

■ Objective of the Survey

In the Kansai region, various organizations have been holding diverse discussions and making various efforts, such as efforts made in the field of tourism and those for attracting international students and entrepreneurs to Kansai and for making them settle in the region. The number of foreign people visiting Japan is expected to further increase in the future due to the Japan's holding several international sports-related events. Therefore, it is important to enhance the attractiveness of Kansai in a wide range of fields in a way that will appeal to foreign people.

In such situations, Kansai Economic Federation (Kankeiren) established with related parties the Flower of Japan-Kansai (Hanayaka Kansai)Appeal enhancing Forum in June 2015. This Forum was established in order to share and hold discussions on the strengths of Kansai and the issues to be overcome in the region from the viewpoint of foreign people and entities, including foreign affiliates, consulates-general, and foreign students, all for the purpose of attracting not only foreign tourists but also foreign office workers and students. This Forum serves as an opportunity to broadly address the challenges to be faced in the future, regardless of areas, organizations, or themes. Also, this Forum serves as an opportunity to improve the attractiveness of the entire Kansai region in a wide range of fields by making proposals to the economic sectors and a broad range of administrative agencies and following up their efforts.

During this Survey, the Study Group for Hanayaka Kansai Appeal enhancing Forum (secretariat: Kansai Bureau of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI-KANSAI)) was established in order to organize direct comments from foreign people and present them at the Forum. The Study Group analyzed matters such as the attractiveness of Kansai and issues faced by foreigners in Kansai through deepening the needs of foreign people from their perspective and through discovering pioneering cases (best practices). At the same time, the Study Group held discussions on measures for improving the levels of convenience for foreign companies and visitors and further improving the attractiveness of Kansai.

■ Major efforts toward improving the attractiveness of Kansai

○ The Japan Revitalization Strategy (June 2013)

Three plans, namely, the Japanese Industry Revitalization Plan, the Strategic Market Creation Plan, and the International Expansion Plan were specified. In these Plans, the following numerical targets concerning matters such as investment in Japan, global expansion, numbers of foreign tourists and international students were set, and efforts for achieving such targets are being made:

- Achieve 35 trillion yen of inward direct investment stocks in 2020
- Double the export volumes (2010 level) of entities, such as mid-ranking enterprises and SMEs by 2020
- Increase in the number of international students to 0.3 million by 2020
- Increase in the number of international students who obtain employment in Japan to 10,000 per year
- Increase in the number of accredited International Baccalaureate schools and schools that are candidates for the introduction of the program to 200 by 2018
- Increase in the number of foreign tourists visiting Japan in 2030 to more than 30 million

○ Five Promises for Attracting Foreign Businesses to Japan (March 2015)

The Five Promises for Attracting Foreign Businesses to Japan, driven by the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games, were formulated to make efforts for improving the business and living environment in Japan.

- Overcome language barriers in daily life (measures such as the dissemination of mechanisms in which multilingual information can be easily obtained)
- Make Internet connection easier (measures such as the dissemination of free, public, wireless LAN)
- Allow business jets in local airports (measures such as shortening the required deadline for advanced notices to CIQ (Customs, Immigration, Quarantine) offices)
- Enhance the educational environment of foreign children from overseas (measures such as the relaxation of criteria for accrediting international schools)
- Strengthen consultation services for foreign companies (measures such as the establishment of systems for arranging advisors for foreign companies)

○ The 2015 Action Program toward the Realization of Japan as a Tourism-oriented Country (June 2015)

This Action Program presented a plan to achieve the target of increasing the number of foreign tourists visiting Japan per year to 20 million sooner than the previous deadline of 2020, which had been set at an earlier stage. At the same time, it specifies that the amount of money spent by such people (approximately 2 trillion yen in 2014) is to be doubled to 4 trillion yen in the year when the target of 20 million is to be achieved.

■ Attractiveness and potential of Kansai in relation to the business and living environments

○ Wide variety of cities and collection of history and culture

The three major cities in Kansai are Kyoto, which has a thousand-year history, Osaka, which has been a commercial and industrial hub since the Edo period, and Kobe, which has been an open port since the Meiji period and is a cluster of heavy industries. The interesting feature of Kansai is that the various cities in the area differ with one another in terms of their history and culture, similar to the ways in which Wakayama, Nara, Otsu, and Himeji are located extremely close to one another in terms of geography.

○ A regional market with a national scale

As for the scale of Kansai's market, the population is 21.64 million and the GDP is 1.0134 trillion dollars. This economic scale exceeds that of the Netherlands, which ranks 12th among members of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). This demonstrates the tremendous attractiveness of the Kansai region as a base for business activities.

