

## Preface

From 2004 to the first half of 2005, the Japanese machine and information industries were driven by the buoyant state of the automobile and auto parts sectors, with the result that industrial machinery, such as machine tools, bolstered the recovery trend. Furthermore, there was strong demand for digital home appliances due to the emergence of new products aimed at the domestic market. In particular, white goods that respond to new needs oriented towards health, the environment or universal design stimulated domestic demand. At the same time, with regard to the equipment investment situation, investment behaviour has been seen that differs from the overseas transfer of production hubs seen hitherto, with successive announcements of the establishment of and plans to establish large-scale plants within Japan, aimed at the production of next-generation products, such as LCDs, giving rise to a feeling that these are signs of a return to Japan in the manufacturing sector.

Accordingly, in this publication *The Machine Industry in Japan 2005*, we focus on these trends in the Japanese machine industry in 2004 and the first half of 2005, under the title *Recovery and Signs of a Return to Japan Due to "Driving Force" Industries Such as the Auto Industry*.

In compiling this report, we broadened the scope to include the following 6 fields and 27 industry sectors, with the aim of achieving broader coverage of machine industry fields in Japan, and analyzed various demand and supply trends, the export and import situation, business conditions and industrial trends.

A diverse range of industrial fields and sectors have been covered, as follows. Industrial machinery: machine tools, injection moulding and plastic processing machinery, press forging machinery, vending machines, transport equipment and industrial robots, construction equipment, device manufacturing equipment (semiconductor and FPD panel manufacturing equipment), agricultural machinery, textile machinery, refrigerating machines and appliances. Heavy electric machinery for industrial use: heavy electric machinery, etc. Electrical machinery: household electric machinery, household electronic machinery (including cameras), batteries, electronic devices, general electronic components, telecommunications equipment and wireless appliances, medical electronics, computers and office machines. Transport equipment: automobiles, auto parts, motorcycles, industrial vehicles, aircraft. Precision instruments: measuring instruments and analytical equipment. Machine elements: bearings, molds/dies. Moreover, in the statistics section, we have compiled statistical information concerning major industries relating to the machinery and information industries, in a form compatible with machine industry statistics.

This report (for use in our English-language journal) is an English translation of part of the aforementioned *The Machine Industry in Japan 2005*. We hope that this report will be of assistance in some way to those involved in research and industrial policies relating to the machine and information industries in Japan.

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