

# The Daily

Statistics Canada

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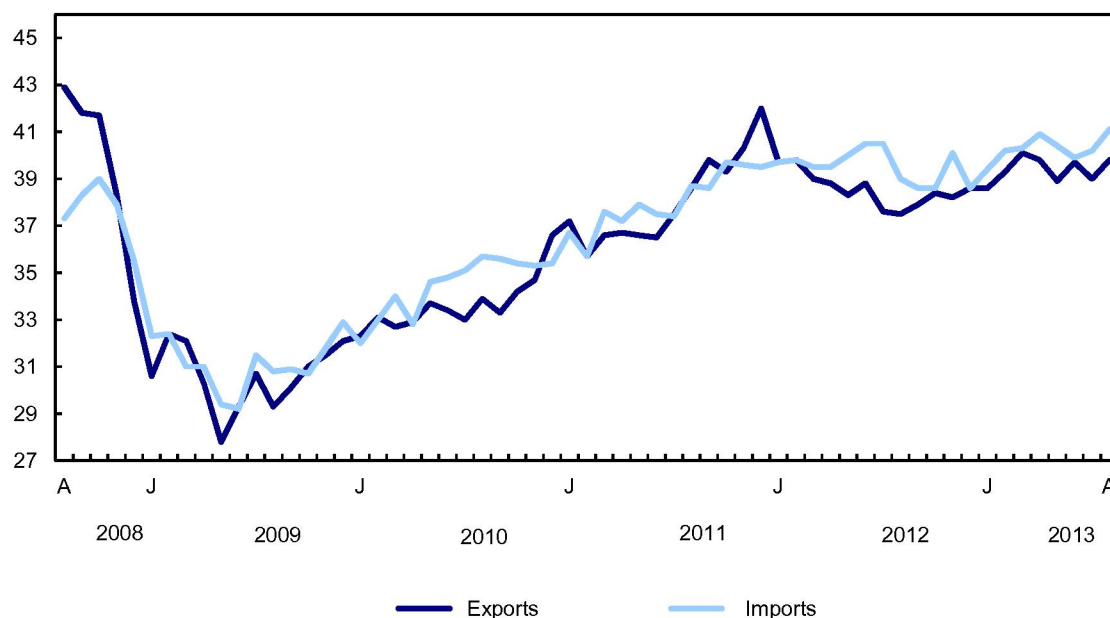
## Releases

### Canadian international merchandise trade, August 2013

Canada's merchandise imports grew 2.1% in August, while exports were up 1.8%. As a result, Canada's trade deficit with the world went from \$1.2 billion in July to \$1.3 billion in August.

#### Chart 1 Exports and imports

billions of dollars, seasonally adjusted



Imports grew to \$41.1 billion, led by energy products, aircraft and other transportation equipment and parts, and motor vehicles and parts. Overall, volumes rose 1.2% and prices were up 0.9%.

Exports increased to \$39.8 billion, as volumes grew 1.4% and prices edged up 0.4%. Energy products and metal and non-metallic mineral products were the main contributors to the increase in exports.

Exports to the United States increased 1.9% to \$30.1 billion, their highest value since December 2011. Imports from the United States edged up 0.1% to \$26.1 billion. Consequently, Canada's trade surplus with the United States widened from \$3.4 billion in July to \$4.0 billion in August.

Imports from countries other than the United States rose 5.8% to \$14.9 billion, on the strength of imports of crude oil and crude bitumen. Exports to countries other than the United States increased 1.6% to \$9.7 billion. The principal trading areas "other OECD countries" (+13.0%) and "all other countries" (+3.1%) were the main contributors to this advance. These gains were partially offset by lower exports to the European Union (-7.1%). As a result, Canada's trade deficit with countries other than the United States widened from \$4.6 billion in July to \$5.3 billion in August.

## Crude oil and crude bitumen as well as aircraft lead increase in imports

Imports of energy products rose 12.5% to \$3.7 billion in August, on the strength of crude oil and crude bitumen (+21.4%), as well as refined petroleum energy products (+18.2%). Imports of these commodities rose on higher volumes. Imports of natural gas, down 25.9% to \$320 million, partially offset the section's increase.

