



The Daily

Statistics Canada

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Study: Out-of-pocket spending on prescription drugs

1992 to 2002

Household spending on prescription drugs jumped more than 70% in the decade-long period between 1992 and 2002, according to a new study published today in *Perspectives on Labour and Income*.

Out-of-pocket spending on medications represented less than 1% of the family budget in 2002. However, it surged 71% in 2002 dollars during the decade, according to the study, which used data from the Survey of Household Spending and the Family Expenditure Survey.

At the same time, average household spending on all aspects of health care increased only 53%, while spending on food, clothing and shelter increased only 11%.

The 7.8 million households that reported spending on prescription drugs in 2002 had average out-of-pocket expenses of \$378. This compares with \$222 in 1992. The gain is likely due to at least two factors: the introduction of new, more expensive drugs, as well as the higher volume of drug use resulting from a larger, and aging, population.

Total out-of-pocket spending in 2002 amounted to an estimated \$3 billion. Pharmacies filled around 300 million prescriptions, about 10 for each man, woman and child.

The most important factor associated with prescription drug spending was the province of residence, even when factors such as household type, income, unionization and others were taken into account.

Spending varied from province to province, reflecting the diversity of provincial drug plans, as well as the age and health of the population.

In 2002, Ontario households spent the least on prescription drugs, \$257 on average. This may be attributable to the availability of high-quality drug plans. An estimated 62% of Ontarians were covered by private drug plans, the highest level in Canada.

On the other hand, Saskatchewan families spent an average of \$415, the highest in Canada, possibly because of the composition of its population. Saskatchewan had the highest percentage of senior citizens (15%) of all the provinces, and one of the highest proportions of Aboriginal people (13%).

In addition, Saskatchewan's large farming population meant that many people had no access to prescription drug insurance through employment.

One-fifth of Saskatchewan's work force was self-employed, the highest in Canada.

A 2002 Senate report recommended that provinces and territories should implement programs to ensure that households would never have to pay more than 3% of their after-tax income for prescription drugs. In Saskatchewan, 15.9% of households did so in 2002, compared with only 3.3% of households in Ontario and the national average of 6.5%.

Income and age were also factors related to household drug expenditures. All provinces have introduced some form of drug plan for those aged 65 and over. However, senior households are still more likely to report out-of-pocket prescription drug spending and to have higher than average expenditures.

Households with at least one senior reported prescription drug spending of \$518 in 2002. This represented about 1.2% of their total household spending that year.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 3508.

The article "Out-of-pocket spending on prescription drugs" is available in the September online edition of *Perspectives on Labour and Income*, Vol. 6, no. 9 (75-001-XIE, \$6/\$52). See *How to order products*.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Jacqueline Luffman (613-951-1563; jacqueline.luffman@statcan.ca), Labour and Household Surveys Analysis Division. ■

Study: Post-retirement employment 2002

Many people who take their retirement either can't, or won't, stay away from the work force, according to a new study which examines individuals who return to paid employment after an initial retirement.

Just over one-fifth (22%) of people who retired between 1992 and 2002 at the age of 50 or older went back to some form of paid work, and another 4% said they looked for a job, but hadn't been able to find one.

The study, based on the 2002 General Social Survey, showed that retirees are more likely to return to work as they increasingly find themselves in good health, and with the education and skills needed to compete in the job market.

Various characteristics influenced the likelihood of returning to work. Men were slightly more likely than

women to return, as were those whose health was good. Retirees from professional occupations were most likely to do so, followed by managers and technicians.

These figures may reflect greater and more attractive employment opportunities available to these individuals — jobs offering good pay, interesting work, and few physical demands.

From an industry standpoint, retirees from the information, culture and recreation sector as well as construction were most likely to return to the work force. Since employment in construction is mostly project-oriented, retirees from this industry often have more opportunity to find employment in temporary, project-specific jobs.

Although financial concerns were by far the most common reason for returning to work, they were cited by only 38% of respondents, suggesting that non-financial considerations were important as well.

Indeed, 22% of retirees returned to employment because they did not like retirement, 19% mentioned the intrinsic rewards offered by work (challenging tasks, social contacts, sense of purpose), and 14% felt they were needed or wanted to help out. Overall, 55% cited at least one of these three non-financial reasons.

Other considerations, such as pressure from family members, improved health, or no longer having to provide caregiving, were cited by less than 5%.

The likelihood of returning to work for financial reasons did not vary by sex or educational attainment. Voluntary and involuntary retirees differed noticeably on this point, however, with financial considerations being cited more often by those who left involuntarily.

