

Connecting the Region's Power to the Future



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Mission: The role we endeavor to fulfill

Connecting the Region's Power to the Future

Vision: The direction our organization aims to pursue

We, the Chubu Bureau of Economy, Trade and Industry, aim to contribute to the sustainable growth of the regional economy and industries, which continue to be faced with changes and transitions, by anticipating the evolving landscape and designing regional strategies and initiatives, and swiftly disseminating and implementing them. Through these efforts, we aspire to earn the trust of the community as a dependable organization capable of meeting their expectations.

Values: The values we share as an organization

Hands-on Approach

We are committed to the community and carry out the necessary measures to promote regional economic development.

Open-mindedness

We respect diversity and unite our individual strengths as a team to respond flexibly and swiftly to the changing times.

Challenge and Execution

We relentlessly pursue difficult challenges, taking them on without fear of failure and following through with determination.

The Noto Peninsula Earthquake on January 1, 2024 devastated countless residents and businesses in the region, drastically altering their lives. The victims are now forced to live with uncertainties about their future living conditions and means of livelihood.

To swiftly revive the affected businesses, such as traditional handicraft artisans and shopping arcade tenants, it is essential to stand by their side and provide continuous support to SMEs determined to thrive. We will work alongside local governments and relevant sectors to continuously help rebuild businesses in the Noto Peninsula.

Furthermore, the Chubu region boasts a high concentration of world-class manufacturing industries in the region, centered around the automotive sector that serves as the key source of our nation's competitive edge. These industrial clusters serve as the foundation for end-product manufacturers and their supporting companies in the Chubu region, playing a vital role in driving Japan's economy. To enhance the industrial competitiveness of the Chubu region and foster next-generation industries, we will support businesses that challenge themselves to reform and create new value with the aim of transitioning to a sustainable growth model.

Additionally, we will promote increased corporate investments and wage hikes, and address various issues such as fair transaction practices that allow these increases to be reflected in prices. We will also dedicate our efforts to supporting business restructuring and continuity, including the succession of SMEs.

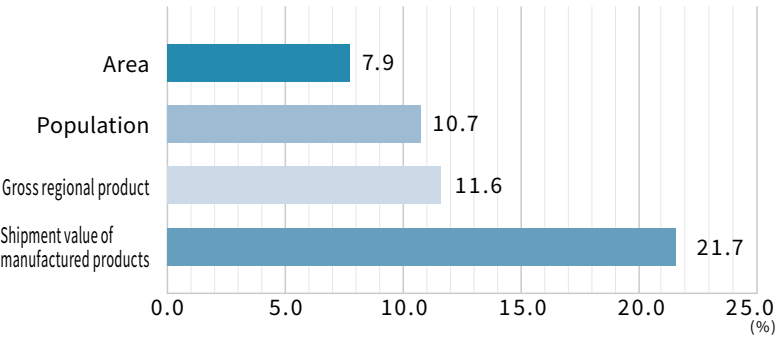
The Chubu Bureau of Economy, Trade and Industry is a government agency at the forefront of implementing economic and industrial policies, working hand-in-hand with the community. Under our mission to "connect the region's power to the future," we occasionally take bold approaches to unlock the region's potential. And together with various corporations, individuals, and relevant sectors, we will promote initiatives that drive future development.

The Chubu Region in Statistics

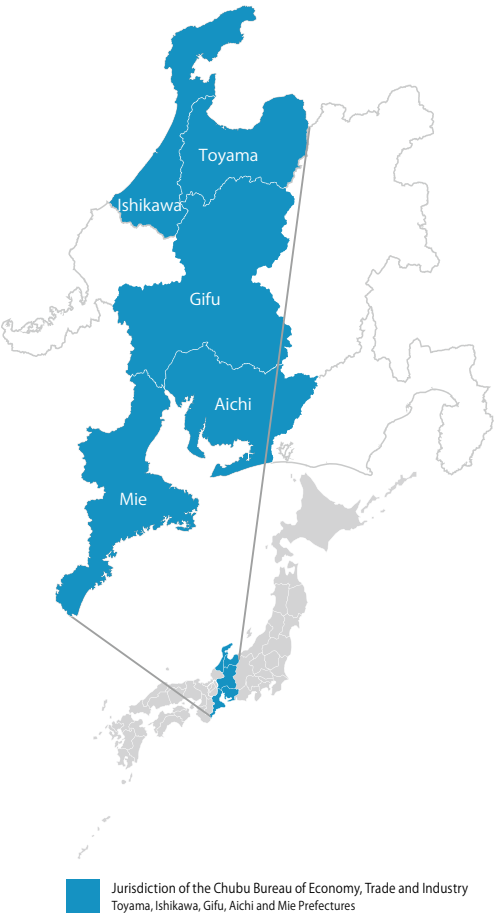
The Chubu region (Toyama, Ishikawa, Gifu, Aichi, and Mie Prefectures) accounts for approximately 10% of Japan’s total area, population, and gross regional product. However, it is one of Japan’s leading manufacturing regions, accounting for 20% of the nation’s total shipment value of manufactured products. Renowned as a leading manufacturing hub in Japan, the region is home to a high concentration of manufacturers that possess outstanding technological prowess in a variety of fields, including transportation machinery used in the automotive and aerospace industries, general production machinery such as metalworking machines, and electrical machinery.

Where the Chubu Region Stands

The Chubu region accounts for 20% of the nation’s total shipment value of manufactured products.



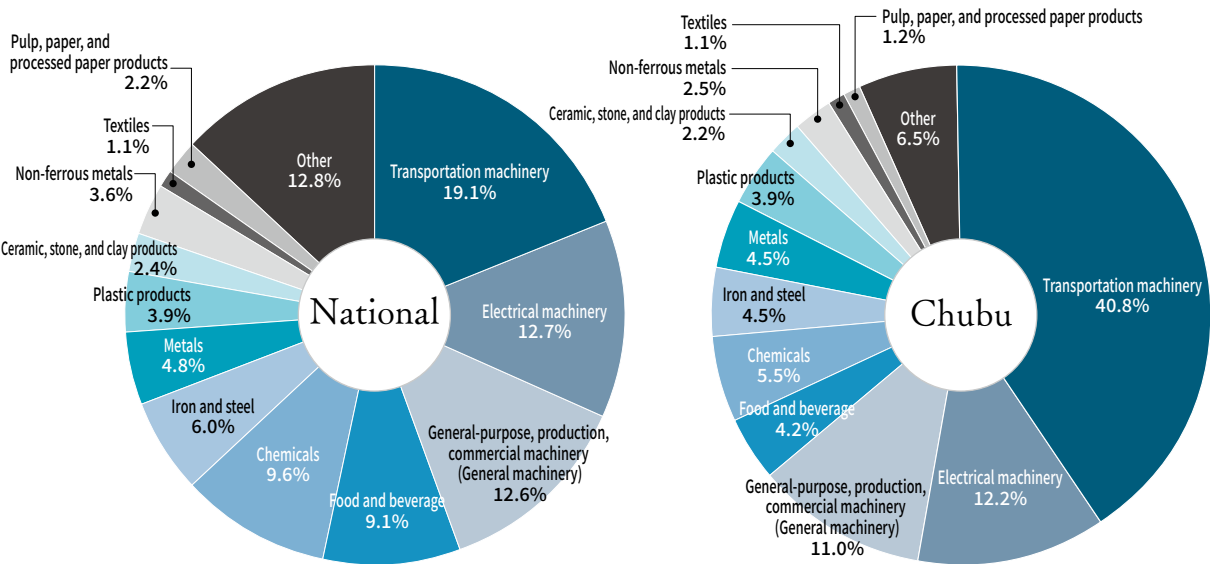
Sources: Geospatial Information Authority of Japan “Areas by Prefecture, City, Ward, Town, and Village” (as of January 1, 2024), Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications “Population Estimation” (as of October 1, 2023), Cabinet Office “2020 Prefectural Economic Calculation,” Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry “2022 Economic Conditions Survey of Manufacturing Operators (Statistical Table Data by Region)”



Jurisdiction of the Chubu Bureau of Economy, Trade and Industry
Toyama, Ishikawa, Gifu, Aichi and Mie Prefectures
※ Electricity jurisdiction: Includes the entire Nagano Prefecture and parts of Shizuoka and Fukui Prefectures; excludes parts of Gifu Prefecture
※ Gas jurisdiction: Includes parts of Shizuoka Prefecture

