

Hong Kong



REGION: ADVANCED ASIA

Also included in this region: Israel, Japan, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan

PART I: ENROLMENTS AND INSTITUTIONS

Hong Kong’s HE system is characterized by a mix of North American and South Asian models. Most students attended comprehensive universities in 2018, though the country also had a substantial short-cycle sector, and a large number of “university colleges”. Total enrolments rose by about 25% between 2006 and 2012 and then remained constant thereafter. Comprehensive universities tended to gain in size, while (private) university colleges became smaller. Roughly seventy-five percent of HE enrolments in Hong Kong were in public institutions in 2018, which is well above the average across the rest of Advanced Asia.

TABLE 1 – Types of higher education providers

CATEGORY	INSTITUTIONS	INSTITUTIONS COUNT IN 2018		
		PUB.	PRIV.	TOTAL
Comprehensive Universities	UGC-funded university; Hong Kong Shue Yan University; Open University of Hong Kong	8	2	10
Specialised Universities	Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts; Approved post-secondary colleges	1	9	10
University Colleges	Non-local higher and professional education courses	0	106	106
Short-Cycle HEIs	Vocational training council; other institutions	13	8	21
Semi-HE	Prince Philip Dental Hospital; Hospital authority (nursing schools)	NA	NA	NA

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

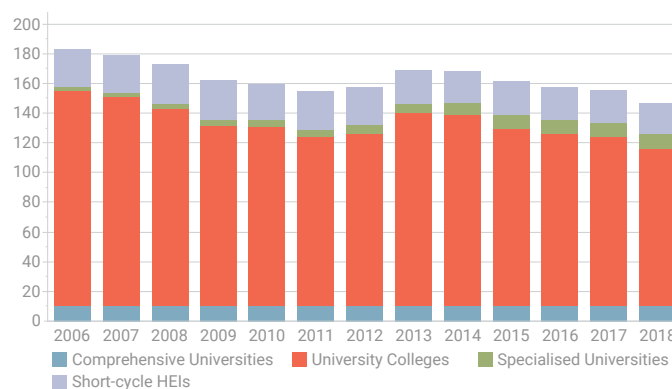


FIGURE 2 – Total enrolments with public and private higher education providers, 2006-2018 (Millions)

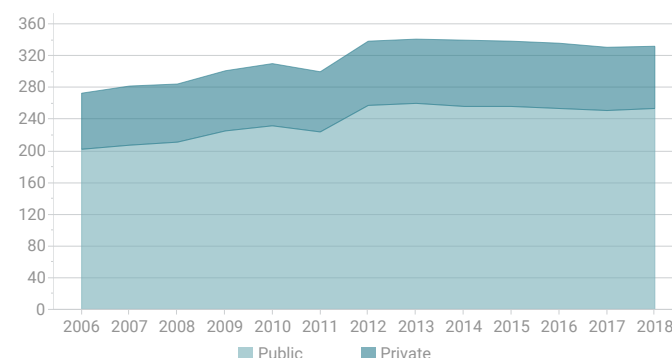


FIGURE 3 – Changes in enrolment, in Hong Kong, rest of Advanced Asia and the rest of the Global North, 2006-2018

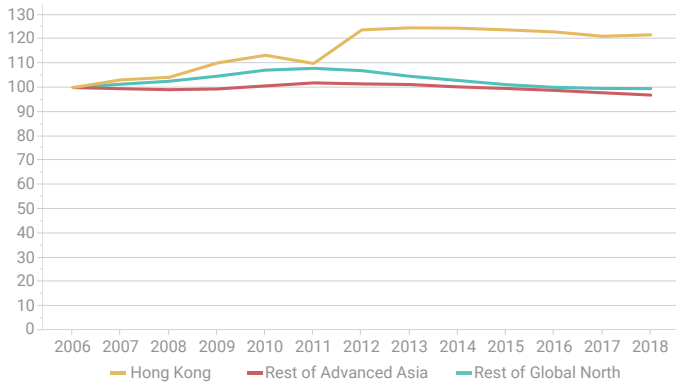


FIGURE 4 – Share of enrolments by institution type in Hong Kong and the rest of Advanced Asia, 2006 and 2018 (2006=100)

