

Sekai wa Hitotsu

Gifu International Center(GIC)

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GIC Project Report: Event held for the first time in 3 years!

Commemorating the 100th anniversary of the friendship between Lithuania and Japan, and the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Japan, 34th Annual Hello Gifu, Hello World Event 2022

Gifu International Center holds the annual Hello Gifu, Hello World event to deepen the mutual understanding and cultural exchange between local Japanese people and foreign nationals residing in Gifu Prefecture. This is achieved by introducing the activities of international exchange and cooperation organizations based in the prefecture, and the cultures of different countries to the wider population through a variety of performances.

This year's event was held at 'Minna no Mori' Gifu Media Cosmos for the first time in 3 years to commemorate the 100th anniversary of friendship between Lithuania and Japan, and the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Japan.

Ukrainian refugees also took part on the spur of the moment, introducing themselves on stage and fund-raising for their home country.



Stage Performances @Dokidoki Terrace (Heart Pounding Terrace)

This year marked the 100th anniversary of the friendship between Lithuania and Japan, so Lithuanian-born Coordinator for International Relations Giedrė spoke about the expanding exchange between Lithuania and Gifu Prefecture. This is linked to the achievements of the former vice-consul to Lithuania, Chiune Sugihara, who is known for his humanitarianism as he issued visas to help Jewish people escape persecution in the 1940s. The performances opened with a song and dance from the kindergarten pupils from Sunnyside International School, and five other Gifu Prefecture Coordinators for International Relations presented their home countries (France, the USA, Vietnam, the UK, and Brazil). In the afternoon, Indian music was performed to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Japan, and the sounds of folk instruments – the santoor, tabla and sitar – filled the hall with a mystical atmosphere. Attendees shared their thoughts, such as; “It was fun listening to presentations about different countries since we can’t travel abroad at the moment”, “It’s been a long time since I’ve experienced international exchange, so it was a valuable opportunity”, “The flamenco, belly dance and south Indian dance performances were amazing!”, and it gave many prefectural citizens the opportunity to become familiar with international exchange.



▲ Song and dance performance by kindergarteners



▲ Flamenco performance by the Gifu Spanish Cultural Center



▲ Gifu Prefecture Coordinators for International Relations

Booth Displays @Kangaeru Studio (Studio of Reflection)

At the Kangaeru Studio, 26 International Exchange Organizations set up booths; these booths displayed different countries' cultures, introduced the activities carried out by their organizations, and sold folk crafts, etc. Many visitors were drawn to the national flags of different countries visible through the windows. At the Japan-Lithuania Friendship Association's booth, there was a workshop to learn how to make “tautinė juosta”, a traditional Lithuanian crochet craft. As well as this, there was a corner for making original bookmarks by putting stickers of national flags and Gifu's mascot, Minamo onto photos of Vietnam and Lithuania. This created a really fun cross-cultural experience for visitors.

◆ Tautinė juosta workshop

Tautinė juosta were originally used as the belt of Lithuania's traditional clothing (equivalent to the obi sash of a Japanese kimono), and continue to be worn at special events where formal dress is necessary, for example at weddings. At this event, there was a workshop to make crafts using wool and tape that resemble tautinė juosta. A total of 50 parents and children had a go, and many children were very happy to wear their completed craft on their arm as a bracelet, creating a souvenir from the event that they could take home.

We have set up a donation collection box for the Ukrainian Refugee Support Fund.

※ For those who wish to donate, please use the QR code. You can find out more details about this fundraising.



▲ Donation collection box



▲ Online game corner



▲ Making a tautinė juosta

Are you familiar with Portuguese, the official language of Brazil?



Here at the Gifu International Center, our Brazilian Coordinator for International Relations offers Portuguese classes every year to promote multicultural understanding and coexistence. The Portuguese language is spoken in 9 countries around the world, including Brazil and Portugal. In May, we ran an introductory level course, then in July a lower beginner's course, both of which were held online. During these classes online games were incorporated to make learning Portuguese fun, and teaching materials were provided using websites (such as Kahoot or Quizlet), which can only be experienced online. Below is a link to an online game where you can challenge yourself to learn Portuguese greetings, so please give it a go! (Inputting your personal details is not required, all you have to do is scan the QR code!)



