

# Meiji

**Product categories assessed**

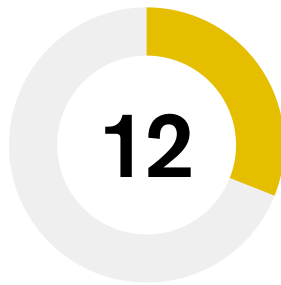
Confectionery|Dairy|Ice Cream and Frozen Desserts|Ready Meals|Sweet Biscuits, Snack Bars and Fruit Snacks

**Percentage of company global sales covered by Product Profile assessment**  
90-95%

**Headquarters**  
Japan

**Number of employees**  
17608

**Type of ownership**  
Public



Rank 12 / Score 3.1  
Rank 17 (2018)



**Product Profile** 1

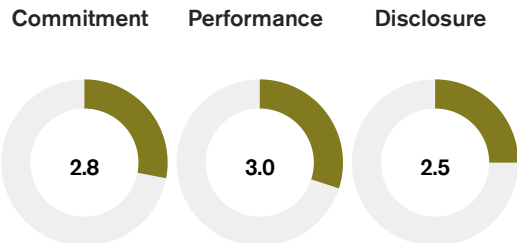
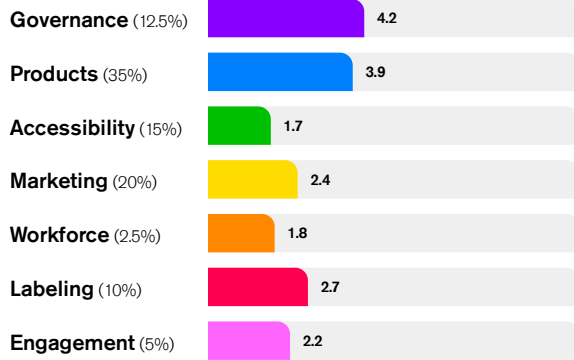
Rank 5 / Score 6.1  
Rank 17 (2018) 2

**Important:**

The findings of this Index regarding companies' performance rely to a large extent on information shared by companies, in addition to information that is available in the public domain. Several factors beyond the companies' control may impact the availability of information such as differences in disclosure requirements among countries or capacity constraints within companies, amongst others the Covid-19 pandemic. Therefore, in the case of limited or no engagement by such companies, this Index may not represent the full extent of their efforts.

## Corporate Profile

**Rank 12    Score 3.1**



The bar graph to the left shows company performance across the seven Index categories, which are key topic areas of assessment, and scores are shown for each category. The circles above provide an alternate view on the company's overall results, showing the score per indicator type. The Commitment, Performance, Disclosure score only applies to category scores and not to the BMS/CF Assessment.

## Main areas of strength

- **SCORES AND RANKS:** Meiji's overall score has improved significantly since 2018, increasing from 0.8 to 3.1, owing to the development of its '2026 Vision CSR strategy', which includes a focus on nutrition and addressing undernutrition and micronutrient deficiencies among women and the elderly in Japan, and the introduction of several new policies relating to responsible marketing, labelling and employee wellness. As a result, the company has risen five places in the Index ranking, from 17th to 12th, one of the largest improvements in ranking across the Index. It also one of the two companies ranking 5th on the Product Profile with a score of 6.1.

- **GOVERNANCE:** Since 2018, the company has shown considerable improvement in terms of its nutrition strategy and governance. Not only does Meiji formally commit to support delivering on nutrition-specific SDGs (Goals two, three, and 12), it also makes a clear strategic commitment to grow through a focus on nutrition. The company's nutrition strategy is part of its 'Healthier Lives' program, one of the main pillars of the 'CSR Vision' in Meiji's 2026 Vision strategy, which seeks to integrate the CSR into its "day-to-day" business. Developing the 'Healthier Lives' strategy involved undertaking a risk assessment and strategic review, with the company committing to address nutrition challenges of Japan's aging population, fight against malnutrition (including in "emerging countries"), and "contribute to healthy diets". While this will partly be achieved through the company's pharmaceutical segments and specialist nutrition portfolio, the company now makes a high-level commitment to deliver more foods containing healthy ingredients, while reducing the amount of sugar, fat and calories.

- **PRODUCTS:** Since 2018, Meiji has developed a greater focus on addressing low levels of protein consumption in Japan, especially among the elderly and women, which is an issue identified in surveys by the Japanese Ministry of Health and Welfare. In 2020, the company launched the Meiji TANPACT product range, which includes beverages, jellies, yogurts, cheese, chocolate, ice cream, frozen foods, soups, and home delivery beverages with added protein, as well as added vitamins.

