



# Infomat

## A Weekly Review

Friday, June 28, 2002

### INSIDE

#### ◆ Leading economic indicator slows

The composite index, an early indicator of economic health, rose 0.7% in May, after gains of 1.3% in March and 1.2% in April. The growth of the housing index continued to moderate, to 0.3%, after hitting an unsustainable high of 5.2% in January.

#### ◆ Consumers spend more in most retail sectors

Retail sales rose 1.0% in April to \$25.5 billion after two months of essentially flat sales. All retail sectors posted higher sales except drug stores. Wholesale sales rose 2.4% to \$34.8 billion, largely because of higher sales of motor vehicles, parts and accessories.

#### ◆ Corporate profits rebound

Corporate operating profits rose for the first time in more than a year in the first quarter of 2002, as the economy continued its recovery. Corporate profits reached \$34.7 billion, up 9.0% from the fourth quarter of 2001.

#### ◆ Students beyond commuting distance less likely to go to university

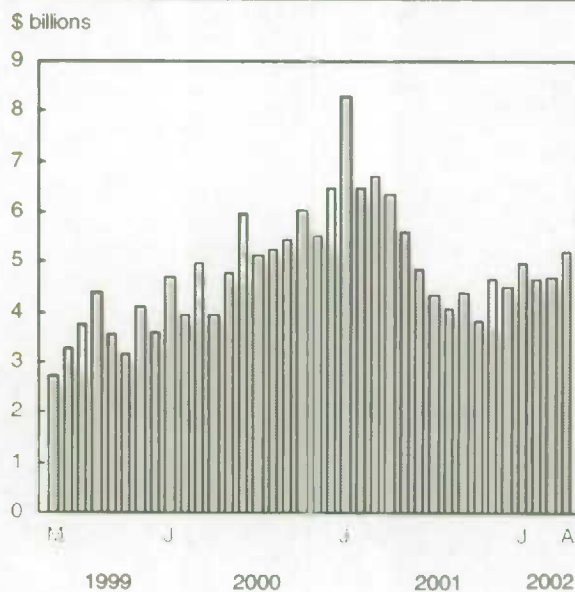
High school students living within commuting distance were almost twice as likely to pursue a university education as those living beyond. Commuting distance had a more negative impact on university access for students from lower-income families.

### Exports reach highest level in almost a year

**M**erchandise exports rose 2.9% to \$34.3 billion in April, the highest level since June 2001. Growth was particularly strong in automotive products and machinery and equipment, which accounted for nearly half of all merchandise exports.

Merchandise imports, however, rose at slightly more than half the pace of exports to \$29.1 billion, a 1.6% increase from March. As a result, Canada's overall trade balance increased 11.0% from March to \$5.2 billion, ending a two-month slide.

The trade surplus with the United States jumped 8.2% to \$8.3 billion. Canadian companies sent \$29.2 billion in goods to the United States, a 2.4% increase from March, while they imported \$20.9 billion worth, up 0.3%.

*(continued on page 2)***Trade balance**

## Exports reach highest... (continued from page 1)

The United States accounted for more than two-thirds of the increase in Canada's exports, while imports from the United States remained virtually unchanged. Canada's total trade deficit with nations other than the United States rose \$109 million to \$3.1 billion.

Sales in the United States of incentive-laden passenger automobiles drove exports up 4.5% to \$4.3 billion. Exports of motor vehicle parts to supply busy American automotive assembly plants jumped 5.5% to \$2.4 billion.

In the machinery and equipment sector, exports increased 2.6% to \$7.8 billion. Aircraft and other transportation equipment exports rose 11.2% to \$1.8 billion. In spite of work stoppages, exports of aircraft, engines and parts rose 14.0% to \$1.4 billion.

