



The Daily

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Releases

National balance sheet accounts

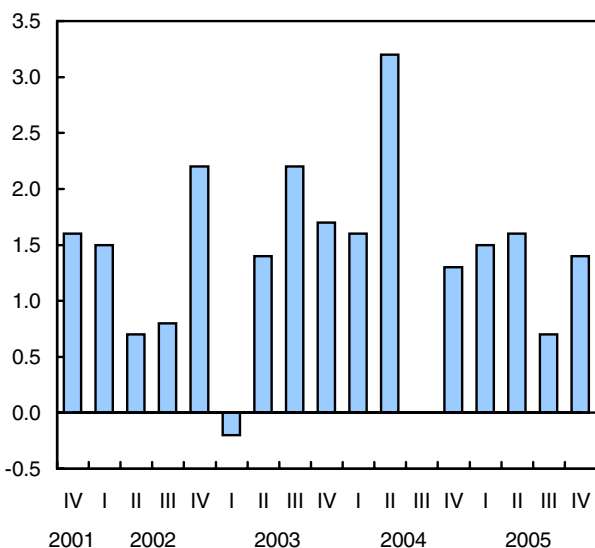
Fourth quarter, 2005 and annual 2005

National net worth reached \$4.5 trillion by the end of the fourth quarter, or \$137,300 per person.

National net worth grew 1.4% in the fourth quarter, up sharply from 0.7% in the third. Third quarter growth was significantly constrained by a marked increase in net foreign debt (what is owed non-residents less what they owe to Canada).

National net worth advances

% change, not seasonally adjusted



The nation's net worth increased by \$60.4 billion in the fourth quarter, as national saving advanced, led by corporate undistributed earnings. This increase was comprised of a \$53.5 billion increase in national wealth (economy-wide non-financial assets) and a slight decrease in net foreign debt.

Continued strong economic performance in the fourth quarter was reflected in the sustained growth of national wealth (+1.2%). Despite slowing investment in new housing, residential real estate continued to be the major contributor to growth in national wealth, accounting for about half of the gain. Increases in machinery and equipment and non-residential structures were significant contributors in this quarter as well.

Note to readers

The national balance sheet accounts are statements of the balance sheets of all of the various sectors of the economy. They consist of the non-financial assets owned in the various sectors of the economy and of financial claims outstanding. **National wealth** is the sum of non-financial assets - produced assets, land surrounding structures and agricultural land - in all sectors of the economy. National net worth is national wealth less net foreign liabilities (i.e., what is owed to non-residents less what non-residents owe to Canadians). Alternatively, it is the sum of the net worth of persons, corporations and governments.

National saving is the sum of saving of persons, corporations and governments. National saving and investment contribute to change in national net worth. The revaluation of assets and liabilities is also responsible for change in national net worth. The causes of revaluation include change in share prices, interest rates, exchange rates and loan allowances. For more information on national saving and the relationship between saving in the different sectors of the economy, see the publication Trends in Saving and Net Lending in the National Accounts, no. 49 (13-604-MIE, free).

Quarterly series run from the first quarter of 1990. Market value estimates have been available since June 2004. For more information, consult Balance sheet estimates at market value.

An annual measure of national wealth that includes selected natural resources is also available (CANSIM table 378-0005). The estimates of natural resources are released annually at the time of the fourth quarter.

Canadians' net foreign indebtedness (with marketable securities on a market value basis) decreased slightly in the quarter, following a significant exchange-rate driven increase in the third quarter. Despite the further strengthening of the Canadian currency, unrealized capital gains in the value of Canadian portfolio investments abroad helped reduce Canada's net foreign debt. Growth in the value of portfolio investment in foreign assets by Canadians outpaced that of non-resident portfolio investments in Canadian equity and debt securities.

However, with marketable securities on a book value basis, Canadians' net foreign indebtedness increased slightly in the fourth quarter.

