The Symbols of Hyogo

Prefectural Flag

The Chinese character “Hyo” of “Hyogo” stands out as white waves against a cerulean background, representing Hyogo Prefecture facing seas on both its north and south sides.

Prefectural Flower: Nojigiku

The Wild Chrysanthemum, or Nojigiku in Japanese, which produces white flowers in November, was chosen as the flower of Hyogo Prefecture when NHK (Japan Broadcasting Corporation) held an event to name a symbolic flower for each prefecture.

Prefectural Tree: Kusu-no-ki

With a form full of vigor and vitality, the Camphor Tree, or Kusu-no-ki in Japanese, is a fitting representation of the image of Hyogo Prefecture. Some trees that are particularly big in size and have beautiful shapes are made natural monuments of Hyogo.

Prefectural Bird: Kounotori

The Oriental White Stork, or Kounotori in Japanese, was designated by the Japanese Government as a specially protected animal in 1956. Captive breeding of storks and research for releasing them back to the wild is currently being conducted in the Prefectural Homeland for the Oriental White Stork in Toyooka City.

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HYOGO PREFECTURE

Beautiful Hyogo

Hyogo Prefecture - Gateway to the Asia-Pacific Region

Hyogo Prefecture, situated in the geographical center of Japan, is easily accessible to the world by sea and air. Within Japan, Hyogo Prefecture offers smooth and uninterrupted passage to various cities by extensive expressway, railway, and airline networks.

The Japanese archipelago, shaped like a bow, is located at the eastern end of the Eurasian Continent. Japan consists of four major islands and many smaller ones. Its land extends considerably both east to west and north to south, resulting in a diversity of climatic conditions around the country. The Kansai region, in which Hyogo Prefecture is located, has its own economic and cultural features that are distinct from those of the Tokyo metropolitan area.

Blessed with a central location, Hyogo Prefecture has developed quick and easy access to various places throughout Japan and around the world. Moreover, since the opening of the Port of Kobe in 1868, Hyogo has served as a gateway to Japan for the outside world. As access to the Prefecture developed, so did the exchange of cultures. Many aspects of Western culture, such as movies and golf, entered Japan through Hyogo and later have spread throughout the country. At the same time, karaoke, anime, and other aspects of Japanese culture have spread from Hyogo to the world.

Kobe Airport

Akashi Kaikyo Bridge

■Airport Access

Kansai International Airport, or KIX, is Japan's only 24-hour airport. Kobe, Hyogo's capital, is one of the closest cities to the Airport. The Airport can be reached in approximately one hour from Kobe by express bus.

Kobe Airport, or UKB, is a domestic airport which has excellent access. It is as little as 16 minutes from downtown Kobe by Portliner train service and is connected with KIX via a bay shuttle ferry service.

■The Port of Kobe

The Port of Kobe is a major international trade port. Efforts are being made to develop this port into the central hub of Asian sea traffic.

■Road Network

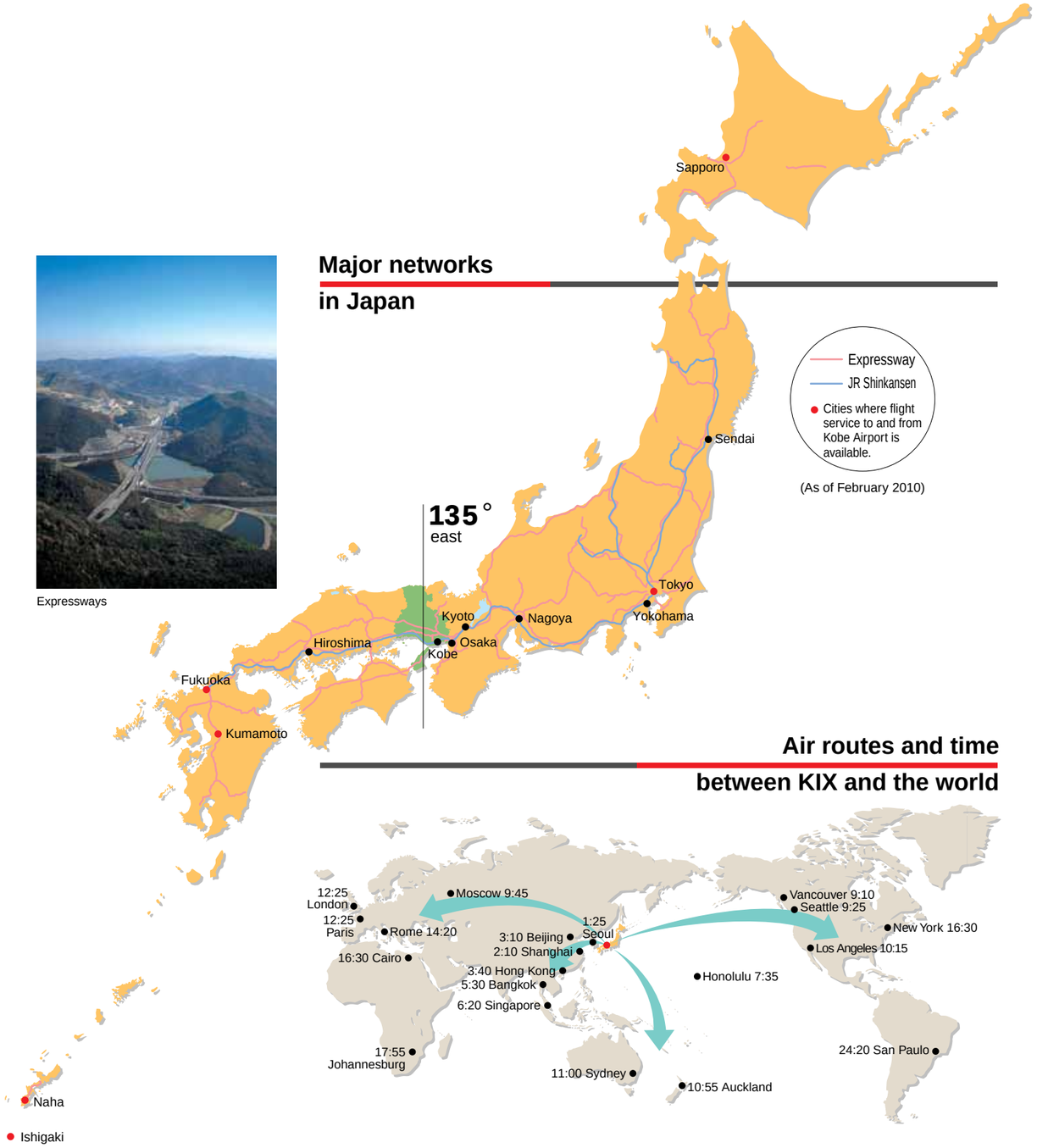
Major expressways that traverse Japan from east to west and from north to south pass through Hyogo Prefecture. Excellent access is available from Hyogo to cities outside of the Prefecture. Construction of the Akashi Kaikyo Bridge, the world's longest suspension bridge, was completed in April of 1998, linking Hyogo Prefecture to the island of Shikoku.