Industrial goods and materials rose 7.3% to \$5.8 billion. Chemicals, plastics and fertilizers increased 6.7% to just under \$2 billion and other industrial goods and materials jumped 8.1% to \$1.5 billion. Metals and alloys exports increased 6.5% to \$1.8 billion as a result of strong shipments abroad of precious metals, aluminum, iron and steel.

Exports of television, telecommunication and related equipment stumbled as sales to the Far East and United States dropped off at the start of the second quarter. The 12.6% decrease ended a five-month streak of increases.

Warmer, more seasonable weather in North America resulted in a 3.4% drop of exports in the energy sector to \$4.1 billion, ending four straight monthly increases. Natural gas exports dropped 11.5% to \$1.7 billion. Petroleum and coal product exports went against the trend, rising 23.4% to \$833.3 million, the third monthly increase in a row.

The forestry products sector remained virtually unchanged at \$3.2 billion. Adequate inventories of softwood lumber in the United States, confusion over the outcome of the softwood lumber dispute and a decline in U.S. housing starts resulted in a 4.8% decline in lumber exports to \$1.1 billion.

Automotive product imports rose 1.3% to \$6.7 billion. Imports of machinery and equipment, Canada's largest import sector, increased 1.0% to \$8.7 billion in April. Canada's third largest import sector, industrial goods and materials, increased 2.4% to \$5.6 billion. Energy product imports rose 16.0% to \$1.3 billion.

**Canadian international merchandise trade** (Internet: 65-001-XIB, \$14/\$141; paper: 65-001-XPB, \$19/\$188) is now available. For more information, contact Jocelyne Elibani (1-800-294-5583; 613-951-9647). For analytical information, contact Daryl Keen (613-951-1810), International Trade Division. (See also "Current trends" on page 6.)

## Leading economic indicator slows

The composite index, an early indicator of economic health, rose 0.7% in May, following the biggest back-to-back monthly increases in 20 years in March (+1.3%) and April (+1.2%). The financial indicators were the only two of the 10 components to decline in May.

The growth of the housing index continued to moderate, to 0.3%, after hitting an unsustainable high of 5.2% in January. Existing home sales dipped in the spring, but housing starts have not slowed because of the strength in single-family dwellings, which rose to their highest level since January 1990. The growth of sales of durable goods also slowed.

New orders accelerated in response to household and export demand. They posted a third straight increase (+1.8%), after falling for over a year. Manufacturers met their increased demand for labour exclusively through new hiring, as the average workweek was unchanged after nearing a 28-year high in April.

Growth in the U.S. economy continued to lag behind Canada. The U.S. leading indicator eased from 0.5% to 0.3% growth, with half of its 10 components falling outright. The divergence with the Canadian index has been sustained all year, especially in the manufacturing sector, where new orders in the United States for both consumer and capital goods retreated.

The June 2002 issue of **Canadian economic observer** (paper: 11-010-XPB, \$23/\$227) is now available. For more information, contact Francine Roy (613-951-3627), Current Economic Analysis Group. (See also "Current trends" on page 6.)



## Consumers spend more in most retail sectors

**R**etail sales rose 1.0% in April to \$25.5 billion after remaining essentially flat in March and unchanged in February.

Previously, retailers enjoyed a four-month period of heavy spending from consumers. In January and in the last three months of 2001, retail sales grew at least 1.3% each month.

All retail sectors posted higher sales in April except drug stores. After leading other retailers in the first three months of 2002, drug stores posted a 0.7% sales decline. Drug stores had their largest quarterly gain in nine years in the first quarter, with sales up 3.9% from the fourth quarter of 2001.

After staying away for three months, consumers spent 3.9% more in clothing stores. April's gain in the clothing sector was the largest in a year. Sales advances were significant in all store types, with women's clothing stores leading the way. Unseasonable weather from January to April may have caused some volatility in clothing store sales.

Following weak sales in January and February, retailers in the furniture sector enjoyed strong gains in March (+1.1%) and April (+1.5%). Credit incentives and a red-hot housing market continued to stimulate sales in furniture stores.

