Public Enrollment by State

Total full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollment in public colleges and universities in the United States increased by 8% between 2007 and 2017—from 9.6 million to 10.4 million. However, changes across states ranged from declines of 13% in Illinois and 10% in Alaska to increases of 24% in Utah and 26% in Texas.

**FIGURE 22A** Percentage Changes in Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Enrollment in Public Institutions by State, Fall 2007 to Fall 2017

- **Illinois:** -13%
- **Alaska:** -10%
- **Michigan:** -5%
- **Maine:** 0%
- **Minnesota:** 20%
- **West Virginia:** 22%
- **Wisconsin:** 22%
- **Kentucky:** 24%
- **Oklahoma:** 26%
- **New Hampshire:** 26%
- **New Mexico:** 26%
- **Wyoming:** 26%
- **Pennsylvania:** 20%
- **Hawaii:** 8%
- **Rhode Island:** 8%
- **Ohio:** 0%
- **Connecticut:** 0%
- **Vermont:** 0%
- **Montana:** 0%
- **Louisiana:** 0%
- **Indiana:** 0%
- **Nebraska:** 0%
- **Kansas:** 0%
- **North Dakota:** 0%
- **Iowa:** 0%
- **Tennessee:** 0%
- **Iowa:** 0%
- **New York:** 0%
- **United States:** 8%
- **Mississippi:** 0%
- **New Jersey:** 0%
- **Massachusetts:** 0%
- **California:** 0%
- **Virginia:** 0%
- **Alabama:** 0%
- **Delaware:** 0%
- **South Dakota:** 0%
- **Maryland:** 0%
- **North Carolina:** 0%
- **Nevada:** 0%
- **South Carolina:** 0%
- **Washington:** 0%
- **Idaho:** 0%
- **Florida:** 0%
- **Georgia:** 0%
- **Oregon:** 0%
- **Colorado:** 0%
- **Arizona:** 0%
- **Utah:** 0%
- **Texas:** 20%
- **California:** 58%
- **Texas:** 26%
- **United States:** 20%

**NOTES:** Two-year institutions are defined as institutions where more than 50% of degrees/certificates awarded are associate degrees or certificates, even if they award some bachelor’s degrees. Students who are not included in the percentages reported in Figure 22B are enrolled in public four-year colleges and universities.

**SOURCES:** NCES, IPEDS Fall Enrollment data, 2007 and 2017; calculations by the authors.

- Between 2007 and 2017, public FTE enrollment increased by 20% or more in four states and declined by 5% or more in six states.
- Overall, two-year colleges, some of which offer a limited number of bachelor’s degrees, accounted for 42% of the public FTE undergraduate enrollment in 2017. In seven states, this share was 50% or more; in eight states, it was less than 25%.

**ALSO IMPORTANT:**

- California and Texas, which together enrolled 24% of the nation’s public college and university students in 2017, accounted for 41% of the overall increase in FTE enrollment over the decade.
- The graduate student share of public FTE enrollments in fall 2017 ranged from 7% in Alaska, California, and Maine to 13% in Alabama, Maryland, Nebraska, and West Virginia and 14% in Michigan.
- Between 2007 and 2017, public graduate FTE enrollment increased by 13%, compared with 8% for undergraduates. In Vermont, North Dakota, and Arkansas, public graduate FTE enrollment increased by more than 25% over the decade, while undergraduate enrollment rose by less than 5%. However, in 14 states public undergraduate FTE enrollment grew more rapidly (or fell less) than graduate enrollment.

For detailed data behind the graphs and additional information, please visit: research.collegeboard.org/trends.