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Official Character
Bora-chan

TOPICS

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The opening of the "Language Support Desk for displaced persons from Ukraine"

In March 2022, the Osaka Foundation of International Exchange (OFIX) established the "One-Stop Consultation Service for Ukrainian Displaced Persons" to provide consultation on daily life and other issues to Ukrainians to support them to adapt to cultural and lifestyle differences during their stay in Osaka. We also established a human resource bank to provide interpreting and translation support to public organizations. This year OFIX has opened the "Language Support Desk for displaced persons from Ukraine" to provide support to displaced Ukrainians nationwide. Public entities outside of Osaka Prefecture can use Ukrainian or Russian translation and interpretation services through the Support Desk.



| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Organizations possible to apply | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local public organizations International exchange associations Public sector organizations supporting Ukrainians |
| Language available | Ukrainian, Russian, English, Japanese |
| Services Content | Interpretation and translation services for Public entities which support displaced persons from Ukraine (for example Explanation regarding resident services and civic services, etc.) |
| Available Hours | Monday to Friday from 9:00am to 5:00pm *Except holidays and new years |
| Ways of Apply | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Interpretation via phone *No prior reservation required Please call from the municipal office, etc. with the presence of a displaced person from Ukraine. We will connect you to an interpreter on the spot and interpret for you. Tel: 070-3149-8387 (for consultation only) 2. Interpretation via Online(ZOOM) ※Prior reservation required Please apply by email in advance. We will arrange the possible dates and times for interpretation. Email: ofixvolunteer@ofix.or.jp 3. Translation Services *Please contact in advance If you have any materials that you would like to translate into Ukrainian or Russian, please feel free to contact us to see if we can accommodate them. Email: ofixvolunteer@ofix.or.jp |



About the "Ukrainian Displaced Persons Interpreter Support Human Resource Bank"

| | |
|--|------------|
| No. of volunteers *by August 2023 | 223 people |
| No. of cases in 2022 Fiscal Year | 47 cases |
| No. of volunteers participated in 2022 Fiscal Year | 68 people |



Staff responsible for the "Language Support Desk for displaced persons from Ukraine"

The Osaka Foundation of International Exchange (OFIX) organized the Osaka Information Service for Foreign Residents and has been providing a one-stop consultation service in Ukrainian and Russian. Utilizing this know-how, OFIX has now started to provide interpretation and translation support to Ukrainian refugees on a nationwide level.

More than a year has already passed since people have evacuated from Ukraine. I believe displaced persons from Ukraine are gradually expanding their sphere of activity from securing a place to live to securing a more stable life and employment.

I myself, with my family, have lived in Russia, Germany, and other countries, and I could not have done so without the support of the local government and the people in my neighborhood. Now, in the opposite position, I would like to return the favor in any way I can.

We are sure that the organizations concerned will continue to update their support systems in a flexible manner to see what kind of support they can provide in the future. We, OFIX, will also be here for the displaced people from Ukraine and will continue to support them through interpretation and translation services.

Interview with volunteers from the “Ukrainian Displaced Persons Interpreter Support Human Resource Bank”

In this issue, we interviewed two volunteers from the Human Resource Bank.

*Nicknames are being used. *Please note that interviews were conducted in Japanese, therefore the content may not reflect the interviewee's original intention perfectly.

Mir-san (from Japan)

Mir-san currently resides in Osaka Prefecture and has been working as a Russian interpreter and translator for many years. She has studied in Russia and has traveled to Crimea, Ukraine.

Why did you decide to participate in OFIX activities?

For a long time now, I have been interpreting and translating as a job, not as a volunteer. Recently, as a volunteer interpreter, I helped displaced Ukrainians with procedures at government offices, such as setting up utilities and assisting children with enrollment procedures and classes. So I decided to participate in OFIX activities also.



What was it like when displaced Ukrainians first arrived in Japan?

Because of the state of emergency, Ukrainians who arrived in Japan often looked for someone who could speak their language (Russian or Ukrainian) and asked for help. Also, they had a lot of questions but they did not know where to call, and since they did not have cell phones, it was very difficult for them.

Are there any problems or difficulties that many Ukrainians are facing?

Some Ukrainians do not speak English or Japanese, so one of the problems they are having is how to get on the train. Since they cannot speak or read Japanese, they do not know which station to get off at and which train to change to when they need to take a train for a short trip. This limits their mobility. Also, Japanese documents have many kanji characters, and they often have trouble with understanding bills and government documents. There is also the issue of health concerns and mental stress.

Is Ukraine's food culture quite different from Japan's?

