



# The Daily

Statistics Canada

Tuesday, November 29, 1994

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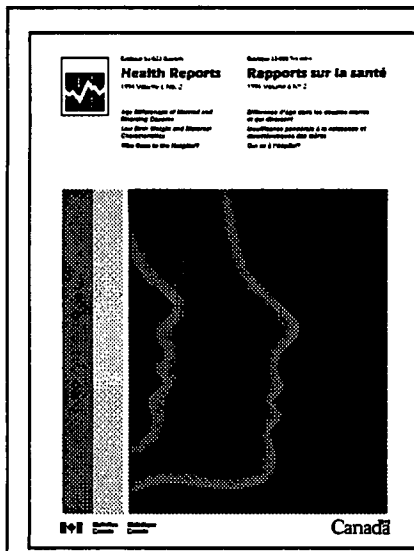
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## MAJOR RELEASES

- **Employment, earnings and hours, September 1994** 3  
 After expanding for the previous six months, employment declined slightly in September. Employees received on average \$570.10 a week in September, a 0.6% increase from August.
- **Unemployment Insurance statistics, September 1994** 7  
 In September claimants received \$1.0 billion in benefits (including regular and special benefits), the lowest level since September 1990. For the first three quarters of 1994, \$12.5 billion of unemployment insurance benefits were paid to Canadians. This is down 12.8% from the same period last year.
- **Rates of low birth weight, 1961-1990** 10  
 The proportion of babies born in Canada with low birth weight has declined over the past three decades.

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### Health reports Second quarter 1994

This issue of *Health reports* presents research papers on three subjects: rates of low birth weight; age differences of married and divorcing couples; and characteristics of high users of hospitals. Four shorter reports focus on therapeutic abortions, death rates, the incidence of tuberculosis in Canada, and the national physician database.

The second quarter 1994 (vol. 6, no. 2) issue of *Health reports* (82-003, \$28/\$112) is now available. See "How to order publications".

For further information on this release, contact the information requests unit (613-951-1746), Health Statistics Division.



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## OTHER RELEASES

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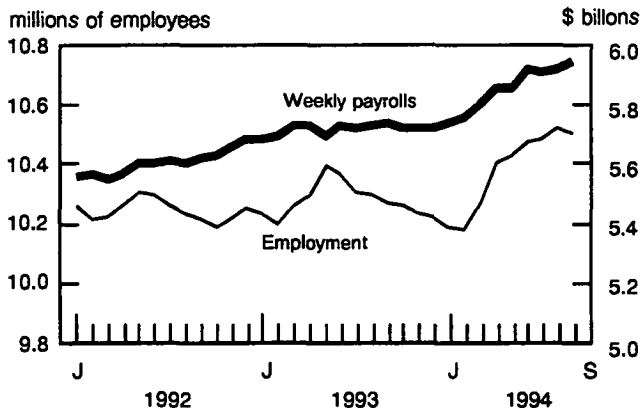
## MAJOR RELEASES

### Employment, earnings and hours

September 1994 (preliminary)

After expanding for the previous six months, employment declined slightly in September. Businesses in all industries employed 10,503,000 workers, down 14,000 from August. The decline had little effect on recent employment gains. The number of employees that businesses have added to the economy since February 1994 remained in excess of 300,000. The September decline, while widespread across most industries, was particularly influenced by a slowdown among manufacturers and construction companies as well as by a business closure in the insurance industry. The employment decline at the national level was not mirrored in Central Canada, where businesses continued to increase employment. Ontario and Quebec were the only provinces to register growth in September; employers in those two provinces have accounted for most of the gains in 1994.

### Weekly payrolls are on the increase despite an employment decline, as weekly earnings rise



Employees received on average \$570.10 a week in September, a 0.6% increase from August. The growth in September left weekly earnings 2.2% higher than in September 1993, continuing the trend of moderate gains and keeping employers' direct labour costs in check. Year-over-year weekly earnings growth has not exceeded 3% since 1992.

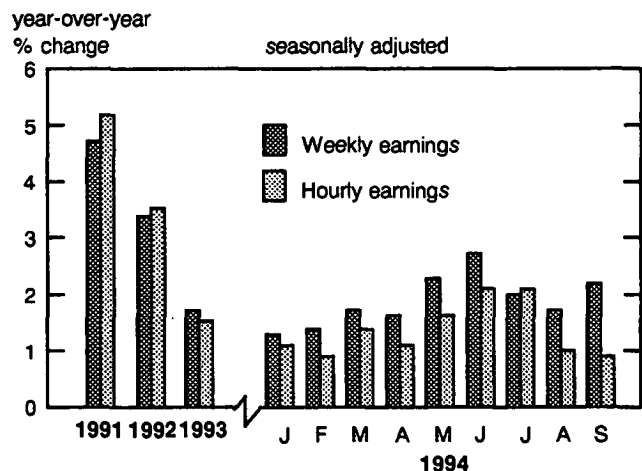
#### Note to users

*Employment, earnings and hours is based on a sample survey of establishments and on a sample of administrative records. The administrative records representing small firms are obtained from Revenue Canada's monthly payroll deduction remittance forms.*