○ International flight network centering on East Asia

In the Kansai area, there is the Kansai International Airport, which has two 4,000-meter-class long parallel runways and provides 24-hour, round-the-clock service. The passenger and cargo lines of this Airport currently link 24 countries and regions and 89 cities in total, and they have an average of 1,215.5 flights per week (sourced from the Flight schedule for winter 2015 [January]). Thanks to the expansion of LCC (low-cost carriers) lines, the number of passengers using international flights exceeded 35,000 people per day in 2014, and 50,000 people per day in August 2015.

○ Collection of excellent academic resources

The Kansai region is home to facilities and infrastructure that provide an excellent level of academic resources, including Kyoto University, Osaka University, and Kobe University, the AIST Kansai, National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology (AIST), as well as leading-edge research facilities, including the large synchrotron radiation facility (SPring-8), and clusters of large companies' pioneering research institutes including the Keihanna area.

○ Demanding consumers

Consumers in Kansai are demanding, which spurs the creation of new products and services. Therefore, many products and lifestyles are created in Kansai every day.

○ Cluster of growth industries including life innovation and green innovation

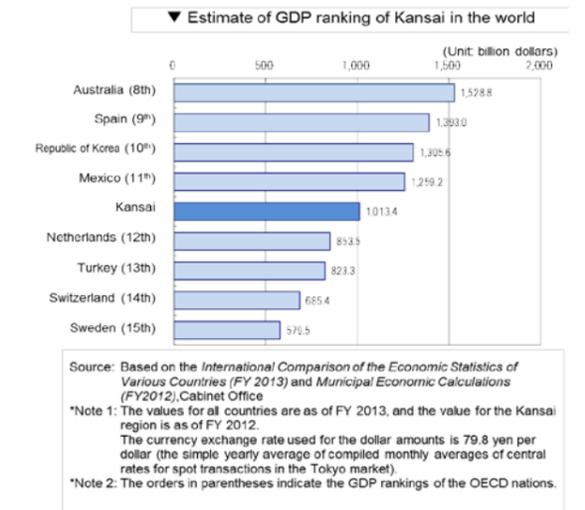
Many medical universities, research institutions, medical-business incubation facilities, pharmaceutical manufacturers and medical equipment manufacturers are located in the Kansai region. Also, there is a cluster of main production bases for battery manufacturers, other entities including relevant universities and many nanotechnology related bases for developmental support.

○ Hospitality shown by people in Kansai

In Kansai, there are about 1,500 organizations involved in international exchanges and in supporting the livelihoods of foreign people including many NPOs that conduct international cooperation activities. Kansai also has a variety of entities, including voluntary organizations, foundations, and international associations belonging to various municipalities that are conducting international exchange activities.

○ Attractiveness of Kansai from the viewpoint of foreign residents in Kansai

In the recently conducted questionnaire for foreign residents in Kansai, the largest number of respondents referred to the abundance of shrines and Buddhist temples (mainly located in Kyoto and Nara) and Kansai's historic resources as the primary factors in their decision to live in Kansai and attractions particular to Kansai. The history and traditional culture that Kansai have accumulated over hundreds of years is a unique attraction of the Kansai region. Other reasons cited for living in Kansai included matters such as the friendliness and open-mindedness of Kansai people, the rich, natural environment that seemed familiar to them, the natural changes of the four seasons and food culture unique to each region and rich food ingredients.



