

# New Tochigi International Strategy

## ~The Preferred Choice for Connecting to World: Tochigi~

### 【Overview Edition】

#### **Purpose of formulation**

In 2021, Tochigi Prefecture formulated the “Tochigi International Strategy” and has since implemented various measures to promote the prefecture’s internationalization. During this period, the environment surrounding the prefecture has undergone significant changes, including the normalization of economic activity following the COVID-19 pandemic, the creation of the new “Training and Employment” residency status, an increase in the projected number of foreign workers under the Specified Skilled Worker program, the easing of import restrictions in Taiwan, and tariff issues with the United States. Even under these circumstances, for the prefecture to achieve sustainable development, it is necessary for all stakeholders to share a common vision, accurately assess changes in the situation, respond in a timely and appropriate manner, and continue to take on global challenges, thus this new strategy has been formulated.

#### **Positioning**

This shows the direction of the initiatives and concepts to promote the internationalization of Tochigi Prefecture, with the aim of realizing the vision for the future of Tochigi set forth in the prefecture’s “New Tochigi Future Creation Plan.”

#### **Promotion period**

The 5-year period from the 2026 fiscal year to the 2030 fiscal year will be the promotion period.

#### **Surrounding environment & issues**

- Contraction of the domestic market and expansion of overseas markets
- Increasingly uncertain international situation
- Decrease in population in prefecture and increase in foreign residents in prefecture
- Characteristics of prefectural industries

## Tochigi Prefecture's goal of internationalization

### Goal (ideal image)

#### The Preferred Choice for Connecting to World: Tochigi

- “Tochigi,” where the local economy is being revitalized by connecting with global demand, expanding exports, and attracting international tourists
- “Tochigi,” where people connect with the world, foreign human resources thrive, and Japanese and foreign residents live together in safety and security while respecting one another
- “Tochigi,” where people build relationships of trust and interact with one another while connecting with countries and regions around the world

### Basic perspective

Strategies will be developed from three perspectives to realize the goal (ideal image)

#### Utilize strengths

- Utilize the strengths of world-class Tochigi.

#### Work together

- Work together with stakeholders within the prefecture, as well as with other local governments and partner countries and regions.

#### Take on challenges

- Take on challenges together with motivated prefectural residents and businesses to compete on the global stage.

### Basic Strategy

Creation of a strong economy by capturing the overseas demand

Securing and development of foreign human resources

Strengthening of relationships with foreign countries

Realization of a society in which Japanese and foreign residents coexist

### Priority project

In the strategy promotion period, target countries and regions will be identified for priority initiatives, reviewed annually, and have measures implemented

## Basic Strategy 1

### Creation of a strong economy by capturing the overseas demand

#### Promotion of overseas expansion of local companies

Aim

- ▶ Identification of companies seeking to expand overseas
- ▶ Expansion of local products (processed foods, industrial goods, etc.) exportation

Main initiatives

- Implementation of a survey on import and export needs and the initiative status of businesses within the prefecture
- Holding of seminars on exporting, ranging from basic export knowledge to the practical application of cross-border e-commerce, for beginners through to advanced levels
- Support of test marketing aimed at developing products for overseas markets, as well as assistance with obtaining international standards and certifications, etc.
- Support of local companies for exhibiting at overseas trade shows and holding business matchmaking events by inviting buyers
- Support of global expansion through overseas offices
- Support of overseas expansion for startup companies in collaboration with JETRO

#### Export promotion of prefectural agricultural products

Aim

- ▶ Stimulation of overseas demand and development of sales channels
- ▶ Formation and cultivation of export production areas

Main initiatives

- Expansion of sales channels in existing exporting countries through local promotions and PR aimed at inbound tourism
- Development of new sales channels through trade show participation, trial exports, and buyer invitation
- Creation of a network for information exchange among producing regions
- Establishment of a local consultation desk

#### Strengthening of efforts to attract foreign tourists

Aim

- ▶ Expansion of tourism spending by foreign tourists

Main initiatives

- Promotion of the development of a welcoming environment capable of meeting diverse needs
- Promotion of high-value-added content and experiential theme-based tourism that leads to overnight stays
- Transmission of highly engaging content created using digital technology and the perspective of a foreigner

## **Attraction of foreign-affiliated companies**

### Aim

- ▶ Attraction of companies in collaboration with overseas government agencies and stakeholders

### Main initiatives

- Promotion of the appeal of this prefecture's industrial parks to government agencies through diplomatic channels such as embassies, etc.
- Approach to companies in cooperation with JETRO Tochigi, etc.

## **Basic Strategy 2**

### **Securing and development of foreign human resources**

#### **Promotion of the development of an environment conducive to accepting foreign human resources**

##### Aim

- ▶ Promotion of an appropriate acceptance of foreign human resources by companies,
- ▶ Retention of foreign human resources in companies, etc.

##### Main initiatives

- Support of the development of work environments for foreign human resources at companies, etc.
- Enhancement of the consultation and support system through the Tochigi Consultation and Support Center for Foreign Residents
- Promotion of awareness and building of networks regarding the appropriate employment and smooth integration of foreign human resources through the Tochigi Council for

#### **Securing of foreign human resources**

##### Aim

- ▶ Securing of foreign human resources based on the demands of companies, etc.

##### Main initiatives

- Employment support of overseas university students, etc. in cooperation with overseas educational institutions
- Holding of explanatory sessions on joint enterprises for foreign exchange students, etc.

