

China



REGION: EAST ASIA

Also included in this region: Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam

PART I: ENROLMENTS AND INSTITUTIONS

The Chinese HE system most closely resembles the Former Eastern Bloc model. Roughly 40% of all HE students were enrolled in specialised universities in 2018, with a slightly smaller proportion in short-cycle HEIs. Only about one in six students is enrolled in a comprehensive university. Total enrolments increased by roughly two-thirds between 2006 and 2018, rising from 27 million to 45 million. The number of HEIs also increased, but much more slowly, meaning that Chinese HEIs are growing larger over time. Roughly 85% of students in China attended public providers in 2018, which was similar to the average across the rest of East Asia.

TABLE 1 – Types of higher education providers

| CATEGORY | INSTITUTIONS | INSTITUTIONS COUNT IN 2018 | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|----------------------------|-------|-------|
| | | PUB. | PRIV. | TOTAL |
| Comprehensive universities | Comprehensives | 287 | 0 | 287 |
| Specialised Universities | Many specialised universities including universities of natural sciences and technology, finance and economics universities and medicine and pharmacy universities | 539 | 154 | 693 |
| University Colleges | Independent institutions | 0 | 265 | 265 |
| Short-cycle HEIs | Specialised course institutions; adult higher education institutions | 1364 | 331 | 1695 |

FIGURE 1 – Numbers of institutions by type, 2006-2018

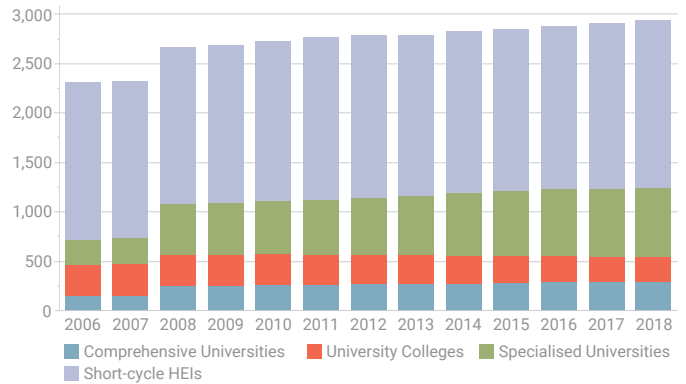


FIGURE 2 – Total enrolments with public and private higher education providers, 2006-2018 (Millions)

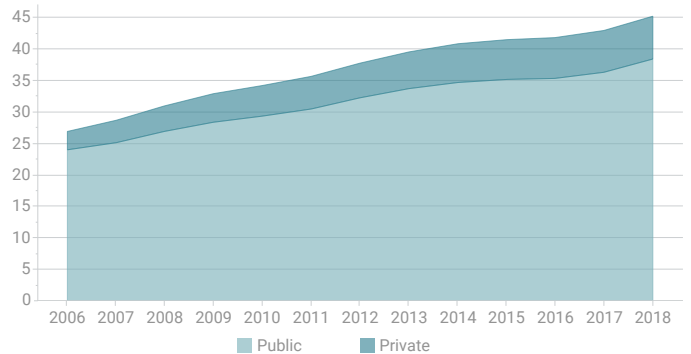


FIGURE 3 – Changes in enrolment, in China, the rest of East Asia and the rest of the Global South, 2006-2018

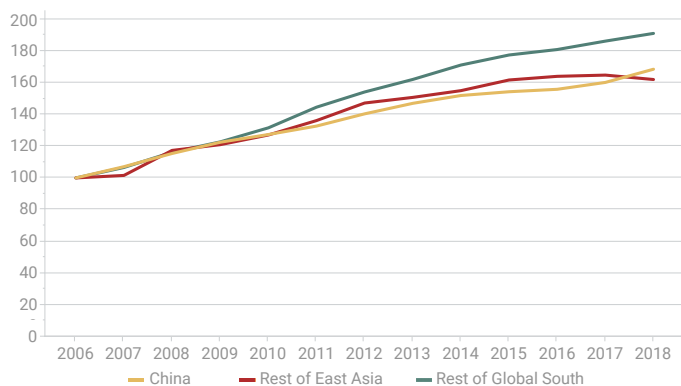


FIGURE 4 – Share of enrolments by institution type in China and the rest of East Asia, 2006 and 2018 (2006=100)

