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A Weekly Review

Friday, September 3, 1999

OVERVIEW

- **Industrial product prices jump**

  From June to July, industrial product prices jumped 1.2%. Prices were up from a year earlier by 2.2%—the largest change since December 1995. Refined petroleum product prices rose sharply.

- **Crude oil lifts raw material prices higher**

  In July, higher crude oil prices lifted raw material prices by 4.6%. The supply cuts imposed by OPEC and other producers have had a major impact this year on oil prices, which have surged 63.2% since January.

- **Large retailers' sales still growing**

  Canada's large retailers saw year-over-year sales growth of 5.1% in May and 8.3% in June.

- **Earnings, overtime and payroll employment unchanged**

  Average weekly earnings, overtime hours and payroll employment were all virtually unchanged from May to June. Compared with June 1998, earnings were up less than 1.0%.

- **Number receiving EI declines again**

  In June, the number of Canadians receiving employment insurance benefits declined 1.8%. As well, jobless claims and the amount paid out as benefits both dropped.

- **Farmers' revenues continue to erode**

  In the first six months of 1999, farmers' cash receipts fell for a third consecutive year in the wake of declining receipts from crops and livestock.

- **Tuition fees' rate of increase has slowed a bit**

  In the 1999/2000 academic year, university students will face another substantial increase in tuition fees. However, the rate of increase in tuition has slowed a bit.

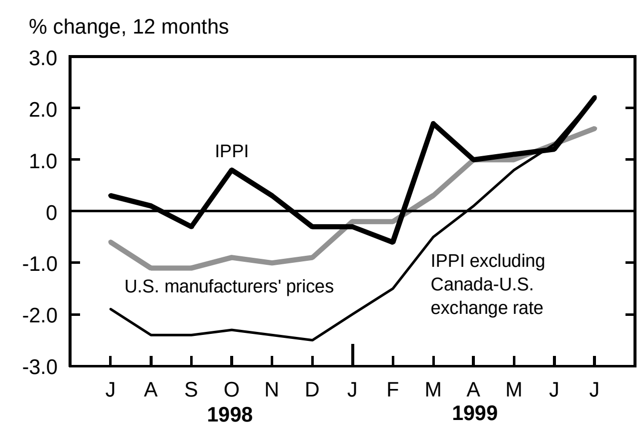
Industrial product prices jump

From June to July, industrial product prices jumped 1.2%. Prices were up from a year earlier by 2.2%—the largest change since December 1995. The most significant monthly price increase was for refined petroleum products. In July, the industrial product price level, excluding petroleum and coal products, increased 0.9% and stood 1.2% higher than a year earlier. Notable increases were also seen in July for softwood lumber, non-ferrous metal products and exported motor vehicles. On a yearly basis, refined petroleum products and softwood lumber accounted for almost all of the increase in the overall price level.

In mid-July, the value of the U.S. dollar (C$1.48) was up from mid-June (C$1.46) but about the same as it was a year earlier. That meant the Canada-U.S. exchange rate had almost no impact in July on the yearly change in Canadian industrial prices. However, it did contribute to the month-to-month increase in prices. If that exchange rate had remained at June's rate, the monthly increase in industrial prices would have been lower, 0.9% not 1.2%.

Refined petroleum product prices jumped from June by 7.5% (+22.3% from July 1998). Prices have climbed 32.6% from their low in February 1999. The jump occurred as crude oil prices rose a further 15.1% in July.

Manufacturing prices



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... Industrial product prices jump

Softwood lumber prices surged in July by 6.1% (+28.1%). The most significant price increases were in British Columbia. Lumber prices in the province were up 6.1% for hemlock and fir, 6.2% for western red cedar and 4.3% for Douglas fir. Domestic softwood lumber prices increased 5.6%, while export prices rose 6.4%.

July's most significant price increases for non-ferrous primary metal products were for copper (+26.2%), aluminum (+5.1%) and nickel (+11.5%) products. Other increases included those of refined zinc (+10.9%) and primary lead (+4.0%) products. Prices for all these had declined in June. On a yearly basis, primary metal products did not contribute on a net basis to the overall increase in industrial prices because price gains for nickel (+32.7%) and copper (+3.7%) products were offset by decreases for primary steel products (-3.5%) and steel pipe and tubing (-4.3%).

