



# Infomat

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## A Weekly Review

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### INSIDE

#### ◆ SPOTLIGHT: Teenagers

Today's *Spotlight* is on teenagers, and new information from the first of several studies on the health of Canadian adolescents. One report shows that three out of every 10 adolescents judged their health to be no better than just good in 2000/01. A second study shows that some health behaviours of both boys and girls mirror those of their parents.

#### ◆ Blackout left 2.4 million workers in the dark

An estimated 2.4 million workers in Ontario and Gatineau, Que., were left in the dark by the mid-August power blackout, resulting in the loss of 26.4 million hours of work time.

#### ◆ Shift to knowledge-based economy started 30 years ago

The proportion of knowledge workers has increased steadily over the last three decades, a growth trend beginning long before the high-tech boom of the 1990s, according to a new study.

### Economic output plummets in wake of blackout

**E**conomic activity in Canada plummeted 0.7% in August, largely the result of the mid-month power blackout in Ontario. It was the largest decline in gross domestic product since September 2001 following the terrorist attacks in the United States. Output then fell 0.6%.

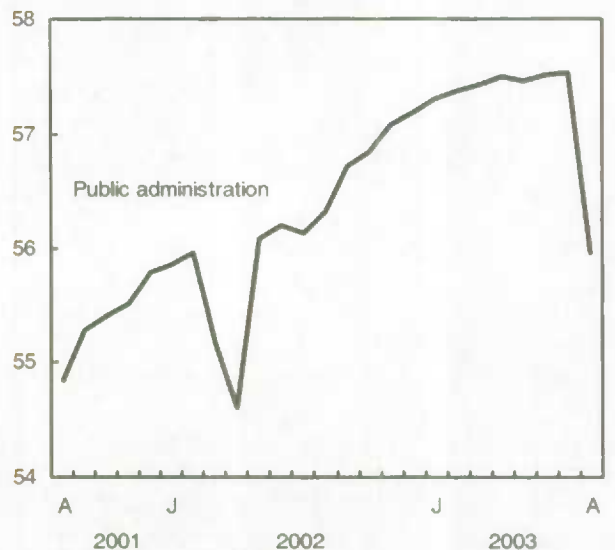
Ontario represents about 42% of the total Canadian economy.

The weakness in the economy was widespread, with most industries reporting slight to sharp production declines. It is not possible to isolate and quantify the exact impact of the blackout, although few areas of the economy were not affected.

(continued on page 2)

#### Output in public administration tumbles

GDP \$ billions chained 1997



Statistics  
Canada

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Canada

## Economic output... (continued from page 1)

Reduced electricity generation hampered manufacturing plants and service-producing establishments. That in turn hindered production, transportation and distribution of goods as well as the sales and delivery of a wide range of business, personal and government services.

The public administration sector was hit heavily as most government offices operated at minimal capacity to conserve electricity needed for the private sector. Unlike manufacturers, most service-producing industries were unable to recuperate their time lost.

South of the border, industrial production in the United States was flat in August, as higher utility and mining output was offset by lower output in manufacturing.

In Canada, total industrial output — the combination of manufacturing, mining and utilities — slid 0.7% after posting a strong gain in July in all three components. Manufacturing fell 0.6%, mining and oil and gas extraction was down 1.1% and utilities declined 0.7%.

Electricity generation fell 0.9%, as increased production in the rest of Canada was not enough to make up for the decline that occurred in Ontario.

One of the largest contributors to the overall decline was the public administration sector. The output of the federal government

fell 5.1%, reflecting the fact that most of the 71,000 federal public servants in Ottawa were ordered to stay home for six working days to conserve energy. About 45% of the federal workforce works in Ontario.

Provincial and territorial government output fell 2.7%. Provincial employees in Ontario account for about 23% of the total provincial and territorial government workforce. Municipal output edged down 0.1%.

The decline in manufacturing completely reversed gains in July. Large setbacks were incurred by producers of chemicals, clothing, wood products and primary and fabricated metal products.

Industries in the travel sector posted a wide range of results, from a drop of 3.8% for travel agents to a gain of 1.9% in the accommodation industry.

The retail trade sector edged down a slight 0.1% in August, as motor vehicle dealers were unable to match the fast pace of sales in July.

Construction was one of the bright spots in August. Residential construction was boosted by a 4.7% increase in housing starts, the fourth consecutive monthly increase and their second-highest level in the past 13 years.