Yes, it is. In the case of the Ukrainian families I know, they mainly eat Ukrainian porridge and Ukrainian food. They have a culture of eating bread, so they are not in the habit of eating rice. They buy ingredients from Japanese supermarkets, like bread similar to black bread and beets, red turnips for making borscht. One of the displaced people I know had trouble ordering beets because they were expensive, but later he discovered the

local supermarket in front of the train station near his place sold beets and he was able to buy them. Some Ukrainians in Japan have family members and relatives still staying in Ukraine, so I heard they send food from Japan to Ukraine, and their family members also send grains and spices to Japan in return.

A heartbreaking story is that six months ago, when the missile attacks were so intense that Ukraine lost electric power, Ukrainians in Japan had to send batteries to Ukraine. It was a really difficult situation to hear. They had to send light bulbs and batteries all the way from Japan because there were no such supplies in Ukraine.



Is there anything else you would like to share with our readers?

I think that the displaced people feel lonely. They have managed to live and work in Japan and are getting used to life in Japan, but I feel that in many cases they are only connected to their home country online and have no friends they know in Japan. Another thing is that they wish to read books. Ukrainians who are not working, told us that they like to read books when they have time at home. I gave picture books to the child, but instead of the child, the parents ended up reading them (laughs). From there on we started borrowing and lending books. If anyone has any Ukrainian or Russian books at home, I think it would be great to collect those books and gather them in one place so that Ukrainians have a place to come and read.

Vita-san (from Ukraine)

Vita-san is a Ukrainian national who has lived in Osaka for many years. When she was in junior high school, she saw a Ghibli movie on TV and was fascinated by its unique worldview, so she started studying Japanese. In her third year in university, she stayed in Osaka as an exchange student. She returned to Ukraine once, and then came back to Japan again for work.

What was the reason for you to register with the Human Resources Bank?

I was originally working full-time at a Japanese company, but when the war broke out in Ukraine, I decided to reduce my work schedule and participate in volunteer activities in order to help Ukraine and those who had evacuated from Ukraine in any way I could.

What kind of activities have you participated in since you registered with the Human Resources Bank?

I mainly do translation, apart from that, I also check the content translated by other volunteers. Recently, I also registered as an interpreter for the “Language Support Desk for displaced persons from Ukraine” and started interpreting activities.

What kind of content do you usually translate?

We often translate information from the government and materials about the education system for displaced people. For example, there were materials introducing the characteristics of the Japanese education system and what career paths are available after graduation from school.

Apart from OFIX, do you participate in any other support activities for displaced persons from Ukraine?

The Ukrainian community in Japan is small, so many of us know each other. When we have an event, we get calls inviting each other to help out. Because of the war, even those who had been out of touch for a while have reconnected and started to cooperate together to plan things. For example, we hold events to introduce Ukrainian culture and hold Ukrainian language classes to let people know more about Ukraine. I believe that everyone is doing what they can do and what they are good at wherever they are.

Are there any problems or difficulties that displaced Ukrainians are facing?

I am sure that the displaced Ukrainians are experiencing a lot of stress as they have to live in an unfamiliar place during an emotional time. Not to mention the pain and anxiety caused by the war going on in their home country. In addition, the language and culture are different, so the displaced people have to face many difficulties every day.

Many people feel as if time stopped on February 24, 2022, the day the all-out war began, but physical time has not stopped, and life goes on. Therefore, it is not possible to just sit still and they have to work for a living. However, there are many displaced people from Ukraine who have yet to find work in Japan.

What are the reasons you feel it is difficult for displaced persons to find jobs in Japan? Is the language barrier one of the reasons?

I think the language issue is a big one. There are also cultural differences. Even if they are able to find a job, some of them have difficulty adjusting to it. If they have an opportunity to learn about cultural differences and Japanese manners, they may be able to fit in more easily. Another problem is that Ukrainians are staying in Japan as displaced people, so it is very difficult for them to see how far they can aim for long-term employment and how far ahead they can make plans for their lives.

What are the differences between the Ukrainian workplace culture and the Japanese workplace culture?

This is my own experience, so I am not sure if it applies to everyone, but

what I found difficult was the *Ba-no-kuki* (場の空気) [the situation of the moment]. I feel that it was quite difficult because I have to guess and learn to understand the situation by myself, and to act according to the situation. Also, I think the Japanese “culture of not saying things directly” is also a bit difficult for Ukrainians. Japanese often choose polite, soft words and expressions and say things in a roundabout way, but in Ukraine we often speak more directly and clearly, so that may also be difficult for Ukrainians to get used to.

Is there anything else you would like to share?

