

Canadians now spend more on taxes than on food, clothing and shelter combined, study finds



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The Fraser Institute calculates that visible and hidden taxes would equal to 42.4 per cent of the cash income for an average Canadian family in 2015.

VANCOUVER — The Fraser Institute calculates that the average Canadian family paid \$34,154 in taxes of all sort last year, including “hidden” business taxes that are passed along in the price of goods and services purchased.

The study’s authors conclude that visible and hidden taxes would have been equal to 42.4 per cent of the cash income for an average Canadian family in 2015, estimated at \$80,593.

By comparison, the study estimates the average Canadian family spent \$30,293 on housing, food and clothing last year — about 37.6 per cent of the family's total cash income.

The Vancouver-based think-tank estimates that the average bill for income taxes collected by governments was \$10,616 in 2015.

The second-biggest category was payroll and health taxes, at \$7,160, followed by sales taxes at \$4,973 and property taxes at \$3,832.

The other categories include taxes on profits, liquor or tobacco, fuel, natural resources and import duties — totalling \$7,573.

The Fraser Institute uses its own “Canadian consumer tax index” to track the tax bill paid by a family with “average income.”

“The objective is not to trace the tax experience of a particular family, but rather to plot the experience of a family that was average in each year,” the 11-page report says.

“The ‘consumer’ in question is the taxpaying family, which can be thought of as consuming government services.”