

Chapter 17

Manufacturing and merchandising

17.1 Manufacturing industries

Statistics on the manufacturing industries are issued by Statistics Canada on an annual, monthly and quarterly basis, depending on the type of data. The annual Census of Manufactures provides the basic annual data. Among the monthly figures available, two important types of information lend themselves to projecting figures of the annual Census of Manufactures: the survey of manufacturers' shipments, inventories and orders, and surveys of employment and related information.

The monthly shipments, inventories and orders series is published by manufacturing industry for Canada and the provinces, with breakdowns by industry group and by selected industry in the case of the totals for Canada. The data are derived from a survey of respondents to the annual census and are projections of the census total, subject to the qualification that only significant new entries into the manufacturing industries since the latest census are added.

The most comprehensive figures resulting from monthly surveys of employment have been estimates of the total number of employees in the manufacturing industries of Canada and the provinces, classified into durable and non-durable goods industries, but publication of these figures has been temporarily halted pending modification of the survey. Both the monthly shipments survey and monthly estimates of employment are based partly on statistical sampling. Both sets of monthly figures also yield totals for the calendar year; while the annual census includes some reports made on a respondent's fiscal year differing from the calendar year, the effect of this is not large.

The data obtained relate to establishments — roughly corresponding to the popular conception of a plant, factory or mill — and, for certain statistics, to non-manufacturing units known as "head offices, sales offices and auxiliary units". For some purposes, companies rather than plants or factories are of interest. For example, a company owning factories, mines and merchandising outlets will normally report its profit for the whole company rather than divide it among the different industrial activities in which it is engaged. Thus, the quarterly survey of corporation profits provides figures on sales, profits and certain other statistics for whole companies classified to industries on the basis of their principal activities (for instance, factories might be included in mining or mines in the manufacturing industry). Such figures are generally not comparable with establishment statistics.

Various other monthly and quarterly surveys relate to commodities rather than to establishments or companies. That is, they account for production or shipments of particular products without regard to the industry in which they are produced.

In addition to providing estimates of over-all employment in manufacturing (and other industries), monthly surveying of employment, hours and payrolls results in indexes of employment for larger establishments by industry and by province and sub-provincial area, and in data on average hours and earnings. Monthly indexes of industrial production provide measures of the physical volume of output of the manufacturing industries. That is, they measure output, net of the effects of price changes. These indexes afford annual averages which can be used to indicate movement in the real domestic product at factor cost originating in the manufacturing industries. In addition, many users find valuable information in the large number of monthly industry selling price indexes for various manufacturing industries.

17.1.1 Post-census data

Only preliminary data based on monthly or quarterly surveys are available for 1971 and 1972 as the results of the Census of Manufactures were being processed at the time of writing. Some factors influencing the levels of current and annual census figures in comparison with each other are mentioned in the preceding text.

Table 17.1 compares the value of shipments of goods of own manufacture, by province, for 1972 (from a monthly survey) with data for 1970 and earlier censuses, and Table 17.2 makes similar comparisons for industry groups. Table 17.3 gives company data on profitability in various industry groups for the years 1964-72. Because these latter figures relate to companies