

Chapter 2 Status of Japanese-language education by region

1. East Asia

Status of Japanese-language education in East Asia

The number of institutions in East Asia overall is 6,939 institutions (up 7.0% compared to the previous (fiscal 2018) survey), the number of teachers is 39,002 people (down 4.1% compared to the previous survey), and the number of learners is 1,713,833 people (down 1.7% compared to the previous survey), so the number of institutions increased compared to the fiscal 2018 survey, while on the other hand the number of teachers and the number of learners declined slightly. Nevertheless, East Asia still accounted for 52.3% of the number of teachers and 45.2% of the number of learners in the world overall.

The number of institutions is highest in China (2,965 institutions), followed by the Republic of Korea (2,868 institutions), which means that the top two countries switched places from the previous survey. Meanwhile, Taiwan remains in third place (907 institutions) and there are no changes in the ranking beyond that point. The order of countries with the highest numbers of teachers (China with 21,361 people, the Republic of Korea with 13,229 people, and Taiwan with 3,375 people) and the highest numbers of learners (China with 1,057,318 people, the Republic of Korea with 470,334 people, and Taiwan with 143,632 people) are also the same. These three countries or regions alone account for 97.5% of the learners in East Asia (China accounting for 61.7% of the region overall, the Republic of Korea 27.4%, and Taiwan 8.4%), with this figure representing a slight decrease from the 97.8% of the previous survey. While the number of learners in China has increased by 52,693 people, the number of learners decreased in the Republic of Korea by 61,177 people and in Taiwan by 26,527 people, which

means that the share of learners accounted for by China has grown even larger since the previous survey.

Regarding the number of learners in the East Asia region, looking at the percentages by educational stage, primary education is low at 0.6%, secondary education is 43.1%, higher education is 39.9%, and non-school education is 16.4%, so secondary education made up the highest percentage of learners, surpassing higher education, which was highest in the fiscal 2018 survey. (Results of the previous survey were secondary education with 32.2% and higher education with 39.8%.)

The online class implementation ratio for the East Asia region overall was 58.5%. While this figure is low compared with the ratio for the world overall (63.1%), the three countries and regions of Hong Kong (78.1%), Mongolia (76.1%), and China (67.1%) were higher than the global percentage, with Hong Kong and Mongolia in particular over 10 points higher.

As for the objectives of Japanese-language learning, the most common response was “interest in the Japanese language” (60.2%), switching spots with “interest in anime, manga, J-POP, fashion, etc.” (56.8%) which had ranked first in the previous survey. Ranking third was “advancement in education in home country” (50.9%), which is a very high percentage compared to the results of 35.6% for the world overall. Objectives related to work and employment, “current or future work in home country” (30.4%) and “future work in Japan” (17.8%) were both 10 points lower than the respective results for the world overall.

Table 2-1-1 Number of institutions, number of teachers, and number of learners in East Asia

