

SHIMANE PREFECTURE



Prefecture's Flag

Main City: Matsue

Population: 703,000 people, ranking 46/47 prefecture (2013) [1]

Area: 6,707 km² [2]

Latest update: August 2013



Geographical / Landscape description

The prefecture has an area elongated from east to west facing the Chugoku Mountain Range on the south side and to the Sea of Japan on the north side. It is divided into the Izumo Region in the east, the Iwami Region in the west and the Oki Region, a small group of islands off the northern coast. Most of the cities are near the shoreline of the Sea of Japan. Forest area is 80% of the land making it one of the highest rates in Japan. [2]

Climate

The prefecture has a sub-tropical climate. Winter is cloudy with some snow and summer is humid. [2]

Time zone

GMT +7 in summer (+8 in winter)

International dialling code: 0081

Recent history, culture

Shimane was the first place of residence in Japan of Lafcadio Hearn (1850-1904) an Irish-Greek writer who became one of the first foreigners to take Japanese citizenship due to his passion for the country. With a passionate interest in Japanese traditional culture, he used Matsue as a stage to introduce Japanese culture to the world through his writings; he is also the "exporter" of Judo to America. Still today, his history and fame are well known in the area and his museum and the villa where he lived are two tourist attractions not to be missed. [3][4]

Economic overview

The service industry, and predominantly the retail sector, makes the largest contribution to the prefecture's economy. Thanks to a relatively cheap land and easy access to water resources, manufacturing industries of electronic components and IT products are well implemented in the prefecture. Recently the prefecture has implemented various means of support for the IT industry. [2][5]

Economic Indicators

	Shimane Prefecture	All Japan
Population (2013) [1]	703,000	127,350,000
Unemployment rate (2012) [6]	2.5%	4.3%
GPD (2010) [7]	0.46% of Japan's	495 trillion Yen

Infrastructure

Road/railways

The prefecture is 3 hours drive from Osaka and Hiroshima, and nearly 6 hours by train from Tokyo. [8]

Shipping

Hamada Port is growing as the largest physical distribution centre in Shimane. It has been taking on an increasingly important role as a gateway for international trade with the Japan Sea Rim region. [8]

Civil Aviation

Shimane Prefecture has three airports at Izumo, Hagi-Iwami, and Oki all managing inland flights to major Japanese cities. [8]

Living Environment

Shimane has the highest percentage of home owners in Japan. Compared to urban areas, the average land price is low, making the dream of owning a home more realistic. Commuting to work or school in a crowded train does not happen here. Compared to urban areas, women and elderly people use cars for everyday living. The average commute time of Shimane Prefecture is approximately half of that in Tokyo, allowing people more leisure time. This is one of the key benefits of living in Shimane. [9]

Major types of economic activities

Agriculture, natural resources

With forest areas covering 80% of the prefecture, forestry plays an important role. Agriculture is mostly focused on rice farming.

With abundant fishing waters, energy is put into developing resource management techniques to protect and nurture the local fishing industry. [4]

Manufacturing, construction

The prefecture is characterized by its cluster of primary materials manufacturing industries, with recent years witnessing the increased participation of companies from the telecommunications equipment, electronic component, general machinery and other processing and assembly sectors. [10]

In 2011, the manufacturing industry's shipment value was principally composed of iron & steel (15.4%), electronic components (13.6%), and information & communication (13.4%). [11]

R&D, Innovation, Scientific research

The Shimane Institute for Industrial Technology provides support for R&D conducted towards the creation of new industries and technical assistance to already established business organisations. [12]

Opportunities for EU Investors / Exporters / Importers

Promising sectors for cooperation

Long-established industries: agriculture, forestry, fisheries, manufacturing industries (machinery, metal, processed marine products, precision machinery), IT-related industries. [4] [5]

Financial/logistic support

No recent incentive-related information is available on English-language sites.

- Shimane Industrial Promotion Foundation: one-stop support and consulting service for businesses
- Specific supports for IT industries

More information: <http://www.joho-shimane.or.jp/english.html>
http://www.pref.shimane.lg.jp/krichi/yugu_seido/
<http://www.pref.shimane.lg.jp/itsangyo/>

Setting up a business in Shimane

Shimane Industrial Promotion Foundation
Techno Arc-shimane, Hokuryo-cho 1
Matsue 690-0816
TEL: +81(0)852-60-5110 FAX: +81(0)852-60-5105
<http://www.joho-shimane.or.jp/english.html>

Other contacts:

Shimane Prefecture
<http://www1.pref.shimane.lg.jp/contents/kokusai/kokusai-e/index.html>
Shimane Institute for Industrial Technology
<http://www.shimane-iit.jp/english/english.htm>
Shimane Style
<http://www.shimane-style.com/>
Shimane Prefectural Tourism Federation
<http://www.kankou-shimane.com/en/>

Sources and footnotes

- [1] <http://www.stat.go.jp/data/jinsui/2.htm>
- [2] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shimane_prefecture
- [3] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lafcadio_Hearn
- [4] <http://www1.pref.shimane.lg.jp/contents/kokusai/kokusai-e/f-05/05.html>
- [5] <http://www.jetro.go.jp/en/invest/region/shimane/>
- [6] <http://www.stat.go.jp/data/roudou/pref/index.htm>
- [7] http://www.esri.cao.go.jp/jp/sna/sonota/kenmin/kenmin_top.html
- [8] <http://www.jetro.go.jp/en/invest/region/shimane/infra.html>
- [9] <http://www.jetro.go.jp/en/invest/region/shimane/living.html>
- [10] <http://www.jetro.go.jp/en/invest/region/shimane/icinfo.html>
- [11] <http://www.stat.go.jp/data/e-census/2012/sokuho/gaiyo.htm>
- [12] <http://www.shimane-iit.jp/english/english.htm>

Garden of the Adachi Museum of Art



Matsue Castle



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