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DRAFT MINUTES

of the 62nd meeting of the

EEA COUNCIL

Brussels, 27 May 2026

(Check against delivery)

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The EEA Council held its 62nd meeting in Brussels on 27 May 2026.

The meeting was chaired by Mr Michael DAMIANOS, Minister of Energy, Commerce and Industry of Cyprus. Minister Damianos was accompanied by Mr Maroš ŠEFČOVIČ, Commissioner for Trade and Economic Security, and for Interinstitutional Relations and Transparency, and Mr Emanuele GIAUFRET, Deputy Managing Director for Europe, representing the European External Action Service (EEAS).

The EEA EFTA side was led by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Norway, Mr Espen BARTH EIDE. Liechtenstein and Iceland were represented by Mr Martin EYJÓLFSSON, Permanent Secretary of State, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Iceland and Ms Sabine MONAUNI, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Liechtenstein, respectively.

The EEA EFTA side also included Mr Kurt JAEGER (Secretary-General of the European Free Trade Association – EFTA), and Mr Arne RØKSUND (President of the EFTA Surveillance Authority – ESA).

Opening statement of Minister Mr Michael DAMIANOS on behalf of the European Union

Dear colleagues from Norway, Liechtenstein and Iceland, from the EFTA Secretariat and from the EFTA Surveillance Authority,

First of all, on behalf of the Council of the European Union, allow me to wish you and your delegations a very warm welcome.

I take also the opportunity to welcome to this session Mr Espen Barth Eide, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Norway, representing the Chair of the Standing Committee of the EFTA States.

Before we go into the substance of our agenda, I would like to express my thanks to you and to the EFTA Secretariat for the excellent cooperation in finalising the arrangements for this 62nd session of the EEA Council.

I am looking forward to a fruitful exchange and discussions!

Opening statement of Minister Mr Espen BARTH EIDE, on behalf of the EEA EFTA side

Thank you, Chair, for your welcoming words. We look forward to a constructive discussion and exchange of views with our EU partners.

Intervention of Minister Mr Michael DAMIANOS on behalf of the European Union

Let us now move to the formal agenda of our EEA Council, as set out in document 1601/26.

As we have done in the past, and in order to gain time, I hope that we can agree to deal with items 1 to 5 of our agenda without further discussion, and therefore note our agreement on the agenda and the other documents related to those items. Items 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 of the agenda are therefore adopted.

1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The EEA Council adopted the Agenda, as set out in doc. 1601/26.

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The EEA Council approved the Minutes of the 61st meeting of the EEA Council, which took place in Brussels on 20 November 2025, as set out in doc. 1602/26.

3. PROGRESS REPORT BY THE EEA JOINT COMMITTEE

The EEA Council took note of the Progress Report by the EEA Joint Committee, as set out in doc. 1603/26.

4. ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT CONCLUSIONS

The EEA Council adopted the Conclusions of the 62nd EEA Council meeting, as set out in doc. 1604/26.

5. Resolution of the EEA Joint Consultative Committee adopted following its 36th meeting in Copenhagen on 10 December 2025 on A European Single Market for Defence and Civil Preparedness (ref. 25-2586)

The EEA Council took note of the Resolution.

6. ASSESMENT OF THE OVERALL FUNCTIONING OF THE EEA AGREEMENT

Intervention of Minister Mr Michael DAMIANOS on behalf of the European Union

Let us move on to item 6 on the agenda, concerning the assessment of the overall functioning of the European Economic Area Agreement.

The Agreement has always been the bedrock of our close and special partnership. It has never been more important than it is now, both in the current geopolitical context and in terms of its size.

On the EEA Agreement, Commissioner Šefčovič will provide a detailed report on the day-to-day developments and on the concrete progress achieved since last May. Before giving him the floor, I would like to highlight some important developments that have taken place since our latest EEA Council in November 2025.

We would like to welcome the incorporation of certain important pieces of legislation into the EEA Agreement, in particular the review package of the European Supervisory Authorities, comprising three acts revising the supervision and enforcement framework of the European System of Financial Supervision. As well the incorporation of other EU acts, such as those linked to food safety, financial services or statistics.

Increased efforts are still needed to conclude discussions on some important pending legislations. The Presidency would like to specifically highlight the importance of the level playing field and tackling the energy backlog, as well as the oldest pending acts in the field of genetically modified food and feed.

We welcome the continued commitment by our EEA partners to incorporate the relevant EU acquis into the EEA Agreement, and reduce the backlog. This is more important than ever to strengthen our collaboration and minimise fragmentation of the internal market.

We welcome the contribution of the EEA EFTA States through the EEA and Norwegian Financial Mechanisms, as part of the overall balance of rights and obligations, and the entry into force of the Agreements for the period May 2021 – April 2028.

We note with satisfaction the progress made in concluding the bilateral memoranda of understanding with all, but one, beneficiary states, and we plea for the swift completion of all of them in order to ensure effective and timely implementation of the funds.

Finally I would like to express our satisfaction that we are able to adopt EEA Council Conclusions today which send a strong and important signal of unity and like-mindedness among us.

Intervention of Commissioner Mr Maroš ŠEFČOVIČ on behalf of the Commission

Dear Ministers, Representatives of the EEA EFTA institutions, Ambassadors, ladies and gentlemen,

First, let me say that I welcome our continued very close cooperation.

Russia's ongoing and brutal war of aggression against Ukraine, rising geopolitical tensions, and global uncertainty continue and underline the importance of European unity and unity with our allies. In this context we appreciate your continued support and close alignment with the EU, both in the sanctions regime against Russia and in humanitarian, financial and military support provided to Ukraine.

We are also glad to see an ever-closer defence cooperation between the EU and EEA EFTA States marked by the upcoming participation of Iceland and Norway in the Govsatcom and Secure Connectivity Programmes, and of Norway in the European Defence Industrial Programme (EDIP).

Second, let me turn to the implementation of the EEA Agreement and the incorporation of the EU acquis into the EEA Agreement.

The efforts to reduce the backlog are not only a legal obligation. They are also crucial to maintain homogeneity and a level playing field across the whole EEA, which are basic prerequisites of the EEA Agreement and extended internal market. Since the last meeting of the EEA Council on 20 November 2025, 223 Joint Committee Decisions were adopted, incorporating 388 legal acts.

During that period, important pieces of legislation were incorporated. A few examples include the Data Governance Act, and the Review of European Supervisory Authorities, which brought the financial contribution of EEA EFTA States to the European supervisory authorities to an appropriate and fully proportional level. This comes along with significant progress against the backlog in the field of financial services.

