

**Shinjuku City Multicultural City
Development Conference Discussion Report**

August 29, 2022

**Shinjuku City Multicultural City Development
Conference**

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Introduction

Shinjuku City established Shinjuku Multicultural Plaza in 2005, and declared that the city was “striving for the realization of a multicultural society to appreciate the diversity” in the Shinjuku City Basic Autonomy Ordinance enacted in 2010. In September 2012, the Shinjuku City Multicultural City Development Conference, made up of both Japanese and foreign residents, was established to discuss the best ways of promoting multicultural living in Shinjuku City. The conference has been convening for a decade, including its recent fifth term.

The discussions during the first to fourth terms—with the exception of the second term, which focused on the Survey on Multicultural Living in Shinjuku City—addressed specific themes. Specifically, “Improvement of the Educational Environment for Children with Foreign Roots” and “Establishment of a Support System for Foreign Residents in Times of Disaster” during the first term, “Issues to Solve for Foreign and Japanese Residents to Live Together in Shinjuku and Dissemination of Information” during the third term, and “Further Promotion of Multicultural Living through the Use of Shinjuku Multicultural Plaza” during the fourth term.

In contrast, the conference’s fifth term has differed significantly from previous discussions in that the themes were approached from a chronological perspective of people who start living in Shinjuku City. We divided the general path that foreign residents take when they move into the city to get oriented into two phases. The first phase is when they begin living in Shinjuku City, and the second phase is about life after they establish a presence in the community. For this term, we set the overall theme as “Establishment of a Local Community Built by Japanese and Foreign Residents Together,” and focused on those two phases that new foreign residents experience. We decided on the topics to be discussed by two subcommittees: “When Accepting New Foreign Residents” and “Life in the Community for Foreign Residents.”

By discussing issues in the lives of foreign residents from a chronological perspective, we gained new insights, such as the fact that issues differ at each phase of adjusting to life after moving in, and that support needs to be tailored to each stage of a person’s life.

Another difference from past terms was that the fifth was convened during a time when the spread of COVID-19 greatly affected Japan. The cancellation of community festivals and many other events resulted in the loss of many local exchange opportunities. This reaffirmed the importance of human interaction in the promotion of multicultural living. Based on the assumption that the virus will not completely subside anytime soon, discussions also touched on ways to implement Japanese-language classes and consultation services for foreign residents, which had to be scaled back amid the COVID-19 situation.

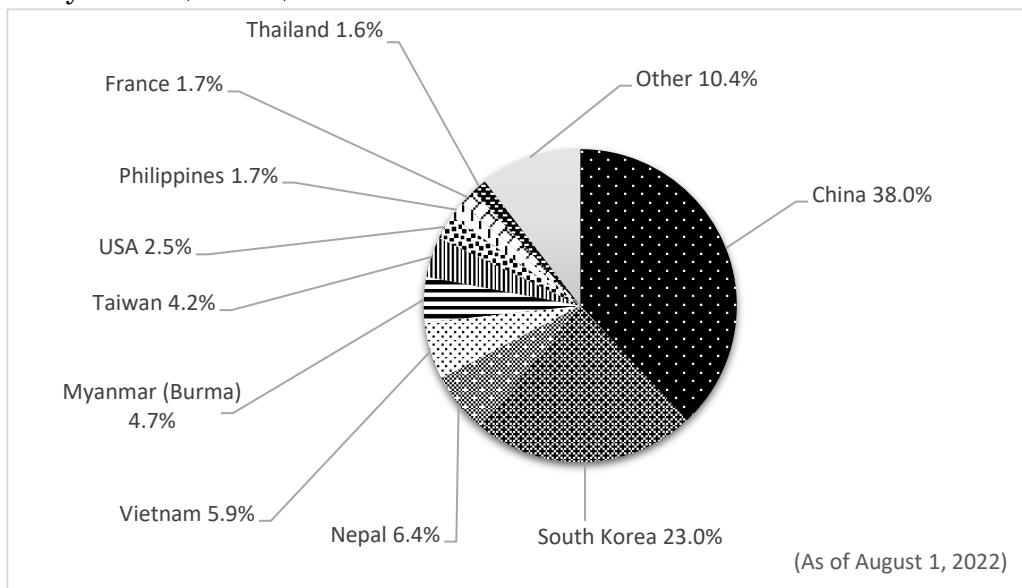
Here we report the results of two years of discussions by the 32 members of the Fifth Shinjuku City Multicultural City Development Conference.

Chapter 1: Multicultural City Development

1 Foreign residents in Shinjuku

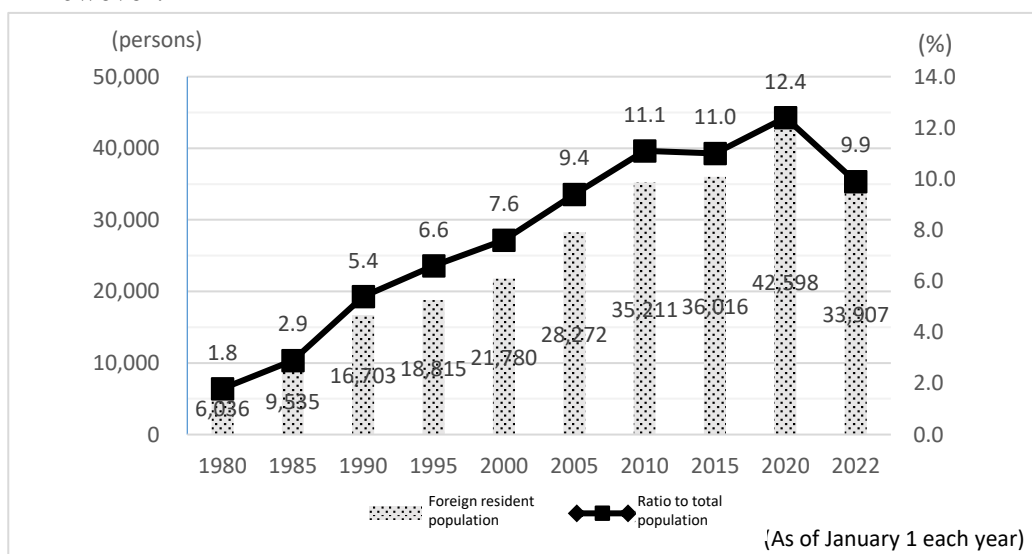
(1) By nationality

- As of August 1, 2022, Shinjuku City has a foreign resident population of 38,622. This represents 11.2 percent of the total population of 345,858, or about one foreign resident for every nine residents.
- There are foreign residents of 127 different nationalities, with approximately 90 percent from Asia, including 13,569 from China, 8,873 from South Korea, 2,376 from Nepal, 2,298 from Vietnam, and 1,794 from Myanmar (Burma)



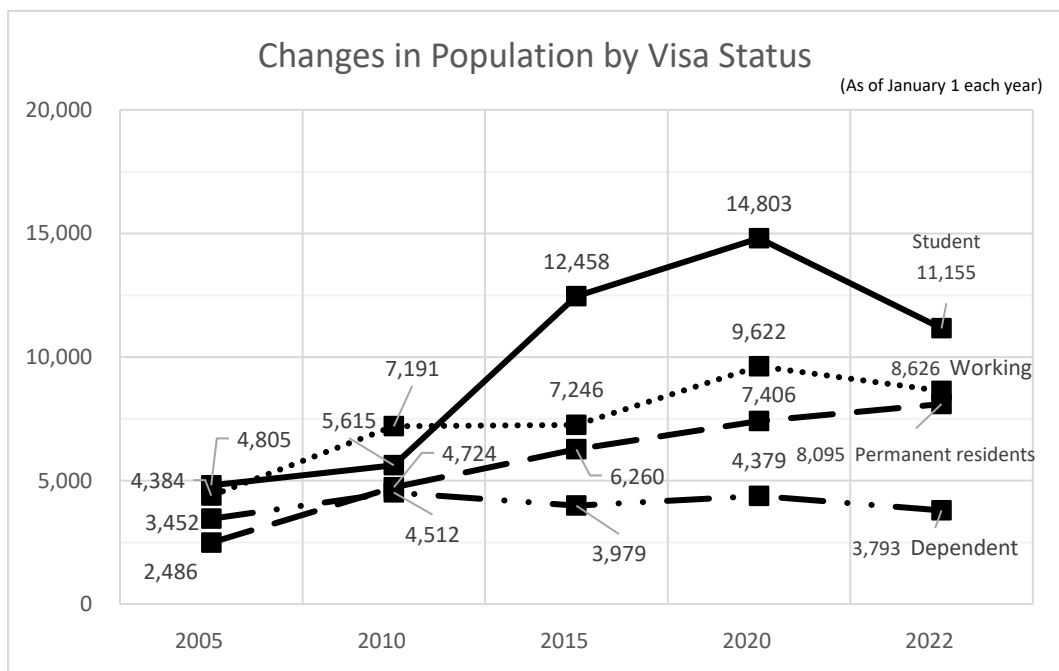
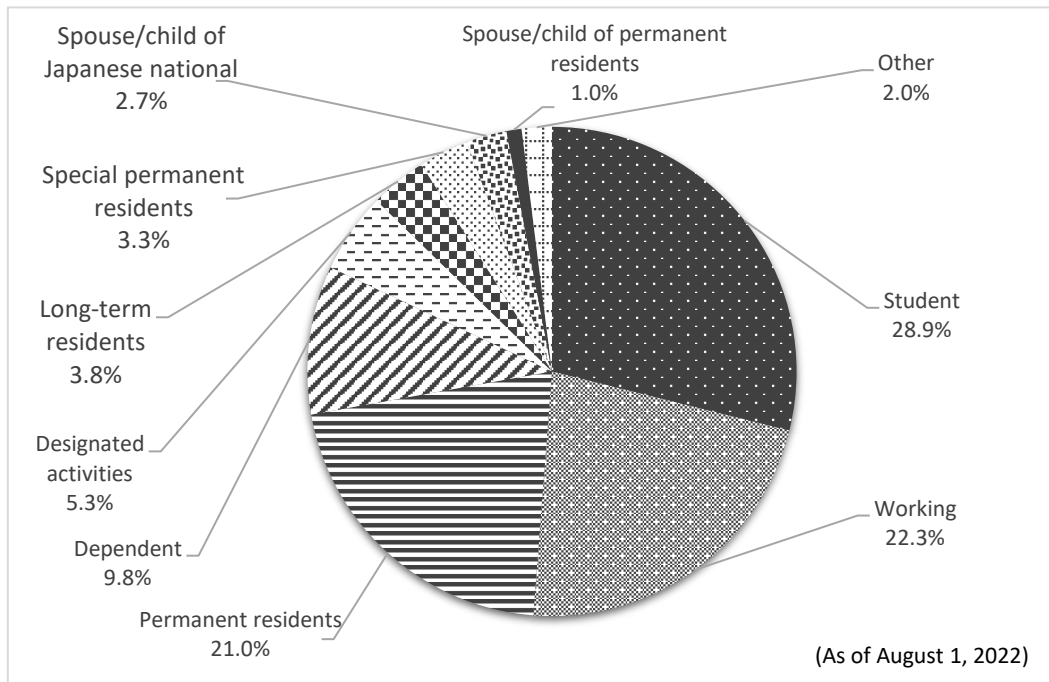
(2) Demographics

- The number of foreign residents rose beginning in the late 1980s. In 1980, the number was about 6,000; in 2000, there were about 22,000; and in 2020, about 42,000. The impact of COVID-19 reduced that number to about 34,000, however.



