

# Malaysia



## REGION: EAST ASIA

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

## PART I: ENROLMENTS AND INSTITUTIONS

The Malaysian HE system most closely resembles the North American model. Just under 65% of students attended comprehensive universities in 2018, with a slightly smaller proportion in short-cycle HEIs. Total enrolments increased by 80% between 2006 and 2018. The number of HE institutions also increased, but much more slowly such that the average HEI grew larger. Roughly 55% of students attended public providers in 2018, which was below the average for the rest of East Asia.

TABLE 1 – Types of higher education providers

CATEGORY	INSTITUTIONS	INSTITUTIONS COUNT IN 2018		
		PUB.	PRIV.	TOTAL
<b>Comprehensive universities</b>	Universities; private satellite campuses; university colleges	20	88	108
<b>University Colleges</b>	International institution satellite campuses	0	10	10
<b>Hybrids</b>	Teacher education institutes (2010 onwards)	27	0	27
<b>Short-cycle HEIs</b>	Polytechnics; community colleges; private colleges; Matriculation colleges; teacher training institutions (up to 2009)	145	397	542
<b>Secondary Schools</b>	Post-secondary education students, including Sixth-form and years three and four of vocational college	NA	NA	NA

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

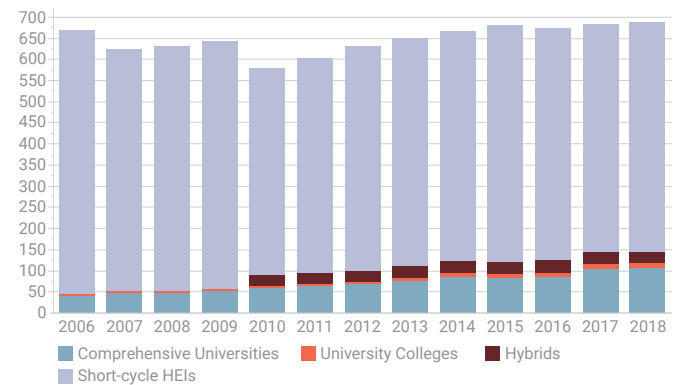
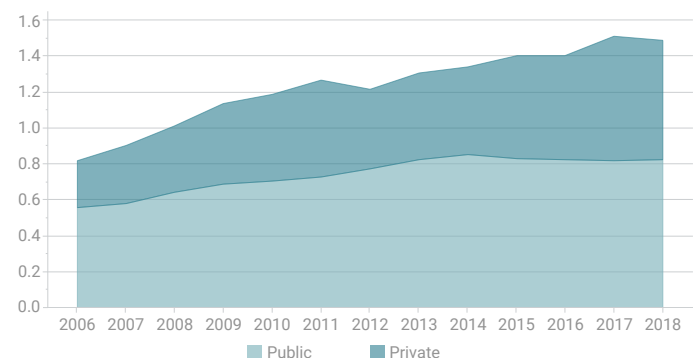
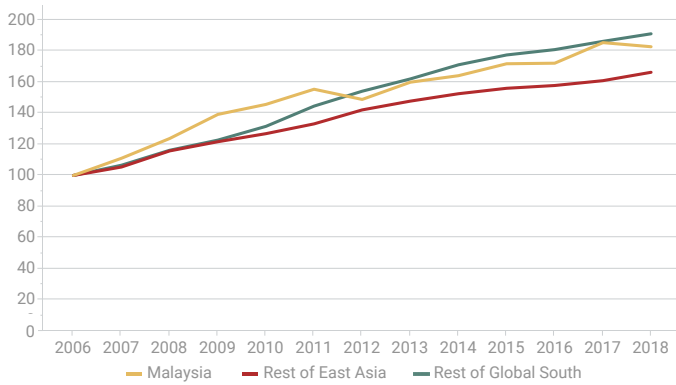


