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**Minutes of 7<sup>th</sup> Meeting**  
**Working Group on Consumer Protection and Gender**  
**December 13, 2023**

The Working Group on Consumer Protection and Gender held its seventh online meeting on December 13, 2023 (at 1.30 p.m. Geneva time). The meeting's objective was to discuss the next steps in considering the proposals of action to tackle the chosen topics: advertisement, product safety, and financial issues.

The secretariat started the meeting by thanking the participation of member states and congratulating SIC Colombia for its Guide on Gender and Consumer Relations.

The meeting also counted on a special participation of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), which presented the [Gender Inclusive Competition Toolkit](#) addressing the role of Competition authorities and equipping them with the knowledge and tools necessary to incorporate gender considerations into their work.

As requested, Australia and Sweden presented a proposal on how to tackle the topics of advertisement, product safety and financial issues, preparing a set of recommendations.

The secretariat welcomed the idea of creating a subgroup to draft best practices and recommendations proposed by Sweden and Australia. Argentina and Colombia also agreed on the creation of a subgroup.

Consumers International proposed working, in parallel to the WG activities on raising awareness on consumer protection and gender, to engage member States to guarantee the WG mandate for another year.

Professor Claudia Lima Marques, representing the International Law Association, proposed working with other UN branches and supported Consumers International's proposal.

Argentina informed about the Working group on Consumption, Gender and Diversity in the ambit of FIAGC (Ibero-American Forum of Governmental Consumer Protection Agencies), under the leadership of Colombia (SIC) and proposed a joint activity with UNCTAD WG on consumer protection and gender.

The secretariat informed participants of the invitation from the WG on consumer protection in e-commerce for a representative of this WG to take part in a webinar on *consumer vulnerability in e-commerce* that will take place on 21 March 2024. The aim is to find a representative of this WG to present the gender perspective on e-commerce. That webinar will be led by Sweden.



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The secretariat sent an email with the proposed questions to include the Gender perspective in the UNCTAD World Consumer Protection Map page following the [UNCTAD World Consumer Protection Map](#), webpage's model:

***On Consumer Protection and Gender:***

- Does your consumer protection law cover the gender perspective?
- Does your consumer protection and/or competition regulator have policy-making powers on gender?
- Does your consumer protection and/or competition regulator have enforcement powers on gender?
- Does your consumer protection and/or competition regulator have cooperation agreements on gender?
- Does your consumer protection and/or competition regulator education initiatives on gender?

Example of how it would be displayed on the UNCTAD WCPM page:

**Consumer financial services**

57

Countries with consumer protection law on financial services

37

Countries with policy making powers on financial services

37

Countries with enforcement powers on financial services

16

Countries having cooperation agreements on financial services

49

Countries having education initiatives on financial services

Consumer confidence and trust in a well-functioning market for financial services promotes financial stability, growth, efficiency and innovation over the long term. Recent financial crises have placed a renewed focus on consumer protection, calling for effective regulatory, supervisory and enforcement frameworks in the financial sector to contribute to consumer welfare.

For more information on information on this topic, please see the document [Financial consumer protection, including financial education and literacy](#).

In its resolution [70/186 on Consumer Protection of 22 December 2015](#), the United Nations General Assembly believed that a robust legal and regulatory framework for consumer protection serves an important public interest, contributes to economic dynamism and consumer welfare.

In its [Agreed Conclusions \(TD/B/C.I/CLP/4\)](#) the First session of the Intergovernmental group of experts on consumer protection law and policy of 17 and 18 October 2016 requested the UNCTAD secretariat to prepare a study on the legal and institutional framework on consumer protection. The goal of this study is to provide an updated and comprehensive picture of consumer protection worldwide, to identify trends and benchmarks as well as challenges and to inform discussions on future work.

The secretariat also recalled that more meetings may be called, if needed, upon request from participating member States and that the next meeting is scheduled for February 7, 2024.

The secretariat informed that meeting minutes will be circulated for feedback together with the documents and presentation shared.

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<b>Working Group on Consumer Protection and Gender</b>		
<b>7<sup>th</sup> Meeting – List of Participants</b>		
<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Country</b>
Paola Rubin	Undersecretary for Actions for the Defense of Consumers	Argentina
Nadia Vassos	Australian Competition and Consumer Commission	Australia
Ellen Creighton	Canadian Competition Bureau	Canada
Nataly Rojas Cuellar	Superintendence of Industry and Commerce - SIC	Colombia
Christina Schürr	Ministry for Consumer Protection	Luxembourg
Rafael Regla	PROFECO	Mexico
Zenia Panduro	INDECOPI	Peru
Ewa Sikorska	Office of Competition and Consumer Protection - UOKiK	Poland
Francisco Freitas	Directorate General for Consumers of Portugal	Portugal
Caroline Hammarstedt Nuss	Swedish Consumer Agency	Sweden
Kutlu Köycü		Turkey
Felicia Fara	Office for Product Safety and Standards	United Kingdom
Amy Pereira	Competition and Markets Authority	United Kingdom
Laura da Costa Ferré	UDECO -- Ministry of Economy and Finance	Uruguay
Lynn Robertson		OECD
Josephine Parmee		Consumers International
Hollie Hamblett		Consumers International
Claudia Lima Marques		UFRGS/ IACL
Antonino Serra	ADELCO	Argentina
Ana Cipriano		UNCTAD