■Railway Access

One of the world's fastest trains, the Shinkansen, or bullet train, runs from Kobe to destinations east and west, making the travel time from Kobe to Tokyo only about two and a half hours. In combination with those of Osaka and Kyoto, Hyogo's extensive transportation system, including various railways such as JR, Hankyu, Hanshin, Sanyo, Kobe Dentetsu, and the Kobe Municipal Subway, make up an integrated commuter sphere in the larger Kansai metropolitan area.

Expressways

Major networks in Japan



Air routes and time between KIX and the world

Kansai International Airport

Port of Kobe

Shinkansen

Hyogo, Kansai, and the World

Hyogo Prefecture has developed into a highly internationalized region centered around the Port of Kobe, and now it servs as home to many international institutions. Hyogo forms the Kansai economic region together with Osaka and Kyoto.

■A World Metropolis, Kansai

The area centered around Hyogo, Osaka, and Kyoto is called the Kansai region, and it was the center of Japan for over 1,000 years until the capital was moved to Tokyo in 1868. As a result, Kansai is rich with shrines, temples, and historic sites. About half of Japan's designated national treasures and important cultural properties are located in the Kansai region. The area is also known for its diversified natural beauty, including forests, lakes, and the sea.

Unlike the Tokyo metropolitan area, Kansai is a decentralized region consisting of the three major cities of Osaka, Kobe, and Kyoto. The three cities respectively display features of a commercial city, an international city, and a historic city, forming a great economic sphere. Other large cities as well as smaller cities and towns all contribute to the area's attractiveness and prosperity. With the global access of Kansai International Airport, the Kansai region is expected to become an international exchange base, mainly for the Asia-Pacific region.

■Hyogo Within Kansai

According to ancient Japanese mythology, the Japanese archipelago came into existence with the formation of Awaji Island, which now belongs to Hyogo Prefecture. This legend shows Hyogo's considerable contribution to the development of Japanese culture in ancient times. Hyogo has been left with a diversity of historical sites, including Himeji Castle, which was designated by UNESCO as a World Cultural Heritage site.

Historically, Hyogo has played a key role in developing transportation routes on land and by sea, and prospered from domestic and international exchange. Since the opening of the Port of Kobe in 1868, Hyogo has been a gateway to the world, serving as a center of international trade and a hub for international exchange.

In terms of modern day attributes, Hyogo Prefecture serves as an international base for research projects that cover a wide range of areas. Research facilities that have been established in Hyogo include the world's largest synchrotron radiation facility (SPring-8), the International EMECS Center for environmental management of enclosed coastal seas, and the WHO Kobe Centre, which conducts human health studies. Based on the lessons learned from the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake, research activities for disaster management and prevention are under way at the Disaster Reduction and Human Renovation Institution as well as the Asian Disaster Reduction Center. In addition, various other international research organizations are coming together in Hyogo Prefecture.

City of Kobe

Hyogo House

Port of Kobe - present day

Port of Kobe shortly after opening: Picture by Sadanobu Hasegawa Ⅱ (Kobe City Museum)

Hyogo Prefecture—A Japan in Miniature

Hyogo Prefecture extends from the Japan Sea in the north to the Seto Inland Sea in the south, and further down to the Pacific Ocean through Awaji Island. Hyogo has an overall area of 8,395 square kilometers, with a population of about 5.6 million as of January 2010.

Hyogo Prefecture contains a rich variety of communities ranging from large cities to rural villages as well as isolated islands, and also has several diversified climatic and natural features. Various leisure activities can be enjoyed here, including swimming, skiing, and bathing in numerous hot springs. As a result, Hyogo Prefecture has become known as a Japan in Miniature. The Prefecture consists of five highly distinctive districts: Settsu (Kobe and Hanshin), Harima, Tajima, Tamba, and Awaji, each of which has its own unique history, climate, and industries.

■Climate

Due to the region's vast land size, climates in Hyogo vary by region, and can be categorized into three different geographic zones - the southern area along the Seto Inland Sea, the northern area along the Japan Sea, and the mountainous area in the middle.

The climate in the south is moderate with little rain, while the cloudy and rainy north receives seasonal winds from Siberia in the wintertime and has a lot of snowfall.

■Industries

Most of the Prefecture's population - over 90% - reside in the urban areas of Kobe, Hanshin, and Harima. Industries such as steel, shipbuilding, and machinery are concentrated in these large urban areas.

In contrast, agricultural, forestry, and fishing industries are active in the districts of Tajima, Tamba, and Awaji, against the backdrop of beautiful rivers, mountains, and seas.

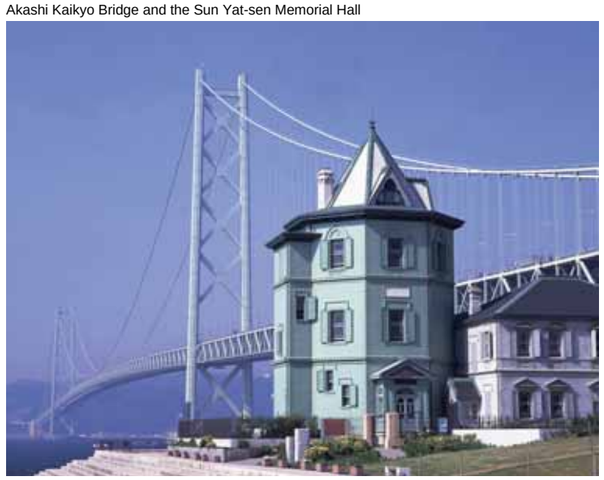
■Leisure Activities

As a result of Hyogo's diversified climate and abundant natural features, swimming and other marine sports can be enjoyed in the summer in various places facing the Japan Sea and the Seto Inland Sea, while in the winter skiing can be enjoyed in the mountains of Tajima. Also, Arima hot springs, one of the oldest in Japan, as well as Kinosaki and Yumura hot springs, are all popular tourist attractions in Hyogo Prefecture.

■Festivals and Events

In various parts of the Prefecture, traditional culture has been passed down through the generations. Visitors can enjoy the traditional Awaji Ningyo Joruri puppet theater and the all-female Takarazuka Revue. There are also a variety of exciting events, such as the Nada Fighting Festival and Toka Ebisu as well as the Shunsetsusai Festival (Chinese New Year festival) in Nankin-machi (Chinatown).

Akashi Kaikyo Bridge and the Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall



Nada Fighting Festival

Meriken Pier, Port of Kobe

Former Foreign Settlement

Kinosaki Hot Springs

Coastline of Tajima

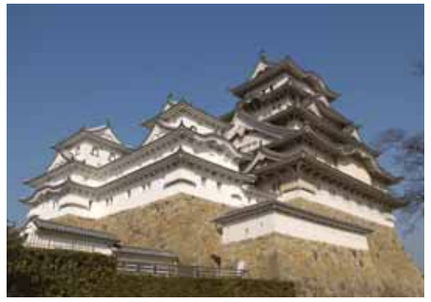
Suma Beach

Ski Resort

Serene sea of clouds

Taki Mountain Range

Akashi Municipal Planetarium



Himeji Castle

Progress Toward Reconstruction From the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake

The Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake occurred in January 1995. Since the occurrence of this tragic disaster, various efforts have been made towards “Creative Reconstruction” with the aim of achieving more than merely returning the region to the pre-earthquake state.

