

# NEWS RELEASE

## Amount Canadians donate to charity at a 20-year low

December 19, 2019  
For immediate release

**VANCOUVER**—The amount Canadians donate to charity—as a percentage of their income claimed on their taxes—has hit a 20-year low and lags far behind the amount Americans give, finds a new study by the Fraser Institute, an independent, non-partisan Canadian public policy think-tank.

“The holiday season is a time to reflect on giving, and with Canadians being less generous every year, charities face greater challenges to secure resources to help those in need,” said Jake Fuss, senior policy analyst with the Fraser Institute and co-author of *Generosity in Canada and the United States: The 2019 Generosity Index*.

The study finds that less than one-in-five Canadian tax-filers (19.9 per cent) claimed charitable donations on their tax return in 2017, the most recent year of available data, compared to 24.9 per cent—almost one-in-four—Americans.

Crucially, the total amount donated by Canadians—just 0.54 per cent of income—is the lowest amount since at least 2000. Over that period, Canadians’ generosity peaked at 0.78 per cent in 2006.

By comparison, American tax-filers donated 1.52 per cent of their income to registered charities in 2017—nearly three times the percentage Canadians claimed.

Moreover, the average dollar amount claimed in Canada was \$1,800 compared to \$6,751 in the U.S. (in local currencies). And tellingly, the lowest average claim of any state—\$3,512 USD in Rhode Island—was still higher than the highest average claim of any province—\$2,703 CAD in Alberta.

Overall, according to the index of charitable giving for all 64 American states (including Washington, D.C.) and Canadian provinces and territories, Utah remains the most generous. Manitoba—which ranks 44<sup>th</sup> out of 64—is again the most generous Canadian province.

“Canadians might be surprised to learn that Americans are far more generous when it comes to claimed donations to registered charities, and that’s been the case for many years,” Fuss said.

### Generosity of Canadian provinces and territories

| Province/Territory<br>(ranking in 2019 Generosity Index) | % of tax filers who claimed<br>charitable donations | Average dollar value of all<br>charitable donations |
|--|---|---|
| <b>Manitoba</b> (44 out of 64)                           | 23.4  | \$2,109   |
| <b>Prince Edward Island</b> (50)                         | 21.3  | \$1,422   |
| <b>Ontario</b> (50)                                      | 20.9  | \$1,934   |
| <b>Saskatchewan</b> (52)                                 | 20.5  | \$1,875   |
| <b>Alberta</b> (52)                                      | 19.8  | \$2,703   |
| <b>British Columbia</b> (52)                             | 19.0  | \$2,570   |
| <b>Nova Scotia</b> (57)                                  | 18.6  | \$1,496   |
| <b>New Brunswick</b> (58)                                | 17.9  | \$1,435   |
| <b>Quebec</b> (59)                                       | 19.0  | \$746   |
| <b>Newfoundland and Labrador</b> (60)                    | 17.9  | \$1,101   |
| <b>Yukon</b> (62)  | 16.5  | \$1,608   |
| <b>Northwest Territories</b> (63)                        | 12.5  | \$1,702   |
| <b>Nunavut</b> (64)                                      | 7.2   | \$2,041   |

NOTE: Table based on 2017 tax year, the most recent year of comparable data in Canada and the U.S.

**MEDIA CONTACTS:**

Jake Fuss, Economist  
Fraser Institute

Finn Poschmann, Resident Scholar  
Fraser Institute

*To arrange media interviews or for more information, please contact:*

Bryn Weese, Media Relations Specialist, Fraser Institute

(604) 688-0221 ext. 589

[bryn.weese@fraserinstitute.org](mailto:bryn.weese@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 measure, study, and communicate the impact of competitive markets and government intervention on the welfare of individuals. To protect the Institute's independence, it does not accept grants from governments or contracts for research. Visit [www.fraserinstitute.org](http://www.fraserinstitute.org)