

How Good is Canadian Health Care?



ALSO INSIDE

Does class size matter?

Hong Kong's Economic Freedom

Alberta's Reform Budget



Niels Veldhuis
President, Fraser Institute

Dear Fraser Institute Friends and Supporters,

As Canadians, we all care deeply about our health care, which is why the Fraser Institute measures the performance of our health care system and explores improvements using solutions from around the world.

So, just how good is Canadian health care?

Unfortunately, it's not great.

As our recently released study, *Comparing Performance of Universal Health Care Countries*, has found (see page 4), Canada is the second-highest spender among 28 developed countries with universal health care systems.

Most Canadians, however, are unaware of the true cost of health care. In fact, our health care system is still widely described as "free." That's why we released another important study in October, *The Price of Public Health Care Insurance*, which helps Canadians better understand health care costs and the value they receive for their tax dollars (see page 2).

While Canadians don't pay directly for medical services, they do pay a substantial amount of money for health care through taxes. Specifically, our study finds that the typical Canadian family will pay over \$13,000 for public health care in 2019.

What do we get for all this spending?

We rank near the bottom on availability of resources:

- 26th (out of 28 countries) for the number of doctors per 1,000 people
- 26th (out of 27) for the number of hospital beds per 1,000 people
- 21st (out of 26) for the number of MRI machines per million people
- 21st (out of 27) for CT scanners per million people

And on the wait-time front, among the 10 comparable universal health care countries for which we have data, we rank last with the highest percentage of patients (30 percent) who waited two months or longer to see a specialist.

These results are simply not acceptable. Nor is the fact that over a million Canadians suffer on waiting lists for medical treatment. And that's why health care is such an important part of the Fraser Institute's research and outreach.

Please help us get the message out by passing this issue of *The Quarterly* on to your friends, family, and colleagues when you've finished reading it.

Enjoy the issue—and as always, thank you for your ongoing support.

Best,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Niels Veldhuis". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a small dot at the end.

Niels

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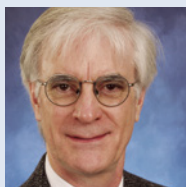
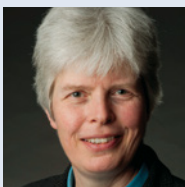
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The High Cost of Our “Free” Public Health Care

Milagros Palacios and Bacchus Barua

The recent federal election showed that politicians across the spectrum are more than happy to promise increased spending on our government-run health care system. Whether the spending is for long-term care or a universal Pharmacare program, the political solution to any problem that plagues our health care systems seems to be to pump more money into it. Of course, it's not secret that it's ultimately the Canadian taxpayer who's stuck with the bill.

So just how large a tab did we run up last year?

While it's fairly straightforward to get a receipt for our collective bill (\$163 billion in 2018), most Canadians remain unaware of their individual contributions to our public health care system. This is through no fault of their own. Rather, it's primarily because health care in Canada is financed through general government revenues rather than a dedicated tax, which means that we pay for public health care insurance through a variety of taxes including those on income, sales, so-called



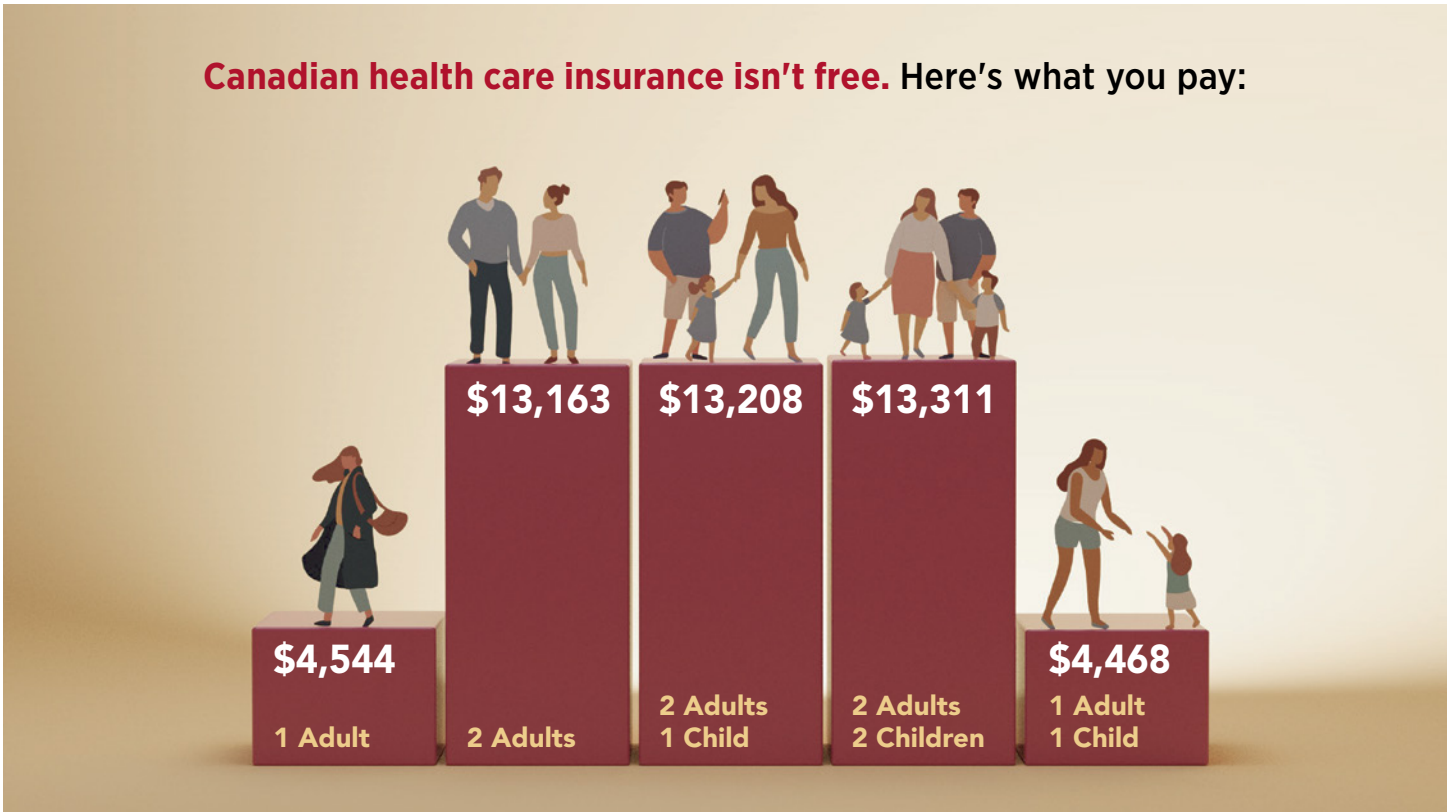
“sin” (alcohol and tobacco), and many others.

Even per-capita estimates (\$4,389) about how much of our taxes go to health care are misleading because Canadians do not pay equal amounts of tax each year. For example, children and dependents are not taxpayers. Meanwhile, health insurance premiums (in provinces that impose them) only cover a fraction of the true cost

of health care, which further exacerbates the confusion.

The reality is that the amounts we pay for health care through the country's tax system depend on family income and size. And while difficult, it's possible to estimate these relative contributions using data from Statistics Canada and the Canadian Institute for Health Information. In fact, a new study by the Fraser Institute, *The Price of Public Health Care Insurance, 2019*, does just that. Calculating estimates across six common family types, the study reveals that a typical Canadian family consisting of two parents and two children with an average household income of \$140,049 will pay \$13,311 for public health care this year. Meanwhile, a single-parent family with two children (earning \$65,858) will pay \$3,833.

Canadian health care insurance isn't free. Here's what you pay:



The amount individual Canadian families pay for health care of course varies widely across the income spectrum. For example, the 10 percent of families with the lowest incomes (earning \$15,070 per household, on average) will pay \$464 for health care in 2019, while families among the top 10 percent of income earners (earning a household income of \$298,872, on average) will pay \$39,486.

Understanding how much each of our families contributes towards the public system is important for a number of reasons. Specifically, knowing how much we pay enables us to better judge whether we are receiving good value in return for our health care dollars. For example, while some Canadians may consider these amounts reasonable for a system that provides life-saving treatment in the emergency room, others may be incensed by the fact that despite spending thousands of dollars, they had to wait 26.5 weeks to receive neurosurgery last year.

Further, by comparing how much families annually contribute towards the public system with changes in their income over time, we can better understand the impact of the growing financing burden of public health care insurance. For example, the cost of public health care insurance for the average Canadian family grew 1.7 times faster than average income between 1997 and

2019. However, and again due to the complex nature of how we pay for health care, it's likely that many Canadians may not be fully aware of this unsustainable growth relative to their incomes.

Finally, and at the very least, these numbers help disabuse Canadians of any notion that we have a "free" health care system. Families across Canada clearly pay a substantial amount of money for health care through our tax system, and it's important that they know just how much of the \$163-billion-dollar bill is on their tab. [FI](#)



MILAGROS PALACIOS



BACCHUS BARUA

Milagros Palacios is Associate Director, Addington Centre for Measurement, and Bacchus Barua is Associate Director of the Centre for Health Policy Studies at the Fraser Institute. They are co-authors of the study *The Price of Public Health Care Insurance, 2019*.

