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A Weekly Review

OCT 21 1994

Friday, October 21, 1994

OVERVIEW

■ Consumer spending picks up again

Consumer spending in retail stores picked up again in August after a drop in July.

■ Imports and exports strengthen

Imports and exports grew to record levels in August, as trade in automotive products recovered from July's longer-than-normal shutdowns.

■ Cost of goods and services rises

Canadians paid 0.2% more for goods and services in September 1994 than during the same month in 1993.

■ Manufacturing shipments continue their steady climb

Due to the continuing surge in new orders, manufacturers increased shipments by 2.5% in August, the sixth consecutive monthly rise since February 1994.

■ Composite index grows in September

The composite indicator grew 0.5% in September.

■ Fewer trips between Canada and other countries

Canadians made fewer trips to the United States and overseas in August 1994. Similarly, foreigners visited Canada in smaller numbers.

Consumer spending picks up again

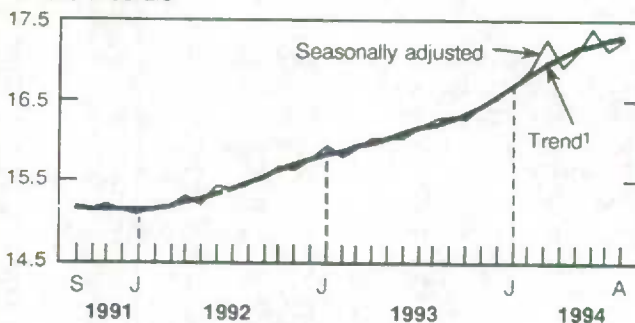
After a drop in July, consumer spending in retail stores picked up again in August: seasonally adjusted retail sales rose 0.9% to \$17.3 billion. This figure was 6.2% higher than in August 1993. Although the increase was broadly based across the sectors, it was not widespread geographically, as only Quebec (1.6%), Ontario (1.5), and Manitoba (1.2%) posted increases. Compared with August 1993, British Columbia and Alberta recorded the highest growth.

All retail sectors grew in August. The largest increases were in automobiles, up 1.1% to \$6.0 billion and in clothing, up 3.2% to \$1.0 billion. The sales increase in the automotive sector was due to a rise in the dollar value of new vehicles, and was realized in spite of a decline in the number of cars sold. Sales by gasoline service stations, and automotive parts, accessories and services outlets remained unchanged.

(continued on page 2)

Retail sales

Billions of dollars



¹ Trend represents smoothed seasonally adjusted data.



... Consumer spending picks up again

Spending in clothing stores advanced 3.2% in August, more than offsetting the 0.3% decline in July. Clothing retailers have been experiencing a strong rate of sales growth since the beginning of the year. All four components of the clothing sector recorded higher sales, particularly shoe stores.

For further information, order Retail trade (catalogue 63-005) or contact Industry Division at (613) 951-9682.

Imports and exports strengthen

Imports and exports grew to record levels in August, as trade in automotive products recovered from July's longer-than-normal shutdowns for retooling and vacations. Imports made a particularly strong comeback, while exports advanced more modestly. As a result, the trade balance fell from its July record of \$2.3 billion to \$0.9 billion in August.

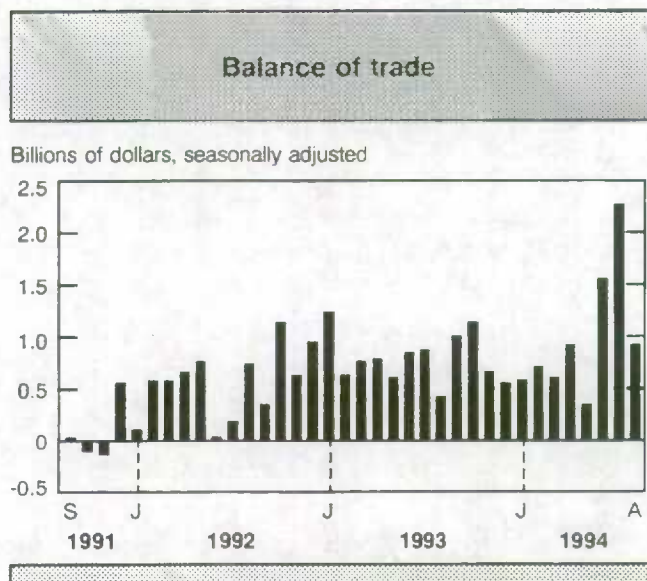
Imports were up 10.2% in August to a record \$17.9 billion. Growth was widespread, with most of the increase coming from autos, energy, and machinery. The bulk of these imports originated from the United States.