Higher department store sales in April pushed sales up 1.2% for the general merchandise sector. The recent growth in this sector originated from department stores. New store openings were largely responsible for the 8.6% year-over-year increase in department store sales. Sales in other general merchandise stores, however, remained 0.5% lower in April than in April 2001.

Sales in the automotive sector rose 0.9%, offsetting the declines in February and March. A strong comeback by retailers of automotive parts and services and a fourth consecutive monthly increase in sales by gasoline service stations led to the higher sales in the automotive sector. Motor and recreational vehicle dealers posted lower sales for a third consecutive month, despite a 1.7% increase in the number of new motor vehicles sold.

Retail sales rose in all provinces, except New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. However, declines in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia in April followed gains in March, which were among the

### Retail sales, April 2002 Seasonally adjusted

	\$ millions	% change, previous month	% change, previous year
<b>Canada</b>	<b>25,453</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>5.5</b>
Newfoundland and Labrador	431	3.3	7.6
Prince Edward Island	113	1.1	7.0
Nova Scotia	759	-1.6	5.6
New Brunswick	600	-3.8	-1.1
Quebec	5,825	0.7	3.0
Ontario	9,585	1.0	5.5
Manitoba	905	4.5	10.5
Saskatchewan	737	0.2	6.4
Alberta	3,085	1.8	8.3
British Columbia	3,325	0.9	7.0
Yukon	29	-9.4	1.8
Northwest Territories	43	6.9	22.8
Nunavut	16	-2.7	4.3

largest of all provinces. April's sales increases were about the same in Ontario, British Columbia and Quebec.

Wholesalers sold \$34.8 billion worth of goods and services in April, up 2.4% from March. Since the start of 2002, wholesale sales have risen a strong 5.2%. Nine of the 11 wholesale sectors benefited from increased sales. April's rise was largely the result of higher sales of motor vehicles, parts and accessories. Only food products and apparel and dry goods reported declines.

Eight provinces saw an increase in wholesale sales. Only Saskatchewan and New Brunswick experienced slight declines. Four provinces benefited from stronger than average increases: Newfoundland and Labrador, Ontario, Manitoba and British Columbia.

The April 2002 issues of **Retail trade** (Internet: 63-005-XIB, \$16/\$155) and **Wholesale trade** (Internet: 63-008-XIB, \$14/\$140) are now available. For general information, contact Client Services (1-877-421-3067; 613-951-3549). For analytical information, contact Paul Gratton (613-951-3541; paul.gratton@statcan.ca) for Retail trade and Jean Lebreux (613-951-4907; jean.lebreux@statcan.ca) for Wholesale trade, Distributive Trades Division.

## Corporate profits rebound

Corporate operating profits rose for the first time in more than a year in the first quarter of 2002. Operating profits reached \$34.7 billion, up 9.0% from the fourth quarter of 2001.

This rebound, which followed four straight quarterly declines, varied widely across the 24 industry groups. Of these, 17 reported gains in the first quarter, and the rest reported declines.

Operating revenues increased 2.7%, whereas operating expenses rose by only 2.3% as businesses continued their restraint in spending.

Non-financial industries accounted for 84% of the overall gain in operating profits, and financial and insurance industries accounted for 16%. After falling in each quarter of 2001, operating profits among non-financial industries rose 9.9% in the first three months of 2002.

The transportation and warehousing industry, whose profits had been dampened by poor results by airlines both prior to and following September 11, is regaining lost ground. First quarter operating profits rose 23.8% to a five-quarter high, boosted by increased shipments of manufactured goods and lower fuel costs.

