

Yokkaichi  
Multicultural Coexistence  
Promotion Plan

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# Chapter I. Purpose of the Multicultural Coexistence Promotion Plan

## 1. History of the Multicultural Coexistence Promotion Plan

With the revision of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act (hereinafter referred to as the “Immigration Act”) in 1990, the number of foreign nationals entering Japan for the purpose of employment from South America, mainly from Brazil, rapidly increased in areas where manufacturing was thriving, such as the Tokai region (including Yokkaichi) and the northern Kanto region.

Later, due to the worsening employment situation following the global financial crisis of 2008 and the impact of the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake, many foreign residents returned to their home countries, causing the number of foreign residents to temporarily decrease. However, given the declining birthrate and aging population in Japan and increasing globalization, since 2015 the number of foreign residents has once again continued to increase. As of the end of March 2021, approximately 1 in 30 Yokkaichi residents were foreign nationals, making Yokkaichi a city with a large foreign resident population when looking nationwide.

As the number of foreign residents increases, issues in various areas including daily life, education, and employment have arisen, and it is necessary to recognize foreign nationals not as temporary residents but as local residents and members of the community.

In light of these circumstances, Yokkaichi formulated the Yokkaichi International Coexistence Promotion Plan in March 2004 in order to clarify city goals, policies, and measures for coexistence among all residents, regardless of their nationality or ethnicity, and has worked to promote initiatives at the resident level.

Subsequently, in order to more effectively promote the creation of a multicultural society, the city revised the Yokkaichi International Coexistence Promotion Plan in May 2010 based on the actual state of the city in 2010 and newly formulated the Yokkaichi Multicultural Coexistence Promotion Plan (hereinafter referred to as the “Plan”). In December 2016, the city revised the Plan based on changes in the circumstances surrounding foreign nationals, and has been working to promote multicultural coexistence.

More than five years have passed since the last review of the Plan, and the circumstances surrounding foreign residents have further changed. In addition, the city needs to enhance its efforts for multicultural coexistence. The Plan will therefore be reviewed again.

### [Key Points of the Review]

- [1] As the areas in which foreign residents live have become increasingly decentralized, the concept of model areas for multicultural coexistence has been re-examined. The Plan has been changed from the promotion of efforts focused on model areas to the promotion of city-wide multicultural coexistence efforts based on the results of model areas.

[2] Although the current situation regarding foreign residents and the environment surrounding them are changing, the basic concept for creating a multicultural community needs to be continued. Based on this, the basic principles and four basic pillars of the current promotion plan will be continued.

## 2. Positioning of the Multicultural Coexistence Promotion Plan

The Yokkaichi Multicultural Coexistence Promotion Plan is based on the City Charter and the City Declaration, which make up the basic principles of Yokkaichi's community development. Through this Plan, individual plans, positions, and basic concepts will be presented, and efforts in cooperation with relevant organizations will be systematically implemented, incorporating the opinions of residents.

## 3. Plan Period of the Multicultural Coexistence Promotion Plan

The plan period of the Plan is five years, from FY 2022 to FY 2026. However, even within the plan period, if there are significant changes in consistency with other plans, national trends, or social conditions, reviews will be made as necessary.

## **Chapter II. Current Situation Regarding Foreign Residents in the City**

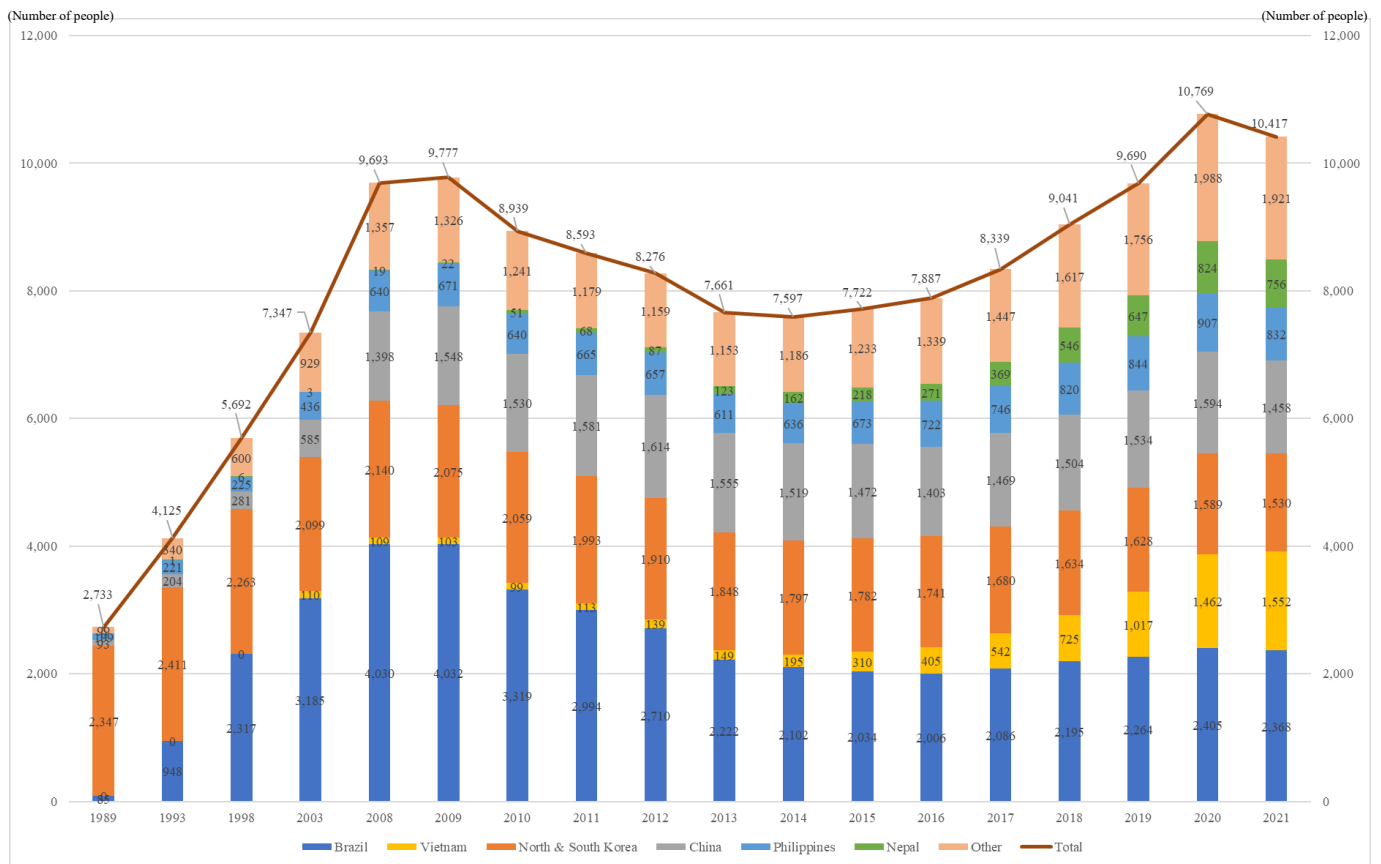
### **1. Number of Foreign Residents Continues to Increase**

As of the end of March 2021, the city was home to 10,417 foreign residents from 65 countries, of whom approximately 23% were from Brazil (2,368), followed by foreign residents from Vietnam (1,552), North and South Korea (1,530), China (1,458), the Philippines (832), and Nepal (756). [Figure 1] Looking at the ratio of foreign residents to the total population of Yokkaichi, foreign residents make up about 3.4% of the population, compared to the national average of about 2.2%.

Looking at the changes in foreign residents in Yokkaichi thus far, the revision of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act in 1990 made it easier for second- and third-generation individuals with Japanese ancestry and their families to enter Japan under the residence status of long-term residents with no restrictions on employment and so on. As a result, the number of foreign residents in Yokkaichi—which stood at 2,733 as of the end of March 1989—increased sharply to 9,777 as of the end of March 2009. The increase was mainly individuals with Japanese ancestry, a large number of which were foreign nationals with Brazilian citizenship. After this, due to the serious jobs crisis that followed the financial crisis in September 2008 and the Great East Japan Earthquake in March 2011, the number of foreign residents started to fall, but it has once again been on the rise since 2015.

