

EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AREA
STANDING COMMITTEE
OF THE EFTA STATES

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NORWAY CHAIR WORK PROGRAMME
EFTA STANDING COMMITTEE – SECOND HALF OF 2012

The main focus of the Norwegian Chair during the second half of 2012 will be to:

- Further improve EEA EFTA contributions to the development of the EEA by the submission and follow-up of EEA EFTA Comments and by implementing the revised procedures for the incorporation of EU acts into the EEA Agreement, including assessments of new legislative acts at an early stage.
- Ensure the continued good functioning of the EEA Agreement through the efficient incorporation of legislative acts, including a further reduction of the amount of adopted Single Market legislation awaiting incorporation into the EEA Agreement.
- Ensure EEA EFTA participation in EU programmes, agencies and authorities in line with the long-established practice in the EEA.

This Programme will be supplemented by the Work Programmes for the Subcommittees and for selected EEA EFTA Working Groups.

I. Key EEA EFTA priorities

- **Processing of EU acquis in the EEA Agreement**
Ensure the continued good functioning and homogeneity of the EEA Agreement through the efficient incorporation of pending and new legislative acts into the Agreement. Implement the revised procedures for the incorporation of EU acts into the EEA Agreement.
- **Single Market Act II and other EU growth initiatives**
Follow closely and contribute to the development of the Single Market Act II. Monitor further development of EU initiatives on economic growth, governance and policy coordination and consider their impact on the EEA. Ensure participation in the development of EEA relevant measures and submit EEA EFTA Comments where relevant.
- **Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020**
Follow the discussions on the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2014-2020 and assess possible implications for the EEA EFTA States, including participation in Programmes (see point III).
- **EEA Financial Mechanism**
Finalise the implementation of the EEA Financial Mechanism 2004-2009, and secure the efficient implementation of the EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014.
- **Enlargement and neighbourhood policies**

Monitor closely the development of EU enlargement and neighbourhood policies and assess their impact on the EEA. Continue preparations for the accession of Croatia to the EEA following its expected accession to the EU in July 2013.

- **Reviews of the EEA**

Follow closely the ongoing EEA review processes in the EU and in the EEA EFTA States.

II. Legal acts and policies (not exhaustive)

Particular emphasis will be put on the following areas:

- **New European architecture of financial supervision**

Further work to clarify EEA EFTA participation in the three new Financial Supervisory Authorities (ESAs) and the European Systemic Risk Board and the powers of the ESAs.

- **Energy**

Continue to follow closely EU proposals and possible new legislation, particularly the proposals for a Directive on Energy Efficiency, and an Energy Infrastructure Regulation. Facilitate negotiations with the Commission regarding the incorporation into the EEA Agreement of the Third Package for the Internal Energy Market.

- **Research and innovation**

Follow closely the proposal for a new Research and Innovation Framework Programme (Horizon 2020) and the Commission proposal for European Research Area (ERA) Framework in 2012, including EEA EFTA participation in the European Research Infrastructure Consortium (ERIC).

- **Climate change**

Finalise preparations for the incorporation of the revised Emissions Trading Scheme Directive and related acts into the EEA Agreement. Finalise preparations for the incorporation of the 2011 ETS Union Registry Regulation.

- **Labour law**

Follow closely the proposal for a directive concerning the enforcement of the provisions applicable to the posting of workers, and the current negotiations of the social partners regarding the revision of the working time directive.

The following areas will also be given priority:

- **Single European Sky II**

Continue the discussions on the Single European Sky II Regulation in order to ensure incorporation as soon as possible into the Agreement.

- **State aid**

Provide contributions to the Commission's work on modernising the EU state aid rules. Any revised guidelines will be mirrored by equivalent guidelines from ESA, whereas revised legislation will have to be incorporated into the EEA Agreement.

- **Public procurement**

Continue to provide input to the on-going revision of the current EU and EEA legislative frame as important components of the Single Market Act and the Europe 2020 Strategy.

- **Environment**

Finalise preparations for the incorporation of the Directive on the Protection of the Environment through Criminal Law, the Regulation on CO₂ emissions from passenger cars and light commercial vehicles, the Timber Regulation, the Directive on Clean Road Transport and the Directive on the Industrial Emissions into the EEA Agreement. Assess the Marine Strategy Framework Directive and the Directive on the Assessment and Management of Flood Risks.

- **Digital Single market**

Address the challenges of creating a truly digital Single market.

- **Services**

Support continued performance checks in order to identify barriers to service providers and follow the development of the internal market for services in general.

- **Standardisation**

Follow negotiations between the Council and the European Parliament on the proposal for a new Regulation on European Standardisation and consider submitting EEA EFTA Comments. Prepare for the incorporation of the Standardisation Regulation in the EEA Agreement.

- **Technical barriers to trade**

Prepare for the incorporation of the Alignment Package in the EEA Agreement and monitor the ongoing revision of other new approach directives with regards to the New Legislative Framework for Goods.

- **Defence related products**

Finalise discussions on the adaptation texts to the Directive on defence related products.

- **Telecom Package**

Ensure the incorporation of the Telecom Package into the EEA Agreement and establish the required level of EEA EFTA participation in the new Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communication (BEREC).

- **Deposit Guarantee Scheme**

Continue to work for a mutually acceptable solution to the Deposit Guarantee Scheme, safeguarding the interests of consumers.

- **Foodstuffs**

Finalise the JCD on Novel Food and GM Food and Feed and monitor the finalisation of a new Regulation on Novel Food. Monitor the revision of the novel foods proposal, and the proposals on the cloning of animals for food production purposes, a Regulation on food intended for infants and young children, and on food for special medical purposes.

- **Veterinary matters**

Monitor the presentation of the new Animal Health Law legislation and the revision of the Regulation on official controls along the food chain.

- **Medicinal products**

Finalise discussions with the EU on the EEA Joint Committee Decision on medicinal products for paediatric use (Paediatrics Regulation).

- **Plant protection**

Finalise discussions on the possible implementation of the new Regulation on plant protection products.

- **Public health**

Ensure a timely incorporation of the Directive on Patients' Rights in Cross-Border Healthcare into the EEA Agreement and follow the implementation process on the EU side.

- **Consumer affairs**

Follow up the new Commission Consumer Strategy 'Consumer Agenda' and follow closely the preparation of the Consumer Programme 2014-2020, Prepare for the incorporation of the consumer rights directive into the EEA Agreement. Follow discussions on a new proposal for a Regulation on a Common European Sales Law as well as on alternative dispute resolution and on-line dispute resolution mechanisms.

- **Internal Market Information (IMI) System**

Follow the discussions and ensure the incorporation of the IMI Regulation into the EEA Agreement.

III. Participation in programmes

- Study closely upcoming proposals for the new generation of EU programmes 2014-2020.
- Monitor closely the ongoing EU budget review with a focus on the scope of EU programmes post-2014.
- Monitor participation in existing programmes and agencies.