

The Policy for the Promotion of Multi-cultural

Integration in Takatsuki City.

(Summary)

March, 2009

Takatsuki City

The Policy for the Promotion of Multi-cultural

Integration in Takatsuki City.

(Summary)

Background.

Due to the globalization of the Japanese economy, the number of registered foreign residents in Japan is expected to rise over the coming years. At the end of 2007, the number of registered foreign residents was recorded at 2,152, 973.

Foreign residents in Japan face a number of problems mainly due to a lack of ability in the Japanese language. Furthermore, a shortage in the employment opportunities available to foreign residents results in a fairly unstable and possibly problematic lifestyle.

Immigration Control for Foreign Residents (including those from developing countries)

Since the instatement of the new immigration laws, the criteria for visitors to Japan eligible for a temporary residence visa has been clarified. The hindrances and boundaries governing what type of employment is available to foreign residents have also disappeared allowing total freedom of job choice and working hours.

As a result, the number of working foreigners in Japan has significantly increased from 260,000 recorded in 1990, to approximately 925,000 recorded in 2006.

Each local council across Japan needs to strive to adjust their working conditions to help create a national standard. The variations of nationality, race, culture and “sense of values” amongst foreign residents in Japan have to be positively recognized and accepted in the hope of bringing about a harmonious and co-operative society.

It is necessary for the residents of Takatsuki to also recognize the variation in cultures and human rights of foreign residents and to promote friendly integration within society. A respect and understanding of one another’s culture and background will lead to healthy and pleasant living conditions for all.

Policy Action Plan.

Basic information regarding day-to-day life will be provided by Takatsuki City Council thus allowing foreign residents in the city to become integral parts of society.

Takatsuki is in collaboration with the 1999 U.N. program to promote the education of human rights.

Takatsuki 's Action Plan.

A law was established in March 2001 designed to create a society in which people respect each other's human rights leading to the set up of *The Human Rights Promotion Committee.*

At many levels in society, internationalization has been spreading at an unprecedented rate. In accordance with this fact, it is evermore important to create a society which welcomes and recognizes the differences in nationality, culture and ethnicity and integrates those factors to create a prosperous society.

1- Takatsuki's Action Plan- for the benefit of promoting human rights.

Due to the increasing spread of various nationalities, religions, cultures and customs, an action plan has been set up in Takatsuki City to promote international integration in society in the hope of creating harmonious living conditions for all.

2- Action Plan Methodology.

In July 2007, a series of 11 meetings were held in Takatsuki City to decide the way forward in promoting internationalization in the area. The policies employed by surrounding cities were also investigated and a questionnaire was produced and given to foreign residents living in Takatsuki.

In September the following year, the results of the questionnaire were put together and analyzed and a policy draft was drawn up by Takatsuki local government to promote multi-cultural understanding in the area.

The Situation for Foreigners in Japan.

Since 1969, the number of foreigners in Japan has been showing a general increasing trend. At the end of 2007, 2,150,000 foreign residents were recorded, representing 1.69% of the overall national population. (This has shown a growth of 45.2% compared to 10 years ago).

The Situation in Takatsuki City.

At the end of 2007, 3,098 foreign residents were recorded in Takatsuki City (representing 0.9% of the population) –a significantly smaller number compared to other cities across Japan. (A growth of 3% over the last 10 years.)

In 1982, Korean residents made up 90.5% of the total number of foreign residents living in Takatsuki city, compared to a figure of 51.2% recorded in 2007.

Since the beginning of The Second World War, people from The Korean Peninsula and their children residing in Japan are classed as “Old-comers.”

People who have been residing in Japan since 1980 are classed as “New-comers.”

The Effort towards Multi-cultural Co-existence.

The National Approach (The recommendation to local governments)

-1987- The guidelines and policy for international exchange were set up by the prefectural and local governments.

-1988- The National Standard for international exchange was put forward.

-1989- The outline for the promotion of regional international exchange was put forward.

-1995- The guidelines for the international co-operation scheme were put in place. Local councils were encouraged to promote international co-operation.

-2000- The Human Rights Awareness and Understanding Act was passed. It has been made clear that it is the responsibility of the national government and local councils to put this act in place. Hence, local councils have been asked to help create communities where foreign residents can carry out daily activities easily.