*Unless otherwise stated, all data in this release are seasonally adjusted.*

*Detailed industrial series (seasonally adjusted) are now available for employment and average weekly earnings by province and territory.*

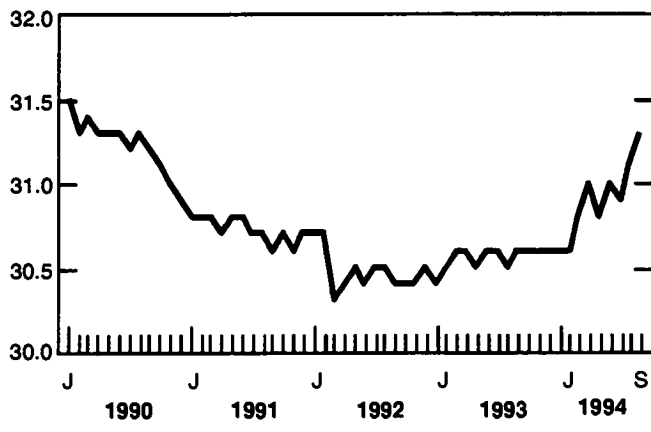
### Weekly and hourly earnings continue a trend of moderate growth.



Weekly earnings growth this year has been bolstered by increasing hours for both hourly-paid and salaried employees. In contrast, average hourly earnings (\$14.07 an hour), actually declined for a second consecutive month, eliminating the significant increase reported in June 1994. Restrained in part by recent contract settlements, average hourly earnings have remained unchanged since January 1994.

## Employees are working longer hours

average weekly hours



Weekly hours for hourly-paid employees continued to increase, rising from 30.6 hours in January 1994 to 31.3 hours in September. Since January 1994, average hours for employees paid by the hour have increased in virtually all regions and industries.

## Employment growth continues in Ontario

Employers in Ontario have expanded employment for eight consecutive months, so that the gain since January 1994 totals 132,000. Manufacturers of durable goods, construction companies, wholesalers, suppliers of business services, and other services have all reported notable gains over this period. Increased hiring by Ontario employers in 1994 is starting to offset some of the 600,000 employment decline recorded between March 1990 and January 1994. Average weekly earnings paid by Ontario employers have increased 2.3% since January 1994, bolstered by a 0.5 hour increase in weekly hours. Earnings increases were widespread across most industries; the exceptions were transportation, communication and other utilities, finance, insurance and real estate, and public administration.

## Employment changes in Ontario from January to September 1994

|                             |        |
|-----------------------------|--------|
| Durable goods manufacturing | 41,000 |
| Construction                | 18,000 |
| Wholesale trade             | 20,000 |
| Business services           | 19,000 |
| Other services              | 22,000 |

Businesses in Quebec increased employment in six of the last nine months. Since February 1994, when employment reached a low of 2,486,000 in Quebec, employers have added 65,000 workers to their payrolls. Manufacturers and construction companies contributed significantly to the gains over this period.

## Manufacturers and construction companies slow employment growth

Led by manufacturers of food, clothing, primary metals and electrical and electronic equipment, employment in manufacturing dipped by 4,000. This partially offset the gains in August. A corresponding drop in the value of manufacturers' shipments was reported in September as manufacturers did not maintain the pace of previous months. Manufacturing employment posted a slight increase in the third quarter, confirming manufacturers' expectations for moderate employment increases as reported in the business conditions survey. Manufacturers have increased employment by 45,000 since February 1994, and indications are that this number will continue to rise in coming months. The balance of opinion on employment prospects for the fourth quarter rose in October 1994 to its highest level since April 1989.

Construction companies reported their first employment decline since February 1994 (-3,000) as employment in non-residential building and industrial and heavy construction contracted. Employers in Ontario accounted for the monthly decline. Despite this drop, the construction industry employed 33,000 more workers than in January 1994.

However, the third-quarter drop in the value of building permits (an early indicator of construction activity), combined with recent declines in housing starts, foreshadow further drops in construction employment in the coming months.

## Finance, insurance and real estate companies reduce employment

Led by finance and insurance companies, employment declined by over 3,400 in September, offsetting the small gains of the previous three months and leaving employment down 10,000 since January 1994. September's drop in employment was concentrated in British Columbia and Ontario and was due in part to the closure of Confederation Life Insurance.

Weekly earnings paid by companies in finance, insurance and real estate remained unchanged for a second month despite a strong increase in weekly hours. Compared to September 1993, weekly earnings declined 1.0%, the first annual decrease since July 1990. Higher interest rates have resulted in a large inventory of unsold new and used residential real estate. Real estate agents' earnings declined sharply in September as sales of existing homes fell for a fourth month since March 1994.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 4285-4466, 9438-9452, 9639-9664 and 9899-9911.

