

The 1st Yao City Foreign Residents' Council Meeting for FY2025 [Minutes Summary]

Date and Time: Friday, October 17, 2025, 7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Location: Conference Room 701, 7th Floor, Main Building, Yao City Hall

Council Members in Attendance:

KUWANA Megumi, Erina SETO-SUH, Jeremy CARLSON, Tikas Ibrahim DARLINGTON, SUGAWARA Hongjie, LE Thi Hong Nhung, I Cyanje, MIYAKE Yoshimi, PAKU Yanghaeng, OU Suichin, YAMAHARA Yoshinori (titles omitted)

Secretariat Members (Human Rights Policy Division):

Mr. MATOBA (Director), Mr. TERASHIMA (Deputy Director and Manager),

Mr. SAKATA (Asst. Manager), Mr. TOMITA (Group Chief)

Observer (Yao International Center Staff): NOSE Yasuko

1. Opening

2. Presentation of the Letter of Appointment

3. Self-introduction of Council Members

4. Selection of Chairperson and Vice Chairperson

Council member Kuwana was elected as chairperson. Council member Seto-Suh was elected as vice chairperson.

5. Disclosure of the council meetings

It was resolved that the Yao City Foreign Residents' Council meetings and materials and minutes related thereto would in principle be open to the public.

6. Meeting procedure

A member of the Secretariat explained Document 3. The Council members will meet twice each fiscal year.

The meetings are designed to monitor progress of the Yao City Plan to Promote a Multicultural Society and to exchange opinions about the projects undertaken by the City.

7. Current situation involving Yao City foreign residents

A member of the Secretariat explained Document 4.

<Questions, etc.>

- Why is the number of residents classified as Korean/Chōsen declining?

⇒ (Secretariat) Similar to the overall population decline in the city, it is due to the falling birthrate and aging population.

⇒ (Council member) The rise in naturalization and in the number of children obtaining Japanese

nationality is another contributing factor.

- It seems that the number of Chinese business owners has been increasing in recent years. Are they not reflected in this data?

⇒ (Secretariat) Although the number is increasing, it remains small. Therefore, they are categorized under “Other” in this data.

- Are individuals with dual nationality counted?

⇒ (Secretariat) We will confirm whether they are counted as Japanese nationals or foreign nationals.

8. Report on achievements in fiscal 2024 related to the Yao City Plan to Promote a Multicultural Society (Basic Goal 3)

A member of the Secretariat explained **Document 5** and the Yao City Second-Term Plan to Promote a Multicultural Society.

<Questions, etc.>

- Regarding No. 113: Promoting Membership in Neighborhood Associations—Has progress been made?

⇒ (Secretariat) Although overall membership is declining, multilingual flyers have been prepared and some foreign residents have joined.

- Regarding No. 90: Provision of Information on Consultation Centers That Support Multiple Languages—Is the number of domestic violence consultations involving foreign nationals recorded? Why is this initiative rated as A?

⇒ (Secretariat) We do not record the nationality of those seeking consultation. The rating is based on the extent of outreach through flyers, websites, social media, and other channels, rather than the number of consultations.

- Regarding No. 88: Efforts Against Online Discrimination—Why is this rated as B?

⇒ (Secretariat) This initiative addresses all forms of online human rights violations, not only those targeting foreigners. Under the current legal framework, balancing freedom of expression makes the process of removing posts complex and time-consuming. The national government is also examining possible countermeasures.

9. Opinion exchange—Theme: “Creating opportunities for foreign and Japanese residents to interact locally”

A member of the Secretariat explained **Document 6**. A staff member from the Yao International Center explained the center’s current projects and the progress of its initiatives.

<Opinion exchange>

- Activities such as hiking and farm work, which combine physical activity with conversation, would be good. Farm work in particular, requiring repeated gatherings from planting to harvest, helps build relationships.

- Rather than one-way language instruction, activities that allow mutual learning are preferable.

- Instead of creating new events, it would be better to adopt an approach that encourages participation in existing local activities, such as sports days, community cleanups, and disaster drills.

- Opportunities for Japanese and foreign residents to interact in familiar places, such as city hall branch offices and parks, would be beneficial.
- Consider an approach where foreign residents take the lead in planning events, with neighborhood associations and the International Center providing support.
- Yao City could organize events where different cultures are introduced and shared.
- Elementary schools offer “international classrooms” to support children with foreign roots in their studies and daily lives. However, participation is limited to those children and the school; Japanese children are not involved. If the goal is to foster exchange, efforts should be made to broaden participation.
- Considering the benefits of connecting with neighbors and gaining access to information, joining neighborhood associations offers significant advantages for foreign residents.
- Cooking classes and exchanges through food are considered effective.
- I was unaware of the food-based exchange activities at the Yao International Center until today’s explanation.

This is an excellent initiative and should be more widely publicized.

- The number of children with foreign roots is increasing in the after-school child rooms, yet there are no multilingual support staff. Implementing exchange programs is a possibility.
- Given the large number of international students in Yao City, efforts could be made to encourage their participation in exchange events and gatherings.

10. Other

The next council meeting will be held around February 2026.

11. Adjournment