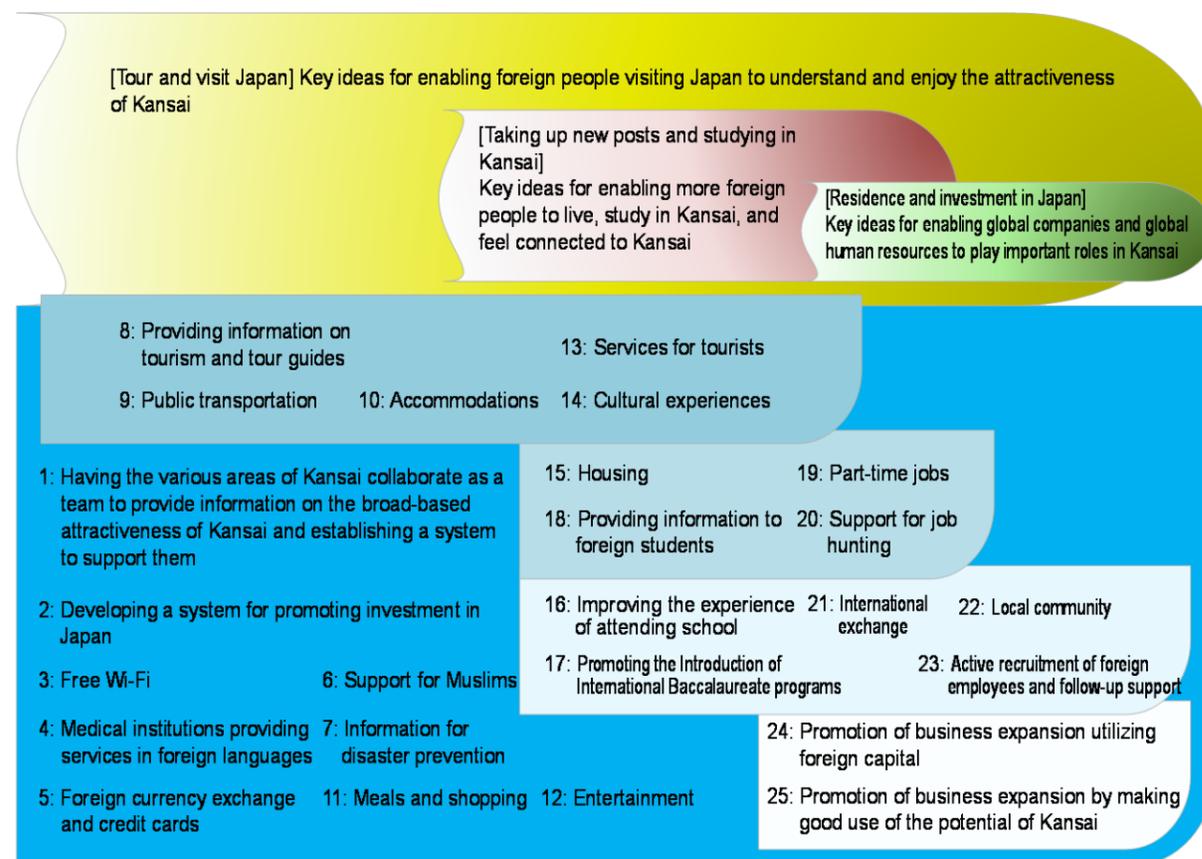
■ Areas for improvement and pioneering cases (best practices) in relation to the business and living environments of Kansai

While the number of foreign people visiting Japan including foreign tourists is rapidly increasing, it is necessary to take measures to develop an environment that accepts foreign people and to increase the opportunities for them to enjoy entertainment and cultural experiences through which they can familiarize themselves with the diverse history and culture of Kansai. Such experiences are expected to develop foreign people's attachment to the Kansai region and to motivate them to study and take up new posts in Kansai. Furthermore, Kansai has high expectations that providing such an environment will lead to the expansion of global enterprises into Kansai and foreigners' success in Kansai as global human resources.

We collected comments and suggestions directly from foreign residents living in the Kansai area and other relevant entities in the form of questionnaires and discussions, organized and analyzed the comments and extracted 25 key ideas for further improving the convenience and attractiveness of the Kansai region for foreign visitors and residents.

In various places throughout Kansai, both public and private entities have already begun making diverse efforts to respond to the issues and needs of foreign people.

▼ 25 key ideas concerning the needs of foreign residents living in Kansai



Key idea 1: Having the various areas of Kansai collaborate as a team to provide information on the broad-based attractiveness of Kansai and establishing a system to support them

- [Comments (needs)]
- Primary organizations in the Kansai region should unify in order to provide information.
 - The information provided by each individual area is fine. As for events and other related matters, however, I'd like all areas in the Kansai region to provide information as part of a single source that represents the entire Kansai region.
 - The name Kanku (Kansai International Airport) is well known by foreign tourists visiting Japan, but the name "Kansai" which refers to the area, isn't.

- [Pioneering Cases]
- ☞ The Union of Kansai Governments and the Foundation for Kansai Region Promotion both run web pages that provide tourism information of Kansai. (Both organizations provide information in four languages: Japanese, English, Chinese, and Korean)
 - ☞ Ohmi Inbound Promotion Committee, which is a type of private-sector-led Destination Marketing/Management Organization (DMO), aims to increase the number of foreign tourists visiting Japan by promoting the historical heritage and other relevant tourism assets of the Kohoku and Koto areas..

Key idea 2: Developing a system for promoting investment in Japan

- [Comments (needs)]
- There isn't enough information available, and I can't find reliable specialists.
 - I can't find the relevant law and procedures necessary for starting a business. I'd like to have better support for foreign students to start a business.
 - There are an insufficient number of global and multilingual human resources.

- [Pioneering Cases]
- ☞ KAHM Japan Limited, founded by retired members of the British Consulate General Osaka, has developed a business that connects Kansai to foreign enterprises and other related entities.
 - ☞ The Council for INVEST KANSAI (secretariat: Kansai Bureau of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI-KANSAI)) recognizes the Invest Japan Business Support Center (IBSC) as a one-stop support center and has implemented many types of supports for foreign enterprises.

