIB, $19/$182), which is now available. See *How to order products*.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods and data quality of this release, contact Francine Roy (613-951-3627; *ceo@statcan.ca*) Current Economic Analysis Group. □

Leading indicators

	August 2004	September 2004	October 2004	November 2004	December 2004	January 2005	Last month of data available
							% change
Composite leading indicator (1992=100)	**199.3**	**199.9**	**200.5**	**200.5**	**201.2**	**201.6**	**0.2**
Housing index (1992=100)[1]	145.8	144.2	142.2	141.4	140.7	137.6	-2.2
Business and personal services employment ('000)	2,609	2,611	2,613	2,613	2,617	2,619	0.1
S&P/TSX stock price index (1975=1,000)	8,408	8,493	8,584	8,681	8,839	9,004	1.9
Money supply, M1 ($ millions, 1992)[2]	128,766	129,731	130,617	129,948	129,811	129,921	0.1
U.S. composite leading indicator (1992=100)[3]	115.5	115.5	115.4	115.1	114.9	114.8	-0.1
Manufacturing							
Average workweek (hours)	38.5	38.4	38.4	38.4	38.5	38.6	0.3
New orders, durables ($ millions, 1992)[4]	23,053	23,250	23,259	23,305	23,567	23,601	0.1
Shipments/inventories of finished goods[4]	1.88	1.9	1.91	1.9	1.9	1.9	0.00[5]
Retail trade							
Furniture and appliance sales ($ millions, 1992)[4]	2049.8	2062.2	2,074	2089.8	2,107	2118.2	0.5
Other durable goods sales ($ millions, 1992)[4]	7643.6	7634.8	7643.2	7666.6	7743.8	7780.8	0.5
Unsmoothed composite leading indicator	**200.1**	**201.0**	**201.5**	**200.3**	**203.1**	**202.3**	**-0.4**

1. *Composite index of housing starts (units) and house sales (multiple listing service).*
2. *Deflated by the Consumer Price Index for all items.*
3. *The figures in this row reflect data published in the month indicated, but the figures themselves refer to data for the month immediately preceding.*
4. *The figures in this row reflect data published in the month indicated, but the figures themselves refer to data for the second preceding month.*
5. *Difference from previous month.*

■

OTHER RELEASES

Employment Insurance

December 2004 (preliminary)

The estimated number of Canadians (adjusted for seasonality) receiving regular Employment Insurance benefits edged up 0.2% to 515,760 in December compared with November. This small increase was the first in four months.

Employment Insurance statistics

	Dec. 2004	Nov. 2004	Dec. 2003	Nov. to Dec. 2004	Dec. 2003 to Dec. 2004
	seasonally adjusted				
				% change	
Regular beneficiaries	515,760^p	514,900^p	560,610	0.2	-8.0
Regular benefits paid ($ millions)	717.5^p	680.2^r	707.6	5.5	1.4
Initial and renewal claims received ('000)	247.3^p	232.8^r	247.5	6.2	-0.1
	Unadjusted				
All beneficiaries ('000)[1]	838.9^p	753.3^p	887.4		
Regular beneficiaries ('000)	543.9^p	463.4^p	591.8		
Initial and renewal claims received ('000)	327.0	303.5	339.7		
Payments ($ millions)	1,200.9	1,115.8	1,268.9		
	year-to-date (January to December)				
			2004	2003	2003 to 2004
					% change
Claims received ('000)			2,849.3	2,992.9	-4.8
Payments ($ millions)			14,970.3	14,950.6	0.1

^{r} *Revised figures.*
^{p} *Preliminary figures.*
1. *"All beneficiaries" includes all claimants receiving regular benefits (for example, as a result of layoff) or special benefits (for example, as a result of illness) and are representative of data for the Labour Force Survey reference week which is usually the week containing the15th day of the month.*

Half the provinces and territories recorded increases, with the largest occurring in Manitoba (+2.3%) and Ontario (+1.3%). Alberta and New Brunswick have shown decreases for five consecutive months. Compared with December 2003, the number of regular beneficiaries fell by 8.0% nationally.

Also on a seasonally adjusted basis, regular benefit payments in December totalled $717.5 million, while the number of people making initial and renewal claims was 247,310.

Number of beneficiaries receiving regular benefits

	Dec. 2004^p	Nov. to Dec. 2004	Dec. 2003 to Dec. 2004
	seasonally adjusted		
		% change	
Canada	**515,760**	**0.2**	**-8.0**
Newfoundland and Labrador	37,260	-0.3	1.0
Prince Edward Island	7,920	1.0	-1.9
Nova Scotia	29,710	0.2	-0.3
New Brunswick	33,930	-0.9	-1.6
Quebec	173,470	0.6	-6.3
Ontario	129,670	1.3	-9.6
Manitoba	11,920	2.3	-17.7
Saskatchewan	11,130	0.1	-12.6
Alberta	26,190	-2.0	-17.6
British Columbia	55,380	-0.5	-13.1
Yukon Territory	890	-2.2	-2.2
Northwest Territories and Nunavut	1,100	-3.5	-6.0
	unadjusted for seasonality		
		% change	
Northwest Territories	810	1.3	-10.0
Nunavut	370	5.7	0.0

^{p} *Preliminary figures.*
Note: *The number of beneficiaries includes all claimants who received regular benefits for the Labour Force Survey reference week, usually containing the 15th day of the month.*

Note: Employment Insurance Statistics Program data are produced from an administrative data source and may, from time to time, be affected by changes to the *Employment Insurance Act* or administrative procedures. The number of beneficiaries is a measure of all persons who received Employment Insurance benefits for the week containing the fifteenth day of the month. The regular benefit payments series measures the total of all monies received by individuals for the entire month.

