

# NIA LETTER

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On The Cover 2020 Exchange Student Representative Meeting (Held 2020/7/18)

The Niigata International Association appoints students who are excelling in cultural exchange activities as Exchange Student Representatives and supports their activities. We canceled the face-to-face appointment ceremony and meeting this year to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, and instead we held an online meeting through Zoom to share opinions and to think about future exchange activities and new exchange methods.

15 Exchange Student Representatives appointed this year participated, including 3 exchange students who had temporarily returned to their home countries of Korea and Indonesia.

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### Language Accessibility

NIA Initiatives: Simple Japanese and Pictograms

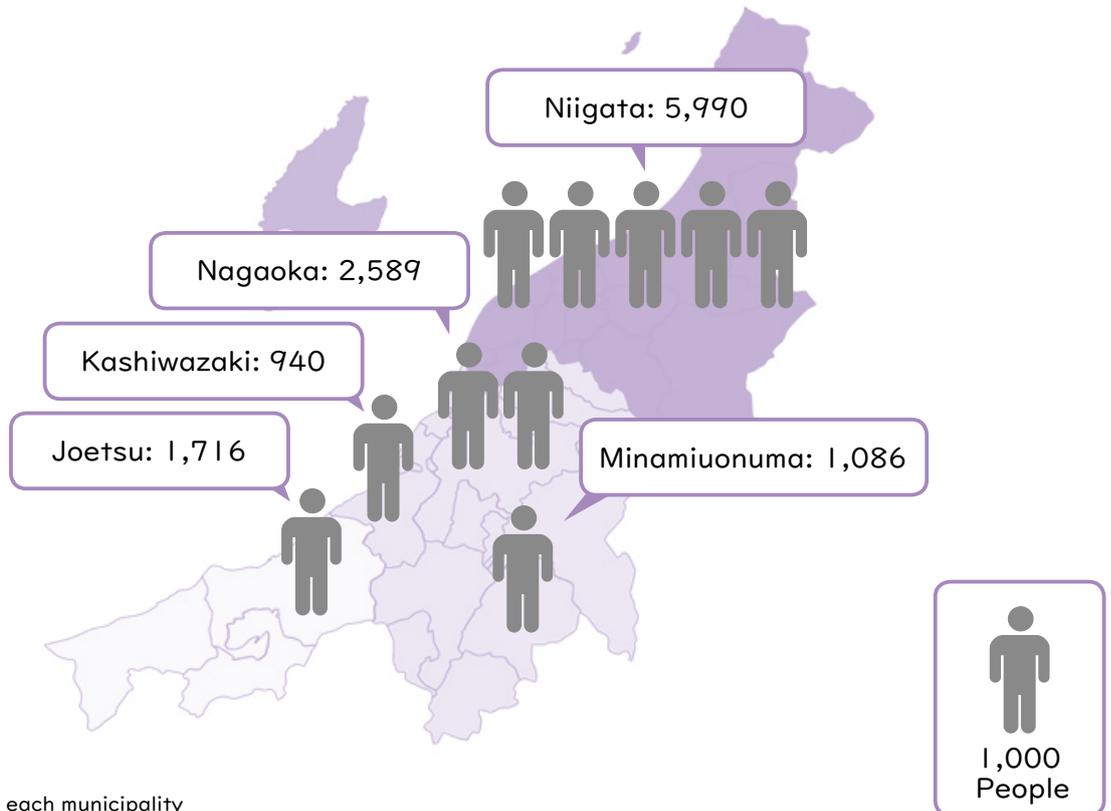
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There are currently 18,861 foreign residents in Niigata (based on the July 2020 report by the Ministry of Justice). Among them, 10,430 have jobs and work in the Niigata Prefecture (according to a January 2020 report from the Niigata Labor Bureau). Many of them study Japanese on their own after coming to Japan, and many of them also experience a language barrier while living in an unfamiliar area. There are also those who rarely meet with Japanese nationals outside of their workplace and are looking for opportunities to become friends with locals. How are we to communicate with each other in our multicultural society? In this issue, we'd like to talk about two tools for this: Simple Japanese (*Yasashii Nihongo*) and Pictograms.

## Niigata Prefecture: Foreign Residents by Area



Source: Website of each municipality

# NIA Initiative # 1: Simple Japanese (*Yasashii Nihongo*)

Whenever we announce something important for foreign residents on our website or Facebook page, we use “Simple Japanese” (*Yasashii Nihongo*).