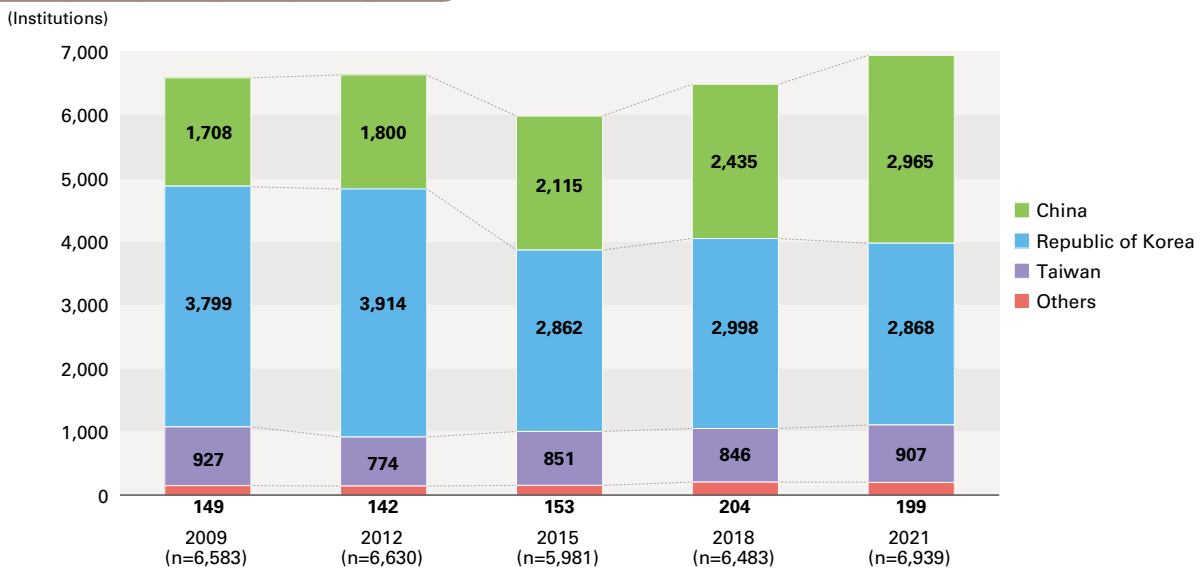
(Listed in order of the number of learners in 2021)

Country and region	2021									Population* (People)	2018		
	Institutions (Institutions)	Teachers (People)	Learners (People)	Learners per 100,000 population (People)	Composition by educational stage (Learners) (People)				Institutions (Institutions)		Teachers (People)	Learners (People)	
					Primary education	Secondary education	Higher education	Non- school education					
China	2,965	21,361	1,057,318	74.9	3,442	335,876	557,153	160,847	1,411,778,724	2,435	20,220	1,004,625	
Republic of Korea	2,868	13,229	470,334	907.5	156	347,138	55,708	67,332	51,829,136	2,998	15,345	531,511	
Taiwan	907	3,375	143,632	614.5	3,270	46,197	61,990	32,175	23,375,314	846	4,106	170,159	
Hong Kong	73	625	27,665	377.1	1,260	3,537	6,213	16,655	7,336,585	70	575	24,558	
Mongolia	117	363	13,334	417.1	2,817	5,232	2,474	2,811	3,197,020	128	363	11,755	
Macao	9	49	1,550	247.7	69	87	675	719	625,674	6	63	1,502	
East Asia overall	6,939	39,002	1,713,833	-	11,014	738,067	684,213	280,539	-	6,483	40,672	1,744,110	

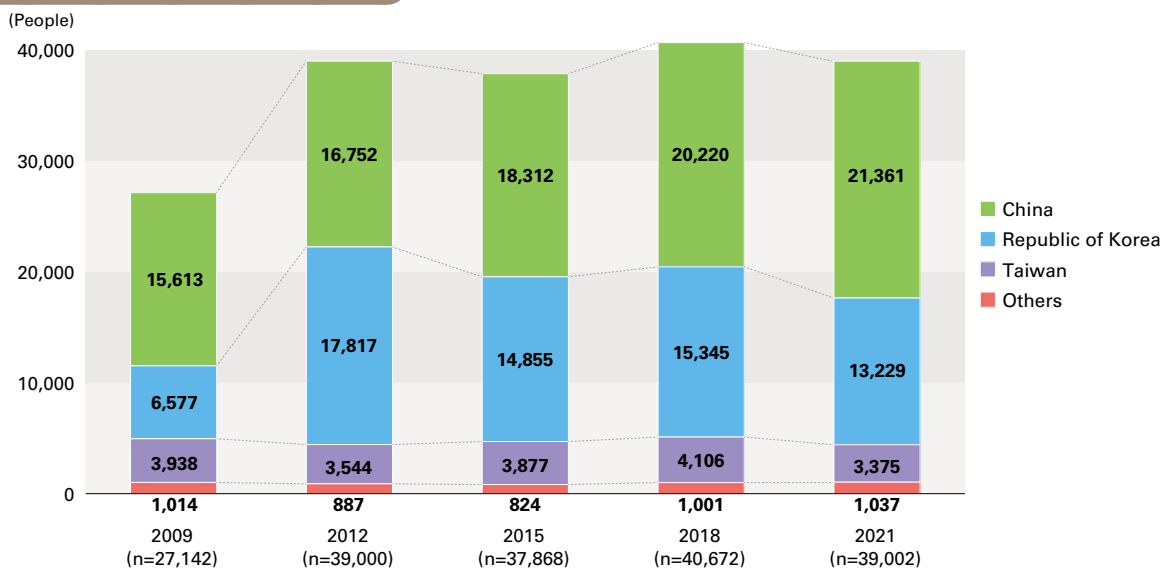
*Source: Population and Vital Statistics Report (as of 3 June 2022), by United Nations