In recent years, there has been a significant increase in the number of foreign residents from Vietnam, mainly technical interns, and Nepal, mainly international students. Looking at the rate of increase by nationality in the number of foreign residents from the end of March 2016 to the end of March 2021, the number of foreign residents from Vietnam increased by approximately 3.8 times and those from Nepal increased by approximately 2.8 times.

[Figure 1] Changes in the number of foreign residents in Yokkaichi <\*As of March 31 of each year>

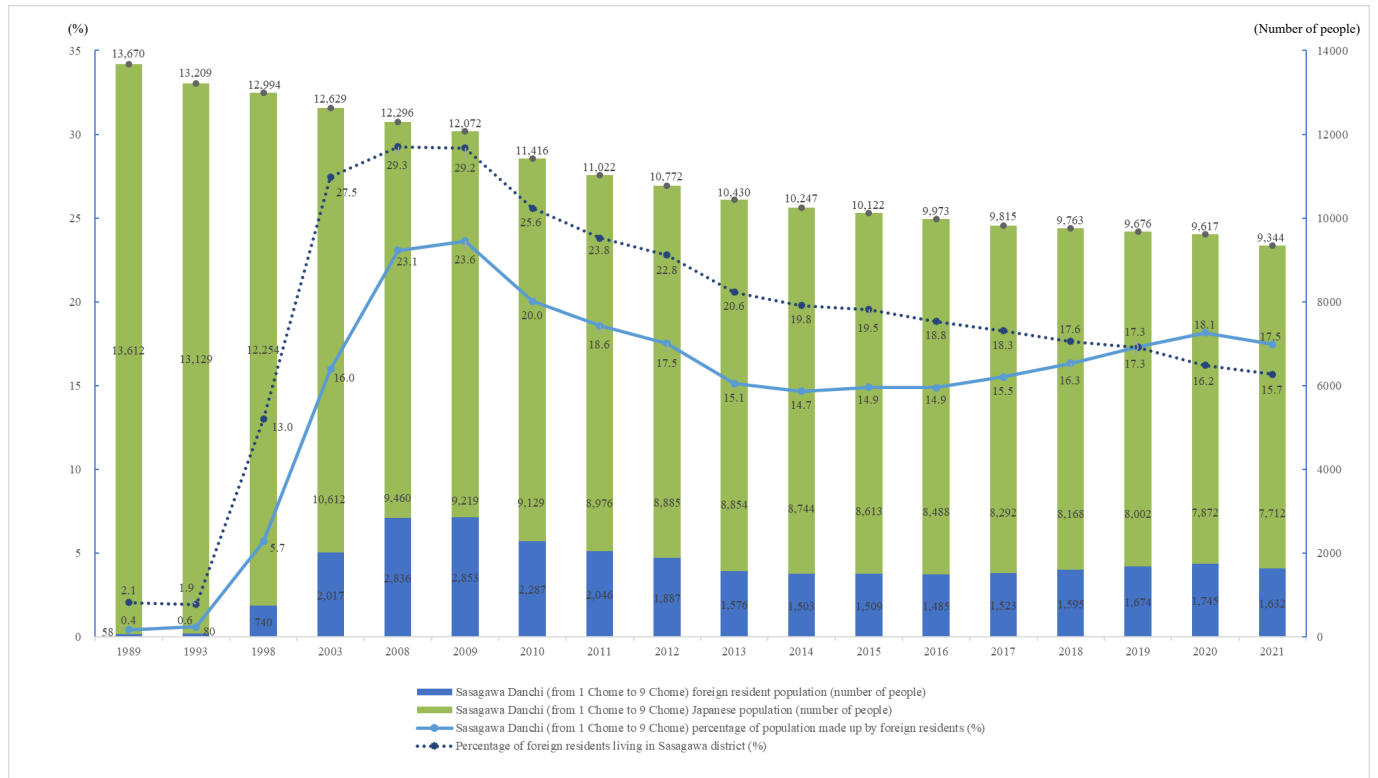


## 2. Decentralization of Areas in Which Foreign Residents Live

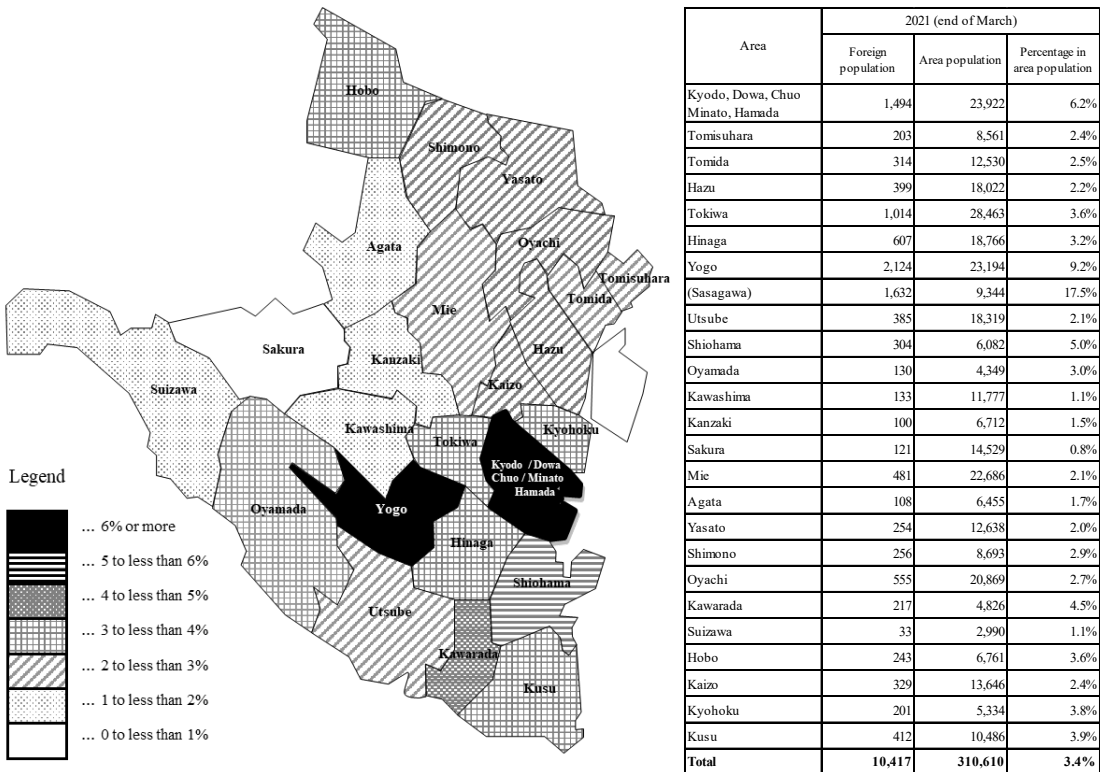
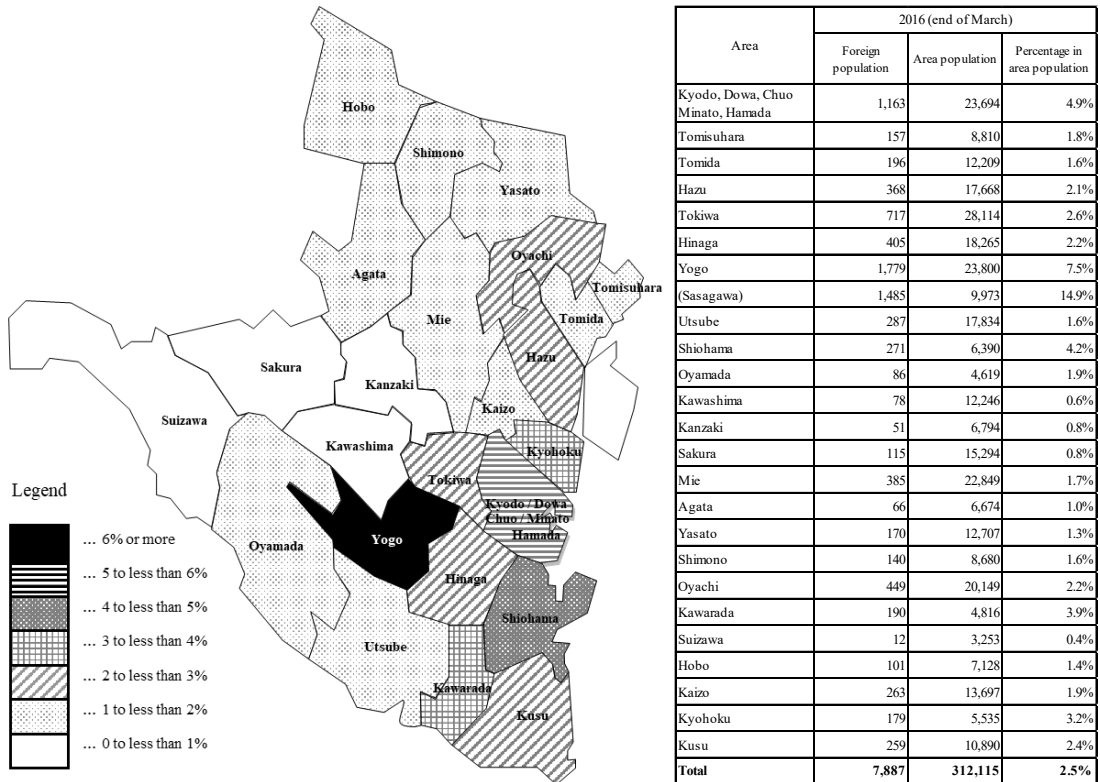
More than 15% of the city’s foreign residents, or about 1,600 people, live in the Sasagawa district\* within the greater Yogo area. Looking at the changes in the number of foreign residents living in the Sasagawa district, the number peaked in March 2009 before falling and then leveling off or gradually increasing since 2013. However, the ratio of the population made up by foreign residents has been increasing every year as the overall population of the entire area, including Japanese residents, has been on the decline. However, looking at the total foreign residents living in Yokkaichi, the percentage of foreign residents living in the Sasagawa district has been on a downward trend since peaking at 29.3% in March 2008, suggesting that the areas in which foreign residents live are becoming more decentralized. [Figure 2] The percentage of population made up by foreign residents by district in 2021 also increased in all districts when compared to 2016. [Figure 3]

