Economic News

Economics and Strategy



August 16, 2018

Canada: Manufacturing shipments lifted in June by resurgent energy sector

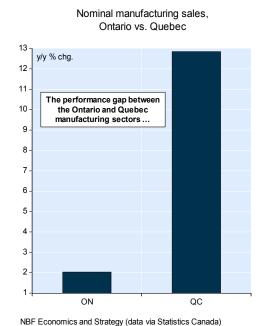
By Jocelyn Paquet

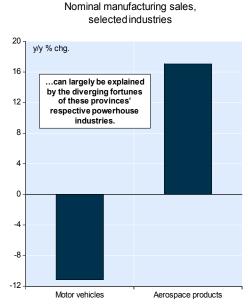
Canadian factory shipments beat expectations for the second month in a row in June. Yet the details of the report showed that the increase was mostly due to a spike in the petroleum/coal products segment, the latter caused by the ramp up of production at several refineries following maintenance work in April and May. Excluding the energy sector, shipments actually retraced 0.4% in the month. At the provincial level, Quebec continued to dominate, posting the strongest m/m print in the federation. Manufacturing sales there are now up 12.9% on a 12-month basis, compared with just 2.0% in Ontario. The relative underperformance of Canada's largest province can be explained in large part by a slump in the auto sector; shipments of motor vehicles countrywide are indeed down 11.2% on their level a year ago. Alternatively, sales of aerospace products – a vital sector in Quebec – are up no less than 17.1% y/y (see chart on the left). Turning to quarterly data, real manufacturing shipments at the national level expanded 1.7% in annualized terms in Q2 for a tenth consecutive increase (the longest streak of uninterrupted quarterly growth since data collection began in 2002). That rise in shipments, combined with a buildup in inventory, should translate into a positive contribution to GDP growth from factories (see chart on the right).

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Manufacturing shipments rose 1.1% in June to a record C\$58.1 billion.
- Sales rose in just 9 of the 21 broad industries surveyed including petroleum/coal products (+15.9%, the steepest increase since 1999), clothing (+2.7%) and fabricated metals (+3.0%).
- These increases were more than enough to offset declines in shipments of chemicals (-4.5%) and food products (-1.7%) among others.
- Nationally, total manufacturing shipments progressed in 5 of the 10 provinces, with Quebec (+3.8%) and Alberta (+3.7%) posting the best results. On the other hand, shipments retreated in Saskatchewan (-11.1%), Newfoundland & Labrador (-8.1%) and Manitoba (-2.3%).
- With the price effect removed, total factory sales advanced 0.7% m/m, while inventories edged down 0.1%. As a result, the real inventory-to-sales ratio slipped one tick to 1.41.

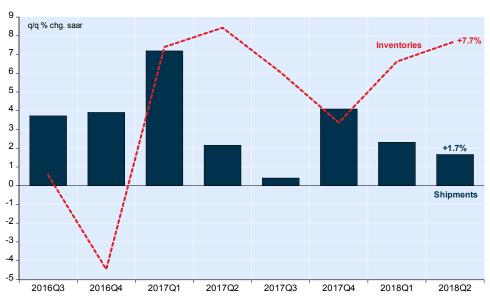
Canada: Different picture in the two largest provinces





Canada: Factory output should contribute to Q2 GDP

Real manufacturing shipments and inventories



NBF Economics and Strategy (data via Statistics Canada)

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Montreal Office

514-879-2529

Stéfane Marion

Chief Economist and Strategist stefane.marion@nbc.ca

Krishen Rangasamy

Senior Economist krishen.rangasamy@nbc.ca

Kyle Dahms

Economist kyle.dahms@nbc.ca

Matthieu Arseneau

Deputy Chief Economist matthieu.arseneau@nbc.ca

Paul-André Pinsonnault

Senior Fixed Income Economist paulandre.pinsonnault@nbc.ca

Jocelyn Paquet

Economist
iocelvn.paquet@nbc.ca

Marc Pinsonneault

Senior Economist marc.pinsonneault@nbc.ca

Angelo Katsoras

Geopolitical Analyst angelo.katsoras@nbc.ca

Toronto Office

416-869-8598

Warren Lovely

MD & Head of Public Sector Strategy warren.lovely@nbc.ca

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