



# FUND THE FUTURE

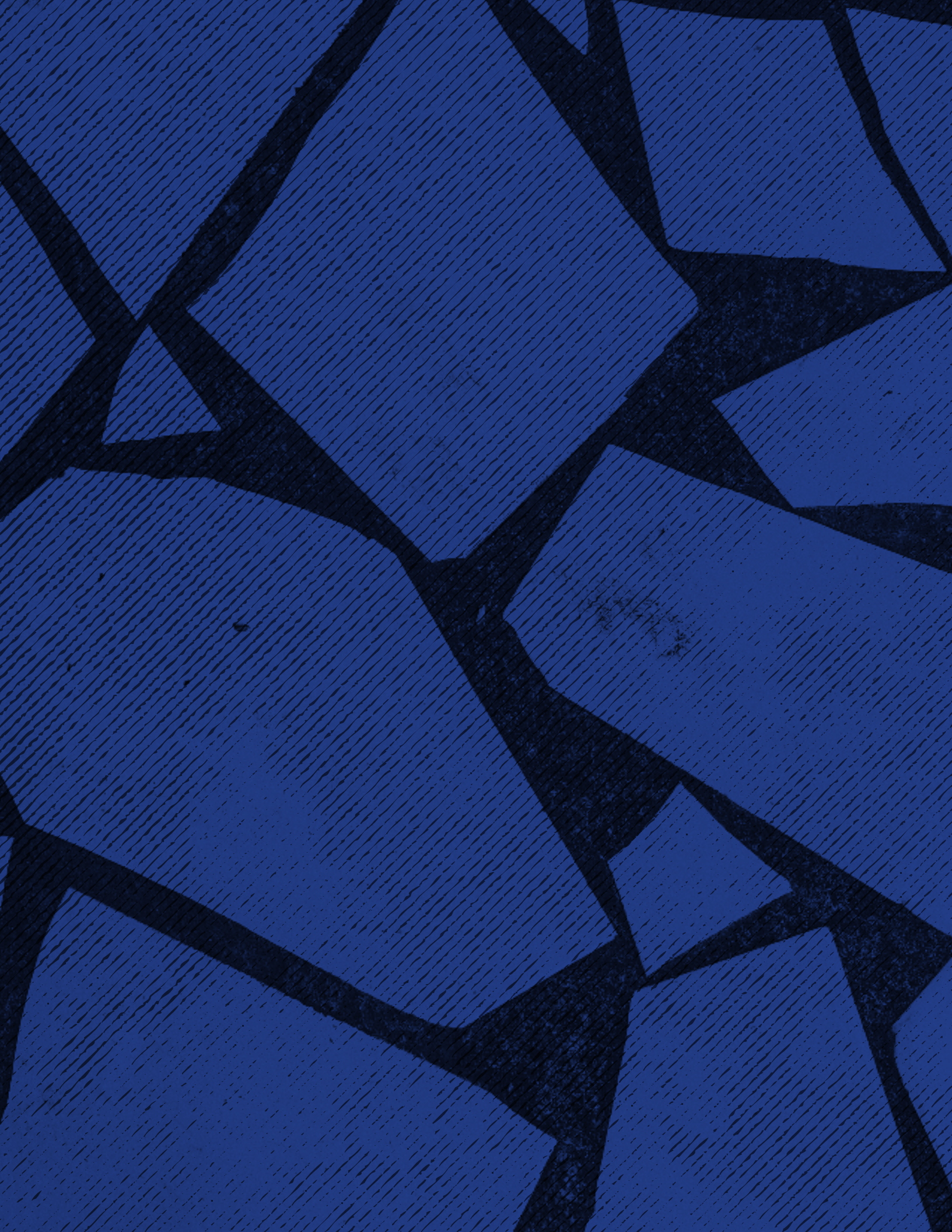
**CANADIAN FEDERATION OF STUDENTS OF NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR**



Grenfell Campus Student Union  
Marine Institute Students' Union  
Memorial University of Newfoundland Students' Union  
Graduate Students' Union of the Memorial University of Newfoundland  
College of the North Atlantic Students' Union









# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## **FREE EDUCATION**

Ending Student Debt  
Recommendations

4  
4  
5

## **FUND HIGH-QUALITY POST SECONDARY EDUCATION**

Recommendations

6  
7

## **FAIRNESS FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS**

Recommendations

8  
9

## **BUILD CONSENT CULTURE**

Recommendations

10  
11

## **PROTECT STUDENT RIGHTS**

Recommendation

12  
12

## **FUNDING**

13

## **SUMMARY**

14

## **ENDNOTES**

15

# FREE



Free education is a viable opportunity for the future of this province. Several countries in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development offer university at zero or near-zero tuition levels. Canada, on the other hand, has moved towards a system of publicly-assisted post-secondary education with a reliance on private and public loans. Decades of funding cuts combined with a lack of federal oversight in the post-secondary education sector, costs have been increasingly downloaded onto students through the implementation of a user-fee model. The result has been catastrophic for students as today the national student debt is a staggering **36 billion dollars**.

In a province that faces critical levels of unemployment with the end of various infrastructure projects, the stability of job market will be dependent upon young highly skilled workers finding meaningful employment.

With post-secondary education now required for 70% of all new jobs, it is time for Newfoundland and Labrador to invest in making our universities and colleges universally accessible. Making post-secondary education accessible will boost economic output, persuade more young people to study at home and end the debt incurred simply for pursuing an education that has become necessary in today's job market

## ENDING STUDENT DEBT

In a 2017 national survey students upon graduation in Atlantic Canada had the highest average debt load of any region in the country, at \$20,493, and a third more than the national average of \$14,763. Average amounts still owing by graduates were also the highest in the country, and at \$17,087 are two-thirds more than the national average of \$10,506. As of 2017 there were **29,145** student loans outstanding in the province totaling \$102.5 million. These are just provincial figures, and don't include the federal loans, which will accrue interest. The overall indebtedness of past and present students



# EDUCATION

in this province, including federal loans, is hovering round **\$440 million**. Student debt does not affect students equally. Statistics Canada data shows that 52 percent of full-time post-secondary students aged 18-24

whose parents earned less than \$40,000 received a loan from the federal government in 2000. By comparison, only 14 percent of students whose parents earned more than \$80,000 received a public loan. In addition, more

women students received federal loans than did their male counterparts (34 percent versus 29 percent). These gaps highlight the challenges faced by students from both low-income and marginalized backgrounds.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Immediately reinstate the tuition fee freeze for all students
- Reinstatement of the full needs-based-grants program  
**Cost: 13 million**
- Establish ongoing funding to progressively reduce and eliminate tuition fees using the 50/ 50 funding model with the Federal Government
  - o College of the North Atlantic: 5.5 million
  - o Memorial University: 35.7 million
  - o **Cost: 41.2 million**



Government funding for post-secondary education, in the form of core operating grants allocated on a per-student basis, is required to ensure long-term, high-quality university and college

education in Newfoundland and Labrador.

The Government's annual financial reports include spending through the Department of Advanced Education and Skills,

which includes various spending items. We know that the total spending of the Department of Advanced Education and Skills was reduced by the following amounts:

### DEPT OF ADVANCED ED AND SKILLS

2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
\$758,793,810	\$712,951,474	\$684,261,356	\$699,466,496

In particular, Memorial University has faced successive cuts to both the overall budget and the total operations spending. There have been reductions across the board with the total reduction in the operations spending of **\$30,127,835**.

### "MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY"

\$363,020,035	\$324,002,200	\$321,828,131	\$339,192,200
---------------	---------------	---------------	---------------

2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------

### TOTAL OPERATIONS spending for "Memorial University"

\$345,220,035	\$320,154,700	\$318,704,900	\$315,092,200
---------------	---------------	---------------	---------------

# FUND HIGH-QUALITY



As the province heads towards a labour shift and increasing levels of unemployment, it is essential to have a highly skilled and educated workforce. In particular, the public college system in the province is in need of increased core funding if it is to meet the demands of the labour market in coming years.

