

Annual Report 2025



ESA | EFTA
Surveillance
Authority

2025 Annual report

Table of Contents

Letter from the College	4
Corporate Information	
This is ESA	6
Human resources	8
Budget and financial performance	8
The Internal Market	
Monitoring the Internal Market	10
Protecting rights of people and business	12
Ensuring safe, secure and sustainable transport	14
Food and feed safety, animal health and welfare	16
Energy, environment and finance	18
Competition and State Aid	
State aid in 2025	21
Competition law in 2025	24
Legal And Executive Affairs	
Legal and Executive Affairs in 2025	26
ESA's court cases in 2025	27
External relations and outreach	28
Press releases 2025	30

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Letter from the College

The year 2025 unfolded against a backdrop of continued geopolitical tensions, a challenging security environment, economic uncertainty and pressure on the international rules-based order. A stable and well-functioning Internal Market is more important than ever, as it underpins Europe's competitiveness, economic security and resilience in a rapidly changing global context.

This also reinforces the important role of the EFTA Surveillance Authority (ESA). Effective surveillance of the EEA Agreement is essential to ensure that Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway participate fully in the internal market, enabling people and businesses to rely on their rights and obligations and to benefit from the opportunities it provides.

Cooperation remains central to our work. Dialogue with the EEA EFTA States is a key priority. The annual package meetings once again provided valuable opportunities for political and technical exchanges on ongoing cases and questions of interpretation. ESA Days held on the fringes of the package meetings, as well as other outreach activities, allowed us to present our work and engage directly with national authorities and practitioners involved in implementing EEA law.

At the same time, close cooperation with the European Commission remains essential. In March, ESA and the Commission held the third Annual Surveillance Policy Dialogue at the EFTA House. The Dialogue provides an important forum for discussing enforcement policy and common challenges in ensuring uniform surveillance of the internal market. It complements the regular meetings between ESA's College and Maroš Šefčovič, the European Commissioner responsible for the European Economic Area (EEA) countries, as well as the close day-to-day cooperation between our institutions. In addition, College members held bilateral meetings with Commissioners Dan Jørgensen on energy and housing, Maria Luis Albuquerque on financial services, and Christophe Hansen on agriculture and food, as well as with Cabinets

of Commission Vice-Presidents, further strengthening dialogue and cooperation.

At the same time, ESA has continued to face a substantial and complex workload. While the overall number of infringement cases remained high and fell slightly compared to the previous year, ESA received a significantly higher number of complaints, more than doubling compared to the year before. New regulatory responsibilities, particularly in the areas of energy, environment and financial services, have further added to the complexity of our work. Faced with these challenges, ESA has taken steps to improve efficiency and modernise its working methods, including testing the use of artificial intelligence in case handling and introducing digital solutions to streamline internal processes.

The annual report provides an overview of the enforcement work undertaken by ESA in the reporting year. It can be broken down into the following key areas:

- ESA monitors the full and timely implementation of EEA directives and regulations in the EEA EFTA States. In 2025, the average transposition deficit decreased and the number of infringement cases fell slightly.
- ESA also monitors the correct implementation and application of EEA law, and continues its efforts to prioritise cases with the greatest impact on the functioning of the internal market and to streamline case handling.
- ESA's workload is increasingly shaped by its regulatory and supervisory tasks in areas such as energy, environment and financial services. These tasks are increasing and becoming more complex, requiring specialised expertise and more resources.
- ESA enforces the general prohibition on State aid and decides how exceptions to this rule apply in Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway. In 2025, ESA adopted 15 State



ESA's College from left to right: Vice-President Árni Páll Árnason, President Arne Røksund, and Vice-President Nuscha Wieczorek.

aid decisions. The year was marked by a high number of formal investigations involving large and complex cases, as well as continued work on complaints and notifications. ESA maintained a focus on measures linked to the green transition and on cases with the greatest potential impact on competition.

- In the field of competition law, ESA continued its own investigations, as well as the close cooperation with the Commission and national competition authorities. ESA investigates possible infringements of EEA competition rules, including through its own initiative and complaints, and may conduct inspections or adopt decisions requiring commitments or imposing fines. Ongoing cases concern key sectors of the economy.

All the above-mentioned areas also involve litigation work. In 2025, ESA participated in a significant number of proceedings, including advisory opinion cases, infringement proceedings and actions before the EFTA Court and the Court of Justice of the European Union.

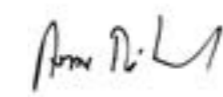
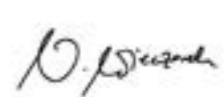
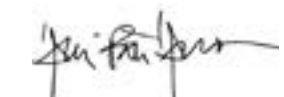
Engagement with stakeholders remains a priority, as reflected in the many meetings, events and outreach activities organised throughout the year, supporting

dialogue with those involved in the implementation and enforcement of EEA law.

The year 2025 marked the final year of the College's mandate, which began in January 2022, and a period of transition. Vice-President Stefan Barriga, who had served as a member of the College since October 2021, concluded his term, and the College expresses its appreciation for his valuable contribution over the past four years. Nuscha Wieczorek, nominated by Liechtenstein, joined the College for the new term starting 1 January 2026.

Over the past four years, we have had the privilege of leading ESA through a period of increasing responsibilities and change. The scale and quality of ESA's work continue to reflect the dedication and expertise of its staff. We would like to thank them for their commitment throughout the year, and also express our appreciation to all partners and stakeholders for their continued and constructive cooperation.

Together, we remain committed to ensuring the effective functioning of the EEA Agreement.




 Arne Røksund Nuscha Wieczorek Árni Páll Árnason
 President Vice-President Vice-President



The EFTA House.

This is ESA

The EFTA Surveillance Authority (ESA) monitors compliance with the rules of the European Economic Area (EEA) in the EEA EFTA States -Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway - enabling them to participate in the European Internal Market. The EEA was established by the Agreement on the European Economic Area in 1994 and brings these states together with the Member States of the European Union (EU) in a common market.

The purpose of the EEA Agreement is to guarantee the free movement of goods, persons, services, and capital in all EEA States. These are known as the four

freedoms. Because of the EEA Agreement, EU law on the four freedoms, State aid and competition rules for undertakings is incorporated into the domestic law of the EEA EFTA States. The rules therefore apply throughout the entire EEA and ensure a common market with common rules. This removes barriers to trade and opens new opportunities for over 450 million Europeans, creating jobs and growth and adding to the international competitiveness of the EEA States.

As well as ensuring equal rights for all citizens and undertakings to participate in the Internal Market, and equal conditions of competition, the EEA Agreement provides for cooperation across the EEA in important

areas such as research and development, education, social policy, the environment, consumer protection, tourism and culture. The success of the EEA Agreement depends on uniform implementation and application of common rules, providing for a system where the European Commission works with the EU Member States, while ESA works with the EEA EFTA States, to ensure compliance with EEA law.

THE ROLE OF ESA

ESA ensures that Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway respect their obligations under the EEA Agreement.

ESA operates independently of the EEA EFTA States and is based in Brussels. The role of ESA in ensuring compliance with EEA law is to protect the rights of individuals and undertakings, and to make sure that their rights are not violated by rules or practices of the EEA EFTA States or companies within those States.

ESA also enforces restrictions on State aid, assessing its compatibility with the functioning of the Internal Market, and can order repayment of unlawful state aid.

Likewise, ESA ensures that companies operating in the EEA EFTA States abide by EEA rules relating to competition. ESA can investigate possible infringements of EEA provisions, either by its own initiative or on the basis of complaints. It can impose fines on individual undertakings and assess mergers between undertakings where certain thresholds are met.

ESA can request a change in national rules or practices that are in breach of EEA law. If the EEA EFTA State concerned decides not to take appropriate action in response to ESA's request, ESA may initiate proceedings against that State before the EFTA Court. In monitoring and enforcing the EEA Agreement, ESA has powers that are similar to those of the European Commission, but they oversee the application of the same laws in different parts of the EEA. Due to their mirror-roles and the need to ensure uniform application of law, there is close contact and cooperation between the two institutions.

HOW ESA IS ORGANISED

ESA is led by a College of three members. Although appointed by the EEA EFTA States, the College members undertake their functions independently and free of political direction. The College in place during 2025 took office on 1 January 2022, and was led by President Arne

Røksund, nominated by Norway, while College members were Árni Páll Arnason, nominated by Iceland and Stefan Barriga, nominated by Liechtenstein, who joined ESA as a College member in October 2021. Under the leadership of the College, ESA employs experts in law, economics, veterinary science and other fields from all over Europe. In November 2025, it was announced that Nuscha Wiczorek would replace Stefan Barriga as of 1 January 2026.

In 2025, ESA was divided into the following departments:

- **Administration Department, led by Terje Hagen.**
- **Internal Market Directorate, led by Jónína S. Lárusdóttir.**
- **Competition and State Aid Directorate, led by Harald Evensen.**
- **Legal and Executive Affairs Department, led by Melpo-Menie Joséphidès.**

CORE VALUES

ESA's core values – Integrity, Openness and Competence – are key elements of our ongoing operations. ESA continued to ensure that they were embedded in all its internal and external activities in 2025.

Integrity: ESA operates in a fair, objective and independent manner. ESA's staff take ownership of their tasks and carry out these tasks in an environment of open discussion and high ethical standards.

Openness: ESA's communication and outreach activities are aimed at increasing knowledge about our work and tasks, as well as strengthening compliance with the EEA Agreement. ESA and its staff carry out their functions in a manner that is visible, approachable and transparent, while still showing due concern for information that needs to be protected.

