

Agreement on the European Economic Area

PART VII

INSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS

CHAPTER 1

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ASSOCIATION

Section 1

The EEA Council

Article 89

1 An EEA Council is hereby established. It shall, in particular, be responsible for giving the political impetus in the implementation of this Agreement and laying down the general guidelines for the EEA Joint Committee.

To this end, the EEA Council shall assess the overall functioning and the development of the Agreement. It shall take the political decisions leading to amendments of the Agreement.

2 The Contracting Parties, as to the Community and the EC Member States in their respective fields of competence, may, after having discussed it in the EEA Joint Committee, or directly in exceptionally urgent cases, raise in the EEA Council any issue giving rise to a difficulty.

3 The EEA Council shall by decision adopt its rules of procedure.

Article 90

1 The EEA Council shall consist of the members of the Council of the European Communities and members of the EC Commission, and of one member of the Government of each of the EFTA States.

Members of the EEA Council may be represented in accordance with the conditions to be laid down in its rules of procedure.

2 Decisions by the EEA Council shall be taken by agreement between the Community, on the one hand, and the EFTA States, on the other.

Article 91

1 The office of President of the EEA Council shall be held alternately, for a period of six months, by a member of the Council of the European Communities and a member of the Government of an EFTA State,

2 The EEA Council shall be convened twice a year by its President. The EEA Council shall also meet whenever circumstances so require, in accordance with its rules of procedure.

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Section 2

The EEA Joint Committee

Article 92

1 An EEA Joint Committee is hereby established. It shall ensure the effective implementation and operation of this Agreement. To this end, it shall carry out exchanges of views and information and take decisions in the cases provided for in this Agreement.

2 The Contracting Parties, as to the Community and the EC Member States in their respective fields of competence, shall hold consultations in the EEA Joint Committee on any point of relevance to the Agreement giving rise to a difficulty and raised by one of them.

3 The EEA Joint Committee shall by decision adopt its rules of procedure.

Article 93

1 The EEA Joint Committee shall consist of representatives of the Contracting Parties.

2 The EEA Joint Committee shall take decisions by agreement between the Community, on the one hand, and the EFTA States speaking with one voice, on the other.

Article 94

1 The office of President of the EEA Joint Committee shall be held alternately, for a period of six months, by the representative of the Community, i.e. the EC Commission, and the representative of one of the EFTA States.

2 In order to fulfil its functions, the EEA Joint Committee shall meet, in principle, at least once a month. It shall also meet on the initiative of its President or at the request of one of the Contracting Parties in accordance with its rules of procedure.

3 The EEA Joint Committee may decide to establish any subcommittee or working group to assist it in carrying out its tasks. The EEA Joint Committee shall in its rules of procedure lay down the composition and mode of operation of such subcommittees and working groups. Their tasks shall be determined by the EEA Joint Committee in each individual case.

4 The EEA Joint Committee shall issue an annual report on the functioning and the development of this Agreement.

Section 3

Parliamentary cooperation

Article 95

1 An EEA Joint Parliamentary Committee is hereby established. It shall be composed of equal numbers of, on the one hand, members of the European Parliament and, on the other, members of Parliaments of the EFTA States. The total number of members of the Committee is laid down in the Statute in Protocol 36.

2 The EEA Joint Parliamentary Committee shall alternately hold sessions in the Community and in an EFTA State in accordance with the provisions laid down in Protocol 36.

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3 The EEA Joint Parliamentary Committee shall contribute, through dialogue and debate, to a better understanding between the Community and the EFTA States in the fields covered by this Agreement.

4 The EEA Joint Parliamentary Committee may express its views in the form of reports or resolutions, as appropriate. It shall, in particular, examine the annual report of the EEA Joint Committee, issued in accordance with Article 94(4), on the functioning and the development of this Agreement.

5 The President of the EEA Council may appear before the EEA Joint Parliamentary Committee in order to be heard by it.

6 The EEA Joint Parliamentary Committee shall adopt its rules of procedure.

Section 4

Cooperation between economic and social partners

Article 96

1 Members of the Economic and Social Committee and other bodies representing the social partners in the Community and the corresponding bodies in the EFTA States shall work to strengthen contacts between them and to cooperate in an organized and regular manner in order to enhance the awareness of the economic and social aspects of the growing interdependence of the economies of the Contracting Parties and of their interests within the context of the EEA.

2 To this end, an EEA Consultative Committee is hereby established. It shall be composed of equal numbers of, on the one hand, members of the Economic and Social Committee of the Community and, on the other, members of the EFTA Consultative Committee. The EEA Consultative Committee may express its views in the form of reports or resolutions, as appropriate.

3 The EEA Consultative Committee shall adopt its rules of procedure.