Imports of aircraft and other transportation equipment and parts grew 27.1% to \$1.4 billion, entirely on higher volumes. Following a decline to \$39 million in July, imports of aircraft increased to \$366 million in August.

Imports of motor vehicles and parts rose 1.9% to \$7.2 billion. Passenger cars and light trucks was the main contributor to the increase, rising 6.4% to \$3.1 billion, as volumes grew 6.3%.

Imports of metal ores and non-metallic minerals declined 11.9% to \$874 million, as volumes were down 15.6%. Leading the decrease in imports was other metal ores and concentrates (-12.0%), mainly lead and zinc ores and concentrates, as well as precious metal ores and concentrates, and precious metal bullion.

## Exports rise on higher volumes

Exports of energy products increased for a third consecutive month, rising 4.7% to \$9.6 billion in August. Volumes were up 3.3% and prices increased 1.4%. Crude oil and crude bitumen led the gain in energy products exports, rising 4.4% to \$7.0 billion. Also contributing to the section's growth were refined petroleum energy products as well as other energy products, such as coal.

Exports of metal and non-metallic mineral products rose 8.2% to \$4.5 billion in August, following an 11.7% decline in July. Higher exports of unwrought iron, steel and ferro-alloys, and basic and semi-finished ferrous metal products (+23.0%) as well as unwrought precious metals and precious metal alloys (+8.5%) were the main contributors to the gain in August. Overall, volumes were up 6.8%.

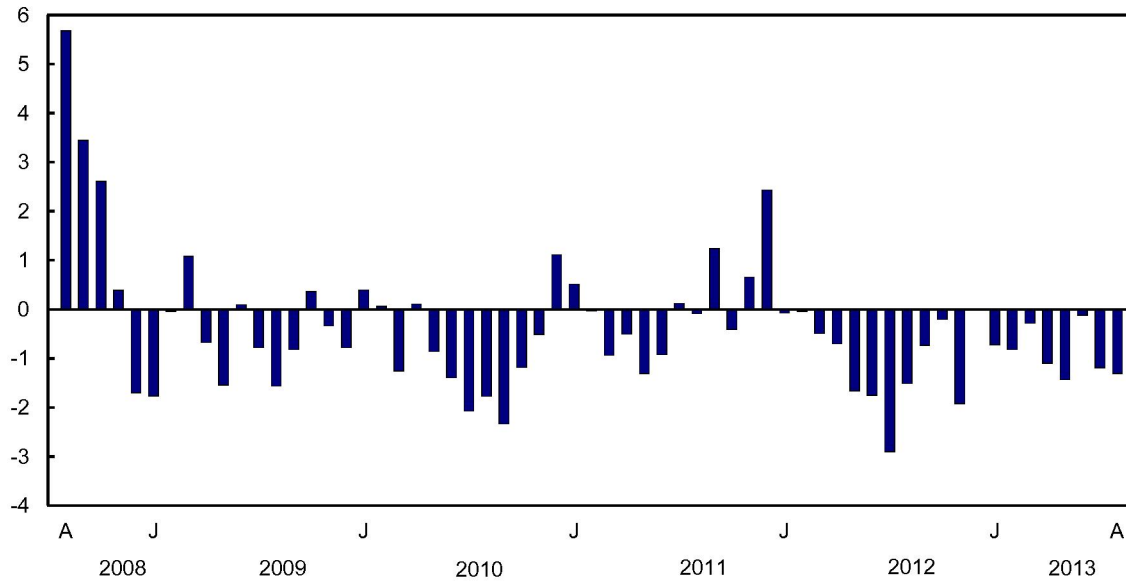
Exports of farm, fishing and intermediate food products fell 10.6% to \$2.1 billion, as all commodity groups recorded decreases. Other crop products, principally oats and corn, led the decline, entirely on lower volumes (-18.4%).

