



TOYAMA



ISHIKAWA



FUKUI



 Hokuriku Electric Power Company

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 Hokuriku Electric Power Company

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The Hokuriku region is located in the central part of Honshu, the main island of Japan. In the Hokuriku area, people live balanced lives, with good job opportunities, rich culture, a high level of education and community services, and they are highly satisfied with their quality of life, amongst the highest in Japan.

Natural Environment

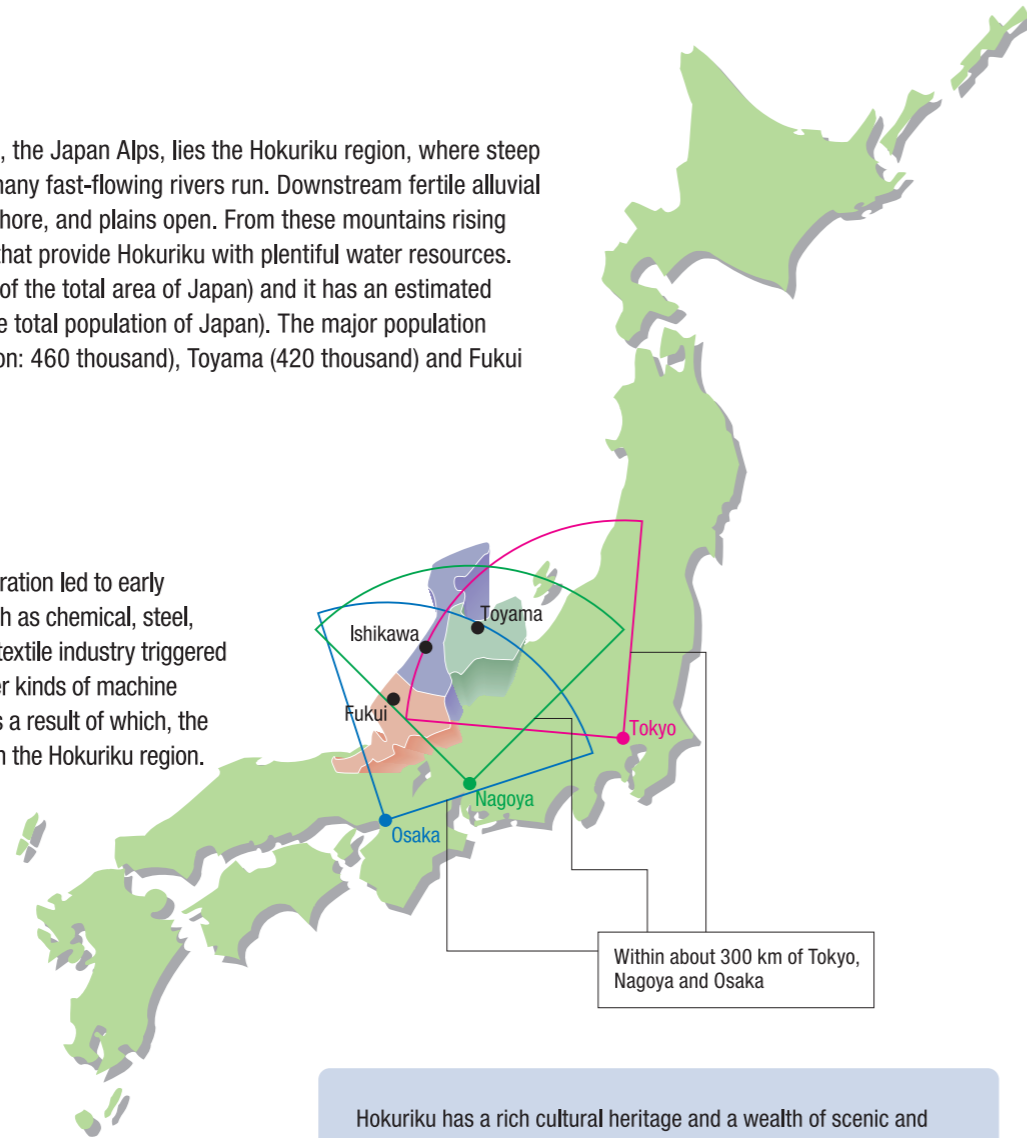
At the northern foot of the Central Highlands, the Japan Alps, lies the Hokuriku region, where steep mountain land faces the Sea of Japan and many fast-flowing rivers run. Downstream fertile alluvial fans spread, sand hills develop into the seashore, and plains open. From these mountains rising 3,000 meters above the sea flow the rivers that provide Hokuriku with plentiful water resources. The region's total area is 12,623 km² (3.3% of the total area of Japan) and it has an estimated population of about three million (2.4% of the total population of Japan). The major population centers of Hokuriku are Kanazawa (population: 460 thousand), Toyama (420 thousand) and Fukui (260 thousand).

Industries

Low-cost, abundant hydroelectric power generation led to early development of heavy chemical industries such as chemical, steel, non-ferrous metal, and textile industries. The textile industry triggered the development of textile machinery and other kinds of machine industries (machining/assembling industry), as a result of which, the machine industry is now the largest industry in the Hokuriku region. High industrial items of a national share in Hokuriku include specific local industry items cultivated by much tradition, such as glasses frame, textiles, lacquer ware, metallic foil (gold leaf), sashes made from aluminum, and copperware. Blessed with a natural environment most suitable for rice cultivation, such as abundant water and fertile alluvial fans, and good fishing grounds on the Japan Sea Coast, agriculture and fishing are prosperous and the primary industries of Hokuriku.

Economic Figure

As the leading industrial zone on the coast of the Sea of Japan, the region is 4th nationally in terms of income per capita after the Kanto (including Tokyo), Chubu (including Nagoya) and Kinki (including Osaka) regions. The combined gross domestic product of the three prefectures reached 12.3 trillion yen (in nominal terms in FY2008), which was equivalent to the GDP level of New Zealand.



Hokuriku has a rich cultural heritage and a wealth of scenic and historic sites, and many traditional crafts fostered by the cultural climate of the region.



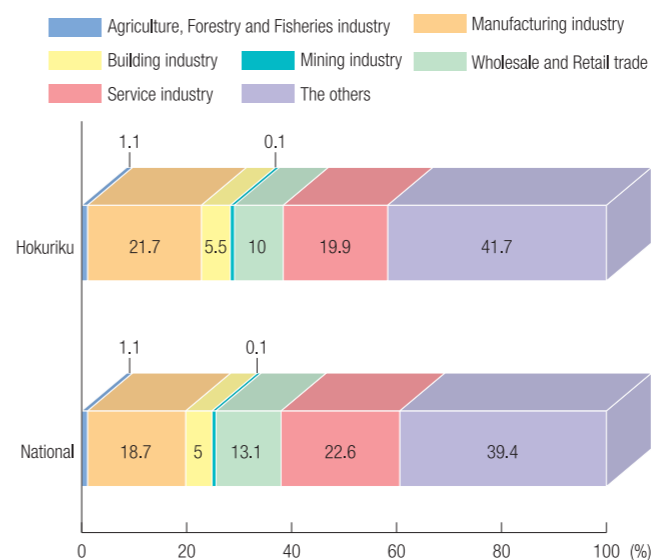
Kanazawa Castle's Ishikawa Gate
This is the back gate of Kanazawa Castle, the residence of the feudal lord of Kaga. The original castle does not remain today, due to its having been destroyed by fire, but this gate makes one realize the magnitude and beauty of the former castle.

Items for which the national share of the amount of money for product shipment from Hokuriku exceeds 40%, 2009

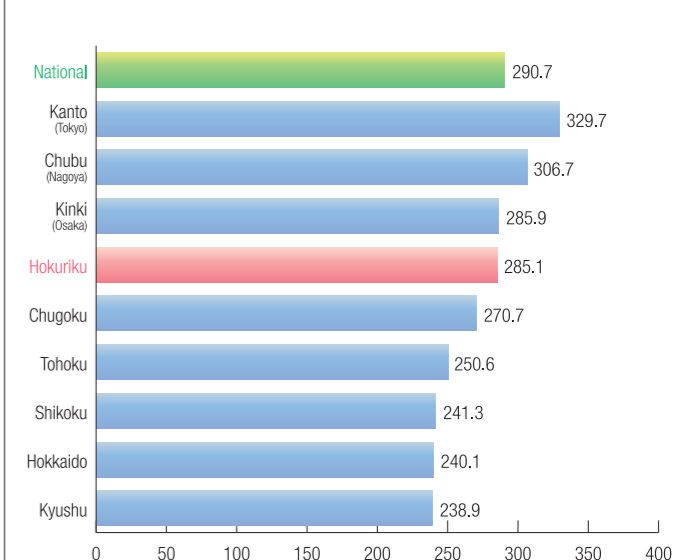
Classification of industry	Item	Share of the national (%)				Shipment amount (million yen)
		Hokuriku	Toyama	Ishikawa	Fukui	
Textile industry	Bulky yarns	61.1	×	58.6	2.6	6,192
	Viscose and rayon fabric	47.7	—	—	47.7	764
	Acetate line fabric	43.0	—	—	43.0	359
	Polyester line fabric	58.4	3.8	18.6	36.0	19,070
	Narrow fabrics	53.3	0.6	22.1	30.6	17,372
	Warp knit fabrics	61.7	21.2	1.2	39.2	19,976
	Refined, bleached and dyed silk and rayon fabrics	64.3	—	—	64.3	707
	Refined, bleached and dyed synthetic line fabric, machine dyed and finished synthetic rayon line fabric	91.0	—	78.5	12.5	15,772
	Miscellaneous fishing net	48.6	×	48.6	—	7,045
	Knit lace fabrics	41.8	—	19.0	22.8	7,102
	Miscellaneous lace fabrics and goods	58.7	—	43.4	15.2	1,159
Nonferrous metal	Regenerated pig copper and copper alloys	56.0	56.0	—	×	24,478
Metal goods	Aluminum sashes for housing	42.8	41.0	0.9	0.9	93,315
	Metallic foil, stamped	83.5	—	83.5	—	1,839
Wide use equipment	Roller chains	41.0	—	41.0	—	20,537
The other products	Miscellaneous dyeing and finishing machinery	40.8	×	8.0	32.9	1,252
	Lacquered kitchenware and tableware	73.1	2.1	27.9	43.1	7,569
	Miscellaneous lacquer ware	47.5	1.4	41.5	4.6	3,738
	Ophthalmic goods	71.8	—	—	71.8	1,630
	Frames	94.4	—	—	94.4	33,749
	Parts of glasses	95.0	—	—	95.0	5,587

