

The Daily

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Perspectives on Labour and Income

July 2009 online edition

The July 2009 online edition of *Perspectives on Labour and Income*, released today, features two articles.

The article "GIS update" looks at recent trends in take-up and application rates for Guaranteed Income Supplement benefits.

"Barriers to training access" examines various job characteristics that reduce the likelihood that employees will receive employer-sponsored training, as well as the differential impacts of these factors on women and men, even after controlling for personal and job attributes.

This edition also contains a yearly update on the gambling industry.

The July 2009 online edition of *Perspectives on Labour and Income*, Vol. 10, no. 7 (75-001-X, free), is now available from the *Publications* module of our website.

For more information, contact Henry Pold (613-951-4608; henry.pold@statcan.gc.ca), Labour and Household Surveys Analysis Division.



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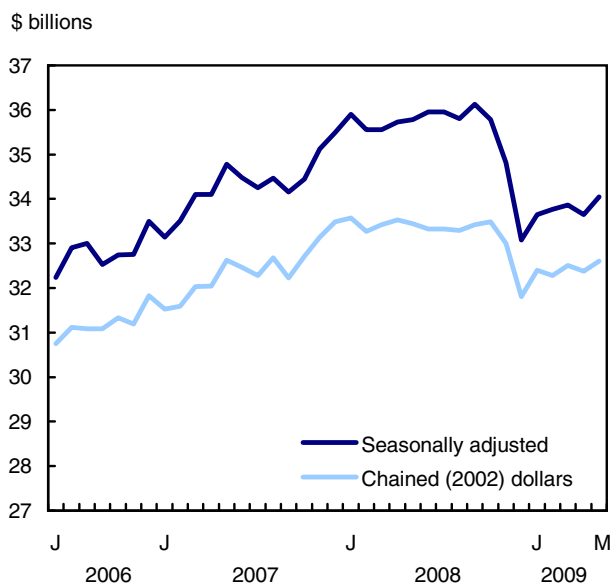
Retail trade

May 2009

Retail sales in current dollars increased 1.2% in May to \$34.0 billion, more than offsetting a modest decline in April. Sales increased in seven of eight sectors, led by a 2.4% increase in the automotive sector. Retail sales have been generally rising since the beginning of 2009.

In volume terms, retail sales increased 0.7%.

Retail sales increase in May



A 3.4% rise in sales at new car dealers was the main contributor to May's increase in the automotive sector, reflecting increased sales of trucks, according to the New Motor Vehicle Sales Survey. Used and recreational motor vehicle and parts dealers saw their sales rise 1.8% after six months of declines. Sales at gasoline stations advanced 0.9% after decreasing 4.7% over the previous two months.

The building and outdoor home supplies stores sector saw sales increase by 1.0%, double the rate of the previous month. Sales in home centres and hardware stores (+1.1%) rose for the fourth consecutive month. Specialized building materials and garden stores posted a 0.8% gain after decreases in the previous two months.

Note to readers

Total retail sales by volume are measured by deflating values in current dollars of the various trade groups using consumer price indexes. This retail sales in chained dollars series (2002) is a chain Fisher volume index with 2002 as the reference year.

After declining in April, sales at food and beverage stores rose 0.7%, with all store types registering increases. None of these increases offset April's declines.

Furniture, home furnishings and electronics stores saw their sales rise 0.5%, the first increase in this sector since July 2008. Sales at home furnishings stores (+2.5%) led the increase in May and have been outperforming the other types of stores in this sector since February 2009. A major part of the revenue of home furnishings stores comes from the sales and installation of products related to home renovation and building, such as floor coverings and tiles.

The exception to rising sales was in clothing and accessories stores, where sales were essentially unchanged from April. Clothing stores registered a 0.2% increase in sales, while the decline in shoe, clothing accessories and jewellery stores (-0.7%) was the fourth consecutive decrease for that trade group.

Sales up in nine provinces

Retail sales were up in nine provinces in May, largely reflecting higher sales of new motor vehicles. The largest contributor to the national increase was a 1.5% gain in sales in Ontario. Retail sales in Ontario have risen in four of the last five months.

The highest rate of increase was in New Brunswick (+2.5%), where new car dealers reported strong truck sales.

With a 1.0% rise in May, Newfoundland and Labrador is the only province where retail sales have risen every month so far in 2009.

The only province to post a decrease in sales was Prince Edward Island. Its retail sales fell 0.7%, following two months of increases greater than 1%.

It is possible to consult the tables of unadjusted data by industry and by province and territory from the *Tables by subject* module of our website.

For information on related indicators, refer to the *Latest statistics* page on our website.

Available on CANSIM: tables 080-0014 to 080-0017.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey numbers, including related surveys, 2406 and 2408.

The May 2009 issue of the publication *Retail Trade* (63-005-X, free) will be available shortly.

Data on retail trade for June will be released on August 24.

For more information, or to order data, contact Client Services (toll-free 1-877-421-3067; 613-951-3549; retailinfo@statcan.gc.ca). For analytical information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Mark Switzer (613-951-7137), Distributive Trades Division.