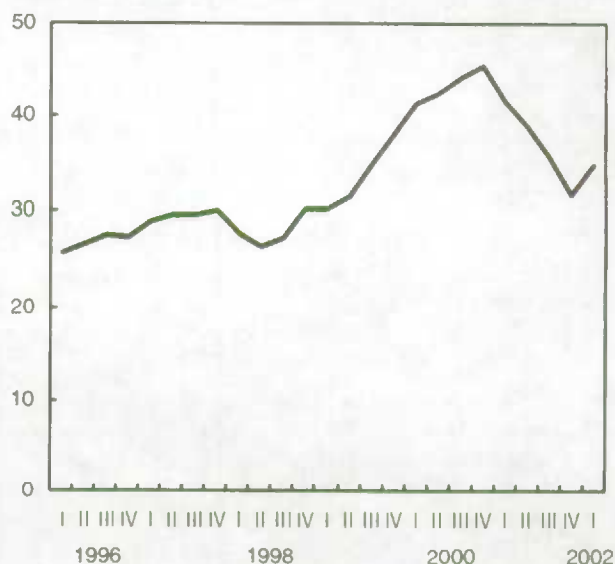
Bolstered by strong foreign and domestic demand for motor vehicles and parts, the manufacturing sector posted an 18.4% rise in operating profits.

Following several quarters of persistent decline, profits of motor vehicles and parts manufacturers surged to \$1.8 billion from a recent low of \$0.7 billion in the fourth quarter of 2001.

After falling to their lowest levels in nine years, profits of primary metals producers rose sharply to \$0.3 billion. This industry has increased production to meet the demand from the automotive sector and appears to have assumed its traditional role as forerunner

### Quarterly operating profits

\$ billions, seasonally adjusted



to an economic recovery.

Wood and paper manufacturers reported a modest profit gain of 4.5%, compared with a 30.5% decrease in the fourth quarter of 2001. However, with the United States imposing countervailing and anti-dumping duties on Canadian softwood exports in May, the impact on the industry's bottom-line remains to be seen.

Electronics and computer manufacturers' profits fell 58.8% to \$0.3 billion, as the industry continued to reel under the persistent slump in global demand for electronic and telecommunications products.

Profits of petroleum and coal producers were down 21.2% because of several factors, including unusually warm winter weather and oversupply. Concerns about turmoil in the Middle East, combined with the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries' agreement to curtail supply, boosted prices in March. However, these increased prices and shipments came too late to reverse the industry's performance in the first quarter.

The financial and insurance industries recorded a 6.2% increase in operating profits; this was in contrast to a 22.9% decline in the fourth quarter of 2001. The improved profit was largely the result of a widespread reduction in operating costs. The lion's share of the profit increase was attributable to depository credit intermediaries and other financial intermediaries.

*Quarterly financial statistics for enterprises (Internet: 61-008-XIE, \$26/\$86) will be available soon. For general information, contact Jeannine D'Angelo (613-951-2604). For analytical information, contact Bill Potter (613-951-2662), Industrial Organization and Finance Division.*

### Financial statistics for enterprises

Seasonally adjusted

	Q1 2001	Q4 2001	Q1 2002	Q4 2001 to Q1 2002
	\$ billions			% change
<b>All industries</b>				
Operating revenue	559.8	530.8	545.3	2.7
Operating profit	41.4	31.8	34.7	9.0
<b>Non-financial industries</b>				
Operating revenue	506.8	480.6	495.3	3.1
Operating profit	32.7	24.5	26.9	9.9
<b>Financial industries</b>				
Operating revenue	53.0	50.2	50.0	-0.6
Operating profit	8.7	7.3	7.8	6.2



## Students beyond commuting distance less likely to go to university

**W**hen it comes to a university education, not everyone is presented with the same opportunities. High school students living within commuting distance (less than 40 km away) were almost twice as likely to pursue a university education as those living beyond commuting distance (more than 80 km away).

However, the impact of distance on university participation hits students from lower-income families the hardest; distance only had a small negative effect on students from upper-income families.

Of students from lower-income families, those living within commuting distance were 4.4 times more likely to attend university than those living beyond commuting distance. In contrast, students from upper-income families who lived within commuting distance were only 1.4 times as likely to attend university as their counterparts who lived beyond the 80 km range.

