



UK- Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement
2nd Meeting of the Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT)
Thursday 4 December 2025
(video conference)

The second meeting of the UK-Japan Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) took place on 4 December 2025 under the Agreement between Japan and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (“the UK”) for a Comprehensive Economic Partnership (“the CEPA”) via video-conference.

Japan’s participants from Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), Consumer Affairs Agency (CAA), National Tax Agency (NTA) and Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) and Japanese Embassy in London, and the UK’s participants from the Department for Business and Trade (DBT) and British Embassy in Tokyo had a fruitful exchange of views on matter related to Article 7.14 (TBT) of the CEPA.

Opening Remarks and Introductions

1. Introductions were made between Japan and the UK. Both sides welcomed the following positive developments in this area since the previous meeting;
 - an arrangement on organic equivalence for alcoholic beverages came into effect on 1 October 2025; and
 - various constructive discussions held regarding the LOT Identification codes.

Adoption of the Agenda

2. The agenda was adopted.

Discussion on Regulatory Requirements for Exporting Alcohol Substitute Drinks

3. The UK inquired about Japan’s regulatory framework for low and non-alcoholic beverages in Japan. The UK reported that the expanding low/no-alcohol beverage category faces challenges due to regulatory differences between the UK and Japan, and expressed interest in building mutual understanding.
4. Japan explained that “alcoholic beverages” which contain 1% or more alcohol by volume are regulated under the Liquor Tax Act, whereas beverages, excluding milk and milk products, that contain less than 1% alcohol by volume are regulated as “soft drinks” under the Food Sanitation Act. Japan also explained that the regulations on “alcoholic beverages” and “soft drinks” apply equally to domestically produced beverages and imported beverages. Guidelines exist for “alcoholic beverages”, such as prohibition of underage drinking by law and mandating labels to prohibit consumption of underage drinking, and there are also voluntary industry standards which require warnings about drinking by pregnant women and new mothers in advertising. However, no official guidelines for alcohol substitute drinks exist. Replying to the UK, Japan replied that as

no specific problems has been raised so far in Japan, Japan has no plans to consider formulating standards or guidelines for alcohol substitute drinks.

5. Japan requested that the UK provide details on the specific challenges that UK manufactures/exporters have been facing in case of exporting alcohol substitute drinks. UK accepted to follow up in writing sharing specific industry concerns.

Closing Remarks

6. Japan will prepare for the draft Joint Minutes and circulate to the UK for their perusal.

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Agenda

№	Issues on the Agenda
1	Opening Remarks and Introductions
2	Adoption of the Agenda
3	Information Sharing <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Regulatory requirements for exporting alcohol substitute drinks
4	Wrap up & Closing Remarks
5	Closing Remarks