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**Chart 2**  
**Trade balance**

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billions of dollars, seasonally adjusted



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### **Note to readers**

*Merchandise trade is one component of Canada's international balance of payments (BOP), which also includes trade in services, investment income, current transfers as well as capital and financial flows.*

*International merchandise trade data by country are available on both a BOP and a customs basis for the United States, Japan and the United Kingdom. Trade data for all other individual countries are available on a customs basis only. BOP data are derived from customs data by making adjustments for factors such as valuation, coverage, timing and residency. These adjustments are made to conform to the concepts and definitions of the Canadian System of National Accounts.*

*Data in this release are on a BOP basis, seasonally adjusted and in current dollars. Constant dollars are calculated using the Laspeyres volume formula (2007=100).*

*For more information on seasonal adjustment, see [Seasonal adjustment and identifying economic trends](#).*

### **Note regarding current US government shutdown**

*Under a 1990 agreement between Canada and the United States, each country uses the other's import data in lieu of its own export data. While data for the current release (August reference month) are unaffected by the current US government shutdown, a continued shutdown will impede Statistics Canada's ability to release a complete picture of Canadian trade statistics for the September reference period on November 5. Specifically, data on Canadian exports to the United States would be unavailable. Statistics Canada will continue to monitor the situation and will provide further information to users as it becomes available.*

### **Revisions**

*In general, merchandise trade data are revised on an ongoing basis for each month of the current year. Current year revisions are reflected in both the customs and BOP based data.*

*The previous year's customs data are revised with the release of the January and February reference months as well as on a quarterly basis. The previous two years of customs based data are revised annually and are released in February with the December reference month.*

*The previous year's BOP based data are revised with the release of the January, February and March reference months. Revisions to BOP based data for the previous four years were released in June with the April reference month.*

*Factors influencing revisions include late receipt of import and export documentation, incorrect information on customs forms, replacement of estimates produced for the energy section with actual figures, changes in classification of merchandise based on more current information, and changes to seasonal adjustment factors.*

*Revised data are available in the appropriate CANSIM tables.*

**Table 1**  
**Merchandise trade: Principal trading areas – Seasonally adjusted, current dollars**

	August 2012	July 2013 <sup>r</sup>	August 2013	July to August 2013	August 2012 to August 2013
	millions of dollars			% change	
<b>Total exports</b>	<b>37,498</b>	<b>39,047</b>	<b>39,769</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>6.1</b>
United States	27,550	29,544	30,116	1.9	9.3
Japan	742	887	888	0.1	19.7
European Union <sup>1</sup>	3,434	2,560	2,379	-7.1	-30.7
Other OECD countries <sup>2</sup>	1,537	1,438	1,625	13.0	5.7
All other countries	4,236	4,617	4,761	3.1	12.4
<b>Total imports</b>	<b>39,012</b>	<b>40,237</b>	<b>41,075</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>5.3</b>
United States	24,171	26,105	26,129	0.1	8.1
Japan	859	826	781	-5.4	-9.1
European Union <sup>1</sup>	4,189	3,652	3,710	1.6	-11.4
Other OECD countries <sup>2</sup>	2,849	2,960	3,011	1.7	5.7
All other countries	6,944	6,694	7,443	11.2	7.2
<b>Trade balance</b>	<b>-1,514</b>	<b>-1,190</b>	<b>-1,306</b>	<b>...</b>	<b>...</b>
United States	3,379	3,439	3,986	...	...
Japan	-117	62	107	...	...
European Union <sup>1</sup>	-755	-1,092	-1,331	...	...
Other OECD countries <sup>2</sup>	-1,312	-1,522	-1,386	...	...
All other countries	-2,708	-2,077	-2,682	...	...

<sup>r</sup> revised

... not applicable

1. The European Union includes Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. Effective July 2013, Croatia is included in "European Union".

2. Other countries in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) include Australia, Canada, Chile, Iceland, Israel, Mexico, New Zealand, Norway, South Korea, Switzerland and Turkey.