Among those living beyond commuting distance to a university, upper-income high school students were almost six times as likely to go to university as students from lower-income families. When living within commuting distance, students from upper-income families were only about twice as likely to go to university as those from lower-income families.

### Note to readers

The results are based on the Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics. The analysis covered students who, from 1993 to 1997, were a minimum of two years away from possibly attending university. Their probability of attending university in the period 1995 to 1999 is reported in this study.

The combined effect of lower income and living outside of commuting distance was substantial. Only 3% of students from lower-income families who lived beyond commuting distance pursued a university education, but 27% of students from upper-income families who lived within commuting distance went to university.

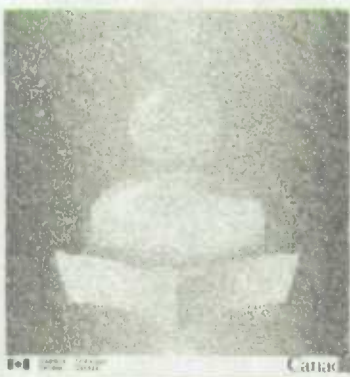
One in five Canadians lived beyond commuting distance of a university in 1996. However, the proportion varied from one province to another. About 52% of Saskatchewan residents and 42% of Newfoundland and Labrador residents lived outside of commuting distance. Conversely, only 9% of Ontario residents, 13% of Nova Scotia residents and 14% of Prince Edward Island residents lived beyond commuting distance.

The research paper *Too far to go on? Distance to school and university participation* (11F0019MIE, free) is now available on Statistics Canada's website ([www.statcan.ca](http://www.statcan.ca)). From the Our products and services page, choose Research papers (free), then Social conditions. For more information, contact Marc Frenette (613-951-4228), Business and Labour Market Analysis Division.



### Education Quarterly Review

June 2002, Vol. 3, No. 2



### Education quarterly review

The latest issue of *Education quarterly review* contains an article examining the impact of household income and the education of parents on postsecondary participation, using the Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics.

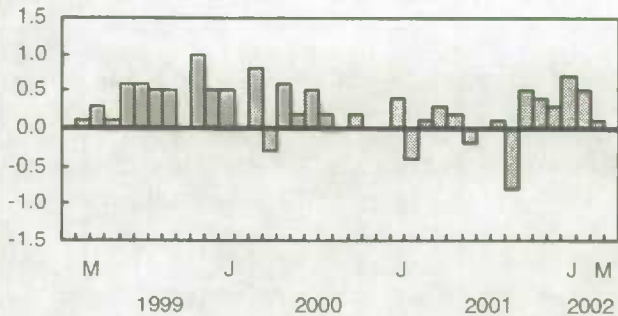
According to the article, postsecondary participation increases with both family income and parents' education, although the latter appears to be a stronger influence in students' pursuit of postsecondary studies.

The June 2002 issue of *Education quarterly review* (Internet: 81-003-XIE, \$16/\$51; paper: 81-003-XPB, \$21/\$68) is now available. For more information, contact Client Services (1-800-307-3382; 613-951-7608; [educationstats@statcan.ca](mailto:educationstats@statcan.ca)), Culture, Tourism and the Centre for Education Statistics.

## Current trends

### Gross domestic product

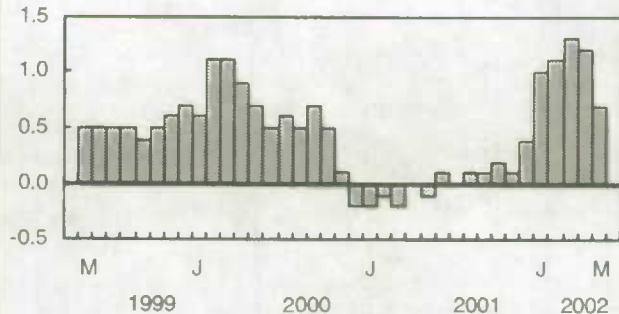
% change, previous month



Total economic activity advanced 0.1% in March, after rising 0.5% in February.

