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A Weekly Review

Friday, June 2, 2000

OVERVIEW

◆ The growth of the composite index slows somewhat

The growth of the leading indicator slowed from 1.2% in March to 0.9% in April, as household demand lost some of the vigour it had at the start of the year and as financial markets slowed.

◆ Raw materials prices drop

Prices for raw materials used by manufacturers fell 6.0% from March to April, largely because of a substantial decline in the cost of crude oil. Manufacturers paid 19.7% more for raw materials than they did in April 1999.

◆ Industrial prices stall

Industrial product prices were unchanged in April compared with March, ending 13 months of increases. This marked the first time in more than a year that petroleum prices have pushed the Industrial Product Price Index downward.

◆ Major international transactions in securities

In March, foreign investors added an unprecedented \$14.6 billion to their holdings of Canadian equities. For their part, Canadian investors made a massive \$6 billion investment in foreign securities.

◆ Hourly-rated employees profit from a strong rise in weekly earnings

In March, earnings gains for hourly rated employees were strong (+5.1%) compared with March 1999. Employees' average earnings in all industries increased by 3.0% during that one-year period.

◆ Brain drain to the United States offset by brain gain in Canada

During the 1990s, Canada suffered a net loss of skilled workers to the United States in several key knowledge-based occupations. However, reliable data from various sources suggest that this brain drain was offset by an equivalent influx of highly skilled workers from abroad.

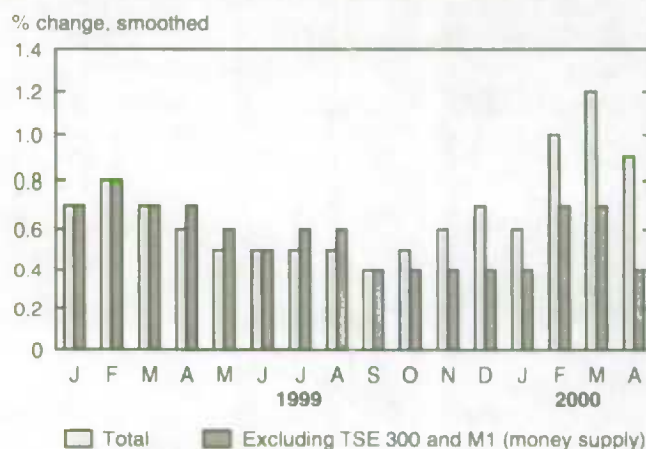
The growth of the composite index slows somewhat

The growth of the leading indicator slowed from 1.2% in March to 0.9% in April, as household demand lost some of the vigour it had at the start of the year and as financial markets slowed. Four of the 10 components retreated, the most since September 1998; none did so in March.

The housing index was unable to sustain the growth realized in February and March, as both housing starts and existing home sales turned down in April. The high demand for housing, however, continued to fuel gains for furniture and appliances. Meanwhile, durable goods sales posted their first decrease in a year and a half. The growth of demand for personal services has levelled off, judging by employment in these industries.

Stock markets faltered for the first time since October 1999. The financial market components had driven much of the acceleration in the overall composite index since that month. Without them, growth would have been kept to an average of 0.5% since October 1999 and returned to 0.4% in April, instead of 0.8% and 0.9% respectively.

Composite index excluding the financial components



(continued on page 2)

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Canada

... The growth of the composite index slows somewhat

The trend of new orders for durable goods turned down for the first time in seven months. A drop in shipments and an increase in inventories pushed down the shipments/inventories ratio for the first time in several months. Manufacturers' optimism, however, was reflected in another large gain in the average work week. The

outlook was especially bright for exports, as the U.S. leading index continued to plow ahead steadily.

The May 2000 issue of *Canadian economic observer* (11-010-XPB, \$23/\$227) presents the full report. For more information, contact Francine Roy (613-951-3627), Current Economic Analysis Group. See "Current Trends" on page 8.

Raw materials prices drop

Prices for raw materials used by manufacturers fell 6.0% from March to April, primarily because of a substantial decline in the cost of crude oil. Prices of mineral fuels, almost all of which is crude oil, declined 15.5%, the first decrease in six months. If mineral fuels were excluded, the monthly increase in raw materials prices would have been 0.5%.

On a year-over-year basis, manufacturers paid 19.7% more for raw materials than they did in April 1999, a substantial deceleration from the 12-month increase of 33.0% in March. Again, the slowdown was due to crude oil prices, which were 50.4% higher than in April 1999. If mineral fuels were excluded, the year-over-year increase in raw material prices would have been only 8.1%.

