



Infomat

A Weekly Review

NOV 4 2003

Friday, October 31, 2003

INSIDE

◆ SPOTLIGHT: Our health

This week's *Spotlight* is on our health. A new report shows that Canadians are eating a lot more fruit and fish, and more vegetables. However, they have also increased the amount of fat they consume. A second report suggests that people living in rural and northern areas are facing a number of troubling indicators about their health.

◆ Spread of satellite TV dishes losing momentum

Satellite TV dishes on the roofs of Canadian houses are becoming part of the landscape. The number of subscribers to satellite and wireless cable television services rose 25.1% last year, but the rate of growth is losing momentum. Even so, the dishes are causing static for cable companies.

◆ Slight drop in industrial diversity in largest cities

Canada's largest cities experienced a modest decline in their level of industrial diversity between 1992 and 2002, according to a new study that examines urban industrial bases across the country.

Investors keeping their cash out of RRSPs

The number of Canadians who contributed to a registered retirement savings plan, as well as the amount of their contributions, have dropped sharply for the second straight year. In total, 5,991,440 taxfilers contributed just under \$27.1 billion to an RRSP in the 2002 tax year.

The number of contributors was down 4.0% from 2001, while the amount of contributions fell 4.8%. Data came from income tax returns filed in the spring of 2003.

Last year's levels were well below record highs in both contributors and contributions reached in 2000. During that year, 6,291,170 taxfilers put away almost \$29.3 billion.

These declines occurred despite a 2% increase in the number of taxfilers with RRSP contribution room, and despite stability in median employment income.

(continued on page 2)

RRSP contributors

	Number of contributors	2001 to 2002	2002		Median contribution
			% change	\$ thousands	
Canada	5,991,440	-4.0	27,072,812	-4.8	2,500
Newfoundland and Labrador	59,860	-3.6	248,004	-4.5	2,000
Prince Edward Island	19,390	-6.3	78,551	-1.3	2,000
Nova Scotia	132,280	-5.0	551,578	-4.0	2,000
New Brunswick	101,670	-3.7	390,683	-7.5	2,000
Quebec	1,516,510	-2.0	6,258,295	-3.5	2,400
Ontario	2,349,330	-4.6	11,227,411	-6.2	2,700
Manitoba	207,150	-6.6	793,535	-6.9	2,000
Saskatchewan	171,410	-7.3	670,223	-9.1	2,200
Alberta	654,270	-3.8	3,124,388	-4.2	2,700
British Columbia	764,190	-4.6	3,650,061	-1.8	2,800
Yukon	5,830	-2.7	28,542	-1.3	3,000
Northwest Territories	7,240	0.7	37,313	0.9	3,400
Nunavut	2,320	-1.3	14,229	4.4	4,200



Investors keeping their cash... (continued from page 1)

Median employment income in 2002 was \$24,400, down a slight 0.5% from the previous year, after adjusting for inflation. The median is the point at which half of taxfilers are below and half are above.

The median RRSP contribution in 2002 declined \$100 from \$2,600 in 2001 to \$2,500. The median contribution fell in all provinces and territories except Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick and Quebec, where it remained the same.

The steepest decline occurred in Saskatchewan, suggesting that tough economic times for the agriculture sector, resulting from drought, deterred many taxfilers from putting more money into RRSPs.

RRSP participation rates among men and women, and across age groups, shifted slightly. Although the number of women who contributed declined, they accounted for 46% of contributors, up from 45% in 2001. Their median contribution of \$2,100 was down from \$2,200 in 2001.

The number of contributors fell in all age groups except those aged 55 to 64. However, even in this age group, the average contribution declined.

To be eligible to contribute to an RRSP, a taxfiler must have either new room as a result of qualifying income from the previous

year, generally employment income, or unused room from earlier years.

For the 2002 tax year, 80% of those who filed taxes had room. Of these, about 34% made contributions.

The contributions in 2002 represented only about 9% of the total room available to those who filed taxes in 2002, and less than half of the new room that was generated in 2002.

According to a Statistics Canada report on retirement income programs published February 14, 2003, total RRSP assets grew substantially during the 1990s.