### Composite index

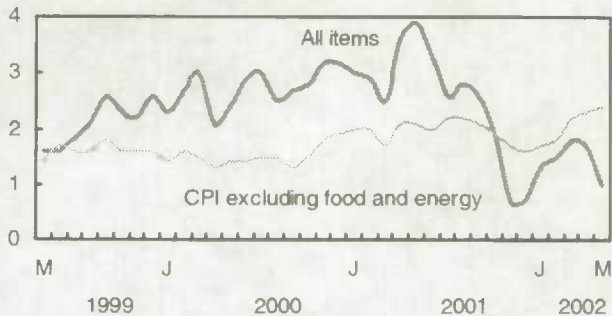
% change, previous month



The leading indicator gained 0.7% in May. New orders accelerated in response to household and export demand.

### Consumer Price Index

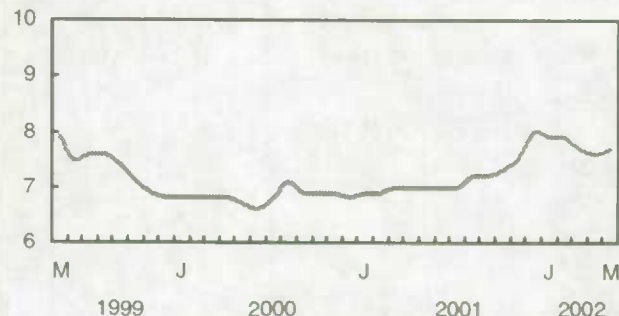
% change, previous year



Consumer prices for goods and services were 1.0% higher in May than they were a year earlier. Excluding food and energy, prices rose 2.4%.

### Unemployment rate

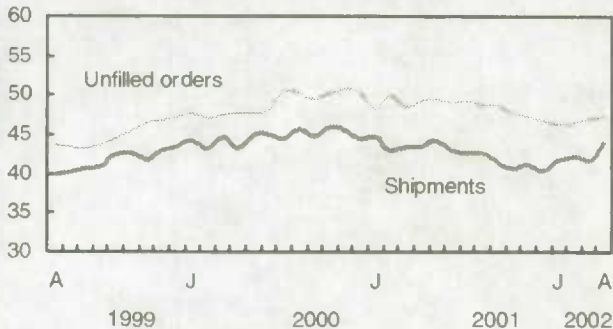
%



In May, the unemployment rate edged up 0.1 percentage points to 7.7%.

### Manufacturing

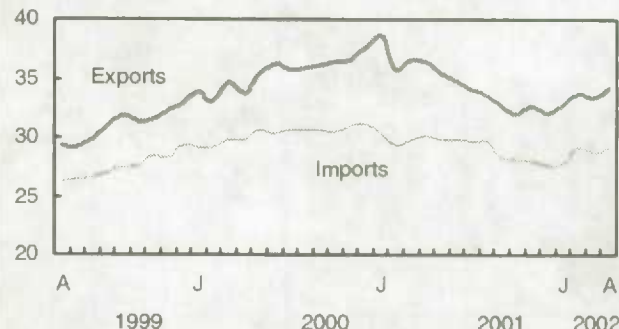
\$ billions



Manufacturers' shipments jumped 5.0% in April to \$43.9 billion. The backlog of unfilled orders rose 0.6% to \$47.3 billion.

### Merchandise trade

\$ billions



In April, the value of merchandise exports increased 2.9% to \$34.3 billion. Imports rose 1.6% to \$29.1 billion.

