Special
Feature

Let's build it together!

A Diverse and Inclusive City

Foreign residents have become an everyday sight around town and at schools and other places. Foreign residents are also active in the development of industry in Koka City, which ships the most manufacturing products in terms of value in all of Shiga Prefecture.

In this special feature, we will introduce the initiatives of Koka City aiming for diversity and inclusion, and will announce the name of the multi-purpose facility with multicultural center functions that is scheduled to open in May of this year.

As members of Koka City who live in the same communities, let us together consider the importance of **diversity and inclusion**.

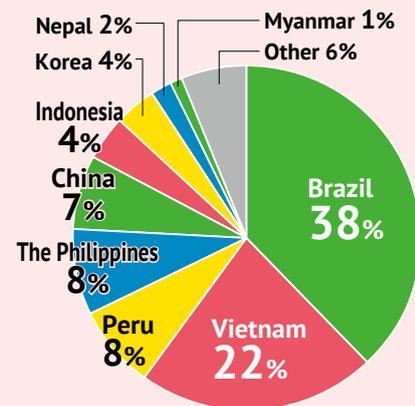
The number of foreign nationals living in Koka City is approximately **4,500** (as of October 31, 2023). This is equivalent to **1/20** of the population living in Koka City.

The increase in the population of foreign nationals has produced a variety of problems such as differences in language, culture, and customs.

Increased by
1,300 persons
in the last 5 years!



In order for everyone to live together comfortably, **it is necessary for persons of different nationalities to accept and respect one another, and to create a diverse and inclusive community.**



What can we do to promote diversity and inclusion?

Friendly greetings



Something as simple as "Good morning" is fine. Looking each other in the face and exchanging friendly greetings is the first step toward diversity and inclusion!

Understanding cultures



You may find it easy to start with areas you are interested in yourself, such as food culture or art culture.

Participating in events



Festivals are exciting events that are held in all parts of the word. Participate in Koka City festivals and have a good time with everyone who is there!

Starting on the following page, we will introduce steps that both Japanese persons and foreign persons can take for diversity and inclusion.



What can Japanese persons do to promote diversity and inclusion?

Try using it! Simple Japanese

“Simple Japanese” is Japanese that replaces ordinary Japanese with simpler terms in consideration for foreign persons and others who are less familiar with Japanese. Here are some examples of key points for simple Japanese.



Key points for simple Japanese



Speak clearly.



Speak all the way to the end.



Speak in short sentences.

For example...

- Kinyu shite kudasai → Kaite kudasai
 - Dosoku genkin → Kutsu wo nuide kudasai
 - Kyo metcha samui na → Kyo ha totemo samui desu ne
 - Tsukaenai wake deha nai desu → Tsukau koto ga dekimasu
- ...etc.

Begin diversity and inclusion with “simple Japanese.”



Community Activities
(Shimin Katsudou Suishin Ka)
**Ms. Sameshima, Diversity and
Inclusion Promotion Staff**

Please imagine the following. You are traveling overseas. You have become lost. Your smartphone battery is dead. Make full use of the English you learned at school and ask directions from someone nearby.

How do you want that person to react? ❶ Do you want the person to speak at a normal speed, using polite words? ❷ Do you want the person to speak slowly, using simple words?

It is likely that most of you would answer ❷. For foreign residents, the situation you just imagined is an everyday experience.

“Consider the above points. Do not use katakana words, or onomatopoeic words or mimetic words. Do not use honorific language or local dialects.”

Taking simple steps such as these can make your Japanese much easier to understand.

You might think that it is rude not to use honorific language, but simple ordinary polite language (-desu, -masu) is sufficient.

There is no single correct answer for what simple Japanese is. It is important to think of the position of the other person, and be considerate.

This kind of simple Japanese is not only effective with foreign residents, but also with children and elderly persons as well. Try using simple Japanese to communicate with a diverse range of persons!

What can foreign persons do to promote diversity and inclusion?