More detailed industry data and other labour market indicators are available from *Employment, earnings and hours* (72-002, \$29/\$285) and by special tabulation.

For further information on this release, contact Stephen Johnson (613-951-4090, fax: 613-951-4087), Labour Division.

### Number of employees

| Industry group<br>(1980 S.I.C.)                   | July<br>1994        | August<br>1994 <sup>r</sup> | September<br>1994 <sup>p</sup> | July<br>1994 to<br>August<br>1994 | August<br>1994 to<br>September<br>1994 |
|---|---------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
|   | seasonally adjusted |                             |                                |                                   |  |
|   | thousands           |                             |                                | % change                          |  |
| <b>Industrial aggregate</b>                       | <b>10,483</b>       | <b>10,516</b>               | <b>10,503</b>                  | <b>0.3</b>                        | <b>-0.1</b>                            |
| Logging and forestry                              | 65                  | 64                          | 63                             | -1.5                              | -1.6                                   |
| Mining, quarrying and oil wells                   | 134                 | 134                         | 132                            | 0.0                               | -1.5                                   |
| Manufacturing                                     | 1,630               | 1,644                       | 1,640                          | 0.9                               | -0.2                                   |
| Construction                                      | 437                 | 444                         | 441                            | 1.6                               | -0.7                                   |
| Transportation, communication and other utilities | 853                 | 848                         | 842                            | -0.6                              | -0.7                                   |
| Trade   | 1,961               | 1,971                       | 1,970                          | 0.5                               | -0.1                                   |
| Wholesale trade                                   | 606                 | 619                         | 621                            | 2.1                               | 0.3                                    |
| Retail trade                                      | 1,356               | 1,354                       | 1,350                          | -0.1                              | -0.3                                   |
| Finance, insurance and real estate                | 641                 | 643                         | 639                            | 0.3                               | 0.6                                    |
| Business services                                 | 559                 | 562                         | 562                            | 0.5                               | 0.0                                    |
| Education-related services                        | 954                 | 941                         | 924                            | -1.4                              | -1.8                                   |
| Health and social services                        | 1,134               | 1,140                       | 1,142                          | 0.5                               | 0.2                                    |
| Accommodation, food and beverage services         | 726                 | 738                         | 752                            | 1.7                               | 1.9                                    |
| Public administration                             | 709                 | 709                         | 707                            | 0.0                               | -0.3                                   |
| <b>Provinces and territories</b>                  |                     |                             |                                |                                   |  |
| Newfoundland                                      | 149                 | 150                         | 150                            | 0.7                               | 0.0                                    |
| Prince Edward Island                              | 40                  | 40                          | 40                             | 0.0                               | 0.0                                    |
| Nova Scotia                                       | 296                 | 295                         | 294                            | -0.3                              | -0.3                                   |
| New Brunswick                                     | 237                 | 236                         | 235                            | -0.4                              | -0.4                                   |
| Quebec  | 2,519               | 2,538                       | 2,551                          | 0.8                               | 0.5                                    |
| Ontario   | 4,101               | 4,110                       | 4,128                          | 0.2                               | 0.4                                    |
| Manitoba  | 397                 | 399                         | 390                            | 0.5                               | -2.3                                   |
| Saskatchewan                                      | 305                 | 304                         | 301                            | -0.3                              | -1.0                                   |
| Alberta   | 1,039               | 1,038                       | 1,034                          | -0.1                              | -0.4                                   |
| British Columbia                                  | 1,364               | 1,369                       | 1,341                          | 0.4                               | -2.0                                   |
| Yukon   | 12                  | 12                          | 12                             | 0.0                               | 0.0                                    |
| Northwest Territories                             | 22                  | 23                          | 23                             | 4.5                               | 0.0                                    |

<sup>p</sup> Preliminary estimates.

<sup>r</sup> Revised estimates.