\* Sasagawa (from 1 Chome to 9 Chome) is an area within the greater Yogo area and is known as Sasagawa Chiku (district), Sasagawa Danchi, or Sasagawa. In this plan, it is written as Sasagawa district.

[Figure 2] Changes in the number of Japanese and foreign residents in the Sasagawa district



[Figure 3] Distribution of foreign residents by area





## Chapter III. Basic Concept of Multicultural Coexistence

### 1. What is Multicultural Coexistence?

In Yokkaichi, the basic principles of multicultural coexistence are to realize a society in which all people can accept and respect each other, and live together as residents of Yokkaichi by making the most of differences in nationality, ethnicity, and culture.

In this context, culture is broadly defined to mean everything related to people's lives, meaning tangible and intangible things that are born out of people's daily lives and interactions with others. It covers a wide range of fields, from art and academia to lifestyle and religion, including behavioral patterns and values shared by society.

Creating a society that embodies multicultural coexistence will lead to the realization of a society in which each and every resident can fully demonstrate their individuality and abilities, and live life in their own way.

As the birthrate continues to decline and the population ages, foreign residents are playing an increasingly important role in local communities. It is necessary for all residents and businesses to share the awareness that foreign residents are not simply temporary residents or workers but that they are members of the local community on an equal footing with Japanese residents.

Foreign residents, like Japanese residents, must comply with Japanese laws, fulfill their obligations as residents such as paying taxes, and have access to administrative and governmental services that cover all aspects of their lives. In order to support each other as members of local communities, it is necessary to promote initiatives to help solve issues related to multicultural coexistence

### 2. Issues Related to Multicultural Coexistence in the City

#### (1) Enhanced and more widespread multilingual support

The number of foreign residents in Yokkaichi has been increasing each year. In recent years, the number of foreign residents from Vietnam, mainly technical interns, and Nepal, mainly international students, has seen a remarkable increase. In addition, the government is currently considering a system revision to expand the scope of business categories covered by the Specified Skilled Worker (ii) visa status from the previous two categories, which is expected to further increase the number of foreign residents with Skilled Worker status and their families.

In order to provide foreign residents with information on governmental and other services necessary in daily life, and to ensure that these services can be received properly, the city is working on measures aimed at multilingual support, such as the assignment of interpreters and the translation of various notices and procedural documents. However, most of the measures taken by the city have been in Portuguese and Spanish for foreign residents from South American countries, and it is necessary to enhance and expand measures for foreign residents from Vietnam and other Asian countries—countries from which there have been remarkable increases in recent years.

#### (2) Support regarding the decentralization of areas in which foreign residents live

In recent years, the areas in which foreign residents live have tended to become more decentralized, and the number of foreign residents is increasing not only in the Sasagawa district, which was traditionally positioned as a model area for multicultural coexistence, but also throughout the city. Therefore, it is necessary to enhance and expand efforts for multicultural coexistence in other areas, referring to the efforts in model districts where measures have been intensively implemented so far.

The Sasagawa district is characterized by the fact that almost 90% of its residents are foreign nationals from South America, mainly those with Japanese ancestry from Brazil, Peru, and Bolivia. In promoting multicultural coexistence in other areas, it will be necessary to keep in mind that the composition of foreign residents is different from that in the Sasagawa district.

### (3) Enhancement and expansion of Japanese language learning environments

In June 2019, the Act on Promotion of Japanese Language Education was promulgated and entered into force, requiring local governments to implement measures necessary to promote Japanese language education in accordance with local conditions, taking into consideration national policies.

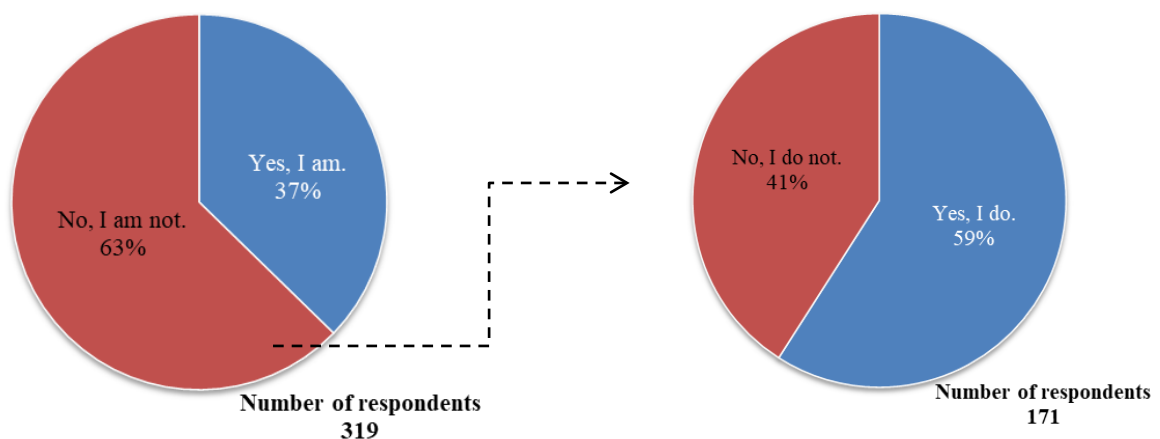
In addition, according to the Resident Awareness Survey on Multicultural Coexistence (hereinafter referred to as the “Resident Survey”) conducted in March 2021, approximately 60% of foreign residents who are not currently studying Japanese answered that they would like to learn the language. Many answered that they are not currently studying the language because they are too busy. It is necessary to enhance and expand the Japanese language learning environments for foreign residents by opening new Japanese language classes and promoting initiatives to support Japanese language learning at companies. [Figure 4]

In addition, because Japanese language acquisition and Japanese language learning needs of foreign residents vary, it is necessary to provide Japanese language learning environments that take into account nationality, residence status, etc., and to raise awareness of their availability.

