

# The Daily

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## Statistics Canada

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## Releases

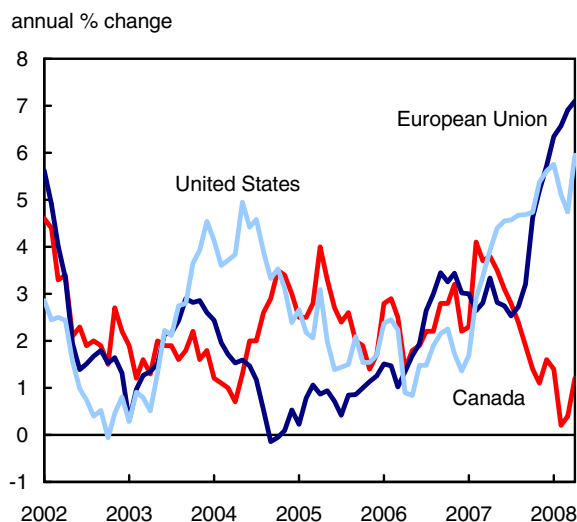
### Study: Food prices: A boon for producers, a buffer for consumers

June 2008

Canada is uniquely positioned to weather the storm of sharply-rising prices for grains and rice, and is even poised to profit from the current surge, according to a study released today in the *Canadian Economic Observer*.

Overall, consumer prices for food consumed at home in Canada have risen only 1.2% in the 12 months ending in April 2008. Food prices increased 7.1% in the European Union and 5.9% in the United States during the same period. Countries in Asia with rice-based diets are experiencing the fastest increase in food costs, as the price of rice doubled early in 2008.

#### Consumer food prices



While consumers in Canada face higher prices for bread and cereal products, they have been insulated at the checkout counter from higher overall grocery bills by stable or falling prices for most other products, the study found.

The absence of price increases for these other food products reflects factors such as the lower cost of food imports in the wake of the rising Canadian dollar, and the relatively small role that commodities play in what consumers buy.

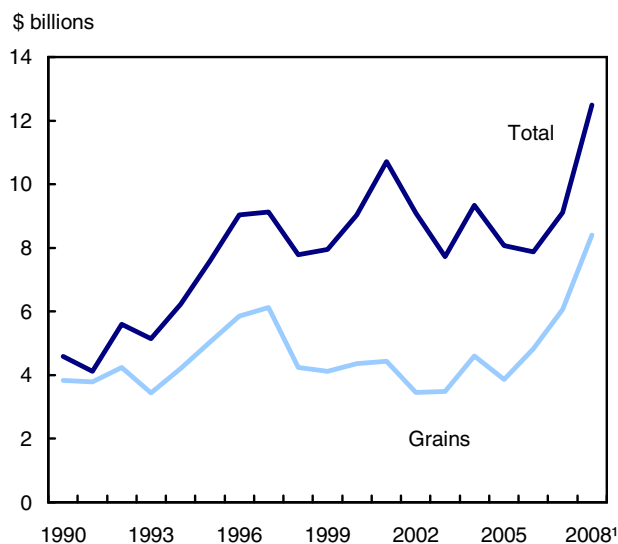
For most food products, services contribute the bulk of the value-added for food that consumers buy. As well, sharp relative price shifts give consumers ample room to adapt by substituting lower-priced foods.

From a broader perspective, Canada overall stands to gain from the agricultural price shock, the study found. Canada ran a surplus of \$9.0 billion in its trade in agricultural and fish products in 2007.

In the first quarter of 2008, the surplus was on track to break that all-time high, running at an annual rate of \$11.2 billion as wheat prices rose.

Moreover, farmers have stepped up their planting this year, especially of higher-priced crops. Besides directly increasing the value of agricultural output and the trade surplus, the boom down on the farm will indirectly benefit a wide range of suppliers, from machinery to transportation, financial and business services.

#### Trade balance for agricultural products



1. Annualized

#### Agricultural exports hit record high in 2007

Canada is a net exporter of food and agricultural products. Last year our exports of these products hit a record high of \$34.6 billion, after hovering around \$31 billion since the commodity boom began in 2002.

The increase in 2007 was driven by grains, which set a record on the strength of a \$1.5 billion hike for wheat and canola despite a poor crop on the Prairies (the average yield per acre of wheat fell 12% last year).

