



Infomat

A Weekly Review

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Friday, December 15, 2000

OVERVIEW

◆ Capacity utilization rate edges down

Capacity use eased slightly to 86.9% in the third quarter. In the manufacturing sector, a rise in capacity use was accompanied by a build-up of inventories. Rates were lower in all non-manufacturing industries except for gas distribution.

◆ Industrial construction projects down sharply

The total value of building permits declined 6.8% in October, with industrial construction projects falling to their lowest level in 14 months. A gain in permits for housing failed to offset a decline in non-residential permits.

◆ Surplus in goods remains high

Canada recorded a surplus of \$3.4 billion on current transactions with the rest of the world in the third quarter. The surplus in goods, which stood at \$12.6 billion, continued to be the source of strength in the current account.

◆ Record number of international tourists

Overnight international travel to Canada posted the highest second-quarter results ever registered. A record 5.2 million tourists arrived from foreign countries from April to June, up 5.0% from the same three months in 1999.

◆ Criminal harassment: more incidents reported to police

The incidence of criminal harassment, or stalking, appears to be on the rise. However, some of this increase may have been the result of greater public and police awareness of the potential seriousness of this crime.

◆ Increasingly, households are using the Internet for more than just recreation

Growing numbers of Canadians logged on to the Internet in 1999, and they used it in more diverse ways. For the first time, the proportion of households using the Internet from home surpassed the proportion using the Internet from work.

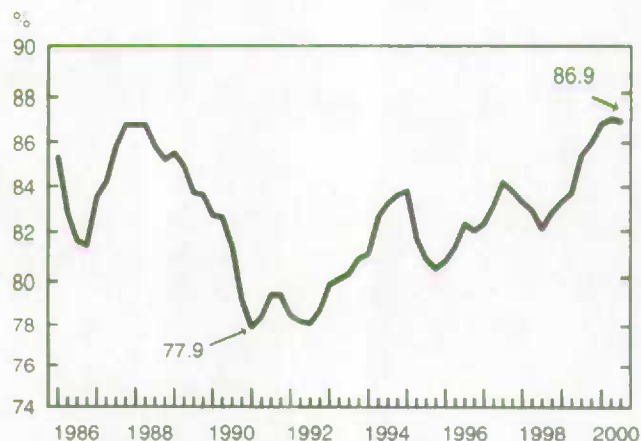
Capacity utilization rate edges down

Capacity use eased slightly to 86.9% in the third quarter, after a string of seven quarterly increases. Declines were widespread. The lower rates were a reflection of both reduced output and additional production capacity coming on stream in many industries. Although total industrial output grew in the third quarter, the pace slowed, as exports declined slightly for the first time in more than three years.

Businesses have been devoting a growing proportion of their spending to assets related to information technology. The productivity gains resulting from this spending have allowed for economic expansion without, as yet, provoking inflation. However, it remains to be seen what the long-term effects of increased energy prices will be. For some time, rates of capacity use have been very high, and recent reports have indicated that a growing number of firms are facing production constraints, including a shortage of skilled labour.

In manufacturing, half of the industry groups showed lowered rates in the third quarter. Nevertheless, manufacturers raised their rate of capacity use 0.4 percentage points to 87.5%, the highest level in over 25 years. The advance over the second quarter was

Industrial capacity utilization rate



(continued on page 2)

... Capacity utilization rate edges down

mainly due to the higher rates posted by two of the larger industry groups: transportation equipment and electrical and electronic products.

Operating at 103.4% of their capacity, producers in the electrical and electronic products group built up inventories. (An operating

Industrial capacity utilization rates, Third quarter 2000

	%	% point change, previous quarter	% point change, previous year
Total, non-farm goods-producing industries	86.9	-0.1	1.5
Logging and forestry	90.2	-2.5	0.7
Mining (including milling) and quarrying	90.9	-1.8	11.3
Crude oil and natural gas	68.8	-1.6	-0.2
Manufacturing	87.5	0.4	0.9
Wood	83.9	-3.6	-7.1
Furniture and fixtures	88.6	-0.1	0.9
Primary metals	89.7	-1.8	-1.3
Fabricated metal products	84.0	-1.1	0.5
Machinery	81.4	-2.8	3.9
Transportation equipment	94.0	2.2	0.1
Electrical and electronic products	103.4	2.9	15.1
Non-metallic mineral products	83.0	2.2	-4.3
Food	80.7	-1.1	-0.4
Beverages	88.4	0.5	0.0
Rubber products	94.6	0.6	2.1
Plastic products	81.5	-0.7	-5.5
Primary textiles	80.4	4.6	-3.1
Textile products	81.2	1.2	1.2
Clothing	82.8	-1.9	0.1
Paper and allied products	95.9	1.1	3.1
Printing and publishing	83.9	-0.8	0.1
Refined petroleum and coal products	90.8	-1.3	0.4
Chemical and chemical products	76.4	0.3	-3.2
Construction	91.6	-0.1	2.3
Electric power	89.7	-0.8	0.3
Gas distribution	79.9	2.4	5.2

