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A Weekly Review

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INSIDE

◆ International tourist spending drops sharply

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◆ Small businesses cautious with financing

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◆ Foreign films dominate movie theatres

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◆ Low-income rates among immigrants on the rise

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Building sector still strong despite slight setback

The value of building permits declined in May, as institutional intentions plummeted and construction intentions for single-family homes hit a 17-month low. Builders took out \$3.9 billion worth of building permits, down 2.0% from April.

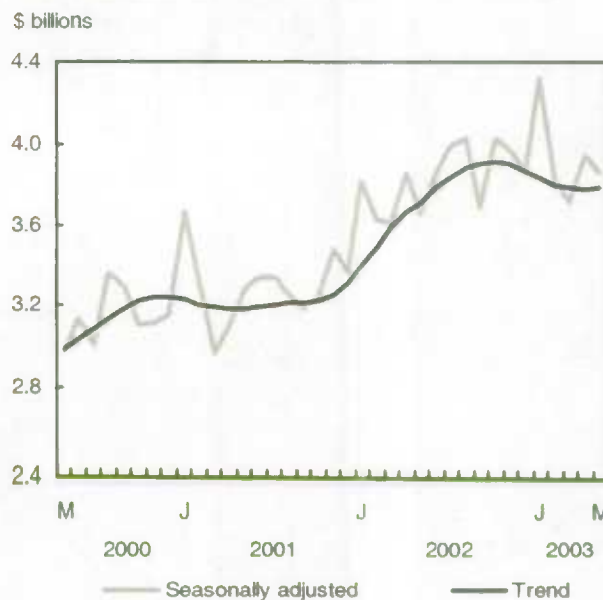
Municipalities issued \$2.4 billion in permits for housing, as demand for multi-family dwellings pushed the total value of residential permits up 0.8%. In contrast, the value of permits for the single-family component fell for the fourth straight month.

Declines in permits for government and commercial projects caused the value of permits to fall 6.2% to \$1.5 billion in the non-residential sector.

However, despite month-to-month fluctuations this year, Canada's building sector is still performing strongly. The value of permits in all major components was higher than during the same five-month period in 2002.

(continued on page 2)

Value of building permits



Building sector still... (continued from page 1)

Provincially, the value of permits recorded the biggest decline in Manitoba, where intentions fell 63.3% to \$79 million after surging in April as a result of two new hospital projects. Quebec experienced the next greatest decline, dropping 10.1% from April to \$760 million. The largest increase occurred in Ontario, where municipalities issued \$1.7 billion in new permits, up \$125 million from April.

In the residential sector, builders took out \$740 million in permits for multi-family housing, up 5.9% from April. The single-family component declined, however, as permits fell 1.3% to \$1.6 billion.

Demand for single-family permits continues to cool from record highs at the start of the year. On a 12-month basis, prices for new housing increased 4.5% nationally, offsetting the impact of mortgage rate reductions.

Among the provinces, British Columbia experienced the biggest increase in the value of permits (+8.7% to \$353 million) in May. It was followed by Nova Scotia (+54.0% to \$69 million), where apartment and single permits fuelled the gains. The biggest declines occurred in Quebec (-4.1% to \$446 million) and Saskatchewan (-34.8% to \$31 million).

About \$12.3 billion worth of residential permits were issued in the first five months of 2003, up 2.7% from the same period of 2002.

In the non-residential sector, institutional intentions fell 21.0% in May to \$444 million. Most of the decline came from social service building and hospital projects.

Commercial projects recorded a slight decline of 0.3% to \$733 million in May. This was still 8.1% above the average monthly value in 2002. The office building and hotel and restaurant categories showed the most significant losses, while the laboratory and trade and service categories recorded substantial increases.

Intentions in the industrial component rose 8.4% to \$297 million, most of this activity coming from the manufacturing plant category.

The non-residential sector continued to level off at a high level of activity. Non-residential building intentions reached \$7.4 billion, up 11.8% from the same period of 2002.

The year-to-date value for industrial building permits reached \$1.5 billion from January to May, up 15.7% from the same period of 2002, followed by the institutional component at \$2.2 billion (+12.0%). Construction intentions for commercial projects also contributed to the advance, increasing 10.3% to \$3.7 billion.

