

# NEWS RELEASE

## Alberta remains most economically-free province in Canada, despite major declines since 2015

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For Immediate Release

**TORONTO**—Alberta has retained its status as the most economically-free province in Canada, despite declining from the top spot in all of North America in recent years, finds a new report released today by the Fraser Institute, an independent, non-partisan, public policy think-tank.

Economic freedom is the ability of individuals to make their own economic decisions free of undue restrictions—what to buy, where to work, whether to start a business, and so on. The [\*Economic Freedom of North America\*](#) report measures government spending, taxation and labour market restrictions using data from 2017, the most recent year of available comparable data.

“Higher levels of economic freedom lead to more prosperity, greater economic growth, more investment and more jobs and opportunities,” said Fred McMahon, report co-author and the Dr. Michael A. Walker Research Chair in Economic Freedom at the Fraser Institute.

Alberta scored 6.60 out of 10 in this year’s report, beating out second-ranked British Columbia (6.25)—although Alberta’s score has decreased substantially, down from 8.21 in 2015.

Ontario and Saskatchewan are the only two other provinces to receive a score greater than 5.0 out of 10 (5.57 and 5.06 respectively). Quebec once again ranks last with a score of 2.86.

The report also includes an additional all-government ranking, which adds federal government policy to the index and includes the 50 U.S. states, 32 Mexican states and 10 Canadian provinces.

Crucially, from 2014 to 2017, the U.S. and Canada have diverged in terms of the level economic freedom. As a result, all Canadian provinces have experienced a decline in economic freedom since 2014.

“Canadian provinces have tumbled dramatically in the North American economic freedom ranking in recent years, and that has real consequences for prosperity and opportunity,” said Dean Stansel, report co-author and economics professor at Southern Methodist University.

The *Economic Freedom of North America* report, also co-authored by José Torra, the 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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