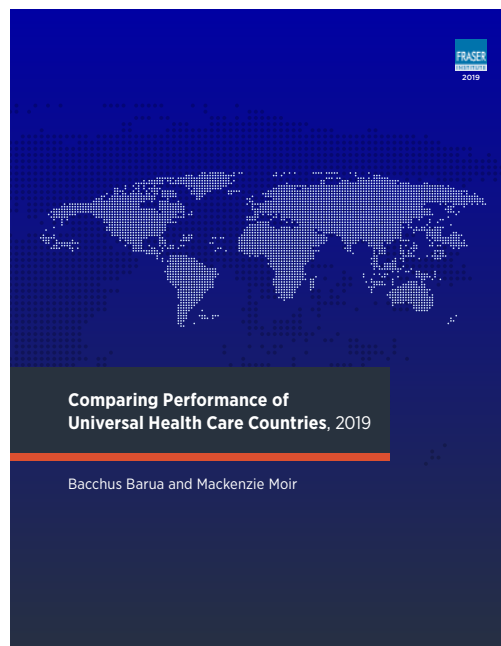
Canada's Health Care System Fares Poorly Compared to Other Countries

Bacchus Barua and Mackenzie Moir

With the Democratic primaries in full swing south of the border, Canada's health care system is once again taking centre stage. And like all good plays, this one has a twist. Taking on the roles of both villain and health care hero, our system's true identity remains a mystery.

Fortunately, we don't have to wait till the end of the play to learn the truth. A new Fraser Institute study, *Comparing Performance of Universal Health Care Countries, 2019*, shines a spotlight on Canada's health care system and—spoiler alert—things don't look too good. Despite spending more on health care than most other developed countries with universal coverage, Canada has relatively little to show for it.

For example, one of the most basic requirements for a functioning health care system is that medical resources be available. Unfortunately, when compared on an age-adjusted basis to other high-income OECD countries with universal coverage, we have fewer doctors (Canada ranks 26th of 28), fewer hospital beds



(26th of 27), and fewer MRI scanners (21st of 26).

Faced with this relative scarcity, it's no wonder many patients struggle to find a doctor and the phrase “hallway medicine” is now firmly part of our Canadian vocabulary.




















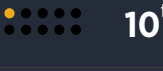




Some of this data may come as a surprise, but most Canadians know we have a wait-time problem. In fact, Canada ranks

last on four out of five indicators measuring timeliness of care.

For example, 30 percent of Canadian patients reported waiting two months or longer for an appointment with a specialist, and 18 percent reported waiting four months or longer for elective surgery. Compare that with Germany, which performed best on both indicators with only three percent waiting two months or more for a specialist and no patients—that's right, zero—reporting a wait of four months or more for elective surgery.

The results aren't all doom and gloom, though. There are a few bright spots in “utilization and quality” where Canada's performance is mixed. For example, our system

Canada, one of the highest spenders among universal health-care systems, ranks **modest to poor** on performance

	 Canada	 Netherlands	 Switzerland	 Germany	 Australia
Health-care Spending (% of GDP) /28	 2 nd	 10 th	 1 st	 8 th	 11 th
Doctors (per thousand) /28	 26 th	 14 th	 5 th	 9 th	 6 th
Hospital Beds (per thousand) /27	 26 th	 18 th	 10 th	 3 rd	NA
Specialist Wait (>2 months) /10	 10 th	 3 rd	 4 th	 1 st	 5 th

delivers more physician consultations and performs more cataract surgeries and knee replacements—but delivers fewer hospital treatments, fewer transluminal coronary angioplasties, and fewer hip replacements—than the OECD average.

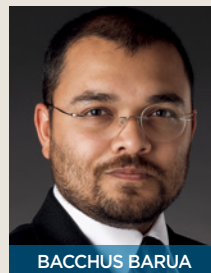
Similarly, while Canada reports a lower rate of patients dying after a heart attack and has a strong record on survival rates for breast, colon, and rectal cancers, we have mediocre survival rates for cervical cancer and the worst record in the cohort for obstetric trauma while giving birth.

Canada's health care spending as a share of GDP (11.1 percent) ranked second-highest after adjusting for population age behind only Switzerland.

Finally, and to be crystal clear, the mixed results in this report card are not due to insufficient spending. In fact, Canada's health care spending as a share of GDP (11.1 percent) ranked second-highest after adjusting for population age behind only Switzerland.

So where does that leave the protagonist in our play? It turns out that Canada's health care system is neither hero nor villain, but a mediocre mixture of the two. It's a universal system that does well on some measures of clinical performance but has fewer medical resources than its counterparts while failing patients who routinely face excessive waits for treatment.

Americans still need to figure out whether they want a universal health care system or not, but Canadians face a different question. When will we finally learn from other universal health care countries and turn our half-villain into a complete hero? [FI](#)



BACCHUS BARUA



MACKENZIE MOIR

Bacchus Barua is Associate Director of the Centre for Health Policy Studies and Mackenzie Moir is a Junior Policy Analyst at the Fraser Institute. They are co-authors of the study *Comparing Performance of Universal Health Care Countries, 2019*.

Study Exposes “Class Size” Myth in Canada

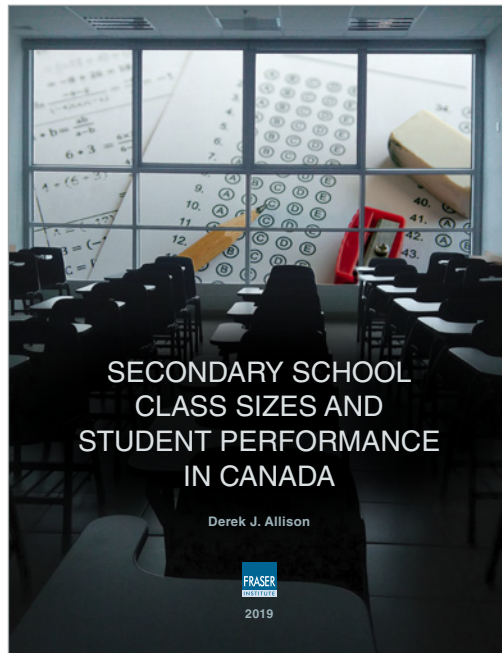
Derek J. Allison

Class war may soon break out in Canada.

More than half of Canadian high school students are in Ontario or British Columbia. Teacher negotiations continue in both provinces with secondary school class sizes a central issue that could trigger strike action.

The BC Teachers’ Federation wants to retain or lower high school class size limits reinstated by the Supreme Court after they were stripped from teacher contracts by a previous government. Ontario’s secondary teachers’ unions are pushing back against the Ford government’s plan to substantially increase class sizes in Grades 9 through 12.

To listen to the teacher unions and their supporters, the sky is about to fall. As usual, their rhetoric dwells on threats to student learning with scant attention to financial costs or pertinent research evidence. But smaller classes remain among the most expensive policy choices as more teachers must be hired or retained. This high cost must be acknowledged, particularly amid ever-growing education spending and a dearth of persuasive evidence of educational gains.



And the evidence is clear—there’s no such evidence. The extensive research literature shows small and limited benefits of smaller classes in the early grades, not high schools. In fact, there’s evidence of greater student performance in school systems with larger secondary school classes.

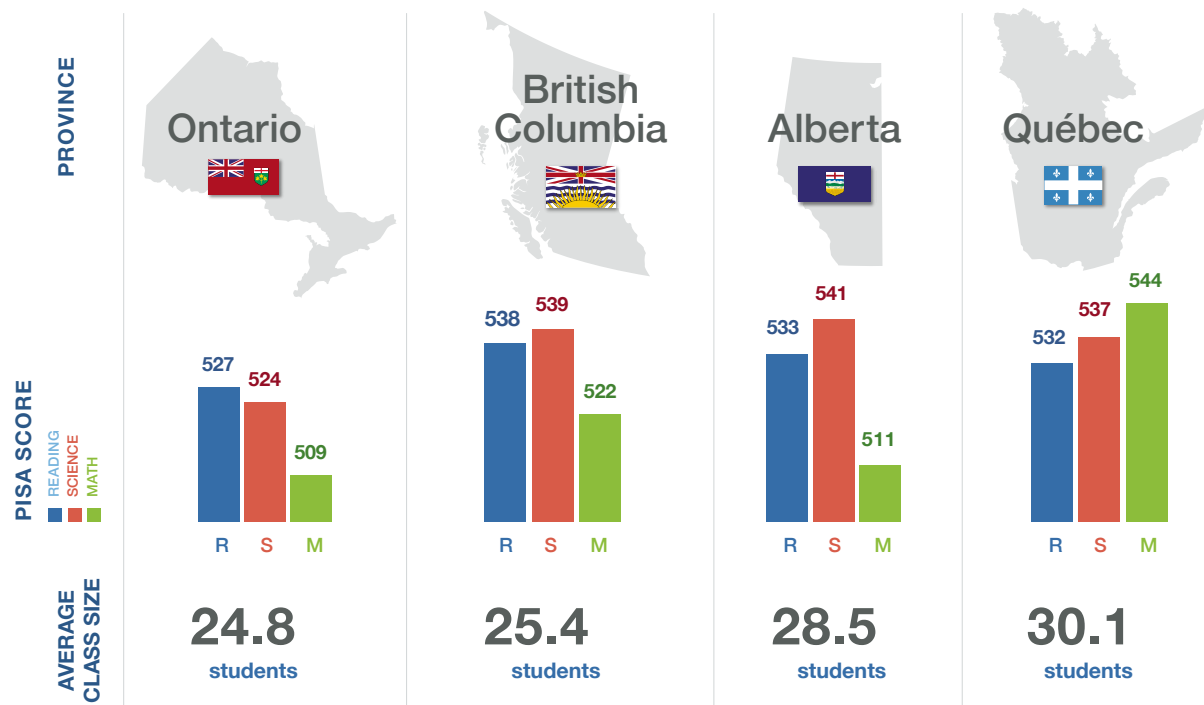
Consider results from a recent Fraser Institute study, based on

findings from the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) results in 2015, the latest year of available data. The PISA project measures the performance of 15-year-olds from more than 70 countries every three years. Canada has an excellent PISA record, coming 10th in math, 7th in science and 3rd in reading among the 72 participating countries in 2015. PISA also uses principal reports to measure average class sizes, yielding interesting insights.

Singapore, the top-scoring country in math and science in 2015, had eight more students (on average) in its high school classes than Canada. Japan, the top-scoring OECD country in math and science, had nine more students in high school classes.