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



## Latest statistics

	Period	Level	Change, previous period	Change, previous year
<b>GENERAL</b>				
Gross domestic product (\$ billions, 1997) <sup>1</sup>	March	956.0	0.1%	2.0%
Composite Index (1992=100)	May*	176.4	0.7%	6.3%
Operating profits of enterprises (\$ billions)	Q1 2002*	34.7	9.0%	-16.3%
Capacity utilization rate (%) <sup>2</sup>	Q1 2002	81.7	1.3†	-2.3‡
<b>DOMESTIC DEMAND</b>				
Retail trade (\$ billions)	April	25.5	1.0%	5.5%
New motor vehicle sales (thousands of units)	April	142.2	1.7%	6.9%
Wholesale trade (\$ billions)	April	34.8	2.4%	7.3%
<b>LABOUR</b>				
Employment (millions)	May	15.3	0.2%	1.6%
Unemployment rate (%)	May	7.7	0.1†	0.7†
Participation rate (%)	May	66.7	0.1†	0.7†
Average weekly earnings (\$)	April*	673.85	0.05%	2.09%
Help-wanted Index (1996=100)	May	126.8	0.2%	-19.4%
Regular Employment Insurance beneficiaries (in thousands)	April*	531.8	-3.1%	6.8%
<b>INTERNATIONAL TRADE</b>				
Merchandise exports (\$ billions)	April	34.3	2.9%	-5.9%
Merchandise imports (\$ billions)	April	29.1	1.6%	-3.4%
Merchandise trade balance (all figures in \$ billions)	April	5.2	0.5	-1.1
<b>MANUFACTURING</b>				
Shipments (\$ billions)	April	43.9	5.0%	1.2%
New orders (\$ billions)	April	44.2	4.5%	0.3%
Unfilled orders (\$ billions)	April	47.3	0.6%	-4.0%
Inventory/shipments ratio	April	1.42	-0.06	-0.08
<b>PRICES</b>				
Consumer Price Index (1992=100)	May	118.6	0.2%	1.0%
Industrial Product Price Index (1997=100)	May*	106.6	-0.7%	-2.6%
Raw Materials Price Index (1997=100)	May*	112.6	0.6%	-5.4%
New Housing Price Index (1992=100)	April	109.4	0.6%	3.7%

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

\* new this week

† percentage point

<sup>1</sup> 1997 replaces 1992 as the base year used in determining prices for gross domestic product by industry. Also, valuation has been changed from factor cost to basic prices.

<sup>2</sup> Calculation of the rates of capacity use is now based on the 1997 North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS), which has replaced the 1980 Standard Industrial Classification.

## Infomat

### A weekly review

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Published by the Official Release Unit, Communications Division,  
Statistics Canada, 10th floor, R.H. Coats Bldg., Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0T6.

Price per issue: paper, \$4; online at [www.statcan.ca](http://www.statcan.ca), \$3. Annual subscription:  
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## Products released from June 20 to 26, 2002

