

Transfer Numbers and Transfer Ratios Explanations for Current Trends

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Background, Questions, and Answers

Background

The number of students who transfer annually among Ohio's public institutions of higher education increased substantially between 2001-02 and 2011-12. In subsequent years, however, transfer numbers declined. We'd like to know what factors drove the decline in transfer numbers between 2011-12 and 2017-18.

Specific Question

The number of transfers in a given year can be expressed as the product of two variables:

$$\text{Transfer Numbers} = \text{Enrollment} \times \text{Transfer Ratio}.$$

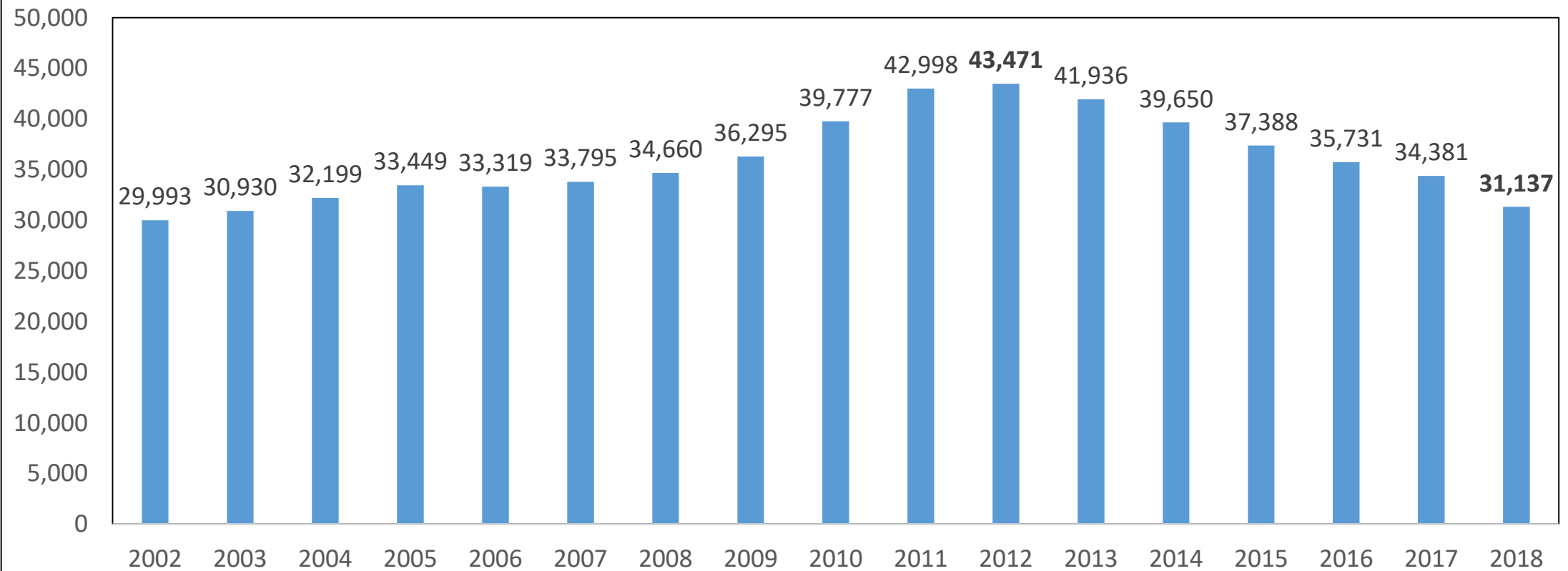
Question: How did changes in enrollment numbers and transfer ratios contribute to the observed decline in the number of transfers?

Our results show the following:

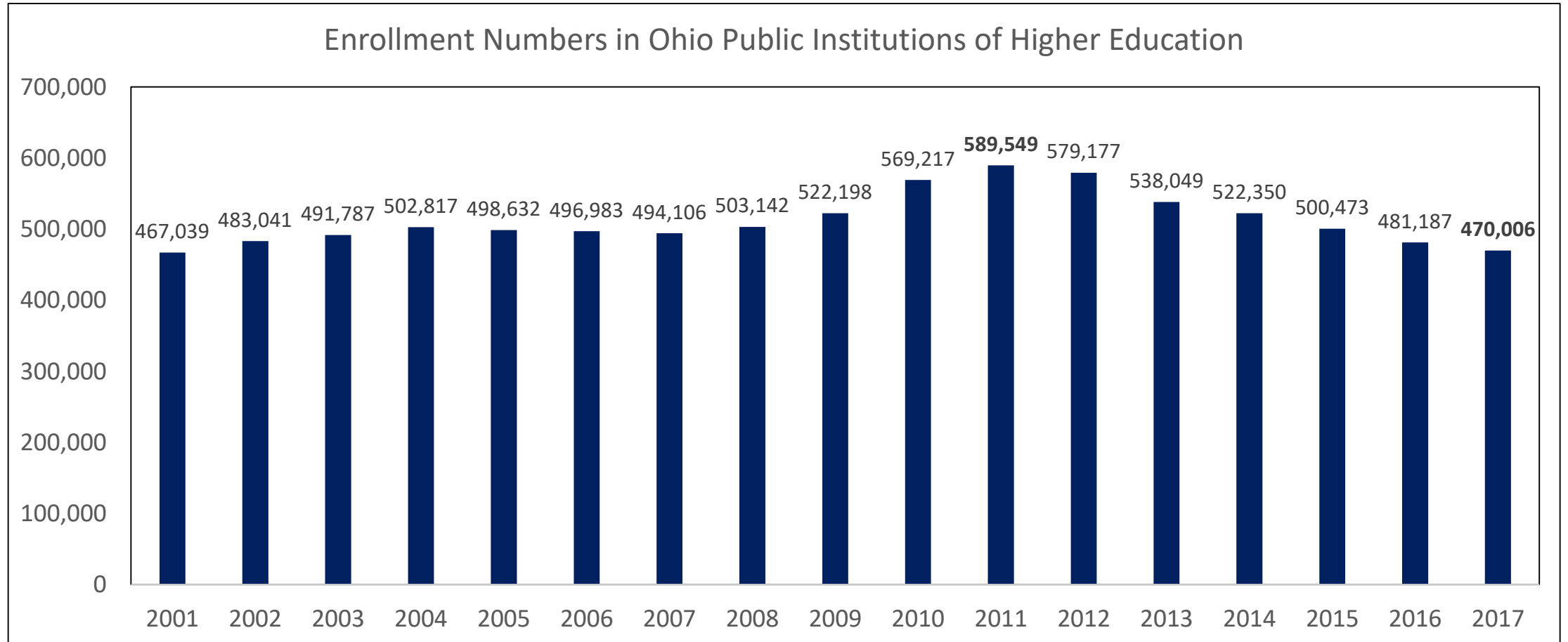
Declines in out-going transfer numbers from two-year institutions, and from four-year regional campuses are due exclusively to declining enrollment numbers. For four-year main campuses, declining out-going numbers are due mostly to lower enrollments, and also to fewer students transferring to two-year institutions.