Corporate finances improve further

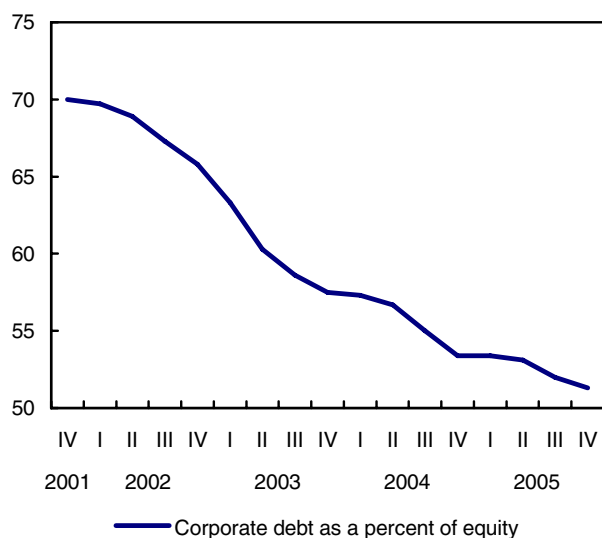
Supported by solid profits in the fourth quarter and despite increases in business investment in structures and machinery and equipment, the corporate sector posted a record surplus. Since 2000, corporations have generated more funds from internal operations than required to finance their non-financial capital acquisition.

As a result, the corporate sector has been a growing net lender to the rest of the economy, while significantly re-structuring their balance sheets.

The reduced reliance on borrowed funds was reflected in the ratio of debt-to-equity (at book value) for non-financial private corporations, which fell further in the fourth quarter.

Corporate leverage continues to ease

As a % of equity, not seasonally adjusted



For more in-depth analysis of the corporate surplus and its effects, see the publication *Recent Trends in Corporate Finance* (13-604-MIE2006050, free).

Household net worth advances at a slower pace

Household net worth grew at a slower pace (+1.4%) than in the third quarter (+2.4%). This reflected slower increases in both residential real estate and equities.

Personal sector share holdings and pension assets increased marginally, reflecting both lower stock market gains and reduced acquisition of financial assets during the quarter.

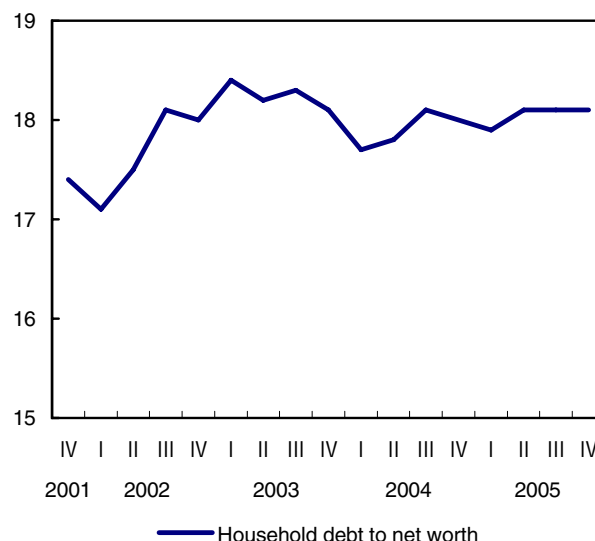
The value of residential real estate increased less in the fourth quarter compared to the third, reflecting both the trend of slowing investment in new housing construction and weaker resale markets in the quarter.

Households' appetite for debt eased with demand for consumer credit and mortgage funds being less exuberant than in the previous quarter. The ratio of household debt to net worth remained flat at 18.1% in the quarter.

Growth in total household debt slightly outpaced that of personal disposable income, as Canadian households currently carry about \$1.08 in debt for every dollar of their disposable income.

Household leverage flat

As a % of net worth, not seasonally adjusted



Government debt-to-GDP continues to fall

With the government sector as a whole registering yet another surplus in the fourth quarter, government net debt (total liabilities less total financial assets) dropped for a third consecutive quarter. Net government debt as a percentage of gross domestic product (GDP) declined further, reaching its 1985 level. Net debt represents roughly half of GDP, compared to 90% a decade ago.

Annual review, 2005

National balance sheet improves at slower pace

Net worth on the national balance sheet expanded 5.3% in 2005. However, marginally slower growth in national wealth and an overall increase in net foreign debt in the year resulted in lower national net worth growth than the 6.2% pace set in 2004.

National wealth grew 5.5% in the year, compared to 5.6% in 2004. Gains in investment and valuation of residential real estate assets continued to be the main contributor to the increase in the value of non-financial assets.

Accumulated plant and equipment assets, held largely by the corporate sector, increased its contribution share in 2005, accounting for 30% of the change in national wealth compared to 24% in 2004.

Natural resources pull up the growth rate of national wealth

The broader measure of national wealth, including natural resources, grew 6.1% in 2005, at the same pace as in 2004. Growth was mainly sustained by higher resource commodity prices.