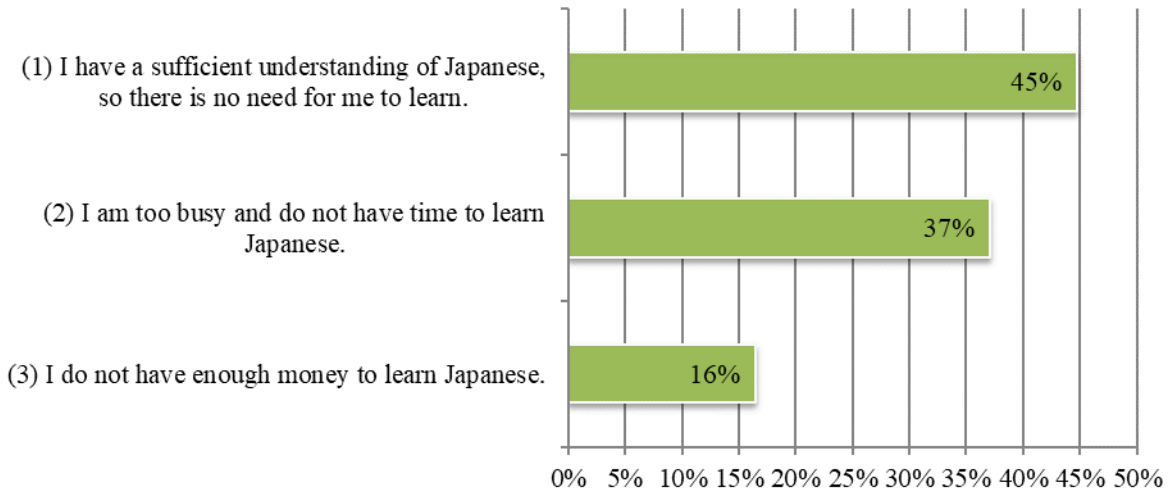
[Figure 4] Japanese language learning status

Q1: Are you currently studying Japanese?

Q2: Do you wish to learn Japanese?



Q3: What is your reason for not studying Japanese?



(4) Promoting Understanding Regarding Multicultural Coexistence

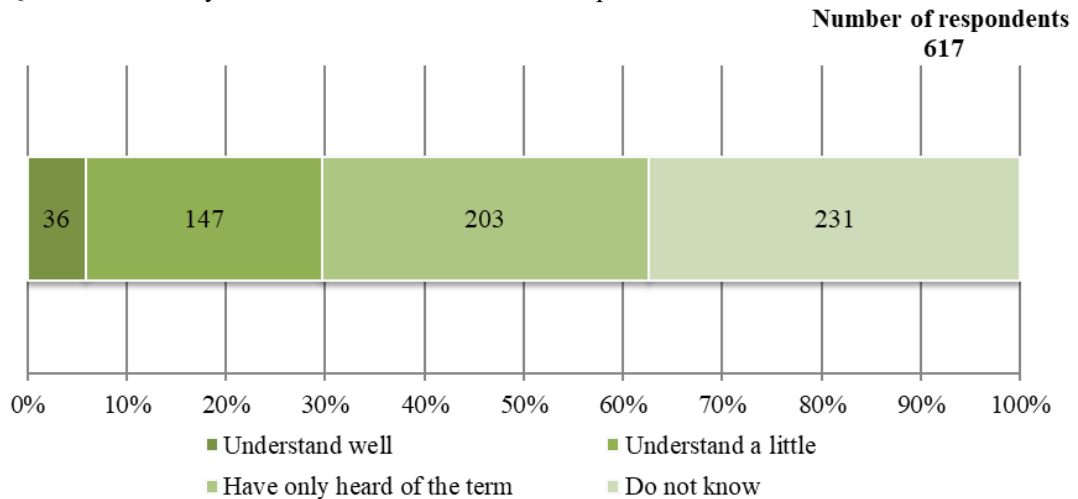
In the Resident Survey, only 30% of Japanese residents answered that they “Understand well” or “Understand a little” about the term and concept of multicultural coexistence. [Figure 5]

In terms of interactions between foreign residents and Japanese residents, approximately 90% of foreign residents answered that they would like to increase their interactions with Japanese residents, while just over 40% of Japanese residents answered that they would like to increase their interactions with foreign residents. [Figure 6]

In order to promote multicultural coexistence, it is necessary not only for foreign residents to deepen their understanding of the Japanese language and Japanese culture and manners but also for Japanese residents to deepen their understanding of multicultural coexistence. Therefore, it is necessary to raise awareness of multicultural coexistence through various opportunities, encourage foreign residents to join community associations and participate in community activities, provide opportunities for interactions between Japanese and foreign residents in the community, and help these residents build face-to-face relationships with each other.

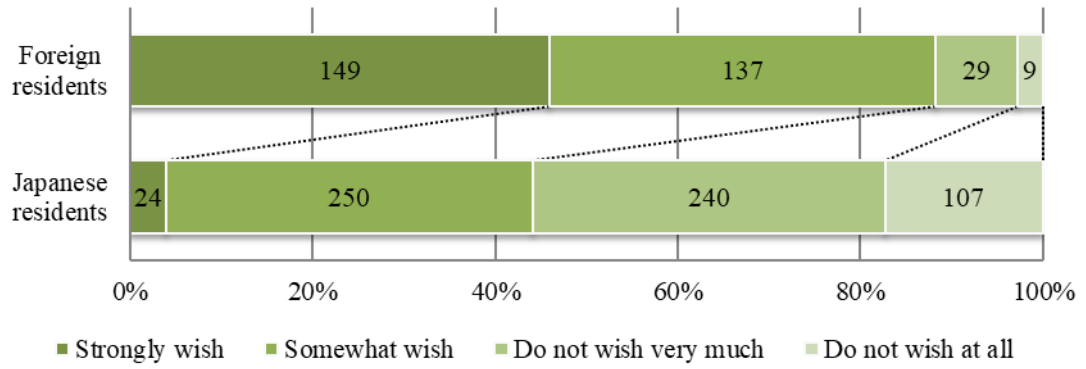
[Figure 5] Awareness of multicultural coexistence (for Japanese residents)

Q4: How well do you understand the term and concept of multicultural coexistence?



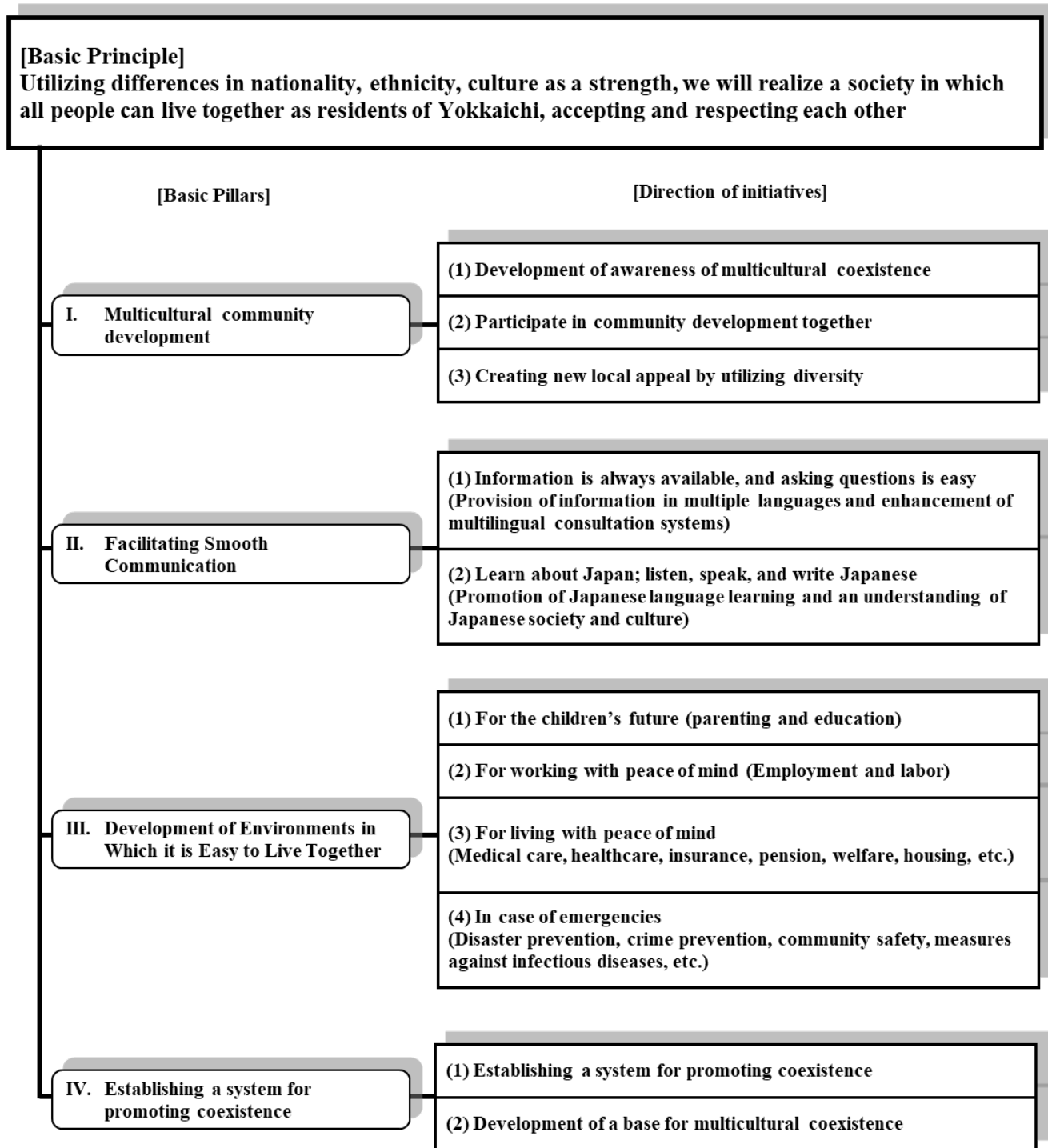
[Figure 6] Interactions between foreign and Japanese residents (for Japanese residents)

