

Activity Report

OFIX Programs and Efforts in Fiscal Year 2017

As fiscal year 2017 marks the final year of the OFIX Mid-term Management Plan (FY 2015 – FY 2017), we are proactively working to achieve the outlined goals by advancing our programs through utilizing our available expertise and network with the support of related bodies such as the Osaka Prefectural Government.

To open this issue, we will introduce our “Osaka Prefectural

Support System for Foreigners in Times of Disasters” program that has just begun this fiscal year. Its aim is to provide multiple language support to foreign residents in the case of a large-scale disaster in Osaka Prefecture and to encourage the exchange of information and knowledge between local governments and international exchange organizations within the prefecture.

We will also highlight OFIX events held between April and the start of July.

★ FY 2017 Osaka Prefectural Support System for Foreigners in Times of Disasters Program ★

■ The 1st Osaka Prefectural Network Meeting for Supporting Foreigners in a Disaster

■ Date: Thursday June 8th ■ Participants: 31

As the first meeting of its kind catered towards staff from local governments and exchange organizations in the prefecture, Osaka, Toyonaka and Matsubara cities gave presentations on their disaster support systems for foreigners.

In the group work section, staff from each organization shared information about the current state of their multilingual assistance efforts and the challenges associated with providing a support system for foreign residents in a disaster.



Additionally, Sakai City and international exchange organizations from Kawachinagano and Minoh cities provided practical information on programs mainly for international students, such as disaster-prevention training drills and how pictograms were added to NTT DoCoMo’s Early Warning “Area mail” service. The meeting was very meaningful for attendees, with comments ranging from “it was so useful to hear about the initiatives of other regions” to “we’d love to have similar programs in our area.”

■ Emergency Shelter Experience and Multilanguage Support Center in Times of Disasters Operations Training Drill

■ Date: Saturday July 8th ■ Participants: ①26 ②19

Two events were held side by side with each other: an Emergency Shelter Experience (①) for international students to learn about what to do after an earthquake and the role of an emergency shelter, and a Multilanguage Support



Center in Times of Disasters Operations Training Drill (②) for volunteers to experience what kind of interpreting and translation is required to provide multilingual assistance to foreign residents in the event of a disaster.



Marking the 6th time this event has been held and as a new challenge, OFIX co-hosted the event with Sakai City, having them take charge of the training. Sakai city officials discussed how to coordinate with volunteers in the event of a disaster so they can smoothly set up a Multilanguage Support Center. During the emergency area patrol simulation, volunteer interpreters assisted international students who pretended to have evacuated to shelters, giving the drill the feeling of a real emergency situation.

★ International Understanding Education Foreign Supporter Training ★

■ Date: Saturday June 17th ■ Participants: 7

OFIX News Editor Ms. Abe is to report on this year’s training. Training began with OFIX’s Coordinator for International Relations giving an explanation about the program, as supporters listened carefully with expectation. Next, during the lecture by JICA Kansai Coordinator for International Cooperation, Noriko Ietani, supporters were introduced to the different characteristics of Japanese schools. After that, Ms.



Ietani conducted a mock lesson about Ghana, the country where she was placed, introducing different cultural aspects, including a demonstration of the Ghana-style game “foot rock paper scissors” that seemed to really fascinate the participants.

Finally, it was time for group work, with each supporter asked to create a 3-minute presentation and then present it in their groups. To help them develop their own original lessons, supporters drew illustrations as well as photos and slides they had prepared in advance. Afterwards, supporters discussed among themselves good aspects of each presentation and also received advice from Ms. Ietani, which seemed to be of much help for them to grasp tips and improve their presentation skills. It is our hope that supporters use what they learned from the training and apply it to their cross-cultural understanding lessons in the future.

★ Consultation Service for Foreign Residents ★

《OFIX Co-Hosted Event》

■ Izumi City's One-Day Consultation Service for Foreign Residents

■ Sunday June 11th ■ Participants: 13 (18 consultations)

This year marked the third consultation service event that OFIX has jointly held with Izumi city, with specialists including a lawyer, administrative scrivener and social security consultant responding to enquiries from foreign residents. OFIX language volunteers were on hand to give support in English, Chinese, Korean and Vietnamese to those with limited Japanese language ability. The annual Izumi World Festival was held at the same time, allowing those who came for the festival the chance to also visit our booth.