At the end of 2000, the assets accumulated in RRSPs, registered pension plans, and the Canada/Quebec pension plans totalled almost \$1.16 trillion. Registered pension plans accounted for 71% of the total, RRSPs for about 25%, and the combined assets of the C/QPP made up the remainder (less than 5%).

RRSPs surpassed registered pension plans in 1995 as the program through which Canadians were investing the most. As of 1999, close to 39% of retirement savings went into RRSPs, up from 31% in 1991. This was due to growth in both the number of contributors and the average amount contributed.

For more information, contact Client Services (613-951-9720), Small Area and Administrative Data Division.

Employment Insurance benefits rise once again

The estimated number of Canadians (adjusted for seasonality) receiving regular Employment Insurance benefits in August moved up 1.0% from July to 588,890, marking the seventh consecutive monthly rise.

The August gain was driven by increases in Ontario (+2.1%), British Columbia (+1.2) and Quebec (+0.6%). Over the past six months, Ontario and British Columbia have registered consecutive monthly increases. Notable decreases were recorded in Manitoba (-5.4%), Newfoundland and Labrador (-1.8%) and Alberta (-1.6%).

Also on a seasonally adjusted basis, regular benefit payments in August totalled \$771.9 million, while the number of people making initial and renewal claims was 244,520.

The number of beneficiaries is a measure of all persons who received Employment Insurance benefits for the week containing the fifteenth day of the month. The regular benefit payments series measures the total of all monies received by individuals for the entire month.

For more information, contact Gilles Groleau (613-951-4091), Labour Statistics Division.

SPOTLIGHT: Our health

Feed me! Canadians eating more, especially fruit, fish

Canadians love our food, and we're eating more of it. In addition, new data on food consumption show that levels of calories, protein and fat have remained stable over the last few years.

Data show Canadians are eating more fruit and fish. In 2002, each of us ate on average 93 kg of fruit, 15% more than a decade earlier.

Fish consumption increased slightly in 2002 to just over 7 kg per person. Two reasons for this increase are a wider array of convenient and easy-to-prepare products and a demand for alternate sources of protein.

The information comes from new experimental data designed to estimate how much food and nutrients Canadians consume after adjusting to account for waste in stores, homes and restaurants.

Canadians consumed more than 23 kg of oils and fats in 2002. That amount hasn't changed much over the past four years, although consumption did increase in the 1990s. Oils and fats alone made up 56% of all intake in 2002, compared with just 47% a decade earlier.

The growing use of shortening oils in salad dressings, deep-fried products and other commercially prepared foods fuelled the increase. In contrast, the level of fat contributed by the red meat, poultry and fish group dropped to 21% in 2002 from 25% in 1992. This drop was due primarily to the ongoing decline in beef consumption.

The level of food energy consumed per person rose 18% from 1992 to 2002, while carbohydrates rose 16%.

Quick glance: How much we eat and drink

A quick look at the per capita consumption of some foods and beverages in 2002 (1991 data in brackets):

- Soft drinks: 112 litres (101 litres)
- Coffee: 102 litres (97 litres)
- Ale, beer, stout, porter: 68 litres (73 litres)
- Fluid milk: 84.3 litres (94.5 litres)
- Butter: 2.8 kg (3.0 kg)
- Margarine: 4.8 kg (5.6 kg)
- Broccoli: 3.1 kg (2.6 kg)
- Tomatoes: 8.3 kg (6.2 kg)
- Bananas: 13.3 kg (12.7 kg)

The proportion of calories available from carbohydrates has remained constant at about 52%. The share of calories from fat has leveled off at 36% during recent years, up from 34% a decade ago. Protein has consistently accounted for about 12% of calories.

Vegetables, especially potatoes, remained a frequent choice for consumers, in spite of a drop in consumption in 2002 from the year before. Each person crunched through an average of 110 kg of veggies, compared with 106 kg a decade earlier.

Potatoes made up 35% of all vegetables consumed in 2002. Each Canadian ate about 38 kg of potatoes in 2002, either in fresh or processed form such as french fries and potato chips. In 1992, Canadians ate just 33 kg of potatoes each.

You can read the entire report *Food statistics*, Vol. 2, no. 2 (21-020-XIE) free of charge on Statistics Canada's website (www.statcan.ca). In addition, the *Canada food stats* CD-ROM will be available soon.