The 12-month increase in the prices of non-ferrous metals, particularly nickel concentrates, alumina, and copper concentrates, also contributed to the overall advance in raw materials prices. Prices rose for all three metals in 1999 as growth continued in North America and the economies of Europe and many East Asian countries gained strength.

From March to April, however, non-ferrous metal prices were generally down, as demand for metal products was probably weakened by fears that plunging stock markets and rising interest rates would slow economic growth in the United States. In particular, nickel concentrate prices dropped 5.1% in April, in contrast to the sharp upward trend since December 1998. April's decline may reflect uncertainty about several market factors. When stainless steel output increases, as has been the case for more than a year, the usual result is a more rapid generation of stainless steel scrap, which can be used as a substitute for nickel.

Among animal products, the most important contributors to the 12-month increase were hogs for slaughter (+57.3%), cattle (+14.3%) and milk. In the case of hogs, production levels remained relatively stable as demand picked up. Internationally, North American hog prices were high in mid-April, amid concern that American fast-food restaurants were using more bacon and that

Raw Materials Price Index, April 2000
Not seasonally adjusted

	Index (1992=100)	% change, previous month	% change, previous year
Raw Materials Price Index (RMPI)	134.1	-6.0	19.7
Mineral fuels	155.6	-15.5	47.2
Vegetable products	112.6	0.6	-3.8
Animals and animal products	123.1	3.2	14.5
Wood	143.4	0.3	5.6
Ferrous metals	123.9	0.7	10.5
Non-ferrous metals	114.5	-3.9	10.2
Non-metallic minerals	119.8	0.1	1.0
RMPI excluding mineral fuels	124.2	0.5	8.1

grocers were selling more pork just as the U.S. hog herd was declining. With regard to the higher prices for cattle, the size of the Canadian cattle herd declined in the early part of 2000 compared with the previous year, while demand for beef remained strong.

Sugar prices jumped 11.6% between March and April to a level 10.4 % higher than in April 1999. The monthly price increase was partly due to Brazil's holding back supplies from the world market in an attempt to boost prices. In addition, demand rose among buyers in the Philippines, Bangladesh and Russia.

As a result of new contracts, iron ore prices in April were 1.2% higher than in March and 2.0% higher than in April 1999. They were still about 10% below the peak they reached in the last quarter of 1998.

The April 2000 issue of *Industry price indexes* (62-011-XPB, \$22/\$217) will be available at the end of June. For more information, contact the Client Services Unit (613-951-3350; fax: 613-951-1539; infounit@statcan.ca), Prices Division.

Industrial prices stall

Industrial product prices were unchanged in April compared with March, ending 13 months of increases. This marked the first time in more than a year that petroleum prices have pushed the Industrial Product Price Index downward. Excluding petroleum and coal products, the IPPI in April would have increased 0.4%.

From March to April, prices in the refined petroleum industry declined 5.8% after OPEC agreed to ease cutbacks in production. Monthly prices have not declined since February 1999, just before OPEC members agreed to cut production in an effort to restore prices. This agreement was rescinded at the end of March 2000.

Effect of the Canada-U.S. exchange rate

Prices of some commodities—motor vehicles, lumber, pulp, newsprint, and certain metals—are often quoted in U.S. dollars. Consequently, exchange rate fluctuations affect their contribution to the Industrial Product Price Index.

From March to April, the U.S. dollar gained ground, pushing up prices quoted in U.S. dollars. Motor vehicle prices rose 1.2%, largely the result of a higher valued U.S. dollar. If the exchange rate had remained unchanged, the IPPI would have edged down (-0.3%).

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... Industrial prices stall

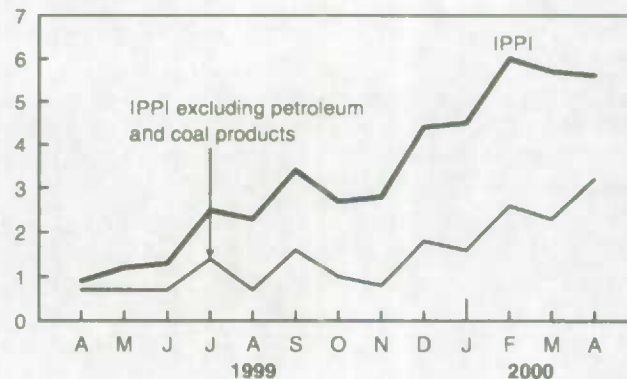
Compared with April 1999, industrial product prices advanced 5.6%, a slight deceleration from the 5.7% annual increase in March and the 6.0% in February. Refined petroleum prices were 46.1% higher than in April 1999, but other sources such as paper and paper products, primary metals, and primary meats also pushed the index upward over the year. The IPPI, excluding petroleum and coal products, rose 3.2%, its largest yearly advance since December 1995.

