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Infomat

A Weekly Review

Friday, November 28, 2003

INSIDE

◆ ***SPOTLIGHT*: Education**

Today's *Spotlight* is on financial planning for education. New data from the Survey of Approaches to Educational Planning show that parents are strongly committed to a postsecondary education for their children. Results also show that about one-half of parents of children up to the age of 18 have set aside savings for their children's future studies.

◆ **Biggest plunge ever in overnight travel to Canada**

Overnight travel to Canada from foreign countries took its biggest plunge ever between April and June, as the war in Iraq was raging and the SARS crisis was reaching its peak. An estimated 4.2 million foreign tourists arrived in Canada during the second quarter, an 18.5% decline from the same quarter last year.

◆ **Travel deficit highest in over nine years**

Canada's international travel deficit hit its highest level in more than nine years in the third quarter, as Canadian travel abroad rose at almost three times the rate of foreign travel into Canada.

Weak finish to summer season for retailers

Retail sales fell for the first time in five months in September, handing Canadian retailers a weak finish to their summer season.

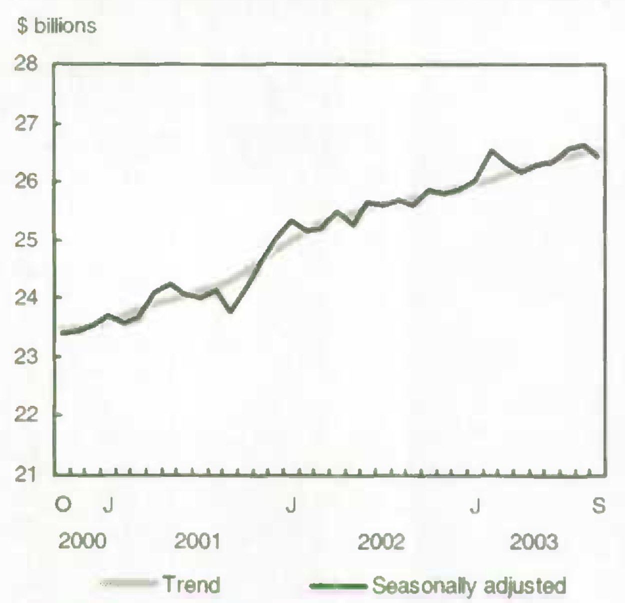
Consumers spent $26.4 billion in retail stores, a 0.8% decline from October, the result of lower spending on automobiles and furniture. Excluding autos, retail sales were down only 0.2%.

Between July and September this year, retailers sold nearly $79.7 billion in goods, up 1.1% from the second quarter, and a 3.6% increase over the third quarter of 2002.

In terms of year-over-year quarterly growth, consumers spent 8.3% more on furniture than they did in the third quarter last year, likely the result of the boom in new housing. They also spent 5.5% more in drug stores.

(continued on page 2)

First sales decline in five months for retailers



Weak finish to... *(continued from page 1)*

For September alone, consumers spent 1.8% less in the automotive sector, 1.4% less in furniture stores and 1.2% less on food. Sales in furniture stores were down for the first time in six months, while food sales continued volatility that started in April.

However, their spending rose 2.6% in drug stores, and they spent 2.3% more on clothing. Spending in the "other retail" category, which includes stores selling goods such as liquor, sporting goods, hardware, jewellery and bookstores, rose 0.5%.

The decline in the automotive sector was led by lower sales by motor and recreational vehicle dealers and gasoline service stations. Retailers of automotive parts, accessories and services posted their first monthly sales gain in three months, resuming a pattern of general increases observed since 1995.

After a month of surging sales in July, motor and recreational vehicle dealers suffered sales declines in both August and September. Nevertheless, these declines left sales at essentially the same high level seen since the beginning of 2002.

Shoppers spent 1.0% less in department stores in September, leaving sales in the general merchandise sector down 0.6% from August. Nevertheless, sales by general merchandisers have been generally increasing since the beginning of 2003, after remaining essentially unchanged since spring 2002.