The value of selected natural resource assets (timber, energy and mineral resources) rose 7.6% to \$925.4 billion in 2005. The rate of growth was lower from that in 2004, partly due to the offsetting effects of the appreciating Canadian dollar.

The value of minerals grew 14.9% in 2005, propelled by strong international demand. The value of energy reserves, which account for more than half of resource wealth, was up 8.4%. Among energy resources, crude oil grew 35.3% through high oil prices. Timber stocks grew 4.0% in value.

Available on CANSIM: tables 378-0003 to 378-0010.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 1806.

The fourth quarter 2005 issue of *National Balance Sheet Accounts, quarterly estimates*, Vol. 3, no. 4 (13-214-XIE, \$23/\$49) is now available. See *How to order products*.

The fourth quarter 2005 issue of *Canadian Economic Accounts Quarterly Review*, Vol. 4, no. 4 (13-010-XIE, free), is now available online. From the *Our products and services* page, under *Browse our Internet publications*, choose *Free*, then *National accounts*.

At 8:30 a.m. on release day, the complete national balance sheet accounts can be obtained on computer diskette. The diskettes (13-214-DDB, \$321/\$1,284) can also be purchased at a lower cost seven business days after the official release date (13-214-XDB, \$65/\$257). To purchase any of these products, contact the client services officer (613-951-3810; iead-info-dcrd@statcan.ca), Income and Expenditure Accounts Division.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact the information officer (613-951-3640), Income and Expenditure Accounts Division.

National balance sheet accounts¹

	Third quarter 2004	Fourth quarter 2004	First quarter 2005	Second quarter 2005	Third quarter 2005	Fourth quarter 2005	2004	2005
National net worth	Market value, not seasonally adjusted, billions of dollars							
National wealth	4,341	4,386	4,441	4,509	4,573	4,627	4,386	4,627
	1.1	1.0	1.3	1.5	1.4	1.2	5.6	5.5
Net foreign debt	-170	-161	-154	-152	-183	-176	-161	-176

National net worth	4,170	4,225	4,287	4,357	4,390	4,450	4,225	4,450
	0.0	1.3	1.5	1.6	0.8	1.4	6.2	5.3
National net worth per capita (dollars)	130,200	131,700	133,300	135,000	135,600	137,300	131,700	137,300
	-0.2	1.2	1.2	1.3	0.4	1.3	5.2	4.3

1. The first line is the series itself expressed in billions of dollars. The second line is the period-to-period percentage change.

... Not applicable.

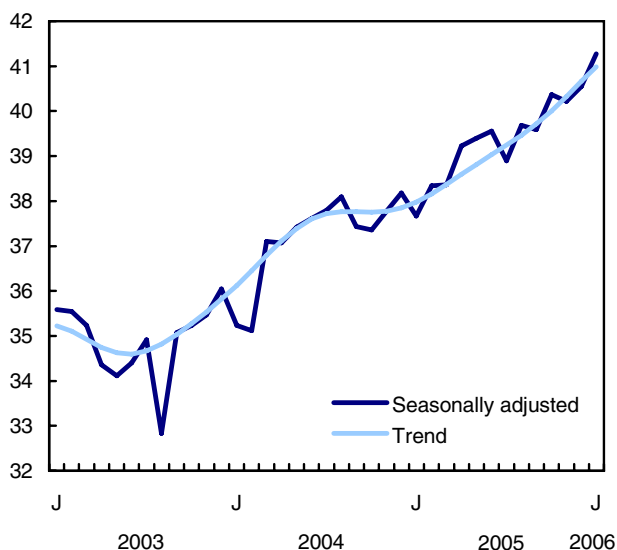
Wholesale trade

January 2006

After ending 2005 on a high note, wholesale sales increased again in January. The broad-based advance led overall sales to jump 1.8% to \$41.3 billion. Sales increased in six of the seven sectors led by machinery and electronic equipment (+3.2%) and automotive products (+2.7%). The farm products sector fell 8.1%.

Wholesalers off to a strong start in 2006

Billions of dollars



Since September 2003, total wholesale sales have generally been rising, with strength in most of the trade groups. Previously, slumping motor vehicle sales were the main cause of a decline that began in April 2003.

In constant prices, wholesale sales grew by 1.9% in January.

Wholesale sales up again in machinery and electronic equipment sector

Following the 0.9% increase in December, wholesale sales in the machinery and electronic equipment sector rose 3.2% in January to \$8.4 billion. All groups in this sector contributed to the growth.

