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Retail trade

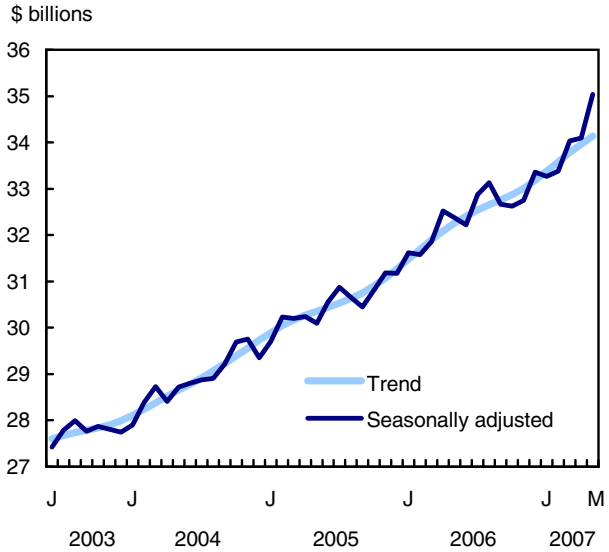
May 2007

Retail sales advanced in almost all sectors in May, marking the largest monthly sales increase in almost a decade.

Total retail sales rose 2.8% to an estimated $35.0 billion in May. Gains in seven of eight retail sectors boosted sales, making May the fourth monthly increase in a row for Canadian retailers. The last time sales increased more than 2.8% was December 1997, when sales advanced 3.7%. When sales of new, used and recreational vehicles and parts dealers are excluded, retail sales jumped 2.3%, more than offsetting April's 0.3% decline.

The Quebec public service pay equity settlement was a key factor in May's retail sales. Sales in this province surged 4.9% in May, the strongest monthly sales growth since February 1998. Excluding Quebec, retail sales rose 2.2%.

Widespread gains in May mark the highest monthly sales increase in nearly a decade



Sales advanced in all retail sectors in May except in the furniture, home furnishings and electronics stores sector. Retailers in this sector saw sales decline 0.8%, after six consecutive monthly gains.

The automotive sector registered a 4.0% sales increase in May, extending the strong sales performance this sector has experienced in the previous two months.

Sales in several non-auto sectors rebounded from poor performances in April to register strong increases in May, possibly as a result of unseasonably poor weather in April and warmer-than-usual weather in May. After a 3.7% drop in April, sales in the building and outdoor home supplies stores sector soared 6.0%, the largest increase since August 2003. Sales in clothing and accessories stores surged 4.6% after falling 3.1% in April.

Sales at miscellaneous retailers rose 3.7% in May following a 1.8% decline in the April. General merchandise stores' sales were up 3.2%, offsetting the 1.2% decline in April. Prior to April's decline, sales in both of these sectors had risen for four consecutive months.

The 2.5% sales increase at pharmacies and personal care stores in May was the strongest monthly growth for this sector since January 1999, and more than offset the 1.3% decline in April.

Sales in the food and beverage stores sector were also up (+0.2%). Food and beverage stores sales have increased in the past four months, although at a diminishing rate.

Price changes did not have a significant effect on overall retail sales in May as retail sales at constant prices increased by 2.5%, a rate of growth not seen since the 2.9% increase in November 2001.

Automotive sector sales continue to climb for a third consecutive month

Higher sales of recreational vehicles drove sales of used and recreational vehicles and parts dealers up 8.4% in May, the highest growth rate of the last five years. Sales at these dealers have been relatively flat since the first quarter of 2006, following a run-up in sales of mainly recreational vehicles that had started in November 2005.

New car dealers' sales advanced 3.4% in May, extending the strong growth seen in the previous two months. Gains in May put sales back on the upward trend begun in early 2006, after March and April gains offset the large declines experienced in January and February 2007.

Sales at gasoline stations increased by 3.3%, continuing three months of strong gains. According

to the Consumer Price Index, the price of gasoline jumped 5.5% in May from April.

Sales in non-auto sectors bounce back from April declines

Within the building and outdoor home supplies stores sector, sales at home centres and hardware stores jumped 6.4% in May, rebounding from a 3.3% decline in April. Unusual weather patterns may have contributed to these fluctuations. Construction activity was also strong in May. According to the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, housing starts were up 7.5% in May after a moderate increase of 2.2% in April. As well, employment gains in construction were one of the main factors behind the increase in employment in May, according to the Labour Force Survey.

