



EUROPEAN FREE TRADE ASSOCIATION

13 September 2022

EFTA – KOSOVO 1ST ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS

Geneva, 29 – 31 August 2022

PUBLIC REPORT

I. Context

The first round of negotiations between EFTA and Kosovo was held in Geneva on 29 to 31 August, after the negotiation process had been officially launched at ministerial level on 20 June 2022 in Borgarnes, Iceland.

II. General Assessment

Efficient progress was achieved during the discussions which took place in a constructive and friendly atmosphere. The delegations entered technical discussions on the texts and made substantial progress. Investment, services and government procurement were addressed at heads of delegation level. Follow-ups were agreed for all areas in preparation for the next round to be held in Pristina. In some areas, finalisation is within reach.

III. Trade in Goods (NAMA/Agriculture)

On the draft Chapter on Trade in Goods both sides presented their respective approaches to trade in industrial and agricultural products. Both sides confirmed the aim of free trade for industrial products including fish and other marine products. Turning to agriculture, Kosovo and the individual EFTA States presented their respective approaches and agricultural policies as well as an overview of current trade flows. Furthermore, follow-ups paving the way forward were agreed.

IV. Rules of Origin

Good discussions were held on the text proposal which provides for a dynamic link to the PEM Convention and allows for the use of the transitional rules of origin as an alternative to the current PEM rules. In addition, a couple of PEM plus elements, such as the use of electronic certificates and cumulation possibilities were addressed. The working group further started its technical work on the mandate of the sub-committee.

V. Trade Facilitation

The working group had a useful exchange on the EFTA text proposal, which incorporates and builds on the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement. Information and clarifications related to domestic procedures were provided from both sides.

VI. SPS/TBT

Constructive discussions were held in the areas of SPS and TBT. Information was exchanged on the Parties' respective systems and their relations to both the WTO and the European Union. Technical exchanges in the areas on cooperation, transparency and conformity assessment also took place.

VII. Competition

The Competition Chapter could already be largely agreed, except for the Article on Cooperation which will be addressed at the next round.

VIII. Trade Remedies

Articles Subsidies and Countervailing Measures and Global Safeguard Measures could already be cleared during this first round. The Article on Anti-dumping requires further discussions. Further to this, experts agreed on the Article on Bilateral Safeguard Measures except for the review clause.

IX. Legal and Horizontal Issues and Dispute Settlement

Almost all of the texts could be cleared during this first round, except for a minor issue concerning Dispute Settlement. The Parties agreed to revert to the Objectives Article in light of the result of the negotiations.

X. Trade and Sustainable Development

The EFTA States and Kosovo reviewed EFTA's proposal for a Chapter on trade and sustainable development. EFTA explained the text article by article and provided clarifications and explanations. Several follow-ups were agreed to pave the way for text-based negotiation in the second round of negotiations.

XI. Intellectual Property Rights

Text proposals for a Chapter and an Annex on IPR were introduced and discussed during this round. The experts identified areas of agreement on text, and issues where further discussions or consultations were foreseen. It was further agreed to include an Appendix for the protection of geographical indications and indications of source in Kosovo, Liechtenstein, and Switzerland.