*For more information, contact Jo Ann MacMillan (613-951-7248), Industry Measures and Analysis Division.*

## Building permits increased once again

Builders took out another monthly record in residential building permits in September, as the demand for single- and multi-family dwellings maintained its torrid pace.

The value of housing permits rose 10.0% to a record \$2.90 billion, surpassing the previous record of \$2.86 billion set in July. The value of building permits, an early indicator of construction activity, points to a busy winter for residential builders.

At the same time, the value of non-residential permits increased in September for the third time in the last four months, rising 4.5% to \$1.5 billion, with gains in commercial and institutional permits.

In total, municipalities issued \$4.4 billion worth of building permits in September, up 8.0% from August.

The results for the first three quarters clearly indicate that 2003 will be an exceptional year. The total value of building permits issued from January to September totalled a record \$38.3 billion, up 9.3% from the same nine months of 2002. Builders took out \$23.6 billion worth in residential permits, up 7.1%. The value of permits in the non-residential sector was up 13.0% to \$14.7 billion.

Among the metropolitan areas, the largest growths (in dollar terms) were recorded in Toronto, Montréal and Oshawa. In Montréal and Oshawa, the advances came from both the residential and non-residential sectors; in Toronto, the rise came exclusively from the non-residential sector.

The value of single-family permits rose 12.3% to a monthly high of \$1.96 billion in September. And the one of multi-family permits rose 5.5% to \$940 million.

Among the factors that have positively affected the housing market recently are advantageous mortgage rates and their positive impact on the housing affordability; high consumer confidence; growth of more than 100,000 in full-time employment since the beginning of the year; and the tight vacancy rates in several centres.

*For more information, contact Étienne Saint-Pierre (613-951-2025), Investment and Capital Stock Division.*



# SPOTLIGHT: Teenagers

## Obesity, alcohol top teen health problems

**T**hree out of every 10 Canadian adolescents judged their health to be no better than just good in 2000/01, according to a new study that probes how teenagers themselves perceive their health.

Using data from the Canadian Community Health Survey, the study found that overall, 27% of teens aged 12 to 17 considered themselves to be in poor, fair or good health. The majority considered themselves to be in very good or excellent health.

The top reasons teenagers considered themselves to be unhealthy were smoking, drinking and obesity. About 14% of teens aged 15 to 17 were daily smokers, the proportion slightly higher among girls. About the same percentage of teens in that age group also reported periodic heavy drinking, although the practice was more common among boys.

About 29% of those aged 12 to 17 reported having chronic ailments, including asthma, bronchitis, back pain or migraine headaches. Among girls aged 15 to 17, this figure rose to 36%. In addition, the lower the education level in the adolescent's household, the worse his or her self-rated health was likely to be.

The study, which was based on interviews with 12,715 teenagers, found a significant difference between the genders – particularly as girls become older.

At the age of 12 to 14, 73% of both boys and girls said they were in very good or excellent health. But that dropped to only 66% among girls aged 15 to 17, while among boys the proportion remained about the same.

Depression was an especially marked problem in older adolescent girls. Nearly 6% of girls aged 12 to 14 had a high risk of having had a major depressive episode in the year before the

### How healthy are Canadian children?

*The two studies comprising today's Spotlight are the first of several on the health of Canadian children that will be released this fall in How healthy are Canadians?, a series of annual supplements to Statistics Canada's quarterly publication Health reports.*

*Future articles will focus on topics such as children who become active, youth obesity, adolescent self-concept and the impact of witnessing violence in the home. A print compendium of all articles will be released in December 2003.*

*The articles are based on data from three Statistics Canada surveys: the National Population Health Survey, the Canadian Community Health Survey and the National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth.*

*They examine the conditions that impede, as well as those that enhance, the potential of children to grow up healthy.*

survey. However, among girls aged 15 to 17 that proportion doubled to 11%.

In contrast, only 2% of boys in both age groups had a high risk.

Regardless of their age, large numbers of young people are inactive, a situation which gets worse as they get older. In 2000/01, 17% of boys and 26% of girls aged 12 to 14 judged themselves inactive. By time the young people were 15 to 17, these proportions had increased to 21% of boys and 36% of girls.

You can read the report *Factors related to adolescents' self-perceived health* (82-003-SIE) free of charge on Statistics Canada's website ([www.statcan.ca](http://www.statcan.ca)).

For more information, contact Stéphane Tremblay (613-951-4765), Health Analysis and Measurement Group.

## Teens follow health patterns of parents

A new report suggests a strong link between parents' obesity and that of their children, through the example of poor eating habits and little physical activity. It also suggests sons and daughters react differently to the behaviour of their parents.