As the auto industry resumed production, Canadian demand for imported vehicle parts soared, as did imports of light vehicles from the United States. Within the energy sector, imports of both crude petroleum and refined petroleum products shot up. Machinery and equipment imports – particularly communications and specialized equipment, and tools – continued to grow, reflecting a more positive outlook by Canadian manufacturers.

Exports jumped by 1.6%, to \$18.8 billion in August, primarily because of a strong automotive sector.

A return to normal production levels among automakers in Canada and the United States, coupled with a rise in U.S. auto sales, led to a 15% increase in exports of automotive products in August over July. While exports of trucks have been growing at a steady rate since the spring, passenger cars have risen somewhat slower.

Driven by coal, as well as crude and refined petroleum products, energy exports grew by more than 12% in August. Natural gas exports were also up, as were Canadian production levels and U.S. demand.



In the industrial goods and materials sector, exports of most base metals and steel products were strong in August. The trend for these exports has been generally upward over the past year, due largely to the healthy state of manufacturing in the United States.

Lumber exports were down 6%, reflecting declines in both price and volume. Fearing strike action in British Columbia, U.S. buyers may have stockpiled lumber in July, thus decreasing requirements in later months.

For further information, order Canadian international merchandise trade (catalogue 65-001) or contact International Trade Division at (613) 951-9647. (See also "Current trends" on page 9.)

Cost of goods and services rises

In September 1994, the cost of goods and services rose 0.2% over the same month last year. This marks the sixth time this year that the annual change in the consumer price index (CPI) was 0.2%.

Prices increased over their September 1993 levels in all major expenditure categories except tobacco products and alcoholic beverages, where tax reductions on cigarettes still had an effect. If tobacco products were excluded, average consumer prices would have increased 1.6% over the same period.

For the eighth consecutive month, transportation-related costs contributed most to the annual increase in the CPI. A surge in rental accommodation costs and post-secondary tuition fees (9.4%) also propelled average prices to rise. Cigarettes had, by far, the largest downward impact, but other items such as mortgage interest costs and fresh produce prices also registered year-over-year declines.

Across Canada, changes in the all-items CPI compared with the same month last year varied from a drop of 1.5% in Quebec to a rise of 2.1% in Saskatchewan. Excluding tobacco products, annual price changes ranged from 0.8% in Quebec to 2.8% in Nova Scotia.

Between August and September 1994, the CPI increased 0.1%, with prices rising in three and declining in four major categories. Recreation, reading and education, and housing recorded the most significant gains. Food and transportation registered the largest drops.

Recreation, reading and education grew by 1.4%, mostly as a result of hikes in post-secondary tuition fees. Since changes in tuition fees are introduced into the CPI once a year – in September – a significant share of the increase in the cost of the basket between August and September was due to this component.

Housing costs moved up 0.3% in September, following a 0.1% rise in August. Shelter costs, led by mortgage interest and rental accommodation, furniture and household textiles, and child care costs all increased.

Changes in the CPI

Beginning with the January 1995 consumer price index (CPI), the basket of goods and services used to calculate the CPI will be updated to reflect changes in spending patterns. Whenever Statistics Canada updates a basket, it also reviews the underlying principles of the CPI program. After national consultations, Statistics Canada decided to incorporate three changes at the same time that it updates the basket:

1. *The national CPI will target the total population of Canada. Currently, the CPI targets families and individuals living in cities with populations over 30,000.*
2. *Emphasis will be put on representing price movements at the provincial level. Significantly less detail will be available for urban centres. Whitehorse and Yellowknife will continue to represent the Territories.*
3. *The products in the basket will be regrouped to improve the relevance, balance, and international comparability of the resulting series.*

Statistics Canada's commitment to providing an informative, reliable and impartial picture of consumer-price inflation in Canada has not changed.

