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Subject: Council Conclusions on a homogeneous extended Internal Market and EU relations with non-EU Western European countries and with the Faroe Islands

Delegations will find attached Council conclusions on a homogeneous extended internal market and EU relations with non-EU Western European countries and with the Faroe Islands as adopted by the Council (General Affairs) on 16 June 2026.

**COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS ON A HOMOGENEOUS EXTENDED INTERNAL MARKET
AND EU RELATIONS WITH NON-EU WESTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES AND WITH
THE FAROE ISLANDS**

1. In accordance with its conclusions of 25 June 2024, the Council has assessed the overall state of EU relations with the following Western European countries that are not members of the EU: Iceland, the Principality of Liechtenstein, the Kingdom of Norway, the Swiss Confederation, the Principality of Andorra, the Republic of San Marino, and the Principality of Monaco. The Council has also assessed the state of EU relations with the Faroe Islands as a self-governing country within the Kingdom of Denmark and to which EU treaties do not apply.
2. The Council welcomes the renewed engagement between the European Union and the Swiss Confederation, following a number of years since the adoption of its Council conclusions on EU relations with the Swiss Confederation (2019).
3. The Council will reassess the state of these relations in two years, as appropriate, in the context of further development of the internal market. In this regard, the Council takes note of the ongoing work on the future enlargement of the European Union.

THE WESTERN EUROPEAN NEIGHBOURS OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

4. The non-EU Western European countries are the EU's closest partners in building a stronger, safer, greener, more competitive and resilient Europe, based on peaceful cooperation, democracy, the rule of law and human rights. The Council recalls the importance the EU attaches to relations with these close, like-minded partners, which are highly integrated with the EU. Our long-standing cooperation is based on shared values and interests and underpinned by our common heritage and history, as well as strong cultural, economic, political and geographical ties.
5. The Council underlines the importance of unity regarding Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. It commends the high level of close coordination and alignment of the non-EU Western European countries with EU statements and restrictive measures. It also expresses appreciation for other actions in line with those by the EU and its Member States to counter Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, including in multilateral fora, demonstrating the excellent and close partnership between the EU and its Western European neighbours also in this domain.
6. The Council notes the excellent cooperation in areas of EU external action such as the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), the development and humanitarian assistance, and the promotion of democracy, human rights and the rule of law. The Council stresses the importance of close and regular political dialogue and expresses its strong appreciation for the high level of alignment of the non-EU Western European partners to the EU's positions, including the restrictive measures in response to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. Continued alignment with CFSP declarations and restrictive measures as well as intensifying global outreach remains essential for European unity and global security. The Council highlights the importance of close cooperation to prevent sanctions circumvention.

7. The Council underlines the importance of strengthening cooperation in multilateral fora between the EU and its non-EU Western European partners, in support of an effective multilateral rules-based international order, and of working jointly on shared global challenges, including peace and security, human rights, and climate change.
8. Economic integration within the framework of the extended EU internal market brings the European Union and its Western European neighbours closer and remains a fundamental pillar for shared prosperity and stability across the continent in an increasingly volatile and fragmented geopolitical landscape. In the last two years, close relations have been further enhanced by a number of initiatives across a wide range of strategic areas of mutual interest.
9. The Council reiterates that the strength of our economic integration depends on full respect for the four freedoms of the internal market, based on a balance of rights and obligations, ensuring a level playing field and robust mechanisms to ensure a quick and effective response to challenges in mutual relations. It is therefore the responsibility of all states which already participate or wish to increase their level of participation in the extended internal market, to ensure its integrity and homogeneity. This includes full respect for equal rights and obligations for both citizens and businesses, equal treatment of Member States, robust governance arrangements and appropriate financial contributions when participating in EU policies and activities, including a fair financial contribution to the European Union's cohesion as a counterpart to access to the extended internal market. Non-members of the Union that do not assume the same obligations as members cannot enjoy the same rights and benefits as members.
10. The Council remains fully committed to advancing collective global efforts on climate change, green and digital transitions, clean, renewable and low-carbon energy efficiency, sustainable mobility, biodiversity protection and environmental resilience. Continued close cooperation between the EU and our closest non-EU Western European partners on these areas remains of key importance.