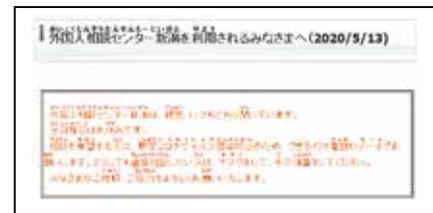
Right now, we are especially focusing on making sure to use Simple Japanese for any information related to the special stimulus payments or COVID-19. Simple Japanese is useful when posting about information that has a lot of complicated expressions.



← Facebook



↓ NIA Website



## 1. What is “Simple Japanese” ?

Many foreign residents in the Kansai area were injured during the Great Hanshin earthquake in 1995. One of the potential causes brought up was that many of them could not easily access emergency information. Today, “Simple Japanese” is in use on local government websites and pamphlets.

## 2. How to Use “Simple Japanese”

**Original Japanese**

在住外国人向けの多言語情報です。



**Simple Japanese**

にほん す がいこくじん  
日本に 住んでいる 外国人の みなさんへ。  
いろいろな くにの ことばで お知らせします。

NIA is still learning too!  
Why not try out Simple Japanese?



### We held training on Simple Japanese!



“Emergency Support for Foreign Residents”  
(Hosted by NIA 2018/12)

We covered Simple Japanese to use during emergency situations.

### The “Yasashii” of *Yasashii Nihongo*

“Yasashii” has two meanings in Japanese. The first is to be simple and easy to understand, and the second is to be kind or friendly.

### Key Points of Simple Japanese

- ① Determine what to convey
- ② Keep sentences short
- ③ Rephrase with simple words
- ④ Add furigana for kanji

Source:

CLAIR Multicultural Coexistence Portal Site, “The Age of Multicultural Coexistence 2.0” (2019/11/5)

<http://www.clair.or.jp/tabunka/portal/reading/col-tabunka2.0-23.html>

## NIA Initiative #2: Pictograms

There is a way to communicate simple messages with speakers of other languages! You can find messages in pictograms around the Niigata International Plaza. Pictograms are designed to communicate simple messages with just a glance, and you can see them all over the world.



### Try Using Them Like This!

You can use pictograms to communicate simple messages to visitors to your facility, such as places where entry is forbidden or requests to use caution.

We looked for pictograms around Toki Messe!



## 1. Pictograms in the Wild Around Toki Messe



- 1. Bandaijima Art Museum Signboard
- 2. Water Shuttle Station
- 3. Vending Machines
- 4. Restroom Facilities
- 5. Sado Kisen Terminal

**Situations Where Pictograms Are Useful**  
 If you notice someone having trouble getting somewhere or finding something, try to find nearby pictograms. If you can signal to pictograms with your hands or find a pictogram of their destination on a map, you can communicate even if you do not speak the same language.



Pictograms are also a useful tool if you visit another country!

## 2. The Origin of Pictograms in Japan

The first sport pictograms in history were first announced at the Tokyo Olympics in 1964 so that people from around the world could enjoy the games, regardless of what language they spoke. Today, pictograms are used by people all around the world.

What pictograms are around you? Try searching for pictograms in places you live or work!



Source:  
 MLIT Informational Symbols (JIS Z8210) (2019/7/20)  
[https://www.mlit.go.jp/sogoseisaku/barrierfree/sosei\\_barrierfree\\_tk\\_000145.html](https://www.mlit.go.jp/sogoseisaku/barrierfree/sosei_barrierfree_tk_000145.html)

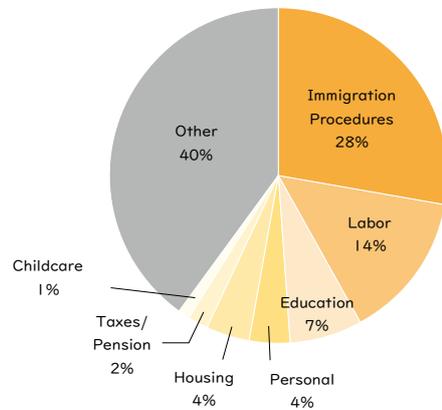
# From the Consultation Window

Foreign Resident Consultation Center of Niigata

What types of problems are foreign residents having?



2019 Consultation statistics



The Foreign Resident Consultation Center of Niigata opened in October 2019 and has received about 60 consultations per month. It received approximately 500 consultations in 2019, including those from before it was officially established.