# Average weekly earnings\*

| Industry group<br>(1980 S.I.C.)                   | September<br>1993   | August<br>1994 <sup>r</sup> | September<br>1994 <sup>p</sup> | August<br>1994 to<br>September<br>1994 | September<br>1993 to<br>September<br>1994 |
|---|---------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|--|---|
|   | seasonally adjusted |                             |                                |  |   |
|   | dollars             |                             |                                | % change                               |   |
| <b>Industrial aggregate</b>                       | <b>557.98</b>       | <b>566.71</b>               | <b>570.10</b>                  | <b>0.6</b>                             | <b>2.2</b>                                |
| Logging and forestry                              | 709.54              | 742.57                      | 758.14                         | 2.1                                    | 6.8                                       |
| Mining, quarrying and oil wells                   | 964.17              | 968.91                      | 967.90                         | -0.1                                   | 0.4                                       |
| Manufacturing                                     | 672.22              | 680.25                      | 688.15                         | 1.2                                    | 2.4                                       |
| Construction                                      | 643.79              | 664.41                      | 683.53                         | 2.9                                    | 6.2                                       |
| Transportation, communication and other utilities | 711.73              | 724.24                      | 720.74                         | -0.5                                   | 1.3                                       |
| Trade   | 410.68              | 421.73                      | 428.99                         | 1.7                                    | 4.5                                       |
| Wholesale trade                                   | 596.64              | 603.88                      | 613.30                         | 1.6                                    | 2.8                                       |
| Retail trade                                      | 329.37              | 339.76                      | 344.37                         | 1.4                                    | 4.6                                       |
| Finance, insurance and real estate                | 636.58              | 630.13                      | 629.99                         | 0.0                                    | -1.0                                      |
| Business services                                 | 585.55              | 612.30                      | 628.91                         | 2.7                                    | 7.4                                       |
| Education-related services                        | 677.91              | 674.64                      | 674.15                         | -0.1                                   | -0.6                                      |
| Health and social services                        | 500.53              | 504.60                      | 505.74                         | 0.2                                    | 1.0                                       |
| Accommodation, food and beverage services         | 216.63              | 226.73                      | 229.19                         | 1.1                                    | 5.8                                       |
| Public administration                             | 742.51              | 744.77                      | 742.87                         | -0.3                                   | 0.0                                       |
| <b>Provinces and territories</b>                  |                     |                             |                                |  |   |
| Newfoundland                                      | 528.79              | 520.61                      | 542.96                         | 4.3                                    | 2.7                                       |
| Prince Edward Island                              | 456.12              | 441.84                      | 452.92                         | 2.5                                    | -0.7                                      |
| Nova Scotia                                       | 495.73              | 491.65                      | 498.47                         | 1.4                                    | 0.6                                       |
| New Brunswick                                     | 509.83              | 496.05                      | 505.42                         | 1.9                                    | -0.9                                      |
| Quebec  | 544.39              | 541.56                      | 548.10                         | 1.2                                    | 0.7                                       |
| Ontario   | 590.39              | 604.46                      | 608.99                         | 0.7                                    | 3.2                                       |
| Manitoba  | 495.91              | 495.36                      | 505.21                         | 2.0                                    | 1.9                                       |
| Saskatchewan                                      | 471.61              | 489.10                      | 491.55                         | 0.5                                    | 4.2                                       |
| Alberta   | 550.48              | 554.76                      | 556.24                         | 0.3                                    | 1.0                                       |
| British Columbia                                  | 557.71              | 580.02                      | 579.43                         | -0.1                                   | 3.9                                       |
| Yukon   | 683.14              | 686.81                      | 704.26                         | 2.5                                    | 3.1                                       |
| Northwest Territories                             | 702.85              | 704.74                      | 693.14                         | -1.6                                   | -1.4                                      |

<sup>p</sup> Preliminary estimates.

<sup>r</sup> Revised estimates.

\* For all employees.

## Unemployment insurance statistics

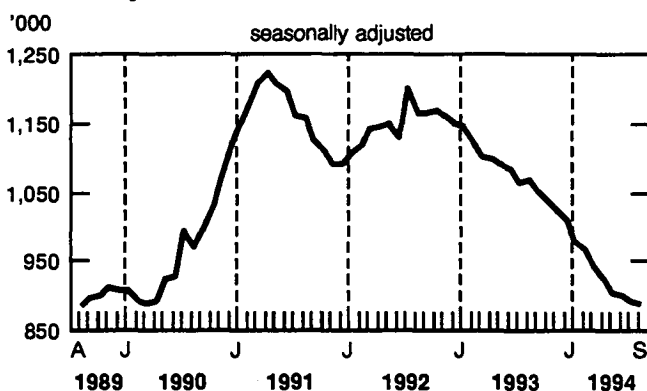
September 1994 (preliminary)

In September claimants received \$1.0 billion in benefits (including regular and special benefits), the lowest level since September 1990. For the first three quarters of 1994, \$12.5 billion of unemployment insurance (UI) benefits were paid to Canadians. This is down 12.8% from the same period last year.

In 1993, UI benefit payments totalled \$18.0 billion. The accumulated deficit in the UI fund at year-end stood at \$5.9 billion. There has been a deficit for the last three years, the largest occurring in 1991. However, in 1994, if the trend continues, there will be a surplus for the current year of operation, which will reduce the cumulative deficit.

There are several reasons for the expected surplus, including: the average number of beneficiaries has dropped from 1993 (-13.2%); the benefit rate was reduced (as of July 1994) from 57% to 55% of insurable earnings for the majority of new claimants (except claimants with low earnings and one or more dependants); more money will be collected for the UI fund because more people are contributing due to the improved employment situation; the premium rate increased from \$3.00 to \$3.07 per \$100 of insurable earnings; and the ceiling on weekly insurable earnings was revised from \$745 to \$780.

