

**Soja City Office
Human Rights and Community
Development Division**

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**Council of Municipalities with Large Foreign Populations
-Toward an Intercultural Society-**



Conference of Cities with Large Foreign Populations
is a gathering of local government officials involved in policies and
activities related to foreign residents to discuss issues related to
intercultural cohesion

FY2024 International Forum

Introduction

Introduction of Soja City and self-introduction

- Total population of 69,925 and the ratio of foreign nationals 2.78% (As of 2025.1.1)
- Top 5 Countries by Nationality

| | |
|-----------------|-------|
| Vietnam | 54.3% |
| Brazil | 11.6% |
| The Philippines | 7.8% |
| China | 7.6% |
| Indonesia | 7.0% |

- Establishment of a support desk for foreign residents in October 2009
Place one interpreter (English, Portuguese, Spanish)
Increase number of Chinese interpreters by one (April 2014) and Vietnamese interpreters by one (April 2019)
- Beginning in FY2010, became a member of the Council of Municipalities with Large Foreign Populations



Concerning the Council of Municipalities with Large Foreign Populations

- **Established in 2001**
- **Member city 12 cities** (as of 2025.2.1)

| Gunma, Nagano and Shizuoka Blocks (7 cities) | Aichi, Mie and Okayama Blocks (5 cities) |
|--|--|
| Ota City (Gunma), Iseaki City (Gunma), Oizumi Town (Gunma), Maebashi City (Gunma *Participated as an observer in FY2024), Ueda City (Nagano), Iida City (Nagano) and Hamamatsu City (Shizuoka) | Toyohashi city (Aichi), Toyota city (Aichi), Komaki city (Aichi) Suzuka City (Mie) and Soja City (Okayama) |

- Purpose of the meeting

The Council of Municipalities with Large Foreign Populations consists of municipalities that promote measures and activities related to foreign residents as well as international exchange associations in the same locality. Through the exchange of information on the situation in each municipality, the council not only actively addresses various issues that have emerged in local communities, but also aims to foster intercultural cohesion by recognizing foreign residents as valuable contributors to community development and revitalization.

Furthermore, issues related to foreign residents are broad and diverse, and many of them stem from laws and institutional frameworks in areas such as employment, education, healthcare, and social security. Therefore, the council holds mayoral meetings as necessary, in order to make policy proposals to the national and prefectural governments as well as related organizations and also to undertake cooperative efforts with them.

Activities of the Council of Municipalities with Large Foreign Populations

FY2024

Holding " the Council of Municipalities with Large Foreign Populations 2024 Online Symposium"

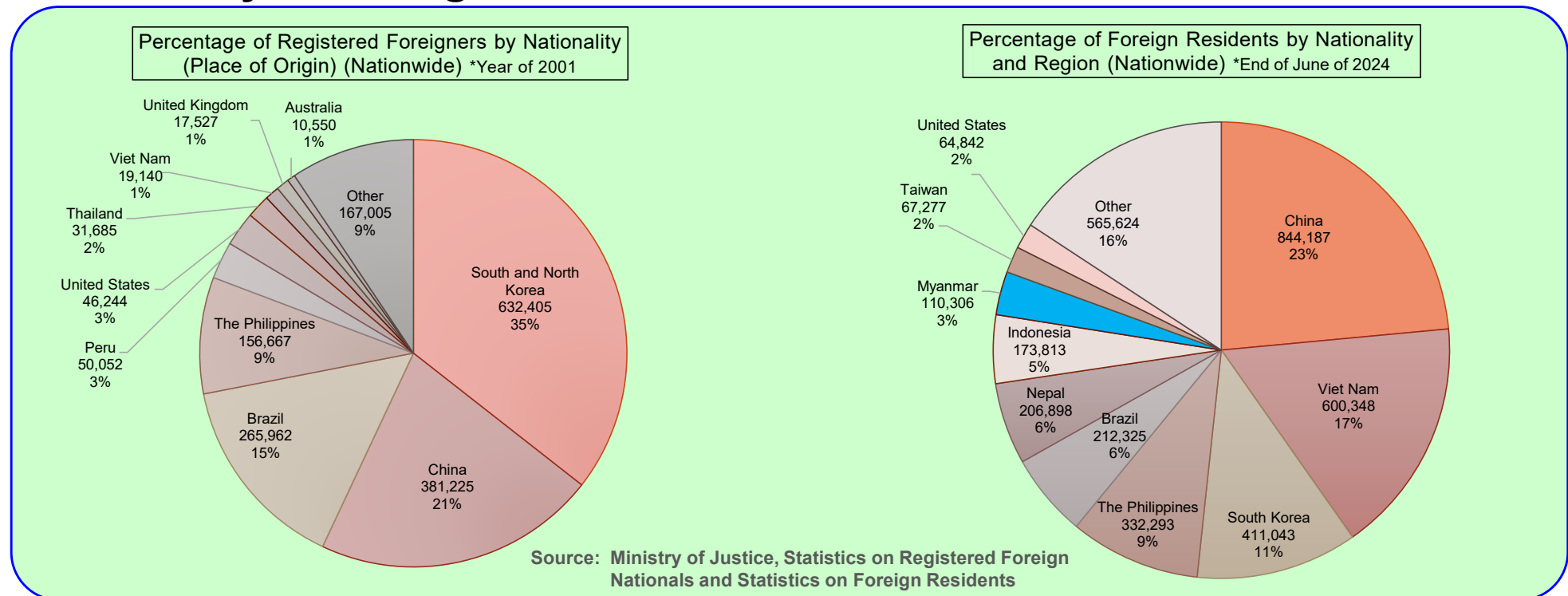
We exchanged opinions on the future of intercultural cohesion not only with member municipalities and related ministries, but also with key players active at the grassroots, such as those in business and Japanese language classes, working toward an intercultural society.

FY2025

Planning to hold “Conference of Municipalities with Large Foreign Populations in Soja ” (around November to December)

Challenges for the Council of Municipalities with Large Foreign Populations

◇ Promoting Intercultural Cohesion in Accordance with Changes in the Nationality of Foreign Residents



◇ Increase the number of member cities to promote intercultural cohesion nationwide