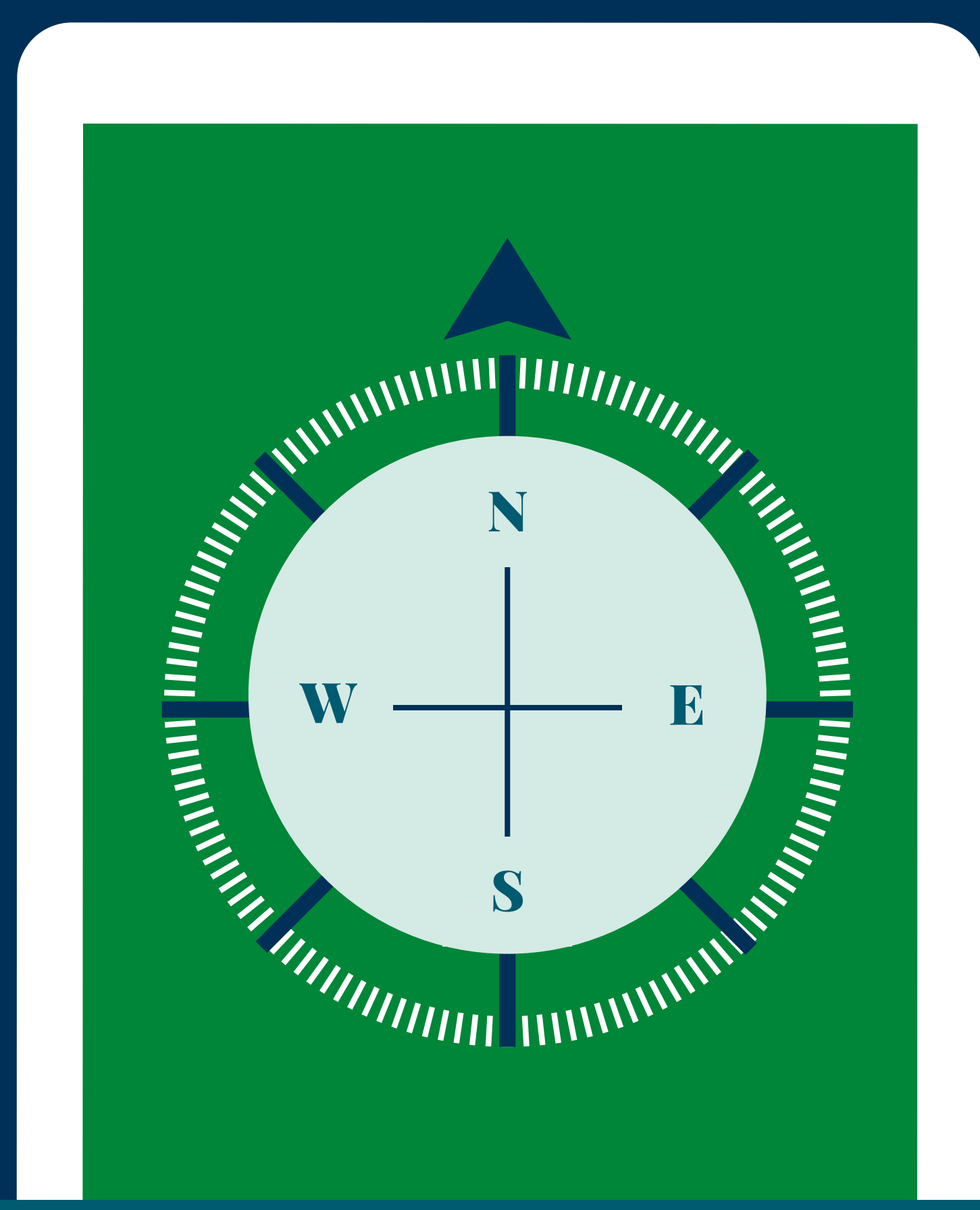


# Digital Learning Compass

## Distance Education Enrollment Report 2017



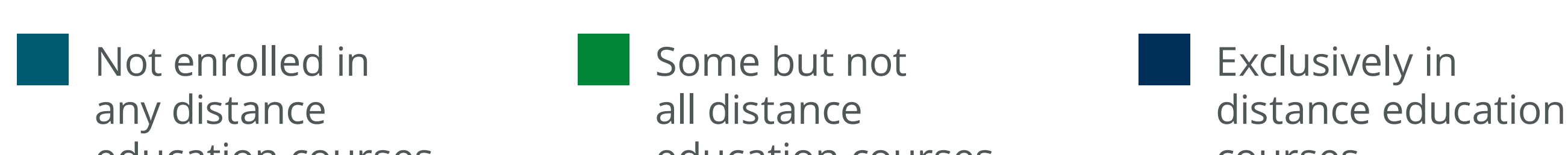
What you should know about the **6,000,000+** students now enrolled in higher education distance courses.

Key findings from *Digital Learning Compass: Distance Education Enrollment Report 2017*, the first of a series of publications from the new research partnership of the Babson Survey Research Group, e-Literate, and WCET. This study takes a detailed look at the trends and patterns of distance education enrollments among U.S. degree-granting higher education institutions. Additional publications in the Digital Learning Compass series will provide detailed examinations of multiple facets of U.S. distance education.

### PROPORTION OF STUDENTS TAKING DISTANCE EDUCATION COURSES | 2015

**30%** of all students in higher education are now taking at least one distance course.

Distance learners are **split almost evenly** between students who are exclusively “distance” and those who take some courses in person.



