

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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NORWEGIAN CHAIR WORK PROGRAMME
EFTA STANDING COMMITTEE
SECOND HALF OF 2015

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 second half of 2015 will be :

- **Legal acts awaiting incorporation.** Building on the progress achieved in 2014 and the first part of 2015, continue the work to further reduce the number of legal acts awaiting incorporation in the EEA Agreement. In particular, further streamline the practical aspects of the Standing Committee procedures for the incorporation of legal acts and follow-up on other measures proposed through the EEA Efficiency Project.
- **Information and knowledge of the EEA Agreement**
Strengthening the knowledge of the EEA Agreement in the EU institutions and Member States as well as in the EEA EFTA countries, including through the organisation of events and spreading knowledge of available EEA information tools and systems.
- **EEA Financial Mechanism.** Continue negotiations with the European Union regarding a new period, with the aim of reaching a conclusion during the Norwegian Chairmanship period.
- **European financial supervision.** Following the agreement of the EU and EEA EFTA Ministers of Finance in October 2014 on the principles for the incorporation of the EU Regulations establishing the European Financial Supervisory Authorities into the EEA Agreement, continue the drafting of the relevant Joint Committee Decisions with the aim of their adoption by the EEA Joint Committee as soon as possible.

I. Horizontal issues and EU developments to be followed closely

- **Internal Market Strategy for Goods and Services**

Monitor closely the development of the Strategy, which is expected in autumn 2015, and consider possible actions and contributions by the EEA EFTA States.

- **Better Regulation package**

Assess the implications of the package for the EEA Agreement, and consider possible actions and contributions by the EEA EFTA States.

- **Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership**

Continue to follow the development of EU-US negotiations on a Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) Agreement and assess the implications for the EEA Agreement and EEA EFTA States. Follow up and further develop the dialogue and exchange of information on TTIP with the EU side, both in the EEA Joint Committee and at technical level, inter alia through the EFTA Working Groups.

- **EEA EFTA decision shaping of EEA-relevant EU legislation and policies**

Be actively involved in all stages of EU decision making of EEA-relevant legislation and actions in a timely fashion and based on key EEA EFTA priorities and expertise. Encourage the submission of EEA EFTA comments and ensure appropriate follow-up.

- **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)

Particular emphasis will be placed on the following areas at all levels:

- **Digital Single Market**

Follow closely initiatives set out in the Commission Digital Single Market Strategy published in May 2015. In particular ensure that the revision of the framework for electronic communications will take into account full EEA EFTA participation without the right to vote. In the area of telecommunications, monitor developments on the Commission proposal for a Single Market for Electronic Communications and the Commission cyber-security package that aims at making the internet more secure in the EEA.

- **Energy, climate change and environment**

Follow closely the legislative proposals implementing the 2030 climate and energy package and actions to strengthen energy security:

- *Energy*

Seek to finalise negotiations with the EU side regarding the incorporation of the Third Package for the Internal Energy Market. Reach an EEA EFTA position for the incorporation of Network Codes. Follow closely political and legislative developments related to the Energy Union package, including revision of existing legal acts and tabling of new legislative proposals. Ensure the incorporation of several legal acts on ecodesign requirements for household appliances.

- ***Climate change and environment***

Ensure the incorporation of the Regulation on carbon dioxide emissions from new passenger cars and new light commercial vehicles and the Industrial Emissions Directive. Finalise the incorporation of the Fuel Quality Directive, and of the Directive on the Protection of the Environment through Criminal Law. Reach a common position on the EEA relevance of the Regulation on ship recycling. Agree on a way forward for the incorporation of the Regulation on fluorinated greenhouse gases, notably regarding the question of whether the EEA EFTA States want to be included in the Union system of quotas. Follow relevant developments in relation to COP21.

- **Data protection**

Continue to follow closely the negotiations on the regulation on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and the free movement of such data. Work towards future EEA EFTA State participation in the proposed committee and in the European Data Protection Board.

- **Consumer protection**

Ensure the incorporation of the consumer ADR/ODR regulations which will allow consumers and traders to solve their contractual disputes without going to court, in a quick, low-cost and simple way.

- **Transport**

Follow Council discussions on the six proposals forming the Fourth Railway Package. Liberalisation of the national railway passenger markets is the main target of the 4th railway package. Special attention will be paid to how the markets for rail passenger services will be exposed to competition. Prepare and adopt two EFTA Standing Committee Decisions on the Designation of Eurocontrol as the Network Manager and the Performance Review Board of the Single European Sky.

- **Modernised Professional Qualifications**

Ensure the incorporation of the modernised professional qualifications directive which is one of the twelve levers for growth set out in the Single Market Act I and aims at further facilitating professional mobility across the EU.

- **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 planned review of the original posting of workers directive. Follow closely the Commission's planned review of the entire occupational health and safety *acquis*.

- **Employment**

Follow the planned revision of the EURES network within the context of the Labour Mobility Package.

- **Social Security**

Monitor possible new proposal on reforming the social security coordination rules regarding unemployment benefits and long-term care.

- **Deposit Guarantee Schemes**

Continue to work towards a solution on the incorporation of the Deposit Guarantee Schemes Directive, which is part of the list of EU acts pending incorporation, because of their link to the European Financial Supervisory Authorities.

- **Postal services**

Work towards the incorporation of the Third Postal Directive.

- **Medicinal products**

Ensure the incorporation of the Paediatrics Regulation.

- **State aid**

Work towards the incorporation of updated and revised state aid rules in relation to the State Aid Modernisation Initiative.

- **Public procurement**

Work towards the incorporation of the Public Procurement Reform.

- **Chemicals**

Work towards the incorporation of the Regulation amending REACH as regards CMR substances.

- **Intellectual Property Rights**

Work towards the incorporation of the Directive on collective management of copyright and related rights and multi-territorial licensing of rights in musical works for online use.

- **Food and Veterinary Matters**

Ensure the incorporation of the legal acts regarding animal by-products. Work towards the incorporation of the legislation on organic production and prepare for the incorporation of the Regulation on Genetically Modified Food and Feed. Continue to follow the finalisation of a new Regulation on Novel Food and the proposals on the cloning of animals for food production purposes. Follow the development of the 5-pack, i.e. legislation for the food chain regarding animal health, plant health, reproductive material, and Official Controls along the Food Chain.