“—”: N/A “×”: confidential

GDP ratio by type of business (2008)



Income per capital by region (FY2008, ten thousand yen)





Location and access

Hokuriku is located in the center of Japan. It has convenient access to three major metropolitan areas: Tokyo, Osaka and Nagoya. The time to each area is about 3 hours.

Overland transportation network

Getting Closer and More Convenient

Hokuriku is connected to Tokyo, Osaka and Nagoya by a highway network. This makes travel to these cities by car easy and speedy. A Shinkansen bullet train line is currently under construction and it will reduce the travel time from Tokyo to Hokuriku to just 2 hours.

The time required to travel to the major cities

Road

	Tokyo	Nagoya	Osaka
Toyama	4 hrs and 50 min	3 hrs	4 hrs and 15 min
Kanazawa	5 hrs and 42 min	2 hrs and 47 min	3 hrs and 34 min
Fukui	5 hrs and 30 min	2 hrs	2 hrs and 50 min

Rail

	Tokyo	Nagoya	Osaka
Toyama	3 hrs and 11 min	3 hrs and 8 min	3 hrs and 15 min
Kanazawa	3 hrs and 47 min	2 hrs and 27 min	2 hrs and 31 min
Fukui	3 hrs and 30 min	2 hrs	1 hr and 50 min

When the Hokuriku Shinkansen opens

	Tokyo	Osaka
Toyama	2 hrs and 7 min	1 hr and 20 min
Kanazawa	2 hrs and 22 min	1 hr and 5 min
Fukui	2 hrs and 42 min	45 min

As of May 2011

Air transportation network

Tokyo is a one hour flight away, and a day destination for business

The time required to travel to the major cities

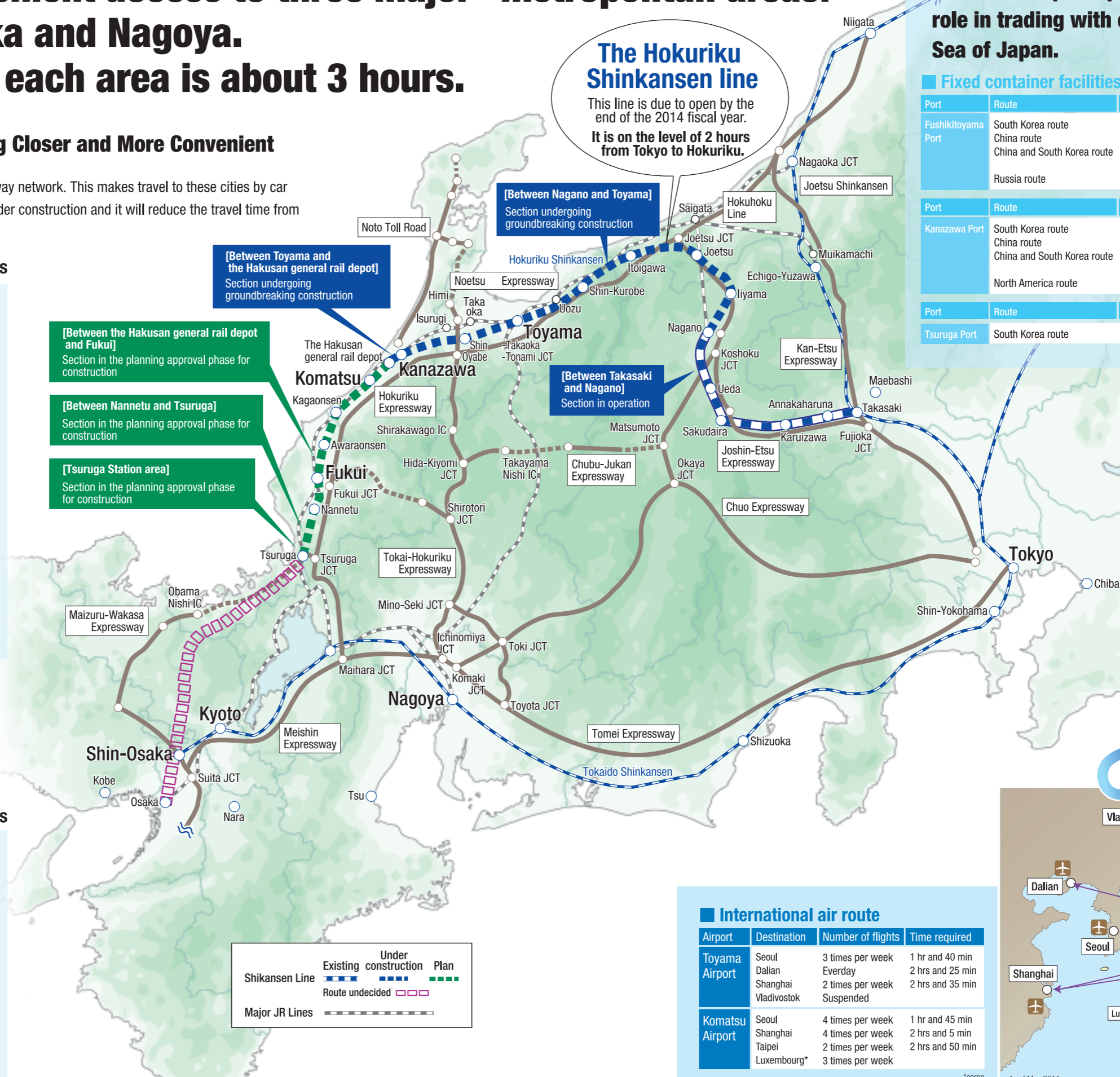
	Tokyo	Fukuoka	Sapporo
Toyama	1 hr	—	1 hr and 30 min
Komatsu	1 hr	1 hr and 10 min	1 hr and 30 min
Noto	1 hr	—	—

Komatsu	Noto
Tokyo 11 times per day	Tokyo 2 times per day
Sapporo 1 times per day	
Sendai 1 times per day	
Fukuoka 2 times per day	Tokyo 6 times per day
Narita 2 times per day	Sapporo 1 time per day
Naha 1 time per day	

As of May 2011

The Hokuriku Shinkansen line

This line is due to open by the end of the 2014 fiscal year. It is on the level of 2 hours from Tokyo to Hokuriku.



Legend

- Existing Shinkansen Line: Solid blue line
- Under construction Shinkansen Line: Dashed blue line
- Plan Shinkansen Line: Dotted blue line
- Route undecided: Pink dashed line
- Major JR Lines: Grey dashed line

International transportation network (surface and air)

Ports and airports play an important role in trading with countries on the Sea of Japan.

Fixed container facilities

Port	Route	Number of facilities	Overseas port of call
Fushikitoyama Port	South Korea route	5 times per week	Pusan
	China route	2 times per week	Dalian, Qingtao, Shanghai
	China and South Korea route	3 times per week	Pusan, Ulsan, Gwangyang, Dalian, Tianjin, Qingtao
	Russia route	2 times per month	Vostochny, Vladivostok

Port	Route	Number of facilities	Overseas port of call
Kanazawa Port	South Korea route	5 times per week	Pusan
	China route	3 times per week	Dalian, Qingtao, Shanghai
	China and South Korea route	1 times per week	Pusan, Ulsan, Gwangyang, Dalian, Tianjin
	North America route	1 times per month	New York

Port	Route	Number of facilities	Overseas port of call
Tsuruga Port	South Korea route	4 times per week	Pusan

As of May 2011

As seen from countries on the opposite coast, such as China and Russia, the Hokuriku area is the center in Japan.

