"I didn’t realize this town had this strength!" Even though you may think you know a lot about your hometown, you can always learn something new and unexpected by looking at objective data. The number of tourists is showing sluggish growth, the key industry is shrinking... hints for resolving such problems in the region could be hidden among the vast amounts of data.

However, it is a formidable task to collect and analyze different kinds of data and determine their meaning. In such cases, you can rely on "RESAS," the regional economy and society analyzing system, launched by the national government from 2015. It is a groundbreaking tool that creates easy-to-understand visualizations of a wide variety of data. RESAS consists of several maps, including "population," "industry," "sightseeing," and "regional economy flow." In addition to macro-analysis including changes in industrial structure, it is also searchable from micro-viewpoints such as determining how long tourists stay in popular stopping areas, or tracing the history of individual stores and offices in the shopping areas of the region.

RESAS is openly accessible on the web and available to anyone, except for some specific functions. In addition to being used by municipalities to plan policies and to evaluate their effects, it can also be used by companies in creating business opportunities, or by regional residents to improve their communities.

The national government also supports activities which utilize RESAS. It holds idea contests and workshops to discuss policies, so that a wide range of people can create ideas freely using RESAS. RESAS brings out new ideas for community building and business. We will examine the breadth of its functions through specific case examples of its use in the following page.
What can you see using RESAS?

The city utilizes RESAS data regarding the movement of foreign tourists by nationality including data which show the regions of the city which they stay for a longer time, and utilizes the results in developing city tour routes for tourists that are well-matched to the region’s characteristics. Furthermore, RESAS data in industry collaboration and the level of importance of particular industries within the city, such as the food and IT industries, a fact which was confirmed through comparative analysis with other cities.

In municipalities, regional communities, and schools

Sapporo City

Sapporo City mainly utilizes RESAS to promote industry, such as tourism and IT. In addition to learning about the region, by comparing with other regions, it is possible to understand the relative advantages and disadvantages of the region making it additionally useful for considering future policy directions. For example, the structure of industries was analyzed from new perspectives such as the number of employees or the amount of added value, and it was found that the city has a comparative advantage over other cities in the IT industry. The IT industry had been a policy focus for the city. So, collaborating with the IT industry leads to higher added value in the manufacture of food. Therefore, the city decided to promote inter-industry cooperation based on this advantage, including the development of new products and services, and expansion of sales channels. The city expects that by sharing the objective data obtained through RESAS not only with city staff engaged in different areas, but also with relevant parties such as private companies and those engaged in community-building, it will lead to realizing even more strategic community-building in the future.

[municipality] Tomigusuku City

By calculating the amount of added value per company in Sapporo City, the information and telecommunication industry ranked first. Moreover, the IT industry leads to higher added value in the manufacture of food. Therefore, the city decided to promote inter-industry cooperation based on this advantage, including the development of new products and services, and expansion of sales channels. The city expects that by sharing the objective data obtained through RESAS not only with city staff engaged in different areas, but also with relevant parties such as private companies and those engaged in community-building, it will lead to realizing even more strategic community-building in the future.

[Regional community] Tama Shinkin Bank

Tama Shinkin Bank has concluded partnership agreements with nine municipalities in the Tama Region, and has repeatedly held various workshops jointly with different municipalities. Despite the fact that it is located in Tokyo prefecture, the Tama Region strongly resembles a rural, residential area in many ways and therefore has been considering the possibility of a future population decrease. Making local revitalization an important theme of the region for a long time. As expected, it is difficult to promote local revitalization as a single municipality. Therefore, we held RESAS study sessions and workshops to further the theme in the region and between companies, jointly with various partners who are the members of the regional community, including residents, companies, universities and NPOs. Once we actually held the workshops, we were surprised at how interested participants were. Many people participated in every session, and the activities sparked other activities, such as the participants voluntarily continuing with the activities after the workshops, or residents starting a study group of their own to consider extensive collaboration. If these activities continue to advance, it will lead to finding NPOs and intermediaries supporting projects in such activities. In addition, in terms of business, visualizing the inter-corporate less that had been relatively unknown by utilizing the RESAS patient data may lead to the generation of new business. We are hoping to continue our efforts to share the future vision of the region with the entire community. Upon doing so, RESAS should play an important role in understanding the current situation of the region.

[Field of education] Fukushima City Gakuyou Lower Secondary School

The Innovation Club at Fukushima City Gakuyou Lower Secondary School won the grand prize of the "RESAS Idea Competition" for high school and university students last year. The club identified some problems in the region, and planned a sightseeing program as a solution. Tama Shinkin Bank is taking study sessions and workshops on RESAS for municipalities, companies and regional residents, aiming to collaborate throughout the entire region to realize the local revitalization of the community. The bank’s efforts have been developed into voluntary activities by the participants.

We believe that companies can be effectively handled if the information is presented in the database of industrial maps must be expanded. Moreover, it was found that the city has a comparative advantage over other cities in the IT industry. The IT industry leads to higher added value in the manufacture of food. Therefore, the city decided to promote inter-industry cooperation based on this advantage, including the development of new products and services, and expansion of sales channels. The city expects that by sharing the objective data obtained through RESAS not only with city staff engaged in different areas, but also with relevant parties such as private companies and those engaged in community-building, it will lead to realizing even more strategic community-building in the future.
Support the utilization of RESAS by communicating good ideas

In order to encourage even more people to use RESAS for more different purposes, METI is collaborating with the Cabinet Secretariat Headquarters for the Creation of Community, Human Resources and Jobs to hold events and compile case examples.

1. Improve staff education by holding workshops

In order to expand the utilization of RESAS not only for the formulation of comprehensive, local strategy, but also to allow municipalities to plan measures, “Policy Planning Workshops” are being held in various locations throughout Japan. Experts on industry, tourism and population are dispatched to these workshops held basically once a month since last summer. The experts not only hold discussions with the municipality staff in charge, but also give advice on data analysis. Also, by transmitting videos on the discussion being held and advice given, information and knowledge related to RESAS are shared with municipality staff throughout Japan.

2. The collection of utilization case examples comprises 19 model cases

Municipalities throughout Japan are looking for new administrative methods based on data. From those efforts, 19 case examples were collected and published as model cases in the form of the “Regional Economy and Society Analyzing System (RESAS) Utilization Case Examples.” The collection explains the use of RESAS that led to the planning of specific policies, such as the formulation of inter-industry cooperation and industrial promotion strategy, or the creation of new jobs by attracting appropriate companies to the region, in an easy-to-understand manner. It contains abundant information that is useful for those who are trying to use RESAS for the first time.

3. There were 907 applications from throughout Japan for the Idea Contest

The “Local Revitalization Policy Ideas Contest,” a contest being held among citizens nation-wide who have used RESAS to develop policies aimed at invigorating local areas. There were 907 applications in total in the “High-school Students and Younger” category and “University Students and General Citizens” section from throughout Japan. From these 907 applications, only 10 applications proceeded to the final screening. The Prize from the Minister in Charge of Vitalizing Local Economies in Japan, Awards of Excellence, Prize from the Presidents of Sponsor Companies, and other awards were awarded to the winners, who gave very enthusiastic presentations.