

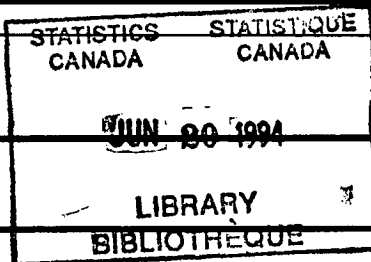


The Daily

Statistics Canada

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MAJOR RELEASE

● Retail trade, April 1994

Consumer spending on goods fell in April, offsetting most of the particularly strong increase in March. Retail sales returned to a level slightly higher than in February. The April sales decline followed sustained increases since November 1993.

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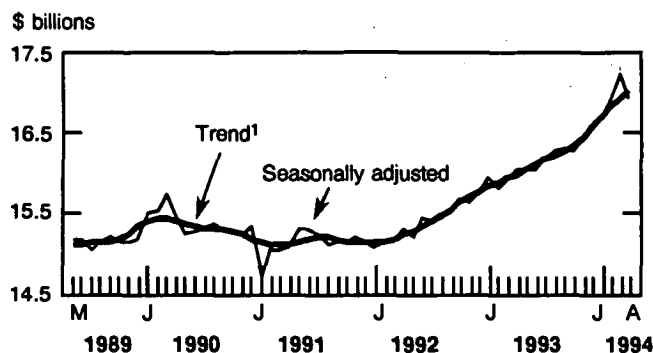
MAJOR RELEASE

Retail trade

April 1994 (preliminary)

Consumer spending on goods fell in April, offsetting most of the particularly strong increase in March. Retail sales returned to a level slightly higher than in February. The April sales decline followed sustained increases since November 1993 and coincided with a decrease in employment in the trade sector in April after two consecutive monthly increases.

April sales decline from March peak



Data prior to 1991 have been adjusted to remove the Federal Sales Tax to be comparable to January 1991 and subsequent data.

¹ Trend represents smoothed seasonally adjusted data.

Seasonally adjusted retail sales declined 1.7% to \$17.0 billion in April. This decline was widespread among all provinces except Saskatchewan which reported higher sales in April. The weakness in April came from five sectors, accounting for almost 84% of total sales, and was led mainly by automotive retailers.

Automotive sector led the decline in April

Of the five retail trade sectors reporting lower sales in April, the largest decrease was in the

automotive sector (-2.9% to \$6.0 billion), partly offsetting the 3.4% gain in March. Despite April's decline, consumers have been increasing their spending on automotive products since May 1993.

Two of the three components of the automotive sector recorded lower sales in April. Sales by motor vehicle and recreational vehicle dealers dropped 4.6%, the first decline since June 1993; the number of new motor vehicles sold fell 4.0% in April. Gasoline service stations recorded lower sales in April after a 0.8% gain in March. Sales by automotive parts, accessories and services outlets advanced 0.8%, the fifth increase in the last six months.

Spending in general merchandise stores (retailers, such as department stores, primarily engaged in selling a wide range of commodities) declined 3.3% in April, the first decrease since June 1993. April's sales almost offset the sizable increases reported in February (+4.0%) and March (+1.6%).

Despite this decline, sales by general merchandise stores have been demonstrating strength since the third quarter of 1993 following decreases from the last half of 1992 up to mid-1993.

Lower sales in most provinces

From 1993 to the first quarter of 1994, all provinces registered fluctuating retail sales around a generally upward trend. In April, all provinces reported lower sales, except in Saskatchewan, ranging from -3.9% in Nova Scotia to -0.3% in British Columbia. In Saskatchewan, sales increased 2.2%, a ninth increase in the last 10 months.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 2299, 2398-2417 and 2420.

The April 1994 issue of *Retail trade* (63-005, \$20/\$200), will be available the first week of July. See "How to order publications".

For further information, contact Pierre Desjardins (613-951-9682), Retail Trade Section, Industry Division. □