11. By virtue of their geographical and political proximity, the EU and its non-EU Western European partners face shared security challenges and are interdependent in ensuring national and regional stability. In this context, the Council underlines the importance of cooperation and mutual support in the field of energy security including the protection of critical infrastructure, security of supply and access to affordable energy in the context of the energy transition.
12. The Council takes note of the ongoing challenges related to the sustainable management of fish stocks in the North-East Atlantic. Maintaining the important economic benefits these stocks provide, avoiding overexploitation and subsequent stock declines, urgently requires comprehensive responsible and sustainable management arrangements involving all relevant parties, including Norway, Iceland and the Faroe Islands. In that context, the Council regrets unilateral actions taken by some parties and the consequent challenges for the joint management of fish stocks in the North-East Atlantic. The Council calls for arrangements taking into account historical rights and involving all relevant parties, including the European Union.
13. The Council welcomes the EU's cooperation with Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland in the area of justice and home affairs and looks forward to further strengthening the cooperation in the field of border management with Andorra and San Marino.

EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AREA

14. The Council recalls that the EEA Agreement constitutes the bedrock of relations with Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway. For over 30 years, the EEA Agreement has promoted trade, economic integration, prosperity and cooperation in several important areas.
15. Through participation in the Single Market via the EEA Agreement enabling the free movement of goods, services, capital and people, the EEA EFTA States are deeply integrated into European value chains. Such cooperation strengthens economic resilience, supports the development of competitive and sustainable industries and contributes to shared goals on climate neutrality, innovation and strategic autonomy.
16. The Council emphasises the importance of maintaining the balance of rights and obligations under the EEA Agreement. This includes the legal obligation to incorporate fully and in a timely manner all EU legal acts falling within the scope of the EEA Agreement, which is essential to ensure homogeneity and a level playing field in the joint internal market across the 30 EEA States.
17. The Council welcomes the incorporation of a number of important parts of legislation into the EEA Agreement during the last two years in areas such as financial services (Digital Operational Resilience Act (DORA), Markets in Crypto-Assets Regulation (MiCA), European Green Bonds, European Supervisory Authorities (ESAs) Review, health (Health Technology Assessment (HTA), European Medicines Agency (EMA), Regulation on serious cross-border threats to health), defence capabilities (Act in Support of Ammunition Production (ASAP), EU Defence Industry Reinforcement Through Common Procurement Act (EDIRPA), energy (Energy Efficiency Directive (EED II), Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD 2018), Renewable Energy Directive (RED II), and digital (Data Governance Act).

18. The Council notes with satisfaction continued efforts made to increase the awareness of the importance of and support for the EEA Agreement in advancing economic integration between the EEA States, building a more resilient and dynamic internal market and in safeguarding our common values in an increasingly complex global environment.
19. Recalling its conclusions of 21 June 2022 and of 25 June 2024, the Council regrets persistent delays in the full incorporation of the EU acts, since the backlog remains high and calls on EEA EFTA States to reduce without delay the number of acts awaiting incorporation in line with the legal obligation under the EEA Agreement. While recognising the ongoing work to reduce the backlog and important progress made in 2025, the Council calls for increased efforts and continued close cooperation with a view to the swift incorporation of long-outstanding legislation, such as Genetically Modified Food and Feed Package, Helicopter Offshore Operations (HOFO) Regulation, and EEA-relevant EU acquis in the areas of energy, transport, environment, financial services and statistics, as well as new acts. This is necessary to ensure legal certainty and homogeneity and a level playing field in the internal market through the full and timely incorporation of the EEA-relevant EU acquis. The Council also underlines the importance of ensuring the timely fulfilment of constitutional requirements allowing for the entry into force of acts incorporated into the EEA Agreement as well as the transposition of the EEA acquis into the national legal system of the EEA EFTA States.
20. In addition, the persistence of the backlog calls for the development of mechanisms to ensure the full and timely incorporation of the relevant EU acquis, essential to ensuring legal certainty and the proper functioning of the internal market.