Fires after the Earthquake

■The Great Hanshin-Awaij Earthquake

The Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake, registering a seismic magnitude of 7.3, struck the southern part of Hyogo Prefecture at 5:46 on January 17, 1995. The vertical-thrust earthquake was responsible for the loss of more than 6,400 lives, and severely damaged utility lines such as electricity, gas, and water supply, in addition to houses and urban infrastructure, including expressways, railroads, and harbors. The total damage amount was valued at approximately 10 trillion yen.

Damage Caused by the Earthquake in Hyogo Prefecture (as of December 22, 2005)

Dead: 6,402

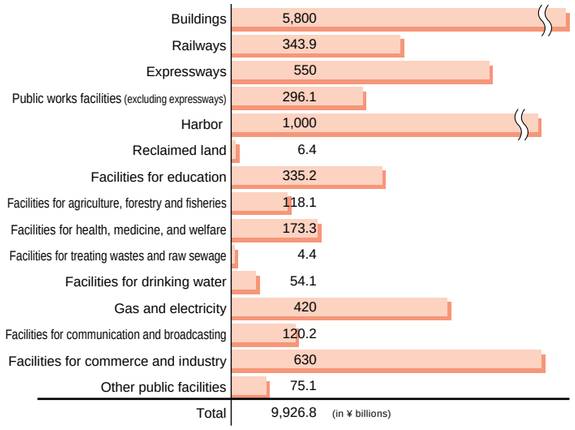
Missing: 3

Injured: 40,092
(10,494 seriously injured and 29,598 slightly injured)

Total damage to houses
(completely / partially destroyed, completely / partially burned)
households: 439,608
buildings: 240,956

Note: Total number of deaths due to the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake : 6,433

Amount and Breakdown of Damage (Estimated as of April 5, 1995)



Sannomiya Center-Gai Shopping Street

Reconstructed Hanshin Expressway

■Restoration Process and Efforts Toward "Creative Reconstruction"

Despite difficult conditions, including severed traffic networks and paralyzed urban functions, steady restoration took place through the dedicated efforts of those involved and with generous assistance from around the world. In only six days following the Earthquake, provisional supply of electricity was restored, with water and gas reconnected in three months.

The Priority Three-Year Reconstruction Plan was implemented to press forward the urgently needed reconstruction of living quarters for the victims, and also the restoration of industries and infrastructure such as roads, harbors, and railways. In addition, the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake Reconstruction Plan (Hyogo Phoenix Plan) was formulated with the aim of achieving “creative reconstruction” over a period of ten years. The Phoenix Plan calls for not only mere restoration but also the creation of urban communities that meet the needs of the increasingly aging society and JapanÅfs highly maturing economy. As the result of efforts made in accordance with these plans, all railroad services were resumed by August 1995, all expressways were reopened by the end of September 1996, and reconstruction work on harbor facilities at the Port of Kobe was completed at the end of March 1997. Also, construction of permanent housing for the victims is steadily progressing.

With the extent of restoration in housing, industries, and urban infrastructure accomplished thus far, the quantitative targets set in the Priority Three-Year Reconstruction Plan were successfully achieved.

On January 17, 2005, the 10th Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake Memorial Service was held in the presence of Their Majesties The Emperor and Empress of Japan. Hyogo continues to exert its utmost efforts to help disaster-hit elderly citizens regain their self-reliance, as well as to create sources of communal vitality and establish safe and secure communities.

Industries

Many foreign-affiliated companies as well as research and manufacturing facilities belonging to a number of major Japanese companies are located in Hyogo Prefecture. Recently, Hyogo is creating a name for itself as a venue of technological innovation and development in fields related to nanotechnology.

■Outline

Hyogo Prefecture is home to internationally renowned companies such as Kawasaki Heavy Industries, Ltd. and Kobe Steel, Ltd. Many major Japanese companies, including Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, Ltd., Toshiba Corporation, Fujitsu Ltd., and Mitsubishi Electric Corporation, locate their research and manufacturing facilities in Hyogo. At the same time, Hyogo is home to global niche businesses for the 21st century. Sysmex Corporation commands about 30% of the world market for hemacytometers, a device designed to count blood cells. Chemiprokasei Kaisha Ltd. has a 50% share of UV absorbers. Japan Electronic Materials Corporation creates probe cards to test ICs and LSI devices, and holds a 20% share in the global market. Teikoku Electric MFG. Co., Ltd. has a 40% global share in the canned motor pumps market. Furuno Electric Co., Ltd. sells commercial fish-finders and holds the top share in the world market. World Co., Ltd., an apparel maker, is leading Japan’s fashion industry.

Apparel Industry

Institute of Biomedical Research and Innovation (IBRI)

Kawasaki Good Times World

■The Best Location For Foreign-Affiliated Companies in Japan

(1) Foreign-Affiliated Companies Located in Hyogo

Aside from the Tokyo Metropolitan Area, Hyogo has been popular with foreign-affiliated companies and currently more than eighty have established their Japanese headquarters here. The existence of a historically developed global personal network, an ideal living environment for foreigners, superior access to transportation and commodities distribution, and enhanced locational support services offered by the prefectural government are exceptional charms that make Hyogo an attractive business base.

Western global companies such as The Procter & Gamble Company, Nestle, and Eli Lily and Company have established their Japanese bases in Hyogo. In addition, companies from China, which is leading the world economy with its outstanding growth, and other companies from Asian countries have begun to increase in number here.

Some of the main case examples recently are insurance companies with large call center facilities including AIG, Inc. and Aflac Japan; large-scale commercial facilities such as IKEA Japan K.K. and Chelsea Japan Co., Ltd; and the construction of plants and distribution facilities for one of the world's largest industrial gas suppliers, Air Liquide.

Hyogo offers opinion exchange meetings and seminars based on its network with foreign-affiliated companies within the prefecture. These measures are designed to reinforce the prefectural policy for the promotion of international economic exchange and to maintain and improve business location environment.

(2) The Best Locational Support Services by Hyogo Prefecture

① Locational Consultation at One-Stop Service Window

Hyogo Prefecture established the Hyogo-Kobe Investment Support Center (HKIS) with the cooperation of the City of Kobe and local economic organizations to offer comprehensive consultation service for companies investing in the prefecture. The HKIS provides very meticulous consultation services in response to each company's needs, the main services include advice concerning administrative procedures for corporate registration and acquiring work visas, introduction of potential offices and industry infrastructure, presentation of local governments' incentive measures for domestic and foreign companies that are considering investment in Hyogo. Furthermore, for companies that want specialized consultation regarding judicial affairs or tax services, the HKIS provides the opportunity for free consultation service by English speaking lawyers, CPAs, and judicial scriveners.

The HKIS also has a business office in Tokyo and provides information about the investment environment in Hyogo to companies that are considering branching out into from the Tokyo metropolitan area.

HKIS Homepage: http://www.hyogo-kobe.jp/

Foreign-Affiliated Companies

PET/CT

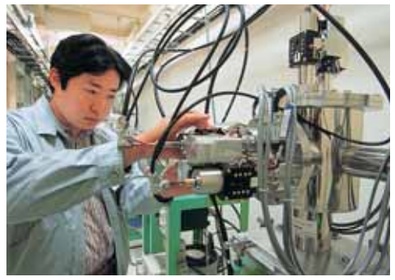
② Locational Support Measures to Minimize Businesses' Initial Investment

The Hyogo Prefecture Industry Accumulation Ordinance designated certain areas as International Economic Zones, also known as the foreign and foreign-affiliated business cluster formation zone. For foreign-affiliated companies that are looking to invest in the area, Hyogo has prepared a wide array of incentives including: a fifty percent reduction in property acquisition tax; subsidies for new local employers, large capital investment, and office rent; and a low interest financing system.