Motor vehicle prices were up in July by 1.2%. The largest part of this increase was due the loonie's decline in U.S. dollar terms. In value terms, about 90% of the vehicles made in Canada are exported, mostly to the United States. Export prices were up 1.4% for cars and 1.2% for trucks. Domestic prices, however, edged down 0.3% for cars and were unchanged for trucks. The decline in Canada of car prices occurred as automakers continued to make small adjustments to incentive programs. The price level also increased in July for vehicle parts and for other transport equipment. Both of these increases were almost entirely due to the Canada-U.S. exchange rate.

In the United States, manufacturing prices were also up overall in July (+0.3%) and on a yearly basis (+1.6%). Since November 1998, the yearly change in U.S. manufacturing prices has risen from -1.0% to +1.6%.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 1870-1878.

The July 1999 issue of ***Industry price indexes*** *(62-011-XPB, $22/$217) will be available at the end of the month. For further information, contact Client Services (613-951-3350; fax: 613-951-1539; infounit@statcan.ca), Prices Division.*

Crude oil lifts raw material prices higher

In July, manufacturers paid 4.6% more for raw materials than they did in June. This increase was almost entirely due to higher prices for crude oil and non-ferrous metals. Crude oil prices also rose in each of the four months prior to July. In July, crude prices were at almost the same level as in October 1997. From June to July, the price of crude oil jumped 15.1%. Excluding mineral fuels (90% of which is crude oil), raw material prices increased in July by only 0.7%. The supply cuts imposed by OPEC (which supplies one-third of the world's oil) and other producers have had a major impact this year on oil prices, which have surged 63.2% since January.

Raw material prices were up from July 1998 by 10.0%—the largest yearly increase in almost three years. By far, the major contributor was crude oil, up 45.3% since July 1998. The impact of mineral fuels was even more pronounced on a yearly basis in July: if mineral fuels were excluded, raw material prices would have declined overall by 0.8%.

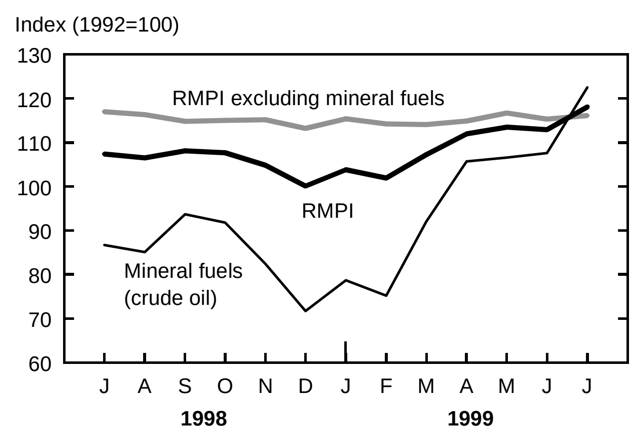
In July, non-ferrous metal prices recorded their largest monthly increase since 1981 (+9.8%). Higher prices were seen for copper concentrates (+26.3%), nickel concentrates (+12.3%), aluminum materials (+6.9%) and zinc concentrates (+11.1%). Recent production cuts have added pressure for higher copper prices. Zinc prices have increased due to low inventories. For most base metals, prices have recently been boosted by commodity funds buying forward positions in anticipation of economic recovery in Asia. Gold prices have been in the doldrums due to selling by major banks around the world.

Vegetable product prices were down from June 4.2%. The major contributors were grains (-5.6%), oilseeds (-7.3%) and coffee (-5.0%). Compared with July 1998, vegetable product prices were down 14.4%, due mainly to lower prices for oilseeds (-23.4%), unrefined sugar (-31.9%) and grains (-11.5%). Bumper crops for corn, wheat and soybeans are expected in the United States. This follows two consecutive years of bumper crops. As a result, inventories of grains and oilseeds are on the high side, contributing to lower prices. Unrefined sugar prices are very weak. Sugar production will outpace consumption by 3.44 million metric tonnes in the 1998/99 marketing year. However, demand for sugar has slowed because Russia, the world's largest sugar importer, has shut down buying for a few months. Heavy sugar buying by Russia occurred before the introduction on August 1 of import duties.

Note to readers

The Raw Materials Price Index (RMPI) reflects the prices that manufacturers paid for key raw materials. Many of these prices are set in a world market. Also, unlike the Industrial Product Price Index, the RMPI includes goods that are not produced in Canada.

Raw Materials Price Index



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... Crude oil lifts raw material prices higher

Animals and animal product prices fell in July by 1.6%. Lower prices for hogs (-8.5%) and cattle (-1.3%) were marginally offset by higher prices for chickens (+1.9%). Hog prices weakened due to an excessive supply of animals and frozen pork and due to an expectation of slower demand. Producers are now selling hogs to avoid potentially lower prices in the near future.

