



How to make the EU-Japan deal work for consumers



Place consumers at the heart of the agreement

The EU-Japan agreement must involve and protect consumers and bring them real benefits, also in terms of sustainable development.

Involve consumer organisations

Modern trade agreements like JEFTA are supposed to be designed for all, including consumers. To make sure of this, consumer organisations must be involved in the process. If properly involved both during the negotiations and the implementation process, consumer organisations can provide constructive input to make it work for consumers. We want consumer organisations to be explicitly mentioned in the article on the domestic advisory group of the Trade and Sustainability Development Chapter.

Preserve consumer protection from foreign investors' attacks

An EU-Japan agreement with an ISDS or ICS regime would put consumers at risk. Foreign investors would have the possibility to attack a consumer protection measure in front of arbitration panels. This would not be acceptable for consumers.

Focus on adequate data protection instead of data flows rules

The EU and Japan made the right choice by exploring the adequacy of their data protection laws first, rather than introducing rules on data flows in their trade deal. If both legislations are recognised as being equivalent, there is no need to further discuss the issue in the trade agreement in the future.

Ensure food labels get better

Consumers expect this trade agreement to improve food labelling rules so that Japanese consumers will have at least the same level of information as consumers in Europe. This is especially the case for food additives and the right to know what foods are genetically modified or not, and which foods contain, consist or are obtained from GMOs. Country of origin labels should be encouraged as they provide consumers with the right to know where food is coming from.

Be transparent

The level of transparency during the negotiations was too low. The EU has published parts of the agreed chapters now, which is positive. But this must continue during the technical conclusion phase. Japan also has a responsibility in becoming more transparent and quickly translate the documents into Japanese and make them available to the wider public.

Make sure regulatory dialogues will benefit and protect consumers

Dialogues between EU and Japanese regulators should have the firm objective to enhance consumer welfare and must remain voluntary. However, a trade agreement is not the place to define a check list for good regulatory practices, notably as Parties want to protect their right to regulate.



European Consumer Organisation



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