

Joint Statement

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Close co-operation between the two Nordic EEA EFTA States on EEA matters is an important element of strengthening Nordic co-operation on European affairs.

Iceland and Norway share a common interest in maintaining the good functioning of the EEA Agreement and often share similar interests and approaches under different areas of the cooperation. Iceland and Norway also share a common interest to ensure that Icelandic and Norwegian nationals and economic operators continue to enjoy the full benefits of the EEA Agreement.

The EEA Agreement remains the main pillar of cooperation of the two countries with the European Union. Iceland and Norway are both fully committed to a strong co-operation between the EEA EFTA States on all levels, including at the working group level and the subcommittee level, together with our EEA EFTA partner Liechtenstein.

Norway and Iceland are working closely together in the planning and implementation of the EEA Financial Mechanism. Together with the Norwegian Financial Mechanism, a total of 2,8 billion € is made available for projects in 15 EU member countries. This is an important element of both Norway's and Iceland's European policies and relations with the EU.

Promoting and protecting the interests of the EEA EFTA States in the development of EU legislation relevant to the EEA Agreement require effective, timely and efficient advocacy by the EEA EFTA States. It is particularly important to focus on the early stages of the EU policy making and decision shaping.

The well-functioning of the EEA Agreement also requires the timely incorporation of EEA relevant EU legal acts into to the EEA Agreement.

In view of the objectives above, and as a follow-up to the Nordic co-operation on European affairs, Iceland and Norway will aim at strengthening the co-operation between their countries, particularly by taking the following action:

1. Iceland and Norway will work together at all levels to further strengthen their co-operation on EEA issues, particularly on the decision shaping of EEA relevant acts within the European Union. In this respect, Iceland and Norway will share information and develop common strategies, as appropriate, in order to work together in influencing EEA relevant EU legislation.
2. The Ministries of Foreign Affairs of Iceland and Norway will co-ordinate consultations and co-operation between the Icelandic and Norwegian authorities. In this respect, officials responsible for the EEA will conduct bilateral consultations on EEA issues of

interests for both sides, with particular emphasis on policy developments within the EU that are relevant for the EEA.

3. In line with the priorities set by the Norwegian Presidency of the Nordic Council of Ministers in year 2017, Iceland and Norway will work to strengthening the Nordic cooperation on European policy. A strong Nordic voice in the European debate serves both Europe and the Nordic countries.
4. The Ministries of Foreign Affairs of Iceland and Norway will each year agree on a list of priority areas of common interest where the Icelandic and Norwegian authorities will pursue common advocacy activities.