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The Daily

Statistics Canada

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MAJOR RELEASES

DATA AVAILABILITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

PUBLICATION RELEASED

MAJOR RELEASES

Quarterly business conditions survey, manufacturing industries
April 1994

At the beginning of April, Canadian manufacturers were considerably more positive than they were three months earlier that orders received are rising and that production is increasing. Satisfaction with orders received reached a record level; the previous peak was in October 1983, as the economy was coming out of the 1981-82 recession.

Manufacturers were also more positive about the level of unfilled orders and less concerned that finished-product inventories are too high. A smaller proportion of manufacturers reported difficulty with a shortage of working capital.

Manufacturers were somewhat less positive that employment will rise this quarter; but this follows an increase of 74,000 manufacturing jobs in February and March 1994, as reported by the labour force survey. This may indicate that manufacturers have met their current employment needs.

Note to users

Data referred to in the text are seasonally adjusted, except for the results on production difficulties.

The balance of opinion is the difference between the proportion with a positive response (e.g., higher volume of production) and the proportion with a negative response (e.g., lower volume of production). Both the unadjusted and the seasonally adjusted data are given for the balance. The seasonally adjusted value for the neutral components (e.g., expected production about the same) is calculated by subtracting the sum of the seasonally adjusted values of the other two components (the positive and the negative components) from 100.

The business conditions survey is conducted in January, April, July and October; the majority of responses are recorded in the first two weeks of these months. Results are based on replies from about 5,000 manufacturers.

The business conditions survey's responses on production, inventories, and orders are weighted by the value of the respondent's shipments reported to the 1989 annual survey of manufactures. Weights for the employment prospects responses are based on the number of employees reported to the annual survey of manufactures.

Satisfaction with orders received reaches a record level

In the April survey, 39% of manufacturers said that orders received are rising, while 11% said they are declining. Subtracting the 11% "declining" from the 39% "increasing", gives a balance of manufacturers' opinion of +28—a new record. The previous record of +26 was registered in the October 1983 survey.

The April 1994 balance is an 11-point jump from the January balance. The major contributors to the increase are the transportation equipment, paper and allied products, and primary metals industries.

Manufacturers were also much more positive about the backlog of unfilled orders. The balance of manufacturers' opinion jumped 15 points to +15. This was the third increase in a row. The backlog of unfilled orders will generate future shipments, provided orders are not cancelled.

More optimism about production prospects over the next three months

Manufacturers' balance of opinion jumped 10 points to +14. This is the second survey in a row to show significantly improved production prospects. The greatest contributor to the increase is the transportation equipment industry.

Less concern that finished-product inventories are too high

Manufacturers' current balance of opinion of -10 represents a 13-point improvement from January 1994. This is a significant improvement over the levels recorded during the last five years.