**Note(s):** Totals may not equal the sum of their components.

**Table 2**  
**Merchandise trade: North American Product Classification<sup>1</sup>– Seasonally adjusted, current dollars**

	August 2012	July 2013 <sup>r</sup>	August 2013	July to August 2013	August 2012 to August 2013
	millions of dollars			% change	
<b>Total exports</b>	<b>37,498</b>	<b>39,047</b>	<b>39,769</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>6.1</b>
Farm, fishing and intermediate food products	2,167	2,298	2,054	-10.6	-5.2
Energy products	8,089	9,131	9,561	4.7	18.2
Metal ores and non-metallic minerals	1,371	1,353	1,453	7.4	6.0
Metal and non-metallic mineral products	4,561	4,184	4,528	8.2	-0.7
Basic and industrial chemical, plastic and rubber products	2,643	2,862	2,903	1.4	9.8
Forestry products and building and packaging materials	2,592	2,834	2,822	-0.4	8.9
Industrial machinery, equipment and parts	2,123	2,214	2,307	4.2	8.7
Electronic and electrical equipment and parts	1,894	1,904	1,865	-2.0	-1.5
Motor vehicles and parts	5,795	5,812	5,786	-0.4	-0.1
Aircraft and other transportation equipment and parts	1,382	1,276	1,338	4.9	-3.2
Consumer goods	4,102	4,321	4,297	-0.6	4.8
Special transactions trade <sup>2</sup>	175	206	188	-8.9	7.0
Other balance of payments adjustments	606	652	667	2.3	10.1
<b>Total imports</b>	<b>39,012</b>	<b>40,237</b>	<b>41,075</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>5.3</b>
Farm, fishing and intermediate food products	1,045	1,124	1,074	-4.4	2.8
Energy products	3,843	3,246	3,651	12.5	-5.0
Metal ores and non-metallic minerals	800	991	874	-11.9	9.3
Metal and non-metallic mineral products	3,433	3,399	3,363	-1.0	-2.0
Basic and industrial chemical, plastic and rubber products	3,026	3,644	3,554	-2.5	17.5
Forestry products and building and packaging materials	1,729	1,746	1,778	1.8	2.8
Industrial machinery, equipment and parts	3,856	3,774	3,867	2.5	0.3
Electronic and electrical equipment and parts	4,464	4,674	4,637	-0.8	3.9
Motor vehicles and parts	6,877	7,023	7,158	1.9	4.1
Aircraft and other transportation equipment and parts	920	1,062	1,350	27.1	46.8
Consumer goods	7,774	8,158	8,106	-0.6	4.3
Special transactions trade <sup>2</sup>	428	557	817	46.8	90.8
Other balance of payments adjustments	818	839	845	0.7	3.3

<sup>r</sup> revised

1. International merchandise trade data are based on the North American Product Classification System 2007.

2. These are mainly low valued transactions, value of repairs to equipment, and goods returned to country of origin.

**Note(s):** Totals may not equal the sum of their components.

**Available in CANSIM: tables 228-0058 to 228-0068.**

**Definitions, data sources and methods: survey numbers 2201, 2202 and 2203.**

These data are now available in the *Canadian International Merchandise Trade Database* (65F0013X). From the *Browse by key resource* module of our website, choose *Publications*.

The August 2013 issue of *Canadian International Merchandise Trade*, Vol. 67, no. 8 (65-001-X), is also now available from the *Browse by key resource* module of our website under *Publications*.

Data on Canadian international merchandise trade for September will be released on November 5.

For more information, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; [infostats@statcan.gc.ca](mailto:infostats@statcan.gc.ca)).

To enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Alec Forbes (613-951-0325), International Trade Division.



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## Skills in Canada: First results from the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies, 2012 (final)

According to a new international survey on adult competencies led by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Canadian adults aged 16 to 65 had above average skills among countries surveyed in problem solving in technology-rich environments.

Given the centrality of written communication and basic mathematics in virtually all areas of life, coupled with the rapid integration of information and communication technology, individuals must be able to understand, process, and respond to textual and numerical information, in print and digital form, if they are to participate fully in society — whether as citizens, family members, consumers or employees.