Hyogo provides offices during the preparation period for free for foreign companies that are considering starting up their businesses here. Furthermore, Hyogo has prepared buildings which are convenient for companies because they are equipped with spaces for different work purposes including assembly, R&D, and offices.

Hyogo offers some of the best locational support services in Japan; companies can set up their businesses quickly with the least investment risk here.

Large scale synchrotron radiation facility, SPring-8



Inside of SPring-8

(3) Growing Business Benefited from Advanced R&D Facilities in Hyogo

The country of Japan now bases its new growth strategy on green innovation and life innovation. Among which scientific technology, especially nanotechnology, is of the utmost priority in the 21st century for supporting innovations in a wide array of industries, such as environment and energy, materials, IT and biotechnology. SPring-8, the world's largest scale synchrotron radiation facility, is an appropriate facility for conducting nanotechnology research and is located in Harima Science Garden City in Hyogo.

SPring-8 is open to the public, and to both domestic researchers and their overseas counterparts. Researchers congregated across the globe are carrying out cutting-edge research activities. On top of three beamlines available for industry use, the establishment of beamlines for drug discovery and soft matter industries, as well as for innovative storage batteries development, is underway.

The prefecture possesses two beamlines and encourages industries to utilize the facility, offering use to comprehensive industrial fields, such as environment and energy as described above. Hyogo Prefecture established the Synchrotron Radiation Nanotech Research Laboratory to provide extensive counseling, from giving advice on synchrotron radiation use and supporting their experiments, to offering training programs for corporate researchers and conducting joint research.

One of the promising areas for nanotechnology application is life science. The City of Kobe is promoting the Kobe Medical Industry Development Project in Port Island to advance health, welfare, and medical industries by establishing an operation base for high-level research and development centers, such as the Institute of Biomedical Research and Innovation (IBRI). The Project aims to attract related companies from within and outside Japan through the collaboration among industry, academia, and government. This area also has a translational research function to apply medical research to clinical practice, while supporting business and human-resource development.

This Project has attracted many pharmaceutical companies and universities around Japan, such as Kyoto University, Osaka University, and Kobe University, and cutting-edge R&D activities are unfolding in many fields, including regenerative medicine. Hyogo Prefecture welcomes foreign-affiliated companies to the region with the best support for incoming business and a great living environment for work.

Products

Ranging from natural bounties such as agricultural products cultivated in the region's vast land area and seafood from the surrounding bodies of waters, to traditional crafts and delicious sake and confectionery, Hyogo's local products make memorable souvenirs and are enjoyed by many visitors.

■Agricultural Products

Various parts of the region have devised unique ways of cultivating agricultural products according to their local climates.

The Tamba District produces black soybeans called *kuromame,* which are widely used for meals and confectioneries. Izushi Soba noodles in the Tajima District, often called Sara Soba as they are served on locally made white porcelain china ("*sara*" in Japanese), are popular among visitors, who often enjoy competing with each other over the number of plates they can eat. Cattle bred in the Tajima District are known as the origin of several top beef brands, such as the world-famous Kobe Beef, Sanda Beef, and Awaji Beef. The rich taste of this beef can be enjoyed in several different dishes such as steaks, *shabu-shabu,* and *sukiyaki*.

■Fishery Products

Hyogo is one of the very few prefectures in Japan that face two bodies of water - the Japan Sea and the Seto Inland Sea. Because of this excellent location, Hyogo is blessed with abundant marine resources.

The Matsuba Crab from the Japan Sea is called the king of winter delicacies. Its sweet and delicious taste, enjoyed raw, baked, or boiled, always gives a sense of satisfaction. Octopus from the Seto Inland Sea is well known for its taste and chewy texture. Moreover, Akashi-yaki, locally known as Tamago-yaki, is a ball-shaped baked batter made of flour, soup, and egg that contains chopped octopus, and is enjoyed by people throughout Japan. *Anago* (conger eel) from the Seto Inland Sea is known for its soft meat and melting texture, while fresh and tough *tai* (sea bream) that comes from the strong current of the Akashi Straits and Naruto Straits is a delight for the eyes as well as the taste buds.

■Traditional Crafts

The colorful climates of Hyogo have been the backdrop for a variety of traditional crafts that are unique to each locality.

The Harima District is home to various superb crafts such as *soroban* (Japanese abacus) made in Ono City using high quality timbers and bamboo, wrought tools in Miki City often used as carpenter tools, and Banshu fishhooks that resemble bait. The Tamba District is famous for the production of Tamba Earthenware, one of Japan's six oldest potteries, while the Tajima District produces the beautiful white Izushi Earthenware and Toyooka woven willow products. The traditional skills and professionalism of the craftworkers have been passed down for generations, and still remain in various parts of Hyogo.

Tamba Black Soy Beans

Kobe Beef

Izushi Soba Noodles

Grilled Conger Eel

Akashiyaki Dumpling

■Sake

There are many places famous for *sake* (Japanese rice wine) production in Hyogo. In particular, Nada Gogo (literally the "five quarters of Nada area"), located in the coastal area east of Kobe, is one of the biggest *sake* brewing communities in Japan. As many as forty breweries are located in an area extending 12 km from west to east. The perfect combination of subterranean mineral water flowing through Mt. Rokko, or *miyamizu,* the brewer's rice called Yamada-nishiki harvested in the Harima District, chilly winds called Rokko Oroshi blowing from Mt. Rokko, and the seasoned techniques of *toji,* chief brewers from the Tamba and Tajima Districts, helped Nada Gogo establish their renowned brands. Moreover, the area's excellent location facing the Seto Inland Sea has also contributed to the development of Nada Gogo by making the shipping of products easier. With Nada Gogo, in addition to many other *sake* breweries producing unique brands, Hyogo Prefecture is often called the "*sake* brewery of Japan." These *sake* brands allow visitors to enjoy their stay drinking, talking, and laughing.

■Confectioneries

Since the opening of the Port of Kobe in the mid-19th century, Hyogo has functioned as the gateway of Japan to the world. People from western countries introduced their style of sweets through this port, and western-style confectioneries have now grown to represent Hyogo's confection business. There are many major confectionery factories as well as cozy cake and sweets shops in and around Kobe City. On the other hand, traditional Japanese sweets made from local ingredients, conveying old-fashioned flavors, are still common in various parts of the region.

Cakes and Sweets

Japanese Sweets

Abacus of Ono

Japanese Sake

Matsuba Crab

Sliced Sea Bream

Tamba Earthenware

Toyooka Willow Basketry

Miki Wrought Tools

Awaji Tiles

Tourism

Hyogo has a variety of tourist locations, including scenic sites created by abundant nature, hot springs loved by famous writers and artists, and historic and cultural heritage sites such as Himeji Castle.

■Nature

Hyogo Prefecture enjoys multi-faceted climatic and geographical features due to its vast land area extending vertically from the Japan Sea in the north to the Seto Inland Sea in the south.