The May 2003 issue of *Building permits* (Internet: 64-001-XIE, \$14/\$145) will be available soon. To order data, contact Vere Clarke (613-951-6556 or 1-800-579-8533; clarver@statcan.ca). For more information, contact Michel Labonté (613-951-9690; labomic@statcan.ca), Investment and Capital Stock Division.



Couples living apart

One in 12 Canadians lives in separate homes from their partners, according to data from the 2001 General Social Survey.

In 2001, 8% of the Canadian population aged 20 and over were part of such relationships. Although 56% of these people were young adults in their 20s, the remaining people in such unions were aged 30 and over, with 19% being in their 30s, 14% in their 40s and 11% aged 50 and over.

Couples may live apart because of family responsibilities. In 2001, 36% of persons who lived away from their partners lived with their parents. While many young adults who live in the parental home may do so to save money, others — particularly older individuals — may be living with their parents to provide some form of parental care. About one-half of couples who live apart expect to live common-law with their current partners at some time in the future.

The article "Couples living apart" is now available in the summer 2003 issue of *Canadian social trends* (Internet: 11-008-XIE, \$8/\$27; 11-008-XPE, \$11/\$36). For more information, contact Anne Milan (613-951-2756; anne.milan@statcan.ca), Housing, Family and Social Statistics Division.

International tourist spending drops sharply

Tourism spending slipped 0.8% in the first quarter, as visits from international travellers dropped sharply. A 4.5% cutback in spending by non-residents more than offset a 1.0% advance in domestic tourism spending.

Tourism spending remained 4.3% below its peak in the first quarter of 2001. The outbreak of SARS was barely felt in the quarter, with the brunt of its effect still to come.

Spending by international tourists in the first quarter was at its lowest level since the second quarter of 1999. Non-resident tourism spending was down a sharp 4.5% for the quarter, following a 2.6% gain in the fourth quarter of 2002. The total number of visitors fell 6.9%, as tourists from both the United States and other countries made fewer trips to Canada.

Security concerns over the war in Iraq, a continued weak global economy and a 4.0% appreciation of the Canadian dollar vis-à-vis its US counterpart were all factors behind the decline.

The decrease in non-resident outlays was widespread. Air transportation services purchased by non-residents were down 5.2%. Non-resident spending on accommodation (-4.1%) and food and beverage services (-6.0%) were also down markedly.

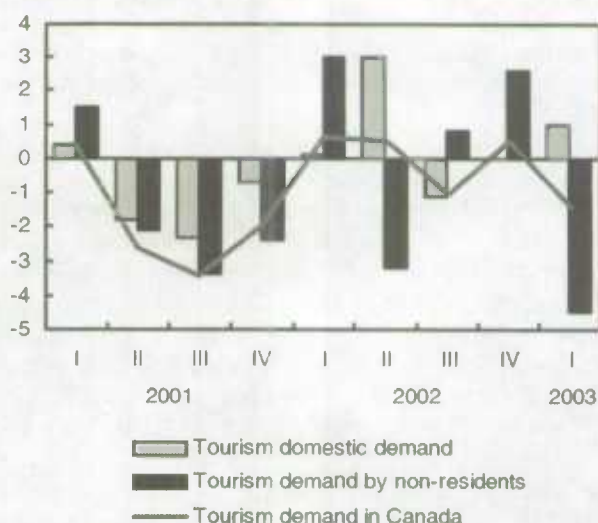
With the drop in spending from abroad, Canada's international travel deficit deteriorated to \$585 million (at current prices) from \$428 million in the fourth quarter of 2002. A deficit indicates that Canadian travellers spent more abroad than international visitors spent in Canada.

Canadians accounted for 67.1% of total tourism spending in Canada during the first quarter. This is the largest share since the fourth quarter of 1997. Domestic tourism spending advanced 1.0% as Canadians spent more touring at home and less abroad than in the fourth quarter of 2002.

Overall spending on many tourism commodities fell in the first quarter. Passenger air transportation dropped 1.9%, following robust gains in the fourth quarter of 2002.

Tourism spending in Canada

% change, previous quarter
Adjusted for seasonal variation and inflation



Accommodation spending fell 1.2%, while food and beverage consumption dropped 1.9%. Expenditures for vehicle fuel edged up 0.4%, partly offsetting some of these declines.