Only the data of Taiwan was quoted for December 2021 figures, from the homepage of the Department of Statistics, Taiwan Ministry of the Interior

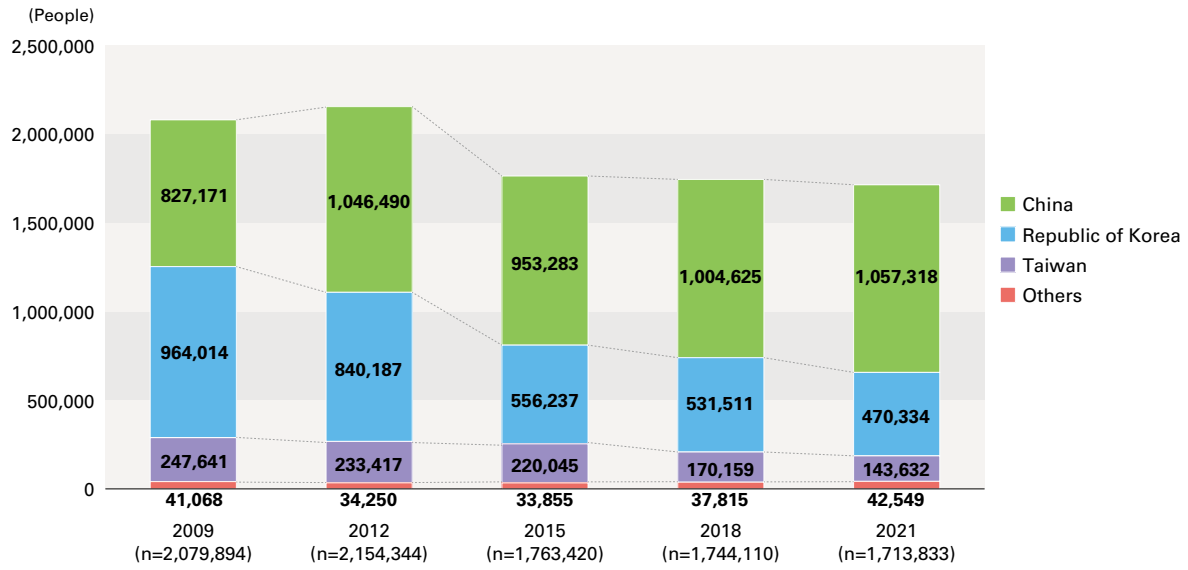
Graph 2-1-1 Number of institutions in East Asia