Studying Japanese has so many benefits! Japanese Class

You can understand the necessary information in case of a disaster or other emergency!

Your life in Koka City will be more fun!

You can get valuable information and information necessary for everyday living!

You can participate in local events with members of the local community and have a good time together!



You can create opportunities for others to understand your country's culture!

The Koka International Society offers two Japanese language classes: the Niji Japanese language class and the Ninja Japanese Class. Your Japanese level will be checked in advance so you can study together with others who are close to your level of ability.

In addition to learning to increase what you can do with Japanese, these classes also actively promotes relationships with new friends, using Japanese as a common language among persons from a wide range of countries with different native languages.

There are also persons you can consult with about concerns or problems in your everyday living, so these classes are a place where you can feel at home.

The next Japanese level check will be in March. Those of you who would like to learn Japanese or who would like to expand your community connections, please invite a friend and apply.



Attended by around 60 students from 17 countries.

- Niji Japanese language class: Mondays at 2:00 pm (individual classroom available)
- Ninja Japanese Class: Saturdays at 7:30 pm (held every other week)

*The class dates depend on the class calendar for each class.

Interview with students attending the Ninja Japanese Class

I worked as an accountant in the US, but I wanted to have more fun in life so I came to Japan about a year and a half ago. Now I am working as an ALT (English teacher at elementary schools). Everyone in Japan works so hard that it can be hard to make promises to go have fun. Let's have some fun together!



Michael (USA)

Rahmat (Indonesia)



I lived in Koka City for three years from 2015 as a technical intern, but I liked living in Japan so I am now working again as an engineer at the same company from last March. The temperature does not change much in Indonesia during the year, but Japan has four distinct seasons and we need to have a lot of clothing and take care not to catch colds.

Koka Koho is also published in other languages (English, Portuguese)!

*The English version is available starting from the 10th.



Koka International Society is now seeking new members!

If you are interested in volunteering at a Japanese language class or in international exchange, please feel free to contact us.

Inquiries **Koka International Society/TEL. 63-8728**



Why not work with us?

Creating a fun place for everyone to feel at home

Diversity and Inclusion Expanding in the Community

In the Bantani area, where there are a particularly large number of foreign residents live, the Bantani Area Exchange Learning Club is held once each during the summer and winter holidays for elementary school students to do homework together in order to improve communication between Japanese residents and foreign residents.

In addition to homework, this class provides opportunities to encounter Japanese culture and customs such as picture-story shows. Something that is ordinary for a Japanese person may be unusual and surprising for a child with roots in a foreign country. Initially there were only two participants, but now there are many children participating with many different nationalities. This activity is made possible by the cooperation of many volunteers, who include high school students.

This class that started in the Bantani area is starting to spread to other areas as well. As the numbers of foreign residents are growing, it is important to create a community that includes the foreign residents, and to create places where everyone can feel at home. I hope that we can make more places in the city where children enjoy going and can feel at home.



We want to continue to provide a place where children who have roots in foreign countries can feel at home.



Bantani Area Exchange Study Club

Mr. Sakamoto (left)

Mr. Okamura (right)

In these places right around you!

Diversity and Inclusion Expanding in Welfare Workplaces

Many people picture foreign residents who are working in factories. In fact, the number of foreign persons working in nursing care facilities and similar workplaces is growing nationwide, and the number of facilities accepting foreign workers is growing in Koka City as well.

I came to Japan around six months ago. I like taking care of people so I really enjoy my work in nursing care.

Communication is important in this work, so I studied Japanese while I was in Nepal.



However I was very nervous about whether I would be able to speak properly when I first started working. The facility staff and users are all very nice and I can enjoy my work.

I look forward to eating all kinds of Japanese foods, participating in local festivals, and learning more about Japanese culture.

I enjoy my work!



Social Welfare Corporation Koga-kai
Kogaso Special Nursing Home for the Elderly

Niruta Chaudhary (Nepal)

The nickname of the multi-purpose facility that will open in May has been decided!

