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From: EEAS
To: Delegations
Subject: Memorandum of Understanding on Enhanced Cooperation between the European Union and the Government of the Faroe Islands

DOCUMENT PARTIALLY ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC (30.04.2024)

Delegations will find in annex the text of the Memorandum of Understanding on Enhanced Cooperation between the EU and the Government of the Faroe Islands, as transmitted by the EEAS.

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To	Council Working Party on European Free Trade Association (EFTA)
Title / Subject	Memorandum of Understanding on Enhanced Cooperation between the European Union and the Government of the Faroe Islands – NBI Step 2
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After endorsement by the Council, the attached Memorandum of Understanding is expected to be signed in the first quarter of 2024.

The Council is invited to endorse the Memorandum of Understanding.

Attached: Memorandum of Understanding

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Memorandum of Understanding
on Enhanced Cooperation

between the European Union and the Government of the Faroe Islands

Section 1 (Introductory section)

The European Union and the Faroe Islands, a self-governing country within the Kingdom of Denmark and to which the EU treaties do not apply (hereafter referred to as “the Participants”), are guided by shared values, principles, and commitments to democracy, rule of law and respect for human rights, peace and stability, international law and sustainable development. The Participants welcome the deepening and steady increase of their long-standing cooperation ties.

The Participants value the solid foundations for their relationship notably through the following agreements:

- On Fisheries: Agreement on fisheries between the European Economic Community, of the one part, and the Government of Denmark and the Home Government of the Faeroe Islands, of the other part¹.
- On Trade: Agreement between the European Community, of the one part, and the Government of Denmark and the Home Government of the Faroe Islands, of the other part² and Protocol on veterinary matters supplementing the Agreement between the European Community, of the one part, and the Government of Denmark and the Home Government of the Faroe Islands, of the other part³.
- On Participation in Union Programmes / Horizon Europe: Agreement between the European Union, of the one part, and the Government of the Faroe Islands, of the other part, on the participation of the Faroe Islands in Union programmes⁴, which incorporates a Protocol on the Association of the Faroe Islands to Horizon Europe – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2021-2027).

The Participants note that, on 21 June 2022, the Council of the EU⁵ assessed the state of EU relations with the Faroe Islands and noted that the Faroe Islands are an important partner of the EU with regards to several of the EU policies.

The Participants recognise that, in the current international geopolitical context, it is of mutual interest for the EU and the Faroe Islands to strengthen cooperation as likeminded partners and to consolidate and broaden their relationship.

¹ OJ L 226, 29.8.1980.

² OJ L 53 22.2.1997.

³ OJ L 305, 30.11.1999.

⁴ OJ L 154, 7.6.2022.

⁵ Council Conclusions on a homogeneous extended Internal Market and EU relations with non-EU Western European countries and with the Faroe Islands (ref 10514/22).

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Section 2 (Enhanced cooperation)

The Participants intend to promote, within their respective fields of competences, closer EU-Faroes relations through regular consultations aimed at strengthening existing cooperation and exploring ways to deepen and diversify their cooperation in areas not covered by the existing agreements, to advance shared interests and values and to facilitate mutual understanding, a level playing field and convergence of positions. They intend to enhance and deepen bilateral ties in areas of common interest.

Section 3 (Priorities and Areas of cooperation)

The Participants identify the following key priorities to guide the development of their relations in areas within the Faroe Islands competence, including, but not limited to:

1. Trade – The Participants intend to promote, through further expansion of reciprocal trade, the harmonious development and enhancement of economic relations and fair conditions of competition for trade. The Participants recognize the importance of the regional integration of trade within the context of the pan-Euro-Mediterranean zone. As regards trade of fishery products, the Participants acknowledge the importance of balanced trade relations and of sustainability and fisheries management.
2. Research and scientific cooperation – The Participants expect that the active collaboration between researchers and research and innovation entities in the EU and the Faroe Islands will continue for the mutual advancement of excellence in science and technology, and the mutual benefits arising from the Faroe Islands' association to the Union's Framework Programmes for Research and Innovation since 2010. The association is in line with the Global Approach⁶ to Research and Innovation – 'Europe's strategy for international cooperation in a changing world' and the Council conclusions⁷ on 'Principles and values for international cooperation in research and innovation.' In the area of fisheries and marine ecosystem science, the Participants expect to continue and strengthen their productive cooperation in and through the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) on shared fish stocks and scientific topics of common interest.
3. Fisheries – The Participants, recognising the importance of sustainable fishing of stocks of common interest, intend to strengthen their cooperation in the bilateral, regional and multilateral context.
4. Climate change, environment and energy – The Participants acknowledge their commitment to the Paris Agreement and its objectives, aiming to limit the global temperature increase to 1.5°C compared to pre-industrial levels. The Participants intend to facilitate the shift towards a sustainable, circular, energy-efficient, renewable energy-based, climate-neutral and resilient economy. They also intend to protect, restore and improve the quality of the environment, including the air, water and soil, to halt and reverse biodiversity loss as well as to tackle the degradation of ecosystems. The participants intend to work together towards the transition to an energy-efficient and renewable energy-based system and exchanges practices on the phase-out of fossil fuels in all sectors of the economy. The participants intend to engage on joint areas of mutual interest such as energy efficiency, electrification and storage. The participants emphasise