Wood prices showed no change in July. A small decrease in log prices was offset by slightly higher pulpwood prices. Compared with July 1998, log prices increased 10.7%, whereas pulpwood prices declined 1.7%. There appears to be a growing interest in the business of exporting logs; recent export volumes have increased.

Available on CANSIM: matrix 1879.

*The July 1999 issue of **Industry price indexes** (62-011-XPB, $22/ $217) will be available at the end of this month. For further information, contact Client Services (613-951-3350; fax (613-951-1539; infounit@statcan.ca), Prices Division.*

Large retailers' sales still growing

Canada's large retailers saw year-over-year sales growth of 5.1% in May and 8.3% in June. In comparison, year-over-year sales for total retail trade excluding vehicle dealers (motor and recreational) increased 3.0% in May and 5.7% in June. The sales increases for health and personal care products and for hardware, lawn and garden products were strong in both months, especially June. (The data refer to sales figures that have not been seasonally adjusted.)

Sales of health and personal care products were 13.3% higher this May than in May 1998. In June, they were up from June 1998 by 15.6%. In the first half of 1999, the large retailers sold $2,466 million worth of health and personal care products. This was up from the first half of 1998 by 16.2%. The health and personal care product line accounted for 7.6% of all the products that large retailers sold in the first half of 1999, up from 6.9% in the first half of 1998.

In May, the large retailers sold $448 million of hardware, lawn and garden supplies (+11.9% from a year earlier), while June sales totalled $362 million (+22.8%). April, May and June (especially May) are traditionally the key months for sales of lawn and garden products. For these three months of 1999, lawn and garden products alone accounted for 67% of the total sales of the hardware, lawn and garden category. The large retailers' sales of lawn and garden products in April, May and June were 19.0% higher than they were in the second quarter of 1998.

Clothing, footwear and accessories also made a strong showing in June at the large retailers (+11.9%). Clothing sales fared much better at department stores and at family and children's clothing stores classified as "other clothing stores" than they did at the more specialized men's or women's clothing stores. In April, sales of clothing, footwear and accessories rose only 1.9% over April 1998. That pace accelerated to 4.8% in May. Clothing, footwear and accessories generally account for the second largest share of all products offered by large retailers.

To order data, or for general information, contact Client Services (1 877 421-3067, retailinfo@statcan.ca). For further analytical information, contact Janet Sear (613-951-5580), Distributive Trades Division.

Large retailers' sales
Not seasonally adjusted

	May 1998	May 1999	May 1998 to May 1999	June 1998	June 1999	June 1998 to June 1999
	$ millions		% change	$ millions		% change
Commodities, total	**5,808**	**6,104**	**5.1**	**5,428**	**5,876**	**8.3**
Food and beverages	2,104	2,149	2.2	1,968	2,039	3.6
Clothing, footwear and accessories	1,187	1,244	4.8	1,053	1,178	11.9
Home furnishings and electronics	646	700	8.5	689	742	7.7
Health and personal care products	385	436	13.3	365	422	15.6
Housewares	249	265	6.4	242	261	7.6
Sporting and leisure goods	251	269	7.3	253	280	10.7
Hardware, lawn and garden products	401	448	11.9	294	362	22.8
All other goods and services	587	592	1.0	564	595	5.4

Earnings, overtime and payroll employment unchanged

In June, average weekly earnings for all employees stood at $609.89, virtually unchanged from May and, compared with June 1998, up less than 1.0%. This continues the trend of moderate growth in earnings, which have shown an annual growth rate since June 1997 of less than 2.0%.

Salaried employees saw their average weekly earnings rise compared with June 1998 by 1.8%, whereas hourly rated employees took home an increase of just 0.4%. Employees included in the "other employees" category saw their average weekly earnings drop 5.5%. Much of that drop was caused by a decrease in the earnings of commissioned salespersons in the finance and insurance industries.

Hourly rated employees in all industries worked in June an average 31.5 hours a week (including overtime), virtually unchanged from May. Their average overtime hours also changed little from May to June.

The total number of employees on payrolls was also almost unchanged from May to June. Employees were added in business services, but those gains were matched by losses in construction, mining, transport and storage.

