

## 25. Eastern Asia

**East** (or Eastern) **Asia** is the eastern subregion of Asia. It consists of six countries, from which China covers about 80% of the region. On mainland are located China, Mongolia, South and North Korea. The island part consists of Japan and Taiwan. The region is bounded by East China Sea and South China Sea.



Fill in the map the countries of Eastern Asia:

1. Mongolia (Ulaanbaatar)
2. China (Beijing)
3. Japan (Tokyo)
4. Taiwan (Taipei)
5. North Korea (Pyongyang)
6. South Korea (Seoul)

### Natural conditions

- climate: from tropical to temperate (north of Japan)
  - southern part influenced by monsoons / eastern part by typhoons
  - cold climate in mountains and plateaus
- biomes:
  - deciduous and mixed forest (Japan, north of China and the Korean Peninsula)
  - steppe (Mongolia, China)
  - deserts (China – Gobi and Taklamakan)
  - tundra (plateaus and high mountains),
- mountain ranges: the Himalayas, Karakoram, Pamir, Tian Shan, Altai  
+ Tibetan Plateau
- largest lowland: North China Plain
- rivers: Yangtze, Huang He (Yellow River), Mekong, Amur

## Population

East Asia is home to more than one and a half billion people, from which most live in China. Japan is 10 times less populous than China, but still among the 10 most populous countries on our planet. The highest population density is along coastal areas, rivers and lowlands near the seas or ocean. Deserts and grasslands in the north are sparsely populated, the Tibetan Plateau as well.

Several areas are populated so much that cities there are merging into continuous units – large urban areas (for example Tokyo-Yokohama, Pearl River Delta, Greater Shanghai, etc). The largest city in the region (and in the world) is Tokyo (Greater Tokyo urban area). Among the largest cities in the region are Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Seoul and Hong Kong.

**Hong Kong** is a special administrative region of China, located in the southern part of China, at the Pearl River estuary. The city is known for extreme population density. In the second half of the 20th century, Hong Kong became a major trade hub and financial centre (the third most important financial centre after London and NY). The city has one of the highest per capita incomes in the world. Hong Kong is part of China, but the city has a high degree of autonomy.

The largest ethnic group in the region are Han Chinese (there are over 50 different nations in China). Other notable nations are Japanese and Koreans. The whole region of East Asia is strongly influenced by Buddhism. In China Buddhism is mixed with Confucianism, in Japan with Shintoism. In South Korea also Christianity is widespread. In communist North Korea the religions are forbidden. In China there are many people who claim to be non-religious.

**Japan** is an island country, archipelago of 6,852 islands. The four largest are Honshu, Hokkaido, Kyushu and Shikoku, which make up about 97% of Japan's area. Japan is one of the most developed countries in the world. Japan successfully built its industries more than 100 years ago, but had to rebuild and modernize them after WWII. The most important industries in Japan are machine engineering, electronics and various high-tech industries. The country has quality modern transportation network, part of it are the fastest trains in the world. The most famous are Shinkansen trains.

### Key words:

East Asia, Han Chinese, Shintoism, Hong Kong, Pearl River, Honshu, Hokkaido