Shipment Value of Manufactured Products by Industry (National and Chubu Region)

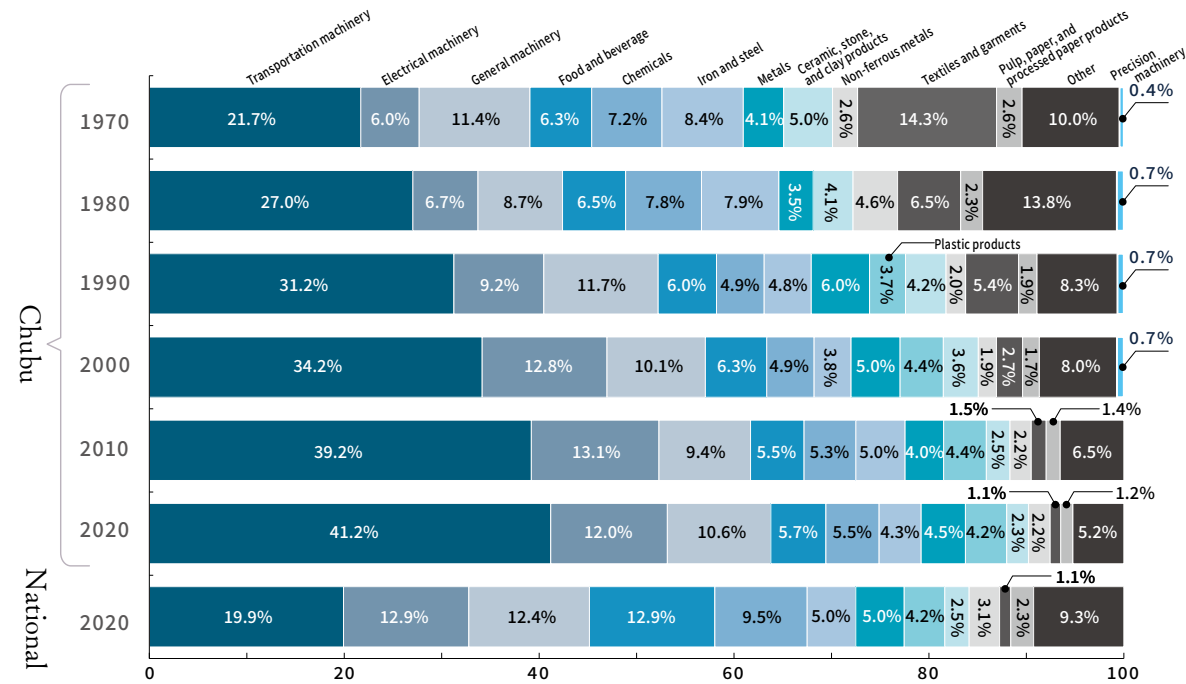
The Chubu region has a high concentration of a wide range of industries centered around transportation machinery.



Source: Created by the Chubu Bureau of Economy, Trade and Industry based on the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry “2022 Economic Conditions Survey of Manufacturing Operators (Statistical Table Data by Region)”

Trends in Shipment Value of Manufactured Products by Industry

The percentage of the Chubu region’s transportation machinery industry is on the rise.

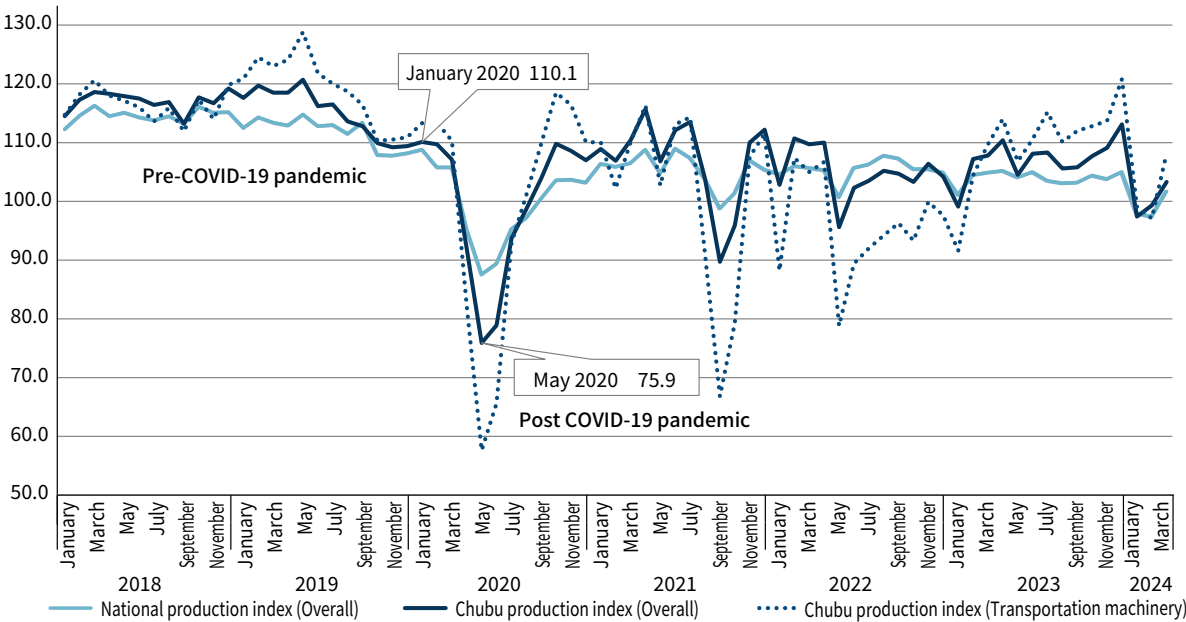


Source: Created by the Chubu Bureau of Economy, Trade and Industry based on the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry “2020 Economic Census for Business Activity (Confirmed Report)”

Industrial Production Index of the Chubu Region vs. National Average

In the assessment of its production activities through the Indices of Industrial Production (IIP), the Chubu region* was significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic compared to the national average, particularly in the transportation machinery sector.

※ Chubu region: Aichi, Gifu, Mie, Toyama, Ishikawa Prefectures (2020 = 100, seasonally adjusted index)



Source: Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry; Chubu Bureau of Economy, Trade and Industry

※ Indices of Industrial Production (IIP): A representative index that shows the overall movement of the mining and manufacturing industries. It is a quantification of the monthly production, shipment, and inventory of the mining and manufacturing industries, calculated as the monthly average of the base year being 100.

SME Policy



Enhancing the Business Environment for SMEs

The environment and challenges surrounding SMEs are becoming increasingly complex, from global affairs, depreciation of the Japanese yen, soaring prices of raw materials and energy, and labor shortage. Under these circumstances, we are dedicated to enhancing the business environment of SMEs from various angles by developing policies that align with their needs. Our philosophy centers on fostering the growth and development of diverse and dynamic SMEs. More specifically, we endeavor to establish a framework for providing highly specialized support, such as the certification of organizations that support business innovation. Within this framework, we aim to provide support for daily business inquiries from SMEs and management support based on the utilization of support programs such as tax systems and subsidies. We also offer support for SMEs facing financial challenges, facilitating smooth financing, corporate revival, and business succession. Furthermore, we actively engage in exchanging ideas and information with municipalities, support organizations, and financial institutions to understand the current situations while listening to the community. We endeavor to publicize and disseminate various measures based on these insights.

(Small and Medium Enterprise Division)



▲ A networking meeting on business succession



▲ Business Fair opening ceremony

Toward the Creation of Innovation that Leverages Regional Strengths

In partnership with regional stakeholders, we support the growth of startups, as well as facilitate collaborations between established companies and startups, and promote the development of intellectual property strategies for these startups. Moreover, we operate “Meet up Chubu,” an open innovation platform that helps stakeholders find partners for the social implementation of cutting-edge technologies and foster new partnerships, and hold a pitch event every two weeks at the Nagoya Innovator’s Garage and other venues. We are working to create opportunities where research institutions, such as universities, and companies, including startups, present their technological seeds, challenges, and partnership needs. By connecting with fellow participants, we endeavor to continuously innovate and create new collaborative projects.