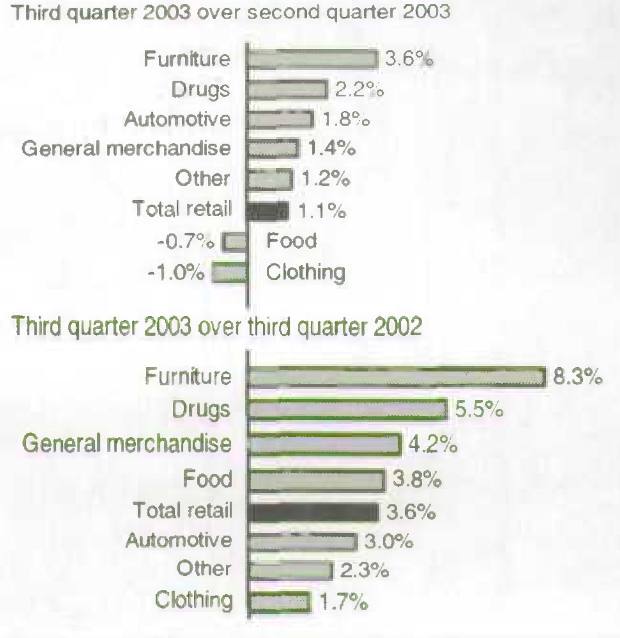
Retail sales in September were off in every province except Ontario, where consumers spent a marginal 0.2% more. However, sales in Ontario had dropped slightly in August because of the power blackout that hit the province and the northeastern United States.

Food and furniture were the only sectors in Ontario to post lower sales in September. Retail sales in Ontario were partially stimulated by a 2.1% gain in the number of new motor vehicles sold in September.

The biggest monthly decline was in Nova Scotia.

For more information, contact Michael Scrim (613-951-5668), Distributive Trades Division.

Quarterly retail sales by sector



Wholesale sales down for two straight quarters

Despite a strong monthly gain in September, wholesale sales have declined for the second straight quarter.

Sales fell a slight 0.2% between July and September, following a 2.1% decrease in the previous three months. The two quarterly declines were largely attributable to weak sales in the automotive sector.

In September, wholesalers sold goods and services worth $36.6 billion, up 6.1%. This follows a 4.1% decline in August as a result of the power blackout.

Activities returned to normal for Ontario wholesalers, who account for about half of Canadian wholesale sales. They posted an 8.7% increase from August, contributing substantially to the gain nationally. Excluding Ontario, wholesale sales would have increased only 3.6%.

All trade groups posted an increase in September. However, only six of the nine groups that lost ground in August as a result of the blackout bounced back. The biggest increase in September (+22.3%) occurred in motor vehicles, parts and accessories.

For more information, contact Jean Lebreux (613-951-4907), Distributive Trades Division.

SPOTLIGHT: Education

One-half of parents have saved for children's education

More Canadian families than ever have set aside money for the postsecondary education of their children, according to new results from the Survey of Approaches to Educational Planning.

In 2002, an estimated 3.6 million children up to the age of 18, or about one-half of the total, had parents who reported that they had set aside savings for their children's postsecondary education. This was up from 3 million children, or 41% of the total, in the first round of the survey in 1999.

Parents of an additional 30% of children reported that they planned to start saving in the future. Parents who had not yet started to save, or did not intend to save, most frequently reported lack of money as the main reason for not saving.

The survey indicated that as of October 2002, parents of these children up to the age of 18 had an estimated $32 billion already set aside for future postsecondary schooling. This was nearly double the estimate of $17 billion in 1999.

The 2002 total includes $11 billion in registered education savings plans and about $20 billion in all other types of savings.

Household income was a factor in the amount of money saved to date by current savers, the savings strategies used and the contributions to savings made in 2001.

As of October 2002, about 26% of children living in households with income of less than $25,000 had parents who were saving. The median amount saved to date for these children was about $2,400.

In contrast, almost seven in 10 children in households with incomes of $85,000 or more had parents who were saving. The median amount saved for these children was almost three times higher at about $7,000.

About 61% of children living in high income households had parents who were using RESPs plans to save, compared with only 42% of children living in low-income households.

Survey of Approaches to Educational Planning

Statistics Canada, in partnership with Human Resources Development Canada, conducted the second round of the Survey of Approaches to Educational Planning in October 2002. The first round was conducted in October 1999.

SAEP is Statistics Canada's first household survey to collect detailed information on how Canadians prepare for their children's postsecondary education.