Nickname: **Minakuru Plaza**

This was selected from among the names submitted in October and November of last year. Thank you for the many submissions.

In addition to multicultural center functions, this facility will function as a community center and youth center.

Inquiries

Community Activities (Shimin Katsudou Suishin Ka)
TEL.0748-70-6032/FAX. 0748-70-6046

For more information, see here.



COVID-19 Vaccine Information

Vaccinations at group vaccination sites and operation of the reservation website ended at the end of December. Vaccinations will continue to be offered in and after January at individual vaccination medical institutions within the city.

For the reservation procedure and a list of individual vaccination medical institutions, please check the Koka City website or the information enclosed with your vaccination coupon.

*The free vaccination period for the COVID-19 vaccine will end on March 31, 2024 (Sun).



◀ Koka City website

Inquiries

COVID-19 Response Office Consultation Center
TEL.0748-69-2154 (Mon. to Fri. 9:00 am to 5:00 pm)

Start of Declaration of Depreciable Assets

Fixed asset taxes are applied to not only land and houses, but also to depreciable assets such as factory machinery, exterior and paving for rental housing and parking lots, business assets such as solar power generation equipment, and so on. Asset owners are required to declare their assets held on January 1 of each year.

Persons (Individuals/Corporations) Who Need to Declare Their Assets

Anyone running a business or operating a factory or store as an individual, or renting out an apartment or parking lot, within Koka City as of January 1, and who owns business assets (including the lessors of such assets)

Submission Deadline

January 31 (Wed)



◀ Koka City website

Submit To
or Inquiries

Property Tax Office, Taxation Affairs (Zeimu Ka)
TEL.0748-69-2129/FAX.0748-63-4574

A Safe City Notice about Driver's License Renewals

Sunday renewal procedures at the Driver's License Center (Moriyama City) will be on a reservation-only basis starting from January 7, 2024 (Sun). (Excluding persons who have completed the elderly driver training)

For details, see the Shiga Prefectural Police website → [Driver's license information] → [Regarding reservations for Sunday driver's license renewal procedures].

January 10 is "110 Day"

110 is the special telephone number for quickly reporting emergencies such as crimes and accidents. Please respond to the police operator's questions calmly and without rushing.

To contact the police for an inquiry or consultation that is not a report of a crime or accident, please call the Police Consultation Number #9110 or your nearest police station.

Inquiries

Koka Police Station
TEL.0748-62-4155

Occurrence of Traffic Accidents

Type	Oct. 2023	Oct. 2022	Change
Injury accidents	18	28	-10
Seriously injured	5	9	-4
Fatalities	1	1	0

Occurrence of Criminal Offenses (Unit: Incidents)

Type	Oct. 2023	Oct. 2022	Change
Violent crimes	1	3	-2
Thefts	38	47	-9
Intellectual offenses	2	8	-6
Other	11	9	2
合計	52	67	-15

January After-hours Counter (every Tuesday until 7:00 pm): January 9, 16, 23, and 30

Every Tuesday the Koka City Hall Citizens' Affairs (Shimin Ka) is open until 7:00 pm, so you can complete administrative procedures such as having certificates issued (family register, resident register, tax certificate, etc.) or registering your personal seal.

*Please note that Individual Number Card administrative procedures and residence-related changes (moving/relocating, etc.) cannot be handled at the After-hours Counter.

Notice from Maina-chan

You can use your Individual Number Card to get a copy of various certificates at convenience stores. (Please contact us at the following telephone number for the applicable certificates.)

Inquiries

Citizens' Affairs (Shimin Ka)
TEL.0748-69-2138
FAX.0748-65-6338

Monthly Tax Payments

The due date for tax payments this month is **January 31 (Wed)**.

