



## EFTA AT A GLANCE

### ▼ What is EFTA?

The European Free Trade Association (EFTA) is an intergovernmental organisation set up for the promotion of free trade and economic integration to the benefit of its four Member States: Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland. The Association has responsibility for the management of:

- The EFTA Convention;
- The European Economic Area (EEA) Agreement; and
- EFTA's worldwide network of free trade and partnership agreements.

### ▼ The EFTA Convention

The EFTA Convention regulates the free trade relations between the four EFTA Member States and provides the legal framework for EFTA as an organisation. It covers trade in goods and services and includes areas such as investment and the free movement of persons.

### ▼ The European Economic Area

The Agreement on the European Economic Area brings together the 27 EU Member States and three EFTA States – Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway – in a single market, the “Internal Market”. The Agreement provides for the inclusion of EU legislation on the free movement of goods, services, capital and persons in the legal systems of the three EEA EFTA States, and covers cooperation in key areas such as research and development, education, social policy, the environment, consumer protection and culture. Switzerland is not a member of the EEA, but has a series of bilateral agreements with the European Union.

### ▼ The EFTA Free Trade Network

Cross-border trade and investment are central to the growth and dynamism of the EFTA countries. They are highly integrated into the global economy, together ranking 11th in world merchandise trade and seventh in world commercial services trade in 2010, and are leading international investors. The EFTA States have one of the largest networks of free trade agreements (FTAs) which today spans over 60 countries and territories, including the European Union. Combining the contractual frameworks with the EU and the FTAs with non-EU countries, 78% of EFTA's total merchandise trade today is covered by preferential arrangements.

	FTA	FTA negotiations	Joint Declaration on Cooperation/ Dialogue/Study on closer trade and investment relations
<b>EUROPE</b>	European Union, Albania, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Turkey, Ukraine	Bosnia-Herzegovina, Russia/Belarus/Kazakhstan	
<b>MIDDLE EAST / NORTH AFRICA</b>	Egypt, Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC; comprising Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates), Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestinian Authority, Tunisia	Algeria	
<b>SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA</b>	Southern African Customs Union (SACU; comprising Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland)		Mauritius
<b>AMERICAS</b>	Canada, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Peru	Central American States (Costa Rica, Honduras, Panama)	Central American States (El Salvador, Guatemala), Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR; comprising Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay)
<b>ASIA PACIFIC</b>	Hong Kong China, Republic of Korea, Singapore	India, Indonesia, Thailand	Malaysia, Mongolia, Vietnam



While actively expanding trade relations with partners worldwide, the EFTA States maintain a strong commitment to the multilateral trading system. The WTO rules-based system provides the basis for all EFTA Free Trade Agreements.

EFTA FTAs cover trade in industrial products (including fish) and agricultural products. They include trade disciplines as well as rules on competition, on the protection of intellectual property, and on payments and transfers. Some FTAs also contain substantive rules liberalising trade in services, investment and public procurement, as well as provisions on trade and sustainable development.

Technical cooperation is part of some FTAs, with the aim of supporting free trade partners in the implementation of the agreements and enhancing their capacity to benefit from preferential access to the EFTA markets.

Joint Declarations on Cooperation aim to promote the development of economic relations between the EFTA Member States and partner countries. They cover various trade-related issues and seek to improve the conditions for private sector cooperation.

### ▼ The EFTA Countries

The EFTA countries are highly competitive, open economies representing a sizeable market with strong per capita purchasing power. The two Alpine members – Liechtenstein and Switzerland – are established international financial centres and leaders in several industrial sectors including machinery, pharmaceuticals and chemicals. The two Nordic countries – Iceland and Norway – excel in industries related to their abundant natural resources, including oil, gas, electricity and fish, and are active in various service sectors.

### ▼ The EFTA Secretariat

The EFTA Secretariat is located in Geneva (headquarters), Brussels and Luxembourg. It has an annual budget of 23.7 million Swiss francs. The approximately 90 staff members provide expertise in all areas covered by the EFTA Convention, the EEA Agreement and EFTA's agreements with its free trade partners.

The Secretariat in Geneva assists the EFTA Council in the management of the relations between the four EFTA States and deals with the negotiation and operation of EFTA's Free Trade Agreements and Joint Declarations on Cooperation with non-EU countries. It also handles EFTA's technical cooperation programme.

The Secretariat in Brussels provides support for the management of the EEA Agreement, including preparation of new legislation and assistance in the elaboration of input into EU decision making.

The EFTA Statistical Office in Luxembourg contributes to the development of a broad and integrated European Statistical System.

### ▼ Contacting EFTA

For more information about EFTA and its activities, please visit our website, [www.efta.int](http://www.efta.int)  
You can also find information in our brochure, "This is EFTA", available on our website.

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