Retail sales

Trade group	April 1993	January 1994 ^r	February 1994 ^r	March 1994 ^r	April 1994 ^p	March 1994 ^r to April 1994 ^p	April 1993 to April 1994 ^p
	\$ millions					% change	
	seasonally adjusted						
Food	4,213	4,369	4,385	4,426	4,386	-0.9	4.1
Supermarkets and grocery stores	3,929	4,089	4,104	4,134	4,109	-0.6	4.6
All other food stores	284	280	281	292	276	-5.3	-2.7
Drug and patent medicine stores	987	1,014	1,006	1,023	1,015	-0.8	2.9
Clothing	944	954	970	984	980	-0.4	3.8
Shoe stores	134	144	147	145	145	--	8.3
Men's clothing stores	144	154	152	156	156	--	8.2
Women's clothing stores	316	306	320	325	317	-2.5	0.2
Other clothing stores	350	350	351	358	362	1.0	3.6
Furniture	878	873	879	895	896	0.2	2.1
Household furniture and appliance stores	695	681	685	700	705	0.8	1.4
Household furnishings stores	182	192	194	195	192	-1.9	5.1
Automotive	5,473	5,887	5,978	6,179	5,999	-2.9	9.6
Motor vehicle and recreational vehicle dealers	3,401	3,706	3,828	4,005	3,820	-4.6	12.3
Gasoline service stations	1,182	1,173	1,172	1,182	1,178	-0.3	-0.4
Automotive parts, accessories and services	891	1,009	978	993	1,001	0.8	12.4
General merchandise stores	1,705	1,739	1,809	1,837	1,777	-3.3	4.2
Retail stores not elsewhere classified	1,847	1,863	1,871	1,899	1,900	0.1	2.9
Other semi-durable goods stores	559	563	558	558	564	1.0	0.8
Other durable goods stores	460	452	459	486	468	-3.7	1.7
All other retail stores n.e.c.	828	848	854	855	868	1.6	4.9
Total, retail sales	16,046	16,700	16,898	17,244	16,954	-1.7	5.7
Total excluding motor vehicle and recreational vehicle dealers	12,646	12,994	13,070	13,239	13,133	-0.8	3.9
Department store type merchandise	5,533	5,595	5,681	5,783	5,701	-1.4	3.0
Provinces and territories							
Newfoundland	277	284	280	288	283	-1.7	2.1
Prince Edward Island	69	76	72	74	72	-1.9	5.1
Nova Scotia	524	550	544	568	546	-3.9	4.1
New Brunswick	416	424	426	417	408	-2.2	-1.9
Quebec	3,903	4,192	4,158	4,185	4,074	-2.7	4.4
Ontario	5,960	6,028	6,204	6,395	6,291	-1.6	5.6
Manitoba	557	566	586	587	577	-1.7	3.7
Saskatchewan	470	497	500	507	519	2.2	10.4
Alberta	1,685	1,739	1,770	1,851	1,819	-1.7	8.0
British Columbia	2,135	2,290	2,302	2,316	2,310	-0.3	8.2
Yukon	17	17	17	17	16	-1.9	-5.4
Northwest Territories	34	38	38	39	39	--	13.6

^p Preliminary figures.^r Revised figures.

n.e.c. Not elsewhere classified.

-- Amount too small to be expressed.

DATA AVAILABILITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Electric lamps

May 1994

Light bulb and tube manufacturers sold 20,706,000 light bulbs and tubes in May 1994, an increase of 12.4% from the 18,421,000 a year earlier.

Year-to-date sales at the end of May 1994 totalled 122,801,000 light bulbs and tubes, an increase of 14.6% from the 107,196,000 a year earlier.

The May 1994 issue of *Electric lamps* (43-009, \$6/\$60) will be available later.

For more information, contact Laurie Vincent (613-951-3523), Industry Division. ■

Air charter statistics

Fourth quarter 1993

Preliminary air charter data for the fourth quarter of 1993 are now available.

The June issue of the *Aviation statistics centre service bulletin* (51-004, \$10/\$99) will be available soon. See "How to order publications".

For more information, contact Francesca Thibeault (819-997-6173), Aviation Statistics Centre, Transportation Division. ■

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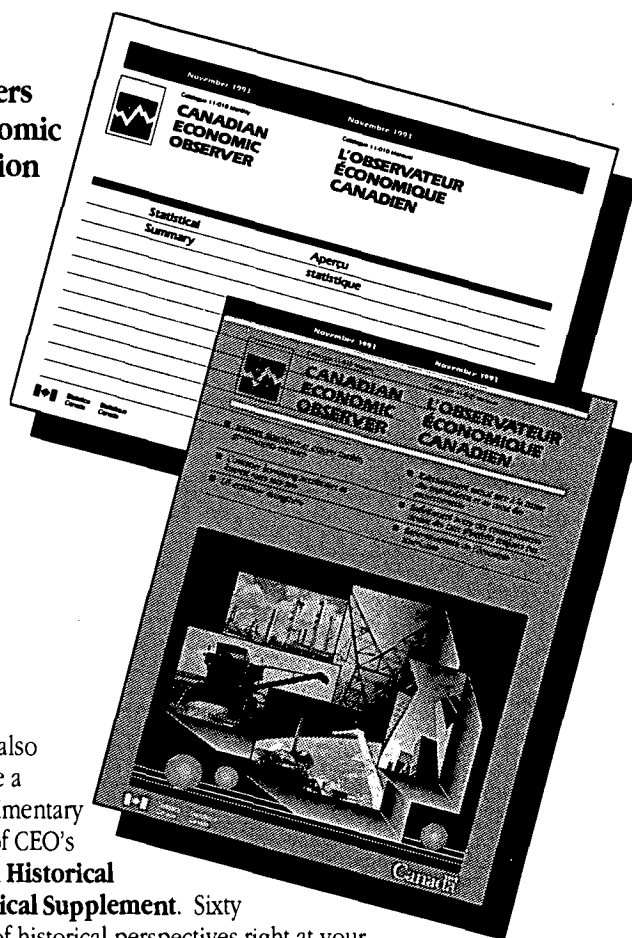
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