



Friday, September 27, 2002

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◆ Leading indicator edges up for 13th straight month

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◆ Cigarettes biggest contributor to jump in inflation

Consumers paid 2.6% more in August than they did in August 2001 for the goods and services included in the Consumer Price Index. This increase is larger than the 2.1% increase recorded in July. Cigarette prices exerted the strongest upward pressure.

◆ Clothing, furniture drag down retail sales

After a 1.9% gain in June, retail sales decreased 0.3% to \$25.6 billion in July. Retail sales in the first seven months of 2002 were 6.1% higher than in the same period of 2001. July's weakness was concentrated in clothing and furniture.

◆ Immigrants healthier before entering Canada

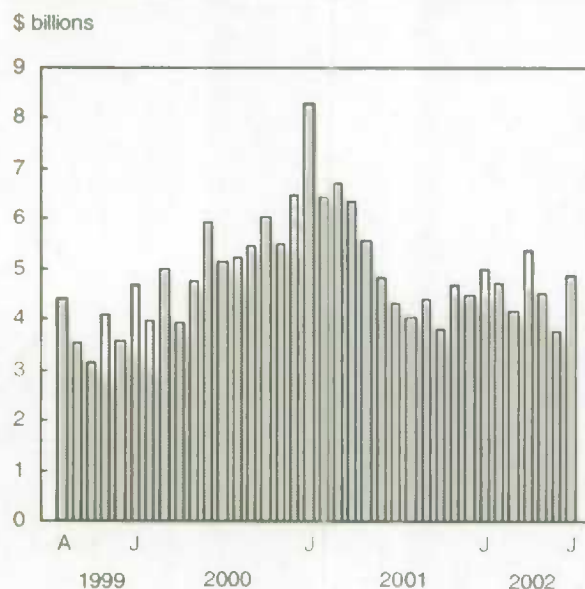
About 60% of immigrants reported having a chronic health condition in 2000/01, compared to more than 65% of the Canadian-born population, according to a study based on the Canadian Community Health Survey. The study also revealed that the incidence of chronic conditions in immigrants rose with time after immigration to Canada.

Exports at highest level in more than a year

Merchandise exports jumped 3.4% to \$34.9 billion in July, the highest level in more than a year. The gain in exports came as a result of a 4.2% increase to the United States. Imports rose a marginal 0.2% to \$30.0 billion, the fourth straight monthly gain.

The forestry products sector regained more than a quarter of the value lost in June, following the first full month of anti-dumping and countervailing duties on softwood lumber exports to the United States. Exports of forestry products rose 4.1% to \$2.9 billion in July after declining 12.9% in June.

Canadian companies sent \$29.7 billion in goods to the United States in July, accounting for 85% of total exports. Imports from south of the border rose 1.6% to \$21.5 billion. Consequently, the trade surplus with the United States reached \$8.2 billion, up \$854 million.

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

Exports at highest level... (continued from page 1)

As a result, Canada's merchandise trade surplus with the world rebounded in July to just under \$4.9 billion. This was up from a revised \$3.8 billion in June, the lowest level in two and a half years.

Car sales in the United States jumped to their highest level so far in 2002, causing shorter auto plant shutdowns than usual in July. This boosted exports of automotive products 7.6% to \$8.7 billion.

With inventory and price levels stabilized by increased US imports from countries other than Canada, exports of crude petroleum fell 4.3% to \$1.4 billion. However, exports of petroleum and coal products increased 18.4% and those of natural gas were up 2.4%, resulting in a 2.7% rise in exports of energy products.

Industrial goods and materials, the third largest export sector, rose 0.4% to just under \$6.0 billion. Increases in metals and alloys and other industrial goods and materials offset declines in chemicals, plastics and fertilizers and metal ores.

Exports of agriculture and fishing products increased 2.1% to \$2.6 billion mainly because of the strength of exports of fish, barley and meat products. Drought conditions and the prohibitive cost of feed in the Prairies have forced the premature slaughter of livestock, especially cows over 320 kilograms. Cattle slaughter through May, June and July was at historic levels. Consequently, meat and meat preparations exports rose 3.3% to \$405.6 million.

Merchandise imports continued a four-month rise to just over \$30 billion in July, the highest level of 2002. This occurred despite declines in imports of machinery and equipment, Canada's largest import sector, and in industrial goods and materials, Canada's third largest import sector.

