



Regional meeting of Initiative Nippon project in Hamamatsu

The second regional meeting of the Initiative Nippon project was co-hosted by the Outlook Foundation and Hamamatsu City on Saturday, June 18 in a seminar room of Tabunka Kyosei Center, CREATE HAMAMATSU in Hamamatsu City.



A total of more than 40 participants including 21 from corporations, municipalities, universities, educational organizations, NPOs and residents of Hamamatsu and other cities held a vigorous discussion, with observers and co-hosts also in attendance.

Chairman Takaji Kunimatsu of the Outlook Foundation opened the meeting, saying, “We are holding a series of regional meetings in Hamamatsu and other areas. We plan to sum them up in the Tokyo round in November. I hear that Hamamatsu leads the nation on this matter with its advanced policies under the leadership of Mayor Suzuki. I am from Hamamatsu, and I am proud that my hometown is making such progressive efforts.”

Hamamatsu Mayor Yasutomo Suzuki then addressed the participants: “Our city has approximately 21,000 foreign residents including 8,000 Brazilians. Recently we have seen a trend toward more nationalities, with an increase in Philippine and other Asian residents.



Hamamatsu initiated the ‘Shuju Toshi Kaigi’ (Conference of Cities with Large Foreign Populations), and we have made several recommendations to the Japan government. We have long been urging the need for an agency for foreigners or agency for immigrants. As Mr. Kunimatsu said, we will inevitably be accepting more immigrants in the future, and the government should consolidate its system to facilitate the process. Hamamatsu is entering a new stage, too. Until recently, our focus was on solving issues, for example in children’s education. Now we are increasingly discussing how to take advantage of our diversity in regional development. I hope we will hear many useful opinions today.”

I would like to express my gratitude to participants and organizers who devoted their weekend to this meeting. I also thank the members of Hamamatsu City’s International Affairs Division, Planning and Coordinating Department.