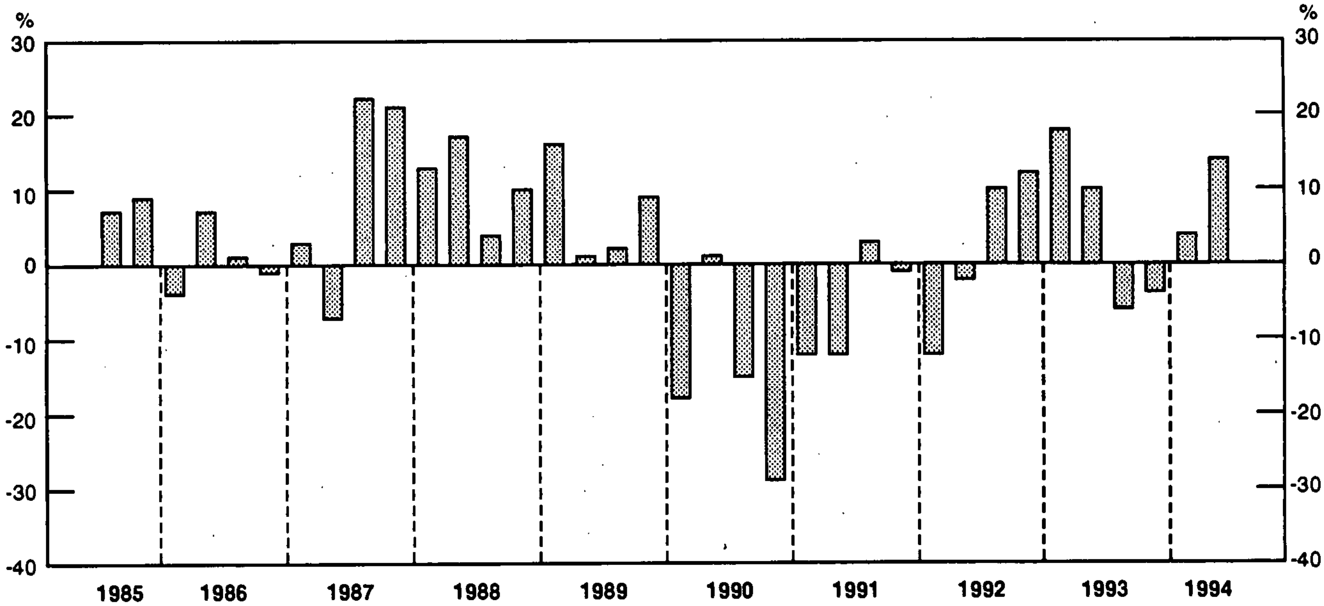
Less optimism about employment prospects

After a 15-point gain in the October and January surveys, manufacturers showed a four-point decrease, from +2 to -2 in the April survey concerning employment prospects for the next three months. However, manufacturers remain significantly more optimistic than during the previous four years.

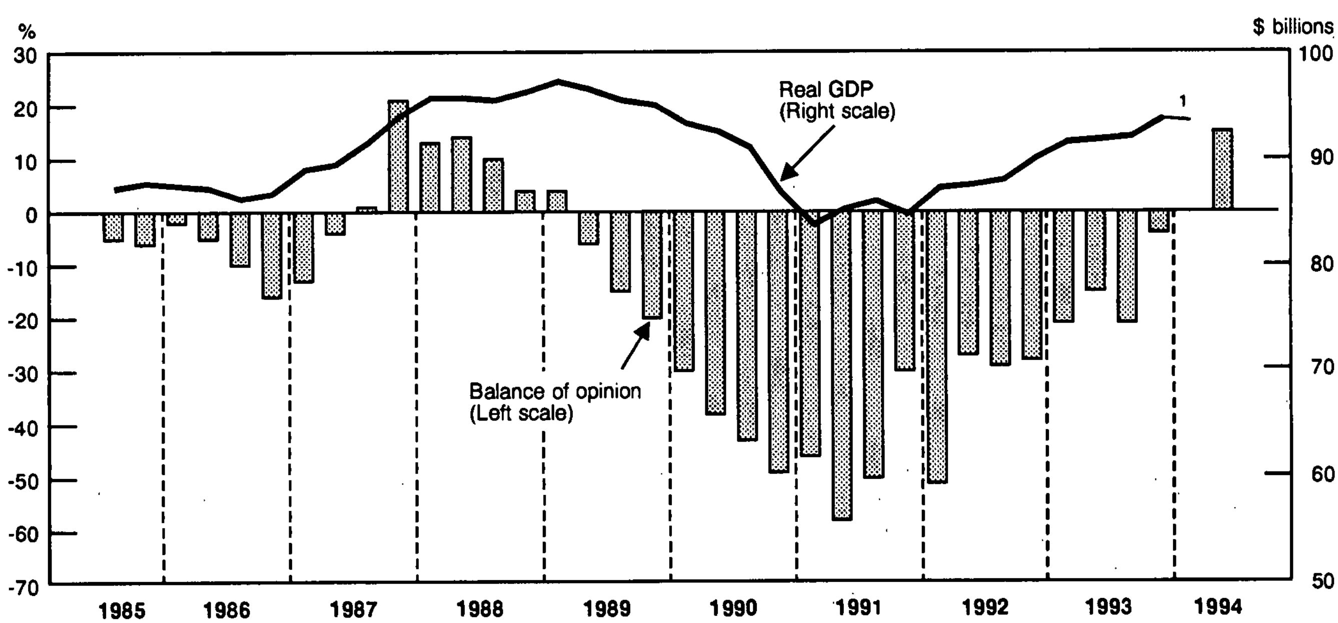
Working capital shortage is less of a concern