For further information on these changes, contact Sandra Shadlock at (613) 951-9606 or Mark Prud'homme at (613) 951-4415, Prices Division (fax: 613-951-2848), or contact your Statistics Canada Regional Reference Centre.

Food prices declined 0.6% in September, following a 0.2% decrease the month before. Grocery bills shrunk while the cost of restaurant meals grew. As is usual in September, the price of fresh produce -- particularly potatoes, tomatoes, onions and carrots -- fell. Consumers also paid less for bananas and apples. In contrast, coffee, beef, pork, fish, and many dairy products cost more. The largest rise occurred in coffee prices (10.8%) resulting from a recent freeze in Brazil, and a subsequent lack of rain.

The transportation index decreased 0.4% in September after having increased for seven consecutive months. Falling gasoline prices and air fares constituted most of the decline.

On a provincial basis, CPI movements varied between a low of -0.2% for both Newfoundland and New Brunswick and a high of 0.4% for the three prairie provinces.

For further information, order The consumer price index (catalogue 62-001) or contact Prices Division at (613) 951-9606. (See also "Current trends" on page 9.)

PROVINCIAL PERSPECTIVES: CONSUMER PRICES

The Consumer price index, percentage change, September 1994/1993*

Province/territory	All-items	Food	Energy	Housing	Transportation
Canada	0.2	0.6	1.8	0.4	5.1
Newfoundland	0.9	1.8	-1.1	-0.7	7.0
Prince Edward Island	-0.4	1.1	-1.5	0.5	5.4
Nova Scotia	1.3	4.4	1.7	0.8	7.0
New Brunswick	0.7	3.2	0.8	0.4	6.4
Quebec	-1.5	0.9	0.2	0.3	3.4
Ontario	-0.1	-0.1	0.2	0.3	4.9
Manitoba	1.7	0.7	8.1	1.6	5.9
Saskatchewan	2.1	2.2	9.9	1.4	7.6
Alberta	1.8	0.7	8.1	0.9	6.5
British Columbia	1.8	0.4	3.3	0.6	6.5
Yukon	2.0	-0.2	7.8	2.7	5.4
Northwest Territories	2.3	4.2	5.8	1.2	6.7

* Data are not seasonally adjusted

Manufacturing shipments continue their steady climb

The seasonally adjusted value of shipments climbed 2.5% to \$30.1 billion, as manufacturers in 15 of the 22 major groups (accounting for 69% of shipments) posted strong performances.

Demand continued to be widespread, with higher shipments, in dollar terms, reported by the automotive industry (10.1%), primary metals industry (4.4%), and the electrical and electronics products industry (4.1%). The significant rise in the auto sector resulted from the changeover to 1995 models, strong U.S. sales, and a rebound from plant shutdowns in July. In addition, with August's unfilled orders up 2.4% in this sector, the strength in auto shipments is expected to continue.

In manufacturing overall, the backlog of unfilled orders grew 1.8% in August to \$32.2 billion, the eighth increase in the last nine months. In dollar terms, the largest increases were in the electrical and electronics products, transportation equipment, and machinery industries.

New orders jumped 2.7% to \$30.7 billion in August. Most of the dollar rise was headed by the transportation equipment, fabricated metal products, and electrical and electronics products industries.

Manufacturers' shipments, August 1994

Unadjusted data (Adjusted data not available by province)

Province	\$ millions	% change, previous year
Canada	30,922	18.8
Newfoundland	117	-7.1
Prince Edward Island	74	48.9
Nova Scotia	462	14.0
New Brunswick	626	13.4
Quebec	7,451	13.9
Ontario	16,110	19.9
Manitoba	606	16.2
Saskatchewan	409	29.9
Alberta	2,241	23.3
British Columbia	2,822	24.7

The value of inventories rose 0.8% in August, due largely to increases in the wood, electrical and electronics products, and transportation equipment industries. The inventories-to-shipments ratio fell to a record level of 1.26 in August, as increases in shipments continued to outpace growth in inventories.

For further information, order Monthly survey of manufacturing (catalogue 31-001) or contact Industry Division at (613) 951-9832. (See also "Current trends" on page 9.)

Composite index grows in September

The growth of the composite indicator picked up slightly from 0.4% in August to 0.5% in September, after a generally slowing trend this year. Growth continued to be sparked by business spending, although there were also some encouraging signs in household demand. The unsmoothed index posted a fourth straight monthly gain.