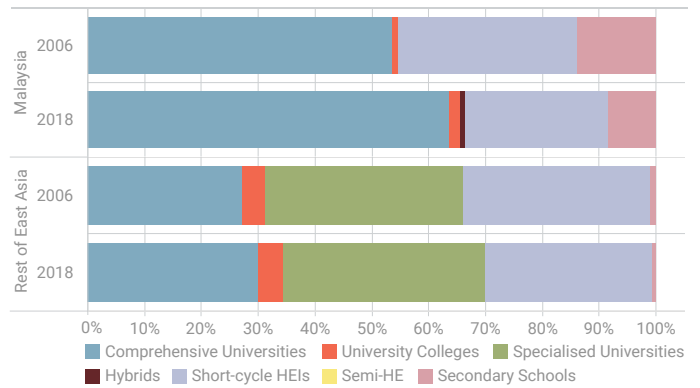
FIGURE 2 – Total enrolments with public and private higher education providers, 2006-2018 (Millions)



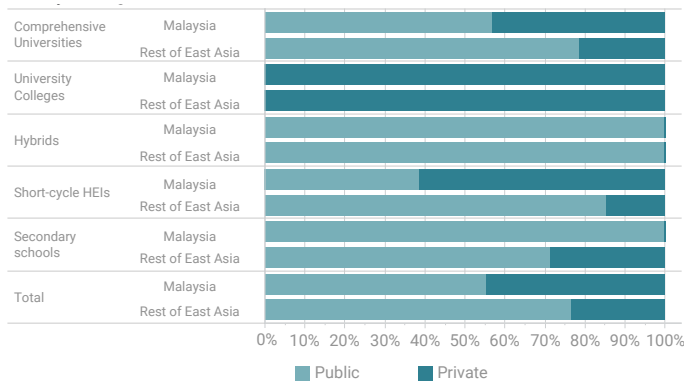
**FIGURE 3** – Changes in enrolment, in Malaysia, the rest of East Asia and the rest of the Global South, 2006-2018



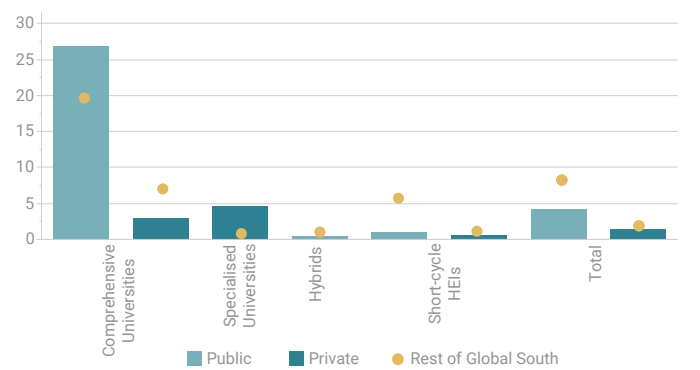
**FIGURE 4** – Share of enrolments by institution type in Malaysia and the rest of East Asia, 2006 and 2018 (2006=100)