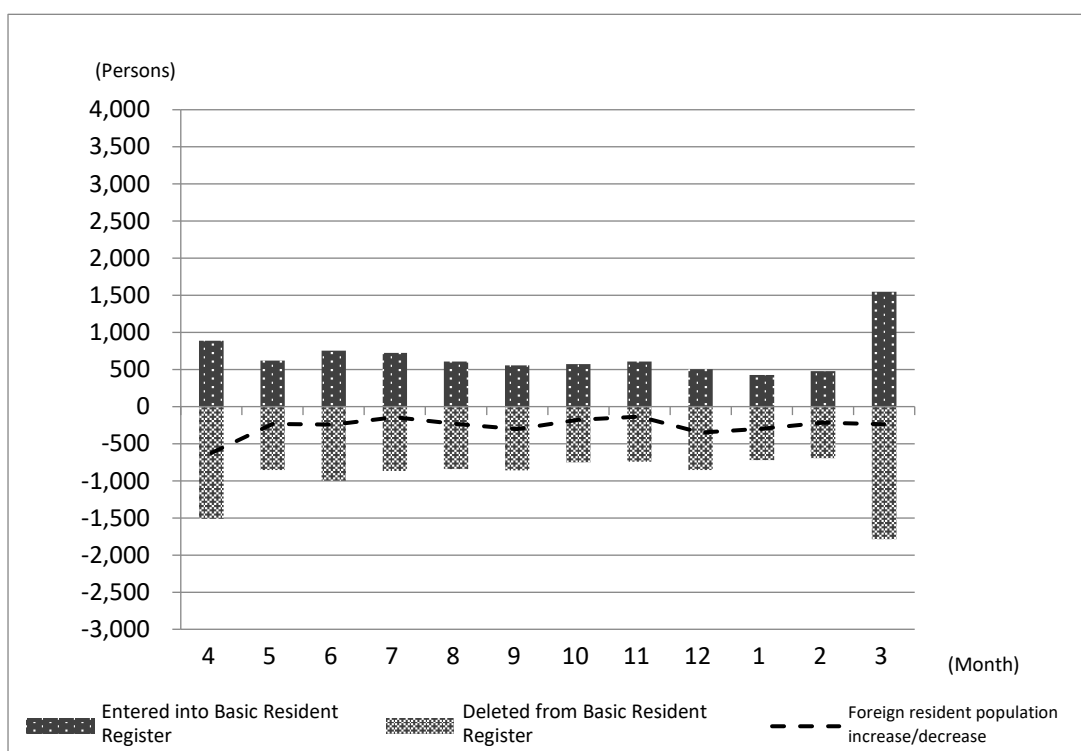
(3) Ratio and changes by visa status

- By visa status, foreign residents with student visas accounted for 28.9 percent (11,155 persons), followed by those with working visas at 22.3 percent (8,626) and permanent residents at 21.0 percent (8,095)
- In 2019, student visa holders accounted for 34.8 percent of the total, but this number sharply decreased in 2020 and beyond due to the spread of COVID-19 and related border measures



(4) Mobility

- According to the basic resident register, during April 2020 and March 2021, 11,702 foreign residents moved into Shinjuku City from abroad or another municipality, while 15,567 moved out, a turnover of more than 10,000 foreign residents. This high degree of mobility is a characteristic of Shinjuku City.



2 Major multicultural living policies of Shinjuku City

The major multicultural living policies related to the theme of this term are as follows:

(1) Dissemination of information in foreign languages

Information on daily life, administrative matters and the like is provided in multiple languages (Japanese with *furigana*, English, Chinese and Korean). In addition to city facilities, these publications are distributed at various locations in the city with the cooperation of foreign residents' communities, establishments often used by foreign residents, and the like. The city also operates a website for foreign residents with information on daily life and foreign-language SNSs.

- ① *Guide to Living in Shinjuku* (guidebook distributed to new foreign residents moving into the city)
- ② *Shinjuku Start Guide* (videos; streaming at City Office Main Building 1F as well as on the city website)
- ③ Foreign-language bulletin *Shinjuku News* (published three times a year)

- ④ Information on Everyday Living (eight volumes divided by content; published once a year)
 - ⑤ Information on Everyday Living for Foreign Residents website (updated three times a month)
 - ⑥ Foreign-language SNSs (Twitter, Facebook, LINE, Weibo; information posted 10 to 15 times a month)
- (2) Foreign-language consultation service and multilingual support

A multilingual consultation service is available to respond to the concerns of foreign residents in their daily lives. The service provides advice on various matters such as administration (resident registration, social insurance, taxes), family, welfare, health, work and education. In addition, a TV interpreter system has been installed at city office counters to accommodate foreign residents who have difficulty communicating in Japanese.

① Consultation for foreign residents

(a) Foreign Resident Advisory Corner (within the City Administration Information Center, City Office Main Bldg. 1F)

Languages: English, Chinese, Korean

(b) Shinjuku Multicultural Plaza Foreign Resident Consultation Corner

Languages: English, Chinese, Korean, Thai, Myanmar (Burmese), Nepali

② Multi-language support (TV interpreter system)

Languages (16): English, Chinese, Korean, Spanish, Portuguese, Thai, French, Filipino, Vietnamese, Myanmar (Burmese), Nepali, Hindi, Russian, Indonesian, Cambodian, Ukrainian

Locations (9): Shinjuku City Office Main Bldg. and Shinjuku City Office Annex 1 (two terminals), Public Health Centers (four locations; one terminal per location), Shinjuku City Office New Wing of Annex 2 (one terminal), Comprehensive Children's Center (one terminal) and Shinjuku Multicultural Plaza (one terminal)

(3) Japanese-Language Education Support

Japanese-language learning support is offered to foreign residents who have difficulty communicating in Japanese to help them lead a stable life in the community (excluding Japanese-language support guidance and the like provided by the Board of Education).

- ① Japanese-language lessons at "Nihongo Hiroba"
- ② Shinjuku City Japanese-language classes (12 classes in 10 locations)
- ③ Children's Japanese-language classes
- ④ Japanese-language classes for beginners

⑤ Shinjuku Multicultural Plaza Japanese-Language Study Corner

(4) Cultural exchange events

To cultivate awareness of multicultural living and international exchange, the city holds delivery-type exchange events and introduces the culture of foreign residents in the community to the Japanese residents.

① Multicultural Exchange Event (held twice a year)

(5) Operation of Shinjuku Multicultural Plaza

Shinjuku Multicultural Plaza was established to promote exchanges between Japanese and foreign residents that will lead to a deeper mutual understanding of each other's cultures, histories and the like, and to contribute to the formation of a community where people of diverse cultures can live together.

Chapter 2: Discussions Held in the Fifth Term

1 Theme

Establishment of a Local Community Built by Japanese and Foreign Residents Together

2 Background and Issues

(1) Background

- With the start of the new foreign human resources acceptance system in 2019, the national government is asking local governments to provide support to foreign residents
- The Act on Promotion of Japanese-Language Education (enacted in June 2019) requires local governments to endeavor to establish a basic policy to comprehensively and effectively advance measures for the promotion of Japanese-language education in accordance with the conditions of the community
- As of October 2020 (the first meeting of the fifth term), Shinjuku City was home to 36,357 foreign residents (about 10.6 percent of the total population), with those with student visas making up the largest percentage (about 25 percent). Shinjuku City was characterized by its high degree of mobility of foreign residents and the diversity made up of people from 126 different countries.

(2) Issues

- Providing appropriate Japanese-language education and information in a city characterized by its high degree of mobility and diversity
- Establishing measures to solve problems and issues that foreign residents face in the community together in cooperation with the local community

3 Discussion items

- (1) Issues to be solved when accepting new foreign residents
- (2) Issues foreign residents face in the community

4 Discussion format

The following subcommittees to discuss each of the above items (1) and (2) were established:

- (1) Subcommittee on Acceptance of New Foreign Residents (to discuss 3 (1))

Examine the functions of consultation, Japanese-language education and other services for new foreign residents, and consider more effective and user-friendly systems.

- (2) Subcommittee on Daily Life for Foreign Residents in the Community (to discuss 3 (2))

Discuss the methods and arrangements of resident exchange that will benefit foreign residents living in the community by examining practical examples of community participation, exchange and multicultural living of the various organizations involved.

Chapter 3: Summary of the Subcommittee Deliberations on Acceptance of New Foreign Residents

1 Goals of the subcommittee

Examine the functions of consultation, Japanese-language education and other services for new foreign residents, and consider more effective, user-friendly systems.

2 Viewpoints and directions for discussion

Before beginning our discussions, we examined subject matter, procedures and viewpoints.

- Review the current acceptance status of foreign residents at the city office, including the flow of the moving-in procedure, length of waiting time, and the materials distributed
- Discuss possible improvements to the *Shinjuku Start Guide*, a set of videos produced by Shinjuku City
- Providing information about daily life is essential
- Since foreign residents are often confused about the distinction between Japanese culture and rules, discussions will be held to find ways to clearly define the two
- Foreign residents often use smartphones, websites and SNSs to obtain information
- Discussions will be held from the viewpoint of the best way to enhance functions meant to support daily life

3 Progress of discussions

Based on the viewpoints and directions we decided on, the subcommittee discussed the following items in the order listed below:

- (1) Current status of the acceptance of foreign residents at the city office
- (2) Improvements to the *Shinjuku Start Guide* (videos)
- (3) Organizing the information provided
- (4) More efficient ways to provide information and support
- (5) Effective and user-friendly foreign language consultation services and Japanese-language education programs
- (6) Providing follow-up information that new foreign residents need and supporting their community participation

Below is a summary of the discussions on each item.

