

EFTA AND EEA CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEES



The Consultative Committee of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) is a forum for Trade Unions and Employers' organisations in the four member countries: Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland. Through its co-operation with Social Partners in the European Union, the Committee also serves as a link between Social Partners in EFTA and in the EU.

ACTIVITIES OF THE EFTA CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Established in 1961, the EFTA Consultative Committee has, in the course of its existence, been put in charge of an increasing number of tasks and responsibilities, and has consequently strengthened its role in the consultation process of the Association.

The Consultative Committee is now a vital platform for dialogue and consultations between EFTA Social Partners and the EFTA authorities. The Committee gives its opinion on current issues to the Standing Committee of the EFTA States and to the EFTA Council of Ministers. Informal policy consultations with subcommittees and working groups, under the Standing Committee structure, also take place and the Consultative Committee gives input to their work.

The Consultative Committee gives special priority to the following areas, for which the Committee has appointed special rapporteurs, who serve as experts and coordinators of the:

- Constitution for Europe and its implications for the EEA
- EEA Enlargement and Financial Mechanism
- EFTA follow-up to the Lisbon Strategy.

The Consultative Committee usually holds three to four internal meetings yearly, in addition to the annual joint meeting with the Standing

Committee of the EFTA States. Biannually, the EFTA Social Partners meet with the EFTA Council at Ministerial level – in the spring with Ministers from all four EFTA States and in the autumn with the Ministerial Chair. Annual meetings with the EFTA Parliamentary Committee ensure a fruitful exchange of views between Social Partners and Parliamentarians of the Member States.

The Consultative Committee has also organised a number of conferences on issues of great significance to the Committee:

The EEA and EFTA in a New Europe, Reykjavik, 21 October 2004 (In co-operation with the EFTA Parliamentary Committee)

Social Partners in the New Europe: EEA, EU and EFTA, Oslo, 27-28 February 2003

The Enlarged Single Market, Oslo, 11 December 2001

New Economy – New Borders, Reykjavik, 12 October 2000

EFTA, EU Relations & Enlargement, Vaduz, 3-4 November 1999

OPINIONS ADOPTED BY THE EFTA CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE 2000 - 2004

EEA Enlargement and the New Financial Mechanism

Rapporteur: Ms Erna Gudmundsdóttir, 21 April 2004

Internal Market Strategy Priorities 2003-2006 - and the Follow-up on the EFTA Side

Rapporteurs: Ms Hanne Lyngstad, Mr Tor Jørgen Lindahl and Ms Grete Gautvik, 15 December 2003

A New European Constitution: Impact on the EEA Agreement

Rapporteur: Ms Wenche Paulsrud, 26 June 2003

EU Developments and their Impact on the EEA Agreement: EU Enlargement, Convention on the Future of Europe and the Lisbon Strategy

Rapporteurs: Ms Wenche Paulsrud, Ms Katarina Sætersdal and Mr Knut Arne Sanden, 14 May 2003

EEA Enlargement and the Lisbon Follow-up

Rapporteurs: Ms Erna Gudmundsdóttir and Ms Katarina Sætersdal, 12 December 2002

Enlargement of the EEA

Rapporteurs: Ms Erna Gudmundsdóttir and Mr Marco Taddei, 26 February 2002

EFTA Follow-up to the Lisbon Strategy

Rapporteur: Ms Katarina Sætersdal, 26 February 2002

EFTA Third-Country Relations

Rapporteur: Mr Gregor Kündig, 11 June 2001

Corporate Social Responsibility: content and Limitation of the CSR Concept

Rapporteurs: Mr Vidar Lindefeld, Mr Thomas Pletscher and Ms Karin Beate Theodorsen, 5 June 2001

Environment 2010 - our Future, our Choice: An Action Programme for the Environment in Europe at the Beginning of the 21st Century

Rapporteur: Mr Halvor Wøien, 7 March 2001

2000 Review of the Internal Market Strategy and the Follow-up on the EFTA Side

Rapporteur: Ms Grete Gautvik, 7 March 2001

The Lisbon Follow-up

Rapporteur: Ms Katarina Sætersdal, 23 January 2001

The Euro - one year old and still a fragile baby

Rapporteur: Mr Pierre Weiss, 16 March 2000

Employment

Rapporteur: Mr Wei Chen, 6 March 2000

The Strategy for the European Union Internal Market and the Follow-up on the EFTA Side

Rapporteur: Ms Grete Gautvik, 6 March 2000

CO-OPERATION WITH THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE (EESC)

Co-operation between the Social Partners in EFTA and in the EU has been strengthened considerably through the close contacts between the EFTA Consultative Committee and the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC). Informal co-operation between the two institutions began in 1975 and was formalised by the European Economic Area (EEA) Agreement, which entered into force on 1 January 1994.

The EEA Agreement extended the Single Market of the EU to three out of four EFTA countries, namely Iceland, Norway and Liechtenstein. Article 96 of the Agreement stipulated the setting up of the EEA Consultative Committee. This body consists of an equal number of members of the EFTA Consultative Committee and of members of the EESC. The EEA Consultative Committee meets once a year.