21. The Council recalls that the financial contribution of EEA EFTA States to the reduction of social and economic disparities within the European Economic Area constitutes an integral and reciprocal component of the EEA Agreement, reflecting the benefits drawn by the EEA EFTA States from their participation in the Internal Market. The Council appreciates the EEA EFTA States' contribution through the EEA and Norwegian Financial Mechanisms to the benefits of the Contracting Parties, as part of the overall balance of rights and obligations, with a view to promoting a continuous and balanced strengthening of trade and economic relations between the parties. The Council welcomes the entry into force of the Agreements on EEA and Norwegian Financial Mechanisms for the period May 2021 – April 2028. In this respect, the Council emphasises the need to swiftly conclude bilateral memoranda of understanding with all Beneficiary States, so as to ensure a clear framework and timeline for the effective and timely implementation of the funds.
22. The Council points out that Article 19 of the EEA Agreement provides that the Contracting Parties should continue their efforts to achieve progressive liberalisation of trade in agricultural products and, to this end, should carry out, at two-yearly intervals, reviews of the conditions of trade in agricultural products, with a view to exploring possible concessions and further reductions of barriers.
23. The Council acknowledges the limits of the EEA Agreement, when it comes to policy areas outside the scope of the agreement, including trade and customs policies. In this regard, the Council notes that the EU reserves the right to impose measures that are compatible with the EU's commitments under the EEA Agreement. The Council welcomes continued discussions with the EEA EFTA States on how to best approach the interplay between matters falling within and outside the scope of the EEA Agreement.

24. The Council welcomes the wish by the EEA EFTA States to promote closer cooperation with the EU on health emergency measures, and looks forward to consider the upcoming results of the ongoing negotiations on the EEA EFTA States' participation in EU health emergency measures in the area of medical countermeasures to protect the health of citizens, building on our existing close relationship, both within and beyond the EEA Agreement. The envisaged agreement between the Union and Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway should be based on, inter alia, the following principles: robust governance mechanisms, including dynamic alignment, mechanisms to safeguard uniform interpretation and application while preserving the autonomy of EU decision-making, and the need for the partner countries to make a significant financial contribution to the Union budget.
25. The Council welcomes the gradual intensification of political dialogue and foreign and security policy cooperation between the EU and Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway. In this context, the Council welcomes the bi-annual political dialogues at ministerial level which take place in the margins of the EEA Councils, as well as the various political dialogues at working level.
26. The Council welcomes the Joint Statement “Strengthening EEA Foreign and Security Policy Cooperation” signed in May 2025 by the Foreign Ministers of Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and encourages its full-fledged implementation.

ICELAND

27. Iceland is a close, reliable and longstanding partner of the European Union. The EU-Iceland partnership is built on shared values and principles of democracy, human rights, the rule of law and the centrality of a rules-based international order.
28. The EEA Agreement has proved to be a solid instrument of EU-Iceland cooperation in addressing common challenges and is complemented by cooperation outside the framework of the EEA. In this respect, the Council appreciates the close cooperation with Iceland in areas such as foreign and security policy, justice and home affairs.
- Over the last two years, the overall relationship has remained excellent, despite our differences notably on fisheries and delays in the incorporation of EU acts, which continue to lead to imbalances within the EEA.
29. The Council welcomes the continued strong cooperation with Iceland in the areas of CFSP and CSDP and appreciates Iceland's continued high rate of alignment with the EU in the field of CFSP. The Council acknowledges the importance of strengthening the collaboration between the EU and Iceland in the field of security and defence and welcomes the signing of the Security and Defence Partnership with Iceland, to formalise and strengthen the existing collaboration while it allows for an even closer cooperation on issues such as maritime security, cybersecurity and emerging disruptive technologies (EDT), resilience, hybrid threats and strengthening support to Ukraine.

30. The Council recognises Iceland's close and active cooperation with the EU across a wide range of joint work strands and initiatives, as well as the regular dialogue maintained at various levels on key foreign policy issues, including security and defence, and encourages Iceland to enhance its participation in CSDP missions and operations. The Council appreciates Iceland's strong support to Ukraine and welcomes the close coordination between the EU and Iceland in this regard. The Council praises the close cooperation between Iceland and the EU in the Council of Europe and underlines the importance both attach to strengthening the rule of law and protecting human rights.
31. The Council welcomes Iceland's willingness to contribute to the implementation of the European Green Deal, to continue to be a driving force for international climate cooperation. The Council welcomes Iceland's joining the EU-led Global Pledge to double annual energy efficiency improvements and tripling renewables deployments by 2030 and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, to reach carbon-neutrality by 2040. In this respect the Council encourages progress towards meeting the Paris Agreement commitments and calls for reinforced collaboration before and during climate negotiations, as well as during the IPCC's seventh assessment cycle, in order to ensure ambitious outcomes. In view of the clean transition, the EU looks forward to strengthening cooperation with Iceland and to exchanging know-how on renewable energy and safe and sustainable low carbon technologies, including geothermal energy, hydrogen and carbon capture and storage.
32. In the field of aviation, the Council recalls that a solution was found in 2023 taking into account Iceland's specific situation in the context of the EU Emissions Trading System, and stresses the importance of continued dialogue. The Council notes that this solution applies until the end of 2026, when the aviation component of the EU Emissions Trading System will be reviewed at EU level. In this respect, the Council stresses the need to ensure the full, uniform and timely implementation of the EU acquis and recalls that any future adjustments will be decided within the common framework based on equal treatment.

