

EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AREA  
STANDING COMMITTEE  
OF THE EFTA STATES

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7 July 2016

**ICELAND CHAIR WORK PROGRAMME  
EFTA STANDING COMMITTEE  
SECOND HALF OF 2016**

The purpose of this programme is to give a general orientation to work at all levels on the EEA EFTA side, particularly under the EFTA Standing Committee structure and in the Secretariat which services it. This programme is supplemented by the work programmes for the Subcommittees and for selected EEA EFTA working groups.

Items under "main focus" are issues that the Chair will pay special attention to. The listing of items in sections I, II and III is intended to highlight key issues under discussion.

**The main focus of the Iceland Chair during the second half of 2016 will be:**

- **Legal acts awaiting incorporation.** Continue the work to further reduce the number of legal acts awaiting incorporation in the EEA Agreement. Efforts will in particular focus on acts and packages that have been outstanding for a long time, the review of the Standing Committee procedures for the incorporation of legal acts, and possible further measures to improve coordination in and between the EEA EFTA States at all levels.
- **European financial supervision.** Swiftly incorporate the first package of acts related to the European Financial Supervisory Authorities. Furthermore, continue working towards swift incorporation of all legal acts related to the European Financial Supervisory Authorities.
- **Brexit.** Monitor the outcome of the United Kingdom's referendum on the European Union with a view of maintaining close economic and trade relations with the United Kingdom, which is one of the major trading partners of the EEA EFTA countries.
- **EEA EFTA decision shaping of EEA-relevant EU legislation and policies.** Focus on key issues in the pre-pipeline and pipeline stage and encourage EEA EFTA comments and appropriate follow-up where relevant.
- **EEA Financial Mechanism.** Ensure the provisional application of the Agreement as soon as possible.

- **Information and knowledge of the EEA Agreement.** Strengthening the knowledge of the EEA Agreement and the new EEA Financial Mechanism for the 2014-2021 period in the EU institutions and EU Member States as well as in the EFTA institutions and in the EEA EFTA States, including through the organisation of events and spreading knowledge of available EEA information tools and systems.

## **I. Horizontal issues and EU developments to be followed closely**

- **Single Market**
  - **Internal Market Strategy for Goods and Services**
  - **Digital Single Market Strategy**

Monitor closely the implementation of the above mentioned EU strategies in particular the individual proposals and initiatives falling thereunder. Work internally in a more horizontal manner in order to consider possible further actions and contributions by the EEA EFTA States.

- **Better Regulation**

Aim to take advantage of increased opportunities for input into the Commission's policy formulation process under the Better Regulation agenda.

- **Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership**

Continue to follow the development of EU-US negotiations on a Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) Agreement and assess the implications for the EEA Agreement and EEA EFTA States. Follow up and further develop the dialogue and exchange of information on TTIP with the EU side, both in the EEA Joint Committee and at technical level, inter alia through the EFTA Working Groups.

## **II. Cooperation and dialogue**

- **Cooperation and dialogue with the EU**

Seek to ensure EEA EFTA participation in EEA-relevant informal EU Councils, and to continue and further develop the political dialogues with the EU on foreign and security policy and the informal dialogues with the EFTA Working Party of the EU Council on EEA and EFTA related issues, including by contributing to the development of the EU Council conclusions on relations with the EEA EFTA States scheduled to be adopted in December 2016.

- **Cooperation and dialogue with the Advisory Bodies**

Continue the close cooperation and dialogue with the EEA and EFTA Consultative and Parliamentary Committees.

## **III. Legal acts and policies (not exhaustive)**

- **Free movement of goods**

- ***Food and Veterinary Matters***

Work towards the incorporation of the legislation on organic production and prepare for the incorporation of the Regulation on Genetically Modified Food and Feed. Continue to follow the finalisation of the proposals on the cloning of animals for food production purposes. Follow the development of the legislation for the food chain regarding animal health and Official Controls along the Food Chain.

- ***Medicinal products***

Ensure the incorporation of the Paediatrics Regulation and follow the developments with regard to import/export of drug precursors between EEA/EFTA States and EU Member States.

- ***State aid***

Work towards the incorporation of updated and revised state aid rules in relation to the State Aid Modernisation Initiative.

