

# Consumption Tax Cut Draws Caution in Major Firm Survey

スーパーやコンビニで買い物をしていると、ここ最近、「また値段が上がっているな」と感じる場面が増えていませんか。物価の上昇が続く中で、消費税の減税を求める声も聞かれるようになってきました。一方で、主要企業へのアンケートでは、減税に慎重な意見が多かったことも話題になりました。税金は家計だけでなく、社会保障や経済全体にも関わる大切なテーマです。物価対策と社会の支え合いのバランスについて、あなたはどのように考えますか。



## 1. Article

Read the following article aloud.

Japan's consumption tax is 10% in principle, with most food and beverages taxed at a reduced rate of 8%. Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi's administration won the recent Lower House election after pledging to abolish the tax on food and beverages for two years, a plan supporters say would ease household pressure, but critics warn could strain public finances and burden businesses.

As tensions in the Middle East fuel concerns about rising prices, few major Japanese companies appear convinced that cutting the consumption tax on food and beverages is the right response.

In a Sankei Shimbun survey of major firms, only 7% said they "support" the tax cut now under consideration by the government. Around 80% were cautious, saying they either "do not support" the measure or "cannot say either way."

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Source: Consumption Tax Cut Draws Caution in Major Firm Survey

# 1. Article

"Some effect can be expected as a measure against inflation," one finance and insurance company said. "But the practical **burden** of changing the system and the impact on public finances cannot be ignored."

In the survey, 28% of companies said they did not support the plan. "The consumption tax is a basic source of government revenue," one finance and insurance company said. "It is not necessarily an **appropriate** tool for income support."

Many companies also raised concerns about implementation and possible side effects. "The impact would differ between food and beverage purchases and the restaurant industry," one manufacturer said. "Support would be needed for those hurt by the measure."

A wholesale and retail company also warned of market **risks**. "The measure could be seen as widening the fiscal deficit, creating the risk of a damaging rise in interest rates."

Reflecting those concerns, 51% of respondents said they "cannot say either way," meaning more than half stopped short of endorsing the tax cut.

Inflation is already affecting business activity. In real estate development, 47% of companies said rising material and labor costs have caused delays or forced them to revise plans.

When asked which anti-inflation measures would be appropriate aside from a consumption tax cut, with multiple answers allowed, the most common response was **subsidies** for electricity, gas, and other fuel costs. Chosen by 44% of companies, such subsidies would help both households and businesses.

The next most popular option was cash payments or similar support for households exempt from resident tax and families raising children, selected by 31%.

Some companies called for more targeted or **structural** measures. "The government should swiftly introduce systems such as refundable tax credits, creating a framework that can deliver support quickly to households in need," one finance and insurance company said.

A manufacturer urged "structural reforms that allow small and midsize companies to pass on higher costs more smoothly, helping to raise real wages."

## 2. Key phrases and vocabulary

First repeat after your tutor and then read aloud by yourself.

1. **burden** 負担

Paying for the repairs placed a heavy **burden** on the small town's economy.

2. **appropriate** 適切な

Jeans are not always **appropriate** clothing for formal events.

3. **risk** 危険

Climbing the icy mountain carried a serious **risk** for beginners.

4. **subsidy** 補助金

The farm survived the dry season with help from a government **subsidy**.

5. **structural** 構造的な

The company made **structural** changes to improve communication between teams.

## 3. Questions

Read the questions aloud and answer them.

1. Why were many companies cautious about the tax cut proposal?
2. What kind of anti-inflation measure received the most support in the survey?
3. How have rising material and labor costs affected real estate development?
4. Which do you think is more effective during inflation: tax cuts, subsidies, or direct cash payments?
5. Have rising prices changed the way you shop or spend money in recent months and years?

## 4. 主要企業アンケート：消費税減税に8割が慎重 「評価する」は7%のみ

中東情勢の緊迫化で物価上昇への懸念が強まっているが、産経新聞社の主要企業アンケートで、政府が検討する飲食料品の消費税減税を「評価する」との回答は7%にとどまった。「物価高対策の効果は一定程度期待できるが、制度変更による実務負担や財政への影響も無視できない」（金融・保険業）として、「評価しない」「どちらともいえない」との減税に慎重な回答が合わせて約8割に上った。

高市早苗政権は先の衆院選で飲食料品の消費税を2年間限定でゼロとする公約を掲げて圧勝。現在、超党派の国民会議で具体化への議論を進めている。

アンケートでは、「消費税は基礎的財源。所得支援の手段としては必ずしも適当ではない」（金融・保険業）など、「評価しない」との回答が28%を占めた。

「飲食料品の購入と外食産業では影響が異なる。マイナスの影響を受ける側への手当ては必要だ」（製造業）、「市場から財政赤字が拡大すると捉えられ、悪い金利上昇を引き起こすリスクもある」（卸売・小売業）など、実施上の課題や減税の副作用を指摘する企業も多く、「どちらともいえない」が51%と半数を超えた。

物価高に関しては、資材価格や人件費の上昇を背景に、不動産開発で遅延や計画の見直しなど「影響が出ている」とした企業が47%に上った。

一方、物価高対策として消費税減税以外に妥当と考える政策（複数回答）を尋ねたところ、最多は家計だけでなく企業にも恩恵が及ぶ「電気・ガスなど燃料費に対する補助金」で44%。次いで「住民税非課税世帯や子育て世帯に対する現金などの給付」が31%だった。

「給付付き税額控除などを早期に導入し、必要な世帯へ迅速な支援を行える仕組みを整備する」（金融・保険業）、「実質賃金の上昇に向けた中小企業の価格転嫁がスムーズに行われる構造変革」（製造業）といった提案もあった。

出典：主要企業アンケート：消費税減税に8割が慎重 「評価する」は7%のみ  
[Japan Forward](#)