

# NEWS RELEASE

## Economic freedom on the wane across Canada

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For Immediate Release

**CALGARY**—Canadian provinces once again lag behind U.S. states in economic freedom, finds a new report released today by the Fraser Institute, an independent, non-partisan, public policy think-tank.

Economic freedom—the ability of individuals to make their own economic decisions about what to buy, where to work and whether to start a business—remains fundamental to prosperity.

“Higher levels of economic freedom lead to more opportunity, more prosperity, greater economic growth, more investment and more jobs for Canadians,” said Fred McMahon, the Dr. Michael A. Walker Research Chair in Economic Freedom at the Fraser Institute and co-author of this year’s [\*Economic Freedom of North America\*](#) report, which measures government spending, taxation and labour market restrictions using data from 2019 (the latest year of available comparable data).

After seven straight years atop the rankings—which include the 50 U.S. states, 32 Mexican states and 10 Canadian provinces—Alberta fell from top spot three years ago and this year tied for 33<sup>rd</sup> place.

“While Alberta saw a change in government in 2019 and has made some progress in changing the course of policy, much remains to be done to once again make the province the most economically-free jurisdiction in North America,” McMahon said.

British Columbia is the second-highest ranked province (47<sup>th</sup>) followed by Ontario (52<sup>nd</sup>), Saskatchewan (54<sup>th</sup>), Manitoba (55<sup>th</sup>) and Quebec (56<sup>th</sup>).

The four Atlantic provinces—New Brunswick (57<sup>th</sup>), Nova Scotia (58<sup>th</sup>), Newfoundland and Labrador (59<sup>th</sup>) and Prince Edward Island (60<sup>th</sup>)—have the lowest levels of economic freedom among all provinces and U.S. states, only outranking the Mexican states. New Hampshire retained its top spot in the rankings again this year.

“As economic freedom wanes across Canada, the economic prospects also diminish for Canadians and their families,” McMahon said.

The [\*Economic Freedom of North America\*](#) report (also co-authored by José Torra, head of research at the Mexico City-based Caminos de la Libertad) is an offshoot of the Fraser Institute’s [\*Economic Freedom of the World\*](#) index, the result of more than a quarter century of work by more than 60 scholars including three Nobel laureates.

Detailed tables for each country and subnational jurisdiction can be found at [www.fraserinstitute.org](http://www.fraserinstitute.org).

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