■ Izumisano Cross-cultural Association's (ICA) Free Information & Advice for Foreign Residents

■ Tuesday June 27th ■ Participants: 3 (3 consultations)

This year, for the fourth consultation event, staff from Izumisano city's Human Rights Promotion Section and an OFIX counselor tended to consultations from foreign residents with volunteer interpreters from ICA and OFIX providing support in English, Chinese, Korean and Filipino languages. In between consultations, an Izumi City Health Center staff member spoke about tuberculosis with the help of an informative pamphlet to raise awareness about the issue.

★ Community Interpreting Training ★

■ 2017 Training Session for Community Volunteer Interpreters

■ Monday June 19th and Wednesday June 21st
■ Participants: 26



The focus for this year's training was "Children" due to a large amount of interpreter requests we have received regarding child-related issues. For this reason, we had a senior member of the

Osaka Prefectural Central Child Family Center give a talk and also incorporated a workshop about multicultural coexistence for the first time. Trainees took part in a simulated career-counselling setting for a child at a school, with OFIX staff and volunteers playing the roles of a teacher and a foreign parent. Here, trainees learned that foreign residents face barriers associated with not only language difficulties, but also psychological and systematic issues.

An interpreting training session using English and Chinese, the languages with most participants, also took place in a simulated face-to-face situation between a foreign resident and a public servant. Interpreters of the other languages interpreted via mobile phones using a three-way calling service.

Interpreters had a difficult time dealing with some of the unfamiliar content of consultations, which was partly to having to consult over the phone without face-to-face contact. Despite this, it was a great chance for trainees to discover with new words and expressions.

We hope that this training helps these trainees shoulder the burden in providing multiple language assistance in regional areas.

★ OISEC Program ★

■ 2017 Osaka Global School Plus Short-term Study Abroad Preparation Class

OISEC* (co-established by Osaka Pref. Government and OFIX) is in charge of the Osaka Global School Program which aims to foster globally-minded citizens capable of playing key roles on the world stage by assisting high school students in Osaka who wish to study abroad.



Students who entered the course in April are currently involved in short-term study abroad preparation classes. Here, they are working hard not only to acquire English skills needed to live a confident and secure life at their study abroad destination, but also to learn other skills required to study at a university overseas, as well as to deepen their own personal understanding and opinion on the cultures and histories of Osaka, Japan, and the wider world so that they can communicate and interact with people internationally. On July 17th, students will have a pre-departure presentation event in English to showcase what they have learned during the course. After that, they will leave for their short-term study abroad program to the UK from July 26th to August 8th. Updates of their study abroad activities will be provided on the OISEC Facebook page. ⇒ <https://www.facebook.com/osakaglobal/> (Japanese only)

* Osaka Prefectural Internationalization Strategy Executive Committee

Column Article 《My National Pride》

Summer in Egypt Osaka International Understanding Foreign Supporter Moaz Mohsen (Arab Republic of Egypt)



Before welcoming summer in Egypt, students must overcome one final hurdle: the end-of-term test at the end of May. This test determines whether students can move up to the next grade from September, and if they manage to pass it, three months of summer holidays await them! In order to escape the heat and humidity,

many families visit Alexandria Beach, the most popular in Egypt. The beach is located in Egypt's second largest city after the capital Cairo, Alexandria, and is said to have been named after its founder, Alexander the Great. As 90% of Egypt's population is Muslim, you can see that swimwear worn by women at the beach cover their whole body, since they are not allowed to show their skin. At the beach you will also come across

merchants hitting cymbals together to try and attract customers. These people are selling licorice juice known as "erk sous". Erk sous is known as a health drink and a perfect solution to help Egyptians get through the long summer.



The Current State of Consultations for Foreign Residents in Osaka Prefecture ~ Based on the Results of FY 2016 ~

As of the end of FY 2016, 11 municipalities in Osaka Prefecture are providing regular consultation services for foreign residents. In this issue, we discuss the current state of OFIX's Osaka Information Service for Foreign Residents, and the person in charge of consultations for foreign residents at Minoh Association For Global Awareness have also written about their ongoing program, as an example of the kind of programs undertaken at municipal level.