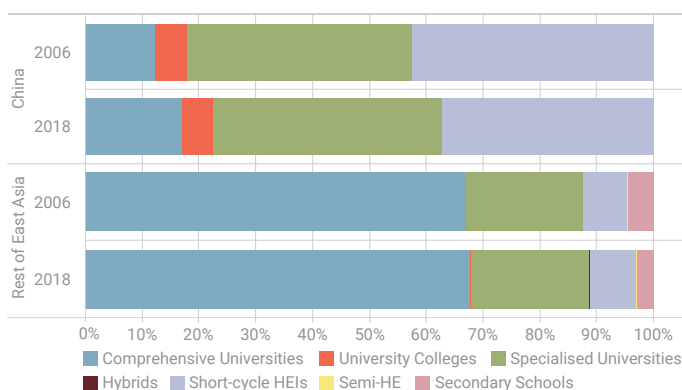


FIGURE 5 – Share of enrolments in public and private institutions, by institution type, in China and the rest of East Asia, 2018

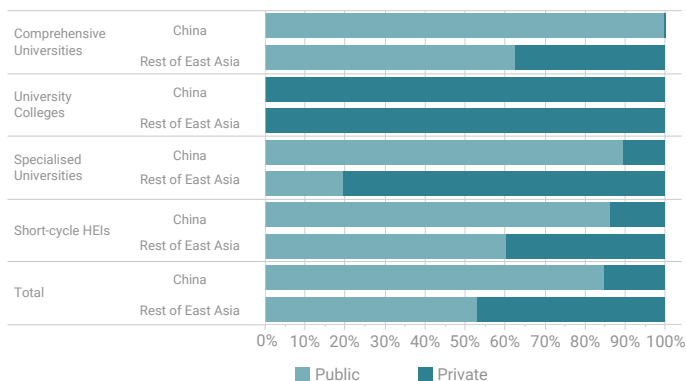
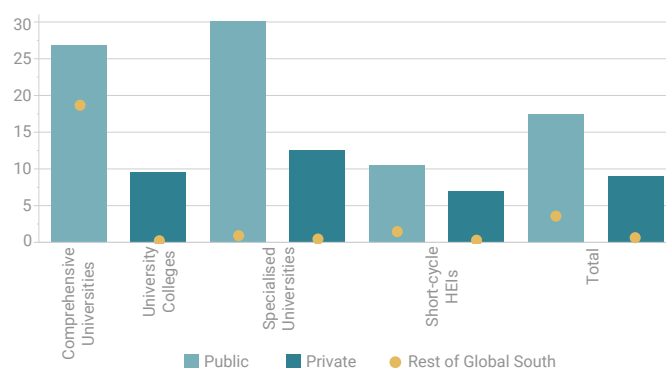


FIGURE 6 – Average institution-size by institution type in China and the rest of the Global South, 2018 (Thousands)



PART II: HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCING

Public HE spending in China rose by a phenomenal 240% from 2006 to 2018, however most of this growth occurred before 2013. This growth in funding was largely driven by economic growth, as public HE spending grew by less than 50% relative to GDP and as a percentage of GDP remains fairly close to the average across the rest of the Global South. Total expenditures of public HEIs increased almost in lock-step, although the slow erosion of the value of student fees attenuated this trend somewhat. Per-student expenditures at private universities, which are almost entirely tuition-funded, also increased sharply, but absolute levels of spending in the private sector remained well below those in the public sector.

