

PRIORITIES OF THE LIECHTENSTEIN CHAIR OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE

FIRST HALF OF 2022

Liechtenstein will chair the Standing Committee of the EFTA States during the first half of 2022. In addition to the Liechtenstein priorities outlines below, the EFTA Subcommittees and Working Groups establish supplementing work programmes.

Introduction

A common understanding of the principles of the EEA is a core foundation for the good functioning and homogeneity of the Agreement. The EEA EFTA States are committed to promoting the EEA, increasing its visibility and ultimately enhancing knowledge of the EEA with the objective to safeguard the common interests of the members of the Internal Market. Against this background, Liechtenstein will particularly focus on:

Timely incorporation of EEA-relevant legal acts

Ensure the timely incorporation of new EEA-relevant EU acts to maintain a level playing field across the EEA. This includes ensuring the swift incorporation of COVID-19 related acts and other critical acts such as the review of the Regulations for the European Financial Supervisory Authorities (The ESAs review), the Taxonomy and Sustainable Finance Disclosure file, as well as processing older files.

Further build on the initiative launched by the Norwegian Chair in the second half of 2021 to further streamline work among EEA EFTA States and assess with the EU institutions processing procedures with the aim of reducing the processing time for the incorporation of EU legal acts.

Monitor the transfer of the EEA file from the EEAS to the European Commission with a view to facilitating a smooth transition to safeguard the good functioning of the EEA.

Enhancing knowledge of the EEA - EEA Outreach

Use the new EFTA House as a dynamic platform for outreach activities to enhance knowledge and understanding of the EEA Agreement among main interlocutors. This includes organising tailor-made EFTA House study visits for European officials.

Launch a social media visibility campaign under the slogan “We are the EEA” with the involvement of EFTA, ESA, and key EU institutions aiming at promoting the core foundations of the EEA and raising awareness of the value of the Agreement for citizens in the EEA.

Assess the feasibility of using the EFTA House as a venue for an EEA Council meeting in 2022.

Decision-shaping

Assess at an early stage possible two-pillar and other horizontal issues related to major pieces of new legislation.

Provide input to EEA-relevant EU legislation and measures in the pre-pipeline stages with emphasis on the European Green Deal including the Fit for 55 package, Europe’s Digital Decade, the European Health Union, the European Pillar of Social Rights and the Action Plan on Anti-Money Laundering.

Issue EEA EFTA Comments in areas of key importance and actively follow-up with EU institutions.

EU programme participation

Ensure that EEA EFTA States' participation in relevant EU programmes under the new programming period 2021-2027 is based on the rights and obligations specified in the EEA Agreement.

Other activities - Financial Mechanisms

Promote a continuous and balanced strengthening of trade and economic relations, in line with article 115 of the EEA Agreement and work towards launching negotiations on a future financial contribution of the EEA EFTA States to social and economic cohesion in the EEA.