4 Current status of the acceptance of foreign residents at the city office

We received explanations from the city regarding the current status of the Resident Registration Section, which handles the processing of new foreign residents, including an overview of procedures such as resident registration, congestion and countermeasures, support for foreign residents such as interpreters, and related issues. As a result, our discussions focused primarily on the provision of information to foreign residents.

(1) Status report from the city

- When foreign residents complete registration procedures, they are also directed to the service windows for National Health Insurance, nursing care insurance, and school enrollment, as necessary
- Updating the address on the back of the residence card is a procedure exclusive to foreign residents
- When the city office receives reservations from Japanese-language schools and other institutions to register international students, a meeting room is provided. National Health Insurance procedures are completed at the same time. The National Health Insurance card is issued on the spot.
- Measures for multilingual support include English, Chinese and Korean interpreters at the service windows, a TV interpreter system for other languages, ticket issuing terminals that support seven languages, and cooperation with the Foreign Resident Advisory Corner (City Office Main Bldg. 1F)
- The *Guide to Living in Shinjuku*, which is available in seven languages including Japanese, and other publications are distributed
- It is difficult to accommodate various languages

(2) Ideas for improvements

- Use the waiting time during the moving-in process to show videos and provide chances to receive verbal explanations, such as consultations with advisors
- When making explanations in Japanese, use simpler words and add *furigana* to kanji characters
- Since a foreign resident must visit the city office to complete moving-in procedures, it is a great opportunity to provide various information. This opportunity should be used to show videos and provide verbal explanations.
- Videos are easy to understand, so they should continue to be used
- Information about Shinjuku Multicultural Plaza should be provided at this time, such as distributing pamphlets at the entrance
- City office staff members should consciously use simple Japanese when talking with foreign residents
- There should be a way to obtain daily life information pamphlets and the like when the city office is closed

5 Improvements to the *Shinjuku Start Guide* (videos)

We reviewed the contents and status of use of the *Shinjuku Start Guide* videos and discussed areas for improvement.

(1) Current status

- The characters in the videos are cute and the overall quality of the videos is high
- The themes of each video are all important and helpful. The chapter about earthquakes is especially helpful.
- The translations used for the foreign-language subtitles are very easy to understand
- The Japanese spoken is a bit fast

(2) Points to improve

- The Japanese used for the titles is too advanced for beginners. Keywords such as じしん (*jishin*; earthquake) and ほけん (*hoken*; insurance) should be written in hiragana.
- Examples of conversations in Japanese should be included so viewers can learn how to respond while watching the videos
- Total views for the videos are still low. Foreign residents who come to the city office service windows to take care of procedures should be introduced to the videos through two-dimensional codes and other methods.
- Foreign residents should be informed that YouTube has a function for easily changing the video speed

6 Organizing the information provided

After the subcommittee received explanations from the city about three booklets for new foreign residents prepared by the national government, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government, and Shinjuku City, respectively, the information was sorted through classification and review, and discussions focused on rules, manners and culture.

Materials used for the discussion:

National government: Guidebook on Living and Working

(https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/guidebook_all.html)

Tokyo Metropolitan Government: Life in Tokyo: Your Guide

(https://www.seikatubunka.metro.tokyo.lg.jp/chiiki_tabunka/tabunka/tabunkasuishin/0000000945.html)

Tokyo Metropolitan Government: Foreign Resident Manual

(<https://www.tomin-anzen.metro.tokyo.lg.jp/about/poster-leafret/>)

Shinjuku City: *Guide to Living in Shinjuku*

(http://www.foreign.city.shinjuku.lg.jp/jp/start/start_1/)

(1) Points for improvement

- ① Organizing the information better

- Help foreign residents understand why resident registration, National Health Insurance, opening an bank account and the like are necessary in Japan
- The first step of starting a new life in Japan is usually finding a place to live. Information about real estate agents that provide multilingual services should be listed.
- It would be good to have information about how to stay legally in Japan (visa and other) and information that helps foreign residents live in Japan comfortably for a long time
- Since the worries and concerns of foreign residents change depending on how long they have been living here, there should be beginner and intermediate editions of guidebooks for them

② Rules, manners and culture

- To foreign residents, the difference between manners and rules is unclear. Rules that must be followed should be clearly stated.
- Regardless of whether it is a rule or a manner to be observed, anything important enough to be listed in a guidebook should be worded somewhat strongly
- The penalties for breaking rules should also be listed. In addition to calling attention to actions that should be avoided, actions that are considered good manners should also be emphasized.
- The city guidebook introduces Japanese manners in the Japanese Culture Column, but many are no longer observed

③ Discussions regarding the *Guide to Living in Shinjuku*

- Foreigners should be informed of these types of guides before they come to Japan
- The two-dimensional codes of LINE Accounts listed in the guide are useful and easy to find
- The Japanese tendency to be kind and avoid direct expression is evident in the guide
- The Japanese used is difficult. Using simpler Japanese is a solution, but it would also increase the size of the guide.
- The translations are strange at times

7 More efficient ways to provide information and support

After the subcommittee received explanations from the city about the current status of information the national government, Tokyo Metropolitan Government and Shinjuku City have provided, and how the information is disseminated, the discussions focused on efficient methods to provide information.

(1) Points for improvement

① Dissemination of information

- The necessary information is all available, but since there is too much of it most readers do not read it all. The information should be divided into categories such as essential information, information that you read once or twice, and information that should be read carefully.
- Since many new foreign residents are international students who already have some knowledge of the Japanese language, providing more specific information on living in Shinjuku is important
- Since information written in Japanese can be translated into different languages using apps, visual information such as videos and photos is important
- Since people will carefully listen to information if they know it is necessary for them, only key information should be translated

② Methods to provide information and support

- For text messaging, Chinese mainly use WeChat, Koreans use KakaoTalk, while Vietnamese and Nepali use Facebook. However, we must keep in mind that the apps used are subject to change.
- Since the Korean businesses in Shinjuku have established a chamber of commerce, information can be provided through the chamber
- We should ask Nepali restaurants to post the two-dimensional code for the Shinjuku City information website
- We should cooperate with media that disseminate information to foreign residents. One way of doing this is posting the two-dimensional code for Shinjuku City's Facebook page on such media.
- Having a person that speaks the same language identify the key points on a YouTube video will bring more viewers. It is easier to accept information from someone from the same country, and providing these videos will be more accommodating for foreign residents.

③ To whom information and support should be provided

- In regard to the provision of information, we need to think about whether to provide information only to those seeking it or to encourage others to find it. People who are not seeking information but have no knowledge of daily life in Japan will be at a disadvantage.
- International students tend to obtain information using their cellphones or computers without the need to ask someone else
- International students who will be coming to Japan in the coming years may have had to wait around two years due to the COVID-19 situation. During that time, many have obtained various information about Japan and improved their Japanese-language proficiency.
- Housing information should be sent to international students who will be entering Japan through SNSs and the like
- In the past, when an international student arrived in Japan, an acquaintance would often provide housing or support for procedures until the student could rent his/her own place. The people willing to provide such support is decreasing due to the COVID-19 situation.

- Some Japanese residents may have concerns about the increasing numbers of international students and other foreign residents in the city. They should be made aware of the ongoing efforts the national government, schools that accept foreign students, and Shinjuku City are making to provide daily life information to foreigners.

8 Effective and user-friendly foreign language consultation services and Japanese-language education programs

(1) Foreign language consultation services

With new foreign residents in mind, we discussed how to provide more effective and user-friendly foreign-language consultation services. In doing so, we considered the possibility of long-term coexistence with COVID-19.

① Consultation topics new foreign residents are interested in

- Resident registration procedures and other administrative procedures such as those related to taxes and health insurance
- Information needed in a case of emergencies, such as hospital locations, evacuation sites for disasters, and consultation lines that residents can call when in need
- Information available in the *Guide to Living in Shinjuku* and *Shinjuku Start Guide*
- COVID-19 information such as vaccinations and PCR tests
- Daily life information such as sorting garbage properly, and how to interact smoothly with neighbors and Japanese people
- Interesting information that may not be especially necessary in daily life, such as locations of inexpensive cafés

② Informing the public about foreign-language consultation services

- Disseminate information through schools, chiiki centers (community centers), foreign resident support organizations, and communities based on nationality
- Disseminate information through two-dimensional codes posted at the city office and Shinjuku Multicultural Plaza
- List examples of consultation topics on posters, flyers and the like to let people know that they can get advice when needed
- Disseminate information through the LINE account
- Disseminate information through NPOs that are trusted by foreign residents

③ The role of foreign-language consultation services in a world with COVID-19

- Use online chat consultations and telephone consultations
- Compile a FAQ for foreign residents and post it on multilingual websites

- In many cases, people seek advice from those they trust. If a leader of a community a person seeking advice belongs to—or someone who he/she interacts with daily—refers to the city’s foreign-language consultation services, it may be effective.
- Cooperate with nationality-based communities to create a system that enable more people to receive consultations

(2) Japanese-language education

Having opportunities to study Japanese is important to living in Japan. We discussed the best ways to provide Japanese-language learning opportunities, including sessions hosted by the city. The possibility of long-term coexistence with COVID-19 was also considered.

