

Retail Services Price Index, first quarter 2019

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The Retail Services Price Index (RSPI) rose 0.3% in the first quarter, mainly as a result of higher margins at general merchandise stores.

Margins were up in 5 of the 10 major retail subsectors, representing 61% of the retail sector surveyed.

Retailers at general merchandise stores reported a 6.1% margin increase with the gains concentrated at all other general merchandise stores (+13.4%). Higher retail prices, due to fewer promotions in the first quarter, led to the margin increase.

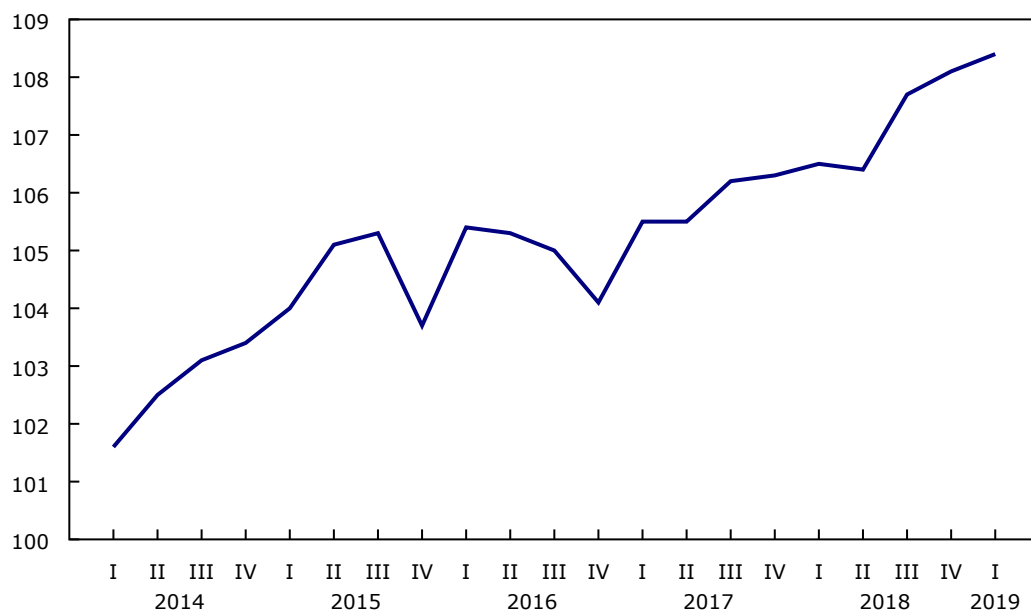
Margins also rose at miscellaneous stores (+5.5%), more specifically at office supplies and stationery stores (+28.7%), as retail prices rose and purchase prices declined compared with the previous quarter.

The growth of the RSPI was moderated by lower margins at gasoline stations (-5.3%) as a result of lower retail prices. Higher gasoline inventories and lower seasonal demand in the quarter contributed to the decrease in retail prices.

Margins at building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers (-2.8%) were also down, as selling prices fell faster than purchase prices. This subsector recorded its first margin decline since the third quarter of 2017.

Chart 1
Retail Services Price Index

index (2013=100)



Source(s): Table 18-10-0252-01.



Year-over-year change

The RSPI increased 1.8% in the first quarter compared with the same quarter in 2018. Of the 10 major retail subsectors surveyed, 7 were up and 3 were down.

Building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers (+6.1%) contributed the most to the increase of the RSPI. Margin growth in this subsector decelerated on a year-over-year basis, largely due to the quarterly decrease in the first quarter of 2019.

To a lesser extent, electronics and appliances stores (+14.5%) also contributed to the increase of the RSPI. Retailers in this category reported margin gains as the growth in selling prices outpaced that of purchase prices.

Health and personal care stores (+3.9%) and general merchandise stores (+2.3%) also registered year-over-year margin gains.

Lower margins at gasoline stations (-4.4%) mainly moderated the year-over-year gains of the RSPI.