Similarly, individuals who retired because of health problems, downsizing or unemployment were more likely to return to work for financial reasons.

Among the 4% of recent retirees who looked for a job but were unsuccessful in finding one, 40% cited wanting to return to work for financial reasons, 39% non-financial reasons, and 22% both.

Many retirees who worked full time before retirement took a part-time job after retirement — over one-third of the men and more than half of the women.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 4502.

The article "Post-retirement employment" is available in the September online edition of *Perspectives on Labour and Income*, Vol. 6, no. 9 (75-001-XIE, \$6/\$52). See *How to order products*.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release,

contact Grant Schellenberg (613-951-9580 or grant.schellenberg@statcan.ca), Social and Aboriginal Statistics Division. ■

Natural gas sales

July 2005 (preliminary)

Natural gas sales totalled 3 790 million cubic metres in July, down 1.1% from July 2004. Higher sales in the residential sector (+2.5%) were more than offset by weaker sales volume in the commercial sector (-1.6%), while the industrial sector (including direct sales) showed a decline of 1.5%.

Year-to-date sales at the end of July were down 1.3% from the same period of 2004. Both the residential (-1.1%) and the commercial (-2.9%) sectors posted declines. Use of natural gas by the industrial (including direct sales) sector has edged down 0.8% so far this year.

Natural gas sales

	July 2005 ^P	July 2004	July 2004 to July 2005
	thousands of cubic metres		% change
Natural gas sales	3 789 703	3 831 507	-1.1
Residential	437 181	426 561	2.5
Commercial	358 243	364 234	-1.6
Industrial	1 401 957	1 500 846	-1.5
Direct	1 592 323	1 539 866	-1.5
	year-to-date		
	2005 ^P	2004	2004 to 2005
	thousands of cubic metres		% change
Natural gas sales	43 367 208	43 924 546	-1.3
Residential	11 052 774	11 176 000	-1.1
Commercial	7 992 921	8 229 064	-2.9
Industrial	11 185 779	11 293 498	-0.8
Direct	13 135 735	13 225 984	-0.8

^P Preliminary figures.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2149.

For more information, or 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. ■

Steel primary forms, weekly data

Week ending September 17, 2005 (preliminary)

Steel primary forms production for the week ending September 17 totalled 299 975 metric tonnes, down 3.9% from 312 102 tonnes a week earlier and down 5.9% from 318 838 tonnes in the same week of 2004.

The year-to-date total as of September 17 was 10 994 798 tonnes, down 5.1% from 11 586 592 tonnes in the same period of 2004.

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. ■

Large urban transit

July 2005 (preliminary)

Combined ridership on 10 large urban transit systems in Canada was 1.6% higher in July than it was for the same month in 2004.

Approximately 97.7 million passenger trips were taken on these transit systems in July. These systems account for about 80% of total urban transit in Canada.

The trips generated \$158.3 million in revenue in July (excluding subsidies), a 4.7% increase over July 2004.

Available on CANSIM: table 408-0004.

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. ■

New products

Perspectives on Labour and Income,
September 2005, Vol. 6, no. 9
Catalogue number 75-001-XIE (\$6/\$52).

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

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
MAJOR RELEASES

- **Urban transit, 1995** 2
Changes in the mode of urban transit, Canadians are using it less and less. In 1995, each Canadian took an average of about 4.5 trips on some form of urban transit, the lowest level in the past 25 years.
- **Productivity, hourly compensation and unit labour cost, 1995** 4
Growth in productivity among Canadian businesses was relatively weak again in 1995, accompanied by sluggish gains in employment and slow nominal growth during the year.

OTHER RELEASES

- **High-wired Index, May 1997** 3
- **Short-term Expectations Survey** 3
- **Steel primary forms, week ending May 31, 1997** 12
- **Egg production, April 1997** 12

PUBLICATIONS RELEASED 11

Statistics Canada's official release bulletin

Catalogue 11-001-XIE.

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Release dates: September 26 to 30, 2005

(Release dates are subject to change.)

Release date	Title	Reference period
27	The Impact of Tuition Fees on University Access: Evidence from a Large-scale Price Deregulation in Professional Programs	1995 to 2002
27	Employment Insurance	July 2005
28	National tourism indicators	Second quarter 2005
28	Quarterly demographic statistics	July 1, 2005
28	Employment, earnings and hours	July 2005
29	Industrial product and raw materials price indexes	August 2005
30	Gross domestic product by industry	July 2005