

# The EEA Seminar



**25 September 2025 – EFTA House, Brussels & online**

09:00-09:30 **Registration and coffee**

09:30-11:15 **Opening remarks**

Ambassador Stefán H. Jóhannesson, Mission of Iceland to the EU, Chair of the Standing Committee of the EFTA States

**Unveiling the magic behind the EEA Agreement**

Marit C. Schage Andria, Director of Internal Market Division, EFTA Secretariat

**From EU law to EEA law**

Karoline Lumholdt Mathisen, Head of EEA Legal Coordination, EFTA Secretariat

**How EEA EFTA States can influence EU law making**

Trond Helge Bårdsen, Senior Officer, Internal Market Division, EFTA Secretariat

**View from the EU**

Matúš Minárik, EEA Policy Coordinator, Secretariat-General, European Commission

**Q&A panel: Understanding the EEA Agreement in action**

Marit C. Schage Andria, Karoline Lumholdt Mathisen and Trond Helge Bårdsen, EFTA Secretariat, and Matúš Minárik, European Commission

11:15-11:35 **Coffee break**

11:35-12:55 **EEA law enforcement: EFTA Surveillance Authority and EFTA Court**

Melpo Joséphidès, Director of Legal & Executive Affairs, ESA, and Ólafur Einarsson, Registrar, EFTA Court

**The role of parliamentarians, social partners and regional authorities in the EEA**

Ingerid Bratz, Officer, EEA Coordination Division, EFTA Secretariat

**Power shifts, shared rules: The EEA in a geopolitical age**

Christel Schaldemose, Vice-President of the European Parliament

**EEA and Norway Grants reduce disparities & strengthen cooperation in Europe**

Ragna Fidjestøl, Managing Director, EEA and Norway Grants

12:55-13:00 **Closing remarks**

Knut Hermansen, Deputy Secretary-General, EFTA Secretariat

13:00-13:55 **Lunch**

14:00-14:50 **Breakout sessions - Part I**

14:50-15:20 **Coffee break**

15:30-16:20 **Breakout sessions - Part II**

16:30-18:30 **Reception**

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## Breakout sessions

### From framework to function: How EU law becomes EEA law

*Suitable for those new to the EEA collaboration or looking for a refresher on the basic principles of adaptation and incorporation.*

What steps need to be taken for an EU act to apply to the EEA EFTA States? Can the EEA EFTA States choose which EU laws to implement? How do Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and the EU collaborate on decisions? Join our Senior Legal Officers for an insightful discussion on how EU legislation is incorporated into the EEA Agreement.

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### From framework to function: A deep dive into the two-pillar system (advanced session)

*Suitable for those who have experience working with EEA law/incorporation or have already attended the “From EU law to EEA law” breakout session.*

This session offers an in-depth discussion on integrating the two-pillar system and how challenges have been addressed to ensure that the EEA stays both dynamic and homogenous.

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### Making an impact: How the EEA EFTA States work to influence EU policy

*Ideal for those who are curious about the early stages of EU policymaking, how the EEA EFTA States interact with the EU institutions and how they ensure that their voice is heard.*

What is the interaction between the EEA EFTA States, the EFTA Secretariat and the different EU institutions? How do the EEA EFTA States contribute to EU policymaking before laws are adopted? What is the role of the EFTA Secretariat in supporting their efforts?

This session explains how Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway work to influence EU legislation at the drafting stage—including through expert groups, committees and political dialogue. It also looks at the broader dialogue between EU and EEA EFTA societies, including through the EEA Joint Parliamentary and Consultative Committees.

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### Making rights real: Judicial enforcement and surveillance

*Ideal for those interested in the practical application of EEA law, its recent developments and the mechanisms that protect the EEA.*

Run by the EFTA Surveillance Authority and the EFTA Court, this session will explore recent important cases from the EFTA Court and their role in shaping rights under the EEA Agreement. It will look at new developments in judicial enforcement, including situations where individuals may seek redress when national systems fall short. The session will also examine the recent case law of the Court, e.g. in the fast-evolving field of environmental law, and the significance of fundamental rights in the EEA legal order.

The discussion will also highlight the role of surveillance in ensuring that individuals can enjoy the rights they are entitled to, such as access to benefits.