For more information, contact Conrad Ogrodnik (1-800-465-1991), Agriculture Division.

Small town Canadians facing bigger health risks

Canadians living in rural and northern areas have a less favourable perception of their health than their urban counterparts, according to a new report.

The study, which used data from the 2000/01 Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS), found significant differences in certain health indicators between urban and rural Canada. The survey covered a population of more than 130,000 people aged 12 and older.

Health risk behaviours, such as smoking and excessive weight problems, were significantly higher in small town regions, rural regions and northern areas of the country.

In addition, the northern regions had a significantly higher-than-average share of the population who were likely to suffer a major depressive episode, as well as a higher proportion of the population with high blood pressure. Northern regions also had higher unmet health care needs, compared with the national average.

You can read the report *The health of rural Canadians: A rural-urban comparison of health indicators* free on Statistics Canada's website (www.statcan.ca).

For more information, contact Verna Mitura (613-951-5206), Agriculture Division.

Spread of satellite TV dishes losing momentum

Satellite TV dishes on the roofs of Canadian houses are becoming part of the landscape. But they are also causing some static for cable companies. The number of subscribers to satellite and wireless cable television services – known as multipoint distribution systems, or MDS – surpassed 2.0 million in 2002, up 25.1% from 1.6 million in 2001.

However, the rapid rise of satellite and MDS television in recent years has lost momentum. The increase in 2002 was less than one-half of the gains of 66.4% in 2001 and 74.4% in 2000.

At the end of August 2002, wireless operators served 21% of multi-channel video services customers, compared with 17% in 2001.

Some of the 2.0 million customers of wireless operators were lured away from cable companies. The number of subscribers to cable television peaked at just over 8 million in 1999 and has eroded since then. It fell to just over 7.6 million in 2002, a 3.1% decline from the previous year, the biggest annual drop ever.

Cable operators in smaller communities were hit particularly hard by competition, with a drop in subscription of 5.6% in 2002.

Despite the loss of subscribers, revenues of cable operators have grown by more than 7.0% a year since 1999. This relatively good performance is due in large part to the popularity of high speed Internet and digital cable.

In 2002, revenue per subscriber for operators providing both these services was 32.8% higher than those of operators that did not offer these services, or offered only one of the two.

The availability and adoption of high-speed Internet by cable are progressing quickly. At the early stage of deployment, high speed Internet by cable was mainly a phenomenon of the largest cities.

Since then, the accessibility of this technology in smaller communities, those outside census metropolitan areas, has advanced rapidly. In 2000, 32% of homes with access to cable in smaller communities could subscribe to high-speed Internet by cable. Two years later, that proportion had more than doubled to 71%.

Not only is this technology more widely available, it is also more widely used. From August 2000 to August 2002, the number of subscribers to Internet by cable more than doubled to 1.9 million. The rate of growth was about twice as strong in smaller communities (+256%) as in larger communities (+123%).

The entry of satellite and MDS operators into the multi-channel video market is at the origin of a shift towards digital technology. As of August 2002, 3.2 million, or one-third, of multi-channel video services customers subscribed to digital wireless or digital cable services.

Although wireless providers continued to dominate the digital service market with 2.0 million customers, cable operators were rapidly closing the gap.

The number of subscribers to digital cable jumped 50.5% in 2002, twice the growth for wireless digital services. This was the second consecutive year in which digital cable growth outpaced wireless digital growth.

For more information, contact Daniel April (613-951-3177), Science, Innovation and Electronic Information Division.

August weekly payroll earnings dipped

Average weekly earnings of payroll employees declined 0.5% in August compared with July. The decrease offset increases recorded in the two previous months and was driven mainly by declines in the manufacturing sector in Ontario and Quebec.

Average weekly earnings were up 0.8% from August 2002. The strongest year-over-year gains were in New Brunswick, up 3.0%, Saskatchewan, up 2.7% and Newfoundland and Labrador, up 2.4%.

Average hourly earnings for hourly paid employees edged down seven cents to \$17.20. Average hours for hourly employees declined slightly to 32.3 hours per week.

For more information, contact Client Services (1-866-873-8788), Labour Statistics Division.