Within Canada, there’s considerable variation among provinces, with reported average high school class sizes ranging from a low of 22.6 students in Saskatchewan to

SMALLER class sizes don't necessarily lead to HIGHER test scores



a high of 30.1 in Quebec. Ontario (24.9 students) was a little below the national average (26.4); BC a little above (25.4). On this basis, the BC and Ontario teacher unions have little to complain about.

The extensive research literature shows small and limited benefits of smaller classes in the early grades, not high schools.

But the real shocker is found in the standardized test scores. Saskatchewan, with the smallest high school class size, had the lowest test scores in all three PISA subjects—reading, math and science.

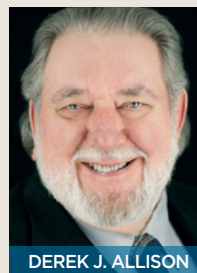
Quebec, which had the largest average class size, had the highest math scores. Alberta, with the second-largest class size (28.5 students), had the highest science scores while BC had the highest reading scores.

And Ontario had the smallest class size—and lowest test scores in all three PISA subjects—among the four largest provinces.

Of course, these findings do not mean we can increase test scores by increasing class sizes. Many other variables are in play. But they should challenge the common misperception, held by many policymakers and parents, that smaller class sizes produce better results.

It's not yet clear whether the BC or Ontario teacher unions will strike. Given their high membership fees and recent years of relative peace, both have large war chests. The Ontario unions are politically opposed to their current provincial government, the BC union less so.

But regardless of how the stories unfold, unions in both provinces lack credible arguments to justify striking to protect their already relatively small high school classes. [FI](#)



DEREK J. ALLISON

Derek J. Allison is a professor emeritus of education at the University of Western Ontario, Fraser Institute senior fellow and author of *Secondary School Class Sizes and Student Performance in Canada*.

Federal Government should Consider Risks of Potential Recession

Jake Fuss and Milagros Palacios

Many economists have warned of a US recession in the near future, due to multiple possible factors including the rise of trade protectionism, political turmoil, and market volatility. Of course, a US recession will also harm the Canadian economy and create significant problems for federal finances.

Therefore, the government should weigh different policy options in response to a recession and decide whether to enact new policies to “stimulate” the economy or rely solely on existing policies known as “automatic stabilizers,” which are designed to help address changes in household income and which do not require direct government action.

Put differently, automatic stabilizers inject money into the Canadian economy during an economic downturn prior to any discretionary stimulus measures.



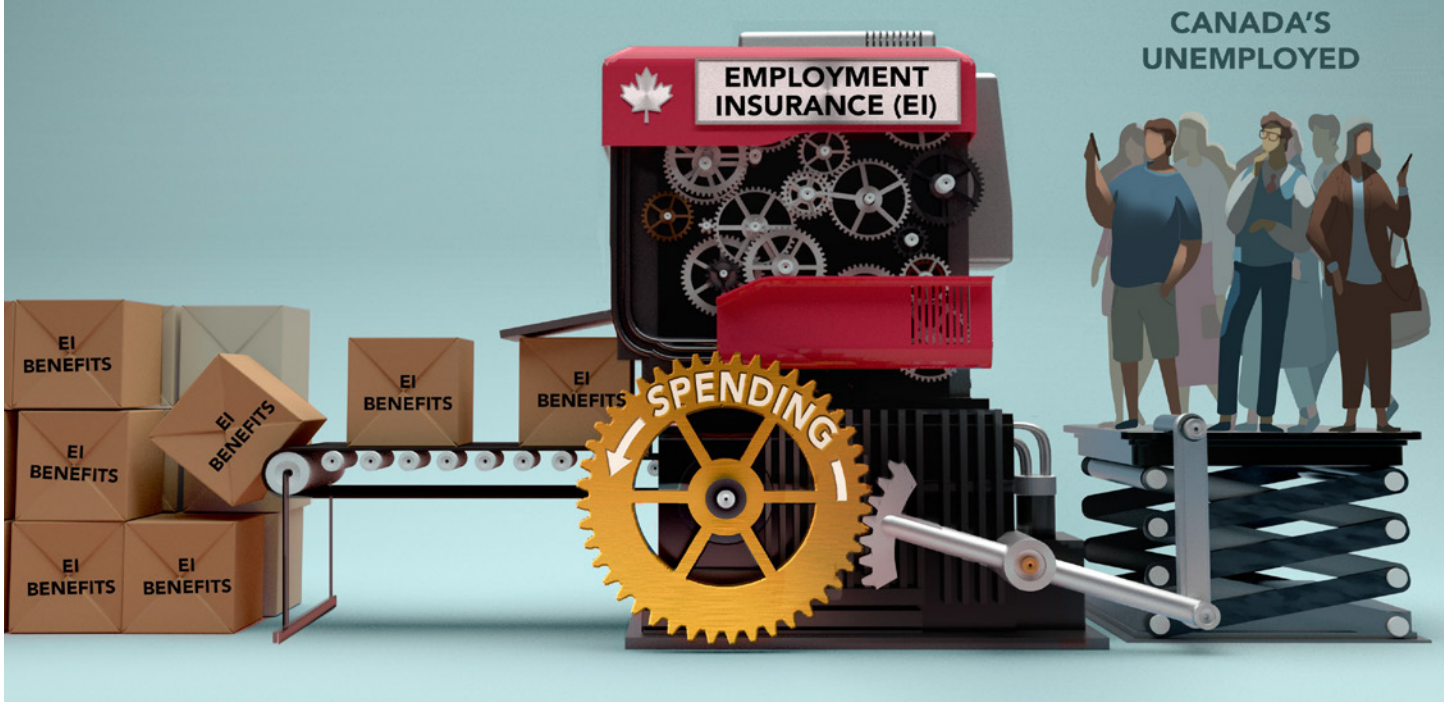
A recent Fraser Institute study, *Fiscal Policy and Recessions: A Primer on Automatic Stabilizers*, examined the effect of automatic stabilizers during the 2009 recession, spotlighting the federal employment insurance (EI) program. When the economy slows or contracts, government spending on benefit programs automatically

rises. For example, spending on EI benefits automatically responds to changes in unemployment. In other words, a rise in unemployment causes spending on EI benefits to grow as well.

The 2009 recession saw a pronounced increase in Canada’s unemployment rate, from 6.1 percent to 8.3 percent over a one-year period, and unemployed Canadians received income from EI without requiring the government to draft new legislation. In fact, regular EI benefits surged by 43.4 percent or nearly \$5.0 billion.

At the same time, EI premium revenues (money Cana-

In 2009 Employment Insurance automatically increased spending by nearly \$5 billion as unemployment rose



dians pay into the program) declined by 0.7 percent or \$126 million during the recession. When more people are unemployed, EI automatically collects less money while spending much more on EI benefits.

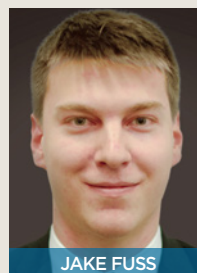
The boost of money from automatic stabilizers such as EI also increases the federal budget deficit (or reduces the surplus, if one exists) during a recession—without any government action. A study from earlier in 2019, *What Happens to the Federal Deficit if a Recession Occurs in 2019?* estimated that the federal deficit could hit \$34.4 billion if the federal government relied solely on existing programs such as EI in the event of a recession.

Consequently, any voluntary increase in spending by Ottawa would further exacerbate the deficit. Another Fraser Institute study, this one from 2018, *Federal Deficits and Recession: What Could Happen*, estimated that the annual deficit could skyrocket to \$120.5 billion if the conditions of the 2009 recession repeated and government enacted a similar stimulus package.

The Federal government should recognize that spending will automatically increase when the economy deteriorates, making it more difficult to balance the budget. Any discretionary measures the government uses to

try to stimulate the economy (increases in spending or decreases in taxes) will be added on top of the automatic stabilizers that already exist.

There's an increasing likelihood of a recession occurring in the not-too-distant future. It will be important for the government to not only understand how a recession can affect federal finances, but to also account for automatic stabilizers before discussing any potential stimulus package. [FI](#)



JAKE FUSS



MILAGROS PALACIOS

Jake Fuss is an Economist and Milagros Palacios is Associate Director, Addington Centre for Measurement, at the Fraser Institute. They are co-authors of the study *Fiscal Policy and Recessions: A Primer on Automatic Stabilizers*.

Hong Kong Still Number One, But for How Long?

James Gwartney and Fred McMahon

In the Fraser Institute's latest *Economic Freedom of the World* ranking, Hong Kong again tops the list as the world's freest economy. It has occupied this position almost without exception through the past half century—but will it remain there?

The foundation for Hong Kong's economic freedom was laid by Sir John Cowperthwaite, the Financial Secretary of Hong Kong from 1961 to 1971.

Cowperthwaite was an old-fashioned classical liberal, who, like Adam Smith, believed that the key elements of economic progress were “peace, easy taxation, and a tolerable administration of justice.” Under British rule and Cowperthwaite's direction during the 1960s and 1970s, low taxes, free trade, competitive markets, limited government, sound money, and rule of law characterized the Hong Kong economy.

The results: surging economic growth and higher income levels. When Cowperthwaite became Financial Secretary in 1961, the per capita GDP was about 25 percent that of Britain; three decades later income in Hong Kong



exceeded that of the British. By 2016, the real income level of Hong Kong was more than nine times what it was in 1960. Moreover, the per capita income level of Hong Kong today is five times that of mainland China.

The rapid growth of Hong Kong did not go unnoticed. Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher pointed to Hong Kong to support their own policies of economic liberalization. Moreover, the success of Hong Kong was an important motivation for the economic liberalization of mainland China

following the death of Mao.

Sadly, Hong Kong's freedom is now threatened. Pressures from mainland China forced Hong Kong's legislature to consider a law that would allow the government to extradite persons accused of crimes to be tried in the mainland. This triggered protests that have now continued for three months even though the government has promised to withdraw the bill.