The EEA Consultative Committee works to strengthen contacts between Social Partners on both sides and to co-operate in an organised and regular manner to enhance awareness of the economic and social aspects of the EEA, and to provide input into the deliberations of other EEA bodies.

The EEA Consultative Committee is the main forum for co-operation between the two sides but the contacts have been reinforced further through the Osmosis procedure, which allows representatives of the EFTA Consultative Committee to participate in the work of the EESC, and vice-versa.

Through the Osmosis procedure, a regular dialogue has been established between the EFTA Consultative Committee and the EESC and the co-operation has proved to be both valuable and productive. The extensive contacts with the EU counterparts have contributed to an increased awareness of the EEA among EESC members, which is often reflected in opinions from the EESC.

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE EEA CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE 2000 – 2004

The Second Northern Dimension Action Plan

Rapporteurs: Ms Erna Gudmundsdóttir, EFTA CC, and Mr Filip Hamro-Drotz, EESC, 23 June 2004

The European Neighbourhood and the EEA

Rapporteurs: Ms Pernille Aga, EFTA CC, and Ms Karin Alleweldt, EESC, 23 June 2004

The Enlargement of the European Economic Area – Institutional and Legal Issues

Rapporteurs: Mr Arno Metzler, EESC, and Mr Knut Arne Sanden, EFTA CC, 20 March 2003

The Follow-up of the Lisbon Strategy

Rapporteurs: Mr Peter J. Boldt, EESC, and Ms Katarina Sætersdal, EFTA CC, 20 March 2003

Enlargement and the Future of the EEA

Rapporteurs: Mr Filip Hamro-Drotz, EESC, and Mr Jon Ivar Nålsund, EFTA CC, 26 June 2002

Governance and Corporate Social Responsibility in a Globalised World

Rapporteurs: Mr Uno Westerlund, EESC, and Ms Åse Erdal, EFTA CC, 26 June 2002

Free Movement of Workers in the Context of Enlargement

Rapporteurs: Mr Johannes Jaschick, EESC, and Ms Erna Gudmundsdóttir, EFTA CC, 20 November 2001

eEurope

Rapporteurs: Mr Filip Hamro-Drotz, EESC, Ms Sissel Monsvold and Mr Davíð Stefánsson, EFTA CC, 23 May 2001

The European Social Policy Agenda

Rapporteurs: Ms Margareta Regnell, EESC, and Mr Wei Chen, EFTA CC, 23 May 2001

The EU's Northern Dimension

Rapporteurs: Mr Filip Hamro-Drotz, EESC, Mr Ari Skúlason and Mr Jon Veá, EFTA CC, 19 June 2000

Energy and Environment: Towards an Integrated Approach

Rapporteurs: Mr Rudolf Strasser, EESC, and Mr Halvor Wøien, EFTA CC, 19 June 2000

MEMBERS

The members of the EFTA Consultative Committee are designated by the Member States, and chosen from the Social Partner organisations, i.e., employers' organisations and trade unions, in the four EFTA countries. Normally, six members from Norway, four members each from Iceland and Switzerland and two from Liechtenstein participate in meetings of the Committee. The Consultative Committee elects a Chairperson and two Vice-Chairperson, chosen from among its members, with a term of office of two years.

MEMBERS OF THE EFTA CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Iceland

Mr Halldór Grönvold
Icelandic Confederation of Labour (ASÍ)

Ms Sigthrúður Ármann
Iceland Chamber of Commerce

Ms Erna Gudmundsdóttir
Federation of State and Municipal Employees (BSRB)

Mr Gústaf Adolf Skúlason
Confederation of Icelandic Employers (SA)

Mr Jón Steindór Valdimarsson
Federation of Icelandic Industries (SI)

Liechtenstein

Mr Josef Beck
Liechtenstein Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI)

Mr Albert Jehle
Federation of Liechtenstein Employees

Mr Sigi Langenbahn
Federation of Liechtenstein Employees

Norway

Mr Jon Vea
Confederation of Norwegian Business and Industry
(NHO)

Mr Thomas Angell
Federation of Norwegian Commercial and Service
Enterprises (HSH)

Mr Johan-Ludvik Carlsen
Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions (LO)

Ms Åse Erdal
Norwegian Association of Local and Regional
Authorities (KS)

Mr Vidar Lindefeld
Confederation of Norwegian Business and Industry
(NHO)

Ms Toril Marstrander
Norwegian Confederation of Vocational Unions
(YS)

Ms Ingunn Yssen
Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions (LO)

Switzerland

Mr Gregor Kündig
economiesuisse

Ms Ruth Derrer Balladore
Swiss Employers' Federation

Mr Peider Signorell
Swiss Federation of Commercial Employees

Mr Marco Taddei
Swiss Union of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises

Mr Pierre Weiss
Swiss Union of Employers

Permanent Observers

European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC)

Union of Industrial and Employer's Confederation of
Europe (UNICE)

For more information about the EFTA and EEA Consultative Committees, please visit:
<http://secretariat.efta.int/consultative>