Despite the poor harvest, Canada remained the world's second largest exporter of wheat, after the United States. A 25% increase in crop sales drove farm cash receipts to a record \$40.5 billion last year, and they continued to strengthen in the first quarter of 2008.

Canada has large surpluses for grains, meat and fish products, which outweigh deficits for foods which are difficult or impossible to grow here, such as many fruits, vegetables, coffee, tea and sugar, which collectively show a trade deficit of over \$4 billion.

### **Fruits, vegetables dominate agricultural imports**

Overall, more than 70% of the food on Canadian tables is produced domestically. This includes over 80% of meat and dairy products, partly because supply management practices limit import competition for poultry, dairy and eggs. Bread and cereal products also are largely supplied by Canadian farms and factories.

Conversely, imports account for over 40% of all fish and fruit and vegetables purchased in Canada. Imports supply nearly one-third of other food products, notably coffee, tea and some fats (such as olive oil).

Canada's imports of agricultural products are dominated by fruits and vegetables, particularly in winter months when imports of fresh produce nearly double. Imports of fruit and vegetables totalled \$7.3 billion in 2007.

Not far behind at \$5.4 billion were coffee, tea and sugar, all products that cannot be grown in Canada's climate. Imports of fruits, vegetables and other staples have been trending up in recent years, as lower prices helped boost the volume of demand.

The cost of importing food into Canada has fallen 7% from its average in 2002 through the first quarter of 2008.

### **Distribution of the food dollar: What the consumer is paying for**

The study provides a breakdown of value-added by food type, which shows that the rapid rise in some food commodity prices (notably grains) affects only a small fraction of what consumers buy.

For bread and cereals, the cost of commodities represents less than a tenth of what consumers pay for

bread, even factoring in energy costs. This is the lowest share of any of the major food products.

Meat and dairy products have almost identical revenue structures: manufacturers receive nearly one-quarter of all revenues, while farmers get just under 15%.

In contrast, manufacturers and farmers garner only one-third or less of revenues from consumer spending on bread and fruit and vegetables. Most of this goes to manufacturers, as farmers received less than 3%.

Services contributed between half and three-quarters of what consumers buy at the grocery store. The share of services was lowest for fresh fish, dairy products, meat, and soft drinks, at around 50%. Services account for about 60% or more of consumer spending on breads, fruits and vegetables.

Wholesale and retail trade dominates the value-added of services in food. This reflects the cost of warehousing, stocking shelves, advertising and of course profit margins.

Surprisingly, finance and real estate make a larger contribution than transportation in producing most food products. This reflects the importance of renting buildings as well as loans to finance day-to-day operations.

Transportation consistently represents between 5% and 6% of value-added for all food products. However, the gap between finance and transportation may have narrowed after gasoline prices hit record highs early in 2008.

### **Definitions, data sources and methods: survey numbers, including related surveys, 1401, 2202, 2203 and 2301.**

The study, "Food prices: A boon for producers, a buffer for consumers," is included in the June 2008 Internet edition of the *Canadian Economic Observer*, Vol. 21, no. 6 (11-010-XWB, free), now available from the *Publications* module of our website. The monthly paper version of the *Canadian Economic Observer*, Vol. 21, no. 6 (11-010-XPB, \$25/\$243), will be available on June 19.

For more information about the *Canadian Economic Observer*, click on our banner ad from the *Publications* module of our website.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Philip Cross (613-951-9162; [ceo@statcan.ca](mailto:ceo@statcan.ca)), Current Economic Analysis Division. ■

## Canadian Internet Use Survey

2007

Canadians are making greater and more diverse use of the Internet, but a digital divide persists among various groups, according to new data for 2007 from the Canadian Internet Use Survey.

Almost three-quarters (73%), or 19.2 million Canadians aged 16 and older, went online for personal reasons during the 12 months prior to the survey. This was up from just over two-thirds (68%) in 2005 when the survey was last conducted.

For the first time, the survey covered young people aged 16 and 17. They accounted for almost one of the five percentage point increase in Internet use between 2005 and 2007.

Survey results showed that the digital divide, or gap in the rate of Internet use, still existed among certain groups of Canadians on the basis of income, education and age.