The demonstrators are protesting the failure of the Chinese government to live up to its commitment to respect the rule of law in Hong Kong and to a democratically elected legislature and chief executive. China

turned Hong Kong's legislature and chief executive into mainland puppets while the extradition treaty would have subjected Hong Kong residents and visitors to the mainland rule of law, firmly under the thumb of the Communist Party, as witnessed by the Chinese government using its legal system to take two Canadian hostages, under abysmal conditions, to protest the arrest in Vancouver of Huawei executive Meng Wanzhou.

Hong Kong again tops the list as the world's freest economy—but will it remain there?

The protests have led to indefensible violence and a breakdown of the rule of law. The police have used tear gas rather indiscriminately and even posed as protesters in order to make arrests. A small minority of the protesters have also been violent.

Most egregiously, a group of protesters held two men thought to be agents of the mainland government hostage for several hours at Hong Kong's international Airport, zip-tied the men's hands and beat them. At times, protests have closed the airport and train stations. Actions like these undermine economic freedom and, if continued, they will damage Hong Kong's future.

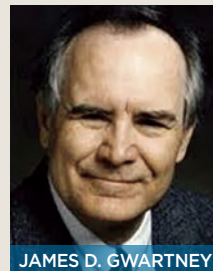
Although both sides have violated the rule of law, government abuses hold more peril than the acts of a radical fringe of protesters. The rule of law and its protection of property form the bedrock of economic freedom. When the rich and powerful can bend the law to their desire and seize property, the vast majority are denied economic freedom.

This sadly is the state of things on the mainland. Communist officials have repeatedly stated the rule of law—or, for China, "rule by law"—is subservient to the Party, and thus helpful to corrupt government officials and their friends. Chinese authorities and companies routinely steal intellectual property. They also expropriate with little compensation—in effect steal—their own citizens' homes for ego-driven mega projects.

At least until 2017, the year for which we have the most recent comprehensive data, Hong Kong largely maintained the rule of law and the other aspects of a free economy. However, mainland appointments to high-level positions in police and government administration and other interventions are weakening the rule of law in Hong Kong. Its rating has trended down since 2009, at least partially because of mainland interference.

The broader picture is also troubling. Hong Kong is declining in the Human Freedom Index, jointly published by the Fraser Institute (Canada), the Cato Institute (United States), and the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom (Germany). This index combines a measure of economic freedom with measures of personal and civil freedom.

The current situation is explosive. If the Communist Party crushes the demonstrations much as it did the 1989 Tiananmen Square protests, it would spur a major response by the rest of the world. Removal of China from the World Trade Organization and huge reductions in trade with China head the list of possibilities. If this happens, the decade ahead will be dramatically different from the recent past, for Hong Kong, for China, and for the global trading system. **FI**



JAMES D. GWARTNEY



FRED McMAHON

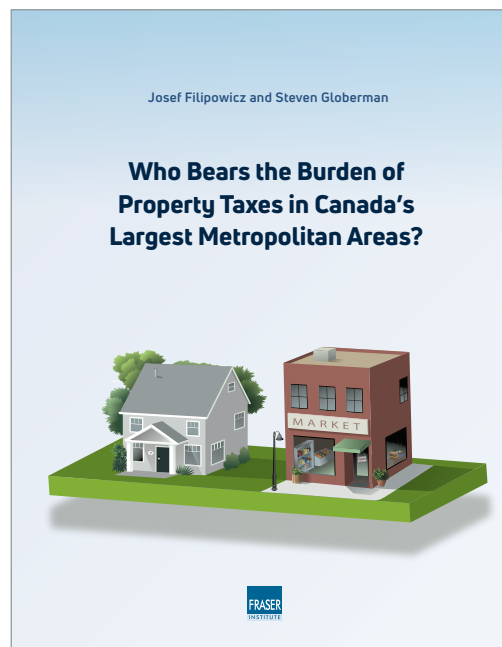
James D. Gwartney is a Professor of Economics at Florida State University and principal author of the Fraser Institute's *Economic Freedom of the World Annual Report*. Fred McMahon is the Dr. Michael A. Walker Chair of Economic Freedom Research at the Fraser Institute

Property Tax Imbalance Erodes Political Accountability, Discourages Business Investment

Josef Filipowicz and Steven Globerman

In many cities and towns across Canada, residential properties are increasing in value, while some local businesses are struggling to survive. There are different reasons for this development including factors well beyond our borders, but in most of those cities and towns, business property tax rates are higher than residential rates—often two, three, or four times higher.

For example, a new Fraser Institute study, *Who Bears the Burden of Property Taxes in Canada's Largest Metropolitan Areas?* which compares commercial-to-residential property tax ratios in Canada's largest metropolitan areas, shows that business rates were 3.81 times higher in Toronto, 3.56 times higher in Vancouver, and between 3.98 to 4.39 times higher in Montreal (depending on the borough) than the residential rate in the latest years of available data.



In some municipalities the ratio falls to roughly 2-to-1, while in others it skyrockets into the double-digits, notably for industrial properties. What's common across virtually all municipalities, however, is that rates are higher for businesses.

And yet, governments across Canada—both municipal and provincial—seldom justify the disproportionate tax burden on businesses. According to the literature on the subject, governments at all levels are

likely responding to political incentives to overtax non-voting property classes such as businesses (and to a lesser extent, tenants) while subsidizing services enjoyed by residential property owners who are more likely to be voters.

This implicit income redistribution is not without consequences. For one, it erodes political accountability as the property tax no longer follows a clear principle such as "user-pay" or payments for benefits received from the

Entrepreneurs and small business owners bear much higher property taxes—240% more, on average, in major metropolitan areas—than comparable residential properties



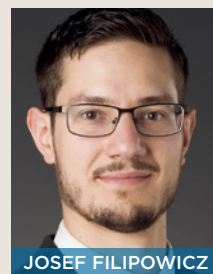
municipality or province. It can also threaten the survival of many small businesses. Although business property taxes are deductible expenses from corporate income taxes, they still represent approximately half of the tax burden faced by businesses. This burden may prevent businesses from starting up, expanding, hiring more workers, and remaining open for business. It will also have a disproportionate effect on small businesses that can't absorb costs in a way their larger competitors can.

Moreover, the tax burden imbalance, alongside the raft of other advantages the federal (and to a lesser extent, provincial) governments offer homebuyers and homeowners, encourages investors (other things equal) to favour residential real estate over other forms of capital investment such as software, machinery, and equipment. Homeowners are exempt from paying capital gains on the sale of their primary residence, while businesses must pay capital gains tax on land and (indirectly) on other assets (including machinery, equipment, and intellectual property) that increase the value of a business when it's sold. Mortgage stress test or not, federal incentives clearly favour investment in residential real estate.

And we may already be witnessing the consequences. The growth of capital investment in Canada slowed substantially from 2005 to 2018 compared to earlier periods. Crucially, during this same period, business investment's share of total capital investment declined markedly while residential real estate's share of total investment increased. Again, there are many possible reasons for this, including increased uncertainty about

Canada's trade environment and the effects of government regulation and carbon taxes. But the relatively heavy local tax burden on businesses likely plays a meaningful role in the decline of business investment, the lifeblood of local economies.

Given Canada's population growth, increased housing investment serves a valuable economic purpose. However, to the extent that property tax distortions steer capital investment away from other productive assets, especially research and development and new business equipment, the commercial-residential property tax imbalance could come with a significant overall cost to Canada's productivity performance and local businesses across the country. [FI](#)



JOSEF FILIPOWICZ



STEVEN GLOBERMAN

Josef Filipowicz is a Senior Policy Analyst in the Centre for Municipal Policy and Steven Globberman is a Fraser Institute Resident Scholar and Addington Chair in Measurement as well as Professor Emeritus, Western Washington University. They are co-authors of *Who Bears the Burden of Property Taxes in Canada's Largest Metropolitan Areas?*

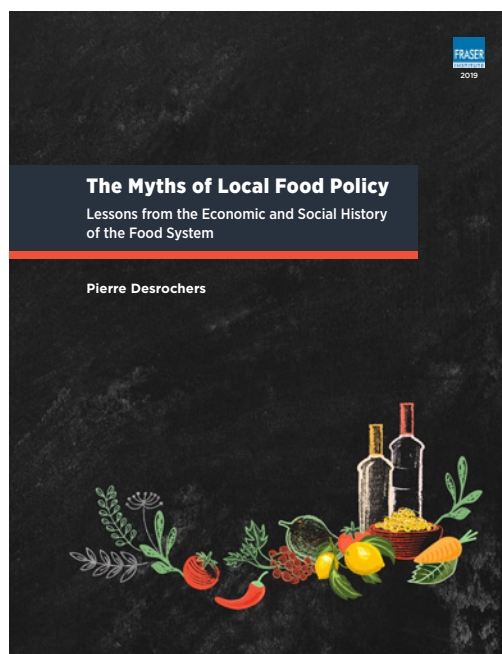
“Eat Local” Food Movement Doomed to Fail in Ontario and Beyond

Pierre Desrochers

Across Ontario, “local food” activists continue to promote the economic, social, and environmental virtues of small local alternative farms, community gardens, backyard hen-houses, and older, less-efficient and more expensive ways to produce food.

In response, the Ontario government—directly or through organizations such as Foodland Ontario, the Greenbelt Fund, and the Trillium Foundation—supports several local food initiatives. And many government-funded institutions have also pledged to purchase more local food.

Unfortunately for taxpayers, the wishes of activists have clashed with reality. In recent years, vertical farms have gone bankrupt. Backyard chickens appeared in increasing numbers in animal shelters. Ontarians participating in community supported agriculture (CSA) arrangements—where you buy a share of a harvest in advance without really knowing what a



farmer will send you—suffered from “supermarket withdrawal” syndrome and failed to renew their memberships. Authorities uncovered fraud at farmers’ markets.

Today, the “local food” movement is now mostly concerned with connecting producers of expensive niche products with middle- and upper-middle-class patrons,

a far cry from the vision of fresher, more affordable food once promised by activists.