Key idea 3: Free Wi-Fi

- [Comments (needs)]
- I need more free Wi-Fi spots.
 - It's not easy to access Free Wi-Fi.
 - Wi-Fi systems need to be improved because they are unavailable on trains and busses.
 - Information regarding internet accessible spots should be provided.

- [Pioneering Cases]
- ☞ It's possible to search for free Wi-Fi spots in Osaka Prefecture through a webpage named OSAKA ENJOY RALLY provided by Osaka Convention & Tourism Bureau. It supports five languages (Japanese, English, Korean, Chinese, and Thai).
 - ☞ Kansai International Airport, Hankyu Corporation and Hanshin Electric Railway Co., Ltd. have all installed free Wi-Fi in their facilities. Four temples in central Nara (Hase-dera Temple, Murou-ji Temple, Oka-dera Temple, and Abe-Monjiuin Temple) have also cooperated by installing free Wi-Fi in their facilities.

Key idea 4: Medical institutions providing services in foreign languages

- [Comments (needs)]
- I need a list of hospitals whose staff can communicate in English.
 - The doctor who diagnosed me could not speak English and I couldn't speak Japanese, so I needed to call an interpreter.
 - I can't understand how the hospital referral or health insurance systems work.
 - I'm not good at speaking Japanese and am afraid to go to the hospital.

- [Pioneering Cases]
- ☞ A specified nonprofit organization and multi-language center named FACIL conducted the Model Project for Establishing a Medical Interpreter System in Hyogo Prefecture.
 - ☞ Rinku General Medical Center established an International Clinic where staffs who are proficient in foreign languages work fulltime. About 60 volunteer interpreters who are trained medical interpreters and certified foreigners are registered.

Key idea 5: Foreign currency exchange and credit cards

- [Comments (needs)]
- There are few places where I can use credit cards issued in my country.
 - There are far fewer currency exchange counters than in other tourism-friendly countries.
 - There are very few places where I can withdraw cash with foreign credit cards.

- [Pioneering Cases]
- ☞ The Senshu Ikeda Bank, Ltd. opened foreign exchange counters and ATMs that only exchange foreign currency.
 - ☞ It is possible to withdraw cash with a credit card issued by an overseas bank at the ATMs of Seven Bank, Ltd. and Japan Post Bank Co., Ltd.
 - ☞ SQUARE, INC. provides a credit card payment service using a smart phone or a tablet.

Key idea 6: Support for Muslims

[Comments (needs)]

- Muslims have difficulty finding places to pray and places that serve halal foods in Japan. It would be helpful if such facilities could be found at large stations, shopping malls, and crowded sightseeing spots.
- Muslims use water to clean themselves after using the toilet. It would be better if all public lavatories were equipped with a toilet seat with a washing function.

[Pioneering Cases]

- ☞ A specified nonprofit organization named Internashokunal developed Foodpict pictogram. 1,300 stores throughout Japan have adopted it as of FY 2014.
- ☞ Fukushima Katsuo Co.,Ltd. has constructed a new factory that acquired Halal Certification.
- ☞ A webpage named the Kansai Sightseeing Web, run by the Union of Kansai Governments, provides information to help Muslims enjoy sightseeing in the Kansai region in a corner entitled Muslim Friendly KANSAI.

Key idea 11: Meals and shopping

[Comments (needs)]

- It's difficult to enter restaurants if I don't know what kinds of foods are served. There are very few restaurants that provide menus in multiple languages, so it's difficult to order.
- I'd like to eat while walking along the streets in shopping districts. In order to do that, clean restrooms, Wi-Fi spots, and resting areas are necessary.
- The information on duty-free shops is limited and the paperwork takes a long time.

[Pioneering Cases]

- ☞ Gankozushi Dotonbori Restaurant has a menu with photographs for easy ordering, a ranking list of popular plates, and combo plates for foreigners.
- ☞ Kuromon Shopping Mall expanded the number of its eat-in stores to meet the needs of people who want to enjoy eating and strolling. It has converted an empty store into a free rest area that has toilets and a Wi-Fi spot.

Key idea 7: Information for disaster prevention

[Comments (needs)]

- I'm worried about the support for foreigners in the event of disasters. It would be convenient if a map with the locations of hospitals, shelters, and other relevant places was available.
- There are few opportunities to participate in emergency drills.
- People from countries where disasters such as earthquakes and typhoons are rare don't have enough knowledge to prepare for such disasters.
- Alerts are only issued in Japanese, so I don't know what is happening in disasters.