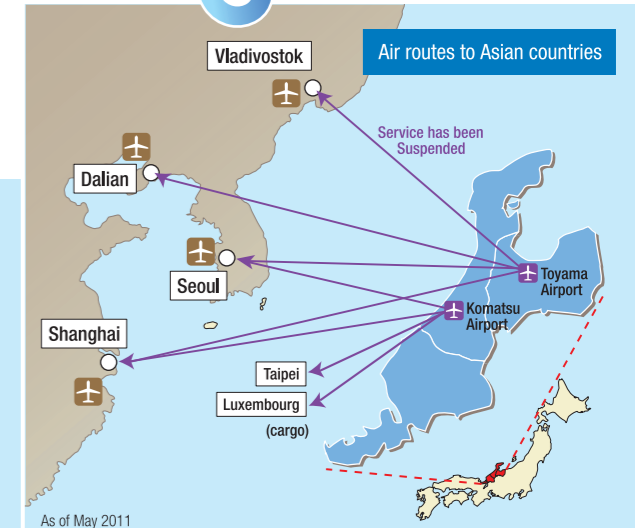


Air routes to Asian countries

International air route

Airport	Destination	Number of flights	Time required
Toyama Airport	Seoul	3 times per week	1 hr and 40 min
	Dalian	Everyday	2 hrs and 25 min
	Shanghai	2 times per week	2 hrs and 35 min
	Vladivostok	Suspended	
Komatsu Airport	Seoul	4 times per week	1 hr and 45 min
	Shanghai	4 times per week	2 hrs and 5 min
	Taipei	2 times per week	2 hrs and 50 min
	Luxembourg*	3 times per week	

*cargo



As of May 2011



A safe and rich environment for the people to build their lives

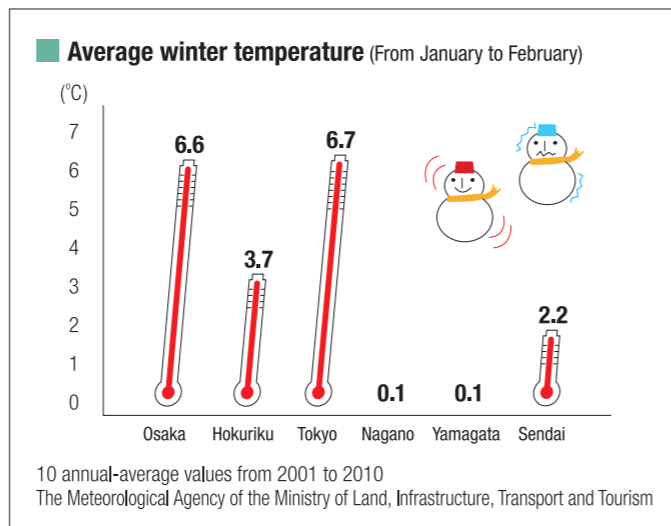
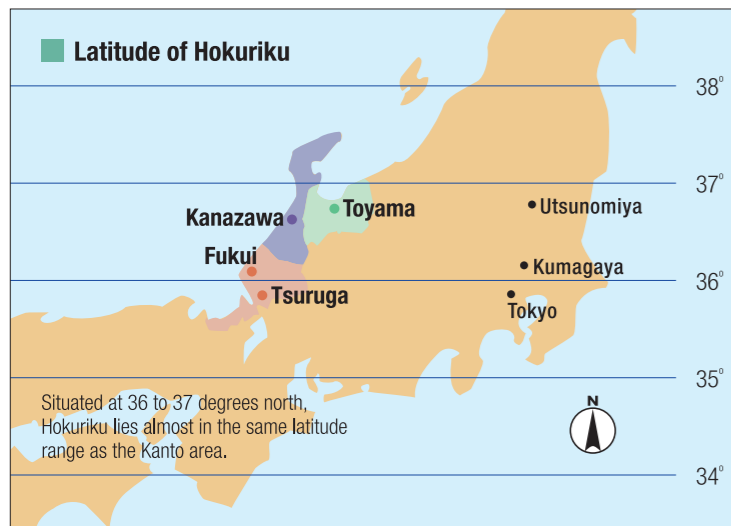
Hokuriku is surrounded by the beauty of nature, with magnificent mountains and ocean.

The four seasons bring you different tastes throughout the year.



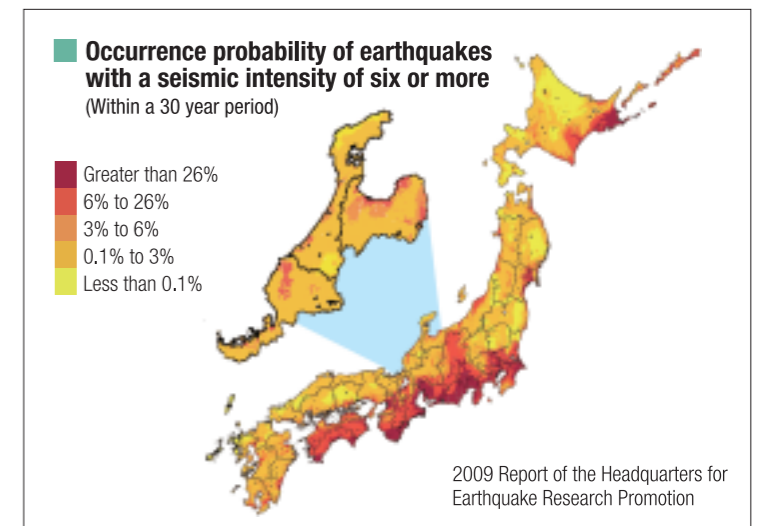
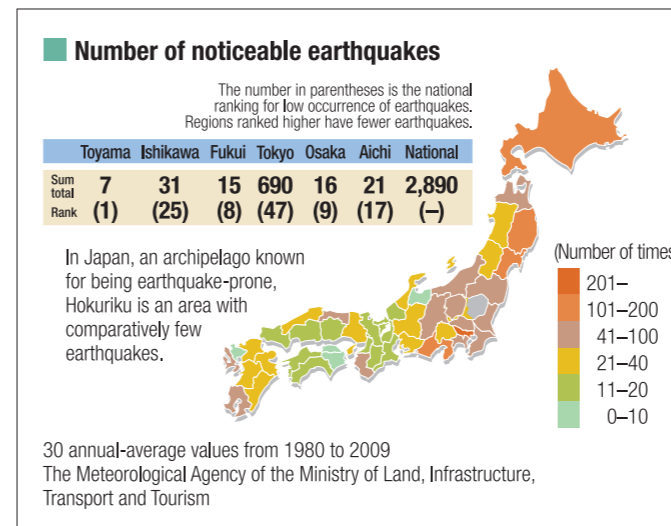
Winter in Hokuriku is Relatively Mild

Some people think of Hokuriku as a northern part of Japan. But in fact it is located at roughly the same latitude as the Kanto area. In addition, the Tsushima warm current in the Sea of Japan keeps the temperature of this region at a moderate level. So even in mid-winter the temperature is only 3 to 4 degrees Celsius.



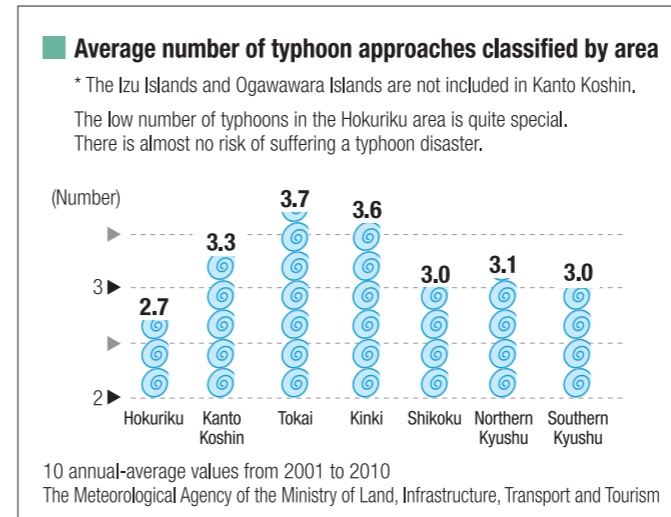
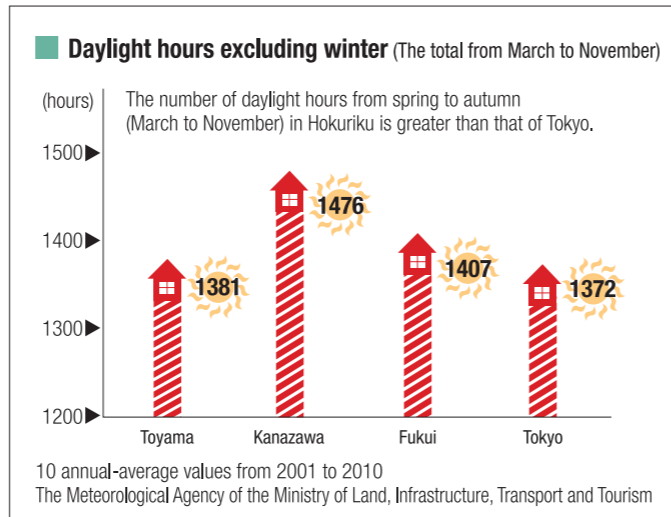
Safer from Natural Disasters

Statistically, we have much fewer natural disasters, like earthquakes or typhoons, than the Japanese average. So if your factory or office is in a metropolitan area, Hokuriku would be an ideal location to which to move if you have risk diversification in mind.



