



Initiative Nippon project in Aichi: Regional meeting on acceptance of foreign residents

The first regional meeting of the Initiative Nippon project was co-hosted by the Outlook Foundation and Aichi Prefecture on Sunday, June 12 in Aichi Industry & Labor Center's WINC AICHI building in Nagoya.

A total of 50-plus participants including 22 from corporations, municipalities, universities, and NPOs from Aichi and other prefectures engaged in vigorous discussion, with observers and co-hosts also in attendance.

Governor Hideaki Omura of Aichi Prefecture, where more than 200,000 foreigners live, kicked off the meeting by updating last year's proposal of a special zone. He suggested that Aichi should accept foreigners through new support organizations. He continued:

- While the Cabinet Office is positive about these ideas, other ministries such as the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology and the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry are hesitant.
- We would like the participants at this meeting to offer ideas for changing such attitudes.
- We should remind ourselves that the path towards globalization is unavoidable and take a step forward.



After Governor Omura's speech, all participants presented their views. In Aichi, second-generation immigrants are growing. There have been reports of some cases in which immigrant children have been actively participating in local communities and others in which they have not been well accepted. Some said we should support the formation of foreign communities.

Our Chief Executive Director Yoshio Ishizaka closed the meeting by asking for participants' support in the Tokyo round which is scheduled for this fall.

I would like to express my gratitude to participants and organizers who dedicated their weekend to this meeting. I also thank the members of Aichi Prefecture's Policy Planning Bureau.