[Pioneering Cases]

- ☞ Local24 Inc. is to offer a packaged service including earthquake-resistant reinforcement of buildings and regular stock of emergency provisions from FY 2016 onward so that such buildings can be used as shelters in an emergency.
- ☞ Tanabe City, Shirahama Town, Shingu City, Kamitonda Town, and Susami Town, all located in Wakayama Prefecture, and Kyoto City, Sakai City, and Kobe City run a telephone interpretation service available 24/7 in five languages.

Key idea 12: Entertainment

[Comments (needs)]

- I'm disappointed that there aren't any major entertainment spot other than Universal Studios Japan®. Entertainment spots suited to the Kansai region are necessary.
- Almost all famous foreign cities have night spots for entertainment, and I'm wondering why Japan doesn't have such spots.
- There is a lot of information regarding restaurants serving alcohol, but there is insufficient information regarding night spots for entertainment.

[Pioneering Cases]

- ☞ GEAR is a nonverbal performance. It achieved the record of 1,100 consecutive performances in November 2015. About 30% of the audience is made up of foreigners.
- ☞ Designpocket Inc. provides a service where you can create your own plastic food display samples in three languages (English, Chinese, and Korean), and staff demonstrates how to make the samples.

Key idea 8: Providing information on tourism and tour guides

[Comments (needs)]

- Tourist information centers are mainly for travelers who visit Japan for the first time, so I can't get in-depth information from such places.
- There is little information for travelers who are not from English-speaking regions of the world.
- There are few tourist information centers for foreigners.
- I'm interested in industrial tourism but don't know where to get such information.

[Pioneering Cases]

- ☞ Kansai Scene publishes a free magazine for foreigners in the Kansai region. 15,000 copies are distributed monthly to more than 600 locations.
- ☞ PIJIN Co., Ltd. offers a service providing information in multiple languages, named the QR Translator, and it is available at Kansai International Airport and other relevant places.
- ☞ Shinki Bus Co.,Ltd. has planned a bus tour that is limited to the Kansai region focusing on tourists from Thailand.

Key idea 13: Services for tourists

[Comments (needs)]

- I'd like to experience Japanese craftsmanship by visiting tatami stores, pottery and Nishijin textile studios. I'd also like to experience making Japanese food and sake, dressing in a kimono, and learning about Japanese history.
- I'd like to attend local events including farm-fresh markets.
- I'm looking for sightseeing spots that don't appear in typical guidebooks and other popular publications.
- It would be better if there were more events that allowed me to visit countryside towns.

[Pioneering Cases]

- ☞ Tanabe City Kumano Tourism Bureau has developed landing-type tourism for foreign independent tour.
- ☞ Ieshima Concierge provides a tour regarding a laver (seaweed) factory, where participants can experience the processing steps from raw materials to shipping; they also offer other relevant tours.
- ☞ Grandsoul Nara has developed a medical tourism business for foreigners including Chinese.

Key idea 9: Public transportation

[Comments (needs)]

- Often, taxis don't pick up foreigners in the Kansai region. Foreigners often have a lot of baggage, so taxi drivers tend to ignore them.
- There is insufficient information in English. It's so difficult to understand displays, even those in Osaka station. Such displays need zoning and classification by color.
- Announcements on trains need to be provided in multiple languages.
- City busses are the most difficult type of public transportation to use.

[Pioneering Cases]

- ☞ Osaka Taxi Center started a system for making taxi reservations in English, in July 2015.
- ☞ West Japan Railway Company assigned bilingual staff members to assist people who speak foreign languages; these services are available at Kansai-airport station, Kyoto station, and Shin-Osaka station. A Service center for foreigners visiting Japan has opened at Osaka Station, and it provides guidance in multiple languages, as well as a baggage delivery service, and other relevant support services.

Key idea 14: Cultural experiences

[Comments (needs)]

- There are few environments or options that allow me to casually experience Japan's artistic culture.
- I'd like to experience Japanese culture to learn more deeply about Japan's tradition and history.
- I'd like to feel Japan's atmosphere by wearing traditional Japanese clothes.
- I'd like to experience Japanese culture but worry about language problem.

[Pioneering Cases]

- ☞ WAK Japan Co. provides experiential programs for tourists, including tea ceremonies, flower arrangements, home cooking, and wearing kimonos. 90% of the users are foreigners.
- ☞ Mitate Co., Ltd. plans and runs programs offered in English that allow guests to experience Japanese culture (Obanzai cooking : light Kyoto-style home cooking, flower arrangements, tea ceremony, calligraphy, and sake tastings) at an 80-year-old traditional town house in Kyoto.

Key idea 10: Accommodations

[Comments (needs)]

- It's hard to book hotel rooms.
- There are no casual, low-priced hotels in Kyoto.
- I could stay longer if less expensive hotels were available.
- There are few hotels which accommodate travelers using overnight flights run by LCCs.
- I'd like to stay in an ordinary Japanese house.
- I'd like to stay in a traditional private house.