Of course, these problems were entirely predictable because activists never asked themselves why modern production and retail practices, along with the globalized food-supply chain, were developed in the first place. Nor did they ponder one simple question—why would anyone import food to Canada if the local alternatives were better?

Regrettably, as noted in a recent study published by the Fraser Institute, *The Myths of Local Food Policy: Lessons from the Economic and Social History of the Food*

System, local food activists bought and spread several demonstrably false myths. Below are just a few.

Myth: Buying directly from local farmers mends community ties eroded by large retailers.

Reality: Supermarkets deliver lower costs and greater convenience. Spending more time and money to acquire food means fewer opportunities to nurture social capital (in the home or community) in other ways.

Myth: Money spent locally generates additional employment.

Reality: Local food that is the best alternative available creates value for local people, but more expensive local alternatives destroys jobs because cheaper imports leave more money in the pockets of consumers to spend on other things, thus creating other kinds of jobs.

Myth: Because it's fresher, local food is tastier and more nutritious.

Reality: Sometimes it is; sometimes not. And crucially, barring massive investments in fossil-fuel heated greenhouses, fresh food is only available for short periods of time each year in most locations in Canada. By contrast, the globalized food-supply chain delivers “permanent summertime” by importing food from producers in different latitudes who harvest what they grow at different times of the year. Furthermore, produce grown specifically for freezing and canning by large companies is typically picked in its best state and, depending on the commodity, freezing and canning processes often preserve nutrient value better than refrigeration.


Myth: Local producers are more dependable than foreign suppliers in times of political and economic crisis.

Reality: Natural factors such as unseasonable heat or cold, excessive or insufficient rainfall, floods, insect and rodent pests, pathogens, soil degradation, and epidemics have always and everywhere condemned local food systems to recurring malnutrition and famine. Only modern transportation (e.g., railroad, steamship, container shipping) solved this problem by creating the capacity to move large quantities of food affordably over long distances—often between regions enduring bad harvests and those enjoying better-than-average harvests.

Myth: Locally-produced food is more environmentally-sustainable because it travels shorter distances (or “food miles”) and therefore generates fewer greenhouse gas emissions from transportation.

Reality: The notion of “food miles” is a meaningless environmental indicator. Among other problems, producing food requires much more energy than moving it around, especially when significant amounts of heating and/or cold-protection technologies, irrigation water, fertilizers, and pesticides are required to grow food near consumers. In such circumstances, reducing “food miles” implies a greater environmental footprint due to the use of additional inputs in less suitable locations. The distance travelled also matters less than the mode of transportation. For example, moving food halfway around the Earth on a container ship often has a smaller footprint (per item carried) than a relatively short distance by truck. Importing food from different latitudes further reduces the waste and energy expenditure inherent in preserving local food.

The best way to make our food more affordable and sustainable in Canada is paradoxically to globalize our food supply even more.

So despite enthusiasm and good intentions, the vision of many local food activists is doomed to fail. The best way to make our food more affordable and sustainable in Canada is paradoxically to globalize our food supply even more. 



Pierre Desrochers is a senior fellow at the Fraser Institute and associate professor of geography at the University of Toronto Mississauga. He is the author of *The Myths of Local Food Policy: Lessons from the Economic and Social History of the Food System*.

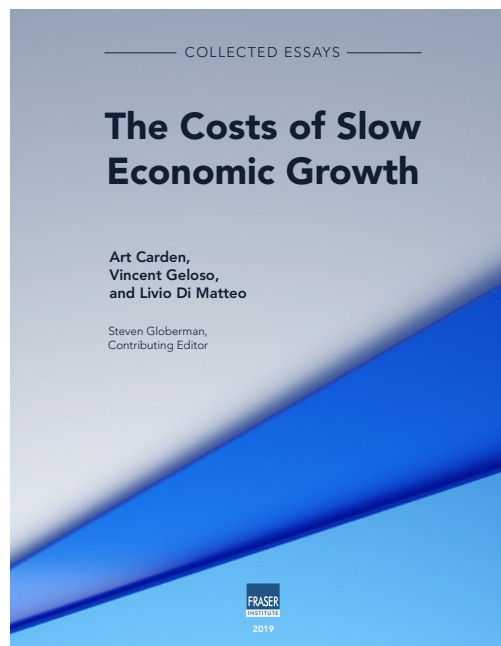
The Costs of Slow Economic Growth

Steven Globberman

In the recent federal election campaign, the parties proposed numerous taxpayer-funded programs to address various ostensible social problems including unaffordable education from pre-school to post-secondary, a tax system that's insufficiently progressive and provides too many loopholes for large companies, and insufficient funding for pharmaceuticals, alternative energy, public transit, child care, sports, fitness, and camping.

But no major party made economic growth a significant focus of its election campaign. Presumably to stimulate business investment, the Liberals promised government financial support for startup businesses while the Conservatives promised to cut regulatory red tape. And the Liberals claimed they've been successful in growing the economy in a way that "works for everyone" with no other party challenging this claim with any enthusiasm.

But the empirical fact is that the Canadian economy has been mired in relatively slow economic growth for most of the past decade. From 2011 to 2018, Canada's real



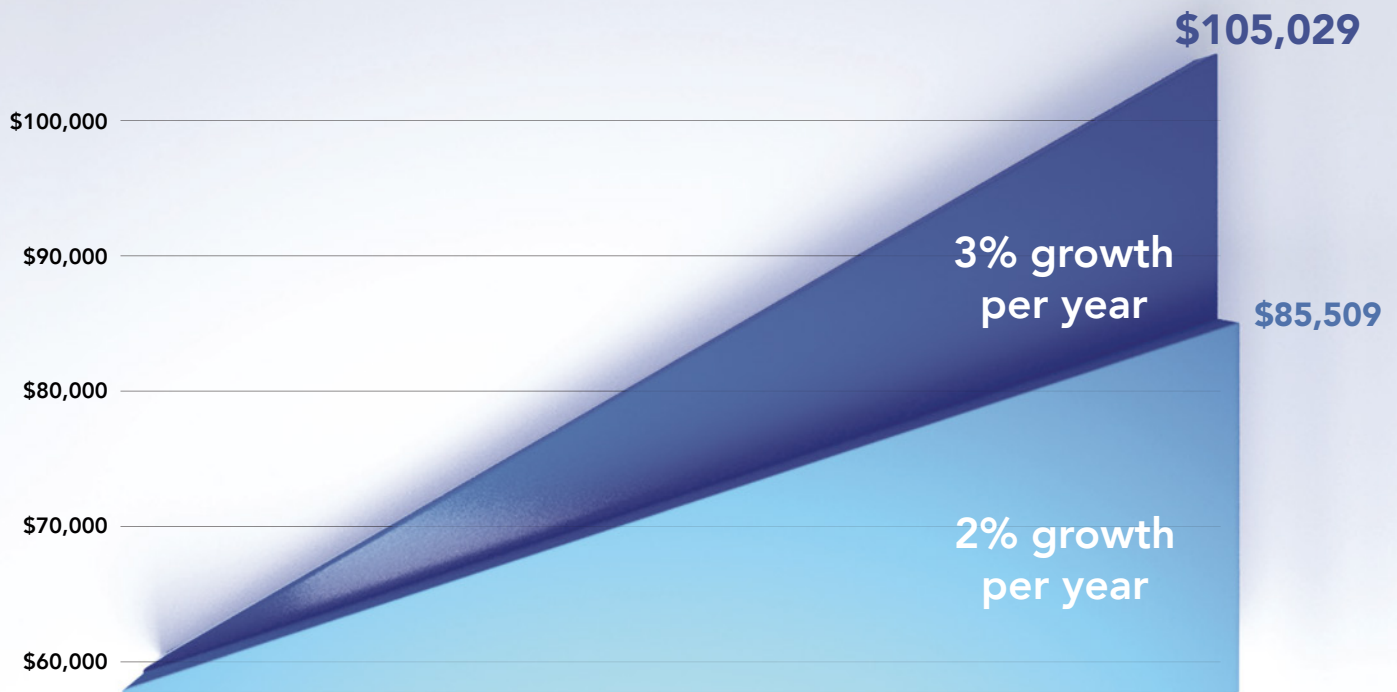
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) grew at an average annual rate of 2.17 percent. This pales in comparison to the 1960s and 1970s when average annual real GDP growth was in the 4 and 5 percent region. In relative terms, recent GDP growth is even well below the approximately 3 percent annual growth rate over the 2001 to 2010 period.

The fact that other high-income countries have experienced similar growth rates over the past decade should be no consolation for Canadians. Nor was it a reason to relegate economic growth, as in issue, to a minor role in the campaign. Prolonged slow economic growth begets social and political turmoil, as the expectations of many for a better standard of living are frustrated. It promotes special-interest lobbying and support for populist political remedies such as economic protectionism, which harm the majority while benefiting special interests.

But there's good news. Whether the candidates knew it or not, the central issues of the campaign, including improved educational opportunities, investments in alternative energy and infrastructure, and even expanded recreational activities such as camping are all potential fruit of faster economic growth.

Why economic growth matters to Canadians

The difference between 2% and 3% real GDP growth over a twenty-year period means nearly \$20,000 of increased income per person



So what kind of growth can we reasonably expect, if policymakers get it right? The rapid economic growth of the '60s and '70s was arguably unique to that period, which featured a rapidly growing labour force of Baby Boomers. However, as noted in a recent Fraser Institute study, *The Costs of Slow Economic Growth: Collected Essays*, a return to the 3 percent annual growth rate of the 2001 to 2010 period seems a reasonable policy objective. Meeting that objective would make a big difference to the future living standards of Canadians.

In the recent federal election ... no major party made economic growth a significant focus of its election campaign.

Consider this. Holding Canada's population constant for purposes of convenience, a real annual growth rate of

2 percent would result in an almost \$27,000 increase in Canada's per-person income after 20 years. At 3 percent, Canada's per-person income would be approximately \$47,000 higher than it is today.