Just over 10,000 children up to the age of 18 were selected for the sample. In most cases, their parents or guardians responded, although in some instances, older children living on their own were contacted.

They were asked a series of questions about the perceived importance of a postsecondary education; the educational aspirations parents have for their children; children's academic performance; and financing strategies to be used to cover the costs of postsecondary education.

Parents who had put aside savings at the time of the survey were asked to estimate their total savings by the time their child became eligible for postsecondary enrolment. Parents of children living in lower income groups tended to expect about $10,000 in savings by the time postsecondary schooling began. This is the equivalent of about one year of postsecondary costs.

In contrast, parents of children living in households at the highest income levels were more likely to expect about $20,000 to $25,000 in savings, the equivalent of about 2.5 years of postsecondary costs.

Few children had parents who anticipated being able to set aside enough money to be able to cover a four-year undergraduate degree at current postsecondary costs.

You can read the full report *Planning and preparation: First results from the Survey of Approaches to Educational Planning SAEP (2002)* (81-595-MIE2003010) free on Statistics Canada's website (www.statcan.ca).

For more information, contact Client Services, (1-800-307-3382), Centre for Education Statistics.

Most parents dream of university education for children

Canadian parents are strongly committed to a postsecondary education for their children. However, they tend to modify their expectations as the youngsters get older, and as parents become more attuned to their children's academic interests and abilities.

Almost three-quarters of children up to the age of five had parents who expected that their youngsters would complete a university degree. This expectation tapered off as the children got older.

Among children aged six to 12 in 2002, 68% had parents who anticipated that the youngsters would finish university. This proportion fell further to 61% among children aged 13 to 18.

As parental hopes for a university education for their child declined across age groups, there were accompanying increases within other forms of postsecondary education. For example, 12% of children up to the age of five had parents who were hoping that they would complete a CEGEP or college diploma. But for youngsters aged 13 to 18, this proportion jumped to 19%.

Even after these modifications by age, the proportion of children who were expected to complete some type of postsecondary education remained above 90%.

Biggest plunge ever in overnight travel to Canada

Overnight travel to Canada from foreign countries took its biggest plunge ever between April and June, as the war in Iraq was raging and the SARS crisis was reaching its peak.

An estimated 4.2 million foreign tourists arrived in Canada during the second quarter, an 18.5% decline from the same quarter last year. It was the largest percentage decrease since the International Travel Survey was instituted in 1972. It was also more than twice the 7.1% drop in the fourth quarter of 2001 following the events of September 11.

Concerns about SARS resulted in a week-long travel advisory from the World Health Organization in April, which included Toronto. The number of visits to Toronto plunged 33.8% in the second quarter, resulting in a 44.6% decline in tourism revenues for the metropolitan area.

Overnight travel from the United States fell 17.7%, while trips from overseas countries plunged 22.1%. For overseas trips, this was the ninth consecutive quarterly decline.

More than 80% of foreign visitors, some 3.4 million, came from the United States, the lowest level for a second quarter since 1994. An estimated 752,000 tourists arrived from overseas countries, the lowest level in 15 years.

Canadian residents took 4.0 million overnight trips outside Canada, down 6.7% from the second quarter of 2002. Travel to U.S. locations tumbled 6.9%, while travel to overseas countries decreased 6.0%.

All provinces suffered losses in the number of overnight visits from the United States, but Ontario was hardest hit. U.S. residents made 26.2% fewer visits to Ontario, and spent 27.3% less during the second quarter of 2003.

U.S. travellers spent an estimated $1.7 billion (excluding international fares) on overnight trips to Canada in the second quarter of 2003, down 18.6%.

Travel to Canada from overseas nations was still suffering. All top12 overseas markets except Mexico, which registered a 4.0% increase, recorded decreases in the number of overnight trips to Canada. Asian markets claimed the most important losses, with Japan down 58.8%, Hong Kong, 46.7% and China, 44.7%.