Transfer numbers: 2001-02 to 2017-18

Annual Number of Transfers among Ohio Public Institutions of Higher Education

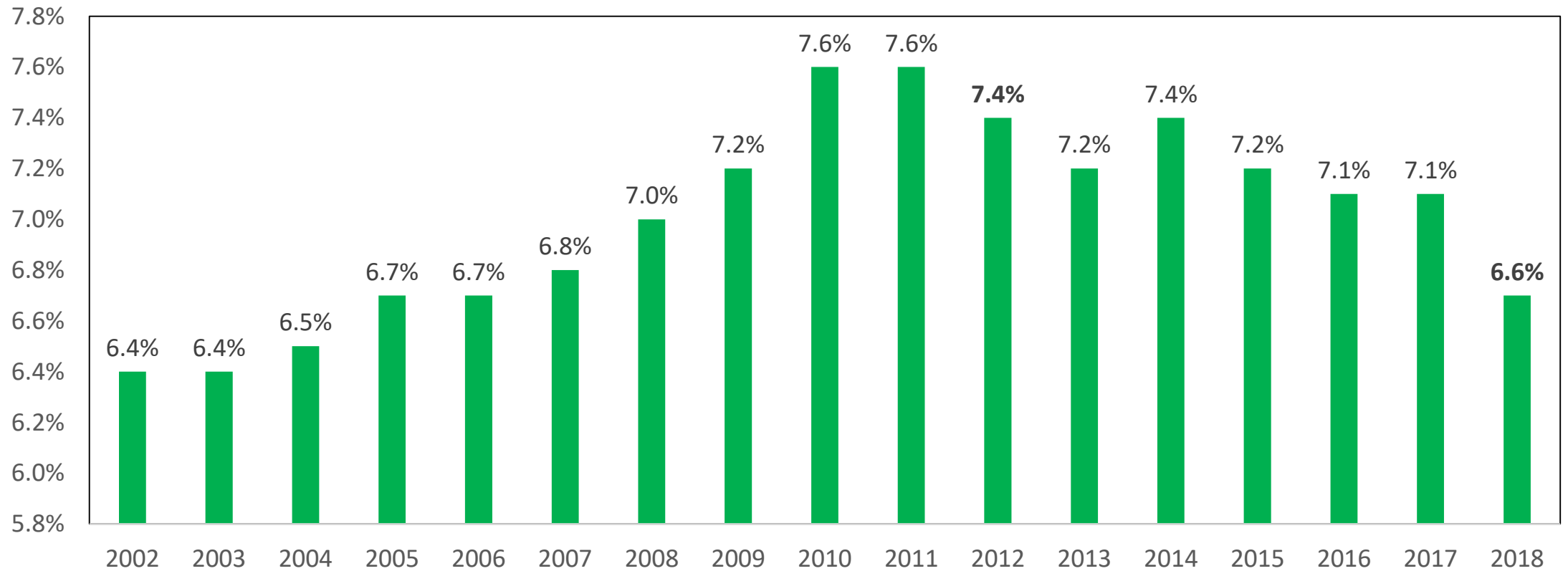


Annualized enrollment numbers: 2000-01 to 2016-17



Transfer to enrollment ratio: 2001-02 to 2017-18

Transfer Ratios for Ohio Public Institutions of Higher Education



Observed trends in the data

- Transfer numbers:
 - Between 2001-02 and 2011-12: Increased by 13,478 – from 29,993 to 43,471.
 - Between 2011-12 and 2017-18: Declined by 12,334 – from 43,471 to 31,137.
- Enrollment numbers:
 - Between 2000-01 and 2010-11: Increased by 122,510 – from 467,039 to 589,549.
 - Between 2010-11 and 2016-17: Declined by 119,543 – from 589,549 to 470,006.
- Transfer ratios:
 - Between 2001-02 and 2011-12: Increased by 1.2 percentage points – from 6.4% to 7.6%.
 - Between 2011-12 and 2017-18: Declined by 1.0 percentage points – from 7.6% to 6.6%.

Why did transfer numbers increase between 2001-02 and 2011-12?

- In a given year, transfer numbers are a product of:
 - Enrollment in the previous year, and the transfer ratio (proportion of enrolled students who transfers).
- Enrollment numbers increased
 - Dwindling economic conditions are likely to have led to large increases in enrollments, especially at two-year institutions.
- Transfer numbers increased
 - Rising enrollments led to higher transfer numbers.
 - Transfer ratios also increased – a reflection of many factors including implementation of statewide policies boosting transfers – Transfer Assurance Guide (TAG) was implemented in 2006.

Why did transfer numbers and transfer ratios decline between 2011-12 and 2017-18?

- Our data show that both enrollment and transfer ratios declined over the period under consideration.
- However, the overall data – aggregates of two-year, four-year regional, and four-year main campuses do not shed light on the underlying mechanism driving down transfer numbers and transfer ratios.

Decomposing enrollment numbers, transfer numbers, and transfer ratios by college type

- We examine enrollment numbers separately for two-year institutions, four-year regional campuses, and four-year main campuses.
- We track out-going transfer numbers by (source) college type.
- We track out-going transfer numbers and transfer ratios by source college-types, and also by destination college types. This allows us to show exactly where the declines took place.

Results: Why did transfer numbers declined?
Focus: Out-going transfers from two-year institutions and four-year regional campuses

- Transfer numbers: Enrollment numbers \times Transfer ratio
- For two-year institutions and four-year regional campuses:
 - **Lower enrollment numbers are unequivocally the driving force behind declining out-going transfer numbers between 2011-12 and 2017-18.**
- What happened to transfer ratios over the period?
 - **For four-year regional campuses, out-going transfer ratios actually increased.**
 - **For two-year institutions, out-going transfer ratios remained constant.**

Results: Why did transfer numbers decline?

Focus: Out-going transfers from four-year university main campuses

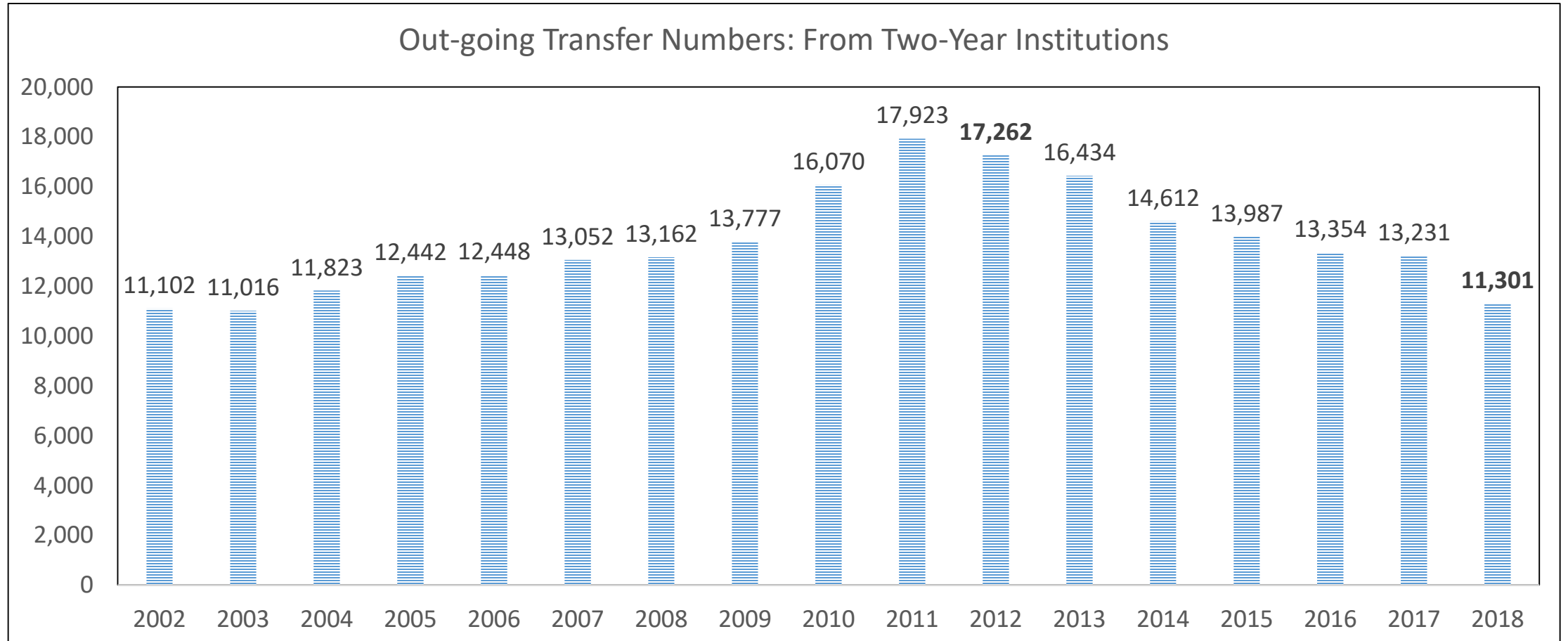
- Transfer numbers: Enrollment numbers \times Transfer ratio
- For four-year main campuses:
- **Both lower enrollment and lower transfer ratios contributed to declining out-going transfer numbers between 2011-12 and 2017-18.**
- However, out-going transfer ratios declined mostly because a substantially smaller number of four-year main campus students transferred to two-year institutions.

Decomposition of numbers and ratios: Two-year institutions

- Out-going transfer numbers.
- Enrollments.
- Transfer ratios.
- Out-going transfer numbers by destination type.
- Transfer ratios by destination type.

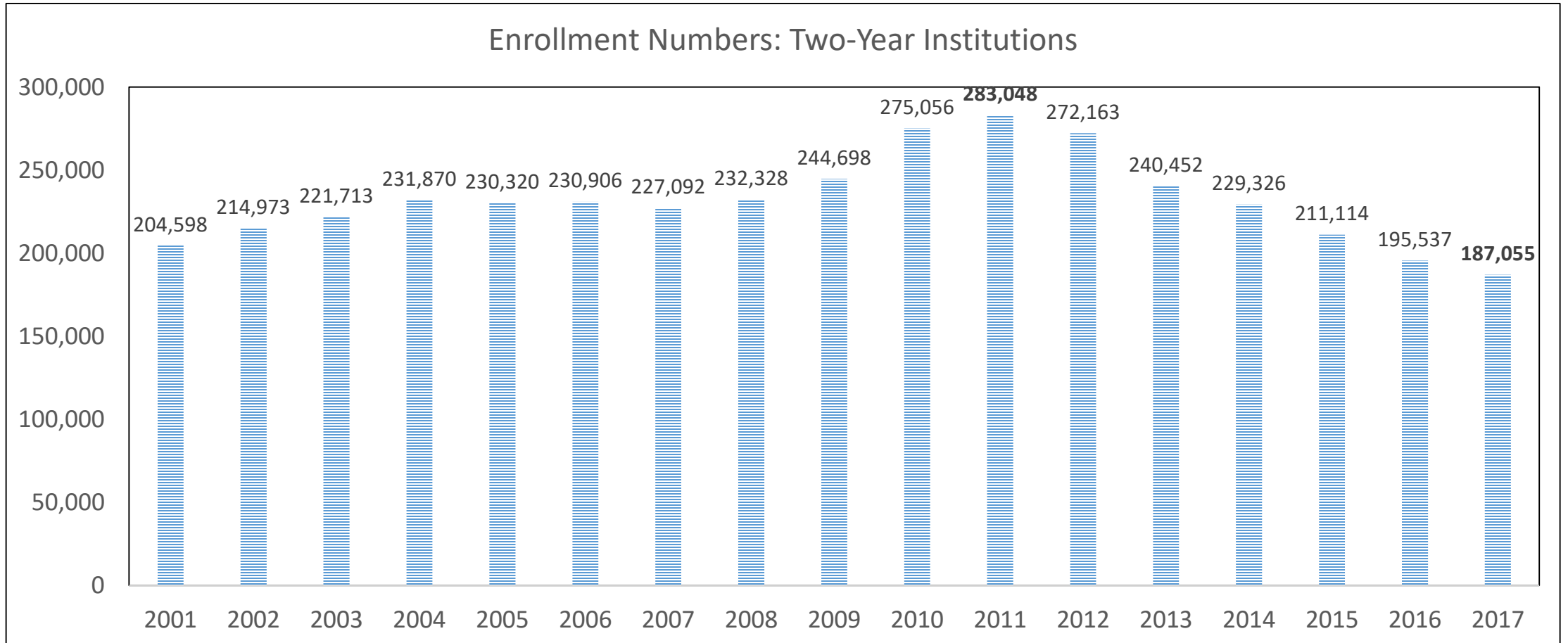
Out-going transfer numbers: Two-year institutions

Between 2011-12 & 2017-18, numbers declined by almost 6,000

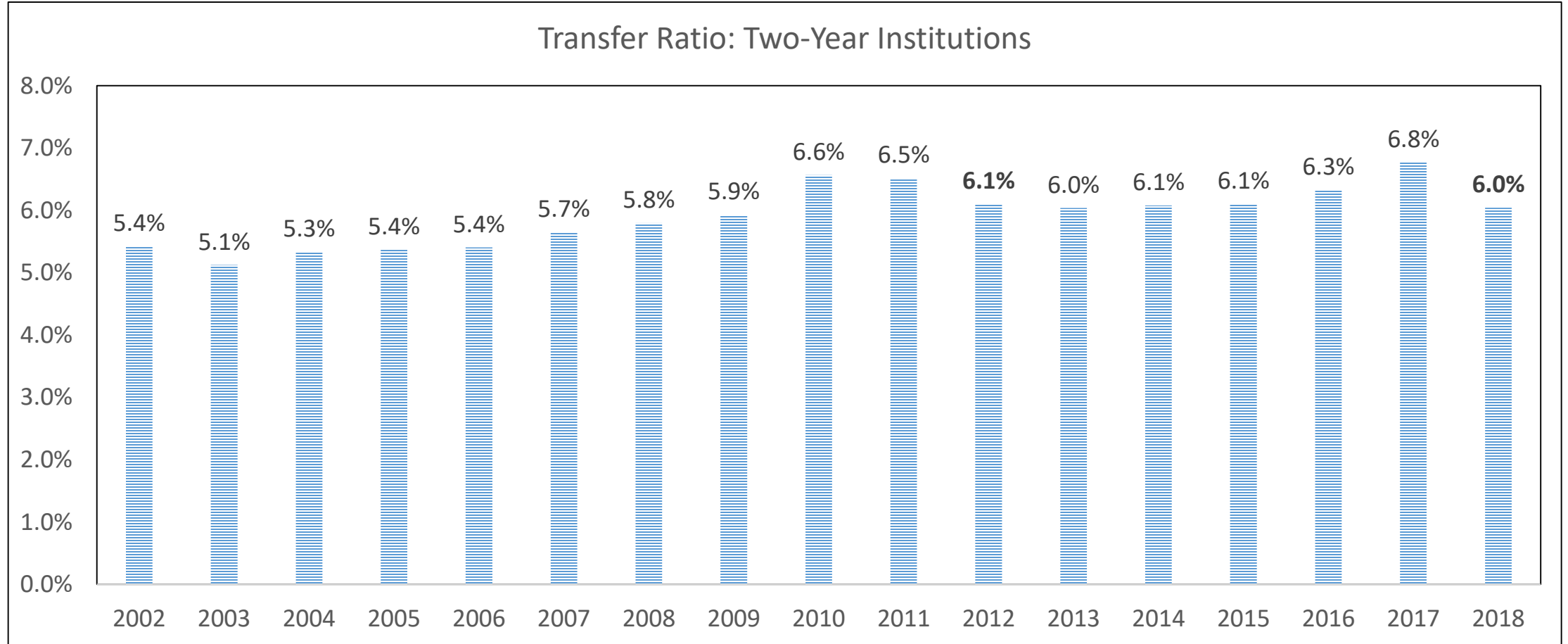


Enrollment trends: Two-year institutions

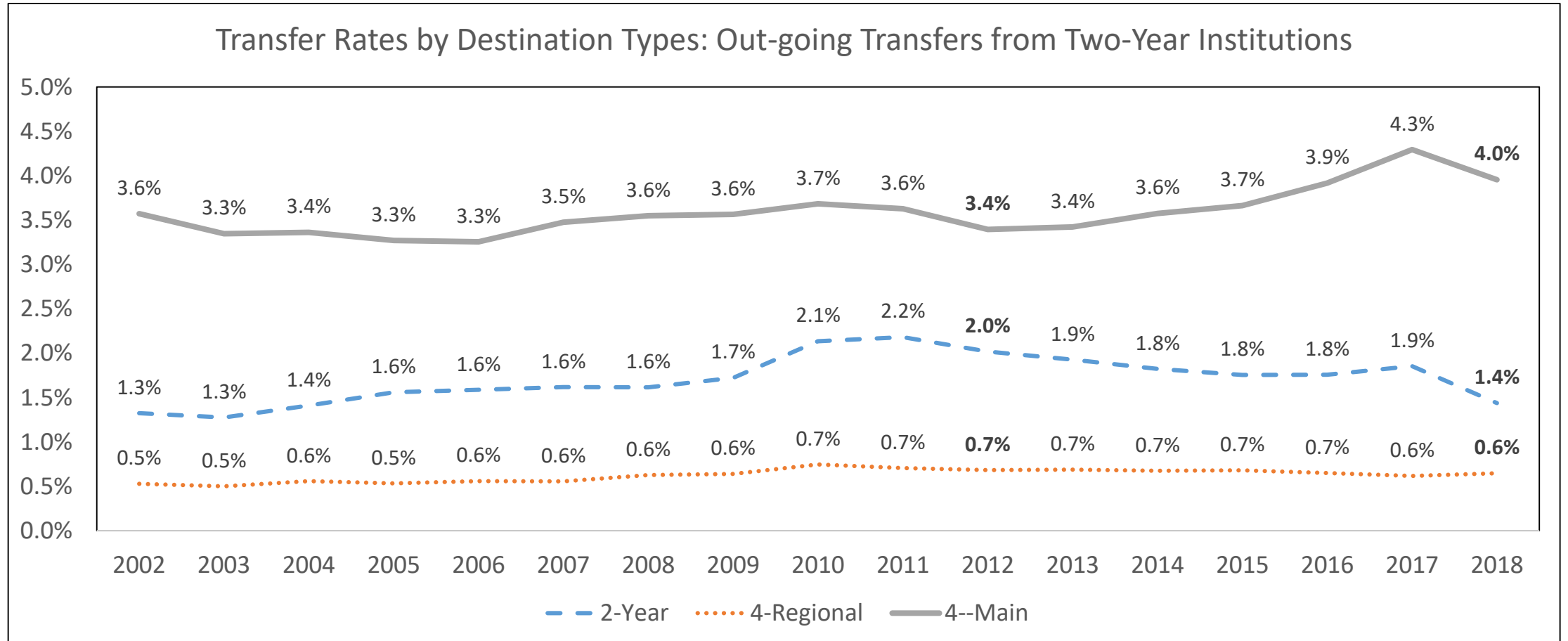
Between 2010-11 & 2016-17, numbers declined by almost 100,000



Did out-going transfer ratios change over the period? No.
Declines in out-going transfer numbers from two-year colleges, therefore,
were due to lower two-year college enrollments

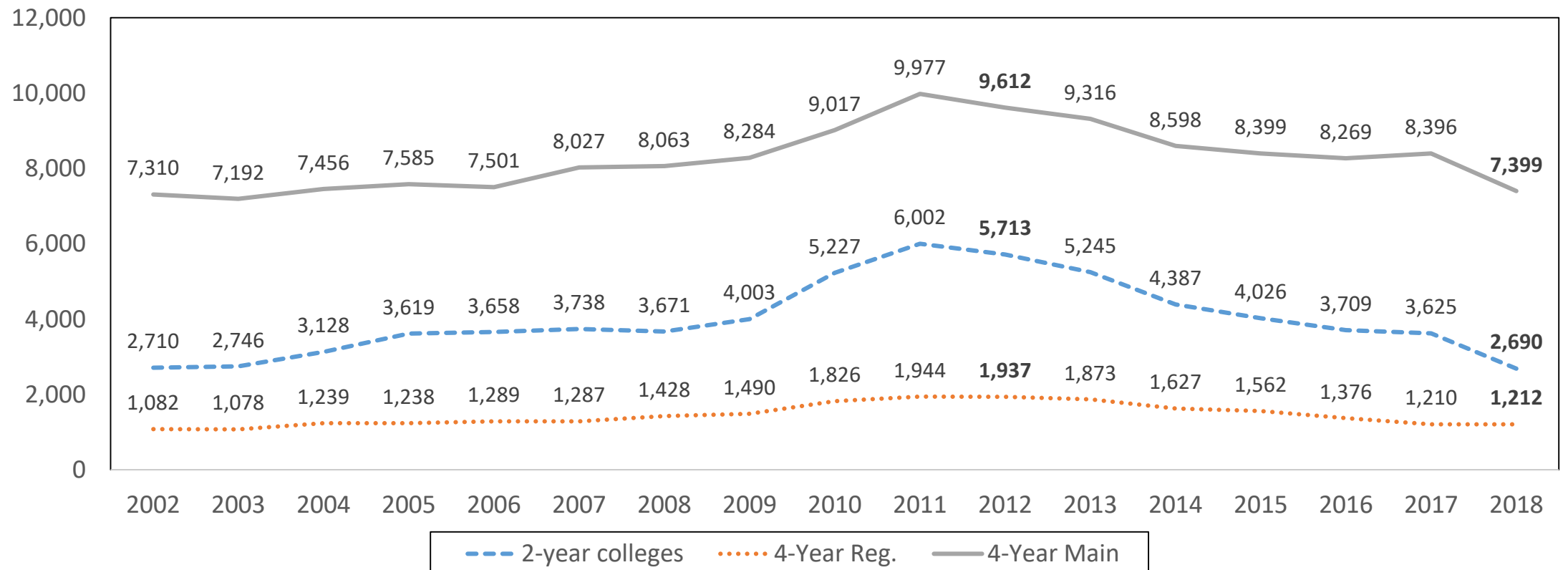


Interestingly, out-going transfer ratios – from two-year to four-year main campuses – actually increased between 2011-12 and 2017-18



So where did the out-going transfer number decline the most?
 For students transferring from two-year institutions to other two-year institutions – by 3,023

Out-going Transfers from Two-Year Institutions: By Destination Types

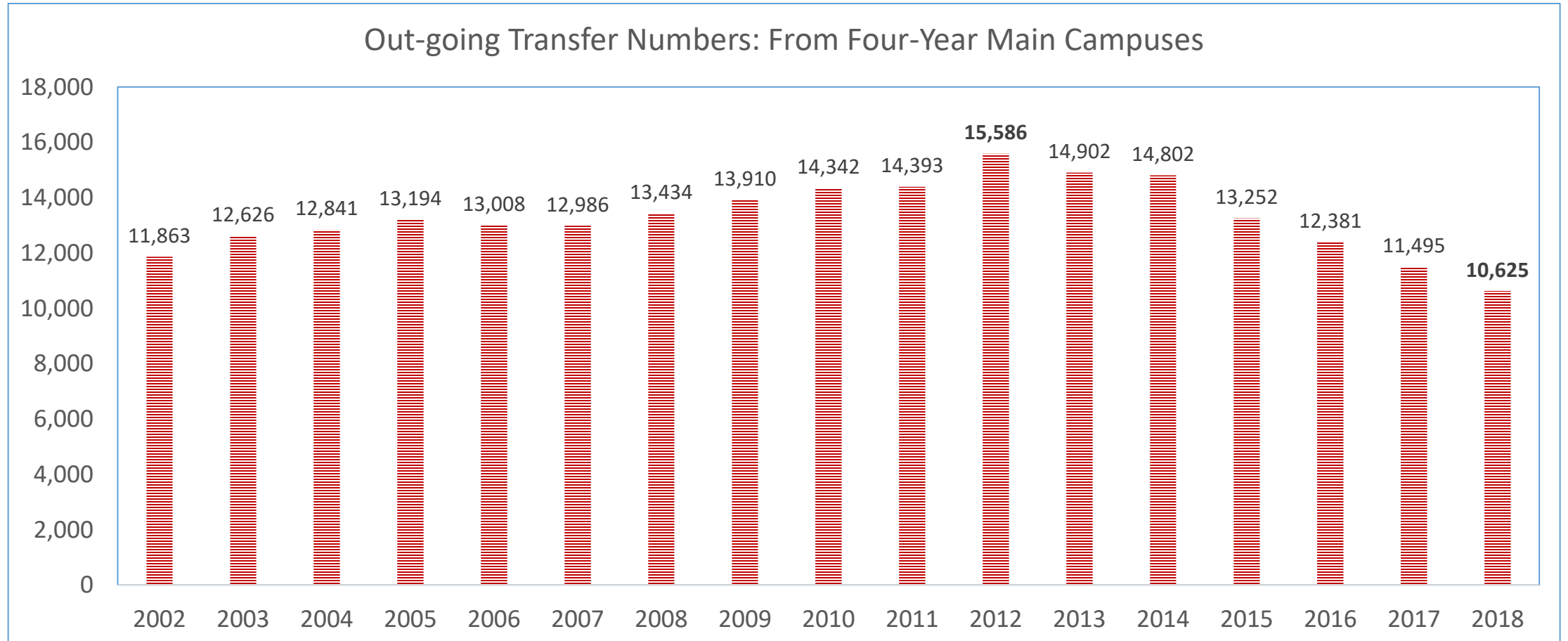


Decomposition of numbers and ratios: Four-year university main campuses

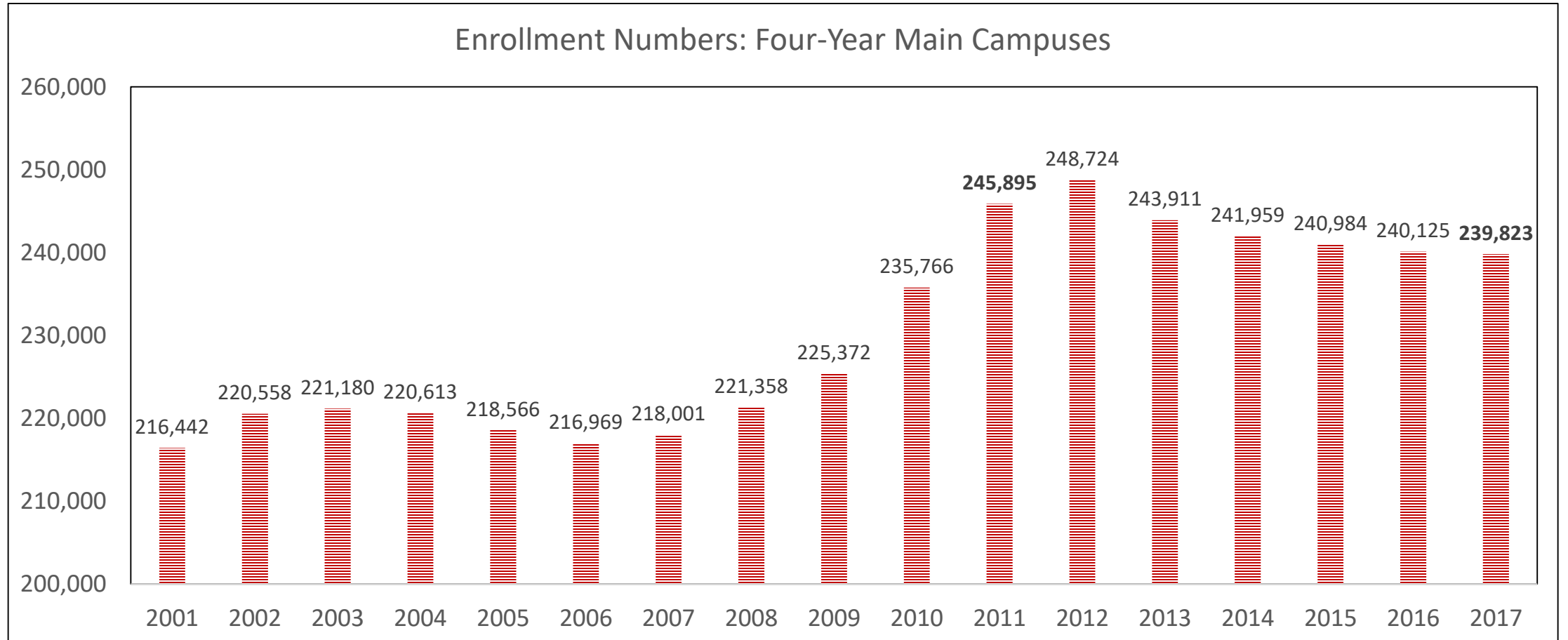
- Out-going transfer numbers.
- Enrollments.
- Transfer ratios.
- Out-going transfer numbers by destination type.
- Transfer ratios by destination type.

Out-going transfer numbers: Four-year main campuses

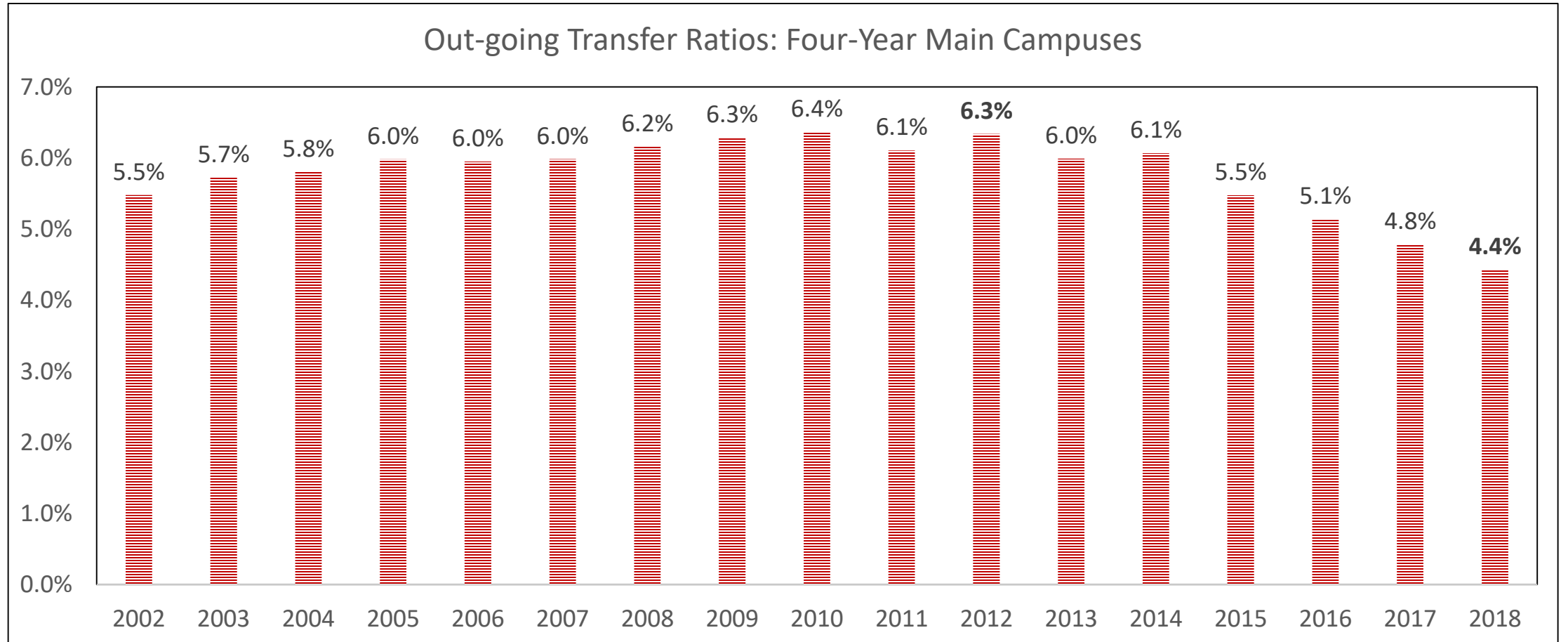
Between 2011-12 & 2017-18, numbers declined by almost 5,000



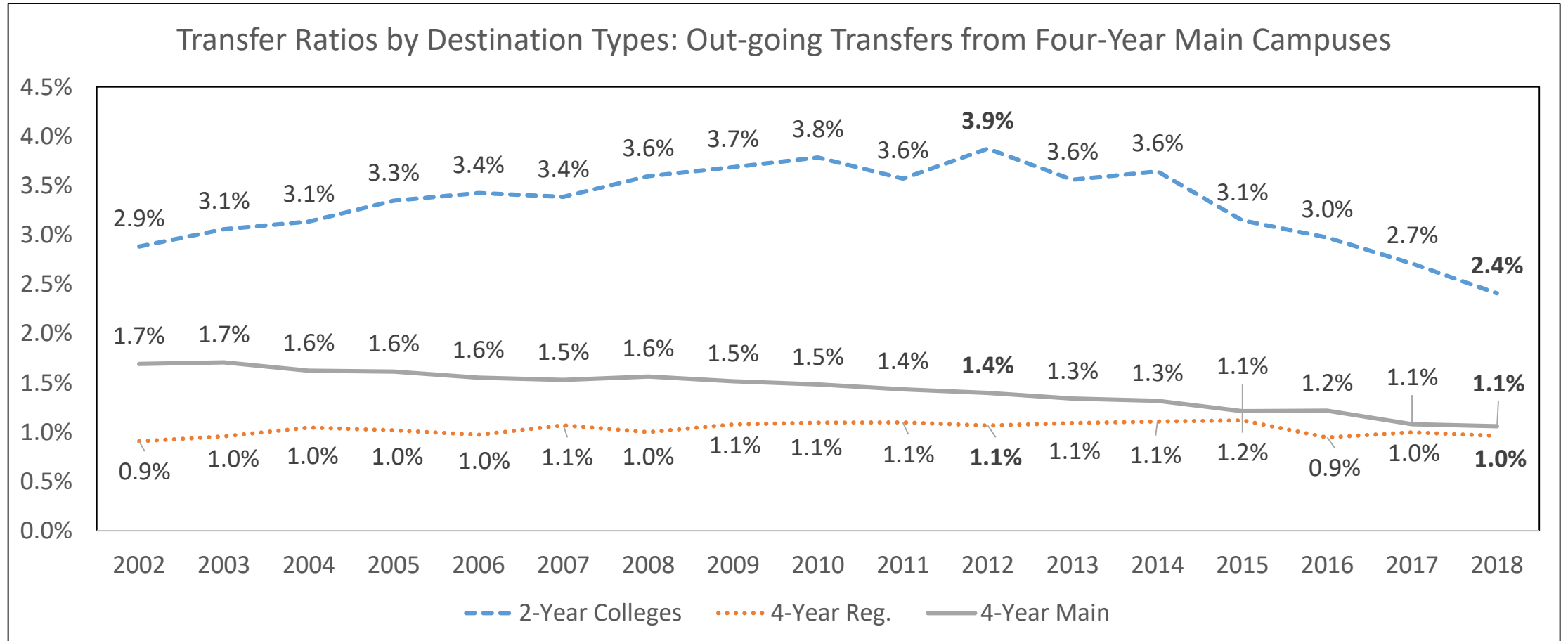
Enrollment numbers in four-year main campuses, however, declined very little between 2010-11 & 2016-17



So did the out-going transfer ratio decline between 2011-12 and 2017-18?
Yes. The ratio declined from 6.3% to 4.4% – by 1.9 percentage points

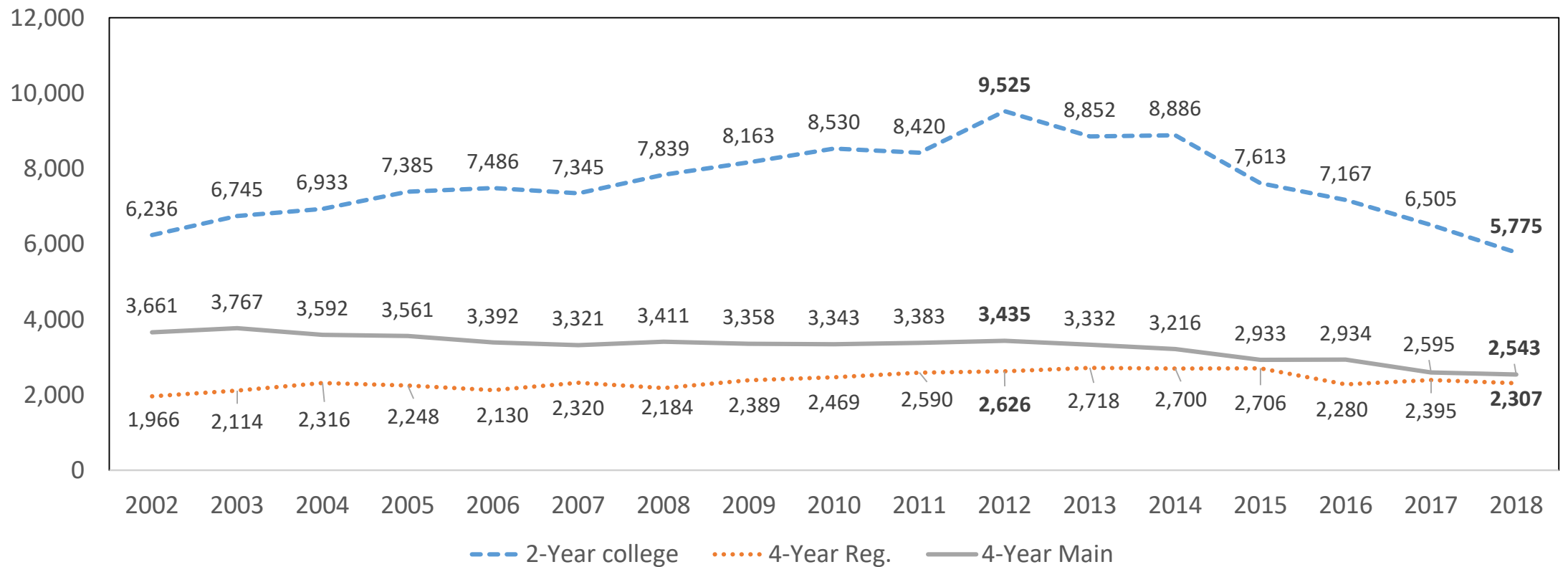


Did transfer ratios decline in the same manner for all destination types?
No. The ratio declined mostly for destination two-year institutions.



Out-going transfer numbers also show the same feature:
 Transfers to two-year institutions declined the most – by 3,750

Out-going Transfers from Four-Year Main Campuses: By Destination Types

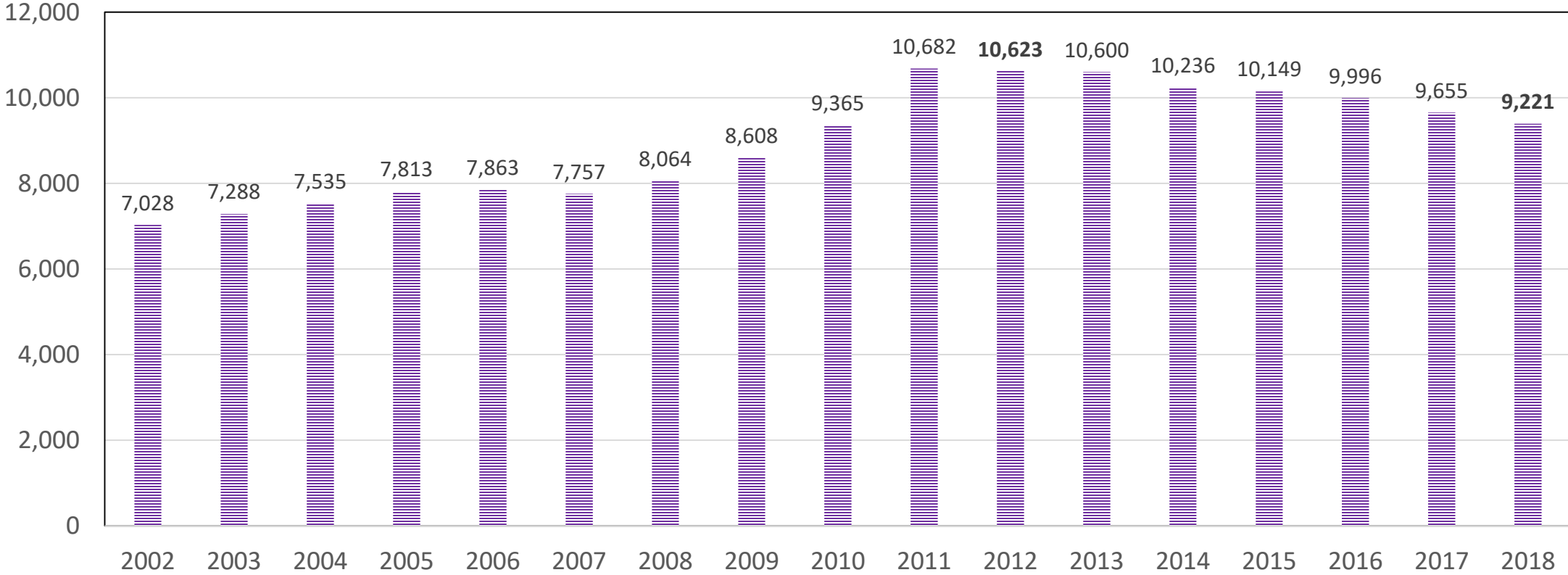


Decomposition of numbers and ratios: Four-year university regional campuses

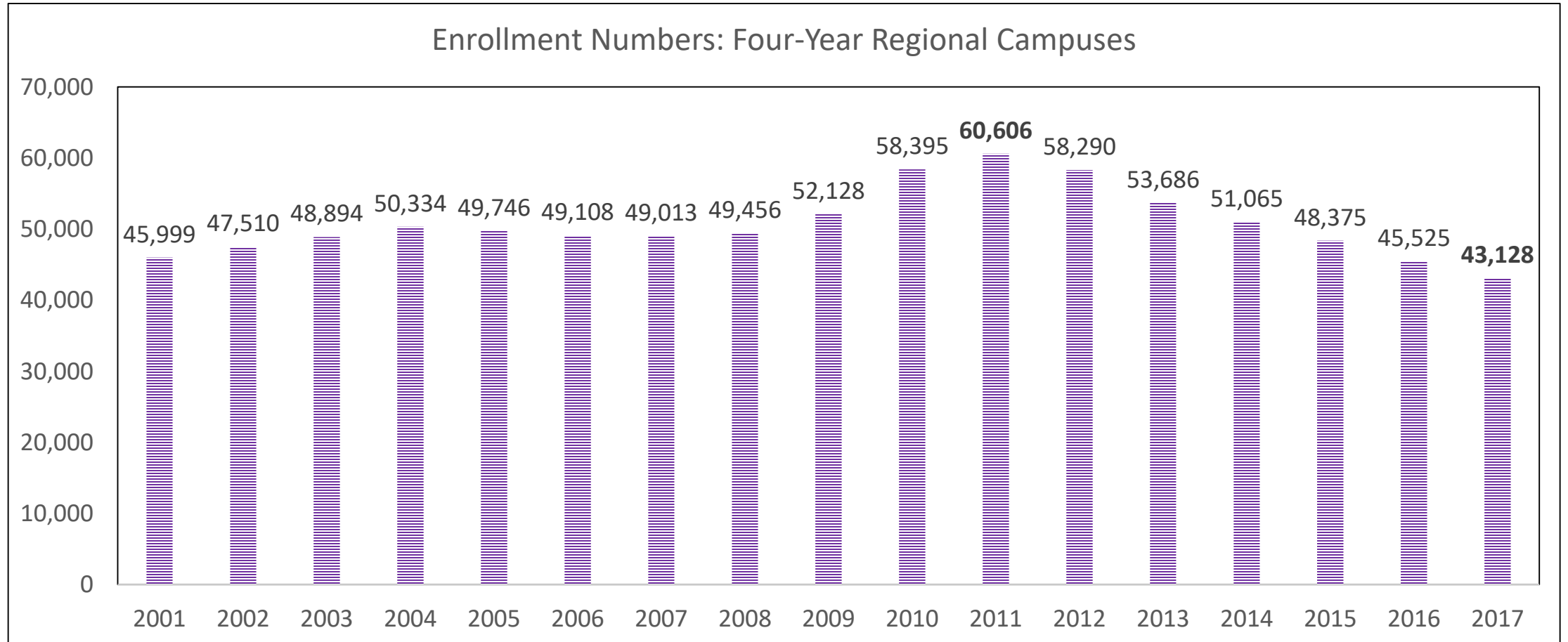
- Out-going transfer numbers.
- Enrollments.
- Transfer ratios.
- Out-going transfer numbers by destination type.
- Transfer ratios by destination type.

Out-going transfer numbers: From four-year regional campuses Between 2011-12 & 2017-18, numbers declined by 1,227

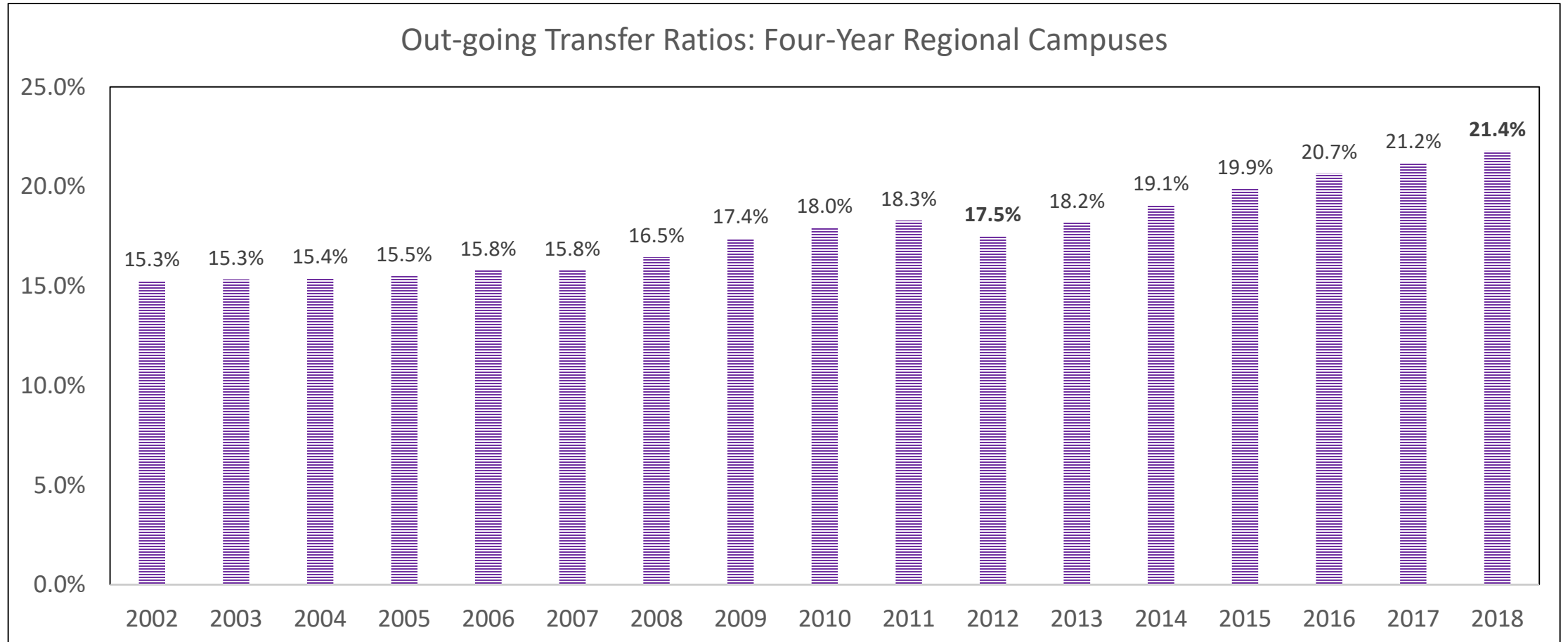
Out-going Transfer Numbers: From Four-Year Regional Campuses



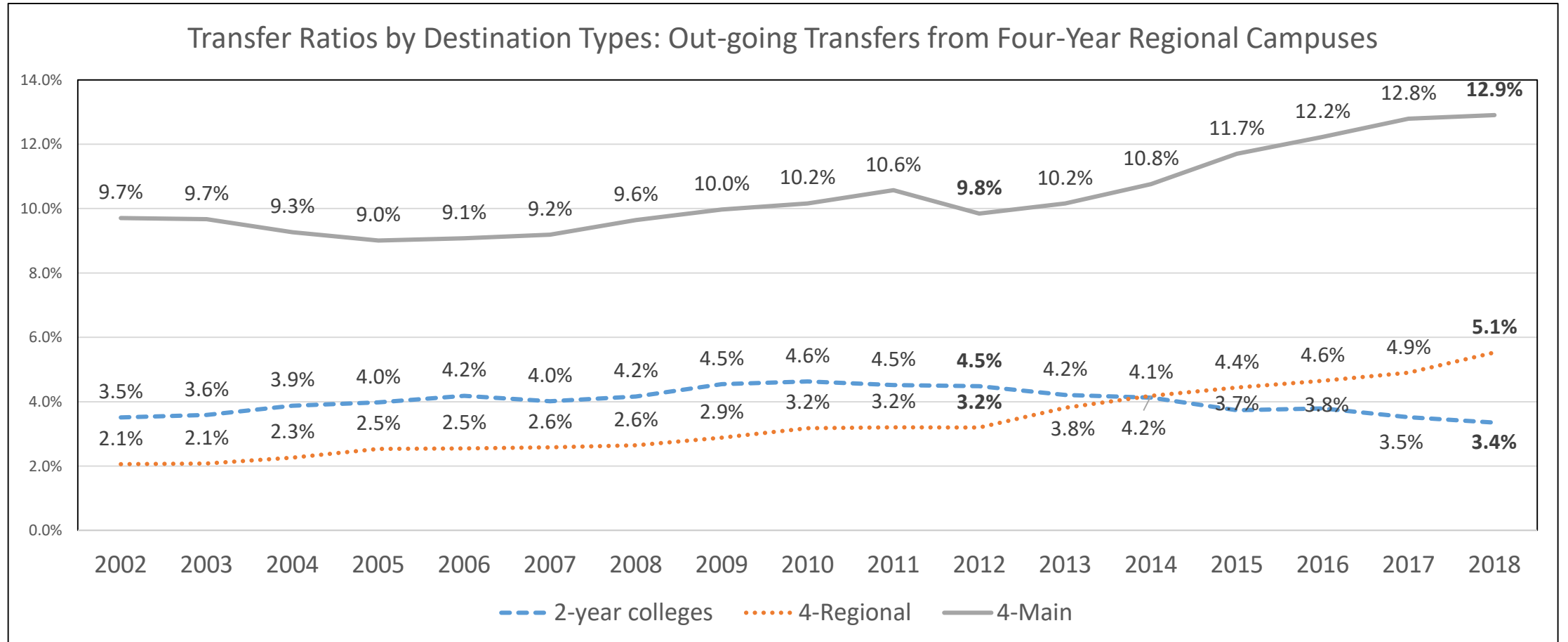
Enrollment numbers in four-year regional campuses declined substantially between 2010-11 & 2016-17 – by 17,478