- Municipal and prefectural residences tax (4th installment)
- National Health Insurance tax (8th installment)
- User fees (Nursery school fees, Kindergarten and Nursery school lunch fees)
- Nursing-care insurance premium (8th installment)
- Medical Insurance premiums for older senior citizens
- Public sewerage fee/Rural community sewerage fee

Please use the convenient direct debit system for your tax payments.

Consultation content/Contact

Date

Time

Location

Life and Work Consultations (Public Assistance Counter)*

Advice is available for concerns about daily life and work. *No need to apply Responders: Consultation support staff and employment support staff

Contact Public Assistance, Public Assistance (Seikatsu Shien Ka)
TEL.0748-69-2158/FAX.0748-63-4085

Every week, from Monday to Friday (except public holidays)

8:30 am to 5:15 pm

Public Assistance Desk, Public Assistance (Seikatsu Shien Ka), 1F, Koka City Hall

Consumer Affairs Consultations

Advice is available for concerns about consumer affairs, such as products, purchase agreements, and other contracts.

Responders: Consumer affairs counselors

Contact Consumer Life Center (Shouhi Seikatsu Center)
TEL.0748-69-2147/Consumer Hotline: 188 (no area code)

Every week, from Monday to Friday (except public holidays)

9:00 am to 5:00 pm

Consumer Life Center (Shouhi Seikatsu Center), 1F, Koka City Hall

Pension Consultations

Consultants: Kusatsu Pension Office staff *By appointment only, first-come-first-served basis

Contact Appointments Kusatsu Pension Office
TEL.077-567-2220/FAX.077-562-9638

March 14 (Thu)
 *Held every second month

10:00 am to 3:00 pm

2F Meeting Room 202, Koka City Hall

School-age Children Consultations

This consultation counter is for school-age children (elementary to high school) and their parents/guardians and other family members.

Contact Child Rearing Policy, Child Rearing Policy (Kosodate Seisaku Ka)
TEL.0748-69-2176/FAX.0748-69-2298

Every week on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday(except public holidays)

8:30 am to 5:15 pm

Child Rearing Policy (Kosodate Seisaku Ka), 2F, Koka City Hall
 You can also make inquiries using the Child-Rearing Concierge Inquiry Form.



Parenting and Study Consultations*

We are ready to listen and offer advice on matters about your child's development and emotional/mental concerns. *Please make an appointment by phone or fax.

Eligible persons: Generally children aged 4 years or older, elementary and middle & senior high school students, adolescents and young adults (up to around 25 years old)

*For consultations regarding children younger than 4 years old, please contact your local health care (Hoken) center.

Contact Appointments Development Support (Hattatsu Shien Ka)
TEL.0748-69-2178/FAX.0748-69-2298 (Hours: 9:00 am to 5:00 pm)

Kindergartens/nurseries and schools, Koka City Hall, etc.

Youth School Absenteeism & Hikikomori Consultation

We are ready to listen and offer advice on matters related to school absenteeism and hikikomori for youth up to around 25 years old who have completed compulsory education.

Contact

Development Support (Hattatsu Shien Ka)
TEL.0748-69-2179 (Hours: 9:00 am to 5:00 pm)

Youth Concerns Consultations*

We are ready to listen and offer advice on matters concerning young people, including school absenteeism, bullying, misbehaving, delinquency, friendships, and pursuing further education or finding work.

*From Monday to Friday, 9:00 am to 4:00 pm (except public holidays and end-of-year holidays). Consultations can also be made by phone and email.

Contact

Youth (Shonen) Center (2F, Minakuchi Central Community Center (2F, Minakuchi Chuo Kominkan))
TEL.0748-62-6010/FAX.0748-63-3977
Email: k-syonen@city.koka.lg.jp



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Hours: 8:30 am to 5:15 pm (except for the After-hours Counter on Tuesday)

Please check the Koka City website and Facebook page for Koka City information.

Koka City website

<https://www.city.koka.lg.jp/>

Koka City Facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/city.koka>

Koka City website



Koka City Facebook page

