

# Charitable donors, 2016

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Total donations reported by Canadian tax filers fell to \$8.9 billion in 2016, down 2.7% from 2015.

The largest decreases were in Alberta (-10.7%), Prince Edward Island (-5.3%), Nunavut (-4.4%) and Saskatchewan (-4.1%). Yukon (+4.5%) had the largest increase in donations in 2015.

The decrease in total donations (-10.7%) in Alberta for 2016 may be associated with economic factors in that province such as the decline in resource prices. For the previous three years, Alberta had an annual increase in the dollar amounts of donations, which was close to or above the national average. Even with this decrease in 2016, Alberta still had a higher proportion of tax filers making donations (21.1%) than the national average (20.5%). It also still had the second highest median donations at \$470, compared with the national median donation of \$300.

The general decrease in the amount of charitable donations in dollars reported by Canadian tax filers was accompanied by a decrease in the actual number of donating tax filers, down 98,840 (-1.8%) to 5,397,060. The number of donors fell in every province and territory except Yukon, where it was unchanged. There has been a small yearly decline in the number of donating tax filers since 2011, but since 2013 this had typically been offset by higher overall donation amounts. In 2016, both the number of donating tax filers and the total dollar amount of donations declined.

Nationally, the median donation was \$300 in 2016, meaning that half of those claiming a donation tax credit made donations of more than \$300, while the other half donated less than \$300.

Although Nunavut had proportionately fewer donors than other provinces and territories, it had the highest median donation (\$520) among tax filers claiming charitable donations. Alberta had the next highest median donation at \$470, followed by British Columbia (\$440). The lowest median donation amount was in Quebec (\$130).

Among census metropolitan areas (CMAs), donors in Abbotsford–Mission, British Columbia, had the highest median charitable donation at \$760. This was the 15th consecutive year that Abbotsford–Mission had the highest median donation in the country. Donors in Lethbridge, Alberta (\$620) had the second highest median charitable donation among CMAs, followed by Saskatoon (\$470), Vancouver (\$460) and Calgary (\$450).

## Note to readers

Canadians contribute in many ways to charitable organizations. These data include only amounts given to charities and approved organizations for which official tax receipts were provided and claimed on tax returns. To verify if a charity is registered under the Income Tax Act, tax filers can consult the [Charity Listings](#) available from the Canada Revenue Agency webpage. It is possible to carry donations forward for up to five years after the year in which they were made. Therefore, donations reported for the 2016 taxation year could include donations that were made in any of the five previous years. According to tax laws, tax filers are permitted to claim both their donations, and those made by their spouses to receive better tax benefits. Consequently, the number of people who made charitable donations is higher than the number who claimed tax credits.

Another source of donation data at Statistics Canada is the General Social Survey - Giving, Volunteering and Participating. This survey collects information on all monetary donations reported by individuals, regardless of whether or not the donation resulted in a tax credit.

All data in this release have been tabulated according to the 2016 Standard Geographical Classification used for the 2016 Census.

A census metropolitan area (CMA) is formed by one or more adjacent municipalities centred on a population centre (also known as the core). A CMA must have a total population of at least 100,000, of which 50,000 or more must live in the core.