Office and professional equipment sales rose 0.5%, the third gain in four months. Wholesalers in this group have generally seen rising sales since October 2003.

Wholesalers in the machinery and equipment group posted a 1.8% gain in January. This group has experienced a period of almost uninterrupted growth since January 2004. Higher raw material prices stimulated capital spending, especially in Western Canada, which boosted the growth of this group. According to the latest survey of private and public investment prospects, investment in equipment should remain robust in 2006, in light of the excellent prospects in the energy and utilities sectors.

Sales of computers and electronic products grew by 7.8% in January. After increasing at a dizzying pace in the 1990s, sales of this group lost some ground in 2000 and 2001, which it has not yet fully recovered. The weakness of the past two years is attributable, in part, to a strong push toward overseas manufacturers, particularly China, a fact which has pushed prices downward, while, at the same time, reducing the value of sales.

In fact, according to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, China surpassed the United States as the foremost exporter of technological equipment such as mobile phones and laptops as early as 2004. These products accounted for 30% of China's total exports.

Second consecutive rise for automotive products

The automotive products sector posted a 2.7% advance in January, as a result of higher wholesale sales of motor vehicles.

Wholesale sales of motor vehicles (+3.6%) increased for a second consecutive month in January to \$6.8 billion, exceeding the peak attained in January 2003. Wholesalers in this group benefited in January from higher vehicle exports and increased demand from Canadian dealers. Approximately one-quarter of the sales of this group is destined for foreign markets.

For their part, wholesalers of motor vehicle parts posted a second consecutive decline in January (-1.4%). These wholesalers, who do not supply auto plants but sell mainly to retailers and dealers, have posted generally stable sales since July 2004.

Farm products sector posts third consecutive decline

Farm product wholesalers saw sales fall for the third consecutive month with an 8.1% decline in January. Just as in previous months, the drop was largely attributable to wholesalers of live animals. Wholesalers in this group had strongly benefited from the United States reopening the border in July 2005 to cattle under 30 months of age. Exports of live animals then grew rapidly, peaking in October 2005. In the following two months, cattle exports declined. In addition, this group's sales were further hit by some temporary closures during the winter.

Second strong increase in a row for Ontario and British Columbia

In January, British Columbia wholesalers saw their sales rise 2.3%. Increases were reported in many groups, especially lumber. Lumber exports were strong, boosted by mild weather in January, which enabled home builders in the colder parts of the United States to continue working. British Columbia wholesalers have been enjoying strong growth since the last quarter of 2003.

In Ontario, wholesale sales grew 2.2% in January. This increase was attributable to a sharp rise in motor vehicle sales and to the computer and electronic equipment group, both of which are highly concentrated in Ontario. Generally, Ontario wholesalers have registered rising sales since January 2005.

In Saskatchewan, wholesale sales fell for the second consecutive month in January (-10.8%), mainly

as a result of declines in the "other products" category (including seed, fertilizer and agricultural chemicals) and the farm products group.

Inventories continue to rise

After increasing 0.7% in December, inventories grew a further 1.4% in January. The trend in total inventories has been generally upward since November 2003, after a five-month period in which wholesalers cut back their inventories.

The inventory-to-sales ratio remained stable at 1.21 in January. This ratio has generally been stable since October 2004, following a downward period that began in October 2003.

Available on CANSIM: tables 081-0007 to 081-0010.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2401.

The January 2006 issue of *Wholesale Trade* (63-008-XIE, \$15/\$150) will be available shortly.

Wholesale trade estimates for February will be released April 21.

For data or general information, contact Client Services (1-877-421-3067; 613-951-3549; wholesaleinfo@statcan.ca). To enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Jean Lebreux (613-951-4907 or jean.lebreux@statcan.ca), Distributive Trades Division.