(Innovation Promotion Division)



▲ At “Deep tech J-Startup Pitch in Meet up Chubu”



▲ Nagoya Innovator's Garage

◆ “Deep tech J-Startup Pitch in Meet up Chubu”

Deep tech startups related to green transformation (GX) and digital transformation (DX) gathered from across the nation to hold a pitch event.

Establishing a Startup Ecosystem in the Hokuriku Region

With the goal of ensuring sustainable growth in the Hokuriku region, we are dedicated to fostering awareness for promoting the creation of startups taking on new businesses and facilitating growth support by relevant entities. We also engage in efforts to promote open innovation through collaborations between corporations and startups in the Hokuriku region. Specifically, we hold the Startup Connect Hokuriku event in partnership with relevant regional organizations to raise awareness. Moreover, in December 2023, we launched the Hokuriku Kyoso Community to connect companies interested in new initiatives, such as for new business ventures and productivity improvements, with startups from within the region and beyond. By leveraging these two initiatives, we aim to foster the innovation and growth of startups and establish an ecosystem for collaborative innovation in the Hokuriku region.

(Hokuriku Branch
Regional Economic and Industrial Division)



▲ At the Startup Connect Hokuriku

Initiatives for Supporting Startups in the Hokuriku Region

Producing new business owners or entrepreneurs is a crucial initiative in revitalizing the region and securing employment. The Hokuriku Startup Support Network, an inter-prefectural initiative comprised of startup support staff and organizations from municipalities in Toyama and Ishikawa Prefectures, hosts lectures by key persons involved in startup support and community development in the Hokuriku region and beyond, as well as workshops to discuss startup support. By providing opportunities for municipalities and relevant institutions to exchange ideas, we encourage the entire Hokuriku region to enhance its startup support skills and share know-how. The aim is to make the Hokuriku region the chosen destination of human resources aspiring to become entrepreneurs.

(Hokuriku Branch
Regional Economic and Industrial Division)



▲ Hokuriku Startup Support Network: Group work

Promoting Cost Pass-Through and Fair Transactions

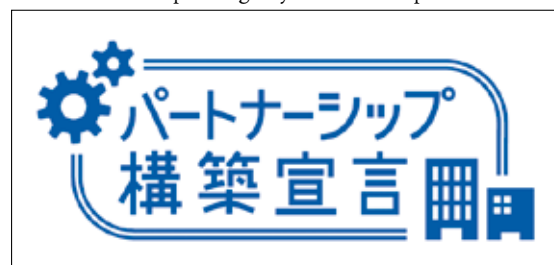
In an effort to overcome long-standing deflation, the government is attempting to instill the idea that increased wages are to be expected. This initiative aims to realize a new economic landscape through the virtuous cycle between prices and wages.

To support this objective, the government has designated September and March as “Price Negotiation Promotion Months” every year to establish trade practices that encourage periodic price negotiations and cost pass-through. After the “Price Negotiation Promotion Month” ends, a follow-up survey is conducted with SMEs to assess the status of price negotiations and pass-through of costs such as labor and raw materials. The findings are compiled by the Small and Medium Enterprise Agency, which then publishes a list of corporations and provides guidance and advice to parent businesses that receive unfavorable evaluations.

Furthermore, we aim to enhance the overall value of the entire supply chain and foster mutually beneficial relationships between large enterprises and SMEs. To achieve this, we are promoting and expanding the “Declaration of Partnership Building,” where representatives of ordering parties declare their commitment. We will team up with local governments and relevant entities to expand the declaration, and through workshops and seminars to encourage price negotiations and cost pass-through, we will work to improve the profitability of SMEs.

Additionally, we are engaged in promoting fair subcontracting transactions and improving the trading terms and conditions for SMEs and the entire supply chain by conducting site visit interviews led by investigators to understand the trading status with the parent companies, and providing guidance and advice to parent companies based on on-site inspections conducted under the Act Against Delay in Payment of Subcontract Proceeds, etc. to Subcontractors.

(Fair Transaction Promotion Office)



▲ Declaration of Partnership Building logo



▲ At the Fair Transaction and Cost Pass-Through Promotion Forum

Promoting New Businesses Through the Utilization of Intellectual Property

By hosting intellectual property (IP) seminars, facilitating IP business matching, and providing accompanied support for IP and design management, we are promoting the widespread understanding of IP rights systems and encouraging the strategic utilization of intellectual property by SMEs. These initiatives are based on the Chubu IP Strategy Promotion Plan formulated by the Chubu IP Strategy Headquarters, which consists of experts and stakeholders from regional companies and IP-related institutions. Our goal is to help companies in the Chubu region adapt to the changing business environment and pursue new business developments. Since FY2023, we have focused particularly on providing accompanied support to promote IP management and utilization and facilitating co-creation and collaboration through IP business matching.

(Intellectual Property Office)



▲ Providing accompanied support for design management



▲ IP Business Matching Guidebook

Exploring New Markets Through Business Strategies Utilizing Standardization

Standardization is a system in which a set of arbitrary rules concerning a product's compatibility, quality, performance, safety, and other matters are established by an agreement among the parties involved. It is achieved through the commonization of shapes and units and the unification of testing and evaluation methods, and involves the dissemination of such standards. Leveraging this characteristic, if a company can standardize a testing method that enables the proper evaluation of the superior performance of its new products or technologies as a Japanese Industrial Standard (JIS), it will make it easier for the company to objectively and accurately communicate its competitive advantages and expand its market. We are committed to spreading public awareness of business strategies that utilize standardization and promoting support programs that enable even SMEs to establish JIS.

(Innovation Promotion Division)

◆ Example of JIS Established Through the Utilization of Support Programs

Overview of JIS B 9947 - Test method for evaluating performance to identify and count bubbles in liquid particle counters: A measuring instrument was developed to measure only metals and other particles in lubricating oil without requiring the removal of air bubbles. The aim is to measure the contamination levels (i.e., the occurrence of particles, such as metals, due to machine wear) in lubricating oil used in generators and machine tools to ascertain the deterioration levels of those machines in real-time. To objectively demonstrate the reliability and effectiveness of measurement instruments using this new technology, its performance evaluation test method has been established as a JIS standard.



▲ In-oil particle counter with bubble detection capability
(Photo courtesy of TRIBOTEX Co., Ltd.)

Supporting the Research & Development and Commercialization of SME Manufacturers

In a bid to strengthen the global competitiveness of our nation's manufacturing and service industries, we employ the subsidized Go-Tech Project to support initiatives with high potential for commercialization. These initiatives include research and development, prototype development, and the exploration of new distribution routes, undertaken by SMEs in collaboration with universities and research institutions such as public testing laboratories.

(Innovation Promotion Division)

◆ Example of Subsidy Utilization

Against the backdrop of the declining birthrate, aging population, and overall population decline, there is growing social demand for autonomous driving technology. Concurrently, there is a need to reduce costs toward expanding the development of accurate 3D mapping and 3D model data, which are essential for improving vehicle self-position estimation and recognition capabilities.

In this research and development project, our aim was to realize the practical implementation of autonomous driving technologies in society. We developed an inexpensive backpack-type and vehicle-mounted data measurement system in addition to software to generate accurate 3D maps (point cloud maps and vector maps) and 3D model data using the collected data. Furthermore, we succeeded in utilizing AI technology to automate the post-processing tasks, such as eliminating noise from point clouds and adding road attributes to maps, which were previously done manually.



▲ Backpack-type measurement system
(Photo courtesy of MAP IV, Inc.)

Supporting the Innovation of New Products and Development of Sales Channels

We partner with local governments, regional support organizations, and financial institutions to provide comprehensive support in strengthening product competitiveness and establishing strong brand identities for appealing products crafted using the abundant regional resources of the Chubu region, as well as new products born from agriculture-commerce-industry partnerships. We also support the expansion of sales channels both domestically and internationally through business conventions and other events.

Additionally, we recognize and promote business plans that facilitate collaboration between SMEs and operators in the agriculture, forestry, and fishery sectors, in accordance with the Act on Promotion of Business Activities by Collaboration Between Small and Medium Sized Enterprise Operators and Operators of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery.