Top twelve overseas markets to Canada

	Overnight trips		
	Second quarter 2002	Second quarter 2003	Second quarter 2002 to second quarter 2003
	'000		% change
United Kingdom	189	183	-3
Germany	76	61	-20.6
France	64	57	-11.5
Japan	102	42	-58.8
Mexico	37	38	4
Australia	38	36	-6.3
Netherlands	31	31	-2.1
South Korea	36	26	-27.7
India	21	20	-7.9
Switzerland	20	19	-3.6
Hong Kong	30	16	-46.7
China	24	13	-44.7

Residents of overseas countries spent less than $1.0 billion on their overnight trips to Canada in the second quarter of 2003, down 23.9% compared to last year.

Canadian residents took 8.2 million trips to the United States in the second quarter of 2003, down 5.2% from the second quarter last year.

Among the top 12 states visited by Canadians, Nevada registered an increase of 36.7% in the number of overnight visitors. Both California and Maine recorded drops of 18.6%. Canadian residents still stayed longest and spent the most in Florida, with an average of 38 nights and $1,765 per visit in 2003.

Canadian residents took more than 1.0 million overnight trips to overseas countries, down 6.0% from the second quarter of 2002. Canadian visits to China were down 80%, and down 84% to Hong Kong.

For more information, contact Danielle Shaienks (613-951-5095), Culture, Tourism and Centre for Education Statistics.

Leading indicator up for fifth consecutive month

The composite leading indicator strengthened for a fifth consecutive month in October, rising 0.6% increase after an upward-revised increase of 0.8% in September. These were the largest back-to-back gains since early 2002.

Housing components continued to lead growth. All indicators related to household demand improved, dominated by the housing sector. Housing has accelerated every month since a dip in April 2003. In October, the housing index rose 3.6% to a 30-year high.

Both housing starts and existing home sales contributed to this record-setting performance. The strength in housing spilled over into higher sales of furniture and appliances. Demand for other durable goods rose for a fifth straight month. Household spending was reinvigorated by the largest consecutive gains in full-time jobs since the start of the year, just as interest rates and consumer prices fell.

The pace of growth of the US leading indicator eased slightly from 0.5% to 0.4%, although the number of components rising increased from seven to 10.

For more information, contact Francine Roy (613-951-3627), Current Economic Analysis Group.

Travel deficit highest in over nine years

Canada's international travel deficit hit its highest level in more than nine years in the third quarter, as Canadian travel abroad rose at almost three times the rate of foreign travel into Canada.

The deficit — the difference between what Canadian residents spend abroad and what foreigners spend in Canada – reached an estimated $1.2 billion between July and September, the biggest since the second quarter of 1994. It was up from $999 million in the previous three months.

Canadian residents may have been taking advantage of the soaring loonie, while foreign travel into Canada may still have been recovering from the SARS crisis earlier this year.

The loonie jumped about 14% in value against its American counterpart in the first nine months of this year, and was hovering around US$0.73 in September.

Canadian residents made 9.8 million same-day and overnight trips outside the country in the third quarter, up 6.8% from the second. Travel to Canada by non-residents increased only 2.4% to 9.3 million trips.

Between July and September, Canadian residents spent $4.8 billion on travel outside the country, up 7.4% from the second quarter. During the same period, foreign visitors injected $3.6 billion in the Canadian economy, a 4.7% increase from the second quarter.

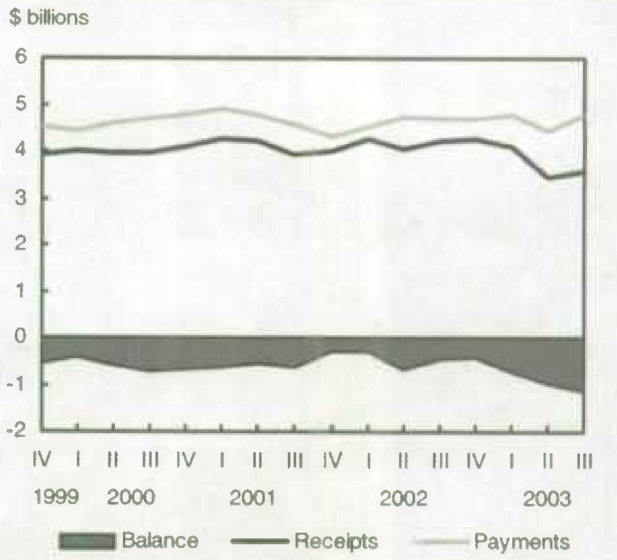
Canada's travel deficit with the United States fell from $482 million in the second quarter to $464 million in the third quarter, the result of higher increases in spending by American visitors.