Tourism employment remained steady in the first quarter at 586,100 jobs, after two quarters of healthy growth. Job losses in passenger air transportation and food and beverage services were offset by slight gains in accommodation and recreation.

The first quarter 2003 issue of *National tourism indicators* (Internet: 13-009-X1B, free) is now available on Statistics Canada's website (www.statcan.ca). To order a paper copy of the publication (Internet: 13-009-XPB, free), contact Client services (613-951-3640; fax: 613-951-3618; iead-info-dcrd@statcan.ca). For more information, contact the information officer (613-951-3640), Income and Expenditure Accounts Division.

Private radio broadcasting

At a time when digital television networks, direct-to-home satellite service providers and new media companies are struggling to make ends meet, the oldest electronic medium is steadily generating profits.

The profits before interest and taxes of private radio broadcasters represented 15.9% of their revenues in 2002. The performance of FM stations is at the root of the sustained level of profits for the radio industry in recent years. In 2002, FM stations achieved a robust 24.3% profit margin and 70.0% of stations realized a profit.

English language stations continued to generate higher profits than French language stations in 2002 but the gap is closing. The profit margin was 16.4% for English stations and 15.2% for French stations.

Radio stations in large markets continued to outperform those operating in smaller markets. The profit margin for stations operating in the five largest census metropolitan areas was 18.8%, compared with 13.2% for stations outside these markets.

More detailed information is available in *Broadcasting and telecommunications*, Vol. 33, no. 2 (Internet: 56-001-XIE, \$10/\$32). For more information, contact Daniel April (613-951-3177; daniel.april@statcan.ca), Science, Innovation and Electronic Information Division.

Small businesses cautious with financing

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Canada appeared to exercise more caution when it came to requesting various types of financing in 2001, a tendency that may partly be in reaction to the slackening growth of the gross domestic product.

According to the 2001 Survey on Financing of Small and Medium Enterprises in Canada, only 18% of such enterprises applied for debt financing, down from 23% the previous year. However, eight in 10 SMEs had their debt applications approved by credit suppliers in 2001, virtually unchanged from 2000.

Overall, SMEs reported applying for \$38.9 billion in debt financing in 2001, down from \$54.2 billion in 2000. Similarly, they reported that the total amount of debt financing approved in 2001 was \$28.3 billion, down from \$44.3 billion in 2000. Only 73% of the total amount applied for was approved, compared with 82% in 2000.

The approval rate for SME leasing applications declined to 94% in 2001 from 98%, whereas only 7% of SMEs reported applying for a lease, compared with 9% in 2000. On the other hand, the total leasing amount authorized jumped from \$6.4 billion in 2000 to \$9.1 billion in 2001.

The largest percentage of credit applications (27%) came from SMEs with five to 19 employees. Companies of larger size (20 to 99 employees) accounted for only 23% of the applications.

With regard to amounts applied for, firms with 20 to 99 employees and those with 100 to 499 employees accounted

for only 16% and 10%, respectively, of the total amount (\$38.9 billion) of debt financing applied for. In comparison, SMEs with one to four employees and those with five to 19 employees each applied for 30% of that amount.

As in 2000, one in three SMEs applied for a term loan. The same proportion tried to obtain a new line of credit. However, mortgage loan applications increased from 10% in 2000 to 16% in 2001. The upswing suggests that more SMEs tried to take advantage of low mortgage interest rates offered by credit suppliers in 2001, when the prime rate averaged 4.5%.

The three sets of documents requested most often by credit suppliers in 2001 were business financial statements, an official credit application and the owner's personal financial statements. Specifically, three out of four SMEs had to provide their financial statements, three out of 10 submitted an official credit application, and a similar proportion provided the personal financial statements of the owner(s).

In 2000, the same documents were required most often, but fewer firms had to provide them. In addition, the 2001 survey showed that credit suppliers asked 17% of SMEs for an appraisal of the assets to be financed, compared with 9% in 2000.

Nevertheless, this more cautious and stringent approach does not seem to have affected credit suppliers' traditional criteria for evaluating applications. The percentages of, and reasons for, refusals for the requested amount were similar in 2000.

For more information, contact Christophe Kadji (613-951-3639; christophe.kadji@statcan.ca) or Gilles Paré (613-951-2517; gilles.pare@statcan.ca), Small Business and Special Surveys Division.