The Hachi Highlands located in the northern Tajima District is one of the most popular ski resorts in the Kansai region, where off-season activities such as camping and hiking can also be enjoyed. The Yotakuji Temple in Sanda City is famous as a major flower viewing spot, where as many as 3.5 million irises of about 650 species blossom in June and July. The Maya View Line is a cable ropeway near downtown Kobe, from which both the scenic cityscape of Kobe and the panoramic view of the sea can be enjoyed. Across the Akashi Straits from the Honshu mainland toward Awaji Island is Awaji Yumebutai, where greenery was beautifully restored to a former gravel quarry used for reclaiming land for the Kansai International Airport. The Awaji Yumebutai consists of a luxury hotel, international conference center, greenhouse, restaurants, and a national government park. In Awaji Island people can also visit a museum preserving the Nojima Fault, which was exposed to the ground surface when the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake occurred, and the Awajishima Bokujo farm park, where visitors can pet various animals. In the Naruto Straits lying between Awaji Island and Shikoku, large-scale whirlpools are major tourist attractions.

Iris Garden of Yotakuji Temple

Naruto Whirlpool

■Hot Springs

There are many famous hot springs in Hyogo. Arima Hot Spring is one of the oldest hot springs in Japan. It was allegedly fancied by a famous feudal warlord, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, and there still remains in Arima various reminders of his days. Kinosaki Hot Spring, located in the Tajima District, has a history of about 1,400 years. There, visitors enjoy touring the seven public baths while strolling through old and nostalgic streets lined with willow trees. Also in the Tajima District is Yumura Hot Spring, which has an 1150-year-old history. There, the 98°C water from the springhead can even be used to boil eggs.

There are many other hot spring resorts of every size in various parts of Hyogo and they are all prepared to welcome visitors in a hospitable manner.

■History / Culture

In Hyogo Prefecture, there are many old and cultural sites that often played a role in Japanese history. Such tangible and intangible cultural and traditional heritages still remaining in various parts of the region appeal to many visitors.

Himeji Castle, also known as the White Heron Castle, still preserves the original exterior appearance and interior structure that have been kept unchanged since its construction. This national treasure was also inscribed on the World Heritage List of UNESCO. The Kogenji Temple constructed in the Tamba District some 680 years ago is famous for its beautiful turning of the leaves. A maple tree that is said to have been brought back from China turns its color to a particularly beautiful bright red. Built in Izushi Town of the Tajima District in 1871, the Shinko-ro drum tower, which was used to announce the time by beating the drum every hour, is now preserved as a symbolic clocktower of the Town.

The Nishinomiya Shrine is known for enshrining the god of happiness and business success. More than a million people visit the Nishinomiya Shrine for the famous Toka Ebisu festival held on or around January 10 ("*toka*" in Japanese) every year. The Nada Festival is the autumn festival of the Matsubara Yahata Shrine in Himeji City. It is also known as the Nada Fighting Festival due to the wild movement of portable shrines that frequently run into each other. Those portable shrines as well as special stands lining up along streets attract many visitors every year. Ako City is a venue for a popular true-life story from the Edo era, known as the "Chushin-gura," which has also been featured in various novels and films. The parade of the Ako Loyal Samurai Festival called the Ako Gishi-sai, which reenacts the old days of Ako, is a must-see attraction for visitors. The Awaji Puppet Theater, a classical art in which a group of three skillful puppeteers manipulates one puppet, is an Important Intangible Cultural Heritage of Japan.

Night view of Kobe

Shinkoro drum tower in Izushi

■Metropolis / City / Town

Metropolitan, city, and town areas of Hyogo pride themselves on their colorful characteristics that are unique to each locality.

Kitano Ijinkan in the northern mountainside of Kobe City, which used to be the residential area for foreign residents, still gives many tourists a western atmosphere. In the southern bayside, Kobe Harborland, consisting of an amusement park and shopping zones, draws many visitors of all ages, while in the central area the Nankin-machi Chinatown adds to the multicultural attractiveness of Kobe City.

In the Hanshin area extending between Kobe and Osaka, there is Takarazuka City, known as the home of the spectacular Takarazuka Revue performed by a unique all-women troupe. There is also Nishinomiya City, which accommodates a famous baseball mecca known as Koshien Stadium.

There are various historic places all around the Harima District, such as Tatsuno, Ako, and Himeji. In particular, Himeji City developed together with a world famous castle whose graceful appearance is often described as that of a white heron.

Toyooka City in the Tajima District is a place blessed with abundant nature. Here, various efforts have been made to release oriental white storks-the symbolic bird of Hyogo-back into the wild, and to create an environment where people and nature can coexist in harmony. Towns in the Tamba District are famous for their lush forest environment, while Awaji Island is known as an island of parks full of beautiful trees and flowers.

The energetic features of Hyogo's metropolitan, city, and town areas, highlighted by such tourist sites, attract many visitors every day.

Nojima Fault Preservation Museum

Himeji Castle

Awaji Puppet Show

Flower carpet of Awaji Hana Sajiki

Autumn leaves of Kogenji Temple

Kitano Ijinkan (Western style houses)

Arima Hot Springs

Yumura Hot Springs

Ebisu Festival at the Nishinomiya Shrine

Nankin-machi (Chinatown)

Koshien Stadium

Projects Leading the Way in the 21st Century

With projects such as the Kobe New Eastern City Center, home to several international organizations, Hyogo Prefecture is currently engaged in several diverse international projects that will lead the way in the 21st Century.

■Kobe New Eastern City Center (HAT Kobe)

A model city based on health and welfare for the 21st century equipped with housing, commercial facilities, and disaster management functions is being constructed in the Kobe New Eastern City Center. Established in the City are the WHO Kobe Centre, which conducts research for health promotion; the International EMECS Center, which deals with the environmental management of enclosed seas and coastal regions of the world; and the Disaster Reduction and Human Renovation Institution, which engages in disaster management based on the experiences and lessons learned from the Earthquake. The International Recovery Platform and the Asian Disaster Reduction Center were also established to provide support for reconstruction from natural disasters. Through these and other international organizations such as the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the City serves as a global hub for international institutions.

In addition, the City is also home to the Hyogo Prefectural Museum of Art, which serves as a symbol of cultural restoration, and the Hyogo Emergency Medical Center, which acts as a core emergency service center in the event of a disaster.

●Disaster Reduction and Human Renovation Institution

The Disaster Reduction and Human Renovation Institution passes down the experiences and lessons learned from the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake to future generations. The facility contributes to mitigate damages during disasters at home and abroad. The Institution displays an abundance of movies and documents about the destructiveness of the earthquake, life and cityscapes immediately after the earthquake and during the recovery process that allow you to feel the earthquake and study about it. The Institution also distributes current information related to disaster prevention and reduction.

●Hyogo Prefectural Museum of Art - Hall of the Arts -

The Hyogo Prefectural Museum of Art not only represents cultural restoration from the Earthquake, but also aims to heal the spirit of the victims while providing the inspiration for a cultural city geared towards the 21st century.

●Hyogo Emergency Medical Center

The Hyogo Emergency Medical Center's purpose is to serve as a core medical service facility in the event of a large-scale natural disaster, creating a place where prefectural citizens can live with peace of mind. The Center's functions include information collection and direction of medical services, offering information relating to emergency rescue, handling the transportation of patients, and keeping a stockpile of medicine in order to respond to a large-scale disaster.