Graph 2-1-2 Number of Teachers in East Asia



Graph 2-1-3 Number of Learners in East Asia



Graph 2-1-4 Percentages of learners by educational stage in East Asia

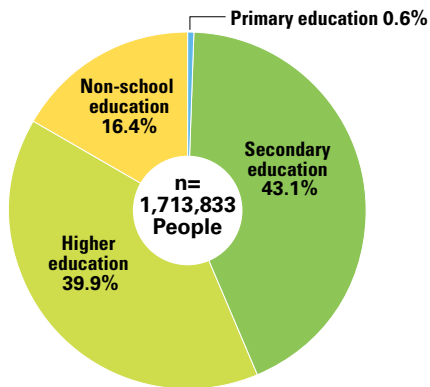
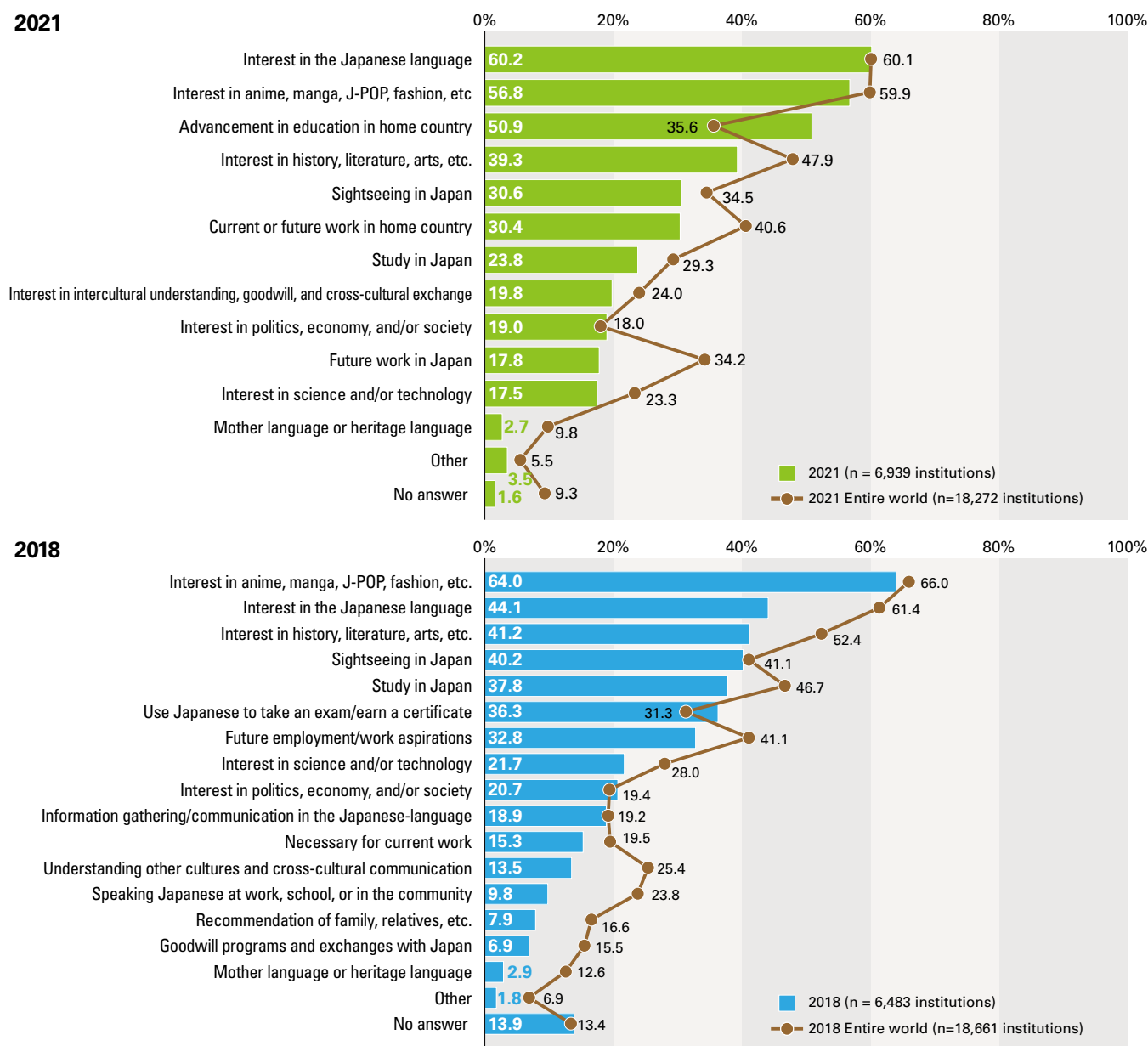


Table 2-1-2 Online class implementation ratio in East Asia

Country and region	Total number of institutions in the country and region	Online class implementation	
		(Institutions)	(%)
China	2,965	1,989	67.1
Republic of Korea	2,868	1,642	57.3
Taiwan	907	280	30.9
Mongolia	117	89	76.1
Hong Kong	73	57	78.1
Macao	9	3	33.3
East Asia overall	6,939	4,060	58.5

Graph 2-1-5 Objectives of Japanese-language learning in East Asia



Trends in each country and region

[China]

Compared with the fiscal 2018 survey, the number of institutions, the number of teachers, and the number of learners all increased.