Canadian auto plants had shorter-than-usual shutdowns and even boosted output to satisfy customer demand, resulting in a jump in motor vehicle parts imports of 9.6% to \$4.0 billion.

Imports of agricultural and fishing products climbed 6.2% to \$1.9 billion, as a result of increases in fresh fruit and vegetables and other agricultural and fishing products.

Consumer goods imports rose 1.1% to \$3.9 billion in July, a new high. Imports of apparel and footwear drove the increase, rising 7.2% to \$718.1 million.

Imports of energy products rose 3.4% to \$1.5 billion, continuing a five-month streak that extends back to February. Uncertainty in the Middle East pushed prices for petroleum and coal products up 4.6% in July.

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

Leading indicator edges up for 13th straight month

A key gauge of Canada's future economic activity edged up for the 13th straight month in August, with the manufacturing sector accounting for the bulk of the gains.

The Composite Index rose 0.2% in August, following an upwardly revised 0.3% gain in July.

The nation's manufacturing sector continued to account for most of the monthly gains. New orders alone increased 1.0%.

In total, four of 10 segments advanced in August, with those gains offsetting downturns in the U.S. leading indicator and in services employment. Five components fell and one remained unchanged.

Demand for information technology picked up, and the auto industry benefited from the reintroduction of low financing

programs. With the average workweek already at a high level, manufacturers continued to turn to more hiring to meet their growing work force needs.

The housing index continued to ease slightly from its 25-year high set in May because of a slowdown in existing home sales, which accompanied shortages in some parts of Canada. However, furniture and appliance sales rose 0.3%.

In the United States, the first drop in the leading indicator in 15 months was caused largely by the slump in the stock market, compounded by lower orders for investment goods and falling consumer confidence. Americans remained reluctant to travel, which coincided with the first drop in services employment in Canada since 2001, led by food and accommodation.

For more information on the economy, the September 2002 issue of **Canadian Economic Observer** (paper: 11-010-XPB, \$23/\$227) is now available. For analytical information, contact Philip Cross (613-951-9162), Current Economic Analysis Group.

Cigarettes biggest contributor to jump in inflation

Consumers paid 2.6% more in August than they did in August 2001 for the goods and services included in the Consumer Price Index (CPI). This increase is larger than the 12-month increase recorded in July (+2.1%), which was moderated by falling energy prices.

Indeed, the energy sector did not temper the all-items index as it did in recent months. In August, energy prices were unchanged from August 2001, compared with a year-over-year decline of 3.1% the previous month.

The 12-month change in the CPI excluding energy reached 2.9% in August, having accelerated slowly from 2.2% in January.

Cigarette prices, which climbed 40.2% from August 2001, exerted the strongest upward pressure on the all-items CPI. This rise can be attributed largely to increases in provincial and federal

taxes in November 2001 and to more recent increases in the spring of 2002.

Also playing an important role were gains in automotive vehicle insurance premiums, electricity prices and gasoline prices. The rise in electricity prices stemmed almost entirely from a 32.7% leap in prices in Ontario.

A sharp drop in natural gas prices (-32.0%) had the strongest moderating effect on the CPI's 12-month increase. A decrease in the cost of mortgage interest, as well as declining prices for traveller accommodation, also helped to moderate the increase.

On a monthly basis, the CPI increased 0.4% from July to August, which was similar to the gain of 0.5% from June to July. August's increase was attributable mainly to the rise in prices for electricity and gasoline, as well as to higher automotive vehicle insurance premiums, whereas fresh vegetable prices helped to keep it down.

The 6.8% rise in the electricity index was the largest monthly increase since January 1991. It was entirely attributable to the 18.3% price increase in Ontario, where electricity is now sold on an open market. Record heat pushed demand up in August.

A widespread increase in prices across Canada pushed the gasoline index up 2.5% in August from July. The price increases ranged from 0.1% in Whitehorse to 4.7% in Prince Edward Island.

Automotive vehicle insurance premiums went up 2.6%, mainly under the influence of price hikes in Quebec, Alberta and Ontario.

Fresh vegetable prices dropped 13.8% in August, the result of increased supply. Summertime and the local availability of these products explained these price drops. Even so, these prices were 5.7% higher than in August 2001.