■Harima Science Garden City

Located in a rich natural environment, Harima Science Garden City is a futuristic city designed to promote harmonious coexistence between people, nature, and science. The city is laid out in such a way that residential and recreational zones surround a concentration of research facilities and advanced technology industries. In addition to various facilities such as SPring-8 - which is the world's largest third-generation synchrotron radiation facility, the Hyogo Prefectural Center for Advanced Science and Technology, the University of Hyogo, and institutions such as the Hyogo Ion Beam Medical Center, which conducts R&D of cutting-edge cancer treatment methods, are established here. The SPring-8 facility is capable of producing extremely bright light by accelerating electrons to light speed. The system has proven particularly effective in analyzing substances and living organisms at nuclear and molecular levels. Many expectations are placed on its application in a wide range of fields, including the development of new materials and medicine. Since its opening in 1997, the facility has made a number of noteworthy achievements.

■Hyogo Media Garden City

This area is ideally located in a lush natural environment that is close to convenient transportation outlets and a large city. By acting as a central base for the creation of new industries, Hyogo Media Garden City promotes the creation of jobs and the structural reform of current industries. Through these roles, the City serves as a leading model of prefectural policies towards industry and information, based on the concept of "creation of an attractive media garden city where people, things, and information can interact."

Disaster Reduction and Human Renovation Institution

Hyogo Prefectural Museum of Art -Hall of the Arts -

Kobe New Eastern City Center (HAT Kobe)

■Kobe Airport

Kobe Airport, which opened in February 2006, has a total area of 272 ha and a runway 2,500 m long. The airport was created on reclaimed land about 1km off the shore of Port Island. As a regional airport for domestic flights, the airport is expected to provide additional convenience to the citizens of Kobe and the surrounding areas.

■Next-Generation Supercomputer Facility

RIKEN is now developing the RIKEN next-generation supercomputer as a part of the Key Technology of National Importance, with the aim of further raising the level of simulation science technology, which is now solidifying its footing as a method of modern scientific technology in line with theory and experimentation.

When the facility is completed in 2012, the system can perform at the speed of ten petaflops per second (ten to the power of the sixteenth). It will be the world's most cutting-edge and highest performance facility. When its operational services begin, it is expected to lead development of the nation's scientific technology and industries by being available to comprehensive fields like life science, nanotechnology, earth environment, nuclear power, etc.

Harima Science Garden City

Hyogo Emergency Medical Center

■Awaji Yumebutai

Awaji Yumebutai is one of the ongoing projects aimed at the creation of a garden island open to the world, serving as a base for international exchange in the Osaka Bay Area. It is the core of Awaji Island International Garden City, which is intended to be a city of communication, where people from all over the world can interact under the general theme of "communication between people, nature, and the world."

Awaji Yumebutai was built on the site of a former gravel quarry whose greenery was restored, and utilizes the surrounding dynamic, sloping environment to host several types of international exchange facilities such as a hotel, an international conference center, a greenhouse, an open-air theater, and a park.

■Hyogo Performing Arts Center

In addition to presenting world-renowned performing art productions and performances as well as introducing top-class foreign and domestic arts and culture, the Hyogo Performing Arts Center aims to broadly convey to the world information about arts and culture by acting as a center for the exchange of such.

Hyogo Performing Arts Center

Kobe Airport

Awaji Yumebutai

International Exchange and Cooperation

Hyogo Prefecture has internationalized and modernized itself with the opening of the Port of Kobe. The Prefecture is making efforts to create cities where people from across the globe can live in comfort, and is addressing various challenges that are common to all of humanity in collaboration with various countries around the world.

Hospitals providing multilingual services

Centered around the Port of Kobe, which was opened to the rest of the world in 1868, Hyogo Prefecture has developed into a cosmopolitan region leading the modernization and internationalization of Japan. Since the opening of the port, the Prefecture has become a more and more comfortable place to live for non-Japanese residents, offering such conveniences as many housing units designed to international standards, international schools that provide first-class education, hospitals and consulting institutions that offer multilingual services, and a number of churches. At present, more than 100,000 overseas residents from about 141 countries reside in Hyogo.

The 21st century is a time of great exchange. Just as this new century was dawning, the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake robbed us of many precious lives. During the reconstruction process from the disaster, gracious support was received from all over Japan and abroad, making us realize how important it is for us to live together with other people in the world and help each other.

Some of the problems local governments face today require collective efforts by many regions regardless of the boundaries of districts and nations. Therefore, Hyogo Prefecture is promoting multilateral cooperative frameworks in addition to the traditional bilateral exchange among our overseas sister states and affiliated regions.

Meanwhile, the newly developed Kobe New Eastern City Center has become home to a collection of international institutions that address a wide range of global issues, such as disaster management, environment, health and welfare, and humanitarian affairs.

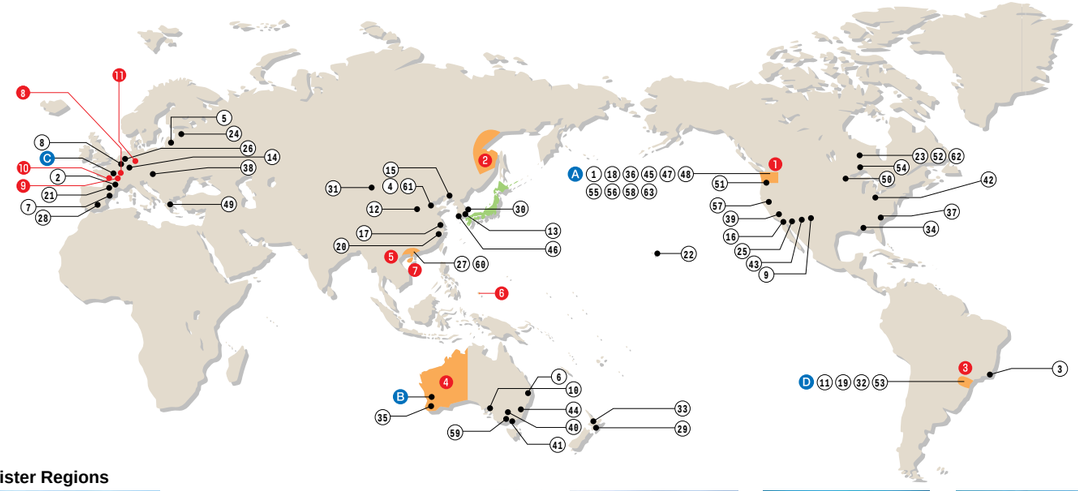
In addition to the accumulation of international research institutions and collaboration with local governments abroad, the Prefecture encourages the participation and cooperation of non-governmental organizations and companies that engage in activities for international exchange and cooperation. Through such measures, Hyogo Prefecture hopes to contribute to the peace and stability of the world in the 21st century by advancing efforts to solve common issues for all humanity.