- **ACCESSIBILITY:** The company has a free Home Delivery Service in Japan, which has considerably expanded since 2018 and now offers a range of milks, probiotic yogurts, vitamin-rich fruit and vegetable juices and other products with healthy ingredients. The service is used by 2.5 million households in Japan via 3,000 local distributors, and is also now offered by its subsidiary in Thailand. Some products are fortified with micronutrients and have been specifically developed to meet the needs of the elderly, pregnant and breastfeeding women, and infants. This constitutes a solid accessibility strategy for addressing micronutrient deficiencies in priority populations, although the company could be more explicit about this aim.

- **MARKETING:** In February 2020, Meiji published its first responsible marketing policy, 'Marketing Communication to Children Policy'. This applies to confectionery and ice cream categories only, and stipulates that the company will not market these products to persons under the age

## Priority areas for improvement

- **GOVERNANCE:** While the company has a strategy for preventing and tackling undernutrition and/or micronutrient deficiencies, it could consider significantly improving its public reporting on this. Meiji is also advised to develop a strategy for addressing issues related to obesity and diet-related chronic disease. ATNI recommends it expands the scope of these efforts to include all markets in which it is active, and not just its home market of Japan.

- **PRODUCTS:** While Meiji makes a high-level commitment to reduce the amount of sugar, fat, and calories in its portfolio, the company is encouraged to formulate and publish specific and measurable targets on doing so. This could also include targets to increase the levels of fruits, vegetables, nuts, and legumes (FNVLs), as well as whole grains, across the portfolio. While Meiji has set a KPI relating to the development of 'health-conscious products', it does not explain how these are classified. The company has no Nutrient Profiling Model (NPM) in place that would enable it to classify its products based on objective nutrition criteria. As such, ATNI recommends the company adopts a Nutrient Profiling System (NPS), and publish clear definitions of how it classifies its 'healthy' products, while also publishing the percentage of its products that meet these criteria. This could also guide its fortification and reformulation efforts, ensuring that only 'healthy' products are fortified. Meanwhile, one of the company's KPIs for its 'CSR Vision' is to develop "health-conscious products", although the company does not publish a baseline, or any criteria detailing how these are classified.

- **AFFORDABILITY:** The company is encouraged to adopt and publish a policy to improve the affordability of healthy products, considering how it reaches low-income populations or populations that lack regular access to healthy, affordable food in all its markets.

- **MARKETING:** While it is a positive step that Meiji has developed a responsible marketing to children policy, there is still much scope for improvement. Firstly, the company is advised to expand the policy to encompass its entire portfolio, rather than two product categories (confectionery and ice cream). It could also consider upgrading the policy to include: explicit commitments regarding responsible marketing techniques; the responsible deployment of children, celebrities (including influencers), or fantasy and animated characters; and the responsible use of promotional toys, games, vouchers, and competitions. Furthermore, it is recommended that the company establishes age thresholds on both traditional and digital media to ensure its marketing of unhealthy products do not reach younger audiences. Finally, Meiji could consider assessing compliance with its policy, and publish the findings in the public domain.

- **LIFESTYLES:** Since less information could be found since the 2018 Global Index iteration, Meiji is encouraged to disclose more details about its health and wellness programmes for employees. It is important that these involve a strong nutrition-related element alongside the promotion of active lifestyles. Furthermore, the company

of 12. This includes a commitment not to market or advertise these products at all in either primary or secondary schools. The policy also states that its general marketing standards are “consistent with and support the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) Code of Advertising and Marketing Communication Practice and the ICC Framework for Responsible Food and Beverage Communications”.

- **LIFESTYLES:** The company published its ‘Pledge of Health and Productivity Management’ in April 2018, in which it “aims to create a comfortable workplace for employees to be healthy and active, both physically and mentally”. Certified by the Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry as a ‘Health and Productivity Management Organization’.

- **LABELING:** The company published its ‘Food Nutrition Labeling Policy’ in 2019, which includes a commitment to disclose back-of-pack (BOP) nutrition information regarding energy (calories), protein, total carbohydrates, fat, and salt, per serving/per portion and/or per 100 grams basis, based on ‘official daily intake guidance’. This is a positive step, since Meiji previously did not have a labeling policy. Regarding health and nutrition claims, the policy also includes a commitment to align with Codex in cases where the local/national regulations are less strict. The company provides nutrition information online for all of their products sold in Japan, Thailand, and the U.S., which is commendable.

