

East Asia Economic Pulse: Semiconductor Surge, FDI Shifts, and Inflationary

East Asia Economy · Answer Key · 20 Questions

1. In early May 2026, South Korea's export data showed a significant year-on-year increase. Which product category was the primary driver of this surge, reaching a record high for the same period in May?

- A) Automotive parts
- B) Petroleum products
- C) Semiconductors**
- D) Vessels

2. Which East Asian nation saw a substantial year-on-year increase of 42.9% in total foreign direct investment (FDI) in the first quarter of 2026, largely driven by new projects in manufacturing and processing?

- A) Japan
- B) South Korea
- C) Taiwan
- D) Vietnam**

3. According to preliminary data for the first 10 days of May 2026, what percentage of South Korea's total exports did semiconductors account for, representing a significant year-on-year increase in their share?

- A) 35.2%
- B) 46.3%**
- C) 58.1%
- D) 67.5%

4. In Q1 2026, Vietnam's FDI inflows reached US\$15.2 billion. Which sector continued to attract the largest share of this new FDI, accounting for approximately 69% of the newly registered capital?

- A) Real Estate
- B) Technology and IT
- C) Manufacturing and Processing**
- D) Finance and Banking

5. Thailand's exports reached a record high in March 2026, with a year-on-year increase of 18.7%. Which sector, driven by AI and data center technology, was a primary contributor to this growth?

- A) Agriculture and food products
- B) Electronics and electrical appliances**
- C) Automotive manufacturing
- D) Tourism services

6. In early May 2026, South Korea's non-chip exports saw a significant decline. What was the value of these non-chip exports in the first 10 days of May, falling below \$10 billion for the first time in seven months?

- A) \$12.5 billion
- B) \$9.9 billion**
- C) \$11.2 billion
- D) \$8.7 billion

7. During Q1 2026, Vietnam saw a significant increase in FDI. Which country was the largest single investor in Vietnam during this period, contributing approximately 52% of the total new capital?

- A) China
- B) South Korea
- C) Singapore**
- D) Japan

8. In March 2026, Thailand's trade balance resulted in a deficit. What was the value of this trade deficit for the month?

- A) US\$1.5 billion
- B) US\$3.34 billion**
- C) US\$5.1 billion
- D) US\$7.8 billion

9. Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company (TSMC) reported strong Q1 2026 earnings. What was the year-over-year increase in TSMC's net revenue for this quarter?

- A) 25.8%
- B) 30.2%
- C) 40.6%**
- D) 55.1%

10. According to data released in early May 2026, what was the approximate annual inflation rate in the Philippines for April 2026, which significantly exceeded the central bank's forecast?

- A) 3.1%
- B) 4.1%
- C) 7.2%**
- D) 5.8%

11. In Q1 2026, China's GDP grew by 5.0% year-on-year. Which component of the economy experienced a significant surge of 14.7% year-on-year, contributing to this growth?

- A) Domestic Consumption
- B) Services Output
- C) Retail Sales
- D) Exports**

12. Malaysia is aiming to attract a significant amount in green investments over the next decade. What is the projected range for this capital inflow, according to statements made in April 2026?

- A) US\$10-20 billion
- B) US\$20-30 billion
- C) US\$30-40 billion**
- D) US\$50-60 billion

13. In early May 2026, South Korea's trade balance for the first 10 days of the month recorded a surplus. What was the approximate value of this trade surplus?

- A) US\$0.5 billion
- B) US\$1.7 billion**
- C) US\$2.3 billion
- D) US\$3.1 billion

14. What was the projected annualized GDP growth rate for Japan in the first quarter of 2026, according to private sector forecasts compiled in mid-May 2026?

- A) 0.4%
- B) 1.3%
- C) 1.8%**
- D) 2.5%

15. In Q1 2026, Vietnam's FDI disbursement reached a five-year high. What was the estimated value of this disbursed FDI for the quarter?

- A) US\$3.5 billion
- B) US\$5.41 billion**
- C) US\$7.2 billion
- D) US\$10.5 billion

16. In April 2026, the Philippines reported its highest inflation rate in three years. What was this rate?

- A) 4.1%
- B) 5.8%
- C) 7.2%**
- D) 3.5%

17. As of early May 2026, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) raised its policy rate to what percentage to combat rising inflation?

- A) 4.0%
- B) 4.5%**
- C) 5.0%
- D) 5.25%

18. Which of the following factors was identified as a key driver for the projected GDP growth in Japan for Q1 2026, despite some global economic uncertainties?

- A) Government spending on infrastructure
- B) A recovery in exports and solid domestic demand**
- C) A surge in tourism revenue
- D) Increased foreign investment in real estate

19. In Q1 2026, China's industrial producer purchase price index (PPI) turned positive year-on-year for the first time in over three years. What was the percentage increase in March 2026?

- A) 0.1%
- B) 0.5%
- C) 0.8%**
- D) 1.2%

20. In early May 2026, Singapore's fintech sector was noted for its progress in specific areas. Which of the following was highlighted as a key area of advancement and innovation?

- A) Expansion into cryptocurrency mining
- B) Development of AI-powered anti-money laundering solutions
- C) Cross-border payment systems through Project Nexus and tokenised assets**
- D) Introduction of blockchain-based stock trading platforms