Hyogo International House (JASSO)

JICA Hyogo International Center

Hyogo International Plaza

Sister and Affiliated Localities



Sister Regions

1 State of Washington (USA)
Relationship established: 1963
Capital city: Olympia

2 Khabarovsk Territory (Russia)
Relationship established: 1969
Capital city: Khabarovsk

3 State of Paraná (Brazil)
Relationship established: 1970
Capital city: Curitiba

4 State of Western Australia (Australia)
Relationship established: 1981
Capital city: Perth

5 Guangdong Province (China)
Relationship established: 1983
Capital city: Guangzhou

6 Republic of Palau
Relationship established: 1983
Capital city: Melekeok

Affiliated Regions

7 Hainan Province (China)
Relationship established: 1990
Capital city: Haikou

8 Seine-et-Marne Department (France)
Capital city: Melun

9 Aveyron Department (France)
Capital city: Rodez

10 Indre-et-Loire Department (France)
Capital city: Tours

11 State of Schleswig-Holstein (Germany)
Capital city: Kiel

Sister Relationships of Cities and Towns

①	Seattle, Washington, U.S.A.	*Kobe*
②	Marseilles, France	*Kobe*
③	Rio de Janeiro, Brazil	*Kobe*
④	Tianjin, China	*Kobe*
⑤	Riga, Latvia	*Kobe*
⑥	Brisbane, Queensland, Australia	*Kobe*
⑦	Barcelona, Spain	*Kobe*
⑧	Charleroi, Belgium	*Himeji*
⑨	Phoenix, Arizona, U.S.A.	*Himeji*
⑩	Adelaide, South Australia, Australia	*Himeji*
⑪	Curitiba, Paraná, Brazil	*Himeji*
⑫	Taiyuan, Shanxi, China	*Himeji*
⑬	Masan, Kyongsangnam, Korea	*Himeji*
⑭	Augsburg, Germany	*Amagasaki*
⑮	Anshan, Jaoning, China	*Amagasaki*
⑯	Vallejo, California, U.S.A.	*Akashi*
⑰	Wuxi, Jiangsu, China	*Akashi*
⑱	Spokane, Washington, U.S.A.	*Nishinomiya*
⑲	Londrina, Paraná, Brazil	*Nishinomiya*
⑳	Shaoxing, Zhejiang, China	*Nishinomiya*
㉑	Lot-et-Garonne Prefecture & Agen City, France	*Nishinomiya*
㉒	Hawaii County, Hawaii, U.S.A.	*Sumoto*
㉓	Van Wert, Ohio, U.S.A.	*Sumoto*
㉔	Kronstadt, Russia	*Sumoto*
㉕	Montebell, California, U.S.A.	*Ashiya*
㉖	Hasselt, Belgium	*Itami*
㉗	Foshan, Guangdong, China	*Itami*
㉘	Alicante, Spain	*Toyooka*
㉙	Ruapehu District, New Zealand	*Toyooka*
㉚	Kyongju, Kyongsangbuk, Korea	*Toyooka*
㉛	Bogdo County, Bayankhongor, Mongolia	*Toyooka*
㉜	Maringá, Paraná, Brazil	*Kakogawa*
㉝	Waitakere, New Zealand	*Kakogawa*
㉞	Anniston, Alabama, U.S.A.	*Tatsuno*
㉟	Rockingham, Western Australia, Australia	*Ako*
㊱	Renton, Washington, U.S.A.	*Nishiwaki*
㊲	Augusta, Georgia, U.S.A.	*Takarazuka*
㊳	Vienna's 9th Ward, Austria	*Takarazuka*
㊴	Visalia, California, U.S.A.	*Miki*
㊵	Corowa, New South Wales, Australia	*Miki*
㊶	Latrobe, Victoria, Australia	*Takasago*
㊷	Bowling Green, Kentucky, U.S.A.	*Kawanishi*
㊸	Lindsay, California, U.S.A.	*Ono*
㊹	Blue Mountains, New South Wales, Australia	*Sanda*
㊺	Kittitas County, Washington, U.S.A.	*Sanda*
㊻	Pukcheju County, Cheju, Korea	*Sanda*
㊼	Pullman, Washington, U.S.A.	*Kasai*
㊽	Walla Walla, Washingon, U.S.A.	*Sasayama*
㊾	Epidaurus, Greece	*Sasayama*
㊿	Celina, Ohio, U.S.A.	*Minami Awaji*
51	Newberg, Oregon, U.S.A.	*Asago*
52	Perth, Ontario, Canada	*Asago*
53	Paranaguá, Paraná, Brazil	*Awaji*
54	Saint Marys, Ohio, U.S.A.	*Awaji*
55	Sequim, Washington, U.S.A.	*Shiso*
56	Olympia, Washington, U.S.A.	*Kato*
57	Hollister, California, U.S.A.	*Kato*
58	Chelan, Washington, U.S.A.	*Kato*
59	Ballarat, Victoria, Australia	*Inagawa*
60	Sanshui, Guangdong, China	*Taka*
61	Heping, Tianjin, China	*Harima*
62	Lima, Ohio, U.S.A.	*Harima*
63	Port Townsend, Washington, U.S.A.	*Ichikawa*

Hyogo Offices

- Ⓐ Hyogo Business & Cultural Center in Washington
- Ⓑ Hyogo Prefectural Government Cultural Centre in Western Australia
- Ⓒ Representative Office of Hyogo Prefecture in Europe
- Ⓓ Brazil Representative Office of Hyogo Prefectural Government

Administration

Hyogo Prefecture is making a variety of efforts to create a “Beautiful Hyogo” where people can live their lives in caring communities that are rich in natural and cultural beauty.

Hyogo Prefectural Assembly

Hyogo Prefectural Government Offices

Extensive transportation network

Seto Inland Sea

Oriental White Storks

The Constitution of Japan sets forth a system of local autonomous governance based on the concept that in a democracy it is important for local residents to have a strong voice in the management of local administration. This system of self-governance is founded on a dual structure of local authorities, which consists of municipalities and prefectural governments. Both of these public bodies maintain respective executive branches and assemblies and have the authority to establish regulations, manage property, and execute regional administrative work. The members of the assemblies and the heads of the executive branches are selected through direct election by residents in the regions where the local public bodies are located, and their term of office is four years each.

Municipal public bodies, of which there are approximately 1,700 in the entire nation, provide administrative services closely related to the daily living of residents. The 47 prefectural public bodies in Japan contain numerous municipalities and serve wide areas. These bodies are responsible for formulating regional projects in each prefecture, improving the health and welfare of prefectural citizens including hygiene, executing administrative work entrusted by the national government, and coordinating the work done by the municipalities. Hyogo Prefecture employs approximately 60,000 civil servants, including police officers and teachers, who are engaged in public work. The organization for handling the administration of the Prefecture consists of a prefectural assembly (a legislative body), the Governor and his secretariat (executive body), and administrative commissions, such as the Prefectural Board of Education.

Hyogo Institute for Aging Brain and Cognitive Disorders

Tajima Airport

Akashi Park

University of Hyogo

Urban planning for comfortable living

○Urban Planning for Comfortable Living

Under the concept of creating a living environment complete with strong community ties and rich natural surroundings, the Prefecture offers guidance on regional planning, coordinates planning that involves multiple municipalities, and makes decisions for large-scale urban planning. The Prefecture is also responsible for the establishment and management of prefecture-run housing. In order to respond to the increasing importance placed on sports and leisure activities, the Prefecture is involved in the management, maintenance, and establishment of prefectural parks.

