

## Agreement on the European Economic Area

### AGREEMENT ON THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AREA

#### **PREAMBLE**

[<sup>F1</sup>THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY,

THE KINGDOM OF BELGIUM,

THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA,

THE CZECH REPUBLIC,

THE KINGDOM OF DENMARK,

THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY,

THE REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA,

IRELAND,

THE HELLENIC REPUBLIC,

THE KINGDOM OF SPAIN,

THE FRENCH REPUBLIC,

[<sup>F2</sup>THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA,]

THE ITALIAN REPUBLIC,

THE REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS,

THE REPUBLIC OF LATVIA,

THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA,

THE GRAND DUCHY OF LUXEMBOURG,

[<sup>F3</sup>THE REPUBLIC OF] HUNGARY,

[<sup>F2</sup>THE REPUBLIC OF] MALTA,

THE KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS,

THE REPUBLIC OF AUSTRIA,

THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND,

THE PORTUGUESE REPUBLIC,

ROMANIA,

THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA,

---

*Status: This is the revised version from EUR-Lex dated 14/12/2019. There are no timeline of changes available for treaties, instead, previous dated versions from EUR-Lex (as pdf) can be accessed via the More Resources menu.*

---

THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC,

THE REPUBLIC OF FINLAND,

THE KINGDOM OF SWEDEN,

THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND,

and

ICELAND,

THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN,

THE KINGDOM OF NORWAY,]

hereinafter referred to as the CONTRACTING PARTIES;

CONVINCED of the contribution that a European Economic Area will bring to the construction of a Europe based on peace, democracy and human rights;

REAFFIRMING the high priority attached to the privileged relationship between the European Community, its Member States and the EFTA States, which is based on proximity, long-standing common values and European identity;

DETERMINED to contribute, on the basis of market economy, to world-wide trade liberalization and cooperation, in particular in accordance with the provisions of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and the Convention on the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development;

CONSIDERING the objective of establishing a dynamic and homogeneous European Economic Area, based on common rules and equal conditions of competition and providing for the adequate means of enforcement including at the judicial level, and achieved on the basis of equality and reciprocity and of an overall balance of benefits, rights and obligations for the Contracting Parties;

DETERMINED to provide for the fullest possible realization of the free movement of goods, persons, services and capital within the whole European Economic Area, as well as for strengthened and broadened cooperation in flanking and horizontal policies;

AIMING to promote a harmonious development of the European Economic Area and convinced of the need to contribute through the application of this Agreement to the reduction of economic and social regional disparities;

DESIROUS of contributing to the strengthening of the cooperation between the members of the European Parliament and of the Parliaments of the EFTA States, as well as between the social partners in the European Community and in the EFTA States;

CONVINCED of the important role that individuals will play in the European Economic Area through the exercise of the rights conferred on them by this Agreement and through the judicial defence of these rights;

---

*Status: This is the revised version from EUR-Lex dated 14/12/2019. There are no timeline of changes available for treaties, instead, previous dated versions from EUR-Lex (as pdf) can be accessed via the More Resources menu.*

---

DETERMINED to preserve, protect and improve the quality of the environment and to ensure a prudent and rational utilization of natural resources on the basis, in particular, of the principle of sustainable development, as well as the principle that precautionary and preventive action should be taken;

DETERMINED to take, in the further development of rules, a high level of protection concerning health, safety and the environment as a basis;

NOTING the importance of the development of the social dimension, including equal treatment of men and women, in the European Economic Area and wishing to ensure economic and social progress and to promote conditions for full employment, an improved standard of living and improved working conditions within the European Economic Area;

DETERMINED to promote the interests of consumers and to strengthen their position in the market place, aiming at a high level of consumer protection;

ATTACHED to the common objectives of strengthening the scientific and technological basis of European industry and of encouraging it to become more competitive at the international level;

CONSIDERING that the conclusion of this Agreement shall not prejudice in any way the possibility of any EFTA State to accede to the European Communities;

WHEREAS, in full deference to the independence of the courts, the objective of the Contracting Parties is to arrive at, and maintain, a uniform interpretation and application of this Agreement and those provisions of Community legislation which are substantially reproduced in this Agreement and to arrive at an equal treatment of individuals and economic operators as regards the four freedoms and the conditions of competition;

WHEREAS this Agreement does not restrict the decision-making autonomy or the treaty-making power of the Contracting Parties, subject to the provisions of this Agreement and the limitations set by public international law;

HAVE DECIDED to conclude the following Agreement:

---

**Textual Amendments**

- F1** Substituted by [Agreement on the participation of the Republic of Bulgaria and Romania in the European Economic Area](#).
- F2** Inserted by [Agreement on the participation of the Republic of Croatia in the European Economic Area and three related agreements](#).
- F3** Deleted by [Agreement on the participation of the Republic of Croatia in the European Economic Area and three related agreements](#).