In order to assess people's level of proficiency in skills related to literacy, numeracy and problem solving in technology-rich environments (referred to as PS-TRE), and to understand how those skills are being used, Canada took part in 2012 in the OECD Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC). PIAAC provides internationally comparable measures of these three skills that are essential to processing information. PS-TRE is an innovative component of PIAAC and is unique in incorporating digital technology in the solution of problems. PS-TRE was only assessed for respondents who did the assessment using the computer. Those who were unable to complete the PIAAC assessment by computer were assessed by paper in the other domains.

Among the 22 countries taking part in PIAAC, 19 countries participated in PS-TRE. Of those, Canada had the second-largest proportion of adults aged 16 to 65 who perform at the highest level in PS-TRE.

### A high proportion of Canadians engage with information and communication technologies compared with the OECD average

With 81% of its population doing the assessment using the computer-based assessment, Canada was above the OECD average of 74%. The proportion of those who completed the computer-based assessment version of PIAAC varied from 88% in Sweden to 44% in Cyprus. Almost all provinces and territories were at or above the OECD average.

### Canada is among the countries with the largest proportion of adults who perform at the highest level of PS-TRE

Adults were grouped into levels of proficiency based on their performance in PS-TRE. Among Canadians surveyed, 37% scored at the top two levels (Level 2 or 3) on the PS-TRE scale, which was above the OECD average of 34%.

Overall, 7% of Canadians performed at the highest level (Level 3) in PS-TRE, meaning they can complete tasks involving multiple applications and a large number of steps in an environment that may be unfamiliar, and they can establish a plan to arrive at a solution as they deal with unexpected outcomes and impasses. At this level, Canada was above the OECD average of 6%, and only Sweden had a higher proportion. Within Canada, two provinces, Ontario and Alberta, exceeded the OECD average.

On the other hand, 15% of Canadians fell below Level 1, which is 3 percentage points higher than the OECD average. These individuals display the basic information and communication technology abilities for undertaking the test, but have difficulty in their ability to solve problems.

Among Canadians surveyed, 30% performed at Level 1, which was similar to the OECD average. Individuals at Level 1 can solve problems that have an explicitly stated goal, and that involve a relatively small number of steps to be completed in a familiar environment.

### **Among participating countries, Canada has a higher proportion of its population at the highest and lowest levels in literacy**

On a scale of 0 to 500, Canada's performance in literacy was similar to the OECD average of 273 points. However, 14% of Canadians scored at Level 4 or 5, meaning they can undertake tasks that involve integrating information across multiple dense texts and reasoning by inference. This places Canada above the OECD average of 12%. Among the provinces and territories, Alberta, British Columbia and Ontario each registered a proportion of adults scoring at Level 4 or 5 higher than the OECD average.

At the other end of the scale, on average, 17% of Canadians scored at Level 1 or below compared with 15% across OECD countries.

Among respondents, 13% scored at Level 1. These individuals have skills that enable them to undertake tasks of limited complexity, such as locating single pieces of information in short texts in the absence of other distracting information.

The remaining 4% scored below Level 1 and do not have these skills. They demonstrate only basic vocabulary, as well as the ability to read brief texts on familiar topics to locate a single piece of specific information.

### **Among participating countries, Canada has a similar proportion of its population at the highest levels of numeracy, and a higher proportion at the lowest levels**

Canada's average score of 265 points in numeracy was below the OECD average (269). About 13% of Canadians scored at Level 4 or 5 in numeracy proficiency, which means they can understand complex mathematical information and work with mathematical arguments and models. This proportion was equal to the OECD average. No provinces or territories had a proportion of their population scoring higher than the OECD average.

At the low end of the scale, a higher proportion of Canadians (23%) scored at Level 1 or below, compared with the OECD average of 19%. Among respondents, 17% scored at Level 1, which means that they have the skills to perform simple mathematical operations involving a single step, such as counting or ordering. The remaining 6% fell below Level 1, which means they can cope with very simple tasks placed in concrete, familiar contexts where the mathematical content is explicit and requires only simple processes.

## Note to readers

This is the first release of data analysis from the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC). PIAAC is a joint education and labour initiative of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and provides internationally comparable measures of the following three skills that are essential to processing information.

