

Introduction to the EEA Agreement

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The EFTA Secretariat in Brussels

- > Secretariat for the EEA EFTA States in their EEA work - «the EEA process»
- > Coordinating role between EFTA States and Commission/EEAS
- > Secretariat for the EEA advisory bodies



Objectives and principles of the EEA

- > *“... establishing a dynamic and homogenous European Economic Area, based on common rules and equal conditions of competition and providing for the adequate means of enforcement at the judicial level, ...”*
- > Which means: Extending the internal market to the participating EFTA States
- > Incorporation of all relevant legislation and the establishment of an institutional set-up for incorporation of new legislation (“dynamic”)
- > Institutional set-up for surveillance and judicial litigation (“homogeneous”)



European Economic Area

Extending the EU Internal Market

Four Freedoms

- > Free movement of goods
- > Free movement of services
- > Free movement of capital
- > Free movement of persons

Horizontal Polices

- > Environment
- > Social policy
- > Consumer protection
- > Statistics
- > Company law

Common Rules

- > State aid
- > Competition
- > Public procurement

Cooperation

- > EU programmes
- > EU agencies

Cohesion

- > EEA and Norway Grants



The EEA does not cover

- > Common trade policy
- > EU customs union
- > Common agricultural and fisheries policies
- > EU regional policy
- > Economic and monetary union
- > Common foreign, security and defense policy
- > Justice and home affairs



However...

EEA extended to cover Food Safety and Veterinary matters in 1998

EFTA States' bilateral agreements on :

- > Schengen
- > Dublin



The challenge: Reconciling two different models of cooperation

The EU model

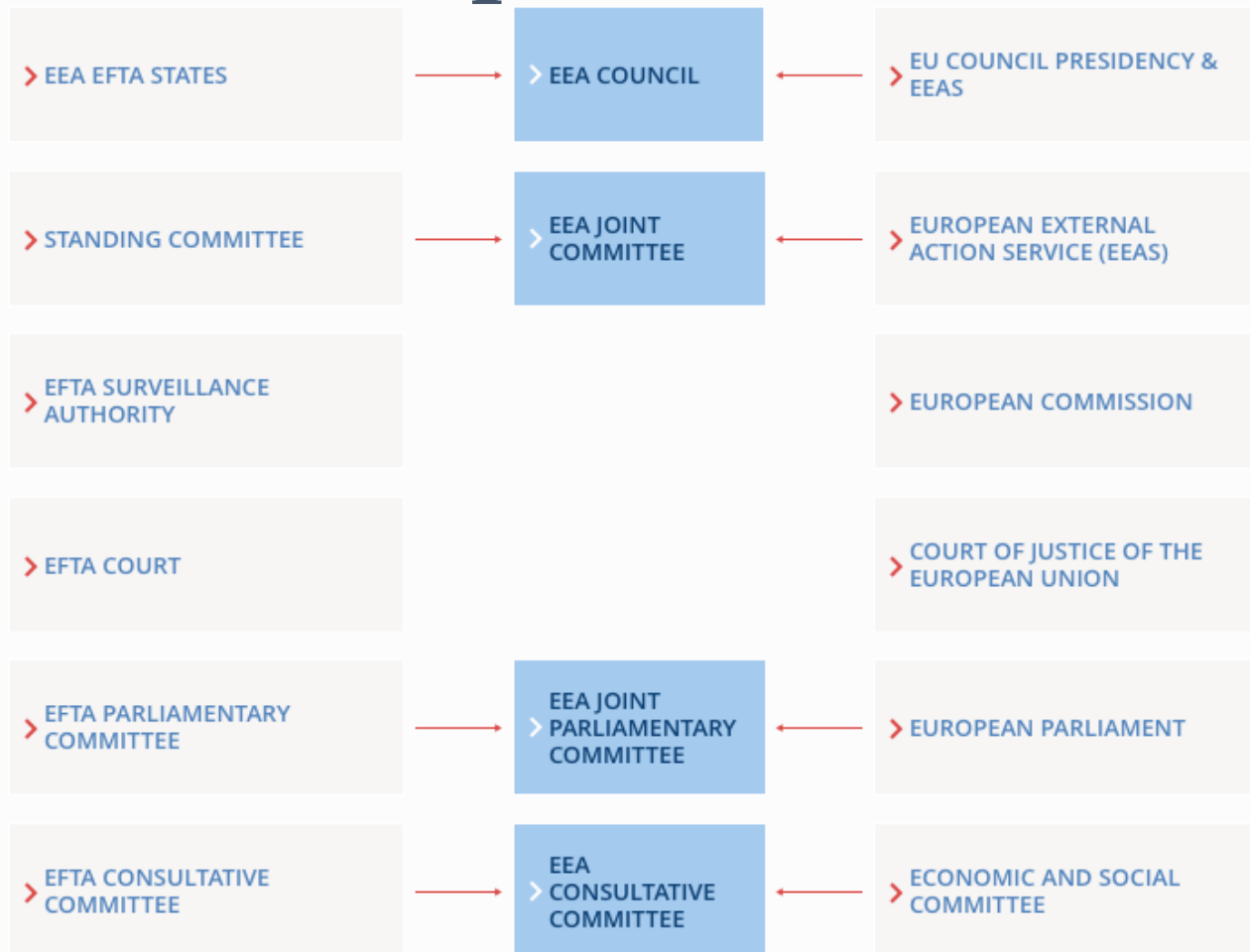
- Supranationality: transfer of competence and sovereignty
- Institutions with defined roles in the decision-making processes: Commission – European Parliament – Council
- Important concern: Preserving decision-making autonomy of the EU

The EFTA model

- Intergovernmental cooperation: No transfer of competence, no “common policies”
- Decisions taken by consensus between the Governments
- Important concern: Preserving sovereignty



The two pillar structure



This diagram illustrates the management of the EEA Agreement. The left pillar shows the EFTA States and their institutions, while the right pillar shows the EU side. The joint EEA bodies are in the middle.



EEA 25 years – EU Summit 22 March 2019



EEA EFTA Prime Ministers with leaders of all EU Member States

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XuneBV9Te-E>