Nearly 5% of the adolescents studied for the report were considered obese. Among girls aged 12 to 19 who lived with an obese parent, 18% were overweight and 10% were obese. The situation was similar for boys: 22% of boys with an obese parent were overweight, and 12% were obese.

Some 4,800 girls and almost 5,000 boys aged 12 to 19 were interviewed for the 2000/01 Canadian Community Health Survey.

Girls who were former smokers had higher odds of being obese than those who had never smoked. Youth smoking behaviour was not associated with obesity among boys. However, when the parent smoked daily, this increased the odds that boys would be obese.

Other parental habits were also associated with those of their children, including physical activity, smoking and eating habits. If the parents ate fruits and vegetables relatively infrequently, or smoked, the teens were likely to mirror these activities.

You can read the report *Parent and child factors associated with youth obesity* (82-003-SIE) free of charge on Statistics Canada's website ([www.statcan.ca](http://www.statcan.ca)).

For more information, contact Gisèle Carrière (604-666-5907), Health Statistics Division.

## Blackout left 2.4 million workers in the dark

An estimated 2.4 million workers in Ontario and Gatineau, Que., were left in the dark by the mid-August power blackout, resulting in the loss of 26.4 million hours of work time.

At the same time, an estimated 713,000 people, or 11% of workers, put in a total of 7.5 million overtime hours. The net impact was a loss of 18.9 million hours.

Data were derived from questions added to September's Labour Force Survey. Special questions were required to estimate the impact on hours worked of the power outage and subsequent conservation period.

Much of Ontario and portions of the northeastern United States were left without power on August 14 after an outage swept through the region. Power was restored to most areas within days. But conservation efforts kept much of Ontario operating at a fraction of full capacity throughout the following week in efforts to keep the power grid up and running.

There was a net loss in all industries except utilities, farm and municipal government. Workers in these three industries saw their hours rise as a result of the outage. In some industries, the net loss was large.

Of the 18.9 million hours lost, 3.6 million occurred at the federal or provincial level. About six in 10 federal government workers, as well as more than four in 10 provincial workers, lost work hours.

While some also worked overtime, the net effect was a loss of 16 hours for every federal employee and 12 hours for every provincial worker.

A significant share of factory workers also lost time in August. One-half of all people working in manufacturing were absent because of the blackout. Helping offset this, power outage-related overtime was relatively common in manufacturing, with 17.1% of workers putting in extra hours. But the net loss of hours was still 3.7 million hours.

In utilities, 122,000 hours were added to workers' schedules as a result of the power outage. While 17% of utilities workers lost some work time, 19% worked some overtime. Furthermore,

### Impact of Ontario-US power outage

	Number of people absent because of power outage	Rate of absenteeism (absent workers as a share of total employed)	Total hours lost	Hours lost per absent employee
	'000	%	'000	
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,381.40</b>	<b>36.8</b>	<b>26,377.30</b>	<b>11.1</b>
<b>Goods-producing sector</b>	<b>725.8</b>	<b>41.8</b>	<b>7,408.80</b>	<b>10.2</b>
Agriculture	4.6	4.9	35.6	7.7
Forestry, fishing, mining, oil and gas	4.6	13.8	43.9	9.5
Utilities	10.0	17.2	91.7	9.2
Construction	133.3	32.0	1,476.50	11.1
Manufacturing	573.2	50.6	5,761.00	10.1
<b>Services-producing sector</b>	<b>1,645.40</b>	<b>34.7</b>	<b>18,875.90</b>	<b>11.5</b>
Trade	336.9	35.2	3,047.30	9.0
Transportation and warehousing	70.1	24.9	858.5	12.2
Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing	202.7	45.5	1,943.20	9.6
Professional, scientific and technical services	197.4	44.2	1,914.80	9.7
Management of companies and administrative and other support services	112.3	40.9	1,167.00	10.4
Educational services	71.2	21.0	713.6	10.0
Health care and social assistance	135.0	21.3	1,184.30	8.8
Information, culture and recreation	123.9	36.8	1,504.30	12.1
Accommodation and food services	135.9	34.7	1,336.60	9.8
Other services	94.8	34.7	897.2	9.5
Public administration	165.0	46.0	4,309.20	26.1
Federal	102.4	60.4	2,889.30	28.2
Provincial	34.5	44.7	1,090.80	31.6
Municipal and other	28.0	25.1	329.2	11.8

the overtime was long for utilities workers. The average overtime worker in utilities put in 19.4 hours in the second half of August, more than any other industry.