China was first in the world for the number of institutions, surpassing the Republic of Korea, which had been first-ranked in the previous survey, and Indonesia, which had ranked second, and has consistently ranked first for the number of teachers since the survey before last (fiscal 2015). China also continues to be the only country in the world with over a million Japanese-language learners as in the previous survey, but looking at increases and decreases by educational stage, secondary

education learners increased significantly by 245,767 people (going from 90,109 people to 335,876 people, up 272.7% compared to the previous survey), whereas non-school education learners decreased significantly by 174,322 people (going from 335,169 people to 160,847 people, down 52.0% compared to the previous survey).

The large increase in secondary education learners is due, as seen in the previous survey, to more Chinese students selecting Japanese as the foreign-language subject in their university entrance exams because it is considered easier to score highly on, which has led to an increase in the schools offering Japanese-language classes. Out of the 1,351 secondary education institutions, 1,243

institutions, or over 90%, indicated that the objective of Japanese-language learning was “advancement in education in home country,” whereas around 50% of secondary education institutions responded “use Japanese to take an exam/earn a certificate” in the previous survey, indicating that the number of learners enrolling in Japanese-language classes for the purpose of taking university entrance examinations is increasing. This trend continues to be prominent in the southern region (Guangdong Province, Guizhou Province, Jiangsu Province, Zhejiang Province, etc.), and in Guangdong Province in particular, the number of learners enrolled in secondary education institutions has increased markedly and is nearly 8 times that of the previous survey.

On the other hand, the number of institutions, teachers, and learners in the category of non-school education have all significantly decreased. This is due to local government policies that have restricted non-school learning to reduce the burden on children and students and a decrease in travel to Japan to study or for sightseeing purposes because of the COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in less demand for Japanese-language education.

Meanwhile, although there were no major changes in primary education or higher education to the extent seen in the two categories mentioned above, both showed a decrease. In higher education in particular, the number of learners continues to be on a declining trend due to the withdrawal of Japanese companies from the Chinese market and the stagnation of the Japanese economy, which make it difficult to link Japanese-language education to a career after graduation.

While China was continuing to enforce strict measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 at the time the survey was implemented, the online class implementation ratio for the country overall was 67.1%. Regions where many institutions began providing online classes included Guangdong Province and Jiangsu Province, which coincide with the regions where the number of learners has increased.

The spreadsheets for survey results by province (1-3a and 1-3b) are available on the Japan Foundation website.

[The Republic of Korea]

In the fiscal 2021 survey, the number of institutions, teachers, and learners all declined. In particular, the number of teachers in the country overall decreased by 2,116 people (down 13.8% compared to the previous survey) and the number of learners decreased by 61,177 people (down 11.5% compared to the previous survey), both representing a decline of over 10%. The number

of learners has been on a declining trend since the fiscal 2012 survey, and looking at the results by educational stage, the major declines in the number of learners are in secondary education and non-school institutions.

The number of Japanese-language learners in secondary education has decreased by 64,117 people (down 15.6% compared to the previous survey). This is because the number of students itself has been decreasing due to the falling birth rate, as has been the case since the previous survey, which is thought to be impacting all second foreign-language subjects, including Japanese, which are elective subjects in the secondary education curriculum.

With regard to non-school education, although a certain number of institutions offer online classes, the COVID-19 pandemic has led to a marked temporary suspension of classes at educational institutions that are based on in-person learning, with a decrease of 12,670 people (down 15.8% compared to the previous survey).