Note to readers

An industry's capacity use is the ratio of its actual output to its estimated potential output. Statistics Canada derives estimates of an industry's potential output from measures of its capital stock. A company's measure of its level of operation, as a percentage of potential, takes into account changes in the obsolescence of facilities, capital-to-labour ratios and other characteristics of production.

level over 100% indicates that producers have surpassed the level of output considered a maximum under their usual operating practices.) Accumulation of inventories was also a factor in the transportation equipment industry. Producers stepped up output and raised their operating rate 2.2 percentage points to 94.0%, a new historical peak for the industry.

The paper and allied products group operated at 95.9%, just shy of its historical peak reached in the late 1980s. The wood group posted a second quarterly decline, bringing the rate to 83.9%. Production did not recover after a second-quarter strike by British Columbia loggers. Generally slowing housing construction in the United States also contributed to the decline in output. In the primary metals group, the rate of capacity use fell to 89.7%. Additional production capacity coming on stream amplified the effect of reduced output of primary steel and steel pipe and tubing.

In the non-manufacturing sector, capacity use declined in almost all industries in the third quarter. The only exception was in gas distribution systems, where increased production capacity partly absorbed the rise in production. Output in both forestry and mining was down significantly. As a result, the rate of capacity use in forestry fell to 90.2%. In the mining, quarrying and oil wells industries as a whole, the rate fell to 76.3%, owing to a reduction in crude petroleum exploration.

For more information, contact Susanna Wood (613-951-0655) or Richard Landry (613-951-2579), Investment and Capital Stock Division.

Industrial construction projects down sharply

The value of building permits issued by municipalities declined 6.8% in October to \$3.1 billion. A gain in permits for housing failed to offset a decline in non-residential permits. In the non-residential sector, industrial construction projects fell to their lowest level in 14 months.

In October, municipalities issued residential permits totalling \$1.7 billion, up 5.5% from September. Multi-family dwelling construction rose 14.5% after a major decline in September. Single-family dwelling construction rose 2.3%. Home resales were up in October, and a sustained demand for residential building permits was reflected in a 4.9% increase in housing starts. These developments occurred in a context of stable mortgage rates, high levels of full-time employment and continued economic growth.

The housing sector's activity in October was led by Ontario, which registered a 10.4% rise in the value of building permits because of a significant increase in the construction of multi-family dwellings in the Toronto area. The most significant decline occurred in British Columbia (-16.6%), where a strike among municipal workers in Vancouver delayed the processing of building permits.

In the non-residential sector, the value of building permits fell 18.4% to \$1.4 billion, after four straight monthly increases. All three components of the sector were down, but it was the industrial component that contributed the most to the decline. After reaching their highest level since November 1997 in September, industrial permits plummeted 51.5%, largely as a result of significant decreases in the construction of manufacturing plants in the St. Catharines-Niagara and Montreal census metropolitan areas.

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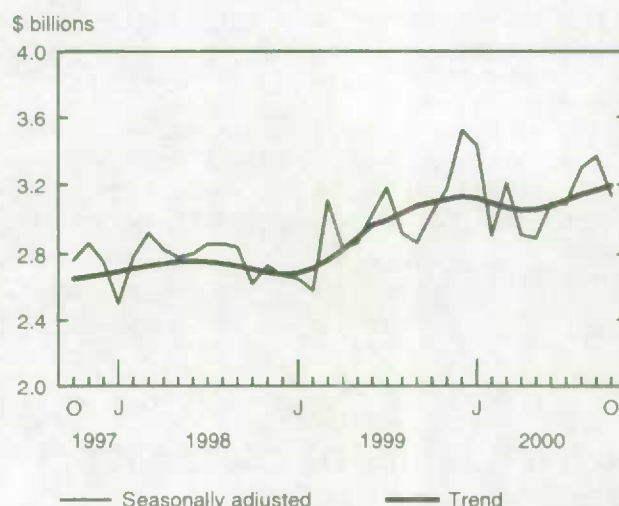
... Industrial construction projects down sharply

In the first 10 months of 2000, municipalities issued permits totalling \$31.3 billion, a 7.8% increase compared with the same period in 1999. An increased number of projects in every component in both the residential and non-residential sectors contributed to this performance, which was the best for the January-to-October period since 1989.