After advancing steadily since last July, primary metal product prices slipped 1.5% in April. Aluminum product prices were an important factor in this decline, dropping 3.6%. April's prices were still 11.3% above those of April 1999. Primary copper product prices fell for a third straight month (-5.2%) on the prospect of robust production despite ample inventories. Similarly, nickel product prices fell 4.6%, the first decline of this size since last June. This downturn did little to dampen yearly prices, which have climbed 89.3% since April 1999. Altogether, primary metal product prices have advanced 10.4% on a year-over-year basis, nickel prices accounting for the bulk of the gains.

Pulp prices continued to strengthen (+4.3%), boosted by healthy demand in both North America and abroad. Though pulp prices were 32.5% higher than they were in April 1999, they remained 26.9% below their November 1995 peak. Rising pulp, newsprint (+1.8%) and paper product (+1.0%) prices, brought about a 2.0% monthly increase in the paper and paper product category.

Industrial Product Price Index

% change, 12-month



Altogether, prices for paper and paper products have climbed 12.2% since April 1999.

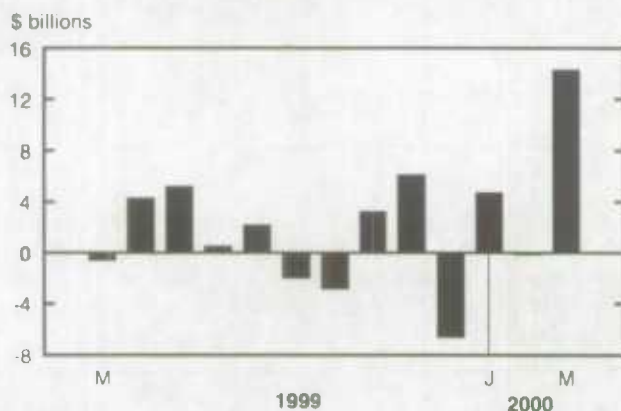
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Major international transactions in securities

In March, foreign investors added an unprecedented \$14.6 billion to their holdings of Canadian equities, double the previous high recorded in August 1998. The lion's share of their investment was in new shares, both those floated in foreign markets and those exchanged as part of direct investment acquisitions.

Americans continued to invest substantially in Canadian technology shares in March, especially in treasury shares issued

Foreign investment in Canadian securities¹



¹ Includes bonds, stocks and money market paper.

Related market information on financial markets

In March, the short-term differential narrowed by some 30 points but still favoured investment in the United States by some 50 basis points. Both Canadian and U.S. short-term interest rates rose slightly during the month. The differential on long-term government instruments narrowed to less than 5 basis points at the end of March, still in favour of the United States.

The TSE 300 Composite Index closed 3.7% higher in March, the sixth consecutive monthly advance, for a total increase of 36% since September 1999. For its part, the Standard & Poor's 500 Index rose a much sharper 9.7% in March, erasing a two-month decline. U.S. stock prices have climbed only 16.8% since September 1999.

The Canadian dollar ended March at U.S.\$0.69, virtually unchanged from the monthly closings since December 1999.

by Canadian firms that acquired U.S. companies. Of the \$9.4 billion worth of foreign investment in new shares, roughly two-thirds was for the purposes of acquisitions; the remainder was in new Canadian issues in foreign markets.

Against a backdrop of higher Canadian stock prices, foreigners, mainly Americans, purchased an additional \$5.2 billion worth of shares on the secondary market. The back-to-back record equity investments in February and March were heavily weighted toward technology shares.

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... Major international transactions in securities

For the second time in more than a year, foreigners acquired Canadian money market instruments in March, adding \$3.1 billion to their holdings. This amount included a \$2.2 billion investment in federal Treasury bills, the first significant foreign buying since August 1999.

