

## T O P I C S



OFIX's Official Character:  
Bora-chan

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## Becoming Conscious of the Unconscious

### Viewing Through a Stereotypical Lens



We communicate with one another on a daily basis not only through words, but also through so-called nonverbal cues such as facial expressions, eye contact, and tone of voice. At times, we also try to communicate by imagining the background and experiences of the other person and by taking into account the knowledge and information available to us.

However, this perception is sometimes expressed as stereotypes regarding foreigners—such as with their nationality, language, ethnicity, or culture.

Remarks that come from assumptions such as “men are...,” “women are...,” or “elderly people are...,” can make people who don’t fit those assumptions feel as though their very identity is being denied.

Situations in which foreign residents feel an emotional barrier because they are “not seen as an individual” are inconsistent with the multicultural society that OFIX seeks to promote. Perhaps the first step toward a truly inclusive, multicultural society is becoming aware of our own stereotypes.

### Microaggressions

Microaggression is a term formed by combining “micro” (small) and “aggression” (attack).

Even when the speaker has no intention of causing harm, their remarks or actions may contain ignorance or bias toward the other person’s culture or background. These are often described as “everyday, subtle, and hard-to-notice forms of aggression that are common in daily life.”

Moreover, even in close relationships such as those between friends, repeated exposure to such interactions can accumulate and place a psychological burden on the recipient. Microaggressions occur within relationships between “majorities” and “minorities.” In this context, “majority” does not refer only to numerical dominance, but also to those who hold a socially more privileged position.



## A Quest Around the World: China



China (the People's Republic of China) is located in East Asia and covers approximately 9.6 million square kilometers. To the east it faces the Pacific Ocean, the East China Sea, and the South China Sea, and it shares land borders with 14 countries.



### Population & Language

The population is about 1.4 billion people. The official language is Mandarin Chinese (Putonghua), but a wide variety of regional languages and dialects, such as Cantonese and Minnan, are spoken throughout the country. The majority of the population is Han Chinese; however, 55 ethnic minority groups make up about 8–9% of the population. Each group continues to preserve its own language and culture, making the country rich in diversity.



### Cuisine

#### Peking Duck



**Features:** Rich flavor, fragrant aroma, and a hint of sweetness.

**Main Ingredients:** Duck meat, green onions, sweet bean sauce, and thin wheat flour pancakes.



### Culture

#### The Symbol of the Dragon

While dragons are often seen as symbols of evil in the West, in China they represent good fortune, imperial authority, and power. The Chinese Dragon is so deeply rooted in Chinese identity that Chinese people sometimes refer to themselves as “descendants of the dragon.”



### Feng Shui and Lucky Date Selection

Feng Shui is a traditional practice focused on geography and the flow of energy, influencing building layouts and furniture placement. Even today, many people consult specialists to choose auspicious dates for weddings, business openings, and moving houses, reflecting the Chinese philosophy of harmony between heaven and humanity.

## From the Frontline of Foreign Resident Consultations

### Osaka Information Service For Foreign Residents

The nature of inquiries received at the Osaka Information Service for Foreign Residents (OIS) is gradually changing. In the past, most questions were relatively straightforward requests for information, such as “Where can I find a hospital that offers services in foreign languages?” These cases were often resolved quickly by helping users find the necessary information, and their concerns tended to be eased soon after.



However, beginning last year, there has been an increase in more complex cases. In particular, a growing number of cases relate to employment issues, such as unpaid wages, discrepancies in working hours, and situations where employees work under unclear contract terms. In some cases, these issues reflect challenges common in small businesses or workplaces run by foreign employers. It is common for problems to arise due to the absence of written employment contracts or insufficiently established work regulations.



When handling consultations, it is more important than ever to carefully confirm the consultant's employment status and contract details first.

The OIS provides a range of specialized consultation services to help foreign residents living in Osaka Prefecture live safe and secure lives.

The Osaka Information Service For Foreign Residents: <https://ofix.or.jp/life-japanese>

## Reports on Other Projects and Activities

4/20 Courtesy visit to the Royal Thai Consulate-General, Osaka

4/23 Conducted an Online Information Session

4/28 The First Life Orientation Session at Osaka Wakaba High School



**Editorial Note** The Osaka City announced that the number of visitors to Osaka Castle Main Tower in fiscal year 2025 reached a record high of 2,813,851. It is said that inbound tourists accounted for 80% of the visitors, boosted by factors such as last year's Osaka-Kansai Expo.

I visited Osaka Castle during the cherry blossom season, and it was bustling with many international visitors. It is hard to imagine that such a large number of foreign tourists would come here—something that even Toyotomi Hideyoshi, who built the castle about 440 years ago, could never have dreamed of.

## Registered Volunteers of OFIX

**No. of Supporters: 129 supporters**

**No. of Language Volunteers : 523 volunteers**

**No. of Disaster Interpretation and Translation Volunteers : 204 volunteers**

Current status as of May 15, 2026

For more volunteer information, please scan this QR code.



Volunteer



Supporter

## OFIX Sponsor Recruitment

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

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

- ◆ Provision of OFIX's printed materials, reports and other publications free of charge or on a priority basis
- ◆ OFIX News (quarterly) and Report (yearly) containing information on OFIX's activities and international exchange
- ◆ FREE banner advertisements (for corporate members)

※ Donations to public interest foundations are eligible for tax benefits

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

## JICA Osaka Desk@OFIX

A JICA Osaka Desk is located within the OFIX office.

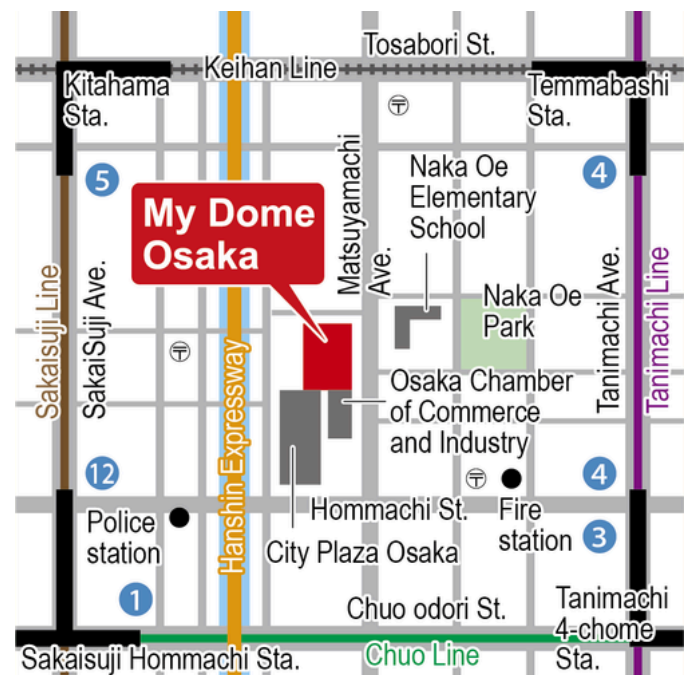
Tel: 06-6966-2400

Email: [jjcadpd-desk-osakafu@jica.go.jp](mailto:jjcadpd-desk-osakafu@jica.go.jp)



Contact us if you have any comments or opinions  
[info@ofix.or.jp](mailto:info@ofix.or.jp)

## Access



## Osaka Foundation of International Exchange (OFIX)

5th Floor, MyDome Osaka, 2-5 Hommachibashi,

Chuo-ku, Osaka 540-0029

TEL : 06-6966-2400 FAX : 06-6966-2401

Email : [info@ofix.or.jp](mailto:info@ofix.or.jp)