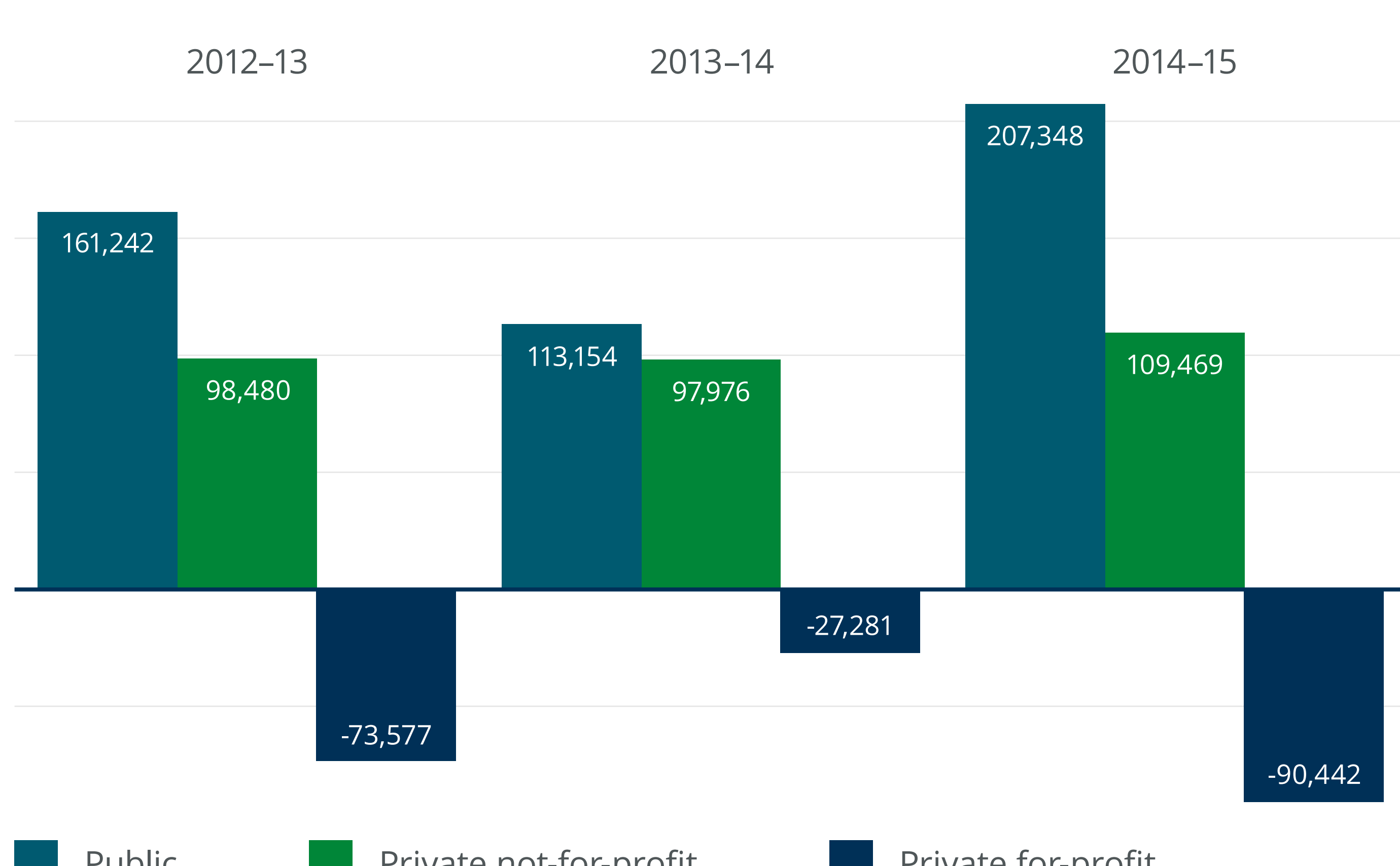
### TYPE OF INSTITUTION—STUDENTS ENROLLED IN DISTANCE EDUCATION COURSES | 2015

Most distance learners in private institutions attend **not-for-profits**.

Most distance learners attend **public institutions**.



### YEAR-TO-YEAR CHANGE IN DISTANCE ENROLLMENTS (DEGREE-GRANTING INSTITUTIONS) | 2012–2015

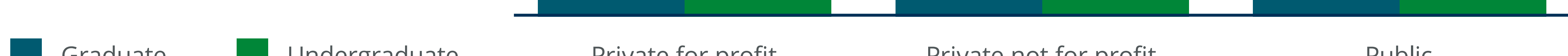


Public and private not-for-profit institutions **have grown their distance learning enrollments** (as for-profit enrollments slipped). All three trends accelerated in 2014-2015.