[Pioneering Cases]

- ☞ Dotonbori Hotel managed by Oukyu Co., Ltd. has shifted from the conventional management style to the "Omotenashi Hotel" style for foreigners visiting Japan. It has developed Japanese culture experience services that allow them to like Japan.
- ☞ Note Inc. has renovated some traditional folk houses located in castle towns into hotels and restaurants.
- ☞ Osaka Prefecture enacted the Ordinance on Private Guest Houses in 2015.

Key idea 15: Housing

[Comments (needs)]

- It's impossible to find Japanese guarantors.
- I can't understand the "key money" system.
- The deposits and "key money" are expensive. In addition, the two-year contract system makes me feel as if I'm told to move out in two years.
- There are few furnished apartments.
- Some apartments don't rent a room to foreigners, and I feel discriminated

[Pioneering Cases]

- ☞ Kyoto City International Foundation jointly runs with private companies a portal site called HOUSE Navi which lists rental property for foreigners. It provides information about real estate agents who can provide support in multiple languages.
- ☞ Shiga Intercultural Association for Globalization (SIA) has launched a Private Rental Housing System - Questions and Answers for foreign residents.

Key idea 16: Improving the experience of attending school

[Comments (needs)]

- My son was refused entry into several kindergartens because of concerns that he might become a victim of bullying.
- The local school said that they were unable to respond to bullying against foreign students.
- There is too little information about whether foreign students can actually adapt themselves to school after entering it and what should be done for that.

[Pioneering Cases]

- ☞ Shiga Intercultural Association for Globalization runs a school support site for building multicultural symbiosis, which provides language support in schools.
- ☞ Osaka Prefecture publishes a "Guide Book on Preparation for Elementary School," which provides information regarding the local school system and school life in eight languages.
- ☞ Toyonaka City holds Japanese language instructor's training courses for teaching Japanese to foreign residents.

Key idea 17: Promoting the Introduction of International Baccalaureate programs

[Comments (needs)]

- Tuition fees are extremely expensive.
- Courses are filled by Japanese students.
- International schools are limited to Kyoto, Osaka, and Kobe, so it is inconvenient for residents in other areas.
- I have to live far from my work place because there are too few international schools.

[Pioneering Cases]

- ☞ In September 2013, Osaka Prefecture and Osaka City submitted to the government a proposal of "opening up public school operation to the private sectors," including establishing publicly-built and privately-operated schools accredited as International Baccalaureate schools" in the National Strategic Special Zone. Accordingly, the National Strategic Special Zone Act was revised in September 2015.

Key idea 18: Providing information to foreign students

[Comments (needs)]

- I'd like to have more opportunities to meet people and work together, through participation in sporting and art events.
- I'd like to make many Japanese friends, so I wish that universities would provide more international exchange opportunities.
- I am struggling with making friends because there are very few social opportunities at Japanese universities other than club ("circle") activities.

[Pioneering Cases]

- ☞ Kyoto City and Kyoto City International Foundation provide useful information for foreign students on the Kyoto International Students Information Site, which offers support in Japanese, English, Chinese, and Korean.
- ☞ Urban Innovation Institute set up a team of "Kansai Tourism Supporters," consisting of foreign students. They participate in tourism promotion and other events, and distribute firsthand information to their home countries.

Key idea 19: Part-time jobs

[Comments (needs)]

- The pay in Kansai is lower compared to in the Tokyo metropolitan area. In addition, for foreign students who have just arrived in Japan, jobs can be limited to simplistic work with much lower pay.
- It is tough to balance part-time work and study.
- There is a lack of information on part-time jobs for foreign students.
- It is difficult to pay school expenses on my own because my earnings are limited by the 28-hour-per-week work limit.

[Pioneering Cases]

- ☞ Ehle Institute, based on its recognition that a part-time job creates the best opportunity to get to know Japan and develop self-discipline, provides quality part-time job opportunities for foreign students in collaboration with companies. It also provides support such as dispatching newer foreign students with those who already have part-time job experience to companies in pairs.

Key idea 20: Support for job hunting

[Comments (needs)]

- I need to fill out online job applications, but it is hard for me to fill out so many applications, and I eventually give up.
- I can't understand the job-hunting system unique to Japan.
- There is no one whom I can consult about my career or future study.
- I'd like more English information to be provided, such as briefing sessions for job seekers.

[Pioneering Cases]

- ☞ Ehle Institute, through its internship programs achieved a 100% employment rate for foreign students.
- ☞ JK-Branding Inc. holds Career Fairs in collaboration with Kyoto City International Foundation.
- ☞ Logic and Surprise Co., Ltd. operates "LANDS-NAVI," a job information website for foreigners.