Slight drop in industrial diversity in largest cities

Canada's largest cities experienced a modest decline in their level of industrial diversity between 1992 and 2002, according to a new study that examines urban industrial bases across the country.

From 1992 to 2002, a time of significant structural change in Canada's economy, the average Canadian city became more industrially diverse. However, this increase in diversity generally occurred in small and medium-sized cities, such as Windsor, Ont., and Truro, N.S.

On average, the diversity of Canadian cities increased nearly 7% over the 10-year period. Small cities (those with fewer than 100,000 people) increased their diversity by 9%, while medium-sized cities (those with 100,000 to 500,000 people) increased theirs by 6%.

In contrast, large cities (those with more than 500,000 people) became slightly less diverse, their diversity declining 3%.

The study showed that even though the diversity of large cities declined, their economies remained more diverse than that of the average small or medium-sized city.

A city is considered more diverse if the number of its industries increases and/or if employment is distributed more evenly across its industries. Two cities may have the same number of industries, but if in one city 90% of employment is concentrated in only one industry, its economy is clearly less diverse than that of a city in which employment is spread evenly across all industries.

Urban economies with more diverse industrial bases are thought to be more stable and more dynamic. That is because a diverse set of industries is believed to help cushion an urban economy from a slump in any one industry.

In addition, new innovations are thought to be most easily transferred across industries in diverse cities, leading to stronger long-term growth. Because of these benefits, increasing industrial diversity has long been a goal of policy makers.

This study, which used data from Statistics Canada's Business Register, showed that levels of diversity are closely related to the size of the population in an urban area. The smallest urban areas are the least diverse and the largest are the most diverse.

In 2002, Montreal was Canada's most industrially diverse city, while Kitimat was the least diverse, its diversity being one-eighth that of Montreal. Among the most diverse cities were Toronto, Vancouver and Winnipeg, all of which had levels of diversity near 90% of Montreal's.

It is not necessary to be among the largest cities in Canada to have similar levels of industrial diversity. Kitchener with a population less than one-tenth that of Toronto, had a level of diversity in 2002 that was almost 90% of Toronto's.

You can read the entire report *From Labrador City to Toronto: The industrial diversity of Canadian cities* (11-624-MIE2003003) free of charge on Statistics Canada's website (www.statcan.ca).

For more information, contact Mark Brown (613-951-7292), Micro-economic Analysis Division.

Calendar of key releases: November 2003

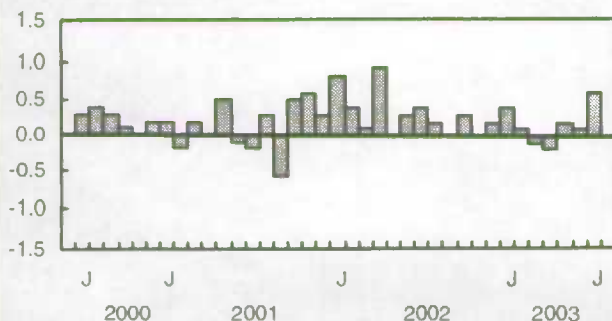
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
3 Factors associated with youth obesity, 2003*	4 Business Conditions Survey: Canadian manufacturing industries, October 2003 Building permits, September 2003	5	6 Children who become active, 2003* Provincial economic accounts, 1999 to 2002*	7 Labour Force Survey, October 2003 Impaired driving and other traffic offences, 2002*
10	11	12 New Housing Price Index, September 2003	13 Canadian international merchandise trade, September 2003 New motor vehicle sales, September 2003	14 Monthly Survey of Manufacturing, September 2003
17	18 Canada's international transactions in securities, September 2003 Home repairs and renovations, 2002*	19 Consumer Price Index, October 2003 Travel between Canada and other countries, September 2003	20	21 Television viewing, fall 2002*
24 Wholesale trade, September 2003 Retail trade, September 2003	25 Net farm income, 2002 Leading Indicators, October 2003 Farm cash receipts, Q3 2003	26 Industrial Product Price and Raw Materials Price Indexes, October 2003 International travel account, Q3 2003 Characteristics of international travellers, Q2 2003	27 Quarterly financial statistics for enterprises, Q3 2003 Balance of international payments Employment Insurance, September 2003 Employment, earnings and hours, September 2003	28 Gross domestic product by industry, September 2003 National economic and financial accounts, Q3 2003

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.