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

*The June 1999 issue of **Employment, earnings and hours** (72-002-XPB, $32/$320) presents the month's industry data and other labour market indicators in detail. Annual averages for 1998 are now available in a variety of formats. Custom tabulations are available on demand. For further information, contact Jean Leduc (613-951-4090; fax: 613-951-4087; labour@statcan.ca), Labour Division.*

Average weekly earnings by industry, June 1999
Seasonally adjusted

	$	% change, previous month	% change, previous year
All industries	**609.89**	**0.1**	**0.7**
Logging and forestry	776.34	1.3	2.0
Mining, quarrying and oil wells	1,120.69	1.5	2.0
Manufacturing	752.63	-0.4	-1.4
Construction	693.19	-0.3	1.2
Transportation and storage	742.53	0.1	0.7
Communications and other utilities	817.14	0.0	0.9
Wholesale trade	663.13	-0.2	0.4
Retail trade	370.51	0.4	2.5
Finance and insurance	824.35	2.2	2.0
Real estate and insurance agencies	644.50	-0.5	4.4
Business services	702.80	1.0	1.9
Education-related services	657.54	0.0	-0.7
Health and social services	526.02	-0.1	1.3
Accommodation, food and beverage	233.39	0.5	2.3
Public administration	745.51	0.4	0.1
Miscellaneous services	410.17	0.3	1.3

Number receiving EI declines again

In June, 512,050 Canadians received the regular type of employment insurance (EI) benefits. That was down from May by 1.8%. Seven provinces and the territories reported decreased numbers of EI beneficiaries. Increases were recorded in Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick and Newfoundland.

The number of claims for EI benefits made by the jobless dropped 11.1% to 204,900 claims. The amount paid out as regular benefits fell 13.2% in June to $605.8 million.

The number of beneficiaries is a measure of all persons who received employment insurance benefits for the week containing the 15th day of the month. Regular benefit payments is the total of all monies received by individuals for the entire month. These different reference periods must be considered when making data comparisons.

The Employment Insurance Act allows each province or administrative region of Human Resources Development Canada some autonomy in the way renewal claims are handled. Thus, changes from month to month in claims levels may be affected by these differences in provincial/regional administrative procedures.

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

EI beneficiaries receiving regular benefits, June 1999
Seasonally adjusted

	Beneficiaries	% change, previous month	% change, previous year
Canada	**512,050**	**-1.8**	**-8.0**
Newfoundland	34,640	1.0	10.1
Prince Edward Island	8,340	2.2	-8.9
Nova Scotia	26,890	-0.2	-11.5
New Brunswick	34,520	1.1	-7.7
Quebec	175,850	-0.4	-10.2
Ontario	104,080	-2.2	-17.3
Manitoba	12,760	-3.0	-1.3
Saskatchewan	13,080	-5.7	20.7
Alberta	37,420	-10.5	19.5
British Columbia	63,860	-3.3	-6.4
Yukon	1,030	-3.7	-22.0
Northwest Territories and Nunavut	1,260	-2.3	13.5

For further information, contact Gilles Groleau (613-951-4090, fax: 613-951-4087; labour@statcan.ca), Labour Statistics Division.

Farmers' revenues continue to erode

Farmers' cash receipts or gross revenues in the first half of this year totalled $14.4 billion, down from the first half of 1998 by 1.9% and down for a third consecutive year. However, this level was 2.3% above the $14.0 billion average of the five-year period between 1994 and 1998. The record high in receipts for a first half was $14.8 billion in 1996.

Breaking that down, crop receipts declined 5.1% to $6.7 billion. That was 0.9% below the previous five-year average for the first half. Prices for most grains and oilseeds have dropped to their lowest levels since 1994. Livestock receipts slipped 0.9% from the first half of 1998 to $7.0 billion, due mainly to lower hog prices. However, livestock receipts in the first half were 5.0% above the previous five-year average. And program payments to farmers reached $679 million, up 25.5% from the previous year, as payments under the Net Income Stabilization Account in 1999 were triggered by the lower farm incomes reported in 1998.

Among the crops, cash receipts for canola declined 27.4% to $795 million. A combination of lower deliveries (-15.6%) and prices (-14.1%) was responsible. Receipts for soybeans slumped 33.1% to $240 million, as deliveries fell 16.8% and prices dropped 19.6%. An abundance of oilseed products on the world market sent prices sliding. Durum wheat receipts tumbled a significant 26.4% to $388 million. Lower prices (-38.4%) far outweighed growth in deliveries (+22.9%) as farmers delivered a record crop. Large world wheat supplies continued to push prices lower. Barley receipts dropped 27.7% to $250 million in the wake of lower deliveries and prices. Barley receipts were also 40.1% below their previous five-year average. Abundant world supplies of feed grains, due in part to bumper corn harvests in the United States, have put downward pressure on prices for three years now.