Another retail sector affected by the unusual weather patterns observed this spring is the clothing and accessories stores sector. Clothing stores, the dominant group in this sector, saw sales rise by 5.9% in May, more than offsetting a 3.9% decline in April. Although they have fluctuated since January 2007, sales at these stores have been generally trending up.

Miscellaneous store retailers, such as office supplies and stationery stores, florists and swimming pool retailers, registered a 5.2% sales increase in May, the highest monthly growth rate since October 2003. Despite monthly fluctuations, sales at these stores have been flat since the beginning of 2006. Sales at sporting goods, hobby, music and book stores also increased in May, up 2.2%, almost offsetting April declines.

Widespread gains in all provinces and territories, with Quebec leading the way

Sales gains were observed in all provinces and territories in May. Quebec led the way with an increase of 4.9%, the strongest monthly sales growth since February 1998, when Quebecers recovered from the ice storm. The recent payout of a pay equity settlement to Quebec's public service sector added more fuel to an already growing retail sector. Quebec retailers have been enjoying consecutive monthly sales growth since November 2006 in the midst of historically low unemployment rates and healthy employment gains, especially in full-time employment. Employment growth since the beginning of 2007 in Quebec was 1.3%, above the 0.3% growth for the same period in 2006.

Sales were also up in Alberta (+3.1%) after little change in April. Alberta has experienced enormous growth since 2003, and although the pace of sales growth had slowed in the latter half of 2006, sales appear to be picking up speed again in 2007.

After two months of declines in sales, shoppers in New Brunswick opened their wallets in May, resulting in a 5.4% jump in retail sales. According to the New Motor Vehicles Sales Survey, sales of new motor vehicles in New Brunswick soared 10.1% in May.

Other provinces with strong sales in May were Nova Scotia (+2.7%), Manitoba (+2.4%), Ontario (+1.8%), British Columbia (+1.7%) and Saskatchewan (+1.5%).

The territories posted another month of vigorous sales, up 2.2% after rising 2.7% in April. Sales grew moderately in Prince Edward Island (+1.0%) and Newfoundland and Labrador (+0.8%).

Related indicators for June

Estimates from the Labour Force Survey revealed that employment growth resumed in June, up an estimated 35,000, following little change in April and May.

Based on preliminary sales data from the automotive industry, new motor vehicle sales fell 1% in June.

The seasonally adjusted annual rate of housing starts declined 4.1% to 225,500 units in June, down from 235,200 units in May, according to the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

Available on CANSIM: tables 080-0014 to 080-0017.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey numbers, including related surveys, 2406 and 2408.

The May 2007 issue of *Retail Trade* (63-005-XWE, free) will soon be available.

Data on retail trade for June will be released on August 21.

For more information or to order data, contact Client Services (toll-free 1-877-421-3067; 613-951-3549; *retailinfo@statcan.ca*). For analytical information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Lucy Chung (613-951-1903), Distributive Trades Division.