This is however contrasted with limited progress in other areas, such as energy. Since the long-delayed incorporation of three energy acts in July last year, progress on the incorporation of the outstanding acts is slow.

Another example includes the Helicopter Offshore Operations Regulation, where we still keep discussing the incorporation into the EEA Agreement 10 years after its entry into force on the EU side.

We need to further intensify efforts to decrease the backlog, which reached an all-time high of 661 pending acts in January, including the really old, pre-2022 backlog of 59 acts.

In this context, I would like to refer to the Backlog initiative my services launched in February. It contains concrete proposals to the EEA EFTA side – both on significant priority acts as well as on possible systemic solutions to accelerate the incorporation of simple acts into the EEA Agreement.

I am pleased that these proposals have been positively received and that you are exploring ways to streamline and expedite processes on your side. We anticipate tangible progress and look forward to seeing concrete results.

Any effort also needs to look beyond incorporation of EU acts in the Joint Committee. These acts need to enter into force as soon as possible after their adoption and be implemented.

Constitutional requirements are an integral part of the EEA framework and we appreciate that their handling has clearly been prioritised on your side. However, there are limitations. This is well illustrated by the three energy acts that have been incorporated in July 2025 but that are not yet in force for the EEA EFTA States as they are blocked by constitutional requirements.

The EEA Agreement clearly provides for the possibility to provisionally apply incorporated acts, which has however never been used. This option should be seriously considered.

Once in force, the acts incorporated into the EEA Agreement must be properly enforced in a uniform manner across the whole EEA. The annual Surveillance Policy Dialogue with the EFTA Surveillance Authority continues to prove useful in this regard.

Third, as you know, in the EEA Agreement, the Contracting Parties agreed on the need to reduce the economic and social disparities between their regions. To this end, the EEA Agreement provides for a Financial Mechanism for the EEA EFTA States to contribute.

We are pleased with the gradual launch of the EEA and Norwegian Financial Mechanisms, and the signature of Memoranda of Understanding with fourteen Beneficiary States so far (Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Estonia, Greece, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia). We would like to encourage swift conclusion of the process with the remaining Beneficiary State (Hungary).

This way, the EEA and Norwegian Financial Mechanisms will address the needs on the ground without further delays and accompany increased EU investment into social and economic cohesion.

With all these elements in mind, I look forward to maintaining our fruitful and specific relationship.

Thank you.

Intervention of Minister Mr Michael DAMIANOS on behalf of the European Union

I will now give the floor to the EEA EFTA states for their statements.

Joint intervention on of Mr Espen BARTH EIDE on behalf of the EEA EFTA States

Dear colleagues, dear friends,

For more than three decades, the EEA EFTA States have contributed constructively to the Internal Market through our participation in the EEA Agreement. The world has changed since the 1990s, yet our robust Agreement continues to deliver. Today, the Internal Market fosters prosperity and creates opportunities for 450 million people across 30 Member States.

Close collaboration is important at a time of change and geopolitical strain. We should continue to nurture our friendship and jointly defend our shared values and commitment to rules-based trade. In this regard, we welcome the adoption of concise EEA Council Conclusions, which illustrate the strength of our cooperation. They reflect our close relationship across the entire spectrum of Internal Market policy and beyond.

Europe is faced with multiple challenges. Strained competitiveness, war at our borders, and a complex geopolitical outlook. As full participants in the Internal Market we are determined to play our part to tackle these issues and increase Europe's competitiveness and resilience. We will also continue to stand firmly with Ukraine alongside the EU for as long as it takes.

The EEA Agreement also strengthens Europe's economic security. As global trade relations grow more fraught and economic vulnerabilities are increasingly weaponised, the EEA Agreement has helped keep our economies strong, diversified and resilient.

We understand and share the EU's ambition to enhance Europe's economic security and autonomy in the current context. The EEA EFTA States offer experience, resources and stability in crucial areas related to economic security and resilience. This includes energy, technology and our strong commitment to fair and open, rules-based trade. We must protect these complementary strengths by ensuring that the Internal Market continues to rest on a level playing field, and that we avoid creating new barriers to trade.

Keeping this in mind, we look forward to a continued dialogue on economic security. Together, we must find ways to protect the EEA from external coercion, to guard the integrity of the Internal Market, and do so while preserving both openness and autonomy.

We will continue to engage constructively with the EU in the relevant forums.

Dear friends,

The EEA EFTA States are reliable and strong contributors to a competitive and dynamic European economy.

Time and again, we have managed to find creative, pragmatic and mutually beneficial solutions. Recently, we have strengthened certain dimensions of our cooperation to address new challenges, unlocking opportunities in areas such as space, security and defence. Our relationship continues to evolve in line with developing priorities and policies.

As the EU works to strengthen the Internal Market, we will continue to contribute constructively through policy advice and active participation, including in the EU Programmes.

Throughout our cooperation, one thing has always stayed the same: our shared commitment to maintaining the homogeneity of the EEA – through the timely incorporation of legal acts.

Pleased to see movement on several of the older files (GM Food and Feed, Procedural State Aid Regulation, statistics). Appreciate the close and constructive cooperation which has led to substantial progress on important energy files.

However, despite our efforts, the backlog remains high. . The increased volume and complexity of the acts challenge us. Our procedures were established at a time when the world and the EEA agreement looked very different.

We need to take a systemic look at how we deal with the backlog. We therefore appreciate the EU initiative to reduce the backlog and are studying it closely.

At the same time, we are also working on our end to improve our systems and procedures. Simplification, improving efficiency and enhancing transparency are key words. All while respecting the institutional framework of the EEA Agreement and its two pillar structure.

Making progress on the backlog is a joint priority by the EEA EFTA States and the EU. It is a joint commitment that requires close collaboration. We look forward to continuing this important endeavour together.

Colleagues,

Let me end by reiterating that the EEA EFTA States remain close and reliable partners of the EU. Recent years have taught us never to take close cooperation for granted. In an increasingly volatile world, our partnership matters more than ever.

Thank you.

Intervention of Minister Mr Espen BARTH EIDE on behalf of Norway

The Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Espen Barth Eide, based his statement on the following:

The EEA Agreement builds on a value-based relationship between 30 countries. A common commitment to fundamental values such as democracy, rule of law and respect for human rights.

When the international rules-based order is being challenged, trusted partnerships are essential not only to ensure our economic security, but also our physical security and to protect our democratic institutions.