Tradition and culture to appreciate seasonal beauty

The Tonami region is very famous for its "million tulip," the Echizen region is famous for its winter narcissus, and Kenroku Garden is well known throughout Japan for its elegant apricot and cherry blossom trees. People here have long enjoyed flower arrangement and tea ceremony, and this very tradition has resulted in a culture of appreciation for seasonal beauty.



Beauty celebrated in the Manyo anthology

The natural beauty of Hokuriku has fascinated many people, and admiration for this beauty was also expressed in the Manyo anthology, compiled 1200 years ago. These beautiful natural features include the Tateyama mountains with the fantastic Mikuriga lake and Midagahara highland, Toyama Bay known for its mirages, Hakusan mountain with its lovely alpine plants and solemn waterfalls, Chirihama beach on which you can drive your car, Mikatagoko lake that often changes its image, and the gigantic Tojinbo cliffs.



Abundant, clean water that supports our life and industry

Rivers in Hokuriku flow from beautiful mountains. The rich water has supported our lives and industries for a long time.

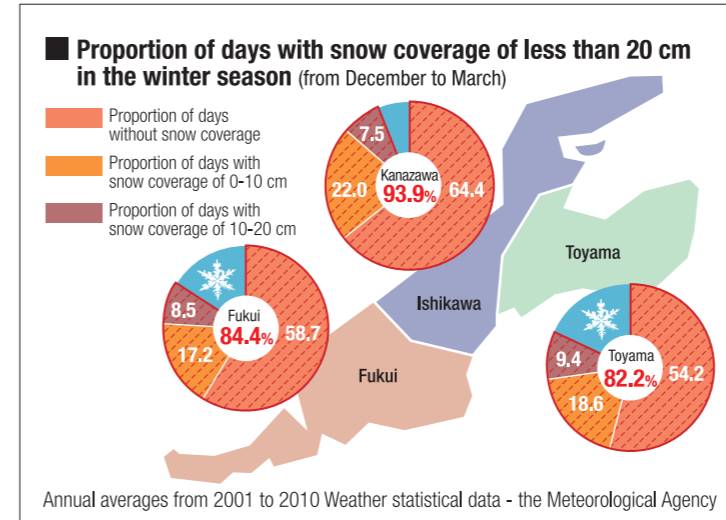
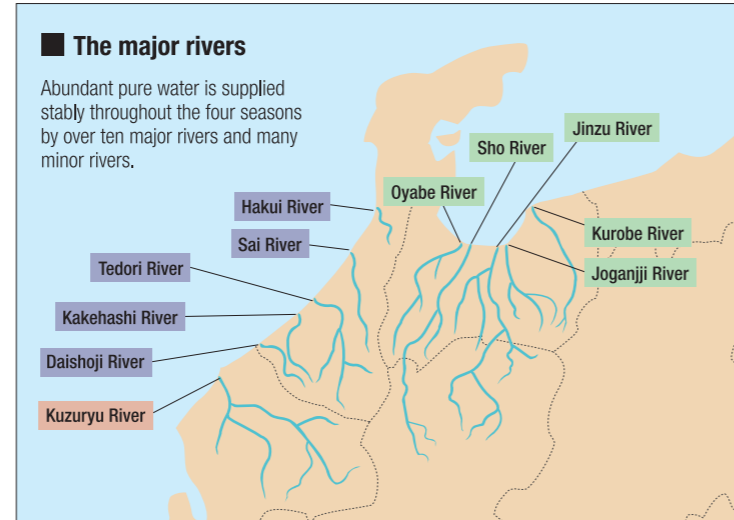
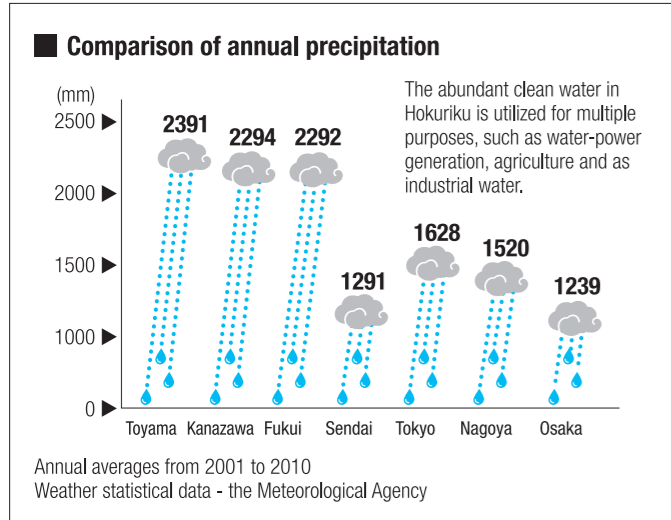


Blessed with rich nature, Hokuriku is a treasury of quality water

Ten waterways in Hokuriku have been selected by the Ministry of the Environment for inclusion in its list of 100 best quality water sources in Japan. High-tech industries give high regard to the water resources in the Hokuriku area.

You don't have to worry about snow

Many people imagine Hokuriku as being covered with snow. However we have less snowfall than you might expect, with less than 20 cm of snow on average during winter. Moreover, the frequent removal of snow and facilities to melt snow via water and heat on major roads such as the Hokuriku Highway mean that it's not an exaggeration to say that there is no impact on daily living and industry.

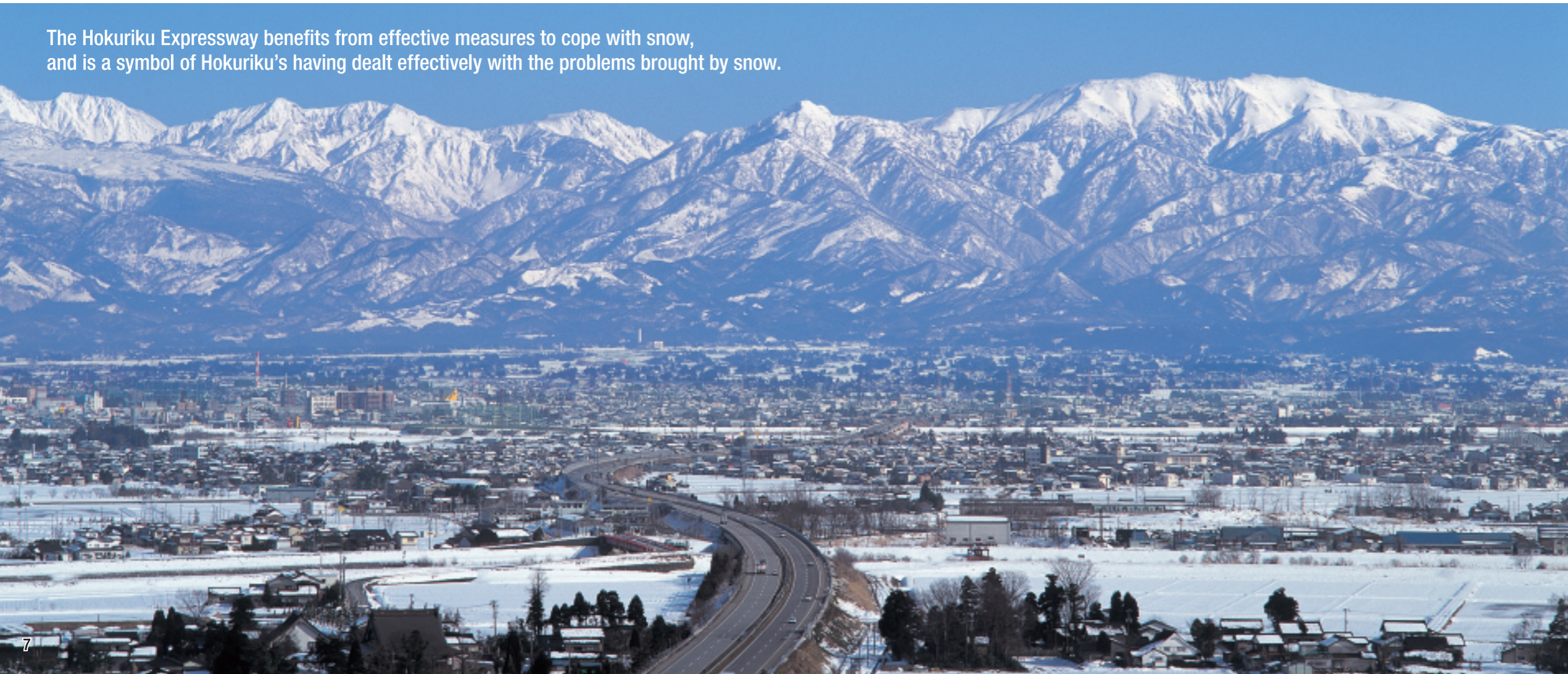


The snow removal rate on major roads

	Toyama	Ishikawa	Fukui
Hokuriku Highway	100.0	100.0	100.0
National road	100.0	100.0	100.0
Secondary national road	98.0	98.7	95.7
Major regional road	91.9	95.1	96.6
Prefectural road	92.7	95.7	99.5

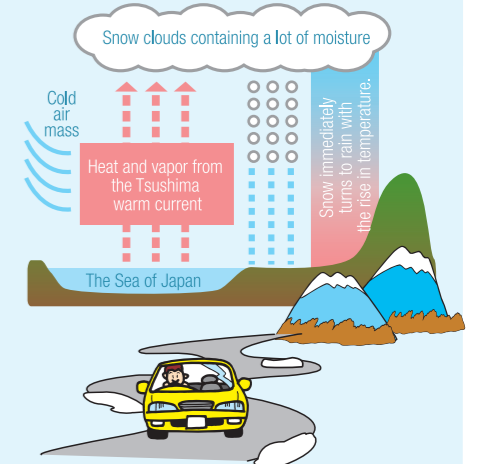
(%)

The Hokuriku Expressway benefits from effective measures to cope with snow, and is a symbol of Hokuriku's having dealt effectively with the problems brought by snow.