Retail sales

	May 2008	February 2009 ^r	March 2009 ^r	April 2009 ^r	May 2009 ^p	April to May 2009	May 2008 to May 2009
Seasonally adjusted							
	\$ millions					% change	
Automotive	12,532	10,305	10,365	10,228	10,469	2.4	-16.5
New car dealers	6,316	5,259	5,449	5,398	5,584	3.4	-11.6
Used and recreational motor vehicle and parts dealers	1,585	1,527	1,501	1,474	1,499	1.8	-5.4
Gasoline stations	4,632	3,518	3,415	3,356	3,385	0.9	-26.9
Furniture, home furnishings and electronics stores	2,613	2,377	2,375	2,355	2,367	0.5	-9.4
Furniture stores	865	772	772	761	763	0.3	-11.7
Home furnishings stores	513	446	454	457	469	2.5	-8.5
Computer and software stores	121	107	108	108	107	-0.3	-11.6
Home electronics and appliance stores	1,114	1,052	1,041	1,029	1,028	-0.1	-7.7
Building and outdoor home supplies stores	2,269	2,197	2,191	2,201	2,223	1.0	-2.0
Home centres and hardware stores	1,853	1,777	1,777	1,789	1,808	1.1	-2.4
Specialized building materials and garden stores	415	420	413	412	415	0.8	-0.1
Food and beverage stores	7,849	8,294	8,354	8,261	8,318	0.7	6.0
Supermarkets	5,612	6,000	6,048	5,994	6,032	0.6	7.5
Convenience and specialty food stores	830	847	848	834	840	0.7	1.2
Beer, wine and liquor stores	1,406	1,446	1,458	1,432	1,446	1.0	2.8
Pharmacies and personal care stores	2,435	2,471	2,481	2,473	2,510	1.5	3.1
Clothing and accessories stores	1,997	1,964	1,939	1,928	1,939	0.0	-3.4
Clothing stores	1,531	1,507	1,486	1,477	1,480	0.2	-3.4
Shoe, clothing accessories and jewellery stores	465	457	453	451	448	-0.7	-3.7
General merchandise stores	4,265	4,335	4,341	4,363	4,379	0.4	2.7
Miscellaneous retailers	1,825	1,821	1,816	1,836	1,850	0.8	1.4
Sporting goods, hobby, music and book stores	911	903	911	914	934	2.2	2.5
Miscellaneous store retailers	914	918	905	922	916	-0.6	0.3
Total, retail sales	35,785	33,764	33,862	33,644	34,045	1.2	-4.9
Total, excluding new car dealers, used and recreational motor vehicle and parts dealers	27,884	26,977	26,912	26,772	26,961	0.7	-3.3
Provinces and territories							
Newfoundland and Labrador	575	579	590	591	597	1.0	3.7
Prince Edward Island	143	138	141	143	142	-0.7	-0.6
Nova Scotia	1,014	975	990	988	993	0.5	-2.1
New Brunswick	825	793	801	794	814	2.5	-1.2
Quebec	7,976	7,659	7,761	7,621	7,712	1.2	-3.3
Ontario	12,757	12,098	12,202	12,059	12,245	1.5	-4.0
Manitoba	1,250	1,206	1,204	1,200	1,213	1.1	-3.0
Saskatchewan	1,207	1,158	1,164	1,142	1,161	1.7	-3.8
Alberta	5,137	4,677	4,579	4,619	4,642	0.5	-9.6
British Columbia	4,770	4,358	4,304	4,365	4,399	0.8	-7.8
Yukon	44	41	42	41	42	2.8	-4.5
Northwest Territories	59	55	57	54	57	6.8	-3.3
Nunavut	26	26	27	27	26	-2.5	3.0

^r revised

^p preliminary

Note: Figures may not add up to totals as a result of rounding.

■

Study: Guaranteed Income Supplement update

2006

More seniors who are eligible for Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) benefits are actually receiving them, as both take-up rates and application rates have improved.

The GIS was established in 1967 as an additional benefit for low-income seniors receiving the Old Age Security pension.

In 2006, about 1.4 million seniors received the GIS. At the same time, roughly 159,400 seniors eligible for the GIS did not receive any benefits, but this was down from 191,700 in 2000. This decline occurred as the ranks of Canada's seniors rose to over 4 million.

Between 2000 and 2006, the take-up rate for the GIS among eligible seniors rose from 87% to 90%. The largest increases occurred among the two lowest benefit groups (less than \$500 and \$500 to \$999 annually).

Take-up rates also increased for individuals aged 70 and over, with both men's and women's rates going up. While women had a higher take-up rate in 2006, the increase between 2000 and 2006 was slightly greater for men (4.1 percentage points for men compared with 2.2 percentage points for women). Increases were also seen for those with good or fair health, homeowners and immigrants.

Changes in other sources of income can move seniors above or below the GIS eligibility threshold. Prior to 2007, those who fell below the threshold were required to re-apply for benefits, but many failed to do so. In 2000, about 45% of all eligible seniors required to apply for the GIS submitted an application. By 2006, this application rate had increased to almost 57%.