-2005- The Study group to promote multi-cultural coexistence was established and the regional promotion of multi-cultural coexistence was put under consideration.

-2006- The multi-cultural coexistence program was suggested. Regional international exchange and co-operation along with multi-cultural coexistence were set as the main themes for regional internationalization.

-December 2006- A plan regarding foreign residents living in the area was proposed to clarify the issue of promoting multi-cultural coexistence.

Osaka Prefecture's Approach.

-May 1992- the basic policy for the promotion of internationalization in Osaka prefecture was put forward. The policy was aimed at educating people towards international open-mindedness.

-March 2002- The policy regarding foreign residents living in Osaka prefecture was proposed.

-December 2002- The guide regarding the policy for foreign residents living in Osaka prefecture was put forward.

Takatsuki City's Approach.

-1982- The basic education guidelines for tackling the problems faced by South and North Korean residents living in Japan was put forward and made concrete.

-1984- The subsidy system for the welfare of physically or mentally challenged foreign residents living in Japan was set up.

Attention has been paid to these two policies for their progressive nature.

Since then, the number of “*New-comers*” hasn’t increased as sharply as expected leading to “International Exchange” being set as the main point of the policy.

Due to a lack in the number of “*New-comers*” the foreign workforce in Takatsuki also hasn’t increased as expected resulting in the internationalization policy for a society of multi-cultural co-existence.

In 2003, a questionnaire was carried out in Takatsuki (for the fourth time) enquiring on the consciousness of human rights. It was made clear in the report that there has been a distinct rise in the acceptance of foreign labor by citizens of Takatsuki along with their consciousness of human rights towards foreign residents in Japan.

The Onward Action Plan.

We aim to make the most of the experience gained from the advanced effort made towards the “*Old-comers*” and take measures to benefit the increasing number of “*New-comers*.” A communication and acceptance system for daily life is necessary. An organization for the promotion of multi-cultural co-existence is required.

Results of the questionnaire given to foreign residents living in Takatsuki City.

-The aim of the investigation.

To create a basic policy which provides invaluable information, grasping the main issue and aiming towards the realization of a society of multi-cultural coexistence. The main items of the investigation were:

- Human Rights (communication of information)
- Living Environment (creating an area of multi-cultural coexistence).

-The method of implementation.

During the period between May 9th and May 23rd 2008, 700 foreign residents living in Takatsuki were selected at random for the purpose of the questionnaire. The questionnaire was comprised of a Japanese version along with a further four

foreign language versions.

The results collected from “*Old-comers*” and “*New-comers*” were separated for analysis. 218 completed questionnaires were returned (representing 31.1%).

-The results of the investigation.

-“*Old-comers*”

-Of the 74 people who responded to the questionnaire (around 50% of whom were over the age of 60) 72 people had been born and raised in Japan. For these participants in the survey, Japanese language support was deemed unnecessary.

-Residents over the age of 50 represented 48.6%. A considerable number of foreign residents are entering and leaving Takatsuki city.

-Those who feel a sense of attachment and commitment to Takatsuki and intend to reside in Takatsuki in the future represented approx. 70%

The most common response to the proceeding questions was: “Nothing in particular.”

- 1- What worries or troubles you in day-to-day life? (“Nothing in particular” 43.2%)
- 2- What worries you regarding your children’s future? (“Nothing in particular 31.1%)
- 3- Have you encountered any problems when using public facilities such as hospitals? (“Nothing in particular” 54.1%)

The problems regarding Human Rights:

- 1- What would you like Japanese residents to understand?
 - “The existence of discrimination against foreign residents” Approx. 60%
- 2- Under what circumstances have you felt discriminated against?
 - “Being refused employment on the grounds of nationality” 24.3%
 - “Being refused a residential contract when looking for a place to live on the grounds of nationality” 23%
 - “In some situations it’s difficult or may prove problematic to reveal you real name, often relying upon a Japanese alias” 24.3%
 - “There exists a level of unkindness towards foreign residents at public facilities such as hospitals” 1.4%

While applying for employment or looking for a place to live, foreign residents often directly feel discriminated against. In addition, foreign residents are sometimes unwillingly forced into assuming an alias to facilitate daily life in Japanese society and avoid any possible unpleasant circumstances. Unfortunately, there's no denying the fact that this is a clear example of discrimination.

