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Kyoto City Council on Multicultural Policy Newsletter No.26

Edited by the Secretariat of the Kyoto City Council on Multicultural Policy
(Kyoto City International Relations Office)
Published in March, 2021

The Kyoto City Council on Multicultural Policy for FY2020 meetings were held!

7 new members were newly commissioned to the Council on April 1, 2020 and the 6th term Council was set up.

The 1st Meeting

Time & Date: 10:00 a.m. – noon, Thu. Sep. 3, 2020
Venue: Kyoto City Hall Branch Bld.,
Meeting Room No.5 on the 4th floor

The 2nd Meeting

Time & Date: 10:00 a.m.– noon, Thu. Feb. 4, 2021
Venue: Kyoto City Hall Branch Bld.,
Meeting Room No.6 on the 4th floor



The 6th Term Committee Members of the Kyoto City Council on Multicultural Policy

	Name	Designations
<i>Nominated members</i>	OKUMA Susumu	Director, Kyoto City Youth Service Foundation Fushimi Branch
	SOHN Mihaeng	Associate Professor, Bunkyo University
	HAMADA Mari	Professor, Kyoto University of Education Director, Kyoto City International Foundation
	FUJITA Hiroyuki	Superintendent, Kyoto International Community House Managing Director, Kyoto City International Foundation
<i>Publicly recruited members</i>	CARABAIN Cesca	China
	DUHO Benjamin Kweku	Ghana
	PONGKIJVORASIN Prach	Thailand

○Nominated members were appointed at the discretion of the Mayor.

Report on the 1st FY2020 Meeting

Reports from the Secretariat (Reported by MORIMOTO Yukitaka, Director for Promoting Exchanges, Kyoto City International Relations Office)

1. Introduction of some initiatives taken by the City against the COVID-19 pandemic

- Posted a contact list of support related to COVID-19 for international residents on the City's official website with English translation.
- Set up a multilingual site on the kokoka Kyoto International Community House official website to introduce support related to COVID-19 for international residents.
- Offered online explanatory sessions by using Zoom, a video conferencing application, on the ¥100,000 Cash Handouts program for international residents to make the application properly.



2. Initiatives concerning Japanese language education in local communities

- The national government has formulated laws and policies, in recent years, to promote Japanese language education.
- Kyoto City International Foundation, which is the designated administrator of the kokoka Kyoto International Community House, applied for a subsidy provided in a project led by the Agency for Cultural Affairs for municipalities or the designated organizations to establish a comprehensive system for Japanese language education in each region.
 - ⇒With the provided subsidy, the Foundation plans to;
 - Carry out a survey on companies' needs for Japanese language education
 - Start offering online Japanese language classes
 - Enhance the existing Japanese language classes
 - Train personnel for Japanese language education, etc.

3. Kyoto City International Strategic Vision (Draft)

- The term set forth in the revised version of the Kyoto City Internationalization Plan expires at the end of March, 2021 so that the Kyoto City International Strategic Vision (Draft) will be laid out to show the City's directions to become an international city.
- In the Vision, main items related to multicultural coexistence are stated in one of the City's goals as an international city; a city that promotes the incorporation of diversity, and enriches the lives of its citizens. The direction of initiatives for the goal is to;
 - (1) Provide information in multiple languages and support for communication
 - (2) Create systems for international residents to live safely and with peace of mind
 - (3) Promote participation by international residents in regional and civic activities
 - (4) Provide employment support for international residents in various regions

●Comments by committee members (Extract)

- It is said that COVID-19 has reinforced prejudice and discrimination against international residents, but I think it has only revealed the existing issues.
- It is inconvenient for international residents that they sometimes experience cases where officials cannot communicate with them even if the Inquiry Center instructs the residents to visit appropriate organizations in charge.
- Even if there are language barriers, a good relationship between international residents and the local residents would help international residents ask for help and feel secure in the emergency such as the COVID-19 crisis.
- I think it is a good idea to disseminate information on various topics including COVID-19 for international residents by video streaming.
- It is difficult for international residents to attend a Japanese class in the daytime. If the Foundation plans to set up Japanese classes online, I think it is necessary for them to consider having on-demand service for live streamed contents.
- I think we should provide international residents with opportunities to motivate them to learn Japanese in addition to offering Japanese lessons.
- The Vision does not state any views on the City in the post-coronavirus era, such as whether the City plans to increase the number of tourists and international students as before or what it intends to do.

Report on the 2nd FY2020 Meeting

Reports from the Secretariat (Reported by MORIMOTO Yukitaka, Director for Promoting Exchanges, Kyoto City International Relations Office)

1. Report on the current situation of the City and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic

(1) Transition of the number of international residents registered in Kyoto City in the Basic Resident Registration System

*The number is as of the end of December in each year.