However, foreign investors reduced their holdings of Canadian bonds by \$3.5 billion, the fourth consecutive monthly divestment. The divestment, mainly of Canadian government bonds, continued to outpace new issues in foreign markets.

For their part, Canadian investors have continued to invest massively in foreign securities. Their \$6.0 billion March investment was the second highest on record; only last November's record of

\$8.8 billion surpassed it. The \$4.0 billion acquisition of foreign stocks was again led by Canadian mutual funds, but pension funds also acquired foreign stocks. Notably, 60% of these investments were in overseas shares; usually, the majority of this activity is in U.S. stocks.

Canadian investors bought \$2.0 billion in foreign bonds. This represented the first substantial investment of the year, and was directed solely to U.S. treasury bonds.

The March 2000 issue of Canada's international transactions in securities (67-002-XPB, \$18/\$176; 67-002-XIB, \$14/\$132) will be available in June. For more information, contact Don Granger (613-951-1864), Balance of Payments and Financial Flows Division.

Hourly-rated employees profit from a strong rise in weekly earnings

In March, employees' average weekly earnings were estimated at \$624.11, an increase of \$2.02 (0.3%) from February. Employees' average earnings increased by 3.0% from March 1999. Earnings gains for the last 12 months were strongest in goods-producing industries, with the most significant gains in manufacturing and construction.

In all industries, earnings gains for hourly-rated employees were strong (+5.1%) compared with March 1999, because of gains in paid hours of 2.0% and an increase in average hourly earnings of 3.0%. Average earnings for salaried employees rose by 3.2% in the past 12 months, and earnings for commissioned salespersons and other employees were virtually unchanged.

Compared to February, average weekly hours for hourly rated employees grew by 0.2 hours to 32.0 hours per week, and average overtime hours increased 0.1 hours. Average hourly earnings for hourly-rated employees were almost unchanged in March at an estimated \$15.70.

March was the seventh consecutive month of payroll employment increases, as employers added 17,000 additional employees to their payrolls. The largest gains were in business services and manufacturing. By province, the strongest employment gains were in Ontario and British Columbia.

Canada's brain drain to the United States offset by brain gain

During the 1990s, Canada suffered a net loss of skilled workers to the United States in several key knowledge-based occupations. The magnitude of the loss was relatively small: about 0.1% of the Canadian population, and less than 1% of the stock of workers in any specific knowledge occupation.

Even so, the number of people leaving Canada for the United States and other countries grew steadily during the 1990s. This

Average weekly earnings by industry, March 2000
Seasonally adjusted

	\$	% change, previous month	% change, previous year
All industries	624.11	0.3	3.0
Logging and forestry	816.03	-0.5	8.0
Mining, quarrying and oil wells	1,136.56	0.5	2.6
Manufacturing	783.12	0.9	5.1
Construction	731.93	1.4	5.0
Transportation and storage	743.62	-0.7	0.9
Communications and other utilities	817.23	0.1	0.1
Wholesale trade	667.39	1.3	1.3
Retail trade	376.17	0.4	1.9
Finance and insurance	836.25	1.3	5.4
Real estate and insurance agencies	629.36	-0.4	-3.0
Business services	722.72	0.4	4.1
Education-related services	664.45	-0.8	0.9
Health and social services	534.52	0.4	2.3
Accommodation, food and beverage	242.30	-0.2	2.3
Public administration	751.57	-0.1	2.8
Miscellaneous services	419.14	0.1	1.9

The March 2000 issue of Employment, earnings and hours (72-002-XPB, \$32/\$320) presents the month's industry data and other labour market indicators in detail. Custom tabulations of the data are available on request. Annual averages for 1999 are also available on CANSIM. For further information, contact Jean Leduc (613-951-4090; fax: 613-951-4087; labour@statcan.ca), Labour Statistics Division.

Note to readers

This article is based on an article in the Spring 2000 issue of Education Quarterly Review about the migration of knowledge workers into and out of Canada. While the main points of this article have been in the public domain for some time, this study analyzes the most up-to-date data on the subject.

was particularly notable for health professionals, followed by engineers and managers.

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... Canada's brain drain to the United States offset by brain gain

These emigrants tend to be young workers who are highly skilled, well-educated and well-paid. For example, between 1994 and 1999, 49% of emigrants aged 16 and over had a university degree, compared with 12% of Canadian-born people and 21% of immigrants who arrived during the 1990s. Individuals earning more than \$150,000 a year were seven times as likely to move to the United States as the average taxpayer.