The survey also showed that people living in urban areas continued to be more likely to have used the Internet than those from smaller towns and rural areas. Only 65% of residents living in small towns or rural areas accessed the Internet, well below the national average, while just over three-quarters (76%) of urban residents did so. Both proportions were higher than in 2005.

Among people who used the Internet at home, 68% went online every day during a typical month and 50% for five hours or more during a typical week. On average, men were online more often and for longer periods than women.

### Digital divides in Internet use persist

Findings reveal gaps in the rate of Internet use among certain groups of Canadians, specifically on the basis of income, education and age.

Households were divided into five equal groups, or quintiles, based on income.

The vast majority (91%) of people in the top quintile (more than \$95,000) used the Internet. This was almost twice the proportion of 47% for the lowest quintile (less than \$24,000). This gap in use has narrowed slightly since 2005.

In terms of education, 84% of individuals with at least some post-secondary education used the Internet in 2007, compared with 58% of those who had less education. Again, this gap has narrowed slightly since 2005.

### Note to readers

*The 2007 Canadian Internet Use Survey was conducted in October and November 2007 as a supplement to the Labour Force Survey. More than 26,500 Canadians aged 16 years and over were asked about their Internet use, including shopping, for the past 12 months. Estimates of Internet shopping (e-commerce) will be released in November 2008.*

*Caution is required comparing these results with those from 2005, when the survey was restricted to persons aged 18 years and older. In 2007, respondents aged 16 and 17 accounted for almost an entire percentage point of the overall increase in Internet use since 2005. They also affect estimates of online behaviours.*

### Definitions

*An **Internet user** is someone who used the Internet from any location for personal non-business reasons in the 12 months preceding the survey. A **home user** is someone who reported using the Internet from home, for the same reasons.*

*Urban boundaries are based on Statistics Canada's census metropolitan areas (CMA) and census agglomerations (CA). The rural and small town category consists of Canadians living outside CMAs and CAs.*

Age remained an important factor. In 2007, 96% of persons aged 16 to 24 went online, more than three times the 29% among seniors aged 65 and older. However, Internet use increased among all age groups since 2005.

The proportion of men and women using the Internet during 2007 was just below three-quarters for both.

Among people born in Canada, 75% used the Internet, compared with 66% of those born elsewhere. However, the rate was 78% among immigrants who arrived in Canada during the last 10 years. Most of these recent immigrants live in urban areas.

### High-speed connections more popular

The vast majority of Internet users aged 16 or older, 94%, reported personal Internet use from home during 2007, while 41% said they used it from work, 20% from schools and 15% from libraries.

High-speed connections are becoming far more prevalent. An estimated 88% of people who accessed the Internet at home did so with a high-speed connection in 2007, up from 80% two years earlier. This growth was driven by new users and by existing users switching from a slower service.

Over 9 in 10 urban home users reported using a high-speed connection, compared with just over 7 in 10 home users in rural areas. More than one-half of rural and small town residents using a slower

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service reported that a high-speed telephone or cable service was not available in their area.

**Growing online activities: blogging, chatting, downloading**

E-mail and general browsing continued to be the most popular online activities from home. The web remained popular for finding government or health information and making travel arrangements. And many Canadians also used it for banking, paying bills and ordering goods or services.

However, survey data show that more Canadians are participating in additional activities.

For example, one-fifth (20%) of home Internet users reported contributing content by posting images, writing blogs, or participating in discussion groups. Of these people, over one-half were under the age of 30.

Some 50% of home Internet users used an instant messenger during 2007. Again, relatively more young Canadians reported going online for this reason.

The increased use of broadband has also meant a rise in downloading or watching movies or television, and downloading music.

**Concerns about online privacy and security**

In 2007, the survey estimated that approximately 50% of Canadians (Internet users or not) were very concerned about online credit card use, 44% about online banking transactions and 37% about online privacy.

While all three estimates are below 2005 levels, they do not necessarily indicate that online privacy and security threats have declined. Other factors may be at work.

For instance, the 2007 survey included individuals aged 16 and 17 who, on average, expressed lower levels of concern. Canadians have also become more

experienced online, with 54% reporting five or more years of Internet use in 2007, up from 45% in 2005.