Competitiveness and single market:

New initiatives to strengthen European competitiveness must enable our businesses to focus on driving innovation and creating value. Simplification is key. The single market - Europe's strongest asset. Our value chains are closely integrated. Our industries follow the same rules and regulations. The integrity of the single market is in our joint interest and a shared responsibility.

Where a European preference requirement is introduced, it should be clarified that this requirement includes all 30 EEA States. We are doing our utmost to reduce the backlog at our end, and my government is committed to this.

Participation in EU programmes:

Norway is a long-standing participant in numerous EU programmes. We look forward to continued cooperation in the next program period. We have some concerns regarding our participation. There should be clear references to the EEA Agreement in the program regulations, and clauses on "EU preference" should be kept to an absolute minimum.

Economic security:

Strengthening our economic security is key to remaining open to global cooperation and competition. Mindful that EU policies in the field of economic security go beyond internal market policies. However, closer contact and coordination necessary to avoid unintended new barriers in the internal market.

Recall our common interest in close dialogue on economic security clearly expressed in the EEA Council one year ago. Timely now to make sure that we follow this up in an appropriate manner.

Security, preparedness, and defence cooperation

The EEA Agreement enables Norway to fully participate in key EU defence industrial initiatives, such as EDF, SAFE and EDIP (thereby) strengthening both European defence readiness and our shared industrial base. EU-NO Security and Defence Partnership (signed 2024). Successful dialogue in Oslo in April this year. Action points on enhanced cooperation on maritime security, space, preparedness, resilience, the Arctic and countering hybrid and cyber threats.

New EU security strategy. We are providing our input. Key message: The importance of a partnership approach. We have common aims, interests and challenges.

The proposed regulation on Military Mobility is a significant initiative. Can contribute to a stronger European deterrence by ensuring effective military transports throughout the EEA. To effectively handle crisis in - and ultimately defend - the Nordic-Baltic region, military transport in Norway will play a crucial role. The regulation must therefore work effectively also in the EEA context.

To ensure effective application of the crisis mechanism EMERS, all the EEA countries must have the same situational awareness. Amendments proposed both in the European Parliament and in the ad-hoc council working party: giving EEA EFTA states observer status in Council when activation of EMERS is considered. I encourage the Commission to support these amendments.

The Arctic:

We are close partners in the Arctic. I was very pleased to welcome HRVP Kaja Kallas to Tromsø, our Arctic capital, in February.

Have provided input to the ongoing revision of the EU Arctic Policy: support partnerships as a main approach. We are looking forward to discussing further at our first working level Arctic dialogue meeting in Oslo on June 12.

EEA Financial Mechanism

Norway's support through the EEA and Norway Grants is one of our key investments in Europe's future. A special feature is the objective of strengthening bilateral relations.

Have signed memorandums of understanding for a new period of collaboration with 14 out of 15 beneficiary states. Hope to conclude the last one (Hungary) soon.

Under the civil society fund, 14 of 15 national fund operators have been appointed and the first programmes and calls have been launched.

The collaboration with OECD, Council of Europe and FRA has been strengthened and their initiatives to strengthen democratic institutions, human rights and rule of law have started with participation from several of the beneficiary states.

Ukraine:

Shoulder to shoulder with the EU in supporting Ukraine's fight for European security and in increasing pressure on Russia's war machine. Only unity, resolve, and sustained support can change Russia's calculus. This year, Norway is contributing NOK 85 billion in combined military and civilian support to Ukraine, and we expect to maintain a high level of support also next year.

We will shortly conclude an agreement on a third voluntary financial contribution of NOK 1 billion (EUR 86 mill.) to the European Peace Facility, as part of joint European efforts to urgently donate ammunition to Ukraine. Norway wholeheartedly supports Ukraine's ambitions for EU membership. Reforms, good governance and anti-corruption are guiding principles of our support program.

We aim to maintain close coordination in supporting Ukraine, as demonstrated at yesterday's joint EU–Norway conference on Ukraine Winter. We announced a new contribution of NOK 425 million to the Ukraine Investment Framework to help secure electricity and heating for the Ukrainian people.

Intervention of Minister Ms Sabine MONAUNI on behalf of Liechtenstein

Dear Commissioner, dear colleagues,

The increasing global uncertainty has been a recurring theme in this and other debates, so I was hesitant to use this again in today's statement – but here we are, five months into a year that began with the US' President's threats to Greenland's territorial integrity and continued with a new war in Iran, a conflict with extensive effects on the global economy. And at the same time, the war of aggression of Russia against Ukraine is ongoing.

At the beginning of the year, Europe answered threats to its territorial integrity with one voice, and this has not only been successful, but it also made it stronger. Discussions on security and defense that had been going on before, are now being conducted with more urgency – discussions on a common voice, a common industrial policy, a common defense market, even a defense union.

We follow these discussions with great interest. It is essential for all of us that Europe is strong, resilient and competitive. We believe that Europe must unite, not fragment, to remain a global power bloc. One of Europe's core strengths is its economy, and this is where the EEA comes in.

For Liechtenstein, keeping the EEA strong and functional is a priority. We are part of the internal market and while we recognize that many initiatives in the EU do not squarely fall within the EEA agreement as we traditionally got or choose to know it, we would like to underline that the Internal Market must remain homogeneous and resilient and respect the logic that it consists of 30 States and not only 27.

We realize that we also have to do some heavy lifting at home by evaluating our participation in files that we would previously, based on an outdated stringent reflex, not have considered of EEA relevant – we need to shift our understanding to the relevance for the Internal Market. Economic security files and cross-sectorial initiatives are prime examples of this, and within Liechtenstein we are focusing on coordination and discussions on these files.

We also hope that we can have an exchange with the EU on these files soon as they have a bearing and are impacting the Internal Market and its functioning – including in some cases the core freedoms that are also enshrined in and guaranteed by the EEA Agreement.

The EEA Agreement also enables us to participate in EU programmes. Discussions within the EU on the new programme cycle and especially on the ECF are being followed closely by our experts and we hope that the logic of the EEA and the EEA agreement will be reflected in the new participation modalities.

Finally, allow me to add one sentence to the developments on our side. The next time we meet in this grouping one of us could be in accession talks with the EU. This requires us to do some thinking on our end on the impact this will have on the EEA Agreement in general but also on our own working methods. It is of utmost priority for Liechtenstein that we find a modus operandi for this period that does not negatively affect our relationship. We note the increasing pressure on the backlog and we will do our very best to find swift, practical and effective solutions to continue our trustful and close relationship with you.