□

Retail sales

	May 2006	February 2007[r]	March 2007[r]	April 2007[r]	May 2007[p]	April to May 2007	May 2006 to May 2007
	Seasonally adjusted						
	$ millions					% change	
Automotive	**11,130**	**11,253**	**11,700**	**11,905**	**12,386**	**4.0**	**11.3**
New car dealers	6,073	6,097	6,412	6,546	6,772	3.4	11.5
Used and recreational motor vehicle and parts dealers	1,471	1,507	1,532	1,533	1,661	8.4	13.0
Gasoline stations	3,586	3,648	3,757	3,826	3,953	3.3	10.2
Furniture, home furnishings and electronics stores	**2,270**	**2,435**	**2,469**	**2,503**	**2,482**	**-0.8**	**9.3**
Furniture stores	792	829	853	859	852	-0.8	7.6
Home furnishings stores	438	494	490	499	495	-0.8	13.0
Computer and software stores	124	126	121	125	123	-1.2	-0.9
Home electronics and appliance stores	917	985	1,005	1,020	1,012	-0.8	10.4
Building and outdoor home supplies stores	**2,040**	**2,179**	**2,205**	**2,124**	**2,251**	**6.0**	**10.4**
Home centres and hardware stores	1,659	1,759	1,781	1,721	1,831	6.4	10.4
Specialized building materials and garden stores	381	420	424	402	420	4.4	10.2
Food and beverage stores	**7,318**	**7,503**	**7,564**	**7,634**	**7,651**	**0.2**	**4.5**
Supermarkets	5,282	5,372	5,399	5,444	5,451	0.1	3.2
Convenience and specialty food stores	774	819	841	845	861	2.0	11.3
Beer, wine and liquor stores	1,263	1,312	1,324	1,345	1,338	-0.5	5.9
Pharmacies and personal care stores	**2,161**	**2,329**	**2,343**	**2,313**	**2,371**	**2.5**	**9.7**
Clothing and accessories stores	**1,875**	**1,947**	**1,989**	**1,927**	**2,015**	**4.6**	**7.5**
Clothing stores	1,438	1,489	1,526	1,466	1,553	5.9	8.0
Shoe, clothing accessories and jewellery stores	437	458	463	461	462	0.4	5.7
General merchandise stores	**3,885**	**3,998**	**4,000**	**3,953**	**4,079**	**3.2**	**5.0**
Miscellaneous retailers	**1,697**	**1,735**	**1,766**	**1,735**	**1,798**	**3.7**	**6.0**
Sporting goods, hobby, music and book stores	829	875	892	873	892	2.2	7.5
Miscellaneous store retailers	867	860	874	862	907	5.2	4.5
Total retail sales	**32,376**	**33,380**	**34,036**	**34,093**	**35,033**	**2.8**	**8.2**
Total excluding new car dealers, used and recreational motor vehicle and parts dealers	**24,832**	**25,776**	**26,092**	**26,014**	**26,600**	**2.3**	**7.1**
Provinces and territories							
Newfoundland and Labrador	498	539	542	545	549	0.8	10.4
Prince Edward Island	123	132	133	130	131	1.0	6.2
Nova Scotia	941	961	966	950	976	2.7	3.7
New Brunswick	736	761	759	746	787	5.4	6.9
Quebec	7,210	7,403	7,464	7,559	7,926	4.9	9.9
Ontario	11,626	11,885	12,140	12,112	12,334	1.8	6.1
Manitoba	1,082	1,132	1,159	1,152	1,180	2.4	9.1
Saskatchewan	954	992	1,052	1,052	1,067	1.5	11.9
Alberta	4,662	4,897	5,059	5,054	5,209	3.1	11.7
British Columbia	4,435	4,557	4,645	4,673	4,752	1.7	7.1
Yukon	38	43	39	40	41	1.9	7.2
Northwest Territories	50	55	56	57	58	3.0	16.9
Nunavut	21	23	23	24	24	1.0	12.2

[r] *revised*
[p] *preliminary*

Retail sales

	May 2006	April 2007[r]	May 2007[p]	May 2006 to May 2007
	Unadjusted			
	$ millions			% change
Automotive	**12,962**	**12,787**	**14,684**	**13.3**
New car dealers	7,209	7,263	8,192	13.6
Used and recreational motor vehicle and parts dealers	1,994	1,809	2,302	15.4
Gasoline stations	3,759	3,715	4,190	11.5
Furniture, home furnishings and electronics stores	**2,123**	**2,215**	**2,311**	**8.8**
Furniture stores	780	808	840	7.7
Home furnishings stores	432	453	487	12.7
Computer and software stores	114	113	111	-2.7
Home electronics and appliance stores	797	841	873	9.6
Building and outdoor home supplies stores	**2,685**	**2,120**	**2,991**	**11.4**
Home centres and hardware stores	2,144	1,727	2,380	11.0
Specialized building materials and garden stores	541	393	611	13.0
Food and beverage stores	**7,392**	**7,138**	**7,950**	**7.6**
Supermarkets	5,356	5,136	5,713	6.7
Convenience and specialty food stores	808	828	913	12.9
Beer, wine and liquor stores	1,227	1,175	1,324	7.9
Pharmacies and personal care stores	**2,197**	**2,233**	**2,416**	**10.0**
Clothing and accessories stores	**1,883**	**1,821**	**2,043**	**8.5**
Clothing stores	1,436	1,409	1,570	9.4
Shoe, clothing accessories and jewellery stores	448	412	473	5.6
General merchandise stores	**4,021**	**3,712**	**4,283**	**6.5**
Miscellaneous retailers	**1,691**	**1,586**	**1,812**	**7.1**
Sporting goods, hobby, music and book stores	771	796	843	9.2
Miscellaneous store retailers	920	790	970	5.4
Total retail sales	**34,955**	**33,611**	**38,490**	**10.1**
Total excluding new car dealers, used and recreational motor vehicle and parts dealers	**25,752**	**24,539**	**27,996**	**8.7**
Provinces and territories				
Newfoundland and Labrador	540	518	605	12.1
Prince Edward Island	135	121	143	6.6
Nova Scotia	1,001	911	1,054	5.3
New Brunswick	798	739	862	8.0
Quebec	8,100	7,772	9,007	11.2
Ontario	12,482	11,751	13,503	8.2
Manitoba	1,156	1,138	1,287	11.4
Saskatchewan	1,045	1,038	1,189	13.7
Alberta	4,976	4,977	5,672	14.0
British Columbia	4,612	4,530	5,039	9.2
Yukon	41	38	46	10.5
Northwest Territories	50	55	59	19.0
Nunavut	22	24	24	13.0