- **ENGAGEMENT:** Having engaged with an independent Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) expert and publicly disclosed the results of their discussion, Meiji has slightly improved its engagement with stakeholders to inform the design and improve its nutrition strategy or policies.

could consider offering similar initiatives to its employees working in all markets the company is active in, while also committing to improve the health and wellness of groups across the food supply chain that are not direct employees (e.g., smallholder farmers, factory workers, and small scale vendors) through nutrition-sensitive programs.

- **LIFESTYLES:** To support breastfeeding mothers, the company offers paid maternity leave of 101 days in Japan. It could consider extending the length of maternity paid leave to at least six months, as recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO), and offer the same benefits to employees in all markets. No information was found about the company providing private, hygienic and safe rooms, with fridges, in which to express breastmilk. It is encouraged to offer these facilities or, if it does already, report that it does so.

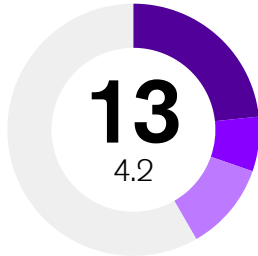
- **LABELING:** While the publication of its ‘Food Nutrition Labelling Policy’ represents a promising first step, there is still significant room for improvement. The company is recommended to expand the commitment to provide BOP nutrient information to include total sugars, saturated fat, added sugars, and dietary fiber. Furthermore, Meiji is encouraged to clarify its position on front-of-pack (FOP) labeling, either by showing the percentage of Guideline Daily Amounts (or similar metrics) of multiple nutrients, or by using an interpretative label on the front of all its packs to help consumers understand the product’s nutritional quality at a glance. Tracking and publishing information about its progress in placing such labels on products in all its markets would enhance transparency.

- **ENGAGEMENT:** The company is advised to commit to only lobby in support of measures designed to improve health and nutrition that have a solid grounding in independent, peer-reviewed science. Meiji could consider developing adequate internal controls to ensure that its lobbying activities align with company policy. ATNI also encourages the company to provide greater disclosure about its lobbying efforts on nutrition-related topics, and on measures to prevent and address obesity and diet-related chronic diseases.

- **ENGAGEMENT:** Meiji has improved its stakeholder engagement slightly since 2018. To develop further, it is encouraged to actively engage with a wider range of stakeholders, both local and international, and consult with a panel of external experts who’ve reputed expertise in nutrition-related topics, to improve the design of their nutrition strategies, policies, or programs.

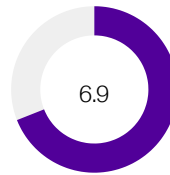
# Category Analysis

## Governance

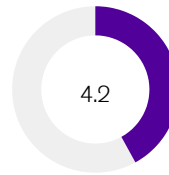


- A1** Nutrition strategy
- A2** Nutrition management
- A3** Reporting quality

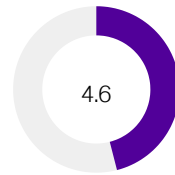
### Commitment



### Performance

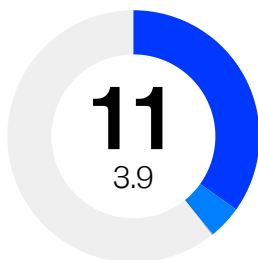


### Disclosure



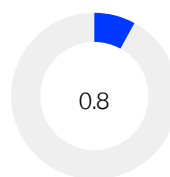
The big circle on the left represents the company result for this Index category, showing the rank out of 25 and the score below it. The smaller circles above indicate company's scores on the three types of indicators.

## Products

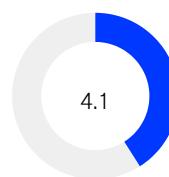


- B1** Product Profile
- B2** Product formulation
- B3** Defining healthy products

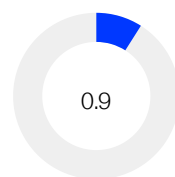
### Commitment



### Performance

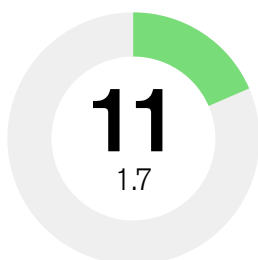


### Disclosure



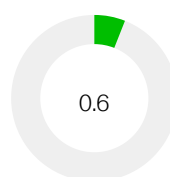
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## Accessibility