Competence: ESA employs highly qualified staff, who have the skills and knowledge required for ESA to fulfil its role and to deal with tasks in an effective and efficient manner. ESA's staff develop their competence, and continuously improve their skills and knowledge, and aim for excellence. ESA is open to continuous improvement at the organisational and individual levels.

Human resources

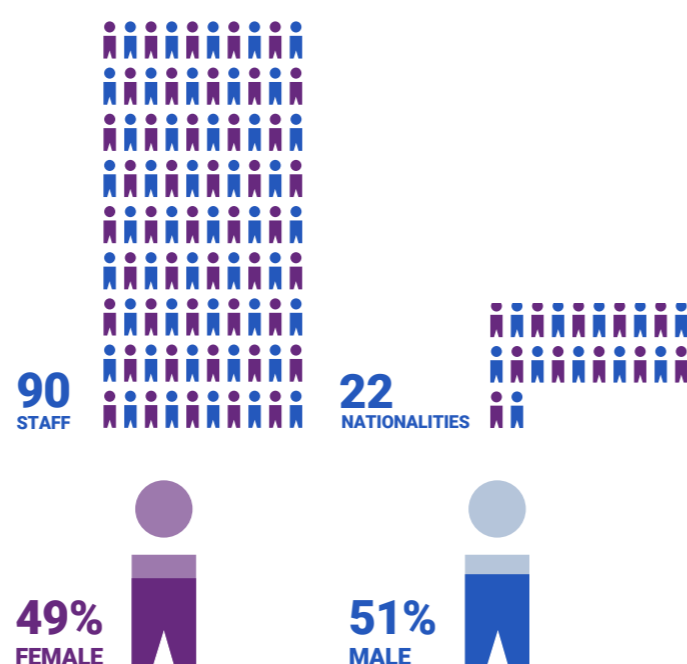
ESA employs highly competent and motivated multidisciplinary staff from across the EEA EFTA States and the EU Member States. We offer a collaborative and flexible working environment, with excellent opportunities for professional development.

At the end of 2025, ESA employed 90 staff members, representing 22 nationalities, of which 53 were EEA EFTA nationals. Of all the employees 51% were male and 49% female. For staff in management positions, there was an equal split between 50% female and 50% male.

The EEA EFTA States have established staff regulations providing for employment by ESA on a temporary or fixed-term basis, which means that opportunities arise frequently for qualified candidates.

Each year, ESA also engages several Junior Professionals from the EEA EFTA States for an 11-month programme. This is an opportunity to gain experience in an international setting and make a vital contribution to ESA's work.

STAFF AT ESA



MANAGERS AT ESA



Budget and financial performance

ESA in 2025 operated with a budget of approximately EUR 23 million and recorded a surplus of EUR 0.85 million, compared to a surplus of EUR 0.48 million in 2024. ESA's activities are primarily financed by contributions from the EEA EFTA States amounting to EUR 22.85 million, with Norway contributing 89%, Iceland 9% and Liechtenstein 2%.

The financial results for 2025 reflect continued efforts by the EEA EFTA States to strengthen ESA's operational

capacity in response to its expanding mandate. Total income for the year amounted to EUR 23 million, including limited financial and other income, while total expenditure reached EUR 22.2 million, resulting in a surplus.

Personnel and turnover costs represented approximately 79% of total expenditure. These costs increased compared to 2024, mainly due to indexation and investments in staffing to support ESA's activities. Actual personnel costs remained below budget,

largely due to recruitment timing and changes in staff composition during the year.

Expenditure on supplies and services remained stable compared to the previous year. Increased spending on IT security and digital tools was largely offset by reduced reliance on external consultants. Office accommodation costs and travel, training and outreach expenses increased compared to 2024, driven by activity levels and inflation. Financial income had a limited impact and was lower than in the previous year.

ESA's annual financial statements are prepared in accordance with the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) and following completion

of the audit, are submitted to the ESA-Court Committee (ECC) for approval. The ECC approved the 2024 financial statements on 5 December 2025.

The EFTA Board of Auditors (EBOA) acts as ESA's independent external auditor. EBOA is a permanent body composed of auditors from the supreme national audit institutions of the EEA EFTA States and is supported by external audit expertise as required. EBOA audits ESA's financial statements and reports its findings to the ECC, providing independent assurance on the reliability of ESA's financial reporting and the regularity of its financial management.

Amounts in thousand EUR	Actuals 2025	Budget 2025	Actuals 2024	Budget 2024
EEA EFTA States' contributions				
- Current year	22 851	22 851	21 144	21 144
- Multi-year contributions for IT investments*	-	-	22	20
Total EEA EFTA States' contributions	21 851	22 851	21 166	21 164
Financial income	30	-	198	-
Other income**	165	150	145	150
Total income	23 046	23 001	21 509	21 314
Salaries, benefits, allowances and turnover costs	17 596	18 120	16 545	16 681
Travel, training and representation expenses	852	955	774	953
Office accommodation expenses***	1 606	1 708	1 535	1 620
Supplies and services expenditure**	2 107	2 142	2 147	2 024
Financial expenses	33	37	28	36
Total expenditure	22 194	23 001	21 029	21 314
Net (deficit)/surplus for the year	852	-	480	-

Notes:

* Multi-year contributions for IT investments represented income from deferred contributions received in 2018 for new IT projects.

** Excludes income received from and expenditure made on behalf of the EFTA Secretariat and FMO

*** Includes EUR 318,000 (2024: EUR 305,000) interest from a financial lease regarding the office building which has been classified as office accommodation expenses to align with the budgeted expense category.

Monitoring the Internal Market

The Internal Market comprises the 27 European Union member states, plus Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway. It aims to be an area without internal frontiers or regulatory obstacles, and is founded on the principles of free movement of goods, persons, services and capital.

These principles – or four freedoms – are supplemented by policies and legislation in a number of other areas, including social security, labour law, food safety, transport, financial services, public procurement, environment and energy. The evolving nature of Internal-Market laws and policies helps ensure prosperity, growth, competition and trade. The Internal Market can also help drive efficiency, raise quality, and competition brings fairer prices to consumers.

ESA's role is to monitor that EEA legislation incorporated into the Agreement is properly implemented and applied in the national laws of Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, thereby helping to ensure that individuals and businesses can fully benefit from the Internal Market. Dialogue with the EEA EFTA States is at the core of ESA's efforts to secure compliance with EEA rules. In fact,

most cases of non-compliance are resolved through this cooperative exchange. While ESA has the authority to launch infringement proceedings to ensure the correct implementation and application of Internal-Market rules, only a very small proportion of cases – fewer than 2% – ultimately proceed to the EFTA Court.

At the start of 2025, ESA's Internal Market Affairs (IMA) Directorate had 138 open cases related to the late implementation of directives and regulations by the three EEA EFTA States. By year-end, this number had decreased to 124.

At the start of 2025, IMA had 199 open cases relating to complaints, conformity assessments, and incorrect implementation or application of EEA rules; 104 cases against Norway (52%), 64 against Iceland (32%), 30 against Liechtenstein (15%) and 1 conformity assessment applicable for all EEA EFTA States.

Although 73 cases were closed during the year, the total number of cases increased to 228 by year-end, driven in part by a two-fold rise in the number of complaints received compared to the previous year; 123 cases against Norway (54%), 71 against Iceland (31%),

33 against Liechtenstein (14%) and one conformity assessment applicable for all EEA EFTA States. Of the 228 cases still open at the end of 2025, 36 had progressed to the infringement stage, meaning that legal proceedings had been initiated. Of those 11 related to Norway (30.6%), 22 concerned Iceland (61.1%) and 3 (8.3%) were for Liechtenstein.

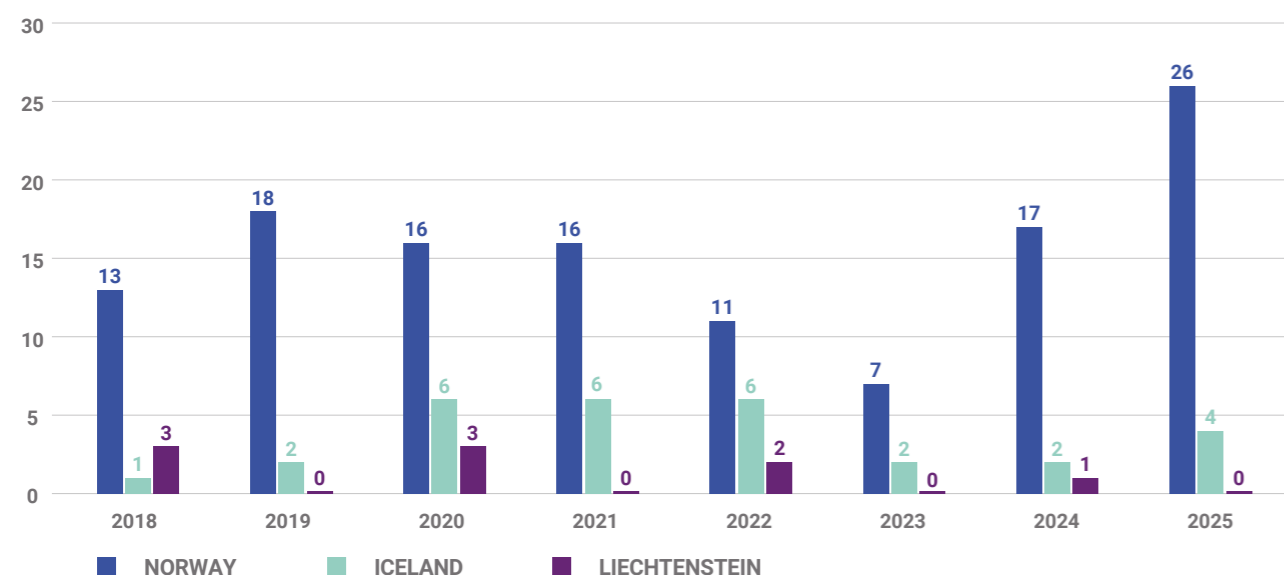
IMA closed the year with 28 ongoing audit and inspection cases, as well as 83 other cases arising from tasks assigned to ESA under the EEA Agreement, including monitoring reports and binding decisions addressed to national authorities. During the year, 102 new cases were opened, including complaints, conformity assessments, and cases concerning the incorrect implementation or application of Internal Market rules. Of these, 66 were complaint cases spanning various sectors, with nearly half relating to the free movement of persons and social security. Seven new conformity assessment cases were initiated, six of which concerned telecommunications services and audiovisual services. An additional 29 cases involved the incorrect implementation or application of Internal Market rules in

areas such as environment, transport, financial services, social security, and telecommunications services.