[r] *revised*
[p] *preliminary*

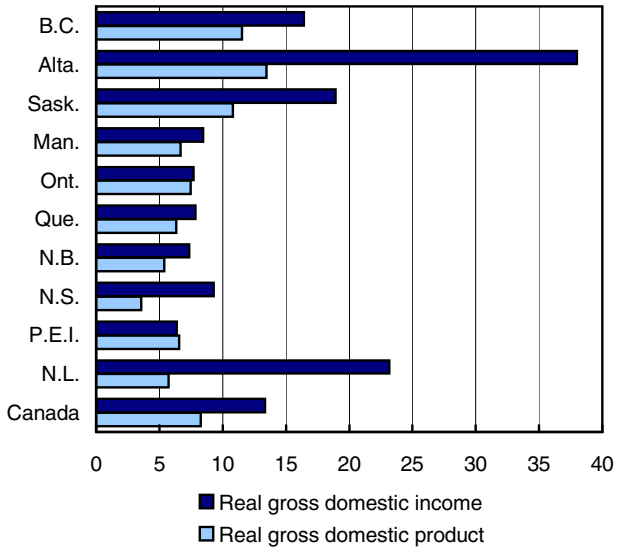
■

Study: Real gross domestic product and the purchasing power of provincial output

Rising commodity prices and the surging Canadian dollar have led to a divergence between real earnings growth and the increase in the purchasing power of those earnings, according to a new study. From 2002 to 2005, real earnings (real gross domestic product) rose by 8.3%, while the purchasing power of those earnings (real gross domestic income) increased by 13.4%.

The study found that high commodity prices and the rising value of the Canadian dollar against the American dollar have led to significant increases in so-called "trading gains" for many provinces, as well as the nation.

Cumulative growth, 2002 to 2005



The current boom in commodity prices, initially sparked by a surge in the energy sector, is now entering its fifth year. A wide range of commodity prices, from coal to uranium, have been affected, as has the Canadian dollar, which appreciated significantly after 2003.

The study noted that as Canada commits more of its resources to production, the volume of goods available to Canadians rises and economic output, as measured by real gross domestic product (GDP), expands.

Canada sells exports to buy imports. When the price of exports rises or the price of imports falls, it allows Canada to import more goods without having to export more raw materials.

This is referred to as a "trading gain," which is not captured by real GDP. The study uses an alternative measure called real gross domestic income (GDI) instead. Real GDI responds to changes in domestic production and changes in trading gains.

The difference between the two measures is significant. Real GDP is a measure of how much Canada earns through domestic production. On the other hand, real GDI is a measure of the goods and services that income can buy.

The study found that from 2002 to 2005, real GDP increased by 8.3%, while real gross domestic income rose by 13.4%. Trading gains added 5.1 percentage points of growth, meaning that for every $2 of extra income earned by Canada, roughly $3 extra worth of goods and services could be purchased.

"Terms of trade": Price of exports relative to price of imports

An important ratio for determining how changes in export and import prices will affect Canada is the "terms of trade." This is the price of exports relative to the price of imports.

When the ratio rises, it indicates that the value of Canada's exports is increasing. In other words, exports should purchase more imports than they would have previously. A rise in the terms of trade, therefore, indicates that trading gains are increasing, and that

Note to readers

This release is based on a research paper that examines the impact of price changes in imports and exports on economic welfare in Canada, and in each of the provinces.