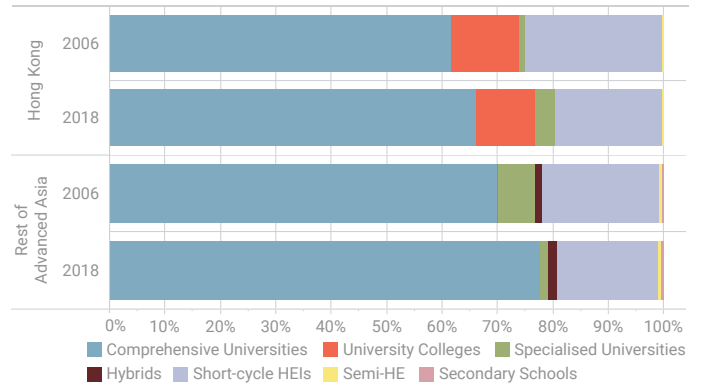


FIGURE 5 – Share of enrolments in public and private institutions, by institution type, in Hong Kong and the rest of Advanced Asia, 2018

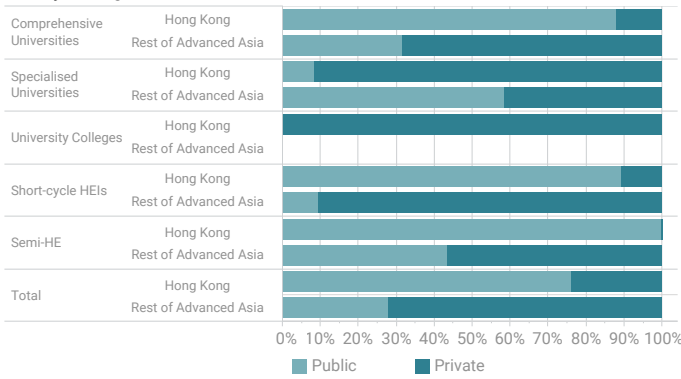
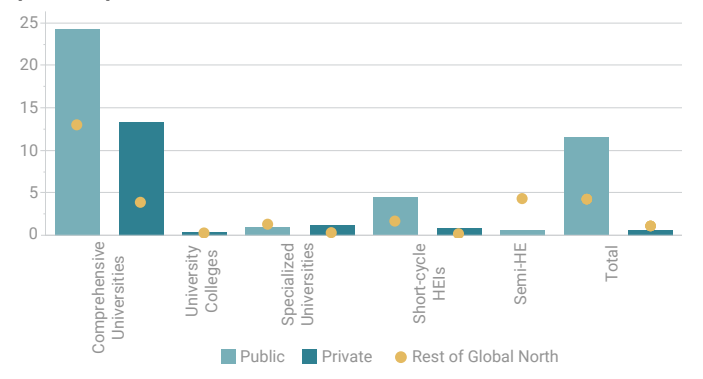


FIGURE 6 – Average institution-size by institution type, Hong Kong and the rest of the Global North, 2018 [Thousands]



PART II: HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCING

Public HE spending in Hong Kong rose in constant dollars by 13% from 2006 to 2018, roughly in line with spending across the rest of Advanced Asia and the Global North. As a percentage of GDP, however, public HE spending declined, though it remained above the average of the Global North and about twice the level of the rest of Advanced Asia. Total expenditures of public HEIs grew more quickly, thanks to privately-generated income, including student fees.