▲Game QR code

Feedback from the participants

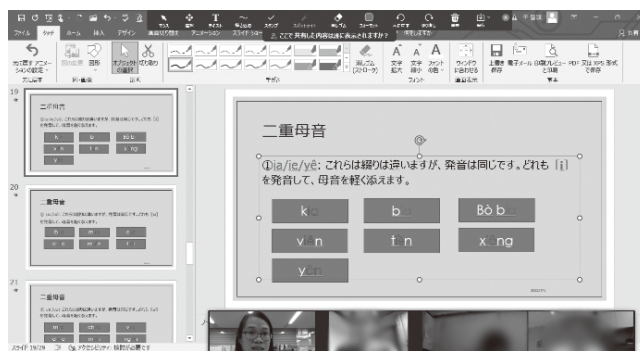
- I had never studied Portuguese before, but I enjoyed it and was happy I could learn to understand a little Portuguese even in this limited time. I would like to continue to study Portuguese in the future if possible.
- By making sure to prepare for each lesson and review the content after class, I feel that I was definitely learning.
- I am very grateful for the opportunity to study a foreign language online for multiculturalism, as it's very convenient. I really hope that these classes continue.

Next classes

By popular demand, we are planning to run mid-level beginner's and upper beginner's classes in autumn and winter! All level classes start with the alphabet (the basics), so even people who have no prior experience of learning Portuguese are warmly welcome! Please feel free to join and have a go!

Multicultural Vietnamese language classes

This year, the Gifu International Center held its first Vietnamese classes in May, which were attended by many people living and/or working in Gifu Prefecture. By the end of August, two introductory courses had been held, as well as one beginner's course. In order to prevent the spread of COVID-19 infections, the classes were held online using Zoom, a web conferencing system. On a positive note, this enabled people living far away from the Center, such as in Yoro and Ogaki, to attend the classes. The participants include company employees, people with a Vietnamese spouse, and retirees, all with an interest in Vietnam. The Vietnamese language is often said to be difficult for Japanese people to learn as it has many tone letters and unclear vowels. But, with a lot of practice and increased student input to provide more speaking opportunities, the classes were made easy to understand and enjoyable.



Feedback from the participants is below. We look forward to seeing you soon in Vietnamese class!

- The classes were short but the teacher was very thorough and the texts were easy to understand. Thank you!
- I am interested in the Vietnamese language and would like to continue taking classes.
- It was difficult to attend the lessons during work hours, but it was very helpful that they were recorded.

▶ Information about language classes run by the Gifu International Center is available from the QR code



////// Regarding Pension Withdrawal Payment ////

If someone who does not have Japanese citizenship leaves Japan following the loss of their insured status, they can claim a lump sum withdrawal payment from both national pension payments paid by the individual and their employer (employee pension insurance; including mutual aid association pension payments), within two years of the date they no longer have residence in Japan.

Requirements for reclaiming national pension payments

1. You do not have Japanese citizenship.
2. You are not insured under any public pension scheme (employee pension insurance or national pension).
3. The total number of months payments were made exceeds 6 months (this does not include periods where payments were not made, even if you had already joined the national pension scheme).
4. The eligibility period required to receive an old age pension (10 years in total, including the period of participation in employee pension insurance) has not been met.
5. You have never been eligible to receive disability benefits, or other welfare payments.
6. You do not have an address in Japan.
7. Lastly, it has not been more than 2 years since the insured status in the public pension scheme was lost. (If the person in question still had a Japanese address on the day their insured status was lost, the day they left this address is used. So, it must be no more than 2 years since they left their place of residence in Japan.)