33. In that context, the Council regrets the delays in the full incorporation of the EU Clean Energy Package and calls for a swift completion of the process, crucial for maintaining a level playing field within the EEA.
34. The EEA Agreement remains the cornerstone of our relations. In this regard, the Council commends Iceland for its efforts to address the backlog and reduce the EEA Agreement transposition deficit. At the same time, the Council calls for increased efforts towards the full incorporation of EU acts and continued close cooperation on long out-standing files, including the EU acquis in the area of energy, financial services and genetically modified food and feed, as well as new acts, without delay in line with Iceland's legal obligation under the EEA Agreement. The Council regrets the long delay in the process of the adoption of Protocol 35 of the EEA Agreement. In this regard, the Council calls on Iceland to fully fulfil its obligations under the EEA Agreement.
35. Iceland, as a founding member of the Arctic Council, is an important partner of the EU. The EU Arctic Policy, while maintaining its focus on climate change, environmental issues, sustainable development and international cooperation, demonstrates the Union's strong interest in building on, and further developing, its existing cross-sectoral engagement in the Arctic. As current geopolitical tensions continue to create an increasingly complex and challenging environment in the region, the Council welcomes Iceland's pivotal role as North Atlantic gateway and its continued strong support for the EU's engagement in the Arctic. The Council looks forward to continuing to intensify this special partnership, expanding the scope of cooperation to include comprehensive resilience, the protection of critical infrastructure, secure connectivity and dual-use transport networks, education, research and science, security, climate action to enhance climate change resilience and pollution prevention. In this context, the Council encourages a stronger cooperation.

36. The Council acknowledges Iceland as an important trade partner of the EU and recalls the expected regular review of the conditions of trade in agricultural products pursuant to Article 19 of the EEA Agreement. The Council regrets the lack of progress in liberalisation of trade within the framework of Article 19 of Protocol 3 to the EEA Agreement, and firmly calls on Iceland to engage actively, as a priority and without delay, to implement Protocol 3.
37. The Council welcomes the Memorandum of Understanding between the European Union and Iceland signed in July 2025 on enhanced cooperation in Fisheries and Ocean Affairs. The Council recognises that it is in the mutual interest of the Union and Iceland to reinforce bilateral fisheries relations through a cooperative framework that provides for a high-level dialogue and promotes a coordinated approach, ensures a level playing field, and supports the sustainable management of shared stocks.
38. The Council deplores the decision of Iceland to agree on mackerel quota allocations outside a comprehensive and inclusive Coastal States sharing arrangement and without the participation of the European Union. The Council expresses serious concerns about these quota allocation arrangements which risk to undermine the long-term sustainability of the stock and run counter to the principles of responsible fisheries management and international cooperation.
39. The Council stresses the importance of sustainable management of shared fish stocks, including mackerel, in line with international law and scientific advice. In this context, the Council regrets the lack of progress on joint management of shared fish stocks in the North-East Atlantic. The Council also deplores the lack of consideration by Iceland to the Coastal State status of the EU for the Atlanto-Scandian herring.

