

PRIORITIES OF THE NORWEGIAN CHAIR

FIRST HALF OF 2020

The purpose with this document is to highlight the priorities of the Norwegian Chair for the EFTA Standing Committee during the first half of 2020. The priorities are supplemented by the work programmes prepared for the EFTA Subcommittees and EFTA Working Groups.

Incorporation of legal acts

Building on the progress achieved and based on the shared responsibility between the parties of the EEA Agreement, continue the good dialogue and the systematic efforts to ensure the timely incorporation of new EEA relevant EU acts. Particular focus on critical acts, including acts within financial services (EMIR CCP Supervision, Anti-Money Laundering, Banking Package).

Decision-shaping

To closely follow the new European Commission and European Parliament with the aim at identifying, following and promoting EEA/EFTA views on development of new legislation and measures. Main priorities for the first half of 2020 include:

- To maintain and further develop EEA/EFTA cooperation with the EU on EEA relevant initiatives under the European Green Deal, including the new climate law, financing mechanisms, transport, the circular economy action plan.
- Engage and promote EEA/EFTA views related to EU cooperation on labour issues, including collective bargaining/minimum wage, working standards, social dumping, gender equality and non-discrimination.
- Identify and engage with EU cooperation in overarching areas such as maritime issues, competitiveness, knowledge (research and education), industrial policy and digitalization.

Continue to focus on key issues in the pre-pipeline and pipeline stage, including through meetings with officials from EU institutions and written statements. Actively use EEA/EFTA comments as an instrument for influencing the EU decision-making process, including on key legislation arising the next six months.

EEA Outreach

Strengthen the knowledge in the EU institutions, including European Parliament and MEPs of the EEA Agreement and the EEA and Norway Financial Mechanisms, through full use of the available tools and arenas to disseminate EEA information. In addition to the biannual EFTA seminars, organize an event on EEA/EFTA States participation in EU Agencies to increase knowledge, identify opportunities and share experiences on the EEA/EFTA States participation in the different agencies.

In cooperation with the FMO, organize specific exhibition on the EEA and Norway Grants in the European Parliament.

New EU Programmes 2021-27

Continue the preparations for EEA/EFTA participation in relevant EU programmes under the new Multiannual Financial Framework, with the aim to ensuring participation in line with priorities in the EEA/EFTA States and the provisions in the EEA Agreement. Submit indicative positions on individual programme participation in February 2020.

Other activities

Relations with the UK

Contribute to a robust management of relevant agreements in the transitional period.

Continue a close dialogue between the EEA/EFTA States and the EU UK Task Force, in order to preserve the interest of all parties concerned and the integrity of the internal market when negotiating the future treaty relationship with the UK.