Current trends

Gross domestic product

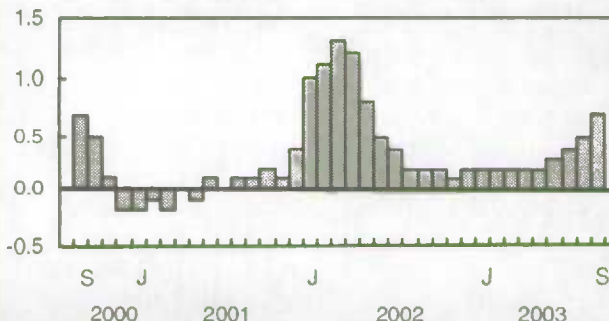
% change, previous month



Total economic activity jumped 0.6% in July, after a 0.1% gain in June.

Composite Index

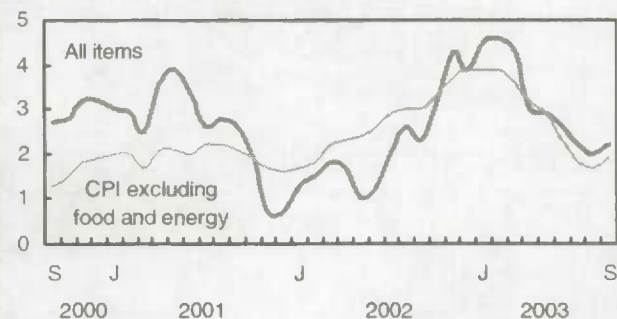
% change, previous month



The leading indicator grew 0.7% in September after rising 0.5% in August.

Consumer Price Index

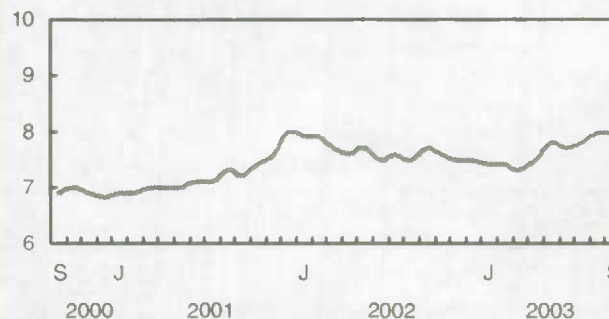
% change, previous year



Consumer prices for goods and services were 2.2% higher in September than they were a year earlier. Excluding food and energy, prices rose 1.9%.

Unemployment rate

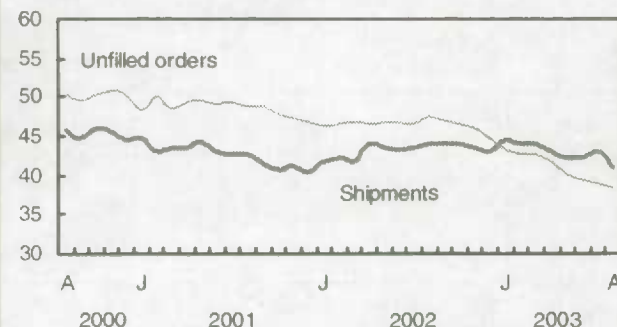
%



In September, the unemployment rate held steady at 8.0%.

Manufacturing

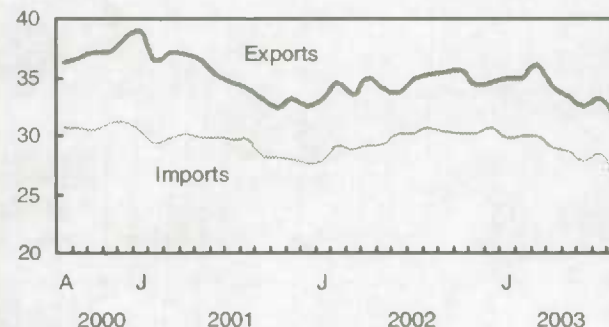
\$ billions



Manufacturers' shipments fell 4.5% in August to \$40.9 billion. The backlog of unfilled orders declined 1.5% to \$38.4 billion.