- ***Intellectual Property Rights***

Follow, and react to, the upcoming reviews of the Trademark and Copyright systems in the EU as well as the upcoming Directive on Trade Secrets.

- ***Product Safety and Market Surveillance***

Continue to closely monitor developments on the Product Safety and Market Surveillance Package and contribute to the actions on market surveillance proposed in the Single Market Strategy.

- **Research and innovation**

Closely monitor developments in the preparatory work for the 9<sup>th</sup> framework programme on Research and Innovation, beyond Horizon 2020. Aim to facilitate collaboration between EEA EFTA stakeholders in engagements with the preparatory stages of the future research programme.

- **Energy, climate change and environment**

Follow closely the legislative proposals implementing the 2030 framework for climate and energy policies and the Energy Union as well as the ratification and follow-up to the Paris Agreement:

- ***Energy***

Seek to finalise negotiations with the EU side regarding the incorporation of the Third Package for the Internal Energy Market. Continue discussions on the energy performance of buildings. Reach an EEA EFTA position for the incorporation of Network Codes.

- ***Climate change and environment***

Confirm and implement the agreed upon solution for the EEA EFTA States to auction their emission allowances on the Common Platform. Finalise the incorporation of the Regulations on carbon dioxide emissions from new passenger cars and new light commercial vehicles, as well as the Regulation on fluorinated greenhouse gases. Reach a common position on the EEA relevance of the

Regulation on ship recycling. Follow developments related to the Circular Economy, discussions on the proposal for the Emissions Trading System post-2020, and upcoming legislative proposals on effort-sharing and land use.

- **Employment, social policy, health and consumer affairs**

- ***Employment and Social Policy***

- Follow the re-establishment of the EURES network and the incorporation the new founding regulation into the EEA Agreement. Follow the planned establishment of the new Pillar of Social Rights.

- ***Social Security***

- Monitor the Labour Mobility Package and the proposal on reforming the social security coordination rules regarding unemployment benefits, long-term care and family benefits.

- ***Labour law and Health and Safety at Work***

- Seek to incorporate the directive concerning the enforcement of the provisions applicable to the posting of workers and follow closely the proposal reviewing the original posting of workers directive and the yellow card procedure which has been launched against it by a number of parliaments in EU member states. Participate in the new Platform against undeclared work and monitor the Commission's planned proposal for changes to the Health and Safety Framework Directive and related acquis.

- ***Consumer protection***

- Ensure the incorporation of the consumer ADR/ODR regulations, in accordance with the draft JCD sent over to the EEAS during the first half of 2016.

- **Electronic communication, audiovisual services and information society**

Work towards the incorporation of the BEREC Regulation and related acts. Follow closely the revision of the regulatory framework for telecommunication expected to be proposed by the Commission in autumn 2016, and in particular ensure that the revision of the BEREC Regulation will take into account full EEA EFTA participation without the right to vote set out in EEA EFTA comments to the EU in November 2015. Monitor developments on the Commission cyber-security package that aims at making the internet more secure in the EEA. Monitor the revision of the Audiovisual Media Services Directive.

- **Data protection**

Work towards the incorporation of the Regulation on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and the free movement of such data (General Data Protection Regulation). Ensure future EEA EFTA State participation in the consistency mechanism between national authorities and in the European Data Protection Board.

- **Transport and postal services**

- ***Transport***

Follow developments on the proposal replacing the Regulation establishing the European Aviation Safety Agency and ensure appropriate follow-up on EEA EFTA comments submitted in June to the EU. Work towards the incorporation of the Ship inspection and Survey organisation package. Adopt an EFTA Standing Committee Decisions on the Designation of Eurocontrol as the Network Manager of the Single European Sky and monitor closely the discussions on the Single European Sky2+ package. Continue to follow discussions on a possible new Road package. Process legislation related to the adopted technical pillar of the fourth railway package and follow progress on the market pillar.

- ***Postal services***

Work towards the incorporation of the Third Postal Directive.

- **Professional Qualifications**

Ensure the incorporation of the Modernised Directive on Professional Qualifications, which is one of the twelve levers for growth set out in the Single Market Act I.

- **Statistics**

Seek to incorporate the amended Regulation on European Statistics. Follow closely the Commission's planned extension of the European Statistical Programme 2013-2017 to 2020 in order to synchronise it with the EU Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020.