



THE TRANSATLANTIC CONSUMER CHECKLIST FOR A NEW EU-US COOPERATION AGENDA

After years of tensions, a new cooperation agenda between the EU and the US is welcomed by the Transatlantic Consumer Dialogue (TACD). Voluntary cooperation between governments and regulators can be beneficial for consumers, as long as it aims to enhance their welfare and does not lower their current and future levels of protection. TACD has developed six recommendations for this cooperation agenda to be successful:

ENSURE ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE MEDICINES FOR ALL

The EU and the US must lead the way to scale up global production and availability of COVID-19 medicines and other health technologies. A critical step is for the EU to join the U.S. in supporting a temporary COVID emergency waiver of certain TRIPS rules. The US and EU should also coordinate with the WHO in supporting states to increase vaccine production capability. This is essential to end the pandemic. Beyond COVID-19, cooperation in the area of pharmaceuticals should aim at improving consumer access to safe, effective and affordable medicines.

MEANINGFULLY INVOLVE CIVIL SOCIETY

Civil society should be regularly consulted and briefed about the progress of the cooperation. The EU and the US should also jointly ask civil society what type of cooperation dialogues would benefit society.

BE AMBITIOUS ON SUSTAINABILITY

Consumers on both sides of the Atlantic want to consume more sustainably. This requires regulation. It is important that greening consumption through sustainable products rules, ecodesign requirements and new labels is not seen as a barrier to trade. Cooperation on sustainable finance initiatives (such as taxonomies, better disclosures or ecolabels for financial services products) could help consumers steer their investments towards sustainable economic activities. Finally, both sides should ensure enforceable and substantive labour and environmental rights and standards.

DELIVER TO CONSUMERS

EU-US cooperation must bring benefits to consumers. The different dialogues should focus on improving consumer wellbeing and protection on both sides of the Atlantic.

BE FULLY TRANSPARENT

The EU and the US must not repeat the mistakes from the TTIP era. Cooperation dialogues, just like trade talks, must be transparent. People should be aware of what is being discussed on their behalf. The EU and the US should publish their trade and cooperation proposals. Agendas and minutes of meetings should also be published, as well as the list of EU and US representatives and other participants.

PROTECT CONSUMERS IN THE DIGITAL SPHERE

New digital dialogues should aim at better protecting consumers. They should recognize that digital governance and regulation that protect individual rights and the public interest are not trade barriers and must not be constrained by “trade” rules. The EU and the US could exchange best practices to meaningfully address harmful business models based on data exploitation, online scams and the sale of non-compliant and dangerous goods online. They could explore how to protect consumers from the use of unfair artificial intelligence systems. Discussions on data flows should focus on enhancing and assertively enforcing data protection and privacy rights of citizens.

FURTHER READING:

TACD [Resolution on Positive Consumer Agenda: New Rules for the Global Economy](#)