The brain drain to the United States has had a negative impact on Canada. Yet while losses of highly skilled workers to the United States accelerated during the 1990s, so too did the influx

of highly skilled workers into Canada from other countries. This was especially true in the high-technology sector, where workers arriving in Canada far outnumbered those moving to the United States.

Emigrants to the United States were more than twice as likely to hold a university degree as were immigrants to Canada. However, because the overall pool of immigrants was larger, there were four times as many university graduates at all levels entering Canada from abroad (about 39,000 between 1990 and 1996) as leaving for the United States (roughly 10,000 between 1990 and 1996). Some 11,000 immigrants to Canada had a master's or doctoral degree; this is approximately the same as the number of Canadian university degree holders of all levels who moved to the United States.

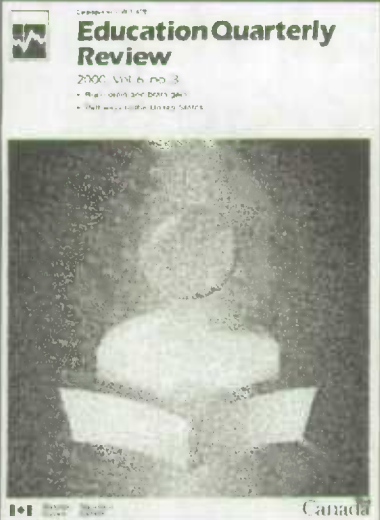
Recent immigrant high-technology workers have made an important contribution to meeting the rapidly growing demand in the high-technology sector. From 1991 to 1996, immigrants took about one third of the 39,000 new computer engineer, systems analyst and computer programmer jobs.

The article, "Brain drain and brain gain: The migration of knowledge workers into and out of Canada," was published in the May 2000 issue of *Education Quarterly Review* (Vol. 6, No. 3) (print: 81-003-XPB, \$21/\$68; on line at [\\$16/\\$51](http://www.statcan.ca:81-003-XIF)). The article can be downloaded free of charge from the Statistics Canada Web site at www.statcan.ca, under "In Depth." For more information, contact John Zhao (613-951-1531; john.zhao@statcan.ca), Centre for Education Statistics.

Permanent migration between Canada and the United States, selected professional occupations, 1990 to 1997

	Outflow	Inflow	Ratio of outflow to inflow
Managerial occupations	2,470	381	6.5
Engineers	521	77	6.7
Computer scientists	135	88	1.5
Natural scientists	144	55	2.6
Physicians	320	17	18.7
Nurses	773	51	15.3
Teachers, postsecondary	231	112	2.1
Teachers, except postsecondary	296	76	3.9

New from Statistics Canada



Education quarterly review 2000, Vol. 6, no. 3

Education quarterly review, Statistics Canada's flagship publication for education statistics, analyses and reports on current issues and trends in education. The Spring 2000 issue offers the following articles: "Brain drain and brain gain: the migration of knowledge workers from and to Canada" and "Pathways to the United States: graduates from the class of 95". These analytical articles tackle the complex issues and questions surrounding the loss of skilled workers to knowledge-based occupations in the United States, and the gain of knowledge workers from the United States and the rest of the world.

The Spring 2000 issue of *Education quarterly review*, Vol. 6, no. 3 (print: 81-003-XPB, \$21/\$68; online at www.statcan.ca: 81-003-XIB, \$16/\$51) is now available. For more information, contact Jim Seidle (613-951-1500; jim.seidle@statcan.ca), Centre for Education Statistics.

Education in Canada 1999

Need more data on education in Canada? Want to research issues and trends in more depth? Consult *Education in Canada*, our annual review of statistics on Canadian education. This publication summarizes data on institutions, enrolment, graduates, teachers and finance for all levels of education. Its 71 tables, covering 206 pages, present a comprehensive overview of the key variables in Canadian education.

Education in Canada, 1999 (print: 81-229-XPB, \$51; online at www.statcan.ca: 81-229-XIB, \$38) is now available. For more information, contact Jim Seidle (613-951-1500; fax: 613-951-9040; jim.seidle@statcan.ca), or the Centre for Education Statistics (1-800-307-3382; educationstats@statcan.ca).

Canadian economic observer May 2000

The May issue of Statistics Canada's flagship publication for economic statistics, *Canadian economic observer*, analyses current economic conditions, summarizes the major economic events that occurred in April and reprints a feature article on knowledge workers who emigrate from Canada that was published in the *Education quarterly review*.

