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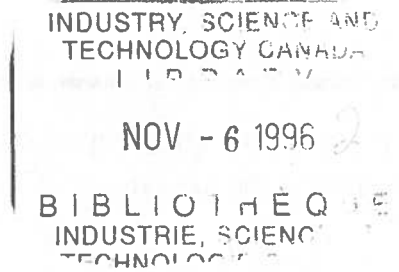
THE FORD-Q

ECONOMIC UPDATE

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Major Increase in Unemployment

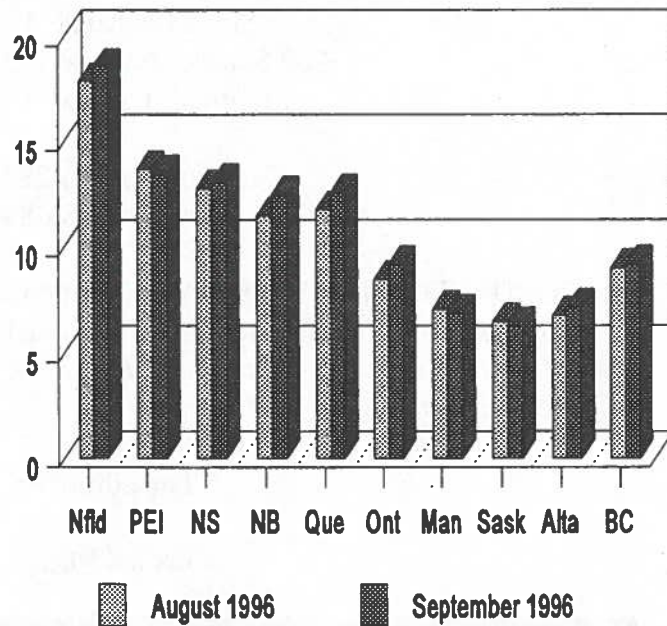
According to seasonally adjusted Statistics Canada labour force data, 47,000 jobs were lost across Canada in September 1996 compared with the month before. Activity in the Quebec employment market, where 9,000 jobs were lost, was relatively stable during the reporting period.

In Quebec, a significant increase in the labour force (+ 20,000 between August and September) together with a slight decrease in the number of jobs caused the September unemployment rate to climb by 0.8 percentage points to 12.8%. This was highest level reached since May 1994.

The unemployment rate across Canada was 9.9%, an increase of 0.5 percentage points over August 1996. The national rate, like Quebec's, was particularly high and had not been at this level since October 1994.

Unemployment Rate per Province

Seasonally Adjusted Data



Source: Statistics Canada, LFS



The FORD-Q ECONOMIC UPDATE is a monthly publication whose purpose is to inform readers about the most recent economic developments affecting Quebec and its regions.

The information in this monthly report is taken from dailies and weeklies, magazines and other publications on the Quebec economy. Most of the statistical data come from Statistics Canada.

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Investment tapering off almost everywhere in Quebec

According to the Bureau de la Statistique du Québec, private and public-sector investment in Quebec in 1996 decreased by 2%, compared with 1995. Total investment was \$25 billion for the year. Investment in 1995 was also down in comparison with 1994. The 1995 decrease amounted to 4.6%.

Ten of Quebec's 16 administrative regions reported that investment had decreased from the year before. The largest decreases were in the Northern Quebec (-12.3%), Mauricie-Bois Francs (-9.7%) and North Shore (-8.3%) regions. The decrease in the latter two regions was partly attributable to smaller purchases of machinery and equipment.

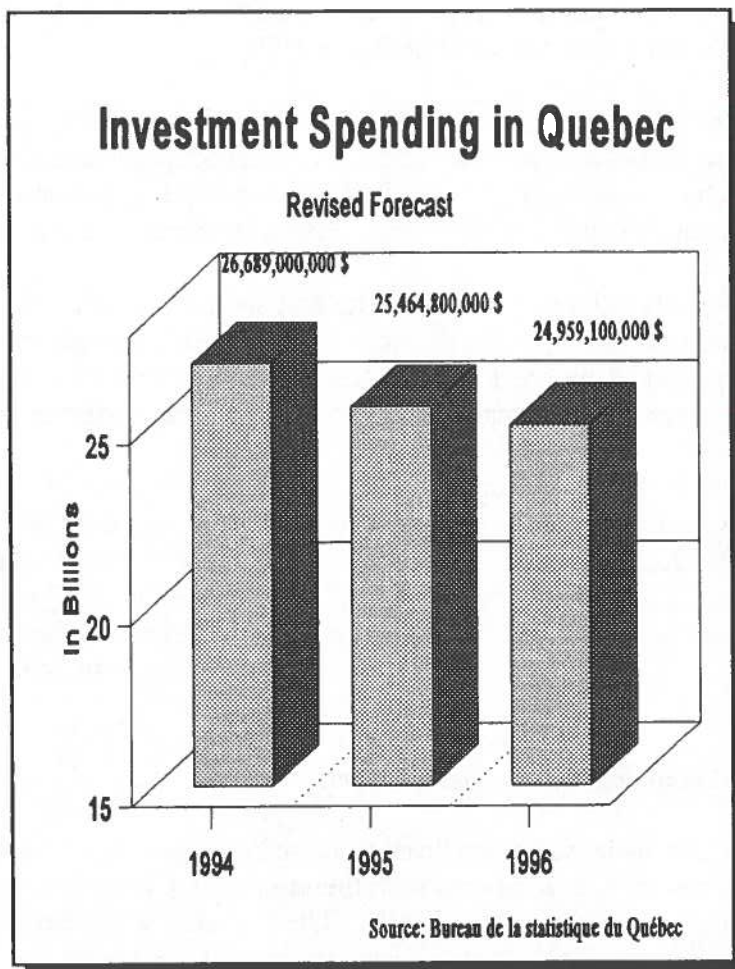
In contrast, increased investment was reported in the regions of Saguenay-Lac St Jean (+17.6%), Laurentians (+6.8%) and Quebec City (+4.6%) and was attributed to increased purchases of equipment in the manufacturing and construction industries. Investment was up for the second consecutive year in Saguenay-Lac St Jean. The region

posted the second highest investment increase in Quebec in 1995, a jump of 13% over 1994. Investment on the Island of Montreal decreased by 4.9% from the 1995 level and totalled close to \$5.9 billion. (Bureau de la Statistique du Québec, 8/10/96)

Economic growth still sluggish in Quebec

Quebec reported stable economic activity in June and real gross domestic product (GDP) at factor cost at about the same level as in May. There were increases reported in the manufacturing sector, however, of 0.6% between May and June and 3.3% between January and June 1996. The Quebec economy has grown by 0.5% since the beginning of the year.