About 84% of manufacturers did not report any particular production difficulties in the April 1994 survey. Some 4%, down from 7% in the January 1994 survey, reported that a shortage of working capital is impeding their level of production. The proportion of manufacturers reporting a shortage of

Balance of opinion for expected volume of production
Next three months vs last three months



Balance of opinion on backlog of unfilled orders
and real GDP for manufacturing industries
Seasonally adjusted



[1] January and February 1994 average.

raw materials as a production impediment increased by two points to 5%. A shortage of skilled labour was indicated as a production impediment by 2% of manufacturers. For the fourteenth consecutive quarter, less than 0.5% of respondents reported that a shortage of unskilled labour is impeding their production.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 2843-2845.

For further information on this release, contact Claude Robillard (613-951-3507), Monthly Survey of Manufacturing Section, Industry Division.

Business conditions survey, manufacturing industries

	April 1993	July 1993	October 1993	January 1994	April 1994
Volume of production during next three months compared with last three months will be:			seasonally adjusted		
About the same	46	44	52	38	48
Higher	32	25	22	33	33
Lower	22	31	26	29	19
Balance	10	-6	-4	4	14
			unadjusted		
Balance	28	-17	-1	-10	35
Orders received are:			seasonally adjusted		
About the same	58	57	64	61	50
Rising	27	22	21	28	39
Declining	15	21	15	11	11
Balance	12	1	6	17	28
			unadjusted		
Balance	14	2	3	12	32
Present backlog of unfilled orders is:			seasonally adjusted		
About normal	63	59	64	68	65
Higher than Normal	11	10	16	16	25
Lower than Normal	26	31	20	16	10
Balance	-15	-21	-4	0	15
			unadjusted		
Balance	-17	-23	-2	-4	16
Finished-product inventory on hand is:			seasonally adjusted		
About right	74	75	62	65	80
Too low	4	4	7	6	5
Too high[1]	22	21	31	29	15
Balance	-18	-17	-24	-23	-10
			unadjusted		
Balance	-19	-17	-23	-24	-11
Employment during the next three months will:			seasonally adjusted		
Change little	67	69	64	62	66
Increase	10	9	14	20	16
Decrease	23	22	22	18	18
Balance	-13	-13	-8	2	-2
			unadjusted		
Balance	-3	-12	-16	-4	8
Sources of production difficulties:			unadjusted		
Working capital shortage	5	6	6	7	4
Skilled labour shortage	2	2	3	2	2
Unskilled labour shortage	0	0	0	0	0
Raw material shortage	4	4	4	3	5
Other difficulties	3	4	4	4	4
No difficulties	85	83	83	84	84

[1] *No evident seasonality.*

Short-term expectations survey

The increase in the consumer price index for April was forecast at 0.3%, with minimum and maximum values of +0.2% and +0.6% respectively. For March, the mean forecast was overestimated at +0.6%, compared to an outcome of +0.2%.

The mean forecast of the unemployment rate for April was 10.7% (minimum 10.5%, maximum 10.9%). For March, the mean forecast was overestimated at 11.0%, compared to an outcome of 10.6%.

March merchandise exports were forecast to be $15.6 billion, with a minimum and maximum of $15.2 billion and $16.0 billion respectively. For February, the mean forecast ($15.8 billion) overestimated the outcome by $0.4 billion. The forecast of imports for March was $14.8 billion, with minimum and maximum values of $14.5 billion and $15.5 billion respectively. For February, the mean forecast ($14.9 billion) slightly overestimated the outcome by $0.2 billion.

