

NEWS RELEASE

Polish incomes nearly quadrupled after Poland transitioned from socialism to market democracy

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For immediate release

VANCOUVER—According to many key metrics including incomes and life expectancy, life in Poland improved dramatically after the country transitioned from socialism to a market democracy, finds a new book published by the Fraser Institute, an independent, non-partisan, Canadian public policy think-tank, in partnership with think-tanks in the United States, Australia and the United Kingdom.

“When Poles finally discarded the yoke of socialism, life in Poland improved dramatically on virtually every measure of economic wellbeing,” said Matt Mitchell, Fraser Institute senior fellow and coauthor of [*The Road to Socialism and Back: An Economic History of Poland, 1939–2019*](#).

The book, part of a multimedia project, which includes an interactive [website](#), documents the misery of the Polish people from 1944 to the early 1990s—but also the marked improvements after Poland transitioned from socialism to a market economy and democracy. For example:

- From 1990 to 2018, the average Polish income increased from \$8,493 to \$31,629.
- From 1990 to 2018, average life expectancy in Poland increased from 70.89 years to 77.60 years.
- Government per-person spending on social services increased from \$1,557 in 1990 to \$6,720 in 2018.

The book’s findings are especially important given recent [polling](#), which found that 42 per cent of all Canadians—and 50 per cent of young Canadians aged 18 to 24—support socialism as their preferred economic system. And among those who favour socialism, 35 per cent support government directly running the economy by owning companies and entire industries.

“Because they weren’t alive when actual socialism was imposed on one-third of the planet, many young people don’t fully appreciate socialism’s devastating effects,” Mitchell said.

The Realities of Socialism is a multimedia project by the Fraser Institute, the Institute of Economic Affairs in the United Kingdom, the Institute of Public Affairs in Australia and the Fund for American Studies in the United States. To learn more, visit [RealitiesofSocialism.org](#)

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