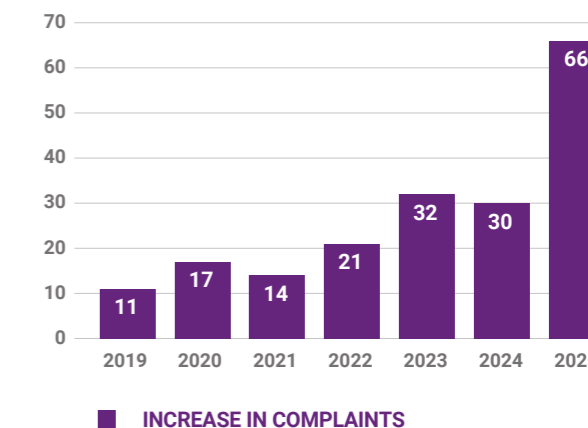
Of the 73 complaints, incorrect implementation or application and conformity assessment cases closed during the year, thirteen were concluded following the initiation of infringement proceedings.

An increasingly important aspect of the work of the IMA Directorate is engagement and cooperation with the EU's agencies and supervisory bodies. In total, 64 meetings were held with agencies or other bodies in 2025, most of which were in the financial services and energy sectors.

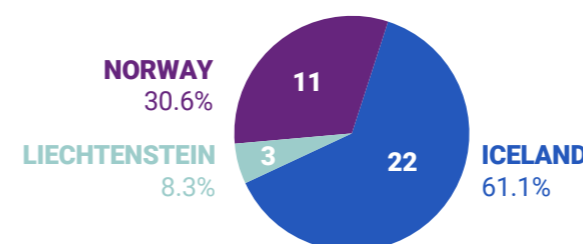
DRAFT TECHNICAL REGULATIONS RECEIVED PER YEAR



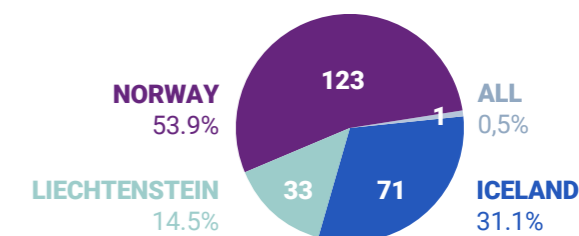
INTERNAL MARKET COMPLAINTS



COMPLAINTS, CONFORMITY ASSESSMENTS AND INCORRECT IMPLEMENTATION / APPLICATION CASES AT INFRINGEMENT STAGE (36)



ALL OPEN COMPLAINTS, CONFORMITY ASSESSMENTS AND INCORRECT IMPLEMENTATION / APPLICATION CASES (228)





A panel discussion during the ESA Day conference held in Oslo in October 2025 on the sidelines of the annual Package Meeting with Norway.

Protecting rights of people and business

IMAGEN is the unit in ESA's Internal Market Affairs (IMA) Directorate that deals with cases concerning the 'four freedoms' and related issues pertaining to the Internal Market. The unit's main purpose is to investigate if EEA rules have been infringed in one way or other within the Internal Market.

ESA has a range of tools that it deploys in its work to monitor the EEA Agreement, delivering on its mandate to ensure that EEA EFTA States – Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway – fulfil their obligations.

An important aspect of ESA's infringement work is launching an investigation following notifications that the laws or the administrative practices in an EEA EFTA State may not be in line with EEA rules. Such notifications, so-called infringement complaints arguing alleged wrongful implementation or application of EEA rules, are

submitted to ESA by people and businesses. In 2025, ESA received 57 infringement complaints in the areas falling within the responsibility of IMAGEN (out of the 66 complaints received on the application of Internal Market rules). These covered issues including social security coordination, free movement of persons, recognition of professional qualifications and exit taxation. This number of infringement complaints constitutes a sharp increase in comparison with previous years.

Monitoring the application of EEA rules in the three EEA EFTA States also includes so-called conformity assessments. ESA uses this tool to explore how EEA legal acts have been implemented into national rules, conducting a systematic comparison of the EEA rules and their implementing measures into the national legal orders.

Similarly, ESA dealt with an increased number of

notifications of draft technical regulations under the Single Market Transparency Directive ([Directive \(EU\) 2015/1535](#)). The Directive aims to prevent the creation of new trade barriers and requires that national authorities of the EEA States inform the European Commission and ESA of any draft technical regulations on products and information society services before they are adopted in national law. ESA issued comments regarding several of those notifications.

In 2025, several infringement procedures for breaches of the Internal Market rules were pursued. In April, ESA sent a letter of formal notice to Iceland for applying the wrong customs tariff classification for cheese with added plant oil, restricting the free movement of goods.

The case was initiated after the receipt of a complaint on the customs tariff classification of cheese with added plant oil, including a product known as 'pizza mix'. According to the complaint, Iceland had placed cheese with added plant oil in the wrong tariff category. Consequently, custom duties of 30% plus a fixed rate of ISK 795 per kg were charged upon the import of the products to Iceland. By contrast, if they were classified in the correct category, no customs duties would apply as the products would fall under Protocol 3 of the EEA Agreement.

In 2020, the Icelandic customs authorities decided to review the practice of classifying pizza-cheese mix products. The outcome of the review was that such products belonged to Chapter 4 of the Harmonised System, the global system used to classify traded products. Chapter 4 covers dairy products and falls outside the scope of the EEA Agreement and carries custom duties. The classification had since been confirmed by the Icelandic courts.

In its letter, ESA concluded that by classifying cheese with added plant oil, that comes under the product scope of the EEA Agreement, under the wrong customs tariff category and by subjecting those products to customs duties, Iceland had failed to fulfil its obligations under the EEA Agreement.

Also in April, ESA sent a letter of formal notice to Liechtenstein concerning the country's restrictions on European lawyers from assuming a legal aid mandate in

the country.

According to national legislation, a lawyer who obtained his qualification in another EEA State was not authorised to be appointed as a legal aid lawyer, legal aid defence counsel or public defender in the country.

In 2022, the Administrative Court of the Principality of Liechtenstein requested the EFTA Court to provide an advisory opinion on whether the national rule was in breach of EEA law, namely the EU Lawyer's Directive (98/5/EC). In October 2023, the EFTA Court held that prohibiting European lawyers from assuming a legal aid mandate was incompatible with EEA law and went beyond the relevant exceptions in the Directive.

In November 2023, ESA opened an own-initiative case on the matter. As more than a year had passed since the judgment of the EFTA Court and the legislative amendments remained outstanding, ESA decided to open an infringement procedure.

In ESA's view, Liechtenstein had failed to fulfil its obligations under EEA rules by maintaining these restrictions.

In October, ESA commenced infringement proceedings against Norway, requesting full implementation of the revised Posting of Workers Directive.

To protect workers' rights and ensure fair competition across the EEA, the EU in 1996 introduced the Posting of Workers Directive. The Directive requires that key employment conditions such as pay, annual leave and working hours follow the rules of the host State. The Directive was updated in 2018 to include new provisions on long-term postings, travel and accommodation expenses, and enforcement.

The revised rules entered into force in the EEA EFTA States in January 2023, and Norway confirmed full implementation shortly thereafter. However, having assessed information provided by the Norwegian authorities, ESA concluded that the State had not sufficiently implemented the revised Directive into its national legal framework. In ESA's view, Norway therefore had failed to meet its obligations under the Directive and the EEA Agreement.

Similarly, ESA initiated conformity assessments for the implementation of the Directive in the other two EEA



Harbour of Stavanger

Ensuring safe, secure and sustainable transport

The safe, secure, and sustainable transport of goods, services and people is fundamental for a functional and competitive Internal Market. The EEA Agreement covers all modes of transport, and ESA is charged with monitoring that EEA legislation covering aviation, maritime, rail and road transport are correctly implemented in Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway.

Accessible and secure connectivity is a priority for the EU and the EEA EFTA States. ESA also ensures that national rules in Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway related to electronic communications, cybersecurity, connectivity, as well as the information society, postal and audiovisual

services comply with EEA legislation.

In 2025, ESA issued two letters of formal notice and one reasoned opinion in the area of transport, all against Norway. The first letter of formal notice concerned the announced temporary [direct award of a passenger rail services contract for southern Norway from 2027](#); the second concerned Norway's failure to deploy [data-link services for airspace operators](#), as ESA took further steps to ensure compliance with the ruling of the EFTA Court (Case [E-15/22](#)). ESA issued the reasoned opinion to Norway concerning continued [failure to implement EEA rules on port security](#).

