

## Yes

*Here are some reasons why people might argue that the Canadian government **should reduce spending** on foreign aid.*

### **Canadians are struggling at home**

Canadians across the country are facing a financial pinch, with households now having to spend a greater share of their income on basic needs as well as on debt repayments. Likewise, the country is facing a housing shortage (estimated to be nearly 300,000 by 2030) contributing to a rise in the cost of both buying and renting. Before helping anyone else, Canada needs to invest in solutions for its own citizens.

### **Not meeting our NATO commitments**

Last year, Canada spent 1.37% of its gross domestic product – or the value of all goods and services produced in a country – on defense, making us one of eight NATO member countries to not meet the 2% target. This gap was targeted by American President Donald Trump, who said it spends billions to protect Canada, as well as in a bipartisan letter from 23 American senators in 2024. As tensions continue to rise with the United States, Canada needs to spend less on foreign aid and more on defense.

### **Can cause issues for countries receiving funds**

Critics of the current foreign aid system have said that it can cause developing countries to get stuck in an “aid trap.” This means that the countries receiving it become dependent, and it can undermine their ability to govern themselves due to the conditions that are often attached to receiving foreign assistance.

### **Government needs to represent interest of all Canadians**

As shown by the 2025 election cycle, there is a lot of disagreement among Canadians about where and in what capacity we should be sending foreign aid. A [recent Nanos poll](#) also showed that nearly a third of Canadians want a decrease in foreign and humanitarian aid, and Conservatives – who won 41% of the popular vote – have charged that our aid goes towards what they define as “dictators, terrorists and global bureaucracies.” The government needs to represent the interest of Canadians, and not making major changes to foreign aid policy betrays this mandate.

### **Read More**

- [Breaking free from the aid trap: time for Africa to halt international financial institutions' austerity policies](#) (Bretton Woods Project)
- [Canada could cut deal with U.S.—increase defence spending, remove tariffs](#) (Fraser Institute)
- [It's not a "vibecession." Canadians are really struggling more, and the data proves it](#) (Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives)