



# Trends in the Participation of International Student-Athletes in NCAA Divisions I and II

December 2022



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# Methodology

- ▶ Percentages are based on first-year student-athletes (nontransfers) at Division I or II schools. Similar data are not available for Division III.
- ▶ Student-athletes with a non-U.S. home address were categorized as international.
- ▶ Student-athletes from the 50 U.S. states and U.S. territories (Guam, Puerto Rico, etc.) were considered domestic.
- ▶ Data include all first-year student-athletes who were in a 2021 Division I Academic Progress Rate cohort or in the 2021 Division II Academic Performance Census. This may exclude some Division I walk-ons and others who do not meet academic tracking inclusion criteria in Divisions I or II.



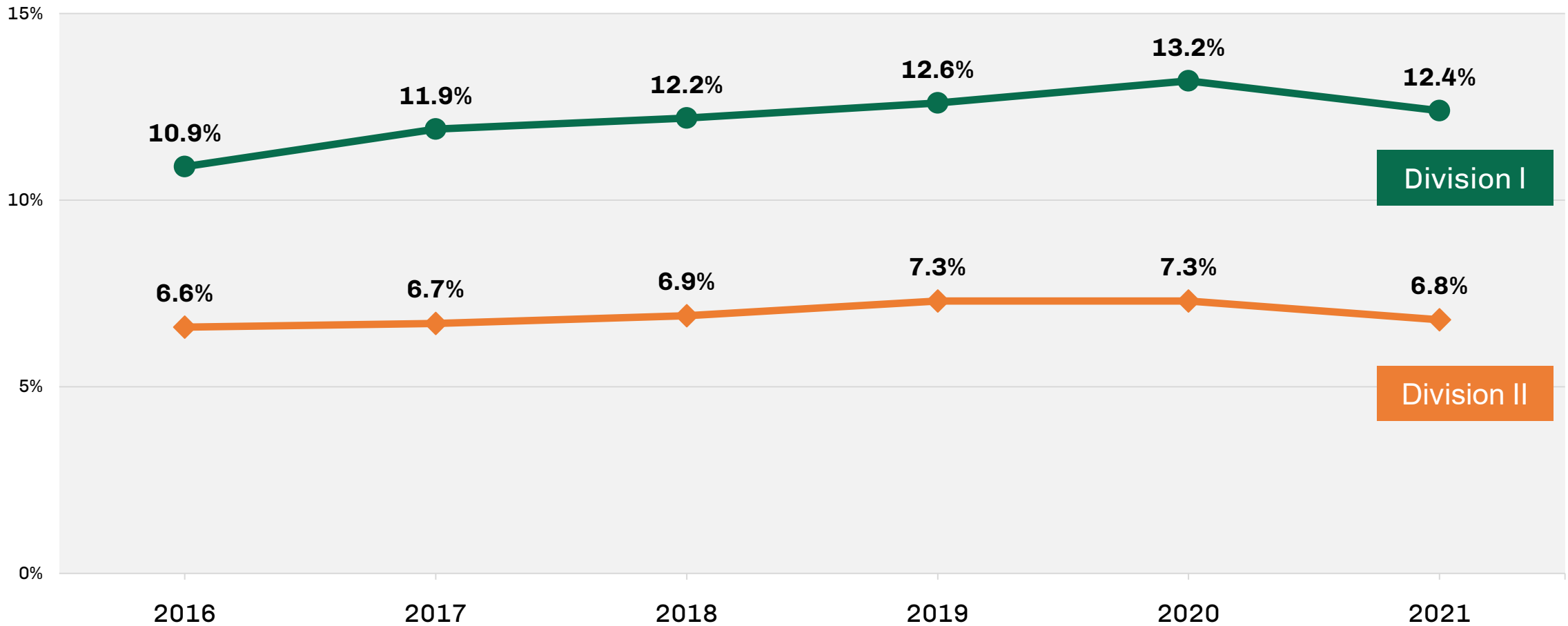
## Points of Consideration

- ▶ The 2020-21 academic year included two significant impacts from COVID-19 on college sports:
  - ▶ The NCAA granted all student-athletes an extra year of eligibility due to the pandemic.
  - ▶ Safety protocols and travels restrictions impacted international student enrollments.
- ▶ Data from the Institute of International Education (IIE) indicate that the number of enrolled international students in the U.S. during 2020-21 dropped to its lowest levels since 2011-12.
- ▶ IIE reported a 15% decrease\* in total enrolled international students from 2019-20 to 2020-21 within U.S. schools.

\*Total value includes international graduate students.



# Overall Trends in International Student-Athlete Participation in Divisions I and II



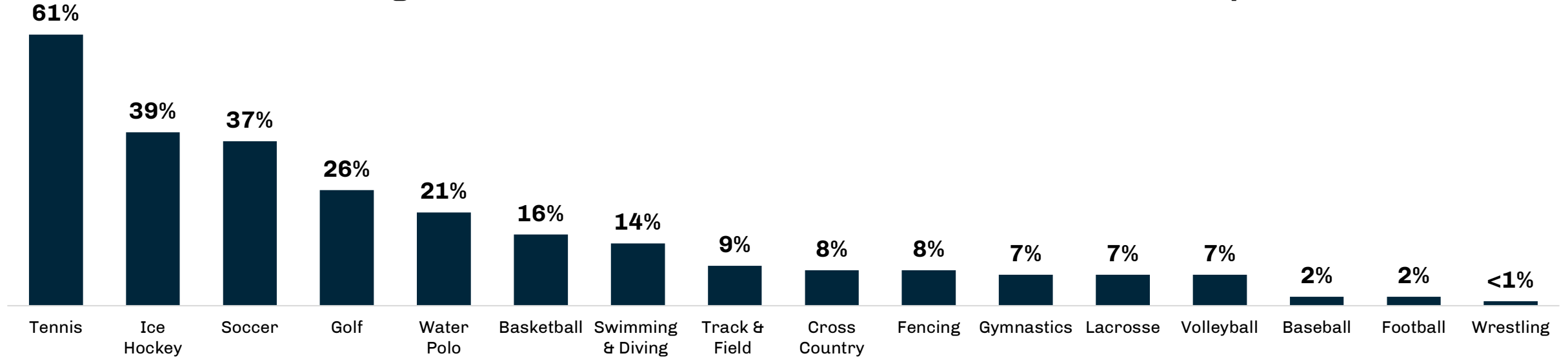
**Total Numbers**

	2016	2020	2021
DI	2,889	3,639	3,311
DII	1,800	2,145	1,439

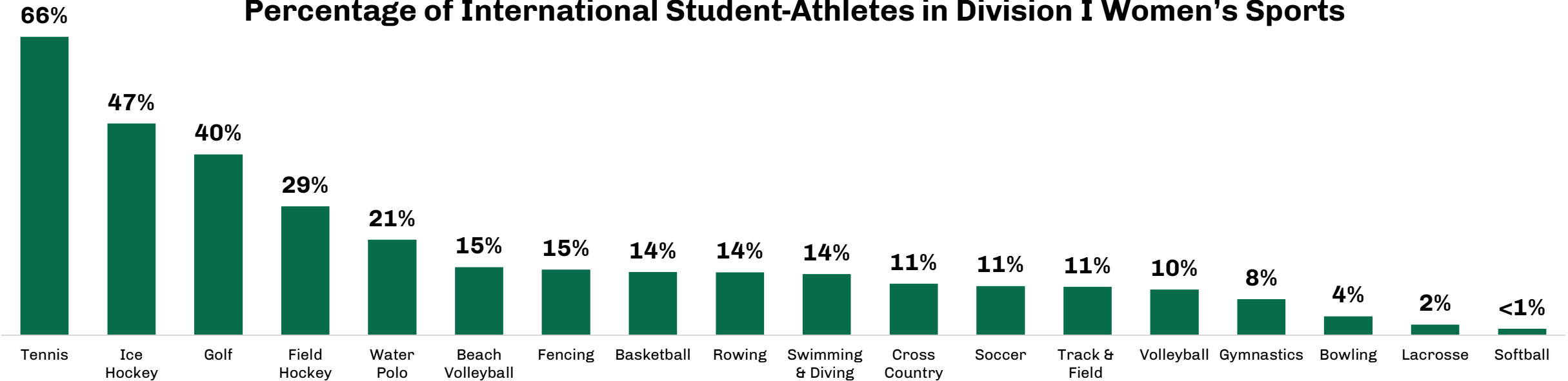
Note: Data shown are for first-year student-athletes.

# Division I

## Percentage of International Student-Athletes in Division I Men's Sports

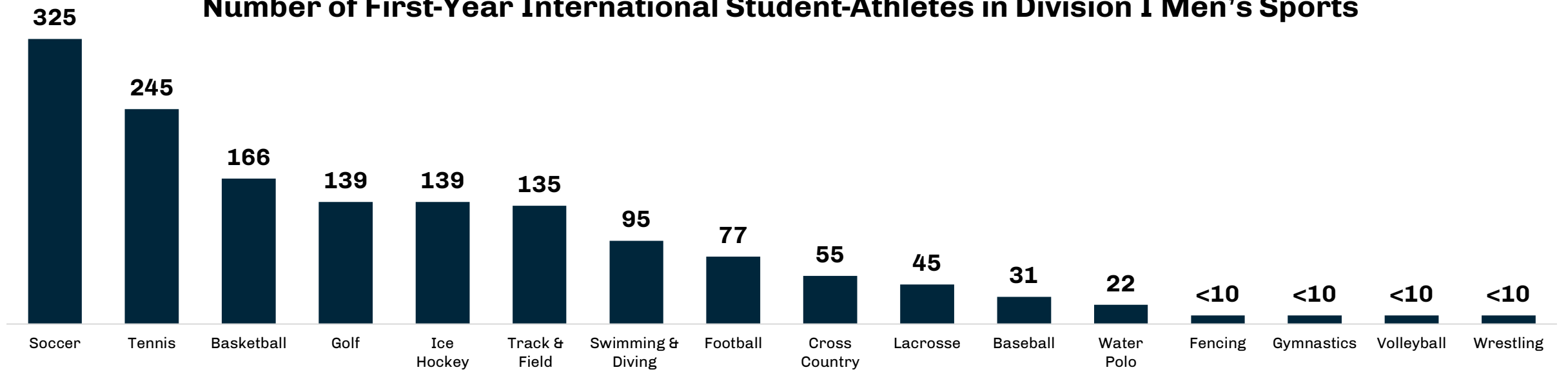


## Percentage of International Student-Athletes in Division I Women's Sports

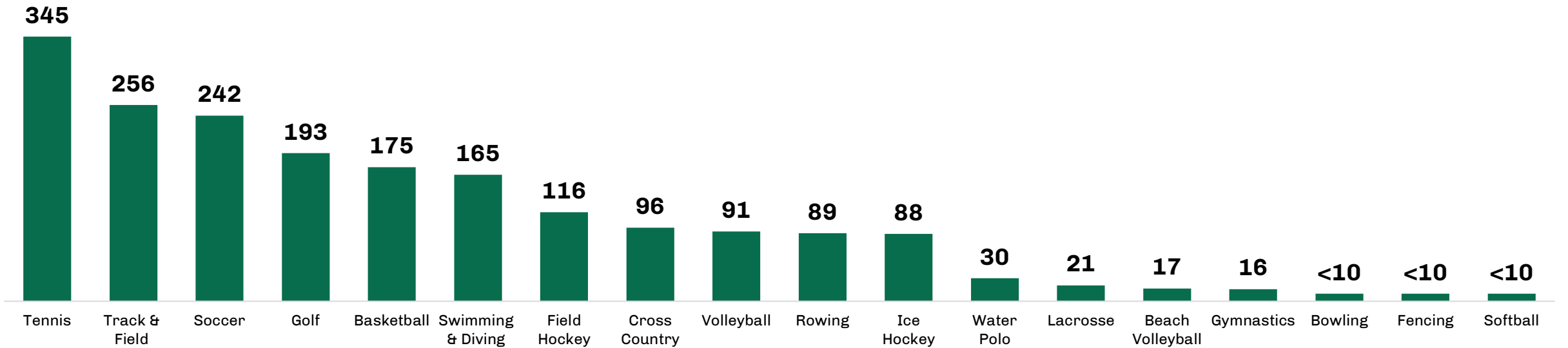


Note: Sports with more than 200 Division I student-athletes. Data shown are for first-year student-athletes (2021).

## Number of First-Year International Student-Athletes in Division I Men's Sports



## Number of First-Year International Student-Athletes in Division I Women's Sports



Note: Sports with more than 200 Division I student-athletes. Data shown are for first-year student-athletes (2021).

## Top 10 Home Countries by Percentage of First-Year Division I International Student-Athletes

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
CANADA	23.8%	23.1%	22.2%	21.6%	21.5%	21.0%
UNITED KINGDOM	8.2%	6.8%	8.4%	7.8%	8.3%	7.5%
SPAIN	4.5%	4.1%	4.8%	4.9%	5.1%	5.7%
GERMANY	5.3%	6.2%	6.0%	5.4%	6.4%	5.6%
AUSTRALIA	5.2%	5.3%	5.0%	5.6%	4.9%	5.0%
SWEDEN	3.8%	3.7%	3.2%	3.7%	4.0%	3.9%
NETHERLANDS	2.0%	2.1%	2.3%	2.4%	2.6%	3.0%
FRANCE	2.1%	2.3%	2.2%	1.9%	2.6%	2.7%
NORWAY	1.6%	1.8%	1.7%	2.1%	2.0%	2.1%
ITALY	1.4%	2.1%	2.2%	1.5%	1.9%	2.0%

Note: Nations sorted by the highest percentage of first-year international student-athletes in 2021. In 2016, international first-year student-athletes came from 120 nations and independent territories; in 2021, this number remained 120. Two countries in the 2016 top 10 did not make the 2021 list: New Zealand (2.6% in 2016, 1.9% in 2021) and Mexico (1.9% in 2016, 1.6% in 2021).



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## Top 10 Home Countries by Number of First-Year Division I International Student-Athletes

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
CANADA	689	731	738	746	784	696
UNITED KINGDOM	237	214	281	271	302	247
SPAIN	131	131	161	169	184	188
GERMANY	154	195	201	185	232	184
AUSTRALIA	149	168	167	193	180	166
SWEDEN	109	118	108	129	147	128
NETHERLANDS	57	65	77	82	94	99
FRANCE	60	74	72	67	96	91
NORWAY	47	58	57	74	71	71
ITALY	41	66	72	53	69	65

Note: Nations sorted by the highest number of first-year international student-athletes in 2021. In 2016, international first-year student-athletes came from 120 nations and independent territories; in 2021, this number remained 120. Two countries in the 2016 top 10 did not make the 2021 list: New Zealand (74 in 2016, 62 in 2021) and Mexico (55 in 2016, 54 in 2021).



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# Top Three Home Countries Among First-Year International Student-Athletes in Division I

Division I Men's Sports							
Soccer	N	Tennis	N	Basketball	N	Ice Hockey	N
UNITED KINGDOM	44	SPAIN	31	CANADA	34	CANADA	107
CANADA	40	UNITED KINGDOM	18	AUSTRALIA	19	SWEDEN	10
GERMANY	31	GERMANY	17	FRANCE, LITHUANIA	7	FINLAND	7

Division I Women's Sports							
Tennis	N	Track & Field	N	Soccer	N	Golf	N
SPAIN	33	CANADA	38	CANADA	64	CANADA, SPAIN	16
CANADA, GERMANY	23	JAMAICA	27	UNITED KINGDOM	29	THAILAND	13
UNITED KINGDOM	22	UNITED KINGDOM	25	GERMANY	26	GERMANY, UNITED KINGDOM	11

Note: Sports included are the four sports with the highest number of first-year international student-athlete participants. The top three home countries for first-year international student-athletes in the 2021 Academic Progress Rate cohort are listed.



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# Percentage Change in the Number of International Student-Athletes in Division I From 2016 to 2021

Division I Men's Sports			
	2016	2021	% change
FOOTBALL	42	77	83%
SWIMMING & DIVING	67	95	42%
SOCCER	269	325	21%
ICE HOCKEY	117	139	19%
BASKETBALL	147	166	13%
LACROSSE	42	45	7%
BASEBALL	29	31	7%
GOLF	138	139	1%
TRACK & FIELD	147	135	-8%
TENNIS	281	245	-13%
CROSS COUNTRY	67	55	-18%

Division I Women's Sports			
	2016	2021	% change
WATER POLO	23	30	30%
SWIMMING & DIVING	129	165	28%
FIELD HOCKEY	95	116	22%
SOCCER	199	242	22%
TRACK & FIELD	209	256	22%
ICE HOCKEY	74	88	19%
GOLF	165	193	17%
BASKETBALL	151	175	16%
TENNIS	310	345	11%
CROSS COUNTRY	88	96	9%
VOLLEYBALL	88	91	3%
ROWING	87	89	2%

Note: Sports with more than 30 first-year international Division I student-athletes in 2021. Data shown are for first-year student-athletes.



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# Percentage Change in the Number of International Student-Athletes in Division I from 2020 to 2021

Division I Men's Sports			
	2020	2021	% change
LACROSSE	32	45	41%
ICE HOCKEY	144	139	-3%
SOCCER	341	325	-5%
SWIMMING & DIVING	103	95	-8%
GOLF	152	139	-9%
FOOTBALL	88	77	-13%
BASKETBALL	200	166	-17%
TENNIS	302	245	-19%
BASEBALL	39	31	-21%
CROSS COUNTRY	79	55	-30%
TRACK & FIELD	198	135	-32%

Division I Women's Sports			
	2020	2021	% change
BASKETBALL	173	175	1%
FIELD HOCKEY	115	116	1%
GOLF	191	193	1%
ICE HOCKEY	88	88	0%
TENNIS	347	345	-1%
SWIMMING & DIVING	169	165	-2%
VOLLEYBALL	95	91	-4%
TRACK & FIELD	269	256	-5%
CROSS COUNTRY	112	96	-14%
SOCCER	289	242	-16%
WATER POLO	37	30	-19%
ROWING	111	89	-20%

Note: Sports with more than 30 first-year international Division I student-athletes in 2021. Data shown are for first-year student-athletes.



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# Change in the Percentage of International Student-Athletes in Division I from 2016 to 2021

<b>Division I Men's Sports</b>			
	<b>2016</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>% point diff.</b>
SOCCER	29%	37%	8%
ICE HOCKEY	34%	39%	5%
GOLF	22%	26%	4%
SWIMMING & DIVING	10%	14%	4%
WATER POLO	17%	21%	4%
TENNIS	58%	61%	3%
BASKETBALL	14%	16%	2%
GYMNASTICS	5%	7%	2%
FOOTBALL	1%	2%	1%
WRESTLING	0%	1%	1%
BASEBALL	2%	2%	0%
LACROSSE	9%	9%	0%
TRACK & FIELD	7%	7%	0%
VOLLEYBALL	7%	7%	0%
CROSS COUNTRY	10%	8%	-2%
FENCING	11%	8%	-3%

<b>Division I Women's Sports</b>			
	<b>2016</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>% point diff.</b>
TENNIS	56%	66%	10%
GOLF	33%	40%	7%
FIELD HOCKEY	25%	29%	4%
GYMNASTICS	4%	8%	4%
ICE HOCKEY	43%	47%	4%
SWIMMING & DIVING	11%	14%	3%
CROSS COUNTRY	9%	11%	2%
SOCCER	9%	11%	2%
TRACK & FIELD	9%	11%	2%
BASKETBALL	13%	14%	1%
FENCING	14%	15%	1%
VOLLEYBALL	9%	10%	1%
WATER POLO	20%	21%	1%
LACROSSE	2%	2%	0%
ROWING	14%	14%	0%
SOFTBALL	1%	0%	-1%
BOWLING	8%	4%	-4%

Note: Graphic is limited to those sports with more than 200 Division I student-athletes. Data shown are for first-year student-athletes. Figures rounded to the nearest whole number.

# Change in the Percentage of International Student-Athletes in Division I from 2020 to 2021

<b>Division I Men's Sports</b>			
	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>% point diff.</b>
WATER POLO	18%	21%	3%
LACROSSE	5%	7%	2%
GOLF	25%	26%	1%
WRESTLING	0%	1%	1%
BASEBALL	2%	2%	0%
FOOTBALL	2%	2%	0%
ICE HOCKEY	39%	39%	0%
SOCCER	38%	37%	-1%
SWIMMING & DIVING	15%	14%	-1%
BASKETBALL	18%	16%	-2%
CROSS COUNTRY	10%	8%	-2%
GYMNASTICS	9%	7%	-2%
TENNIS	64%	61%	-3%
TRACK & FIELD	12%	9%	-3%
VOLLEYBALL	13%	7%	-6%
FENCING	21%	8%	-13%

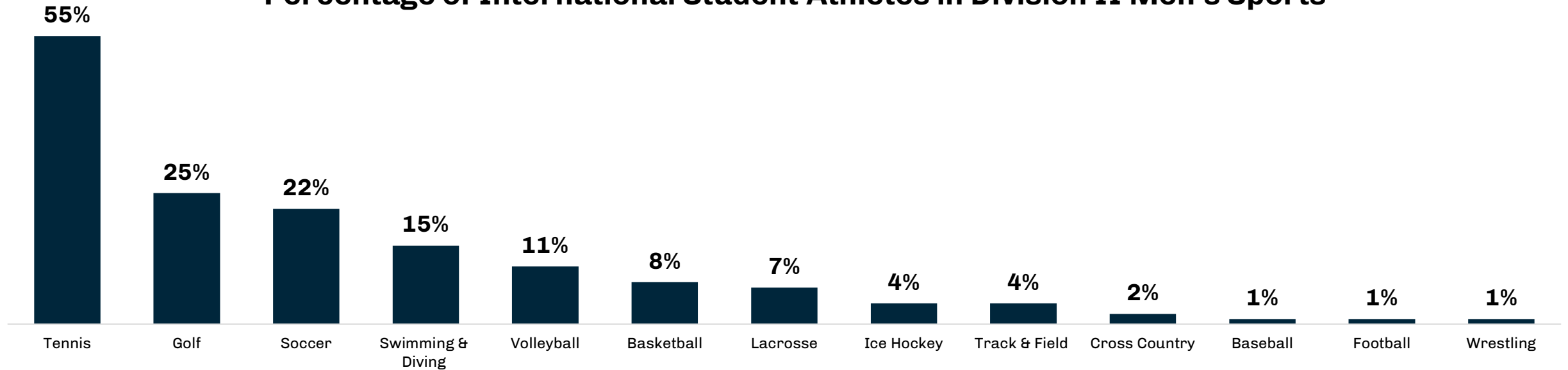
<b>Division I Women's Sports</b>			
	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>% point diff.</b>
TENNIS	60%	66%	6%
GOLF	36%	40%	4%
ICE HOCKEY	44%	47%	3%
FIELD HOCKEY	27%	29%	2%
GYMNASTICS	7%	8%	1%
VOLLEYBALL	9%	10%	1%
CROSS COUNTRY	11%	11%	0%
SWIMMING & DIVING	14%	14%	0%
TRACK & FIELD	11%	11%	0%
BASKETBALL	15%	14%	-1%
LACROSSE	3%	2%	-1%
SOCCER	12%	11%	-1%
SOFTBALL	1%	0%	-1%
FENCING	18%	15%	-3%
ROWING	17%	14%	-3%
WATER POLO	24%	21%	-3%
BOWLING	9%	4%	-5%

Note: Graphic is limited to those sports with more than 200 Division I student-athletes. Data shown are for first-year student-athletes. Figures rounded to the nearest whole number.

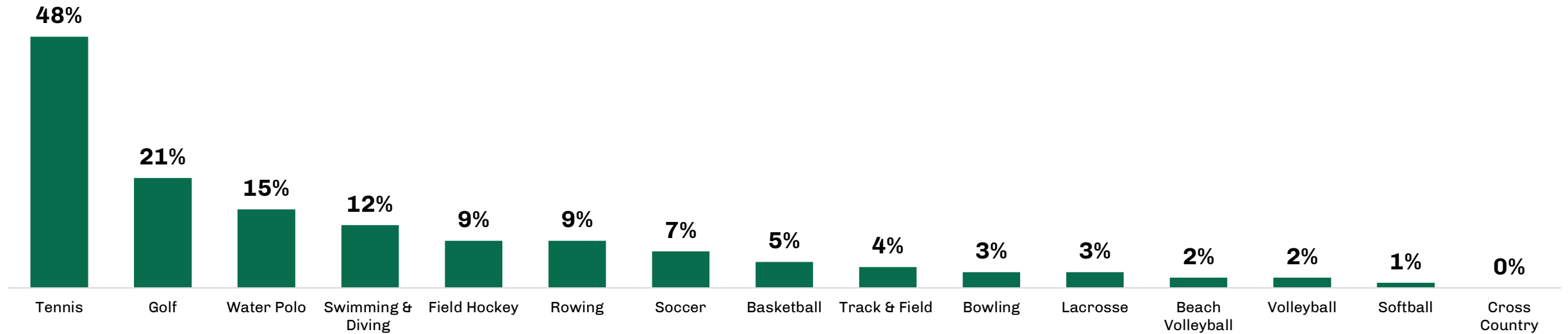


# Division II

## Percentage of International Student-Athletes in Division II Men's Sports

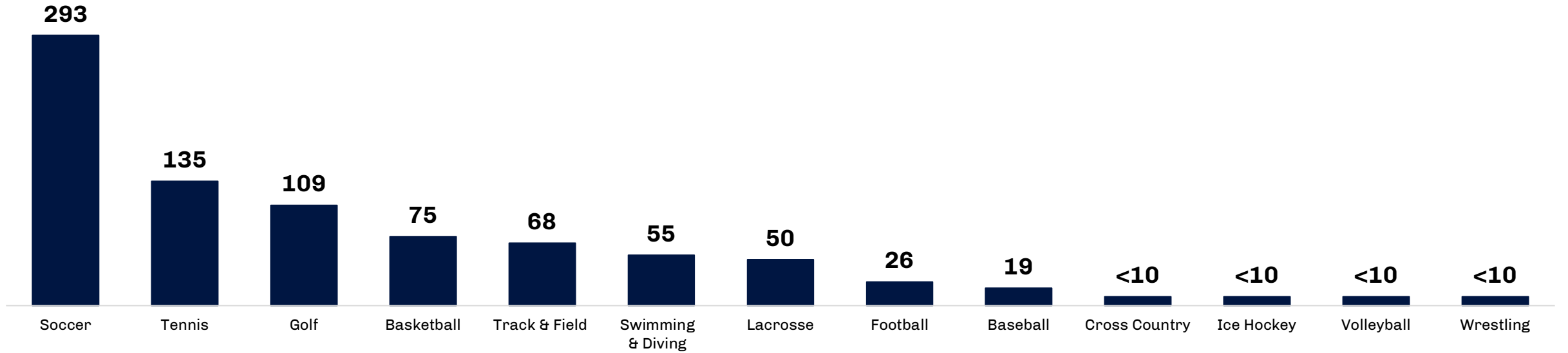


## Percentage of International Student-Athletes in Division II Women's Sports

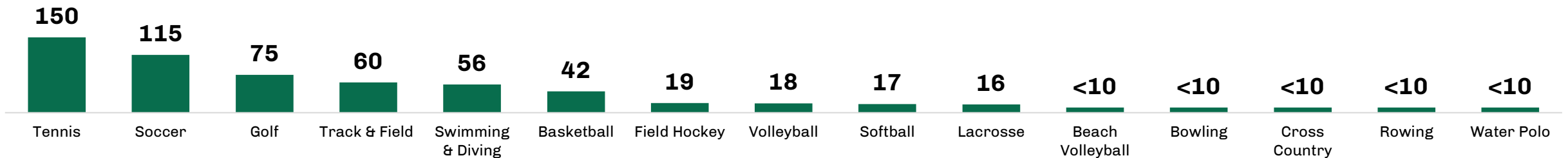


Note: Sports with more than 200 Division II student-athletes. Data shown are for first-year student-athletes (2021).

## Number of First-Year International Student-Athletes in Division II Men's Sports



## Number of First-Year International Student-Athletes in Division II Women's Sports



Note: Sports with more than 200 Division II student-athletes. Data shown are for first-year student-athletes (2021).

## Top 10 Home Countries by Percentage of First-Year Division II International Student-Athletes

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
CANADA	19.8%	17.8%	16.1%	14.4%	15.1%	16.3%
UNITED KINGDOM	11.8%	10.6%	9.4%	9.8%	8.8%	11.4%
GERMANY	6.9%	8.2%	7.3%	8.7%	8.2%	9.0%
SWEDEN	5.3%	4.6%	5.0%	4.2%	4.8%	6.8%
SPAIN	6.0%	6.2%	6.3%	6.0%	7.8%	6.0%
AUSTRALIA	3.7%	3.2%	4.0%	3.5%	4.7%	3.9%
SOUTH AFRICA	0.8%	0.7%	1.6%	1.6%	1.7%	2.6%
BRAZIL	5.3%	4.7%	4.4%	3.8%	3.0%	2.5%
FRANCE	2.1%	2.1%	2.3%	2.5%	2.5%	2.4%
MEXICO	2.1%	2.4%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	2.2%

Note: Nations sorted by the highest percentage of first-year international student-athletes in 2021. In 2016, international first-year student-athletes came from 112 nations and independent territories; in 2021, this number dropped to 106. Two countries in the 2016 top 10 did not make the 2021 list: Colombia (1.6% in 2016, 1.0% in 2021) and Norway (1.6% in 2016, 1.9% in 2021).



## Top 10 Home Countries by Number of First-Year Division II International Student-Athletes

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
CANADA	357	337	318	314	324	234
UNITED KINGDOM	213	200	187	214	189	164
GERMANY	124	156	145	190	175	129
SWEDEN	96	87	99	91	104	98
SPAIN	108	118	124	132	168	87
AUSTRALIA	67	60	80	76	100	56
SOUTH AFRICA	14	13	31	35	37	38
BRAZIL	95	89	88	84	64	36
FRANCE	38	39	46	54	53	34
MEXICO	38	45	39	43	43	32

Note: Nations sorted by the highest number of first-year international student-athletes in 2021. In 2016, international first-year student-athletes came from 112 nations and independent territories; in 2021, this number dropped to 106. Two countries in the 2016 top 10 did not make the 2021 list: Colombia (28 in 2016, 15 in 2021) and Norway (28 in 2016, 28 in 2021).



# Top Three Home Countries Among First-Year International Student-Athletes in Division II

Division II Men's Sports							
Soccer	N	Tennis	N	Golf	N	Basketball	N
UNITED KINGDOM	60	SPAIN	20	UNITED KINGDOM	21	AUSTRALIA	16
GERMANY	34	GERMANY	14	CANADA	17	CANADA	8
SPAIN	33	BRAZIL	11	SWEDEN	13	GREECE, UNITED KINGDOM	5

Division II Women's Sports							
Tennis	N	Soccer	N	Golf	N	Track & Field	N
GERMANY	20	UNITED KINGDOM	25	SWEDEN, UNITED KINGDOM	12	CANADA	15
UNITED KINGDOM	13	SWEDEN	18	SPAIN	9	GERMANY	10
SPAIN	11	CANADA	15	CANADA, MEXICO	5	KENYA	4

Note: Sports included are the four sports with the highest number of international student-athlete participants. The top three home countries for first-year international student-athletes in the 2021 Academic Performance Census cohort are listed.



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# Percentage Change in the Number of International Student-Athletes in Division II from 2016 to 2021

Division II Men's Sports			
	2016	2021	% change
TRACK & FIELD	71	68	<b>-4%</b>
GOLF	121	109	<b>-10%</b>
LACROSSE	57	50	<b>-12%</b>
BASKETBALL	88	75	<b>-15%</b>
FOOTBALL	33	26	<b>-21%</b>
SWIMMING & DIVING	73	55	<b>-25%</b>
SOCCER	404	293	<b>-27%</b>

Division II Women's Sports			
	2016	2021	% change
BASKETBALL	31	42	<b>35%</b>
GOLF	67	75	<b>12%</b>
TENNIS	158	150	<b>-5%</b>
SOCCER	127	115	<b>-9%</b>
SWIMMING & DIVING	62	56	<b>-10%</b>
TRACK & FIELD	69	60	<b>-13%</b>

Note: Sports with more than 25 first-year international Division II student-athletes in 2021. Data shown are for first-year student-athletes.



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# Percentage Change in the Number of International Student-Athletes in Division II from 2020 to 2021

Division II Men's Sports			
	2020	2021	% change
GOLF	137	109	<b>-20%</b>
SWIMMING & DIVING	70	55	<b>-21%</b>
LACROSSE	71	50	<b>-30%</b>
BASKETBALL	111	75	<b>-32%</b>
FOOTBALL	39	26	<b>-33%</b>
SOCCER	491	293	<b>-40%</b>
TRACK & FIELD	118	68	<b>-42%</b>
TENNIS	258	135	<b>-48%</b>

Division II Women's Sports			
	2020	2021	% change
GOLF	63	75	<b>19%</b>
SWIMMING & DIVING	65	56	<b>-14%</b>
SOCCER	152	115	<b>-24%</b>
BASKETBALL	57	42	<b>-26%</b>
TENNIS	207	150	<b>-28%</b>
TRACK & FIELD	100	60	<b>-40%</b>

Note: Sports with more than 25 first-year international Division II student-athletes in 2021. Data shown are for first-year student-athletes.



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# Change in the Percentage of International Student-Athletes in Division II from 2016 to 2021

Division II Men's Sports			
	2016	2021	% point diff.
GOLF	19%	25%	6%
TENNIS	53%	55%	2%
BASKETBALL	8%	8%	0%
CROSS COUNTRY	2%	2%	0%
FOOTBALL	1%	1%	0%
LACROSSE	7%	7%	0%
TRACK & FIELD	4%	4%	0%
WRESTLING	1%	1%	0%
BASEBALL	2%	1%	-1%
SOCCER	24%	22%	-2%
SWIMMING & DIVING	17%	15%	-2%
VOLLEYBALL	13%	11%	-2%
ICE HOCKEY	7%	4%	-3%

Division II Women's Sports			
	2016	2021	% point diff.
TENNIS	30%	48%	18%
WATER POLO	2%	15%	13%
GOLF	15%	21%	6%
FIELD HOCKEY	5%	9%	4%
ROWING	5%	9%	4%
BASKETBALL	3%	5%	2%
BOWLING	2%	3%	1%
LACROSSE	2%	3%	1%
SOCCER	6%	7%	1%
SWIMMING & DIVING	12%	12%	0%
TRACK & FIELD	4%	4%	0%
VOLLEYBALL	2%	2%	0%
SOFTBALL	2%	1%	-1%
CROSS COUNTRY	2%	0%	-2%

Note: Graphic is limited to sports with more than 200 Division II student-athletes. Data shown are for first-year student-athletes. Figures rounded to the nearest whole number.



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# Change in the Percentage of International Student-Athletes in Division II from 2020 to 2021

Division II Men's Sports			
	2020	2021	% point diff.
GOLF	23%	25%	2%
ICE HOCKEY	2%	4%	2%
VOLLEYBALL	9%	11%	2%
SWIMMING & DIVING	14%	15%	1%
BASEBALL	1%	1%	0%
CROSS COUNTRY	2%	2%	0%
FOOTBALL	1%	1%	0%
LACROSSE	7%	7%	0%
WRESTLING	1%	1%	0%
BASKETBALL	9%	8%	-1%
TRACK & FIELD	5%	4%	-1%
SOCCER	26%	22%	-4%
TENNIS	61%	55%	-6%

Division II Women's Sports			
	2020	2021	% point diff.
WATER POLO	0%	15%	15%
TENNIS	40%	48%	8%
GOLF	14%	21%	7%
BOWLING	0%	3%	3%
ROWING	6%	9%	3%
SWIMMING & DIVING	10%	12%	2%
BASKETBALL	5%	5%	0%
SOCCER	7%	7%	0%
SOFTBALL	1%	1%	0%
TRACK & FIELD	4%	4%	0%
VOLLEYBALL	2%	2%	0%
CROSS COUNTRY	1%	0%	-1%
LACROSSE	4%	3%	-1%
FIELD HOCKEY	11%	9%	-2%

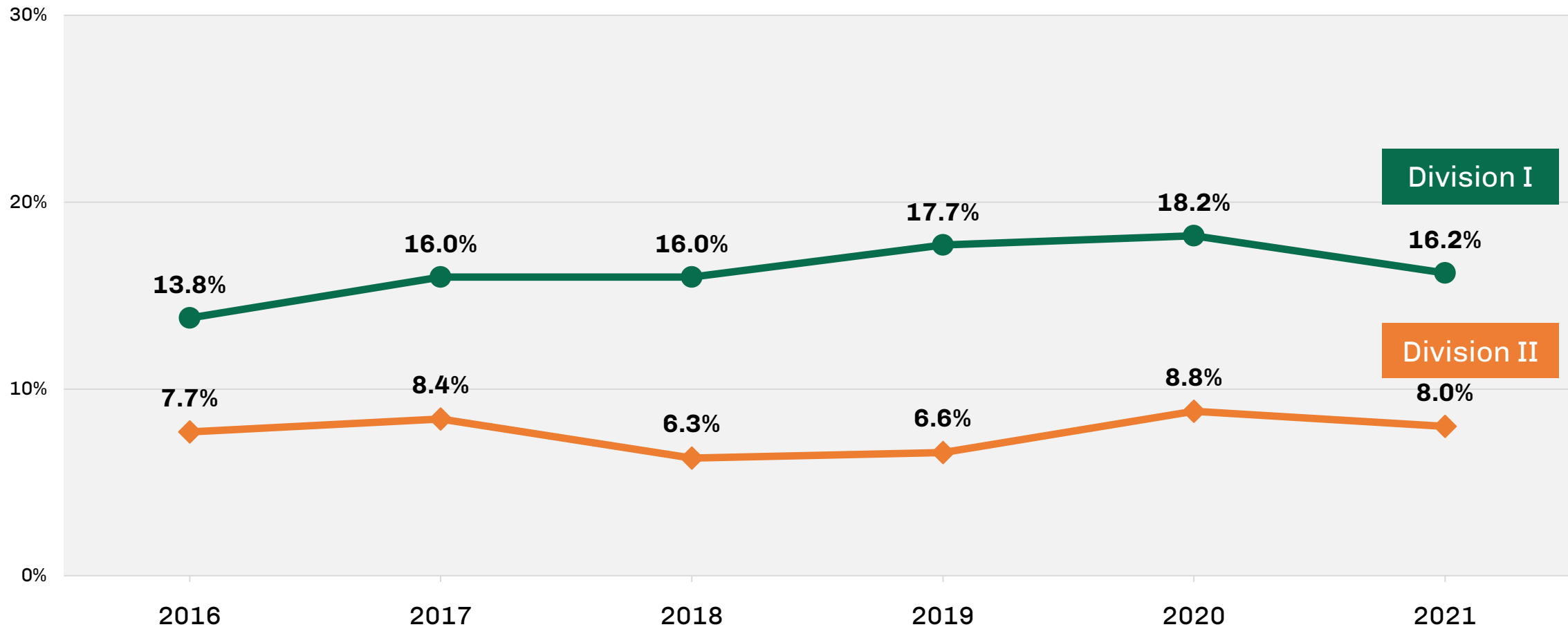
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# Trends by Sport

# Trends in Percentage of International Men's Basketball Student-Athletes



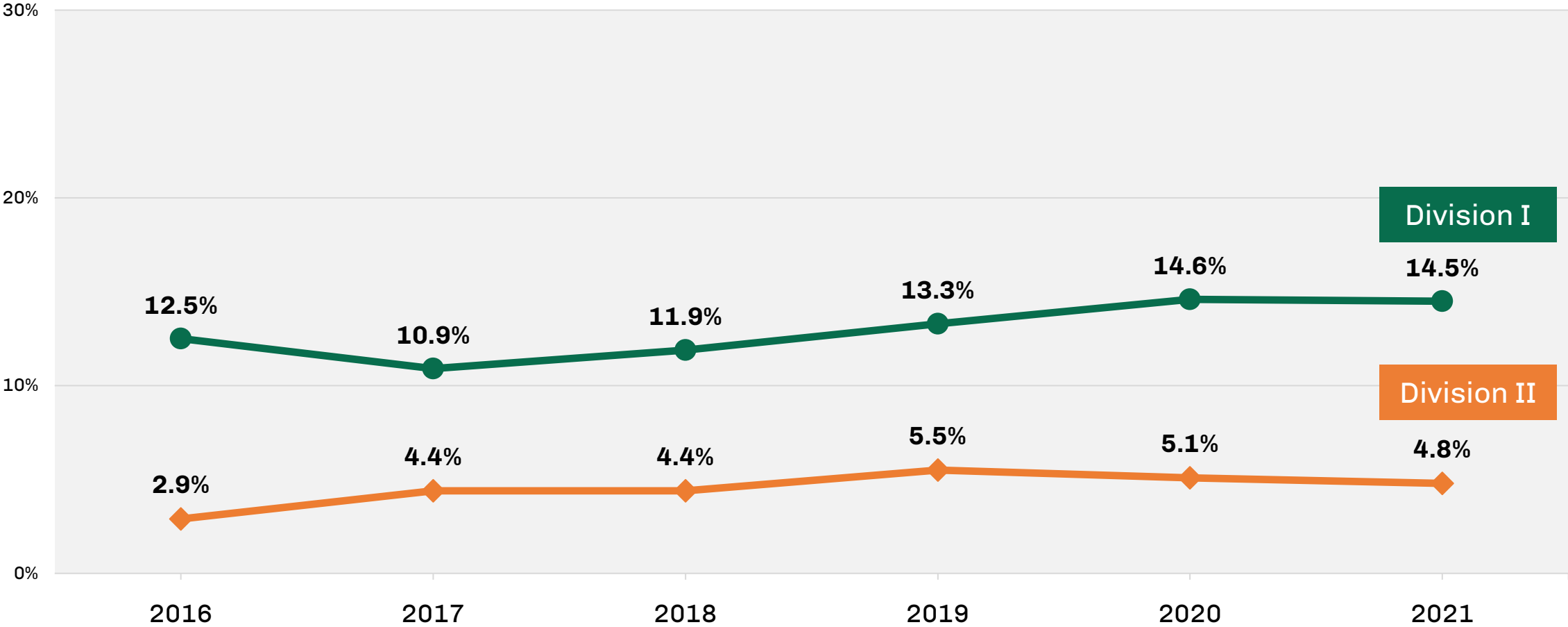
**Total Numbers**

	2016	2021
DI	147	166
DII	88	75

Note: Data shown are for first-year student-athletes.



# Trends in Percentage of International Women's Basketball Student-Athletes

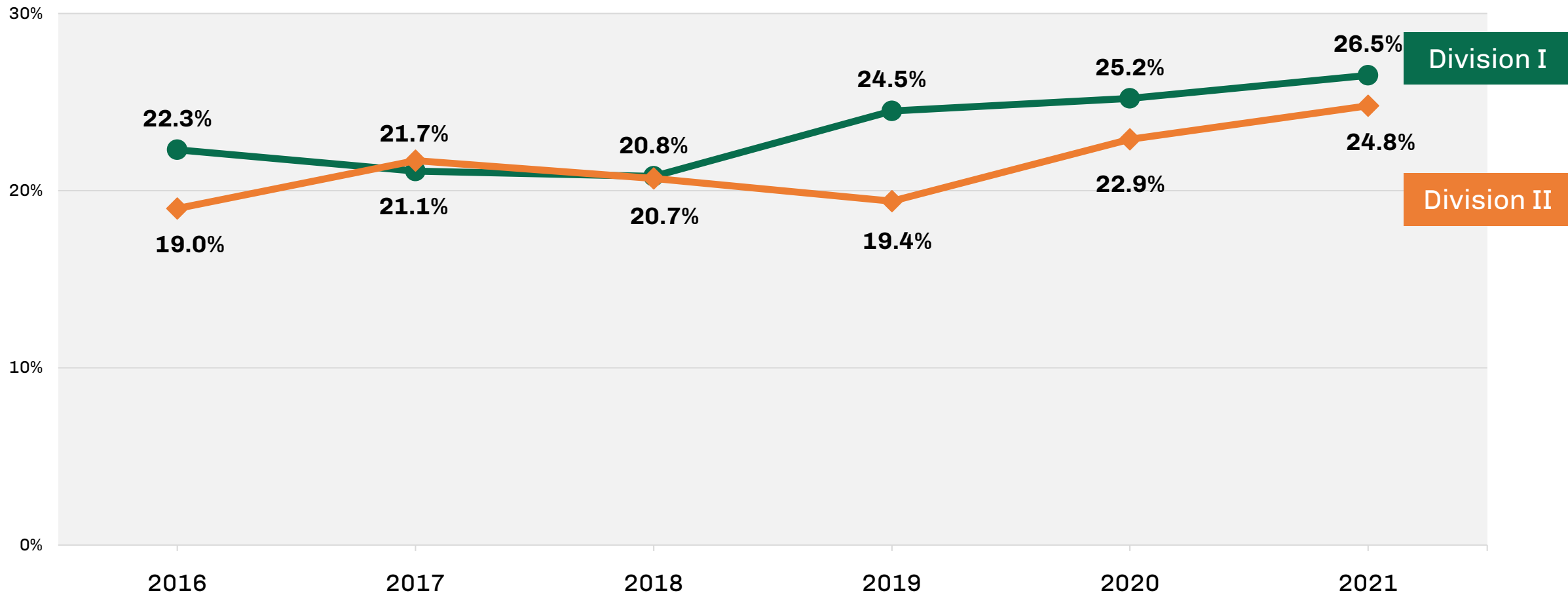


**Total Numbers**

	2016	2021
DI	151	175
DII	31	42

Note: Data shown are for first-year student-athletes.

# Trends in Percentage of International Men's Golf Student-Athletes

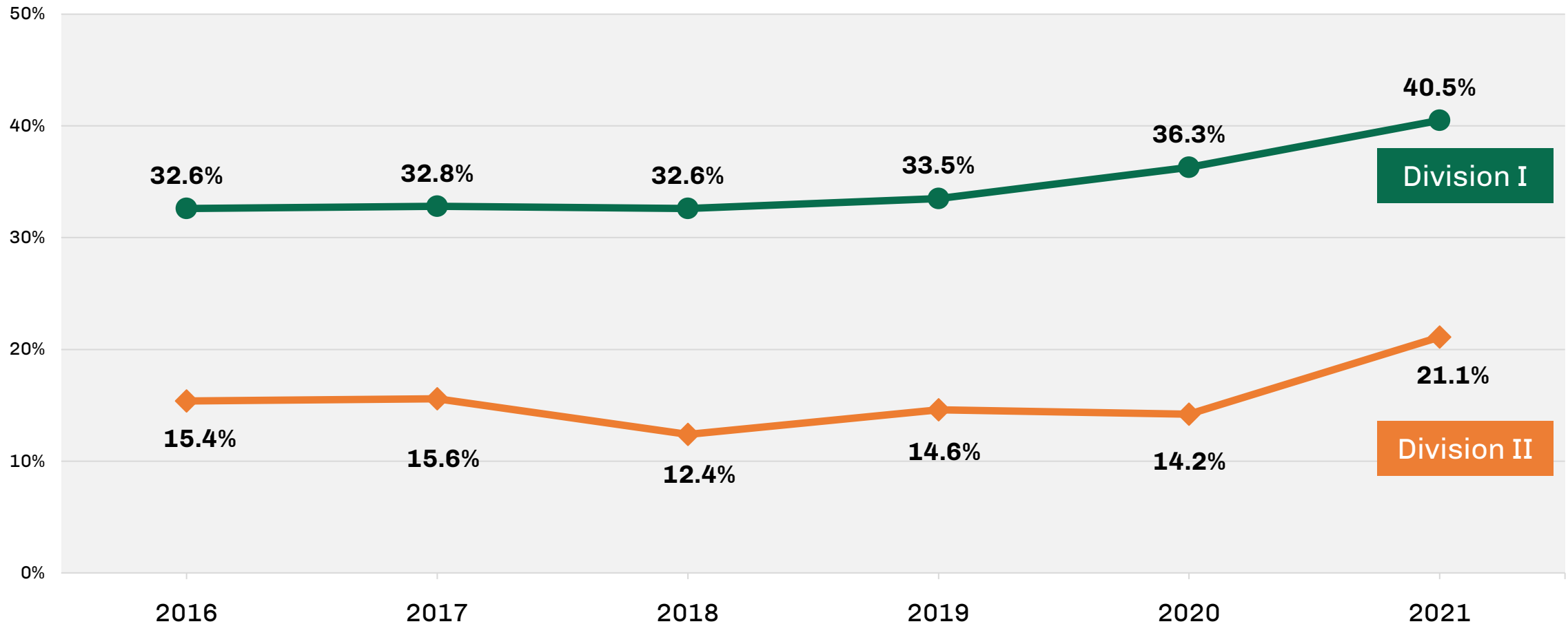


**Total Numbers**

	2016	2021
DI	138	139
DII	121	109

Note: Data shown are for first-year student-athletes.

# Trends in Percentage of International Women's Golf Student-Athletes

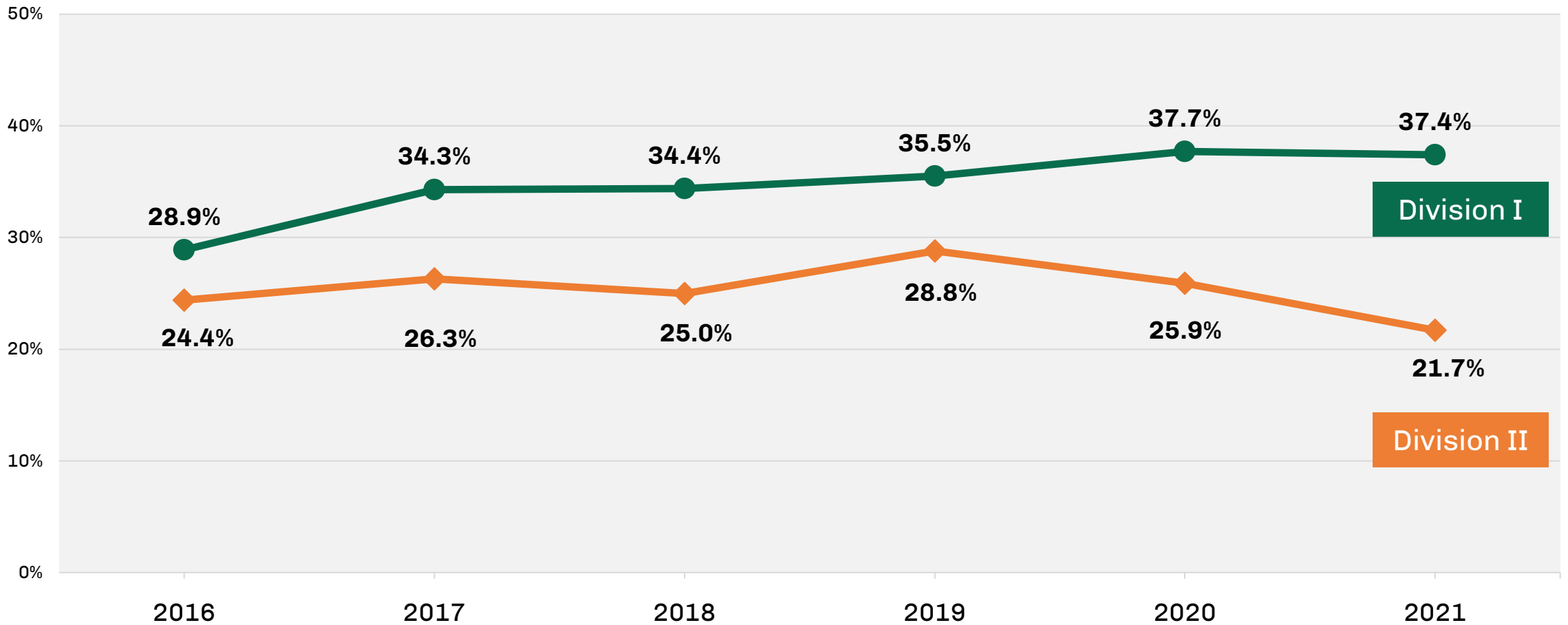


**Total Numbers**

	2016	2021
DI	165	193
DII	67	75

Note: Data shown are for first-year student-athletes.

# Trends in Percentage of International Men's Soccer Student-Athletes

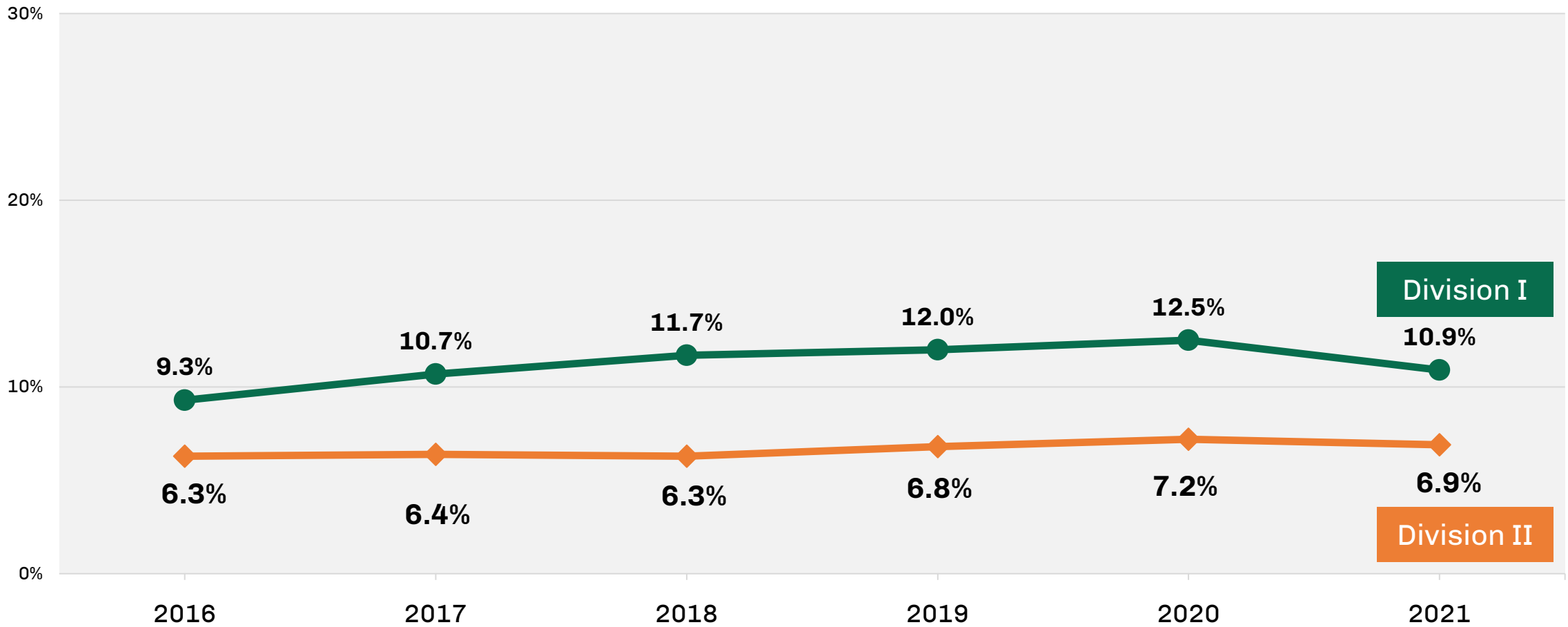


**Total Numbers**

	2016	2021
DI	269	325
DII	404	293

Note: Data shown are for first-year student-athletes.

# Trends in Percentage of International Women's Soccer Student-Athletes

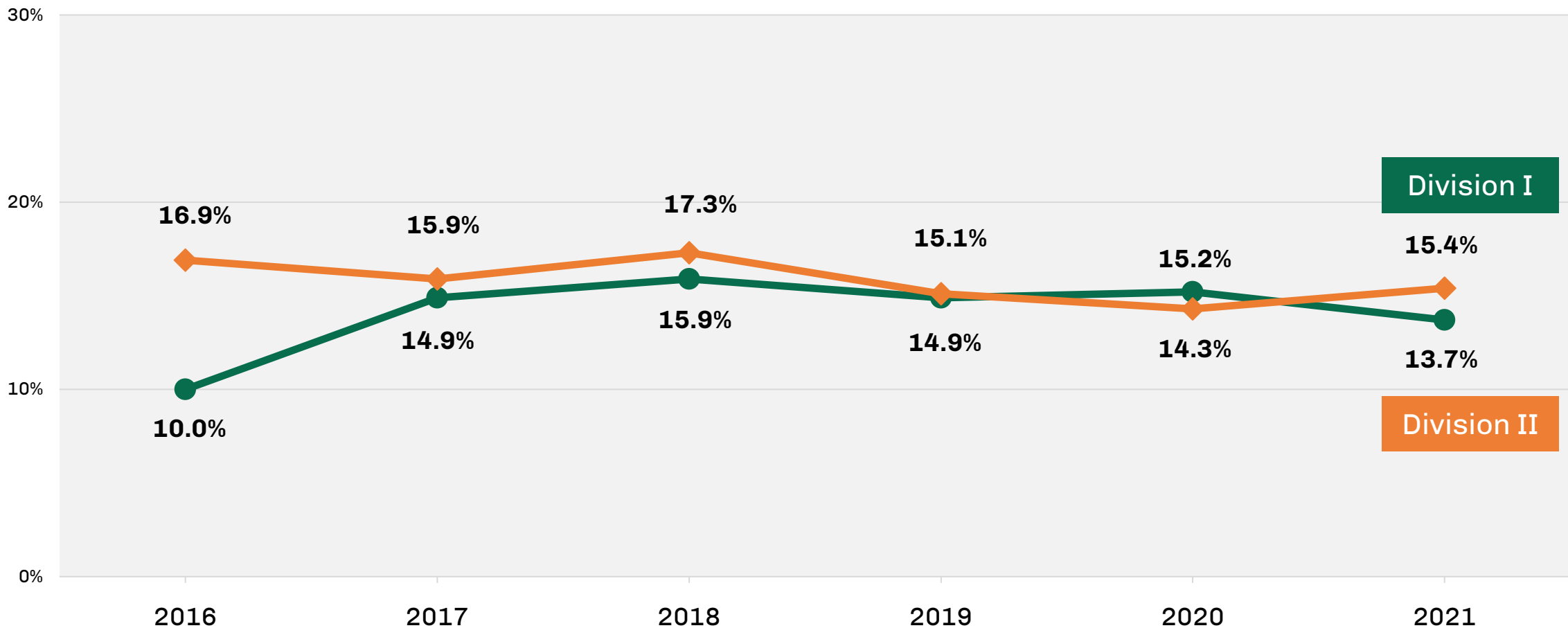


**Total Numbers**

	2016	2021
DI	199	242
DII	127	115

Note: Data shown are for first-year student-athletes.

