

# An International City

**NOT LONG AGO, CHARLOTTE COULD FLY** under the radar of most international city watchers. Not anymore. This city with deep business roots and a rich economic base strengthened by diverse industry is now a magnet that attracts foreign-owned companies and valuable employees.

Charlotte is a multicultural metropolitan area that embraces diverse ideas, opinions, business operations and residents. Foreign-owned firms enrich our business community, cultural amenities and daily lives. In turn, Charlotte offers an environment that helps foreign-owned firms grow and makes foreign-born workers feel at home.

Over 850 foreign-owned firms, representing 42 countries, provide jobs to over 50,000 workers in the 16 county Charlotte region.

**CHARLOTTE'S QUALITY OF LIFE IS A MAJOR FACTOR IN EMPLOYEES' DESIRE TO MOVE HERE.**

## Pro-Business Climate

Charlotte is one of the most business-focused cities in the United States. For three years running, North Carolina claimed the top spot in *Site Selection* magazine's listing of the best business climates in North America. The magazine ranked Charlotte first on its list of top 10 U.S. cities for foreign investment. The Queen City has such a pro-business environment that more than 326 of *Fortune's* top 500 companies have placed one or more facilities within Mecklenburg County.

For foreign-owned firms in particular, Charlotte offers exceptional air service, foreign trade zones, transparent

government and business practices and numerous non-profit organizations that focus on international business, foreign policy and global culture. Charlotte-Mecklenburg is home for the honorary consuls of Austria, Canada, France, Germany, Great Britain, Guatemala, Mexico, Moldova, Nicaragua and Switzerland.

More than one-third of the 1,373 manufacturing firms in Mecklenburg County are involved with importing or exporting goods. The Charlotte Foreign-Trade Zone, which allows goods to be brought in from overseas duty-free and stored or manufactured into a product, is one of the largest in the state.

The Charlotte chapter of the North Carolina World Trade Association, which promotes international trade, is one of the largest in the nation.

Charlotte is also known for being the world headquarters of Bank of America, the nation's largest bank. This bank operates in 225 cities in 43 countries, including the financial capitals of Frankfurt, Hong Kong, London, Mexico City, Milan, Paris, Seoul, Singapore, Taipei, Tokyo and Zurich. More banking resources are headquartered in Charlotte than in any other U.S. city except New York.

## High Quality of Life

Charlotte's high quality of life, below-average cost of living, world-class arts and major league sports, as well as abundant opportunities attract talented individuals from around the globe. Approximately 13 percent of Mecklenburg's population was born outside of the United States.

### Why International Companies Choose Charlotte

- ▶ Excellent U.S. market access from a central Atlantic coast location
- ▶ Large airport hub with direct international flights
- ▶ Pro-business local government
- ▶ Highly productive workforce for manufacturing and services
- ▶ State-funded worker training programs
- ▶ Extraordinary quality of life
- ▶ Below-average cost of living
- ▶ Rich international business and cultural communities
- ▶ Foreign language schools
- ▶ Excellent universities and research programs

# CHARLOTTE



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People like living here, and companies based in Charlotte successfully recruit highly talented individuals from around the world and all regions of the U.S.

## Market Access

Charlotte Douglas International (CLT) Airport offers extensive commuter and airfreight services. Home to US Airways' largest hub, the airport offers non-stop service to more than 179 different cities, including Frankfurt, Munich, London, Montreal, Paris, Toronto, the Caribbean and several Mexican cities. Roughly 655 flights leave Charlotte daily.

Charlotte ranks 34th nationwide in air cargo. More than 132,000 tons of cargo were enplaned in Charlotte in 2008. More than 500,000 square feet of warehouse space in the Charlotte Air Cargo Center offers quick proximity to runways, railways and interstate highways.

Charlotte is at the heart of a highway and railroad system that stretches across the Eastern and Southern United States. Most of the nation's largest trucking companies have facilities here. The Charlotte region links to 23 states with two major



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rail systems, Norfolk Southern and CSX. Some 300 trains pass through Charlotte weekly.

## Emphasis on Education

Charlotte's future strength is in development today in schools across Mecklenburg County. The Charlotte-Mecklenburg School (CMS) system supports and encourages cultural and foreign-language education and operates five language immersion schools for students who study German, French, Japanese, Mandarin Chinese or Spanish. More than 12,000 CMS students speak a foreign language, representing a total of 140 different languages and 160 countries of origin.

Eight international schools also help students maintain language skills and cultural identity while they are in Charlotte: a Japanese school, a German school, two Chinese schools, a Korean school, a Greek school, a Swedish school and a Russian school. Charlotte is also home to one of five British American schools. The Carolina International School is located just outside of Charlotte in Cabarrus County.

Many of the colleges and universities in the Carolinas are recognized for their excellence both nationally and internationally. Charlotte is a city of educated individuals. We were recently ranked as America's fifth most literate city based on the percentage of residents having a high school diploma or greater and the percentage of residents with a bachelor's degree.

## A Great Destination

Whether you are considering expanded business operations or a new home for your company's headquarters, Charlotte deserves your consideration. We live for business and make business easy to do.

### Foreign Firms Growth

*Since 1990, the number of foreign-owned firms operating in metro Charlotte has grown by over 162 percent.*

Year	Total
2009	850
2007	740
2000	546
1990	325

### Foreign Firms Operating in Charlotte

*The number of foreign-owned firms operating in the Charlotte region grows every year. Today, 850 foreign-owned firms operate here. The 10 countries with the largest presence are:*

Country	Business total 2009
Germany	194
United Kingdom	103
Japan	91
Canada	71
France	60
Switzerland	47
Italy	46
Netherlands	38
Sweden	32
Australia	18