Intervention of Mr Martin EYJÓLFSSON on behalf of Iceland

Ministers, Commissioner Šefčovič, dear colleagues and friends,

Allow me to start by conveying the best wishes of my Minister, Þorgerður Katrín Gunnarsdóttir, who unfortunately is not able to be with you today due to her parliamentary commitments.
She needs to attend our Parliament which currently is debating a proposal to call a referendum this August on whether to continue EU accession negotiations.

As we take stock of the functioning of the EEA Agreement, it is important to note the enduring strengths of our cooperation. In the context of the backlog of legal acts where incorporation is pending, Foreign Minister Eide has stated on behalf of all three EEA EFTA States that this is a mutual concern that requires a systematic approach. But when considered in the context of other international trade co-operation, such as the WTO and transatlantic co-operation, the EEA co-operation is a haven of stability. The issues we face in the EEA co-operation can be compared with a happy marriage, where the partners may disagree sometimes on who should be responsible for housecleaning.

One issue which we disagreed on was the ferro-alloy safeguards that were imposed last year. Let me make two points regarding these measures. First, after six months in force, they have significantly decreased Icelandic exports to the EU and severely impacted the sole producers of these products in Iceland. The design of the measure has not achieved the stated aim of minimizing the disruption of trade within the EEA.

Second, it is essential that the Contracting Parties on both the EFTA-side and the EU-side contribute to the consultation within the EEA Joint Committee.

The access to the Internal Market provided by the EEA Agreement has allowed Iceland's energy-intensive industries to integrate into European value and supply chains. Industry that uses renewable resources while maintaining high environmental and employment standards in full compliance with the EEA Agreement. The ferro-alloy safeguards expose new risks for these industries, and it is essential that we work together to address the shared challenges of our energy intensive industries across the EEA.

Ministers, Commissioner,

Turning to the Emission Trading System, we are fully aware of the ongoing sensitive discussions within the EU on this review, the reality is still that ETS aviation poses unique challenges to Iceland due to our geographical location. There has been a significant decrease in flights to Iceland since the ETS aviation entered into force and the detailed data we have shared with the Commissions shows how ETS aviation has impacted our connectivity and aviation sector since it was incorporated. This is a matter of vital economic, societal, and national security importance, as aviation and services are significant parts of our economy and around 1% of our entire workforce is employed by our largest airline. We look forward to continuing constructive engagement with the Commission services on this issue where providing short-term predictability for the sector is of paramount importance. It would be preferable that the revised ETS provides for a durable solution that addresses our situation and will not require specific adaptation upon incorporation into the EEA Agreement.

Finally, as I mentioned earlier Iceland's Parliament is currently debating a proposal to call a referendum this August on whether to continue EU accession negotiations. Recent polls suggest the outcome will be close, but many voters will only decide once we are closer to the vote.

Intervention of Minister Mr Michael DAMIANOS on behalf of the European Union

Maroš, do you have further comments on this topic?

Colleagues, would you like to add anything to the discussion?

As there are no further comments, we can close this item.

7. ORIENTATION DEBATE: Ensuring competitiveness and green growth in the Internal Market

Intervention of Minister Mr Michael DAMIANOS on behalf of the European Union

Dear colleagues, as you know, Europe's competitiveness faces unprecedented challenges, compounded by the latest geopolitical tensions.

In addition to increasing competition from third countries, our companies face supply chain disruptions and global uncertainty, adding to their challenges in remaining competitive on the global market.

It is clear that decisive action is needed. The crisis in the Middle East has once again underlined the importance of enhancing our competitiveness, economic security and strategic autonomy. This represents yet another challenge that must be confronted, and it is therefore essential that we act promptly, in a coordinated manner, and with a uniform approach.

In the current business environment, the free movement of goods across EU borders and the absence of restrictions on travelers and EU citizens residing in other EU Member States or the European Economic Area are largely taken for granted.

This is a success story, and a manifestation of what Europe stands for.

The Single Market is one of the EU's main driving forces. It acts as a home market for our companies, as a springboard to scale and as a basis to advance the European interest. It provides a stable business environment, with strong institutions and full commitment to the rule of law.
The Single Market is our best asset to counter external pressures. It is all the more urgent and important that we complete and reinforce it.

This March, the European Council launched the 'One Europe, One Market' agenda, calling on the Council, the European Parliament and the Commission to urgently implement it to complete the Single Market by 2027. This was followed by the Commission's 'One Europe, One Market' Roadmap published in April.

In particular, remaining barriers to the Single Market should be removed as a matter of priority, especially the most harmful ones, which the Commission has dubbed the 'terrible ten'. This goes hand in hand with the EU's Simplification agenda, which aims to drastically reduce administrative burdens for businesses by simplifying existing legislation.

At the same time, the EU has set itself the ambitious goal to achieve climate neutrality by 2050. The EU's green and competitiveness goals complement each other. The green transition is an opportunity to build European industrial leadership in net-zero technologies.

The recently published Industrial Accelerator Act, which is currently under discussion in the Council, is a case in point. It aims to support industry's adoption of low-carbon, European-made technologies, while at the same time boosting manufacturing, growing businesses, and creating jobs in the EU.

Given the current challenging geopolitical context, the EU's strong cooperation with Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein is more important than ever. Reinforcing the Single Market and strengthening our competitiveness will very much be in our mutual best interest.

I am very interested in hearing your perspectives on the competitiveness agenda and any possible experiences, recommendations or concerns you may have in this area.

First, however, I would like to pass the floor to the European Commission, followed by the EEAS, for their comments on the subject.

Maroš, please you have the floor.

Intervention of Commissioner Mr Maroš ŠEFČOVIČ on behalf of the Commission

Thank you Chair for the opportunity to speak on this essential topic. Competitiveness and green growth are indeed at the core of our cooperation.

The European Union, together with the European Economic Area, has always been a place of industry, services and innovation, with the benefits of a Single Market of more than 450 million consumers and large economies of scale. But the EU's competitiveness has deteriorated over the past decades as a result of limited productivity gains. Our businesses today must deal with a challenging geopolitical context, unfair competition from abroad, higher energy prices than those of our competitors, skills and labour shortages and hurdles in accessing capital.

Improving Europe's competitiveness is the European Commission's overarching and urgent priority, and we have a solid agenda for achieving this.

The European Single Market is our greatest economic asset in this fight. By leveraging our integrated market, common standards, and shared ambition, we can accelerate clean tech deployment, strengthen strategic value chains, and ensure our industries lead in the net-zero economy.

Europe is and must remain a good place to live, work and do business for all its citizens. To achieve this, we will need to act collectively. The EU's competitiveness and resilience are intrinsically linked to the European Economic Area through the Single Market.

