



ASSOCIATION OF
ATLANTIC
UNIVERSITIES

ASSOCIATION DES
UNIVERSITÉS DE
L'ATLANTIQUE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 13, 2017

HALIFAX, NS – Despite the continuing demographic challenge facing Atlantic Canada, enrolment across the region's universities remains stable and in some categories, growing, especially among international students.

The Association of Atlantic Universities (AAU) released its [Preliminary Enrolment Data](#) for 2017-2018 today.

Overall, full-time enrolment among both Undergraduate and Graduate students declined by just - 0.3% (73,298 – to – **73,079**), a decline of -219 students, year-over-year.

Positive year-over-year growth (+2.4%) continues among full-time Graduate students (8,991 – to – **9,209**), an **increase of +218 Masters and PhD students**, essential to the growth of the region's professional ranks.

The Preliminary Enrolment Data report is highlighted by the continued growth in international student enrolment, up by +4.3% year-over-year (13,215 – to – **13,784**), an increase of **+569** students.

“The continued growth in international students choosing to study at universities in Atlantic Canada is a good news story for the future of the region,” said Dr. Alaa Abd-El-Aziz, President, University of Prince Edward Island and Chair, AAU.

“A key pillar of the Atlantic Growth Strategy is immigration and retention of New Canadians in the region,” said Dr. Abd-El-Aziz. And, he added, “it is widely acknowledged that our universities are the best source of new immigrants to Atlantic Canada. We are fully-committed to working collaboratively with employers, communities and governments to help create a welcoming environment that encourages international students to stay following their graduation.”

He noted that a 2017 AAU survey conducted among recent international student graduates indicated that 65% would like to stay in the region following graduation. “This a huge opportunity for our region that must be capitalized upon”, concluded Dr. Abd-El-Aziz.

The AAU is committed to working with the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA) and the four Atlantic provinces to pursue International Student Recruitment and Retention (ISRR) as a strategy under the Atlantic Growth Strategy to help Atlantic business find the skilled workers they need to grow their companies.

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.

Suite 403
5657 Spring Garden Road
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3R4
902-425-4230
Fax: 902-425-4233
www.atlanticuniversities.ca

-30-

For further information, contact:
Peter Halpin, Executive Director, AAU
phalpin@atlanticuniversities.ca
(902) 425-4238 or (902) 497-4419