In the third quarter, American travellers spent $2.2 billion in Canada, up 4.3% from the second quarter. They took 8.4 million same-day and overnight trips, up 2.0%.

Meanwhile, Canadian residents made 8.5 million trips south of the border, a 6.3% increase from the second quarter. They spent $2.7 billion on those trips, up 2.9%.

From the second to the third quarter, the value of the Canadian dollar rose 1.3% on average against its American counterpart.

Canada's travel deficit highest since the second quarter of 1994



Canada's travel deficit with countries other than the United States rose sharply in the third quarter, as Canadian travel spending in overseas countries increased considerably more than spending by overseas visitors in Canada.

Canadian travellers spent $2.1 billion in overseas destinations, up 14.0% from the second quarter. They made 1.2 million trips in the third quarter, a 10.2% jump compared to the second quarter.

Overseas residents, for their part, took more than 0.8 million trips to this country in the third quarter, up 5.9% from the second. Their spending on those trips increased 5.3% to $1.4 billion.

As a result, the travel deficit with overseas countries jumped from $518 million in the second quarter to a record high of $703 million in the third quarter.

The Canadian dollar increased its value against several major overseas currencies in the third quarter, including the euro (+2.2%), British pound (+1.8%) and yen (+0.3%).

For more information, contact Jocelyn Lapierre (613-951-3720), Culture, Tourism and Centre for Education Statistics.

Pay-TV, specialty channels growing in popularity

Pay-TV and specialty channels are more and more popular in Canada. On the other hand, Canadians continue to spend less time watching conventional television stations.

In 2002, Canadians spent 25% of their viewing time watching pay-TV and specialty channels, up from only 16% in 1998. In contrast, the time they spent watching conventional Canadian TV stations fell from 56% to 51%.

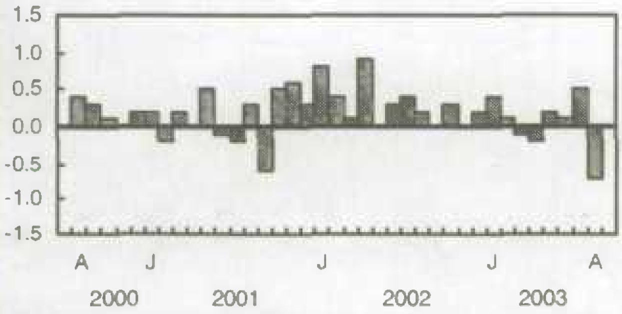
At the same time, the proportion of Canadian content in pay-TV and specialty television continued to grow, rising from 40% in the fall of 1998 to 44% in the fall of 2002. Canadian content in conventional television fell slightly, from 57% to 56%.

More and more Canadians watch TV using dish antennas which have grown remarkably since 1998 across Canada. The penetration rate of dish antennas reached 19% in the fall of 2002, a four-fold increase from only 5% five years earlier. The penetration rate of cable has steadily declined from 77% in 1998 to 68%.

Current trends

Gross domestic product

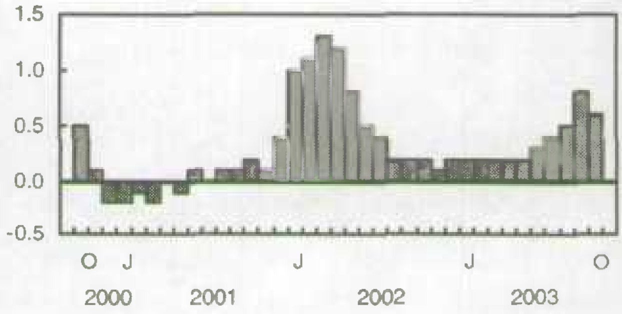
% change, previous month



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

Composite Index

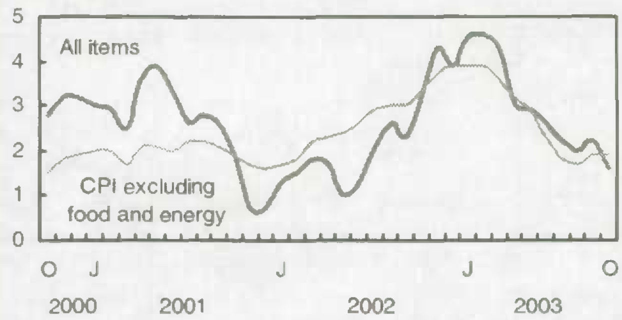
% change, previous month



The leading indicator grew 0.6% in October after rising 0.8% in September.