As for higher education, however, the online class implementation ratio was higher than in other educational stages in the Republic of Korea, and the number of students has increased by 15,934 people (up 40.1% compared to the previous survey) because of the presence of universities offering distance learning and other such institutions. As seen in secondary education, the number of students is decreasing due to the decline in the birth rate, and as such future developments need to be monitored closely.

[Taiwan]

While the number of institutions has increased since the previous survey by 61 institutions (up 7.2% compared to the previous survey), the number of teachers decreased by 731 people (down 17.8% compared to the previous survey), and the number of learners decreased by 26,527 people (down 15.6% compared to the previous survey), resulting in Taiwan moving down one spot to 8th in the world for the number of Japanese-language learners.

Turning to the survey results by educational stage, while secondary education showed an increase in the number of institutions by 38 (up 9.9% compared to the previous survey), the number of learners in secondary education decreased by 8,354 people (down 15.3% compared to the previous survey). Looking at the breakdown, the number of learners in lower secondary education actually increased, but the number in upper secondary education decreased by 8,839 people (down 17.4% compared to the previous survey). Meanwhile, one of the reasons for the increase in the number of institutions is the establishment of new Japanese-language classes as a result

of educational system reforms that allow schools to offer new classes at their discretion. As for the decline in the number of learners, one of the primary reasons is the ongoing decreasing trend in the number of students due to Taiwan's falling birth rate, which is continuing from the previous survey.

Moreover, the decrease seen in higher education, which accounts for the highest percentage of Japanese-language learners in Taiwan, is also continuing from the previous survey, and is mainly due to the decrease in the population that goes to university due to the falling birth rate and the resulting succession of integrations and abolitions of universities, faculties, and academic departments. While the number of institutions decreased only slightly by 5 (down 3.6% compared to the previous survey), the number of learners decreased by 8,443 people (down 12.0% compared to the previous survey).

With regard to non-school education, the number of institutions remained basically flat, increasing slightly by 3 institutions (up 0.9% compared to the previous survey), but the number of teachers and learners both fell off sharply (decreasing by 656 people (down 33.6% compared to the previous survey) and 10,426 people (down 24.5% compared to the previous survey), respectively). The reason for the decline is the drop in the number of learners enrolled at institutions, as COVID-19 lockdowns have resulted in a loss of opportunities to join in-person classes. On the other hand, 81 of the 149 newly-opened institutions are institutions for people in the retirement age bracket, indicating that Japanese-language learning is becoming an established part of lifelong learning.

[Hong Kong]

The number of institutions, teachers, and learners have all increased. And while the number of learners increased in all stages of education, secondary education

in particular saw a significant jump with an increase of 1,506 people (up 74.2% compared to the previous survey). This increase can be attributed to many learners choosing Japanese as their foreign language subject for university entrance exams, and the number of institutions offering Japanese-language education also being on the rise. Interest in Japan is high in Hong Kong as a whole, and looking at the number of people taking the Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT), there were more applicants for each level of the test when it was held in December 2021 compared to when it was held in December 2018 at the time of the previous survey, which is another indication that the number of learners is increasing in Hong Kong. While on the one hand, it is not possible to predict whether this kind of increasing trend will continue in the future, as Hong Kong's school-age population is expected to shrink due to the decline in the birth rate and other factors, once the outbreak of COVID-19 subsides and it becomes possible to travel freely again, the desire to visit, study, and work in Japan may be rekindled, leading in turn to an increase in the number of learners.

[Mongolia]

Although the number of institutions decreased compared to the fiscal 2018 survey, the number of teachers was unchanged and the number of learners increased by 1,579 people (up 13.4% compared to the previous survey), with the increasing trend in the number of learners continuing on since the survey before last. Many institutions that focus on sending technical interns to Japan have temporarily suspended classes due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but the need for Japanese-language education in Mongolia continues to be high, as evidenced by over 75% of the institutions in the country overall conducting online classes as well as a trend toward opening new non-school institutions.