FIGURE 7 – Change in real total public spending on higher education in Hong Kong, the rest of Advanced Asia and the rest of the Global North, 2006-2018 (2006=100)

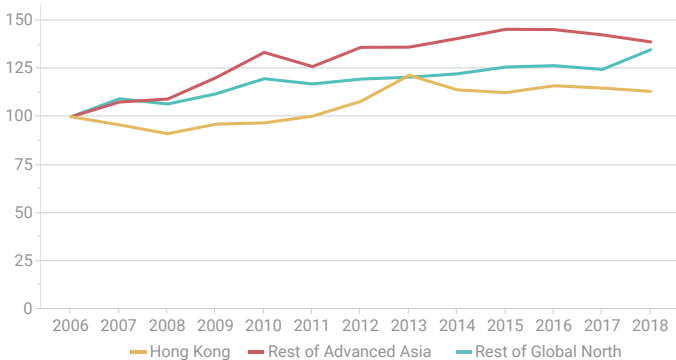


FIGURE 8 – Total public spending on higher education relative to GDP in Hong Kong, the rest of Advanced Asia and the rest of the Global North, 2006-2018

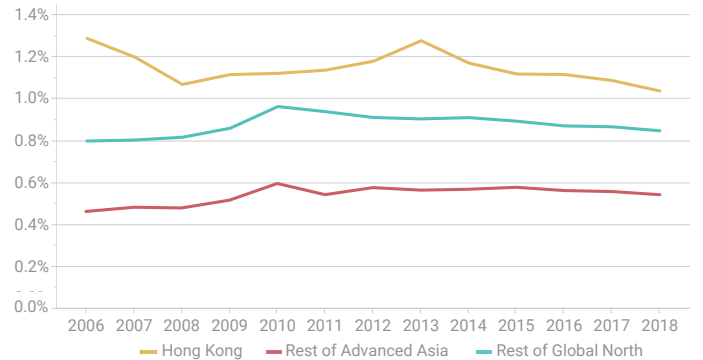


FIGURE 9 – Change in real total institutional spending of public institutions by institution-type in Hong Kong and the rest of the Global North, 2006-2018 (2006=100)

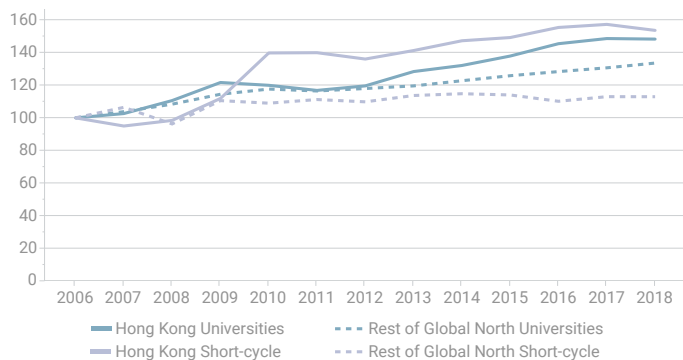


FIGURE 10 – Per-student total institutional spending of public institutions by institution-type in real PPP, in Hong Kong and the rest of the Global North, 2006-2018

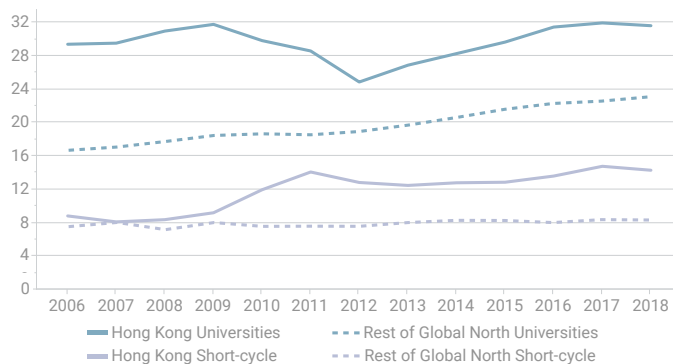
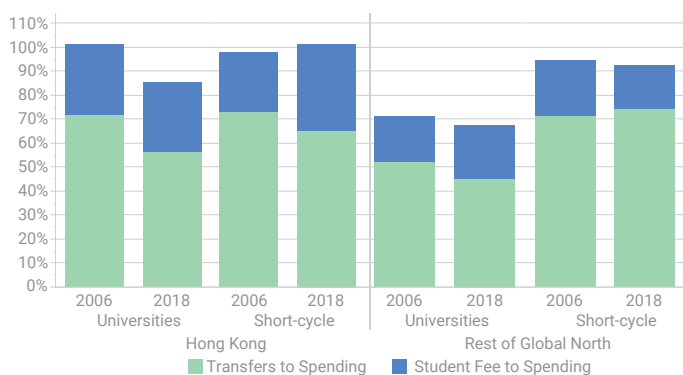