Regionally, 21 of the 26 census metropolitan areas showed increases in the value of building permits for the first 10 months of the year. Powered largely by new non-residential projects, the largest rise in dollar terms occurred in Calgary (+23.6%). Ottawa came just behind (+37.4%) because of a large surge in office building construction projects, reflecting the low vacancy rate in the region.

The October 2000 issue of *Building permits* (64-001-X1B, \$19/\$186) is now available. For analytical information, contact Étienne Saint-Pierre (613-951-2025; saineti@statcan.ca), Investment and Capital Stock Division.

Value of building permits



Surplus in goods remains high

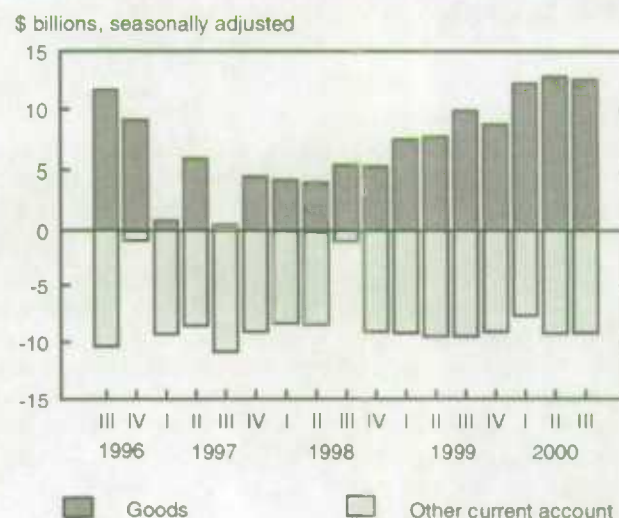
Canada recorded a seasonally adjusted surplus of \$3.4 billion on current transactions with the rest of the world in the third quarter. This brings the cumulative current account surplus to \$11.6 billion for the first three quarters of the year, more than twice the previous annual high of \$4.6 billion in 1996.

While \$0.3 billion lower than in the second quarter, the surplus in goods continued to be the source of strength in the current account in the third quarter. At \$12.6 billion, it registered above \$12 billion for the third consecutive quarter. The third quarter decline reflected a larger deficit on machinery and equipment and smaller surpluses on forestry and auto products. At the same time, the energy surplus rose and the deficit on industrial goods narrowed. Canada's large goods surplus with the United States grew, while the deficits in all other trading areas increased, with the exception of the United Kingdom.

The other components of the current account were fairly balanced. Canada registered a lower deficit on investment income transactions, owing to lower interest payments to non-residents. Revenues from commercial services levelled out while expenses edged down; the narrower deficit resulted from a variety of changes across component sectors, including research and development and management services. In the travel account, unchanged receipts and lower payments again led to a marginally smaller deficit. Some of the increase in the deficit for transportation services resulted from lower receipts on passenger fares during the quarter.

On the financial and capital account (not seasonally adjusted), Canadian portfolio investors again invested substantially on international markets in the third quarter, making sizable purchases of both stocks and bonds. With legislation allowing higher foreign content, pension and mutual funds were again the leaders behind these acquisitions.

Goods and other Current Account balances



The increase in Canadian direct investment abroad, at \$4.6 billion, was the weakest in more than four years and only about one-fifth of the record amount that flowed out in the second quarter. There was little activity in acquisitions of existing foreign companies, which had been the driving force behind the second quarter surge.

With regard to other investment assets, Canadian banks increased their foreign currency deposits with foreign affiliates. Canada resumed its investment in international reserve assets, after a pause in the second quarter.

