

# Preface

The Intercultural City does not view diversity as a threat, nor simply “cope” with it, but utilizes it as a source of dynamism, innovation, creativity and growth. Based on this latest idea, the Council of Europe has started the “Intercultural cities” programme with 12 cities in Europe to exchange expertise and experience among each other.

In Japan, in order to facilitate peaceful co-existence between indigeneous and foreign inhabitants in a community, various policies are being carried out with the idea of “multicultural symbiosis” (Tabunka-kyosei). Some of these policies present strong pararell cases with those in the intercultural cities, where diversity is regarded as strength and participation in community activities are encouraged all across the ethnic landscape.

However, these initiatives towards integration at regional and community levels in Europe and Japan did not been fully introduced to each other, let alone studied comparatively.

The Japan Foundation and the Council of Europe invited to Japan a group which was consisted of the representatives of Tilburg / the Netherlands, Neuchâtel / Switzerland, Patras / Greece, among the member cities of “Intercultural cities” programme, Mr. Phil Wood, a co-coiner of the term “Intercultural city”, and other experts. They made a study visit to Kani city and Minokami city of Gifu pref. and Kobe city of Hyogo pref. to have seen demonstration of typical “multicultural symbiosis” in Japan, then participated in an open symposium in Tokyo.

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to Prof. Yasuyuki KITAWAKI, Director of Centre for Multilingual Multicultural Education and Research, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies and Mr. Taro TAMURA, Director of Institute for Human Diversity Japan, for their useful advices and serious contributions to this event, to Mr. Yutaka YAMADA, Mayor of Kani city, staff of Municipal office of Kani city, Kani Multicultural Centre FREVIA, “Bara Kyoushitsu KANI” the school for non-Japanese-speaking children in Kani city, Kani Public Arts Center ALA, to Mr. Naoyoshi Watanabe, Mayor of Minokamo city, staff of Municipal office of Minokamo city, Support Centre for Foreign Residents in Minokamo, Brazilian Friendship Society in Minokamo,

to Mr. Shinichi OMORI, Chief of International Culture and Tourism Bureau, staff of Municipal office of Kobe city, Specified Nonprofit Corporation Kobe Foreigners Friendship Center, Specified Nonprofit Corporation Takatori Community Center, and Kobe Centre for Overseas Migration and Cultural Interaction, for their cooperation to the study tour, Mr. Katsumi SAKAI, the former Director of Multicultural Symbiosis Section of Minokamo city and Ms. Shizuyo YOSHITOMI, Director of Specified Nonprofit Corporation Takatori Community Center, for their participations and speeches in the symposium.

We sincerely hope that this report which contains a summary of the study tour and the whole text of the symposium would contribute to a certain aspect of the issue of social inclusion of foreign residents in Europe and Japan.

April 2010

The Japan Foundation