

Agreement on the European Economic Area

PART VI

COOPERATION OUTSIDE THE FOUR FREEDOMS

Article 78

The Contracting Parties shall strengthen and broaden cooperation in the framework of the Community's activities in the fields of:

- research and technological development,
- information services,
- the environment,
- education, training and youth,
- social policy,
- consumer protection,
- small and medium-sized enterprises,
- tourism,
- the audiovisual sector, and
- civil protection,

in so far as these matters are not regulated under the provisions of other Parts of this Agreement.

Article 79

1. The Contracting Parties shall strengthen the dialogue between them by all appropriate means, in particular through the procedures provided for in Part VII, with a view to identifying areas and activities where closer cooperation could contribute to the attainment of their common objectives in the fields referred to in Article 78.
2. They shall, in particular, exchange information and, at the request of a Contracting Party, hold consultations within the EEA Joint Committee in respect of plans or proposals for the establishment or amendment of framework programmes, specific programmes, actions and projects in the fields referred to in Article 78.
3. Part VII shall apply *mutatis mutandis* with regard to this Part whenever the latter or Protocol 31 specifically provides therefor.

Article 80

The cooperation provided for in Article 78 shall normally take one of the following forms:

- participation by EFTA States in EC framework programmes, specific programmes, projects or other actions;
- establishment of joint activities in specific areas, which may include concertation or coordination of activities, fusion of existing activities and establishment of *ad hoc* joint activities;
- the formal and informal exchange or provision of information;
- common efforts to encourage certain activities throughout the territory of the Contracting Parties;
- parallel legislation, where appropriate, of identical or similar content;

- coordination, where this is of mutual interest, of efforts and activities via, or in the context of, international organizations, and of cooperation with third countries.

Article 81

Where cooperation takes the form of participation by EFTA States in an EC framework programme, specific programme, project or other action, the following principles shall apply:

- (a) The EFTA States shall have access to all parts of a programme.
- (b) The status of the EFTA States in the committees which assist the EC Commission in the management or development of a Community activity to which EFTA States may be contributing financially by virtue of their participation shall take full account of that contribution.
- (c) Decisions by the Community, other than those relating to the general budget of the Community, which affect directly or indirectly a framework programme, specific programme, project or other action, in which EFTA States participate by a decision under this Agreement, shall be subject to the provisions of Article 79(3). The terms and conditions of the continued participation in the activity in question may be reviewed by the EEA Joint Committee in accordance with Article 86.
- (d) At the project level, institutions, undertakings, organizations and nationals of EFTA States shall have the same rights and obligations in the Community programme or other action in question as those applicable to partner institutions, undertakings, organizations and nationals of EC Member States. The same shall apply *mutatis mutandis* to participants in exchanges between EC Member States and EFTA States, under the activity in question.
- (e) EFTA States, their institutions, undertakings, organizations and nationals shall have the same rights and obligations with regard to dissemination, evaluation and exploitation of results as those applicable to EC Member States, their institutions, undertakings, organizations and nationals.
- (f) The Contracting Parties undertake, in accordance with their respective rules and regulations, to facilitate the movement of participants in the programme and other action to the extent necessary.

Article 82

1. When the cooperation envisaged under the present Part involves a financial participation of the EFTA States, this participation shall take one of the following forms:

- (a) The contribution of the EFTA States, arising from their participation in Community activities, shall be calculated proportionally:
 - to the commitment appropriations; and
 - to the payment appropriations;

entered each year for the Community in the general budget of the Community for each budgetary line corresponding to the activities in question.

The 'proportionality factor' determining the participation of the EFTA States shall be the sum of the ratios between, on the one hand, the gross domestic product at market prices of each of the EFTA States and, on the other hand, the sum of the gross domestic products at market prices of the EC Member States and of that EFTA State. This factor

shall be calculated, for each budgetary year, on the basis of the most recent statistical data.

The amount of the contribution of the EFTA States shall be additional, both in commitment appropriations and in payment appropriations, to the amounts entered for the Community in the general budget on each line corresponding to the activities concerned.

The contributions to be paid each year by the EFTA States shall be determined on the basis of the payment appropriations.

Commitments entered into by the Community prior to the entry into force, on the basis of this Agreement, of the participation of the EFTA States in the activities in question — as well as the payments which result from this — shall give rise to no contribution on the part of the EFTA States.

- (b) The financial contribution of the EFTA States deriving from their participation in certain projects or other activities shall be based on the principle that each Contracting Party shall cover its own costs, with an appropriate contribution which shall be fixed by the EEA Joint Committee to the Community's overhead costs.
 - (c) The EEA Joint Committee shall take the necessary decisions concerning the contribution of the Contracting Parties to the costs of the activity in question.
2. The detailed provisions for the implementation of this Article are set out in Protocol 32.

Article 83

Where cooperation takes the form of an exchange of information between public authorities, the EFTA States shall have the same rights to receive, and obligations to provide, information as EC Member States, subject to the requirements of confidentiality, which shall be fixed by the EEA Joint Committee.

Article 84

Provisions governing cooperation in specific fields are set out in Protocol 31.

Article 85

Unless otherwise provided for in Protocol 31, cooperation already established between the Community and individual EFTA States in the fields referred to in Article 78 on the date of entry into force of this Agreement shall thereafter be governed by the relevant provisions of this Part and of Protocol 31.

Article 86

The EEA Joint Committee shall, in accordance with Part VII, take all decisions necessary for the implementation of Articles 78 to 85 and measures derived therefrom, which may include, *inter alia*, supplementing and amending the provisions of Protocol 31, as well as adopting any transitional arrangements required by way of implementation of Article 85.

Article 87

The Contracting Parties shall take the necessary steps to develop, strengthen or broaden cooperation in the framework of the Community's activities in fields not listed in Article 78, where such cooperation is considered likely to contribute to the attainment of the

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objectives of this Agreement, or is otherwise deemed by the Contracting Parties to be of mutual interest. Such steps may include the amendment of Article 78 by the addition of new fields to those listed therein.

Article 88

Without prejudice to provisions of other Parts of this Agreement, the provisions of this Part shall not preclude the possibility for any Contracting Party to prepare, adopt and implement measures independently.