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The Daily

Statistics Canada

Tuesday, December 7, 2010
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Releases

New products and studies

Releases

Performance of Canadian youth in reading, mathematics and science

2009

Canadian 15-year-old students continue to perform well internationally and have strong skill sets in reading, mathematics and sciences.

Canada's results remained stable between 2000 and 2009. However, its relative ranking declined in all three assessment domains in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) in 2009. This decline was attributable to improvements in the performance of other countries and to the introduction of new countries that had high performance levels.

On the combined reading scale, the major assessment domain, 4 countries outperformed Canada among the 65 that participated: Shanghai (China), Korea, Finland and Hong Kong (China). But Canadian results also indicated a decline in the proportion of high achievers in reading.

In mathematics and science, the Canadian students scored well above the OECD average. They were outperformed by seven countries in mathematics and six countries in science.

Several Canadian provinces experienced significant declines in the skill levels of their 15-year-olds, mostly in reading and in mathematics.

Reading

Results from PISA 2009 corroborate the findings from previous PISA cycles: Canada performed among top-level countries in reading. Canada had a mean score of 524 on the combined reading scale, well above the OECD average of 496, and was outperformed by Shanghai (China), Korea, Finland and Hong Kong (China).

There was significant variation in the level of performance among Canadian provinces. Students in nine provinces performed at or above the OECD average on the combined reading scale, while those in Prince Edward Island performed below the OECD average.

As with previous PISA results, female 15-year-old students continued to outperform their male counterparts in reading both nationally and across the provinces. Canadian females outperformed males by 34 score points, which was similar to the average gap of 33 points in OECD countries.

Note to readers

Data in this release are from the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). This is a collaborative effort among member countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) to provide policy-oriented international indicators of the skills and knowledge of 15-year-old students.

In Canada, PISA is administered through a partnership of the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada and Statistics Canada.

It assesses youth outcomes in three domains (reading, mathematics and science) focusing on what students can do with what they have learned in school, at home, and in the community. Reading was the main focus of PISA 2009 and mathematics and science were also covered.

First implemented in 2000, PISA is repeated every three years. Each cycle provides detailed assessment in the major domain and summary assessments in the other two.

In total, 65 countries participated in PISA 2009, including all OECD countries. In Canada, about 23,000 15-year-old students from about 1,000 schools participated. A large sample was drawn in Canada so that information could be provided at both national and provincial levels.

The PISA 2009 included a direct assessment of students' skills, a student questionnaire, and a school questionnaire completed by principals. The school and student questionnaire were used to collect background and contextual information related to student performance.

Canada had both a high proportion of students at the highest levels (Level 5 or above) and a low proportion of students at the lowest levels (below Level 2) compared with the OECD average. However, 1 in 10 Canadian students performed at a low reading level (below Level 2) and lacked some fundamental skills to prepare them to either enter the workforce or pursue postsecondary education.

Canada's overall mean performance in reading was not significantly different between 2000 and 2009. However, the proportion of high achievers (Level 4 and above) fell from 45% in 2000 to 40% in 2009.

In addition, Canada's relative performance declined. Among the countries that participated in both 2000 and 2009, only Finland outperformed Canada in reading in 2000. In 2009, Canada was outperformed by Korea, Finland and Hong Kong (China) as well as Shanghai (China), which participated for the first time.

Provincially, reading performance declined significantly in five provinces: Prince Edward Island, Quebec, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. Nevertheless, in Quebec, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and

Alberta, reading performance remained at or above the OECD average.

Mathematics and science

On average, Canadian 15-year-old students performed well in mathematics and science, the two minor domains in the 2009 PISA.

Canadian students had an average score of 527 in mathematics and 529 in science, well above the OECD average of 497 and 501, respectively.

Among the 65 countries that participated in PISA 2009, 7 outperformed Canada in mathematics, while 6 countries outperformed Canada in science.

Provincially, the mathematics and science performance of students in all provinces, except for Prince Edward Island, was at or above the OECD average.

In mathematics, students in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec, Ontario, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia performed above the OECD average. In science, students in Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Quebec, Ontario, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia performed above the OECD average.

On average, male 15-year-old students outperformed females by 12 score points in mathematics, both across OECD countries and in Canada. This was a much smaller difference than the gender difference favouring females in reading.

In science, boys and girls had similar performance levels on average across OECD countries. However, in Canada, boys outperformed girls by 5 score points.