The research paper examines how shifts in terms of trade and fluctuations in the ratio of prices of traded to non-traded goods affect the purchasing power of domestic production.

It also examines the evolution of real gross domestic product (GDP) and real gross domestic income (GDI) from 1981 to 2005 nationally and in the provinces.

The difference between real GDI and real GDP originates in how exports and imports are treated. Real GDP deflates imports and exports separately, while real GDI as measured in this release deflates net exports by final domestic demand prices. Importantly, real GDP and real GDI are not adjusted for financial flows.

Real GDP and real GDI focus only on the income earned and its purchasing power within a country or province. There is no adjustment for earnings that are repatriated to other jurisdictions, which may be important for understanding the evolution of income growth in some cases.

the quantity of goods and services that Canada can purchase with its earnings is rising.

Canada's terms of trade are primarily determined by three factors: commodity prices, the exchange rate with the American dollar, and the prices of imported manufactured goods.

The terms of trade for the provinces are also affected by the same three factors. However, resources and industries are not equally distributed across the country. Therefore, some provinces can be more susceptible to shifts in the overall terms of trade.

From 2002 to 2005, shifts in terms of trade affected real income growth in all provinces. The two provinces that were affected the most were Alberta and Newfoundland and Labrador.

Surging energy prices between 2002 and 2005 led to terms-of-trade growth in energy-exporting provinces. In Alberta and Newfoundland and Labrador, the terms-of-trade growth led to large trading gains.

During this period, real GDI in Alberta increased by 38.0%, triple the growth in real GDP. Similarly, in Newfoundland and Labrador, real GDI expanded by 23.2%, which was roughly four times its real GDP growth.

As a result, an extra dollar earned between 2002 and 2005 bought roughly $3 extra of goods and services in Alberta, and $4 extra of goods and services in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Energy-exporting provinces have experienced the largest gains. However, the impact of rising commodity prices, the appreciation of the Canadian dollar and falling prices for manufactured components have also led to improvements in the terms of trade in most of the other provinces.

Impact of commodity prices varies over time

The study illustrates how the impact of commodity prices on real income in Canada varies over time and from province to province.

Sources of growth in commodity price indexes are not constant over time. As a result, the specific commodities driving the change suggest that the impact will be different from one province to the next.

The differing impact among the provinces is important for understanding the progress of real income in Canada. Before 2002, changes in terms of trade that benefited real GDI growth in energy-importing provinces had hindered real GDI growth in energy-exporting provinces. For example, during the early 1980s, falling energy prices had inhibited real income growth in Alberta and Saskatchewan, while bolstering it in the rest of the country. The regional differences offset each other so that real GDI and real GDP growth for Canada were roughly equal.

However, the recent surge in energy prices has been accompanied by a widespread increase in provincial terms of trade resulting from the appreciation of the Canadian dollar and the higher prices of all commodities. Consequently, the terms of trade have improved in most energy-importing provinces.

The effect of higher commodity prices and the appreciation of the Canadian dollar can be illustrated by events in three provinces: Newfoundland and Labrador, Ontario and Alberta.

In the early 1980s, Newfoundland and Labrador was an energy importer. Following the development of offshore oil and gas deposits in the 1990s, the province became an energy exporter. As a result, Newfoundland and Labrador's trading gains increased sharply as energy prices increased after 2002.

In Ontario, the 1986 energy price collapse made an important contribution to an improvement in the province's terms of trade and trading gains. In 1986, real GDP increased by 4.1% while real GDI rose by 5.6%. After 1986, rising prices for commodities other than energy continued to bolster increases in trading gains until 1990.

From 1998 to 2001, the terms of trade declined in Ontario as the Canadian dollar depreciated and energy prices rose. The 55.8% rise in energy prices in 2000 led to the biggest terms-of-trade drop in this period. In 2000, real GDP rose 5.9%, but real GDI only rose 5.2%.

From 2002 to 2005, however, gains in the prices of commodities other than energy and the appreciation of the Canadian dollar helped push up trading gains in Ontario, despite continued increases in energy prices. During this period, real GDP rose 7.5% and real GDI rose 7.7%.