Survey data show that the proportion very concerned about security was lower for people who had used the Internet longer and for more activities.

**The provinces: Rates highest in British Columbia, Alberta and Ontario**

Rates of Internet use among Canadians increased in every province between 2005 and 2007. Rates were above the national average of 73% in three provinces: British Columbia, Alberta and Ontario.

Rates in the two western provinces were boosted by high usage in major census metropolitan areas. In Calgary, 85% of people aged 16 and older used the Internet, as did 83% in Victoria, and 78% in both Vancouver and Edmonton.

Urban-rural differences in Internet use persisted during 2007. In Quebec for example, rates ranged from 58% in small towns and rural areas to 78% in Quebec City.

In general, cities have younger populations and proportionately more residents with higher levels of income and education. These concentrations of population are attractive markets for Internet service providers.

**Available on CANSIM: tables 358-0122 to 358-0126, 358-0128 to 358-0132 and 358-0134.**

**Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 4432.**

For further information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, please contact Larry McKeown (613-951-2582; [larry.mckeown@statcan.ca](mailto:larry.mckeown@statcan.ca)), Science, Innovation and Electronic Information Division.

**Online activities of home Internet users — Caution is required comparing these results with those from 2005, when the survey was restricted to persons aged 18 years and older. In 2007, respondents aged 16 and 17 accounted for almost an entire percentage point of the overall increase in Internet use since 2005. They also affect estimates of online behaviours.**

	2005	2007
	%	
E-mail	91	92
General browsing for fun or leisure	..	76
General browsing	84	..
Research other matters (family history, parenting)	..	70
Obtain weather or road conditions	67	70
Travel information or making travel arrangements	63	66
View news or sports	62	64
Electronic banking or bill payment	61	63
Window shopping	57	60
Search for medical or health related information	58	59
Search for information about governments	52	51
Education, training or school work	43	50
Use an instant messenger	38	50
Ordering personal goods or services	43	45
Obtain or save music (free or paid downloads)	37	45
Research community events	42	44
Play games	39	39
Obtain or save software (free or paid downloads)	32	33
Job search	..	32
Listen to the radio over the Internet	26	28
Communicate with governments	23	26
Research investments	26	25
Download or watch TV or a movie over the Internet	12	20
Contribute content (blogs, photos, discussion groups)	..	20
Make telephone calls	..	9
Sell goods or services (auction sites)	..	9

.. not available for a specific reference period

**Percent of Canadians using the Internet — Caution is required comparing these results with those from 2005, when the survey was restricted to persons aged 18 years and older. In 2007, respondents aged 16 and 17 accounted for almost an entire percentage point of the overall increase in Internet use since 2005. They also affect estimates of online behaviours.**

	2005	2007
	%	
Newfoundland and Labrador	55	61
Prince Edward Island	61	69
Nova Scotia	67	69
New Brunswick	57	65
Quebec	62	69
Ontario	72	75
Manitoba	66	70
Saskatchewan	66	73
Alberta	71	77
British Columbia	69	78



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## Study: Neighbourhood characteristics and the distribution of youth crime on the Island of Montréal

2006

The study, "Neighbourhood characteristics and the distribution of crime on the Island of Montréal: Additional Analysis on Youth Crime," available today, analyzes the geographic distribution of police-reported crime among young people aged 12 to 17 on the Island of Montréal and the neighbourhood factors that affect this distribution.

It is the second phase of a project that examined police-reported crime data at a neighbourhood level in Montréal using a combination of statistical analyses and crime mapping based on Geographic Information System (GIS) technology.

Results of the first phase showed that overall, crimes reported to the police were not evenly distributed on the island, but tended to be concentrated in a limited number of hot spots.

This second phase found, however, that police-reported youth crime on the island was distributed differently from adult crime. Youth crime was distributed over many small hot spots across the entire island.

A number of these hot spots were concentrated in areas where secondary schools, youth centres and shopping centres were located.

The study found that 27% of violent crimes involving young people occurred on school grounds. Similarly, about one-fifth of drug offences occurred on school property.

Since shoplifting was the most common police-reported property offence among young people, property crime densities tended to be highest in areas with large shopping centres.