Between 2003 and 2009, the performance of Canadian students in mathematics and science remained stable. However, as a result of a lack of improvement in performance in Canada, coupled with increased performance in other countries, an additional two countries outperformed Canada in mathematics and science than in previous PISA assessments. Additionally, a few countries participating in PISA for the first time in 2009 outperformed Canada in both.

Provincially, performance levels in mathematics declined in six provinces between 2003 and 2009. However, two of these provinces, Alberta and British Columbia, continued to have strong performance in PISA 2009, well above the OECD average.

In science, performance levels declined significantly in Manitoba and Prince Edward Island.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 5060.

The report *Measuring Up: Canadian Results of the OECD PISA Study:* "The Performance of Canada's Youth in Reading, Mathematics and Science: 2009 First Results for Canadians Aged 15" (81-590-X2010001, free), is now available online from the *Key resource* module of our website under *Publications*.

The report is also available on the websites of the Programme for International Student Assessment (*www.pisa.gc.ca*) and the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (*www.cmec.ca*).

For more information, or to enquire about concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Client Services (toll-free 1-800-307-3382; 613-951-7608; fax: 613-951-4441; *educationstats@statcan.gc.ca*), Tourism and the Centre for Education Statistics Division. ■

Study: Working at home

2000 to 2008

Between 2000 and 2008, the number of Canadians who had paid employment and worked at home at least occasionally increased slightly. Even so, their share of the total workforce remained relatively stable.

In 2008, just under 1.8 million employees worked at home, compared with about 1.4 million in 2000. They represented 11.2% of all paid employees in 2008, up from 10.2% eight years earlier.

However, for self-employed workers, the situation was somewhat different as the incidence of working at home for this group has increased in recent years. In 2008, just over 1.8 million self-employed people worked at home, or 60% of the total, up from 50% or 1.4 million eight years earlier.

When employees and the self-employed are combined, the overall proportion of Canadians working at home increased about 2 percentage points from 17% to 19%.

The likelihood of working at home varied by a number of factors including level of education, hours worked, occupation, industry and income.

In 2008, for example, 54% of all employees who worked at home had a university degree, compared with 25% of those who never worked at home. Similarly, 55% of employees who worked at home at least occasionally were in professional or managerial jobs, compared with 23% of employees who did not work at home.

Of all employees, about 10% of women worked at home, slightly less than the 12% for men. Among professional employees, however, the gap between the sexes was wider: 29% of male professionals worked at home compared with 19% of female professionals in 2008.

The most common reason for working at home, cited by 25% of employees, was that it was a job requirement. The next most common reasons were that it provided better working conditions (23%) and that home was their usual place of work (18%).

The worker's family situation and distance between the home and workplace were also factors. In 2008, 12% of female self-employed workers reported that they were working at home for family reasons, compared with 3% of their male counterparts.

Among employees who lived within 4 kilometres of their workplaces, 7% had worked at home, compared with 13% of those who lived at least 30 kilometres away.

Note: Data for this study came from the General Social Survey (GSS) between 2000 and 2008. For the 2008 GSS, data were collected from 20,000 people aged 15 and over who were interviewed between February 1, 2008, and November 30, 2008. Working from home was defined as those who responded that they usually did some of their scheduled work at home.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 5024.

The article "Working at home: An update" is now available in the December 2010 online issue of *Canadian Social Trends*, no. 91 (11-008-X, free), from the *Key resource* module of our website under *Publications*.

Also in this issue of *Canadian Social Trends* is the article "Uptake of water- and energy-conservation devices in the home." The article examines the association between income, education, ownership, age of dwelling, and years lived at the dwelling and the use of low-volume toilets, low-flow showerheads, compact fluorescent light bulbs, programmable thermostats, and appliances bought to save energy or water.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Client Services (613-951-5979; *sasd-dssea@statcan.gc.ca*), Social and Aboriginal Statistics Division. ■

Domestic sales of refined petroleum products

October 2010 (preliminary)

Sales of refined petroleum products in October totalled 9 111.5 thousand cubic metres, up 980.7 thousand cubic metres (+12.1%) from October 2009. (One cubic metre equals a thousand litres.)

Diesel fuel sales increased 440.2 thousand cubic metres (+18.9%) and motor gasoline sales increased 282.6 thousand cubic metres (+7.8%) from October 2009.

Sales of refined petroleum products in October decreased by 117.1 thousand cubic metres (-1.3%) from September.

Note: Preliminary domestic sales of refined petroleum products data are not available on CANSIM.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2150.