On the positive side, receipts from corn swelled by 33.6% to $374 million. A record crop sustained deliveries (+62.5%) that more than offset weaker prices (-17.8%). Receipts from potatoes rose 12.7% to $384 million, fuelled by growing demand for frozen french fries in both Canada and the United States. Prices increased 13.7%, whereas deliveries edged down 0.9%.

As for livestock, lower hog prices continued to be a drag on receipts in the first half. Hog producers saw receipts fall to $1.1 billion, down 9.9% from the first half of 1998—the largest decrease in the livestock industry. Hog marketings were up 11.9%, but prices were off 19.4%. Analysts had expected to see the U.S. sow herd shrink this spring. That did not occur, however, so prices remained lower than anticipated. Cattle and calf receipts remained virtually unchanged at $2.7 billion. A reduction in the number of cattle on the market was offset by higher prices. Meanwhile, the supply-managed sectors experienced stable market conditions and inexpensive feed costs.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 3582-3592.

The January-June 1999 issue of ***Farm cash receipts*** *(Internet at www.statcan.ca: 21-001-XIB, $15/$48) presents the full report. For further information, contact Martin Beaulieu (613-951-6357, martin.beaulieu@statcan.ca), Agriculture Division.*

Note to readers

Farm cash receipts measure the gross revenue of farm businesses in current dollars. This includes sales of crops and livestock products (except sales between farms in the same province) and program payments. It also includes Canadian Wheat Board and Ontario Wheat Producers' Marketing Board payments and deferred grain receipts. The receipts data presented here are not directly comparable with the 1996 Census of Agriculture data.

Farm cash receipts

	First half 1999	% change, first half 1998
Canada	**14,373**	**-1.9**
Newfoundland	37	8.8
Prince Edward Island	192	12.3
Nova Scotia	166	0.0
New Brunswick	169	9.0
Quebec	2,452	4.1
Ontario	3,195	-0.9
Manitoba	1,437	0.8
Saskatchewan	2,658	-9.5
Alberta	3,097	-5.0
British Columbia	969	4.0

Note: *Figures may not add to totals due to rounding.*

Tuition fees' rate of increase has slowed a bit

In the 1999/2000 academic year, university students will face another substantial increase in tuition fees. However, the rate of increase in tuition fees has slowed a bit. For undergraduate arts students—they account for a large proportion of universities' enrolments—fees this academic year have increased an average 7.1%. This compares with an annual average hike of about 9% in each of the past five years.

Tuition fees have soared during the past decade, mainly due to attempts by universities to offset cuts in government funding. As government funding has shrunk as a percentage of the universities' total operating revenues, tuition fees paid by students have become an increasingly important source of revenue for Canadian universities. In 1980/81, the proportion of operating revenues coming from governments stood at 74%. That declined to 58% by 1996/97. By contrast, the proportion coming from tuition fees doubled over the same period from 8% to 16%. As a result, undergraduate arts fees since 1990/91 have more than doubled in all provinces except Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick and British Columbia. The largest increase occurred in Alberta, where average tuition fees for undergraduate arts students have almost tripled from $1,244 to $3,658.

This fall, tuition fees will increase in every province except British Columbia and Quebec. British Columbia has frozen fees in public universities for a fifth consecutive year. As for Quebec universities, fees for residents of the province will remain frozen at $1,668. However, in 1997/98, Quebec universities introduced higher fees for out-of-province students. Following an 8.5% increase last year, these out-of-province fees will jump another 10% this fall.

Students in medicine and dentistry will be hit hardest by fee increases in the 1999/2000 academic year. These two programs will also be the most expensive in terms of average tuition. Since 1995/96, fees in Ontario's dentistry programs have almost quadrupled, while fees in medicine programs have doubled or quadrupled, depending on the institution. In 1998, Ontario completely deregulated the fees charged for professional programs such as medicine, dentistry, business and law.

Fees in medicine have also risen significantly elsewhere in the country. Exceptions are seen in Quebec, Saskatchewan and British Columbia, where they have remained stable over the past five years. The situation is similar for dentistry programs in Quebec and British Columbia. However, Saskatchewan has significantly increased tuition fees for dentistry, due to concerns over availability of funds.