The reason why snow melts away early in Hokuriku

Snow in Hokuriku has a particular characteristic. Although air masses from Siberia are very cold, the Tsushima current warms these air masses before they reach Hokuriku. So although we do have some snow, it melts very easily.





A diligent and brilliant workforce

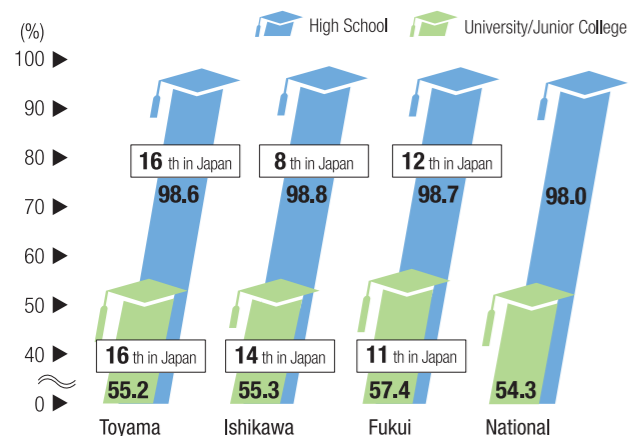
Hokuriku is full of hard-working people with a high level of education.



Highest rate in Japan for advancement to higher education

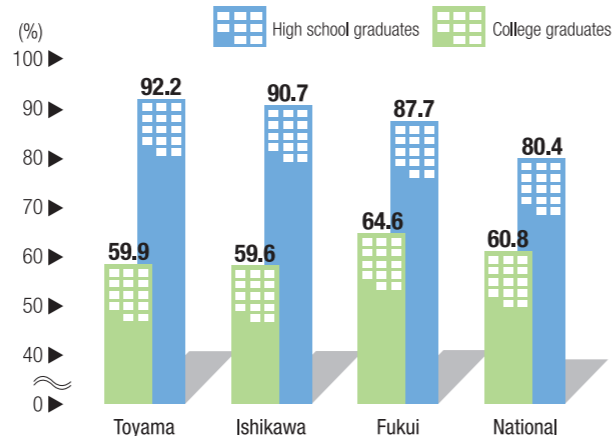
Parents in Hokuriku are eager to give the opportunity of higher education to their children. The ratio of students who go on next-stage education, such as high-school, college and university, is higher than other areas of Japan. That is the reason you can find such diligent and intelligent people here.

Ratio of students going on to high school and university/junior college



Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology
"School Basic Survey" 2010

Rate of employment for graduates from high school and college

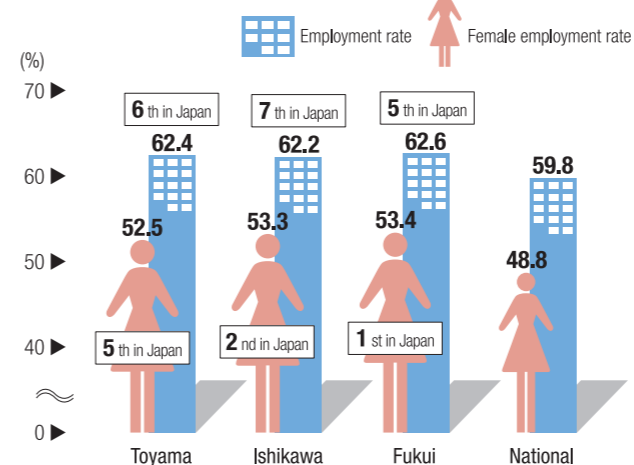


Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology
"School Basic Survey" 2010

Employees remain in their jobs for longer

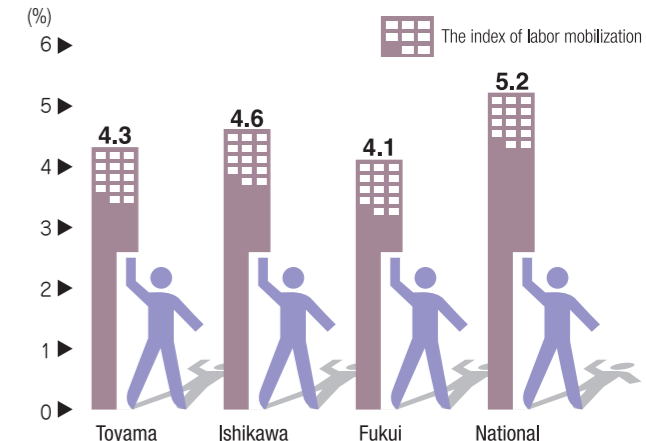
Hokuriku culture has instilled a diligent character in the citizens of the area. Many companies report experiencing a lower rate of employee resignation in Hokuriku compared to elsewhere in the country.

Employment rate



Number of workers divided by Population aged 15 and over.
2007 Basic survey of employment structure, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications

The index of labor mobilization



The ratio of the number of workers who ended the employment relationship with their employers within a fixed period divided by the number of all workers including the unemployed after they left their former employers.
2007 Basic survey of employment structure, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications

A culture of improving the quality of products

The Hokuriku area is proud of its traditions, culture and crafts. People from this region have produced creative and artistic craftsmanship, and the result of this is that many companies possess exclusive technology. So you can understand that Hokuriku is probably the best place to produce new products.



Echizen Washi Paper



Kaga Yuzen



Inami Wood Carving

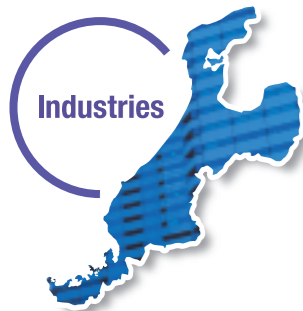
Monthly salary payment in cash

It is an attractive prospect to be able to secure talented people at low cost in Hokuriku.

	Toyama	Ishikawa	Fukui	Tokyo	Osaka	Aichi	National
Male	326.2	325.3	333.6	429.8	378.0	381.1	360.0
Female	224.7	225.5	218.7	298.2	259.8	252.4	243.6

"Salary payment in cash" is defined as a summation of basic salary, various types of compensation, and overtime work allowance before deduction of individual income tax and social insurance premiums.
2010 Basic statistical survey of wage structure, Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare

Unit: thousand yen



Hokuriku is one of the foremost industrialized areas on the Sea of Japan coast. There are many famous domestic companies.

Many companies have constructed factories here to take advantage of local subsidies, the diligent workforce and future expansion possibilities.

Companies that have factories in Hokuriku

There are many famous companies. The attractive environment of Hokuriku has been highly evaluated not only domestically but also internationally.



1 TANAKA CHEMICAL CORPORATION
Factory to manufacture battery electrode materials at Technoport Fukui (Fukui)



2 ONO PHARMACEUTICAL
Research institute for medicine at Technoport Fukui (Sakai, Fukui)



3 RENESAS
Electronic components factory aiming to world highest quality that underpins advanced information society (Sakai, Fukui)