Among the provinces, Alberta is the most susceptible to changes in energy prices. In 1986, the decline in energy prices led to a 15.7% decrease in real GDI through trading gains in Alberta. Real GDP fell 2.3%.

But after 1998, a series of improvements in the terms of trade, precipitated by rising energy prices, contributed to trading gains that increased growth in real income.

As a result, from 2002 to 2005, the growth of real income in Alberta was three times that of real GDP growth.

The research paper "Real GDP and the purchasing power of provincial output" is now available as part of the *Economic Analysis Research Paper Series* (11F0027MIE2007046, free), from the *Publications* module of our website.

More studies related to international trade are available in the analytical series *Update on Economic Analysis* (11-623-XIE, free) on our website.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact John R. Baldwin (613-951-8588) or Ryan Macdonald (613-951-5687), Micro-economic Analysis Division. ■

Employment Insurance

May 2007 (preliminary)

An estimated 470,520 Canadians (seasonally adjusted) received regular Employment Insurance benefits in May, down 1.3% from April, primarily the result of declines in Quebec (-2.3%) and Ontario (-2.2%). These decreases were partially offset by monthly increases in Saskatchewan, Prince Edward Island and Alberta.

Nationally, the number of regular beneficiaries was 4.2% lower than in May 2006.

Regular benefit payments in May totalled $671.2 million, while 219,700 people made initial and renewal claims.

Note: With this release, the annual revision to the seasonally adjusted series has been completed back to January 2004. All seasonally unadjusted series were unaffected. 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 for this month is a measure of all persons who received Employment Insurance benefits from the 13th to the 19th of May. This coincides with the reference week of the Labour Force Survey. The regular benefit payments figure measures the total of all monies paid to individuals from the 1st to the end of the 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 June will be released on August 21.

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

Employment Insurance statistics

	May 2007	April 2007	May 2006	April to May 2007	May 2006 to May 2007
	Seasonally adjusted				
				% change	
Regular beneficiaries	470,520[p]	476,950[r]	491,190	-1.3	-4.2
Regular benefits paid ($ millions)	671.2[p]	727.9[r]	629.9	-7.8	6.5
Initial and Renewal Claims received ('000)	219.7[p]	221.4[r]	220.6	-0.8	-0.4
	Unadjusted				
All beneficiaries ('000)[1]	658.6[p]	792.7[p]	698.6		
Regular beneficiaries ('000)	416.6[p]	535.2[p]	434.4		
Initial and Renewal Claims received ('000)	166.2	177.5	172.1		
Payments ($ millions)	1,056.8	1,512.2	1,096.2		
	Year-to-date (January to May)				
			2007	2006	2006 to 2007
					% change
Claims received ('000)			1,048.2	1,044.4	0.4
Payments ($ millions)			6,898.3	6,983.7	-1.2

[r] *revised*
[p] *preliminary*
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 the 15th of the month.*

Number of beneficiaries receiving regular benefits

	May 2007[p]	April to May 2007	May 2006 to May 2007
	Seasonally adjusted		
		% change	
Canada	**470,520**	**-1.3**	**-4.2**
Newfoundland and Labrador	35,970	-0.4	-1.6
Prince Edward Island	8,000	2.8	-1.0
Nova Scotia	28,300	1.0	-1.8
New Brunswick	30,800	-0.2	-4.8
Quebec	166,560	-2.3	-4.6
Ontario	126,610	-2.2	-1.1
Manitoba	9,900	0.7	-8.2
Saskatchewan	9,450	5.5	-2.5
Alberta	16,860	1.2	-10.0
British Columbia	36,800	-0.5	-11.5
Yukon	770	-2.5	-4.9
Northwest Territories	610	-11.6	-11.6
Nunavut	360	-2.7	-10.0

[p] *preliminary*

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.*

Study: Infant macrosomia among First Nations in British Columbia

1981 to 2000

The study *Infant Macrosomia Among First Nations in British Columbia – Prevalence, Trends and Characteristics* provides valuable information on the prevalence, trends and characteristics of macrosomia among First Nations births in British Columbia over the past two decades. Macrosomia is defined as heavy birthweight for gestational age.

Health care practitioners and community midwives have long recognized the relatively higher birth weights of First Nations infants.

From 1981 to 2000, the prevalence of macrosomia was higher among First Nations births than among non-First Nations births in British Columbia.