Household demand ended the third quarter on a more upbeat note. The housing index fell less rapidly than in August, as housing starts regained some of the ground lost since July. The starts of both single and multiple units firmed after a pick-up in existing house sales in August. Demand for business services recorded another big gain, while personal services saw their first increase since February. Sales of durable goods remained slow, although consumer credit rose in the third quarter as interest rates fell.

New orders for durable goods rose for the eleventh straight month, driven by business investment. Orders for capital goods have strengthened in line with investment intentions this year. The increase in orders was reflected in the first gain in five months in the shipments-to-stocks ratio for finished goods. The average workweek recovered in September, after falling in July and levelling off in August.

The financial market indicators remained mixed. The stock market bounced back, but money supply growth slowed again.

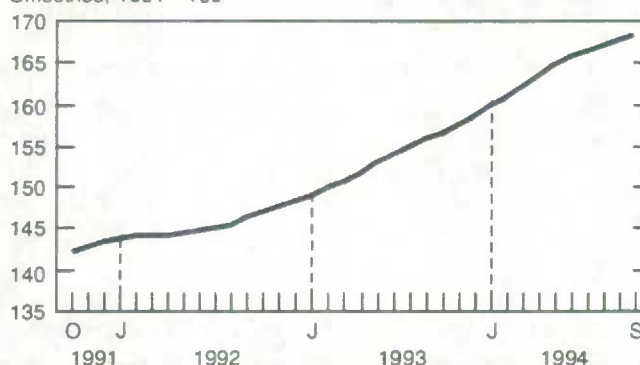
Fewer trips between Canada and other countries

Canadian residents made 3.1 million (seasonally adjusted) same-day car trips to the United States in August, down 1.4% from July and substantially below the August 1993 figure. These types of trips declined between February 1992 and March 1994, and have stayed relatively stable since. The weakening Canadian dollar, (which stood at about US73 cents in August), lowered taxes on tobacco products in Canada, and rising gasoline prices in the United States accounted for the downtrend in same-day trips. Unadjusted same-day car trips by Canadians to the United States dropped 22.5% from August 1993 to 3.7 million.

Canadians made 1.1 million seasonally adjusted overnight trips to the United States by all modes of transportation, down 4.1% from July. This kind of travel has been gradually decreasing since January 1992. Overnight trips to all other countries decreased 1.1% from July, to 271,000.

Composite leading indicator

Smoothed, 1981 = 100

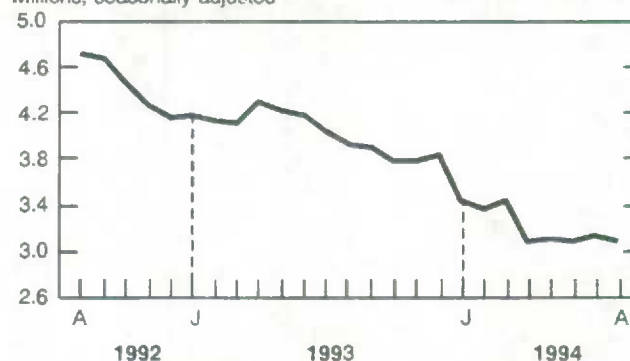


The U.S. leading indicator grew less rapidly than earlier this year but was more broadly based: household demand firmed and employment growth continued, offering encouraging signs for Canadian exporters.

For further information, order Canadian economic observer (catalogue 11-010) or contact Current Economic Analysis Division at (613) 951-3627. (See also "Current trends" on page 9.)

Same-day trips by Canadian residents to the United States, by automobile

Millions, seasonally adjusted



(continued on page 2)

... Fewer trips between Canada and other countries

Overall, Canadians made fewer overnight trips abroad in August. In terms of all modes of transportation, overnight trips by Canadians to all countries decreased 3.5% from July, to 1.4 million (seasonally adjusted) – well below the August 1993 figure.

Foreigners made 1.3 million overnight trips (seasonally adjusted) to Canada in August, down 0.9% from July. This type of travel was relatively constant between late 1986 and early 1993. In April 1993, it began inching upward. Residents of the

United States made 1.1 million trips of one or more nights to Canada in August, down 1.0% from July.