Yet, time and again over the past years we have seen

programs under fire for fear of losing their accreditation, students not getting the level of training needed, safety procedures not being followed, and students left in the limbo as these programs struggle to meet expectations.

Therefore, while the individual student benefits from a high-quality and accessible post-secondary education system, funding this

system in Newfoundland and Labrador adds to the overall quality of life in this province. It is a legacy that sets this province apart, one that has fostered generations of creativity, innovation, research, academia, public policy, and so much more that wouldn't have been possible without recognizing the importance of education

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Restore core funding to 2013/2014 levels for Memorial University of Newfoundland and the College of the North Atlantic to ensure all programs maintain high levels of performance with necessary accreditation and research capacity  
**Cost: 34 million**
- Review all programs to ensure accreditation standards are being maintained for all.

# POST SECONDARY EDUCATION



# FAIRNESS FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

A declining birth rate and smaller pool of eligible university and college students has resulted in a decline in the number of professionals in a variety of fields from health-care to engineering and technical trades. International students present a potential boon to the population and can fill positions in fields that desperately need more trained professionals. The recent measures by the current government are a great first step in attracting highly skilled, talented, and creative young people who have already adjusted to our culture and our weather, and have likely made friends and connections in the community.

Recently, Global Affairs released the result of their study on the impact of international students in the Canadian economy and the findings were overwhelming positive. The study found that international students contributed almost **\$11.4 billion** to economic activities in Canada in 2014. This translates to **\$9.3 billion in GDP** contribution to the Canadian economy. In Newfoundland and Labrador, international students had annual expenditures of over \$48 million dollars with over 350 jobs created.

Memorial University and the College of the North Atlantic have become the hub of the international community in Newfoundland and Labrador.

However, in the past year international students have seen their tuition at MUN increase to **4.5 times** that of domestic students reducing the accessibility and attractiveness of the province. International students may decide to move elsewhere due to the remote location, high cost of travel and living, challenging climate, and lack of a developed international community.

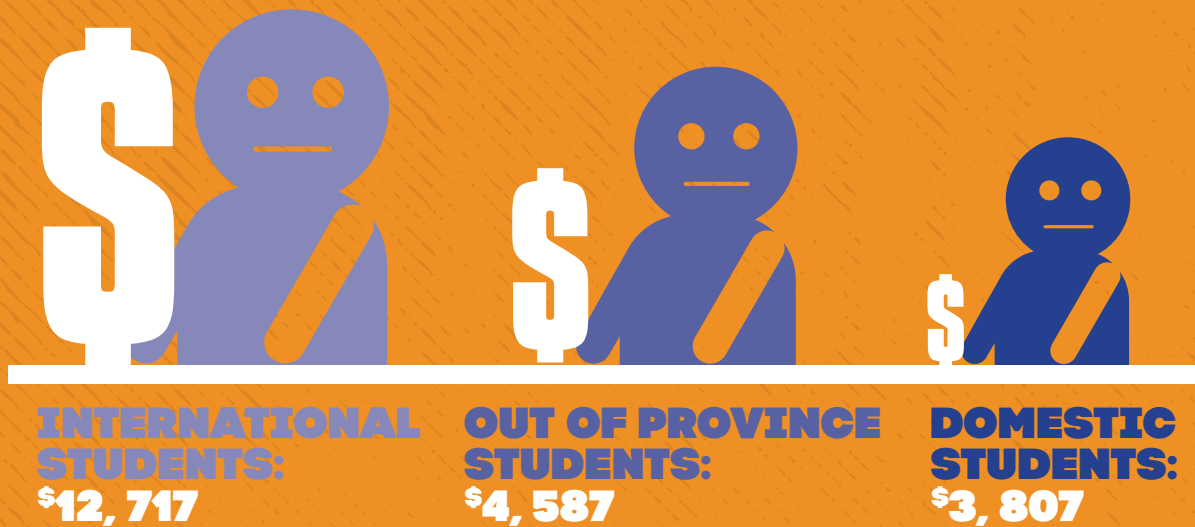
In Newfoundland and Labrador, international students contribute over \$800,000 into the local economy each year. This is further evidence that the exorbitant tuition fees paid by international students are not justified as their



contribution to the Canadian economy are significant. As a distinct group of individuals, international students bring much to the culture and economy of our

province and contribute by teaching, conducting research, purchasing necessary goods and services, and paying both sales and income taxes. They bring a wealth

of unique knowledge and experience to our university and college, enhancing the educational experience for all students and citizens of our province.