4 NICHICON
Factory to manufacture electrode foil for aluminum electrolytic condensers (Ono, Fukui)



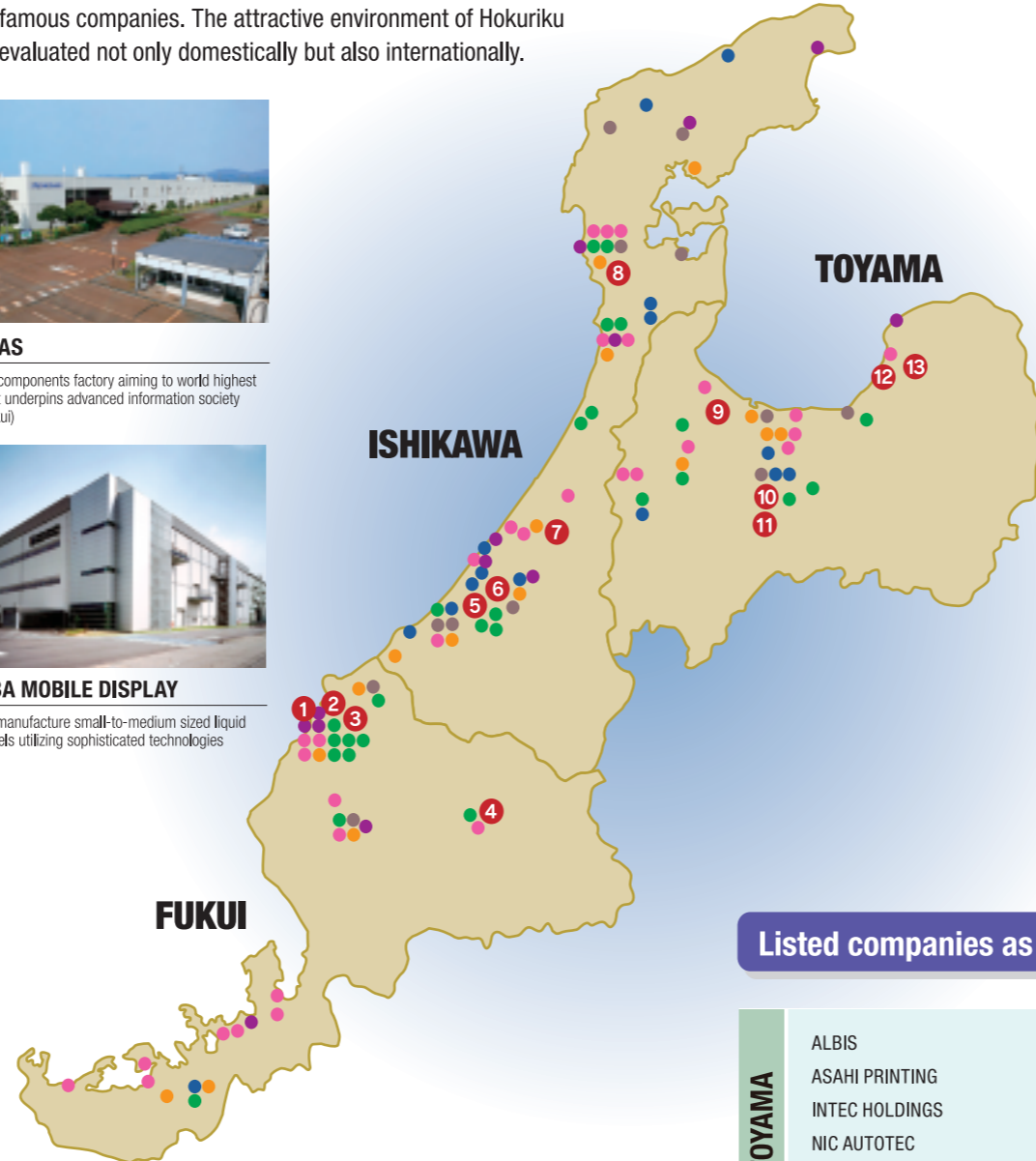
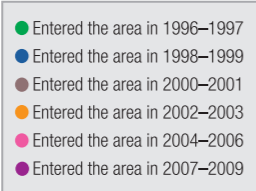
5 SONY
Factory to manufacture printed circuit boards supporting miniaturization and improved performance in mobile phone and digital appliances (Ishikawa)



6 TOSHIBA MOBILE DISPLAY
Factory to manufacture small-to-medium sized liquid crystal panels utilizing sophisticated technologies (Ishikawa)



7 YOKOGAWA
Research, development and production center for life science at Kanazawa Technopark (Ishikawa)



8 SANKEN
The world's largest factory to manufacture cold cathode fluorescent lamps for liquid crystal backlight systems (Shika town, Ishikawa)



9 ZEON
Combined with development function, factory to manufacture optical film for liquid crystals (Takaoka, Toyama)



10 HITACHI KOKUSAI ELECTRIC
Flagship center to produce equipment to manufacture semiconductors at the Yatsuo Industrial Complex (Toyama)



11 FUJITSU
Center to develop software at the Yatsuo Industrial Complex (Toyama)



12 FUJI XEROX
Integrated production factory for emulsion polymerization toner that handles everything from cartridge fabrication to filling (Toyama)



13 PANASONIC
Mass-production base for system LSI with the world's most sophisticated processing technology (Toyama)

Listed companies as of June, 2010

There are 68 listed companies in Hokuriku – a very high figure considering the economic size of the area. Some are internationally famous.

TOYAMA	ISHIKAWA	FUKUI
ALBIS	I-O DATA DEVICE	EMORI
ASAHI PRINTING	ISHIKAWA SEISAKUSHO	HITACHI ZOSEN FUKUI
INTEC HOLDINGS	WELLCO CORPORATION	KYODO COMPUTER HOLDINGS
NIC AUTOTEC	ORIENTAL CHAIN MFG	KUMAGAI GUMI
KAWADA TECHNOLOGIES	KITANIHON SPINNIG	GENKY STORES
COSEL	KYOWAKOGYOSYO	SAKAI OVEX
GOLDWIN	KUSURI NO AOKI	SEIREN
SAN-ETSU METAL	KOMATSU WALL INDUSTRY	TANAKA CHEMICAL
SANKYO-TATEYAMA HOLDINGS	KOMATSU SEIREN	NICCA CHEMICAL
SANKO GOSEI	COMANY	THE FUKUI BANK
TAKAGI SEIKO	SHIBUYA KOGYO	FUKUI COMPUTER
TANAKA SEIMITSU KOGYO	SOKOSEIREN	FUKUI CHEMICAL INDUSTRY
DAIKEN	DAIDO KOGYO	PLANT
DAITO PHARMACEUTICAL	DAIWA	MAEDA KOSEN
CHUETSU PULP & PAPER	TAKAMAZ MACHINERY	MITANI
TONAMI HOLDINGS	TAKEDA MACHINERY	MITANI SEKISAN
THE TOYAMA BANK	TSUDAKOMA	ROYAL ELECTRIC
NICHI-IKO PHARMACEUTICAL	EIZO NANA0	
THE NIHON SEIMA	NIKKO COMPANY	
JAPAN RESISTOR MFG	NISSEI BUILD KOGYO	
FUSHIKI KAIRIKU UNSO	HACHI-BAN	
NACHI-FUJIKOSHI	FUKUSHIMA PRINTING	
HOKURIKU ELECTRIC INDUSTRY	HOKURIKU DENWA KOUJI	
HOKUHOKU FINANCIAL GROUP	THE HOKKOKU BANK	
HOKURIKU ELECTRICAL CONSTRUCTION		
HOKURIKU ELECTRIC POWER		
	MITANI SANGYO	

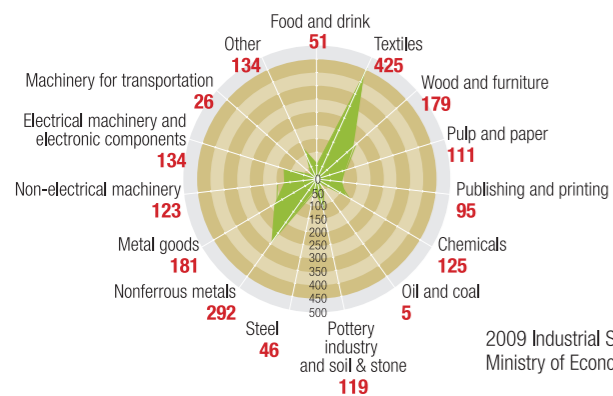
Companies which have their head office in Hokuriku

Many industrial factories

A wide range of advanced factories connected with electricity, electronics, machinery and chemistry operate here in Hokuriku. Current skills and know-how are partly derived from traditional local industries and textile technologies.

Industries in which Hokuriku specializes

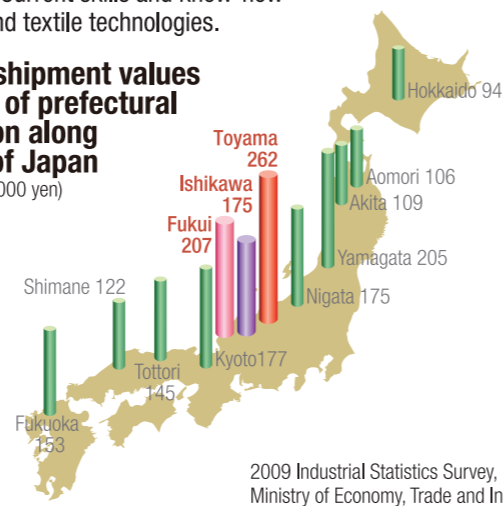
The ratio of Hokuriku's product shipment value when the whole country ratio is 100



2009 Industrial Statistics Survey, Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry

Product shipment values per head of prefectural population along the Sea of Japan

(in units of 10,000 yen)



2009 Industrial Statistics Survey, Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry



You are supported by generous local aid.

Aid from local governments decreases your initial costs.

Each prefectural government provides a sufficient menu of support programs to help lower the investments you need to make for land, buildings, facilities and human resources.

Aid provided by three prefectural governments



You may be able to benefit from a maximum of **5 billion yen** in support.

- Subsidies for promoting the establishment of new business facilities. A maximum of **5 billion yen**.

* The maximum total amount of money per plant site and per subsidy is 4 billion yen.