In the area of connectivity, ESA referred five non-implementation cases to the EFTA Court. [Iceland failed to implement the Web Accessibility Directive](#), which aims to reduce online barriers, especially for persons with disabilities. Norway failed to implement the [NIS 1 Directive](#) and its [implementing act](#), which aim at boosting cybersecurity of network and information systems. Finally, both [Iceland](#) and [Norway](#) failed to implement the Cybersecurity Act which aims to strengthen cybersecurity resilience and capabilities in the EEA.

RAILWAY SERVICES

ESA continued to investigate Norway's application of EEA rules concerning public service contracts for railway services. In addition to [the conclusion drawn regarding the railway lines in southern Norway](#), in October ESA [issued a preliminary conclusion](#) about Norway's failure to properly assess the market before the direct award of a public service contract in 2023 for railway services in Oslo and the surrounding regions.

MARITIME TRANSPORT

In 2025, ESA opened a case concerning legislation in Norway that mandates Norwegian minimum wages to all seafarers on board ships sailing in Norwegian waters, the Norwegian exclusive economic zone and the Norwegian continental shelf. ESA had already raised concerns in 2024, during the legislative process, about the proposal's incompatibility with EEA law, and in November ESA [issued a preliminary conclusion](#) that the Norwegian legislation limits the freedom to provide maritime transport services across the EEA.

AVIATION AND MARITIME SECURITY

ESA ensures compliance with aviation and maritime security rules by conducting on-site inspections in the EEA EFTA States. ESA also participates regularly in similar inspections conducted by the Commission in EU Member States. In 2025, ESA carried out one maritime security inspection in Norway, and two aviation security inspections (one in Norway and one in Iceland).

Joining forces with the Norwegian Coastal Administration (Kystverket), ESA in April organised a conference on security and resilience in European

ports. Fostering a collaborative dialogue between representatives of national governments, the Commission, the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA), industry leaders and security experts, the event provided insights into current threats and challenges to maritime and port security and the role of public-private partnerships to address those concerns.

AUDIOVISUAL SERVICES

The EEA EFTA States may adopt measures to ensure that broadcasters under their jurisdiction do not transmit key societal events exclusively in a way that prevents a substantial proportion of the public from following them on free television. In 2025, Norway notified ESA of its intention to add four sports events to its list of events considered to be of major importance to Norwegian society. ESA concluded in November that the measure was compatible with EEA law.

COOPERATION WITH EU AGENCIES AND BODIES

ESA works closely with the EU transport agencies: the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), EMSA, and the European Union Agency for Railways (ERA). These agencies provide ESA with the necessary expert advice, either periodically in accordance with their work programmes, on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the EEA legal framework or following a specific ESA request. In the maritime transport sector, EMSA assists ESA with security inspections and conducts visits to verify the implementation of EEA legislation concerning maritime safety.

In April, ESA's Internal Market Affairs Director met the Executive Director and the management team of EASA in Cologne to exchange on common priorities and further strengthen the good collaboration.

In the field of electronic communications, ESA cooperates with the Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications (BEREC) and participates in the work of the European Regulators Group for Postal Services (ERGP) and the European Board of Media Services (EBMS).

ESA participates as an observer to the management board of the transport agencies and BEREC.



Food and feed safety, animal health and welfare

ESA monitors the implementation in Iceland and Norway of EEA legislation related to food and feed safety, and animal health and welfare. Legislation in this area is dynamic and often marked by rapid implementation due to the need to ensure an effective and immediate impact.

In 2025, ESA adopted a new [multiannual programme of controls for the period 2026-2030](#), outlining certain priority areas in the food and veterinary area for that period.

AUDITS

A key part of ESA's work in the food and veterinary area is to conduct audits. Through these, ESA verifies

the implementation of official controls and related enforcement activities in Iceland and Norway. ESA does not monitor Liechtenstein in these areas due to sectoral adaptations following the extension of the Agreement on trade in agricultural products between the EU and Switzerland to Liechtenstein. Audits comprise both documentary reviews and assessments of implementation. Documentary reviews cover, amongst others, control plans, risk-based planning systems, and control procedures, while implementation is assessed through the review of controls in practice and on-site verification.

Following an [audit to Norway on animal welfare for laying hens](#) in November 2022, ESA concluded that

laying hens in Norway had been kept in conditions below minimum animal welfare standards for a substantial period of time. Given the severe shortcomings, ESA conducted a [follow-up audit in 2025](#) to assess the implementation of corrective measures, and found that Norway had improved its control of animal welfare for laying hens. However, further actions are required to meet EEA animal welfare requirements for broiler chickens.

ESA also carried out a follow-up audit to Iceland to assess the effectiveness of measures taken to address open recommendations from an audit in 2021 on [the protection of animals at the time of killing](#). One of five recommendations remains open, awaiting full implementation of an animal welfare risk model and online registration system allowing the official controls in slaughterhouses to be carried out on a risk base. In an audit series on official controls on feed hygiene, ESA found weaknesses in the control systems in both [Iceland](#) and [Norway](#). The systems in place do not cover controls in establishments supplying feed as a by-product of food production. As a result, no official controls are carried out in such establishments, including bakeries and breweries, allowing non-compliance to go undetected. In addition, the effectiveness of Norway's official controls in approved feed establishments were weakened because many non-compliance go undetected by the competent authority.

In 2025 ESA also audited [Iceland's](#) and [Norway's](#) official controls of primary producers of cut fruits, leafy greens and sprouts. The control systems in the two countries ensure that approved establishments are subject to regular official controls. The audits nevertheless found certain weaknesses and issued recommendations that the national authorities must address to rectify the identified shortcomings and enhance the control system.

DESK-BASED CONTROLS

Desk-based analyses are controls based on documentary reviews only. Certain desk-based analyses are specifically required by EEA legislation. ESA also uses desk-based analyses to assess the current situation in certain areas. ESA continuously monitors that the EEA EFTA States

implemented satisfactory corrective actions to address ESA's findings and updates annually an [overview of the status of recommendations from audits](#). The update published in 2025 included the recommendations issued following audits carried out between 2018 and 2022. For [Iceland](#), 28 out of 98 recommendations remain open. The review allowed ESA to close two audits: National audit system (2018) and Import control of products of non-animal origin (2022). For [Norway](#), ESA concluded that 48 out of 54 recommendations had been addressed and closed four audits. These were: Animal welfare during transport and related operations (2018), Production of ready-to-eat food (2020), Plant protection products, pesticide residues and the sustainable use of pesticides (2021) and poultry meat and poultry meat products (2022).

ESA found that [residue control plans](#) for 2025 were satisfactory in both Iceland and Norway. The States had addressed shortcomings identified by ESA in the 2024 plans. ESA also found that control plans on contaminants for food placed on the Internal Market and for food of animal origin entering the EEA, met the requirements for the minimum number of samples and relevant commodities.

ESA verifies that minimum requirements are met for new border control posts or inspection centres, or changes thereto, in Iceland and Norway. In 2025, ESA concluded on three such notifications.

DISEASE ERADICATION

In 2025, ESA amended its [Decision No 203/21/COL](#) to reflect which rivers in Norway remain under the approved eradication programme to combat the salmon parasite *Gyrodactylus salaris*.

EMERGENCY MEASURES

ESA adopted in 2025 one emergency decision concerning an outbreak of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) in Norway. [Decision No 150/25/COL](#) was adopted on 11 September 2025 in relation to an outbreak of HPAI in a poultry farm keeping approximately 7 500 laying hens in Hadsel in Nordland County.



Finance, energy and the environment

During 2025, ESA continued its compliance work related to climate change, energy, the environment, public procurement and financial services. This work was conducted by the Environment, Energy, Financial Services and Public Procurement (ENFIP) unit, using a wide range of enforcement tools.

Among the unit's tools are traditional implementation checks, but also reports on specific issues, decisions and non-binding opinions. These reflect ESA's expanding tasks and the EEA's evolving legal landscape.

For example, last year ESA adopted its first report assessing the EEA EFTA States' river basin management plans. In the field of carbon capture and storage, ESA issued its second non-binding opinion on a draft CO₂ storage permit. A total of 13 decisions were taken to strengthen Norway's integration into the EU's energy market. ESA also issued a decision on Norway's temporary derogation for the domestic gas market. Crucial to carrying out these tasks were strengthened cooperation with the EU and the EEA EFTA institutions, but also proactive engagement with relevant stakeholders, including non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and business associations. In October, ESA,

together with EURNOR (the European Dimension of Norwegian Law project) and the Faculty of Law at the University in Oslo hosted the annual ESA Day in Oslo. The event focused on the growing influence of EEA law in the areas of energy, environment and climate law.

CLIMATE CHANGE

ESA is responsible for monitoring attainment towards emission-reduction targets as part of a Europe-wide effort to significantly cut greenhouse gas emissions by 2030. In November, ESA issued its fifth [Climate Progress Report](#), taking stock of Iceland's and Norway's progress in reducing greenhouse gas emissions in line with their obligations under relevant EEA law.

The EEA EFTA States participate in the European Emissions Trading System (ETS) ([Directive 2003/87/EC](#)), an EEA-wide carbon market designed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in a cost-effective manner. The ETS Directive allows free allocation of some emission allowances. ESA in 2025 started its assessment of the calculation of free allocations to stationary installations, by the EEA EFTA States, for the 2026-2030 period. The assessment continues in 2026, in close cooperation with the European Commission.