One of the most significant increases occurred among individuals with annual GIS benefits of less than \$500. Between 2000 and 2006, their application rate increased by more than 20 percentage points. It was no longer significantly different from the rate for those with benefits of \$2,000 or more.

In both 2000 and 2006, the application rate was highest for seniors aged 65 to 69. However, seniors 80 and over made the largest gains during the period, followed by those aged 70 to 79. Application rates for men and women also increased significantly.

Between 2000 and 2006, the probability of not applying when eligible decreased for those aged 70 and over, as well as for those who would receive relatively small payments. The rates of non-application for the older groups no longer differed significantly from other seniors once automatic applicants were excluded.

Increases in both the GIS take-up rate and application rate during this period coincided with a

number of reforms by the federal government to simplify the application process. Since 2007, seniors have needed to apply only once to receive GIS payments for all years of eligibility, provided they file tax returns. This marks a significant change from the study period, when eligible seniors were required to re-apply if they lost eligibility during one or more years because of an increase in income.

Note: Data for this article came from the Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics. This article updates a previous study published in *Perspectives on Labour and Income* in October 2005. The application rate focuses on individuals who apply for the GIS when eligible, while the take-up rate provides information on those receiving GIS benefits, which includes a large number of automatic applicants.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey numbers, including related surveys, 3889 and 4107.

The article "GIS update" is now available in the July 2009 online edition of *Perspectives on Labour and Income*, vol. 10, no. 7 (75-001-X, free), from the *Publications* module of our website.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this article, contact May Luong (613-951-6014; may.luong@statcan.gc.ca), Labour and Household Surveys Analysis Division. ■

Natural gas sales

May 2009 (preliminary)

Natural gas sales totalled 4 441 million cubic metres in May, down 9.1% from May 2008.

In May, the volumes of sales to the residential and commercial sectors rose 10.2% and 3.6% respectively from May 2008. The volume of sales to the industrial, including direct sales, sector was down 16.6% from May 2008.

Total sales in May were 18.2% lower compared with April.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2149.

For more information, to order data, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact the dissemination officer (toll-free 1-866-873-8789; 613-951-9497; energ@statcan.gc.ca), Manufacturing and Energy Division. □

Natural gas sales

	May 2008	April 2009	May 2009 ^P	April to May 2009	May 2008 to May 2009
	thousands of cubic metres			% change	
Total sales	4 887 594	5 432 027	4 441 163	-18.2	-9.1
Residential ¹	855 687	1 510 672	942 649	-37.6	10.2
Commercial ²	671 738	1 050 177	695 984	-33.7	3.6
Industrial ³ and direct sales ⁴	3 360 169	2 871 178	2 802 530	-2.4	-16.6

^P preliminary

1. Gas sold for domestic purposes, including space heating, water heating and cooking, to a residential dwelling unit.

2. Gas sold to customers engaged in wholesale or retail trade, governments, institutions, office buildings, etc.

3. Gas sold to customers engaged in a process that creates or changes raw or unfinished materials into another form or product. Includes mining and manufacturing establishments. Includes firm, interruptible and buy/sell agreements.

4. Represents direct, non-utility, sales for consumption, where the utility acts solely as the transporter.

Aircraft movement statistics: Major airports

June 2009

Aircraft take-offs and landings at Canadian airports with NAV CANADA air traffic control towers and flight service stations decreased 0.6% in June compared with June 2008. These 93 airports reported 563,146 movements in June compared with 566,799 movements at 95 airports in June 2008.

Available on CANSIM: tables 401-0007 to 401-0020.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2715.

The June 2009 issue of *Aircraft Movement Statistics: NAV CANADA Towers and Flight Service Stations (TP 141)* (51-007-X, free) is now available from the *Publications* module of our website. This report is a joint publication of Statistics Canada and Transport Canada.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Client Services (toll-free 1-866-500-8400; transportationstatistics@statcan.gc.ca), Transportation Division. ■

Sawmills

May 2009

In May, monthly lumber production by sawmills decreased 3.7% compared with April to 3 555.2 thousand cubic metres. Compared with May 2008, lumber production declined 26.0%

In May, sawmills shipped 3 685.5 thousand cubic metres of lumber, down 3.1% from April.

Available on CANSIM: table 303-0009.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2134.

The May 2009 issue of *Sawmills*, Vol. 63, no. 5 (35-003-X, free), is now available from the *Publications* module of our website.

To order data, to obtain more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact the dissemination officer (toll-free 1-866-873-8789; 613-951-9497; manufact@statcan.gc.ca), Manufacturing and Energy Division. ■

New products

Sawmills, May 2009, Vol. 63, no. 5
Catalogue number **35-003-X** (PDF, free; HTML, free)

Aircraft Movement Statistics: NAV CANADA Towers and Flight Service Stations (TP 141), June 2009
Catalogue number **51-007-X** (PDF, free; HTML, free)

Perspectives on Labour and Income, July 2009,
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