The August 2002 issue of the *Consumer Price Index* (Internet: 62-001-XIB, \$8/\$77; paper: 62-001-XPB, \$11/\$103) is now available. For more information, contact Louise Chainé (1-866-230-2248; 613-951-9606), Prices Division. (See also "Current trends" on page 6.)

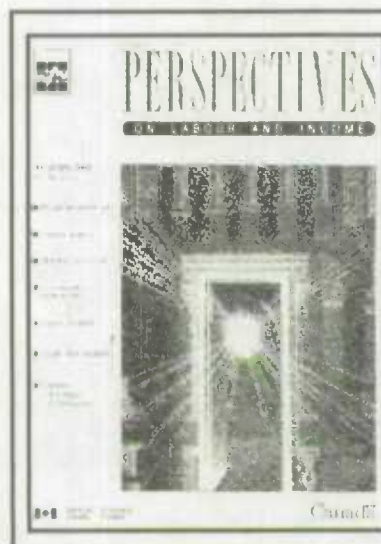
Consumer Price Index, August 2002
% change, previous year, not seasonally adjusted

	All items	Food	Shelter	Transportation	Energy
Canada	2.6	2.1	0.4	4.7	0.0
Newfoundland and Labrador	2.4	1.6	-0.5	8.8	-1.5
Prince Edward Island	3.1	3.4	-1.1	6.2	-3.7
Nova Scotia	3.6	4.3	0.0	8.6	1.3
New Brunswick	4.2	4.1	0.4	9.4	4.3
Quebec	2.2	0.8	1.0	3.4	0.6
Ontario	2.9	3.1	1.9	3.6	2.4
Manitoba	1.8	1.5	-0.3	2.6	1.0
Saskatchewan	2.6	0.6	0.8	3.0	1.8
Alberta	2.3	2.0	-6.1	10.4	-14.6
British Columbia	2.2	2.1	-0.2	4.9	1.4
Whitehorse	0.8	-1.3	-1.9	4.3	-1.4
Yellowknife	3.2	0.5	3.4	3.2	3.2

Perspectives on labour and income

The Autumn 2002 edition of *Perspectives on labour and income* contains six articles. "Families on the financial edge" shows that low income families are particularly vulnerable in the face of income interruptions or unexpected expenses. Other articles look at people who have trouble keeping up with their bill payments; examine how Canadians were housed in 2000; compare the registered pension plan coverage of immigrants and visible minorities with that of other Canadians; compare insurance and pension plan coverage among unionized and non-unionized workers; and explore the perceptions associated with working in the high-tech industry.

The autumn 2002 issue of *Perspectives on labour and income* (paper: 75-001-XPE, \$18/\$58) is now available. For more information, contact Henry Pold (613-951-4608; henry.pold@statcan.ca), Labour and Household Surveys Analysis Division.



Clothing, furniture drag down retail sales

After a 1.9% gain in June, retail sales decreased 0.3% to \$25.6 billion in July. Retail sales have progressed little since January, following four months of sharp advances. However, retail sales in the first seven months of 2002 were 6.1% higher than in the same period of 2001.

July's weakness in retail sales was concentrated in the clothing, furniture and general merchandise sectors. Smaller declines occurred in the other retail category and in drug stores. Sales advanced in the food and automotive sectors.

During the four months following the events of September 11, Canadian and US retail sales behaved very differently. Both countries reported similar declines in September 2001 (-1.6% in Canada and -1.7% in the United States). In October, US sales soared 7.4%, but sales in Canada rose a relatively modest 2.1%. After October, sales in Canada continued to advance through January 2002, before flattening out. In the United States, sales peaked in October and were generally lacklustre thereafter.

Since February 2002, sales performance in the two countries has been quite similar, although July sales fell 0.3% in Canada and rose 1.5% in the United States. (Food services, building material dealers and non-store retailers were excluded from total US retail sales in order to make a more direct comparison with Canadian retail sales.)

