



NEWS RELEASE

Quebec government spending reached highest level on record in 2021 at \$15,562 per person

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For Immediate Release

MONTREAL—Per-person program spending in Quebec reached its highest level on record at \$15,562 in 2021 (inflation adjusted), finds a new report published today by the Fraser Institute, an independent, non-partisan Canadian public policy think-tank.

“A useful way of measuring government fiscal policy is by comparing per-person program spending by various premiers,” said Tegan Hill, an associate director with the Fraser Institute and co-author of *Quebec Premiers and Provincial Government Spending*.

This study reviews annual per-person program spending (inflation-adjusted) by Quebec premiers from 1965 to 2021 (the latest year of available data) and finds that the highest single year of per-person spending on record was under Premier François Legault in 2021.

Legault also had the second-highest year of per-person spending in 2020 at \$15,260. Even excluding COVID-related spending, Premier Legault holds the record for the highest per-person spending levels in Quebec at \$14,487 (2021) and \$13,705 (2020).

Overall, Jean-Jacques Bertrand oversaw the highest rate of average annual per person program spending growth at 10.0 per cent, however, this was over a relatively short period of just one year in 1969. The second-highest average annual increase in per-person program spending was over Robert Bourassa’s first term at 9.4 per cent in the 1970s. (The study excludes Jean Lesage, whose full tenure in the 1960s is not included due to data limitations.)

Premier Legault’s government has overseen the third highest rate of average annual per person spending growth at 7.3 per cent.


“The intention of this study is to provide a historical analysis of this key measure of government fiscal policy,” said Yanick Labrie, Fraser Institute senior fellow and study co-author.

“By comparing current spending levels to the past, Quebecers can better decide for themselves whether they’re getting good value for their tax dollars.”

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