### The number of beneficiaries \* has been declining since July 1992



\* Receiving regular benefits.

### Ontario, Manitoba and Newfoundland post the largest decreases in the number of beneficiaries

Between August and September, the largest decreases (seasonally adjusted) in the number of

#### Note to users

Unless noted, all figures in this release are unadjusted.

Most who collect unemployment insurance benefits receive regular benefits (the year-to-date average in 1994 was 81%). In order to qualify for regular benefits, a person must have experienced an interruption of earnings, be capable and available for work, and be unable to find suitable employment.

In addition to regular benefits, claimants can qualify for special benefits (e.g., training, maternity, sickness and fishing).

Data on the number of beneficiaries relate to a specific week of the reference month. Data on benefit payments, benefit weeks, and claims refer to a complete calendar month.

beneficiaries who received regular benefits occurred in Ontario (-2.0%), Manitoba (-2.7%) and Newfoundland (-6.6%). These decreases were offset by minor increases in a few provinces and territories. Compared with the same period last year, the number of beneficiaries declined in all provinces and territories.

#### Number of beneficiaries receiving regular benefits

|                       | September<br>1994   | August 1994 to<br>September 1994 |
|-----------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|
|                       | seasonally adjusted |                                  |
|                       |                     | % change                         |
| Canada                | 882,500             | -0.2                             |
| Newfoundland          | 48,440              | -6.6                             |
| Prince Edward Island  | 11,630              | -0.3                             |
| Nova Scotia           | 47,780              | -1.9                             |
| New Brunswick         | 50,830              | 1.5                              |
| Quebec                | 299,870             | 0.0                              |
| Ontario               | 218,960             | -2.0                             |
| Manitoba              | 22,760              | -2.7                             |
| Saskatchewan          | 18,410              | -0.2                             |
| Alberta               | 62,690              | 0.9                              |
| British Columbia      | 94,460              | -0.9                             |
| Yukon                 | 1,610               | 0.1                              |
| Northwest Territories | 1,430               | 2.3                              |

The number of people receiving regular benefits in Canada was virtually unchanged (-0.2%) in September. However, this was the lowest level since August 1989. Over the past two years, and particularly in 1994, there were substantial gains in the number of jobs created. Another contributing factor may be the rising level of long-term unemployment (those looking for work for more than one year). There has been a large increase in the number of long-term unemployed since 1990. This suggests

that fewer people are eligible to collect UI benefits. In addition, in July 1994 changes were introduced to the UI legislation: the minimum number of weeks of insurable employment was increased from 10 to 12 weeks, and the length of time that a beneficiary can collect benefits was reduced.

### Number of claims

In September, the number of people who submitted applications (claims) for UI stood at 240,000 (seasonally adjusted), virtually unchanged from August. Compared to September 1993, the number of claims declined 13.3%, continuing a downward trend that started in mid-1992.

### Number of beneficiaries (all types of benefits)

|                                 | September 1994 | September 1993 to<br>September 1994 |
|---------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------------|
|                                 | unadjusted     | % change                            |
| <b>Census metropolitan area</b> |                |                                     |
| St. John's                      | 8,280          | -25.2                               |
| Halifax                         | 10,880         | -10.5                               |
| Saint John                      | 4,480          | -1.5                                |
| Chicoutimi-Jonquière            | 8,060          | -13.5                               |
| Québec                          | 26,630         | -5.6                                |
| Sherbrooke                      | 5,160          | -9.6                                |
| Trois-Rivières                  | 6,040          | -21.1                               |
| Montréal                        | 118,290        | -13.2                               |
| Hull                            | 8,050          | -13.3                               |
| Ottawa                          | 13,970         | -8.5                                |
| Oshawa                          | 5,670          | -22.0                               |
| Toronto                         | 97,000         | -22.6                               |
| Hamilton                        | 13,340         | -22.3                               |
| St. Catharines-Niagara          | 8,820          | -25.4                               |
| Kitchener                       | 6,720          | -35.7                               |
| London                          | 7,210          | -22.4                               |
| Windsor                         | 5,130          | -35.2                               |
| Sudbury                         | 4,290          | -29.3                               |
| Thunder Bay                     | 3,210          | -31.0                               |
| Winnipeg                        | 15,340         | -23.2                               |
| Regina                          | 3,010          | -27.5                               |
| Saskatoon                       | 4,290          | -26.9                               |
| Calgary                         | 19,530         | -13.9                               |
| Edmonton                        | 23,490         | -9.7                                |
| Vancouver                       | 41,540         | -19.9                               |
| Victoria                        | 6,190          | -17.9                               |

Available on CANSIM: matrices 26 (series 1.6), 5700-5717 and 5735-5736.

The September 1994 issue of *Unemployment insurance statistics* (73-001, \$16/\$160), will contain data for July, August and September. It will be available in December. See "How to order publications".