A separate 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 May 2000 issue of *Canadian economic observer* (11-010-XPB, \$23/\$227) is now available. For more information, contact Cyndi Bloskie (613-951-3634; ceo@statcan.ca), Current Economic Analysis Group).



New from Statistics Canada

Censuses of Canada, 1665 to 1871, Statistics of Canada, Volume IV 1997

An electronic version of the *Censuses of Canada, 1665 to 1871, Statistics of Canada, Volume IV* is now available. This unique reference volume was first published in 1876, and has been out of print for more than a century. It depicts the growth and development of Canada from the earliest settlements to Confederation and on to 1871, in introductory texts and extensive statistical tables. References to the original sources make the volume a critical jumping-off point for historical research and analysis.

Many researchers have asked for this volume to be published in electronic form. In response, Statistics Canada has re-issued the original content of this publication on its Web site without alterations to the original text and data.

The electronic version of *Censuses of Canada, 1665 to 1871, Statistics of Canada, Volume IV* (98-187-X1E) is available on Statistics Canada's Web site (www.statcan.ca). The introduction is available free of charge. For more information, contact Ruth Kelly (613-951-1168), Dissemination Division.

Health Reports Spring 2000

The Spring 2000 issue of *Health Reports* contains the following articles: "Are recent cohorts healthier than their predecessors?," "Oral contraceptive use," "Changes in social support in relation to seniors' use of home care," and "Living at home or in an institution: What makes the difference for seniors?"

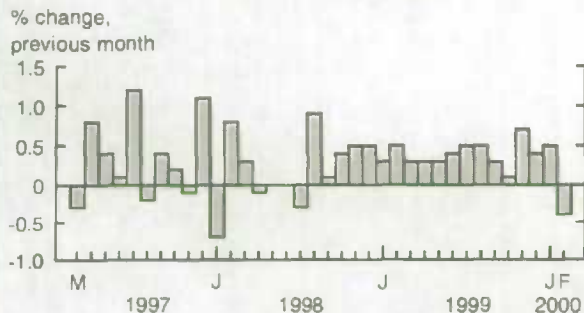
Health Reports provides comprehensive and timely analysis of national and provincial health information and vital statistics derived from surveys or administrative databases. It is designed for a broad audience that includes health professionals, researchers, policy-makers, educators and students.

The spring 2000 issue of *Health Reports* (print: 82-003-XPB, \$35/\$116; online at www.statcan.ca: 82-003-X1E, \$26/\$87) is now available. For more information, contact Marie Beaudet (613-951-7025; beaumar@statcan.ca), Health Statistics Division.



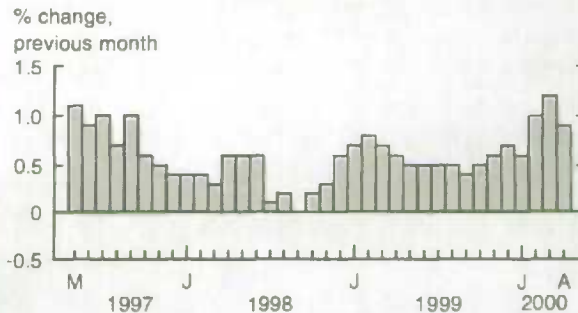
Current trends

Gross domestic product



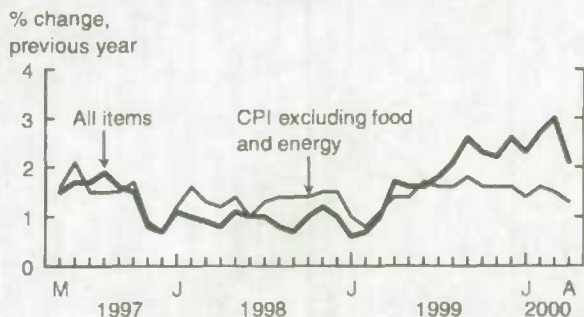
Economic activity receded for the first time in 19 months in February, declining 0.4%. The decline followed three months of strong growth.