Note to users

Since April 1990, Statistics Canada has canvassed every month a small group of economic analysts (an average of 20 participants) and requested from them a one-month-ahead forecast of key economic indicators.

Participants forecast the year-over-year changes in the consumer price index and the unemployment rate for April 1994, the levels of merchandise exports and imports for March 1994, as well as the month-to-month change in the gross domestic product for March 1994.

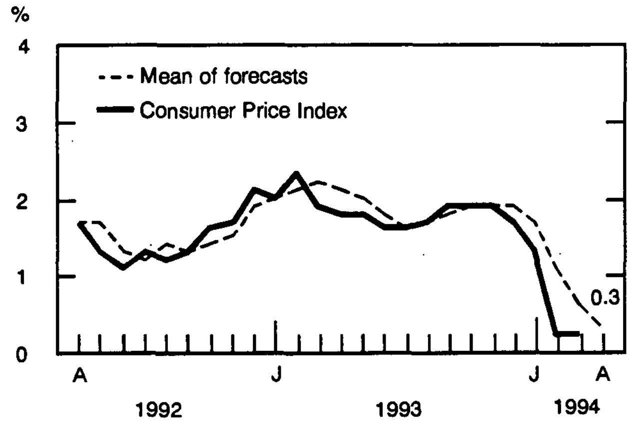
The next release is scheduled for June 7.

Real gross domestic product at factor cost is forecast to have changed by +0.4% between February and March 1994 (minimum +0.1%, maximum +0.6%). Between January and February 1994, the mean forecast was overestimated at +0.4%, compared to an outcome of +0.1%.

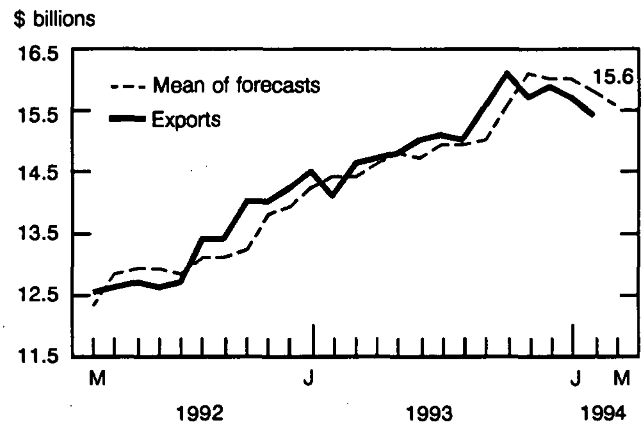
For a complete set of tables or further information on this release, contact Diane Lachapelle (613-951-0568). □