The study also examined whether differences in neighbourhood youth crime rates were related to factors specific to those neighbourhoods. It showed that the characteristics of a neighbourhood explained only a small proportion of the variation in police-reported youth crime.

When all factors were taken into account, the rate of youth violent crime was higher in neighbourhoods where there were greater numbers of secondary school students and a higher percentage of land zoned for commercial use.

Violent crime rates were also higher in neighbourhoods with higher proportions of low-income earners, dwellings requiring major repairs, visible minority residents, and residents without a high school diploma.

The rate of youth property crime was higher in neighbourhoods where there was high residential

mobility and where there were lower proportions of people with a university degree.

Neighbourhoods with greater numbers of secondary school students and a higher percentage of commercial land also had higher property crime rates.

Police-reported data show that Montréal in 2006 had a lower youth crime rate than both the national average and the provincial average for Quebec.

In fact, the census metropolitan area of Montréal, which includes the island and its suburbs, had a lower youth crime rate than any other metropolitan area in Canada except Quebec City.

Between 1996 and 2006, there was a general downward trend in youth crime on the Island of Montréal attributable to a sharp decline in property crime. Violent crime and drug-related incidents rose slightly.

The study, funded by the National Crime Prevention Centre at Public Safety Canada, used demographic and socio-economic information from the census, zoning data from the Communauté urbaine de Montréal and police-reported crime data.

### Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 3302.

The study "Neighbourhood characteristics and the distribution of crime on the Island of Montréal: Additional analysis on youth crime," part of the *Crime and Justice Research Paper Series* (85-561-MWE2008011, free), is now available on our website. From the *Publications* module, choose *Free Internet publications*, then *Crime and Justice*.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Information and Client Services (toll-free 1-800-387-2231; 613-951-9023), Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics. ■

### Consulting services

2006

Operating revenues for the consulting services industry increased to \$10.9 billion in 2006, a 14.8% increase from 2005.

The largest operating revenue increases were in the other scientific and technical consulting services industry (+29%) followed by the environmental consulting services industry (+28%) and management consulting services industry (+10%). The continuing interest in environmental issues and the natural resource boom in the western provinces certainly contributed to the large increases in the environmental and scientific and technical consulting services sectors.

Operating expenses for consulting services firms rose to \$8.8 billion in 2006, a 15.9% increase over 2005.

Businesses in the industry rely heavily on the knowledge of employees to provide services and as a result, salaries, wages and benefits paid to employees are the single largest expense, accounting for 42 cents out of every dollar spent in 2006.

The operating profit margin for the entire industry was 19.6%, which was lower than the 2005 rate of 20.4%

Close to half of industry's operating revenues were generated in Ontario (45%), followed by Alberta (19%), Quebec (16%), and British Columbia (14%).

The four western provinces showed strong growth in operating revenue: Saskatchewan (+29.2%), British Columbia (+25.2%), Manitoba (+20.1%) and Alberta (+16.1%). Firms located in Ontario and Quebec grew by 10.3% and 15.8% respectively.

The consulting services industry consists of firms that provide expert advice and assistance to other organizations on a variety of topics including management, human resources, environmental issues, international development, and scientific and technical issues. The common trait of businesses classified to the consulting sector is that they help other organizations grow and develop by providing expert advice.

Data for the consulting services industry are now available.

**Available on CANSIM: table 360-0001.**

**Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 4717.**

For more information about the survey, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Luc Provençal (613-951-1960; fax: 613-951-6696; [luc.provençal@statcan.ca](mailto:luc.provençal@statcan.ca)), or Peter Rosborough (613-951-0348; [peter.rosborough@statcan.ca](mailto:peter.rosborough@statcan.ca)), Service Industries Division. ■

## **Employer pension plans (trusteed pension funds)**

Fourth quarter 2007

The market value of retirement savings held in employer-sponsored pension funds increased at its slowest pace in five years in 2007 with only marginal gains in the last two quarters of the year.

Assets in these pension funds closed 2007 with a market value of \$966.0 billion, up 4.8% over 2006. This was the smallest increase in value since the devaluations of assets in 2001 and 2002.

Assets edged up 0.9% during the last three months of 2007, after only a slight gain in the third quarter.

Between 2003 and 2006, fund asset increases ranged from 10.8% to 15.3%, more than double the 4.8% gain posted in 2007.

