

# NEWS RELEASE

## All Canadian provinces now languish in bottom half of North American economic freedom rankings

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For Immediate Release

**VANCOUVER**—For the first time, every Canadian province ranks in the bottom half of jurisdictions in our annual rankings of economic freedom in North America, 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. The report has two indexes: a sub-national index which measures restrictions on freedom at the province/state and local level and an all-government index which adds federal restrictions.

The trajectory of economic freedom in Canada could lead to weakness in economic growth and prosperity in the years ahead,” 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 2021 (the latest year of available comparable data).

“Since 2014, all Canadian provinces have suffered significant declines in economic freedom at the all-government level, while a majority of provinces also suffered declines at the subnational level,” McMahon added.

Alberta in the all-government index is once again the highest-ranking Canadian province but it has declined substantially. In the all-government index, Alberta is now tied for 31st place out of 50 U.S. states, 32 Mexican states, 10 Canadian provinces, and the US territory of Puerto Rico.

British Columbia is the second-highest ranked province (45<sup>th</sup>) followed by Ontario (50<sup>th</sup>), and Manitoba (54<sup>th</sup>).

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

“Higher levels of economic freedom lead to more opportunity and more prosperity, so as economic freedom wanes the prospects also diminish for Canadians and their families,” McMahon said.

The *Economic Freedom of North America* report (co-authored by Dean Stansel, José Torra and Ángel Carrión-Tavárez) 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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