Requirements for reclaiming employee pension insurance payments

1. You do not have Japanese citizenship.
2. You are not insured under any public pension scheme (employee pension insurance or national pension).
3. You were insured under employee pension insurance (including mutual aid association pension payments) for a total of more than 6 months.
4. The eligibility period required to receive an old age pension (10 years) has not been met.
5. You have never been eligible to receive welfare payments (including disability benefits).
6. You do not have an address in Japan.
7. Lastly, it has not been more than 2 years since the insured status in the public pension scheme was lost. (If the person in question still had a Japanese address on the day the insured status was lost, the day they left this address is used. So, it must be no more than 2 years since they left their place of residence in Japan.)

How to make a claim

1 Filling out the withdrawal payment claim application form (1), preparing other necessary documents (2)

- (1) The Application Form Requesting a Withdrawal Payment for Foreign Nationals with Short-Term Residency is available on the Japan Pension Service website in the following languages:
English, Chinese, Korean, Portuguese, Spanish, Indonesian, Tagalog, Thai, Vietnamese, Burmese, Khmer, Russian, Nepali and Mongolian.
 - (2) Please also provide the following documents: Passport copy, evidence that the applicant does not have a Japanese address, name of the financial institution or bank receiving the money, name and address of the branch office, bank account number, evidence that the bank account is in the name of the applicant, document clearly showing the pension number e.g. pension number notification letter or pension book, document authorizing a representative make the claim in the case that a proxy is being used.
- 2 Place of submission** : Japan Pension Service head office or any mutual aid association, etc.
 - 3 Submission method** : By post or electronically
 - 4 Submission period** : Within 2 years of the foreign national moving out of their address and leaving Japan following short-term residence.

For more details, please check the Application Form Requesting a Withdrawal Payment for Foreign Nationals with Short-Term Residency on the Japan Pension Service website, which is available in multiple languages.

If there is anything you are unsure about, please enquire at your local Japan Pension Service office.

Consultations are available at Pension Service offices with interpreting services in 10 languages.

Available languages: English, Chinese, Korean, Portuguese, Spanish, Tagalog, Vietnamese, Indonesian, Thai and Nepali.

- Opening times: 8:30 – 17:15 (Monday to Friday) *excluding national holidays and the New Year period (29th of December until 3rd of January).
- The Pension Service does not provide consultations using interpreting services over the phone.
- Please be aware that if the interpreting services are busy you may have to wait longer.

Close up!

Close up
introduction of
activity-based
organizations in
Gifu!

Children's Multicultural Education niho★nico

Our hope is that children with overseas roots can live happily in “niho” (Japan) and “nico” (smile).

Featuring Nico-chan, a
fun mascot character



We are a volunteer group based in Mizuho whose aim is to support children with overseas links and their families. One of our main roles is to provide support for elementary and junior high school children living in Mizuho to help them with learning Japanese and other subjects. In addition, we offer consultations and advice for those advancing into the next stage of education, e.g. high school, and help with entrance exam preparation. These services are carried out in our weekly Sunday sessions, but we also have links with elementary and junior high schools, to further the support for those proceeding to the next stage of education. Also, once a year we organize workshops with internationally-renowned artists to promote multicultural exchanges between local Japanese families and families with overseas links.

Our group members are mainly mothers who work part time and live in Mizuho city and its surrounding area. Many are familiar with the children's school environment, and some have experience as municipal learning support workers and Japanese language instructors. Drawing on their childcare experience, they try to create an environment where children can play and learn in a fun way, as well as learn from each other.



Sunday sessions



2019 drama workshop



2019 photo workshop



2021 dance workshop

Founded in 2017

Place of activity : Mizuho Civic Center, elementary and junior high schools in the city

Representative : Kaori Matsui (Asahi University)

Website : [//nihonicogifu.wixsite.com/nihonico/about-us](https://nihonicogifu.wixsite.com/nihonico/about-us)

Contact information : E-mail: kaori-m@alice.asahi-u.ac.jp

TEL: 058-329-1321

☆☎ We're currently looking for people to work with us! People with overseas roots and university students are welcome. If you are interested, please feel free to come and observe our activities.



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Closed: Saturday, Public Holidays, New Year Period

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