① Providing information that meets the needs of learners

- Japanese-language classes should be held in the afternoon or later, when working adults will be able to participate
- Offer opportunities to learn Japanese through other events such as cultural exchange events and cooking classes
- Create a website that allows users to search for Japanese-language classes in multiple languages and make them sortable by day of the week, location, time, level, cost, etc. in a list format
- Distribute flyers at Japanese-language schools, international markets and restaurants in the city. The flyers will include simple, easy-to-understand phrases such as “にほんごをまなぼう (*Nihongo wo manabō*; Let’s learn Japanese)” and photos that convey the atmosphere of the classes.
- Post videos in Japanese useful for people of various proficiency levels and videos with subtitles in foreign languages introducing Japanese sightseeing spots and history on the Japanese-language education website

② Providing learning opportunities when holding classes is difficult

- When the Japanese-language lessons “Nihongo Hiroba” are not being held at Shinjuku Multicultural Plaza, the space should be converted into a self-study space with books and reference materials, or holding sessions with volunteer Japanese teachers
- Host language exchange events
- Hold online classes through Zoom and SNSs
- Direct foreign residents to the videos posted on the Agency for Cultural Affairs’ Tsunahiro website (website for foreign nationals as residents to learn Japanese) so they can watch the videos and practice common phrases at any time
- Japanese-language classes in which Japanese residents also participate to introduce Japanese culture and learning aids that emphasize visual materials such as videos are effective
- Provide users with information on useful videos posted online to study Japanese, and opportunities to interact with Japanese people on a regular basis

- Classes should be held with ample infection control measures such as ventilation and acrylic panels, and limit the number of students if necessary
- ③ The role of Japanese-language classes in a world with COVID-19
- Hold online classes on Zoom or the like. Operation and know-how training are necessary before hosting online classes.
 - Hold classes that combine on-demand online contents and face-to-face classes
 - Create a system in which students can learn grammar in classrooms while practicing conversation through video calls and the like
 - Since it is easier to evaluate the needs to students when meeting face-to-face, holding classes while conducting ample infection control measures and limiting the number of students is preferable

9 Providing follow-up information that new foreign residents need and supporting their community participation

(1) Follow-up information for new foreign residents

The city provides various information to new foreign residents when they complete the moving-in procedures. After they start living in the community, however, information the city provides may not reach them. The subcommittee therefore discussed following up on what information is necessary after foreign resident starts life in Shinjuku. Here is the feedback.

- ① What information is necessary?
- The information needed changes depending on the person
 - Information about hospitals
 - Information about activities that are legal in another country but not in Japan, to ensure that foreign residents do not unintentionally commit a crime
 - Information about cases in which criminals force foreign residents to register for mobile SIM cards or credit cards to be used for crimes, to ensure that foreign residents do not become involved in criminal activities
 - Information about malicious job agencies that take advantage of individuals laid off due to COVID-19 to scam them of placement fees
 - Information about how to safely use heating appliances, since there are cases in which improper use of them led to a fire
 - Information about cases in which lending or borrowing money leads to broken relationships. People from the same country often help each other, but receiving/giving monetary support may result in trouble.
 - Information about how to use emergency services, such as the role of health centers and hospitals
 - Information for Japanese residents about the ongoing efforts the governments and other organizations are making to support foreign residents

② Current status and issues

- The information needed is provided but does not reach everyone
- If a Japanese-language school student in Japan on a student visa gives birth, the baby born is not eligible to obtain a dependent visa, meaning the child must depart Japan within sixty days. Most people will not know this unless they experience it or search for it. The way information is provided and conveyed is crucial.
- Information should mainly be delivered through online/electronic means rather than booklets or other physical media. However, physical media may be the most effective at times, such as when the power goes out during a disaster, so different situations must be considered.
- Some people only want to consult with people from the same country, so we must think of how to accommodate those people

③ Specific measures and methods of delivering follow-up information

- Provide opportunities for individuals to look up the information they need
- When foreign residents come to the city office for resident registration, provide information relevant to them according to their specific life stages, family composition, etc.
- Since people may forget vital information in an emergency, we should produce a wallet-sized card that lists the numbers for ambulances and the like
- There are foreign residents that own businesses in Japan who convey information to other people from their country, so we should cooperate with these businesses
- Some people can find the info they need quickly, while others can't. The information needed also differs from person to person. We will ask foreign residents how they gather information and compile several typical "patterns" of acquiring information according to visa status and the like so that people can refer to cases similar to their own.
- If we post banners leading to information about Shinjuku City on famous websites run by foreign companies or the like, people can obtain relevant information even before coming to Japan
- People still leave their homes and meet each other even as the spread of COVID-19 continues. Shinjuku Multicultural Plaza has many helpful reference materials and staff members, so people should visit or consult with the Plaza before relying on the Internet and other electronic communications methods.
- After they complete resident registration procedures, foreign residents should be informed about Shinjuku Multicultural Plaza through flyers with maps that clearly show the services it offers. Promoting conversation between Plaza staff members and visitors also creates a sense of trust.
- Many people may not read or may misplace paper-based media. Since you cannot misplace a smartphone app, the city should develop one that presents information about the Plaza and the like.

(2) Support for community participation

After new foreign residents complete resident registration, their next step is to start life as members of the community. Providing support is essential to helping them accomplish this. The subcommittee therefore discussed the type of support that will help foreign residents participate in community activities and be accepted into the community.

① Opportunities to connect with the community

- Some said that participating in small community events or Bon dance festivals helped start relationships with neighbors. However, many of these events have been canceled due to COVID-19, so there is minimal contact with neighbors. Even small events that can help break the ice would be helpful.
- The reality is that socializing with neighbors is often hard because of age differences and insufficient interaction to get to know each other well. However, hobby clubs and the like provide opportunities for foreign residents to get acquainted with Japanese people, since these clubs attract individuals who want to enjoy particular activities or are interested in Japanese culture. Hobby clubs, community center festivals and so on are practical methods of connecting foreign residents to the community.
- Japanese residents should be informed about events foreign residents are hosting so they can participate

② Specific measures and methods to support community connections

- When Japanese residents want to interact with foreign residents, they must introduce themselves. However, many Japanese are shy about doing so, partly because the increase in foreign resident numbers is a fairly recent development. We need to take this into consideration.
- The Bon dance festival may be the event most familiar to residents and creates links with the community. We should create multilingual flyers, encourage local residents to inform foreign residents about participation and show them the kindness of the community during such events.
- Some felt that the importance of connecting with the community became greater when starting to raise children, so approach people in the childrearing demographics is a good idea
- International students should be approached through topics that interest them, such as disaster preparedness
- Foreign residents should also proactively greet Japanese residents. While some people may not respond to a greeting from someone they don't know, a relationship may begin.
- A group of Vietnamese, Korean, Japanese and Nepali people organized a festival. We were able to socialize with many neighbors as we prepared for the event and talk with many others who attended it. We want to host such an event again.
- Forming relationships with neighbors is not a matter unique to foreign residents. Japanese society is experiencing a reduction in personal relationships and people are distancing themselves from each other. Although a human can live alone, that comes with drawbacks such as loneliness. People may get along better if they stop thinking about

whether they are Japanese or foreign and simply consider each other as human beings.

- Regardless of whether a resident is Japanese or foreign, it is easier to establish relationships with someone having common interests. For example, regardless of nationality, people enjoy similar activities at Shinjuku Gyoen National Garden, such as admiring flowers, taking a stroll, eating lunch, and playing with children. People will be able to casually start conversations and develop mutual understanding if we coordinate events based on interests.

10 Summary of the subcommittee (direction of the measures to be taken)

With the aim of building local communities through cooperation between Japanese and foreign residents, the subcommittee discussed what issues to address in the process of accepting new foreign residents and what direction those measures should take. We focused on the early stages of starting life in the city, such as when moving in and becoming members of the community.

The following summarizes the discussions the subcommittee had from three perspectives: 1) efforts at the scene of acceptance of foreign residents, 2) provision of services (foreign-language consultations and Japanese-language education) and information to support their daily lives after moving in, and 3) support that enables them to become members of the local community after starting their new lives in Shinjuku.

(1) Efforts at the scene of acceptance of foreign residents

Since new foreign residents must come to the Shinjuku City Office to complete resident registration procedures, it is a valuable opportunity to disseminate information. It is commendable that the city office directs new foreign residents to the National Health Insurance, nursing care insurance, and school enrollment procedures service windows during the same period, and distributes the *Guide to Living in Shinjuku*.

To take maximum advantage of this opportunity, waiting times during the moving-in procedures should be used to convey various information such as showing the *Shinjuku Start Guide* videos, providing opportunities to consult with an advisor, and distributing flyers about Shinjuku Multicultural Plaza, which holds Japanese-language classes and offers various information.

In addition, the information provided should be organized to make it more understandable and usable, such as distinguishing between rules and manners, and to emphasize information necessary for daily life. Furthermore, it is essential to understand actual needs through surveys and the like to continue improving the information provided. Shinjuku Multicultural Plaza should also be relocated to the city office so it can be utilized more.

(2) Services to support daily life after moving in (consultations, Japanese-language education, etc.)

① Foreign-language consultations

Foreign-language consultation services are something new foreign residents of Shinjuku City can rely on when they need help. However, the existence of these consultation services and the topics they can advise residents about are not widely known. It is therefore necessary to better

publicize these services through Japanese-language schools and foreign communities, the use of two-dimensional codes, and creative flyers.

In addition, the services must connect foreign residents to the appropriate consultation services more effectively by strengthening cooperation with specialized organizations and the like, as well as by cooperating with the community of the person seeking advice. It must also serve as a consultation center during emergencies such as the recent COVID-19 situation, so making multilingual FAQs available at all times is necessary. Since the content of the consultations is valuable raw data, it is also important to compile statistics.

② Japanese-language education

The opportunity to study Japanese is crucial for new foreign residents. In addition to the fee-based and free Japanese-language classes the city hosts, there are classes hosted by volunteers within Shinjuku City. Information about Japanese-language classes offered by volunteers should therefore be collected and listed together with those the city offers so that people can search a single platform for classes that best meet their needs.

Making creative flyers or two-dimensional codes that show the characteristics of each class would be best. Besides holding Japanese-language classes, Shinjuku Multicultural Plaza has many other reference materials that are helpful for studying Japanese, so it would also be smart to promote the use of the Plaza. Many online learning materials such as the videos on the Agency for Cultural Affairs' Tsunahiro website are also available, so it is essential to use such materials effectively.

(3) Effectively providing information to make daily life easier

Providing a steady stream of information to foreign residents after they start their lives in Shinjuku is an issue we need to address. When a foreign resident first comes to the city office, the staff members there should keep in mind that these people are new members of the community and provide them with the information they need to stay in Japan. That includes key daily life information important in Japan and distinguishing rules and manners to enhance understanding. The information provided should match the stages of life and purposes of these residents. Shinjuku Multicultural Plaza, which provide foreign-language consultation services and Japanese-language education functions as well as various other helpful information for foreign residents, should also be introduced and promoted.

We recommend incorporating simple Japanese in pamphlets and other materials.