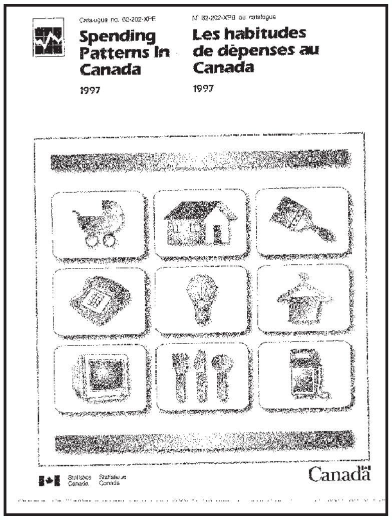
As for graduate students, they will pay on average $3,681 in tuition this fall, up from the previous academic year by 8.3%. However, many universities have kept their graduate tuition fees stable or have imposed relatively small increases for 1999/2000. A few universities have stabilised or lowered tuition for foreign students this school year. Some universities are attempting to improve their competitive position in the minds of foreign and graduate students.

Information is also available on additional compulsory fees and the cost of accommodation on campus. To order data, or for general enquiries, contact Daniel Perrier (613-951-1503, perrdan@statcan.ca). For analytical information, contact Brigitte Bouchard (613-951-9167, boucbri@statcan.ca), Centre for Education Statistics.

Average tuition fees for undergraduate students

	1998/99	1999/2000	1998/99 to 1999/2000
	$		% change
Undergraduate, total	**3,155**	**3,433**	**8.8**
Agriculture	3,183	3,364	5.7
Architecture	3,132	3,372	7.7
Arts	3,156	3,379	7.1
Commerce	3,131	3,391	8.3
Dentistry	5,576	7,377	32.3
Education	3,032	3,245	7.0
Engineering	3,292	3,606	9.5
Household sciences	3,031	3,260	7.6
Law	3,274	3,639	11.2
Medecine	4,930	5,699	15.6
Music	3,096	3,299	6.6
Science	3,150	3,357	6.6
Graduate, total	**3,400**	**3,681**	**8.3**

New from Statistics Canada



Spending patterns in Canada
1997

Consult *Spending patterns in Canada, 1997* to learn how Canadian households spend their money. This report allows you to assess household spending patterns in different regions of the country and to examine expenses by different types of households (such as lone-parent, senior, or high-income). It includes statistical highlights and key tables from the first annual Survey of Household Spending.

The Survey of Household Spending collects information from households and families about their spending on a wide variety of goods and services from food to communications to healthcare to charitable contributions.

Spending patterns in Canada, 1997 *(paper: 62-202-XPB, $45; online at www.statcan.ca: 62-202-XIB, $34) is now available. For further information, contact Client Services (613-951-7355, 1 888 297-7355, fax: 613-951-3012, income@statcan.ca), Income Statistics Division.*

Low income after tax and low income measures
1997

Low income after tax, 1997 presents the 1997 rates, estimated numbers and distributions of low income after-tax in terms of individuals and families. As well, it assembles selected historical tables based on two alternative measures to the traditional pre-tax low-income cutoffs.

Low income measures, 1997 compiles low-income data based on the pre-tax low-income measures for 1997. This publication presents the 1997 rates, estimated numbers and distributions of low-income persons and families. It also provides selected historical tables based on low-income measures.

Low income measures, low income after-tax cutoffs and low income after-tax measures gathers together historical sets of the three alternative measures for measuring the size, prevalence and composition of the low-income population. The report covers the period from 1980 to 1997.

The three publications, ***Low income after tax, 1997*** *(13-592-XIB, $30),* ***Low income measures, 1997*** *(13-582-XIB, $23) and* ***Low income measures, low income after-tax cutoffs and low income after-tax measures*** *(13F0019XIB, no charge), are now available online at www.statcan.ca. For further information, contact Client Services (613-951-7355 or 1 888 297-7355, fax: 613-951-3012, income@statcan.ca), Income Statistics Division.*

Legal aid: Description of operations
March 1999

Legal aid in Canada: Description of operations describes the structure and administration of the provincial/territorial legal aid services in Canada. The report includes information on legislation, organization, coverage, eligibility, duty counsel and tariffs. Lists of resource persons and legal aid office locations are also provided.

The report ***Legal aid in Canada: Description of operations*** *(diskette: 85-217-XDB, $35; online at www.statcan.ca: 85-217-XIB, $30) is now available. For further information, contact Client Services (613-951-9023 or 1 800 387-2231), Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics.*

New from Statistics Canada

Economic overview of farm incomes, dairy farms
1996

The fourth bulletin in the *Economic overview of farm incomes* series produced by Statistics Canada and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada is now available. The series offers farm financial information and analysis based on data from the Taxation Data Program and other agricultural surveys.

This new bulletin provides a detailed analysis of dairy farms. It includes information on farm revenues, expenses and net operating income before depreciation. The data are tabulated by revenue class and by province. Information is also included on the concentration and specialization of production, as well as on the physical characteristics of dairy farms.