In other words, increasing Canada's economic growth rate from 2 percent to 3 percent per year would almost double the expected increase in the average real incomes of Canadians over the next two decades. Clearly, how to recapture the relatively modest economic growth rate of this century's first decade is an issue worthy of serious political attention, on the campaign trail and beyond. [FI](#)



Steven Globberman is a Fraser Institute Resident Scholar and Addington Chair in Measurement as well as Professor Emeritus, Western Washington University. He is the contributing editor of the recently released study, *The Costs of Slow Economic Growth: Collected Essays*.

Ontario Should Learn From Michigan Reforms

Ben Eisen and Tegan Hill



Ontario has experienced its share of economic hardship over the past 15 years, with generally weak economic growth, sluggish job creation in most of the province, and a ballooning government debt. The province's long-term slump has been so severe that one 2018 study concluded Ontario has suffered a "lost economic decade."

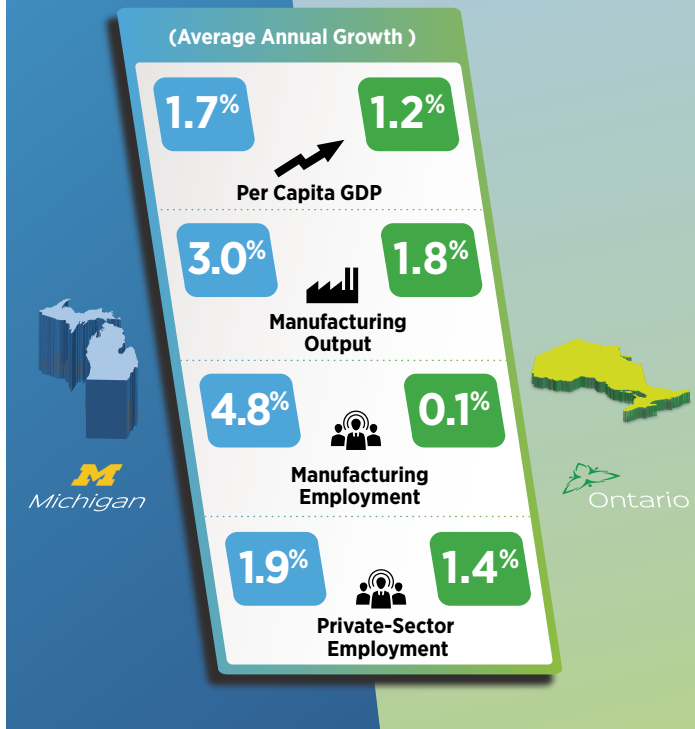
The pain has been particularly acute in regions that have historically relied on a strong manufacturing base to drive growth, including major urban centres in southwestern Ontario. Consider that between 2008 and 2016, 98.6 percent of all new net jobs in Ontario were created in Toronto and Ottawa. In other words, outside

the two biggest cities there was almost no net job creation during this period.

Some analysts suggest Ontario's economic problems have been the unavoidable result of global restructuring and, specifically, the movement of manufacturing to other countries. But in reality, some nearby jurisdictions with large manufacturing sectors have actually prospered in recent years—and seen their manufacturing sectors grow.

For example, a Fraser Institute study, *The Power of Comprehensive Policy Reform: Lessons for Ontario from Michigan*, looked at Ontario's economic performance and compared it to Michigan, a close neighbour with a large manufacturing sector. It found that on indicator after

Michigan vs Ontario (2011-2017)



indicator, Michigan has outperformed Ontario almost every year since 2011.

Let's take a closer look. Since 2011, Michigan has averaged annual real per-person GDP growth of 1.7 percent compared to Ontario's 1.2 percent. In Michigan, private-sector employment has averaged 1.9 percent annual growth, significantly higher than Ontario's 1.4 percent.

We see similar results in the manufacturing sector. Michigan has rebounded from the painful recession of 2008/09 and seen its sector thrive. In 2017, there were 47,000 more manufacturing jobs in Michigan than in 2007, before the recession hit. Ontario, meanwhile, shed 170,000 manufacturing jobs in the same period.

So it's crystal clear that Michigan's economy is outperforming Ontario's. But why? There's no simple answer to this question, as many different factors influence a jurisdiction's economic performance at any particular time.

It's worth noting, however, that Michigan's sharp economic turnaround happened almost simultaneously with the introduction of a significant comprehensive economic reform package in the state. Starting in 2011,

Michigan reduced and simplified its corporate tax system, embraced a smaller and smarter government by reducing expenditures, and implemented labour law reforms that made the state more attractive for investment.

Meanwhile, Ontario was going in the other direction, raising personal income taxes, cancelling a planned reduction to the corporate income tax, continuing to increase spending and grow the province's debt, and introducing new labour laws including a large increase to the minimum wage.

Between 2008 and 2016, 98.6 percent of all new net jobs in Ontario were created in Toronto and Ottawa... outside the two biggest cities there was almost no net job creation during this period.

Michigan's story shows that manufacturing-driven economies are not doomed to economic stagnation. As such, that state's economic turnaround, and the policy choices it implemented since 2011, deserve careful attention from policymakers here at home. The Ford government should consider Michigan's reforms to determine how the Michigan model of large-scale, comprehensive policy growth—explicitly aimed at encouraging economic growth—might be useful for Ontario. **FI**



BEN EISEN



TEGAN HILL

Ben Eisen is a Senior Fellow in Fiscal and Provincial Prosperity Studies and Tegan Hill is a Junior Economist at the Fraser Institute. They are co-authors of *The Power of Comprehensive Policy Reform: Lessons for Ontario from Michigan*.

Climate Activists Discard the “Science” for the Extreme “Unknown”

Robert P. Murphy



Apropos of the recent headline-making Climate Week, the recent tragic death of Harvard economist Martin Weitzman has underscored his work on climate risk assessment, which many climate activists use to argue for more aggressive government policies such as a cap-and-trade program or a carbon tax.

How ironic. Interventionists used to say that only “deniers” dispute the standard modelling results codified in periodic United Nations’ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reports, and anyone

who cited uncertainties in our understanding of climate change was compared to flat-earthers.

Yet the elevated treatment of Weitzman’s work shows the tables have turned, and now it’s climate activists who discard standard economic tools and the IPCC’s literature summary, and instead appeal to our uncertainty to promote aggressive greenhouse gas controls.

The IPCC publishes periodic reports that summarize the ostensible consensus of scientific research, to guide policymakers and the public. Back in 2014, I used (what remains) the most recent report to demonstrate that the

economic cost of limiting global warming to 2 degrees Celsius would probably exceed the benefits of avoided damage from climate change.

Last fall, William Nordhaus won the Nobel (Memorial) Prize in economics for his pioneering work on climate change. The award was announced the same weekend the UN released its Special Report on limiting global warming to 1.5°C. Major newspapers covered the two events as if they were compatible, and yet ironically, Nordhaus' model (as of its 2016 calibration) says the economically "optimal" amount of global warming is 3.5°C by the year 2100. Indeed, Nordhaus' framework shows that it would be better for humanity *if governments did absolutely nothing* to stop climate change, rather than enforce the necessary measures to limit global warming to 1.5°C.

... the tables have turned, and now it's climate activists who discard standard economic tools and the IPCC's literature summary, and instead appeal to our uncertainty to promote aggressive greenhouse gas controls.

For another example of the gap between policy goals and the literature, consider the case of Rachel Warren. Even though she's a lead author on the UN's 1.5°C Special Report, in 2018 she co-authored a paper that announced in its abstract: "The economic case for limiting warming to 1.5°C is unclear, due to manifold uncertainties. However, it cannot be ruled out that the 1.5°C target passes a cost-benefit test." Notice that it's not "settled science" (a favourite term of many interventionists) that the UN's latest goal makes sense, but instead this particular paper argues that "manifold uncertainties" mean we *can't rule it out*.

Which takes us back to Martin Weitzman. In the face of these awkward facts, many climate activists have embraced Weitzman's work, which can be quite technical. But in a more accessible introduction from one of

his papers, he wrote, "the most striking feature of the economics of climate change is that its extreme downside is non-negligible. Deep structural uncertainty about the unknown unknowns of what might go very wrong is coupled with essentially unlimited downside liability on possible planetary damages" adding that it's difficult to judge what the extent of "catastrophic climate change might be because it represents events that are very far outside the realm of ordinary experience."

To translate, besides the open-ended focus on "unknown unknowns," there are technical problems with Weitzman's approach. Nordhaus himself (in 2009) noted that Weitzman's modelling choices would also imply that humanity should spend \$10 trillion today, if that spending would eliminate the chance of a killer asteroid wiping out Earth, *no matter how unlikely* the outcome, even if it had only a one in a quadrillion-quadrillion chance of occurring. To be clear, Nordhaus' own approach doesn't ignore unlikely but catastrophic events; he simply handles them in the standard way economists for decades have modelled risky outcomes. It is Weitzman who suggested a novel way to handle climate change, and one that would lead to absurd recommendations in comparable scenarios.

Finally, as commentary on the work of Weitzman implicitly admits, the tables have turned in the climate change policy debate. It's no longer the unscientific "deniers" who sow doubt by discussing the uncertainties in our models of global warming. It's now those pushing aggressive targets—which include the UN's goal of 1.5°C—who want to throw out the standard peer-reviewed (and Nobel-winning) work and focus on the "unknown unknowns" of the issue. [FI](#)



Robert P. Murphy is a senior fellow at the Fraser Institute. He is the author of the study, *Carbon Pricing in Alberta*.

Socialism Produces Misery, Starvation, Death— and Bad Beer

Robert Lawson

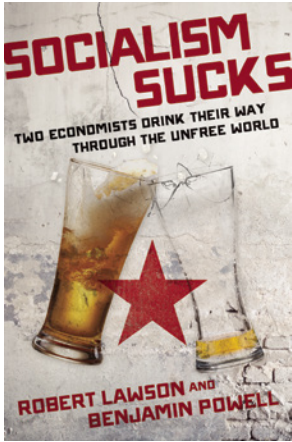


Socialism is a hot topic these days. In the United States, Democratic presidential wannabes including Senator Bernie Sanders say they're for it, and recent polls indicate about 40 percent of American young people are, too.