Consumer Price Index

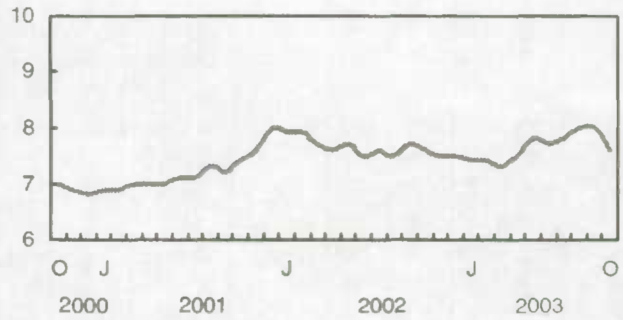
% change, previous year



Consumer prices for goods and services were 1.6% higher in October than they were a year earlier. Excluding food and energy, prices rose 1.9%.

Unemployment rate

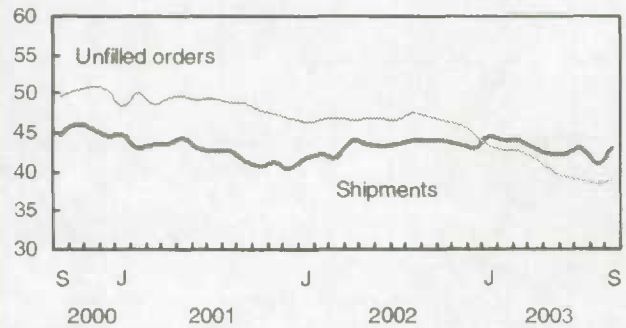
%



In October, the unemployment rate fell to 7.6%.

Manufacturing

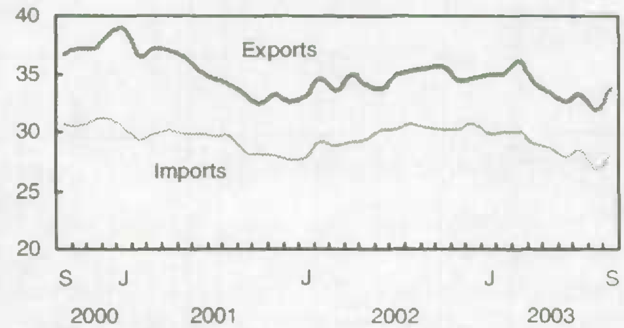
$ billions



Manufacturers' shipments increased 5.2% in September to $43.0 billion. The backlog of unfilled orders increased 1.1% to $38.8 billion.

Merchandise trade

$ billions



In September, exports increased 4.7% to $33.7 billion. Imports increased 4.9% to $28.0 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]	August	1,007.7	-0.7%	0.8%
Composite Index (1992=100)	October*	185.0	0.6%	3.8%
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)	September*	26.4	-0.8%	3.3%
New motor vehicle sales (thousands of units)	September*	145.3	1.9%	-3.3%
Wholesale trade ($ billions)	September*	36.6	6.1%	3.2%
LABOUR				
Employment (millions)	October	15.8	0.4%	1.6%
Unemployment rate (%)	October	7.6	-0.4†	0.0†
Participation rate (%)	October	67.5	-0.1†	0.3†
Average weekly earnings ($)	August	681.85	-0.6%	0.8%
Regular Employment Insurance beneficiaries (in thousands)	August	588.89	1.0%	5.7%
INTERNATIONAL TRADE				
Merchandise exports ($ billions)	September	33.7	4.7%	-4.9%
Merchandise imports ($ billions)	September	28.0	4.5%	-7.6%
Merchandise trade balance (all figures in $ billions)	September	5.6	0.3	0.5
MANUFACTURING				
Shipments ($ billions)	September	43.0	5.2%	-2.5%
New orders ($ billions)	September	43.4	8.0%	-0.2%
Unfilled orders ($ billions)	September	38.8	1.1%	-17.3%
Inventory/shipments ratio	September	1.42	-1.2	-1.1
PRICES				
Consumer Price Index (1992=100)	October	122.4	-0.2%	1.6%
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)	September	117.9	0.5%	5.1%