FIGURE 7 – Change in real total public spending on higher education in China, the rest of East Asia and the rest of the Global South, 2006-2018 (2006=100)

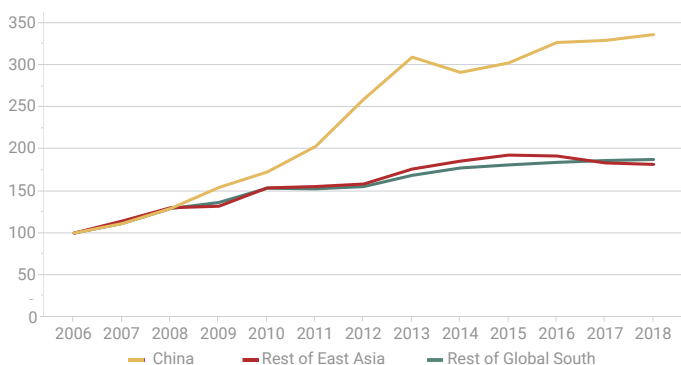


FIGURE 8 – Total public spending on higher education relative to GDP in China, the rest of East Asia and the rest of the Global South, 2006-2018

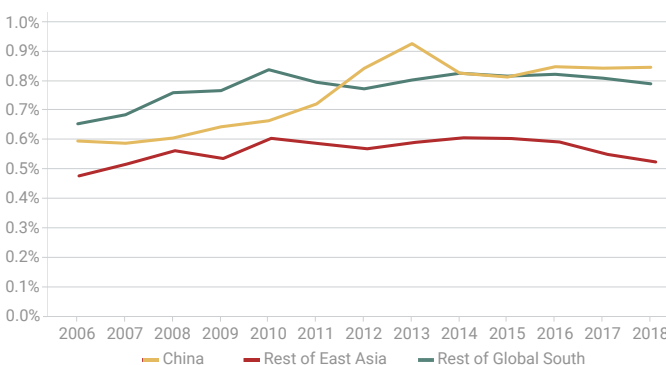


FIGURE 9 – Change in real government transfers to public institutions by institution-type in China and the rest of the Global South, 2006-2018 (2006=100)

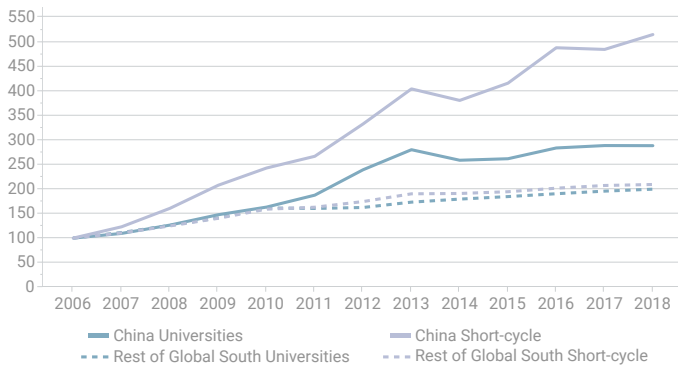


FIGURE 10 – Per-student government transfers to public institutions by institution-type in real PPP, in China and the rest of the Global South, 2006-2018

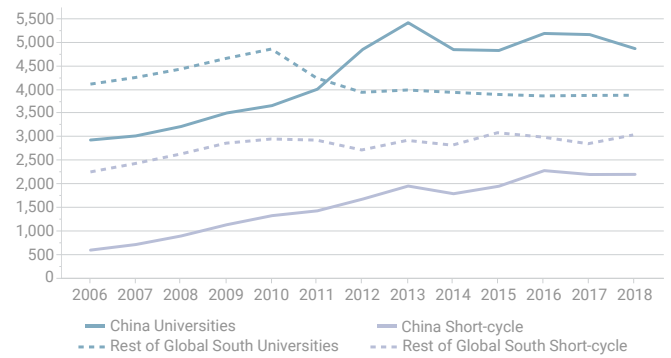


FIGURE 11 – Government transfers relative to total institutional spending of public institutions by institution-type in China and the rest of the Global South, 2006 and 2018