What happened to out-going transfer ratios between 2011-12 and 2017-18?
The ratio increased by 3.9 percentage points— from 17.5% to 21.4%

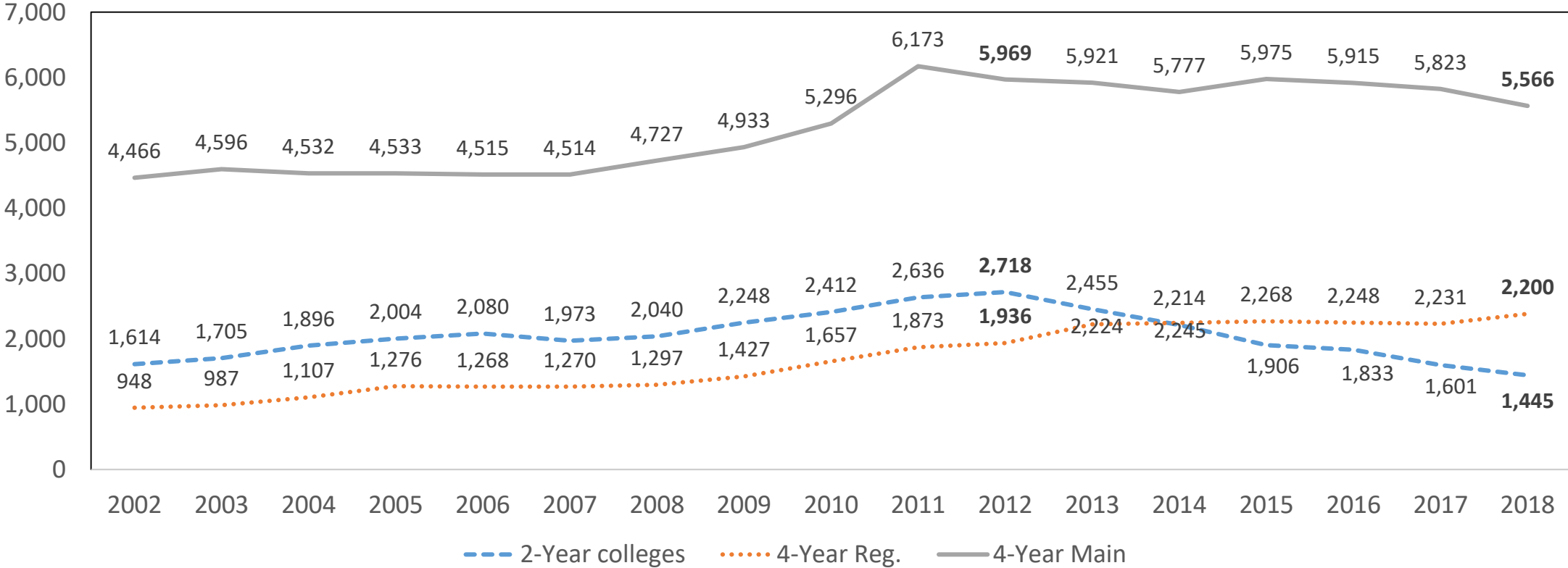


Where was the big gain in out-going transfer ratios for regional campuses?
 Out-going transfer ratios to four-year main campuses – by 3.1 percentage points



Numbers show small declines in out-going transfers to four-year main campuses (driven by falling enrollments)

Out-going Transfers from Four-Year Regional Campuses: By Destination Types

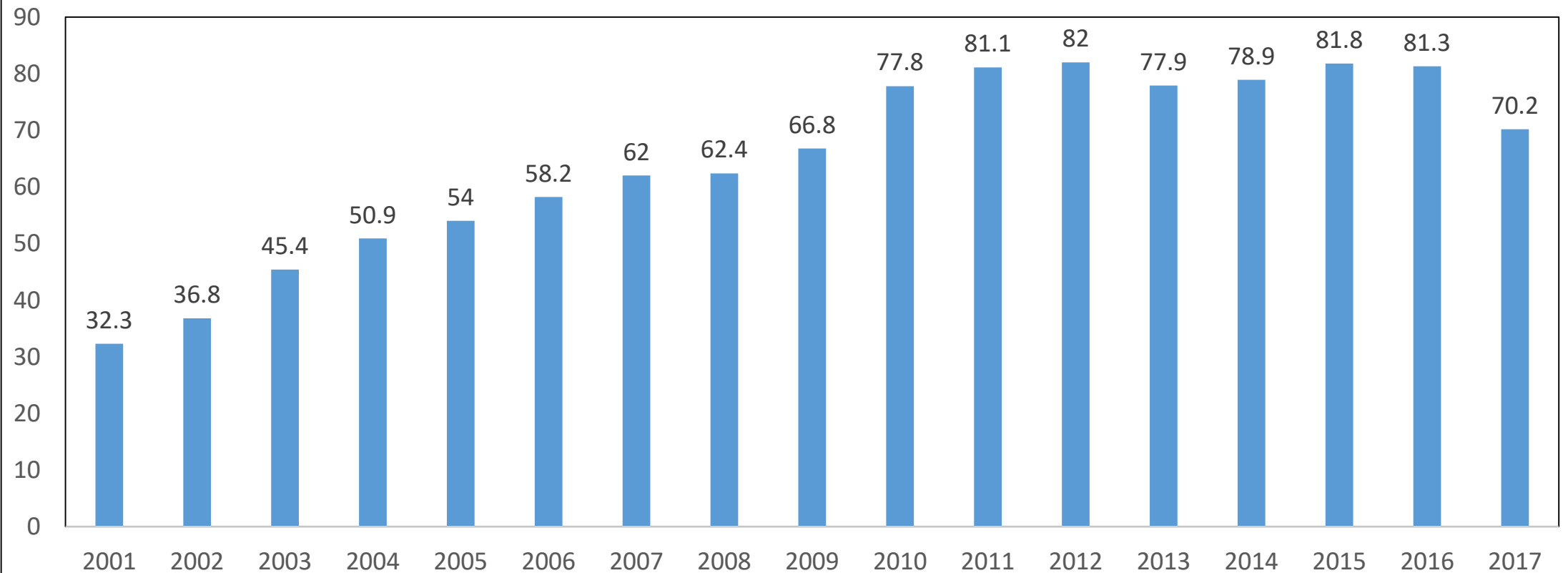


Consequences of declining transfers: Smaller transfer-facilitated savings

- The ability to transfer credits from lower-cost to higher-cost institutions help students save considerable amounts.
- Our calculations show that between 2000-01 and 2010-11, annual aggregate transfer-facilitated savings increased from \$32.3 million to \$81.0 million.
- Although transfer numbers started declining in the subsequent years, estimated annual savings amounts still remained close to \$80.0 million.
- However, in 2016-17, annual savings declined to \$70.0 million.

Transfer-facilitated savings amounts: 2000-01 to 2016-17

Annual Aggregate Tuition-Savings from Transfers: In Millions of Dollars (2009-10 Prices)



Declining transfers, unchanging tuition, and rising consumer price index

- Savings values depend on the following:
 - The number of hours transferred from low-cost institution to high-cost institutions (example: from two-year to four-year).
 - The difference in per credit tuition cost between the high-cost and the low-cost institutions (example: between four-year & two-year).
 - The consumer price index used to convert the nominal value to constant 2009-10 prices.
- The number of transferred hours declined following extremely large drops in two-year college enrollment.
- Pairwise differences in tuition cost remained almost identical between 2015-16 and 2016-17, reflecting Ohio's policy to keep college affordable.
- The consumer price index increased from 2015-16 to 2016-17.

What did we learn?

- Transfer numbers declined mostly for enrollment declines.
- Between 2010-11 and 2016-17, combined enrollment at two-year institutions and four-year regional campuses declined by 113,471 (94.9% of the overall decline of 119,543 during the period).
- However, transfer-to-enrollment ratios for two-year institutions remained constant over the period, and actually increased for four-year regional campuses.
- The above implies that declining enrollments at two-year institutions and four-year regional campuses alone drove their declining transfer numbers.
- For four-year main campuses, transfer numbers declined because of enrollment declines and transfer-ratio declines. However, it is important to note that outgoing transfer ratios declined for four-year main campuses mostly because fewer students transferred to two-year institutions.