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... Surplus in goods remains high

Foreign investment in Canada in the third quarter was robust at \$10 billion, although that amount was only about one-third of the massive investment in the second quarter. The acquisition of existing Canadian companies continued to play a key role, along with injections of working capital in existing foreign-owned companies. However, continued strong demand for Canadian stocks was mostly offset, as foreigners again reduced their holdings of debt instruments. The Canadian dollar continued to lose ground against the American dollar, down a cent over the quarter to 66.51 U.S. cents.

Other investment liabilities decreased \$2.6 billion in the third quarter, entirely because of withdrawals of deposits. About half of these withdrawals resulted from lower foreign currency deposits at Canadian banks by their foreign affiliates.

The third quarter 2000 issue of Canada's balance of international payments (Internet: 67-001-XIB, \$29/\$93; paper: 67-001-XPB, \$38/\$124) will be available soon. For more information, contact Arthur Ridgeway (613-951-8907) or Denis Caron (613-951-1861), Balance of Payments and Financial Flows Division.

Record number of international tourists

Overnight international travel to Canada posted the highest second-quarter results in the 26 years that international travel data have been collected. A record 5.2 million tourists arrived from foreign countries from April to June, up 5.0% from the same three months in 1999.

About 4.0 million came from the United States, a 3.4% increase from the second quarter of 1999. Massachusetts and Texas were the U.S. states with the strongest percentage increases in travellers to Canada. Most regions across the country enjoyed more tourism from the United States; British Columbia led the increases (+7.2%), followed by the Atlantic provinces (+6.0%).

The majority of Americans travelled to Canada for a holiday. In the second quarter, they made a record 2.2 million such trips, up 2.6% from the same quarter of 1999. Business travel increased 5.1% to 678,000. Americans' trips by car rose by just 0.8%, compared with 6.0% for trips by air.

Tourists from countries other than the United States totalled about 1.2 million in the second quarter, up 10.5% from the second quarter of 1999. This was the sixth consecutive quarterly increase. European and Asian markets spurred much of this growth. Travel from Asian markets expanded 12.6%, the result of strong increases from South Korea and Hong Kong. The number of travellers from Europe rose 7.2%. Travel from the United Kingdom, Canada's largest overseas market, expanded 14.5% following a 7.7% increase in the first quarter.

Canadian travel to the United States continued its upward trend in the second quarter, for the fifth consecutive quarter. Canadians made 3.7 million overnight trips to the United States, 4.6% more than in the second quarter of 1999. In particular, travel to Florida surged 22.1%. Despite this resurgence, the average number of nights Canadians spent in that state on each visit fell from 37.8 in the second quarter of 1999 to 30.9 in the second

Top 10 states of origin for American tourists to Canada

	Second quarter 1999	Second quarter 2000	Second quarter 1999 to second quarter 2000
	thousands of travellers		% change
New York	494	491	-0.6
Michigan	449	478	6.5
Washington	401	409	2.0
California	274	266	-2.9
Ohio	193	199	3.1
Massachusetts	145	176	21.4
Pennsylvania	197	174	-11.7
Minnesota	131	152	16.0
Texas	106	129	21.7
Illinois	148	124	-16.2

quarter of 2000. The number of Canadians travelling to the gambling state of Nevada rose by 32.5%.

Canadians flew to the United States on 1.3 million trips in the second quarter, up 12.2% compared with the same quarter of 1999. Many of these travellers were headed to southern states such as Florida. Auto trips south of the border remained virtually unchanged.

Canadians also made more than one million trips to countries other than the United States in the second quarter, up 10.2% from the second quarter of 1999. This strong increase follows three consecutive quarterly declines. The United Kingdom remained the most popular overseas destination for Canadians, followed by Mexico and France.

Data from the International Travel Survey are now available. For data requests, contact Michel Campbell (613-951-9169; fax: 613-951-2909; michel.campbell@statcan.ca). For analytical information, contact Laurie McDougall (613-951-6766; fax: 613-951-2909; laurie.mcdougall@statcan.ca), Tourism Statistics Program.

Criminal harassment: more incidents reported to police

According to data reported by a group of 106 Canadian police forces, the incidence of criminal harassment, commonly known as stalking, appears to be on the rise. These police forces reported a total of 5,382 incidents of criminal harassment in 1999, up 32% from 1996. However, some of this increase may be the result of greater public and police awareness of the potential seriousness of this crime, which became a *Criminal Code* offence only in 1993.