□

Wholesale merchants' sales

	January 2005	October 2005 ^r	November 2005 ^r	December 2005 ^r	January 2006 ^p	December 2005 to January 2006	January 2005 to January 2006
seasonally adjusted							
	\$ millions					% change	
Total, wholesale sales	37,666	40,368	40,214	40,543	41,273	1.8	9.6
Farm products	466	572	516	490	451	-8.1	-3.3
Food, beverages and tobacco products	7,004	7,289	7,346	7,301	7,379	1.1	5.3
Food products	6,377	6,674	6,681	6,683	6,744	0.9	5.8
Alcohol and tobacco	627	616	665	618	635	2.7	1.2
Personal and household goods	5,449	5,916	6,123	5,881	6,006	2.1	10.2
Apparel	754	913	927	992	995	0.3	32.0
Household and personal products	2,200	2,378	2,592	2,348	2,412	2.7	9.6
Pharmaceuticals	2,495	2,625	2,603	2,540	2,599	2.3	4.2
Automotive products	7,297	8,146	7,638	8,062	8,277	2.7	13.4
Motor vehicles	5,713	6,636	6,040	6,538	6,774	3.6	18.6
Motor vehicle parts and accessories	1,584	1,511	1,597	1,525	1,503	-1.4	-5.1
Building materials	5,442	5,571	5,703	5,836	5,919	1.4	8.8
Building supplies	3,061	3,389	3,436	3,526	3,560	1.0	16.3
Metal products	1,154	1,129	1,198	1,191	1,204	1.1	4.3
Lumber and millwork	1,227	1,054	1,069	1,120	1,155	3.2	-5.8
Machinery and electronic equipment	7,479	8,222	8,113	8,157	8,419	3.2	12.6
Machinery and equipment	3,472	3,859	3,847	3,964	4,035	1.8	16.2
Computer and other electronic equipment	2,242	2,511	2,459	2,338	2,522	7.8	12.5
Office and professional equipment	1,765	1,853	1,808	1,854	1,863	0.5	5.5
Other products	4,530	4,651	4,776	4,816	4,823	0.1	6.5
Total, excluding automobiles	30,369	32,221	32,576	32,481	32,996	1.6	8.6
Sales by province and territory							
Newfoundland and Labrador	206	217	216	224	227	1.2	10.3
Prince Edward Island	48	36	36	35	34	-0.9	-28.1
Nova Scotia	490	528	532	497	540	8.7	10.2
New Brunswick	428	392	400	398	395	-0.7	-7.8
Quebec	7,359	7,770	7,819	7,543	7,720	2.3	4.9
Ontario	19,287	20,377	20,068	20,486	20,945	2.2	8.6
Manitoba	979	1,122	1,116	1,171	1,171	0.0	19.5
Saskatchewan	1,020	1,190	1,196	1,127	1,005	-10.8	-1.5
Alberta	4,203	4,701	4,757	4,860	4,933	1.5	17.4
British Columbia	3,621	4,011	4,039	4,175	4,272	2.3	18.0
Yukon	6	6	12	10	11	7.7	72.0
Northwest Territories	16	15	19	16	19	16.3	15.7
Nunavut	2	2	2	2	2	-0.5	-32.4

^r Revised.

^p Preliminary.

Wholesale merchants' inventories and inventory-to-sales ratio

	January 2005	October 2005 ^r	November 2005 ^r	December 2005 ^r	January 2006 ^p	December 2005 to January 2006	January 2005 to January 2006	December 2005 ^r	January 2006 ^p
	Wholesale inventories					Inventory-to-sales ratio			
	seasonally adjusted								
	\$ millions					% change			
Inventories	47,097	48,736	48,791	49,156	49,823	1.4	5.8	1.21	1.21
Farm products	143	193	188	140	141	0.6	-1.9	0.28	0.31
Food products	4,292	4,319	4,335	4,312	4,369	1.3	1.8	0.65	0.65
Alcohol and tobacco	305	289	281	288	278	-3.5	-9.0	0.47	0.44
Apparel	1,580	1,670	1,586	1,572	1,551	-1.4	-1.9	1.58	1.56
Household and personal products	3,621	3,385	3,428	3,498	3,780	8.1	4.4	1.49	1.57
Pharmaceuticals	2,742	3,243	3,140	3,021	3,109	2.9	13.4	1.19	1.20
Motor vehicles	4,197	4,397	4,473	4,626	4,532	-2.0	8.0	0.71	0.67
Motor vehicle parts and accessories	3,221	3,243	3,265	3,207	3,383	5.5	5.1	2.10	2.25
Building supplies	4,731	5,142	5,089	5,345	5,451	2.0	15.2	1.52	1.53
Metal products	2,311	2,325	2,328	2,343	2,250	-3.9	-2.6	1.97	1.87
Lumber and millwork	1,128	1,044	1,057	1,140	1,097	-3.8	-2.8	1.02	0.95
Machinery and equipment	8,723	9,246	9,404	9,541	9,720	1.9	11.4	2.41	2.41
Computer and other electronic equipment	1,416	1,526	1,487	1,438	1,453	1.1	2.6	0.61	0.58
Office and professional equipment	2,525	2,513	2,497	2,370	2,523	6.5	-0.1	1.28	1.35
Other products	6,161	6,203	6,234	6,316	6,188	-2.0	0.4	1.31	1.28

^r revised.