But do they really understand how socialism works? Let's use beer—yes, beer—to assess the political systems in some socialist countries.

Consider Sweden, which Senator Sanders and others extol as an ideal example of socialism. I've got news for Bernie and his crew. Sweden is no more socialist than the US. The beer is good and cold, produced by privately-owned companies, imported from all over the world, and sold at privately-owned bars at unregulated prices. Those prices are high, because of Sweden's notoriously high taxes, which are about 50 percent higher than in the US. But that's not socialism.

Socialism is a system where government controls the means of production and the raw materials. Think of your least-favourite government office. Then imagine every business in Canada, from Starbucks to Home Depot, being run the same way. Not a pretty picture.



How does that type of system affect beer?

In Venezuela, the country has actually run out of beer on several occasions. Yes, you read that right. The entire country has run out of beer. How could that happen? The government, which controls the foreign exchange market, couldn't (or wouldn't) allocate enough hard

currency for the largest beer company, Empresas Polar, to buy sufficient quantities of malted barley from outside the country.

Sweden is no more socialist than the US. The beer is good and cold, produced by privately-owned companies, imported from all over the world, and sold at privately-owned bars at unregulated prices.

In Cuba, they had beer. But the central planners in charge of the economy decided they only need two kinds. There is Cristal, a light lager, and Bucanero, a dark bock-like beer. Both taste like Budweiser that's been left out in the sun too long.

How about China? There's plenty of good beer in China because China's economy is no longer socialist; it's pretty much a market economy within a police state. Also in China, you can buy North Korean beer—a toxic industrial solvent is the only way to describe the taste.

Like China, Russia, Ukraine, and Georgia are all struggling with hangovers from their socialist days, but their emerging market economies produce good beer—and wine. The country of Georgia, formerly part of the Soviet Union, has become a wine mecca, producing some of the world's most interesting wines using local varieties and old-world techniques.

Socialism fails in practice because it's bad in theory... Every place that has tried socialism has ended up in misery, with starvation and death rather than prosperity.

Socialism fails in practice because it's bad in theory. Central planners lack the knowledge and incentives to respond to consumer wants and needs. Every place that has tried socialism has ended up in misery, with starvation and death rather than prosperity.

And of course, the beer sucks, too. [FI](#)



Robert Lawson is Professor of Economics and the Fullinwider Chair in Economic Freedom at Southern Methodist University in Dallas. He is also a Fraser Institute Senior Fellow and co-author of the book *Socialism Sucks: Two Economists Drink Their Way Through the Unfree World*, published by Regnery.



Why Feminists Should Stop Worrying and Learn to Love the Pipeline

Rosemarie Fike

Environmentalists and feminists are sometimes viewed as political allies, with recent “green” policy proposals in Canada and the United States containing provisions for gender equality and empowering women.

But sometimes the objectives of the environmental movement are at odds with the goal of increased gender equality. In fact, opposition to pipelines at home may have helped strengthen regimes in other countries that oppress women.

Consider the controversy surrounding the expansion of the Trans Mountain pipeline. Proponents of the pipeline project argue it will reduce Canada’s dependence on other countries to fulfill its energy needs. Those against the pipeline focus on potential damage the construction and operation of the pipeline may do to protected lands and habitat.

In this case, feminists should think twice before accepting the “environmentalist” position on the pipeline. Why? Because the oil-rich countries on which Canada—and much of the developed world—rely to



satisfy the demand for petroleum products are among the worst-performing countries for gender equality. If you care about women's rights, you should understand that continued dependence on exports from oil-rich countries in the Middle East and North Africa help prop up legal systems that exploit women.

If you care about women's rights, you should understand that continued dependence on exports from oil-rich countries in the Middle East and North Africa help prop up legal systems that exploit women.

Saudi Arabia, for example, has the most extreme limitations on women's economic rights in the world according to the Fraser Institute's Gender Disparity Index. And while Canada imports the majority of its oil from the US, the amount imported from Saudi Arabia has steadily increased since 2014. Not surprisingly, human rights groups argue that Canada's oil imports directly support a regime that regularly commits human rights violations. If you are particularly concerned with women's rights issues, this argument should resonate with you.

Human rights groups argue that Canada's oil imports directly support a regime [in Saudi Arabia] that regularly commits human rights violations.

Decreasing Canada's dependence on oil imports from Saudi Arabia should be a priority for feminists across Canada and beyond, and investing in a pipeline is one way to achieve this goal. [FI](#)



Rosemarie Fike is an Instructor of Economics at Texas Christian University and a Fraser Institute Senior Fellow. She is the author of *Gender Disparity under the Law and Women's Well-Being*.

Alberta Could Pull Policy Levers That Would Spread the Pain

Niels Veldhuis
and Jason Clemens



In response to the federal election results, Alberta Premier Jason Kenney announced that his government will create a panel to look at ideas for reforming Alberta's role within Canada. He also put the federal government on notice that his government will give it two years to make progress on the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion and redraft bills such as C-69, which created more impediments and uncertainty for large infrastructure projects including pipelines.

While he didn't state what the ramification of inaction would be, Premier Kenney was clearly expressing the frustration felt by many Albertans (and

Saskatchewanians). After all, Alberta sends more than \$20 billion more in federal taxes to Ottawa than it receives in federal spending. Put simply, that's \$20 billion annually that Albertans provide to help keep taxes lower and fund public services in all provinces, including British Columbia and Quebec, which have blocked needed pipelines to transport Alberta's resources to markets.

Too many well-meaning Canadians in Ontario and Quebec underestimate the level of frustration and growing anger in Western Canada generally and particularly in Alberta. Even more worrying, many act as if there's little or nothing the province can do to assert itself against Ottawa. This is a misread of Albertans, and a misunderstanding of the policy levers at their disposal.

For example, the status quo of the Canada Pension Plan (CPP) is completely dependent on Alberta's continued participation. The province's comparatively young workforce coupled with its higher-than-average earnings mean Alberta's workers pay significantly more into the CPP than retirees in the province receive in benefits.

If Alberta were to withdraw from the CPP, which is within its right (Quebec decided to run its own program when the CPP was created in 1966), the basic CPP rate (9.9 percent) would have to increase to 10.6 percent, resulting in up to \$367 in additional contributions (in the form of payroll taxes) for workers outside Alberta. Meanwhile, Albertans would pay a reduced 5.85 percent for a CPP-like program for the province. This is not to say such a change should be made, but rather that decisionmakers in Ottawa should understand what actions Alberta can take and the consequences of those actions for the rest of the country.

Alberta sends more than \$20 billion more in federal taxes to Ottawa than it receives in federal spending.

Similarly, Alberta could push for reforms to the equalization program, including removing resource revenues from the program's equation and eliminating a rule the Harper government introduced in 2009—the fixed growth rate rule, which increases equalization payments to provinces such as Quebec even when “non-recipient” (i.e., paying) provinces such as Saskatchewan and Alberta are struggling. Such changes would reduce equalization payments to provinces such as Quebec and the Maritime provinces.

Alberta could also launch a constitutional challenge of federal spending power. As noted legal scholar Burton H. Kellock concluded in his essay “Questioning the Legality of Equalization,” the validity of federal spending power has never been fully debated or examined despite the fact that Ottawa raises revenues through federal taxes and uses it for areas of exclusive provincial responsibility (i.e., health care and education). Such a challenge,

if successful, would impose major changes on federal/provincial fiscal relations.

Alberta must enact a more aggressive tax-cutting plan than is currently contemplated, including an integrated personal and business tax rate of 6 percent coupled with eliminating the province's capital gains tax.

Most importantly, however, Alberta should do everything in its power to make the province the most attractive jurisdiction for entrepreneurship and investment in Canada—and indeed North America. It must enact a more aggressive tax-cutting plan than is currently contemplated, including an integrated personal and business tax rate of 6 percent coupled with eliminating the province's capital gains tax.

These changes, along with regulatory reform, would quickly and noticeably re-establish the “Alberta Advantage” within North America, attracting entrepreneurs and investment again to the Wild Rose province.

Albertans are clearly frustrated—and rightfully so. Let's hope Prime Minister Trudeau truly meant what he said to Albertans on election night, that “you are an essential part of our great country... Let us all work hard to bring our country together.” If not, the consequences for the rest of the country could be quite costly. **FI**



NIELS VELDHUIS



JASON CLEMENS

Niels Veldhuis is President and Jason Clemens is Executive Vice President of the Fraser Institute.

Alberta's Era of Fiscal Complacency is Over

Steve Lafleur
and Ben Eisen



Premier of Alberta Flickr photo

The United Conservative Party led by Premier Jason Kenney recently delivered its first budget. On the campaign trail, UCP members regularly stressed the need to tackle Alberta's deficit, which is projected to total \$8.7 billion in 2019/20. The government's first budget shows that it's willing to match those words with action. Alberta's era of fiscal complacency has ended.

First, let's look at the grim reality of Alberta's finances. The province has run budget deficits every year except one since 2008/09. Largely as a result, provin-

cial net debt has soared to nearly \$37 billion. And yet, despite the severity of these challenges, fiscal policy in Alberta has in recent years been characterized by unrelenting complacency. For example, instead of confronting the deficit challenge, the NDP government of Rachel Notley allowed it to fester. Alberta kept increasing nominal government program spending year after year. Predictably, large deficits remained and the debt kept growing.

But in this budget, the Kenney government will finally reduce nominal spending, with a spending decrease of 1.6 percent over four years. As a result, Alberta is now

forecasted to reduce its budget deficit in coming years before returning to balance in 2022/23. And shrinking and then eliminating the deficit will slow the pace of debt accumulation. Taxpayers always pay the interest on government debt, which takes away money that could otherwise be used for tax relief or public services.

