

12.3.2025

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**Title**

Who should pay for higher education? : a Japanese perspective

**Publication year**

2003

**Source/Footnote**

In: Higher education in Europe. - 28 (2003) 4, S. 559 - 568

**Inventory number**

17373

**Keywords**

Ausland : Japan : Hochschulwesen allgemein ; Ausland : Japan : Studenten, Studium, Lehre ;  
Studiengebühren ; Hochschule : Privathochschule

**Abstract**

A key question is whether or not beneficiaries should pay the entire cost of their higher education. It is clear that the benefits of higher education are broad. They extend to the public domain and are not limited to individual interests. Therefore, the fundamental question is always to what extent and in what form public funds should be used to support higher education. Should such support be given by means of institutional aid or through student loans? This article examines some theories and practices from the Japanese perspective. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)