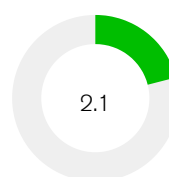


- C1** Product pricing

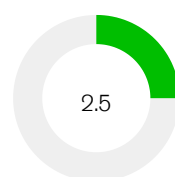
### Commitment



### Performance

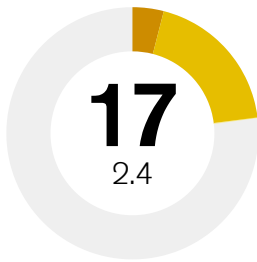


### Disclosure

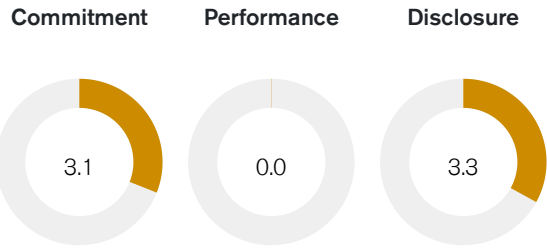


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## Marketing

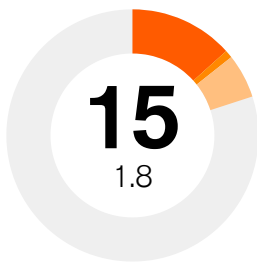


- D1 Marketing policy
- D2 Marketing to children
- D3 Auditing and compliance

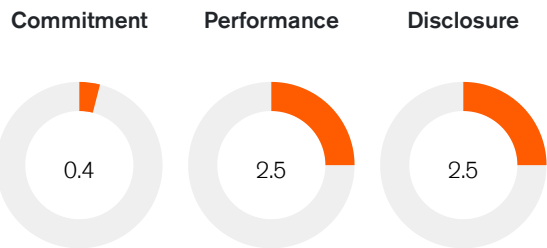


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## Workforce

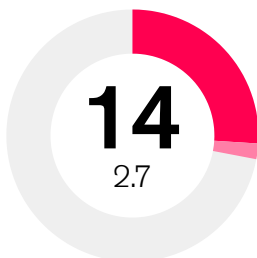


- E1 Employee health
- E2 Breastfeeding support
- E3 Consumer health

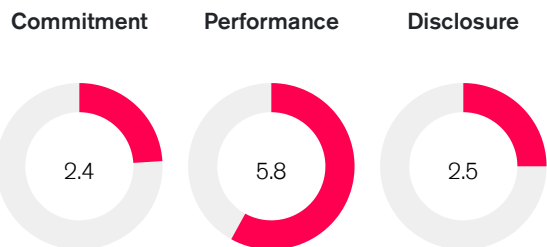


The big circle on the left represents the company result for this Index category, showing the rank out of 25 and the score below it. The smaller circles above indicate company's scores on the three types of indicators.

## Labeling

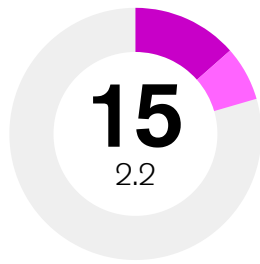


- F1 Product labeling
- F2 Claims



The big circle on the left represents the company result for this Index category, showing the rank out of 25 and the score below it. The smaller circles above indicate company's scores on the three types of indicators.

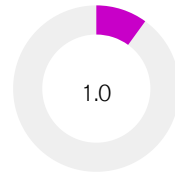
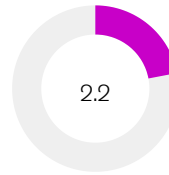
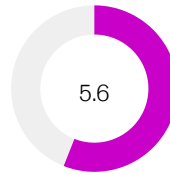
# Engagement



Commitment

Performance

Disclosure



- G1 Influencing policymakers
- G2 Stakeholder engagement

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# Detailed Product Profile Results <sup>1 3</sup>