Merchandise trade

\$ billions



In August, exports fell 3.8% to \$31.9 billion. Imports fell 5.9% to \$26.7 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	July	1,017.0	0.6%	1.9%
Composite Index (1992=100)	September	184.1	0.7%	2.7%
Operating profits of enterprises (\$ billions)	Q2 2003	40.4	-1.3%	11.7%
Capacity utilization rate (%) ²	Q2 2003	82.5	-1.2†	-1.1†
DOMESTIC DEMAND				
Retail trade (\$ billions)	August	26.7	0.3%	3.9%
New motor vehicle sales (thousands of units)	August	143.8	-1.1%	-1.2%
Wholesale trade (\$ billions)	August	34.2	-4.6%	-2.9%
LABOUR				
Employment (millions)	September	15.7	0.3%	0.4%
Unemployment rate (%)	September	8.0	0.0†	0.3†
Participation rate (%)	September	67.6	0.1†	0.4†
Average weekly earnings (\$)	August*	681.85	-0.3%	0.8%
Regular Employment Insurance beneficiaries (in thousands)	August*	588.89	1.0%	5.7%
INTERNATIONAL TRADE				
Merchandise exports (\$ billions)	August	31.9	-3.8%	-9.2%
Merchandise imports (\$ billions)	August	26.7	-5.9%	-13.0%
Merchandise trade balance (all figures in \$ billions)	August	5.2	0.4	0.8
MANUFACTURING				
Shipments (\$ billions)	August	40.9	-4.5%	-6.7%
New orders (\$ billions)	August	40.3	-4.9%	-10.3%
Unfilled orders (\$ billions)	August	38.4	-1.5%	-19.2%
Inventory/shipments ratio	August	1.50	0.05	0.08
PRICES				
Consumer Price Index (1992=100)	September	122.7	0.2%	2.2%
Industrial Product Price Index (1997=100)	September*	108.7	0.2%	-2.6%
Raw Materials Price Index (1997=100)	September*	107.7	-3.1%	-8.3%
New Housing Price Index (1992=100)	August	117.3	0.5%	4.7%

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.

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A weekly review

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presents highlights from new data releases, along with sources, links and contacts for further information. It also contains schedules of upcoming major news releases and announces the Agency's new products and services.

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Products released from October 23

SUBJECT AREA Title of product	Period		
AGRICULTURE			
Cereals and oilseeds review	August 2003	22-007-XIB	12/120
Cereals and oilseeds review	August 2003	22-007-XPB	17/160
Farm product price index	August 2003	21-007-XIB	Free
CANADIAN CENTRE FOR JUSTICE STATISTICS			
Canadian crime statistics	2002	85-205-XIE	35
CENSUS OPERATIONS			
2001 Census: Age, sex, marital status and common-law status		92-380-XIE	Free
CURRENT ECONOMIC ANALYSIS			
Canadian economic observer	October 2003	11-010-XIB	19/182
Canadian economic observer	October 2003	11-010-XPB	25/243
DEMOGRAPHY			
Parental work, child-care use and young children's cognitive outcomes		89-594-XIE2003001	Free
DISTRIBUTIVE TRADES			
Retail trade	August 2003	63-005-XIB	18/166
HOUSEHOLD SURVEY METHODS			
Survey methods and practices		12-587-XPE	100
INTERNATIONAL TRADE			
Exports by commodity	August 2003	65-004-XMB	40/387
Exports by commodity	August 2003	65-004-XPB	84/828
MANUFACTURING, CONSTRUCTION AND ENERGY			
Mineral wool including fibrous glass insulation	September 2003	44-004-XIB	6/51
Primary iron and steel	August 2003	41-001-XIB	6/51
Particleboard, oriented strandboard and fibreboard	August 2003	36-003-XIB	6/51
Sawmills and planing mills	August 2003	35-003-XIB	10/93
MICRO ECONOMIC STUDIES AND ANALYSIS			
From Labrador City to Toronto: The industrial diversity of Canadian cities	1992-2002	11-624-MIE2003003	Free
SCIENCE, INNOVATION AND ELECTRONIC INFORMATION			
Broadcasting and telecommunications: Cable, satellite and multipoint distribution system	2002	56-001-XIE	11/35

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