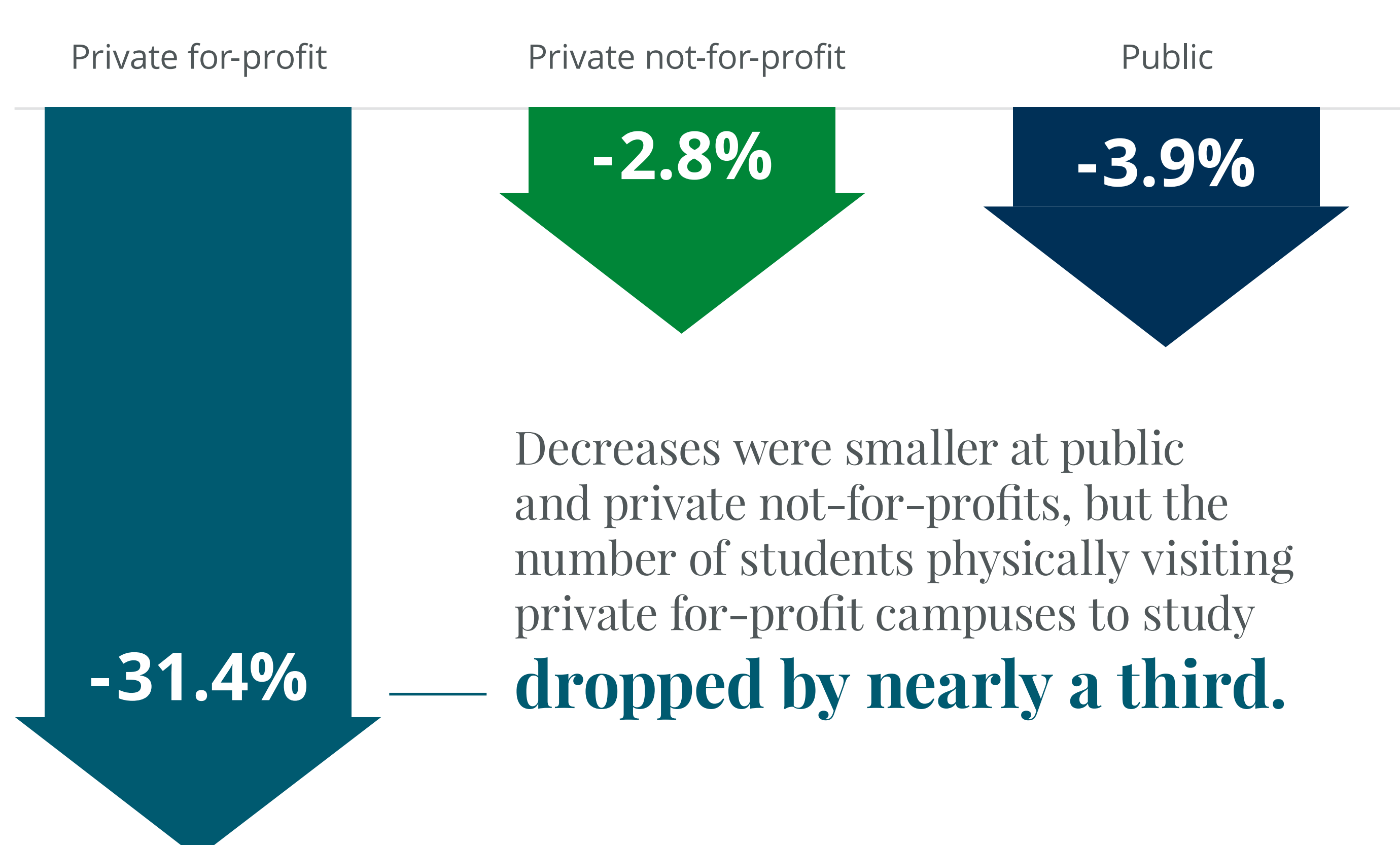
### PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS TAKING DISTANCE COURSES BY CONTROL OF INSTITUTION AND LEVEL OF STUDY | 2015

However, **most for-profit students are distance learners**.

In fact, **six out of seven** graduate students at for-profits are studying at a distance.



### PERCENTAGE CHANGE IN THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS STUDYING ON CAMPUS | 2012–2015



Decreases were smaller at public and private not-for-profits, but the number of students physically visiting private for-profit campuses to study **dropped by nearly a third**.

As overall distance enrollment has grown, on-campus enrollment has fallen by **5% since 2012**.