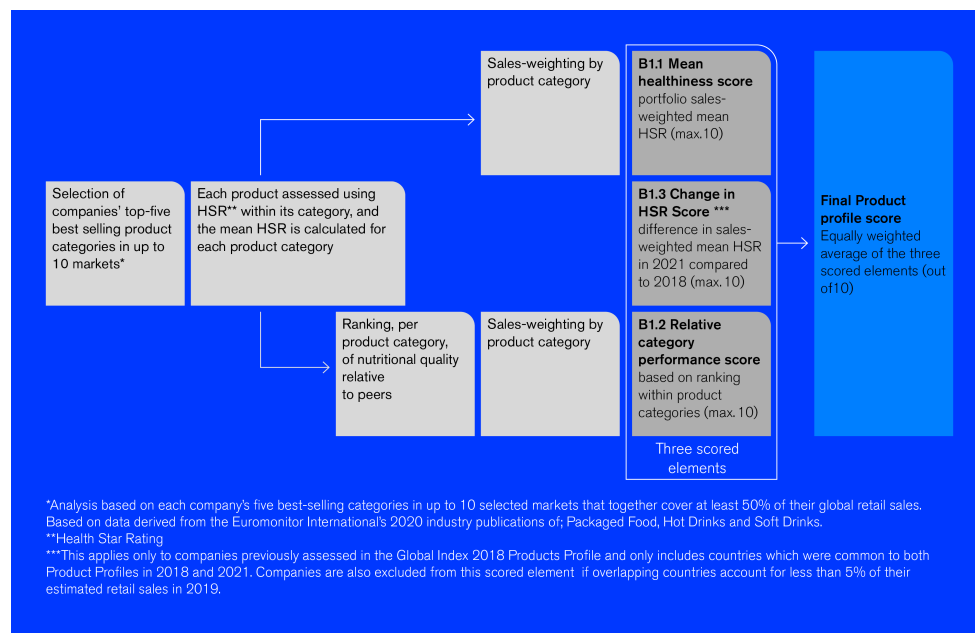


5

Rank 5 / Score 6.1

The Product Profile is an independent assessment of the nutritional quality of companies' product portfolios. For this purpose, ATNI uses the Health Star Rating (HSR) model, which rates foods from 0.5 to 5.0 based on their nutritional quality. ATNI uses the threshold of 3.5 stars or more to classify products as generally healthy. This assessment is undertaken in partnership with The George Institute for Global Health (TGI), with additional data input from Innova Market Insights.

The methodology for the Global Index 2021 Product Profile has been revised and now includes three scored elements. The overall Product Profile score reflects: B1.1, the mean healthiness of a company's product portfolio; B1.2, the relative healthiness within product categories compared to peers, and; B1.3, changes in the nutritional quality of product portfolios compared to the Global Index 2018 Product Profile. The steps taken to calculate the final Product Profile scores are visualized in Box 1. The next section further explains each of these three elements.



Meiji has been assessed for the second time in the Global Index Product Profile. In the previous assessment, three of the company's markets were selected, and a total of 75 products analyzed – accounting for approximately 0-5% of global retail sales in 2017, excluding baby foods. In this Index, a total of 744 products have been analyzed across three of the company's major markets. Products from the top five best-selling product categories within each market are included. In 2019, these products accounted for 90-95% of the company's global retail sales, excluding baby foods, plain tea and coffee.

Meiji's home market, Japan, is a new country included in this iteration. Australia was included in 2018 but has been omitted this time. In 2018, a total of three product categories were covered by the assessment, compared to three categories in 2021.

In this Product Profile assessment, Meiji scores 5.1 out of 10 (B1.1) in the mean healthiness element and 7.2 out of 10 (B1.2) for the relative healthiness of its products within categories compared to peers. This results in Meiji obtaining an overall score of 6.1 out of 10, and ranking fifth out of 25 in the Product Profile.

## B1.1 Portfolio-level Results

Average HSR (out of 5 stars) (sales-weighted)	3 Countries included	Range of global sales included <sup>4</sup>	Healthy products (HSR)				Products suitable to market to children (WHO regional models) - UNSCORED		
			No. products assessed	% products healthy ( $\geq 3.5$ stars)	% retail sales healthy 2019 ( $\geq 3.5$ stars) – assessed countries only	% estimated global retail sales healthy 2019 ( $\geq 3.5$ stars) <sup>5</sup>	No. products assessed	% products suitable	% sales from suitable
2.5	China, Hong Kong, Japan	90-95%	744	12%	28%	28%	782	3%	8%

- A total of 744 products manufactured by Meiji, sold in three countries, covering five product categories, were included in this Product Profile (baby foods were not assessed). The company's sales-weighted mean HSR is 2.5 out of 5. ATNI turns this value into a score between 0 and 10, resulting in a mean healthiness score of 5.1 out of 10 for Meiji. The company ranks 14 out of 25 companies in this first scored element (B1.1).