Q5: Do you wish to increase your interactions with Japanese residents (foreign residents) in the future?



### 3. Basic Principles and Basic Pillars

Based on the following basic principles, Yokkaichi will clarify the four basic pillars for promoting multicultural coexistence and work to link them with various initiatives going forward.



## 4. Promotion of Multicultural Coexistence

### (1) Role of residents

Residents play a central role in multicultural coexistence. Residents living in the community communicating with and understanding each other is the first step toward realizing a multicultural society.

In local communities, it is necessary for Japanese and foreign residents to accept and respect each other's differences, such as nationality, ethnicity, culture and lifestyle, while also observing the law and rules in daily life.

### (2) Role of the city

Based on the basic principles listed on the previous page and the four basic pillars, the city will undertake a variety of projects and support for the realization of a multicultural society from the following perspectives.

- [1] Promoting community development in which residents deepen their understanding of each other's culture and the concept of multicultural coexistence and participate as equal members
- [2] Providing information to foreign residents through easy Japanese and multilingual assistance, supporting Japanese language acquisition, and promoting understanding of Japanese culture and society
- [3] Providing administrative and governmental services to foreign residents in a smooth manner
- [4] Establishing systems to promote multicultural coexistence, etc.

### (3) Coordination with community associations, volunteers, NPOs, companies, etc.

In order to promote multicultural coexistence, it is necessary for various entities such as community associations most familiar to local residents, volunteer organizations that support Japanese language learning, NPOs with expertise in multicultural coexistence, and companies that employ foreign residents to actively coordinate, collaborate, and exchange opinions with the government and various related organizations.

In the Sasagawa district, which was positioned as a model area for multicultural coexistence, various entities such as the government, local communities, and volunteers work together to promote multicultural coexistence. In order to promote efforts for multicultural coexistence in other areas, it is important to establish similar systems for coordination.

Having various leaders bring their ideas and knowledge together and cooperate with each other will deepen their understanding of multicultural coexistence and leading to various initiatives.

## 5. Action Targets

### (1) Establishment of action targets

In promoting efforts for multicultural coexistence, we have set targets for Basic Pillars I–III.

(2) Description of the target indicators

Basic Pillar	Item	Reference value	Target value	Indicator description
I. Multicultural community development	Percentage of respondents who “Understand well” or “Understand a little” about the term and concept of multicultural coexistence in the Resident Survey (for Japanese residents)	28.7% (2020 Resident Awareness Survey)	50.0% (2025 Resident Awareness Survey)	In order to promote multicultural coexistence, it is necessary not only for foreign residents to deepen their understanding of the Japanese language as well as Japanese culture, manners, etc. but also for Japanese residents to deepen their understanding of multicultural coexistence. Therefore, a target has been set for the percentage of people who respond that they “Understand well” or “Understand a little” about the term multicultural coexistence in the Resident Survey. The target has been set at 50% in order to have half of all resident understand the concept of multicultural coexistence.
	Percentage of people who respond that they participate in local events such as festivals, cleanup activities, and disaster drills (those who respond that they “Participate” or “Participate occasionally”) in the Resident Survey (for foreign residents)	50.4% (2020 Resident Awareness Survey)	60.0% (2025 Resident Awareness Survey)	In order to promote multicultural coexistence, it is important for many foreign residents to participate in community activities and interact with Japanese residents. Therefore, we set a target for the percentage of respondents in the Resident Survey who responded that they “Participate” or “Occasionally participate” in local events. The target value was set at 60.0%, above the result of 50.4% seen in the 2020 survey.
II. Facilitating Smooth Communication	Percentage of businesses that provide support for foreign employees learning Japanese	32.3% (FY 2020 Mie Prefecture Japanese Language Education Survey)	40.0% (FY 2025 Survey <Survey method(s) to be determined>)	In order to encourage multicultural coexistence, it is essential for foreign residents to learn the Japanese language. In order to promote corporate efforts to facilitate this language learning, we set a target for the percentage of businesses that support foreign employees learning Japanese. A survey on Japanese language education was conducted in Mie Prefecture in FY 2020. In response to the question, “How many people at your workplace do you think do not have sufficient Japanese language skills and cannot hold daily conversations?” just under 40% responded “Many” or “About half.” Based on this, we set a target of 40.0% in order to encourage support for foreign employees to learn Japanese.
III. Development of Livable Environments Where it is Easy to Live Together	Percentage of people who responded to the Resident Survey (for foreign residents) that they wish to continue living in Yokkaichi in the future	76.4% (2020 Resident Awareness Survey)	80.0% (2025 Resident Awareness Survey)	Basic Pillar III: Development of Environments in Which It Is Easy to Live Together targets the percentage of foreign residents who wish to continue living in Yokkaichi. As there are foreign residents who intend to return to their home countries in the future, we set the target at 80.0%, slightly higher than the results of the 2020 Resident Survey.

## Chapter IV. Initiatives for Multicultural Coexistence

### Basic Pillar I

### Multicultural Community Development

We will promote the development of awareness of multicultural coexistence and work to develop communities in which foreign residents participate together with Japanese residents.

[Action target]

Item	Reference value	Target value
Percentage of respondents who “Understand well” or “Understand a little” about the term and concept of multicultural coexistence in the Resident Survey (for Japanese residents)	28.7%	50.0%
Percentage of people who respond that they participate in local events such as festivals, cleanup activities, and disaster drills (those who respond that they “Participate” or “Participate occasionally”) in the Resident Survey (for foreign residents)	50.4%	60.0%

#### I-(1) Development of awareness of multicultural coexistence

☆ Work to develop awareness among residents of respect for human rights among residents

Respect for the human rights of all citizens, regardless of nationality or ethnic differences, helps realize a more livable society. Discrimination and prejudice against foreign residents must be eliminated.

☆ Respect cultural diversity and promote an understanding of coexistence

In order to promote multicultural coexistence, it is necessary for Japanese and foreign residents to understand each other’s differences and have a sense of building equal relationships as members of the same community. Considerations and support regarding diversity will help lead to community development with which all citizens, no matter their circumstances or way of thought, can be satisfied.

☆ Create face-to-face relationships among residents

In order to facilitate multicultural community development, it is important for Japanese and foreign residents to build face-to-face relationships with each other on a daily basis as members of the same community through greetings and participation in various community events. Building face-to-face relationships with foreign residents from diverse cultural backgrounds also



leads to the revitalization of local communities.

### **Main initiatives**

We will raise awareness of multicultural coexistence by holding lectures on the subject.

With the participation of residents as volunteers, Japanese language classes held throughout the city are not only a place for foreign residents to learn Japanese but also a place for interactions, where Japanese and foreign residents can build face-to-face relationships.

In addition, foreign language courses will be held to provide opportunities for Japanese residents to experience foreign cultures, and international understanding courses and Japanese cultural understanding courses will be held for Japanese and foreign residents to help understand each other's cultures.

In addition, opportunities for interaction between Japanese and foreign residents in the community will be created by encouraging the participation of foreign residents in community-sponsored exchange events and holding events related to multicultural coexistence in cooperation with foreign communities. We will strive to create face-to-face relationships among residents.

