

# Japan's Regional Power

## Fukuoka—One of the Most Livable Cities in the World

Encouraging foreign companies to invest in Japan plays a crucial part in Abenomics—the economic program advocated by Prime Minister Abe's Cabinet. We spoke with Soichiro Takashima, mayor of Fukuoka, who is actively working to attract companies to invest in his regional municipality.

Ideally located in close proximity to other countries, Fukuoka has a long history as a gateway for trade and interchange with the world. Fukuoka's Port of Hakata is an international seaport servicing thirty-nine routes. It boasts faster shipping than any other major port in Japan, making it a perfect base for distribution, particularly in trade with other Asian countries. In addition, Fukuoka has one of the most easily accessible international airports in the world—only 10 minutes by subway from downtown. And being near other Asian countries makes the city an ideal business hub—traveling to another major city in East Asia is just as easy as traveling to Tokyo. The airport also offers regular international flights to countries beyond East Asia, connecting to nearly twenty cities across the globe, including in the United States and Europe.

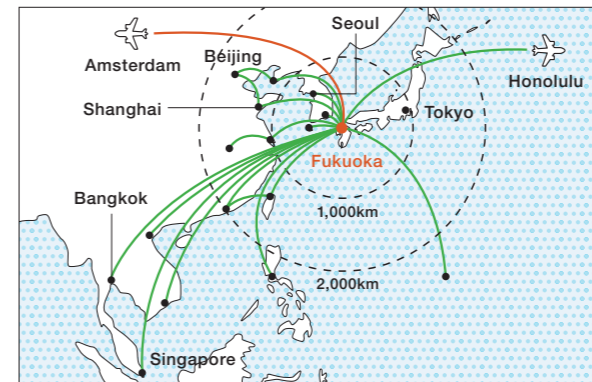
Fukuoka's downtown area features a bustling business district and shopping centers and is a major hub for transportation. Just outside the city is a rich and vast natural landscape including ocean and mountains, providing a stress-free, comfortable living environment. Fukuoka is ranked high both nationally and internationally as one of the most comfortable cities in the world to live in. It placed first among Japanese businessmen in a national survey and global tenth in a survey by a foreign magazine. Since Fukuoka is more affordable than other major cities in developed countries, savings on office rent and living expenses make it an ideal business environment.

In 2014, Fukuoka was selected as a National Strategic Special Zone for Global Startups and Job Creation, one of the new strategic special zones created by the national government to boost local economics, and efforts to further support startups are being accelerated. Fukuoka is also implementing several policies to encourage people from other countries to set up businesses in Japan. The city is working toward simplifying the procedures required to start a business, and offering an incentive to companies that establish their headquarters in the city within five years of their founding: a reduced effective corporate tax rate on par with that of Singapore (17 percent) the lowest rate among the major countries of Asia. In addition, Fukuoka is also working to simplify immigration procedures and ease visa requirements.

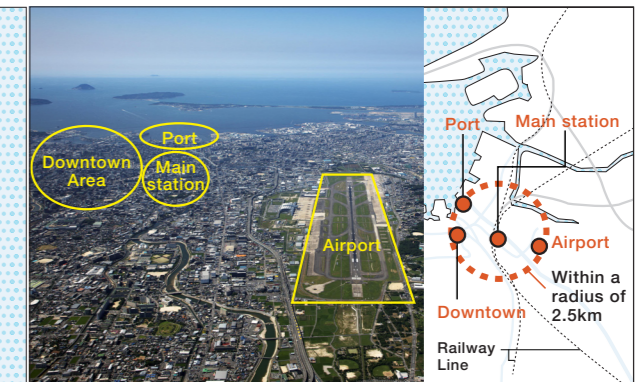
Combining the initiatives of the national government with Fukuoka's own efforts, the city is striving to be the world's best business environment and continuously generate new value.

New Industry & Investment Promotion Department  
<http://asiabiz.city.fukuoka.lg.jp/?lang=en>

## Great Access to the World

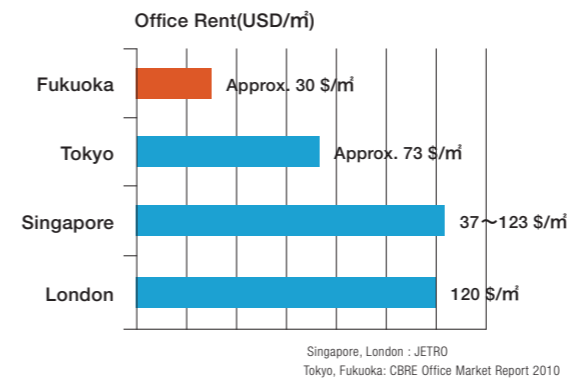


## A Compact City



Fukuoka Airport offers regular international flights to 20 cities. Only 10 minutes from the downtown area, it is one of the most conveniently located airports in the world. Fukuoka's easy access to other major cities in Japan and around the world via rail, air, and sea can significantly reduce distribution time and costs.

## Affordability/Livability for Foreigners

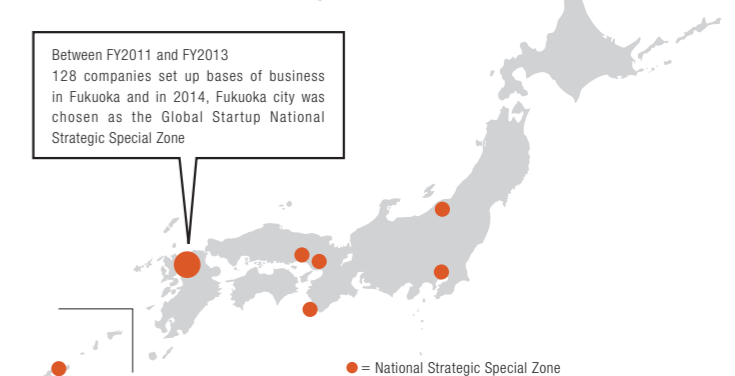


With office rents a third of those in Singapore or London, and half of those in Tokyo, Fukuoka's low office rents let businesses save on expenses. Fukuoka offers an ideal living environment for foreigners; including advice for international visitors and residents, multilingual maps, signs, and public facility information, and an outstanding educational environment, with Japanese classes for all ages and globally aware schools for young learners.



"By implementing deregulation measures, clearly defining employment terms, and making it easier to employ foreign workers, Fukuoka is striving to attract people and companies from around the world that want to start a new business; the city strives to continuously generate new value."—Fukuoka Mayor Soichiro Takashima

## A Business Friendly Environment



- Clarification of employment terms
- Review of residence status of foreigners
- Allowing foreign doctors and foreign nurses to practice medicine
- Lower corporate tax rates

Fukuoka city offers the best business environment!

## Basic facts and figures



With a population of around 1.52 million, Fukuoka city is the largest city in Kyushu. On the recently completed Kyushu Shinkansen, it is only 80 minutes to Kagoshima, the southern tip of Kyusyu. Fukuoka is an international city second only to Tokyo in the number of international conferences held.