Overtime was also common in municipal government, where almost 17% of workers put in long hours because of the outage, second only to utilities. Included in municipal government are many essential services such as police, fire and ambulance.

For more information, contact Geoff Bowlby (613-951-3325), Labour Force Survey.



## Shift to knowledge-based economy started 30 years ago

**T**he proportion of knowledge workers has increased steadily over the last three decades, a growth trend beginning long before the high-tech boom of the 1990s, according to a new study.

In 1971, about 14% of Canada's workforce fell into what can be considered high-knowledge occupations. By 2001, this proportion had almost doubled to 25%.

Almost all sectors witnessed this growth, the largest increase occurring among people in professional occupations. In 1971, they accounted for almost 9% of Canada's workforce. Three decades later, they accounted for more than 14%.

Contrary to the view that knowledge workers are found only in a handful of high-technology industries, the report shows that Canada's skilled workers are spread widely across all sectors and regions of Canada.

However, across industries, there were large differences in the percentage of employment found in knowledge-based occupations. In 2001, some of the largest concentrations of knowledge workers were in business services (66%) and finance and insurance (42%).

From 1971 to 2001, the proportion of knowledge workers in the mining and oil and gas sector almost doubled, from 14% to 26%.

The proportion of workers in knowledge-based occupations who have completed a university degree has increased significantly in the past 30 years.

In 1971, 34% of knowledge workers had university degrees, compared with slightly less than 3% of other workers. By 2001, 52% of all workers in knowledge-intensive occupations had a university degree, compared with less than 10% of those in other occupations.

University degrees are most common in professional occupations. In 1971, slightly less than 45% of professionals had university degrees. Three decades later, this proportion had increased to two-thirds.

While knowledge-based occupations pay significantly higher wages, the wage advantage enjoyed by knowledge workers relative to other occupations did not increase significantly from 1971 to 2001.

Growth in knowledge-based occupations has occurred in all regions but Ontario and Quebec experienced the strongest increases.

From 1971 to 1996, the percentage of workers in knowledge occupations was much higher in urban areas than in rural areas, but these urban-rural differences have decreased over time.

You can read the research paper *Dimensions of occupational changes in Canada's knowledge economy, 1971-1996* (11-622-MIE2003004) free of charge on Statistics Canada's website ([www.statcan.ca](http://www.statcan.ca)).

For more information, contact Desmond Beckstead (613-951-6199), Micro-Economic Analysis Division.

## Canadians even more generous

Canadians continued their generosity to charities in 2002, opening their pocketbooks even wider than usual across the majority of provinces and territories.

Canadians donated more than \$5.8 billion to charity in 2002, a 6.0% increase from 2001. The number of donors remained stable at around 5.5 million, in spite of a marginal 0.4% increase in the number of taxfilers.

In 2002, the median donation was \$210, up from \$200 in 2001. (In other words, half the donations exceeded \$210, and half were below.) The median donation has been increasing each year since 1999.

Nunavut residents were the most generous, the median donation was 400\$, by far the highest across provinces and territories. The jump in their median donation from \$360 last year was also the largest increase. Nunavut has led the provinces and territories since 2000.

It was followed by Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland and Labrador, with median donations of \$330 and \$310, respectively.

The median donation increased in 10 provinces and territories. Only in New Brunswick was there a small decline.

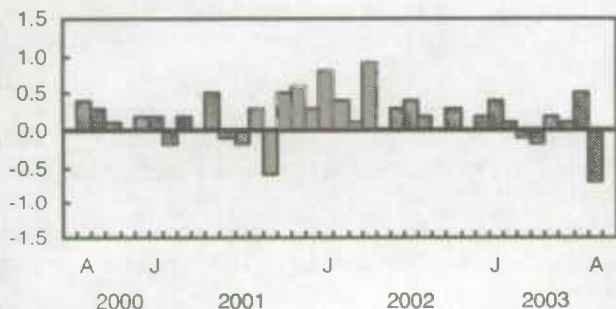
As in 2001, 25% of all Canadian taxfilers claimed charitable donations. At the provincial and territorial level, Manitoba once again led the way with 29% of taxfilers declaring donations. Ontario and Saskatchewan each had 27%, while Prince Edward Island followed close behind with 26%.

For more information, contact Client Services (1-866-652-8443), Small Area and Administrative Data Division.