Key idea 21: International exchange

[Comments (needs)]

- I'd like to make many Japanese friends, so I wish that universities would provide more opportunities for international exchange.
- I am struggling with making friends because there are very few social opportunities at Japanese universities, other than club ("circle") activities.
- I'd like to better understand Japanese so that I can enjoy better communication with my neighbors and friends.

[Pioneering Cases]

- ☞ Toyonaka International Friendship Association (TIFA) has developed TIFA kitchens, host family activities, and other activities. These programs offer a special meal of the day prepared by foreigners and opportunities for multicultural exchanges and contribute to supporting the employment of foreigners in Japan.
- ☞ Kyoto City International Foundation implements the Kokoka Family Program, in which Kyoto citizens accept foreign students as family members.

Key idea 22: Local community

[Comments (needs)]

- I have little connection with my community.
- I felt lonelier and more psychologically discriminated against in Japan than I've ever felt in any other of my assigned countries.
- I have just arrived in Japan, and have not participated in a local gathering. I have children, and hope that my children will attend lessons for infant if possible.

[Pioneering Cases]

- ☞ Osaka Foundation of International Exchange has set up the Osaka Information Service for Foreign Residents, which offers a variety of information including status of residence, medical care and welfare. It offers support in eight languages.
- ☞ *Comunidad Latina Hyogo* (Hyogo Latin Community) provides living consultation services to Spanish speakers, as well as interpretation services, a Spanish school for children, and other activities. They publish an information magazine called "Latin-a."

Key idea 23: Active recruitment of foreign employees and follow-up support

[Comments (needs)]

- Numerous companies assert that they would like to proactively hire foreigners, but in fact, not so many companies actually hire them.
- Many companies insist that they do not discriminate against foreigners, but the reality is different. I feel treated unfairly, and it's sad.

[Pioneering Cases]

- ☞ EVER-ON CORPORATION actively provides internships for foreign students. Taking this opportunity, nine former foreign students have started to work at this company.
- ☞ Okudaya Giken Co., Ltd. established an overseas affiliated company by using connections with a Malaysian employee. It led to establish a Thai subsidiary.
- ☞ ACRO NAINEN CO., LTD. dispatches foreign employees who have completed training at its headquarter to local subsidiaries in order to improve their business management.

Key idea 24: Promotion of business expansion utilizing foreign capital

[Examples of Progress]

- ☞ Kyowa Pharmaceutical Industry Co., Ltd. has tripled their sales over seven years by establishing an investment alliance, derived from joint research with Lupin Ltd, a major Indian pharmaceutical company. By leveraging its partner's funds, Kyowa Pharmaceutical has actively promoted new capital investments.
- ☞ Digital Electronics Corporation has established an investment alliance with Schneider Electric, a French company which covers a different product area, in order to further promote overseas expansion focused on their strength of manufacturing high quality touch panel HMI. Building mutually complementary relationships can help realize their overseas expansion.
- ☞ Swissport Japan Ltd. started by splitting off and selling the ground handling division (businesses) of ShinMaywa Industries, Ltd. as their noncore business (aircraft guidance and inspection business). They succeeded in expanding the scale and activities of their business by leveraging the know-how with foreign capital.

Key idea 25: Promotion of business expansion by making good use of the potential of Kansai

[Examples of Progress]

- ☞ KENGO GROUP CO. was established as a trading company having leveraged the current chairperson's experience in studying at Kobe University and his connection with China. The company purchased P&G Japan's former Head Office Building in Kobe, which will serve as a base of operations in Japan for 200 Chinese companies.
- ☞ Active Gaming Media Inc. was established in Tokyo as a company that supports the overseas expansion of Japanese pop culture, mostly in the form of games. The company moved to Osaka in connection with CAPCOM CO., LTD.
- ☞ Ceres Power Holdings PLC is a development company producing household and commercial fuel cell cogeneration systems. In order to establish a base in Japan, the company decided to move to Kyoto by focusing on Kansai due to its concentration of cell-related industries and Kyoto's proximity to Nagoya, a ceramic production area.

■ Measures for making KANSAI more attractive

In order to revitalize the Kansai region, it is important to aim for a “Kansai where global companies and global human resources can play active roles beyond the constraints of countries and regions on the line of that foreigners visiting Kansai can come to understand the convenience and attractiveness of Kansai and develop a connection with the region through various exchanges and experiences. A variety of advanced efforts valuable from the viewpoint of foreigners have been undertaken to date across the Kansai region, but to further enhance the region’s attractiveness upon these efforts, we propose promoting the following measures.