(Bureau de la Statistique du Québec, 23/9/96)



External trade slips during the first six months, picks up in July

Large decreases in exports and imports were reported during the first six months of the year, compared with the same period in 1995.

Quebec's **exports** abroad fell by 2.9% between the first quarter of 1995 and the same period in 1996. A sharp falloff in automotive-sector export activity was the major cause. Weakness in the automotive sector, a key driver of the United States economy, was also cited as the reason for the 4.0% drop in Quebec's exports to the United States during the same period, .

Imports fell by 2.9% during the first six months of 1996, compared with the same period in 1995. Areas hardest hit were computers and telecommunications equipment and materiel. Decreased exports and imports together caused Quebec's trade surplus to fall from \$3.70 billion to \$3.58 billion between the first quarter of 1995 and the same period in 1996.

The first signs of improvement in Quebec's external trade for 1996 showed up in the July data. **Exports** had climbed above July 1995 levels and only declined by 1.3% during the first six months of 1996, compared with the same period a year earlier. A similar trend was observable on the **imports** side. The monthly increase (July 1996 over July 1995) meant that imports between the first seven months of 1995 and the same period in 1996 had declined by 0.7%.

(Bureau de la Statistique du Québec, 5/9/96, 3/10/96)

Widespread rise in bankruptcies

In July, there was a significant increase in the number of bankruptcies in urban centres in Quebec and across Canada, compared with the same month a year earlier. There were 465 more bankruptcies in Quebec, an increase of 24%. The increase was also equally divided between consumers and businesses. The Montreal area accounted for two thirds of the province's increased number of bankruptcies.

(Industry Canada, Bankruptcy Branch)

Construction starts lagging

The number of construction starts in Quebec urban centres of 10,000 or more residents increased slightly between August 1995 and August 1996. Quebec's increase of 158 new construction starts (+19%) ranked below the average increase posted for the country as a whole (22.4%). Although the total number of construction starts in Quebec was 991, this figure was still only 10.4% of the Canadian total.

The situation has caused even greater concern since the beginning of the year. During the first nine months of 1996, there were 613 fewer construction starts (-5.3%) than in the same period a year earlier. By comparison, the trend across the country was buoyant with construction starts increasing by 9.65%.

(Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, CMHC)

Increase in number of hours worked

Between the second quarter of 1995 and the same period in 1996, the number of hours worked by salaried Quebec employees subject to the Labour Relations Act increased slightly by 5%. Since the beginning of the year (January to June), the number of hours worked increased by 11%, compared with the same period a year earlier. Most of the increases reported during the two periods were attributed to increased activity in the residential construction industry. In the second quarter of 1996, the Saguenay-Lac St Jean region reported an increase in hours worked of 52%, by far the highest increase in Quebec's major regions. During the same period, the James Bay region reported a decrease in hours worked of 52%. The decrease was directly related to a falloff in activity at hydroelectric projects.

The Greater Montreal area reported a 13% increase in construction activity in the second quarter compared with the same period a year earlier. Increased activity was reported in all construction industry sectors except civil engineering and highway maintenance, where the level of activity remained stable.

(Commission de la Construction du Québec, *Revue de l'Activité dans l'Industrie de la Construction*, 2nd quarter, 1996, Vol 18, No 2)

Number of Hours Worked (x1,000) per Region

Region	Second Quarter				January to June		
	1995	1996	% of TNHW	% NRCH	1996	% of TNHW	% NRCH
Lower St Lawrence / Gaspé	580	545	-6	-13	807	1	-7
Saguenay / Lac St Jean	602	913	52	51	1,442	59	58
Quebec City	2,295	2,316	1	-3	3,720	7	4
Mauricie / Bois Francs	1,129	1,025	-9	-16	1,545	-12	-19
Eastern Townships	558	661	19	4	1,029	25	11
Greater Montreal	8,258	9,364	13	9	15,383	17	14
Outaouais	610	523	-14	-21	1,055	10	7
Abitibi-Témiscamingue	484	473	-2	-5	880	21	19
James Bay	408	194	-52	-52	342	-55	-55
North Shore	596	497	-17	-17	888	-2	-2
TOTAL	16,534	17,400	5	0	28,500	11	7

* Total includes hours that could not be included in any given region.
 % = percentage variation compared with the same period a year earlier (TNHW = total number of hours;
 NRCH = non-residential construction hours only)

Source and table: Commission de la Construction du Québec

\$1-billion gas pipeline

Gaz Métropolitain is planning to invest some \$1 billion in the construction of a 900-kilometre gas pipeline to link Bernières-St Nicolas on Quebec City's south shore to Country Harbour, Nova Scotia. The gas pipeline would transport natural gas from Sable Island deposits to Canadian and American markets. The work is likely to start sometime next year and be completed in 1999.

(Constructo, 10/9/96)

Deep cuts for public television

The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation has announced drastic staff cuts and the layoff of 2,500 employees over the next few months. The English television network will be slashed more than its affiliated French network. In Quebec, French radio will be hardest hit with budget cuts of \$20 million over the next four years and further layoffs of some 240 employees.

(Le Soleil, 9/96)

Mazarin Inc plans to open a plant in Quebec

Several Quebec cities are currently competing for the calcium aluminate plant that mining corporation Mazarin Inc plans to open next year. Beauce, Thetford Mines, Asbestos and Drummondville are some of the sites in the running. Once in operation, the \$5-million plant would directly create about thirty new jobs.