Overnight trips to Canada by residents of overseas countries also dropped a slight 0.5% from July to 283,000 – but still stayed at a higher level than a year earlier. Overnight visits from a number of other countries were up from August 1993, including Japan, Australia, and South Korea.

For further information, order International travel, advance information (catalogue 66-001P) or contact Education, Culture and Tourism Division at (613) 951-1791.

International travel between Canada and other countries, August 1994^P

	August 1994 ^P	July 1994 to August 1994 ^P	August 1994 ^P	August 1993 to August 1994 ^P
	('000)	% change, previous month	('000)	% change, previous year
	Seasonally adjusted		Unadjusted	
Canadian trips abroad				
Auto trips to the United States				
Same-day	3,068	-1.4	3,666	-22.5
One or more nights	772	-2.7	1,493	-25.9
Total trips, one or more nights				
United States	1,122	-4.1	1,906	-23.6
Other countries	271	-1.1	338	-5.1
Travel to Canada				
Auto trips from the United States				
Same-day	1,712	0.3	2,572	5.5
One or more nights	724	-1.7	1,523	4.8
Total trips, one or more nights				
United States	1,055	-1.0	2,085	3.7
Other countries	283	-0.5	532	5.8

^P preliminary figures.

NEW FROM STATISTICS CANADA

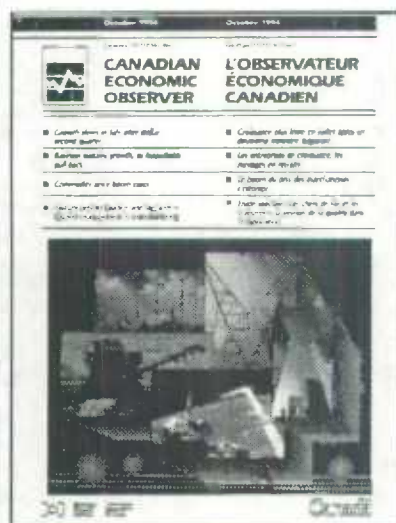
CANSIM time series directory

The 1994 *CANSIM time series directory* now available in compact disc or hard-copy format serves as a guide to the CANSIM time series database. On-line access to this database is available worldwide from several distributors. The compact disc makes searching the directory easier because you can search by keyword and topic. The disc also contains a thesaurus of terms used by Statistics Canada and an instructional module called "About Statistics Canada data". The module gives you more information on the data and services available from Statistics Canada. This product is priced as follows: *StatCan: CANSIM directory disc*: a compact disc with a new disc issued semi-annually (Canada: \$75; United States: US\$90; other countries: US\$100).

CANSIM time series directory: a three-volume, hard-copy set with a semi-annual amendment (Canada: \$199; United States: US\$230; other countries: US\$250).

Cross-reference index: (hard copy) for databank, matrix and series identifiers (Canada: \$65; United States: US\$75; other countries: US\$85).

For further information on this release, contact Mary Townson at (613) 951-1122, Marketing Division, or your nearest Statistics Canada Regional Reference Centre.



Canadian economic observer

The October 1994 issue of *Canadian economic observer*, Statistics Canada's flagship publication for economic statistics, presents a monthly summary of the economy and the major economic events in September. Featured this month is an article on quality management in manufacturing. A separate and more extensive statistical summary contains a wide range of tables and graphs on the principal economic indicators for Canada, the provinces and the major industrial nations.

The October 1994 issue of *Canadian economic observer* (11-010, \$22/\$220) is now available. For further information on this release, contact Cindy Bloskie (613)951-3634, Current Analysis Group.

StatCan: CANSIM disc

A comprehensive collection of data with simple retrieval software and excellent documentation make *StatCan: CANSIM disc* a valuable source of information on Canada. This release puts over 550,000 variables of socio-economic information with their complete history on your desktop.

Access to this combination of data and reference material is easier than ever. Information on the disc can be searched by keyword. You can also "search by topic", choosing progressively narrower topics from a provided list, thus focusing your search and retrieving just the information you need. A few keystrokes on your computer will give you detailed data on topics ranging from agriculture to zinc mining.

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For further information on this release, contact Mary Townson at (613) 951-1122, Marketing Division, or contact your nearest Statistics Canada Regional Reference Centre.