FIGURE 11 – Government transfers relative to total institutional spending of public institutions by institution-type, in Hong Kong and the rest of the Global North, 2006 and 2018



Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong

PART III: STUDENT FEES

All students paid fees in Hong Kong in 2018, but a substantial proportion – studying in programs not covered by public subsidies – paid elevated differential fees. This makes Hong Kong’s a differentiated fee-charging student fee model. For domestic students, compulsory fees evolved in two directions over our period of interest: university students experienced frozen standard fees which eroded in value, while fees at short-cycle HEIs grew substantially.

FIGURE 12 – Share of students at public institutions under each type of tuition regime in Hong Kong, the rest of Advanced Asia and the rest of the Global North, 2006 and 2018

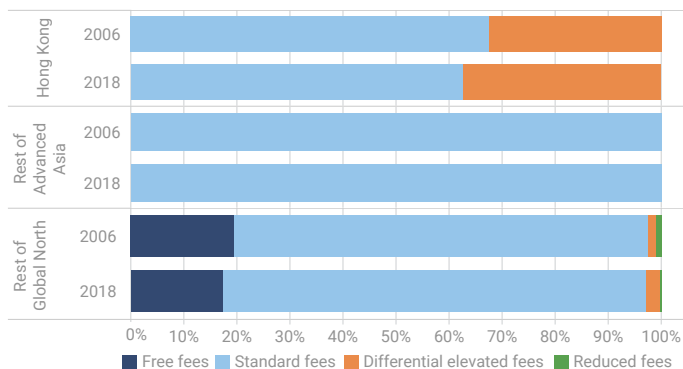
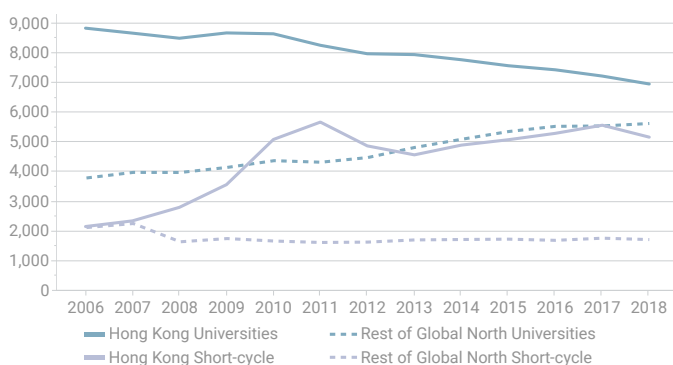


FIGURE 13 – Fee revenues per student paying “regular” rates at public institutions by institution type in PPP, 2006-2018



PART IV: STUDENT FINANCIAL AID

Government student financial aid in Hong Kong is comprised of a roughly equal mix of grants and loans. More recipients received grants than loans in 2018, but grants were also smaller in value. During our period of interest, loan disbursements remained relatively constant, whereas grants rose sharply until 2013 before falling back again. The total amounts disbursed through student assistance programs was slightly below the average of the rest of Advance Asia and well below the average of the rest of the Global North.

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

CATEGORY	PROGRAMS	BASIS OF ALLOCATION	RECIPIENTS	AMOUNTS DISBURSED (USD)
Grants	Grants under the Tertiary student finance scheme for publicly-funded programs, the financial assistance scheme for post-secondary students, and the student travel subsidy scheme.	Need-based	73,273	318,424,511
Loans	Loans under the Tertiary student finance scheme for publicly-funded programs, the financial assistance scheme for post-secondary students, and the non-means tested loan schemes	Need-based or open enrolment	40,488	323,790,601