(Le Soleil, 17/9/96)

REGIONAL REVIEW

GREATER MONTREAL

ISLAND OF MONTREAL

	Aug. 96	July 96	June 96	Aug. 95	Month-over-Month Change	Year-over-Year Change
<i>Jobs</i>	770	778	775	782	-1.0	-1.5
<i>Unemployed</i>	126	122	116	103	3.3	22.3
<i>Labour Force</i>	896	900	891	885	-0.4	1.2
<i>Unemploy. Rate</i>	14.0	13.6	13	11.7	2.9	19.7

Source: Statistics Canada, LFS
In Thousands, unemployment rates and changes in %
Non-seasonally Adjusted Data, three-month moving average

Increased unemployment in Montreal

The Greater Montreal area, like the rest of the province, had only slight changes in the labour force to report between August and September 1996. In September, the unemployment rate rose to 12.6%, the fourth monthly increase in a row and the highest since February 1995.

The number of unemployed people in the Greater Montreal area has grown by 36,000 in the past year.

Area companies visit Boston

Several mayors and business people from the Greater Montreal area recently headed to Boston for several days on an economic mission. The visit was organized to forge stronger links between New England's leading centre and the Greater Montreal area. The visit was an opportunity for area companies, such as Aveltech, Naoki Systems and the Centre québécois d'innovation en biotechnologie, to sign agreements for the opening of offices in the Boston area. A delegation of Boston area business people will make a similar visit to Montreal in the spring. Annual trade between Quebec and New England totals \$6 billion. (Le Journal de Montréal, 15/9/96)

Montreal unveils \$533-million investment plan

The City of Montreal recently unveiled a three-year \$533-million plan to revitalize many of its capital assets. Several of the projects under study involve repairs to popular commercial arteries to promote economic development. Improvements to several green spaces and work on the Lachine Canal are also included in the City Plan. (The Gazette, 17/9/96)

Montreal and Ottawa studying a project to revitalize the Lachine Canal

The federal government and the City of Montreal are working together on revitalization of the Lachine Canal in order to reverse the decline of the south-western district of Montreal. Some \$300 million of public and private-sector investment is earmarked for a number of recreation, tourism and industrial projects, most of which are still being studied. (Le Devoir, 16/9/96)

The Centre Hospitalier de l'Université de Montréal will go ahead

Since the signing of an agreement in principle between the various stakeholders, it now appears very likely that a project to set up the Centre Hospitalier de l'Université de Montréal will go ahead. The CHUM will be a merger of the Hôtel Dieu de Montréal hospital and the St Luc and Notre Dame hospitals. It is expected that approximately \$265 million will be invested in the project, which could take until the year 2001 to complete. The distribution of funding has not yet been decided. (Constructo, 27/9/96)

Saturn Solutions Inc will double its workforce

Saturn Solutions Inc will invest \$20 million by 1998 to build a CD-ROM manufacturing plant in St Laurent. The project would double the company's current workforce of about 120 employees. An abundance of qualified workers and relatively low rent and electricity costs were some of the reasons cited by company management for their choice of Montreal as the future production site. (Le Journal de Montréal, 21/9/96)

Université de Montréal will abolish 365 professors' positions

The Université de Montréal is preparing to cut the number of its professors by 20% by 1999 to cope with what it calls the government's decommitment to education. In concrete terms, 175 professors' positions will be abolished over a three-year period in addition to the 190 other professors' positions, which the university announced it would cut last year. (La Presse, 19/9/96)

200 new jobs in biotechnology

The federally-owned Biotechnology Research Institute will invest \$20 million to expand its facilities and meet ever-growing demand. The project will allow the Institute to add 200 new employees to its current staff of 430. (Le Journal de Montréal, 2/10/96)

RIO rejects retractable-roof idea

The Régie des Installations Olympiques (RIO) recently stated that it would prefer to have a permanent, flexible roof installed on the Montreal Olympic Stadium. The idea of installing a retractable roof appears to have been rejected. The RIO is also studying two roof-covering options, one being a structural fabric made of Kevlar and the other a Teflon-coated fiberglass fabric stretched over a meshwork of cables. Regardless of the option chosen, the work will require a \$40-million investment and not begin until 1999. (Constructo, 10/9/96)

120 new jobs to be created at Ericsson

Ericsson Inc of Montreal has been given a new mandate by its Swedish head office and will invest \$100 million over a five-year period to build a new telecommunications research centre. The investment will allow the company to hire 120 new engineers. (La Presse, 2/10/96)

Mallinckrodt Medical Inc will invest \$23.3 million

Assisted in large part by \$3.46 million in loans from the federal and provincial governments, Mallinckrodt Medical Inc will invest \$23.3 million to modernize its plant in Pointe Claire. The project will create 40 new jobs and preserve 125 existing company jobs. (Le Devoir, 27/9/96)

180 layoffs in Lachine

Valmet Inc, a Finnish-owned company in Lachine that specializes in the manufacture of paper machines, has laid off 180 of its 400 employees. Management cited oversupply of plant resources as the reason for its decision. (Le Journal de Montréal, 2/10/96)

Major contract for Axor Inc

The Axor Ingénierie Construction group of Montreal was recently awarded a major \$54.4-million contract by the American government to build the United States' new Canadian embassy in Ottawa. The project is expected to take 30 months to complete and will provide work for about 200 construction workers. (Constructo, 20/9/96)

Major housing project in Anjou

The Montreal construction industry seems to be rebounding. A project to build between 400 and 600 mostly single-family housing units in Anjou is currently being studied. The project would require an investment of \$70 million and could begin this fall. (Constructo, 13/9/96)

ABITIBI-TÉMISCAMINGUE

	Aug. 96	July 96	June 96	Aug. 95	Month-over-Month Change	Year-over-Year Change
<i>Jobs</i>	68	70	68	66	-2.9	3.0
<i>Unemployed</i>	8	8	8	9	0.0	-11.1
<i>Labour Force</i>	76	78	76	75	-2.6	1.3
<i>Unemploy. Rate</i>	11.0	10.0	10.6	12.1	10.0	-9.1

Source: Statistics Canada, LFS
In Thousands, unemployment rates and changes in %
Non-seasonally Adjusted Data, three-month moving average

Major contracts for Talpa Inc

Talpa Inc of Val d'Or is on a roll nowadays. It has just been awarded a \$32-million contract to do underground work at the Jefferey mine in Asbestos in the Eastern Townships. The company will hire about 30 new workers to carry out the work. Talpa Inc also recently renewed a contract with Richmond Mines to develop the new Nugget Pond gold mine in Newfoundland.