40. The Council reaffirms its strong willingness to reach bilateral and multilateral sharing arrangements that ensure responsible, stable and sustainable management of shared stocks in the North-East Atlantic, in line with scientific advice, international obligations and taking into account historical rights, and calls on Iceland, to engage constructively and in good faith to that end. This would positively impact the implementation of the EU-Iceland Memorandum of Understanding on enhancing cooperation on Fisheries and Ocean Affairs. The Council regrets a number of positions taken by Iceland at the 2025 NEAFC Annual Meeting and invites Iceland to cooperate with the European Union in NEAFC.
41. Reaffirming its strong support for the internationally agreed moratorium on commercial whaling established under the International Whaling Commission (IWC) and for the listing of cetaceans and other marine species under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), the Council urges Iceland to lift its objection to the moratorium and to withdraw its reservations under CITES for these and other marine species.
42. The Council welcomes the cooperation with Iceland on the governance of the Schengen area and appreciates its reliable commitment to the effective application of the Schengen acquis and on the implementation of the Entry/Exit System (EES) since October 2025 and the forthcoming European Travel Information and Authorisation System (ETIAS). The Council continues to appreciate the strong integration of Iceland into the Schengen and Dublin systems, based on cooperation, the principle of solidarity and fair sharing of responsibility, respect for international law and for human rights and effective management of external borders. In this respect the Council welcomes Iceland's participation in the Instrument for Financial for Border Management and Visa Policy (BMVI), since June 2025, in the 2021-2027 programming period and the signing of the Agreement on the transfer of Passenger Name Record (PNR) data.

43. The Council appreciates Iceland's contribution to the reduction of social and economic disparities through the EEA Financial Mechanisms to the benefits of the Contracting Parties, with a view to promoting a continuous and balanced strengthening of trade and economic relations between the parties.
44. The Council looks forward to further strengthening the ties between the EU and Iceland, beyond the EEA cooperation in view of shared values and the challenges we face together as European neighbours in a new geopolitical and geoeconomic setting. The Council will at the same time continue to pay attention to the necessary overall balance in EU-Iceland relations.
45. The Council welcomes Iceland's decision to hold a referendum on 29 August 2026 on the resumption of the accession negotiations between Iceland and the European Union. The Council stands ready, should the people of Iceland so decide, to initiate the resumption of accession negotiations and to maintain close and constructive engagement with Iceland throughout this process.

PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN

46. The Principality of Liechtenstein is an important, reliable and longstanding partner of the European Union. Relations between the EU and Liechtenstein are close, constructive and dynamic, based on shared values and principles of democracy, human rights, the rule of law and the centrality of a rules based international order. Over the last two years the overall relations have remained excellent, with 2025 marking Liechtenstein's 30th anniversary of membership in the European Economic Area (EEA).
47. The Council recalls the continued strong cooperation with Liechtenstein in the areas covered by the Agreement on the European Economic Area (EEA), as well as the close cooperation outside the framework of the EEA. In this respect, the Council appreciates the close cooperation with Liechtenstein in areas such as foreign and security policy, justice and home affairs and in other sectors. The Council welcomes in particular the first-ever foreign policy consultations held between the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the Office for Foreign Affairs in Vaduz in May 2025. The Council encourages Liechtenstein to enhance cooperation with both CEPOL and Europol.
48. Liechtenstein's continued high rate of alignment with the EU in the field of CFSP is highly appreciated.
49. The Council appreciates Liechtenstein's strong support to Ukraine and welcomes the close coordination and alignment with the EU. The Council commends as well Liechtenstein's engagement in international fora and praises the close cooperation between Liechtenstein and the EU in various multilateral frameworks, notably the UN, the Council of Europe and the OSCE, underlining the importance that both sides attach to strengthening the rule of law and protecting human rights.

50. The Council welcomes the cooperation with Liechtenstein on the governance of the Schengen area and appreciates its reliable commitment to the effective application of the Schengen acquis and on the implementation of the Entry/Exit System (EES) since October 2025 as well as Liechtenstein's readiness to implement the European Travel Information and Authorisation System (ETIAS) and the Interoperability Regulations. The Council continues to appreciate the strong integration of Liechtenstein into the Schengen and Dublin systems, based on cooperation, and solidarity. In this respect, the Council welcomes Liechtenstein's readiness to discuss a framework for its voluntary and ad-hoc participation in the Solidarity part of the Asylum and Migration Management Regulation.
51. The Council welcomes Liechtenstein's joining of the EU-led Global Pledge to double annual energy efficiency improvements and tripling renewables deployments by 2030 and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, to reach carbon-neutrality by 2040, as well to its commitment to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050. In this respect the Council encourages progress towards meeting the Paris Agreement objectives.
52. The Council notes positively Liechtenstein's high and reliable transposition rates within the EEA and appreciates in particular the efforts aimed at jointly addressing common challenges.
53. At the same time, the Council calls on Liechtenstein to continue its efforts to reduce the number of acts awaiting incorporation without delay in line with Liechtenstein's legal obligation under the EEA Agreement. The Council stresses the need to continue close cooperation on long-outstanding files, including on the financial services and industrial sectors, as well as new acts.
54. The Council notes that the free movement of persons, the freedom to provide services and the right of establishment constitute an integral part of the EEA Agreement and that the sectoral adaptations applicable to Liechtenstein are of an exceptional nature and have remained unchanged since 1999. The Council welcomes the ongoing review, and looks forward to the constructive dialogue to ensure that the sectoral adaptations are still fit for purpose.