As 2007 closed out, pension fund assets held in stocks and equity funds accounted for 37.2% of total assets, down from 39.1% in the third quarter. The share of assets held in bonds and bond funds increased from 32.0% to 33.8% and real estate assets increased to 7.1%. Short-term assets accounted for 3.5%, mortgages 1.5%, and the remaining assets which include pooled foreign funds accounted for 16.9%.

Domestic holdings rose slightly to 69.9% of total fund assets in 2007, while the share in foreign holdings edged down from 30.9% to 30.1%. However, the share of foreign holdings has increased 9.3 percentage points since 2000 and 4.5 points since 2005.

Pension revenues peaked in the fourth quarter at \$35.3 billion, up 24.7% over the third quarter when revenues fell 18.6%.

The boost in fourth-quarter revenues was due to a 15.4% increase in employer and employee contributions, a 41.7% increase in investment income from fourth quarter dividends paid on stocks, and an 18.7% increase in net profit on the sale of securities.

Expenditures in the fourth quarter increased 7.4% to \$13.8 billion. However, with the increase in revenues, net income was up 39.2%, compared with a 31.7% loss in the previous quarter.

Contributions for 2007 declined 5.7% to \$32.8 billion, the first annual decrease in seven years. Pension benefits paid to retirees rose 6.4% to 33.8 billion in 2007, the first time benefits have exceeded contributions since 2002.

Of the 5.7 million Canadian workers belonging to employer pension plans, about 4.6 million were members of trusteed plans in 2007. The remaining approximate 1 million workers with employer pension plans were covered principally by insurance company contracts.

**Available on CANSIM: tables 280-0002 to 280-0004.**

**Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2607.**

For more information about the current survey results and related products and services, or to inquire about the concepts, methods, or data quality of this release, contact Client Services (613-951-7355;



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toll-free 1-888-297-7355; fax: 613 951-3012;  
[income@statcan.ca](mailto:income@statcan.ca)), Income Statistics Division. ■

## **General Social Survey: 20th anniversary** 1985 to 2006

For 20 years, Statistics Canada's General Social Survey (GSS) has been collecting information on the social conditions of Canadians.

To mark the 20th anniversary, the Agency is publishing a series of analytical fact sheets called *Matter of Fact*, which highlight important developments in Canadian society discovered through the analysis of GSS data during the past two decades.

Each issue of *Matter of Fact* will look at a single theme. The inaugural article, released today, is titled "Violent victimization in Canada."

This issue analyzes data from GSS surveys on victimization conducted in 1988, 1993, 1999 and 2004. These surveys collected information on the extent and nature of self-reported criminal victimization, the impact and consequences of crime to the victim, the extent that victimization is reported to police, and the use of informal and formal victim services.

Future issues of *Matter of Fact* will analyze GSS findings on health, time use, personal risk, education and work, social networks, family, social support, aging and retirement, and use of technology.

Among other things, they will show changing trends in housing during the past 20 years; how Canadian families have changed; what motivates people to retire; how the Internet has changed the way Canadians live; how Canadians are engaged with their families, neighbours and communities; how religious practices have changed; and what impact care-giving has on an individual's work, family, leisure time and health.

**Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 4502.**

New installments of *Matter of Fact* will be released Thursdays in *The Daily*. The first issue of *Matter of Fact*: "Violent victimization in Canada" (89-630-XWE, free) is now available from the *Publications* module of our website.

For custom tables from the 20 years of GSS data, contact Client Services ([sasd-dssea@statcan.ca](mailto:sasd-dssea@statcan.ca)), or call our national enquiries line (toll-free 1-800-263-1136).

For more information on *Matter of Fact*, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Client Services (613 951-5979; [sasd-dssea@statcan.ca](mailto:sasd-dssea@statcan.ca)), Social and Aboriginal Statistics Division. ■

## **Natural gas transportation and distribution** January and February 2008

Data on natural gas transportation and distribution are now available for January and February.

**Available on CANSIM: tables 129-0001 to 129-0004.**

**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 (toll-free 1-866-873-8789; 613-951-9497; [energ@statcan.ca](mailto:energ@statcan.ca)), Manufacturing and Energy Division. ■

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