

Foreigners here more eager to interact with Japanese: poll

Kyodo News

Foreign residents in the Kanto region appear more inclined to interact with local Japanese, according to a survey conducted by the land ministry and other government agencies.

The survey showed that 56 percent of foreign respondents living in districts where foreigners accounted for 15 percent or more of the total population expressed eagerness to communicate with their communities.

Only 10 percent of Japanese respondents, on the other hand, said they want to interact with foreign residents.

The Land, Infrastructure and Transport Ministry attributed the survey results to the lack of opportunities for Japanese to meet foreign residents.

As steps to increase such opportunities, the ministry stressed the need for cooperation among residents, companies, administrative authorities and schools. It also called for creating a framework for promoting multicultural community exchanges.

The survey was conducted between December and January on 738 foreign households and 1,104 Japanese households in 16 districts in Gunma, Tochigi, Saitama and Ibaraki prefectures.

By nationality, 49 percent of the foreign respondents were Brazilian nationals. The next largest group was Peruvians at 14 percent, followed by Chinese at 12 percent. The average length of their stay in Japan was 8.7 years.

According to the survey, 31 percent of foreign respondents were somewhat reluctant to communicate with their communities, while 77 percent of Japanese respondents showed at least some degree of reluctance.

The poll found 87 percent of the foreign respondents want to learn Japanese, while 73 percent want to continue living in their area.

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