**Table 1**  
**Charitable donations - Canada, provinces and territories**

|                           | Donors           |              | All tax filers | Donations            |              | Median donations |
|---------------------------|------------------|--------------|----------------|----------------------|--------------|------------------|
|                           | 2016             | 2015 to 2016 | 2016           | 2016                 | 2015 to 2016 | 2016             |
|                           | number           | % change     | %              | thousands of dollars | % change     | dollars          |
| <b>Canada</b>             | <b>5,397,060</b> | <b>-1.8</b>  | <b>20.5</b>    | <b>8,888,325</b>     | <b>-2.7</b>  | <b>300</b>       |
| Newfoundland and Labrador | 77,020           | -4.8         | 18.7           | 81,805               | -3.4         | 360              |
| Prince Edward Island      | 24,630           | -2.1         | 22.0           | 32,020               | -5.3         | 420              |
| Nova Scotia               | 136,090          | -2.6         | 19.3           | 181,935              | 1.4          | 340              |
| New Brunswick             | 110,040          | -2.7         | 18.7           | 151,965              | 2.2          | 320              |
| Quebec                    | 1,207,250        | -1.0         | 19.1           | 885,585              | 0.8          | 130              |
| Ontario                   | 2,135,570        | -1.7         | 21.5           | 3,886,895            | -2.0         | 370              |
| Manitoba                  | 221,960          | -2.4         | 23.8           | 427,285              | -3.6         | 430              |
| Saskatchewan              | 173,080          | -3.8         | 21.5           | 310,770              | -4.1         | 420              |
| Alberta                   | 612,220          | -2.6         | 21.1           | 1,436,145            | -10.7        | 470              |
| British Columbia          | 689,290          | -1.5         | 19.5           | 1,478,395            | 2.1          | 440              |
| Yukon                     | 4,610            | 0.0          | 17.5           | 6,615                | 4.5          | 420              |
| Northwest Territories     | 3,840            | -1.3         | 13.0           | 6,205                | -1.4         | 400              |
| Nunavut                   | 1,460            | -5.8         | 7.3            | 2,710                | -4.4         | 520              |

Source(s): CANSIM table [111-0001](#).

