

NEWS RELEASE

Ottawa-Gatineau metropolitan area had highest employment incomes nationwide in 2019

May 16, 2023
For Immediate Release

TORONTO—Canada’s national capital region had the highest median employment incomes in the country in 2019—the last year unaffected by COVID—while energy-centred census metropolitan areas (CMAs) also rank high, finds a new study released today by the Fraser Institute, an independent, non-partisan Canadian public policy think-tank.

“Metropolitan areas across Canada vary greatly in their employment incomes, but some regions and types of CMAs fair better than others,” said Ben Eisen, a senior fellow with the Fraser Institute and co-author of *Comparing Median Employment Incomes in Canada’s Census Metropolitan Areas*.

The study measures median employment income—wages, salaries and commissions from paid and net self-employment income before taxes and government transfers—across Canada’s 41 census metropolitan areas for the year 2019, the last year unaffected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

CMAs containing capital cities are heavily concentrated at the top of the ranking of higher income CMAs. In fact, of the ten highest income CMAs, five include either a federal or provincial capital.

The Ottawa-Gatineau CMA topped the list at \$45,500, followed by Edmonton (\$45,470), Calgary (\$43,870), and Regina (\$43,760). Other CMAs connected to the energy sector also ranked high, including Red Deer, AB at 6th (\$42,000), St. John’s, NL at 7th (\$41,360), Saskatoon, SK (12th at \$39,940) and Lethbridge, AB (13th at \$39,470).

Conversely, Census Metropolitan Areas in Quebec (excluding Quebec City at 8th) and Atlantic Canada generally ranked low, with median employment incomes in Montreal, Moncton, NB and Saint John, NB falling below the national average of \$36,960.

The lowest median employment income of Canada’s 41 CMAs was \$31,540 in St. Catharines-Niagara, ON. In fact, Ontario contains both the highest ranked CMA (Ottawa-Gatineau) and the lowest ranked nationally.

“Capital cities across Canada rank very high when it comes to employment incomes, as do cities connected to Canada’s energy sector, while many urban areas in southwestern Ontario, Quebec and the Atlantic Canada continue to underperform,” Eisen said

-30-

MEDIA CONTACT:

Ben Eisen, Senior Fellow
Fraser Institute

To arrange media interviews or for more information, please contact:
Drue MacPherson, Media Relations, Fraser Institute
604-688-0221 ext. 721
drue.macpherson@fraserinstitute.org

[Follow the Fraser Institute on Twitter](#) | [Like us on Facebook](#)

The Fraser Institute is an independent Canadian public policy research and educational organization with offices in Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto, and Montreal and ties to a global network of think-tanks in 87 countries. Its mission is to improve the quality of life for Canadians, their families and future generations by studying, measuring and broadly communicating the effects of government policies, entrepreneurship and choice on their well-being. To protect the Institute's independence, it does not accept grants from governments or contracts for research. Visit www.fraserinstitute.org