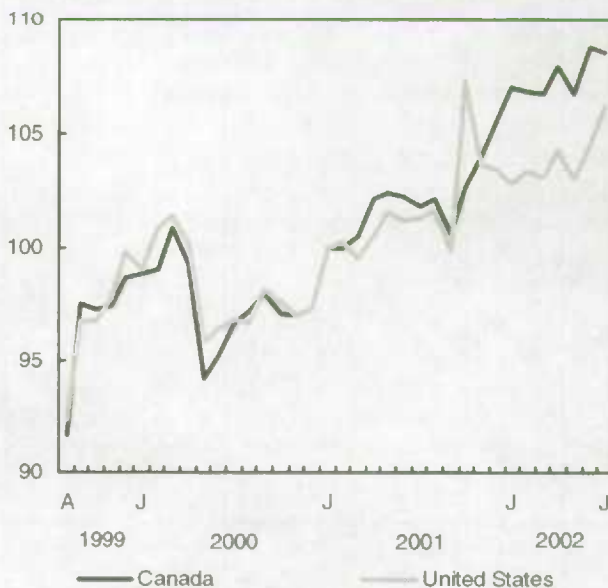
Consumer spending in clothing stores fell 3.3% in July after jumping 6.1% in June. All store types in the clothing sector posted lower sales in July. Sales in clothing have been generally flat since January. Sales in the furniture sector fell 1.6% in July, a second consecutive decline.

Retail sales, July 2002 Seasonally adjusted

	\$ millions	% change, previous month	% change, previous year
Canada	25,608	-0.3	6.5
Newfoundland and Labrador	424	1.7	0.0
Prince Edward Island	109	3.8	0.4
Nova Scotia	758	0.0	4.0
New Brunswick	613	0.3	6.0
Quebec	5,883	-0.1	7.4
Ontario	9,609	0.1	6.2
Manitoba	893	0.0	6.9
Saskatchewan	762	0.9	9.4
Alberta	3,119	-1.3	7.8
British Columbia	3,345	-1.7	5.2
Yukon	34	1.9	14.7
Northwest Territories	42	4.3	19.3
Nunavut	17	-0.4	3.2

Retail sales in Canada and the United States

Index (January 2001=100)



Consumers spent 1.1% less in the general merchandise sector in July, after a 3.9% gain in June. The main contributors to the decline were stores in the "other general merchandise" category, where sales were down 3.3%, mostly offsetting June's 3.7% increase.

Food store sales grew 0.5% in July, after a 0.9% gain in June. With five gains in the last six months, food store retailers continued the sales growth begun in the spring of 2000.

In July, sales by retailers in the automotive sector increased slightly (+0.2%), after a 1.7% gain in June. Despite this gain, sales in this sector increased at a much slower pace recently after strong growth in the fall of 2001. Sales by gasoline service stations (+3.4%) were the main contributor to July's increase. The increase in the gasoline service stations reflects a 2.8% rise in the price of gasoline at the pump. Partly offsetting the gain in gasoline service stations sales was a 0.8% drop in sales by automobile and recreational vehicle dealers.

Retail sales advanced in Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland and Labrador, Saskatchewan and New Brunswick. Sales were almost unchanged in Nova Scotia, Quebec, Ontario and Manitoba.

British Columbia and Alberta reported drops in sales. In both provinces, July's weaker sales ended three consecutive months of growth. Retail sales have generally been rising since the spring of 1999 in British Columbia and Alberta.

The July 2002 issue of *Retail trade* (Internet: 63-005-X1B, \$16/\$155) is now available. For more information, contact Pierre Desjardins (613-951-9682; pierre.desjardins@statcan.ca), Distributive Trades Division.

Immigrants healthier before entering Canada

Based on the 2000/01 Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS), 59.6% of immigrants reported that they had a chronic condition, compared to 65.2% of the Canadian-born population.

The study also revealed that the incidence of chronic conditions rose with time after immigration to Canada. Thus, in terms of chronic conditions, immigrants and non-immigrants appear to converge in health status over time.

Newly-arrived men had lower odds than Canadian-born men of reporting heart disease. But for diabetes, high blood pressure and cancer, there appeared to be no advantage for either male or female immigrants over their Canadian-born counterparts.

The study found that poor health behaviours, such as smoking, heavy drinking and obesity, differed between immigrants and the Canadian-born population and varied with the length of an immigrant's residence in Canada.

First-generation immigrants do not necessarily adopt health-related lifestyle changes to the point of eventually resembling other Canadians. Furthermore, differences in behaviour accounted for only a small part of the gap in chronic diseases between immigrants and non-immigrants.