(L'Echo, 2/10/96)

Hospital renovation project still being studied

The Corporation d'Hébergement du Québec is currently studying a \$9.5-million project to modernize and renovate the Val d'Or hospital. The work is still awaiting authorization and would take a year to complete. (Constructo, 13/9/96)

LOWER ST LAWRENCE

	<i>Aug. 96</i>	<i>July 96</i>	<i>June 96</i>	<i>Aug. 95</i>	<i>Month-over-Month Change</i>	<i>Year-over-Year Change</i>
<i>Jobs</i>	86	86	84	89	0.0	-3.4
<i>Unemployed</i>	12	12	12	10	0.0	20.0
<i>Labour Force</i>	98	98	96	99	0.0	-1.0
<i>Unemploy. Rate</i>	12.6	12.2	12.9	10.5	3.3	20.0

Source: Statistics Canada, LFS
In Thousands, unemployment rates and changes in %
Non-seasonally Adjusted Data, three-month moving average

Possible new factory at St Jean de Dieu

A project to build an inline-skate manufacturing plant in St Jean de Dieu is currently being studied and could be finalized by next spring. The project would require an investment of \$3 million.

(Le Soleil, 17/9/96)

Report on the Matane cultural-centre project

A project to build a cultural centre in Matane will be delayed by a year and might even be abandoned if costs prove higher than forecast. While the lowest bid so far has been \$3.2 million, the promoters had estimated \$2 million in project costs.

(Le Soleil, 17/9/96)

CHAUDIÈRE-APPALACHES

	<i>Aug. 96</i>	<i>July 96</i>	<i>June 96</i>	<i>Aug. 95</i>	<i>Month-over-Month Change</i>	<i>Year-over-Year Change</i>
<i>Jobs</i>	184	185	185	185	-0.5	-0.5
<i>Unemployed</i>	11	11	12	12	0.0	-8.3
<i>Labour Force</i>	195	196	197	197	-0.5	-1.0
<i>Unemploy. Rate</i>	5.6	5.6	6.0	6.2	0.0	-9.7

Source: Statistics Canada, LFS
In Thousands, unemployment rates and changes in %
Non-seasonally Adjusted Data, three-month moving average

St Romuald beats out competitors

Sanfaçon Industries has finally chosen St Romuald as the site where it will build a plant to manufacture moist paper towels and plastic cutlery. The project will require an investment of \$15 million and create from 100 to 200 jobs. St Romuald was chosen over other towns in Quebec, New Brunswick and Ontario. (Le Soleil, 18/9/96)

NORTH SHORE/NORTHERN QUÉBEC

	Aug. 96	July 96	June 96	Aug. 95	Month-over-Month Change	Year-over-Year Change
<i>Jobs</i>	55	57	57	62	-3.5	-11.3
<i>Unemployed</i>	9	9	10	6	0.0	50.0
<i>Labour Force</i>	64	66	67	68	-3.0	-5.9
<i>Unemploy. Rate</i>	14.3	13.7	14.5	9.0	4.4	58.9

Source: Statistics Canada, LFS
In Thousands, unemployment rates and changes in %
Non-seasonally Adjusted Data, three-month moving average

Sept-Îles becomes a destination for prospectors

The Sept-Îles area is making a handsome profit from the current rush of prospectors, who are staking out an area not far from the city where large deposits of copper and nickel have been discovered. It is estimated that the accommodation and food and beverage services industries have increased their business by about 30%. There could be even more spinoffs once the Quebec government lifts the ban on the main area where the largest deposits have been discovered. (Le Soleil, 8/10/96)

Kruger Inc is about to acquire the Haute Côte Nord sawmill

Kruger Inc will very likely become the new owner of the Haute Côte Nord sawmill in Forestville after current shareholders in the company agreed at a general meeting to sell their shares at \$1.50 per share, 50¢ more than the value they had when the sawmill reopened. To complete the transaction, however, Kruger Inc must negotiate with two co-operatives and the Boisaco sawmill, which together own about half of the shares. (Le Soleil, 23/9/96)

Economic mission to Sept-Îles

In response to an invitation sent to them last March, a delegation of seven Brazilian iron-industry representatives recently visited the Sept-Îles and Port Cartier areas on an economic mission to forge stronger business ties between the two business communities. Last spring, a North Shore delegation went on a similar mission to Brazil. (Le Soleil, 24/9/96)

EASTERN TOWNSHIPS

	Aug. 96	July 96	June 96	Aug. 95	Month-over-Month Change	Year-over-Year Change
<i>Jobs</i>	125	123	122	130	1.6	-3.8
<i>Unemployed</i>	13	13	13	14	0.0	-7.1
<i>Labour Force</i>	138	136	135	144	1.5	-4.2
<i>Unemploy. Rate</i>	9.3	9.7	9.3	9.8	-4.1	-5.1

Source: Statistics Canada, LFS
In Thousands, unemployment rates and changes in %
Non-seasonally Adjusted Data, three-month moving average

Lower unemployment rate in Sherbrooke

According to seasonally adjusted data, activity in the Greater Sherbrooke area labour market was stable between August and September 1996. The area's unemployment rate during this period fell by 0.6 percentage points, the best performance by a major metropolitan area in Canada. The area's 10.9% unemployment rate in September was equal to its rate for May 1996.