For further information on this release, contact André Picard (613-951-4045), or Ruth Barnes (613-951-4046), Labour Division (fax: 613-951-4087). □



# Unemployment insurance statistics

|                                |        | September<br>1993                   | July<br>1994       | August<br>1994   | September<br>1994 | August<br>1994 to<br>September<br>1994    |
|--------------------------------|--------|-------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------|-------------------|---|
|                                |        | seasonally adjusted                 |                    |                  |                   |   |
|                                |        | % change                            |                    |                  |                   |   |
| Regular beneficiaries          | '000   | 1,050                               | 891 <sup>r</sup>   | 884 <sup>P</sup> | 882 <sup>P</sup>  | -0.2                                      |
| Amount paid                    | \$'000 | 1,176,252                           | 961,188            | 981,620          | 947,132           | -3.5                                      |
| Weeks of benefits              | '000   | 4,597                               | 3,800              | 3,876            | 3,761             | -3.0                                      |
| Total claims received          | '000   | 277                                 | 257                | 241              | 240               | -0.2                                      |
|                                |        | September<br>1993                   | July<br>1994       | August<br>1994   | September<br>1994 | September<br>1993 to<br>September<br>1994 |
|                                |        | unadjusted                          |                    |                  |                   |   |
|                                |        | % change                            |                    |                  |                   |   |
| All beneficiaries              | '000   | 1,038                               | 978 <sup>r</sup>   | 995 <sup>P</sup> | 860 <sup>P</sup>  | -17.2                                     |
| Regular beneficiaries          | '000   | 837                                 | 793 <sup>r</sup>   | 813 <sup>P</sup> | 666 <sup>P</sup>  | -20.4                                     |
| Male                           | '000   | 460                                 | 417 <sup>r</sup>   | 396 <sup>P</sup> | 350 <sup>P</sup>  | -23.8                                     |
| Female                         | '000   | 377                                 | 376 <sup>r</sup>   | 417 <sup>P</sup> | 316 <sup>P</sup>  | -16.4                                     |
| Claims received                | '000   | 264                                 | 261                | 196              | 228               | -13.4                                     |
| Amount paid                    | \$'000 | 1,233,020                           | 1,023,601          | 1,270,626        | 1,010,529         | -18.0                                     |
| Weeks of benefits              | '000   | 4,767                               | 3,942              | 4,933            | 3,931             | -17.5                                     |
| Average weekly benefit         | \$     | 254.12                              | 251.49             | 253.11           | 251.63            | -1.0                                      |
|                                |        | Year-to-date (January to September) |                    |                  |                   |   |
|                                |        | 1993                                | 1994               |                  | 1993 to 1994      |   |
|                                |        | % change                            |                    |                  |                   |   |
| All beneficiaries, average     | '000   | 1,336                               | 1,160 <sup>P</sup> |                  | -13.2             |   |
| Regular beneficiaries, average | '000   | 1,118                               | 942 <sup>P</sup>   |                  | -15.8             |   |
| Claims received                | '000   | 2,298                               | 2,071              |                  | -9.9              |   |
| Amount paid                    | \$'000 | 14,324,420                          | 12,492,338         |                  | -12.8             |   |
| Weeks of benefits              | '000   | 53,630                              | 46,693             |                  | -12.9             |   |
| Average weekly benefit         | \$     | 260.64                              | 258.83             |                  | -0.7              |   |

<sup>p</sup> Preliminary figures.

<sup>r</sup> Revised figures.

"All beneficiaries" includes all claimants who receive regular benefits (e.g., because of lay-off) or special benefits (e.g., in case of sickness). ■

## Rates of low birth weight

1961 to 1990

The proportion of babies born in Canada with low birth weight has declined over the past three decades. A nation's rate of low birth weight is considered an important indicator of population health status by the World Health Organization. By this standard, Canada ranked 10th in the world in 1990, the latest year for which comparable statistics are available.

In Canada the percentage of live births accounted for by low birth weight infants fell from 7.2% in 1961 to 5.5% in 1990 (-24%). This decline likely reflects increased availability of prenatal programs, improved maternal diet, and better medical management of pregnancies. There has also been a reduction in the proportion of births to teenage mothers.

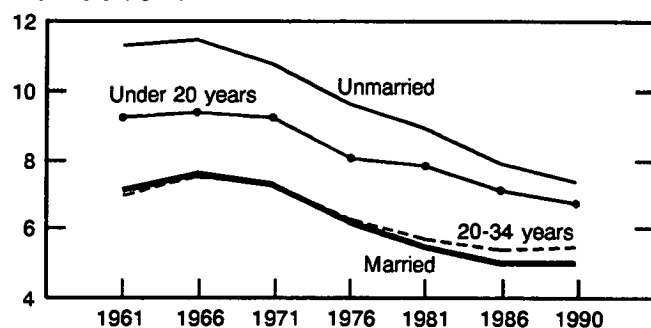
### The strongest declines are among unmarried and teenage mothers

An infant's birth weight is related to the mother's health and socio-economic environment. For example, the low birth weight rate was higher among unmarried mothers than among their married counterparts (7.3% vs 5.0% in 1990) and was greater among teenage mothers than among those aged 20 to 34 (6.7% vs 5.4% in 1990).