The Single Market as the backbone of Europe's resilience:

The Clean Industrial Deal is key to ensuring that Europe's green transition and industrial competitiveness reinforce rather than undermine each other. It focuses on cutting red tape, fully exploiting the scale of the single market, promoting quality jobs, and better coordinating policies at the EU and national levels.

The Industrial Accelerator Act is a central pillar: it links public funding and procurement to European production, sets "Made in EU" and low-carbon requirements, and speeds up permits. Public procurement amounts to 14% of GDP. Directing more of this to European industries will support growth. The Critical Raw Materials Act and Net Zero Industry Act complete this picture.

We also have to make doing business in Europe easier and faster. That is why we have set a target to cut red tape by 25% at European level, worth €37 billion. At its last meeting, the EEA Council rightly discussed simplification.

On energy, it is urgent to deliver on reliable, affordable energy. This is central to making the business case for Europe, especially for the energy-intensive sectors. Prices are still too high and too volatile. Over half of our energy consumption still comes from fossil fuels, and in 2025 we spent almost €340 billion on fossil fuel imports. This burden has grown even heavier in 2026 following conflict in the Middle East and the closure of the Strait of Hormuz.

We should stay focused on the long-term objectives of the energy transition. Investing in a low-carbon energy system will protect us when fossil fuel prices go up, and for this we need the infrastructure.

The AccelerateEU toolbox sets the long-term strategy. Energy Highways will grow capacity from 55 GW to 200 GW by 2030. A new legislative proposal on network charges and ETS reform will ensure electricity is taxed less than fossil fuels.

Opening new markets is equally vital. The EU's trade network is the largest in the world and our momentum is scaling up with the formation of major new trading blocs. Our successful trade agenda is a testament to the EU's status as a trusted partner – one that lives up to its commitments and is valued by partners around the world.

Working together: EU and EEA EFTA States cooperation:

In this context of competitiveness and green growth at the centre stage of European policies, the EEA EFTA States are close partners in building a stronger, greener and more competitive Europe.

The close integration of our EEA EFTA partners in the Single Market under the EEA strengthens our economies and resilience. For the many shared challenges we face, we are keen to explore common solutions. This is the EU's mindset: cooperation can make both of us stronger.

As such, we strongly value the joint cooperation with EEA EFTA partners on climate policy, be it through the Emissions Trading System (EU ETS), the voluntary cooperation of Iceland and Norway under the Effort Sharing and Land Use, Land-use Change and Forestry Regulations (LULUCF) of the EU, but also the active participation of EEA EFTA partners to the Innovation Fund. We look forward to collaborating with you under the Net Zero Industry Act regulation, once incorporated into the EEA Agreement, in particular on the CO2 storage targets that will be needed to decarbonise our industries.

With Norway, our cooperation under the EU-Norway Green Alliance, signed in 2023, is a flagship partnership deepening collaboration on climate action and environmental protection.

At the same time, it is important that obligations under the EEA Agreement are respected. On energy, the EEA backlog creates a legal vacuum and unequal conditions on our common market. The EEA Agreement is based on homogeneity and level playing field, which is essential if we want to strengthen our common market. As agreed in March at the Senior Dialogue on EEA Energy Backlog, our priority must be to continue to advance on electricity market legislation.

We welcome the new technical dialogue formats and these must continue at rapid pace. Importantly, they need to deliver concrete results: incorporation of the entire EEA-relevant acquis.

The EU will continue its constructive and strategic external engagement, even more so in today's challenging geopolitical context. The EU and the EEA EFTA countries should continue consulting each other to address shared challenges in this sense.

We look forward to the work ahead together - to address the hurdles we see in the functioning of the EEA Agreement, and to build a more resilient and competitive internal market together. The work ahead is significant, but so is what we have already built. We have a shared interest in sustaining and strengthening this cooperation, and we are committed to doing so.

Intervention of Minister Mr Michael DAMIANOS on behalf of the European Union

I now wish to give the floor to the EEAS representative. Please Emanuele, you have the floor.

Intervention of Mr Emanuele GIAUFRET, Deputy Managing Director for Europe, representing the European External Action Service

I would like to address the topic of competitiveness from a global angle. Today's geopolitical tensions and conflicts, from Ukraine to Iran, directly affect the EU's economy, our supply chains, our access to energy.

But the opposite is also true: the EU's strategic dependencies on critical materials and technologies impede our ability to achieve our domestic political objectives and ensure our security.

Let's take our defence industrial base: without tungsten or titanium, no fighting jet or submarines; without batteries, no drone for reconnaissance mission. These dependencies are weaponised by other global players to exert economic coercion upon us. China is using an export control mechanism on rare earths to obtain commercial secrets from our companies.

Strengthening our economy and our security are two sides of the same coin. Our companies are operating in a global context – where their competitiveness toward international competitors matter as much as their resilience at home. Our partners have understood that the US are massively investing in strategic sectors, from semi-conductors to critical minerals; Japan has become a leading economic security actor.

We must therefore pursue our agenda to promote the EU's competitiveness abroad, based on of the following pillars:

First, the EU's external policy should enable the growth of EU companies abroad. The partnerships we conclude on topics ranging from raw materials to security must complement our network of free trade agreements in a new, pragmatic fashion. This new generation of partnerships must enable our businesses to thrive by helping them identify opportunities across the world – and the EU delegations on the ground will support them in this endeavour.

Second, we must ensure that our companies operate in a level-playing field with their international competitors. Over the last few years, we have seen EU companies faced with increasingly unfair global competition. To counter that, we are strengthening our toolkit, for instance with a revised foreign investment screening regulation, with a view to strength our capacity to act strategically and assertively.

Lastly, our actions should thrive to build a vibrant and resilient European industrial base. With this in mind, the Commission proposed the Industrial Accelerator Act (IAA) earlier this year. Measures such as the "Made in EU" keep the EU open to trade with its partners. At the same time, the Accelerator helps ensure fair access and strengthen Europe's strategic industries, supporting a resilient and competitive economy.

To help achieve those goals, the EEAS is committed to bringing a strategic external perspective that connects EU internal competitiveness with geopolitical dynamics. This would ensure coherence between diplomacy, partnerships, and economic security objectives. With one goal in mind: that no one can impede the achievement of the EU's security, clean and industrial agenda.

On clean transition:

The clean transition is the most effective strategy towards Europe's strategic autonomy, as the European Council affirmed last month in their EU Energy and Climate Diplomacy Council Conclusions.