Neuman Aluminum coming to Sherbrooke

The Neuman Aluminum company, formerly known as Alu-Amerika, recently announced that it would set up its new aluminum-processing plant in Sherbrooke, rather than Magog. The company's move into the former ABB plant on Roy Street is expected to create 60 new jobs over the next few months. Some \$19 million will be required for the plant's fit-up.

(La Tribune, 21/9/96, 25/9/96; La Presse, 28/9/96)

GASPÉ / MAGDALEN ISLANDS

	<i>Aug. 96</i>	<i>July 96</i>	<i>June 96</i>	<i>Aug. 95</i>	<i>Month-over-Month Change</i>	<i>Year-over-Year Change</i>
<i>Jobs</i>	37	37	35	36	0.0	2.8
<i>Unemployed</i>	6	6	7	7	0.0	-14.3
<i>Labour Force</i>	43	43	42	43	0.0	0.0
<i>Unemploy. Rate</i>	14.5	14.6	16.5	16.9	-0.7	-14.2

Source: Statistics Canada, LFS
 In Thousands, unemployment rates and changes in %
 Non-seasonally Adjusted Data, three-month moving average

Newport fishing corporation plant may still reopen

An American firm and a Quebec firm have expressed interest in reopening the Société des Pêches de Newport plant, which shut down operations in 1994. About 200 workers are still unemployed and waiting for the plant to eventually reopen. In the meantime, they are drawing \$250 of weekly compensation from the federal government. (Le Journal de Québec, 17/9/96)

LANAUDIÈRE

	<i>Aug. 96</i>	<i>July 96</i>	<i>June 96</i>	<i>Aug. 95</i>	<i>Month-over-Month Change</i>	<i>Year-over-Year Change</i>
<i>Jobs</i>	180	175	171	172	2.9	4.7
<i>Unemployed</i>	25	26	25	19	-3.8	31.6
<i>Labour Force</i>	205	201	196	191	2.0	7.3
<i>Unemploy. Rate</i>	12.2	12.8	12.9	10.1	-4.7	20.8

Source: Statistics Canada, LFS
 In Thousands, unemployment rates and changes in %
 Non-seasonally Adjusted Data, three-month moving average

LAURENTIANS

	Aug. 96	July 96	June 96	Aug. 95	Month-over-Month Change	Year-over-Year Change
<i>Jobs</i>	211	213	217	207	-0.9	1.9
<i>Unemployed</i>	24	23	22	21	4.3	14.3
<i>Labour Force</i>	235	236	239	228	-0.4	3.1
<i>Unemploy. Rate</i>	10.2	9.9	9.2	9.2	3.0	10.9

Source: Statistics Canada, LFS
 In Thousands, unemployment rates and changes in %
 Non-seasonally Adjusted Data, three-month moving

Sub-contracting a major issue

Unionized workers at the GM plant in Boisbriand recently went on strike to force their employer to negotiate a new collective agreement. The employees are seeking restrictions on GM's use of sub-contractors. The strike is part of a widespread plan by the Canadian Automobile Workers (CAW) to bring pressure to bear on the car manufacturers. (Le Journal de Montréal, 4/10/96)

\$39-million project in Blainville

The City of Blainville will soon be the scene of major construction activity on a \$39-million wastewater treatment plant. It is hoped the project will help reduce pollution of the Mille Îles River. The work, expected to begin in spring 1997, will take two years to complete.

(La Presse, 1/10/96)

Major construction at the courthouse

Phase I of a project to extend the Palais de Justice in St Jerome could begin in spring 1997. The \$21.3-million project will involve building a wing to house courtrooms and the Chambre de la Jeunesse youth court. (Constructo, 17/9/96)

LAVAL

	<i>Aug. 96</i>	<i>July 96</i>	<i>June 96</i>	<i>Aug. 95</i>	<i>Month-over-Month Change</i>	<i>Year-over-Year Change</i>
<i>Jobs</i>	157	157	160	164	0.0	-4.3
<i>Unemployed</i>	16	19	20	17	-15.8	-5.9
<i>Labour Force</i>	173	176	180	181	-1.7	-4.4
<i>Unemploy. Rate</i>	9.4	10.7	10.9	9.6	-12.2	-2.1

Source: Statistics Canada, LFS
 In Thousands, unemployment rates and changes in %
 Non-seasonally Adjusted Data, three-month moving average

MAURICIE / BOIS FRANCS

	<i>Aug. 96</i>	<i>July 96</i>	<i>June 96</i>	<i>Aug. 95</i>	<i>Month-over-Month Change</i>	<i>Year-over-Year Change</i>
<i>Jobs</i>	206	208	207	215	-1.0	-4.2
<i>Unemployed</i>	24	24	23	24	0.0	0.0
<i>Labour Force</i>	230	232	230	239	-0.9	-3.8
<i>Unemploy. Rate</i>	10.5	10.4	10.2	9.9	1.0	6.1

Source: Statistics Canada, LFS
 In Thousands, unemployment rates and changes in %
 Non-seasonally Adjusted Data, three-month moving average

1,000 jobs lost in Trois Rivières

According to seasonally adjusted data for the **Trois Rivières Census Metropolitan Area**, 1,000 jobs were lost between August and September 1996. In September, the unemployment rate for the Trois Rivières area rose by 0.5 points to 12.0%, the fourth monthly increase in a row.