“New-comers”

- People in their 20's and 30's represent approx. 60% of “New-comers” in Japan.
- People who have lived in Takatsuki for less than 5 years represent approx. 50%
- People with a Japanese spouse represent 66.4%
- 45.7% of people say the main reason they stay in Japan is because they are married to a Japanese national.

- Insufficient understanding of the Japanese language:

- **Listening ability** > ”not really able” 16.7%
> “almost incapable” 1.4%

- **Writing ability** > “not really able” 37.7%
> “almost incapable” 10.9%

This information suggests that a lot of foreign residents in Takatsuki are in need of Japanese language support.

- “Takatsuki city is the source of necessary information regarding everyday life” 2.2%
- What troubles or worries you in day-to-day life? (“It's difficult to get information about Takatsuki city” 10.1%)
- What are your general hopes and concerns for your children? (“Japanese language ability and academic performance is a worry” 13.8%)
- What troubles do you encounter when searching for a job? (“Potential employment advertisements and information are usually written in Japanese making it difficult to understand” 13%)
- Those who would like to get involved in public activities represent 43.5%
- “In the hope of receiving assistance in the event of an emergency “New-comers” want to try and increase the opportunity of developing a communicative relationship with the local residents” 39.9%
- 52.2% of “New-comers” are conscious of a sense of belonging to Takatsuki city and intend to reside there in the coming future.

The Issue of Human Rights.

- What would you like Japanese people to understand?
 - >"A level of discrimination exists towards foreigners" 36%

- In which situations have you felt discriminated against?
 - >"Being declined when looking for a job due to nationality" 18.8%
 - >"Being declined when looking for a place to live due to nationality" 15.9%
 - >"Not being able to make friends due to nationality" 10.1%

It is thought that "*Old-comers*" have sufficient knowledge and experience of Japanese language and culture. However, it is thought that a consciousness of discrimination is nevertheless present within Japanese society making everyday life problematic for foreigners living in Japan.

It is thought that due to a lack of understanding of the Japanese language and culture, "*New-comers*" face difficulties in a variety of situations when living in Japan.

For each other to co-exist mutually, it is essential for us to grasp the issue and reach the fulfillment of the policy goal.

The Basic Idea of the Policy.

Approach: To accept into society the variety of customs, cultures and "ways of thinking," races and nationalities. Not to differentiate between different cultures but to integrate them in the hope of creating a rich and powerful multi-cultural society.

-In other words, the policy towards foreign residents living in Takatsuki is not only a local council issue, but a national issue for the whole country.

-In the hope of creating a multi-cultural society it is essential to view foreign residents living in Takatsuki as integral members of society.

-Not only accepting one another's cultural differences but tackling and resolving the everyday difficulties facing the foreign residents living in Takatsuki.

It is hoped that foreign residents living in Japan and foreign visitors to Japan are addressed and thought of as “Foreign Citizens.”

The object of the guidelines applies to all residents of the city. It is hoped that services will be provided to help with Japanese language support, even for those born in Japan or those born into an international marriage.

The Basic Policy.

To achieve the aims of the policy, five basic principles and specific measures need to be set in place.

1- Regard for Human Rights and Promoting an Awareness of Multi-culturalism.

It is essential to overcome racial prejudice and discrimination by continuously developing campaigns to educate and enlighten people on human rights along with encouraging and promoting a mutual understanding between foreign residents and Japanese residents in Takatsuki city.

The Measures.

>Fulfilling the campaigns to educate and enlighten on human rights by positively taking up a human rights training course with the main theme being “Multi-cultural Co-existence.” It’s necessary to have regard for and stand on the side of human rights.

>To raise awareness of human rights within business enterprises by having them accept these policies and employ foreign workers.

>Co-operating with The NPO in regards to educating and enlightening the residents of Takatsuki city and striving to promote such campaigns within each and every sector of the city.

>Continuously making requests to the national government and other organizations in regards to improving the restrictions on the present system.