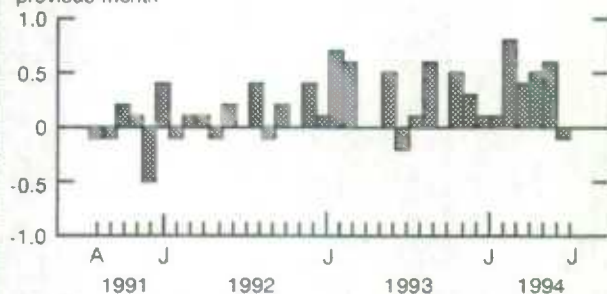
PUBLICATIONS RELEASED FROM OCTOBER 14 TO 20, 1994

Division/title of publication	Period	Catalogue number	Price: Issue/Subscription		
			Canada (Cdn.\$)	United States	Other countries
			US\$		
AGRICULTURE					
Cereals and oilseeds review	July 1994	22-007	15/144	18/173	21/202
BALANCE OF PAYMENTS					
Canada's international transactions in securities	July 1994	67-002	17/170	21/204	24/238
Canada's balance of international payments	2nd quarter 1994	67-001	30/120	36/144	42/168
CURRENT ANALYSIS					
Canadian economic observer	October 1994	11-010	22/220	27/264	31/308
EDUCATION, CULTURE AND TOURISM					
Touriscope: international travel advance information	August 1994	66-001P	7/70	9/84	10/98
HEALTH STATISTICS					
Therapeutic abortions	1992	82-219	15	18	21
INDUSTRY					
Electric power statistics	1993	57-204	29	35	41
Factory sales of electric storage batteries	August 1994	43-005	6/60	8/72	9/84
Gas utilities	June 1994	55-002	14/140	17/168	20/196
Industrial chemicals and synthetic resins	August 1994	46-002	6/60	8/72	9/84
New motor vehicle sales	April 1994	63-007	16/160	20/192	23/224
Oils and fats	August 1994	32-006	6/60	8/72	9/84
Oil pipeline transport	July 1994	55-001	11/110	14/132	16/154
Particleboard, waferboard and fibreboard	August 1994	36-003	6/60	8/72	9/84
Production and shipments of steel pipe and tubing	August 1994	41-011	6/60	8/72	9/84
Primary iron and steel	August 1994	41-001	6/60	8/72	9/84
Pulpwood and wood residue statistics	August 1994	25-001	7/70	9/84	10/98
Refined petroleum and coal products industries	1992	45-250	38	46	54
Retail trade	July 1994	63-005	20/200	24/240	28/280
Wholesale trade statistics-wholesale merchants, agents and brokers (last issue)	1992	63-226	37	45	52
INDUSTRY MEASURES AND ANALYSIS					
Gross domestic product by industry	July 1994	15-001	14/140	17/168	20/196
INVESTMENT AND CAPITAL STOCK					
Building permits	August 1994	64-001	24/240	29/288	34/336
LABOUR					
Unemployment insurance statistics	July 1994	73-001	16/160	20/192	23/224
PRICES					
Farm product price index	August 1994	62-003	8/76	10/92	11/107
Industry price indexes	August 1994	62-011	20/200	24/240	28/280
The consumer price index	September 1994	62-001	10/100	12/120	14/140
SERVICES, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY					
Software development and computer service industry	1992	63-222	28	34	40
TRANSPORTATION					
Railway operating statistics	June 1994	52-003	12/120	15/144	17/168
Railway operating statistics	July 1994	52-003	12/120	15/144	17/168
Passenger bus and urban transit statistics	August 1994	53-003	8/80	10/96	12/112

CURRENT TRENDS

Gross domestic product

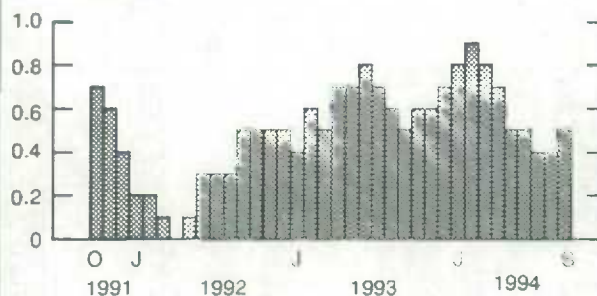
% change,
previous month



In July, real gross domestic product at factor cost fell 0.1%, due mainly to cutbacks in services.