New foreign residents often obtain information from local nationality-based communities, so cooperating with these communities is essential. Ways to convey information that is important when living in Japan to foreigners who have not yet entered Japan should also be investigated.

(4) Effective use of existing resources

The city already has many resources in the areas of foreign-language consultation, Japanese-language education and other information. However, these resources are not fully utilized. We must come up with a more effective way to provide information to enable those who need such resources to utilize the resources that exist.

- (5) Support to enable foreign residents to become members of the local community after starting their new lives in Shinjuku

The city should provide support for new foreign residents who wish to become members of their community. One aspect of that is to promote their participation in existing community events such as Bon dance festivals, portable shrine processions, and university cultural festivals. It is also essential to provide opportunities for exchange, especially for the childrearing generation, who are more likely to become involved with the community. To get foreign residents actively involved in community development, it is desirable to promote events where Japanese and foreign organizers can work together.

11 Progress of subcommittee discussions

Dates		Meeting No.	Discussion theme
2021	March 9	1	Operation of the subcommittee
	June 25	2	Review the current status of acceptance at the city office (including improvements to the <i>Shinjuku Start Guide</i> videos)
	August 24	3	Sorting the information provided (from the viewpoint of supporting daily life, separating rules and manners)
	November 2	4	Effective ways to disseminate information (use of SNSs, ICT)
2022	February 22	5	Effective and user-friendly foreign-language consultation services and Japanese-language education
	March 25	6	Necessary follow-up information and support for community participation

12 Subcommittee members (organizations and titles are as of the time of delegation)

Position	Organization	Name
Subcommittee Chairperson	Managing director and chief program officer, Japan Center for International Exchange	Menju Toshihiro
	Professor, Waseda University Graduate School of Education	Kobayashi Atsuko
	Professor, Tokyo Future University of Motivation and Behavioral Sciences	Kaku Iyo
	Resident	Matsuda Nami
	Resident	Rex Kyle Patrick
	Koreans in Japan Federation	Lee Hang Soon
	Korean Residents Union in Japan, Shinjuku Branch	Kim Hoon
	BST Unique Co., Ltd.	Bhushan Ghimire
	GMT International	Dura Ritu Kumar
	Dream Park Co., Ltd	Park Sang Bum
	Association des Français et Francophones du Japon	Joelle Ezoe-Canel
	The Fellowship of Japanese Nationality Chinese People	Mori Towako
	Intercultural Child-Rearing Information Station	Ando Hiroko
	Shin-Okubo International Business Meeting	Nguyen Trung Thanh
	Shinjuku City Town Councils	Honda Makoto
Shinsenkaku (Japanese-language schools)	Inoue Takayoshi	

Chapter 4: Summary of the Subcommittee Deliberations on Daily Life for Foreign Residents in the Community

1 Goals of the subcommittee

Discuss the methods and mechanisms of resident exchange that help foreign residents become members of the community and inspire them to continue living there. In addition, examine practical examples of community participation, exchange and multicultural living in the various organizations involved.

2 Viewpoints and directions for discussion

- The subcommittee will discuss the types of participation and exchanges that help foreign residents fit into the community based on actual situations in town councils and foreign communities
- With a focus on the community, discuss situations in which connecting with the community is needed, and determine how to approach those who need such connections
- Since these discussions should be based on actual situations, we must find out what goes on during town council activities and foreign community activities
- When used in the context of relationships between people of different nationalities, the word “exchange” is usually and immediately linked to exchange events and the like. We should establish a shared understanding of that word not limited to such events in terms of community participation and exchange in everyday life.
- We need to discuss what kind of community foreign residents find most comfortable to live in

3 Progress of discussions

Based on the viewpoints and directions decided, the subcommittee discussed the following items in the order listed below.

- (1) Town council activities
- (2) Activities in foreign communities
- (3) Status of community participation and exchanges involving foreign residents
- (4) Information and services that people need at different stages of life
- (5) Connections and relationship-building that are needed in the community

Below is a summary of the discussions on each item.

4 Town council activities

Committee members who also belong to town councils explained the purpose and organization of town councils. They also described their activities, such as

gatherings to get acquainted with local residents, cleaning, disaster preparedness and other purposes. Subcommittee members then offered their opinions.

(1) Current status of town councils

- Many events have been canceled due to COVID-19
- Only about 1 percent of members are foreign residents
- There is an impression that most households consisting only of young people do not join the councils
- When someone moves into the community, the section leader explains what the town council does and invites them to join

Materials used for the discussion

- Shinjuku Town Council Federation website, Shinjuku Eleven (<https://shinjuku11.jp/chokai-2/>)
- Pamphlet: Town Council and Community Group Participation Promotion Handbooks (booklet)
- Pamphlet: Chien Iki-iki (<https://www.city.shinjuku.lg.jp/content/000307815.pdf>)

(2) Issues

- The number of member households is decreasing, and many members are elderly
- There are not enough board members and other administrative staff
- Older board members are hesitant to use SNSs and other electronic means of contact
- In addition to language, the needs of foreign residents differ depending on their age and lifestyle. We must consider the cost and effort it takes to accommodate every single need.

(3) Directions

- Although town council fees are required to be a member, waving the fees for certain age groups may be a way to increase membership
- Provide services for single-person households, such as safety confirmation
- Neighborhood notices will also be put into the mailboxes of nonmembers to promote council activities
- Foreign residents tend to participate in certain kinds of events, such as cleaning activities. This may provide hints for promoting participation in these events.
- The functions and roles of town councils should be reevaluated from the viewpoint of creating a local community

5 Activities in foreign communities

After receiving explanations from committee members active in foreign communities about what their communities do—which most Japanese residents know little about—subcommittee members discussed related issues.

(1) Examples of foreign community activities introduced in the subcommittee

- Community members pick themes for seminars. Some themes focus on health checkups and legal advice for their home countries.
- Cultural exchange events for local children and cooking classes
- Japanese-language classes for adults as well as native language classrooms for children
- The community also supports aspects such as job searches and COVID-19 vaccinations

(2) Relationships and interactions with the community

- Taking their children to parks, chiiki centers, and children's halls is an opportunity for parents to form relationships with other parents and make friends
- Cooking classes and Japanese-language classes also provide an opportunity to get to know participants and instructors, who are often Japanese university students
- Connection with the community allows people to help each other and become more tolerant toward household noise
- People interact with each other in the same way regardless of whether they are Japanese or foreign

(3) Community activities in their home countries

- Their home countries do not have organizations similar to Japanese town councils
- While this differs by region, in some rural areas, connections are made when the whole community gathers at temples or for ceremonies such as weddings and funerals
- In one case, a community leader led the community to build a market
- There are activities where residents become involved in the community, such as cleaning your own home and surrounding areas

(4) Issues

- Promote parental understanding of the education system and cooperation with schools
- Address issues regarding trouble when moving out due to differences in housing customs or a lack of explanation. Do the same for issues related to the aging population and different burial customs.
- Create an environment where residents working from morning till evening can study Japanese

(5) Direction of future activities

- Provide opportunities for foreign and Japanese residents to learn about each other
- Cooperate with the Council of Social Welfare and other Japanese organizations
- Provide regular opportunities for direct interaction between Japanese and foreign residents to cultivate an awareness of multicultural living
- Create connections for foreign residents who are not official members of community organizations to receive support for daily life issues

6 Status of community participation and exchanges involving foreign residents

During the discussion, someone pointed out that we should consider issues from the perspective of the relationship with the community, and reconfirm what the term “exchange” means. The subcommittee discussed events, which are one way to promote community participation and exchanges, and other ways to build relationships.

(1) Opportunities for community participation and exchange

- Community cleaning activities are a good opportunity to get acquainted and interact with others
- Even though flyers are distributed in the community and posted on town council bulletin boards, few people, regardless of nationality, participate in town council events
- People may be more comfortable joining a community having members at the same life stage (childrearing generation, students, etc.)
- Since initiatives will not have immediate effects, town councils need to create several events suited to different targets, monitor the response, and gradually expand effective events
- There used to be a “childrearing salon” where tea and snacks were offered to mothers and their children, but no foreign residents participated. They are hesitant to join events that have no clear purpose, and some do not regularly drink tea. We promoted the participation of foreign residents in the childrearing salon by catering to their desires to learn Japanese, and combined the salon with a Japanese-language class.

(2) Issues surrounding community participation and exchanges

- It is hard for those who work long hours to join in community events
- Most people have limited free time. They will not participate in town councils unless they have a strong desire to volunteer or there is a clear merit to becoming a member.
- Foreign residents should not bear the burden of learning a new culture alone. Japanese residents must also learn about new cultures by visiting places and community where foreign residents gather as a form of equal mutual exchange.

- Instead of holding events that only Japanese people plan and host, it would be better to have foreign residents involved in the organizing process
- Many foreign residents feel that their Japanese is not proficient enough and fear that they will make a mistake. They are therefore hesitant to talk to Japanese residents.
- Many new foreign parents have a hard time when a child is born because the Japanese system is completely different from their home countries

(3) Building relationships through events

- Events are transient, so even when people gather for one it is difficult to build lasting relationships
- Even for people on event organizing committees, relationships will not deepen if there are no opportunities to interact after completing their assigned roles
- Instead of focusing on exchange, it is essential to think about how foreign and Japanese residents can connect and build relationships

7 Information and services that people need at different stages of life

Based on the opinion that people at different stages of life have different ways of interacting with the community, the subcommittee discussed the information and services necessary, solutions for the target demographic to obtain such information and services, as well as relationships with the community and concrete measures that will lead to solutions for each life stage.

(1) Students (international students)

① Necessary information and services

- Information about study environments such as libraries
- Information about financial aid such as scholarships and student loans
- Information about part-time jobs
- Information about protecting oneself from labor problems and about consultation agencies
- Information about opportunities to interact with Japanese residents, such as hobby-based gatherings, and about Japanese manners

② Solutions to providing such information and services

- Set up a bulletin board exclusively for international students
- Create opportunities for exchanges with people of the same age group
- Have the city provide information through schools that have international students
- The city should provide helpful information (such as about city SNSs) to Japanese-language schools, professional training colleges, universities and the like so that these schools can introduce them to students. The city should also devise measures that encourage students to join these SNSs and the like.