(Business Support Division)



▲ Business discussion between a service/parking area tenant and business operator



▲ Maze no Hoba Sushi (Maze's regional sushi wrapped in magnolia leaf)
The package was developed through the Regional Organization Trademark and Regional Brand Utilization Promotion Project in 2023, leveraging regional resources through regional partnerships
(Photo courtesy of Maze Satoyama Co., Ltd.)

International Relations Policy



Aiming to Further Strengthen the Global Competitiveness of the Chubu Region

Through the Greater Nagoya Initiative (GNI), we partner with local governments, industries, and universities to attract outstanding companies, technologies, and talent from around the world. At the same time, we encourage local companies to embrace new challenges and take steps to expand their businesses internationally. We are working to enhance the global competitiveness of the Chubu region by providing local companies with business information on countries of interest, such as India, supporting their on-site business activities, attracting and retaining foreign companies, and other related endeavors.

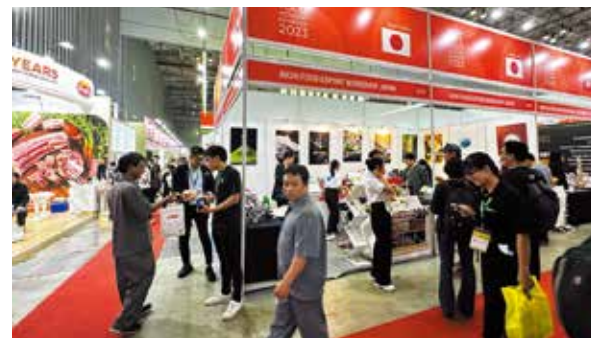
(International Affairs Division)



▲Promoting the Greater Nagoya region at an exhibition in France



▲A discussion between highly skilled professionals from India and local companies



▲A campaign to promote Japanese food at FOOD EXPO VIETNAM



◆ What is the Greater Nagoya Initiative (GNI) ?

The Greater Nagoya Initiative (GNI) is a project by a collective of industry-academia-government entities that is working toward the dissemination of information overseas, promotion of foreign investments in Japan, and creation of new business opportunities under the “Greater Nagoya” brand, an economic zone stretching at a radius of approximately 100 km, with Nagoya City at its center.

Initiatives for Economic Security and Export Management to Protect the Future and Technologies of Industries

In an era where global affairs are becoming increasingly severe and complex, as seen in the US-China confrontation and Russia's invasion of Ukraine, industries all over the world are facing difficult challenges. These include dealing with the economic measures imposed on other countries, having to back out of excessive dependence on specific nations, diversifying supply chains, and regional business restructuring. In response, the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) has established the “Action Plan for Strengthening the Foundation of Industries and Technologies Related to Economic Security” that aims to protect and strengthen domestic industries against threats and risks in global competition. We endeavor to enhance innovation and supply chains through public-private partnerships, unified implementation of industrial support and protection measures, and strategic collaborations with like-minded countries and regions.

As outstanding products and technologies carry the risk of being diverted for military use, Japan regulates exports and transactions under the Foreign Exchange and Foreign Trade Act. The Chubu region is home to a concentration of companies with advanced manufacturing technologies, particularly in metal processing. Due to this, we conduct screenings in accordance with the aforementioned Act to prevent the leakage of products and technologies to entities that may threaten peace and security. Furthermore, we support the establishment of export management systems to promote initiatives toward security export control in companies, and universities and other research institutions.

(International Affairs Office)

Japan's Vision

Advancement toward independence

Establishment of a supply system to avoid excessive dependence on other countries

Securing dominance and indispensability

Possessing the strength to become indispensable on the global stage

Maintenance and enhancement of international order

Foreign partnerships based on fundamental values and rules

Promotion

Economic Security Promotion Act

- 1 Enhance the supply chain of key supplies and raw materials
- 2 Secure the safety and reliability of essential infrastructure through pre-screening and other means
- 3 Develop advanced critical technologies through public-private partnerships
- 4 Ensure non-disclosure of patents related to national security

▲ Economic security framework promoted by the government under the Economic Security Promotion Act (enacted in May 2022)

Regional Economic Policy

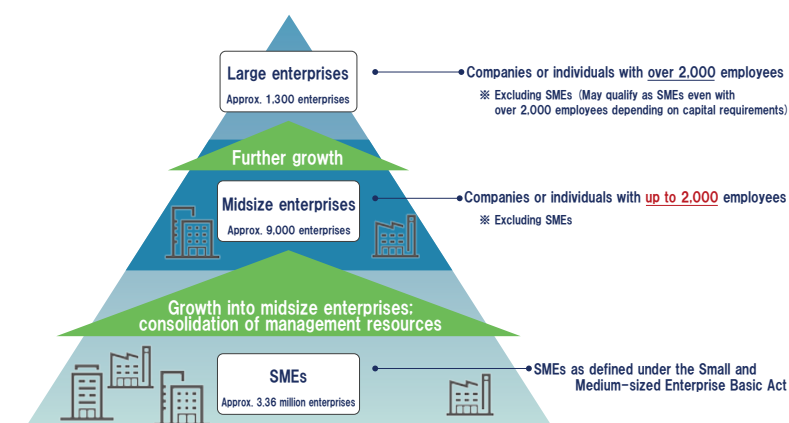


2024 as the Kick-off Year for Midsized Enterprises

Midsized enterprises are pivotal to Japan's economic growth, significantly contributing to the expansion of domestic businesses and investments, in addition to the increase in regional wages. They are expected to develop even further through advanced management, market expansion, and business diversification associated with their growth. With that, the government has designated 2024 to be the "kick-off year for midsized enterprises," implementing focused support measures and cross-ministerial initiatives for this sector.

The Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) is committed to providing subsidies and various tax incentives to encourage midsized enterprises to engage in large-scale capital investments and wage increases, as well as supporting their moves toward the development of new business ventures. At the Chubu Bureau of Economy, Trade and Industry, our mission is to further the development and expansion of midsized enterprises by disseminating information to enterprises and collaborating with relevant organizations to ensure that these midsized enterprises can effectively utilize these measures. In particular, the development of new businesses must be promoted with consideration for the unique characteristics of the region, such as its industrial structure. To support this, we will collaborate with leading support organizations in the region to establish a platform for support organizations and midsized and core enterprises that are highly motivated to start new businesses. We will also build momentum through seminars and workshops, as well as dispatch specialists with advanced expertise, to promote the development of new businesses and the growth of midsized, core enterprises.

(Business Support Division)



▲ Definition of Midsized Enterprises

Addressing the Once-in-a-Century Reform in the Automotive Industry

The automotive industry, regarded as the backbone of Japan's manufacturing industry, is currently undergoing a massive transformation driven by advancements in CASE (Connected, Autonomous, Shared, Electric) and MaaS (Mobility as a Service) technologies, on top of the demands to address carbon neutrality throughout the entire lifecycle of products. To overcome this time of great changes, small- and medium-sized parts suppliers in the Chubu region have to manage their existing businesses while simultaneously shifting their manufacturing focus from automotive components (such as engines and transmissions), which are expected to see a decline in demand, to the production of electrical components, where demand is expected to grow in the future. In this context, it becomes crucial for these businesses to develop business plans in preparation for future business transformations while making investments in facilities, nurturing human resources, and developing technologies.

In light of these, we are taking the following initiatives to support regional businesses that are taking aggressive actions to convert and restructure their businesses, such as shifting to the manufacturing of electrical automotive components or adapting their technologies following vehicle transformations brought about by electrification.

- ▶ Accompanied support based on the supplier's business status
 - └ Consultations through helplines, and dispatch of specialists
 - └ Hosting seminars and hands-on training
- ▶ Establishment of a regional support network system
- ▶ Dissemination of information on CASE, MaaS, and the latest trends on technological advancements
- ▶ Support for facility investments and technology development

We also aim to resolve mobility-related issues and promote regional revitalization through the social implementation of new mobility services. To achieve this, we take part in raising awareness and promoting solutions by supporting MaaS demonstrations within the region and hosting tours of experimentation sites.

(Automobile-Related Industry Office)



▲ Tour of autonomous driving demonstration site in Nisshin City

Supporting the Launch of New Businesses in the Forges and Foundries Sector

The forges and foundries sector is the industry where metals and other materials are forged and processed to manufacture components for automobiles and industrial machinery. To support the numerous small- and medium-sized companies specializing in forges and foundries in the Chubu region, we organize seminars aimed at the launch of new businesses such as business-to-consumer ventures, and offer programs to utilize business restructuring subsidies. Our goal is to strengthen the ability of companies to transform their businesses in preparation for reforms in the automotive industry in the future, as well as the advent of a new era that comes with such elements as carbon neutrality.