Needs of foreigners

Measures to further increase the number of tourists

- Having the various areas of Kansai collaborate as a team to promote the broad-based attractiveness of Kansai
- Expansion of free Wi-Fi
- Increase in foreign currency exchange and credit cards handling resources
- Response to specific dietary requirements (for Muslims, vegetarians, etc.)
- Providing information on tourism and tour guides
- Increase in accommodations
- Enhancing dining and shopping experiences
- Enhancement of entertainment

Measures for making Kansai a more comfortable place to live

- Increase in foreign language medical services
- Enhancing disaster prevention/response information
- Improving convenience of public transportation
- Improving tourism services
- Enhancing opportunities for cultural experiences
- Improving the process of finding a residence
- Improving the experience of attending school
- Expansion of international schools
- Exchange with local communities

Measures for making Kansai an easy place to study and work

- Enhancing the investment environment
- Improving information for foreign students
- Securing part-time jobs
- Support for job hunting
- Promotion of international exchange
- Active recruitment of foreign employees (by companies)

Major measures to enhance the attractiveness of the Kansai region

● **Continuous provision of information valuable from the viewpoint of foreigners**

- Promotion of Kansai overseas : Dissemination of information using local media, travel companies for individual travelers, and airline companies
- Online delivery of information about Kansai : Dissemination of information from the viewpoint of foreigners to inside and outside of Japan
- Introduction of foreigners who play active roles in Kansai : Introduction of foreigners who enjoy their lives in Kansai and play active roles in companies of the region to various countries

● **Deregulation**

- Relaxing the requirements for obtaining residency status : Response to the need for flexibility for changing the conditions of residence, deregulation of the requirements for dependents, additional posts, etc.
- Licensed multi-lingual tour guides : Expansion of languages spoken by tour guides, and the creation of a system of tour guides specializing in specific fields
- Local bus operation : Deregulation of the entry of sightseeing buses
- Partial deregulation of no-parking zones : Deregulation of specified no-parking zones in major sightseeing spots to be applied to large sightseeing buses
- Additional deregulation of Hotel Business Law : Promotion of using traditional Japanese houses as accommodations
- Additional deregulation of the Road Act and the River Act : Response to town walking tourism by the installation of open cafes using roadside spaces or waterfront spaces
- Deregulation of the limitations on the working hours of foreign students, etc. : Deregulation of the 28-hour-per-week work limit for foreign students and the spouses of highly skilled foreign human resources

● **Improvement of an environment for accepting foreigners**

Acceleration of immigration procedures (in response to the rapidly increasing number of foreigners visiting Japan due to an increase in international LCC flights and cruise ships, etc. (increasing the number of immigration staff, etc.))
Support for entities to accommodate foreigners (DMO, etc.) and the establishment of the necessary infrastructure.

<Example of main items>

- Establishment of free Wi-Fi (expansion of areas, improving convenience during moving by public transportation, simplification of access, provision of information on Wi-Fi spots, etc.)
- Enhancement of multilingual displays (introduction of QR codes or pictograms in sightseeing spots, stores and transportation centers, etc.)
- Securing bus stops and parking spaces for large sightseeing buses, etc.
- Support for financial services (dissemination of foreign currency exchange venues and ATMs or ATMs that accept foreign credit cards, etc.)
- Support for multi-lingual responses in an emergency (disasters, reporting to the police or the fire department, or medical examinations in a medical institution, etc.)
- Establishing manuals to help better serve foreigners in stores and accommodations (conducting training sessions, etc.)
- Response to Muslims (Halal certification, installation of a place for prayer, etc.)

● **Dissemination of successful cases**

<DMO: Deployment of landing-type travel businesses that cover the entire region>

• Example

Tanabe City Kumano Tourism Bureau: Practice of thoroughly responding to individual traveler inquiries from all over the world (provision of information, utilization of the foreign tourism promotion staff, improving tourism spots, offering seminars and training for relevant people, etc.)

<Shopping district that meets the needs of foreigners, including the creation of areas where they can eat and stroll >

• Example

Kuromon Shopping Mall OSAKA JAPAN: Enhancing the establishment of environments that accommodate foreigners visiting Japan (Modification of stores to an eat-in style, creation of displays in foreign languages, use of vacant stores to create spaces for restrooms, etc.)

<Universal entertainment>

• Example

GEAR (ART COMPLEX): Language-independent performances. Performances starting in the evening enable many foreign visitors to enjoy them.

<Support for job hunting for foreign students>

• Example

EHLE Institute: Support for foreign students by offering long-term internships (Securing 100% employment rate by offering lectures and establishing relationships between companies and foreign students through long-term internships, affiliation with Foreign Trade University in Hanoi using a credit transfer system)

Measures for “Creating a more attractive Kansai that attracts people from around the world and enables them to play more active roles in Kansai”