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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Products released from November 20 to 26, 2003

SUBJECT AREA Title of product	Period	Catalogue number	Price ($) (issue/subscription)
AGRICULTURE			
Canadian potato production	November 2003	22-008-XIE	Free
CENSUS OPERATIONS			
2001 Census technical reports: Families	2001	92-381-XIE	Free
CULTURE, TOURISM AND THE CENTRE FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS			
Education indicators in Canada: Report of the Pan-Canadian Education Indicators Program	2003	81-582-XIE	Free
Education indicators in Canada: Report of the Pan-Canadian Education Indicators Program	2003	81-582-XPE	70
Education, skills and learning research papers: Planning and preparation: first results from the Survey of Approaches to Educational Planning (SAEP) 2002	2002	81-595-MIE2003010	Free
Television viewing: Data tables	Fall 2002	87F0006XIE	Free
CURRENT ECONOMIC ANALYSIS			
Canadian economic observer	November 2003	11-010-XIB	19/182
Canadian economic observer	November 2003	11-010-XPB	25/243
DISTRIBUTIVE TRADES			
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Wholesale trade	September 2003	63-008-XIB	15/150
HEALTH STATISTICS			
General summary of vital statistics by local area	2001	84F0001XPB	22
Marriages - Shelf tables	2001	84F0212XPB	22
Health indicators	2003	82-221-XIE	Free
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNTS			
Income and Expenditure Accounts technical series: The 1993 international System of National Accounts: Its implementation in Canada	No. 32	13-604-MIB1995032	Free
Income and Expenditure Accounts technical series: The 1995 revision of the National Economic and Financial Accounts	No. 33	13-604-MIB1995033	Free
Income and Expenditure Accounts technical series: A primer on financial derivatives	No. 34	13-604-MIB1995034	Free
Income and Expenditure Accounts technical series: The effect of rebasing on GDP	No. 35	13-604-MIB1996035	Free
Income and Expenditure Accounts technical series: Purchasing power parities and real expenditures, United States and Canada - an update to 1998	No. 36	13-604-MIB1999036	Free
Income and Expenditure Accounts technical series: Trends in provincial and territorial economic statistics	1981-2002	13-604-MIE2003043	Free
INCOME STATISTICS			
Canada's retirement income program: A statistical overview	1991-2001	74-507-XCB	195
Household expenditures research papers series: Survey of Household Spending 2001: Data quality indicators	2001	62F0026MIE2003001	Free
Survey of Household Spending: Public-use microdata file	2001	62M0004XCB	3,210
MANUFACTURING, CONSTRUCTION AND ENERGY			
Construction type plywood	September 2003	35-001-XIB	6/51
Energy statistics handbook	Q2 2003	57-601-XCB	54/161
Energy statistics handbook	Q2 2003	57-601-XIE	38/107
Mineral wool including fibrous glass insulation	October 2003	44-004-XIB	6/51
PRICES			
Capital expenditure price statistics	Q2 2003	62-007-XPB	26/85
SCIENCE, INNOVATION AND ELECTRONIC INFORMATION			
Quarterly telecommunications statistics	Q1 2003	56-002-XIE	23/43
Quarterly telecommunications statistics	Q1 2003	56-002-XIE	23/43
TRANSPORTATION			
Monthly railway carloadings	September 2003	52-001-XIE	9/83

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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.

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8 **Adult correctional services,** 2001-2002	9 **Growth in Standards of living: a Canada-Australia comparison** **Canadian social trends,** 2003	10 **Deposit-accepting intermediaries: Activities and economic performance,** 2002 **Industrial capacity utilization rates,** Q3 2003 **New Housing Price Index,** October 2003	11 **New motor vehicle sales,** October 2003 **Electronic commerce: Household shopping on the Internet,** 2002	12 **Canadian international merchandise trade,** October 2003 **Labour productivity, hourly compensation and unit labour cost,** Q3 2003
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