#### **Development of foreign human resources**

##### Aim

- ▶ Enhancement of communication and technical skills of foreign human resources

##### Main initiatives

- Implementation of training programs tailored to the needs of companies, etc., such as business Japanese for foreign residents, etc.
- Implementation of vocational training sessions for foreign residents, etc. seeking employment with companies, etc.

## **Basic Strategy 3**

### **Strengthening of relationships with foreign countries**

#### **Promotion of economic exchange**

Aim

- ▶ Promotion of exchanges led primarily by private-sector entities such as companies and organizations in the prefecture, etc.

Main initiatives

- Dispatch and acceptance of business missions
- Discussion on a mutual investment environment utilizing exchange relations
- Provision of information on the investment environment for companies in the prefecture that are considering investing in the region
- Attraction of local companies by providing information on the investment environment of this prefecture, etc.

#### **Promotion of friendly exchanges**

Aim

- ▶ Penetration of friendly exchanges into the region and their development into economic exchanges

Main initiatives

- Dispatch and acceptance of delegations
- Promotion of cultural and educational exchange
- Support for proactive exchanges among prefectural residents and private organizations, etc.

#### **Promotion of Tochigi-style embassy diplomacy**

Aim

- ▶ Building of relationships and promotion of exchanges with influential countries, etc.

Main initiatives

- Promotion of the appeal of this prefecture to ambassadors, etc. from influential countries and regions stationed in Japan
- Exchanges of ongoing information provision to the embassies of countries and regions with which there are established relationships
- Implementation of economic seminars, information exchange sessions, etc.

#### **Cultivation of an international perspective**

Aim

- ▶ Cultivation of the awareness of prefectural residents

Main initiatives

- Implementation of international understanding lectures by Coordinators for International Relations
- Support of international and regional events held within the prefecture

## **Promotion of international cooperation**

Aim

- ▶ Promotion of activities and information in collaboration with JICA

Main initiatives

- Promotion of the participation of local companies and prefectural residents in international cooperation activities in collaboration with JICA
- Transmission of information on international cooperation activities

## **Development of global human resources in school education**

Aim

- ▶ Development of human resources responsible for the global society

Main initiatives

- Promotion of international exchanges to foster international human resources with cross-cultural understanding and a global perspective

## **Basic Strategy 4**

### **Realization of a society in which Japanese and foreign residents coexist**

#### **Strengthening of the consultation system for foreign residents**

Aim

- ▶ Response to the increasing number of foreign resident livelihood consultations, etc.

Main initiatives

- Implementation of multilingual consultations, etc.
- Strengthening of cooperation with stakeholders that provide consultation services, etc. to foreigner residents

#### **Promotion of the provision and transmission of information in multiple**

Aim

- ▶ Development of an environment in which one can obtain information necessary for daily life

Main initiatives

- Promotion of the provision and transmission of administrative and daily life information in multiple languages and “Easy Japanese” through the use of diverse communication

#### **Promotion of Japanese language education**

Aim

- ▶ Development of the Japanese language education system in the region
- ▶ Enhancement of Japanese language instruction in schools

Main initiatives

- Provision of advice and guidance, etc. to persons involved with Japanese language education
- Support of managing local Japanese language classes and strengthening collaboration with various stakeholders involved in Japanese language education
- Enhancement of instruction and support for foreign resident students who require Japanese language instruction

#### **Strengthening of disaster prevention measures for foreign residents**

Aim

- ▶ Ensuring of the safety of foreign residents in the event of a disaster

Main initiatives

- Provision of disaster-related information in multiple languages and consultation services in the event of a disaster
- Establishment of a support system for foreign residents in the event of a disaster
- Promotion of disaster prevention awareness among foreign residents

#### **Ensuring and development of human resources to support foreign residents**

Aim

- ▶ Ensuring and development of the presence of individuals who support and assist foreign residents facing language barriers, etc.

Main initiatives

- Ensuring and development of diverse human resources to support foreign residents

## **Promotion of mutual understanding between Japanese and foreign residents**

Aim

- ▶ Ensuring of a safe and secure community

Main initiatives

- Publicity of Japanese culture and rules, etc. among foreign residents
- Promotion of awareness of multicultural coexistence among prefectural residents
- Implementation of training sessions on coexistence with foreign residents for municipalities and companies, etc.
- Enhancement of learning opportunities related to multicultural coexistence in school education

## **Promotion of the participation of foreign residents in community activities**

Aim

- ▶ Promotion of the active involvement of foreign residents in the community

Main initiatives

- Support of initiatives to resolve local issues through activities of foreign residents

## Promotion system, etc.

### Promotion system

- Through the “Tochigi Global Strategy Promotion Headquarters,” efforts will be made to comprehensively and effectively implement international measures by leveraging a cross-sectoral and cross-departmental collaborative system.
- Through the “Tochigi Global Strategy Council,” efforts will be made to review strategies, solicit evaluations and opinions from council members regarding progress, and incorporate these into the review of the measures.
- The “All-Tochigi” promotion system will be strengthened by collaborating with municipalities and stakeholders (JETRO, SME Support Japan, JICA, etc.).

### Promotion of the strategy and SDGs

Promoting this strategy will also contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The prefecture will actively promote initiatives to achieve each of these goals, while sharing the principles and objectives of the SDGs with the diverse stakeholders that make up the local community, such as prefectural residents, municipalities, companies, etc.