

**COUNCIL****Council****IN-DEPTH EVALUATION OF THE COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER  
POLICY (CCP)****Executive Summary****JT03546695**

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## IN-DEPTH EVALUATION OF THE COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER POLICY (CCP)

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The Committee on Consumer Policy (hereafter the “Committee” or the “CCP”) was established in 1969 to “examine questions relating to the development and strengthening of consumer policy and to facilitate information exchange and international co-operation in this area”. The Committee’s substructure is composed of a single Level II subsidiary body, the Working Party on Consumer Product Safety (henceforth also referred to as the “WPCPS” or the “Working Party”). The Working Party was initially created in 1972 to “exchange information and develop analysis on trends and challenges associated with the safety of non-food consumer products”.

The objectives pursued by the CCP are highly relevant to the policy needs of OECD Members, as expressed by the Member views obtained through the on-line relevance survey. However, CCP objectives with a specific focus on consumer and business awareness-raising have a comparatively lower perceived relevance. This indicates a preference by Members for CCP’s ambitions aimed at influencing policy behaviour, rather than business and consumer behaviour and awareness directly.

There is a slight gap between the strong perceived relevance of CCP’s objectives, and the levels of capital-based delegate attendance to Committee meetings. The latter is used in this evaluation as a proxy for the level of interest that Members have in the work and objectives undertaken by the Committee. While capital-based delegate participation in the CCP increased throughout the review period, on average it remained lower than the average of all OECD Level I committees. It also decreased as compared to the previous reference period.

In terms of effectiveness, the qualitative policy contribution case studies point to the existence of an important CCP policy impact track record in OECD Members, non-Members, and international organisations working in the field of consumer policy. The CCP often acted as a “policy compass” by providing recommendations and guidance to policymakers and practitioners on sound policy solutions and good practices, including via standards and examples of international best practices. This outcome was frequently enabled by CCP’s empirical work and related publications, which are considered very useful in supporting policy discussions domestically and are valued by policymakers given their high level of detail and standards of reliability. Due to the nature of the policy areas it addresses, the CCP’s achievements illustrate how the work and collaboration undertaken by the OECD can lead to better conditions for consumers, in line with the OECD’s goal to support better policies for better lives. This achievement is noteworthy given the CCP’s modest resources. The policy contributions and recognised quality of committee work allowed the CCP to become one of the leading global consumer policy thought leaders and source of influence.

However, several factors have limited the CCP’s capacity to achieve further policy contributions, including lack of visibility and resource limitations, differences in the level of maturity of consumer policy frameworks in OECD Members, uneven levels of engagement and participation by Members’ delegates, limited resources in consumer agencies to engage in international co-operation, lack of committee capacities to develop consumer / business-oriented content, the lengthy format, slow development pace, and challenging accessibility of committee products. From a quantitative perspective, programme implementation report (PIR) results show that the CCP products’ impact is medium, close to the average of OECD products overall, with lately released PIR data (not included in this report) suggesting a recently increased impact. While the work of the CCP is strongly aligned with global priorities, the Committee did not contribute to broader efforts to support gender equality.

The CCP functions well in many areas, including the transparency and quality of the PWB development process, the management of Committee meetings, and the collaborations with the European Union (EU), non-OECD Members and international organisations and networks. These collaborations enabled the

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achievement of significant policy contributions beyond the OECD membership, and allowed to enhance synergies with the work carried out by different international organisations in the field of consumer policy. The CCP's ability to involve Consumers International in its work also allowed to take into account the views of consumer groups.

However, the evaluation identified inconsistencies in the status of collaborations with international organisations that the CCP engages in. While important measures were taken during the review period to strengthen collaborations with other OECD bodies; engaging in further horizontal collaborations with other committees could allow the CCP to further strengthen its internal and external visibility, and improve the dissemination of its work beyond its existing audiences.

The comparatively lower and heterogeneous levels of delegate involvement in Committee work, as well as the limited visibility and exposure of the Committee both within the OECD (i.e., other bodies and Directorates) and OECD Member government administrations, represent limitations to the CCP's work. Actions to be taken to overcome these issues could further unleash the Committee's potential to continue improving the protection and safety of consumers from a policy standpoint and capitalise on the visibility it will gain as part of its 2024 meeting at Ministerial level.

### Assessment<sup>1</sup>

**Relevance:** High to Very High

**Effectiveness:** Medium to High

**Quality of Committee Products:** Medium to High

**Committee functioning:** Highly satisfactory

### Recommendations

**Recommendation 1:** Given the results of the IDE assessment of the relevance of objectives, the Committee should discuss and reflect on the relative importance it gives to business and consumer outreach and awareness raising in the context of the renewal of its mandate.

**Recommendation 2:** Given the importance of enhancing consumer protection as a policy goal globally, the Committee should undertake actions to spur interest in its work and enhance the levels of participation by Member representatives in its meetings.

**Recommendation 3:** The Committee should introduce measures to simplify and improve the user friendliness of its products, making them more directly fit for policymaking purposes; as well as to improve their pace of publication and accessibility.

**Recommendation 4:** The Committee should undertake efforts to mainstream gender equality into its work and contribute to addressing knowledge gaps regarding the consumer-gender policy nexus.

**Recommendation 5:** The Committee should review and update its collaborations with international organisations in its work and activities, including participation to its meetings, in line with the nature, frequency and relevance of these collaborations.

<sup>1</sup> Relevance, effectiveness and quality are rated on a 9-point scale (Very Low / Very Low to Low / Low / Low to Medium / Medium / Medium to High / High / High to Very High / Very High); committee functioning is rated on a 5-point scale (Poor / Fair / Satisfactory / Highly Satisfactory / Excellent).

**Recommendation 6:** The Committee should strengthen its engagement in horizontal collaborations with other relevant OECD bodies to support the achievement of its objectives, mainstream consumer protection into other relevant OECD areas of work, and strengthen its visibility within and outside of the OECD.

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**Recommendation 7:** The Committee should reflect on the need to develop guidelines as a means of futureproofing its functioning arrangements – including with respect to the use of hybrid solutions to conduct meetings – as well as to enhance delegate participation.

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**Recommendation 8:** The Committee should undertake actions to strengthen its visibility and outreach, within the OECD as well as among key stakeholder groups in OECD Members. This could include, for instance, the development of a communications strategy which defines objectives, roles, and procedures to effectively conduct dissemination of Committee work, or the establishment of a Global Forum or a lasting advisory group.

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