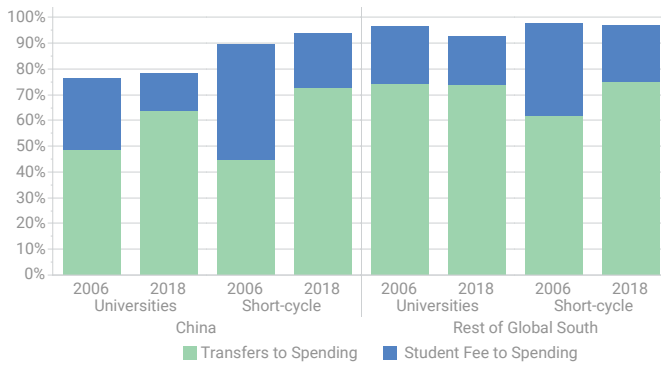


FIGURE 12 – Change in real total institutional spending of private institutions by institution-type in China and the rest of the world, 2006-2018 (2006=100)

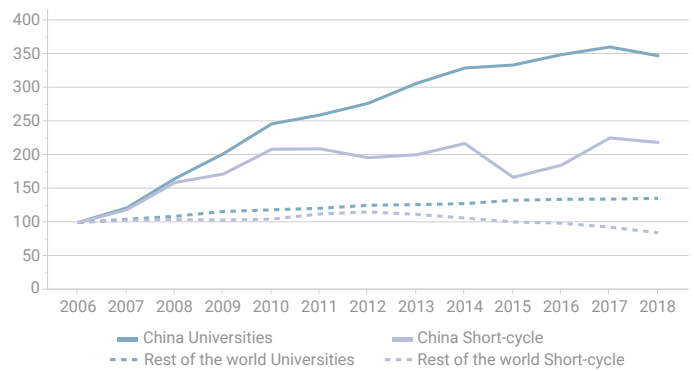


FIGURE 13 – Per-student total institutional spending of private institutions by institution-type in China and the rest of the world, 2006-2018

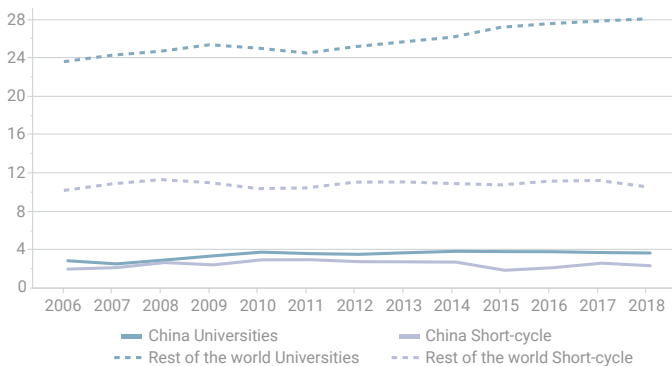
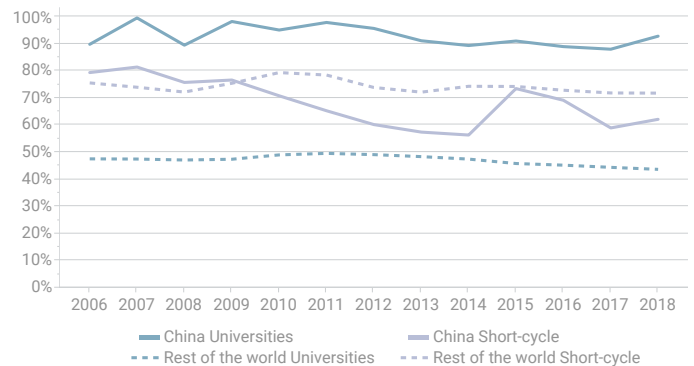


FIGURE 14 – Student fee revenues relative to total institutional spending of private institutions by institution-type in China and the rest of the world, 2006-2018





The West Gate, Peking University, Beijing, China

PART III: STUDENT FEES

All but a very few students in China paid at least some level of compulsory fees in 2018. The value of these fees for public universities declined from 2008 to 2018, and in the public short-cycle sector from 2011 on, in both cases falling by one-third from their earliest peaks. Private universities did not experience similar declines, and charged fees in 2018 that were roughly two-to-three times the levels in public HEIs.