Over the study period, the low birth weight rate generally dropped across all maternal demographic characteristics examined; that is, there were

### Low birth weight (LBW) rates for specific maternal characteristics

% of live births with LBW



Source: vital statistics files, Statistics Canada.

#### Note to users

Low birth weight is defined as less than 2,500 grams (5.5 lbs.), the World Health Organization standard.

Data on live births to Canadian residents from 1961 to 1990 were obtained from provincial vital statistics registrations on file at the Health Statistics Division.

Births registered in Newfoundland were excluded from the study because information on the mother's age and the child's birth weight was unavailable for the period examined.

reductions for women in each age group, for those who were married as well as unmarried, and for women giving birth to a first, second or later child. The strongest declines were among unmarried mothers (from 11.3% in 1961 to 7.3% in 1990) and teenage mothers (from 9.2% to 6.7%).

### Quebec's low birth weight rate has declined substantially, especially among the unmarried

Rates of low birth weight have been consistently higher in Quebec than in other regions of Canada. However, the gap gradually narrowed in the 1970s and 1980s. In 1961, Quebec's low birth weight rate was 8.3%, compared with the Canadian average of 7.2%. By 1990 Quebec's rate had dropped to 6.0%, which was much closer to the Canadian average of 5.5%.

Low birth weight rates also dropped in all of the other regions during the period examined, and clustered around the national average. (Thirty years earlier, these rates ranged from 6.3% in the Maritimes to 6.9% in Ontario, compared with 8.3% in Quebec.)

Quebec's relatively large drop in its low birth weight rate between 1961 and 1990 is attributable, in part, to a dramatic reduction among unmarried mothers (from 13.8% to 7.5%), as well as to a more moderate reduction in the low birth weight rate among married mothers (from 8.1% to 5.1%). The convergence of low birth weight rates by marital status may be related to the increasing prevalence and acceptance of single motherhood and common-law unions. These trends also partly explain the general convergence of low birth weight rates across the regions.

However, unmarried mothers in all parts of Canada are still more likely to produce low birth weight infants than their married counterparts. In 1961, the low birth weight rate among unmarried mothers nationally was 11.3%, compared with 7.0% for married mothers. By 1990, these rates had dropped to 7.3% and 5.0% respectively.

"Maternal demographic characteristics and rates of low birth weight in Canada, 1961 to 1990" appears in the second quarter 1994 (vol. 6, no. 2) issue of *Health reports* (82-003, \$28/\$112), which is now available. See "How to order publications".

For further information on this release, contact Edward Ng (613-951-1733) or Russell Wilkins (613-951-1633), Health Statistics Division. ■

## OTHER RELEASES

### Short-term expectations survey

Every month for almost five years Statistics Canada has canvassed a group of economic analysts (on average 20) for one-month-ahead forecasts of key economic indicators. Participants in this survey forecast the year-over-year changes in the consumer price index, the unemployment rate, and merchandise exports and imports. They also forecast the monthly change in gross domestic product at constant prices. An evaluation of the accuracy of the mean forecast (see the March 1993 issue of *Canadian economic observer*) showed it to be superior to mean naive forecasts and suggested that the quality of the forecast showed signs of improvement with time.

The group of economists forecast the November 1994 consumer price index will stay at the same level as one year earlier. Within the group, opinion ranged from a minimum of -0.4% change to a maximum of +0.2%. One month ago, the mean forecast (+0.2%) overestimated the outcome, which was no change.

The same group foresaw the unemployment rate coming down to 9.9% in November after missing the October outcome (10.0%), overshooting it by 0.1 percentage point. The current range of forecasts was wide: maximum 10.2% and minimum 9.0%.

The group dropped its forecast of exports in October to \$18.9 billion from \$19.0 billion a month earlier. The current mean forecast is the same as the September outcome. Once again opinions ranged widely, from a maximum of \$19.4 billion to a minimum of \$18.0 billion. The current forecast for October imports (\$17.7 billion) shows no change from what was expected a month earlier, when there was an overestimate of \$0.4 billion.

Finally, experts believe that October's real GDP will show no change (+0.4%) from September's forecast. The mean forecast is right in the middle of a range going from +0.6% to 0.2%.

The next release will be on January 5, 1995.

For a set of tables or further information on this release, contact Diane Lachapelle (613-951-0568). ■

### Sales of refined petroleum products

October 1994 (preliminary)

Sales of refined petroleum products totalled 6 937 000 cubic metres in October, down 0.5% from October

1993. The decline was due to lower demand for light fuel oil, petrochemical feedstocks, and other refined products. Partly offsetting these declines was a rise in the sale of motor gasoline.

