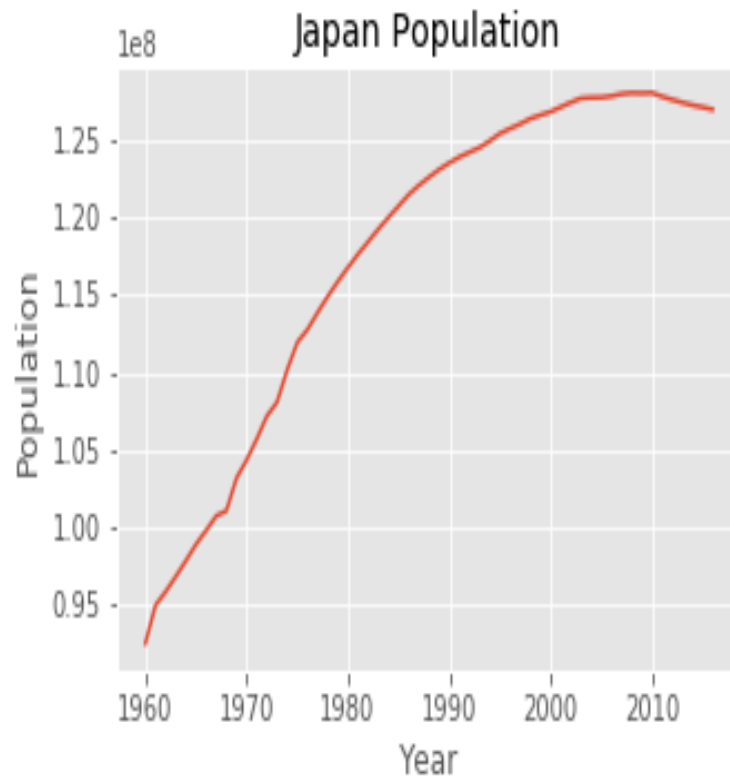


Japan



Coordinates: 35°N 136°E﻿ / ﻿35°N 136°E﻿ / 35; 136Japan (Japanese: Nippon [ippo] or Nihon [iho]; formally Nippon-koku or Nihon-koku, meaning "State of Japan") is a sovereign island nation in East Asia. Located in the Pacific Ocean, it lies off the eastern coast of the Asian mainland and stretches from the Sea of Okhotsk in the north to the East China Sea and China in the southwest. The kanji, or Sino-Japanese characters, that make up Japan's name mean "sun origin", and it is often called the "Land of the Rising Sun". Japan is a stratovolcanic archipelago consisting of about 6,852 islands. The four largest are Honshu, Hokkaido, Kyushu and Shikoku, which make up about ninety-seven percent of Japan's land area and often are referred to as home islands. The country is divided into 47 prefectures in eight regions, with Hokkaido being the northernmost prefecture and Okinawa being the southernmost one. The population of 127 million is the world's tenth largest. Japanese people make up 98.5% of Japan's total population. About 9.1 million people live in Tokyo, the capital of Japan.