FIGURE 15 – Share of students at public institutions under each type of tuition regime in China, the rest of East Asia and the rest of the Global South, 2006 and 2018

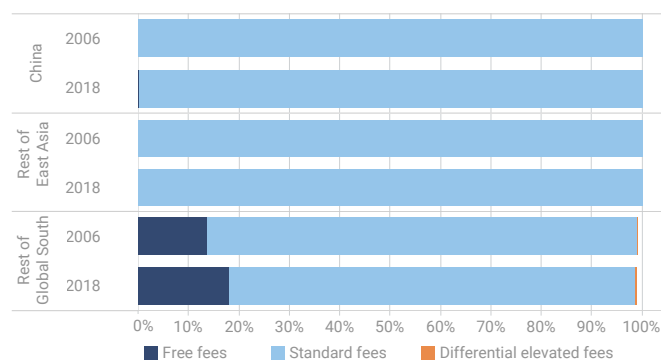


FIGURE 16 – Fee revenues per student paying typical rates at public institutions by institution type in PPP, 2006-2018

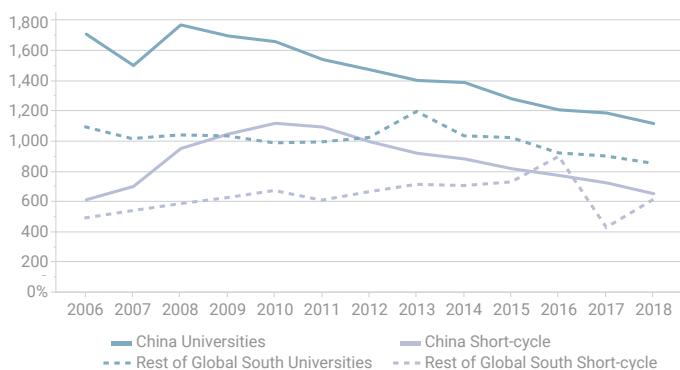
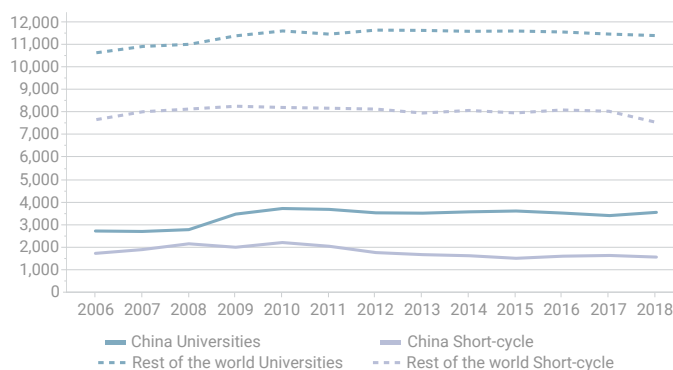


FIGURE 17 – Fee revenues per student at private institutions by institution type in PPP, 2006-2018



PART IV: STUDENT FINANCIAL AID

Government student financial aid in China consists of a mix of loans and grants, with grants predominant in a roughly 2:1 ratio in 2018. Roughly 35% of Chinese students received a grant in 2018, a roughly 23-fold increase since 2006. However, a significant fall in the average value of grants accompanied the growth in grant numbers. In GDP terms, the total value of student financial aid disbursements doubled over the 2006-2018 period, and yet still China’s relative investments in student financial aid trailed the average across the rest of the Global South.