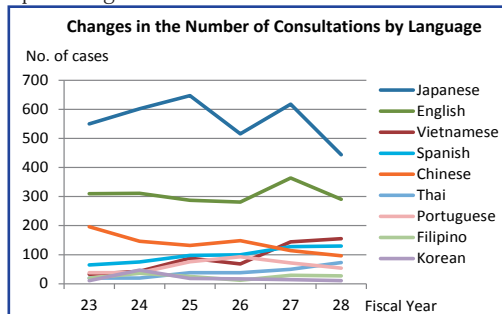
OFIX's Osaka Information Service for Foreign Residents Based on FY 2016 Consultation Statistics

OFIX set up the Osaka Information Service for Foreign Residents since being entrusted with the program by the Osaka Prefectural Government in FY 2009. The service is available in nine languages: Japanese, English, Chinese, Korean, Portuguese, Spanish, Vietnamese, Filipino and Thai. For languages other than Japanese and English, OFIX fields calls using a three-way phone system that connects the OFIX counselor and consulting person together with registered counselors of their specific language. For FY 2016, we had a total of 1,281 consultations (84% compared to that of FY 2015)

Sharp Increase of Vietnamese-language Consultations

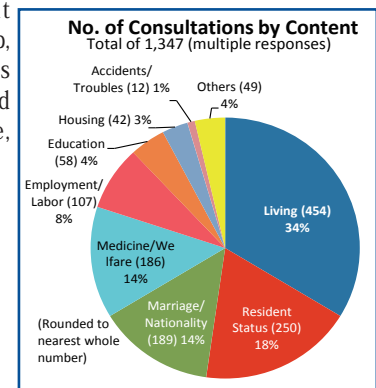
Similar to previous years, consultations from Japanese nationals were the highest among all nationalities, accounting for 19% of all enquiries. However, consultations in languages other than Japanese reached 837 cases, comprising of 65% of all enquiries, which is the highest percentage since the service was established.

In addition, consultations for Vietnamese nationals rose rapidly by 96% from FY 2014 to 2015 to reach 161 cases, and once again to 166 cases in FY 2016. By the end of 2015, the number of Vietnamese nationals living in Osaka Prefecture increased to 10,494, marking a growth of 51% compared to the end of 2014. By the end of 2016, we saw another increase of 36% of Vietnamese residents, reaching a total of 14,260. The rise in consultations can be attributed somewhat to this underlying context. The ratio of consultations from Spanish-speaking and Thai nationals is also on an upwards trend, and in particular the percentage of consultations from Vietnamese and Spanish-speaking people conducted in Japanese language is limited to less than 10%. Given this, there is we see a growing need to provide interpreting for languages other than English and Chinese, which have accounted for most of our multilingual services until now.



Diversification of the Content of Consultations Due to the Ageing of Foreign Residents

Consultations related to "living", the most frequent category accounting for 34% of all enquiries, vary in content. For a tax-related matter for example, an individual's tax situation is handled differently depending on their nationality and living circumstances. With these cases, we handle them individually and make enquiries to the tax office. In recent years, the foreign resident population in Osaka has aged, resulting in an increase in enquiries about adult guardianship, survivor's pensions and inheritance, and so on.



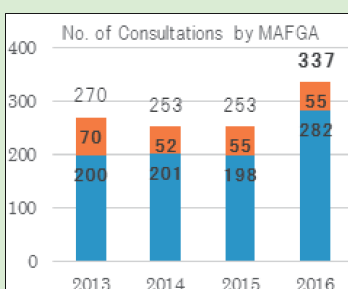
[From the Chief Advice Officer of the Osaka Information Service for Foreign Residents]

While about 84% of consultations we receive are via the phone, we have also seen an increase in enquiries by email or fax, requesting explanations of Japanese-language notifications from city halls and schools. This suggests that the daily lives of foreign residents with little understanding of Japanese language can be quite difficult to navigate. While the most suitable response is for local governments close to them to develop prompt support systems of their own, our Information Service will continue to efficiently handle consultations by utilizing email and fax.

