

Sekai wa Hitotsu

Gifu International Center (GIC)

International Exchange & Multiculturalism Information Magazine

November 2023 No.157



© 岐阜県 清流の国ぎふ・ミナモト # 0195

Hello Gifu, Hello World 2023: Celebrating 50 years of diplomatic relations between Japan and Vietnam

The annual cultural exchange event Hello Gifu, Hello World 2023 was held at 'Minna no Mori' Gifu Media Cosmos. A Vietnamese female dance troop, "V-Artists" were invited to perform on stage to commemorate 50 years of diplomatic relations between Japan and Vietnam. The first of two memorable dance numbers performed was done wearing green modern style áo dài, (Vietnamese traditional dress) to the song "Hương Sắc Việt", which means "beautiful Vietnam". The second song, "Sen hồng hừ vô", meaning "elegant pink lotus", featured a beautiful dance performed while holding a lotus, the national flower of Vietnam. Also during the stage event, Gifu Prefectural Coordinator for International Relations (CIR) Đặng Thái Quỳnh Chi gave a presentation introducing Vietnam and explaining the history of friendship between Japan and Vietnam.

In addition, as part of our activity GIC carries out consultations for Gifu's foreign residents to help them if they have a problem related to their daily life in Japan. We have three consultants working here at GIC, who specialize in Portuguese, Tagalog, and Vietnamese.

Stage Event



Dance performance by the "V-Artists", a group of Vietnamese dancers who live in Japan



Vietnamese Coordinator for International Relations Đặng Thái Quỳnh Chi

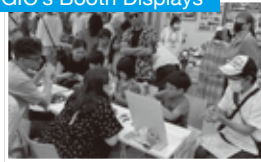


Group photo of the performers and CIR who commemorated 50 years of diplomatic relations between Japan and Vietnam

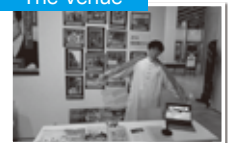
Booth Displays

At the Kangaeru Studio (Studio of Reflection), 27 international exchange organizations set up booth displays. The displays introduced the culture of each country and the activity of the organizations, and folk crafts were also sold. GIC arranged two workshops for children, making French scoubidou and Lithuanian tautinė juosta, inspired by the knitted sash or belt used for traditional Lithuanian clothing. Visitors enjoyed learning about the culture of each country through the kids' workshops organized by the French and Lithuanian CIRs, and through the items displayed such as photo albums introducing the CIRs' home countries, and folk art and craft items. Here at GIC, we would like to continue to strive for the promotion of exchange between local Japanese people and foreign residents through global events, and to increase the number of opportunities to learn about differences in the culture and customs of different countries.

GIC's Booth Displays



The Venue



Gifu Prefectural Consultation Center for Foreign Residents

Here at the Gifu International Center, we have set up the Gifu Prefectural Consultation Center for Foreign Residents, where we carry out consultations for foreign residents living in Gifu related to their daily lives. We provide accurate information and act as an intermediary between foreign residents and relevant institutions. GIC's Foreign Resident Support Consultants are here to help, and 15 languages are available using phone interpretation services. In addition, we organize various types of consultations, including consultations with the Nagoya Regional Immigration Services Bureau staff members, free consultations with lawyers, free consultations with administrative scriveners, and mental health counselling. An administrative scrivener is someone who is qualified to help with drawing up documents to be handed in to government and public offices.

Consultation process:

- ① The person in need of assistance calls GIC (058-263-8066).
- ② GIC connects the caller with an interpretation call center (3-way call).
- ③ If necessary, the interpretation call center connects the caller to a public office, such as a city hall (4-way call).

Please be aware of the following:

- Consultations are mainly for foreign residents.
- Consultation is free, but the caller must pay for any phone charges.
- For more information about the languages available and opening times, please use the QR code on the right.



Please consider donating to the Gifu Prefecture Ukrainian refugee support fund

Money donated to the support fund will go to Ukrainian refugees living in Gifu Prefecture to help them with their daily living expenses. If you would like to donate, please use the QR code on the right to find out more about the fundraising.



※QR Code is a registered trademark of DENSO WAVE INCORPORATED.

Introducing new Coordinators for International Relations

Li Yang (from Nanchang, Jiangxi Province, China)

Nice to meet you all, my name is Li Yang!

I'm from Jiangxi Province in China, which has enjoyed a friendship partnership with Gifu Prefecture for 35 years. Jiangxi is on the south coast of the Yangtze River and is a very mountainous province. Among these mountains there is Mount Lu, often described as "the most beautiful mountain in the world"; Mount Longhu, a sacred Taoist site; Mount Sanqing, a UNESCO World Heritage Site; the Jinggang Mountains, known as the cradle of the Chinese revolution; and the Wugong Mountains, popular for camping. As well as for its mountains, Jiangxi is also famous for its pottery production.

I majored in Japanese during my time at university, and the more Japanese I learnt, the more my interest in Japanese culture grew. I had always hoped to go to Japan one day and experience Japanese culture firsthand. After graduating from university, I came to Japan for work, and even though I was only here for one month I felt the sincerity of the Japanese and their kindness towards foreign people. This month-long experience became an important lifelong memory.