Of course, this budget marks the beginning of the process—not the end. The government must remain committed to its spending targets, which will require meaningful program reforms in the health and education sectors. Further, government-sector workers in Alberta enjoy a 9.6 percent pay premium over similarly skilled and educated private-sector employees. To slay the deficit on schedule, the government will likely have to reduce this gap.

There are bound to be some who criticize the size of the government’s planned spending reductions. On this point, some historical context is needed. During the 1990s, governments across Canada introduced much larger spending reductions than this one to eliminate their deficits, including the Romanow NDP government in Saskatchewan, the Chretien Liberals federally, and the Alberta government, which in the ’90s reduced program spending by approximately 20 percent.

But in this recent budget, the Kenney government will finally reduce nominal spending, with a spending decrease of 1.6 percent over four years.

At key moments, when facing big challenges, these governments were willing to reform and reduce spending. It’s important to keep this history in mind and recognize that the spending reductions in Thursday’s budget are moderate by comparison.

None of this is to say the government’s plan is perfect. Indeed, there are risks to a four-year path to budgetary balance. Again, the 1990s have demonstrated that faster deficit reduction efforts (over two or three years) have

a much more consistent record of success. Indeed, a faster path to balance in Alberta would have meant less debt accumulation in coming years. The slower four-year path also means a longer period of exposure to various revenue risks (including a recession), which could derail the plan.

This budget takes an active approach to the deficit, planning to reduce government spending over time by reforming programs.

Notwithstanding these points, if the Kenney government follows through on its plan, its first budget will represent a turning point in Alberta fiscal history. The previous government refused to reduce spending at all, instead waiting and hoping for resource revenue gains to eliminate the deficit. This budget takes an active approach to the deficit, planning to reduce government spending over time by reforming programs. It seems Alberta’s era of fiscal complacency has finally come to an end. **FI**



STEVE LAFLEUR



BEN EISEN

Steve Lafleur is a Senior Policy Analyst and Ben Eisen is a Senior Fellow in Fiscal and Provincial Prosperity Studies at the Fraser Institute. They are co-authors of *Spending beyond Our Means: Addressing the Root Cause of Alberta’s Deficit*.

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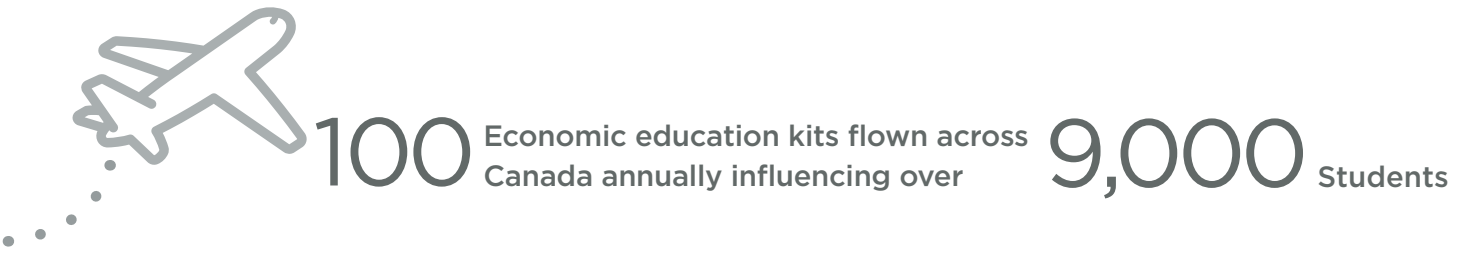
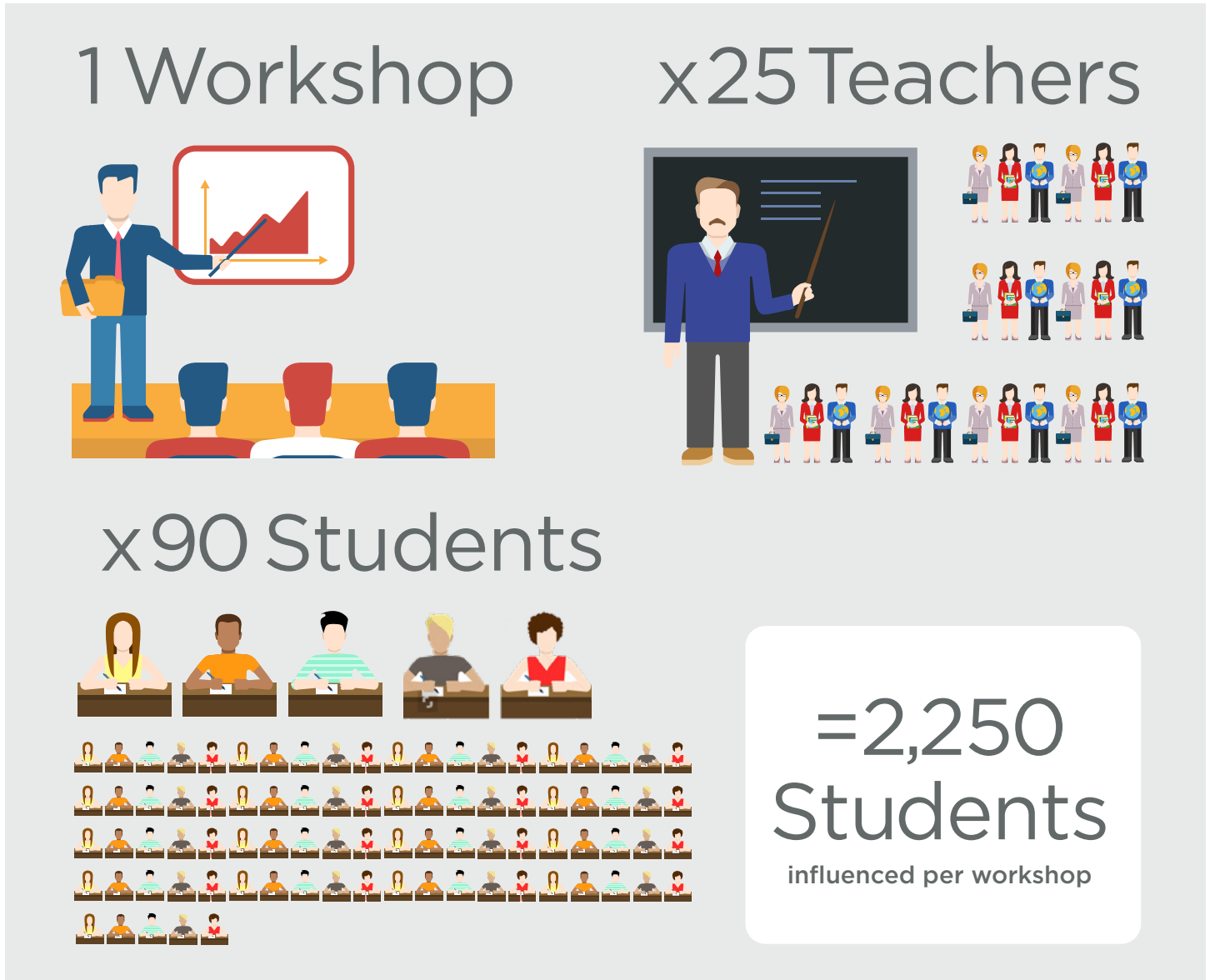
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Kristin McCahon

What's your role at the Institute?

I am a senior editor in the Marketing and Publications department, responsible for

editing and typesetting many of the Institute's publications.

How did you arrive at the Institute?

In 1990, I applied for the job of Production Editor and was interviewed by our then Associate Director, Sally Pipes. She and Executive Director Michael Walker chose me not because I knew anything about economics, but because I was skilled in the use of the software package (now obsolete) that they used at the time—and because I have an M.A. in literature and they thought I could learn what I needed to know.

Tell us something exciting you're working on now for the immediate future.

I love our Essential Scholars series. It is exciting to read and be able to

help edit the succinct overviews of the thinkers whose influential work has shaped much of the 21st century thinking about economics.

What do you enjoy doing in your spare time that your colleagues might not be aware of?

In my spare time, I work with a relocation company that helps seniors downsize and transition into more supportive accommodation. The work is very active and rewarding—and saves me from having to get a gym membership!



Lindsey Martin

What's your role at the Institute?

I am the production editor. I edit, typeset, and design studies and other publications of the Institute and, in addition, monitor

developments in publishing software and its application to the workflow of the Production and Marketing department.

How did you arrive at the Institute?

In 1996, I was wrapping up my contracts for editing and typesetting the *Canadian Philosophical Review* and *Vancouver Studies in Cognitive Science*. I applied for a similar position at the Institute and started work at the beginning of 1997.

Tell us something exciting you're working on now for the immediate future.

The current state of publishing after the “digital revolution” is certainly interesting, if not exciting. Both publishers and developers of publishing software are heavily invested in a mature

market; competition is confined to refinements, efficiencies, and pricing; and development of purely digital formats like EPUB has stalled. This suggests that only the low-hanging fruit has been harvested and that the industry is ripe for another disruption.

What you do in your spare time that your colleagues might not be aware of?

I read to keep up with research in Classics, my own field, as well as related disciplines. Some current projects are the often obscure connections between Presocratic and middle-eastern thought; the Jewish diaspora's response to the political and intellectual hegemony of the Hellenistic kingdoms; and the currently expanding literature on the Phoenicians.

Made possible by a generous donation from the Lotte and John Hecht Memorial Foundation and the John Templeton Foundation.

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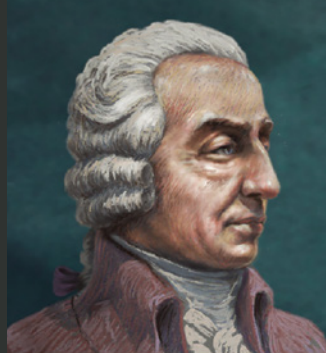
Essential Scholars

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