## **I-(2) Participate in community development together**

### **☆ Discover and train human resources to promote multicultural coexistence**

Residents play a central role in multicultural coexistence. As volunteers involved in Japanese language learning support and multicultural coexistence projects are also supporters who play an important role in connecting foreign and Japanese residents in promoting coexistence in local communities, we will provide training and support for a wide range of citizen volunteers, including those who have lived overseas.

In addition, we will identify and train human resources from among foreign residents who can be the foundation of community activities in the future.

### **☆ Promote the development of environments in which foreign residents can become independent and play an active role as members of their local communities**

As residents living in the same community, it is hoped that foreign residents, like Japanese residents, will participate in various community activities and play an active role as leaders of their community.

Community associations play an important role as the core of community development. However, there are many foreign residents who are not familiar with the concept of community associations; there may not be similar organizations in their home country, for example. Therefore, we will raise awareness among foreign residents about the activities and importance of community associations. We will work to create environments in the local community where

Japanese and foreign residents can participate in local activities together, so that all citizens can fully exercise their abilities.

☆ Create a system to incorporate the opinions of foreign residents in city government

We will create a system to incorporate the opinions of foreign residents, such as holding social gatherings for foreign residents, exchanging opinions and sharing information with the foreign communities, and enhancing opportunities to opinions directly from foreign residents.

### **Main initiatives**

With regard to the development of human resources who promote multicultural coexistence, in order to promote mutual exchanges and information sharing among resident volunteers, we will regularly hold network meetings for Japanese language classes held by volunteers in various places in the city to enhance opportunities for exchanging opinions and sharing information among the classes. In addition, we will endeavor to find new volunteers and provide opportunities for them to play active roles. This will be done by asking residents who have knowledge of multiple languages and cultures, such as Japanese residents who have lived overseas and foreign residents who are well versed in Japanese and Japanese society and culture, to help with Japanese language classes and cooperate with courses on multicultural coexistence.

In order to increase opportunities for foreign residents to participate in community activities, it is necessary to effectively communicate information. Therefore, we will provide information and further raise public awareness on the necessity of community activities, etc. at the orientations for foreign residents held on the first floor of the main city hall building.

In addition, we will encourage foreign residents to join community associations and participate in local activities through door-to-door visits in cooperation with community associations. We will also encourage companies that employ foreign residents to cooperate in encouraging foreign employees to join community associations and participate in local activities.

As a place to directly hear the opinions of foreign residents, we will continue to hold multicultural coexistence promotion resident gatherings, etc., and exchange opinions with participating foreign residents on issues and efforts in promoting multicultural coexistence. In addition, we will take various opportunities to actively exchange opinions and share information with foreign communities.

In addition, referring to the training courses for community development supporters held in the Sasagawa district, we will work to develop human resources among foreign residents who will be at the core of future community development in other areas.

### I-(3) Creating new local appeal by utilizing diversity

☆ Create new local appeal by utilizing of diversity

We will promote the revitalization of local communities and the creation of new appeal by actively utilizing the international sensibilities, language abilities, knowledge, and skills of foreign residents. Furthermore, international students have the potential to become key persons in the development of multicultural communities, so we will provide, in cooperation with universities, etc., opportunities for exchanges between such international students and local residents.

#### Main initiatives

In order to create opportunities for foreign residents to participate in the revitalization of local communities and the creation of new appeal, we will encourage, in cooperation with universities, etc., international students to join community associations and participate in local activities, and provide opportunities for exchanges between foreign students and local residents.

## **Basic Pillar II**

### Facilitating Smooth Communication

For foreign residents, we provide information on governmental and other services necessary for daily life, provide lifestyle counseling, promote understanding of Japanese society and culture, and support Japanese language study.

[Action target]

Item	Reference value	Target value
Percentage of businesses that provide support for foreign employees learning Japanese	32.3%	40.0%

\* The reference value was set based on the results of the survey on Japanese language education conducted by Mie Prefecture in FY 2020.

### II-(1) Information is always available, and asking questions is easy

(Information provided and a consultation system in place that uses easy Japanese and offers multilingual support)

☆ Ensure the reliable provision of information on governmental services and other essential services  
In order to prevent foreign residents who cannot fully understand Japanese from becoming

isolated due to the language barrier and help them live in their community with peace of mind, we will provide information necessary for daily life in easy Japanese\* and through multilingual support.

☆ Make Interpretation and translation services available at administrative and consultation counters

Interpreters, translators, and terminals for videophone interpretation services will be appropriately deployed at city hall counters to ensure that administrative information and governmental services are provided to foreign residents in the same way as Japanese residents.

☆ Provide consultation services for foreign residents

There are various barriers to living in Japan for foreign residents, such as differences in language, systems, and culture. In order for foreign residents to live with peace of mind, we will provide a counter where they can easily ask questions about problems they have.

☆ Utilize technologies such as ICT and AI

By actively utilizing ICT and AI, such as multilingual translation apps, we aim to create an environment where foreign residents can easily obtain necessary information.

### **Main initiatives**

Regarding the provision of information in multiple languages, in addition to the provision of information on governmental services mainly in Portuguese at the orientations for foreign residents, the city's website will offer multilingual support, and we will provide PR information in multiple languages through apps and so on.

In regards to interpretation and translation services at administrative counters, interpreters and videophone interpretation service terminals will be placed at the main city hall building. Support will be provided through interpretation and the translation of procedural documents and notices. We will regularly conduct training for interpreters, etc., based on the Interpretation Guidelines established by the city government in order to provide an appropriate range of interpretation for foreign residents. We will also promote efforts for interpreters to acquire the necessary roles and responsibilities.

At the same time, Yokkaichi is home to foreign residents from many different countries who speak a multitude of languages, and in some cases, interpretation is not possible. Therefore, in order for employees to communicate with foreign residents using easy Japanese without the use of interpreters, we will conduct training on easy Japanese for staff at the counters. In addition, in order to facilitate communication between Japanese and foreign residents in local communities, we will promote the adoption of easy Japanese.

In addition, local civic centers will provide consultation services for foreign residents through the placement of counselors and videophone interpretation services using tablet devices. In addition, the centers will issue local public relations bulletins that also give consideration to

foreign residents.

As for the consultation counters for foreign residents, at the Yokkaichi International Center, in addition to the staff responding to questions from foreign residents regarding daily life, administrative scriveners regularly provide free consultations concerning governmental services, and provide consultations on changes and renewals of status of residence, marriage and divorce, and naturalization applications. Furthermore, in order to ensure that foreign residents with urgent consultation needs such as domestic violence (DV) can receive the appropriate consultation services, the city will endeavor to disseminate information about specialized consultation counters, such as the gender equality center and child consultation center, at orientations for foreign residents, multicultural coexistence gatherings, and in foreign communities.

In providing such consultation services and information, we will make efforts to improve convenience through the use of ICT devices and other means, and we will strive to communicate information in a timely manner through the use of social media and so on.

\* Easy Japanese is simple Japanese that is easy for anyone to understand. It employs shorter sentences, replacing words with familiar expressions that are often used in everyday life, and so on.

## II-(2) Learn about Japan; listen, speak, and write Japanese

(Promotion of Japanese language learning and an understanding of Japanese society and culture)

☆ Raise awareness of Japanese language learning and provide opportunities for foreign residents to learn Japanese

In order to live independently in Japan, it is essential for foreign residents to learn Japanese. It is also extremely important for foreign residents to learn Japanese in order to communicate with Japanese residents in their communities. The city will help foreign residents learn Japanese so that foreign and Japanese residents can deepen their mutual understanding and live in peace in their communities.

In addition, support will be provided in order to promote initiatives to support Japanese language learning at companies for foreign employees and their families. This will include raising awareness by holding lectures for companies employing foreign nationals and holding model Japanese classes at companies.

☆ Promote understanding of Japanese society and culture among foreign residents

In order for foreign residents to live together with Japanese residents as equal members of local communities, it is necessary for them to fully understand Japanese society, culture, and customs, in addition to learning the language. Therefore, we will promote an understanding of Japanese rules

and culture among foreign residents.

☆ Deepen mutual understanding and exchange between Japanese and foreign residents through study of the Japanese language, etc.