Thanks to the JET Programme, I will be able to further my knowledge about Japanese culture and I would also like to share Chinese culture with you all! I plan to do my utmost to work towards mutual understanding and Sino-Japanese friendship. I will work hard as a CIR to further friendly relations between China and Japan!

I look forward to meeting and working with you in the near future!



Agne Vegelyte (from Lithuania)

Labas! (Or hello in Lithuanian!) My name is Agne and I'm so pleased to meet you all!

From this August I began working as a CIR, and I'm looking forward to introducing my little-known home country, Lithuania, to people here in Japan!

I'm from Utena, a small city with a population of less than 30,000 people, but after finishing high school I moved to Lithuania's capital Vilnius for university, and lived there until coming to Gifu. The beautiful old town of Vilnius is a UNESCO Cultural Heritage Site. At university I majored in Japanese Studies, and as well as learning Japanese, I also studied Japanese culture, history and literature, including classical literature.

During my fourth year of university I came to Japan for the first time on an exchange program lasting one year. The delicious food, effectiveness of public safety and beautiful nature all created a strong impression, but most of all it was the warm hearts of the people that moved me.

I've spent about 5 years in Japan in total so far, but this is my first time in Gifu, and I think I'm going to enjoy the slow life surrounded by nature! In Lithuania we don't have mountains, and it's one of the world's flattest countries, so when I go to the observation deck on the 20th floor of the Gifu Prefectural Office almost every day to look out at the surrounding mountains, I enjoy scenery that I can't see back home.

While engaging in cultural exchange with everyone in Gifu Prefecture, I hope to learn more about Gifu, including about its culture, history and festivals. If you see me out and about, please feel free to come and say hello!

I look forward to meeting you all and working with you soon!



Former Lithuanian Coordinator for International Relations, Giedrė Dulskaitė's Parting Words

Hello everyone! Two years have now passed since I began working as a CIR in Gifu Prefecture. I am extremely grateful to everyone in Gifu Prefecture for the help and support that I have received for the last two years. I will always remember my time in Gifu fondly, as I was able to meet many people and I learnt so much about Gifu. Over the past two years I have participated in various events, and I've been able to experience the deep ties between Gifu and Lithuania.

While in Gifu, I was able to engage in meaningful cultural exchange activities about Lithuanian culture and history, including at events such as Lithuania NOW, which broadly introduces Lithuania; the Kaziukas fair in Yaotsu town, which is based on the folk arts and crafts festival held in Lithuania; and other culture-based lectures held in numerous locations in Gifu Prefecture.

I want to extend a heartfelt thank you to everyone who participated in events I was involved in, and I hope that the ties between Gifu and Lithuania will become even stronger in the future.

I would like to come back to Gifu one day, so this is not goodbye! Instead, I'll say "see you soon", iki pasimatymo!





【 Foreign residents and Japanese healthcare 】

Problems that foreign residents may encounter when seeking medical care

According to the “Written Report of the Survey on Foreign Residents in Japan for the 2021 Fiscal Year” published by the Immigration Services Agency, regarding “difficulties getting a diagnosis or treatment at a hospital”, the percentage of foreign residents experiencing such difficulties has increased, with 22.8% saying they “did not know which hospital to go to”, and 21.8% saying they “could not accurately describe their symptoms at the hospital”.

In addition, by looking at the results of the survey by visa type, among respondents with a student visa, 40.3% said that they “did not know which hospital to go to”, a higher percentage than for other visa types. There is a tendency for foreign residents who live in Japan for a shorter period of time to have more problems related to medical care. Based on the report, it appears that the leading causes of the problems encountered are a “lack of information about hospitals” and a “language barrier”.

(Source: Immigration Services Agency, “Written Report of the Survey on Foreign Residents in Japan for the 2021 Fiscal Year”)

Initiatives for foreign patients

In response to the increasing number of foreign residents in Japan, a “Comprehensive Strategy for the Acceptance of and Coexistence with Foreign Personnel” is being developed, which recommends that all residential areas establish a system to ensure that foreign patients can receive medical examinations easily and with confidence.

Additionally, with COVID-19 entry restrictions being lifted, it is expected that the number of foreign tourists traveling to Japan will increase. Accordingly, it is important to create an environment in which tourists visiting Japan can easily and comfortably receive medical care in preparation for situations arising where such care is necessary.

As part of this initiative, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare and the Japan Tourism Agency have compiled a list of “Medical Institutions Accepting Foreign Patients” with the aim of creating a user-friendly system for patients and improving the services provided by hospitals and administrations.

Hospitals on the list of “Medical Institutions Accepting Foreign Patients” are willing to see foreign patients and have been deemed eligible to do so by local Prefectural Government. In Gifu Prefecture there are currently 53 suitable hospitals.

You can access the list of “Medical Institutions Accepting Foreign Patients” from the QR code on the right. ➡



Introducing a useful website for receiving medical care in a foreign language

On the Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO) website you can search for medical institutions where foreign nationals can have an examination by region or by language.