Economic overview of farm incomes, dairy farms *(21-005-XIE, vol. 1, no. 4, no charge) is now available online at www.statcan.ca. Look under "Products and services" then "Downloadable publications (free)". For further information, contact Lina Di Piétro (613-951-3171 or 1 800 465-1991, fax: 613-951-3868) or Alain Bertrand (613-951-5027), Agriculture Division.*

Postal area profiles
1997

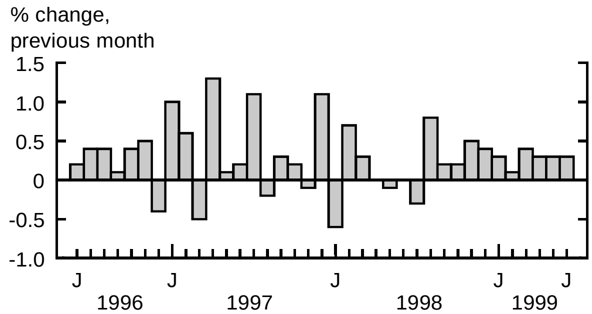
Postal area profiles, a databank profiling more than 5,000 communities across Canada, is now available for 1997. It is based on 1997 tax records filed in the spring of 1998. These data are ideal for supporting policy analysis because they provide a comprehensive picture of communities. High standards of confidentiality ensure that no individual or family can be identified from these profiles.

The profiles consist of five tables that include information on taxfilers and dependants, selected sources of income of individuals, labour force participation, economic dependency on transfer payments and family characteristics. Data on each community can be compared with provincial and national figures to show how communities fit into the big picture. These data can also be used to assess trends over the past four years.

To order ***Postal area profiles 1997****, or for further information, contact Client Services (613-951-9720, fax: 613-951-4745, saadinfo@statcan.ca), Small Area and Administrative Data Division.*

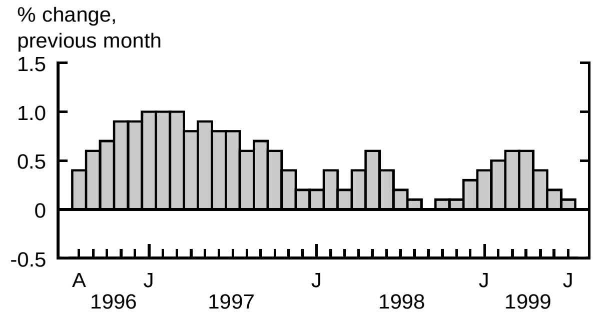
Current trends

Gross domestic product



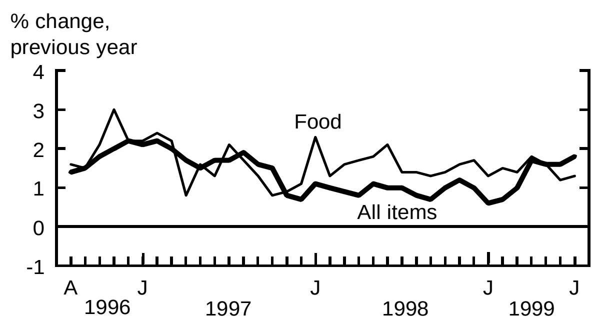
Economic activity continued to advance in June (+0.3%). This extended the expansion to 11 months – the longest uninterrupted string of advances in more than a decade.

Composite Index



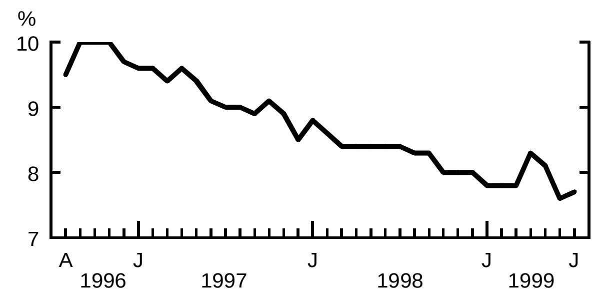
The growth of the leading indicator slowed to 0.1% in July, marking its smallest gain since last November.

Consumer Price Index



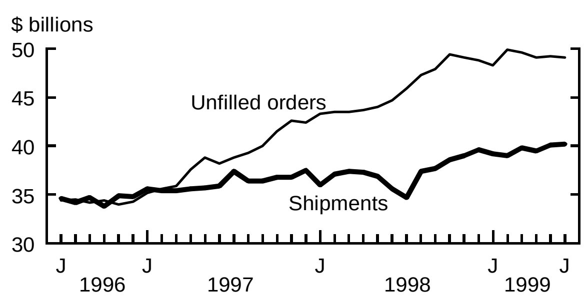
Consumers paid 1.8% more for goods and services in July 1999 than they did a year earlier. Food prices rose 1.3%.