In 1999, three-quarters of the victims of criminal harassment were females. Slightly more than half of female victims were stalked by a current or former partner. A further 25% were stalked by a casual acquaintance. By contrast, males were most frequently stalked by a casual acquaintance (44%).

Offences commonly associated with criminal harassment include uttering threats, threatening or harassing phone calls, common assault and mischief. While less than 2% of criminal harassment incidents in 1999 resulted in physical injury to the victim, the obsessive and repetitive nature of stalking can have a profound emotional impact on victims, such as depression and anxiety.

Stalking also has the potential of progressing to more serious crimes. There were nine stalking-related homicides from 1997 to 1999, each involving a female being stalked, and subsequently killed, by a recently-separated husband, an ex-husband or an ex-lover.

Among 10 selected cities, the highest rates of stalking in 1999 were reported in Saskatoon, which had 75 incidents of criminal

Accused-victim relationship in criminal harassment incidents, 1999

	Male victims		Female victims	
	number	%	number	%
Total accused	897	100.0	3,120	100.0
Current spouse	3	0.3	115	3.7
Ex-spouse	98	10.9	1,134	36.3
Current or ex-dating relationship	49	5.5	482	15.4
Other family	59	6.6	111	3.6
Casual acquaintance	396	44.1	782	25.1
Business relationship	107	11.9	146	4.7
Other known relationship	44	4.9	24	0.8
Stranger	104	11.6	225	7.2
Unknown	37	4.1	101	3.2

harassment per 100,000 population, Montreal (73) and Vancouver (68). The lowest rates were reported in Edmonton (11), Calgary (12) and London (12).

More than 4,000 cases involving criminal harassment charges were heard in adult provincial or territorial courts in 1998/99. This is 32% higher than in 1994/95. About half these charges led to a conviction, and a jail term was imposed in 35% of convictions. Over the same period, the median length of prison sentences for this offence increased from 30 days to 90 days.

Juristat: Criminal harassment, Vol. 20, no. 11 (Internet: 85-002-X1E, \$8/\$70; paper: 85-002-XPE, \$10/\$93) is now available. For more information, contact Information and Client Services (1 800 387-2231; 613-951-9023), Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics.

Increasingly, households are using the Internet for more than just recreation

Canadians are not only logging on to the Internet in growing numbers, they are also using it in more diverse ways. In 1999, about 42% of all households, or 4.9 million, had at least one family member who used the Internet regularly from home, work, school or another location. This is up from 29% two years earlier.

In 29% of all households, there was someone who used the Internet from home. This proportion, which has almost doubled since 1997, surpassed for the first time the share of households with someone who used the Internet from work.

Of the households with someone who used the Internet from home, 19% used it to buy goods and services, more than double the proportion observed in 1997. Fifty-four percent used the Internet to seek medical and health information, 28% used it for

electronic banking, and more than 90% for e-mail. One in five households used their Internet connection for self-employment purposes, and one in four for employer-related reasons.

Internet use has increased for all age groups, but the growth in Internet use and home connections has been fastest in households headed by seniors 65 and over, followed by those headed by individuals aged 55 to 64. Also, four of every 10 households with children were connected from home, nearly twice the proportion in 1997.

Internet use increases directly with education and income levels in the household. Households in which the head had a university degree were almost twice as likely to use the Internet as those headed by high school graduates, and four times as likely as those in which the head did not complete high school. However, the proportion of households using the Internet increased the most among households in the lowest education category.

Similarly, households with the highest incomes were five times as likely to be Internet users as were those with the lowest

(continued on page 6)

... Increasingly, households are using the Internet for more than just recreation

incomes. However, the growth in the penetration rate has been greater in lower-income households than in higher-income households, rising from 6% in 1997 to 11% in 1999.

Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia, where average incomes are the highest, are the most connected provinces. They had the highest rate of household Internet use and were the only provinces above the national average of 42%. Quebec improved its position considerably relative to the other provinces; 33% of all Quebec households used the Internet in 1999, compared with little more than 26% the year before. Newfoundland's home and work penetration rates remained the lowest of any province.

Among census metropolitan areas (CMAs), 61% of households in Ottawa were connected to the Internet from any location. This

was the highest rate among the 15 largest CMAs. Calgary followed with 60%. The lowest rates were in Windsor and Québec, both at 34%.