- Many professional training colleges have an international student department that provides various international student support. This includes providing necessary information, holding exchange gatherings with Japanese students, workplace manner training sessions, job placement and resume writing guidance.
 - Disseminate information through local businesses and organizations
 - It is important to have someone trusted in a community provide information to foreign residents according to their depth of understanding of Japan and their life situations
- ③ Relationships with the community and concrete measures that will lead to solutions
- Utilize existing events. For example, tell international students about existing events that anyone can participate in through their school. Create a website that compiles an activity calendar and other information about various hobby clubs active in Shinjuku.
 - A Japanese-language speech contest is a good way to make the community aware of international students. It also provides students with an opportunity to reconfirm their connection to Japanese society.
 - Local community organizations should connect to international students by approaching Japanese-language schools and asking them to cooperate on events. Conversely, schools with international students should create a network that includes local organizations and the like.
 - As a way to provide opportunities for students to connect with the community, some professional training colleges have been offering referrals and support for participation in volunteer activities
- (2) Childrearing generation (pregnancy, childbirth and infancy)
- ① Necessary information and services
- Information about pregnancy/childbirth benefits and nursery school enrollment
 - Timely and detailed information on and support for health concerns during pregnancy, parenting knowledge, and emotional care of mothers who are often mentally isolated
 - Multilingual information on various classes and workshops
- ② Solutions to supplying information and services
- Make it easier for foreign residents to access the information and services the city provides. For example, provide information in multiple languages at nursery schools, kindergartens, community centers, etc.; distribute pamphlets with specific information in the appropriate languages during home visits such as home visit health checkups for babies and other services conducted during pregnancy, after childbirth, and childrearing; and create a system to continuously supply information about support services to women during pregnancy and after giving birth.
 - Instead of listing so much information on various topics, focus on where to get advice when in need

- Devise a way for foreign residents who are not proficient in Japanese to easily reach city services
 - Provide opportunities for mothers to interact
 - Women during pregnancy and after childbirth are prone to mood swings and postpartum depression. It would be good to have an arrangement to ensure that they can consult with someone who understands their language and culture.
 - Utilize the family support programs of the Shinjuku Social Welfare Conference
- ③ Relationships with the community and concrete measures that will lead to solutions
- Create connections with neighbors who have experience raising children
 - Since movement may be restricted due to COVID-19, the presence of mom/dad friends in the neighborhood is essential. However, since people have different work schedules, coming up with specific ideas for gatherings is an issue.
 - Organize Japanese-language classes that are held together with exchange salons for mothers
 - The lack of networking between parents is an issue that also affects Japanese households. Since many people are busy and do not have time to participate in new initiatives, networking through SNSs and nursery schools would be effective.
- (3) Childrearing generation (school-age children)
- ① Necessary information and services
- Information about enrollment procedures, including information obvious to Japanese people, such as customs and the education system. For junior high school students, this includes information about high school entrance exams, including evaluation systems based on school records and teacher recommendations. They should also be informed about the importance of school admission information sessions.
 - Information about financial aid
 - Translations of notifications from schools
 - Information about supplemental education, such as about educational support organizations for foreign children
 - Information on educational counseling for parents concerned about developmental issues
- ② Solutions to obtain such information and services
- Providing opportunities for parents to convey information to each other and to interact with each other is essential
 - Providing children with information on Japanese-language volunteers is necessary
 - Providing information through schools and hobby clubs

③ Relationships with the community and concrete measures that will lead to solutions

- Interactions with people from the same country who have raised a child in Japan is effective in helping parents understand the Japanese education system. Establishing a community or place where foreign residents with school-age children exchange information is also effective. Specialized advisors or the like should be available there.
- Create regular opportunities for parents to talk with each other. For example: 1) a salon associated with a Japanese-language class where parents/guardians can interact with each other, 2) exchanges with parents of graduates or through the PTA, and 3) parent social gatherings and clubs.
- Friendly relations with neighbors require effort on both sides, which is a difficult aspect
- Invite foreign parents and hold a talk session to promote understanding about the Japanese education system, etc.
- Elementary schoolchildren have many opportunities to connect with the community. It may be possible to provide community members with opportunities to participate in community activities through schools. Children should be able to participate in community clubs they are interested in.
- Provide information about children's Japanese-language volunteer classes and other opportunities for children to learn Japanese

8 Connections and relationship-building that are needed in the community

The subcommittee discussed the current status and issues related to connections and relationship-building in the community, based on the actual conditions in each member's local community. The main theme of the subcommittee deliberations was the discussion on the methods and mechanisms of resident exchange necessary for foreign residents to live in the community through examination of practical examples of community participation, exchange, and multicultural living through the various organizations involved. To conclude our deliberations, we discussed the connections and relationship-building the community needs, and how to fulfill those needs.

(1) Situations in which connections and relationship-building are needed, and the current status of the community

- The childrearing generation mainly conducts the relationship-building that occurs. Other opportunities include such topics as pets and hobbies. When planning an event or some other activity, defining target generations would make it easier for participants to talk with each other.
- Foreign residents who only have connections with other foreign residents have some difficulty when negotiating in Japanese society

- Limiting connections to online communities becomes an issue in times of disaster. When a disaster strikes, it is vital to have people in the neighborhood help each other.
 - It is easier to make connections with someone having common interests, goals or the like. However, it is difficult to find that common ground.
 - To build a relationship with a person that is strong enough to be able to call on them in an emergency, both parties must have a willingness to connect with each other regularly. This includes interacting on a daily basis and maintaining the relationship.
 - The language barrier is a major issue for foreign residents. Connecting with volunteer Japanese teachers is therefore very important.
 - When helping foreign residents in need, the support of volunteer interpreters or the like is necessary
 - Building relationships in the local community is essential when you want to ask somebody close by for casual advice
- (2) Reasons why exchange events do not lead to relationship-building, and solutions for it
- Relationships are not built simply by participating in community cleaning events. Devising ways to motivate interactions and promote conversation among participants is essential.
 - When I participated in a series of consultation sessions for childrearing mothers held at a health center, I was able to build relationships naturally with other participants
 - Some issues can be solved through talking with other mothers
 - Many foreign residents are very interested in Japanese culture such as *ikebana* (flower arrangement) and kimono. Connections can be made naturally at hobby events that do not emphasize multiculturalism.
 - In one case, residents of a studio apartment building hold an annual potluck party, and residents who participated began greeting each other on a daily basis
 - It is also important to hold regular meetings with no set theme and where any opinion is respected so that foreign residents can feel they belong. A managing staff member (core staff) or other facilitator would be necessary for this.
 - As the core staff member gets to know participants, they will be able to make new connections through those participants. Such an approach is worth considering.
 - One issue is that there are not enough people who can take on the responsibilities of the core staff
 - Coordinators, such as school coordinators, do not naturally appear. They must be trained, so a training course or the like is necessary. Those who have completed the intercultural coordinator training courses offered by the Tokyo Metropolitan Foundation “Tsunagari” may be good candidates.

- It is a good idea to provide information to international students through Japanese-language schools and other organizations about existing events and the like where young people gather, such as campus festivals
- Creating connections in the community will be easier if organizations active in the community collaborate in their areas of expertise

9 Summary of the subcommittee (direction of measures to be taken)

With the aim of building local communities where Japanese and foreign residents can work together, the subcommittee discussed issues that foreign residents in the community face and the direction of efforts to address those issues. The following summarizes this subcommittee's discussions in terms of what we have learned from the activities of the town council and foreign communities, community participation and exchanges by foreign residents, community participation and exchange by life stage, and community relationship-building.

(1) What we have learned from the activities of town councils and foreign communities

When considering how to respond to the issues that foreign residents face from the viewpoint of the local community, the key parties are town councils and foreign communities. Town councils engage in a variety of activities related to the local community. However, their membership numbers are reportedly decreasing, and many members are elderly. Few foreign residents are joining, it is difficult to utilize SNSs and the like because aging board members do not know how to use them, and most events have been canceled in recent years due to COVID-19. Opinions expressed indicate that it would be hard to operate a council that accommodates the various needs of foreign residents.

Many foreign communities already assist their compatriots in several areas, such as finding work and vaccinations. They also host exchange events with local children, and reportedly have a desire to interact more with Japanese people, collaborate with Japanese organizations, and create an environment where foreigners and Japanese people can learn about each other.

(2) Community participation and exchanges by foreign residents

Community participation and exchanges present precious opportunities to start relationships in which the community supports foreign residents. Events are a catalyst for such community participation and exchanges. From the perspective of event participation, it is easier to gather people in the same life stage, such as international students or those raising children.

However, many people today, both Japanese and non-Japanese, spend less time in the community and seldom participate in community events. Even if an event takes place, they will not participate unless the benefits and significance of joining in are clear. From the perspective of the community supporting residents, building relationships is the key. While events are a good catalyst, they alone do not lead to support for foreign residents. Therefore, measures for relationship-building need to be considered separately. As for events, hosting free legal consultations for foreigners or events that target both foreign and Japanese residents and let anyone casually participate will allow event organizers to pick up on the hidden needs of foreign residents.

(3) Community participation and exchanges by life stage

When considering support for foreign residents, the different needs based on each life stage are a major factor. The subcommittee discussed cases of international students and the childrearing generation as examples for clarifying the necessary information and services for these groups. We also considered relationship-building in the community that allows easy access to such information and services.

The information and services international students want include places to study, part-time jobs, opportunities to interact with Japanese people, and related information. Many international students report that they obtain such information through their Japanese-language schools and friends. Given this situation, it is desirable to have international students build relationships with the community through participation in existing events and hobby clubs, and to have the local community and Japanese-language schools work together to convey information about such opportunities to international students through their schools and other institutions.

The necessary information and services for foreign residents of the childrearing generation include childrearing support services and related information, info about the Japanese education system, and other services that foreign residents may not be aware of. Providing such information when city staff members visit childrearing households and through schools and hobby clubs is recommended. To provide support in the community, opportunities should be created for parents—including Japanese parents—to get to know each other. We also think that volunteer Japanese-language classes for children can play a key role in developing relationships between foreign children and Japanese residents in the community.

(4) Connections and relationship-building that are needed in the community

As stated above, to create a community that supports foreign residents it is essential for all residents to build ties with the community and relationships with other people living there. During this discussion, the opinion was expressed that since different life stages—such as the childrearing generation and international students—have different needs and desired services, we need to come up with ways of making connections and relationship-building that meet those needs. At the same time, another opinion expressed was that opportunities with no specific purpose—just providing a comfortable place to be—can also connect people effectively.

In any case, learning Japanese is the key step in making connections with the community, so providing opportunities to learn Japanese is essential.