Other possible explanations for these patterns may be that newer immigrants were healthier at the time of their arrival in Canada than were those who immigrated earlier, or that the healthiest immigrants eventually leave Canada and the comparatively less healthy immigrants remain in this country.

According to the CCHS, in 2000/01, 7.9% of Canadians aged 15 to 75 reported having experienced at least one major episode of depression in the 12 months before the survey. The rate among people born in Canada was 8.3%, whereas the rate among immigrants was significantly lower, at 6.2%.

Similarly, 2.1% of Canadians reported having experienced problems with alcohol dependence. Such symptoms were reported by 2.5% of the Canadian-born population, but only 0.5% of immigrants.

Those from Asia in particular had the lowest rates of depression, and those from Africa had the lowest rates of alcohol dependence. These two trends are related, since recent immigrants have tended to come from Africa and Asia, whereas the majority of those who immigrated more than a decade ago came from Europe. Earlier immigrants have similar rates of depression as the Canadian-born population.

All immigrants except those who arrived at least 30 years ago had lower rates of alcohol dependence than the Canadian-born population. Furthermore, the study found that language barriers, immigrants' higher unemployment rates, and their lower sense of belonging to the local community did not diminish this gap with respect to either depression or alcohol dependence.

*The studies **Health status and health behaviour among immigrants** (82-003-SIE, free) and **Mental health of Canada's immigrants** (82-003-SIE, free) are now available on Statistics Canada's website (www.statcan.ca). For more information, contact Claudio E. Perez (613-951-1733; perecla@statcan.ca), or Jennifer Ali (613-951-4798; jennifer.ali@statcan.ca), Health Statistics Division.*

Foreign investors unload Canadian stocks

Foreign investors sold \$3.7 billion worth of Canadian stocks in July, almost wiping out the \$4.0 billion investment made in June. American investors did most of the selling in July and most of the buying in June; Europeans were small buyers in both months, investing a total of \$0.9 billion.

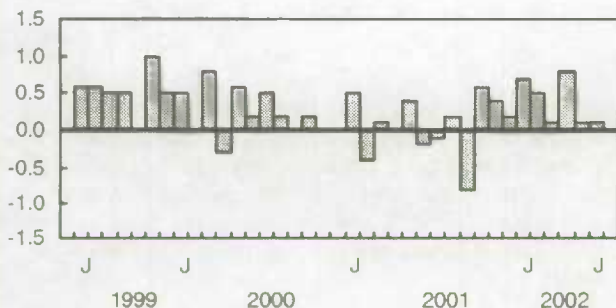
July's divestment was reflected in North American stock prices. Canadian stock prices experienced their second consecutive large setback, dropping 7.6% in July after losing 6.7% of their value in June. U.S. stock prices recorded losses of 7.9% in July and 7.2% in June.

*The July 2002 issue of **Canada's international transactions in securities** (Internet: 67-002-XIB, \$14/\$132; paper: 67-002-XPB, \$18/\$176) will be available in October. See How to order products. For more information, contact Donald Granger (613-951-1864; don.granger@statcan.ca), Balance of Payments Division.*

Current trends

Gross domestic product

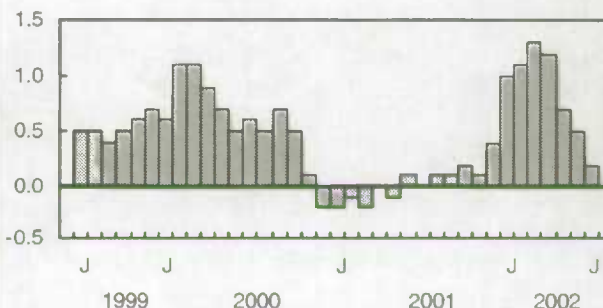
% change, previous month



Total economic activity rose 0.1% in June, the same as in May.

Composite Index

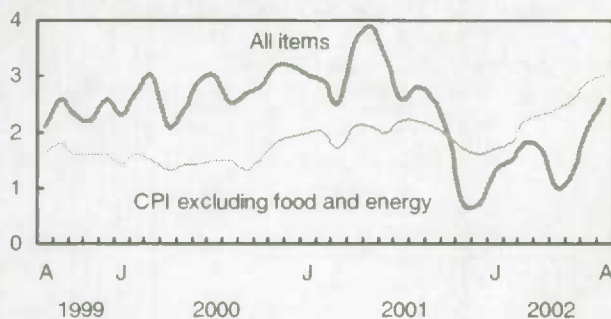
% change, previous month



The leading indicator gained 0.2% in July. The rise would have matched June's had the stock market not tumbled again.

