

Priorities of the Norwegian Chair of the EFTA Standing Committee

First half of 2023

The purpose with this overview is to describe the priorities of the Norwegian Chair of the EFTA Standing Committee during the first half of 2023. The priorities are supplemented by the work programmes of the EFTA Subcommittees and Working Groups.

EEA Outreach:

- Strengthen the knowledge of the EEA Agreement and of the EEA EFTA States as EU's closest partners, using available tools and arenas, including by seeking to emphasise this in relation to the celebration of the 30-year anniversary of the Single Market
- This will include:
 - o Highlighting that the EEA EFTA States are an integral part of the internal market, and hence of European supply chains, and that EU must take into account its EEA obligations, where relevant, in its trade policy
 - o Continuing to ensure that the EEA EFTA States' participation in relevant EU programmes for the programme period 2021-2027 is based on the rights and obligations that follow from the EEA Agreement

Decision-shaping:

- Identify and provide input to relevant EU legislations and measures in the pre-pipeline and pipeline stages
- Main focus:
 - o Initiatives stemming from the upcoming Commission Communication marking the 30-year anniversary of the Single Market
 - o The upcoming Commission proposal for reform of the electricity market design
 - o Critical Raw Materials Act
 - o The Commission proposal of a Green Deal Industrial Plan, most notably the Net-Zero Industry Act and adaptations to state aid rules.
- Actively use EEA EFTA comments as an instrument for influencing the EU decision-making process, in addition to meetings with officials from EU institutions and other written statements

Incorporation of legal acts:

- Based on the shared responsibility between the parties of the EEA Agreement, and building on previous initiatives and progress achieved, continue the work to ensure timely incorporation of EEA relevant EU acts and to reduce the backlog
- This will include:
 - Building on the work that has been carried out to identify possibilities to speed up the processing of outstanding acts within the current incorporation procedures
 - A particular focus on central acts, packages of acts and long outstanding files, including the Digital Markets Act and the Digital Services Act, EEA relevant legislation in the Fit for 55 Package, the Digital Finance Package, the Ship Survey-file and the EASA-file

Financial Mechanism:

- Continue negotiations with the European Commission regarding a new period of the Financial Mechanism and, in parallel, regarding arrangements for trade in fish and marine products between some of the EEA EFTA States and the EU, with a view of swift conclusion
- Spread knowledge of the contributions of the EEA EFTA States to reduce economic and social disparities in the EEA, notably by preparing, in cooperation with the Financial Mechanism Office, a specific exhibition on the EEA and Norwegian Financial Mechanisms in the European Parliament

Synergies between the three EFTA House organisations:

- Building on the work that has already been carried out with a view to enhance further the synergies between the three EFTA House organisations