

E U R O P E A N E C O N O M I C A R E A
S T A N D I N G C O M M I T T E E
O F T H E E F T A S T A T E S

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NORWAY CHAIR WORK PROGRAMME
EFTA STANDING COMMITTEE
FIRST HALF OF 2017

The purpose of this programme is to give a general orientation to work at all levels on the EEA EFTA side, particularly under the EFTA Standing Committee structure and in the Secretariat which services it. This programme is supplemented by the work programmes for the Subcommittees and for selected EEA EFTA working groups.

Items under "main focus" are issues that the Chair will pay special attention to. The listing of items in sections I and II is intended to highlight key issues under discussion.

The main focus of the Norwegian Chair during the first half of 2017 will be:

- **Legal acts awaiting incorporation.** Continue the work to reduce the number of legal acts awaiting incorporation in the EEA Agreement, including how to improve the coordination in and between the EEA EFTA States at all levels. Efforts will in particular focus on ensuring the incorporation of acts and packages that have been outstanding for a long time, including acts related to the European Financial Supervisory Authorities in a timely manner, the Third Energy Package, legislation on organic production, the Paediatrics Regulation, and the Telecoms Package (BEREC).
- **Brexit.** Work to establish regular consultations between the EU and the EEA EFTA States on EEA relevant aspects of a UK withdrawal agreement under Article 50 and on the future relations between the EU and the UK.
- **Information and knowledge of the EEA Agreement.** Strengthening the knowledge of the EEA Agreement and the EEA Financial Mechanism for the 2014-2021 period in the EU institutions and the EEA States, including through the organisation of events and spreading knowledge of available EEA information tools and systems.

I. Cooperation, dialogue and decision-shaping

- **EEA EFTA decision shaping of EEA relevant EU legislation and policies.** Focus on key issues in the pre-pipeline and pipeline stage and encourage EEA EFTA comments and appropriate follow-up where relevant.

- **Cooperation and dialogue with the EU**

Seek to ensure EEA EFTA participation in EEA relevant informal EU Councils, and to continue and further develop the political dialogues with the EU on foreign and security policy and the informal dialogues with the EFTA Working Party of the EU Council on EEA and EFTA related issues.

- **Cooperation and dialogue with the Advisory Bodies**

Continue the close cooperation and dialogue with the EEA and EFTA Consultative and Parliamentary Committees.

II. Legal acts and policies (not exhaustive)

- **Better Regulation**

Aim to take advantage of increased opportunities for input into the Commission's policy formulation process under the Better Regulation agenda.

- **Food and Veterinary Matters**

Seek to incorporate the legislation on organic production. Prepare for the incorporation of the Regulation on Genetically Modified Food and Feed. Continue to follow the finalisation of the proposals on the cloning of animals for food production purposes. Ensure a thorough preparation of the incorporation of the legislation regarding animal health and Official Controls along the Food Chain.

- **Medicinal products**

Ensure the incorporation of the Paediatrics Regulation and follow the developments with regard to import/export of drug precursors between EEA/EFTA States and EU Member States, and ensure the incorporation and correct implementation of Regulation 2016/161 on safety features appearing on packaging of medicinal products.

- **State aid**

Work towards the incorporation of updated and revised state aid rules in relation to the State Aid Modernisation Initiative, in particular the Procedural Regulation No 659/1999, as amended by Regulation No 734/2013.

- **Intellectual Property Rights**

Assess three Commission Proposals in the field of Copyright as well as the Trade Mark Directive and the Trade Secrets Directive with a view to incorporation them into the EEA Agreement.

- **Product Safety and Market Surveillance**

Contribute to the actions on market surveillance proposed in the Single Market Strategy and to the legislative proposal amending the market surveillance provisions of Regulation No 765/2008, expected to be adopted by the Commission mid-2017. Continue to monitor the Product Safety and Market Surveillance Package, in case of any new developments.

- **Research and innovation**

Closely monitor developments in the preparatory work for the 9th framework programme on Research and Innovation, beyond Horizon 2020. Aim to facilitate collaboration between EEA EFTA stakeholders in engagements with the preparatory stages of the future research programme.

- **Energy**

Follow closely the legislative proposals implementing the Energy Union. Incorporate the Third Package for the Internal Energy Market. Continue discussions on the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive and engage in discussions about the Energy Efficiency Directive. Following agreement on the Third Energy Package, engage in discussions with the Commission on the incorporation of Network Codes.

- **Climate change and environment**

Follow closely the legislative proposals implementing the 2030 framework for climate and energy policies and the Paris Agreement, notably on emissions trading, effort-sharing and LULUCF. Implement the solution for the EEA EFTA States to auction their emission allowances on the Common Platform in line with the agreed upon timeline. Finalise the incorporation of the Regulations on carbon dioxide emissions from new passenger cars and new light commercial vehicles, the Regulation on fluorinated greenhouse gases and the Regulation on ship recycling. Follow developments related to the Circular Economy, notably the legislative proposals on waste, and related upcoming initiatives.

- **Employment and Social Policy**

Follow the re-establishment of the EURES network and the incorporation the new founding regulation into the EEA Agreement. Follow the planned establishment of the new Pillar of Social Rights.

- **Social Security**

Monitor the Labour Mobility Package and the proposal on reforming the social security coordination rules regarding unemployment benefits, long-term care and family benefits.

- **Labour law and Health and Safety at Work**

Seek to incorporate the directive concerning the enforcement of the provisions applicable to the posting of workers and follow closely the proposal reviewing the original posting of workers directive. Participate in the new Platform against undeclared work and monitor the Commission's planned proposal for changes to the Health and Safety Framework Directive and related acquis.

- **Electronic communication, audiovisual services and information society**

Incorporate the BEREC Regulation and related acts. Follow closely the Commission proposal for a revision of the regulatory framework for telecommunication published in September 2016, and in particular ensure that the proposed amendment on the EEA EFTA States participation in BEREC will be adopted. Monitor developments on the Commission cyber-security package that aims at making the internet more secure in the EEA. Monitor the revision of the Audiovisual Media Services Directive.

- **Data protection**

Work towards the incorporation of the Regulation on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and the free movement of such data (General Data Protection Regulation). Ensure future EEA EFTA State participation in the consistency mechanism between national authorities and in the European Data Protection Board.

- **Transport**

Follow closely developments on the proposal replacing the Regulation on common rules in the field of civil aviation and establishing the European Aviation Safety Agency. Work towards the incorporation of the Ship inspection and Survey organisation package. Continue to follow discussions on a possible new Road package. Process legislation related to the adopted technical pillar of the fourth railway package and follow progress on the market pillar.

- **Postal services**

Work towards the incorporation of the Third Postal Directive.

- **Professional Qualifications**

Ensure the incorporation of the Modernised Directive on Professional Qualifications, together with the update of Annex VII of the EEA Agreement in order to ensure legal clarity for professionals from the EFTA States seeking access to regulated professions in other EEA countries.

- **Statistics**

Seek to incorporate the amended Regulation on European Statistics. Follow closely the Commission's planned extension of the European Statistical Programme 2013-2017 to 2020 in order to synchronise it with the EU Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020.

- **Tobacco**

Seek to finalise negotiations with the EU side regarding the incorporation of the Tobacco Products Directive.