Splitting of Mauricie-Bois Francs region under study

The two halves of the Mauricie-Bois Francs administrative region could go amicably on their separate ways as early as 1997 and become two separate administrative regions. The Bois Francs region (Drummondville, Victoriaville and Nicolet) has officially submitted its proposal to the Honourable Guy Chevrette, Quebec's Minister responsible for Regional Development, who was quite receptive to it. Mauricie region (Trois Rivières and Cap de la Madeleine) officials are studying several options and may hold public consultations on the issue in the fall (La Terre de Chez Nous, 26/9/96)

MONTÉRÉGIE

	<i>Aug. 96</i>	<i>July 96</i>	<i>June 96</i>	<i>Aug. 95</i>	<i>Month-over-Month Change</i>	<i>Year-over-Year Change</i>
<i>Jobs</i>	640	645	640	639	-0.8	0.2
<i>Unemployed</i>	70	68	66	60	2.9	16.7
<i>Labour Force</i>	710	713	706	699	-0.4	1.6
<i>Unemploy. Rate</i>	9.8	9.6	9.3	8.6	2.1	14.0

Source: Statistics Canada, LFS
 In Thousands, unemployment rates and changes in %
 Non-seasonally Adjusted Data, three-month moving average

Future of Domtar Inc uncertain

Because of yearly losses in the \$7-million to \$8-million range, the future of Domtar's operations in Beauharnois appears increasingly doubtful. However, regional stakeholders are working together on a business plan to avoid a shutdown of production at the plant, which employs 175 workers. Beauharnois residents have set up a plant recovery committee and plant managers and employees have formed a working group to come up with solutions. (La Presse, 27/9/96)

OUTAOUAIS

	<i>Aug. 96</i>	<i>July 96</i>	<i>June 96</i>	<i>Aug. 95</i>	<i>Month-over-Month Change</i>	<i>Year-over-Year Change</i>
<i>Jobs</i>	154	155	154	152	-0.6	1.3
<i>Unemployed</i>	20	19	19	16	5.3	25.0
<i>Labour Force</i>	174	174	173	168	0.0	3.6
<i>Unemploy. Rate</i>	11.3	11.0	10.8	9.8	2.7	15.3

Source: Statistics Canada, LFS
 In Thousands, unemployment rates and changes in %
 Non-seasonally Adjusted Data, three-month moving average

High-tech firm moves across the Ottawa River

Televitesse Systems, a large firm specializing in advanced technology, has moved its facilities and 40 employees from Kanata in suburban Ottawa to Hull. The company management based its decision on Quebec tax incentives promoting research and development. (La Presse, 28/9/96)

\$20 million to open new Réno-Dépôt store

A Réno-Dépôt store to be opened in Hull or Gatineau will require an investment of \$20 million. Work could begin in the fall. (Constructo, 10/9/96)

Champlain Bridge may be renovated

The National Capital Commission is currently studying a project to renovate the Champlain Bridge in Hull. The project would require an investment of \$20 million. If the project goes ahead, work would begin in spring 1998. (Constructo, 10/9/96)

QUEBEC CITY

	Aug. 96	July 96	June 96	Aug. 95	Month-over-Month Change	Year-over-Year Change
<i>Jobs</i>	296	302	303	291	-2.0	1.7
<i>Unemployed</i>	42	42	39	32	0.0	31.3
<i>Labour Force</i>	338	344	342	323	-1.7	4.6
<i>Unemploy. Rate</i>	12.5	12.3	11.5	9.9	1.6	26.3

Source: Statistics Canada, LFS
In Thousands, unemployment rates and changes in %
Non-seasonally Adjusted Data, three-month moving average

Another increase in Quebec City's unemployment rate

There were 2,000 more unemployed people in the Greater Quebec City area in September. Despite the creation of 1,000 jobs, the unemployment rate rose for the fourth month in a row. The rate for September was 11.2%, the area's highest since February of this year.

Work begins on new exhibition centre

On September 18, 1996, Mayor Jean-Paul L'Allier officiated at the traditional sod-turning ceremony marking the start of construction of Quebec City's new exhibition centre. This is a large-scale project for the city and involves a \$20-million investment. The centre is designed to accommodate large-scale exhibitions requiring large surface areas. It will also complement the recently inaugurated new convention centre. For the first year of operation, 19 exhibitions have already been confirmed. Work is likely to continue until August 1997. (Le Journal de Québec, 19/9/96)

SAGUENAY / LAC ST JEAN

	<i>Aug. 96</i>	<i>July 96</i>	<i>June 96</i>	<i>Aug. 95</i>	<i>Month-over-Month Change</i>	<i>Year-over-Year Change</i>
<i>Jobs</i>	116	117	117	118	-0.9	-1.7
<i>Unemployed</i>	18	18	18	19	0.0	-5.3
<i>Labour Force</i>	134	135	135	137	-0.7	-2.2
<i>Unemploy. Rate</i>	13.5	13.5	13.2	13.7	0.0	-1.5

Source: Statistics Canada, LFS
 In Thousands, unemployment rates and changes in %
 Non-seasonally Adjusted Data, three-month moving average

Stable labour market

Activity in the **Greater Chicoutimi-Jonquière** area labour market between August and September 1996 was stable. Despite the creation of 1,000 jobs during this period, the number of unemployed people remained at the same level as in August. In September, the unemployment rate moved up very slightly by 0.1 percentage points to 14.6%.

Hefty bill for Saguenay flood damage

According to Quebec government estimates, the amount of public and private-sector infrastructure damage is close to \$700 million. The federal government has already announced initial funding of \$50 million for flood disaster victims.
 (La Presse, 24/9/96)

Aluminum plant in Alma would be the region's largest

Alcan Inc's project to build a new aluminum plant in Alma is making progress. Alcan is currently holding public consultations on the project and carrying out several impact studies. The process is expected to last from 15 to 18 months. The plant that Alcan has in mind would cost \$1 billion to build, create a large number of jobs and be the most productive one in the region.