55. The Council underlines the importance of consistent legal frameworks for market access within the EEA. In this context, it notes that Liechtenstein's participation in a customs union with Switzerland creates challenges in ensuring the continued homogeneity of the EEA. The Council therefore calls upon Liechtenstein to ensure full compliance with EEA obligations, preserve homogeneity and a level playing field across the whole EEA.
56. The Council acknowledges Liechtenstein's continued constructive, transparent, and open cooperation with the EU, which aims at ensuring that all principles and criteria of the EU Code of Conduct on Business Taxation are effectively applied. The Council welcomes the signing of the Amending Protocol to the Agreement providing reciprocal Automatic Exchange of Financial Account Information and improving international tax compliance between Liechtenstein and each of the EU Member States, which entered into force on 1 January 2026. The Council welcomes Liechtenstein's accession to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in October 2024.
57. The Council appreciates Liechtenstein's contribution to the reduction of social and economic disparities through the EEA Financial Mechanisms to the benefits of the Contracting Parties, with a view to promoting a continuous and balanced strengthening of trade and economic relations between the parties.
58. The Council looks forward to further strengthening the ties between the EU and Liechtenstein, beyond the EEA cooperation, in fields such as cross-border cooperation and regional infrastructure, health emergency measures in the area of medical countermeasures in the context of cross-border health threats, digital and innovation policy and cybersecurity cooperation, in view of shared values and the challenges we face together as European neighbours in a new geopolitical and geoeconomic setting. It considers worthwhile to further discuss best practices with Liechtenstein in areas of mutual interest, such as block chain regulatory regimes. The Council will at the same time continue to pay attention to the necessary overall balance in Liechtenstein - EU relations.

KINGDOM OF NORWAY

59. Norway is a longstanding and strategic partner of the European Union and is among the countries having the widest and deepest ties with the EU across all policy areas. Norway is one of the most closely associated partners of the EU through the European Economic Area (EEA) Agreement. The EU-Norway partnership is anchored in shared values and principles of democracy, human rights, the rule of law and the centrality of a rules-based international order. The current increased complexity and volatility of geopolitical dynamics and the cumulation of security challenges reinforce the need for enhanced and balanced cooperation with like-minded partners such as Norway.
60. The Council appreciates the close cooperation with Norway in various fields. The EU and Norway work together in addressing many common challenges, such as climate change, green and digital transitions, industrial transformation, migration and the protection of our citizens. Over the course of the last two years, the overall relationship has remained excellent, despite our differences notably on fisheries, trade in agricultural and fishery products or delays in the incorporation of EU acts which continue to lead to imbalances within the EEA.
61. The Council welcomes the continued strong cooperation with Norway in all areas of CFSP and CSDP and appreciates Norway's continued high rate of alignment with the EU in the field of CFSP, the good cooperation in multilateral settings and regular exchanges and dialogues. Cooperation extends to mediation, peacebuilding and the international agenda for development. The Security and Defence Partnership with Norway, signed in May 2024, aims to formalise and strengthen the existing collaboration while it allows for an even closer cooperation on security and defence, including issues such as international peace and crisis management, maritime security, defence industry, space collaboration, critical infrastructure, economic security, cyber security and hybrid threats.