(Manufacturing Industries Division)

◆ Example of Adoption of Funding Projects



▲ Rolling out a plating line for athletics as part of the company's new business expansion
(Photo courtesy of Nagoya Mekki Inc.)

◆ Example of Corporate Innovation Challenges



▲ An example of the company's challenge to manufacture and sell golf clubs leveraging their in-house technology
(Photo courtesy of MS Manufacturing Department, MS Group Co., Ltd.)

Support for Nurturing Human Resources in the Semiconductor Industry

Semiconductors serve as a critical platform supporting digital society that is characterized by 5G, Big Data, AI, IoT, autonomous cars, robotics, smart cities, and digital transformation (DX). They are also regarded as vital strategic technology directly connected to economic security. The Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) is promoting support to secure Japan's ability to produce and supply semiconductors.

The Chubu region is home to numerous factories operated by semiconductor-related companies. But while they play an important role in Japan's semiconductor industry, these companies also face challenges such as the low level of recognition of the semiconductor industry, difficulties in recruiting talent, and a lack of educational content provided by academic institutions. To address these issues, we established the Chubu Region Liaison Council for Human Resource Development in Semiconductors in May 2023, with participating members from semiconductor manufacturers and academic institutions in the Chubu region. The Council aims to create an environment that encourages an increase in the number of science and engineering students interested in the semiconductor industry, and expands the talent pool for the semiconductor industry.

Specifically, the Council is working on activities such as factory tours, internships, special lectures, joint industry briefings, and the creation of human resource development programs, all through industry-academia collaboration.

(Manufacturing Industries Division)



▲ Hands-on training in wafer manufacturing process
(Photo courtesy of Toyohashi University of Technology)



▲ Semiconductor substrate

Aiming to Revive the Aerospace Industry

The Chubu region is home to the only aerospace industry cluster in the country. In order to capture new value and realize growth in the aerospace industry in the Chubu region amid the changes in the environment surrounding the aerospace industry, such as green and digital transformations, we will facilitate supplier reforms, nurture human resources, improve productivity through labor-saving efforts, and support global expansion efforts in accordance with the Aerospace Industry Strategy that was established in April 2024. Through these endeavors, we aim to enhance the resilience of supply chains proactively adding value to their worth and generating the momentum for growth.

(Aerospace and Next Generation Industry Division)



▲ Singapore Air Show 2024

Aiming to Revive the Next Generation Industry

Looking ahead to the 2030s, we aim to explore new demands that are yet to be seen. Our objective is to respond to diversifying social issues and create new values by leveraging the potential of the Chubu region, where numerous manufacturers with diverse aspects and technologies are concentrated, and by combining existing technologies with new ones.

(Aerospace and Next Generation Industry Division)

◆ The Healthcare Sector

To address the social issues in the medical and nursing care fields resulting from an aging society, as well as in the healthcare field, we aim to further strengthen the industry-academia-government-finance network. At the same time, we will strive to create and expand the market for products and services that incorporate the manufacturing technologies and emerging digital technologies of the Chubu region.



▲ Medical Messe 2024

◆ The Next Generation Air Mobility Sector

As an emerging mobility industry, drones and flying cars hold great potential in the field of next generation air mobility. In this sector, we will leverage the potential of the Chubu region, where automotive and aerospace industries are concentrated, and collaborate with municipalities to create use cases that combine people, things, and services, while also providing support for technological development.



▲ Rendering of the utilization of next generation air mobility

◆ The Space Sector

In the space sector, which is expected to grow significantly in the coming years, we aim to promote the emergence of new businesses in the space equipment industry, including satellite and rocket manufacturing. In addition, we will endeavor to create space-related services that utilize satellite data, which will be used across various business sectors.



▲ Satellite remote sensing data utilization seminar by Monopura Chubu

Securing and Utilizing Diverse Human Resources

Aiming towards sustainable development and increased value of SMEs in the Chubu region, we promote the understanding of the importance of formulating and implementing human resource strategies in conjunction with management strategies. We also promote the “Regional Human Resources Division” to support the region as a unified entity and engage in initiatives to secure diverse talents who contribute to the resolution of management challenges for SMEs.

Moreover, through the “Next-Generation Female Leader Training Course (Chubu WIN),” which promotes female contributions within companies and encourages the formation of networks of potential female leaders, and the dissemination of “Case Studies of Diverse Human Resource Contributions and Worker-Friendly SMEs,” we aim to establish an employee-friendly work environment where diverse talents, including women, can actively participate.

(Regional Development and Human Resources Policy Division)



▲ The 6th Next-Generation Female Leader Training Course [Chubu WIN] Completion Ceremony



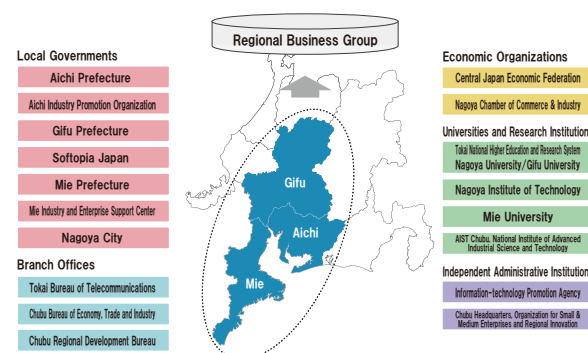
▲ Case Studies of Diverse Human Resource Contributions and Worker-Friendly SMEs

Supporting Businesses in Their Pursuit of Digital Transformation

The Chubu DX Promotion Community was established in March 2022 as a collaborative support program initiated by industry, academia, and government to advance the digitalization and digital transformation (DX) of companies within the Tokai region. Throughout FY2023, our activities focused on introducing successful implementation cases with an emphasis on the processes leading up to the realization of DX. We also conducted discussions on the strategic mapping of support measures provided by various support organizations and on cybersecurity measures pillared on DX and regional partnerships. The Chubu DX Promotion Community is a one-stop portal site where visitors can find comprehensive information on the support efforts of participating entities. Moreover, in March 2024, we held a forum to report on the accomplishments of the Chubu DX Promotion Community. The forum also included presentations of progressive case studies of SMEs utilizing data to combine traditional techniques with cutting-edge technologies, as well as support initiatives implemented by participating organizations. From FY2024 onwards, we will focus on the three key sectors of data utilization, talent development for promoting DX, and cybersecurity in a bid to further expand the support system involving the entire community and continue our activities.

The Tokai/Hokuriku regions conducted the “SMEs x DX Challenge Project” to promote the digital transformation of SMEs. In this project, we offered assistance to secure and foster human resources necessary for promoting DX based on the degree of engagement of the companies involved.

(Information Policy Office)



▲ Promotion system for the Chubu DX Promotion Community



▲ At the Chubu DX Promotion Community Forum 2024

Promoting the Traditional Crafts Industry

The Chubu region boasts 42 “traditional crafts” designated by the Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry and which are crafted using skills and techniques cultivated through years of history and local practices. These traditional handicrafts represent the origins of Japan’s world-renowned manufacturing prowess and are also valued for their historical significance, making them a legacy to be passed on to future generations. However, producers of traditional crafts and local industries in the Chubu region and across Japan have to deal with structural challenges such as the shrinking domestic market, aging artisans, lack of successors, and supply chain issues. To address these challenges, a project called “Shitetsusai” was launched in 2023 by artisans and other relevant parties with a determination to continue these traditions into the future. The project is committed to making sustainable efforts towards resolving these structural challenges.

The damage caused by the Noto Peninsula Earthquake in 2024 to the production sites was devastating, and in response, the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) established the Traditional Craft Industry Support Subsidy Program to facilitate the swift restoration and recovery of the affected areas. Moreover, in April 2024, we launched “Shitetsusai: The Noto Peninsula Earthquake Revival Project” under the slogan, “Passing the flame of tradition through enduring bonds.” Panel discussions and workshops were held with exhibitors carrying deep sympathy for the disaster-stricken areas.