ENVIRONMENT

ESA followed up on the implementation of EEA environmental rules, in cooperation with the European Commission and the European Environment Agency.

In April, ESA published its first independent report on the implementation of the Water Framework Directive. In its report, ESA assessed the river basin management plans (RBMPs) of the EEA EFTA States, providing recommendations for future improvement for the management and protection of the aquatic environment. The report feeds into the update of the RBMPs due by 2027. Following the publication, ESA has initiated structured dialogues with the states, with the aim of identifying appropriate follow-up action to address the recommendations.

In March, ESA set out its [preliminary view](#) in a case against Liechtenstein concerning access to justice in the field of the environment. ESA maintains that those affected, including NGOs that pursue the protection of the environment, should have access to national review procedures to be able to assess the substantive and procedural legality of decisions, acts, and omissions related to plans and programmes covered by the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive. ESA also received a complaint raising similar issues against Iceland. Work on these cases, that concern the enforceability of the EEA environmental rules, will continue in 2026.

During the course of the year, ESA opened an own-initiative case to investigate the collection and treatment of wastewater in Norway, following reports of potential non-compliance with the 1991 Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive. This investigation will continue to be a priority going forward.

CARBON CAPTURE AND STORAGE

ESA monitors the implementation of the Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) Directive and may issue non-binding opinions on draft storage permits to ensure consistency in the implementation of the CCS Directive requirements across the European Economic Area. In April, ESA issued an [opinion on the draft permit](#) from the Norwegian Environment Agency to Northern Lights for the injection and geological storage of CO₂.

The Northern Lights project is one of Europe's first full-scale CCS projects and forms part of Norway's efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It concerns the storage of up to 37.5 million tonnes (Mt) of CO₂ over 25 years, with an annual limit of 1.5 Mt.

ENERGY

ESA adopted 13 decisions related to the energy market for Norway in 2025, including on electricity network codes related to balancing, system operation, intraday and day-ahead trading, and forward markets. These were adopted in cooperation with the European Union Agency for the Cooperation of Energy Regulators (ACER). ESA's decisions set methodologies for the determination of technical requirements by market participants. The complete list of ESA's decisions can be found [here](#).

In accordance with the two-pillar structure of the EEA Agreement, ESA's decisions are based on a draft from ACER and subject to consultation with the Norwegian Energy Regulatory Authority (RME). Once ESA takes a decision, this is being addressed to RME, which will then approve and ensure implementation in Norway.

In addition, ESA in March issued a decision on Norway's temporary derogation for the domestic gas market, following the notification by RME of the continuation of this derogation.

ESA in 2025 also initiated an assessment of the Norwegian scheme for electricity price ('Norgespris') and supplier of last resort, following receipt of a complaint against the scheme.

PUBLIC PROCUREMENT

In April, ESA [closed](#) a complaint case regarding the two-track review system in Norway. Breaches of the procurement rules can be brought either before the national courts or before the Norwegian Complaints Board for Public Procurement. Depending on which track applicants choose, certain remedies might be unavailable to them. ESA concluded that all remedies required by the Remedies Directive were available in at least one of the two tracks, and that the interaction between the two tracks does not render obtaining remedies excessively difficult.

FINANCIAL SERVICES

ESA continued its dialogue with Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway on the timely transposition of the EEA acquis. This was complemented by ongoing follow-up on conformity assessments in the banking, payments and capital markets sectors, ensuring that national legislation remains aligned with EEA requirements. In parallel, ESA advanced internal initiatives, including the development of AI tools, to enhance efficiency in its enforcement activities.

In June, ESA [decided](#) not to propose a rejection of Norway's proposal to increase the risk-weight floor for residential real estate exposures under Article 458 of the Capital Requirements Regulation. ESA's involvement ensures that national measures to safeguard financial stability remain within legal limits and do not harm the Internal Market.

Following ESA's referral in July 2024, the EFTA Court delivered a judgment on 30 September 2025 in [Case E-24/24](#), upholding ESA's position on ownership restrictions. The Court confirmed that Norway's rules and practice on acquiring qualifying holdings in the financial sector were inconsistent with EEA law, which fully harmonises the assessment criteria and the procedural rules for such holdings.

EEA COOPERATION

ESA continued its close cooperation with the three European supervisory authorities – the European Banking Authority (EBA), the European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA), and the European Insurance and Occupational Pensions Authority (EIOPA) – at both the board and technical levels.

Engagement in supervisory workstreams deepened following the incorporation of several key acts in digital and green finance into the EEA Agreement, including the Markets in Crypto-Assets Regulation (MiCAR), the Digital Operational Resilience Act (DORA) and European Green Bonds Regulation (EUGBR). This involved participation in EBA's Standing Committee on Crypto-Asset Service Providers (CASC) and the DORA Oversight Forum. To support effective cooperation, ESA continued its work with the agencies to update the multilateral memorandum of understanding (MMoU) to reflect evolving supervisory responsibilities.

ESA further engaged in regular exchanges with the European Commission, EEA EFTA States and national competent authorities to support consistent implementation and supervisory coordination. Furthermore, ESA initiated structured engagement with the European Central Bank to clarify cooperation arrangements regarding ESA's supervisory tasks under MiCAR.



The Hunderfossen Dam near Lillehammer in Norway.



Waste collection bins in Iceland.

State aid the year in review

In the field of State aid, 2025 was marked by a high number of formal investigations involving large and complex cases, continuing the trend from 2024, which saw a record number of formal investigations being opened. ESA was also able to move forward on several complaint cases and dealt with numerous notifications of aid measures from Iceland and Norway.

The total number of State-aid decisions adopted in 2025 was 15, compared to 21 in 2024, and 16 in 2023. ESA continued to prioritise measures related to the green transition and had an active dialogue with the states on the prioritisation of other cases. Another key selection criteria when prioritising complaints is when measures have the potential to distort competition on important markets or foreclose markets.

FORMAL INVESTIGATIONS

In 2025, ESA had 10 active formal State-aid

investigations, of which six were initiated in 2024. A formal investigation has to be launched if, after a preliminary examination, ESA is unable to without doubt, conclude that a potential State aid measure is in line with the EEA Agreement. A decision to open a formal investigation sets out ESA's preliminary views. During an investigation, ESA invites interested parties to comment on its preliminary view. The relevant state then has the opportunity to respond to comments from interested parties.

Formal State-aid investigations can look into a range of important sectors such as the [universal postal services](#) and [public rail passenger transport](#), but also [bus transport services](#) and [railway infrastructure](#).

ESA in 2025 closed two formal State aid investigations. One concerned Lørenskog municipality's failure to enforce a purchase price claim arising from the sale of public land to a property developer. ESA concluded that the municipality's failure to collect the full

price constituted unlawful State aid to the developer and ordered Norway to recover the outstanding amount. The developer has since [appealed](#) ESA's decision to the EFTA Court.

[The second formal investigation](#) closed in 2025 concerned Norway's proposed exemption from the excise duty on waste incineration for activities covered by the European Emissions Trading System. ESA found the exemption to be a part of normal taxation of emissions from waste incineration and therefore not to constitute State aid.

WASTE MANAGEMENT

In 2025, ESA closed an investigation concerning to existing aid to [Sorpa](#), a waste-management company owned by a group of Icelandic municipalities. Based on legal remedies suggested by the Icelandic authorities, ESA proposed several measures, including that Sorpa's economic activities be transferred to a limited liability company subject to income tax. This would help ensure a level playing field in the waste-management sector and ensure compliance with EEA law.

CLEAN INDUSTRIAL DEAL STATE AID FRAMEWORK

Energy, climate and environmental protection remain an

important part and a key priority of ESA's State aid work. ESA has relied on the [Guidelines on State aid for climate, environmental protection and energy](#) ('CEEAG') and the European Commission's [Temporary Crisis and Transition Framework](#) (TCTF) in its assessment of related State aid measures.

In June, building on the TCTF and complementing existing State aid rules, the Commission adopted the [Clean Industrial Deal State Aid Framework](#) (CISAF). ESA followed suit and [adopted](#) CISAF in July 2025. That framework is intended to support the [Clean Industrial Deal](#). CISAF sets out how the 30 EEA States can design State aid measures to support the development of clean energy, industrial decarbonisation and clean technologies, while facilitating fair competition. It replaces the TCTF and simplifies the assessment of certain measures that also fall within the scope of CEEAG. CISAF will remain in force until 31 December 2030.

ESA'S WORK CONCERNING FLOATING OFFSHORE WIND

Floating offshore wind (FOW) deployment is a priority for the Norwegian authorities, forming an important part of its efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. In 2025, ESA approved two aid schemes supporting investments

in FOW projects in Norway. In April, ESA [approved](#) a NOK 35 billion scheme aimed at developing a FOW farm in Utsira Nord, off the coast of Rogaland County in the North Sea. The aid will take the form of a direct grant awarded following a two-step tender procedure. In the first step, the Ministry of Energy will announce a qualitative competition for the award of project areas. The second step consists of a State aid auction set to take place in 2028 to 2029. Aid will be granted to the bidder willing to realise the project with the lowest amount of State aid per megawatt (aid/MW). The scheme was approved in accordance with CEEAG.

In November, ESA [approved](#) a scheme with a budget of up to NOK 10 billion to speed up the development of affordable renewable electricity from FOW farms by support to small-scale projects. Aid under the scheme will be granted as direct grants, the amount of which will be determined following several competitive bidding rounds. The scheme was the first to be approved by ESA in accordance with the CISAF and will be in force until 31 December 2030.