*The detailed analytical report **Plugging in: The increase in household Internet use continues in 1999** (56F0004MIE) is now available free on Statistics Canada's Web site, www.statcan.ca. From the Products and services page, choose Free publications. For data or general information, contact Marc Nadeau (613-951-2183; marc.nadeau@statcan.ca). For analytical information, contact Greg Peterson (613-951-3592; greg.peterson@statcan.ca), Science, Innovation and Electronic Information Division.*

New from Statistics Canada



Canadian social trends Winter 2000

The Winter 2000 issue of *Canadian social trends* features the following articles: "100 years of...education, income and expenditures, health and urban development," plus "Patterns of religious attendance."

Each quarter, *Canadian social trends* integrates data from many sources to examine emerging social trends and issues. It also features the latest social indicators, as well as information about Statistics Canada's products and services.

The Winter 2000 issue of *Canadian social trends* (Internet: 11-008-XIE, \$8/\$27; paper: 11-008-XPE, \$11/\$36) is now available. For more information, contact Susan Crompton (613-951-2556; estsc@statcan.ca), Housing, Family and Social Statistics Division.

Innovation and training in new firms

The analytical report *Innovation and training in new firms* describes the environment and the characteristics of new businesses that survive and grow. The report focuses on two issues: new firms' propensity to innovate, and the extent to which their growth depends on their innovativeness; and the extent to which the emphasis the firm places on worker skills complements innovation and aids growth.

Research paper no. 123, *Innovation and training in new firms* (11F0019MPE, free), is now available. To obtain a copy, contact Louise Laurin (613-951-4676) or visit the Statistics Canada Web site (www.statcan.ca). From the Products and services page, choose Research papers (free) then Social conditions. For more information, contact John Baldwin (613-951-8588), Micro Economic Studies and Analysis Division.

Perspectives on labour and income Winter 2000

The feature article in the winter issue of *Perspectives on labour and income*, "Incomes of younger retired women: The past 30 years," examines the extent of change in the source, distribution and level of incomes of younger retired women aged 65 to 69. It also discusses how future labour market changes and social roles may eventually affect women's retirement income.

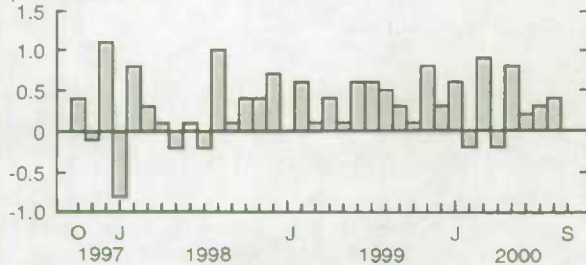
The second article in this issue looks at the investment strategies of pension plans offered by many employers and unions. Another reviews trends in the level and distribution of income among those 65 and over from 1980 to 1996 in the context of the maturation of Canada's earnings-related pension schemes, both public and private. Finally, this issue looks at the degree of inequality in the distribution of market income, total income and after-tax income within each province, and compares it with the degree of income inequality in other provinces.

The Winter 2000 issue of *Perspectives on labour and income*, Vol. 12, no. 4 (75-001-XPE, \$18/\$58) is now available, as is the December 2000 online version, Vol. 1, no. 3, (75-001-XIE, \$5/\$48). For more information, contact Henry Pold (613-951-4608; poldhen@statcan.ca), Labour and Household Surveys Analysis Division.

Current trends

Gross domestic product

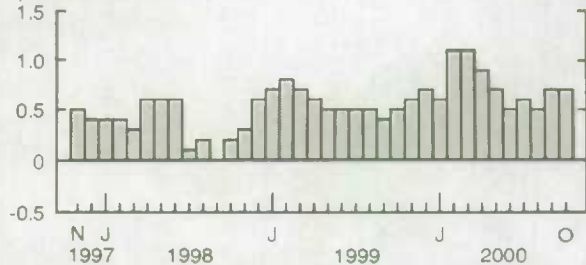
% change,
previous month



Gross domestic product growth was flat in September, ending a four-month string of gains.

Composite Index

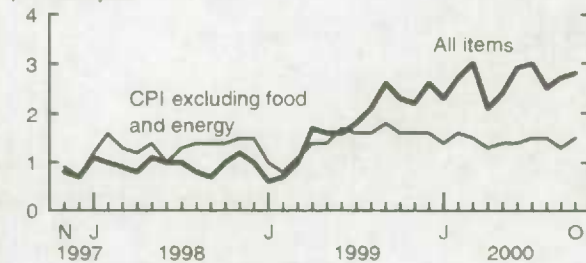
% change,
previous month



The leading indicator grew by 0.7% in October, matching its gain in September. The growth was widespread.

