



Brussels, 15.7.2019
COM(2019) 337 final

2019/0153 (NLE)

Proposal for a

COUNCIL DECISION

on the position to be adopted, on behalf of the European Union, in the EEA Joint Committee amending Protocol 31 to the EEA Agreement, on cooperation in specific fields outside the four freedoms

[RescUE]

(Text with EEA relevance)

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

1. CONTEXT OF THE PROPOSAL

- **Reasons for and objectives of the proposal**

The draft Decision of the EEA Joint Committee (annexed to the proposed Council Decision) aims to amend Protocol 31 to the EEA Agreement on “cooperation in specific fields outside the four freedoms” in order to extend the cooperation of the contracting parties in the area of civil protection. In the present case, the purpose of this amendment is to include Decision (EU) 2019/420 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 March 2019 amending Decision No 1313/2013/EU on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism¹ to allow the EEA EFTA States to participate in the Union actions related to this EU Decision as of 21 March 2019.

- **Consistency with existing policy provisions in the policy area**

The annexed draft Joint Committee Decision extends the already existing EU policy to the EEA EFTA States (Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein) in the field of civil protection in order to improve the Union's response to natural and man-made disasters.

- **Consistency with other Union policies**

The extension of the EU acquis to the EEA EFTA States, through their incorporation into the EEA Agreement is conducted in conformity with the objectives and principles of that Agreement, aiming at establishing a dynamic and homogeneous European Economic Area, based on common rules and equal conditions of competition

2. LEGAL BASIS, SUBSIDIARITY AND PROPORTIONALITY

- **Legal basis**

The legislation to be incorporated into the EEA Agreement is based on Article 196 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union in conjunction with Article 218(9) thereof.

Article 1(3) of Council Regulation (EC) No 2894/94² concerning arrangements for implementing the EEA Agreement provides that the Council establishes the position to be adopted on the Union's behalf on such Decisions, on a proposal from the Commission.

- **Subsidiarity (for non-exclusive competence)**

The proposal complies with the subsidiarity principle for the following reason.

The objective of this proposal, namely to ensure the homogeneity of the Internal Market, cannot be sufficiently achieved by the Member States and can therefore, by reason of the effects, be better achieved at Union level.

- **Proportionality**

In accordance with the principle of proportionality, this proposal does not go beyond what is necessary in order to achieve its objective.

- **Choice of the instrument**

In conformity with Article 98 of the EEA Agreement, the chosen instrument is the EEA Joint Committee decision. The EEA Joint Committee shall ensure the effective implementation and

¹ OJ L 77I, 20.3.2019, p. 1.

² OJ L 305, 30.11.1994, p. 6–8

operation of the EEA Agreement. To this end, it shall take decisions in the cases provided for in the EEA Agreement.

3. RESULTS OF EX-POST EVALUATIONS, STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS AND IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Not applicable.

4. BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS

The EEA EFTA States shall financially contribute to the Mechanism in conformity with its amended provisions as of 21 March 2019.

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[RescUE]

(Text with EEA relevance)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular Article 196 in conjunction with Article 218(9) thereof,

Having regard to Council Regulation (EC) No 2894/94 of 28 November 1994 concerning arrangements for implementing the Agreement on the European Economic Area³, and in particular Article 1(3) thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the European Commission,

Whereas:

- (1) The Agreement on the European Economic Area⁴ (“the EEA Agreement”) entered into force on 1 January 1994.
- (2) Pursuant to Article 98 of the EEA Agreement, the EEA Joint Committee may decide to amend, inter alia, Protocol 31 thereto.
- (3) Protocol 31 to the EEA Agreement contains specific provisions on cooperation in specific fields outside the four freedoms.
- (4) It is appropriate to extend the cooperation of the Contracting Parties to the EEA Agreement to include Decision (EU) 2019/420 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 March 2019 amending Decision No 1313/2013/EU on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism⁵.
- (5) Protocol 31 to the EEA Agreement should therefore be amended accordingly, in order to allow for this extended cooperation to take place from 21 March 2019.
- (6) The position of the Union in the EEA Joint Committee should be based on the attached draft Decision.

³ OJ L 305, 30.11.1994, p. 6.

⁴ OJ L 1, 3.1.1994, p. 3.

⁵ OJ L 77I, 20.3.2019, p. 1..

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

The position to be adopted, on behalf of the European Union, in the EEA Joint Committee on the proposed amendment to Protocol 31 to the EEA Agreement shall be based on the draft Decision of the EEA Joint Committee attached to this Decision.

Article 2

This Decision shall enter into force on the day of its adoption.

Done at Brussels,

*For the Council
The President*