FIGURE 14 – Total disbursements to students in financial aid relative to Gross Domestic Product, in Hong Kong, the rest of Advanced Asia and the rest of the Global North, 2006-2018

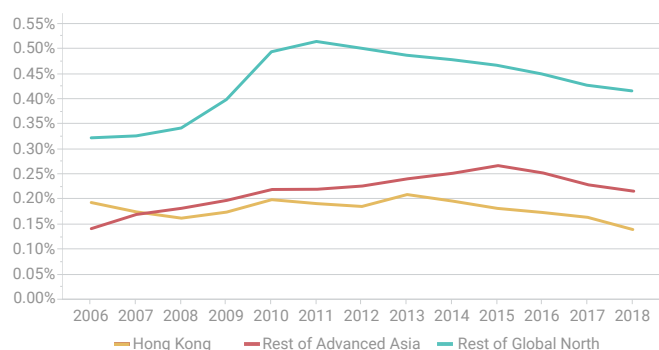


FIGURE 15 – Change in amounts disbursed to students by form of financial aid in Hong Kong and other Global North countries that offer financial aid of this type, 2006-2018 (2006=100)

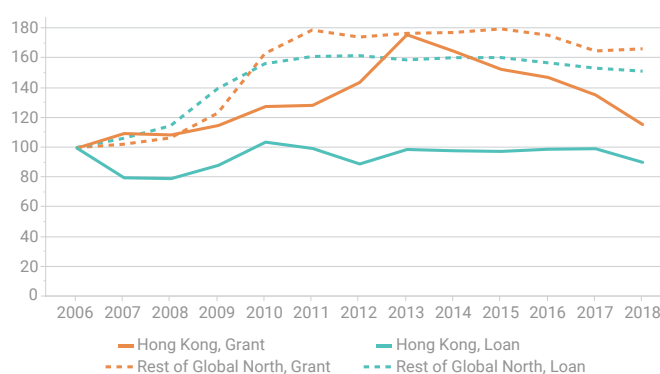


FIGURE 16 – Share of higher education students receiving student financial aid by type in Hong Kong and other Global North countries that offer financial aid of this type, 2006-2018

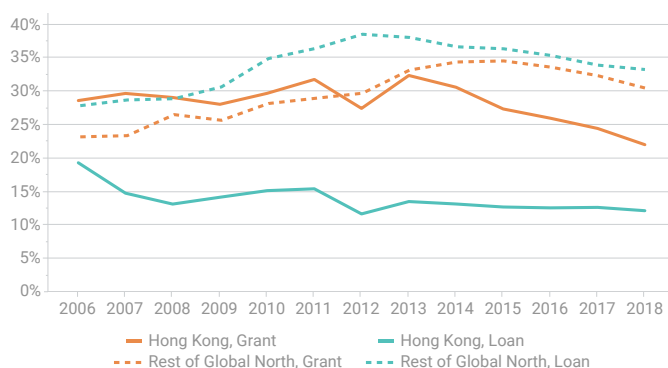
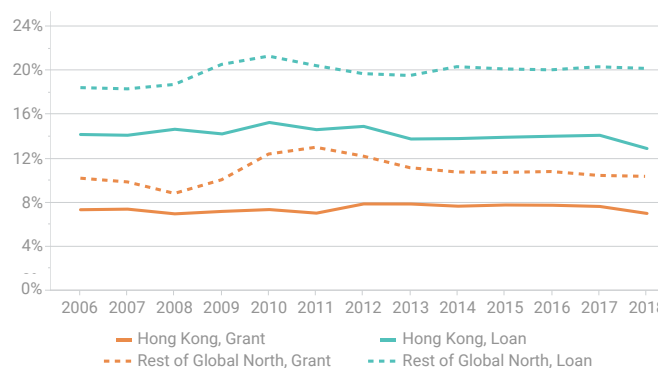


FIGURE 17 – Financial aid per recipient relative to GDP per capita by form of financial aid in Hong Kong and other Global North countries that offer financial aid of this type, 2006-2018



***Note:** For more on methodology and data quality please see [Appendices A and B](#).