Consumer Price Index

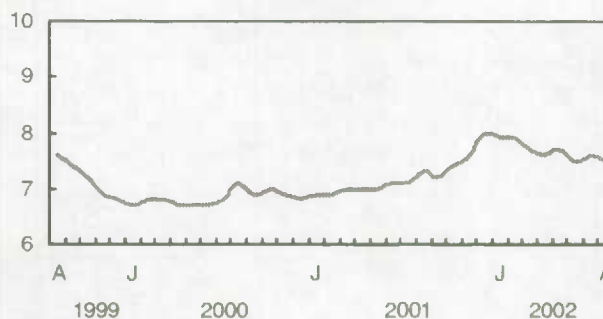
% change, previous year



Consumer prices for goods and services were 2.6% higher in August than they were a year earlier. Excluding food and energy, prices rose 3.0%.

Unemployment rate

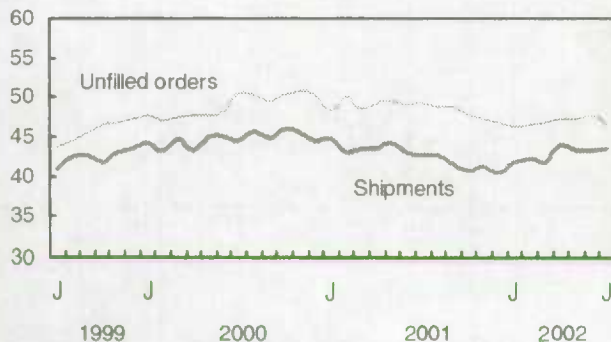
%



In August, the unemployment rate edged down 0.1 percentage points to 7.5%.

Manufacturing

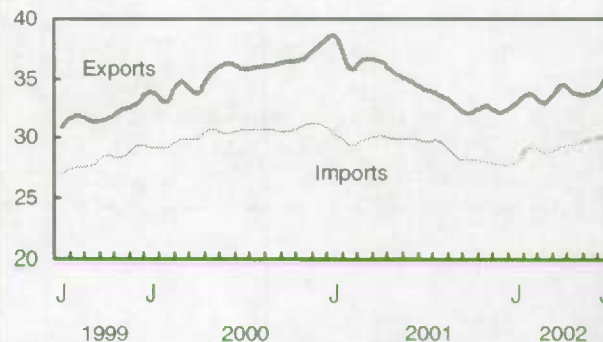
\$ billions



Manufacturers' shipments rose 1.0% in July to \$43.6 billion. The backlog of unfilled orders declined 0.9% to \$46.6 billion.

Merchandise trade

\$ billions



In July, the value of merchandise exports jumped 3.4% to \$34.9 billion. Imports rose 0.2% to \$30.0 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 (\$ billions, 1997) ¹	June	967.4	0.1%	2.9%
Composite Index (1992=100)	August*	178.4	0.2%	7.3%
Operating profits of enterprises (\$ billions)	Q2 2002	38.8	10.7%	-0.2%
Capacity utilization rate (%) ²	Q2 2002	83.2	1.3†	-0.1†
DOMESTIC DEMAND				
Retail trade (\$ billions)	July*	25.6	-0.3%	6.5%
New motor vehicle sales (thousands of units)	July	139.4	-1.9%	5.4%
Wholesale trade (\$ billions)	July*	34.7	0.7%	4.9%
LABOUR				
Employment (millions)	August	15.5	0.4%	2.7%
Unemployment rate (%)	August	7.5	-0.1†	0.2†
Participation rate (%)	August	67.0	0.2†	1.1†
Average weekly earnings (\$)	July*	677.97	0.3%	1.8%
Help-wanted Index (1996=100)	August	126.9	-1.1%	-11.9%
Regular Employment Insurance beneficiaries (in thousands)	July*	573.2	3.9%	3.8%
INTERNATIONAL TRADE				
Merchandise exports (\$ billions)	July	34.9	3.4%	2.5%
Merchandise imports (\$ billions)	July	30.0	0.2%	1.1%
Merchandise trade balance (all figures in \$ billions)	July	4.9	1.1	0.5
MANUFACTURING				
Shipments (\$ billions)	July	43.6	1.0%	2.3%
New orders (\$ billions)	July	43.2	-0.5%	0.9%
Unfilled orders (\$ billions)	July	46.6	-0.9%	-5.5%
Inventory/shipments ratio	July	1.42	-0.01	-0.09
PRICES				
Consumer Price Index (1992=100)	August*	120.1	0.4%	2.6%
Industrial Product Price Index (1997=100)	July	106.9	0.2%	-0.3%
Raw Materials Price Index (1997=100)	July	114.7	2.6%	0.3%
New Housing Price Index (1992=100)	July	110.5	0.2%	4.0%