Consumer Price Index

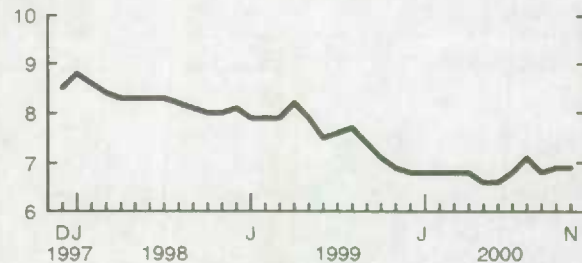
% change,
previous year



Consumer prices for goods and services were 2.8% higher in October 2000 than they were a year earlier. Excluding food and energy, prices rose 1.5%.

Unemployment rate

%



In November, the unemployment rate was unchanged at 6.9% from October. While employment grew, so too did the labour force by a similar amount.

Manufacturing

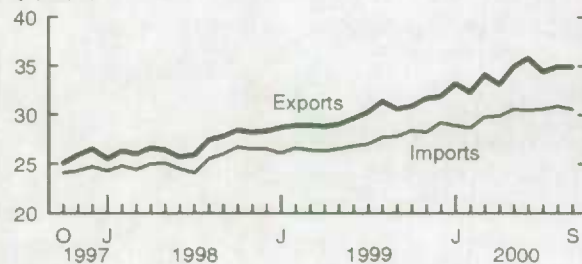
\$ billions



Manufacturers' shipments were down 1.0% in September to \$44.9 billion. The backlog of unfilled orders decreased 0.8% to \$55.5 billion.

Merchandise trade

\$ billions



In September, the value of merchandise exports increased a marginal 0.1% from August to \$34.9 billion. Imports declined 0.7% to \$30.6 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)	September	792.6	0.0%	4.1%
Composite Index (1992=100)	October	167.6	0.7%	9.0%
Operating profits of enterprises (\$ billion)	Q3 2000	52.6	0.1%	15.7%
Capacity utilization (%)	Q3 2000	86.9	-0.1†	1.5‡
DOMESTIC DEMAND				
Retail trade (\$ billion)	September	23.5	0.4%	6.0%
Department store sales (\$ billions)	October	1.57	4.9%	0.4%
New motor vehicle sales (thousand of units)	October*	123.3	-12.4%	-4.8%
Wholesale trade (\$ billion)	September	31.6	-0.9%	4.8%
LABOUR				
Employment (millions)	November	15.04	0.4%	2.4%
Unemployment rate (%)	November	6.9	0.0‡	0.0‡
Participation rate (%)	November	66.2	0.2‡	0.7‡
Average weekly earnings (\$)	September	630.57	0.2%	2.9%
Help-wanted Index (1996=100)	November	181	1.7%	9.0%
INTERNATIONAL TRADE				
Merchandise exports (\$ billion)	September	34.9	0.1%	14.1%
Merchandise imports (\$ billion)	September	30.6	-0.7%	10.4%
Merchandise trade balance (all figures in \$ billion)	September	4.3	0.2	1.4
MANUFACTURING				
Shipments (\$ billion)	September	44.9	-1.0%	6.1%
New orders (\$ billion)	September	44.4	-1.6%	2.8%
Unfilled orders (\$ billion)	September	55.5	-0.8%	3.8%
Inventory/shipments ratio	September	1.34	0.02	0.04
PRICES				
Consumer Price Index (1992=100)	November*	115.0	0.3%	3.2%
Industrial Product Price Index (1992=100)	October	129.1	0.6%	4.4%
Raw Materials Price Index (1992=100)	October	150.5	0.5%	20.4%
New Housing Price Index (1992=100)	October*	103.9	0.2%	2.4%

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

* new this week

‡ percentage point

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Products released from December 7

SUBJECT AREA Title of product	Period	Catalogue number	Price (\$) (issue/subscription)
AGRICULTURE			
Egg production	October 2000	23-003-XPB	110
Factors associated with female employment rates in rural and small town Canada		21-006-XIE	no charge
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