You may be able to benefit from a maximum of **5 billion yen** in support.

- Subsidies to creative industries, etc., for promoting the establishment of new business facilities. A maximum of **3 billion yen**.
- Subsidies to industries involved in expansion of employment opportunities for promoting the establishment of new business facilities. A maximum of **2 billion yen**.
- Subsidies to research institutes for promoting the establishment of new business facilities in places like ISHIKAWA Science Park. A maximum of **1 billion yen**.



You may be able to benefit from a maximum of **4.5 billion yen** in support.

- Subsidies for promoting the establishment of new business facilities. A maximum of **3.3 billion yen**.
- Incentive plan decided by each city or town. A maximum of **1.2 billion yen**.

* Each prefecture establishes financing for promoting the establishment of new business facilities other than those above. * Subsidies and remission decided originally by each municipality can be applied to you in certain cases.

A support system based on the "Act on Formation and Development of Regional Industrial Clusters through Promotion of Establishment of New Business Facilities, etc."

- Tax system related incentive plan** Application of extraordinary depreciation on capital investment
Remission of local taxes (real estate acquisition tax and fixed assets tax)
- Deregulation** Each prefecture has delegated the authority for regulation of Green Space-Area Ratios based on factory location law to each municipality. Thus, Green Space-Area Ratios can be reduced. Procedures for converting agricultural lands can be conducted at a more efficient pace than previously.

	TOYAMA	ISHIKAWA	FUKUI			
Region	Whole region of Toyama (15 municipalities)	Whole region of Ishikawa (19 municipalities)	Whole region of Fukui (17 cities and towns)	Reihoku Region	Technoport Region	Reinan Region (8 cities and towns)
Type of industry	IT (semiconductors, electronic materials, electronic components, manufacturing equipment), pharmaceuticals, machine industry, metals, industries related to health and living	Machinery, textiles, food, IT (electronics, information, software)	Industries related to healthy and longevity	The automobile industry	Industries related to chemicals and basic materials	The electronic components industry

Incentive plan for promoting power supply regions

- Subsidies for electricity charges** Subsidies to support companies which locate close to nuclear power generation facilities
Subsidies to support regions in which nuclear power generation facilities are located

Tax system related incentive plan

- Chubu Area Development and Improvement Act
- Act on Special Measures for Promotion for Independence for Underpopulated Areas
- Act on Special Measures concerning Development of Areas around Nuclear Power Plants and Other Facilities
- Peninsular Areas Development Act
- Kinki Area Adjustment Act

When companies which establish new business facilities in the municipalities which operate such laws, they can decline enterprise tax, real estate acquisition tax and fixed assets tax.

Aid for Research & Development

A number of cooperative activities between industries, universities and local governments are taking place, and there are breeding programs that can create new technology and industries.

Toyama Industrial Technology Center

This center conducts tests, analyses and measures for industrial technology. Research and development is also carried out into areas such as human engineering for quality life and computers.



Industrial Research Institute of ISHIKAWA

This institute supports companies in becoming high-technology companies by helping them to make maximum use of their facilities and providing guidance on workforce training.



Industrial Technology Center of Fukui Prefecture

This is an institute where testing, research and instruction about technology are carried out. Technical support is provided to companies in a variety of fields.



Hokuriku Economic Federation (Innovation promotion department)

Through various cross-industrial exchange programs and various seminars and lectures for advanced technology, this organization promotes technical innovation, industry, academic and government cooperation, and personnel training.

Wakasa Wan Energy Research Center

This center promotes research and development in energy. This builds a vigorous community through its influence on local industries.

The Hokuriku Industrial Advancement Center

The technical research here is regarded as the best out of 11 Industrial Advancement Centers, and so this research support system is a symbol of Hokuriku. Its operations are essential as an incubator and as a research partner.

Toyama Prefectural Institute for Pharmaceutical Research

This institute offers total support to companies through R&D in medicine and biotechnology to secure the promotion of medical businesses, the quality of medical supplies, validity, and safety.

Toyama New Industry Organization

Ishikawa Sunrise Industries Creation Organization

Fukui Industrial Support Center

Each prefecture has established a supporting institute with an extensive global network for new business development and management innovation.

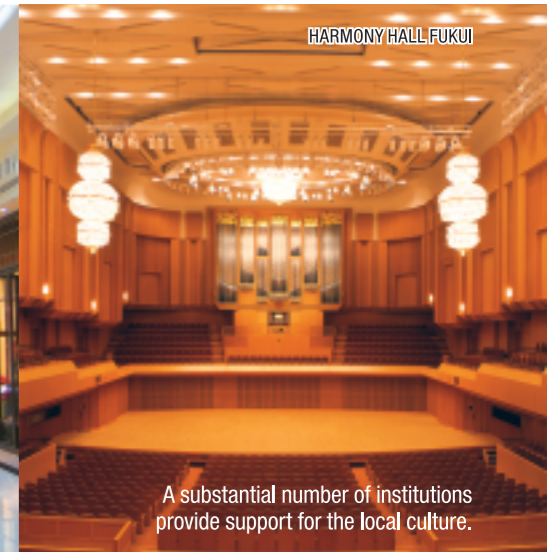
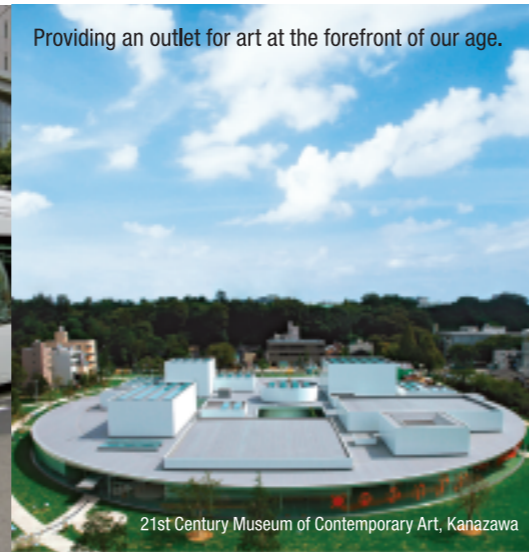
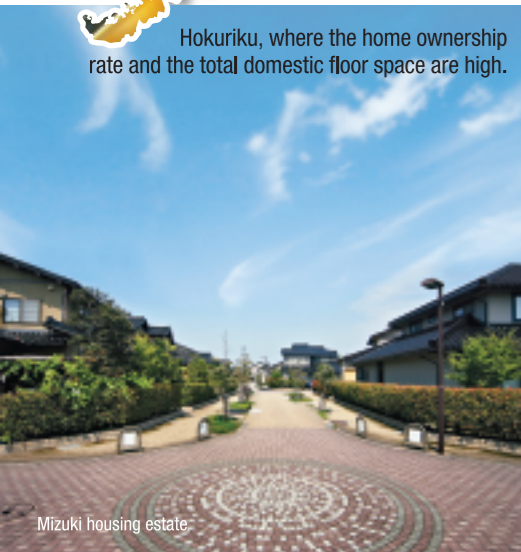
Advanced medicine pharmaceutical-research center

This research center was established in 1996 with the aging society in mind. The center develops early checkup techniques for cancer and dementia to develop new diagnostic technology and treatments for disorders that accompany aging.



