

Japan

Capital: Tokyo

Population: 120,000,000

Largest cities: Osaka, Yokohama, Sapporo, Kyoto

For many centuries, Japan was closed for foreigners. Today, it is leading industrial and technological power and 1 of the world's richest countries. Most raw materials have to be imported from abroad. Japanese people enjoy a high standard of living, with good health and education systems. Average life expectancy in Japan is amongst the highest in the world. Western influence is strong but people remain proud of their culture and traditions.

Landscape

- mountainous island country (Mt. Fuji)
- lack of lowlands, at coastal areas only

Agriculture and fishing

- intensive agriculture, double-(triple-)cropping
- *rice, wheat, barley, potatoes, fruit trees, vegetables, technical crops (tobacco, sugar cane, sugar beet, soya, cotton, silk)*
- *fishing* = the largest fishing fleet in the world
- fish farms and hundreds of fishing villages along the east Pacific coast

Economic strength

- Japanese = hardworking
- highly developed infrastructure and industrial base (esp. processing industry)
- many of the larger companies = families, i.e. providing housing and health care for their employees
- *electronic goods (electronic components, consumer goods – TVs, cameras, watches and computers, copy and fax devices, etc.)*
- No. 1 in R&D of new technologies
- *car-manufacturing industry, engineering, metallurgy of non-ferrous metals*

Making money

- Japanese invest into land and properties around the world
- the largest commercial banks are Japanese
- Tokyo = commercial and industrial heart of Japan, e.g. the 2nd largest stock exchange, headquarters of many banks and corporations in the CBD
- if earthquake = world would suffer from economic chaos.

Overpopulation

- large population + lack of land for settlements = overcrowded country
- commuting over long distances thanks to well-developed transport infrastructure
- rush hour = guards of subway trains have to push commuters on board

Religion

- Shinto and Buddhism = main religions, merging results in Shinto-Buddhism
- significant Christian community = the 3rd most popular religion of Japan
- many festivals = kimonos (dress)