

The Basic Concept of
Multicultural Coexistence Promotion Plan
(Mid-term version)

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Higashimurayama City Hall
Residential Service Division
Residents' Life and Multicultural Subsection

1. The Basic Concept of this Plan

In The Higashimurayama Multicultural Coexistence Promotion Council, 10 members who have been commissioned on July 2nd, 2012 have been discussing the Multicultural Coexistence Promotion Plan. Over 4 meetings, the council has been discussing variety of matters such as the current situation of foreign citizens in Higashimurayama and their relation to Japanese citizens, and the council would like to propose the basic concept of Multicultural Coexistence Policies in Higashimurayama.

(1) The Philosophy of the Plan

The Philosophy of this plan is based on the town development by the “4th-Term Higashimurayama City General Plan” which is the basic policy of administrative management of the city, and this plan is drawn up based on “The Plan for Multicultural Coexistence Promotion in Local Communities (Document No. 79-Int’l Div., Local Admin Bureau, Min. of Internal Affairs & Comm., March 27, 2006)” created by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, considering the city’s current condition.

(2) The Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to create a “town where all the residents in the city is connected with each other by a strong sense of solidarity and relationship of mutual trust as local society’s partners regardless of the difference of nationality, culture, and sex”, which is one of the policies of the 4th-Term Higashimurayama City General Plan.

(3) The Time Period

This plan is effective for 5 years from the fiscal year of 2013 to 2017. The plan will be revised as the changes of institutions and the social condition.

2. Perspectives on issues

Higashimurayama city has been promoting the internationalization in the community through “international exchanges” with Independence City, Missouri, of the United States of America since late 1980’s, then with Suzhou City, Jiangsu Province, and Weifang City, Shandong Province of People’s Republic of China.

The City has been enhancing the consultation service for foreign citizens ⁽¹⁾ regarding to the problems in labor or daily lives, by staffing consultants who speak multiple languages (at the beginning English consultant). Also, for the acquisition of Japanese language which is necessary for foreign citizens to ensure stable life and employment in Japan, the City has served a variety of needs by collaborating with citizen’s groups.

These efforts are to add “international cooperation” among the community to the previous effort of “International interaction,” and the main actor of administering the policies has shifted from public administration to collaboration with other citizen’s groups, however, nowadays the situation that requires different support has emerged.

The environment surrounding us has changed dramatically, and to meet the challenge of changes and tasks within the country, as seen in the global impact from the financial crisis, it is becoming necessary to think globally.

As the need of support for various tasks that many foreign citizens face

in the community increases, it becomes more difficult to develop policies without thinking about the relationship of Japanese and foreign citizens, and how the local society should be. Based on this standpoint, the “Multicultural Coexistence” has become one of the pillars of the policies.

Based on the “Multicultural Coexistence in Local Communities” (issued by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications) which aims to assist the development of guidelines and plans for the promotion of multicultural coexistence, and to promote the harmonious coexistence of multiple cultures in an organized and comprehensive manner, this plan sets 5 basic objectives: “communication Support,” “Livelihood Support,” “Development of a Multicultural Coexistence Community,” “Development of a System in time of Disasters,” and “Development of a System to Promote Multicultural Coexistence Policies,” and organizes the system of basic plans by indicating future tasks and the direction of policies.

Note (1) This word, in a broad sense, includes people from different country who acquired Japanese nationality and their children.

Basic Objective 1

Communication Support

<Measure>

1-1
Multilingualization of
information in the community

1-2
Learning support of Japanese
and Japanese society

<Concepts of Policies>

1. Enhance the provision of information through issues of each division in multiple languages, and improve the explanation so that it would be easier to understand for foreign citizens.
2. Enhance communications and the provision of information by providing translation and interpretation by the Multicultural Consultees, and sharing their knowledge of accumulated case examples to other staffs.
3. Provide opportunities to learn Japanese language and common practice of the community and day to day life through Japanese language classes or courses.

<Concepts>

It is becoming necessary to provide information which foreign residents need to know concerning life in local communities such as receiving administrative services, obligations to be fulfilled, rules, and customs, so that it would be easier to understand for foreign citizens.

In addition, it is important to support foreign citizens to have a comfortable social life in Japan by reducing inconvenient situations at work and in community life, and by paying special attention in the process of learning Japanese so that foreign citizens can understand Japanese customs and traditions including cultural elements.

Basic Objectives 2

Livelihood Support

< Measure >

2-1
Enrich the community life

< Concepts of Policies >

4. Enrich the provision of daily information on the city website and public facilities, and create "Living Guide" for foreign citizens in multiple languages.
5. Create a network among foreign citizens utilizing the "Koryu-shitsu"- the Center of Multicultural Coexistence and Gender Equality Promotion.

2-2
Environmental
Improvement for Next
Generation

6. Expand the provision of translation, interpretation, and consultation for faculty members and parents of nursery schools and educational schools.

2-3
Providing information
regarding to work and
employment, and
multilingualization of
medical care, health, and
social welfare.