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

* new this week

† percentage point

¹ 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.

² 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

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Products released from September 19 to 25, 2002

SUBJECT AREA Title of product	Period	Catalogue number	Price (\$) (issue/subscription)
AGRICULTURE			
Agriculture and rural working paper series: Performance in the food retailing segment of the agri-food chain	1990-1998	21-601-MIE2002056	free
CANADIAN CENTRE FOR JUSTICE STATISTICS			
Juristat: Homicide in Canada	2001	85-002-XIE	8/70
Juristat: Homicide in Canada	2001	85-002-XPI	10/93
CULTURE, TOURISM AND THE CENTRE FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS			
International travel, advance information	July 2002	66-001-PIE	6/55
CURRENT ECONOMIC ANALYSIS			
Canadian economic observer	September 2002	11-010-XPB	23/227
DISTRIBUTIVE TRADES			
Retail trade	July 2002	63-005-XIB	16/155
Wholesale trade	July 2002	63-008-XIB	14/140
GEOGRAPHY			
Block digital boundary file	2001	92F0177XCE	various prices
HEALTH STATISTICS			
Health status and health behaviour among immigrants	2000/01	82-003-SIE	free
Mental health of Canada's immigrants.	2000/01	82-003-SIE	free
INCOME STATISTICS			
Quarterly estimates of trustee pension funds	Q1 2002	74-001-XIB	14/47
Quarterly estimates of trustee pension funds	Q1 2002	74-001-XPB	19/62
INTERNATIONAL TRADE			
Canadian international merchandise trade	July 2002	65-001-XIB	14/141
Canadian international merchandise trade	July 2002	65-001-XPB	19/188
Imports by commodity	July 2002	65-007-XMB	37/361
Imports by commodity	July 2002	65-007-XPB	78/773
LABOUR AND HOUSEHOLD SURVEYS ANALYSIS			
Perspectives on labour and income	Autumn 2002	75-001-XPE	18/58
MANUFACTURING, CONSTRUCTION AND ENERGY			
Asphalt roofing	August 2002	45-001-XIB	5/47
Mineral wool including fibrous glass insulation	August 2002	44-004-XIB	5/47
Monthly Survey of Manufacturing	July 2002	31-001-XIB	15/47
Production and disposition of tobacco products	August 2002	32-022-XIB	5/47
Pulpwood and wood residue statistics	July 2002	25-001-XIB	6/55
Quarterly report on energy supply-demand in Canada	Q3 2001	57-003-XPB	43/141
PRICES			
Consumer Price Index	August 2002	62-001-XIB	8/77
Consumer Price Index	August 2002	62-001-XPB	11/103
SOCIAL SURVEY METHODS			
Statistics Canada's quality assurance framework	2002	12-586-XIE	free
TRANSPORTATION			
Air charter statistics	2000	51-207-XIB	31
Aircraft movements statistics	July 2002	51F0001PIE	free

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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: October 2002

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	1 Financing of small and medium-sized enterprises, 2000	2 Help-wanted Index, September 2002	3 Moderate alcohol consumption and heart disease, Autumn 2002	4 Production of principal field crops, September 2002
7 Building permits, August 2002	8	9	10 New Housing Price Index, August 2002	11 Labour Force Survey, September 2002
14	15 New motor vehicle sales, August 2002 The evolution of job stability in Canada: Trends and comparisons to U.S. results, 1976 to 2001	16 Investment in non residential building construction, Q3 2002	17 Monthly Survey of Manufacturing, August 2002	18 Canadian international merchandise trade, August 2002 Travel between Canada and other countries, August 2002
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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.

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