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

Sales of refined petroleum products

	October 2009[r]	September 2010[r]	October 2010[p]	September to October 2010	October 2009 to October 2010
	thousands of cubic metres			% change	
Total, all products	**8 130.8**	**9 228.6**	**9 111.5**	**-1.3**	**12.1**
Motor gasoline	3 601.1	3 843.5	3 883.7	1.0	7.8
Diesel fuel oil	2 324.8	2 667.3	2 765.0	3.7	18.9
Light fuel oil	252.0	233.3	221.9	-4.9	-11.9
Heavy fuel oil	325.6	375.4	301.4	-19.7	-7.4
Aviation turbo fuels	495.7	530.7	488.2	-8.0	-1.5
Petrochemical feedstocks[1]	138.2	456.8	374.9	-17.9	171.3
All other refined products	993.3	1,121.6	1,076.3	-4.0	8.4

r revised
p preliminary
1. Materials produced by refineries that are used by the petrochemical industry to produce chemicals, synthetic rubber and a variety of plastics.
Note: *Data may not add up to totals as a result of rounding.*

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Farm product prices
October 2010

Prices received by farmers in October for grains, oilseeds, specialty crops, potatoes, cattle, hogs, poultry, eggs and dairy products are now available.

The Quebec oats price in October was $165.00 per metric tonne, up 11.5% from September, and up 21.3% from October 2009 when the price was $136.00.

The October Manitoba slaughter-cattle price was $67.47 per hundredweight, down 2.4% from September, but up 23.1% from October 2009 when the price was $54.81.

Note: Farm commodity prices are now available on CANSIM. Prices for over 35 commodities are available by province, some series going back 20 years.

Available on CANSIM: table 002-0043.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 3436.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Nickeisha Patterson (613-951-3249; fax: 613-951-3868; *nickeisha.patterson@statcan.ca*), Agriculture Division. ■

Small business profiles
2008

Small business profiles for 2008 are now available. The profiles present financial data for small businesses in Canada, defined as having annual total revenue between $30,000 and $5 million in 2008. They are classified by industry, by province or territory, and by legal status (incorporated or unincorporated).

The SME Benchmarking Tool from Industry Canada provides these data at no cost.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 5028.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Client Services (toll-free 1-877-679-2746; *bsstsdinfo@statcan.gc.ca*), Business Special Surveys and Technology Statistics Division.

For more information on the SME Benchmarking Tool, contact Customer Service (toll-free 1-800-328-6189; *info@ic.gc.ca*), Industry Canada. ■

New products and studies

Canadian Social Trends, Summer 2011, no. 91
Catalogue number 11-008-X (PDF, free; HTML, free)

Industry Price Indexes, October 2010, Vol. 36, no. 10
Catalogue number 62-011-X (PDF, free; HTML, free)

Building Permits, October 2010, Vol. 54, no. 10
Catalogue number 64-001-X (PDF, free; HTML, free)

Study: Measuring Up: Canadian Results of the OECD PISA Study: "The Performance of Canada's Youth in Reading, Mathematics and Science. PISA 2009 First Results for Canadians Aged 15", no. 4
Catalogue number 81-590-X2010001 (PDF, free; Print $20; HTML, free)

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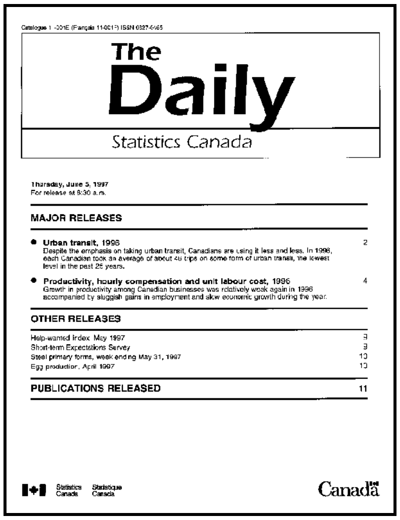

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Statistics Canada

Thursday, June 5, 1997
For release at 8:30 a.m.

MAJOR RELEASES

- **Urban transit, 1996** 2
  Despite the emphasis on taking urban transit, Canadians are using it less and less. In 1996, each Canadian took an average of about 46 trips on some form of urban transit, the lowest level in the past 25 years.
- **Productivity, hourly compensation and unit labour cost, 1996** 4
  Growth in productivity among Canadian businesses was relatively weak again in 1996 accompanied by sluggish gains in employment and slow economic growth during the year.

OTHER RELEASES

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Canada

Statistics Canada's official release bulletin

Catalogue 11-001-XIE.

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