The most common languages for consultations were Japanese, Chinese, Filipino, and English. The most common types of consultations were related to immigration procedures (such as changes to residency status), labor, child education, and personal (such as marriage or divorce).



COVID-19 Prevention Measures in Use

The number of consultations related to COVID-19 has risen from February of this year, reaching a total of 59 (as of End of July). Consultations for COVID-19 included those related to residency status and immigration procedures, procedures for those who suspected they were infected, and the system for receiving stimulus payments such as the one-time stimulus or business continuation payments.

## Foreign Resident Consultation Center of Niigata

- **Consultation Scope:** Residence/visa status, jobs, education, healthcare, welfare, other consultations and information provision about living in Japan in general
- ※ Please note we do not translate official documents, assist with translation or interpretation for individual or business purposes, or dispatch interpreters to other locations
- **Consultation Methods:** We accept consultations in person, by phone, and by email
- ※ Appointments not necessary, consultations are free (normal phone rates may apply)  
Address: Niigata-shi, Chuo-ku, Bandaijima 5-1, Bandaijima Bldg. 2nd Floor  
Phone: 025-241-1881 Email: nia10@niigata-ia.or.jp
- **Consultation Hours:** Monday-Friday, 10:00-17:00 (Reception ends at 16:30)

Consultation Hours by Language					
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Japanese	10:00 ~ 17:00	10:00 ~ 17:00	10:00 ~ 17:00	10:00 ~ 17:00	10:00 ~ 17:00
Chinese			10:00 ~ 17:00		
English	10:00 ~ 14:00			10:00 ~ 14:00	10:00 ~ 17:00
Filipino	10:00 ~ 14:00				
Thai		10:00 ~ 17:00			
Vietnamese		10:00 ~ 16:00			
Spanish				10:00 ~ 14:00	
Portuguese				10:00 ~ 14:00	
Other Languages	10:00 ~ 17:00 with the use of interpretation software				

- **Specialist Consultations:** Specialists from different fields will be available for consultations  
Education: Every Tuesday 10:00 ~ 17:00 (Japanese, English, Chinese, Thai, Vietnamese)  
Administrative Scrivener (*Gyosei-shoshi*): 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the Month 10:00 ~ 17:00 (Japanese, Chinese)  
Immigration Procedures: 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the Month 13:00 ~ 17:00 (Japanese, Chinese, Thai, Vietnamese)  
Legal Consultation: 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of Odd Months 13:00 ~ 17:00 (Japanese, English, Chinese, Spanish, Portuguese)  
※ Schedule subject to change.

## NIA INFORMATION

# Niigata International Cooperation Fund

The Niigata International Association supports individuals and private organizations engaged in international cooperation activities by way of the Niigata International Cooperation Fund.

Previously, the fund has been used to support a number of NPO projects such as education and job training in a children's home in Vietnam and to support agricultural community maintenance in Heilongjiang, China. These activities are supported by donations from around the prefecture.



Support Activities in Vietnam

International Cooperation Fund Mascot  
Earth-kun



More Information Here!



