

Introduction to the EEA Agreement

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The EFTA Secretariat in Brussels



The EFTA Secretariat in Brussels – what do we do?

- > Secretariat for the EEA EFTA States in their EEA work - «the EEA process»
- > Coordinating role between EEA EFTA States and Commission
- > 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 Policies

- > 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 challenge: Reconciling two different models of cooperation

The EU model

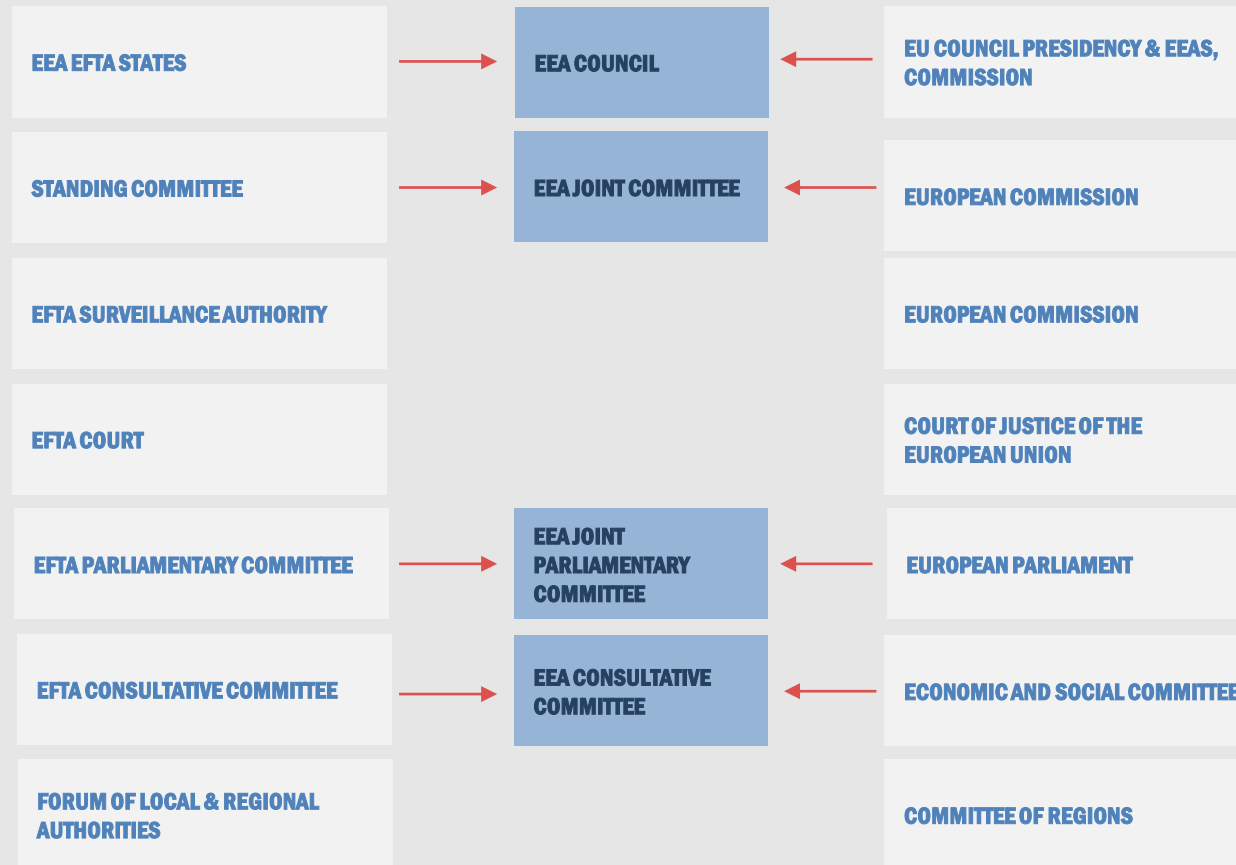
- Supranationality: transfer of competence and sovereignty
- Institutions with defined roles in the decision-making processes:
Commission – European Parliament – Council
- Important concern: Preserving decision-making autonomy of the EU

The EFTA model

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



The EEA two pillar structure



EEA 25 years – EU Summit 22 March 2019