**Literacy:** defined as the ability to engage with written texts (print-based and digital) and thereby participate in society, achieve goals, and develop their knowledge and potential. This requires accessing, identifying, and processing information from a variety of texts that relate to a range of settings.

**Numeracy:** defined as the ability to engage with mathematical information in order to manage the mathematical demands of a range of situations in everyday life. This requires understanding mathematical content and ideas (for example, quantities, numbers, dimensions, relationships), and the representation of that content (for example, objects, pictures, diagrams, graphs).

**Problem solving in technology-rich environments (referred to as PS-TRE):** defined as the ability to use digital technology, communications tools, and networks to acquire and evaluate information, communicate with others, and perform practical tasks. This requires understanding technology (for example, hardware, software applications, commands and functions) and solving problems with it. Measurement is divided into two different but related parameters: 1) familiarity with computers and how to use them; and 2) the ability to solve problems commonly encountered in a technology-rich world.

The skill of adults in literacy, numeracy and PS-TRE was assessed using a computer-based assessment. However, a portion of respondents were given a paper based assessment if they did not have experience with computers, were not able to pass a simple test of their basic computer skills, or they opted out.

Literacy and numeracy were measured on a continuous scale ranging from 0 to 500 and are reported as either the average proficiency of the population (average score) or as the distribution of the population across five proficiency levels from 1 to 5 with an additional category, "below Level 1". Level 1 contains respondents displaying the lowest level of ability. Levels 4 and 5 were combined for both literacy and numeracy and contain those with the highest level of ability.

PS-TRE was assessed using a measurement scale ranging from 0 to 500 and was only reported for individuals who had experience with computers and were able to pass a test of their basic computer skills. In order to take into account the proportion of the population who does not have a score for PS-TRE, results for PS-TRE focus on the proportion of the population by proficiency levels only. PS-TRE is reported using three proficiency levels with an additional category, "below Level 1".

## Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 4406.

The report *Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies Series: "Skills in Canada: First Results from the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC)," 2012 (89-555-X2013001)*, is now available from the *Browse by key resource* module of our website under *Publications*.

Additional tables are available on the [Council of Ministers of Education, Canada](#) website.

An international public use microdata file, which includes data for all participating Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies countries, is available on the [Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development \(OECD\)](#) website.

The [International Report](#) published by the OECD is also available on the OECD website.

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; [infostats@statcan.gc.ca](mailto:infostats@statcan.gc.ca)) or Media Relations (613-951-4636; [mediahotline@statcan.gc.ca](mailto:mediahotline@statcan.gc.ca)).

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## Chain Fisher real export and import values, August 2013

The monthly chain Fisher real dollar values (reference year 2007) for Canadian international merchandise trade are now available for August.

**Available in CANSIM: tables 228-0061 and 228-0062.**

**Definitions, data sources and methods: survey numbers 2201, 2202 and 2203.**

The August 2013 issue of *Canadian International Merchandise Trade*, Vol. 67, no. 8 (65-001-X), is now available from the *Browse by key resource* module of our website under *Publications*.

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## Export and import price indexes, August 2013

Current- and fixed-weighted export and import price indexes (2007=100) on a customs or balance of payments basis are now available based on the North American Product Classification System 2007.

Current- and fixed-weighted import and export price indexes (2007=100) for all countries and the United States on customs basis, by Standard International Trade Classification, are also available.

**Available in CANSIM: tables 228-0063 to 228-0068.**

**Definitions, data sources and methods: survey numbers 2201, 2202 and 2203.**

The August 2013 issue of *Canadian International Merchandise Trade*, Vol. 67, no. 8 (65-001-X), is now available from the *Browse by key resource* module of our website under *Publications*.

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## New products and studies

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### New products

**Building Permits**, August 2013, Vol. 57, no. 8  
Catalogue number 64-001-X (HTML | PDF)

**Canadian International Merchandise Trade**, August 2013, Vol. 67, no. 8  
Catalogue number 65-001-X (HTML | PDF)

**Canadian International Merchandise Trade Database**, August 2013  
Catalogue number 65F0013X (Database)

**Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies Series: "Skills in Canada: First Results from the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC)", 2012**  
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