Youth court statistics

The youth court caseload in Canada has been declining over the past decade, consistent with a decrease in charges laid by police, according to the Youth Court Survey.

Youth courts heard 85,640 cases during the 2001/02 fiscal year, 2% fewer than in 2000/01, and 16% fewer than in 1992/93. The number of drug-related cases, however, has tripled since 1992/93, going from 1,924 to 6,058. In 2001/02, two-thirds of these cases (4,058) were for possession of drugs.

Accused youth were found guilty in six out of 10 cases heard in youth courts in 2001/02. Criminal Code traffic offences had the highest conviction rate (71%) and drug-related crimes the lowest (54%).

*The publication **Juristat: Youth court statistics, 2001/02**, Vol. 23, no. 3 (Internet: 85-002-XIE, \$8/\$70, 85-002-XPE, \$10/\$93), is now available. For more information, contact Client Services (1-800-387-2231; 613-951-9023), Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics.*

Foreign films dominate movie theatres

Revenues hit a record high for film distributors and video wholesalers in Canada in the fiscal year 2000/01. Canadian films and videos, however, continued to struggle in a domestic marketplace dominated by foreign products.

Revenues for the industry reached an all-time high of \$2.8 billion. Foreign films, mostly in the television and theatrical markets, led the way in 2000/01 with over 90% of domestic sales.

At the same time, Canadian products lost shares in the domestic theatrical and conventional television markets. While Canadian content accounted for 25% of revenues in the conventional-TV market in 1999/2000, this share dropped to 16% in 2000/01.

Canadian firms nevertheless continued to benefit from exports and pay-television markets. Distribution sales of Canadian film and video productions to other countries brought in a high of \$177.5 million. Combined with revenue from the distribution of non-Canadian films, total exports reached \$222.3 million in 2000/01.

Canadian productions were increasingly popular in foreign markets, accounting for 64% of all revenues from the distribution of Canadian productions in 2000/01. In the domestic market, where they earned the balance of their revenues, Canadian productions accounted for just under 10% of all distribution revenues.

The rate of growth in expenses slowed for the second year in a row. Film and video distributors and video wholesalers reported a total of \$2.5 billion in expenses in 2000/01. As a result, profits rose 17.9% to \$347.2 million. Revenues in the pay-TV market increased 18.2% to \$81.2 million, while revenues in the home-video market rose 12.3% to \$165.8 million.

Salaries and benefits, on the other hand, showed a slower growth. They rose 6.6% to \$144.6 million. Much of the employment gains were generated by Canadian-controlled companies. These were responsible for over 87% of total employment.

Foreign productions accounted for over 90% of the \$1.1 billion in total sales in the domestic market for films and videos. However, in certain sectors of the industry, foreign domination was much higher.

Canadian and foreign-content share of revenue in the domestic market

	1999/00			2000/01		
	Canadian content	Foreign content	Total	Canadian content	Foreign content	Total
Domestic distribution	13.1	86.9	100.0	9.5	90.5	100.0
Theatrical	2.7	97.3	100.0	1.9	98.1	100.0
Pay TV	23.6	76.4	100.0	23.5	76.5	100.0
Conventional TV	24.7	75.3	100.0	15.7	84.3	100.0
Home video	2.8	97.2	100.0	2.9	97.1	100.0
Non-theatrical	26.2	73.8	100.0	24.7	75.3	100.0
Domestic wholesaling of videocassettes	1.3	98.7	100.0	1.7	98.3	100.0

Note: Figures may not add to total because of rounding.

In the theatrical market, foreign movies accounted for over 98% of distributors' revenue, which totalled \$390.6 million in 2000/01. Similarly, in the pre-recorded-video market, foreign productions accounted for almost 98% of the \$1.4 billion in domestic wholesale sales in 2000/01.

Although the conventional and pay-TV markets were also dominated by foreign productions, revenues from Canadian products in the pay-television market rose 18.2% to \$81.2 million.

In the non-theatrical market (educational institutions, governments and private companies), revenue rose to \$23.7 million in Canada in 2000/01, with a 25% share for Canadian-content product.

The largest item in expenses was \$806.7 million in payments of licensing fees and royalties to both foreign and Canadian copyright holders. Canadian films and videos accounted for a 10% share of these payments.