Additionally, once every year, we honor individuals and entities that have made significant contributions to the promotion of the traditional craft industry through the “Traditional Crafts Industry Distinguished Service Awards.” Through this, we aim to further promote the presence of traditional crafts in the everyday lives of the Japanese people and to motivate those involved in the traditional craft industry.

(Manufacturing Industries Division)



▲ Wajima lacquerware, one of the designated traditional crafts of Japan
(Photo courtesy of the Wajima Lacquerware Industry and Commerce Cooperative Association)

◆ Shitetsusai (職手継祭)

The logo represents the blazing “flame” of tradition, with Japanese characters “し (shi)” “て (te)” and “つ (tsu)” incorporated into the design.

- Mission: Keeping the flame of tradition alive
- Vision: Fostering management systems and production areas with increased industrial metabolism, thereby creating jobs that young generations aspire to pursue
- Values: Communicating the charms, encouraging dialogue, embracing change, and instilling regional pride



▲ The Shitetsusai venue



▲ Wajima lacquerware workshop at Shitetsusai: Noto Peninsula Earthquake Revival Project

Distribution and Service Policy



Promoting the Tourism-Related Industries

With the full recovery of inbound visitors and diversification of people's needs in relation to tourism, we are committed to stimulating economic growth through the revitalization of tourism-related industries. We will partner with regional municipalities and stakeholders and take advantage of the extensive infrastructure developments with the commencement of the Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan, the 2026 Asian Games and other major events, and the launch of the Linear Chuo Shinkansen.

The Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan, in particular, will be an opportunity for enhancing the tourism-related industries in the Chubu region. We will be hosting symposiums on tourism to raise public awareness about sustainable regional development in the context of tourism. We also provide support for creating unique tourism content that utilizes the diverse regional resources of the Chubu region and promote regional partnerships of tourist destinations based on collected tourism data. Through these efforts, we aim to implement effective regional campaigns to attract visitors while also aiming to extend their stay and encourage increased consumption. This strategy is intended to generate a positive cycle of tourist consumption with the goal of encouraging the sustainable development of tourism-related industries and revitalizing the regional economy in the Chubu region.

(Distribution and Service Industries Division)



▲ A rendering of the Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan venue
(Photo courtesy of the Japan Association for the 2025 World Exposition)



▲ Symposium on sustainable regional development in tourism

Revitalization of Shopping Districts and City Centers

We are committed to supporting the entire process from problem assessment to the formulation and execution of solutions necessary for the revitalization of shopping districts and city centers. We will dispatch specialists matching the status and needs of the region to assist the initiatives of shopping districts aiming to improve their economic vitality and area value. We also utilize subsidy programs to aid in the restoration of arcades, streetlights, and other infrastructure in shopping districts damaged by the Noto Peninsula Earthquake in 2024. Furthermore, we support efforts by shopping districts seeking to generate vitality and enthusiasm in their streets.

(Commerce Promotion Office)



▲ Wajima Asaichi Market pop-up held in Kanaiwa, Kanazawa City, organized by the Committee to Support the Wajima Asaichi Market and other organizations

Initiatives to Address Distribution Challenges in 2024

Distribution is an essential social infrastructure that supports the livelihood of people and economic activities. On the other hand, the challenges faced by the distribution industry in recent years have become increasingly severe. In addition to the ongoing manpower shortage, particularly among drivers, the maximum labor hour regulations for truck drivers have been implemented from FY2024, requiring urgent responses to improve distribution efficiency, review business practices, and implement labor reforms. In a bid to resolve these distribution challenges, we have been holding discussions and sharing information with stakeholders, shippers, and distribution companies. Moreover, to accelerate the response to the distribution challenges in 2024 in the Chubu region, we have joined hands with relevant government agencies to establish the "Policy Package Toward Distribution Reform" Chubu Block Promotion Conference to promote this initiative in the Chubu region.

(Distribution and Service Industries Division)



▲ Participating organizations of the "Policy Package Toward Distribution Reform" Chubu Block Promotion Conference handing a request letter to the Central Japan Economic Federation

Energy and Environment Policy

▲Nyuzen Offshore Wind Power Farm located in Nyuzen-machi, Shimoniikawa-gun, Toyama Prefecture (Photo courtesy of VENTI JAPAN Inc.)

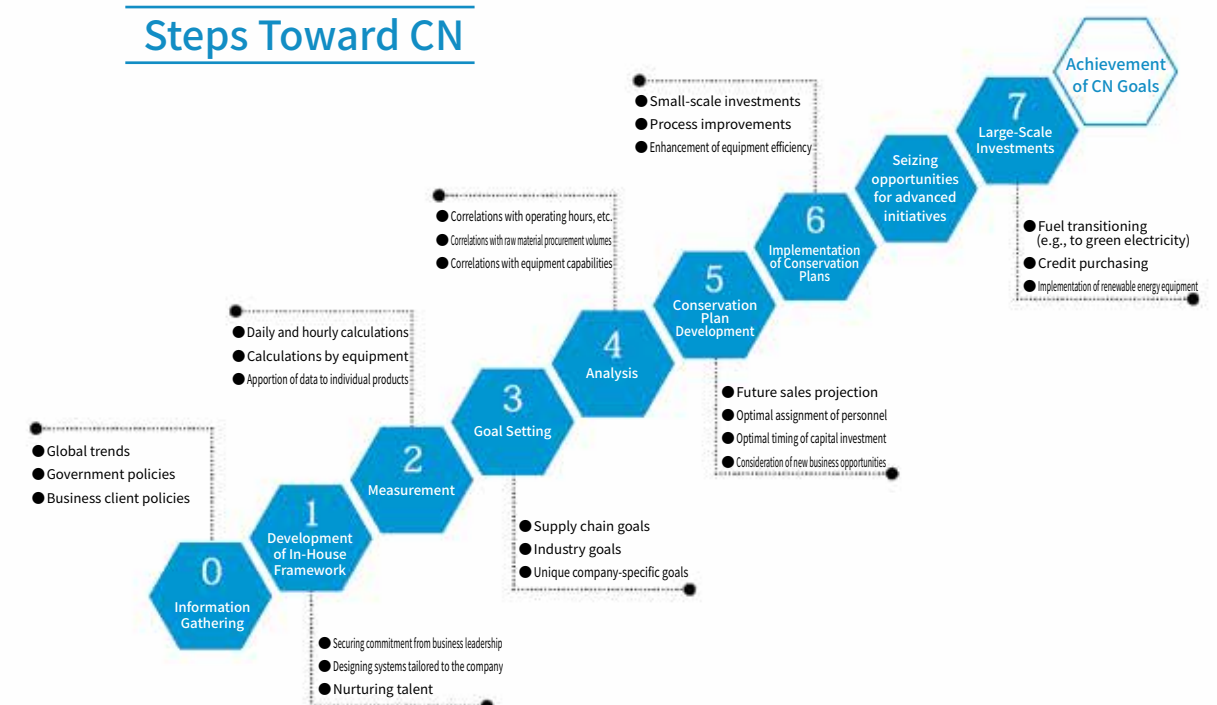
Promoting Carbon Neutrality in the Manufacturing Sector

Achieving carbon neutrality (CN) has become an urgent global issue. Governments and private sectors in Japan and overseas are accelerating their efforts, causing rapid changes in the business environments surrounding companies. Client companies, consumers, financial markets, governments, and various stakeholders are demanding reductions in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions across the entire supply chain. This call for action extends not only to major corporations but also to SMEs in the Chubu region. Moreover, SMEs, which make up 70% of Japan's employment, account for approximately 20% of the nation's total CO₂ emissions, so it is imperative for SMEs to take measures to achieve CN by 2050.

Under these circumstances, we have partnered with the Organization for Small & Medium Enterprises and Regional Innovation to develop the "Guideline for Carbon Neutral Initiatives for the Manufacturing Industry" in hopes of inspiring SMEs to take a step toward CN. We also support initiatives of regional business operators working to achieve carbon neutrality. One such example is the support for initiatives related to the reduction of CO₂ emissions through visualization for business operators with the potential to create a significant ripple effect throughout the entire supply chain. In addition, we introduce stakeholders who are at the forefront of the CN journey and highlight their earlier success stories.