Composite index

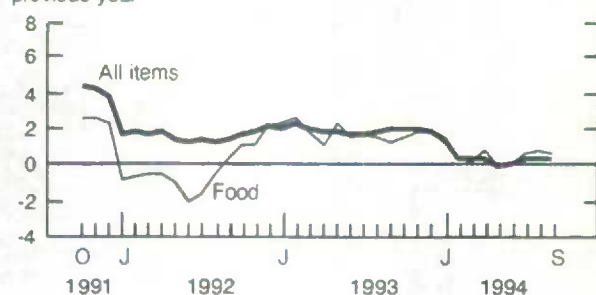
% change,
previous month



Led mostly by business spending, the composite index grew by 0.5% in September.

Consumer price index

% change,
previous year



Consumers paid 0.2% more for goods and services in September 1994 than the year before. Food prices rose by 0.6%.

Unemployment rate

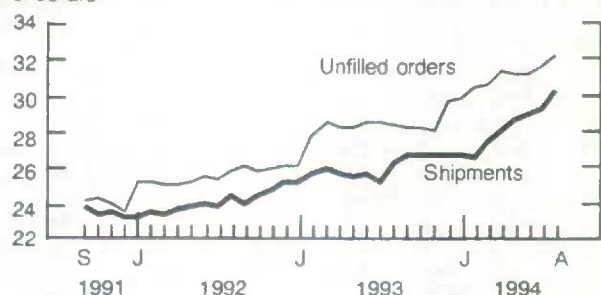
%



In September, the unemployment rate fell to 10.1%, its lowest rate since January 1991.

Manufacturing

Billions
of dollars



Canadian manufacturers' shipments rose 2.5% in August to \$30.1 billion. The level of unfilled orders grew 1.8% to \$32.2 billion.

Merchandise trade

Billions
of dollars



The value of merchandise exports increased by \$291 million in August, to \$18.8 billion. Imports grew by \$1.7 billion, to \$17.9 billion.

Note: All series are seasonally adjusted except the consumer price index.

LATEST MONTHLY STATISTICS

	Period	Level	Change, previous period	Change, previous year
GENERAL				
Gross domestic product (\$ billion, 1986)	July	530.5	-0.1%	3.9%
Composite leading indicator (1981 = 100)	September*	168.5	0.5%	7.6%
Operating profits of enterprises (\$ billion)	2 nd quarter	18.1	10.9%	29.5%
DOMESTIC DEMAND				
Retail trade (\$ billion)	August*	17.3	0.9%	6.2%
New motor vehicle sales ('000 units)	August	97.5	-1.5%	-1.9%
LABOUR				
Employment (millions)	September	12.7	0.5%	2.7%
Unemployment rate (%)	September	10.1	-0.2 [†]	-1.1 [†]
Participation rate (%)	September	65.1	0.1 [†]	0.0 [†]
Labour income (\$ billion)	July	34.1	-0.7%	3.1%
Average weekly earnings (\$)	July	568.15	-0.5%	1.8%
INTERNATIONAL TRADE				
Merchandise exports (\$ billion)	August*	18.8	1.6%	24.8%
Merchandise imports (\$ billion)	August*	17.9	10.2%	22.1%
Merchandise trade balance (all figures in \$ billion)	August*	0.9	-1.4	0.5
MANUFACTURING				
Shipments (\$ billion)	August*	30.1	2.5%	15.4%
New orders (\$ billion)	August*	30.7	2.7%	18.7%
Unfilled orders (\$ billion)	August*	32.2	1.8%	14.3%
Inventory/ shipments ratio	August*	1.26	-0.03	-0.11
Capacity utilization (%)	2 nd quarter	77.9	2.4	4.1
PRICES				
Consumer price index (1986 = 100)	September*	130.9	0.1%	0.2%
Industrial product price index (1986 = 100)	August	120.1	0.6%	6.4%
Raw materials price index (1986 = 100)	August	123.9	-1.0%	9.4%
New housing price index (1986 = 100)	August	136.2	0.1%	-0.2%

Note: All series are seasonally adjusted with the exception of the price indexes.

* new this week

[†] percentage point

I·N·F·O·M·A·T

A Weekly Review

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