Donations To Date:  
**15,953,436 Yen**

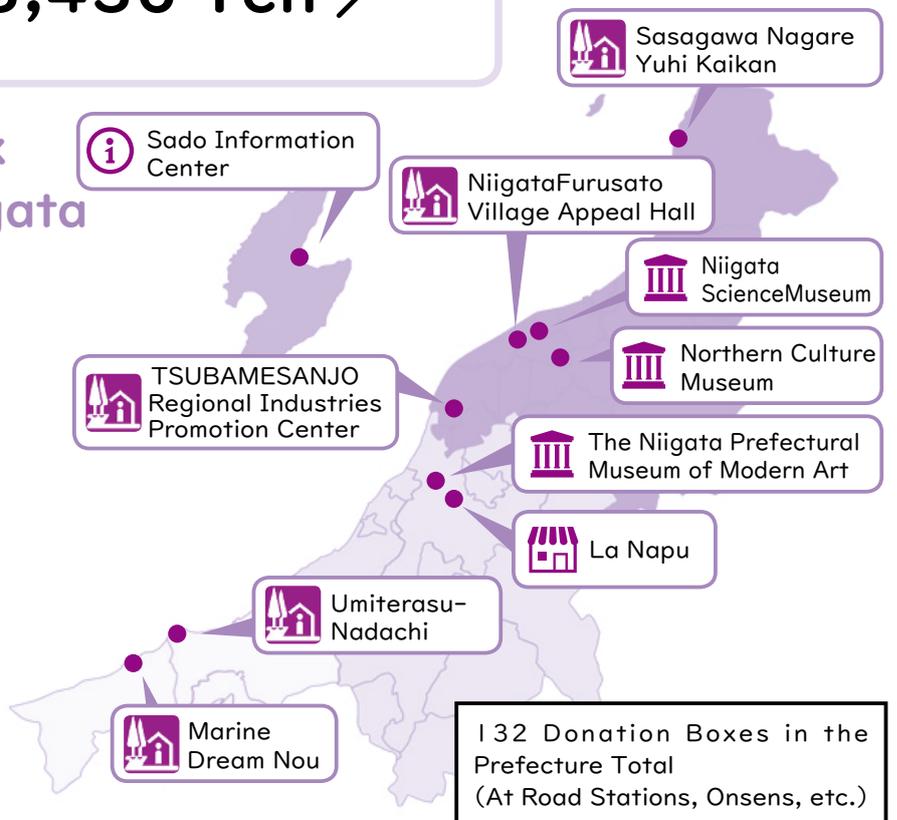
## Donation Box Locations in Niigata



Donation box



Donation box in the Earth-kun monument



132 Donation Boxes in the Prefecture Total  
(At Road Stations, Onsens, etc.)

**There's One Here Too!**  
 There is a donation box in the Earth-kun monument at Toki Messe, where NIA is headquartered. Keep an eye out for it if you visit!

# NIA INFORMATION Niigata International Plaza



## Access to Toki Messe

- 【By Car】** 5 Minutes from Niigata Station  
Parking Lots A-E Free for 60 Minutes
- 【By Bus】** 15 Minutes from Niigata Station  
Departs from Bandai Terminal 3  
Take bus for 「Toki Messe / Sado Kisen」
- 【Other】** 10 minutes from Niigata Station by bike  
25 minutes from Niigata Station on foot

## Niigata International Plaza

**Address :** Niigata-shi, Chuo-ku, Bandaijima 5-1  
Bandaijima Bldg. 2nd Floor (In Toki Messe)

**Hours :** Monday to Friday, 9:00a.m-5:30p.m  
(Closed weekends, holidays, and New Year's)

## Things to Try at the Niigata International Plaza

Anyone can use the multipurpose space for free. We also lend out materials from the plaza to our supporting members.

### COVID-19 Countermeasures in Place

We are using increased ventilation, hand sanitizer, and partitions to help reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19.



1	2	1 International Plaza 2 Foreign Magazines 3 Library Corner 4 Picture Book Corner
3	4	



1	2	1 Chinese New Year (January) 2 Maslenitsa (February) 3 Summer Break Fair (August) 4 Christmas Fair (December)
3	4	

## Plaza Fair

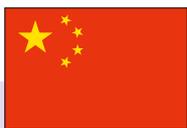
The Niigata International Plaza holds Plaza Fairs to match with seasonal events and events held by Toki Messe. We have a photobooth and a world clothing exhibition!



# Foreign Language Tidbits Vol. I

Simple phrases to use on social media!

## Chinese



『点赞(点赞)』

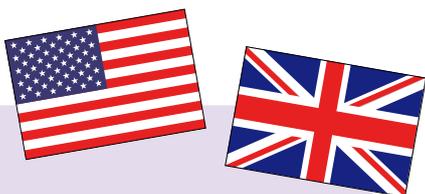
Refers to a like or thumbs up on social media.  
Read as diǎn zàn.

If you get a like on Facebook or Instagram:

「谢谢给我点赞！」  
("Thank you for the like!")



## English



『NP』

An abbreviation of "no problem." Often used in response to a thanks.

Line Conversation  
When thanked by another:

A 「Thanks !」

B 「NP」  
("No problem.")



# Exchange Student Comic

A foreign exchange student introduces an experience from their life in Japan through manga!

### ~ Message from the Author ~

My name is Kohane, from Malaysia. I am currently a student at Japan Animation and Manga College. I was interested in Japanese culture from the time I was a kid. Living in Japan can be hard, but there are fun things too ! I want to become a professional manga author in the future!

Vol. 5

Title:  
『Takoyaki Party』

Pen Name:  
Kohane

Malaysia  
Japan Animation and  
Manga College (JAM) ,  
Manga Illustration Master  
Course (3rd year)

