

# International Marriage

It is not always a good thing.

“Communication is very important!”



“Marriage” When you call this word to mind, you will always feel happy. However, if you get married to foreign national, you might face particular problems of international marriage. We introduce the common problems of international marriage from among the consultation received at FICEC.

**There are many hurdles (legal issue, everyday life, violence and nationality, etc.) in an international marriage.**

Now, the percentage of international marriage in Japan is about 5-6%. It is said that one in ten couples is an international marriage in urban areas such as Tokyo. (By the way, it is said that the number of marriage of Japanese man and foreign national woman is four times as much as that of marriage of Japanese woman and foreign national man.)

“International marriage” You may think it is so cool. Usually, the considerable hurdles exist in a married life. Even if it is not an international marriage, people will face many problems. In case of an international marriage, you should think more hurdles exist.

The language barrier is a major issue. For example, even if you can't speak Japanese it doesn't mean that you can't understand things. However, many Japanese take an attitude of haughtiness to his/her spouse due to poor language skill. To overcome differences in language or culture, you need to make some effort. Please talk to each other well, slowly and carefully, and spend more time together.

An international marriage has complications. The divorce rate is high due to the difficulties of married life. Foreign national spouse would be disadvantaged by divorce. The reason is that it is difficult to obtain necessary information(Japanese law, etc.)and to know his/her rights regarding divorce. For a person who has a visa for "Spouse of Japanese National" divorce is a matter of life and death. He/She may have to leave Japan. If a foreign national takes care of a child in Japan, he/she may be faced with economic difficulties. Because it is so hard to make enough money for living expenses, child-rearing expenses, etc alone.

In addition, it is very serious for women who have suffered from domestic violence. Marital violence takes place behind closed doors. Therefore, it is difficult to know the fact. As a result, she will suffer from escalating violence. If the victim of the violence is a foreign national woman, she will have a lot of hardship. She can't report the violence from her husband because she can't speak proper Japanese. (Also, she can't obtain information about system for supporting victims of domestic violence.) And she has resident status based on marriage. If she runs away from her husband, the action could lead to losing a visa for "Spouse of Japanese National"(At worst, her husband reports her to the immigration office.) Also, she has almost no means of living due to lack of job opportunities.

Some foreign national women seem to marry Japanese men easily because they think it is easy way to get resident status. However, if you rush your decision, you'll regret it.

Please think twice before making a decision. It is important to think about him carefully before you marry.

[www.ficec.jp/foreign/](http://www.ficec.jp/foreign/)

●The back numbers of “Information Fujimino” are available at online.

If you have marital difficulty, please consult with your friend or support group. Don't face your problem alone. You can also consult with FICEC. (written by · Miho MAEDA)

● New series **【Strange things about Japanese people for foreigners】**

**年賀状**

The question of this month is about New Year's card called "Nengajou". Some countries near Japan such as Korea, China and Taiwan have similar customs. However many countries don't have that culture, so they send X'mas card with New Year's greeting. That's why some foreigners don't understand what "Nengajou" is. It is said that this culture began in Nara period (in710). The event of greetings at the beginning of the year spread to noblemen and court noble in Heian period. It is very hard to greet if they live far, so "Nengajou" was begun to use instead of direct greeting. Nowadays for new years greeting, people send "Nengajou" with some messages of celebration for the new year and news about yourself. However, if any family member passed away within a year, which is called "Mochu", people usually send another type of cards to inform that they would like to refrain from sending "Nengajou". These days many people send text messages of New Year's greeting on mobiles. We have a lot called "Otoshidama kuji" at the lower right of New Year's postcard, and in January we might win something expensive like oversea travel or a big TV or stamps etc... This is one of the biggest events for Japanese people in January.

(written by · Ayumi Kanda/ translated by Eri Sawada)



**Information of Medical Institutions for Vaccination of New type Influenza**

Prompt medical attention is crucial to treating influenza. If you or your family have symptoms of influenza such as

a sudden high fever, a cough, a sore throat, a pain involving the entire body, etc., please visit a medical institution as soon as possible. Washing your hands and gargling, wearing a mask, prevention of droplet infection and avoiding crowded places may help prevent infection. And it has been confirmed that flu vaccines have an effect that prevents aggravation of symptoms.

Medical institutions where you can receive a vaccine have been announced by local government. Adults need 1 dose of vaccine. Children from age 1 to high-school-age need 2 doses. There is an age requirement. And people who especially need the vaccine can be given priority. The cost for vaccination shall be paid by recipients. So it may become a burden to you. However, vaccination is effective method to prevent influenza. Please get vaccinated to prevent aggravation of symptoms.

**“New year's resolutions”**  
=A message from translator=



First of all, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to all those who kindly supported me. I would like to be of help to people who come to FICEC. So my dream is to obtain a professional qualification. It is very difficult to achieve the goal and it may take a long time. However I keep trying.

**“May This Year be the Happiest for You!”**

English: N. Ueshima