The Current State of Our Consultation Service for Foreign Citizens

Minoh Association For Global Awareness (MAGFA) Peter SAKAGUCHI

At MAGFA, our "Living-related Consultation Service by Multilingual Counselors" service for foreign citizens is open every Tuesday from 11am to 2:30pm. Consultations are available in English, Chinese and Korean, and also Vietnamese on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month. Staff members also respond to enquiries outside of those consultation hours in the language required. In FY 2016, our counselors and



staff responded to 337 consultations, an increase of 33% from the previous year. Content varied from simple enquiries about applying for day care services, to cases requiring ongoing support such as financial difficulties and family issues. Many individual cases extended into multiple areas, requiring our staff to reach out to bodies including departments within Minoh City Office such as Child-Care, Welfare and Medical Services, and other external organizations like the Social Welfare Council, elementary and junior high schools and others. As we expect consultations to increase and diversify, our challenge is to strengthen our system to ensure they can be resolved at any time, utilizing internal and external resources that are available to our organization.

Notice

Trainees for the 2017 Ando Program Finalized

For this year's Osaka Invitational Program for Short Term Overseas Trainees in Architecture and Arts (Ando Program), we received applications from 47 people from 11 countries. Of these applicants, 8 trainees were chosen from 7 different countries (India, Indonesia, Thailand, China, Bangladesh, the Philippines and Vietnam). Trainees will arrive in Osaka on Friday September 22 to undertake the 28-day training program, before returning to their respective countries on Thursday October 19.

We are currently looking for host families to accommodate the trainees from Saturday September 30 to Sunday October 1, as part of their scheduled homestay program. If you are interested, please contact us. TEL: 06-6996-2400 Email: info@ofix.or.jp

[Notice from Osaka Prefectural Government] The Sixth Osaka 8.8 Million Drill on Tuesday September 5th!

Since being implemented in FY 2012, this drill provides residents throughout Osaka Prefecture with the chance to think about how to protect themselves and act accordingly in the event of a disaster. For more information, please visit the Osaka Prefectural Government website. http://www.pref.osaka.lg.jp/shobobosai/trainig_top/h29_880.html

* To make it easier for foreigners to participate, OFIX has assisted in translating the leaflet for the drill into several languages.

Participants Wanted

Orion Dormitory residents wanted from fall 2017

From the start of August, the OFIX-run Osaka Prefectural Sakai International Hall Orion International House will be seeking new residents from fall this year.

For more on Orion Dormitory, please visit this page: <http://www.ofix.or.jp/english/accept/support/orion.html>

[JICA Osaka Desk] Seeking Participants for the 2017 Development and International Education Seminar (Introduction)

- ◆ Date & Time: Friday August 4th 10am - 5pm
- ◆ Venue: JICA Kansai International Center
- ◆ Participants: School teachers and staff living in Osaka and surrounding prefectures, and Kobe city residents
- ◆ Participation fee: Free
- ◆ Enquiries and how to apply: JICA Kansai International Center Citizen Participation Cooperation Division Development Education Support Program Chief

TEL: 078-261-0384 (Direct) FAX: 078-261-0357
Email: jicaksic-kaihatsu@jica.co.jp

Editor's Note

Hello, its OFIX News Editor Kayo Abe here.

Recently, I participated in the first-part of the two-part training program, "Multicultural Managers Development Course". With trainees coming from all over Japan for the same purpose, I received a lot of positive energy and motivation from them. Now I have a lot of homework to complete for the second-part of the training... By the time this issue reaches you all, I will probably be struggling at the second-part of the training?! But I'll do my best to acquire my multicultural manager qualification! For more on the training: <http://www.jiam.jp/workshop/doc/2017/17211/tr16209-1.pdf>

Osaka Information Service for Foreign Residents

Free Consultation Service for Foreigners

Consultations about Status of Residence, Employment and Labor, Medical and Welfare and Living

■ Consultation Hours

9:00am - 5:30pm (Monday to Friday)
※ except for national holidays
Lunchtime (12:15pm - 1:00pm)

■ Designated Line 06-6941-2297

■ Available Languages English, Chinese, Korean, Portuguese, Spanish, Vietnamese, Filipino and Thai

■ E-mail jouhou-c@ofix.or.jp ※ J/E Only

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The next edition (84th edition) will be available in October.

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