(Le Soleil, 21/9/96)

LABOUR FORCE DATA BY METROPOLITAN AREAS

(Seasonally adjusted estimates, Three-month moving averages)

Metropolitan Areas	Employment						Unemployment rates							
	Sep-96	Aug-96	Sep-95	Change		Variation		Sep-96	Aug-96	Sep-95	Variation		Variation	
				Sep-96	Aug-96	Sep-96	Sep-95				Sep-96	Aug-96	Sep-96	Sep-95
Halifax	169	170	167	-1		2		8.4	8.1	8.6	0.3		-0.2	
Chicoutimi-Jonquière	65	64	61	1		4		14.8	14.5	16.5	0.1		-1.9	
Québec	323	325	320	-2		3		11.2	10.8	9.1	0.4		2.1	
Montréal	1,544	1,546	1,543	-2		1		12.6	12.4	10.8	0.2		1.8	
Trois-Rivières	62	63	62	-1		0		12.0	11.5	12.1	0.5		-0.1	
Sherbrooke	65	66	68	0		-2		10.9	11.5	10.4	-0.6		0.5	
Ottawa-Hull	538	532	510	6		28		7.4	7.7	10.0	-0.3		-2.6	
Toronto	2,154	2,150	2,127	4		27		9.2	9.4	8.5	-0.2		0.7	
Winnipeg	345	345	347	0		-2		8.2	8.6	8.0	-0.4		0.2	
Calgary	455	454	432	1		23		6.9	7.1	7.9	-0.2		-1.0	
Vancouver	930	932	909	-2		21		8.0	7.6	8.5	0.4		-0.5	

Metropolitan Areas	Unemployed						Employment / population ratio							
	Sep-96	Aug-96	Sep-95	Change		Change		Sep-96	Aug-96	Sep-95	Change		Change	
				Sep-96	Aug-96	Sep-96	Sep-95				Sep-96	Aug-96	Sep-96	Sep-95
Halifax	15	15	16	0		-1		62.6	62.1	61.8	0.5		0.8	
Chicoutimi-Jonquière	11	11	12	0		-1		48.3	48.3	46.4	0.0		1.9	
Québec	41	39	32	2		9		56.7	57.5	56.4	-0.8		0.3	
Montréal	222	218	186	4		36		55.9	56.3	56.2	-0.4		-0.3	
Trois-Rivières	8	8	9	0		-1		52.8	54.0	53.7	-1.1		-0.6	
Sherbrooke	8	9	8	-1		0		54.7	55.0	54.9	-0.3		-0.2	
Ottawa-Hull	43	45	57	-2		-14		62.3	61.4	60.8	0.9		1.5	
Toronto	219	222	197	-3		22		61.1	60.9	61.4	0.2		-0.3	
Winnipeg	31	32	30	-1		1		61.4	61.6	62.3	-0.2		-0.9	
Calgary	34	35	37	-1		-3		69.1	69.4	67.5	-0.3		1.6	
Vancouver	81	76	85	5		-4		61.3	61.4	61.0	-0.1		0.3	

Employment in thousands and unemployment rates in percentages

Source: Statistics Canada, LFS

Prepared by Léonel Plasse, Analysis and partnership

LABOUR FORCE DATA BY PROVINCE

(Seasonally Adjusted estimates)

Provinces	Employment						Unemployment rates							
	Sep-96	Aug-96	Sep-95	Change		Variation		Sep-96	Aug-96	Sep-95	Variation		Variation	
				Sep-96	Aug-96	Sep-96	Sep-95				Sep-96	Aug-96	Sep-96	Sep-95
Newfoundland	193	193	198	0		-5		18.6	17.9	18.5	0.7		0.1	
Prince Edward Island	61	61	59	0		2		13.5	13.7	14.4	-0.2		-0.9	
Nova Scotia	384	383	387	1		-3		13.1	12.8	11.0	0.3		2.1	
New Brunswick	307	316	316	-9		-9		12.5	11.5	10.5	1.0		2.0	
Quebec	3,199	3,208	3,208	-9		-9		12.8	11.8	11.0	0.8		1.6	
Ontario	5,325	5,360	5,226	-35		99		9.2	8.5	8.5	0.7		0.7	
Manitoba	526	521	522	5		4		6.9	7.1	7.3	-0.2		-0.4	
Saskatchewan	462	462	461	0		1		6.3	6.5	7.1	-0.2		-0.8	
Alberta	1,413	1,409	1,374	4		39		7.2	6.8	7.6	0.4		-0.4	
British Columbia	1,796	1,803	1,777	-7		19		9.2	9.0	8.9	0.2		0.3	
Canada	13,676	13,723	13,537	-47		139		9.9	9.4	9.2	0.5		0.7	

Provinces	Unemployed						Employment / population ratio							
	Sep-96	Aug-96	Sep-95	Change		Change		Sep-96	Aug-96	Sep-95	Change		Change	
				Sep-96	Aug-96	Sep-96	Sep-95				Sep-96	Aug-96	Sep-96	Sep-95
Newfoundland	44	42	45	2		-1		42.7	42.7	43.5	0.0		-0.8	
Prince Edward Island	9	10	10	-1		-1		56.7	56.8	56.6	-0.1		0.1	
Nova Scotia	58	56	48	2		10		52.1	52.0	52.9	0.1		-0.8	
New Brunswick	44	41	37	3		7		51.1	52.6	52.8	-1.5		-1.7	
Quebec	460	431	398	29		82		54.4	54.6	55.2	-0.2		-0.8	
Ontario	542	499	485	43		57		60.0	60.5	59.7	-0.5		0.3	
Manitoba	39	40	41	-1		-2		61.4	60.9	61.3	0.5		0.1	
Saskatchewan	31	32	35	-1		-4		61.3	61.4	61.5	-0.1		-0.2	
Alberta	109	102	113	7		-4		66.8	66.7	66.3	0.1		0.5	
British Columbia	183	179	173	4		10		59.0	59.4	60.0	-0.4		-1.0	
Canada	1,510	1,432	1,372	78		138		58.4	58.7	58.6	-0.3		-0.2	

Employment in thousands and unemployment rates in percentages

Source: Statistics Canada, LFS

Prepared by Léonel Plasse, Analysis and partnership

LABOUR FORCE DATA BY ADMINISTRATIVE REGIONS

(Unadjusted estimates, Three-month moving averages)