⁶ COM(2021) 252 final - https://commission.europa.eu/system/files/2021-05/ec_rtd_com2021-252.pdf
⁷ [st10125-en22.pdf \(europa.eu\)](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32021R10125-en22.pdf)

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that an accelerated transition to renewable energy is essential to improve security of supply and the affordability of energy.

5. Arctic matters – The Faroe Islands’ and the EU Arctic policies provide a platform for the EU and the Faroes to work together on the basis of shared interests to achieve common objectives. These include e.g. sustainable development, including in infrastructures (with a focus on blue economy sectors), research and innovation, civil protection and safety (particularly at sea), and environmental protection. The Participants intend to support actions and activities that are inclusive and benefit local communities living in the Arctic, including indigenous communities. The Participants intend to support the work of the Arctic Council and other multilateral cooperation in the Arctic regions as well as to contribute to maintaining these regions safe, stable, sustainable, peaceful and prosperous. Cognizant that climate change is the most comprehensive threat facing the Arctic regions, the Participants intend to cooperate to counteract its negative impacts, including by reduction of critical emissions.
6. Marine biodiversity – The Participants intend to cooperate on aspects pertaining to conservation and protection of marine biodiversity including for instance marine science and assessment of populations and to support relevant international conventions. The participants take account of the work undertaken under relevant international agreements and commitments on conservation, sustainable use, management and welfare of cetaceans as well as on research on these matters.
7. Green and Digital transition – The Participants intend to support Green and Digital transition. In this respect, the Participants intend to support just transition towards climate neutral and resilient economies and societies, in line with the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on development finance. The Participants also intend to promote reforms to unlock digital growth potential and deploy innovative solutions for businesses and citizens, and to improve the accessibility and efficiency of public services. The Participants expect digital solutions that put people first will open up new opportunities for businesses, encourage the development of trustworthy technology, foster an open and democratic society, enable a vibrant and sustainable economy, help fight climate change and achieve the green transition.
8. Food Security – The Participants intend to further reinforcing coordination and contingency planning with regard to crises that put, or threaten to put, food supply and food security in the EU and the Faroe Islands in danger, building on the work of the group of experts on the European Food Security Crisis preparedness and response Mechanism (EFSCM), where the Faroe Islands are a member, as Faroese agri-food value chains are strongly linked to those of the EU.
9. Taxation – The Participants intend to promote good governance in tax matters, improve international cooperation in the tax area and facilitate the collection of tax revenues, with a focus on implementing the principles of good governance in the tax area, including the global standards on transparency and exchange of information, fair taxation, and the minimum standards against Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS).
10. Education, culture, youth and tourism - Taking into account the close historical and cultural ties between them, the Participants acknowledge the importance of cooperation on education, people-to-people and culture and intend to cooperate in these fields, based on shared values and principles.

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Section 4 (Methods of cooperation)

The Participants intend to hold periodic consultations to take stock of overall developments in the aforementioned areas of cooperation, while ensuring complementarity and added value to other relevant fora, or Joint Committees, initiatives and processes established under other agreements and instruments in force for both Participants.

Consultations will be held on an annual basis, alternatively in Tórshavn and in Brussels, or by video conference. The Head of the responsible European External Action Service (EEAS) Division and the Head of the responsible unit within the Faroese Foreign Service will co-chair the consultations and prepare joint review reports.

This instrument is not intended to create rights or obligations under international or domestic law and does not have any financial implications on either side.

Signed in XXX on (date),

For the European Union

For the Government of the Faroe Islands

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 Electronically signed on 05/12/2023 16:37 (UTC+01) in accordance with Article 11 of Commission Decision (EU) 2021/2121

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