AKITA PREFECTURE

Main City: Akita City
Population: 1,055,000 people ranking 38/47 (2013) [1]
Area: 11,612 km² [2]

Geographical / Landscape description
Located in the north of Honshu, Akita Prefecture faces the Sea of Japan in the west and is bordered by four other prefectures: Aomori in the north, Iwate in the east, Miyagi in the southeast, and Yamagata in the south. The Ou Mountains mark the eastern border of the prefecture, and the higher Dewa Mountains run parallel through the centre of the prefecture. [2]

Climate
The climate in Akita is characterised by long winters and short summers. The coastal regions of Akita tend to be mild, with a warm current circulating around the area. Compared to the coast, the interior regions of Akita Prefecture are hotter in the summer and colder in the winter with lots of snow fall. [2]

Time zone
GMT +7 in summer (+8 in winter)

International dialling code: 0081

Recent history, culture
Akita is famous for rice farming and its sake breweries, it is well known for having the highest consumption of sake in Japan. Akita is also believed to be home to the most beautiful women in Japan who are known as “Akita bijin”, or “beauties of Akita”, such as the famed poet Ono no Komachi (ca. 825 – ca. 900).
The region is thought to be the origin of the Akita breed of dog which carries the prefecture's name. [2]

Economic overview
In terms of manufacturing industries, Akita Prefecture is characterized by the high weight of the electronic component/device industry, which accounts for approximately 30% of the total value of shipments from the prefecture, and has the largest workforce in Akita Prefecture, thus establishing itself as the leading industry of the prefecture. In the past, Akita was one of the few mining regions in Japan, and that is why the prefecture boasts an advanced metal recycling industry that takes advantage of mineral processing technologies. In addition, inflow of the automotive and other transport equipment industries into the Tohoku district is distinct, and the growth in the medical/pharmaceutical industry exemplifies the accelerating aging of the population in the prefecture. [3]

Economic Indicators

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<tr>
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<th>Akita Prefecture</th>
<th>All Japan</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population (2013) [1]</td>
<td>1,055,000</td>
<td>127,350,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unemployment rate (2012) [4]</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
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<td>GPD (2010) [5]</td>
<td>0.7% of Japan’s</td>
<td>495 trillion Yen</td>
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Infrastructure

Road/railways

Akita Expressway provides access from Akita to Sendai in approximately three hours and seven hours to Tokyo. Tokyo in approximately four hours from Akita by Shinkansen. In Akita Port where the distance between a railway station and a container berth is extremely short, the national government started a model experiment of sea-and-rail transport that carries marine freight containers on a train. [6]

Shipping

Container ship services are regularly operating routes from Akita Port to Korea and China. [6]

Civil Aviation

Akita Airport has daily flights to Japan's major cities as well as international one to Korea. [7]

Living Environment

Surrounded by a rich natural environment as represented by Shirakami-Sanchi, a UNESCO World Natural Heritage site, and enriched by agricultural products cultivated from clear water and on fertile plains, Akita Prefecture is an area where residents can enjoy an affluent, comfortable life. The home ownership rate and average lot area of houses are one of the highest in Japan. Low levels of crime and traffic accidents contribute to the quality of life in Akita. The low cost of employment and land for business is also the appeal of site location in Akita. [8]

Major types of economic activities

Manufacturing

In Akita Prefecture, the electronic parts and devices industry carries of lot of weight. Such companies in the Honjo and Yuri areas make up the manufacturing industry of the prefecture.

In recent year, groups of recycling and environmental companies that make use of mining technology have formed, as well as companies in the Medical and Pharmaceutical fields. There is also movement of companies in the automotive and aircraft fields as well. Akita Prefecture has established and supports 5 such industrial clusters. [9]

In 2011, the manufacturing industry's shipment value was principally composed of electronic components (26.4%), food and related products (8.3%) and machinery equipment (7.7%). [10]

R&D, Innovation, Scientific research

Joint research projects with industry as well as government-industry-academia linked projects are actively pursued at public research institutes, such as the Akita Industrial Technology Center and the Akita Research Institute of Food and Brewing. Effort is being put into similar joint ventures for the further benefit of society. [9]

Opportunities for EU Investors / Exporters / Importers

Promising sectors for cooperation

Long-established industries: food and beverages, manufacturing industries (electronic parts and devices, iron and steel, nonferrous metals, chemical and petroleum products, electronic and transportation machinery, wood processing industries), software industries.

Growing industries: renewable energy-related industries, recycling-based industries, medical and pharmaceutical related industries. [3][9]
Financial/logistic support

*Subsidies for fixed assets investments and new employment
*Subsidies for companies establishing new factories and laboratories through business consolidation, new expansions and business succession
*Availability of a fixed-rate loan system for industrial location investments
*Preferential taxation: tax exemptions under certain conditions
*A two-year subsidy for companies from outside the prefecture, affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake, which are leasing factories, land or other facilities within the prefecture.


Setting up a business in Akita

Industrial Agglomeration Division, Department of Industry & Labor
3-1-1 Sanno, Akita-city, Akita Prefecture 010-8570
TEL: +81(0)18-860-2251  FAX: +81(0)18-860-3869

Other contacts:

Akita Prefecture  
[http://www.pref.akita.lg.jp](http://www.pref.akita.lg.jp)
Akita Industrial Technology Center  
[http://www.rdc.pref.akita.jp](http://www.rdc.pref.akita.jp)
Akita Research Institute of Food and Brewing  
Institute of Wood Technology  
Akita Prefectural Tourist Federation  

Sources and footnotes

[1] [http://www.stat.go.jp/data/jinsui/2.htm](http://www.stat.go.jp/data/jinsui/2.htm)
[10] [http://www.stat.go.jp/data/e-census/2012/sokuho/gaiyo.htm](http://www.stat.go.jp/data/e-census/2012/sokuho/gaiyo.htm)
Lantern festival in Akita

Mount Chokai


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