Note to readers

*The Retail Services Price Index (RSPI) represents the change in the price of the retail service. The **price of the retail service** is defined as the margin price, which is the difference between the average purchase price and the average selling price of the retail product being priced. The RSPI is not a retail selling price index.*

With each release, data for the previous quarter may have been revised. The series are also subject to an annual revision with the release of second quarter data of the following reference year. The indexes are not seasonally adjusted. Data are available at the Canada level only.

Quality indicators

Data-quality indicators are based on measures of survey precision (standard errors), estimates of market coverage (based on the RSPI sample), and the number of reported price quotes.

Index series without data-quality indicators are considered to be statistically reliable.

Users are encouraged to take into account [quality indicators](#) when using RSPI data.

Products

A video entitled "[Producer Price Indexes](#)" is available on the Statistics Canada Training Institute webpage. It provides an introduction to Statistics Canada's Producer Price Indexes-what they are, how they are made and what they are used for.

Infographic: The evolution of margins in the retail trade sector (2008 to 2017)

The infographic, "[Retail Services Price Index \(RSPI\) 2008 to 2017](#)," which is part of Statistics Canada — Infographics ([11-627-M](#)), is now available. It demonstrates how margins in the Canadian retail trade sector have evolved from the first quarter of 2008 to the fourth quarter of 2017.

A Historical Timeline of Canadian Producer Price Statistics

The publication "[A Historical Timeline of Canadian Producer Price Statistics](#)," which is part of the Prices Analytical Series ([62F0014M](#)), was created to showcase the key milestones in the history of Canadian producer price statistics. This historical timeline contains answers to questions such as: Who collected Canada's first statistics? What do Canadian producer price indexes measure?

Infographic: Producer Price Indexes at a Glance

The infographic "[Producer Price Indexes at a Glance](#)," which is part of Statistics Canada — Infographics ([11-627-M](#)), demonstrates how producer price indexes for goods and services are calculated and why they are important for the Canadian economy.

Table 1
Retail Services Price Index – Not seasonally adjusted

	Relative importance ¹	First quarter 2018	Fourth quarter 2018 ^r	First quarter 2019 ^p	Fourth quarter 2018 to first quarter 2019	First quarter 2018 to first quarter 2019
	%	(2013=100)			% change	
Retail Services Price Index	100.00	106.5	108.1	108.4	0.3	1.8
Automotive parts, accessories and tire stores ²	1.92	99.7	101.7	100.3	-1.4	0.6
Furniture and home furnishings stores	5.02	101.2	106.2	104.9	-1.2	3.7
Electronics and appliance stores	3.80	99.7	111.1	114.2	2.8	14.5
Building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers	7.71	124.2	135.6	131.8	-2.8	6.1
Food and beverage stores	22.97	106.5	105.9	106.2	0.3	-0.3
Health and personal care stores	10.64	103.3	106.4	107.3	0.8	3.9
Gasoline stations	6.63	111.3	112.3	106.4	-5.3	-4.4
Clothing and clothing accessories stores	10.54	105.2	105.2	104.2	-1.0	-1.0
Sporting goods, hobby, book and music stores	3.18	106.6	110.1	108.9	-1.1	2.2
General merchandise stores	10.85	97.0	93.5	99.2	6.1	2.3
Miscellaneous store retailers	4.28	114.8	110.2	116.3	5.5	1.3

^r revised

^p preliminary

1. The relative importance is calculated by dividing the weight of each component by the total weight. The weights correspond to the aggregate gross margins of establishments at the time of sample selection, derived from the 2013 Annual Retail Trade Survey (2447). The total does not equal 100 as automobile dealers (North American Industry Classification System [NAICS] code 4411), other motor vehicle dealers (NAICS code 4412) and non-store retailers (NAICS code 454) were not surveyed.
2. For motor vehicle and parts dealers (NAICS 441), data are only available for automotive parts, accessories and tire stores (NAICS 4413) and the constituent five-digit NAICS series. Automobile dealers (NAICS 4411) and other motor vehicle dealers (NAICS 4412) are not surveyed and, therefore, data are not available at this time.

Source(s): Table 18-10-0252-01.

Available tables: 18-10-0251-01 and 18-10-0252-01.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 5135.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca) or Media Relations (613-951-4636; STATCAN.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.STATCAN@canada.ca).