The higher prevalence of macrosomia could not be explained by differences in the mother's age, marital status, parity, or neighbourhood income quintile, suggesting that this could be partly a physiological phenomenon.

However, the study noted an increasingly greater prevalence of macrosomia among First Nations births in recent years, which could reflect additional adverse influences resulting from changing lifestyles and other environmental factors.

Of particular concern was the higher risk of macrosomia among births to diabetic First Nations mothers, and the increasing prevalence of diabetic complications among First Nations mothers. This may partly account for the increasing prevalence of macrosomia among First Nations births.

Another important concern was the relatively poor neonatal and postneonatal outcomes among First Nations births, irrespective of macrosomia. However, this study confirmed the declining differences in rates of adverse outcomes among First Nations births compared with non-First Nations births which have been reported elsewhere.

This study was intended to serve as a reference on the epidemiology of macrosomia among First Nations births for health care providers, policy makers and other stakeholders concerned with perinatal health.

It was conducted by researchers from the British Columbia Vital Statistics Agency, the University of Victoria, the University of Montreal, the Health Canada First Nations and Inuit Health Branch, and Statistics Canada, in consultation with First Nations communities at various stages of the work.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey numbers, including related surveys, 3231, 3233, 3234 and 3901.

The study *Infant Macrosomia Among First Nations in British Columbia – Prevalence, Trends and Characteristics* is an Internet publication available on the website of the British

Columbia Vital Statistics Agency. The full text is available free online in English only (*www.vs.gov.bc.ca/stats/indian/infant_macrosomia.html*).

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of the study, contact Russell Wilkins (951-5305, *russell.wilkins@statcan.ca*), Statistics Canada; William Kierans (1-250-380-7319, *billkierans@shaw.ca*), British Columbia Vital Statistics Agency; or Les Foster (1-250-721-6280, *lfoster@uvic.ca*), University of Victoria. ■

Study: Childhood and adolescent cancer survival

1999 to 2003

Survival rates for childhood and adolescent cancers have improved substantially in Canada since the late 1980s, according to a new study.

The study, to be published in the *European Journal of Cancer* (in English only), used data from the Canadian Cancer Registry (CCR) to provide up-to-date estimates of cancer survival among children and teenagers aged 19 and under.

The CCR is a dynamic, population-based database maintained by Statistics Canada. The information comprising the CCR is based on reports from every provincial/territorial cancer registry in Canada.

Cancer is rare in children and adolescents, accounting for about 1% of all newly diagnosed neoplasms. Nonetheless, it is the fourth leading cause of death among Canadians under the age of 20.

The study found that the predicted five-year survival of 82% for children and adolescents recently diagnosed with cancer was 11% higher than was reported in the only previous Canadian national study. The previous study analyzed cases diagnosed from 1985 to 1988 with a follow-up to 1991.

Among diagnostic groups, the largest survival increases were observed for hepatic tumours (+20%), leukaemias (+15%) and central nervous system neoplasms (+14%).

Five-year survival estimates were highest for retinoblastoma (99%), carcinomas and other malignant epithelial neoplasms and malignant melanomas (91%), and for renal tumours (91%). They were lowest for hepatic tumours (68%) and for malignant bone tumours (68%).

Improvements in survival rates may generally be attributed to a number of changes in the management of childhood and adolescent cancers.

The most notable improvement is the widespread uptake of multimodal therapy. This concept combines surgery and radiation to treat local disease with chemotherapy to treat systematic disease.

To obtain a copy of the study "Childhood and adolescent cancer survival: A period analysis of data from the Canadian Cancer Registry", for more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Larry F. Ellison (613-951-5244), Health Statistics Division. ■

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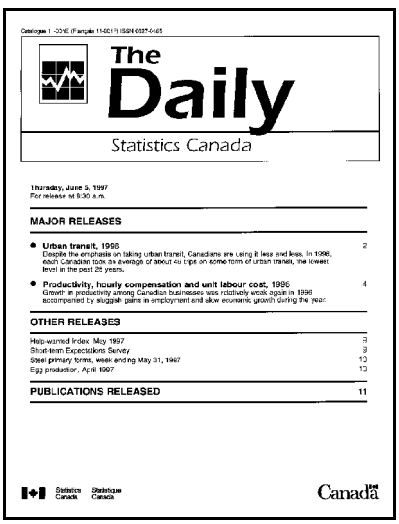
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