TABLE 2 – Student financial aid regime, including recipients and amounts disbursed in 2018

| CATEGORY | PROGRAMS | BASIS OF ALLOCATION | RECIPIENTS | AMOUNTS DISBURSED (USD) |
|----------|---|----------------------|------------|-------------------------|
| Grants | National grants, national merit-based scholarships and special subsidies such as the enlisted soldiers tuition subsidy and the first-year tuition subsidy | Merit and need based | 15,925,000 | 10,982,887,189 |
| Loans | National student loans | Need-based | 4,092,000 | 6,792,543,021 |

FIGURE 18 – Total disbursements to students in financial aid relative to gross domestic product, in China, the rest of East Asia and the rest of the Global South, 2006-2018

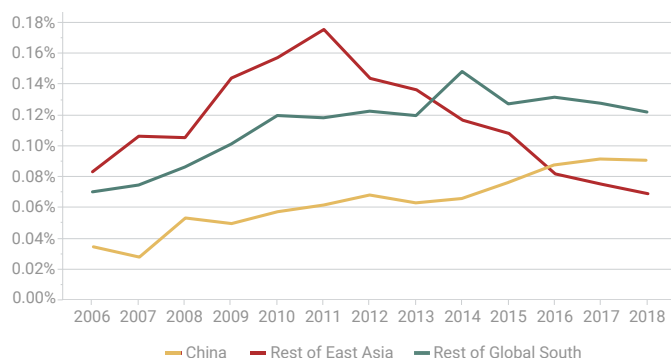


FIGURE 19 – Change in amounts disbursed to students by form of financial aid in China and other Global South countries that offer financial aid of this type, 2006-2018 (2006=100)

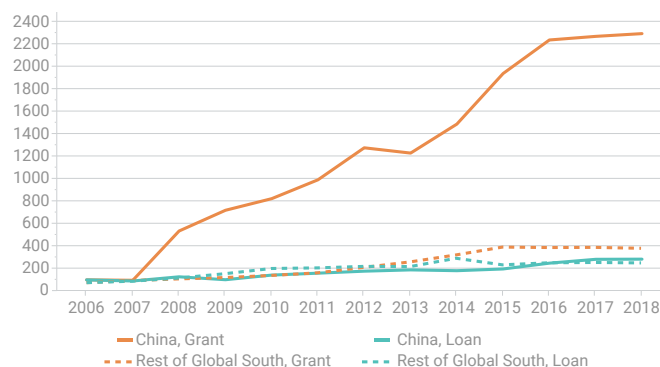


FIGURE 20 – Share of higher education students receiving student financial aid by type in China and other Global South countries that offer financial aid of this type, 2006-2018

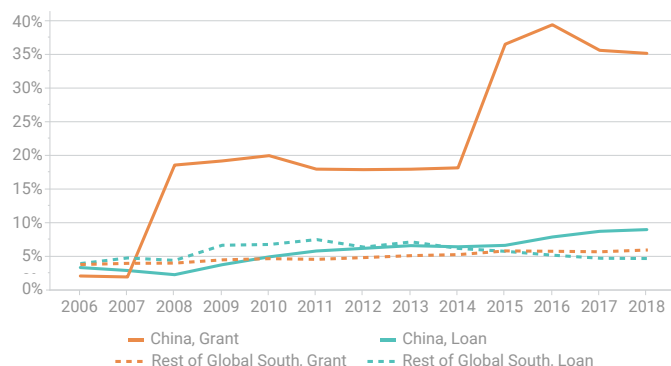
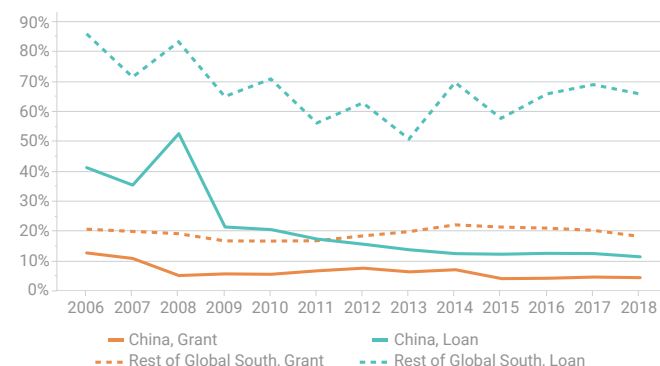


FIGURE 21 – Financial aid per recipient relative to GDP per capita by form of financial aid in China and other Global South countries that offer financial aid of this type, 2006-2018



***Note: For more on methodology and data quality please see Appendices A and B.**