



# EUROPEAN FREE TRADE ASSOCIATION

## **EFTA–THAILAND**

### **TENTH ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS**

*Geneva, 19-23 August 2024*

#### **PUBLIC REPORT**

#### **I. General overview**

EFTA and Thailand met for the tenth round of negotiations in Geneva, Switzerland. Delegates discussed Trade in Goods, Rules of Origin, Trade Remedies, Investment, Trade in Services, Legal and Horizontal Issues and Dispute Settlement, Intellectual Property Rights, Government Procurement, and Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises. Good progress was achieved during the round, in particular through the conclusion of discussions on Legal & Horizontal Issues, Trade Remedies, Trade in Services, Trade and Sustainable Development, Government Procurement, and Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises. Based on the progress made during the round, EFTA and Thailand reiterated their objective to conclude a modern, comprehensive and ambitious free trade agreement.

#### **II. Trade in Goods**

In the negotiations on trade in goods, experts engaged in detailed discussions on their respective market access offers, highlighting areas where further liberalisation was sought, identified remaining priorities and outlined key sensitivities.

#### **III. Rules of Origin**

Very good progress was made on Rules of Origin (RoO), with experts going over the outstanding text of the RoO Annex and the Product-Specific Rules of Origin (PSR). Discussions on pending issues in the RoO Annex were useful while a couple of items remain open.

Substantive progress was also achieved in the PSR Appendix, with an agreement on numerous chapters. Both sides clarified outstanding proposals and agreed on the way forward for the work needed to conclude the few outstanding issues.

#### **IV. Trade Remedies**

The working group reached an agreement on all outstanding issues in the texts under its purview.

#### **V. Investment**

Experts held constructive negotiations and agreed on the text of the investment chapter, which sets out core disciplines including on national treatment and cross-border payments and transfers. They also exchanged views on the remaining open elements of their respective lists of reservations to the national treatment commitment.

#### **VI. Trade in Services**

Mutually satisfactory outcomes were identified across outstanding issues by services experts and negotiations on trade in services could be concluded. The FTA will contain a fully-fledged chapter on trade in services building on WTO disciplines, complemented with specific annexes on financial services, telecommunications services, tourism and travel services, maritime transport services, movement of natural persons supplying services, and domestic regulation.

#### **VII. Legal and Horizontal and Dispute Settlement**

The working group reached an agreement on all outstanding issues in the texts under its purview.

#### **VIII. IPR**

The provisions related to public health, genetic resources and traditional knowledge, protection of plant varieties as well as enforcement were agreed. While some progress was made regarding the remaining open points, further discussions and efforts are needed to achieve mutually satisfactory solutions and conclude negotiations on the IPR texts, in particular regarding the provisions on undisclosed information and geographical indications.

## **IX. Government Procurement**

A chapter and annex on government procurement was finalised. It includes a further negotiation clause allowing the Parties to enter into future negotiations with the view to provide similar market access granted to non-Parties on a reciprocal basis. The chapter underlines the importance of transparency and promotes sustainable procurement and small and medium sized enterprises in procurement.

## **X. Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises**

Experts reached consensus on the remaining open items in the SME chapter during the round. The concluded chapter features disciplines on the online provision of a wide range of business-relevant information as well as cooperation to the benefit of SMEs.

## **XI. Sustainable Development**

The Chapter on Trade and Sustainable Development (TSD) was finalised during the 10<sup>th</sup> round. It includes comprehensive and legally binding commitments on labour standards, gender equality and non-discrimination, and the protection of the environment, including climate change. In case of any disagreement between the Parties on the implementation of the chapter, it provides for the possibility to call for the establishment of a panel of experts competent to issue recommendations to the Parties. The TSD chapter is based on the revised EFTA TSD model provisions and ranks among the most comprehensive and ambitious TSD chapters ever concluded by the EFTA States.