○Infrastructure for Transportation and Daily Living

Hyogo Prefecture is constantly working to maintain and improve its wide-ranging transportation network, including roadways that connect many municipalities, airports, and seaports in the Prefecture. In order to prevent disasters and protect the lives and property of its citizens, the Prefecture is advancing projects to create thoroughly disaster-resistant cities, including river conservation works and dam construction.

○Promotion of Welfare

By establishing the “Ordinance for the Creation of a Society Dedicated to Public Welfare” in 1992, the first of its kind among local governments in Japan, Hyogo Prefecture is promoting a welfare-conscious society in which compassion and coexistence prevail in the minds of the people. Construction of barrier-free public facilities and cooperative housing quarters is an example embodying the concept behind the ordinance. In order to realize an affluent and lively senior society and develop communities in which the elderly, people with disabilities, and other citizens can live in comfort and security, the Prefecture is advancing projects such as the construction of nursing homes for the elderly and the establishment of a system of home-visits by nursing services.

○Health and Medical Services

In order to provide high-quality health and medical services, the Prefecture subsidizes the modernization of hospitals and promotes the construction of prefectural medical institutions throughout its jurisdiction to create regional bases of medical services. In addition, Hyogo operates the “Wide-Area Disaster and Emergency Medical Information System,” providing a medical hot-line throughout the Prefecture to reinforce emergency medical care on holidays and at night. The Prefecture also holds various health classes to raise health awareness among the public.

○Environmental Protection

The Prefecture reviews industrial activities and life-styles of the citizens in order to promote the creation of an environment-friendly society in which people live in harmony with nature. Its activities for raising environmental consciousness among citizens include support for recycling campaigns, efforts to stop unnecessary idling of automobiles, and promotion of low-emission cars. In order to conserve the environment on a global scale, the Prefecture established the International EMECS Center, an international organization for advancing the environmental management of enclosed coastal seas and coastal regions of the world, and has supported its activities. Another project for the environment put forward by the Prefecture is the protection and breeding of oriental white storks, an endangered and specially protected species, in an effort to return them to life in the wild.

○Promotion of Arts and Culture

In order to expand the base of artistic and cultural activities available to its citizens, Hyogo Prefecture promotes arts and culture by granting subsidies for organizations related with arts and culture, and actively supporting performances by the Piccolo Theater Company. The Hyogo Performing Arts Center serves as a base to showcase world-class artistic performances, promote international exchange between performing arts groups, and foster cultural activities of prefectural residents.

Promotion of welfare

Hyogo Performing Arts Center

◯Promotion of Industries

The Prefecture grants a variety of low-interest loans to small and medium-sized businesses for financing and modernizing their facilities. To promote regional industries, support is also offered for the group-transfer of facilities to industrial zones, development of new products, and holding of trade fairs. Regional businesses are also given assistance, through support for the maintenance and construction of shopping arcades and store buildings. Moreover, the Prefecture subsidizes and invests in venture businesses and fosters new entrepreneurs to encourage the creation and development of next-generation industries. In addition to enhancing trade and business attraction, the Prefecture has also been promoting tourist attractions, and tourism campaigns are underway to attract more domestic and foreign visitors.

◯Promotion of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries

In order to help develop farmers who will shoulder the future of the agricultural industry in the region, Hyogo Prefecture offers subsidies and loans for the installation of modern farming facilities and the introduction of new farming machinery. The Prefecture is also responsible for maintaining agricultural infrastructure such as the construction of drainage systems. With regards to the fishing industry, a number of positive steps have been taken particularly in the field of fish-culturing, including the installation of underwater reefs to promote the breeding and raising of marine resources. In the area of forestry, the Prefecture engages in forestry maintenance to conserve forest resources, prevent disasters, and secure the safety of the living environment.

◯Promotion of Education

Hyogo Prefecture establishes and manages educational facilities, including schools, libraries, and museums. The Prefecture also promotes camp school programs for students to learn through nature and outdoor activities. In addition to the funding and operation of the prefectural university and high schools, the Prefecture stations school personnel at public elementary, junior high, and senior high schools. The Prefecture also supports and grants approval to private schools, including international schools and vocational schools.

The International Industrial Fair

Sea-Farming Center

Camp School

History

Hyogo Prefecture was established in 1868 when the Port of Kobe was opened to the world. At that time, the Hyogo area consisted of four prefectures: Hyogo, Shikama, Toyooka, and Myodo, which were brought together into the single prefecture of Hyogo in 1876. Since then, Hyogo has contributed to the modernization of Japan as an important contact point with overseas countries.

1868 Hyogo Prefecture was established.
The Port of Kobe was opened to the rest of the world.
1874 Railway service started between Osaka and Kobe.
1876 Shikama, Toyooka, and Myodo Prefectures joined Hyogo Prefecture.
1879 The first Hyogo Prefectural Assembly was opened.
1882 The Hyogo Prefectural Assembly Hall was completed.
1889 The municipal system was introduced.
(Hyogo Prefecture contained 2 cities, 26 towns, and 402 villages; there are presently 22 cities and 66 towns.)
1902 The Hyogo Prefectural office building, the current Hyogo House, was completed.
1947 The first gubernatorial election was carried out.
1966 The new prefectural office building was completed.
1970 The new Prefectural Assembly Hall and the second prefectural office building were completed.
1972 The Sanyo Shinkansen line was opened between Shin-Osaka and Okayama.
1975 The prefectural population exceeded 5 million.
The Hyogo section of the Chugoku Expressway was opened.
1981 The Kobe Port Island Exhibition “Portpia ’81” was held.
1985 Ohnaruto Bridge was completed.
Kuniumi (the Creation Myth) Festival was held.
1988 The Maizuru Expressway was opened.
The Hokusetsu-Tamba Festival “Holonpia ‘88” was held.
1989 The Far East and South Pacific Games for the Disabled (FESPIC Games) were held in Kobe.
1990 The third prefectural office building was completed.
1994 The Tajima Airport was opened.
The Tajima Festival was held.
1995 The Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake occurred.
1997 SPring-8, a large-scale synchrotron radiation facility, began operations.
The entire portion of the Sanyo Expressway was opened.
1998 The Akashi Kaikyo Bridge was opened.
2000 The International Gardening and Landscaping Exhibition “Japan Flora 2000” was held.
2001 Japan Countdown 2001 and other events were held to commemorate the beginning of the 21st century.
2005 The Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake 10th Anniversary Memorial Service was held.
2006 Kobe Airport was opened.
The 61st National Sports Festival (Nojigiku Games)
2007 Opening of the Hyogo Museum of Archeology
2008 The 25th National Confectionary Exposition in Hyogo (Himeji Confectionery Expo 2008)
2009 Conducted the nation-wide tourism campaign entitled “Hyogo: Make it Your Destination.”

Hyogo House

Kobe Port Island Exhibition

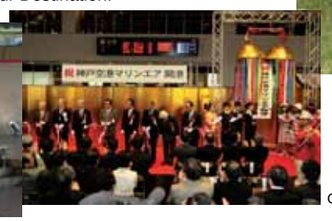
The collapsed Hanshin Expressway

Opening of the Akashi Kaikyo Bridge

Japan Flora 2000

The Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake 10th Anniversary Memorial Service

The 25th National Confectionary Exposition in Hyogo



Opening of Kobe Airport