Unemployment rate



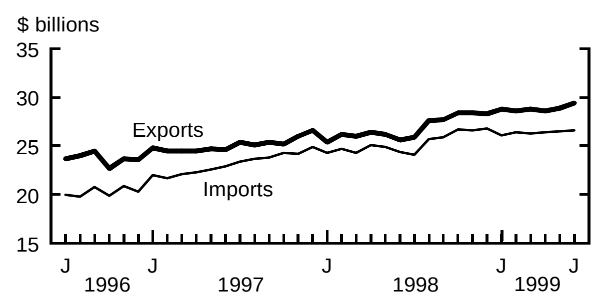
In July, an increase in the number of people looking for work, mostly among youths, pushed the unemployment rate up 0.1 percentage points to 7.7%.

Manufacturing



Manufacturers' shipments grew 0.4% in June to $40.2 billion. The backlog of unfilled orders dropped 0.2% to $49.1 billion.

Merchandise trade



In June, the value of merchandise exports rose 1.9% from May to $29.4 billion. Imports edged up only 0.3% to 26.6 billion.

Note: *All series are seasonally adjusted except the Consumer Price Index.*

Latest statistics

	Period	Level	Change, previous period	Change, previous year
GENERAL				
Gross domestic product ($ billion, 1992)	June*	741.2	0.3%	3.6%
Composite Index (1981=100)	July	215.0	0.1%	3.8%
Operating profits of enterprises ($ billion)	Q1 1999	36.3	4.7%	..
Capacity utilization (%)	Q1 1999	83.1	0.5†	– 0.3†
DOMESTIC DEMAND				
Retail trade ($ billion)	June	21.4	0.3%	5.2%
New motor vehicle sales (thousand of units)	June	125.0	0.6%	1.8%
Wholesale trade ($ billion)	June	29.8	0.0%	7.7%
LABOUR				
Employment (millions)	July	14.68	0.3%	2.7%
Unemployment rate (%)	July	7.7	0.1†	– 0.7†
Participation rate (%)	July	65.4	0.1†	0.4†
Average weekly earnings ($)	June*	609.89	0.1%	0.7%
Help-wanted Index (1996=100)	July	160	0.6%	11.9%
INTERNATIONAL TRADE				
Merchandise exports ($ billion)	June	29.4	1.9%	14.9%
Merchandise imports ($ billion)	June	26.6	0.3%	9.0%
Merchandise trade balance (all figures in $ billion)	June	2.8	0.4	1.6
MANUFACTURING				
Shipments ($ billion)	June	40.3	0.4%	13.1%
New orders ($ billion)	June	40.1	– 0.1%	10.4%
Unfilled orders ($ billion)	June	49.1	– 0.2%	9.8%
Inventory/shipments ratio	June	1.26	0.00	– 0.12
PRICES				
Consumer Price Index (1992=100)	July	110.8	0.3%	1.8%
Industrial Product Price Index (1992=100)	July*	122.1	1.2%	2.2%
Raw Materials Price Index (1992=100)	July*	118.1	4.6%	10.0%
New Housing Price Index (1992=100)	June	100.6	0.0%	0.5%

Note: *All series are seasonally adjusted with the exception of the price indexes.*
* *new this week*
† *percentage point*
.. *figures not available yet due to a survey redesign*

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Publications released from August 26 to September 1, 1999

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AGRICULTURE				
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Field crop reporting series, vol. 78, no. 5: July 31 estimates of production of principal field crops, Canada	July 31, 1999	22-002-XPB	15/88	15/88
The dairy review	April-June 1999			
Internet		23-001-XIB	27/89	
Paper		23-001-XPB	36/119	36/119
BALANCE OF PAYMENTS AND FINANCIAL FLOWS				
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Legal aid in Canada: Description of operations	March 1999	85-217-XIB	30	
CENSUS				
1996 Census catalogue, final edition	1996	92-350-UPE	15	15
INCOME STATISTICS				
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Imports by country	Jan.-June 1999			
Microfiche		65-006-XMB	62/206	62/206
Paper		65-006-XPB	124/412	124/412
LABOUR AND HOUSEHOLD SURVEYS ANALYSIS				
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Energy statistics handbook	August 1999			
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Paper		57-601-UPB	387	387
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Quarterly report on energy supply-demand in Canada	Q3 1998	57-003-XPB	43/141	43/141
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