(Carbon Neutrality Promotion Office)

Steps Toward CN



Utilizing Hydrogen, Ammonia and Other New Energy Sources, and Building Stable and Large-Scale Supply Systems

To achieve carbon neutrality by 2050, it is essential to expand decarbonized energy sources in the electricity sector and promote efforts of the industrial, public welfare, and transportation sectors for decarbonization in heat utilization by employing decarbonized electricity, hydrogen, and ammonia, among others.

The environmental infrastructure is being developed to promote prompt supply and utilization in a bid to encourage the widespread adoption of new energy sources, such as hydrogen and ammonia. In the Chubu region, the use of hydrogen and ammonia is anticipated across various industries. These areas include local power generation in the Ise Bay area's industrial complex; commercial application in the fields of petroleum refining, steel manufacturing, chemicals, and mobility; and factory application primarily in automotive-related industries in inland areas. By pioneering the implementation of hydrogen, ammonia and other energy sources at manufacturing sites in the Chubu region, where world-leading manufacturers are concentrated, we aim to realize a clean supply chain across the entire region from the bay area to the inland areas.

(Carbon Neutrality Promotion Office)



▲ Expansion of hydrogen and ammonia application in the Chubu region
(Photo courtesy of Central Japan Hydrogen and Ammonia Association)

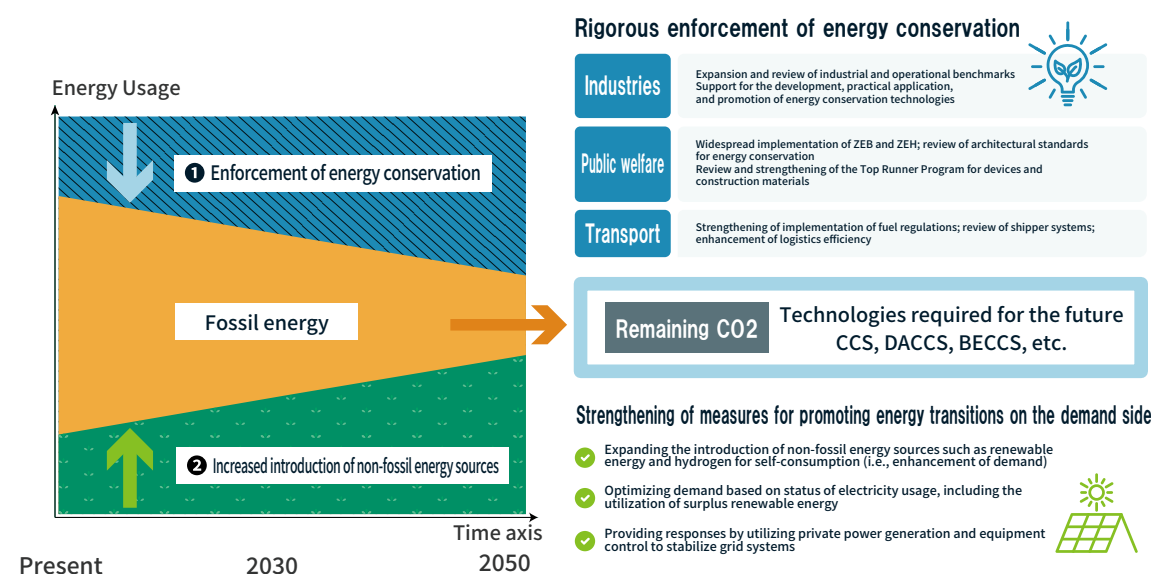
Aiming Towards the Introduction of New Energy Sources and Energy Conservation

We are engaged in formulating various energy-related policies toward realizing green transformation (GX).

For renewable energy, the government's basic policy is to encourage its maximum implementation with a goal of having the share of renewable energy hit the targeted 36% to 38% of the entire energy source by FY2030 under the premise of regional coexistence. Starting in FY2022, we introduced the market-linked Feed-in-Premium (FIP) scheme, in addition to the Feed-in Tariff (FIT) system, to integrate renewable energy into the power supply market. Additionally, in FY2024, we have mandated certification for companies holding briefings and making preliminary information dissemination efforts to community members. These efforts aim to promote the implementation of renewable energy through coexistence with local communities. Furthermore, efforts have been made to rationalize the use of fossil energy up until now. With the amendment of the Act on Rationalizing Energy Use in April 2023, however, we have shifted to rationalizing all energy sources, including non-fossil energy, and demanding the transition to non-fossil energy while also promoting the optimization of electricity demands. To encourage the transition to non-fossil energy, it is essential to expand the implementation of renewable energy for private consumption and the application of hydrogen and other non-fossil energy sources. Through these efforts and law amendments, we enforce the proper laws and regulations on a daily basis.

On top of that, we have been engaged in various energy-related measures in the Chubu region, including holding conferences to promote the Chubu region's energy and global warming measures, promoting and popularizing the J-Credit Scheme, and supporting the creation and utilization of Chubu CO2 Credits.

(Energy Policy Division)



Promoting the 3Rs and Acting Toward a Circular Economy

Our nation has been taking the lead in the effort to shift to a circular economic system in accordance with the Circular Economy Vision that was formulated in 1999 and the Basic Act on Establishing a Sound Material-Cycle Society that was enacted in 2000. Specifically, we have established the Act on the Promotion of Effective Utilization of Resources and various recycling laws according to the characteristics of each product (e.g., laws for the recycling of containers and packaging, home appliances, automobiles, small home appliances). We also promote the 3Rs, which include initiatives to reduce the generation of waste through resource conservation and extended product life, reuse products and components, and recycle products through collection and resource recovery. We are committed to raising public awareness and disseminating information about relevant laws, such as the individual recycling laws and the Plastic Resource Circulation Act enacted in 2022. Moreover, we provide guidance to business operators to ensure compliance with these laws.

In recent years, due to resource constraints arising from increasing global demand for natural resources and heightened geopolitical risks, there has been an urgent need to transition to a circular economy (CE) that prioritizes efficient and circular resource utilization while maximizing added value.

In Japan, we have established the Growth-Oriented Resource-Autonomous Economy Strategy in March 2023 as a comprehensive policy package aimed at fostering the independence and strengthening of domestic resource circulation systems while pursuing international market acquisition. As one of the actions formulated under this strategy, we established the Industry-Government-Academia Partnership for a Circular Economy (Circular Partners) in December 2023, connecting ambitious corporations, universities, and municipalities to consider necessary measures toward the creation of a circular economy. At the Chubu Bureau of Economy, Trade and Industry, we communicate information on the latest domestic and international trends on the circular economy. Additionally, we leverage the potential of the Chubu region, where arterial industries centered around the automotive sector and venous industries with advanced recycling technologies are concentrated, to assess the current state of resource circulation and identify potential challenges. By doing so, we can develop concrete measures, such as fostering partnerships between arterial and venous industries, to realize the creation of a circular economy.

(Environmental Protection, Resource Efficiency and Circular Economy Division)



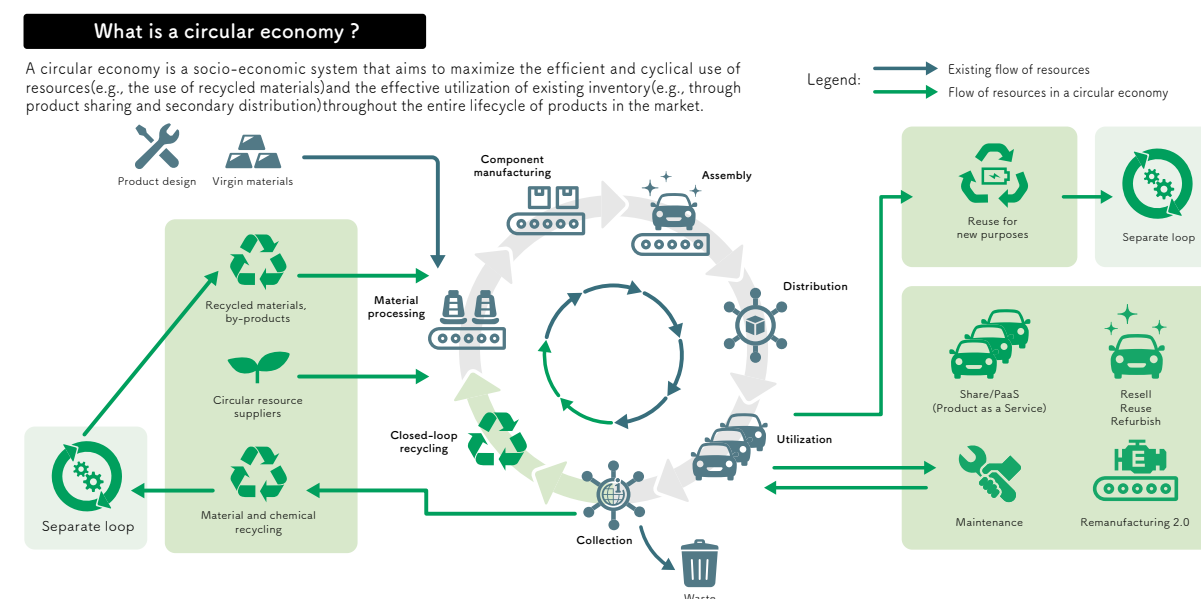
▲ A campaign on the Home Appliance Recycling Law in a shopping complex