Expenses related to video wholesaling activities, including the cost of duplication, amounted to \$660.7 million. Revenues from these activities were \$1.4 billion.

*Selected details from the **Film, Video and Audio-Visual Distribution and Videocassette Wholesaling Survey** are available in table format (87F0010XDB, \$50). For further information, contact Fidel Ifedi (613-951-1569; fax: 613-951-1333; fidel.ifedi@statcan.ca) Culture, Tourism and the Centre for Education Statistics.*

Low-income rates among immigrants on the rise

The low-income rate among the most recent immigrants to Canada almost doubled from 1980 to 1995 before easing back during the last half of the 1990s, according to a new study.

In 1980, low-income rates among immigrants who had arrived between 1975 and 1980 were 1.4 times those of people born in Canada. In 1990, however, low-income rates among immigrants who arrived between 1985 and 1990 were 2.1 times those of the Canadian-born. By 2000, low-income rates among recent immigrants were 2.5 times those of the Canadian-born.

The increase in low-income rates was widespread among recent immigrants in all education levels, all age groups and language types, and for those in all family types.

In 1980, 24.6% of immigrants who had arrived during the previous five-year period were below Statistics Canada's low-income cutoffs. By 1990, the low-income rate among recent immigrants had increased to 31.3%. After peaking at 47.0% in 1995, however, the rate fell back significantly to 35.8% in 2000.

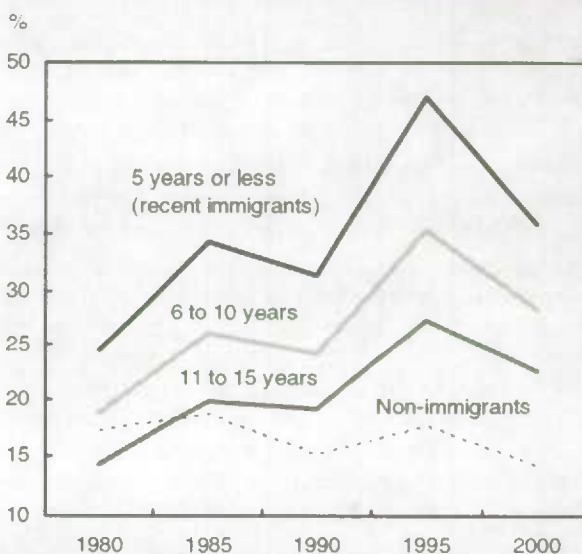
This comparison indicates a long-term upward trend in the low-income rate, and one that is not associated with the poorer general economic conditions of 2000. The national unemployment rate was in fact only 6.8% in 2000, lower than it was in 1990 (8.1%) or 1980 (7.5%).

Neither was the trend associated with a general rise in low-income rates in Canada, since among the Canadian-born population, the low-income rate declined from 17.2% in 1980 to 14.3% in 2000.

Although the increase in low-income rates was greatest among recently arrived immigrants, it was also observed among those who had resided in Canada for a number of years.

Among immigrants who have been in Canada between six and 10 years, the low-income rate rose from 18.7% in 1980 to 28.4% in 2000, while among immigrants who have been in Canada between 11 and 15 years, the rate rose from 14.4% to 22.7% over the same period.

Low-income rates of immigrants by length of stay in Canada



In general, however, the higher the low-income rate at time of entry, the faster it declines as Canadian experience is acquired.

The low-income rate of immigrants who arrived in Canada between 1981 and 1984 was 1.8 times that of Canadian-born people. However, after 17 to 21 years in Canada, their rate fell to about 1.3 times the rate among Canadian-born people.

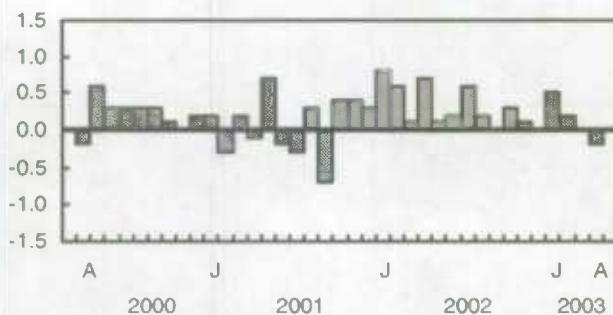
Among the group that arrived in Canada between 1990 and 1994, low-income rates were well above those of the group that entered in the late 1980s. However, after spending seven to 11 years in Canada, both groups had the same low-income rate.