2- Providing Communication Support and Information in a Variety of Foreign Languages.

To continuously support foreign residents in their everyday life and overcome language and cultural barriers.

The Measures.

- >Dispatching multi-lingual information around the city.
- >Putting to use the multi-lingual pamphlets provided by Osaka government.
- >Introducing translation volunteer work at medical facilities.
- >Providing support to improve Japanese language ability among foreign residents.

3- Daily Life Assistance- Creating a town with Comfortable Living Standards for Foreign Residents.

We are aiming at creating a living environment in which foreign residents don't feel mistreated or discriminated against.

The Measures.

- >Residence- We are working towards instructing and educating real estate agents not to be discriminatory against foreign residents.
- >Education - Promoting education that is aimed at taking into consideration foreign children and students.
 - Children that are in need of Japanese language education will be thoroughly provided with support activities.
 - To continuously support foreign residents to take pride in their ethnic background and cultural heritage.
 - To work towards instilling the importance of Multi-cultural Co-existence.

- To work towards offering information and useful documents in a variety of languages.

>Working Environment – To work towards increasing the opportunities of employment for foreign residents and encourage equality.

>Medical Care – Insurance and medical information will be offered in a variety of foreign languages.

>Precautions against Disasters – Evacuation maps and information will be provided. Residents are advised to have an emergency procedure in place in the event of a disaster.

4 - **Creating a Community of Multi-cultural Co-existence in which Foreign Residents can Participate in.**

Japanese residents and foreign residents should both recognize and acknowledge each other's differences and help make up a local community in which residents help and support each other.

The Measures.

>Promoting Exchange – it is important for each citizen to foster a rich sense of internationalism.

To achieve this, it's necessary to deepen the relationship with people from different backgrounds and cultures. By doing so, we will rediscover a new value and history, creating an increasingly attractive town.

>Promotion of Participation in Local Politics – In order to have foreign residents' wants and needs reflected in the policy, questionnaires and a monitoring program will be set up.

5- Establishing a System to Promote the Policy.

To steadily and effectively create a multi-cultural society, citizens and relevant groups have to co-operatively work together.

The Measures.

>Maintenance of the internal infrastructure must be multi-laterally examined.

>It's necessary to establish a department dealing with the promotion of the policy of multi-cultural co-existence > *“The Takatsuki Multi-cultural Exchange Center”*

>It's essential to work towards finding a solution for the variety of problems and needs facing foreign residents. Co-operation with foreign residents and connecting organizations such as The NPO is vital.

Government organizations along with organizations such as The NPO have to clarify and share the roles that need to be played in tackling the issues and promoting the policy of multi-cultural co-existence.

The Basic Guide System.

The Basic Idea.

The wide variety of cultures, customs and “ways of thinking” must learn to recognize and accept each other's differences, regardless of nationality, race or cultural background, leading to the realization of a wealthy and vibrant multi-cultural local community in which residents support and co-operate with one another.

Respect for Human Rights – Promotion of a consciousness towards Multi-cultural co-existence.

>>>The fulfillment of human rights educational activities

>>>An increase in human rights awareness in business enterprises.

>>>Co-ordination with relevant groups such as The NPO

>>>A call for action from the national government

Multi-lingual Information – Communication support.

>>>The application and publicity of multi-lingual information pamphlets.

>>>The introduction of voluntary translation.

>>>Supporting the improvement of Japanese language ability.

Day-to-day life Support – Creation of a town in which foreign residents can live comfortably and easily.

>>>Residence; Education; Working Environment; Insurance; Medical Care; Disaster Prevention Measures.

Creating a Community of Multi-cultural Co-existence – Creating a community in which foreign citizens can participate.

>>>Encouragement of international exchange.

>>>Encouragement of citizen participation.

Policy Promotion – Establishment of a promotion system.

>>>Maintenance of the internal infrastructure.

>>>Establishment of a system regarding the promotion of the multi-cultural co-existence policy.

>>>Co-ordination with relevant groups such as The NPO.

Regarding the Promotion of the Basic Policy.

By administering and promoting the specific measures that this policy is based on, differences in nationality and race will be transcended and residents can learn to help and support each other leading to the creation of a rich and vigorous Takatsuki city.