

October 15, 2018

HALIFAX, NS – Universities across Atlantic Canada continue to defy demographic trends, reporting increased enrolments of full-time undergraduate and graduate students by 2.4% (+1,759) year-over-year. Full-time undergraduate and graduate enrolment across the region's 16 universities now totals 74,854.

The Association of Atlantic Universities (AAU) today released its [2018-19 Preliminary Enrolment Data](#).

Dr. Gary Kachanoski, President and Vice-Chancellor, Memorial University of Newfoundland (MUN) and Chair, AAU, said the increased enrolments speak well of institutional and collaborative efforts to make Atlantic Canada a national and international education destination.

"Despite the region's rapidly shrinking and aging population, our universities continue to succeed at attracting new students from across Canada and around the world," President Kachanoski said.

The AAU also reported a huge 14.9% (+2,057) increase in international students, led by Cape Breton University which added more than 1,000 new visa students to its campus.

There are now 15,848 international students studying at universities across the region.

Dr. Kachanoski noted, "The international student marketplace is highly competitive; however, our universities have a hard-earned reputation for offering high quality education and a unique student experience, in safe and welcoming communities."

He added that a [2017 International Student Graduate Study](#) conducted by the AAU revealed that 65 percent of international graduates hoped to stay in Atlantic Canada. Those participating in the 2017 study cited cost of living (52%), great place to raise a family (48%) and quality of life (47%) as the top three reasons to stay in the region following their graduation.

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada's Atlantic Immigration Pilot program, unique to Atlantic Canada and a cornerstone of the [Atlantic Growth Strategy](#), helps connect qualified international student graduates to employment opportunities and, become future citizens of Atlantic Canada.

"Our universities have an important role to play in attracting international students to the region as well as working in partnership with governments, the private sector and community organizations to help successfully transition those who are motivated to stay and become future citizens of Atlantic Canada," said Dr. Kachanoski.

The Association of Atlantic Universities (AAU) represents the interests of universities across the region, ensuring public visibility for the important role they play in preparing future leaders of our communities, in path-breaking research and innovation, and in contributing to the economic, cultural and social prosperity of life in Atlantic Canada.

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