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



**FIGURE 6** – Average institution-size by institution type in Malaysia and the rest of East Asia, 2018 (Thousands)



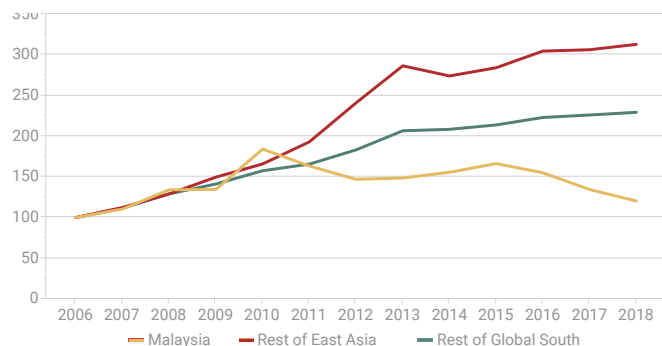
University of Malaya, Malaysia



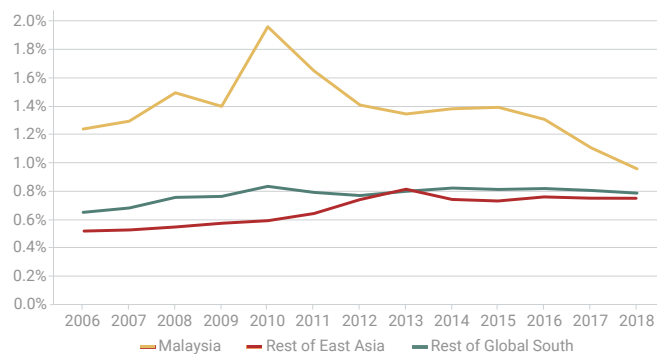
## PART II: HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCING

Public HE spending in Malaysia rose nearly 90% from 2006 to 2010, but subsequently decreased by one-third. Spending similarly rose and then fell relative to GDP, dropping overall from 1.2% of GDP in 2006 to just under 1% in 2018. The combination of falling transfers and increased enrolments resulted in a substantial decrease in the average value of government transfers per student at public universities, although less so at the public short-cycle HEIs for which data are available. Public HEI funding per student nevertheless remained higher than for comparator HEIs across the rest of the Global South in 2018.

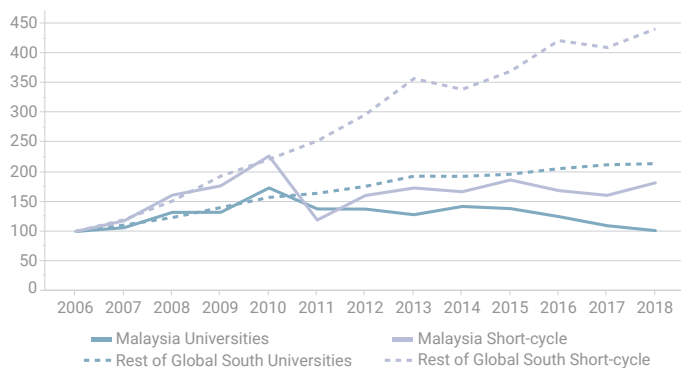
**FIGURE 7** – Change in real total public spending on higher education in Malaysia, the rest of East Asia and the rest of the Global South, 2006-2018 (2006=100)



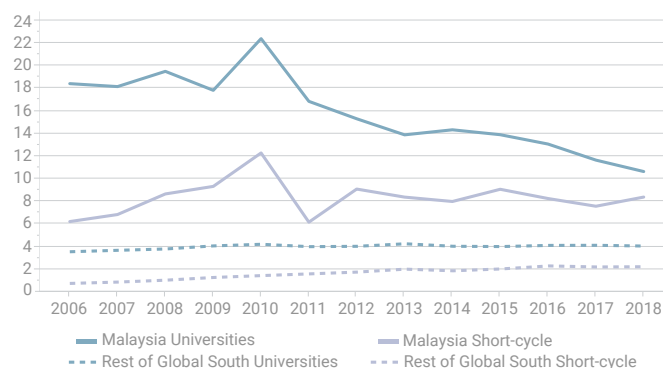
**FIGURE 8** – Total public spending on higher education relative to GDP in Malaysia, the rest of East Asia and the rest of the Global South, 2006-2018



**FIGURE 9** – Change in real government transfers to public institutions by institution-type in Malaysia 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 Malaysia and the rest of the Global South, 2006-2018



## PART III: STUDENT FEES

Public HE providers in Malaysia charge fees to all students, however these are low enough that we classify the system as a mix of privileged-public (recognising the sizable role of private provision) and token-fee charging. Fee revenue per student at public HEIs rose by about one-quarter over the period of interest.