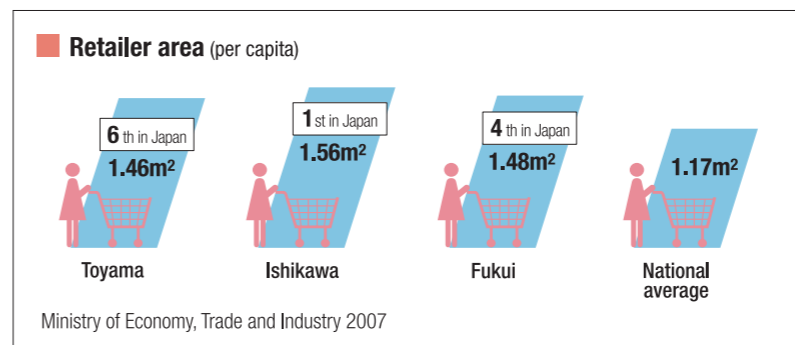
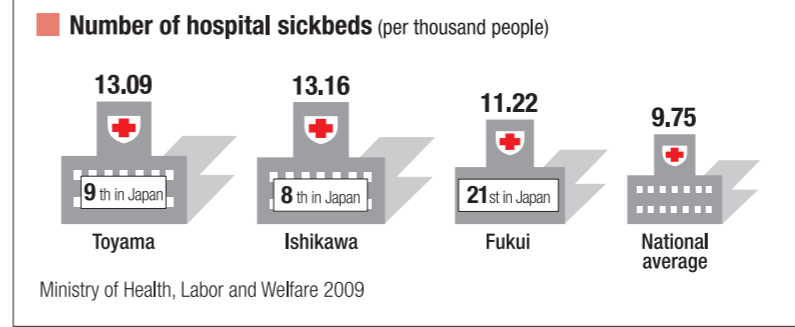
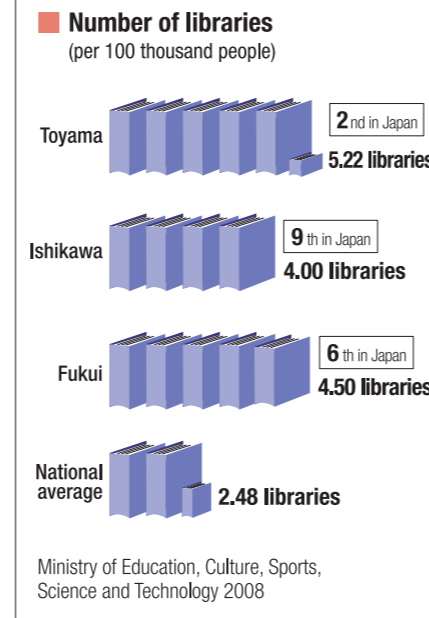
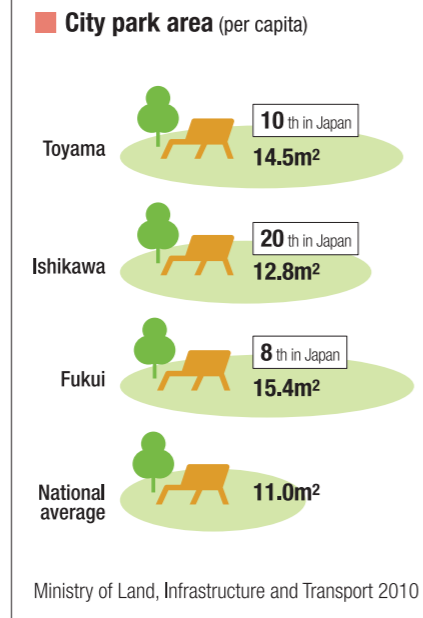
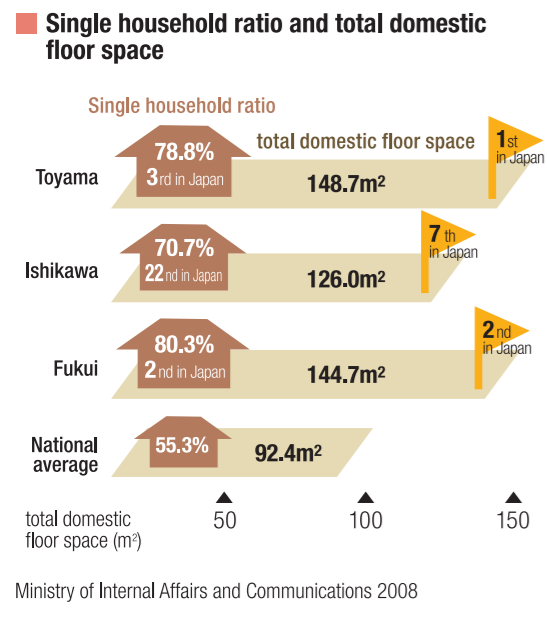
You can enjoy life in many ways

The safe and affordable lifestyle gives you and your family many opportunities to enjoy shopping, art and leisure.

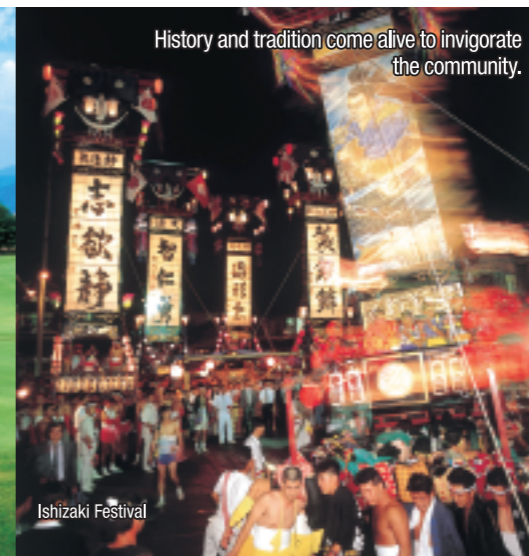
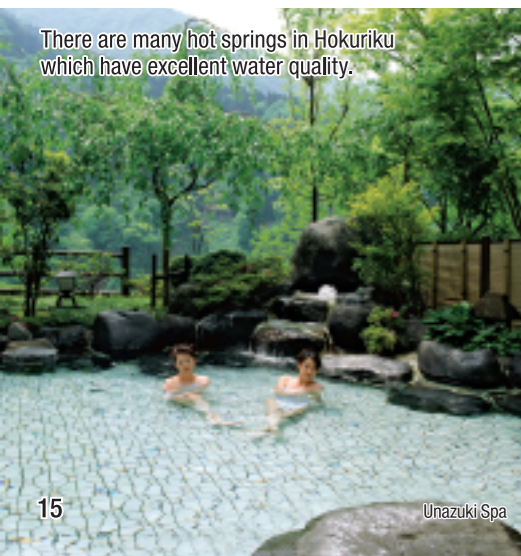
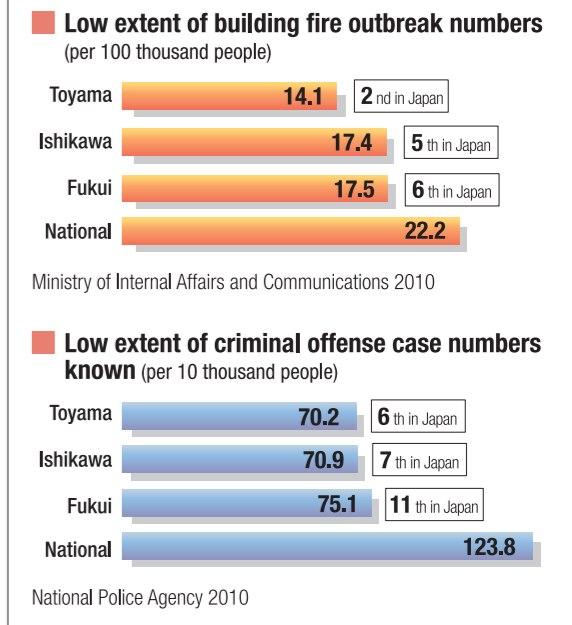


A Higher Living Standard

A satisfactory level of culture, education and welfare guarantee a higher standard of living. Polls show that level of satisfaction with ones lifestyle is in the high range for Japanese cities.



Baseline for Secure and Safe Living





Japan's treasure fountain with four distinctive seasons

To its north lies the Sea of Japan and to its east lies the Tateyama mountain range. Moreover, Hokuriku is a beautiful place which vividly reflects the regular changes of the four seasons from spring to summer and autumn to winter. Since olden times, it has prospered from trade and communication with China and other regions on the coast of the Sea of Japan. Because of such contact, a special culture thrived in Hokuriku, and the traditions of which

are still alive today.



1



2



3

1 The Tateyama Mountain Range (Toyama)

The Tateyama mountain range is one of the steepest and highest mountain ranges in Japan. Fast flowing rivers originate here, and meltwater erodes the surface of rocks, flowing straight into Toyama Bay. The Otani Snow Wall has much snow coverage because of snowdrift, and the depth may exceed 20 meters.

2 Kurobe Gorge Trains (Toyama)

Kurobe Gorge trains run through Kurobe Gorge, a deep, steep-sided canyon with breathtaking cliffs dropping straight into the Kurobe River.

3 Gokayama Gassho Village (Toyama)

"Gassho Zukuri" is a type of three or four storied rural house constructed with only wood and straw ropes, using no nails. The thatched roof is steeply inclined in order to shed heavy snow.



4



5



6

4 Kenroku Garden (Ishikawa)

This is one of the best and most famous gardens in Japan. It was constructed in the latter half of the 17th century, and covers about 10 hectares. It is a landscaped garden representative of the Edo era when the samurai warriors ruled Japan. It shows nature as it changes from season to season.

5 Nagamachi's Samurai Residence (Ishikawa)

In the Edo era, in towns in which the feudal lord's castle was situated, the place where people lived was determined according to their status, such as samurai or merchant. Also, in order to protect the town and the castle from attack by invaders, the town constructed blind alleys as well as narrow T-junctions and key-shaped roads. Even today there remain traces of the area where the samurai lived.

6 Wajima's Morning Market (Ishikawa)

Famous as one of the three Japanese morning markets, women from neighboring fishing areas and farmhouses have sold fish, shellfish, seaweed and vegetables for more than a thousand years.



7



8



9

7 Eiheiji Temple (Fukui)

This is the chief temple of the Soto sect, and was built in 1244. The Soto sect of Buddhism is characterized by adherence to strict commandments and endeavors toward spiritual enlightenment through meditation. On the mountainside, about 70 buildings joined by corridors have been built in a regular manner. Even today, over 100 priests lead an ascetic life here.

8 Marine Product

The sea around Hokuriku has a warm current called the Tsushima current, and in the depths of Toyama Bay there is a mass of cold water that is a characteristic of the Sea of Japan. Consequently, the mixture produces excellent conditions for the numerous types of fish and shellfish to be found there.

9 Maruoka Castle (Fukui)

The castle is reported to have been built in 1576. Today all that remains is a single corner of a castle tower, which is said to be the oldest one surviving in Japan.