



EUROPEAN FREE TRADE ASSOCIATION

Ref. 27909

19 July 2011

DECISION OF THE COUNCIL NO. 5 OF 2011

(Adopted by written procedure on 19 July 2011)

GUIDELINES ON TECHNICAL COOPERATION WITH PARTNER COUNTRIES¹

THE COUNCIL,

Having regard to Article 43 and 44 of the Convention,

DECIDES:

1. The objectives of EFTA's technical cooperation are to:
 - a. strengthen relations and promote trade between EFTA and partner countries;
 - b. increase knowledge and enhance understanding of EFTA's Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) and the global trade regime;
 - c. strengthen the capacity of public and private sector interlocutors in partner countries to maximise the potential offered by EFTA's FTAs and the global trade regime; and
 - d. harmonise and integrate trade practices and information flows between EFTA States and trade partners.
2. Technical cooperation may be extended to partner countries with which EFTA has concluded or started negotiations on a Free Trade Agreement or a Declaration on Cooperation or has an interest in establishing closer trade relations.
3. Technical cooperation should be provided in sectors in which there is the potential of facilitating the implementation of EFTA's Free Trade Agreements and Declarations on Cooperation and other disciplines covered by the global trade regime.
4. Technical cooperation projects may be proposed by partner countries to EFTA or by EFTA to partner countries.
5. Technical cooperation may take the form of:
 - a. seminars and workshops;

¹ For the purposes of this Decision, the term "partner countries" refers to EFTA trade relations partners outside the European Union and may include customs territories, customs unions and free trade areas.

- b. individual training programmes;
 - c. study visits;
 - d. scholarships for participation in academic training; or
 - e. any other form of support in line with the objectives set out in article 1.
6. Technical cooperation activities are organised and coordinated by the EFTA Secretariat. Coordination and synergies with organisations engaged in similar activities should be sought where appropriate. Technical cooperation activities should be implemented in close cooperation with the partner country and should, to the extent possible, include a contribution from the partner country.
 7. Experts participating in the organisation and implementation of technical cooperation activities should, to the extent possible, be drawn from the national administrations of the EFTA Member States and the EFTA Secretariat as well as from the partner countries. When appropriate, services provided by external consultants and reputable academic institutions may be used.
 8. The Secretariat shall update the Member States on the status of the implementation of technical cooperation activities on a regular basis.
 9. EFTA's technical cooperation with partner countries should, to the extent possible, be coordinated with the Association's cooperation activities in the areas of standards and accreditation (Brussels) and of statistics (Luxemburg).
 10. Where possible, the EFTA Member States should inform each other and the EFTA Secretariat about bilateral technical cooperation activities with partner countries.
 11. The funds for technical cooperation activities are drawn from EFTA's budget, Part II. Technical cooperation activities shall be implemented in accordance with EFTA's Financial Regulations and Rules, ref. 1040778.
 12. The EFTA Council shall review and approve technical cooperation projects based on proposals elaborated by the Secretariat. The Secretariat shall be responsible for adequate monitoring and evaluation of the projects. The Council shall consider and note the final reports upon completion of each project.
 13. This Council Decision replaces Council Decision number 2 of 2003, ref. 191.
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