- Although only 12% of distinct products assessed were found to meet the HSR healthy threshold (HSR  $\geq 3.5$ ), an estimated 28% of Meiji's 2019 retail sales in the selected markets (excluding baby foods, plain tea and coffee) derived from healthy products. Assuming the products and markets included in the assessment are representative of the company's overall global sales, ATNI estimates the company derived approximately 28% of its global retail sales from healthy products in 2019.

WHO nutrient profiling models (unscored): Only 3% of products assessed were found to be of sufficient nutritional quality to market to children, according to the World Health Organization (WHO) regional nutrient profiling models. These products were estimated to generate 8% of the company's sales in 2019. More information on this part of the assessment can be found in the Marketing section (Category D) of the Index.



## B1.2. Product Category Results

	No. products analyzed	% products healthy (HSR >= 3.5)	Company mean HSR	Mean HSR for all companies selling this product category	Company performance (rank in mean HSR compared to peers selling products in the same category)
Confectionery	358	1%	0.9	1	4th out of 6
Sweet Biscuits, Snack Bars and Fruit Snacks	107	1%	0.8	1.8	8th out of 8
Dairy	183	43%	3.2	2.9	5th out of 18
Ready Meals	19	5%	2.9	3	5th out of 9
Ice Cream and Frozen Desserts	77	3%	2.2	2	2 out of 7

- For Meiji 'Dairy,' was the best performing category, where a total of 182 products analyzed obtained mean HSR of 3.2 out of 5. Products from the 'Sweet Biscuits, Snack Bars and Fruit Snacks' category (0.8) had the lowest mean HSR of all product categories included for Meiji.

- For two out of the five categories assessed, Meiji's products perform better than the mean HSR of companies selling products in the same categories. The company ranks second in the 'Ice Cream and Frozen Desserts' category (mean HSR 2.2).

- Meiji scores 7.2 out of 10 in this second scored element (B1.2) and ranks 8 out of 25 companies. This is based on its ranking compared to peers within the five categories, using the scoring system set out in ATNI's methodology.

## B1.3. Change in mean HSR

	No. of products analyzed in 2018	No. of products analyzed in 2021	Sales weighted mean HSR 2018	Sales weighted mean HSR 2021
TOTAL	0	0	0	0

Not applicable for this company. This third scored element applies only to companies assessed in both Indexes and takes into account only those countries included in both assessments. Companies are also excluded from this scored element if overlapping countries account for less than five percent of their estimated retail sales in 2019.

Full Product Profile report: [https://new-l40rlzsq.accesstonutrition.org/app/uploads/2021/06/GI\\_Global-Index\\_TGI-product-profile\\_2021-2-1.pdf](https://new-l40rlzsq.accesstonutrition.org/app/uploads/2021/06/GI_Global-Index_TGI-product-profile_2021-2-1.pdf)

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## Footnotes

1. The overall Product Profile score reflects: B1.1 the mean healthiness of a company's product portfolio; B1.2 the relative healthiness within product categories compared to peers, and; B1.3 changes in the nutritional quality of product portfolios compared to the Global Index 2018 Product Profile.
2. In the Global Index 2018, the Product Profile Assessment was conducted as a separate assessment. The results were based on scores generated by applying the Health Star Rating (HSR) nutrient profiling system, which analyzes the level of several positive nutrients (e.g. fruits, vegetables and fibers) and several negative nutrients (e.g. salt, sugar and saturated fat) in products.
3. The overall Product Profile score reflects: B1.1 the mean healthiness of a company's product portfolio; B1.2 the relative healthiness within product categories compared to peers, and; B1.3 changes in the nutritional quality of product portfolios compared to the Global Index 2018 Product Profile.
4. Retail sales data derived from Euromonitor International.
5. ATNI estimates this value by taking the proportion of healthy products within each category assessed and multiplying that figure by the global category retail sales. The values are then aggregated to generate an estimate of the overall global healthy sales (excluding baby foods, plain tea, and coffee, which are not included in the Product Profile).
6. Within-category ranks are calculated for all product categories in which two or more companies are active. Next, a performance percentage is calculated from the inverted rank (e.g. first out of 10: inverted rank  $10/10 = 100\%$  performance score; tenth out of 10: inverted rank  $1/10 = 10\%$  performance score). The 'Bottled Water- Pure' category receives a standard rating of five stars, according to the HSR algorithm for all companies.