Composite Index



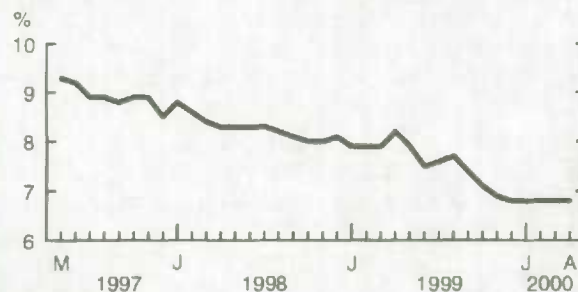
The growth of the leading indicator slowed from 1.2% in March to 0.9% in April. Household demand lost some of its vigour and financial markets slowed.

Consumer Price Index



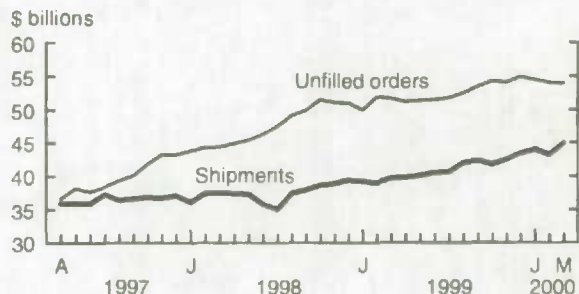
Consumer prices for goods and services were 2.1% higher in April 2000 than they were a year earlier. Excluding food and energy, prices rose 1.3%.

Unemployment rate



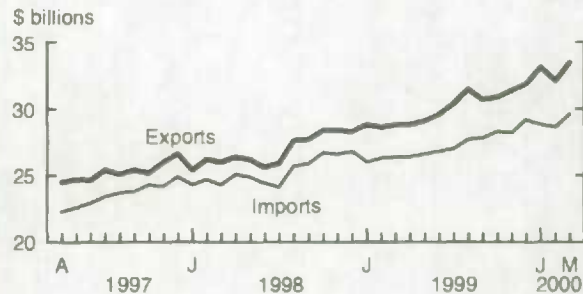
In April, the unemployment rate remained at 6.8% for a fifth consecutive month.

Manufacturing



Manufacturers' shipments rebounded 3.8% in March to \$44.9 billion. The backlog of unfilled orders decreased 0.3% to \$53.9 billion.

Merchandise trade



In March, the value of merchandise exports rebounded 4.5% from February to \$33.5 billion. Imports climbed 3.7% to \$29.6 billion.

Note: All series are seasonally adjusted except the Consumer Price Index.

Latest statistics

	Period	Level	Change, previous period	Change, previous year
GENERAL				
Gross domestic product (\$ billion, 1992)	March*	774.3	0.7%	4.7%
Composite Index (1992=100)	April	161.6	0.9%	8.2%
Operating profits of enterprises (\$ billion)	Q4 1999	43.9	7.8%	27.1%
Capacity utilization (%)	Q4 1999	86.8	1.3†	4.0†
DOMESTIC DEMAND				
Retail trade (\$ billion)	February	22.3	-1.1%	4.9%
Department store sales (\$ billions)	March	1.48	-0.4%	1.8%
New motor vehicle sales (thousand of units)	March	134.9	6.5%	8.8%
Wholesale trade (\$ billion)	March	31.6	2.0%	8.7%
LABOUR				
Employment (millions)	April	14.86	0.0%	2.9%
Unemployment rate (%)	April	6.8	0.0†	-1.4†
Participation rate (%)	April	65.8	-0.1†	0.0†
Average weekly earnings (\$)	March*	624.11	0.3%	3.0%
Help-wanted Index (1996=100)	April	167	-2.3%	7.1%
INTERNATIONAL TRADE				
Merchandise exports (\$ billion)	March	33.5	4.5%	16.3%
Merchandise imports (\$ billion)	March	29.6	3.7%	12.5%
Merchandise trade balance (all figures in \$ billion)	March	3.9	0.4	1.4
MANUFACTURING				
Shipments (\$ billion)	March	44.9	3.8%	13.0%
New orders (\$ billion)	March	44.8	4.5%	13.3%
Unfilled orders (\$ billion)	March	53.9	-0.3%	4.2%
Inventory/shipments ratio	March	1.28	-0.03	-0.01
PRICES				
Consumer Price Index (1992=100)	April	110.1	-0.4%	2.1%
Industrial Product Price Index (1992=100)	April*	126.8	0.0%	5.6%
Raw Materials Price Index (1992=100)	April*	134.1	-6.0%	19.7%
New Housing Price Index (1992=100)	March	102.5	0.1%	2.0%

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

* new this week

† percentage point

Infomat

A weekly review

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The dairy review	Q1 2000		
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