As for events, while they are crucial as a catalyst for building connections and relationships, participating in an event alone does not automatically lead to connections and relationships. Possible factors to overcome that limitation include: 1) creating event themes that make people want to participate again; 2) finding creative ways to organize events, such as including members of various countries; and 3) having a core staff member responsible for the above. However, it should be noted that finding the right candidates for core staff within the community is difficult.

It is also necessary to learn about each other's cultures and foster a sense of coexistence for building relationships through casual interactions such as exchanging greetings. In addition, it is vital to look into the use of government programs such as consultation sessions at health centers for the childrearing

generation, which have been serving as opportunities for interactions between foreign residents and Japanese residents.

10 Progress of subcommittee discussions

Dates		Meeting No.	Discussion theme
2021	March 11	1	Operation of the subcommittee
	June 25	2	Learn about the activities of town councils
	August 25	3	Learn the status of foreign communities
	October 22	4	Community participation and exchange by foreign residents
2022	February 17	5	Necessary information and services by life stage
	March 25	6	Connections and relationship-building that are needed in the community

11 Subcommittee members (organizations and titles are as of the point of delegation)

Position	Organization	Name
Subcommittee Chairperson	Part-time lecturer, Hosei University Graduate School	Inaba Yoshiko
	Associate Professor, Center for Liberal Arts, Meiji Gakuin University	Hasebe Mika
	Resident	Okada Daiichi
	Resident	Shin Hyewon
	Mitta Foundation	Okuda Kousei
	Refugee Coordination Committee Japan	Marip Seng Bu
	Thai Network in Japan	Suzuki Nongyaw
	Junior Chamber International Tokyo, Shinjuku Ward Committee	Kaneko Haruna
	Korea NGO Center	Kim Boong Ang
	Shinjuku Multicultural Society Coordinating Committee	Chen Li-Ting
	Sakura Japanese Circle	Harada Kenichi
	Shinjuku City Town Councils	Yamaguchi Michiyo
	Shinjuku City Town Councils	Morishige Yuko
	Shinjuku City Federation of Stores Association	Ito Setsuko
	Shinjuku City Social Welfare Officer and Child Welfare Council	Kunitani Kanji
Shinsenkaku (professional training colleges)	Uchida Mitsuru	

Chapter 5: Recommendations

For the fifth term of the conference, we divided the discussion into two topics: acceptance of new foreign residents and life in the community for foreign residents. Subcommittees were formed to discuss each topic. As the discussions reached their end, both subcommittees decided to consider ways that foreign residents could connect better with the community, leading to a discussion of common content.

With those discussions in mind, we are making the following recommendations. Our first recommendations were on the acceptance stage of foreign residents based on the discussions the relevant subcommittee held. Our subsequent recommendations were about when foreign residents have settled into the community based on the discussions the relevant subcommittee held as well as the discussions by both committees about connections with the community near the end of the conference. Lastly, we came up with recommendations on the main theme of this term's conference, "Establishment of a Local Community Built by Japanese and Foreign Residents Together," based on the discussions of the whole term.

1 Acceptance of new foreign residents

Recommendations regarding the acceptance of new foreign residents have been sorted into the following four categories: 1) efficient use of the time available when they come to the city office for the first time for moving-in procedures; 2) a system for foreign-language consultations in times of need; 3) Japanese-language education, which is essential to live in the community; and 4) providing daily life information.

(1) Efficient use of time during the moving-in procedure

When welcoming new foreign residents, it is essential to provide them with a variety of information they will need for daily life. Since all new foreign residents must come to the city office to complete moving-in procedures, the following measures should be conducted to use this opportunity efficiently:

- ① Consider more effective use of the *Shinjuku Start Guide* (videos)
- ② Inform them of foreign-language consultation services and Japanese-language classes
- ③ Introduce Shinjuku Multicultural Plaza
- ④ Provide information related to daily life by using opportunities when groups of new foreign residents are completing procedures

(2) User-friendly foreign-language consultation services

Knowing about consultation services that can help when they are in need brings great comfort to new foreign residents. Shinjuku offers foreign-language consultation services in two locations: the city office main building and Shinjuku Multicultural Plaza. We suggest taking the following measures related to such consultation services:

- ① Enhance the following consultation functions to better support the daily lives of foreign residents who need advice:
 - Strengthen cooperation with specialized organizations

- Have city consultation services support foreign communities that provide advice to their compatriots
- Consider incorporating online functions so the services can continue to provide advice even if COVID-19 infections increase
- ② Enhancing consultation functions alone is not enough for the services to support foreign residents in their daily lives. The target audience must know these services exist. Do the following to better publicize the services:
 - Publicize through Japanese-language schools and foreign communities
 - Create flyers that list the consultation topics available in an easy-to-understand manner
 - Use two-dimensional codes when providing information through flyers and the like

(3) Enhance Japanese-language education support

It is essential for new foreign residents to acquire Japanese-language skills so that they can obtain information necessary for daily life and interact with local residents. Although the city already hosts various Japanese-language classes, the following measures should be conducted to further enhance support for Japanese-language education:

- ① Enhance Japanese-language education support
 - Increase usage of the Japanese-language learning materials and free space at Shinjuku Multicultural Plaza
 - Provide information about online learning materials such as the videos available on the Agency for Cultural Affairs' Tsunahiro website
 - Consider the use of online functions so that Japanese-language education is available even during the spread of COVID-19
 - Formulate a basic policy for Japanese-language classes in local communities to strengthen comprehensive Japanese-language education support
- ② Effectively publicize opportunities for learning Japanese
 - Provide information in a way that allows users to choose the correct class based on their needs
 - Create flyers that clearly state the contents of the classes
 - Use two-dimensional codes when providing information through flyers and the like

(4) Effective dissemination of information and support

Foreign residents who complete moving-in procedures and start a new life in Shinjuku will face various daily life issues and need information and support for such issues. Besides making daily life information available to those moving to Japan, the following measures will provide accurate and effective information to new foreign residents and ensure that they can continue to obtain such information.

- ① Information to be disseminated

- Focus on providing information necessary for daily life, such as rules that must be followed
 - Sort the information by relevance, such as by life stage or purpose, and devise a way for foreign residents to obtain information according to its relevance to them
- ② How to disseminate information
- Cooperate with foreign communities
 - Utilize Shinjuku Multicultural Plaza functions
 - Use simple Japanese on pamphlets and the like
 - Utilize websites and SNSs

2 Life in the community for foreign residents

Support from the local community is essential for foreign residents to live comfortably in the city. Foreign residents need different information and seek different types of community participation depending on the stage of life they are in, such as international students and the childrearing generation. We made recommendations on support that takes this into consideration. We also made recommendations on providing support in cooperation with foreign communities engaged in various activities, and community activities that help create relationships with local residents to make daily life easier.

(1) Provision of information by life stage, community participation and exchange

When considering support for foreign residents, we need to consider the actual activities of town councils and foreign communities, as well as to consider their different needs at different life stages, such as international students and the childrearing generation.

① International students

In addition to daily life information, international students want to know about studying and opportunities for interactions with Japanese people. To that end, the following measures are recommended:

- To ensure the information reaches international students, go through Japanese-language schools, foreign communities and similar outlets
- Use disaster drills, hobby clubs and other existing activities and events to provide opportunities for interactions

② Childrearing generation (pregnancy, childbirth, infancy of the child)

The childrearing generation (pregnancy, childbirth, infancy of the child) desires information about childrearing support services, nursery school enrollment procedures, child allowances and other benefits. They also want to know about opportunities for interactions with Japanese people of similar ages who are also expecting or raising children. Community support is essential for this generation. The following measures should help:

- Take advantage of opportunities in which foreign residents find it easier to make connections—such as clubs related to childrearing—to provide the desired information

- Create opportunities for parents of various nationalities, including Japanese parents, to interact with each other. For example, reach out to Japanese and non-Japanese childrearing generations to build relationships with the community through volunteer Japanese-language classes. Also consider how to make it easier for foreign residents to participate in Japanese gatherings.

③ Childrearing generation (with school-age children)

The childrearing generation (with school-age children) want information about the Japanese education system and various procedures. This generation also needs community support. The following measures should help:

- Take advantage of opportunities in which foreign residents find it easier to make connections—such as at school—to provide the desired information
- Create opportunities for parents of various nationalities, including Japanese parents, to interact with each other. For example, reach out to Japanese and non-Japanese childrearing generations to build relationships with the community through volunteer Japanese-language classes. Also consider how to make it easier for foreign residents to participate in Japanese gatherings.

(2) Cooperate with foreign communities

Foreign communities support foreign residents through various activities. At the same time, they want to interact with Japanese people and cooperate with other organizations. The following measures should help:

- Support exchange events with Japanese people that foreign communities put on
- Support cooperation between foreign communities and other organizations

(3) Community activities that will help build relationships

Foreign residents that become part of a community and have relationships with other local residents receive a variety of support from the community. Community events and the like are key opportunities for foreign residents and Japanese residents to get to know each other. The following measures should be implemented for various events hosted by town councils and foreign communities:

- ① Design events that people want to repeatedly participate in
 - Devise content that takes into account life stages such as the childrearing generation and international students
 - Incorporate mechanisms to ensure that participants interact with each other
 - Consider content that makes people want to participate, such as projects that focus on a specific purpose or that provide a comfortable place to be without focusing on a specific purpose
 - Consider how to hold events where some of the organizers are foreign residents
 - Ask people their reason for participation or attendance, and use that information when planning future events

② Utilize existing resources

- Consider using existing community events such as festivals and social gatherings
- Provide specialized events such as free legal consultations for foreign residents in collaboration with other organizations, and create a section that cater to all residents

③ Use Shinjuku Multicultural Plaza

- Shinjuku Multicultural Plaza staff should play the role of core staff members and proactively encourage relationship-building

3 Establishment of a local community built by Japanese and foreign residents together

After foreigners are accepted into the community through the various measures proposed in 1 and 2 above, Japanese and foreign residents can conduct community development measures together, establishing true multicultural living in the community. We therefore are making recommendations related to the main theme of this term's conference, "Establishment of a Local Community Built by Japanese and Foreign Residents Together."