### LOCATION OF STUDENTS ENROLLED EXCLUSIVELY IN DISTANCE EDUCATION COURSES | 2015

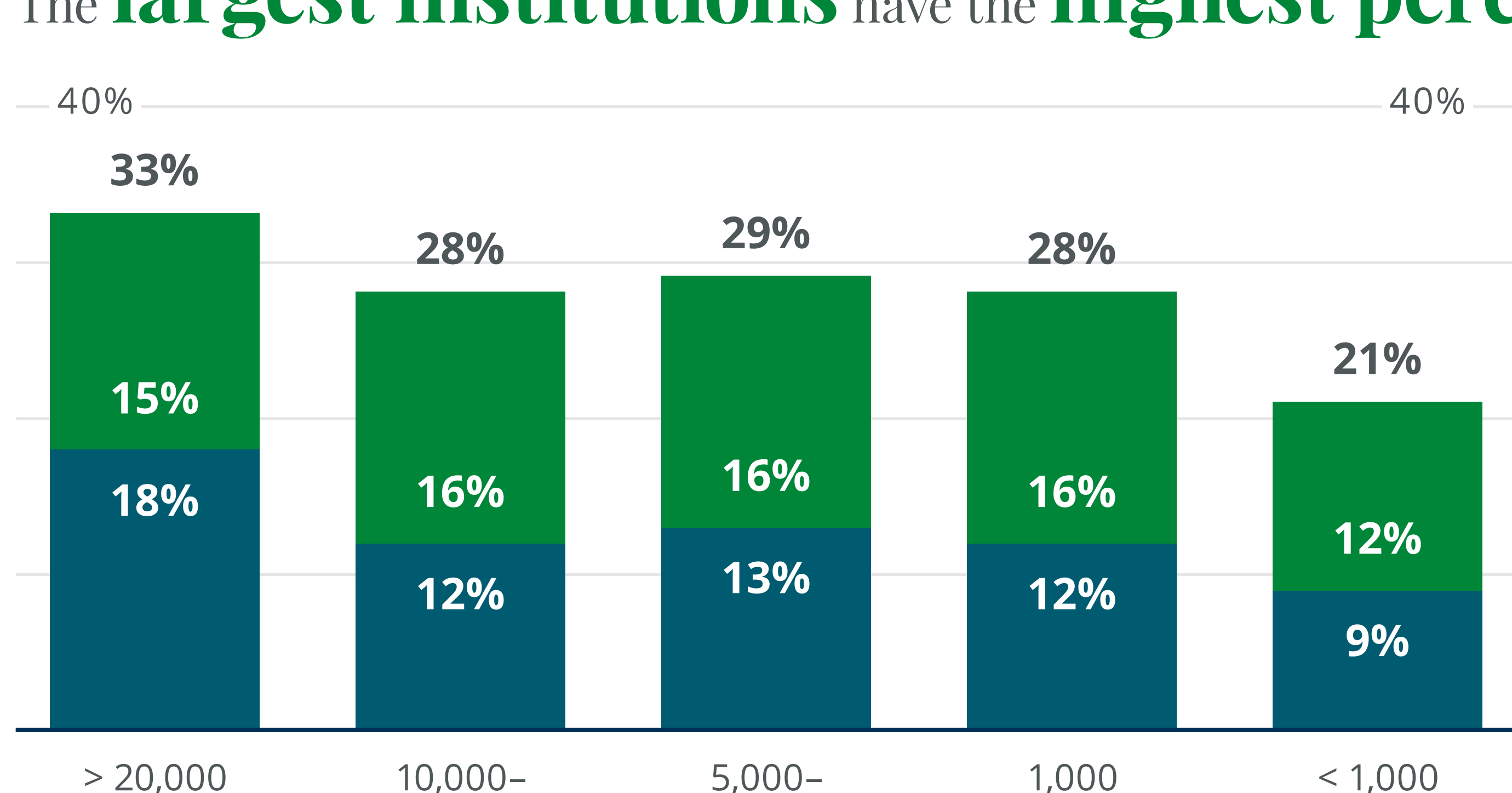
The majority of “exclusively distance” students **live in the same state** as their institution.

But a surprising **42%** are studying at **out-of-state institutions**.



### PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS TAKING DISTANCE COURSES BY INSTITUTION SIZE | 2015

The **largest institutions** have the **highest percentages** of distance students.

