

World Wholesale Price Indexes.—Price changes within different countries have varied widely during the years after World War II. Comparisons of Canadian wholesale price indexes and those of other countries are given in Table 4.

4.—Index Numbers of Wholesale Prices in Canada and other Countries, 1949 and December 1952 and 1953

(Base: 1948 = 100, except for France where 1949 = 100. Source: *Monthly Bulletin of Statistics of the United Nations.*)

Country	1949	Month of December—		Country	1949	Month of December—	
		1952	1953			1952	1953
Australia.....	112	187	186	New Zealand.....	99	142	140
Canada	103	114	113	Norway.....	102	155	152
Chile.....	114	232	313	Peru (Lima).....	140	198	212
Denmark.....	102	139	131	Portugal (Lisbon).....	104 ^r	118 ^r	110
Finland.....	101	162	157	Sweden.....	101	143	138
France.....	100	140	138	Switzerland.....	95	100	97
India.....	104	102	106	Union of South Africa.....	106	151	150
Mexico (Mexico City).....	110	151	152	United Kingdom.....	105	149	149
The Netherlands.....	104	139	134	United States.....	95	105	105

Section 2.—The Consumer Price Index

The Consumer Price Index is Canada's official measure of retail price change. It replaces the Cost-of-Living Index and is the fifth in a series of Canadian index numbers of retail prices dating back to 1900. This new measure was introduced by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics in October 1952 in a publication entitled, *The Consumer Price Index, January 1949–August 1952*. Detailed information on the main aspects of the index is contained in that publication.

The purpose of the Consumer Price Index is to measure changes in retail prices of goods and services bought by a representative cross-section of the Canadian urban population. The families covered by the Index lived in 27 Canadian cities of 30,000 population or over, ranged in size from two adults to two adults with four children and had annual incomes ranging from \$1,650 to \$4,050 during the survey year ended Aug. 31, 1948.

The budget of the Consumer Price Index represents the post-war level of consumption of those families. A list of 224 of the principal goods and services they purchased in the survey year forms the pricing sample of the Index, and the relative amounts they spent on those and similar categories of items determine the relative importance, or weight, given to each item in the Index.

The monthly index number is calculated from a sample of more than 50,000 retail price quotations. Prices are collected by field representatives in 16 cities across Canada and they are obtained by mail questionnaires in 17 other cities. All cities covered, except Charlottetown, had a population of 30,000 or over as at the 1951 Census.