In 2009, the provincial government showed its support against a proposed fee hike for international students at Memorial University. The government must now take bolder steps to legislate the progressive reduction of fees for international students.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Immediately implement tuition freeze for international students studying in the province
- Clarify and simplify process to increase immigration pathways to permanent residency in Newfoundland and Labrador



# BUILD CONSENT CULTURE

Students recognize that a significant barrier to accessing and succeeding in post-secondary institutions is the prevalence of sexual violence on campus, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, and gender-based violence. Young women aged 15 to 24 experience higher instances of sexual violence in Canada

than other age group, with the rates of sexual assault experienced by this age group being 18 times higher than that of Canadians 55 and under. One in five women studying at a post-secondary institution in North America experience some form of sexualized violence over the course of her studies. It is

evident that sexualized violence is pervasive on campuses and in our communities and requires immediate and targeted action from post-secondary institutions and government

We must all work together to build a **culture of consent**, the fact that consent is

mandatory is normalized, respected and valued in society. It is an expression of values and attitudes that respects bodily autonomy and understands that each person is always the best judge of their own wants and needs. It is a culture in which all interactions and relationships are centered on freely given, active and enthusiastic mutual agreement for participation.

Memorial University of Newfoundland and the College of the North

Atlantic are in a unique position to challenge rape culture by promoting consent education, improving on-campus services for survivors of sexualized violence, and establishing strong, stand-alone, survivor-centered, and student-centered policies. However, these institutions are failing to take all the necessary steps and the provincial government must hold them accountable.

The provincial government must take action to combat

sexualized violence and implement the necessary requirements to ensure that our post-secondary institutions are prepared to respond to incidents and effectively support survivors. For these reasons, the Canadian Federation of Students-Newfoundland and Labrador proposes the following recommendations on how the provincial government can best address sexualized violence on campuses and support post-secondary students.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Funding for the Trans Health Center and establish a dedicated Sexual Assault Support Resource Fund accessible to students, campus groups, Memorial University, and the College of the North Atlantic. Funding for projects created under this fund will be renewable on an annual basis and the future size of the fund should be determined by community interest and the demand for project renewals  
**Cost: 2 million**
- Introduce legislation to mandate all post-secondary institutions have stand-alone sexual assault policies that are renewed every two years through a student-driven process which requires universities and colleges to report publicly on incidences of sexual violence, include mandatory consent education for everyone on campus and a mandate survivor/victim support services on campus.



Students' unions in our country have long been the voice of positive and progressive change, pushing for policy that benefits not only post-secondary students but society as a whole. Students' unions were at the forefront of the peace movement, pro-choice movement, anti-apartheid movements, and more recently \$15 & Fairness. It is the voices that are most silenced in broader society that often find support in students' union-run counseling centers, LGBTQ\* clubs and societies, women's centers, advocacy programs, awareness campaigns, radio stations, health and dental plans, and campus food banks.

# PROTECT STUDENT RIGHTS

Student unions have a strong history of holding governments and administrations accountable in making our campuses accessible, affordable, and safer places to pursue higher education. In Newfoundland and Labrador governments have prided themselves on continuing the legacy started by Joey Smallwood of having the most

accessible post-secondary education in the nation. However, these successes are never guaranteed from year to year, it is the students studying in this province who tirelessly and unapologetically call on the government to remember their commitments, and support our collective future through investments in post-secondary education.

Currently, Memorial

University Students' Union is protected through the Act of 1968 but the same is not true for Memorial's satellite campuses and the College of the North Atlantic. We must protect the crucial role of students' unions in the province with legislation similar to that of British Columbia and Quebec, which details the rights of students' unions to exist and details the process for collection and remittance of fees.