^p preliminary.

■

Employment services industry

2004

The employment services industry's total operating revenue reached \$6.1 billion in 2004, up 6.5% from 2003.

This industry's operating profit margin reached 4.0% in 2004, following levels of 3.7% in 2001, 3.6% in 2002 and 3.5% in 2003.

Ontario continued to dominate industry revenues with a 60.3% share, followed by Quebec (15.2%), Alberta (14.6%), and British Columbia (5.8%). Since 2003, the share of operating revenue has decreased slightly for Quebec and Ontario and increased for Alberta and British Columbia.

Temporary staffing activities generated \$4.4 billion in operating revenue, a 6.0% increase over 2003. These activities accounted for 79% of operating revenue, up slightly from 2003.

Permanent placement activities also saw their operating revenue increase by 6.0% to \$1.1 billion. The share of total operating revenue of these activities remained unchanged from 2003 at 19%.

A distinguishing feature of this industry is that a sizable portion of the overall activity was generated by a relatively small number of enterprises. The 20 largest firms accounted for 38% of total operating revenue, unchanged from 2003. Operating profit margin for the 20 largest enterprises remained stable at 3.4% in 2004 compared with the overall industry average of 4.0%.

Available on CANSIM: table 361-0001.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 4718.

Data for the 2004 employment services industry are now available. These data provide information such as revenue, salaries, wages and benefits, profit margin and expenditures.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Nancy Preston (613-951-0392; fax: 613-951-6696; nancy.preston@statcan.ca), Service Industries Division. ■

Steel primary forms, weekly data

Week ending March 11, 2006 (preliminary)

Steel primary forms production for the week ending March 11 totalled 299 347 metric tonnes, down 5.1% from 315 437 tonnes a week earlier and down 9.0% from 328 989 tonnes in the same week of 2005.

The year-to-date total as of March 11 was 2 963 546 tonnes, down 6.2% from 3 160 769 tonnes in the same period of 2005.

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. ■

Stocks of frozen poultry meat

March 1, 2006 (preliminary)

Stocks of frozen poultry meat in cold storage on March 1 totalled 62 772 metric tonnes, up 19.6% from a year ago.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 3425.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Sandra Gielfeldt (613-951-2505; sandy.gielfeldt@statcan.ca), Agriculture Division. ■

Refined petroleum products

January 2006 (preliminary)

Data on the production, inventories and domestic sales of refined petroleum products are now available for January. Other selected data about these products are also available.

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 (613-951-9497; 1-866-873-8789; energy@statcan.ca), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

Monthly Survey of Large Retailers

January 2006

Data for the monthly survey of large retailers are now available for January.

Available on CANSIM: table 080-0009.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 5027.

A data table is also available in the *Canadian Statistics* module online.

Data for the group of large retailers for February will be released on April 18.

Revisions to adjusted and unadjusted data for 2005 will be available on April 18.

For general information or to order data, contact Client Services (1-877-421-3067 or 613-951-3549; retailinfo@statcan.ca). To enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Abdul Mohammed (613-951-3505), Distributive Trades Division. ■

New products

National Balance Sheet Accounts, Quarterly Estimates, Fourth quarter 2005
Catalogue number **13-214-DDB** (\$321/\$1,284).

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 The Daily	
Statistics Canada	
Thursday, June 5, 1997 For release at 9:30 a.m.	
MAJOR RELEASES	
• Urban transit, 1995 Despite the emphasis on taking urban transit, Canadians are using it less and less. In 1996, each Canadian took an average of about six trips on some form of urban transit, the lowest level in the past 25 years.	2
• Productivity, hourly compensation and unit labour cost, 1995 Growth in productivity among Canadian businesses also noticeably weak again in 1996, accompanied by sluggish gains in employment and slow economic growth during the year.	4
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Statistics Canada's official release bulletin

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Release dates: March 20 to 24, 2006

(Release dates are subject to change.)

Release date	Title	Reference period
20	Canada's international transactions in securities	January 2006
20	Travel between Canada and other countries	January 2006
21	Retail trade	January 2006
21	Leading indicators	February 2006
22	Annual Wholesale Trade Survey	Annual 2004
24	Adult education and its impact on earnings	1993 to 2001