## Current trends

### Gross domestic product

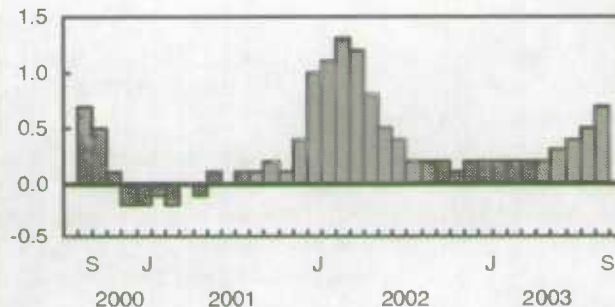
% change, previous month



Total economic activity fell 0.7% in August, after a 0.6% gain in July.

### Composite Index

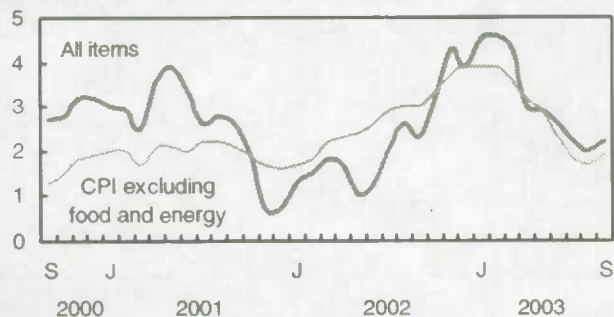
% change, previous month



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

### Consumer Price Index

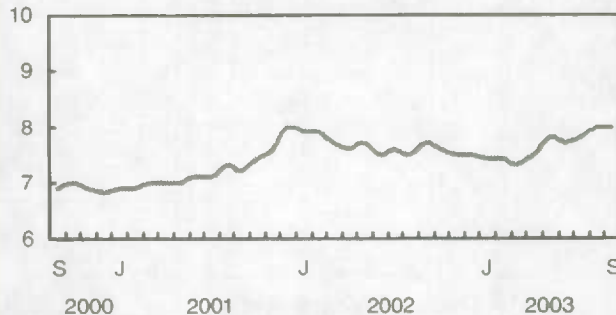
% change, previous year



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

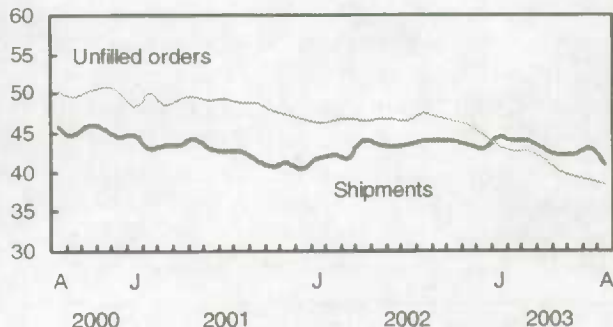
%



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

### Manufacturing

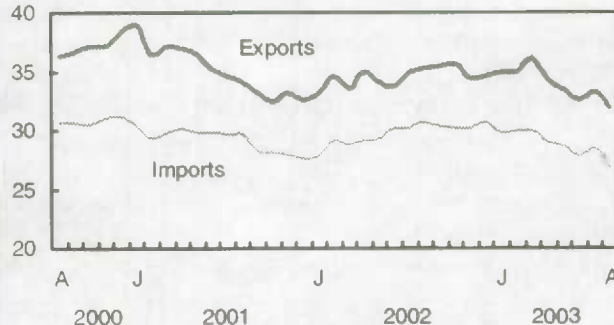
\$ billions



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
<b>GENERAL</b>				
Gross domestic product (\$ billions, 1997) <sup>1</sup>	August*	1,007.7	-0.7%	0.8%
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 (%) <sup>2</sup>	Q2 2003	82.5	-1.2†	-1.1†
<b>DOMESTIC DEMAND</b>				
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%
<b>LABOUR</b>				
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	-0.6%	0.8%
Regular Employment Insurance beneficiaries (in thousands)	August	588.89	1.0%	5.7%
<b>INTERNATIONAL TRADE</b>				
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
<b>MANUFACTURING</b>				
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
<b>PRICES</b>				
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

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

## Infomat

### A weekly review

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<b>INDUSTRY MEASURES AND ANALYSIS</b>			
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<b>LABOUR STATISTICS</b>			
Employment, earnings and hours	August 2003	72-002-XIB	26/257
<b>MANUFACTURING, CONSTRUCTION AND ENERGY</b>			
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Production and disposition of tobacco products	September 2003	32-022-XIB	6/51
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