The research paper *The rise in low-income rates among immigrants in Canada* (11F0019MIE2003198, free) is now available on Statistics Canada's website (www.statcan.ca). For more information, contact Garnett Picot (613-951-8214), Business and Labour Market Analysis Division.

Current trends

Gross domestic product

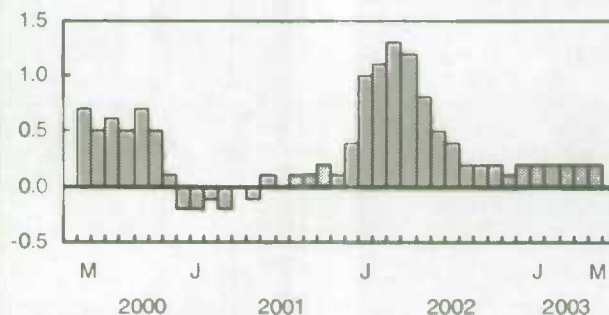
% change, previous month



Total economic activity dropped 0.2% in April, after remaining unchanged in March.

Composite Index

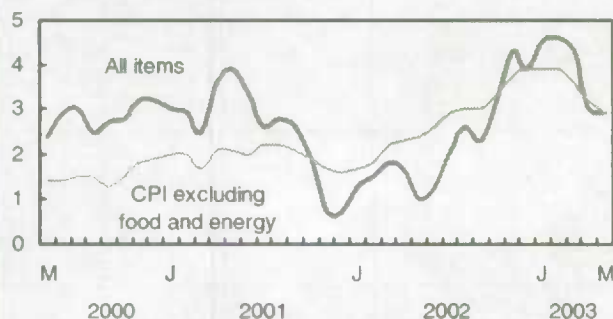
% change, previous month



The leading indicator grew 0.2% in May after rising 0.2% in April.

Consumer Price Index

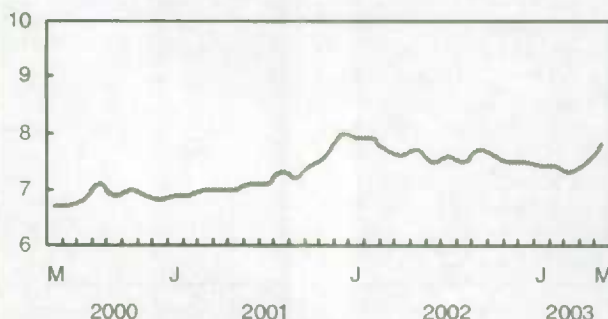
% change, previous year



Consumer prices for goods and services were 2.9% higher in May than they were a year earlier. Excluding food and energy, prices also rose 2.9%.

Unemployment rate

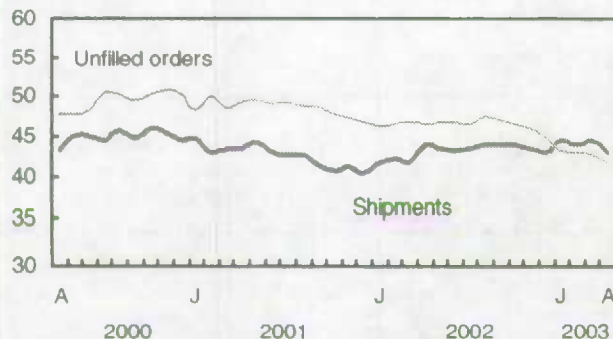
%



In May, the unemployment rate rose 0.3 percentage points to 7.8%.

Manufacturing

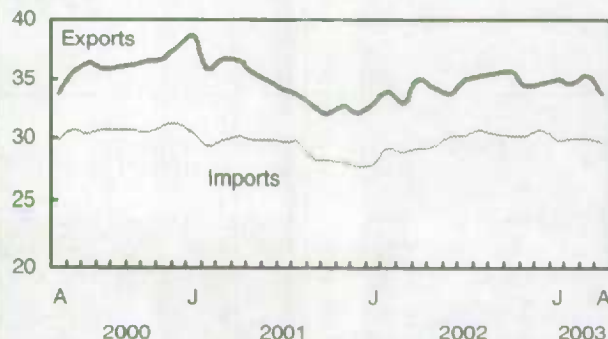
\$ billions



Manufacturers' shipments fell 3.4% in April to \$43.0 billion. The backlog of unfilled orders declined 1.9% to \$41.8 billion.