Forecasts vs actual

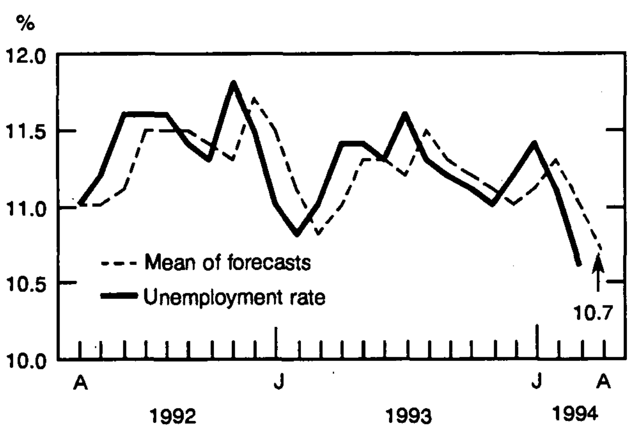
Consumer price index



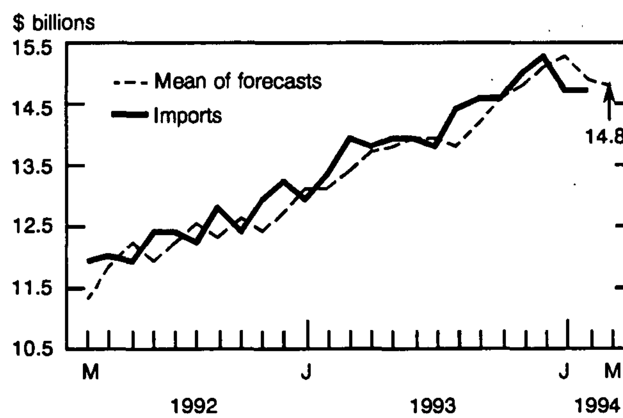
Merchandise exports



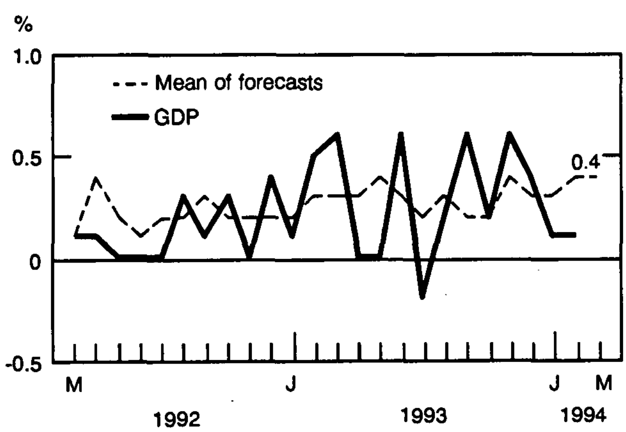
Unemployment rate



Merchandise imports



Gross domestic product



Non-residential building construction price indexes

First quarter 1994

The composite price index for non-residential building construction (1986 = 100) for the first quarter of 1994 rose to 123.1, a 0.4% increase from the fourth quarter of 1993 and a 1.6% increase from the first quarter of 1993; this is the highest it has been since the third quarter of 1990.

Calgary registered the highest quarterly increase over the fourth quarter of 1993, at 0.7%, followed closely by Edmonton and Vancouver, both with 0.6% increases. The Toronto price index edged up 0.4%, while Montréal and Halifax both increased by 0.3%. Ottawa's price index barely moved (+ 0.1%).

The annual rates of change for Vancouver (+ 3.1%), Toronto (+ 1.7%) and Halifax (+ 1.3%) were at their highest levels since the third and fourth quarters of 1990.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 2042 and 2043.

The first quarter 1994 issue of *Construction price statistics* (62-007, $19/$76) will be available in June. See "How to order publications".

For further information on this release, contact Paul-Roméo Danis (613-951-3350, fax: 613-951-2848), Information and Current Analysis Unit, Prices Division.

Non-residential construction price indexes

	Relative importance	First quarter 1993	Fourth quarter 1993	First quarter 1994	First quarter 1993 to First quarter 1994	Fourth quarter 1993 to First quarter 1994
					% change	
Composite	**100.0**	**121.1**	**122.6**	**123.1**	**1.6**	**0.4**
Halifax	1.7	109.0	110.1	110.4	1.3	0.3
Montréal	16.5	111.4	111.9	112.2	0.7	0.3
Ottawa	9.5	126.0	127.4	127.5	1.2	0.1
Toronto	34.1	124.3	125.9	126.4	1.7	0.4
Calgary	5.0	123.5	124.0	124.9	1.1	0.7
Edmonton	7.0	125.3	125.9	126.7	1.1	0.6
Vancouver	26.2	118.9	121.9	122.6	3.1	0.6

■

DATA AVAILABILITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Asphalt roofing

March 1994

Shipments of asphalt shingles totalled 2 429 969 metric bundles in March 1994, a 10.4% increase from 2 201 674r (revised) metric bundles shipped a year earlier.

For January to March 1994, shipments totalled 5 323 790 metric bundles, up 5.0% from 5 069 857r metric bundles shipped during the same period in 1993.

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

The March 1994 issue of *Asphalt roofing* (45-001, $5/$50) will be available later.

For further information on this release, contact Sandra Bohatyretz (613-951-3531), Industry Division. ■

Financial and operating statistics for Canada-based shipping companies

1992 (preliminary)

In 1992, the revenues of Canada-based marine carriers totalled $2.5 billion. This compares with $2.8 billion in 1991. Their operating expenses totalled $3.2 billion in 1992, down slightly from $3.3 billion in 1991.