As well as allowing you to search by region or medical department, you can also use other information to find suitable medical institutions, for example those that accept credit card payments. Other useful information on the website includes how to get medical treatment and how to take out overseas travel insurance.

You can also use this website if an emergency arises when you are traveling in another prefecture, so please make use of this valuable resource.




全国健康保険協会 岐阜支部
協会けんぽ

For information about National Health Insurance please visit the Japan Health Insurance Association website!

Available in 5 languages, in addition to Japanese and English!

岐阜支部マスコットキャラクター





The Coronation of Britain's King Charles 3rd

On May 6th of this year, the historic coronation of Charles 3rd took place in Britain. A coronation is a ceremony in which the new monarch wears the crown for the first time, making the accession to the throne public and clear both at home and abroad. As the longest serving monarch in British history with 70 years on the throne, in September last year Elizabeth 2nd passed away at the age of 96. Immediately following her death, Prince Charles, who was next in line for the throne, became King Charles 3rd. However, preparing for the coronation ceremony takes time, and many British people mourn the ruler who has passed away. Therefore, the coronation of a new monarch often takes place the year after the death of the previous monarch. For example, when George 6th, the father of Elizabeth 2nd passed away in 1952, her coronation did not take place until 1953.

In British history, there have previously been two Kings named Charles, so the current King has the title "Charles III". In Britain, the monarch's spouse has the title Prince Consort if they are a man, and Queen Consort if they are a woman. They themselves are not the monarch, and therefore they are not officially referred to as "King" or "Queen" alone. For example, Queen Elizabeth's husband, while usually referred to as Prince Philip, was her royal consort. King Charles' wife, Queen Camilla, is his royal consort.

During coronation ceremonies, traditional regalia is used. Regalia are items which are emblems of royalty, including crowns and scepters.

The monarch is the head of the Church of England, so the coronation is fundamentally a Church of England rite. Therefore, the Archbishop of Canterbury was the person who placed the crown on King Charles' head. Regarding the crown, Saint Edward's Crown, made in 1661, was used in the coronation ceremony. The crown worn by Charles 3rd after the official ceremony was the 1838 Imperial State Crown. Camilla wore the crown made in 1911 for George 5th's wife and royal consort, Queen Mary. Mary was Queen Elizabeth's grandmother.

The royal couple rode from Buckingham Palace to Westminster Abbey in the Diamond Jubilee State Coach, built to celebrate Elizabeth 2nd's 60 years on the throne in 2012. For the return trip, they rode in the Gold State Coach, built in 1762 and used in every coronation since 1831. After returning to Buckingham Palace, the royal family stood on the famous balcony to greet the members of the public who had gathered outside.



Notice for recipients of special loans, such as the Emergency Small Sum Loan, offered due to the spread of COVID-19

To help those with financial difficulties due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Japanese government, through Municipal Councils of Social Welfare, lent money to those who applied for the "Emergency Small Sum Loan" and the "General Support Fund". Repayments of these loans have now started.

- Depending on when you received the loan and the type of loan, the date of the start of repayment differs.
- If you do not repay the loan on the specified date, interest will be added.
- There are also those who do not need repay the loan if they apply (cases where the borrower and the head of the household are exempt from residence tax).
 - ※If you want to know whether you are exempt from residence tax, please ask your local municipal office.
- If you are having trouble making repayments, please consult with the Municipal Council of Social Welfare where you received the loan.

Please consult with the Gifu Prefecture Council of Social Welfare regarding the special loan. If you cannot repay the loan by the specified date, it is important to seek support rather than shouldering the burden alone. Each Council of Social Welfare offers support for all aspects of life, so please do not hesitate to contact them.

Point of contact for people living in Gifu Prefecture

Gifu Prefecture Council of Social Welfare TEL: 058-201-2100 (Weekdays 9:00-17:00)
Support available in multiple languages. People who have difficulty with Japanese may also consult with us.



What to do if you have moved house

If you have changed your name or address, for example, due to moving house, you must submit a "Notification of Change of Name or Address" form at the Municipal Council of Social Welfare from which you received the loan. If you do not submit this form, you will not receive important notifications informing you when you need to make repayments. Please make sure to follow the necessary procedures.

What to do if you have any other problems

In Gifu Prefecture, each region has its own consultation service. Specialist advisors will listen and offer assistance. For more detail, please visit the Gifu Prefecture Support Consultation Service website. ➔

For consultations in languages other than Japanese, please contact the Gifu Prefectural Consultation Center for Foreign Residents (Located in the Gifu International Center).

TEL: 058-263-8066 (Weekdays 9:30-16:30)



Issued By

Gifu International Center (GIC)

Gifu Chunichi Building 2F, 1-12 Yanagase Dori, Gifu City, 500-8875
Tel: 058-214-7700 Fax: 058-263-8067
E-mail: gic@gic.or.jp URL: <https://www.gic.or.jp>
Opening hours: Sunday to Friday 9:30 – 18:00
Closed: Saturday, Public Holidays, New Year Period
Languages: English, Chinese, Portuguese, Tagalog, Vietnamese

Date of Publication

November 1, 2023

(Published three times yearly in July, November, and February)