# Trends in Percentage of International Men's Swimming & Diving Student-Athletes

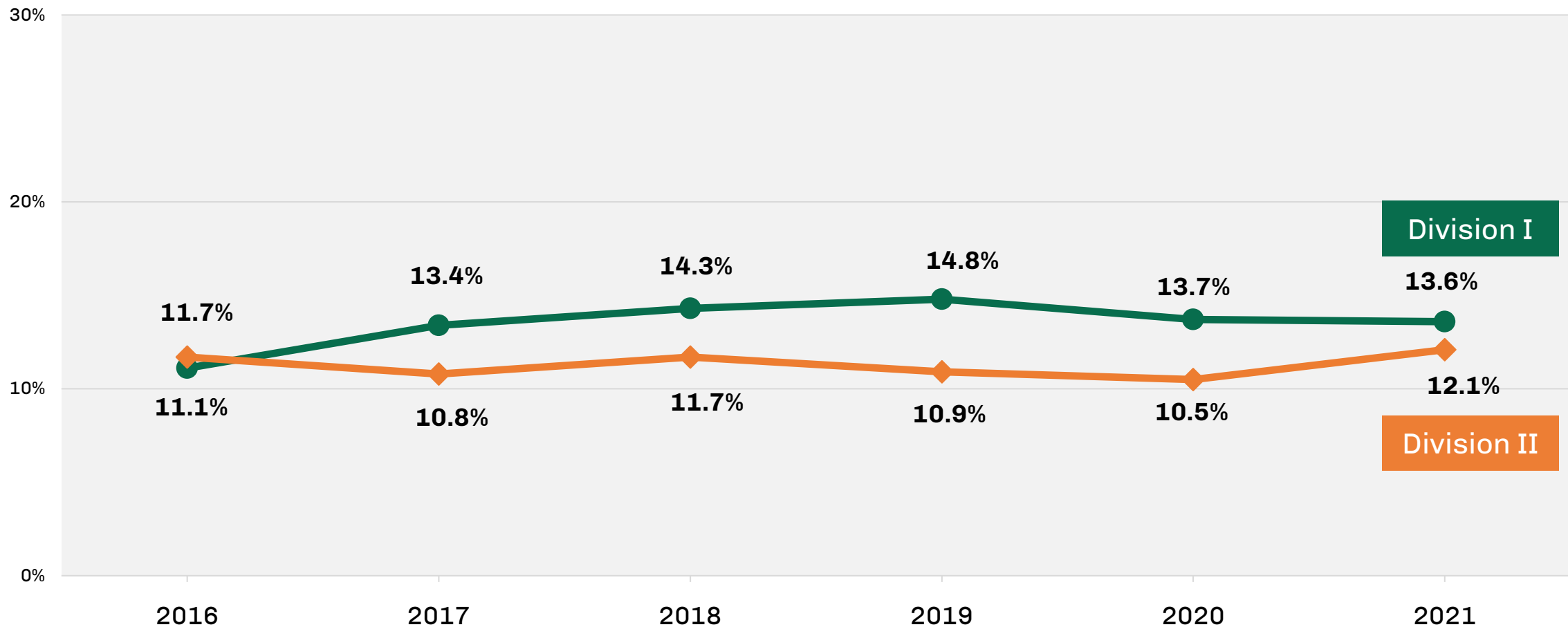


**Total Numbers**

	2016	2021
DI	67	95
DII	73	55

Note: Data shown are for first-year student-athletes.

# Trends in Percentage of International Women's Swimming & Diving Student-Athletes

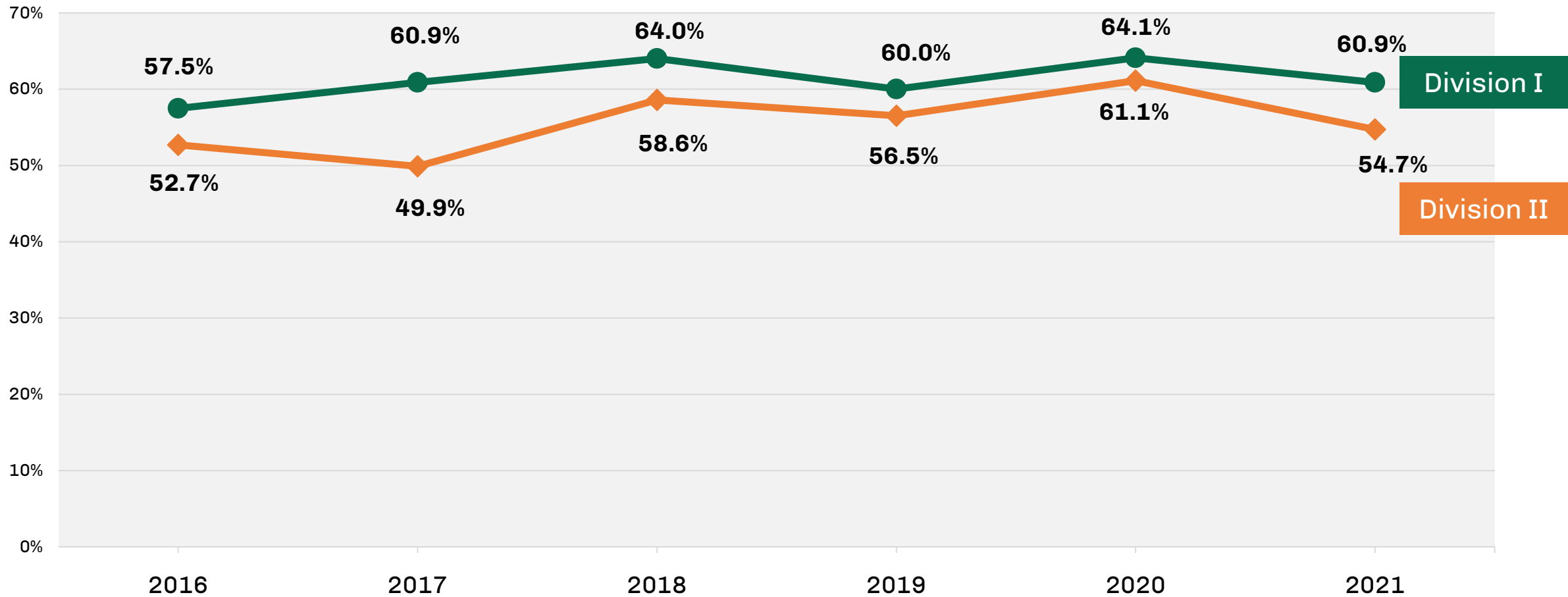


**Total Numbers**

	2016	2021
DI	129	165
DII	62	56

Note: Data shown are for first-year student-athletes.

