

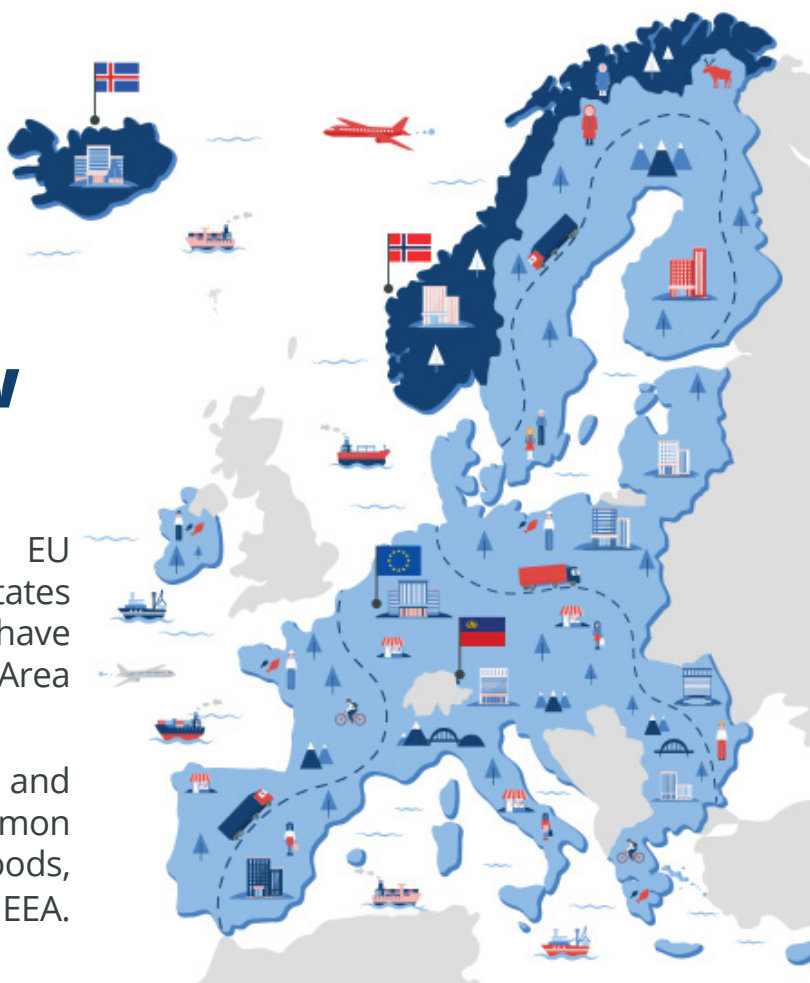
# EEA



## How EU law becomes EEA law

Through the EEA Agreement, the EU Member States and the EEA EFTA States (Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway) have created a shared European Economic Area – the EEA.

The EEA Agreement is dynamic and continuously updated to ensure common rules for the free movement of goods, capital, services and people across the EEA.



## How does EU law take effect in the EEA EFTA States?

### **STAGE 1** *The EEA EFTA States contribute to EU Policy Making*

Experts from the EEA EFTA States contribute to shaping EU legislation before it is adopted by the EU. For instance, they participate in meetings of EU Expert Groups and Committees. Legislation proposed by the Commission is discussed with the EU side in the EEA EFTA Working and Expert Groups composed of experts from the EEA EFTA States. The EEA EFTA States also submit common positions to the EU institutions, for example through EEA EFTA Comments.

### **STAGE 2** *The EEA EFTA States agree on a draft decision to incorporate an act*

When the EU adopts an EEA-relevant act, the EFTA Secretariat launches a procedure to incorporate it into the EEA Agreement. At this stage the EFTA Working or Expert Groups assess the act. Based on the experts' assessment, the EFTA Secretariat drafts a Decision of the EEA Joint Committee to incorporate the act into the Agreement.

This Decision may specify adjustments, known as adaptations, that need to



be made for the EU act to fit the EEA Agreement, for example to ensure EEA EFTA participation in an EU Agency. Other adjustments reflect specific situations of the EEA EFTA States such as geography or infrastructure.

Each of the EEA EFTA States has its own national procedure to prepare for incorporation and implementation of an EU act.

### **STAGE 3** *The EU reviews and approves the draft Decision*

When the EEA EFTA States have agreed on the content of the Decision, it is sent to the EU Commission's Secretariat-General.

The Secretariat-General consults other services of the EU Commission on the content of the draft Decision. If the draft Decision contains substantive adaptations or if it has budgetary consequences, the Council of the European Union must give the Secretariat-General the mandate to adopt it.

The Secretariat-General and EFTA Secretariat coordinate the discussions between the EU and the EEA EFTA States on the final text of the Decision.

### **STAGE 4** *The EEA Joint Committee adopts the Decision*

The EEA Joint Committee adopts the Decisions to incorporate EU acts into the EEA Agreement. The Joint Committee meets around eight times per year and

is composed of the Ambassadors of the EEA EFTA States and officials from the Commission's Secretariat-General.

### **STAGE 5** *Entry into force of the Joint Committee Decision*



Joint Committee Decisions normally enter into force one day after their adoption. If a Decision requires amendments to national law, the Parliaments of the EEA EFTA States must approve it before it can enter into force.

EU law that has become EEA law must be made part of the national legal orders of Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway.

An EU act has become EEA law once the national procedures are completed and the Decision has entered into force.



EEAWebtool

[www.efta.int](http://www.efta.int)