2015	41,609 people
2016	42,567 people
2017	44,282 people
2018	46,451 people
2019	48,773 people
2020	45,637 people

- Compared to the number in 2019, it decreased approx. 3,000 people due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Sorted the number in accordance with the visa status, the number of “Students” reduced approx. 2,400 people. It mainly affected the drop in number.

(2) The number of consultations provided at Inquiry Counter for Foreign Citizens in Kyoto City

	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Number of Consultations	2	33	54	32	33	33	36	21	9	2	6

(Consultation content examples) Where to get a PCR test?

How to fill in the ¥100,000 Cash Handouts application form?, etc.

- Kyoto Novel Coronavirus Medical Consultation Center* was set up on November 1, 2020 for providing telephone consultations 24 hours a day, so that the number of consultations at the Inquiry Center set up at the kokoka International Community House decreased.

*Multilingual interpretation services are available in English, Chinese, Korean, Portuguese, Spanish, Vietnamese (10:00 a.m.- 8:00 p.m.), and Thai (9:00 a.m. -6:00 p.m.).

2. Kyoto City International Strategic Vision (Draft)

- Kyoto City International Relations Office sought public comments from Dec. 14, 2020 until Jan. 22, 2021.
- Presenting received comments and feedback, etc.
- The final edition of the Vision is to be presented at the City Assembly in March 2021 and the new Kyoto City International Strategic Vision will be laid out.

3. Consideration to integrate the Kyoto City Council on Multicultural Policy and Kyoto City Internationalization Plan Review Committee**

(1) Background

(Motivation) The national government has promoted initiatives in recent years to realize a society where coexistence with international residents is achieved; it has made the amendments to the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act and formulated “Comprehensive Measures for the Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign nationals residing in Japan.”

In accordance with the national trend and the increase in number of international residents, interests particularly on practical initiatives to achieve multicultural coexistence attract increasing attention in the city. Therefore, it is also necessary to continue to develop the City’s multicultural policy.

- (Issues) • Securing useful platforms of multicultural coexistence
 • Overlap in discussions at the Council and the Committee

Discussions on multicultural coexistence are also facilitated at the Internationalization Plan Review Committee in recent years.

(Aims) The members of the Committee will newly join a new Council so that it can cover discussions on international exchanges and adopt new views in the constructive discussions on multicultural coexistence. Consequently, the Council can have more meaningful discussions to make the city a real international city.

** Affiliated organization to deliberate on progress of items stated in the Kyoto City Internationalization Plan and internationalization initiatives taken by the City

(2) Roles of the new Council

- Exchange opinions about projects on international exchanges and multicultural affairs implemented by the City, after hearing a report from the Secretariat on the progress of the initiatives undertaken.
- Pick up themes and projects which should be focused in each year at the meeting, and discuss them.
- Make a proposal to the City approximately once in 2 years.

⇒Feedback will be given to the related departments within the city government and all the discussions made will be referred to examine existing projects and plan new projects.

(3) Composition of the new Council

- 7 nominated members and 3 publicly recruited members
 - *For your information, the Council on Multicultural Policy currently comprises 4 nominated members and 3 publicly recruited members.
 - The same number of publicly recruited members is secured in the new Council, so that the City can continue to have opportunities for hearing opinions from international residents.
 - A plan on the new Council is to be proposed at the City Assembly in FY2021.

●Comments by committee members (Extract)

- Disseminated information related to COVID-19 sometimes contain technical terms, which makes them difficult for international residents to understand. Therefore, I hope the information to be released in simple words.
- A lot of information is provided by the governments, but some information is only in Japanese or translated inappropriately. Please keep it in mind and make sure that the information reaches each target correctly.
- I think it is necessary for us to consider providing other forms of interpretation services for people who do not have phones available in Japan and cannot use an interpretation service on the phone.
- There are many international residents who call the Inquiry Counter for Foreign Residents in Kyoto City to be connected with people especially in the COVID-19 crisis, and I feel that mental health support for international residents is needed.
- Please provide information on COVID-19 vaccination thoroughly to make sure that international residents in Kyoto can get vaccinated.
- There are students with international backgrounds at Japanese public schools, who can read, write and communicate in Japanese on a daily basis but have insufficient linguistic competence for learning in Japanese. Please enhance support for those students.
- Please make the new Council to have more constructive discussions by having more members.
- It is better to have more time for each member to read reference materials for each Council meeting in advance and consider topics.

Message from the Secretariat

Meeting materials and references for each meeting are available on the Kyoto City official website.

(The 1st Meeting) https://www.city.kyoto.lg.jp/templates/shingikai_kekka/sogo/0000274655.html

(The 2nd Meeting) https://www.city.kyoto.lg.jp/templates/shingikai_kekka/sogo/0000280690.html

If you have any opinions and comments concerning the newsletters and the Council, send them to the Secretariat. For back numbers of the newsletters in English, contact us as in below;

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