7. Reinforce the cooperation with neighbor municipalities and other related organizations by coordination of events such as a professional consultation for foreign citizens.
8. Expand the consultations responding to changes of cases and the increase of settlement of foreign citizens, and reinforce the cooperation between related sections and Multicultural consultees.

< Concepts >

It is becoming necessary to expand the support for life in general to improve the basic environment where foreign citizens can live in the society without isolation.

The support should be provided to key persons of local foreign citizens'

communities and their networks and self-help groups to help foreign citizens become proactive members of local communities.

Also, it is necessary to provide an environment to help foreign children keep up with their classes in Elementary and Junior High schools, and to enrich the learning support cooperating with other actors such as NPOs. Furthermore, it is necessary to request the government to create an environment which foreign children can gain hope for their future and maximize their strengths in the local communities.

It is important to provide information to employers regarding to the working environment of foreign citizens to promote the awareness of their conditions.

Basic Objectives 3

Development of a Multicultural Coexistence Community

<Measure>

3-1
Awareness building efforts
for local community

<Concepts of Policies>

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9. Support friendship exchange with other cities within and outside of Japan, and to promote exchanges among citizens through cultural events such as introduction of foreign and Japanese culture and experiences of local life-style.
 10. Hold language classes (Chinese, Korean, and English), and nurture language volunteers who supports foreign citizens in time of disasters and day-to-day life.
 11. Provide opportunities to introduce local history, nature, and public facilities in Higashimurayama to foreign citizens.
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12. Support sister-school exchange programs, provide opportunity for foreign citizens to relate to the community by sending foreign citizens to schools as teachers for global understanding classes, and nurture the international sensibility and human resources among next generations.
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3-2
Independence and social
participation of foreign
residents

<Concepts>

It is important to expand the opportunity to enrich the awareness of both foreign and Japanese citizens, and to create an open space so that variety of citizens can interact with each other.

It is expected to accept the diversity proactively, nurture citizens who support multicultural coexistence, and to make a social contribution.

It is becoming necessary that children who lead next generation would understand the cultural differences, and to obtain the knowledge of today's world and the international sensibility.

It is important that foreign and Japanese citizens would join the community development as good partners.

Basic Objectives 4

Development of a system in time of Disasters

<Measure>

4-1

Provide disaster-related support and determine the whereabouts of foreign residents in emergencies.

4-2

Multilingual information service for foreigners and coordination with various media during disaster.

4-3

Cooperation in multilingualization of information in time of disasters.

<Concepts of Policies>

1 3. Make public to register on a list of those who need assistance in time of disasters, and construct a multilingual support system and a support network by safety-confirmation registration card.

1 4. Enrich opportunities of disaster-prevention experiences and workshops cooperating with local resident organizations and citizen's groups.

1 5. Update the manual of support system for those who need assistance in time of disasters, and confirm the feasibility of the support system and the estimated scale by map or field exercises.

1 6. Create cooperative support system with a view to rescue in time of disasters.

<Concepts>

It is necessary to create a system to have accurate information on the whereabouts of foreign citizens in non-emergency situations because knowing the location of disaster-vulnerable people is essential for the development and implementation of disaster measures.

It is also necessary to set up an appropriate section and to create a work environment for continuous support in order to provide quick and accurate response to affected foreign citizens.

It is important to ensure coordination and cooperation with various

private entities, and provide disaster education, drills, and multilingual information about disaster prevention and weather warnings to foreign citizens on a routine basis. In addition, in an emergency situation, it is important to convey multilingual disaster-related information such as evacuation, rescue, and restoration.

When a large-scale disaster strikes, considering that many volunteer translators from non-affected area and the care for minority languages will be necessary, it is important to build a wide-area support system for translation and interpretation over the boundary of local authorities.

Basic Objectives 5

Development of a System to Promote Multicultural Coexistence Policies

< Measure >

5-1
Setting up a section responsible for multicultural coexistence promotion and cross-sectional coordination within local authorities.

5-2
Shared roles and cooperation among various entities.

< Concepts of Policies >

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- 1 7. Form the "Koryu-shitsu" to function as the hub of Multicultural Coexistence promotion.
 - 1 8. Create a network between related sections so that each section can provide information in multiple languages.
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- 1 9. Promote cooperation with citizens, citizen's groups, local businesses, and universities etc.
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< Concepts >

It is necessary to form "Koryu-shitu" as the hub of activities and provision of information related to multicultural coexistence, and to develop human resources to support coordination and cooperation with citizens, citizens' groups, and community.

It is important to improve civil service by providing multilingual support at each section, utilization of simple Japanese, and communication in native language of foreign citizens.

It is necessary to build a system where staffs of different sections can share about the common tasks and cases, and create an opportunity to provide various information.

In order to meet the increasingly complicated and advanced needs of foreign citizens in civil services, it is important to develop a more professional consultation system not only by coordinating among the internal administration, but also by cooperating with various actors in private section.