For foreign residents, Japanese language classes held in local communities are an important point of contact with Japanese society outside of work. In addition to studying the Japanese language, we will make further efforts to build face-to-face relationships between Japanese and foreign residents and to make Japanese language classes a place for mutual understanding and exchange.

### Main initiatives

With regard to the promotion of Japanese language acquisition by foreign residents, in addition to the establishment of multicultural coexistence classes at multicultural coexistence gatherings and a Japanese Language club at the Yokkaichi International Exchange Center, the city will provide support in the form of teaching materials and spaces for Japanese Language classes conducted by volunteers. In addition, the city regularly holds Japanese language learning volunteer network meetings and Japanese language volunteer training to enhance support for learning Japanese appropriate to the level of learners.

With regard to the promotion of understanding of Japanese society and culture among foreign residents, we will further raise awareness of the necessity of learning Japanese and the rules of living in Japan at orientations for foreign residents and multicultural coexistence gatherings. We will also hold seminars on understanding Japanese culture at the Yokkaichi International Center and other facilities.

With regard to the promotion of exchanges between Japanese and foreign residents through the study of Japanese, we will provide a wide range of opportunities for exchanges between Japanese language learners and volunteers by holding exchanges and joint learning presentations at Japanese language classes in the city.

## **Basic Pillar III**

### **Development of Environments in Which It Is Easy to Live Together**

We will work to raise awareness of disaster prevention in addition to raising awareness of child care, education, labor, medical care, healthcare, insurance, pension, welfare, and housing systems, as well as provide smooth governmental services, etc.

[Action target]

Item	Reference value	Target value
Percentage of people who responded to the Resident Survey (for foreign residents) that they wish to continue living in Yokkaichi in the future	76.4%	80.0%

### III-(1) For the children's future (Parenting and education)

#### ☆ Support for children in infancy

For children in their infancy with foreign roots,\*<sup>1</sup> it is very important to have the opportunity to experience Japanese language, customs, and culture. At nursery schools, kindergartens, and certified child centers, we will promote initiatives to enable children and their parents with foreign roots to learn Japanese as well as Japanese lifestyle habits and educational systems.

#### ☆ Support aimed at school attendance, etc.

All children, regardless of nationality, need an environment in which they can grow up healthy and hopeful about the future. In Yokkaichi, children of foreign nationalities\*<sup>2</sup> are guaranteed an opportunity to receive the same education as Japanese children at municipal elementary and junior high schools.

Efforts will be made to raise awareness among children of foreign nationalities and their parents about going to school, and to enable children and their parents to deepen their understanding of the importance of education and the Japanese educational system.

At the same time, there are schools for foreign nationals approved as schools of various levels in the city. As some children go to school to receive education in their native language, the city supports the improvement of the educational environments for children. These schools also hold exchanges with Japanese schools and local communities, contributing to the promotion of multicultural coexistence in local communities.

#### ☆ Support for the study of Japanese and other subjects at school as well as career development

Career development in Japanese society is important in order for children with foreign roots to obtain stable employment in Japanese society and settle down as socially and economically independent residents in the future. To this end, in order to enable students to continue to study at senior high schools after completing compulsory education, the city will implement measures to support the study of Japanese and other subjects at elementary and junior high schools, and will also promote measures to provide information on higher education and future occupations so that students can go to school with their own goals from an early stage.

☆ Support for after-school learning and spaces for students

After school, we will provide support for children who need Japanese language instruction to learn Japanese and develop study habits, promote understanding of Japanese society and culture, and provide spaces for multicultural coexistence where Japanese children and children with foreign roots can meet and interact with each other.

☆ Consideration for children from different religious and cultural backgrounds

Yokkaichi is home to residents from more than 60 countries, with a variety of religious and cultural backgrounds as well as different lifestyles. Consideration is therefore needed for children with different religious and cultural backgrounds. For this reason, we will work in cooperation with parents to create an environment in which children from different religious and cultural backgrounds can live with peace of mind. This includes halal foods during nursery school lunches.

\*1 A child with foreign roots = A child whose mother and/or father is from a foreign country, regardless of nationality

\*2 A child of foreign nationality = Children who do not have Japanese nationality

### Main initiatives

With regard to children in infancy, by assigning interpreters to nursery schools where there are many children with foreign roots and translating written notices, etc., we will endeavor to facilitate communication with children and their parents and provide information on parenting.

With regard to the promotion of school attendance among children of foreign nationalities, the School Education Division, the Resident Division, the Children's Health and Welfare Division, and other departments in charge of resident registration and child benefits will coordinate to determine which children are not attending school and work together to increase enrollment.

At kindergartens and elementary and junior high schools, adaptation instructors are assigned to teach children who need Japanese language instruction while respecting the native language and culture—the identity—of children with foreign roots. In addition to providing support for adapting to school in Japan, Japanese language learning, and learning of other subjects, etc., these instructors will give educational guidance and hold career design courses for children with foreign roots and their parents, etc., and provide information on further education and future occupations. We will strive to enhance and strengthen this support. In addition, for young people with foreign roots, such as those who have graduated from junior high school but who have not yet gone on to higher education or obtained a job, the city will promote initiatives in cooperation with relevant organizations so that these young people can receive specialized support through individual consultations, such as regarding higher education or finding employment.

In addition, the city will support classes for children who need Japanese language instruction or who do not have the proper learning environment at home to help improve their Japanese



language skills and establish good learning habits.

In consideration of children with different religious and cultural backgrounds, Halal foods will be offered at nursery school lunches. This includes the removal of certain ingredients and the use of alternative seasonings. At kindergartens and elementary and junior high schools, etc., information will be provided on foods used in school lunches, and school lunches will be provided in cooperation with parents, respecting differences in religious and cultural backgrounds. Children will also deepen their understanding of the differences between Japanese and foreign cultures by learning about foreign foods, clothing, housing, and lifestyles, and by experiencing forms of play, dance, and so on from different countries.

### III-(2) For working with peace of mind (Employment and labor)

#### ☆ Support the workplace environments of foreign residents

Stability in daily life is necessary for foreign residents to participate in local communities as equal members to Japanese residents. In order to ensure that foreign residents can obtain stable employment, the city will take measures in cooperation with relevant organizations, such as the Public Employment Security Office (Hello Work). The city will also provide Japanese language learning support for foreign employees, etc. at companies, etc. as well as cooperate and provide support for efforts to promote understanding of Japanese society and culture.

In addition, we will strive to create an environment in which foreign residents can play an active role as global human resources to connect the region and the world.

#### ☆ Encourage international students to find work in the community

By acquiring a high level of expertise and Japanese language proficiency and having a deep understanding of the local community, international students are valuable human resources who have the potential to become key persons in the development of multicultural communities. Therefore, in cooperation with the Public Employment Security Office, companies, universities, etc., we will work to secure foreign human resources at companies and promote foreign students' employment at local companies.

#### **Main initiatives**

The city will regularly share information and exchange opinions with relevant organizations, such as the Yokkaichi Public Employment Security Office, the Yokkaichi Labour Standards Inspection Office, and the Mie Labor Bureau regarding the employment status of foreign residents.

Because it is important for foreign residents to learn Japanese in order to obtain stable employment, Japanese language classes and other programs will be held to help foreign residents find employment. In addition, in cooperation with Mie Prefecture and neighboring

cities and towns, we will visit companies where foreign residents work and seek further understanding and cooperation from companies and other entities regarding the promotion of learning Japanese by foreign employees and their families.

Furthermore, through the Yokkaichi Human Rights Awareness Enterprise Liaison Committee\*, etc., we will encourage companies to participate in lectures on multicultural coexistence, etc., in order to raise awareness and encourage the proper employment of foreign residents and their adaptation to Japanese society.

In addition, in cooperation with Mie Prefecture, universities, companies, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Public Employment Security Office, and other organizations, we will work to promote the employment of international students in local communities by holding seminars on accepting foreign talent and job counseling sessions for international students.

\* Yokkaichi Human Rights Awareness Enterprise Liaison Committee

From a corporate perspective, companies are working together to raise awareness of human rights issues in order to deepen correct understanding and awareness and to eliminate all forms of discrimination, including discrimination against Burakumin, people with disabilities, foreign nationals, and women.

### III-(3) For living with peace of mind

#### (Medical care, healthcare, insurance, pension, welfare, housing, etc.)

☆ Provide information on various systems related to daily life in easy Japanese and multiple languages

In order for foreign residents to live with peace of mind, we will raise awareness and provide information on various systems in easy Japanese and in multiple languages.