SUBJECT AREA Title of product	Period	Catalogue number	Price (\$) (issue/subscription)
<b>ANALYTICAL STUDIES</b>			
Too far to go on? Distance to school and university participation, no. 191		11F0019MIE2002191	free
<b>CANADIAN CENTRE FOR JUSTICE STATISTICS</b>			
Family violence in Canada: A statistical profile	1974-2000	85-224-XIE	free
Juristat: National trends in intimate partner homicides	1974-2000	85-002-XIE	8/70
Juristat: National trends in intimate partner homicides	1974-2000	85-002-XPE	10/93
<b>CULTURE, TOURISM AND THE CENTRE FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS</b>			
Education quarterly review, Vol. 8 no. 3		81-003-XIE	16/51
Education quarterly review, Vol. 8 no. 3		81-003-XPB	21/68
<b>CURRENT ECONOMIC ANALYSIS</b>			
Canadian economic observer	May 2002	11-010-XPB	23/227
<b>DEMOGRAPHY</b>			
Quarterly demographic statistics	Q1 2002	91-002-XIB	8/25
Quarterly demographic statistics	Q1 2002	91-002-XPB	10/33
<b>DISTRIBUTIVE TRADES</b>			
Retail trade	April 2002	63-005-XIB	16/155
Wholesale trade	April 2002	63-008-XIB	14/140
<b>INCOME STATISTICS</b>			
Effects of self-rated disability and subjective health on job separation, no. 1		75F0002MIE2002001	free
Quarterly estimates of trustee pension funds	Q4 2001	74-001-XIB	14/47
Quarterly estimates of trustee pension funds	Q4 2001	74-001-XPB	19/62
<b>INTERNATIONAL TRADE</b>			
Exports, merchandise trade	2001	65-202-XMB	103
Exports, merchandise trade	2001	65-202-XPB	258
Imports by commodity	April 2002	65-007-XMB	37/361
Imports by commodity	April 2002	65-007-XPB	78/773
<b>LABOUR AND HOUSEHOLD SURVEYS ANALYSIS</b>			
Perspectives on labour and income, Vol. 3, no. 6		75-001-XIE	5/48
<b>MANUFACTURING, CONSTRUCTION AND ENERGY</b>			
Asphalt roofing	May 2002	45-001-XIB	5/47
Mineral wool including fibrous glass insulation	May 2002	44-004-XIB	5/47
Monthly Survey of Manufacturing	April 2002	31-001-XIB	15/147
Pipeline transportation of crude oil and refined petroleum products	January 2002	55-001-XIB	9/86
<b>SCIENCE, INNOVATION AND ELECTRONIC INFORMATION</b>			
Broadcasting and telecommunications, Vol. 32, no. 1		56-001-XIE	10/32
Broadcasting and telecommunications, Vol. 32, no. 2		56-001-XIE	10/32
<b>SERVICE INDUSTRIES</b>			
Restaurant, caterer and tavern statistics	April 2002	63-011-XIE	6/55
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>			
Service bulletin - Surface and marine transport, Vol. 18, no. 2		50-002-XIB	10

Catalogue numbers with an -XIB or an -XIE extension are Internet versions (B signifies bilingual, E signifies English); those with -XMB or -XME are microfiche; and -XPB or -XPE denote the paper version. XDB means the electronic version on diskette, while -XCB denotes a compact disc.

**Note:** All products are priced in Canadian dollars and exclude applicable sales taxes. Shipping charges will be added for delivery outside Canada.



## Calendar of key releases: July 2002

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1	2 National tourism indicators, Q1 2002	3 Report on the demographic situation in Canada, 2001	4 Building permits, May 2002 Help-wanted Index, June 2002 The health of Canada's communities, 2000-2001	5 Labour Force Survey, June 2002 Canadian Travel Survey: Domestic travel, 1999
8	9 Multifactor productivity, 2001	10	11 New Housing Price Index, May 2002 General Social Survey: Changing conjugal life, 2001	12
15 New motor vehicle sales, May 2002 Health Services Access Survey, 2001	16 Census of population, Age and Sex, 2001	17 Monthly Survey of Manufacturing, May 2002 Crime statistics, 2002	18 Travel between Canada and other countries, May 2002 Investment in non-residential building construction, Q2 2002	19 Canadian international merchandise trade, May 2002 Wholesale trade, May 2002
22 Retail trade, May 2002 Film production and film laboratories*, 1999-2000	23 Composite Index, June 2002 Consumer Price Index, June 2002	24 Canada's international transactions in securities, May 2002 Employment Insurance, May 2002 Private and public investment, 2002	25 Household Internet Use Survey, 2001	26
29 Industrial Product Price and Raw Materials Price Indexes, June 2002	30 Employment, earnings and hours, May 2002	31 Gross domestic product by industry, May 2002		

**Note:** Except for the releases marked with an asterisk, all the release dates in this calendar are fixed. A more detailed calendar of fixed release dates for the entire year is available from Statistics Canada's website at [www.statcan.ca](http://www.statcan.ca).

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