62. Norway pursues close and very active collaboration with the EU in numerous joint work strands and initiatives as well as a regular dialogue at different levels on key foreign policy issues, including through long-standing support for the EU's CSDP missions and operations, participation in PESCO projects and the European Defence Fund (EDF). EU-Norway cooperation on security and defence has further intensified following Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, notably with Norway's participation via the EEA Agreement in the European Defence Industry Reinforcement through the Common Procurement Act (EDIRPA), and in the Act in Support of Ammunition Production (ASAP), and with their financial contribution to the European Peace Facility (EPF).
In addition, the Security Action for Europe (SAFE) is open to participation of Norway, and Norway expressed interest in joining the European Defence Industry Programme (EDIP) via the EEA Agreement.
63. The Council appreciates Norway's strong support to Ukraine and welcomes the close coordination between the EU and Norway on Ukraine, and recognises the significant financial support provided by Norway through the dedicated Nansen Programme for Ukraine as well as the common work in the Coalition of the Willing.
64. Through its participation in the Single Market, Norway is deeply integrated into European value chains, which underpins strategic cooperation in key industrial areas, notably through the EU-Norway Strategic Partnership on Sustainable Raw Materials and Batteries Value Chains.
65. The EU and Norway share a strong sense of responsibility towards their citizens, their natural environment and their future generations. The Council welcomes Norway's clear willingness to contribute to the implementation of the European Green Deal, to continue to be a driving force for international climate cooperation, and to work to fulfil the Paris Agreement commitments, together with the EU. The Council welcomes that Norway joined the Global Energy Transitions Forum in 2025, following up on the EU-led Global Pledge to double annual energy efficiency improvements and tripling renewables deployments by 2030.

66. The Council looks forward to strengthening, through the EU-Norway Green Alliance, the joint efforts with Norway to combat climate change and to accelerate the transition towards climate neutrality, including the decarbonization of the maritime sector and resilient transport infrastructure, as well as the clean and competitive industrial transition, namely on carbon capture and storage in hard-to-abate sectors and through strategic partnerships such as the 2024 EU-Norway Strategic Partnership on Sustainable Raw Materials and Batteries Value Chains. The Council also welcomes Norwegian Parliament's decision in late 2025 to halt new deep sea mining plans and new exploitation licenses in Arctic waters until at least 2029 in line with Norway's international commitments.
67. However, in that context, the Council regrets the delays in the full incorporation of the EU Clean Energy Package and calls for a swift completion of the process, crucial for maintaining a level playing field within the EEA.
68. The Council recognises the ongoing work to reduce the backlog and the important progress made in 2025. At the same time, the Council, stresses the need and calls on Norway to make increased efforts towards the full incorporation of EU acts and to continue close cooperation on long outstanding files, including the EU acquis in the area of energy and aviation safety as well as new acts, without delay in line with Norway's legal obligation under the EEA Agreement.
69. Norway remains a reliable key supplier of oil and gas for the EU. The country is also a close partner for the EU in developing renewables and other sources of low carbon and net zero energy, as well as supporting the transformation and resilience of the energy system. In this context, the Council encourages Norway to develop further its potential in clean energy projects, particularly in offshore wind, and to participate fully in the North Sea and in other EU regions. Our close cooperation remains crucial for the EU's energy security and for the objectives of the Energy Union and is a corner stone for the mutually beneficial relationship between the EU and Norway.

70. The EU Arctic Policy, while maintaining its focus on climate change, environmental issues, sustainable development and international cooperation, demonstrates the Union's strong interest in building on, and further developing, its existing cross-sectoral engagement in the Arctic. As current geopolitical tensions continue to create an increasingly complex and challenging environment in the region, the Council welcomes Norway's continued strong support for the EU's engagement in the Arctic. Norway is a close and reliable partner on Arctic issues and the Council looks forward to continuing to intensify this special partnership, expanding the scope of cooperation to include comprehensive resilience, the protection of critical infrastructure, secure connectivity and transport networks, research and science, security, climate action to enhance climate change resilience and pollution prevention. In this context the Council encourages a stronger cooperation.
71. The Council commends Norway for its active role in support of the Arctic and Northern regional cooperation and for hosting the Secretariat of the Arctic Council. It acknowledges Norway's contribution to maintaining the relevance and effectiveness of the Arctic Council in a challenging geopolitical environment. The Council welcomes Norway's continued strong support for the EU to be granted observer status in the Arctic Council and for EU participation in relevant fora. The EU and Norway remain close and strategic partners in addressing ocean-related issues both at global and regional level.
72. The Council acknowledges the importance of Norway as one of the EU's main trade partners, and recalls the expected two-yearly regular review of the Agreement between Norway and the EU aiming at the exchange of additional trade preferences in basic agricultural products. The Council regrets the lack of progress on the liberalisation of trade in processed agricultural products (PAPs), within the framework of Article 2(2) and Article 6 of Protocol 3 to the EEA Agreement, and firmly reiterates its invitation to Norway to engage actively, as a priority and without delay, in a constructive negotiation process to review Protocol 3. The Council reiterates its call to resume discussions on the signature of an agreement on Geographical Indications (GIs). The Council regrets the persistence of the export prohibition of Norwegian "production" salmon.