# Trends in Percentage of International Men's Tennis Student-Athletes



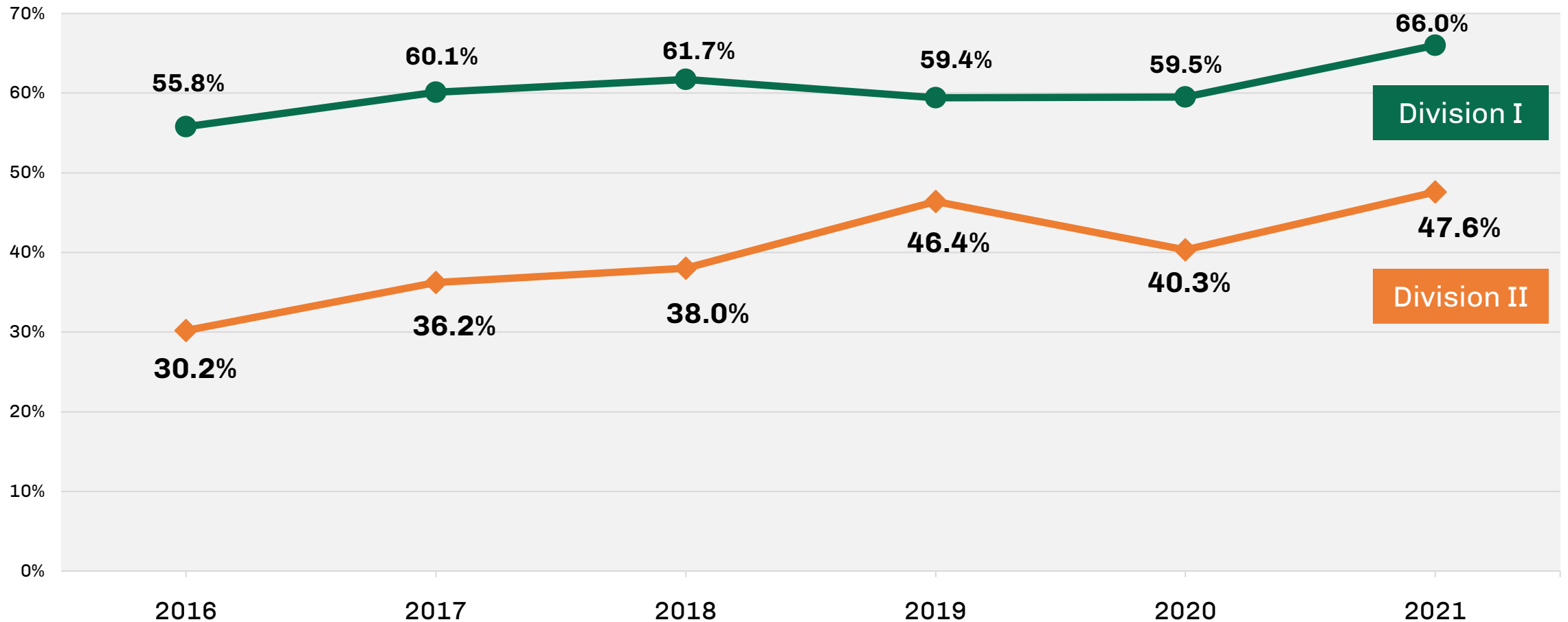
**Total Numbers**

	2016	2021
DI	281	245
DII	251	135

Note: Data shown are for first-year student-athletes.



# Trends in Percentage of International Women's Tennis Student-Athletes

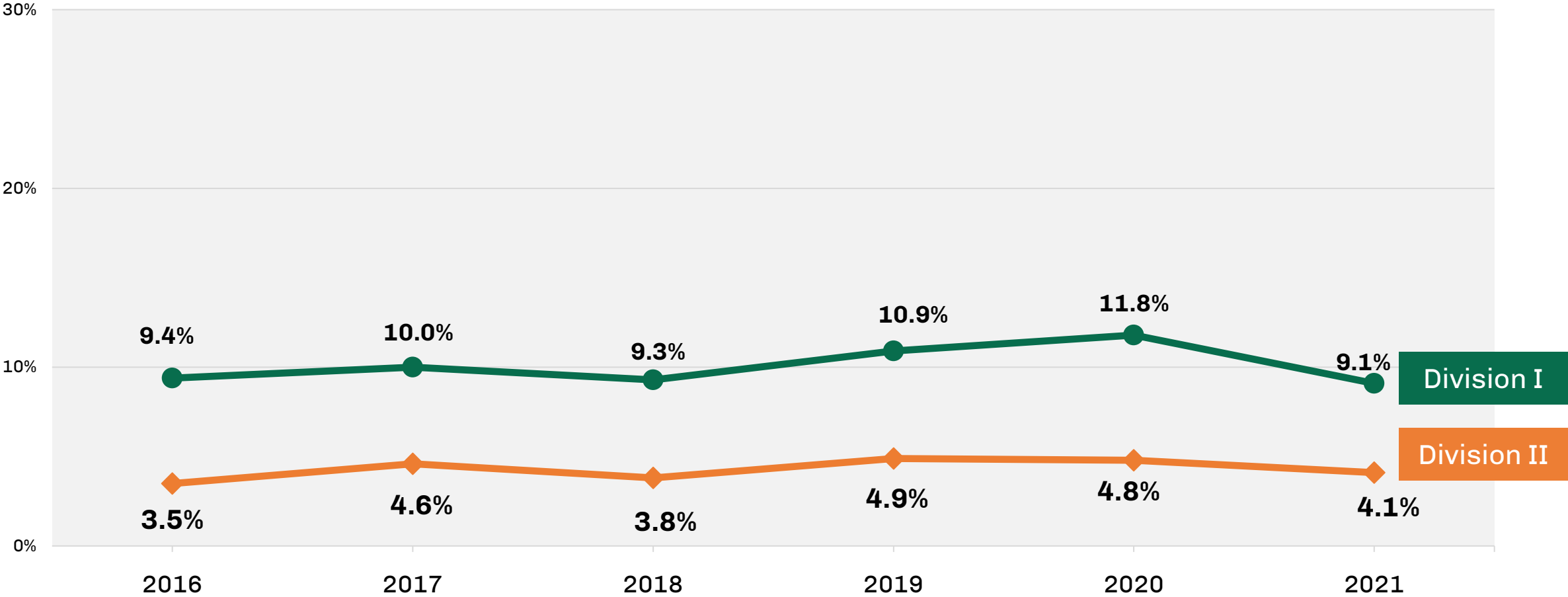


**Total Numbers**

	2016	2021
DI	310	345
DII	158	150

Note: Data shown are for first-year student-athletes.

# Trends in Percentage of International Men's Track & Field Student-Athletes

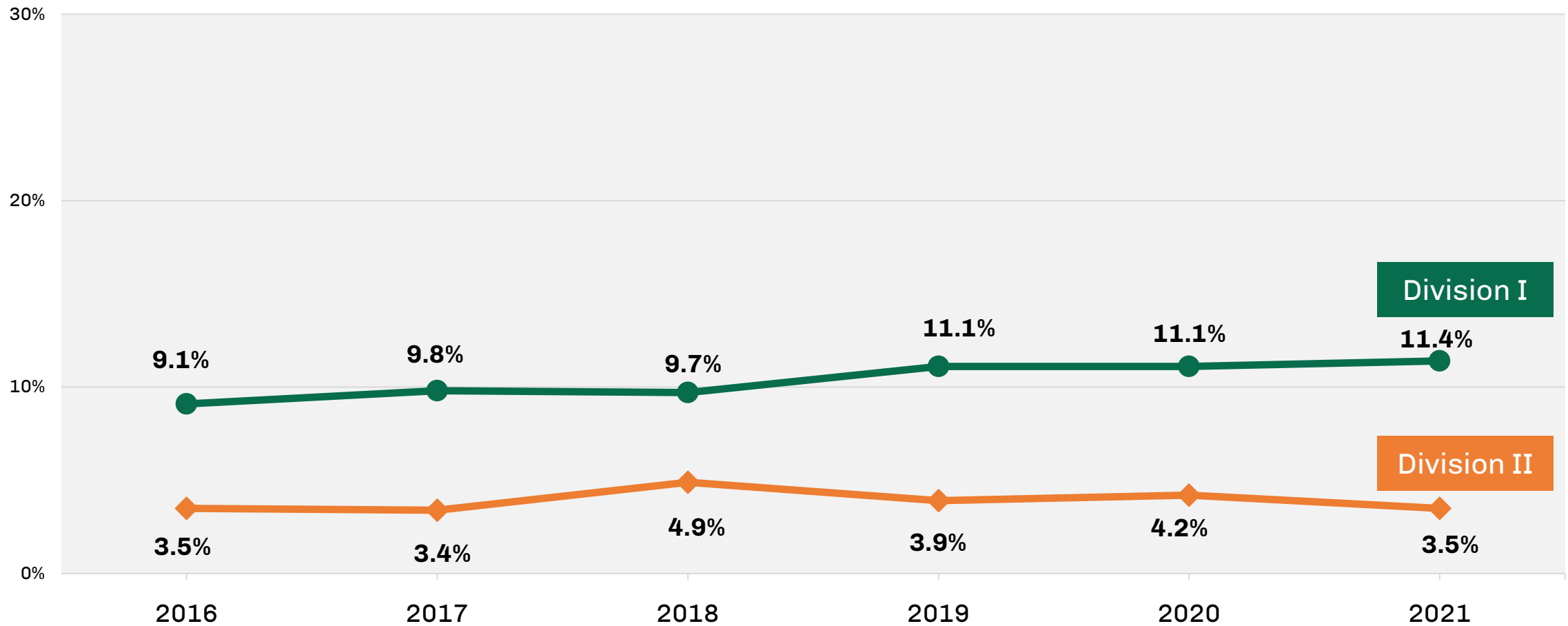


**Total Numbers**

	2016	2021
DI	147	135
DII	71	68

Note: Data shown are for first-year student-athletes.

# Trends in Percentage of International Women's Track & Field Student-Athletes



**Total Numbers**

	2016	2021
DI	209	256
DII	69	60

Note: Data shown are for first-year student-athletes.

# Detailed Methodology

- ▶ Prospective student-athletes (PSAs) who wish to compete in Division I or Division II must register with the NCAA Eligibility Center. All PSAs are assigned a unique NCAA ID number through that process.
- ▶ Home country is captured during registration when PSAs enter their address. Previous country is inputted for PSAs submitting high school transcripts from an additional country. NCAA research determined home country using the country listed in all cases except for PSAs with a U.S. address who also have a non-U.S. previous country in their transcript records. In those cases, home country was set to the previous country. For example, the home country for a prospective student-athlete residing in the U.S. during that student's senior year of high school who was previously enrolled at a high school in Argentina is "Argentina."
- ▶ Matching on NCAA ID, we merged home country with Divisions I and II academic cohort data, which allowed us to examine home country and international status for student-athletes in each sport's cohort. Due to data corrections and the movement of schools or sports into and out of each division, data for each academic cohort are rerun annually, which may result in slight changes to the percentages previously reported.
- ▶ Home country for Division III student-athletes was not included because Division III student-athletes are not required to register with the Eligibility Center. For this population, the only source of international participation is the [NCAA Demographics Database](#).
- ▶ The number and percentage of international student-athletes within the academic data are higher than what is captured in the NCAA Demographics Database. This may be due to cohort restrictions (e.g., Division I academic cohorts are typically limited to student-athletes on scholarship) or because international student-athletes' race/ethnicity is entered for them by someone who may assign a racial category other than "nonresident alien," which is one of the race/ethnicity options within the NCAA Demographics Database.







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