Available on CANSIM: tables 276-0001 to 276-0006, 276-0009, 276-0011, 276-0015 and 276-0016.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2604.

Data on Employment Insurance for January will be released on March 22.

For general information or to order data, contact Client Services at 613-951-4090 or, call toll free 1-866-873-8788; (*labour@statcan.ca*). To enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Gilles Groleau (613-951-4091), Labour Statistics Division. ■

Canada Student Loans Program and administrative data

1991 to 2000

A new file is now available containing characteristics of those who participated in the Canada Student Loans Program between 1991 and 2000 including their annual income and family data from 1982 to 2000. The file will be used for statistical purposes and held until February 2006. Only aggregated data that conform to the confidentiality provisions of the *Statistics Act* will be released.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 4107.

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

Passenger bus and urban transit

December 2004 (preliminary)

Combined ridership on 10 large urban transit systems in Canada was 2.6% higher in 2004 than it was in 2003.

Approximately 1.3 billion passenger trips were taken on these transit systems, which account for about 80% of total urban transit in Canada.

The trips generated $1.95 billion in revenue for 2004 (excluding subsidies), a 5.8% increase over 2003.

On a monthly basis, there were 111.6 million passenger trips taken on the same 10 transit systems in December, 2.9% fewer than in November. Revenue generated in December dropped to 163.7 million (excluding subsidies), from $168.3 million the previous month.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2745.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact the Dissemination Unit (1-866-500-8400; fax: 1-613-951-0009; *transportationstatistics@statcan.ca*), Transportation Division. ■

Natural gas sales

December 2004 (preliminary)

Natural gas sales totalled 8 180 million cubic metres in December, up 2.5% from December 2003. Stronger sale volumes in the residential sector (+4.1%) reflected the colder temperatures recorded in most regions of the country. Sale volumes in the industrial sector (including direct sales) also increased 3.1%. Offsetting these increases, were lower sales volumes in the commercial sector (-1.3%).

Year-to-date sales at the end of December were down 0.6% from the same period of 2003. Both the residential (-2.9%) and the commercial (-5.0%) sectors posted declines. Use of natural gas by the industrial (including direct sales) sector increased 1.9% for the year.

Natural gas sales

	Dec. 2004[p]	Dec. 2003	Dec. 2003 to Dec. 2004
	thousands of cubic metres		% change
Natural gas sales	**8 179 848**	**7 983 379**	**2.5**
Residential	2 438 241	2 341 229	4.1
Commercial	1 740 813	1 762 871	-1.3
Industrial	1 883 889	1 811 828	
			3.1
Direct	2 116 906	2 067 451	
	year-to-date		
	2004[p]	2003	2003 to 2004
	thousands of cubic metres		% change
Natural gas sales	**72 426 770**	**72 842 535**	**-0.6**
Residential	17 195 355	17 710 316	-2.9
Commercial	12 790 337	13 469 814	-5.0
Industrial	19 706 848	19 493 998	
			1.9
Direct	22 734 231	22 168 407	

p *Preliminary figures.*

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2149.

For more information, to order data, 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. ■

Crude oil and natural gas production

December 2004 (preliminary)

Provincial crude oil and marketable natural gas production data are now available for December 2004.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2198.

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. ■

NEW PRODUCTS

Infomat: A Weekly Review, February 22, 2005
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Catalogue number 11-624-MIE2005011
(free).

Cereals and Oilseeds Review, December 2004, Vol. 27, no. 12
Catalogue number 22-007-XIB ($12/$120).

The Consumer Price Index, January 2005, Vol. 84, no. 1
Catalogue number 62-001-XIB ($9/$83).

The Consumer Price Index, January 2005, Vol. 84, no. 1
Catalogue number 62-001-XPB ($12/$111).

Retail Trade, December 2004, Vol. 76, no. 12
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Canada's International Transactions in Securities, December 2004, Vol. 70, no. 12
Catalogue number 67-002-XIE ($15/$142).

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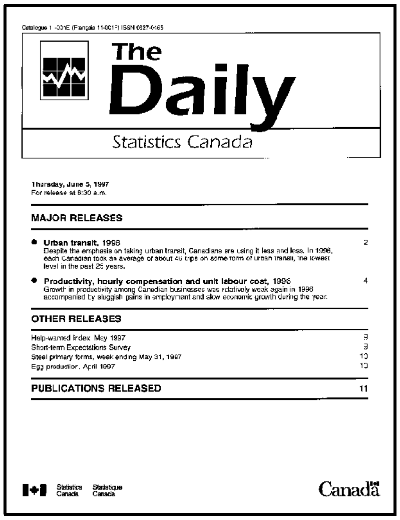

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The Daily

Statistics Canada

Thursday, June 5, 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 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.

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PUBLICATIONS RELEASED 11

Statistics Canada Statistique Canada

Canada

Statistics Canada's official release bulletin

Catalogue 11-001-XIE.

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