## RECOMMENDATION:

- Pass legislation that recognizes the autonomy of all student unions and student associations in the province



# FUNDING

- The tuition tax credit and the GST exemption on tuition would no longer be claimed, and the tax expenditures on this item would be eliminated;
- New revenue sources, e.g. revenues from the coming carbon tax and
- Increases to existing revenue sources, e.g. increases to corporate income tax rates for large corporations, or to the top income-bracket personal income tax rates
- Federal transfers earmarked for post-secondary education



# SUMMARY

## FREE EDUCATION

Immediately reinstate the tuition fee freeze for all students

Reinstate the needs-based-grants program: **Cost: 13 million**

Progressively reduce tuition fees to the point of elimination, for domestic and international students at all public post-secondary institutions in Newfoundland and Labrador: **Cost: 41.2 million**

## FUND HIGH QUALITY POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

Restore core funding to 2013/2014 levels for Memorial University of Newfoundland and the College of the North Atlantic to ensure all programs maintain high levels of performance with necessary accreditation and research capacity: **Cost: 30 million**

Review all programs to ensure accreditation standards are being maintained

**\*\* 85% of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians agree with having free post-secondary education\*\***

## BUILD CONSENT CULTURE

Funding for the Trans Health Center and establish a dedicated Sexual Assault Support Resource Fund accessible to students, campus groups, Memorial University, and the College of the North Atlantic: **Cost: 2 million**

Introduce legislation to mandate all post-secondary institutions have stand-alone sexual assault policies.

## FAIRNESS FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Immediately implement tuition freeze for international students

Clarify and simplify process to increase immigration pathways to permanent residency in Newfoundland and Labrador

## PROTECT STUDENT RIGHTS

Pass legislation that recognizes the autonomy of all student unions and student associations in the province

# END NOTES

**1** OECD, “Education at a Glance 2018 – Data and Methodology” <https://www.oecd.org/education/education-at-a-glance-2018-data-and-methodology.htm>. Germany charges zero tuition, but of up to a few hundred Euro administration fees.

**3** Statistics Canada, “Labour force characteristics, monthly, seasonally adjusted and trend-cycle, last 5 months” Table 14-10-0287-01.

**4** IPSOS, “Three in Four (77%) Canadian Graduates Under 40 Regret Taking on Student Debt” Sept 2017 <https://www.ipsos.com/en-ca/news-polls/BDO-student-debt-2017-09-18>.

**5** This average includes the 28% of graduates with no student debt (as with other figures in this paragraph). If we exclude those, and consider only those with student debt, the average figure is higher, at \$28,413.

**6** Student Loan Corporation, 2016-2017 Annual Report [http://www.aesl.gov.nl.ca/publications/annualreport/slc\\_2016\\_17.pdf](http://www.aesl.gov.nl.ca/publications/annualreport/slc_2016_17.pdf).

**7** Harden, Joel, “The Political Economy of Student Debt in Canada,” 2017

**8** Statistics Canada, “Survey of Financial Security (SFS), assets and debts held by economic family type, by age group, Canada, provinces and selected census metropolitan areas (CMAs)” <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=1110001601&pick-Members%5B0%5D=1.3&pick-Members%5B1%5D=3.1&pickMembers%5B2%5D=5.1&pickMembers%5B3%5D=4.1>.

**9** Employment and Social Development Canada, “Canada Student Loans Program Annual Report 2015 to 2016” <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/canada-student-loans-grants/reports/cslp-annual-2015-2016.html>.

**10** Department of Finance, “Public Accounts and other Financial Reports” [https://www.fin.gov.nl.ca/fin/public\\_accounts/](https://www.fin.gov.nl.ca/fin/public_accounts/).

**11** Global Affairs Canada, “Economic Impact of International Students in Canada.” 2016

**12** Statistics Canada, (2013). Measuring Violence Against Women: Statistical Trends. Retrieved from <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/2013001/article/11766-eng.pdf>



