

NEWS RELEASE

Atlantic provinces rank last among all provinces, U.S. states in annual economic freedom rankings

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For Immediate Release

HALIFAX—All four Atlantic provinces rank last among the 10 Canadian provinces and 50 U.S. states in the world’s premier ranking of economic freedom in North America, finds a new report released today by the Fraser Institute, an independent, non-partisan, public policy think-tank.

New Brunswick is the top-ranked Atlantic province (57th out of 60 Canadian provinces and U.S. states) followed by Nova Scotia (58th) and Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland & Labrador, which are tied (59th).

“Government policies in the Atlantic provinces continue to stifle economic freedom, particularly compared to other provinces and states, which weakens the economic growth and job creation the region so desperately needs,” 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 2018 (the latest year of available comparable data).

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

“Higher levels of economic freedom lead to more opportunity, more prosperity, greater economic growth, more investment and jobs,” McMahon said.

In this year’s report, Alberta remained the highest-ranked province (9th overall) followed by British Columbia (27th), Ontario (45th), Saskatchewan (47th), Manitoba (52nd) and Quebec (55th).

Crucially, from 2015 to 2018 (again, the latest year of available comparable data), the United States and Canada have diverged in their levels of economic freedom.

“In recent years, Canadian provinces have fallen in the North American economic freedom ranking and that has real consequences for the economic prospects of Canadians and their families,” McMahon said.

The [Economic Freedom of North America](#) report 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.

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