Energy supplies are being weaponised. The Russian war of aggression against Ukraine and the crisis in the Middle East have demonstrated the EU's geopolitical exposure to fossil fuel imports.

As we are successfully phasing out Russian energy, we must phase in faster home-grown clean energy, boost our autonomy and avoid new supply dependencies that risk becoming vulnerabilities.

The clean transition also bolsters our competitiveness by ensuring energy security for our economy and encouraging technological innovation, including for the defence sector.

Lastly, the clean transition also mitigates and increases our resilience against the catastrophic security impacts of climate change. If left unchecked, we must prepare for wars over water, arable land, critical raw materials, and millions living in uninhabitable areas. Preparing now is safer and more cost-efficient.

Intervention of Minister Mr Michael DAMIANOS on behalf of the European Union

I now wish to give the floor to the EEA EFTA states. Please Minister you have the floor.

Intervention of Minister Mr Espen BARTH EIDE on behalf of Norway

The Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Espen Barth Eide, based his statement on the following:

It is in our shared interest to strengthen the green transition in a way that does not undermine growth potential. The green transition must be seen as a source of long-term competitiveness, innovation, and job creation—not as a cost.

Both long-term analysis (Draghi, Letta) and recent events (Ukraine, Iran) show that decarbonisation, clean industry and fossil-fuel free energy will continue to be important for the EU's stability and competitiveness.

Rising geopolitical tensions and trade conflicts may create barriers to the flow of green technologies and critical inputs. We must work together to ensure that this does not slow the pace of the transition. We share the ambitions of the European Commission to improve business conditions in a way that allows energy-intensive industries in Europe to continue to decarbonise while maintaining their competitiveness.

Norwegian industry is highly integrated in European value chains as a stable and important supplier. What is good for the competitiveness of European industry, is therefore most often also beneficial to Norwegian industry, and vice-versa.

Norway is equipped with valuable know-how and technology that can help accelerate the energy transition on our path to a net zero society. The establishment of Europe's first full-scale value chain for CCS through the Norwegian Longship project is an example.

For CCS to succeed, a joint European effort is required. EU funding has already contributed to the development of these markets, for example through the Connecting Europe Facility.

Another example of the EU and Norway's joint efforts is to advance hydrogen in the maritime sector.

In the auction organized by the European Hydrogen Bank earlier this month, two Norwegian companies (Gen2 Energy and GreenH) received funding for their projects to produce zero-emission hydrogen for use as fuel in shipping.

The Green Alliance between Norway and the EU provides us with a strategic framework for cooperation on the green transition. The EU programmes are key instruments for operational cooperation between the 30 Internal Market States.

Norway welcomes the proposal for a European Competitiveness Fund. In a time of geopolitical uncertainty, we acknowledge the need for a broad, cross-sectoral and flexible framework to this end. 2026 is shaping up to be a key year for the development of EU climate legislation. Norway will follow the process closely.

Norway supports a strong and efficient EU ETS beyond 2030 and towards 2050. The overall allowance cap should be gradually reduced in line with EUs climate targets.

Despite some voices calling to slow the transition, the EU is embracing these long-term strategic realities and working to smooth the path ahead. There are good reasons to help communities and businesses through the transition we are in the midst of. European industry must continue to evolve and adapt. It is of the utmost importance that we do not slow it down

EUs leadership and steadfastness are important – also to Norway – you are our biggest trading partner, we are an integral part of European value chains, we share values and climate ambition.

Intervention of Minister Ms Sabine MONAUNI on behalf of Liechtenstein

Dear colleagues,

A competitive Internal Market is of key importance for us as an EEA member state. And looking at recent and not-so-recent geopolitical developments, the link between green growth and competitiveness is more evident than ever.

In the context of this debate, I wish to make the following points:

First of all, we acknowledge the EU's efforts in simplifying the rules that govern the Internal Market and in ensuring it is future-proof. We believe that especially in ensuring green growth, further simplification can help climate targets to be more viable:

The burden of reporting obligations on companies is a concern. Simplification both increases their willingness to implement green solutions, and it enables progress by letting them use their resources to enable investments in, innovation and implementation of new solutions.

Secondly, technological neutrality is important: Decarbonisation needs renewable energy, grids, storage solutions and digitalisation. Innovations which support these elements should be enabled with as little restrictions as possible.

Moving to competitiveness in broader terms, we see the clear benefits of initiatives such as the 28th regime – which from an EEA viewpoint should technically be called the 31st regime – and its goal to enable innovative companies to operate under a single, harmonised set of rules. We note, however, that simplification and harmonization of the Internal Market of 30 should not move to the background when designing new regimes.

We also acknowledge that incentives such as the ones to be provided through the ECF make a strong contribution to enabling growth of certain industries. At the same time, we are convinced that clear expiration dates are needed to ensure sustainable industrial growth that does not rely on EU or national funding.

Finally, measures on competitiveness should respect the rules and logic of the EEA Agreement and its four freedoms, even if their scope might, technically speaking, sometimes be broader than the EEA Agreement – as is the case for economic security files but also for initiatives concerning defense or supply chain resilience. And yes, to reiterate it again, this also requires a shift in our/Liechtenstein's internal thinking, away from strict EEA relevance to relevance for the internal market. In the spirit of Letta, Draghi and others, we all need to be committed to a complete and homogenous internal market in the interest of competitiveness.

In Liechtenstein, we do our part.

Intervention of Minister Mr Martin EYJÓLFSSON on behalf of Iceland

I will keep my intervention short since a lot has already been covered here today.
I just want to highlight a few points in addition to what has already been raised by other colleagues.

Iceland's energy transition was undertaken in the 1970s, when Iceland was still considered a developing country. The investment in hydro power and the use of geothermal energy laid the groundwork for transforming our economy.

As noted by Foreign Minister Eide in his intervention, Iceland, like Norway, has a lot to offer in the green transition. Nearly all of Iceland's electricity and heating comes from renewable energy sources, primarily hydropower and geothermal energy. Geothermal is one, and there we look forward to strengthening our co-operation with the EU even further. This is a key area where Iceland's experience can create opportunity to making the EU and the EEA more competitive.

The strength of the EEA comes from working together. We must continue to ensure a level playing field and a predictable regulatory framework that encourages investment and innovation.

This includes simplifying rules where possible, reducing unnecessary administrative burdens, and ensuring that small and medium-sized enterprises can fully participate in the green transition.

The path forward is clear – we must accelerate the green transition while strengthening innovation, productivity and resilience.