▲ On-site inspection at a venous company



▲ At a circular economy seminar on the latest domestic and international trends



Safety and Security



Assuring Consumers of a Safe and Secure Living Environment

Driven by the diversification of product and service provision and payment methods, the consumer environment is changing rapidly every day. With these changes, the prevalence of internet scams, such as phishing, frauds, and social media scams, has become a national concern. Coupled with the increased convenience of services, such as the cross-border e-commerce that allows individuals to directly purchase products from global markets, the nature of consumer troubles is also evolving.

In accordance with the laws that are revised to adapt to these societal shifts, we endeavor to protect consumers and realize a safe and secure society by providing advice to consumers through consultations, promoting consumer awareness, particularly among youths and the elderly who are more likely to fall victim, optimizing consumer transaction by enforcing administrative actions against malicious businesses violating laws and ordinances, and ensuring product safety.

(Consumer Affairs Division)

Securing Product Safety

To ensure the safety of electronics and everyday consumer goods, we disseminate information on the procedures and obligations imposed on manufacturers and importers of these products while providing guidance to improve their operations. We also encourage a strong culture of product safety through the Best Contributors to Product Safety Awards (PS Awards), a program that recognizes outstanding efforts by companies and organizations to ensure product safety. For consumers, we conduct campaigns to raise awareness so that they can protect themselves from product-related accidents. These campaigns include presenting incidents resulting from misuse or negligence and issuing warnings to prevent such accidents.

In recent years, the rapid expansion of internet transactions has heightened the government's role in developing an environment where consumers can safely use products purchased through online platforms operated by domestic and international businesses. We are also committed to preventing accidents related to children's products sold directly from foreign companies.

(Product Safety Office)



▲ A guest lecture at Meijo University Senior High School



▲ Exhibiting at Nagoya Ethical Fair ☆2023, an event advocating for consumer affairs in Nagoya City



▲ A cut electric cord catches on fire (Photo courtesy of the National Institute of Technology and Evaluation)



▲ A poster advocating restrictions on the sale of magnet sets and water beads

Securing the Proper Distribution of Alcohol

Alcohol is a staple good that is essential in people’s lives and industrial activities, as it is utilized not only as beverages but also for industrial applications in the food, chemical, and pharmaceutical industries. To prevent the unauthorized use of alcohol as raw ingredients in liquor while securing the supply for industrial applications, we employ a license system for the manufacture, import, sales, and use of alcohol in accordance with the Ethanol Business Act. Additionally, we endeavor to secure the proper distribution of alcohol by conducting on-site inspections and post-process checks upon receiving regular reports from licensed businesses.

(Alcohol Office)



▲A poster to raise awareness about the Ethanol Business Act

Securing Stable Energy Supply Supporting the Social Foundation

We aim to properly execute the Electricity Business Act and secure a stable supply of electricity in order to protect the interests of electricity users and ensure the healthy development of electricity businesses. In order to do that, we have joined hands with local municipalities to establish a response system during critical shortages of power supplies. At the same time, we engage in regional promotional activities that aim to foster understanding of local communities regarding the installation and operation of power plants. Moreover, to protect the interests of gas users and ensure a healthy development of gas businesses, we strive to foster mutual understanding with local gas businesses and communicate information on compliance with the Gas Business Act while executing proper approval procedures.

(Electricity and Gas Industry Division)



▲The Hida Converter Station that can convert frequencies
(Photo courtesy of the Chubu Electric Power Grid)



▲Gas holders for adjusting supply and demand
(Photo courtesy of the Toho Gas Network Co., Ltd.)

Securing Stable Supply of Resources and Fuel Supporting the Regional Society

To ensure quality assurance and the stable supply of petroleum products and to properly conduct rational development of mineral resources, we monitor and provide guidance to relevant stakeholders and endeavor to contribute to the improved welfare of residents near petroleum-related facilities. Moreover, to achieve a smooth supply of fuel during large-scale disasters, we participate in emergency drills and hold working groups in partnership with other ministries and agencies, municipalities, and relevant organizations. In addition, we are working to revitalize the management of gas stations (service stations), which are essential and integral social infrastructures for the community, in an effort to maintain a continuous and stable fuel supply. More specifically, we aim to roll out case studies across the industry and improve the overall image of the industry. We also conduct workshops for gas station operators to inspire ideas for new business initiatives.

(Natural Resources and Fuel Division)



▲Fueling training during a comprehensive disaster drill held in Anjo City, Aichi Prefecture in FY2023

Proper Monitoring of Electricity and Gas Transactions

With the complete liberalization of electricity and gas retailing, we are dedicated to implementing appropriate monitoring practices through audits and report collection imposed on operators to ensure fair and free competition.

(Electricity and Gas Market Surveillance Office)

Organization

◆General Coordination and Policy Planning Department

- General Affairs Division
 - Information Disclosure and Public Relations Office
- Policy Planning and Research Division
- Budget and Accounts Division
- Electricity and Gas Market Surveillance Office

◆Economic Policy Department

- Economic Policy Division
 - Competition Enhancement Office
- Regional Development and Human Resources Policy Division
 - Investment in the Regional Future Promotion Office
- Aerospace and Next Generation Industry Division
 - Information Policy Office
- Innovation Promotion Division
 - Intellectual Property Office
- International Affairs Division

◆Industries Department

- Industrial Promotion Division
 - Alcohol Office
 - Financial Inspection Office for Small and Medium Enterprises
 - Promotion Office for Reconstruction
- Consumer Affairs Division
 - Consumer Advice Office
 - Product Safety Office
- Manufacturing Industries Division
 - Automobile-Related Industry Office
- Distribution and Service Industries Division
 - Commerce Promotion Office
 - Advisory Office for Large-Scale Retail Stores Location Law
- Small and Medium Enterprise Division
 - Fair Transaction Promotion Office
- Business Support Division
 - SME Business Capabilities Enhancement Office

◆Natural Resources, Energy and Environment Department

- Natural Resources, Energy and Environment Division
 - Public Relations Office for Comprehensive Energy Policy Planning
 - Carbon Neutrality Promotion Office
- Environmental Protection, Resource Efficiency and Circular Economy Division
- Energy Policy Division
- Electricity and Gas Industry Division
 - Gas Industry Office
- Natural Resources and Fuel Division

◆Hokuriku Branch of Electricity and Gas Industry

- General Affairs Division
 - Hokuriku Economic Planning and Research Office
- Regional Economic and Industrial Division
- Electricity and Gas Industry Division
 - Public Relations Office
- Electricity and Gas Market Surveillance Office

Ministry of Economy Trade and Industry
Chubu Bureau of Economy, Trade and Industry

Address 2-5-2 Sannomaru, Naka-ku, Nagoya-shi,
Aichi, Japan 460-8510

Phone +81 (52) 951-2683

URL <https://www.chubu.meti.go.jp/>

Ministry of Economy Trade and Industry
Chubu Bureau of Economy, Trade and Industry
Hokuriku Branch of Electricity and Gas Industry

Address 3rd Floor, Toyama Government Office, 11-7 Ushijimashinmachi,
Toyama-shi, Toyama, Japan 930-0856

Phone +81 (76) 432-5588

URL <https://www.chubu.meti.go.jp/e11hokuriku/>