Before the war, when I went to bookstores in Japan, I saw very few Ukraine-related books. Even in large bookstores, there were often a few Ukrainian books together with Russian-related books on the shelves, and since then I wished to change that situation somehow. I have the impression that the war has triggered Ukrainians living in Japan to become more active in promoting Ukrainian culture. A Ukrainian textbook has been published recently, and I dream that many more Ukrainian books and materials will be published in Japan in the future, and that one day there will one day be a large Ukrainian section in bookstores.



What I want most now is for peace to return to Ukraine, but I would also like to think positively about Ukraine's reconstruction and development in the future.

Is the climate in Ukraine similar to that of Japan?

It is not similar. I think it is not only Osaka but Japan as a whole, humidity is very high and the air is very wet, which I still cannot get used to. Summer in Ukraine can be hot at times, but it cools down quickly at night and the weather is comfortable.

What are the eating habits in Ukraine? Are they very different from those in Japan?

In Ukraine, it is not customary to eat raw food, and seasonings are quite different. For example, in Ukraine, people have a strong image that “sugar is used for desserts”, but I was surprised to see that in Japan, sugar is added to many dishes.

Is there any food that you could not eat when you lived in Ukraine but you can now eat after coming to Japan?

I am able to eat most of the food now. When I was in Ukraine, I could not think of eating food like octopus, but when I tried them, they were delicious. I also love sushi and sashimi.

Activity Report

7.10 [Mon] 9.20 [Wed] Plain Japanese Seminars



On July 10 (Mon), a seminar on Plain Japanese for administrative staff was held with the theme of promoting Plain Japanese and introducing case studies of efforts to spread the usage of Plain Japanese.

In the first part, Ms. Kazuyo Higashida, Vice President of the International Friendship Association of Kishiwada, and Ms. Reiko Nishimura, the Secretary General of the Association, introduced the booklet “Let's Use Plain Japanese”, ways of teaching Plain Japanese as well as how they have cooperated with Kishiwada City.

In the second part, Ms. Eriko Asada, the Chief Senior Staff of the International Affairs Division, Osaka Promotion Bureau, Osaka Prefectural Government, introduced ways they have been promoting Plain Japanese at the International Affairs Division.

On September 20 (Wed), we held a Plain Japanese seminar at Nippon Petro Co., Ltd. Through the introduction and practice of Plain Japanese language related to nursing care, participants commented that they learned a great deal.



9.7 [Thu] “Stories Helpful to Hear Before Hiring Foreign Talent”



The “Stories Helpful to Hear Before Hiring Foreign Talent” seminar was held on September 7 (Thu) in-person and on ZOOM.

Mr. Keisuke Tomomori, a Supervising Examiner from the Immigration Services Agency of Japan, Osaka Regional Immigration Bureau, held a lecture about the necessary and basic knowledge about residence status when hiring foreign talent.

Three residents from abroad (from China, Korea, and Vietnam) shared their experiences of working in their home countries and in Japan as well.

Also present were representatives from the Osaka Foreigner Recruitment Support Center, who explained about their services to assist small and medium-sized companies with various issues related to the recruitment of foreign talent.

9.8 [Thu] Presentation by Intern from the Osaka Regional Immigration Bureau

From August 24 (Thu) to September 8 (Fri), a staff member of the Osaka Regional Immigration Bureau spent two weeks as an intern at OFIX. He visited various organizations and participated in OFIX events. On the last day of the program, the intern gave a presentation about his experience at OFIX and his future plans.



9.22 [Fri] Training for providing Language Support for Displaced Persons from Ukraine



On September 22 (Fri), an online training session was held for those who are registered with the Human Resource Bank and those who are interested in registering in the future.

Ms. Haruka Sakuragi, the coordinator of the NPO Kobe Foreigners Friendship Center (KFC), gave a lecture on the current situation of Ukrainians in Japan and what to keep in mind as a volunteer. She also spoke about the roles of community interpretation and interpreters.

We have released a foreign exchange transaction fraud alert video!



Recently, there have been a number of foreign exchange transaction frauds targeting foreign residents in Japan. We have released a video alerting you to these frauds, so please take a look.

OFIX YouTube Channel "Beware of Foreign Exchange Trading Fraud!"
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6F1TzOrytFg>



If you are staying in Osaka and would like to consult about suspected fraud or have any questions, please contact us below

Osaka Information Service for Foreign Residents
(support 13 languages)

<https://www.ofix.or.jp/life/english/>

Tel: 06-6941-2297

Email: jouhou-c@ofix.or.jp

*Email consultation is only available in Japanese and English





Details will be posted on the OFIX homepage soon.