☆ Take appropriate measures and use procedures based on the nature of the consultation at consultation counters, etc.

In order to prevent differences in language, systems, and culture from becoming a barrier to the provision of governmental services, etc., appropriate measures and procedures are used at consultation counters of each department at city hall based on the nature of the consultation.

☆ Utilize technologies such as ICT and AI (reiteration)

By actively utilizing ICT and AI, such as multilingual translation apps, we aim to create an environment where foreign residents can easily obtain necessary information.

#### Main initiatives

When it comes to systems for medical and health care, pension, welfare, etc., in order for foreign residents to be able to properly receive governmental and other services just as Japanese

residents do, we will take appropriate measures and use procedures based on the nature of the consultation. This includes multilingual notices and procedural documents from the city, as well as interpretation services at the consultation counters as necessary.

With this multilingual approach to notices and services provided at consultation counters, we are working to improve convenience through the use of ICT devices and so on, and to communicate information in a timely manner through social media and more.

With regard to housing, in order to help foreign residents, people with disabilities, the elderly, etc., to move in to private rental housing smoothly, we will continue to work with Mie Prefecture, related NPOs, real estate agents, etc., to hold private rental housing consultation meetings, etc., through the Mie Prefecture Housing Support Liaison Council, in which the city also participates.

### III-(4) In case of emergencies

#### (Disaster prevention, crime prevention, community safety, measures against infectious diseases, etc.)

☆ Engage foreign residents in disaster prevention, crime prevention, community safety, measures against infectious diseases, etc.

If a Tokai or Tonankai/Nankai earthquake, etc. occurs—phenomena that could occur at any time—it is assumed that major damage will occur in the city and neighboring areas.

Since there are many foreign residents who have never experienced a large-scale earthquake, the government will work to raise awareness of disaster prevention by disseminating information about disasters and encouraging participation in disaster prevention drills. The goal of this is to help foreign residents take appropriate action in the event of a disaster.

In addition, in order to ensure that foreign residents can obtain the necessary information appropriately in the event of a disaster or an infectious disease, the city will develop a system for providing this information in easy Japanese and in multiple languages.

Furthermore, in cooperation with local communities and the police, we will raise awareness among foreign residents regarding the prevention of crime and accidents, and encourage them to participate in crime prevention activities. In addition to practicing traffic safety, we will also work to raise awareness and inform foreign residents about consumer issues and other issues related to safety and security in daily life.

#### Main initiatives

In order for foreign residents to learn about the importance of knowledge regarding disasters and helping each other, the city will conduct disaster prevention seminars in cooperation with the foreign communities, etc. In addition, through door-to-door visits by coordinators for multicultural coexistence, we will work to further raise awareness about the importance of

building face-to-face relationships with local residents, such as joining residents' associations, to facilitate helping each other in the event of a disaster.

Further efforts are needed to prevent foreign residents from becoming isolated due to the inability to gather the necessary information in the event of a disaster or an infectious disease. Therefore, we will create a system for multilingual information support, including distributing disaster prevention notebooks and emergency guides in foreign languages, and distributing disaster prevention information by email in simple Japanese.

In the event of a disaster, consideration should be given not only to language barriers but also to foreign residents with different religious and cultural backgrounds, such as meals and worship at evacuation centers. Therefore, the government will work to deepen residents' understanding of differences in religious and cultural backgrounds, raise awareness among foreign residents of the importance of having the necessary supplies ready themselves, and work to create an environment where foreign residents can lead safe lives when evacuating.

On the other hand, with regard to crime prevention and safety in daily life, in cooperation with the local community, the police, and foreign communities, we are working to raise awareness of crime prevention, traffic safety, and public awareness of safety and security in daily life.

## **Basic Pillar IV** **Establishing a System for Promoting Coexistence**

In order to promote multicultural coexistence, we will improve the systems in this city and promote comprehensive efforts. In addition, we will work with relevant organizations such as the Council for Cities with Large Populations of Foreign Nationals to encourage the improvement of systems nationwide.

### IV-(1) Establishing systems for promoting coexistence

#### ☆ Development of systems and promotion of comprehensive efforts in the city

In order to promote multicultural coexistence, the city will establish systems to promote cross-departmental measures and listen to opinions from residents, while promoting comprehensive efforts in cooperation with relevant organizations.

#### ☆ Encourage the national government and other entities to improve systems

In cases where it is necessary to improve nationwide systems or revise laws, etc., there are limits to what local governments can do. Therefore, the city will actively encourage the national and prefectural governments, and the business community in cooperation with other local governments.

## Main initiatives

The Yokkaichi Multicultural Coexistence Promotion Headquarters will establish systems and implement comprehensive measures to promote cross-departmental efforts to promote multicultural coexistence in the city, listen to opinions from residents, and exchange opinions and share information with related organizations.

On the other hand, matters regarding the establishment of a Japanese language education program at the national level, the design of a system for supporting Japanese language learning that is complementary to each other through the cooperation of local governments, NPOs, local residents, companies, etc., the enhancement of support for the stable employment of foreign residents and the acquisition of vocational qualifications, and matters related to the residence status and naturalization application procedures—matters that cannot be adequately addressed by the city alone—are needed improvements to nationwide systems. The Council for Cities with Large Populations of Foreign Nationals (established in 2001), which consists of local governments—including Yokkaichi—with large foreign national populations, will exchange information and opinions on policies and activities related to foreign residents. At the same time, we will actively make proposals to the national and prefectural governments, the business community, etc.\*

In addition, we will encourage the national government to improve the systems and promote initiatives through various methods, such as requests through the Japan Association of City Mayors.

\*Major recommendations by the Council for Cities with Large Populations of Foreign Nationals

[Current status and measures for Japanese language education in the area]

- Development of specific systems and laws that motivate students to study Japanese.
- Creation of a system for qualifications related to Japanese language teachers to help develop human resources capable of reliably improving Japanese language proficiency, and improvements in treatment through remuneration assistance, etc.
- Encouragement of companies to recognize the importance of Japanese language education for foreign human resources.
- Enhancement of the system for accepting foreign children at pre-primary education facilities through the establishment of a subsidy system specifically for the employment of interpreters. Etc.

[Toward the Realization of a Multicultural Society in Which No One Is Left Behind: Enhancing the Japanese Language Education System]

- Establishment of a legal system to serve as the basis for policies and measures to realize a multicultural society accepting of foreign residents.
- Permanent and sufficient financial measures with a high degree of flexibility that are necessary for the measures taken by local governments to realize a multicultural society.

## IV-(2) Development of a base for multicultural coexistence

### ☆ Efforts at multicultural coexistence gatherings

The Yokkaichi Multicultural Gathering (hereinafter referred to as the “Gathering”) has been developed in the Sasagawa district where many foreign residents live as a base to promote multicultural coexistence in a nearby place. In addition to promoting exchanges between Japanese and foreign residents living in the Sasagawa district, promoting understanding of Japanese society and culture among foreign residents, and supporting the learning of Japanese to aid communication in the community, door-to-door visits and so on help us to grasp the needs and living conditions of foreign residents, local issues, etc., and encourage them to participate in local activities.

### ☆ Development of Multicultural Exchange Center Facilities

Given the current shortage of space for gatherings, we will develop new facilities that will serve as a base for mutual exchanges between Japanese and foreign residents as well as for the development of multicultural communities. There, we will provide opportunities for Japanese and foreign residents to build face-to-face relationships with each other.

### **Main initiatives**

At the Gathering, we will engage in exchanges between Japanese and foreign residents living in the Sasagawa district, promote understanding of Japanese society and culture among foreign residents, and provide support for learning Japanese, which is necessary for communication in the community.

In addition, multicultural coexistence coordinators will be stationed at the Gathering to quickly grasp the current situation and issues facing the local community and enable flexible responses and activities. The coordinators will conduct door-to-door visits and other activities to understand the needs and living conditions of foreign residents, as well as local issues, and will also encourage them to join community associations and participate in community activities.

Furthermore, in order to further enhance the opportunities for mutual exchanges and community development between Japanese and foreign residents, we will work to establish new bases for multicultural coexistence.

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## **Yokkaichi Multicultural Coexistence Promotion Plan**

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