

SHIGA PREFECTURE

Latest update: August 2013



Shiga Prefecture's flag

Main City: Otsu

Population: 1,416,000 people, ranking 26/47 prefecture (2013) [1]

Area: 4,017 km² [2]



Geographical / Landscape description

This is a landlocked prefecture. Japan's largest lake, Lake Biwa, is located in the central part and acts as a water supply for the Kansai region. Plains stretch to the eastern coast of Lake Biwa while mountains occupy the west, northeast and southeast areas. [2]

Climate

Shiga's climate sharply varies between north and south. Southern Shiga is usually warm, but northern Shiga is typically cold with high snowfall and is home to many skiing grounds. [2]

Time zone

GMT +7 in summer (+8 in winter)

International dialling code: 0081

Recent history, culture

Shiga was formerly known as the Ohmi region. Ohmi merchants became very famous throughout Japan as they were hard workers who created commercial codes of conduct and business ethics that inspired the founders of today's largest Japanese companies such as Panasonic, Honda and Sony.

Some of their precepts were:

- Sampo-yoshi: satisfaction among the three parties concerned in business. "Benefit to company, customer and society"
- Calculation and aptitude for business: be wise, do not speculate and avoid unfair competition, do not use political influence in business
- Be honest and hardworking
- Trade at low-margin, high turnover: look for the long term and not short term trades
- Contribute to society: use the money from trade to support the development of society [3]

Economic overview

Shiga Prefecture makes effective use of its resources and potential in an effort to create new industries with unique characteristics. Specifically, the prefecture has implemented policies to promote local industries by placing an emphasis on such fields as new energy and energy conservation, biotech and life sciences, collaboration between medicine and industry, tourism, and IT. [4]

Economic Indicators

	Shiga Prefecture	All Japan
Population (2013) [1]	1,416,000	127,350,000
Unemployment rate (2012) [5]	4.3%	4.3%
GPD (2010) [6]	1.2% of Japan's	495 trillion Yen

Infrastructure

Road/railways

Various expressways and Shinkansen (bullet train) lines ensure easy access to all areas of the country. [7]

Shipping

Shiga is a landlocked prefecture with easy access to the major ports of Tsuruga, Osaka, Yokkaichi and Nagoya nearby. [7]

Civil Aviation

There is no local airport but the prefecture has good connections to the international airports in Osaka and Nagoya.

Living Environment

Lake Biwa is a major touristic spot in the prefecture especially during the summer season. Due to its importance as a water supply for the Kansai region, the prefecture is well aware of the importance of environmental issues and regularly supports regulations for water quality and the preservation of the environment. [8]

Major types of economic activities

Agriculture, natural resources

Cultivated areas occupy nearly one-sixth of the prefecture. Rice is the principal crop: over 90 percent of the farmlands are rice fields. Eastern Shiga is famous for cattle breeding and south-eastern Shiga is famous for green tea. On Lake Biwa, some people are engaged in fishery and freshwater pearl farming. Since 2003 the prefecture has been successfully promoting the practice and establishment of ecological agriculture that is friendly to Lake Biwa. [2][8]

Manufacturing

In 2011, the manufacturing industry's shipment value was principally composed of chemicals (14.2%), transport machinery (11.9%), and electronic components (10.8%). [9]

Major companies manufacturing solar power cells/modules and lithium-ion batteries and a large number of companies supplying them have located to Shiga, creating a supply chain centred in the prefecture. [10]

R&D, Innovation, Scientific research

Nagahama Institute of Bio-Science and Technology, Nagahama Science Park and Nagahama Bio Incubation Center all formed through a partnership among industry, government, and academia to support bioscience research and promote development of new products to be commercialized with the aim of revitalizing the local community. [11]

Opportunities for EU Investors / Exporters / Importers

Promising sectors for cooperation

Long-established industries: automotive-related, electrical equipment, devices, chemicals, new energy.
Emerging industries: biotechnology. [4] [11]

Financial/logistic support

Data available only in Japanese.

More information: <http://www.pref.shiga.lg.jp/f/shinsangyo/richi/richi-yuuguu.html>

Setting up a business in Shiga

Business Attraction Office

4-1-1 Kyomachi, Otsu-city, Shiga Prefecture 520-8577

TEL: +81(0)77-528-3792 FAX: +81(0)77-528-4876

Other contacts:

Shiga Prefecture

<http://www.pref.shiga.lg.jp/multilingual/english/>

Nagahama Bio Incubation Center

http://www.city.nagahama.shiga.jp/section/nagahama_corpora/en/location03.html

Nagahama Institute of Bio-Science and Technology

<http://www.nagahama-i-bio.ac.jp/english/index.html>

Travel Guide of Shiga Prefecture

<http://en.biwako-visitors.jp/>

Sources and footnotes

- [1] <http://www.stat.go.jp/data/jinsui/2.htm>
- [2] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shiga_Prefecture
- [3] Japan Close-up magazine June 2012 issue, "The righteous merchants of ohmi" pgs. 12-15
- [4] <http://www.jetro.go.jp/en/invest/region/shiga/>
- [5] <http://www.stat.go.jp/data/roudou/pref/index.htm>
- [6] http://www.esri.cao.go.jp/jp/sna/sonota/kenmin/kenmin_top.html
- [7] <http://www.jetro.go.jp/en/invest/region/shiga/infra.html>
- [8] <http://www.pref.shiga.lg.jp/multilingual/english/about/environment.html>
- [9] <http://www.stat.go.jp/data/e-census/2012/sokuho/gaiyo.htm>
- [10] <http://www.jetro.go.jp/en/invest/region/shiga/icinfo.html>
- [11] <http://www.nagahama-i-bio.ac.jp/english/index.html>

Merchant mansions in Omihachiman



Pagoda of Ishiyamadera temple



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