10.22 [Sun] Asia Week 2023

Asia Week is a festival of international exchange between the university and the region, giving back to the region through global expansion and campus creation under the "Gateway in Asia" teaching concept. Many events will be held such as research reports, sports experience projects, and Asian food stalls. OFIX will have a booth, so please join us.



Date and Time: October 22, 2023(Sun) 10:00-16:00
Place: Osaka Ibaraki Campus, Ritsumeikan University

11.5 [Sun] Shitennoji Wasso2023

On the day of the event, the history of the friendship between Japan and East Asia that took place in Osaka will be reenacted. There will be dynamic performances by young people expressing modern exchange. Let's enjoy Wasso together!

Theme: International Exchange in Ancient and Modern Times

Date: November 5(Sun), 2023, 10:00-16:00

Place: Naniwanomiya Park
(Houenzaka, Chuo-ku, Osaka City)

Free Participation! <https://www.wasso.net/>



11.6 [Mon] Suita International Friendship Association (SIFA) -11.16 [Thu] 10th Anniversary Ceremony

As SIFA celebrates its 10th anniversary of its transaction to a Public Interest Incorporated Association this year, SIFA will hold an exhibition of memorabilia and photographs related to international exchange from November 6(Mon) to November 16(Thu). In addition, on November 11(Sat), SIFA will hold a ceremony to commemorate the 10th anniversary. Please check out SIFA's homepage for details.

<https://sita-sifa.org/sifa/10th-anniversary/>



11.23 [Thu+Holiday] International Friendship Festival

The International Friendship Festival will be held again this year! Participate in various events and enjoy international exchange!

Date and Time: November 23, 2023(Thu+Holiday) 13:00~16:00

Place: The Japan Foundation Japanese-Language Institute, Kansai
(3-14 Rinku-Port-Kita Tajiri-Cho Sennan-Gun, Osaka)

Free Participation!

Ukrainian

Всюди добре, а вдома найкраще.

⇒ There's no place like home.

There may be many fun and interesting things to do wherever you go, but nothing beats the hometown where you were born and raised, the saying goes. It is fun to visit different places, but your home, even if it is ordinary, is the most comfortable and important place you can be.



Proverbs from different languages

Let's check out the proverbs in Ukrainian, Uyghur and Cantonese below. The meanings of Uyghur and Cantonese proverbs will be showcased on OFIX's Facebook and X(Twitter) later on, so be sure to check them out!

Uyghur

غداي نىنىڭ بولمۇسىمۇ، بۇغداي سۆزۈڭ يوقمۇ
(bughday nening bolmisimu, boghday sözüng yoqmu?)

[Hint] The literal translation is: "Even if there is no naan, are you saying that there is not even a grain of wheat?"



Cantonese 偷雞不著蝕把米

[Hint] The literal translation is: "I couldn't steal the chickens and ended up wasting the rice."



We are looking for supporting members!

Annual membership: 50,000 yen for corporate members, 3,000 yen for individual members

<https://www.ofix.or.jp/donate/>

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- ◆ OFIX News (quarterly) and Report (yearly) containing information on OFIX's activities and international exchange
- ◆ 50% off banner advertisements (for corporate members with two or more accounts)

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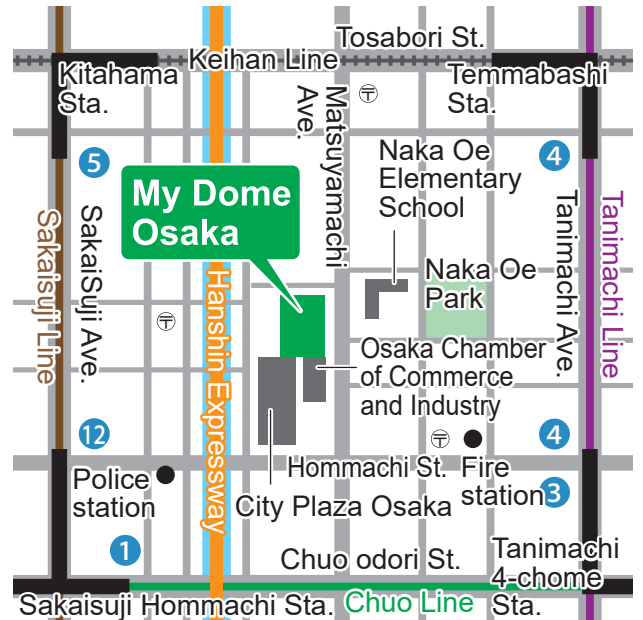
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