

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE STATISTICAL OFFICE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION (EUROSTAT) AND THE EFTA SECRETARIAT,
REGARDING TECHNICAL COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF STATISTICS**

1. The aim of this Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Statistical Office of the European Union (Eurostat) and EFTA is to ensure active participation from the EFTA States in supporting European statistical cooperation projects in third countries.

This MoU is based on the previous agreement between Eurostat and EFTA regarding statistical cooperation, covering Balkan and the Mediterranean countries as well as recent and prospective partners in other geographical areas, including countries to the east of the boundaries of the enlarged EU.

2. EFTA will continue to cooperate with Eurostat in a number of programmes for technical cooperation within the field of statistics. EFTA will aim for active and visible participation in the planning, execution and revision of projects and actions covered by this MoU.

EFTA's own technical cooperation is directed, to the extent possible, towards countries having concluded declarations on cooperation or free trade agreements with EFTA States and will mainly be granted to developing countries and economies in transition. The focus will be on the Western Balkans and Turkey, and countries covered by the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). The scope of the cooperation can also include EFTA free trade and prospective partners in other regions of the world.

3. EFTA will support, in priority, the following areas of statistical cooperation:
 - (a) Comparability, conformity and harmonisation of statistics with international standards and norms.
 - (b) Strengthening and increasing the efficiency of national statistical systems and their institutional framework.
 - (c) Statistical information necessary for the establishment of free trade areas.
 - (d) Human resources development, particularly training in support of the other areas stated here.
 - (e) Exchange of information, dissemination of statistics and use of new technologies.

Other areas for cooperation may be added to this list by mutual agreement through the exchange of letters between Eurostat and the EFTA secretariat.

4. EFTA activities covered by this MoU will be coordinated with Eurostat. In particular, actions by the EFTA Secretariat and EFTA States shall be included in the planning and reporting procedures as implemented for the European Commission and EU Member States.

Eurostat will inform other Commission services as appropriate about the cooperation between Eurostat and EFTA on the basis of this Memorandum of Understanding.

5. Experts from EFTA States (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland) as well as experts from EU Member States may participate in projects and actions covered by this MoU.
6. It is intended that two EFTA national experts will be seconded to Eurostat for the duration of this MoU as part of the EFTA contribution in order to ensure continuity of support to the overall programming and management of projects and actions covered by this MoU. Their recruitment will follow the procedures as for the recruitment of other national experts to Eurostat in the framework of the relevant Commission procedures.

These two EFTA national experts are not part of the contingents of experts seconded to the European Commission through the EEA Agreement and the Agreement between the European Community and the Swiss Confederation on cooperation in the field of statistics.

7. The EFTA Secretariat, represented by the EFTA Statistical Office (ESO) in Luxembourg will act as the contact point between Eurostat and the EFTA States for cooperation programmes covered by this MoU. In that respect, ESO will participate as observer in the various policy and management groups on statistical cooperation.

EFTA States may also participate as observers in management groups on statistical cooperation.

8. EFTA will commit and be responsible for its own budget of up to EUR 2.1 million, including a provision for the seconded experts, for the period from 2011 to 2013 in the framework of its technical cooperation covered by this MoU. Specific cooperation actions will be agreed between EFTA and Eurostat.
9. The duration of this MoU is from 1 January 2011 to 31 December 2013.

Luxembourg,*2.12.2010*.....

Brussels,*13/12/2010*.....


Walter Radermacher

Director General of Eurostat
For the Director General absent,
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Kåre Bryn

Secretary-General of EFTA