

PRIORITIES OF THE LIECHTENSTEIN CHAIR

SECOND HALF OF 2020

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

1. Response to the COVID-19 pandemic

Continue close consultations with the EU on the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, in particular regarding recovery strategies and efforts to ensure the continued integrity and smooth functioning of the Internal Market. Ensure swift incorporation of EEA-relevant legal acts in this area.

2. Prepare EU programme participation 2021-27

Continue preparations for EEA EFTA participation in relevant EU programmes under the new Multiannual Financial Framework, with a view to preserving the interests of the EEA EFTA States and the provisions of the EEA Agreement (in particular regarding equal participation). Ensure smooth progress in drafting JCDs on programme participation with a view to their timely submission in early 2021.

3. Timely incorporation of EEA-relevant legal acts

Continue work among the EEA EFTA States and with the EU institutions to reduce the number of adopted EU acts awaiting incorporation into the EEA Agreement. Particular focus on critical acts (e.g. the Banking Package (CRR II/CRD V), the NIS Directive and Cybersecurity Act, the European Labour Authority Regulation, Regulations on CO2 emission standards for cars and vans, the de minimis Regulation and the General Block Exemption Regulation, the revision of social security coordination rules) as well as on areas with relatively large numbers of outstanding acts (transport, financial services). Finalize incorporation of older acts and packages where good progress has been made in recent months (e.g. Tobacco Products Directive, Ship Inspections, Third Postal Services Directive, Energy Efficiency Directive, Railway Packages, BEREC). Assess challenges related to major pieces of new EU legislation at an early stage, especially regarding possible two-pillar issues (cf. Early Action List). Further improve vertical cooperation among Working Groups, Subcommittees and Standing Committee, in particular in respect of horizontal challenges.

4. Continue efforts on decision-shaping

Continue to place great emphasis on decision-shaping, in particular by issuing further EEA EFTA Comments in appropriate cases (in particular on the European Green Deal) and ensuring follow-up, including through the EEA EFTA Comment Tracker.

5. Brexit-related activities

Continue the close dialogue between the EEA EFTA States and the EU UK Task Force in order to preserve the interests of all parties concerned in the context of the future relationship with the UK, in particular the good functioning of the internal market. Finalize arrangements to ensure the full implementation of the EEA Separation Agreement upon expiration of the transitional period.