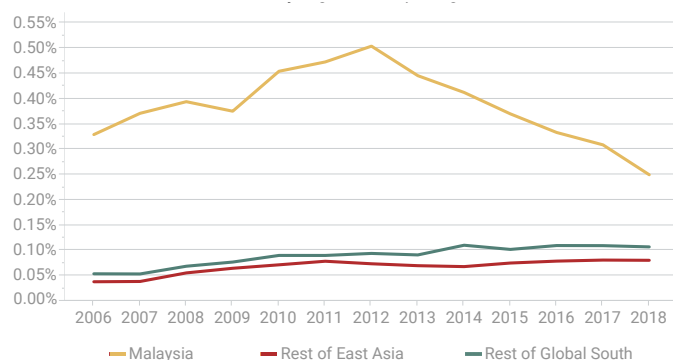
### PART IV: STUDENT FINANCIAL AID

Government student financial aid in Malaysia is essentially loan only. There are some modest grant programs about which data were unavailable. Roughly 10% of Malaysian students received a loan in 2018, which was down somewhat from 2006 due to faster growth in total HE enrolments than in loan recipient numbers. The average value of loans per student was fairly high in 2018 compared to the average across the rest of the Global South. Malaysian student financial aid disbursements were much higher relative to GDP than across the rest of East Asia and the Global South throughout our period of interest. The pattern shows remarkable growth in disbursements relative to GDP up until 2012 followed by a reduction by half.

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

CATEGORY	PROGRAMS	BASIS OF ALLOCATION	RECIPIENTS	AMOUNTS DISBURSED (USD)
Grants	Basic financial assistance for public universities; financial assistance for the disabled; financial assistance for community college students; federal teaching scholarships for local university first degrees; instructor technical training scheme	Need and vocation-based	ND	ND
Loans	National Higher Education Fund Corporation (PTPTN) loans	Open enrolment for eligible programs	136,842	2,030,211,480

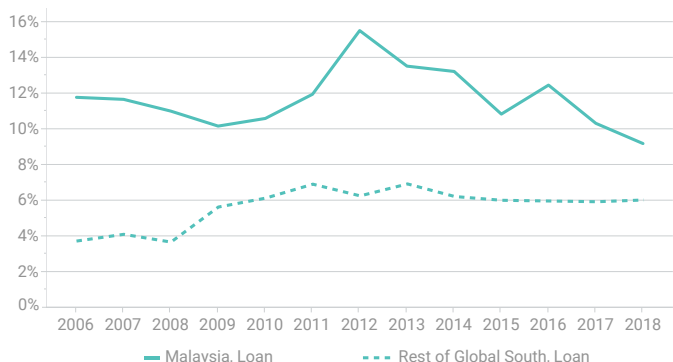
**FIGURE 11** – Total disbursements to students in financial aid relative to gross domestic product in Malaysia, the rest of East Asia and the rest of the Global South, 2006-2018



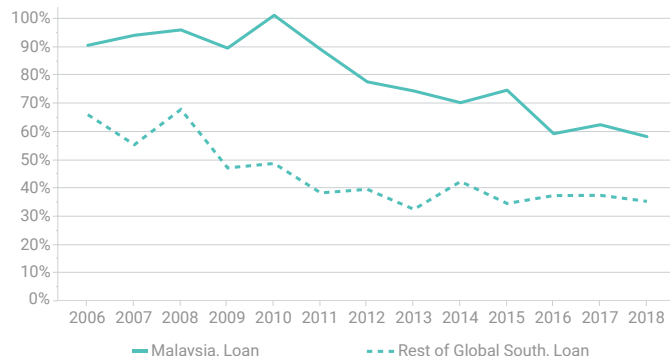
**FIGURE 12** – Change in amounts disbursed to students by form of financial aid in Malaysia and other Global South countries that offer financial aid of this type, 2006-2018 (2006=100)



**FIGURE 13** – Share of higher education students receiving student financial aid by type in Malaysia and other Global South countries that offer financial aid of this type, 2006-2018



**FIGURE 14** – Financial aid per recipient relative to GDP per capita by form of financial aid in Malaysia 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](#).