Europe needs an Internal Market that rewards innovation, attracts investment, and enables green solutions to expand swiftly across borders. Ensuring a level playing field and avoiding fragmentation is essential for the internal market to unlock its full potential.

Intervention of Minister Mr Michael DAMIANOS on behalf of the European Union

Does the Commission and the EEA EFTA side wish to make any further comments?

This point is now closed.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

Intervention of Minister Mr Michael DAMIANOS on behalf of the European Union

Finally, that brings us to Item 8 on our agenda: 'Other business'. Would anyone wish to raise an issue under this item? It does not seem to be case.

Closing remarks by Minister Mr Michael DAMIANOS on behalf of the European Union

Thank you. We have come to the end of this session of the EEA Council.

I would like to thank you all for the interesting discussions and close this part of the meeting.

I would also like to thank everyone from the EEA EFTA States, as well as the EFTA Secretariat, the EFTA Surveillance Authority, the EU Member States and the EU institutions for contributing to and participating in this meeting.

The meeting is closed.

ANNEX I.

62nd meeting of the EEA COUNCIL

(Brussels, 27 May 2026)

Europa Building, room S3

INDICATIVE LIST OF PARTICIPANTS - PLENARY SESSION

Norwegian Delegation
(EEA EFTA Chair)

H.E. Mr Espen Barth EIDE	Minister of Foreign Affairs
Ms Astrid BERGMÅL	State Secretary for Minister of Foreign Affairs
H.E. Mr Anders EIDE	Ambassador, Head of Mission of Norway to the EU
Ms Mette JØRANLI	Director, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Ms Kari HOEL	Senior Adviser, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Ms Jannicke WITSØ	Counsellor, Mission of Norway to the EU

Liechtenstein Delegation

H.E. Ms Sabine MONAUNI	Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Environment and Culture
H.E. Mr Pascal SCHAFHAUSER	Ambassador, Mission of the Principality of Liechtenstein to the EU
Ms Andrea ENTNER-KOCH	Director of the EEA Coordination Unit
H.E. Mr Martin FRICK	Director of the Office for Foreign Affairs
Ms Christine LINGG	Deputy Director of the Office for Foreign Affairs
Ms Kathrin NESCHER-STÜTZEL	Deputy Head of Mission, Mission of the Principality of Liechtenstein to the EU

Icelandic Delegation

H.E. Mr Martin EYJÓLFSSON	Permanent Secretary of State of Iceland's Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Iceland
H.E. Mr Stefán Haukur JÓHANNESSON	Ambassador, Mission of Iceland to the EU
Ms Audur Yr STEINARSDÓTTIR	EEA Director, Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Mr Finnur Thór BIRGISSON	Minister and Deputy Head of Mission, Mission of Iceland to the EU
Ms Katrín SVERRISDÓTTIR	Director of EEA Cooperation, Mission of Iceland to the EU
Ms Inga Thórey OSKARSDÓTTIR	First Secretary, Mission of Iceland to the EU

EU Council Presidency

H.E. Mr Michael DAMIANOS	Minister of Energy, Commerce and Industry of Cyprus
Mr Constantinos KARAGEORGIS	Director of Consumer Protection Service; Ministry of Energy, Commerce and Industry of Cyprus
Mr Vasilis KOUNADIS	Deputy Chair of the EFTA Working Party
Ms Theodora CHRISTODOULOU	Deputy Presidency Coordinator

European Commission

Mr Maroš ŠEFČOVIČ	Commissioner, Trade and Economic Security; Interinstitutional Relations and Transparency
Mr Bernd BIERVERT	Head of Cabinet of Commissioner Šefčovič
Mr Nicolas VON LINGEN	EU Chair of EEA Joint Committee, Head of Unit SG.H3 - EEA, Switzerland, Andorra, Monaco, and San Marino

EU Council Secretariat

Ms Helene HOLM-PEDERSEN	Director, DG RELEX, Enlargement and Europe
Mr Efstratios PEGIDIS	Political Administrator, DG RELEX, Enlargement and Europe

European External Action Service

Mr Emanuele GIAUFRET	Deputy Managing Director, Directorate EURCA
Ms Claude VÉRON-RÉVILLE	EU Special Arctic Envoy, EEAS Head of Division Western Europe

EFTA Secretariat

Mr Kurt JAEGER	Secretary-General
Mr Knut HERMANSEN	Deputy Secretary-General
Mr Thordur JONSSON	Deputy Secretary-General
Ms Marit C. Schage ANDRIA	Director, Internal Market Division
Mr Pétur GUNNARSSON	Head of EEA Policy Coordination, EEA Coordination Division
Ms Karoline Lumholdt MATHISEN	Head of EEA Legal Coordination, EEA Coordination Division

EFTA Surveillance Authority

Mr Arne RØKSUND	President
Ms Nuscha WIECZOREK	Vice-President
Ms Sigrún GISLADÓTTIR	Deputy Director Legal & Executive Affairs

EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AREA
Council of the EEA

Brussels, 18 May 2026
(OR. en)

EEE 1603/26

REPORT

Subject: Progress Report by the EEA Joint Committee

Decision making

1. The EEA Joint Committee has adopted 223 Joint Committee Decisions (JCDs) incorporating 388 legal acts into the EEA Agreement since the 61st meeting of the EEA Council on 20 November 2025. In the period from 1 January to 18 May 2026 the EEA Joint Committee adopted 154 JCDs incorporating 245 legal acts. In comparison, during the period from 1 January to 8 May 2025, the EEA Joint Committee adopted 117 JCDs incorporating 194 legal acts.
2. On 8 April 2026[1], there were 595 legal acts awaiting incorporation, compared with 615 legal acts on 1 October 2025. Since November 2025, therefore, the overall number of legal acts outstanding has decreased. Of the 595 legal acts outstanding on 8 April 2026, 214 legal acts are still in the early stages of the incorporation process, where the compliance date in the EU passed less than six months ago.

[1] The date reflects the most recent edition of the Monitoring List prior to the EEA Joint Committee meeting of 30 April 2026. This is a list of all legal acts outstanding where the compliance date passed two weeks prior to the Subcommittees I-IV meeting.