(1) Foster awareness of multicultural living

To conduct various community initiatives and promote exchanges based on life stage, such as connecting Japanese and foreign childrearing generations, diverse generations of local residents must have a positive attitude about living together with foreign residents. We believe the following are required:

- Devise measures to promote exchange and cooperation between Japanese and foreign residents and learn about each other's cultures
- Devise measures that create opportunities for explaining various initiatives related to multicultural living to community residents, and to foster awareness of multicultural living in young people
- Upgrade knowledge of multicultural living among city office employees

(2) Create an open relationship

The following measures are required to accept and support new foreign residents, and to help Japanese and foreign residents build better relationships:

- Support for becoming part of the community, such as introducing opportunities for exchange
- Cooperation with foreign residents already active in the community
- Appropriate and efficient information provision based on life stage
- Enhancement of consultation function and Japanese-language education functions
- Utilization of Shinjuku Multicultural Plaza
- The "Community activities that will lead to relationship-building" listen in 2 (3) above

Conclusion

During this term's conference, we focused on the process of foreign residents entering Japan and starting life in a community, dividing the discussion into various life stages within that process. As a result, we obtained new insights on measures such as information provision, foreign-language consultation and Japanese-language education support, and on the connections and relationship-building needed in the community.

In regard to providing information, our discussion illuminated the importance of making information available prior to entry into Japan; ensuring that the information provided relates to how the new foreign resident will become part of the community; and considering needs based on life stage and purpose of being in Japan.

Regarding foreign-language consultation services, some felt that alongside strengthening consultation functions, information about these services should be disseminated through foreign communities, Japanese-language schools and the like. On Japanese-language education support, which is vital for foreign residents, it was pointed out that information about Japanese-language classes should be provided to ensure that foreign residents can find classes that match their needs. Others felt that the resources of Shinjuku Multicultural Plaza should be better utilized, and stressed the importance of using online learning materials and the like.

On the connections and relationship-building that the community needs, we heard that town councils and foreign communities conduct various activities with the local community, and that foreign communities desire more interactions with Japanese residents. Based on this, we reaffirmed the importance of developing exchanges that turn into relationship-building so that foreign and Japanese residents cooperate more in daily life. To that end, we want to stress the importance of hosting events that cater to different life stages and which foreign residents can casually participate in, and of using foreign community activities and other existing community events.

There were also requests for Shinjuku Multicultural Plaza to develop specialized staff members who can build relationships with foreign resident organizations and other community residents.

It is a given that for foreign residents to live with peace of mind in the community, they must feel accepted in and belong to the community. With the goal of establishing a local community that Japanese and foreign residents have built together—which was the main theme of this term's conference—the city should devote efforts to understand the needs of the residents and promote building open relationships in the community.

Reference: COVID-19 Effects

The fifth term of the Shinjuku City Multicultural City Development Conference occurred during the spread of COVID-19, and the second meeting involved submitting opinions in writing. In addition to discussions about the theme of the term, committee members expressed their thoughts about the impact of the virus. Below is a record of those opinions.

1 Information provision

- A consultation line is available, but how to inform the public of this phone number and convey information in an easy-to-understand manner are both crucial
- We need to promptly establish a system to convey correct information to those who need it
- We need mental health counseling services along with community support to prevent isolation. Providing practical safety nets is also essential. Such services, which already exist but are not widely known, should be promoted and made easily accessible.
- Since even Japanese people find it hard to obtain useful information, the accuracy of advice foreign residents receive cannot be assured. Foreign residents often have more information, and fewer people are panicking than expected.
- There is an information overload so it is hard to decipher what is correct. It would be best to post links to correct information on the Shinjuku City website and through SNS accounts.
- Many community activities are suspended due to COVID-19 so we must think of alternative ways to proceed, such as video meetings

2 Labor and employment

- Foreign workers are often employed in positions such as nonregular worker, so unemployment and wage cuts due to the COVID-19 situation tend to affect them before Japanese workers. International students have difficulties finding part-time jobs since many restaurants and the like have suspended business.
- Foreign residents whose Japanese skills are poor are at a disadvantage because it is difficult for them to change jobs. Japanese-language education for employment and job training for changing jobs may be necessary.
- Many foreign residents are losing their jobs due to restrictions related to COVID-19 and the like. Since NPOs and NGOs do not receive subsidies to support foreign workers, their financial assistance is limited. Local governments should take the initiative in providing support for basic needs that such organizations cannot fulfill.
- Although it depends on the field, professional training college graduates are having a hard time finding employment because many companies are not hiring or tightening requirements compared to previous years

3 Japanese language

- Shinjuku City has many foreign restaurant owners eligible for the Subsidy Program for Sustaining Businesses, but they may find it hard to apply for the program without Japanese-language proficiency.
- Nationality-based communities are helping compatriots to access COVID-related subsidy programs. Can those with low Japanese-language proficiency ask about how to use these programs at the city's foreign-language consultation services? If not, is language support available?
- News programs in Japanese are too hard to understand, so foreign residents have to ask each other to obtain accurate information. It would be helpful to disseminate the news in foreign languages such as English. Translations are preferable because it is difficult to cover the news using only simple Japanese.

4 Community

- Researching how foreign residents obtained information during the rise in COVID-19 infections can help the city and Shinjuku Multicultural Plaza decide which organizations (communities, language schools, universities, etc.) are suitable partners for disseminating information
- Translation and interpretation work can be eliminated by linking to the websites of trusted foreign communities
- It is hard for welfare commissioners, child welfare workers, town councils and resident associations to conduct face-to-face activities. Various events have also been canceled, so there are fewer opportunities to hear the opinions of foreign residents.

5 Other

- Education to prevent discrimination against people infected with COVID-19 is needed. Make it clear that anyone can get infected, that being infected is not shameful, there is no need to hide infections, and that discrimination is never the answer.
- To ensure that the web of support includes everyone, the various roles of the government and local communities need to be considered
- In some cases a foreign resident infected with COVID-19 has been quarantined at home but was forced to go out to buy food because there was no one to support them. Their families were not in Japan and acquaintances in Japan refused to help, fearing infection.
- There are issues related to subsidies for cooperating with early closing-hour requests, loneliness, anxiety, access to information, mass media coverage promoting prejudice, and implementation of vaccines
- COVID-19 troubles both Japanese and foreign residents equally

Reference materials

Deliberation progress

Meeting No.	Date	Topics
FY2020		
First General Meeting	October 28, 2020	Delegation, election of chairperson and deputy chairperson, set discussion theme
Second General Meeting (held in writing)	January 15, 2021	Effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, how to proceed with discussions, establishment of subcommittees
First Subcommittee 1 Meeting	March 9, 2021	Operation of the subcommittee
First Subcommittee 2 Meeting	March 11, 2021	Operation of the subcommittee
FY2021		
Second Subcommittee 1 Meeting	June 25, 2021	Review the current status of acceptance at the city office (including improvements to the <i>Shinjuku Start Guide</i> videos)
Second Subcommittee 2 Meeting	June 25, 2021	Learn about the activities of town councils
Third Subcommittee 1 Meeting	August 24, 2021	Sorting the information provided (from the viewpoint of supporting daily life, distinguishing rules and manners)
Third Subcommittee 2 Meeting	August 25, 2021	Learn the status of foreign communities
Fourth Subcommittee 2 Meeting	October 22, 2021	Community participation and exchange by foreign residents
Fourth Subcommittee 1 Meeting	November 2, 2021	Effective ways to disseminate information (use of SNSs, ICT)
Third General Meeting	December 24, 2021	About the midterm summary (draft)
Fifth Subcommittee 2 Meeting (held in writing)	February 17, 2022	Necessary information and services by life stage
Fifth Subcommittee 1 Meeting (held in writing)	February 22, 2022	Effective and user-friendly foreign-language consultation services and Japanese-language education
Sixth Subcommittee 1 Meeting	March 25, 2022	Necessary follow-up information and support for community participation
Sixth Subcommittee 2 Meeting	March 25, 2022	Connections and relationship-building that are needed in the community

FY2022		
Fourth General Meeting	May 27, 2022	About the discussion report (preliminary draft)
Fifth General Meeting	July 8, 2022	About the discussion report (draft)
Sixth General Meeting	August 29, 2022	Submission of discussion report

Subcommittee 1: Subcommittee on Acceptance of New Foreign Residents

Subcommittee 2: Subcommittee on Daily Life for Foreign Residents in the
Community

Conference members (organizations and titles are as of the point of delegation)

Position	Organization	Name
Chairperson	Managing director and chief program officer, Japan Center for International Exchange	Menju Toshihiro
	Part-time lecturer, Hosei University Graduate School	Inaba Yoshiko
	Professor, Waseda University Graduate School of Education	Kobayashi Atsuko
	Professor, Tokyo Future University of Motivation and Behavioral Sciences	Kaku Iyo
	Associate Professor, Center for Liberal Arts, Meiji Gakuin University	Hasebe Mika
Deputy chairperson	Resident	Okada Daiichi
	Resident	Matsuda Nami
	Resident	Shin Hyewon
	Resident	Rex Kyle Patrick
	Koreans in Japan Federation	Lee Hang Soon
	Korean Residents Union in Japan, Shinjuku Branch	Kim Hoon
	BST Unique Co., Ltd.	Bhushan Ghimire
	Mitta Foundation	Okuda Kousei
	Refugee Coordination Committee Japan	Marip Seng Bu
	GMT International	Dura Ritu Kumar
	Dream Park Co., Ltd	Park Sang Bum
	Association des Français et Francophones du Japon	Joelle Ezoe-Canel
	Thai Network in Japan	Suzuki Nongyaw
	Junior Chamber International Tokyo, Shinjuku Ward Committee	Kaneko Haruna
	Korea NGO Center	Kim Boong Ang
	The Fellowship of Japanese Nationality Chinese People	Mori Towako
	Intercultural Child-Rearing Information Station	Ando Hiroko
	Shinjuku Multicultural Society Coordinating Committee	Chen Li-Ting
	Shin-Okubo International Business Meeting	Nguyen Trung Thanh
	Sakura Japanese Circle	Harada Kenichi
	Shinjuku City Town Councils	Honda Makoto
	Shinjuku City Town Councils	Yamaguchi Michiyo
	Shinjuku City Town Councils	Morishige Yuko
Deputy chairperson	Shinjuku City Federation of Stores Association	Ito Setsuko

Shinjuku City Social Welfare Officer and Child Welfare Council	Kunitani Kanji
Shinsenkaku (Japanese-language schools)	Inoue Takayoshi
Shinsenkaku (professional training colleges)	Uchida Mitsuru