**Table 2**  
**Charitable donations - Census metropolitan areas**

|  | Donors           |              | All tax filers | Donations            |              | Median donations |
|--|------------------|--------------|----------------|----------------------|--------------|------------------|
|  | 2016             | 2015 to 2016 | 2016           | 2016                 | 2015 to 2016 | 2016             |
|  | number           | % change     | %              | thousands of dollars | % change     | dollars          |
| <b>Canada</b>                                | <b>5,397,060</b> | <b>-1.8</b>  | <b>20.5</b>    | <b>8,888,325</b>     | <b>-2.7</b>  | <b>300</b>       |
| St. John's                                   | 28,170           | -5.8         | 18.4           | 30,430               | -5.6         | 320              |
| Halifax                                      | 64,000           | -0.2         | 21.4           | 92,735               | 5.2          | 350              |
| Moncton <sup>1</sup>                         | 23,490           | -1.7         | 21.3           | 28,870               | -1.2         | 260              |
| Saint John <sup>1</sup>                      | 20,580           | -1.7         | 21.5           | 31,600               | 11.9         | 340              |
| Saguenay <sup>1</sup>                        | 26,520           | -3.7         | 20.5           | 8,840                | -2.3         | 110              |
| Québec <sup>1</sup>                          | 147,710          | -0.6         | 23.4           | 70,735               | 1.5          | 120              |
| Sherbrooke                                   | 31,960           | -1.1         | 19.4           | 21,705               | 17.1         | 110              |
| Trois-Rivières                               | 23,290           | -0.4         | 18.6           | 9,260                | 0.6          | 100              |
| Montréal                                     | 590,650          | -0.6         | 18.9           | 597,595              | -0.1         | 160              |
| Ottawa–Gatineau, Ontario/Quebec <sup>1</sup> | 223,830          | -1.0         | 23.3           | 312,395              | 0.1          | 330              |
| Ottawa part <sup>1</sup>                     | 179,290          | -0.6         | 25.0           | 282,175              | -0.4         | 390              |
| Gatineau part <sup>1</sup>                   | 44,540           | -2.8         | 18.3           | 30,220               | 4.5          | 180              |
| Kingston                                     | 27,530           | 1.2          | 23.2           | 43,735               | 5.3          | 350              |
| Belleville <sup>12</sup>                     | 18,350           | 3.7          | 20.7           | 24,075               | 4.2          | 280              |
| Peterborough                                 | 18,640           | -11.6        | 22.2           | 26,605               | -19.8        | 320              |
| Oshawa                                       | 55,290           | -2.0         | 20.5           | 82,715               | 15.8         | 300              |
| Toronto                                      | 897,750          | -1.3         | 20.5           | 1,988,945            | -3.0         | 410              |
| Hamilton                                     | 123,380          | -0.7         | 22.3           | 205,790              | -7.8         | 340              |
| St. Catharines–Niagara                       | 68,010           | -1.0         | 21.9           | 114,000              | 2.4          | 360              |
| Kitchener–Cambridge–Waterloo <sup>1</sup>    | 89,800           | -1.1         | 23.2           | 165,145              | -3.2         | 400              |
| Brantford                                    | 20,520           | 0.0          | 20.1           | 35,455               | 9.2          | 340              |
| Guelph                                       | 27,290           | -4.5         | 24.7           | 47,405               | 6.9          | 370              |
| London                                       | 82,750           | -2.1         | 22.6           | 130,050              | -3.3         | 360              |
| Windsor                                      | 54,500           | 1.1          | 21.4           | 70,315               | 1.5          | 300              |
| Barrie                                       | 25,570           | -3.9         | 18.2           | 35,795               | -1.9         | 290              |
| Greater Sudbury <sup>1</sup>                 | 26,020           | -3.4         | 21.2           | 26,525               | 6.1          | 250              |
| Thunder Bay                                  | 21,500           | -2.5         | 23.7           | 22,370               | -2.0         | 260              |
| Winnipeg                                     | 143,880          | -2.0         | 24.8           | 272,705              | -4.2         | 400              |
| Regina <sup>1</sup>                          | 39,080           | -4.7         | 22.5           | 71,615               | 8.2          | 390              |
| Saskatoon <sup>1</sup>                       | 47,370           | -3.5         | 22.2           | 101,160              | -13.9        | 470              |
| Lethbridge <sup>2</sup>                      | 18,980           | -0.3         | 22.5           | 52,390               | -3.5         | 620              |
| Calgary                                      | 222,560          | -2.4         | 22.4           | 589,740              | -15.1        | 450              |
| Edmonton                                     | 205,310          | -1.6         | 21.7           | 412,635              | -7.4         | 420              |
| Kelowna                                      | 29,690           | -2.2         | 19.5           | 73,420               | 12.7         | 440              |
| Abbotsford–Mission                           | 25,590           | -1.8         | 19.4           | 84,660               | -0.4         | 760              |
| Vancouver                                    | 366,800          | -1.2         | 19.6           | 868,590              | 2.2          | 460              |
| Victoria                                     | 64,350           | -1.6         | 23.2           | 118,515              | 1.7          | 440              |

1. The 2015 data was adjusted according to the 2016 geographic boundaries of the metropolitan areas.

2. These census metropolitan areas were previously identified as census agglomerations in the 2015 data.

**Note(s):** Go online to view the census subdivisions that comprise the [census metropolitan areas](#), according to the Standard Geographic Classification 2016.

**Source(s):** CANSIM table [111-0001](#).

Available in CANSIM: tables [111-0001 to 111-0003](#) and [111-0041](#).

**Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [4106](#).**

Data on *Charitable Donors* ([13C0014](#), various prices) and *Canadian Taxfilers* ([17C0010](#), various prices) are now available for Canada, provinces and territories, economic regions, census divisions, census metropolitan areas, census agglomerations, census tracts, and postal-based geographies. These custom services are available upon request. CANSIM tables for this release are available for Canada, province and territories, census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations.

The technical reference guide *Investment Income, RRSP Contributions and Charitable Donations, T1 Family File, Preliminary Estimates* ([72-211-X](#)), presents information about the methodology, concepts and data quality for the data available in this release.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; [STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca](mailto:STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca)) or Media Relations (613-951-4636; [STATCAN.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.STATCAN@canada.ca](mailto:STATCAN.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.STATCAN@canada.ca)).