

EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AREA

STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE EFTA STATES

Ref. 25-243

31 January 2025

SUBCOMMITTEES I-II-III-IV - WORK PROGRAMME 2025

This document outlines the Subcommittees main objectives for 2025. The Subcommittees will align their work with the priorities of the chairmanships of the Standing Committee in 2025.

1. DECISION-MAKING

Timely incorporation: The Subcommittees will continue to work, in close cooperation with the Working/Expert Groups (WGs/EGs), to reduce the number of acts awaiting incorporation into the EEA Agreement and monitor the entry into force of Joint Committee Decisions (JCDs). The Subcommittees will continue to have biannual meetings to discuss and share the status of all acts that have passed their six-months compliance date in the EU and set indicative dates for their expected incorporation. Special consideration will be given to long outstanding acts.

Early action on major legislative acts with entry into force in the future: The Subcommittees will closely monitor the incorporation process of EU acts with entry into force in the future which will result in multiple secondary legislation, contain horizontal EEA challenges, or require simultaneous compliance in EU and EEA EFTA States. It is important to identify any challenges and address them at an early stage to minimise delay in incorporation.

Challenging and cross sectoral files: The Subcommittees will prioritise the identification, assessment and possible incorporation and assessment of non-incorporation of cross-sectoral files. These files are inter alia where there are distinct horizontal challenges such as the subject matter is both inside and outside the scope of the EEA Agreement, cases of framework legislation containing numerous secondary legislation, where there is urgency of simultaneous application or fundamental issues or where there are fundamental two-pillar challenges relating to EEA incorporation. Challenging Acts refers to those acts that contain elements that are particularly challenging but not of a cross-sectoral nature.

Processing speed and performance: Based on the Secretariat's annual reporting on the EEA processing key performance indicators, the Subcommittees will continue reviewing the efficiency of the incorporation procedure both for the EEA EFTA Member States and the Secretariat and assess whether there is potential for improvement and need for action. The Subcommittees will continue sharing information on national procedures and strengthen knowledge on the incorporation procedures in the Member States and in the EU institutions.

New online forms: The online forms project is a part of the digitalisation of the forms used in the incorporation procedures. The objective is to create an online platform for the standard procedure forms and make them more user-friendly.

2. DECISION-SHAPING

The Subcommittees will prioritise the identification, assessment and potential incorporation of cross-sectoral initiatives. The objective is to ensure a holistic approach to different acts and enable the EEA EFTA States to consider these acts in relation to one another.

The Subcommittees will continue to encourage the WGs/EGs to inform at an early stage of challenging issues and bring them to the attention of the Subcommittees.

The Subcommittees will monitor, discuss and actively encourage upcoming EEA EFTA comments. The Subcommittees will request feedback from the Commission's Secretariat-General where relevant.

The Subcommittees will follow the 2025 Commission Work Programme and take note of relevant initiatives and the priorities of the Polish, Danish and Cypriot Presidencies of the Council.

Based on lists coordinated by the Secretariat, the Subcommittees will monitor participation of EEA EFTA experts in relevant EU committees and expert groups.

3. HORIZONTAL MATTERS

The Subcommittees will monitor matters with horizontal implications for the management of the EEA Agreement, such as EEA EFTA participation in the programmes under the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027 and participation in EU agencies. The EFTA Secretariat will start the assessment of the 2028-2035 Multiannual Financial Framework from the perspective of future EEA EFTA States contribution to EU programmes and agencies. The Subcommittees will also review the usefulness of statistics, lists and reports produced by the Secretariat for their meetings.