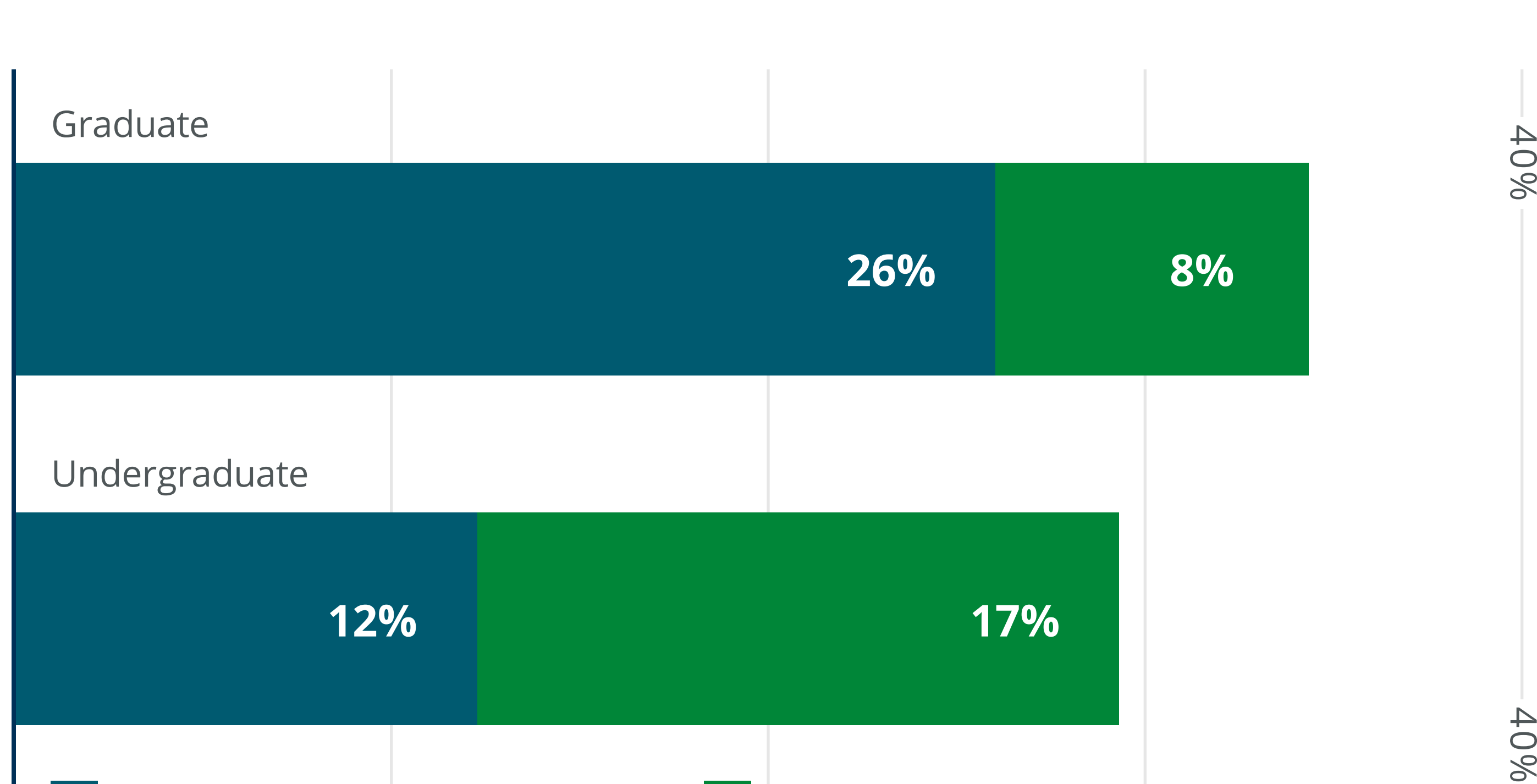


But once institutions exceed 1,000 students, the proportion who study *only part of the time* via distance remains steady.

### PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS TAKING DISTANCE COURSES BY LEVEL OF STUDY | 2015

Graduate students are **twice as likely** to take all courses at a distance.

**More than one-third** of graduate students study at least in part via distance (vs. 29% for undergraduates).



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