MONITORING

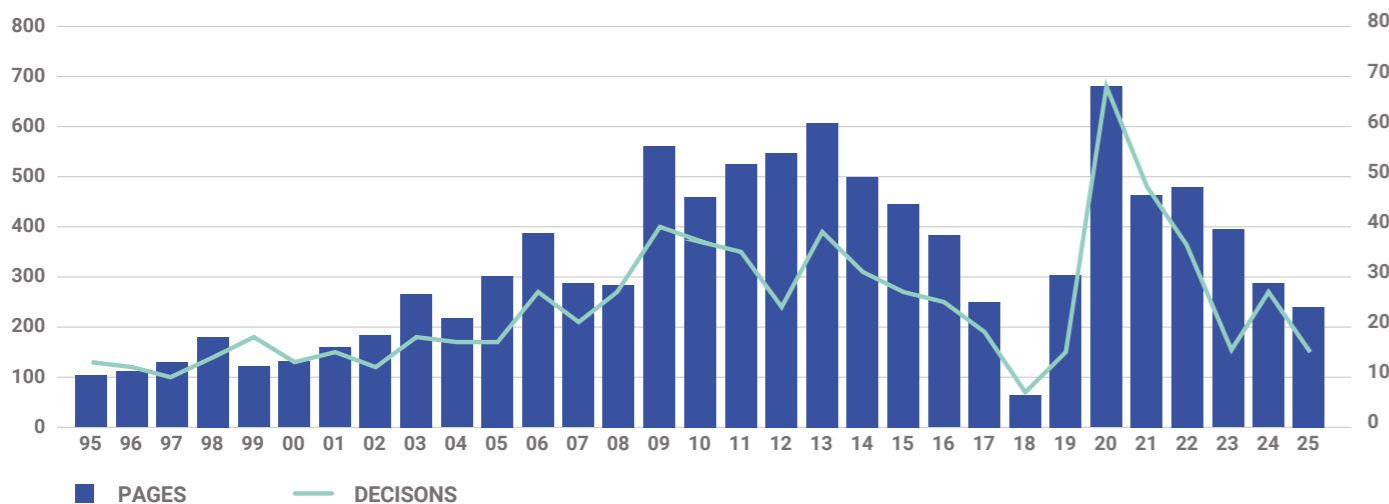
Monitoring is an *ex post* State aid control that aims to correct irregularities in State aid measures. It helps to

improve compliance with State aid rules both directly and indirectly through its deterrent effect. Monitoring is an important part of the State aid decentralisation process and, as such, is a cornerstone of the current State aid control system. In recent years, the scope of the General Block Exemption Regulation, which empowers the states to grant aid without ESA's prior approval, has been expanded, which has increased the importance of the monitoring work.

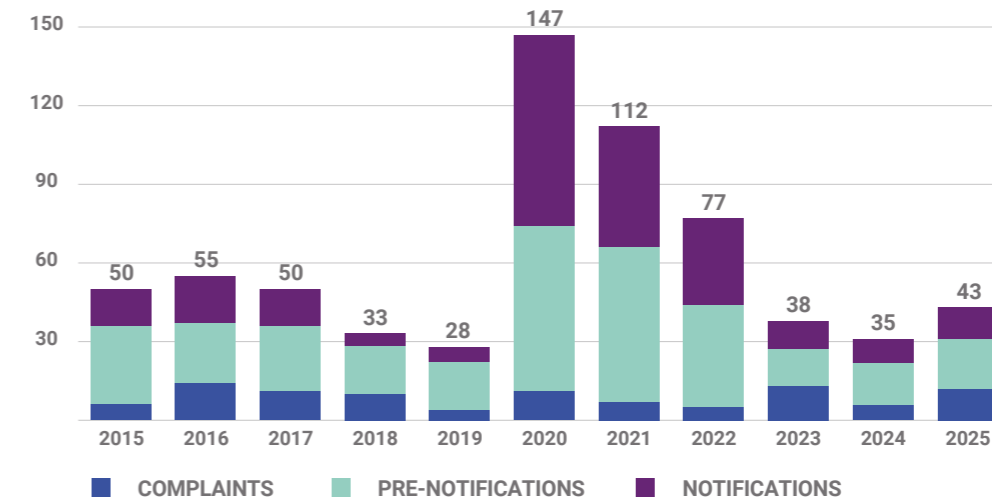
ESA's monitoring team follows an annual cycle that starts in the fall and finishes in spring or early summer. For each cycle, ESA selects a number of schemes to assess based on certain selection criteria. ESA requests information and documentation to assess the implementation by the EEA EFTA States of the applicable State aid rules. If irregularities are detected, a follow-up phase might be initiated during which the national granting authorities need to amend the scheme to correct the irregularities and recover unlawful aid in some cases.

ESA's monitoring approach includes the prioritisation of certain aspects of the monitoring assessment and the implementation of general recommendations to the national granting authorities. This approach enables ESA to focus on specific parts of schemes as appropriate and make the best use of its resources.

STATE AID OUTPUT 1995-2025



(PRE-) NOTIFICATIONS AND COMPLAINTS RECEIVED 2015-2025



EEA Competition law in 2025

ESA ensures that undertakings operating in Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway comply with EEA competition rules. These rules mirror those in the European Union and aim to safeguard genuine, undistorted and effective competition, guaranteeing the best market outcomes for consumers in terms of prices, choice, quality and innovation.

ESA has equivalent powers to those of the European Commission's Directorate-General for Competition. It investigates possible infringements of the EEA competition rules either on its own initiative or in response to complaints. ESA has wide fact-finding powers, including unannounced inspections, and can impose fines of up to 10% of global turnover on companies that breach competition rules. Alternatively, ESA can conclude antitrust investigations by means of a decision rendering binding commitments offered by the undertakings or State concerned to remove ESA's competition concerns.

NSL INTERCONNECTOR INVESTIGATION

In March 2024, ESA sent a letter of preliminary objections to Norway regarding the granting of an exclusive right by the Norwegian Energy Regulatory Authority to Nord Pool, the incumbent power exchange in Norway. The exclusive right related to the organisation of the day-ahead electricity auction including the capacity of the North Sea Link interconnector, which connects the Norwegian and UK electricity markets.

ESA's letter took the preliminary view that such an exclusive right had the effect of maintaining or strengthening Nord Pool's dominant position in the Norwegian market for electricity trading facilitation services to the detriment of new entrants, amounting to an infringement of Article 59(1), read in conjunction with Article 54 EEA. According to Article 59(1), EEA States must respect the EEA competition rules when granting undertakings exclusive rights. Norway offered a set of

commitments to address ESA's preliminary concerns, including a removal of the exclusive right by May 2026. On 17 December 2025, ESA adopted a decision accepting the commitments as appropriate and proportionate and concluding that there were therefore no longer grounds for further action.

ELKJØP INVESTIGATION

In June, ESA adopted a preliminary assessment setting out its concerns that Elkjøp, the leading retailer of electronic goods in Norway, may have abused its dominant position in one or more markets for the retail sale of electronic goods in Norway, by arrangements with its suppliers to limit supplies to specific competitors. While disagreeing with ESA's preliminary findings, Elkjøp nevertheless offered a set of commitments in September 2025 to address ESA's preliminary concerns. On 17 September 2025, ESA launched a market test of the proposed commitments requesting the views of interested third parties on these commitments.

1. THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION ANTITRUST/CARTEL DECISIONS

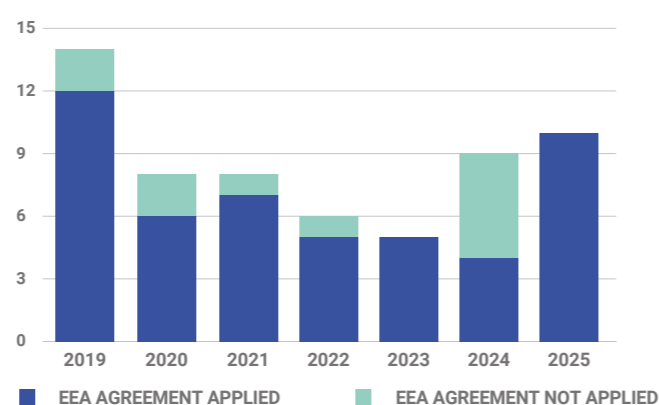


Figure 1 shows that the Commission has applied the EEA Agreement in many antitrust cases in recent years. In such cooperation cases, ESA has the opportunity to be heard.

LANDSVIRKJUN INVESTIGATION

ESA in April initiated formal antitrust proceedings against Landsvirkjun, the incumbent electricity generator in Iceland. This means that ESA will proceed with an in-depth investigation into whether the company has infringed the EEA competition rules by allegedly refusing to supply electricity to undertakings seeking to produce hydrogen or e-fuel in Iceland. This procedural step does not signify that ESA has made a finding of infringement, nor does it prejudice in any way the outcome of the investigation.

EUROPEAN COMPETITION COOPERATION

ESA shares jurisdiction with the Commission. Competition rules in the EEA are subject to a "one-stop-shop" principle: either the Commission or ESA is competent to handle any given case. Due to the jurisdictional rules, the Commission is generally the competent authority for assessing mergers under the EEA Agreement. However, ESA and the EEA EFTA States remain informed and involved, by virtue of the EEA cooperation rules.

In addition, national competition authorities (NCAs) and national courts in the EEA EFTA States apply Articles

53 and 54 EEA, together with their national competition rules, in cases where there is an effect on EEA trade.

There is a system of close cooperation in place between these various enforcers to ensure a uniform application of the EEA competition rules. The European Competition Network, which includes the Commission, ESA and the NCAs, ensures continuous dialogue between enforcers on the application of competition policy in the EEA. In 2025, ESA hosted five expert meetings at EFTA House in Brussels.

In addition, ESA regularly discusses competition policy and cases with the Norwegian and Icelandic NCAs and the Liechtenstein Bureau of Competition.

ESA AND THE ECOM SECTOR

National telecom regulators in the EEA EFTA States are required to notify certain draft measures to ESA prior to their adoption. ESA assesses whether these measures comply with the regulatory framework for electronic communication (eCom) and EEA competition law principles. ESA may comment on notified draft measures and has certain veto rights.

2. THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION MERGER INTERVENTIONS

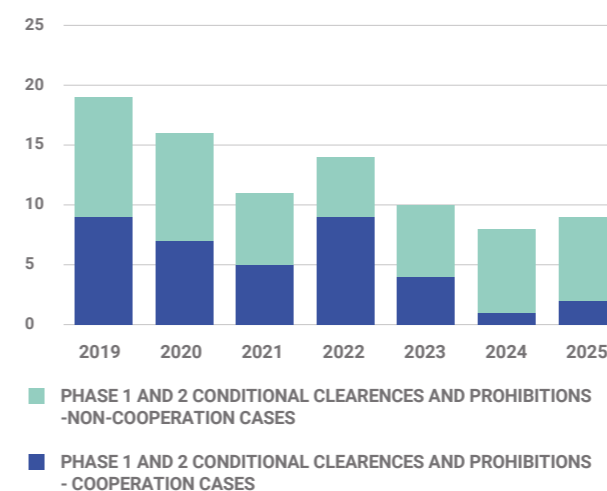


Figure 2 shows the number of mergers that were conditionally cleared or prohibited by the Commission since 2019. It shows that a sizeable share of those mergers were cooperation cases.

3. ECOM CASES 2019 - 2025

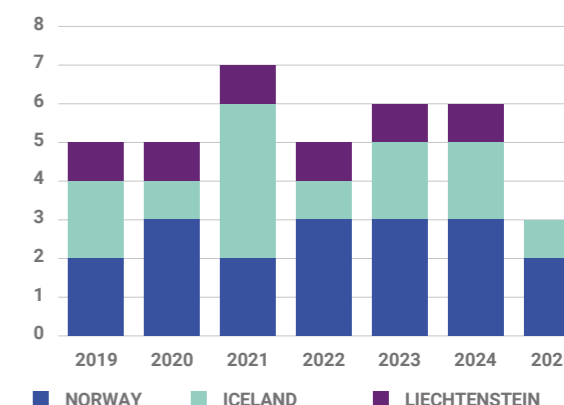


Figure 3 gives an overview of the number of eCom notifications since 2019.

Legal and Executive Affairs in 2025

The Legal and Executive Affairs Department (LEA) is ESA's legal service, providing legal advice and representing ESA in court. LEA supports the College in reviewing, coordinating and communicating ESA decisions, and handles requests for public access to documents. ESA participates in all EFTA Court Advisory Opinion cases.

ESA may also bring infringement proceedings against EFTA States for non-fulfilment of their obligations under EEA law, and ESA's decisions can be challenged before the EFTA Court. ESA also participates in proceedings in the Court of Justice of the EU (CJEU), the EEA EFTA States' courts, and the European Court of Human Rights.

MAIN ACTIVITIES

LEA in 2025 reviewed 713 decisions and handled 188 public access requests. In the EFTA Court, ESA's litigation work included participation in 19 advisory opinions, four infringement proceedings concerning non-compliance with EEA law, 13 infringement proceedings concerning non-implementation of EEA law, and two actions for annulment of ESA's decisions. ESA also participated in 11 cases before the CJEU and General Court. The EFTA Court handed down 33 judgments in 2025: 13 advisory opinions and 20 infringement cases.

HIGHLIGHTS

E-24/24 EFTA SURVEILLANCE AUTHORITY V THE KINGDOM OF NORWAY (QUALIFIED HOLDINGS)

In this infringement case brought by ESA, the EFTA Court ruled that Norway had breached its obligations under the CRD IV Directive and Solvency II Directive for acquisitions of qualifying holdings in credit institutions and insurance undertakings, by maintaining national rules and a long-standing administrative practice that imposed stricter approval requirements and additional assessment criteria than those permitted under fully harmonised EEA law.

E-6/25 SAGA SUBSEA AS V AKSELSEN AND GRANLUND

One of the most notable cases of the year concerned a request for an advisory opinion from the Norwegian

Supreme Court on a fundamental question about the scope of the Temporary Agency Work Directive and whether its equal-treatment guarantees apply to temporary agency workers performing offshore work on board Norwegian-registered multipurpose vessels on the Norwegian continental shelf.

JOINED CASES E-31/24 AND E-32/24 TOSKA EHF. AND LYF OG HEILSA HF. V EFTA SURVEILLANCE AUTHORITY AND SKEL FJÁRFESTINGAFÉLAG HF. V EFTA SURVEILLANCE AUTHORITY

Two notable competition-law cases concerned joined actions before the EFTA Court, challenging ESA's decisions to conduct dawn raids in Icelandic pharmacy groups Toska/Lyf og heilsa and SKEL. The raid was carried out with the aim of investigating possible anticompetitive coordination, including possible market sharing.

E-17/25 REDD ULLEVÅL SYKEHUS V NORWEGIAN STATE, REPRESENTED BY THE MINISTRY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT (STATEN V/ KOMMUNAL- OG DISTRIKT-DEPARTEMENTET)

One of 2025's most closely watched environmental law cases concerned a request for an advisory opinion from the Oslo District Court concerning planned relocation and redevelopment of Oslo University Hospital. Central to the dispute is whether the State's zoning plans for the Gaustad and Aker sites ought to have been preceded by a strategic environmental assessment under the SEA Directive and whether Norwegian courts may rely on a national procedural rule to uphold such plans despite a potential breach of EEA environmental-assessment obligations.

E-1/25 VALAIR AG V AMT FÜR VOLKSWIRTSCHAFT (AMT FÜR HOCHBAU UND RAUMPLANUNG (AHR))

Another important request for an advisory opinion came from the Board of Appeal for Administrative Matters of the Principality of Liechtenstein. The case concerned whether EEA States may impose additional national conditions for issuing air-operator licences beyond those listed in Regulation 1000/2008.

ESA'S COURT CASES IN 2025:

EFTA COURT INFRINGEMENT PROCEEDINGS CONCERNING NON-COMPLIANCE:

[E-9/23 ESA v Norway](#)
[E-24/24 ESA v Norway](#)
[E-30/24 ESA v Iceland](#)
[E-16/24 ESA v Iceland](#)

EFTA COURT INFRINGEMENT PROCEEDINGS CONCERNING NON-IMPLEMENTATION:

[E-19/24 ESA v Iceland](#)
[E-20/24 ESA v Iceland](#)
[E-21/24 ESA v Iceland](#)
[E-22/24 ESA v Iceland](#)
[E-26/24 ESA v Iceland](#)
[E-27/24 ESA v Iceland](#)
[E-28/24 ESA v Iceland](#)
[E-29/24 ESA v Iceland](#)
[E-21/25 ESA v Iceland](#)
[E-23/25 ESA v Iceland](#)
[E-19/25 ESA v Norway](#)
[E-20/25 ESA v Norway](#)
[E-22/25 ESA v Norway](#)

ADVISORY OPINIONS:

[E-1/24 TC](#)
[E-7/24 AA](#)
[E-13/24 Friends of the Earth Norway and others v The Norwegian Government, represented by the Ministry of Climate and Environment and the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Fisheries](#)
[E-14/24 Elmatica AS v Confidee AS and Vidar Olsen](#)
[E-17/24 Söderberg & Partners AS v Gable Insurance AG in Konkurs](#)
[E-18/24 The Norwegian State v Greenpeace Nordic, Nature and Youth Norway](#)
[E-23/24 AO and IM](#)
[E-25/24 Dartride AS v Norwegian State, represented by the Ministry of Justice and Public Security](#)
[E-1/25 Valair AG v Amt für Volkswirtschaft \(Amt für](#)

[Hochbau und Raumplanung \(AHR\)\)](#)
[E-2/25 Sarpsborg Avfallsenergi AS and Others v Norwegian State, represented by the Ministry of Climate and Environment \(Staten ved Klima- og miljødepartementet\)](#)
[E-5/25 Rainer Silbernagl v Universität Liechtenstein \(University of Liechtenstein\)](#)
[E-6/25 Saga Subsea AS v Akselsen and Granlund](#)
[E-7/25 Ólafur Þór Jónsson and others v The National Energy Authority of Iceland \(Orkustofnun\) and Benchmark Genetics Iceland hf.](#)
[E-8/25 Aréas Dommages v Gable Insurance AG in Konkurs](#)
[E-9/25 Peter Plörer v LGT Bank AG](#)
[E-17/25 Redd Ullevål Sykehus v Norwegian State, represented by the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development \(Staten v/ Kommunal- og distriktdepartementet\)](#)
[E-18/25 KB v Land Liechtenstein](#)
[E-24/25 Ísteka ehf. v The Icelandic Food and Veterinary Authority \(Matvælastofnun\)](#)
[E-25/25 AE and YM v The Icelandic State and Registers Iceland \(Þjóðskrá Íslands\)](#)

EU COURT CASES:

[C-482/23 Commission v Denmark](#)
[C-233/23 Alphabet and Others](#)
[C-775/23 Bursa Română de Mărfuri](#)
[C-573/24 NiZza](#)
[T-8/24 Meta Platforms Ireland Ltd v European Data Protection Board](#)
[Joined Cases C-258/23 to C-260/23 Imagens Médicas Integradas SA and Others](#)
[T-649/24 Ryanair v Commission](#)
[C-391/25 Deutsche Umwelthilfe](#)
[C-343/25 CPAM de la Gironde](#)
[C-595/25 Arriva Personenvervoer Nederland and Others](#)
[C-585/25 Freistaat Bayern](#)

Communication and outreach

The year 2025 was busy and active for ESA. Throughout the year, the communications team organised or co-organised numerous bilateral meetings, visits, presentations and conferences. Most were held in Brussels, either at ESA's headquarters in EFTA House or at the premises of partner organisations.

Highlights of the year included the 2024-2025 EEA Law Moot Court in Norway, a series of breakfast and lunch seminars, several book launches, ESA Day in Iceland and Norway, as well as the third annual Surveillance Policy Dialogue organised together with the European Commission.

ESA also continued its outreach to students and young professionals. By taking part in career fairs in Iceland and Norway, ESA promoted the Junior Professionals Programme and highlighted career opportunities, particularly for students of law, social sciences and economics.

MOOT COURT

The 2024-25 EEA Law Moot Court was held in Oslo on 14-16 March 2025, bringing together eleven teams from Norway, Liechtenstein and Portugal. Teams represented the University of Bergen, the University of Oslo and NOVA University Lisbon. For the first time, a Liechtenstein-led team of students from the University of Zurich, affiliated with the Liechtenstein Institute, also competed. The final round was presided over by EFTA Court Judge Michael Reiertsen.

The winning team, Luna Henry, Martyna Burylo, Sunniva Storrønning and Weronika Rydelek from the University of Oslo, emerged victorious after a closely contested final. Martyna Burylo was also awarded Best Speaker for her performance.

The winners were invited on a VIP trip to Brussels and Luxembourg, where they visited ESA, the EU institutions, the EFTA Court and the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU). The programme included expert workshops and in-depth discussions with judges and officials.

SURVEILLANCE POLICY DIALOGUE

The third Annual Surveillance Policy Dialogue was held at the EFTA House on 11 March 2025. The Dialogue is a joint initiative of ESA and the European Commission aimed at ensuring uniform surveillance of the Internal Market in line with the EEA Agreement, through cooperation, exchange of information and consultations on surveillance policy.

The meeting brought together staff members from ESA and the Commission to share experiences and good practices on enforcement. This year's discussions focused on enforcement policy before the EFTA Court and the CJEU, as well as challenges related to investigating and pursuing infringements of EEA law.

ESA's President Arne Røksund opened the event, followed by presentations and panel discussions with representatives of both institutions. Topics included recent legal developments in the EU and EEA pillars, strategic questions related to infringement proceedings and court references, and practical aspects of surveillance work such as admissibility and burden of proof.

ESA AND THE MEDIA

ESA published 57 press releases in 2025, of which 36 were also published in Norwegian, 17 in Icelandic and seven in German. Throughout 2025, ESA was mentioned in news media more than 1,900 times according to Retriever, the news monitoring service.



Melipo-Menie Joséphidès Director of Legal & Executive Affairs and Ólafur Jóhannes Einarsson Registrar of the EFTA Court during EEA Seminar 25 September 2025.



Árni Páll Árnason, College Member and Vice-President, participated in the 64th meeting of the European Economic Area (EEA) Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC).



Arne Røksund, President of ESA, and Vice-Presidents Árni Páll Árnason and Stefan Barriga met with Krístrún Mjöll Frostadóttir, Prime Minister of Iceland, during ESA's annual meeting with the Icelandic Government.



Hosted by the Faculty of Law at the University of Oslo, the 2025 EEA Law Moot Court brought together nearly 50 students to compete.

Press Releases

INTERNAL MARKET AFFAIRS

DECISIONS AND REPORTS

Iceland: [Food Safety: Iceland improves import controls for products of animal origin | ESA](#) (Report)

Norway: [ESA takes a technical decision on measures to improve hedging possibility on electricity market between Norway and the Netherlands | ESA](#) (Technical decision)

Norway: [ESA urges Norway to enforce pig welfare standards | ESA](#) (Report)

Norway: [Food Safety: Norway improves import controls for products of animal origin | ESA](#) (Report)

Norway: [Food safety: Norway continues addressing food and veterinary recommendations | ESA](#) (Report)

Iceland: [Food safety: ESA publishes an updated Country Profile for Iceland | ESA](#) (Report)

Liechtenstein: [ESA asks Liechtenstein to comply with EFTA Court judgment concerning the right of European lawyers to practise in another EEA state | ESA](#) (Letter of formal notice)

Norway, Iceland: [ESA publishes its report on official controls of food and feed safety in Iceland and Norway in 2023 | ESA](#) (Report)

Norway, Liechtenstein and Iceland: [ESA releases report on water management in Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway | ESA](#) (Report)

Iceland: [ESA asks Iceland to align customs tariff classification of 'pizza cheese' with EEA rules | ESA](#) (Letter of formal notice)

Iceland: [ESA opens infringement proceedings, takes Iceland to court for failing to comply with EEA rules on waste management | ESA](#) (Letter of formal notice)

Norway: [ESA urges Norway to continue to strengthen welfare controls for laying hens and chickens kept for meat production | ESA](#) (Report)

Norway: [ESA issues an opinion on storage of CO2 in Norway | ESA](#) (Opinion)

Iceland: [ESA takes Iceland to court for failing to implement EEA rules on accessibility of public websites | ESA](#) (Court referral)

Iceland: [ESA recommends Iceland to strengthen controls on animal feed | ESA](#) (Report)

EEA EFTA: [Internal Market Scoreboard: EEA EFTA States reduce average transposition deficit | ESA](#) (Report)

Norway: [ESA approves Norwegian emergency measures to control outbreak of avian influenza | ESA](#) (Emergency measure decision)

Norway: [ESA asks Norway to fully implement EEA rules on posting of workers | ESA](#) (Letter of formal notice)

Norway: [ESA asks Norway to comply with EFTA Court judgement on EEA rules for air-traffic management | ESA](#) (Letter of formal notice)

Norway: [ESA tells Norway to align port security measures with EEA rules | ESA](#) (Reasoned opinion)

Norway: [Food Safety: ESA recommends that Norway strengthen controls of fruit and vegetable producers | ESA](#) (Report)

Norway: [ESA asks Norway to comply with EEA rules on rail services contracts | ESA](#) (Letter of formal notice)

Iceland, Norway: [Iceland and Norway make progress towards attaining 2030 climate targets under EEA law | ESA](#) (Report)

Norway: [ESA urges Norway to strengthen animal feed controls | ESA](#) (Report)

STATE AID DECISIONS

Iceland: [Iceland agrees to abolish existing State aid in the waste-management sector | ESA](#)

Liechtenstein: [ESA approves renewal of media support scheme in Liechtenstein | ESA](#)

Norway: [ESA approves amendments to the Norwegian tax scheme for employee share options for start-up and growth companies | ESA](#)

Norway: [ESA approves amendments to Norwegian tax refund scheme for employing seafarers | ESA](#)

Norway: [ESA approves Norwegian scheme for floating offshore wind in Utsira Nord | ESA](#)

Norway: [ESA orders Norway to recover purchase price from a property developer | ESA](#)

Norway: [ESA approves Norwegian compensation scheme for rail freight operators following damage to the Otta bridge | ESA](#)

Norway: [ESA approves Norwegian aid to rail freight carrier CargoNet | ESA](#)

Norway: [ESA approves amendment to Norwegian innovation and development scheme for news and current affairs media | ESA](#)

EEA EFTA: [ESA adopts new State aid guidelines linked to the Clean Industrial Deal | ESA](#)

EEA EFTA: [Annual scoreboard: The EEA EFTA States reduce overall State aid spending | ESA](#) (Report)

Norway: [ESA approves Norwegian aid to municipal fitness centre | ESA](#)

Norway: [ESA approves Norwegian aid scheme for floating offshore wind projects | ESA](#)

Iceland: [ESA renews Icelandic production grant scheme for private media outlets | ESA](#)

Norway: [ESA approves Norwegian aid scheme for Sámi news outlets | ESA](#)

Norway: [ESA closes investigation into Norwegian exemption from excise duty on waste incineration | ESA](#)

Norway: [ESA approves additional Norwegian aid for construction of a new airport in Mo i Rana | ESA](#)

COMPETITION DECISIONS

EEA EFTA: [ESA updates Recommendation on Relevant Markets in the electronic communication sector | ESA](#)

Iceland: [ESA initiates investigation into possible anticompetitive conduct by Landsvirkjun, a power company in Iceland | ESA](#)

EEA EFTA: [ESA updates procedural recommendation for notifying electronic communications regulations | ESA](#)

Norway: [Competition: ESA seeks comments on Elkjøp commitments in consumer electronics investigation | ESA](#)

Norway: [Competition: ESA seeks comments on Norway's commitments in North Sea Link interconnector investigation | ESA](#)

Norway: [Competition: ESA accepts Norway's commitments in North Sea Link Interconnector investigation | ESA](#)



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