Preliminary data for 1992 will be published in the vol. 10, no. 4 issue of *Surface and marine transport service bulletin* (50-002, $9.40/$75), which will be available in June.

For further information on this release, contact Anna MacDonald (613-951-0291), Marine Transport Unit, Transportation Division. ■

PUBLICATION RELEASED

Index to Statistics Canada surveys and questionnaires, 1993.
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(Canada: $28; United States: US$34; other countries: US$40).

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.

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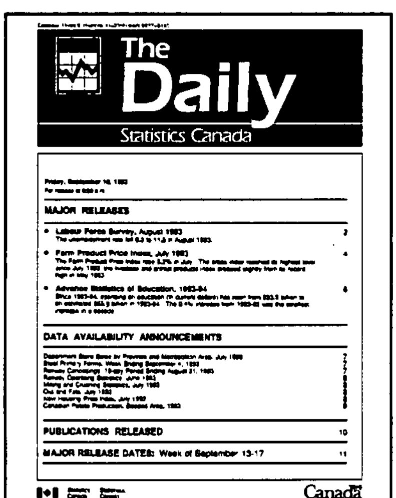
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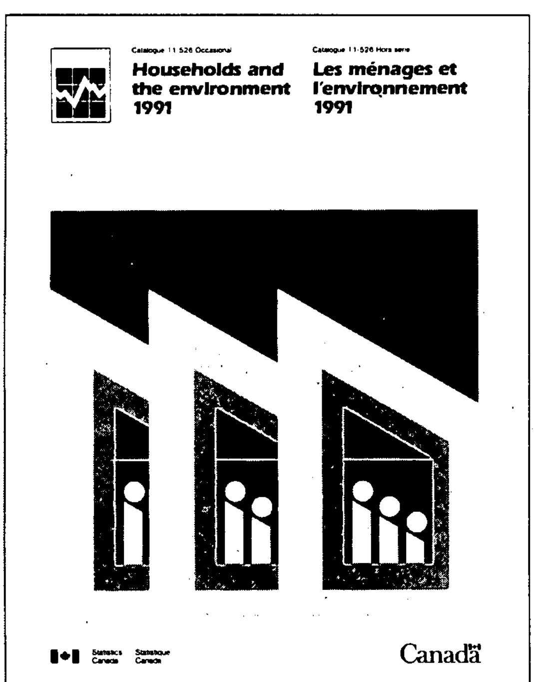
dians have been making measurable changes in their lifestyles for a cleaner environment!



Householders are remarkably aware of the many steps they can take to reduce the household's impact on the environment. Some of these steps are simple, requiring only a change in a product brand. Others require a greater effort -- digging out weeds by hand, rather than using a pesticide on a lawn.

Statistics Canada conducted a national survey of 43,000 households to examine some of these actions. The product of this survey is a publication entitled ***Households and the Environment***.

This 40-page publication includes detailed analysis of socio-economic characteristics related to household environmental practices, and highlights Canadian's efforts to:

- **conserve energy and water**
- **recycle and compost waste**
- **manage potentially harmful products**

The survey asked questions on a wide range of environmental concerns, including usage of:

- **recycling services**
- **composters**
- **own shopping bags**
- **programmable thermostats**
- **energy-saving light bulbs**
- **low-flow showerheads**

...and much more!

This one-of-kind publication highlights such interesting details as:

- **53% of households have access to recycling, and 86% of these households use the services available.**
- **Nearly 1 in 5 households compost waste.**
- **19% of households in Ontario use water filters or purifiers.**
- **63% of households with infants use disposable diapers exclusively.**

Only with reliable information about the environment can government, business institutions and private citizens respond appropriately.

Order your copy of *Households and the Environment* (Cat. No. 11-526) today! At $23.95 (plus 7% GST) in Canada, US$28.95 in the United States and US$33.95 in other countries, this is one reference tool you can't afford to miss.

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