Administrative Regions	Employment						Unemployment rates							
	Sep-96	Aug-96	Sep-95	Change		Variation		Sep-96	Aug-96	Sep-95	Variation		Variation	
				Sep-96	Aug-96	Sep-96	Sep-95				Sep-96	Aug-96	Sep-96	Sep-95
Gaspé-Magdalen Islands	37	37	36	0		1		14.5	14.6	16.9	-0.1		-2.4	
Lower St Lawrence	86	86	89	0		-3		12.6	12.2	10.5	0.4		2.1	
Quebec city	296	302	291	-6		5		12.5	12.3	9.9	0.2		2.6	
Chaudière-Appalaches	184	185	185	-1		-1		5.6	5.6	6.2	0.0		-0.6	
Eastern Townships	125	123	130	2		-5		9.3	9.7	9.8	-0.4		-0.5	
Montréal	640	645	639	-5		1		9.8	9.6	8.6	0.2		1.2	
Montreal	770	778	782	-8		-12		14.0	13.6	11.7	0.4		2.3	
Laval	157	157	164	0		-7		9.4	10.7	9.6	-1.3		-0.2	
Lanaudière	180	175	172	5		8		12.2	12.8	10.1	-0.6		2.1	
Laurentians	211	213	207	-2		4		10.2	9.9	9.2	0.3		1.0	
Outaouais	154	155	152	-1		2		11.3	11.0	9.8	0.3		1.5	
Abitibi-Témiscamingue	68	70	66	-2		2		11.0	10.0	12.1	1.0		-1.1	
Mauricie/Bois-Francs	206	208	215	-2		-9		10.5	10.4	9.9	0.1		0.6	
Saguenay/Lac-St. Jean	116	117	118	-1		-2		13.5	13.5	13.7	0.0		-0.2	
North Shore/North. Quebec	55	57	62	-2		-7		14.3	13.7	9.0	0.6		5.3	
Province of Quebec	3,286	3,309	3,307	-23		-21		11.4	11.3	10.1	0.1		1.3	
Administrative Regions	Unemployed						Employment / population ratio							
	Sep-96	Aug-96	Sep-95	Change		Change		Sep-96	Aug-96	Sep-95	Change		Change	
				Sep-96	Aug-96	Sep-96	Sep-95				Sep-96	Aug-96	Sep-96	Sep-95
Gaspé-Magdalen Islands	6	6	7	0		-1		44.2	44.2	42.8	0.0		1.4	
Lower St Lawrence	12	12	10	0		2		52.4	52.2	54.3	0.2		-1.9	
Quebec city	42	42	32	0		10		54.8	55.9	54.3	-1.1		0.5	
Chaudière-Appalaches	11	11	12	0		-1		60.7	61.1	61.7	-0.4		-1.0	
Eastern Townships	13	13	14	0		-1		55.9	55.4	59.2	0.5		-3.3	
Montréal	70	68	60	2		10		61.4	62.0	62.3	-0.6		-0.9	
Montreal	126	122	103	4		23		52.0	52.5	52.9	-0.5		-0.9	
Laval	16	19	17	-3		-1		57.2	57.4	60.8	-0.2		-3.6	
Lanaudière	25	26	19	-1		6		58.0	56.7	56.9	1.3		1.1	
Laurentians	24	23	21	1		3		59.5	60.2	59.8	-0.7		-0.3	
Outaouais	20	19	16	1		4		60.1	60.5	60.3	-0.4		-0.2	
Abitibi-Témiscamingue	8	8	9	0		-1		56.1	57.8	54.9	-1.7		1.2	
Mauricie/Bois-Francs	24	24	24	0		0		53.2	53.6	56.0	-0.4		-2.8	
Saguenay/Lac-St. Jean	18	18	19	0		-1		50.0	50.6	51.7	-0.6		-1.7	
North Shore/North. Quebec	9	9	6	0		3		53.2	54.4	59.7	-1.2		-6.5	
Province of Quebec	425	421	371	4		54		55.9	56.3	56.9	-0.4		-1.0	

Employment in thousands and unemployment rates in percentages
Source: Statistics Canada, LFS

Prepared by Léonel Plasse, Analysis and partnership

LABOUR FORCE DATA
FULL-TIME, PART-TIME AND EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
(Unadjusted estimates)

Provinces	Full-time employment						Part-time employment							
	Sep-96	Aug-96	Sep-95	Change		Change		Sep-96	Aug-96	Sep-95	Change		Change	
				Sep-96	Aug-96	Sep-96	Sep-95				Sep-96	Aug-96	Sep-96	Sep-95
Newfoundland	172	188	173	-16	-1	31	26	32	5	-1				
Prince Edward Island	53	60	51	-7	2	11	8	11	3	0				
Nova Scotia	316	338	320	-22	-4	77	69	77	8	0				
New Brunswick	270	295	280	-25	-10	53	48	51	5	2				
Quebec	2,683	2,849	2,710	-166	-27	562	462	554	100	8				
Ontario	4,323	4,589	4,313	-266	10	1,010	906	926	104	84				
Manitoba	429	444	429	-15	0	104	91	99	13	5				
Saskatchewan	375	396	372	-21	3	92	81	95	11	-3				
Alberta	1,162	1,216	1,124	-54	38	260	223	261	37	-1				
British Columbia	1,468	1,538	1,436	-70	32	349	317	363	32	-14				
Canada	11,250	11,913	11,206	-663	44	2,549	2,231	2,469	318	80				

Secteurs	Employment by Industry						
	Sep-96	Aug-96	Sep-95	Change		Change	
				Sep-96	Aug-96	Sep-96	Sep-95
Agriculture	90	89	70	1	20		
Autres sect. primaire	45	44	53	1	-8		
Secteur manufacturier	623	625	604	-2	19		
Construction	151	151	167	0	-16		
Transp., comm. serv. pub.	213	222	243	-9	-30		
Commerce	553	548	546	5	7		
Finances, ass. et immeubles	186	191	195	-5	-9		
Services	1,186	1,220	1,186	-34	0		
Administration publique	197	221	200	-24	-3		
Ensemble des secteurs	3,245	3,311	3,264	-66	-19		

Employment in thousands

Source: Statistics Canada, LFS

Prepared by Léonel Plasse, Analysis and Partnership

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