Merchandise trade

\$ billions



In April, the value of merchandise exports dropped 4.5% to \$33.7 billion. Imports fell 1.3% 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 (\$ billions, 1997) ¹	April	991.3	-0.2%	1.8%
Composite Index (1992=100)	May	181.5	0.2%	2.8%
Operating profits of enterprises (\$ billions)	Q1 2003	42.9	10.6%	26.6%
Capacity utilization rate (%) ²	Q1 2003	82.8	0.3†	1.2†
DOMESTIC DEMAND				
Retail trade (\$ billions)	April	26.1	-0.9%	2.2%
New motor vehicle sales (thousands of units)	April	132.5	-3.8%	-7.4%
Wholesale trade (\$ billions)	April	35.9	-1.1%	3.2%
LABOUR				
Employment (millions)	May	15.7	-0.1%	2.3%
Unemployment rate (%)	May	7.8	0.3†	0.1†
Participation rate (%)	May	67.5	0.1†	0.7†
Average weekly earnings (\$)	April	687.17	0.1%	1.3%
Regular Employment Insurance beneficiaries (in thousands)	April	543.4	1.3%	1.2%
INTERNATIONAL TRADE				
Merchandise exports (\$ billions)	April	33.7	-4.5%	-3.3%
Merchandise imports (\$ billions)	April	29.6	-1.3%	1.7%
Merchandise trade balance (all figures in \$ billions)	April	4.1	-1.2	-1.7
MANUFACTURING				
Shipments (\$ billions)	April	43.0	-3.4%	-2.3%
New orders (\$ billions)	April	42.2	-4.5%	-3.5%
Unfilled orders (\$ billions)	April	41.8	-1.9%	-10.4%
Inventory/shipments ratio	April	1.49	0.06	0.08
PRICES				
Consumer Price Index (1992=100)	May	122.0	0.1%	2.9%
Industrial Product Price Index (1997=100)	May	105.2	-2.0%	-1.7%
Raw Materials Price Index (1997=100)	May	113.0	-2.5%	-0.5%
New Housing Price Index (1992=100)	April	114.3	0.4%	4.5%

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 Industry Classification System (NAICS), which has replaced the 1980 Standard Industrial Classification.

Infomat

A weekly review

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Balance sheet of the agricultural sector – Agriculture economic statistics, Vol. 2, no. 1		21-016-XIE	free
Farm business cash flows – Agriculture economic statistics, Vol. 2, no. 1		21-018-XIE	free
ANALYTICAL STUDIES			
Analytical Studies Branch research paper series: Visible minority neighbourhood enclaves and labour market outcomes of immigrants, no. 204		11F0019MIE2003204	free
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CULTURE, TOURISM AND THE CENTRE FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS			
Education, skills and learning research papers: Who goes to post-secondary education and when: Pathways chosen by 20-year-olds, no. 6		MIE2003006	free
Film and video distribution and wholesaling survey	2000/01	87F0010XDB	50
Sound recording	2000	87F0008XDB	50
HEALTH STATISTICS			
Cancer statistics	1992-2000	84-601-XIE	free
INCOME STATISTICS			
Survey of Family Expenditures, public use microdata file – reweighted	1996	62M0001UCB	3,000
INDUSTRY MEASURES AND ANALYSIS			
Gross domestic product by industry	April 2003	15-001-XIE	11/110
INTERNATIONAL TRADE			
Exports by commodity	April 2003	65-004-XMB	37/361
Exports by commodity	April 2003	65-004-XPB	78/773
PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS			
Public sector statistics	2002/03	68-213-XIE	46
SCIENCE, INNOVATION AND ELECTRONIC INFORMATION			
Broadcasting and telecommunications, Vol. 33, no. 2		56-001-XIE	10/32
SERVICE INDUSTRIES			
Restaurant, caterer and tavern statistics	April 2003	63-011-XIE	6/55
TRANSPORTATION			
Air passenger origin and destination, Canada–United States report	2000	51-205-XIB	35

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