3. On 15 April 2026, the number of JCDs awaiting the fulfilment of constitutional requirements where the six-month period had expired was 26, compared with 19 in October 2025.
4. Important decisions incorporated since the 61st meeting of the EEA Council on 20 November 2025 include:
    - Decision No 288/2025 amending EED Annexes on the contents of comprehensive assessments of the potential for efficient heating and cooling
    - Decision No 289/2025 reviewing harmonised efficiency reference values for separate production of electricity and heat
    - Decision No 307/2025 on Data Governance Act
    - Decision No 310/2025 on combating online child sexual abuse
    - Decision No 13/2026 amending Regulation (EC) No 1881/2006 as regards maximum levels of cadmium in certain foodstuffs
    - Decision No 14/2026 on maximum levels for certain contaminants in food
    - Decision No 88/2026 on Review of European Supervisory Authorities
    - Decision No 107/2026 on European business statistics
    - Decision No 108/2026 on Community statistics on migration and international protection
    - Decision No 140/2026 as regards the prudential treatment of global systemically important institutions with a multiple-point-of-entry resolution strategy and methods for the indirect subscription of instruments eligible for meeting the minimum requirement for own funds and eligible liabilities ("Daisy Chains Regulation")
    - Decision No 155/2026 as regards statistics on health care expenditure and financing

Decision shaping

5. The EEA EFTA States participate in 15 EU programmes and 19 decentralised agencies, as well as in the activities of six executive agencies.
6. Since the last meeting of the EEA Council on 20 November 2025, the EEA Joint Committee has taken note of EEA EFTA Comments on the following subjects:
    - Horizontal issues in the EU programme proposals 2028–2034
    - Roadworthiness Package
    - AgoraEU Programme Proposal
    - EEA EFTA Comment on Commission Proposal for Critical Medicines Act
    - EEA EFTA Comment on the EU Space Act Proposal

Briefings in the EEA Joint Committee

7. In the period from 25 October 2025 to 30 April 2026, the EEA Joint Committee received briefings on:
   - the state of play of the EEA and Norway Financial Mechanisms 2021-2028, including an update on the Memoranda of Understanding with the Beneficiary States
   - secure connectivity / cooperation on space in the EEA

Status of issues outstanding

8. Discussions on the following issues have not yet been concluded:

   Energy:
   - Regulation (EU) 2017/460 establishing a network code on harmonised transmission tariff structures for gas; Regulation (EU) 2017/459 establishing a network code on capacity allocation mechanisms in gas transmission systems and repealing Regulation (EU) No 984/2013; Regulation (EU) No 312/2014 establishing a Network Code on Gas Balancing of Transmission Networks and Regulation (EU) 2015/703 establishing a network code on interoperability and data exchange rules; Commission Regulation (EU) 2016/631 establishing a network code on requirements for grid connection of generators; Regulation (EU) No 1227/2011 on wholesale energy market integrity and transparency (REMIT); Commission Regulation (EU) 2017/2196 establishing a network code on electricity emergency and restoration; Regulation (EU) 2019/942 establishing a European Union Agency for the Cooperation of Energy Regulators; Directive (EU) 2019/692 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 April 2019 amending Directive 2009/73/EC concerning common rules for the internal market in natural gas; Regulation (EU) 2019/943 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 June 2019 on the internal market for electricity; Directive (EU) 2019/944 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 June 2019 on common rules for the internal market for electricity and amending Directive 2012/27/EU; Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2020/1294 of 15 September 2020 on the Union renewable energy financing mechanism.

State aid:

- Council Regulation (EU) No 734/2013 amending Regulation (EC) No 659/1999 laying down detailed rules for the application of Article 93 of the EC Treaty

Food chain:

- Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 on genetically modified food and feed (GM Food and Feed); Delegated Regulation (EU) 2019/2122 on personal consignments

Transport:

- Regulation (EU) 2016/1199 on helicopter offshore operations (HOFO)

Competition policy:

- Directive (EU) 2019/1 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2018 to empower the competition authorities of the Member States to be more effective enforcers and to ensure the proper functioning of the internal market ("ECN+ Directive"); Directive 2014/104/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 November 2014 on certain rules governing actions for damages under national law for infringements of the competition law provisions of the Member States and of the European Union

Financial services:

- Directive 2014/49/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 April 2014 on deposit guarantee scheme (recast) – DSG III; Regulation (EU) 2019/2099 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2019 amending Regulation (EU) No 648/2012 as regards the procedures and authorities involved for the authorisation of CCPs and requirements for the recognition of third-country CCPs; Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/1302 of 14 July 2020 supplementing Regulation (EU) No 648/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council with regard to fees charged by the European Securities and Markets Authority to central counterparties established in third countries; Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/1303 of 14 July 2020 supplementing Regulation (EU) No 648/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council with regard to the criteria that ESMA should take into account to determine whether a central counterparty established in a third country is systemically important or likely to become systemically important for the financial stability of the Union or of one or more of its Member States;

Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/1304 of 14 July 2020 supplementing Regulation (EU) No 648/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council with regard to the minimum elements to be assessed by ESMA when assessing third-country CCPs' requests for comparable compliance and the modalities and conditions of that assessment.

Environment:

- Directive (EU) 2016/2284 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 December 2016 on the reduction of national emissions of certain atmospheric pollutants, amending Directive 2003/35/EC and repealing Directive 2001/81/EC

Statistics:

- Regulation (EU) 2016/1952 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 October 2016 on European statistics on natural gas and electricity prices and repealing Directive 2008/92/EC; Commission Regulation (EU) 2017/2010 of 9 November 2017 amending Regulation (EC) No 1099/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council on energy statistics, as regards the updates for the annual and monthly energy statistics; Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/1799 of 21 November 2018 on the establishment of a temporary direct statistical action for the dissemination of selected topics of the 2021 population and housing census geocoded to a 1 km2 grid; Commission Regulation (EU) 2019/2146 of 26 November 2019 amending Regulation (EC) No 1099/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council on energy statistics, as regards the implementation of updates for the annual, monthly and short-term monthly energy statistics; Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2020/1030 of 15 July 2020 laying down the technical specifications of data requirements for the topic 'ICT usage and e-commerce' for the reference year 2021, pursuant to Regulation (EU) 2019/2152 of the European Parliament and of the Council.

9. The EEA Joint Committee has reiterated its determination to work towards the rapid conclusion of these issues.

Financial Mechanisms

10. For the current period of the EEA and Norway Financial Mechanisms (2021-2028), the EEA EFTA States contribute with a total of EUR 3.268 billion to 15 Beneficiary States in the EU. Memoranda of Understanding were signed with 13 Beneficiary States: Poland, Estonia, Slovakia, Portugal, Croatia, Latvia, Czechia, Cyprus, Bulgaria, Lithuania, Malta, Greece and Romania.

11. The three priority areas for the period 2021–2028 are:
    - Green transition
    - Democracy, rule of law and human rights
    - Social inclusion and resilience