Year-to-date sales for all refined products were up 2.7% from the same period in 1993. Five of the seven major product groups, accounting for 81.0% of total sales volume, increased sales. Higher demand by the transport sector (railways and the truck transport industry) and increased usage by the crude petroleum and natural gas industry, due to expanded drilling activity, led to a strong 9.8% gain in diesel fuel oil sales. Heavy fuel oil sales declined 11.7% from the same period in 1993, reflecting decreased use of the product by electric utilities and by the pulp and paper industry.

### Sales of refined petroleum products

|                                       | October<br>1994              | October 1993 to<br>October 1994 |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
|                                       | thousands of<br>cubic metres | % change                        |
| <b>Total, all products</b>            | <b>6 937.8</b>               | <b>-0.5</b>                     |
| Motor gasoline                        | 2 887.4                      | 3.1                             |
| Diesel fuel oil                       | 1 648.5                      | 0.1                             |
| Light fuel oil                        | 380.6                        | -9.4                            |
| Heavy fuel oil                        | 546.5                        | -2.9                            |
| Aviation turbo fuels                  | 354.2                        | 0.4                             |
| Petrochemical feedstocks <sup>1</sup> | 305.1                        | -6.2                            |
| All other refined products            | 815.5                        | -5.6                            |

|                                       | January to<br>October 1994   | Jan.-Oct.1993 to<br>Jan.-Oct.1994 |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
|                                       | thousands of<br>cubic metres | % change                          |
| <b>Total, all products</b>            | <b>68 759.6</b>              | <b>2.7</b>                        |
| Motor gasoline                        | 29 284.2                     | 3.8                               |
| Diesel fuel oil                       | 15 232.3                     | 9.8                               |
| Light fuel oil                        | 4 600.2                      | 0.1                               |
| Heavy fuel oil                        | 5 314.0                      | -11.6                             |
| Aviation turbo fuels                  | 3 909.2                      | 3.7                               |
| Petrochemical feedstocks <sup>1</sup> | 2 968.2                      | -6.7                              |
| All other refined products            | 7 451.5                      | 2.0                               |

<sup>1</sup> Materials produced by refineries that are used by the petrochemical industry to produce petroleum-based chemicals.

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**Available on CANSIM: matrices 628-642 and 644-647.**

The October 1994 issue of *Refined petroleum products* (45-004, \$20/\$200) will be available the third week of January 1995. See "How to order publications".

For further information on this release, contact Gérard O'Connor (613 951-3562), Energy Section, Industry Division. ■

### **Rigid insulating board** October 1994

Shipments of rigid insulating board totalled 3,031 thousand square metres (12.7 mm basis) in October, a 3.6% decrease from 3,143<sup>r</sup> (revised) thousand square metres in October 1993.

For January to October 1994, shipments totalled 31,877 thousand square metres, an 11.3% increase from 28,650<sup>r</sup> thousand square metres in 1993.

**Available on CANSIM: matrices 31 (series 1) and 122 (series 4-7).**

The October 1994 issue of *Rigid insulating board* (36-002, \$6/\$60) will be available later.

For further information on this release, contact Sandra Bohatyretz (613-951-3516), Industry Division. ■

### **Asphalt roofing** October 1994

Shipments of asphalt shingles totalled 2 806 859 metric bundles in October 1994, a 2.9% decrease from 2 891 494<sup>r</sup> (revised) metric bundles a year earlier.

For January to October 1994, shipments totalled 34 958 109 metric bundles, a 5.8% increase from 33 052 845<sup>r</sup> metric bundles shipped during the same period in 1993.

**Available on CANSIM: matrices 32 and 122 (series 27 and 28).**

The October 1994 issue of *Asphalt roofing* (45-001, \$6/\$60) will be available later.

For further information on this release, contact Sandra Bohatyretz (613-951-3516), Industry Division. ■



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## PUBLICATIONS RELEASED

**The dairy review, September 1994.**

**Catalogue number 23-001**

(Canada: \$14/\$138; United States: US\$17/US\$166; other countries: US\$20/US\$194).

**Health reports, second quarter 1994, vol. 6, no. 2.**

**Catalogue number 82-003**

(Canada: \$28/\$112; United States: US\$34/US\$135; other countries: US\$40/US\$157).

**Logging industry, 1992.**

**Catalogue number 25-201**

(Canada: \$33; United States: US\$40; other countries: US\$47).

The paper used in this publication meets the minimum requirements of American National Standard for Information Sciences - Permanence of Paper for Printed Library Materials, ANSI Z39.48 - 1984.

**Retail trade, September 1994.**

**Catalogue number 63-005**

(Canada: \$20/\$200; United States: US\$24/US\$240; other countries: US\$28/US\$280).

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