73. The Council deplors the decision of Norway to agree on mackerel quota allocations outside a comprehensive and inclusive Coastal States sharing arrangement and without the participation of the European Union. The Council expresses serious concerns about these quota allocation arrangements which risk to undermine the long-term sustainability of the stock and run counter to the principles of responsible fisheries management and international cooperation. The Council also regrets the setting by Norway of excessive unilateral quotas for mackerel and the lack of constructive co-operation with the EU.
74. The Council further deplors the lack of progress in recent years on the joint management of shared fish stocks in the North-East Atlantic and Norway's continued lack of cooperation within the framework of the Northeast Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC), including long-standing issues related to Svalbard/Spitsbergen, and the need to respect the Union's fishing rights under the 1920 Treaty of Spitsbergen. Moreover, the Council deplors the reductions imposed in access for the Union fleet to Norwegian waters for North Sea stocks, reduced access for Atlanto-Scandian herring, the absence of adequate scientific justification for the generic ban on beam trawl fisheries and the discontinuation of cross-border fishing in the Skagerrak.
75. The Council reaffirms its strong willingness to reach bilateral and multilateral sharing arrangements that ensure responsible, stable and sustainable management of shared stocks in the North-East Atlantic, in line with scientific advice, international obligations and taking into account historical rights, and calls on Norway, to engage constructively and in good faith to that end.
76. Reaffirming its strong support for the internationally agreed moratorium on commercial whaling established under the International Whaling Commission (IWC) and for the listing of cetaceans and other marine species under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), the Council urges Norway to lift its objection to the moratorium and to withdraw its reservations under CITES for these and other marine species.

77. The Council welcomes the cooperation with Norway on the governance of the Schengen area and appreciates its reliable commitment to the effective application of the Schengen acquis and on the implementation of the Entry/Exit System (EES) since October 2025 and the forthcoming European Travel Information and Authorisation System (ETIAS). The Council encourages Norwegian authorities to ensure that random identity checks remain limited to what is allowed under Article 23 of the Schengen Borders Code, ensuring that they do not have an effect equivalent to border checks.
- The Council continues to appreciate the strong integration of Norway into the Schengen and Dublin systems, based on cooperation, solidarity and effective external border controls.
78. The Council welcomes the positive outcomes and the good cooperation under the Agreement between the European Union and the Kingdom of Norway on administrative cooperation, combating fraud and recovery of claims in the field of value added tax as well as under Chapter IIa of Protocol 10 EEA on customs security measures.
- The Council also welcomes the opening of negotiations on an agreement in administrative cooperation in direct taxation between the EU and Norway, reflecting a shared commitment to strengthening tax transparency and fighting more effectively against tax evasion and avoidance.
79. The Council appreciates Norway's contribution to the reduction of social and economic disparities through the EEA and Norwegian Financial Mechanisms to the benefits of the Contracting Parties, with a view to promoting a continuous and balanced strengthening of trade and economic relations between the parties.
80. The Council looks forward to further strengthening and deepening the ties between the EU and Norway, including beyond the EEA cooperation, on issues such as health emergency measures in the area of medical countermeasures in the context of cross-border health threats, in view of shared values, lessons learned and the challenges we face together as European neighbours in a new geopolitical and geoeconomic setting. The Council will at the same time continue to pay attention to the necessary overall balance in relations between the EU and Norway.

SWITZERLAND

81. Switzerland is a close and longstanding partner of the European Union and one of the most closely associated Western European partners of the EU after the EEA EFTA States. The EU-Switzerland partnership is built on shared values and principles of democracy, human rights, the rule of law and the centrality of a rules-based international order. The current geopolitical context, marked by evolving global challenges, reinforces the need for strengthened cooperation with like-minded partners such as Switzerland.
82. The Council appreciates the close cooperation with Switzerland in various fields. The EU and Switzerland cooperate in a structured manner through international agreements and cooperation in a wide range of policy areas such as the free movement of persons, justice and home affairs, asylum, transport, trade, carbon pricing, research and education, as well as foreign and security policy, all of which are to the benefit of both sides. The Council underscores the importance that Switzerland ensures a level playing field in its relations with the EU and its Member States, including equal treatment between Member States.
83. However, despite the close cooperation, the Council noted that several bilateral agreements, related to fields of the internal market in which Switzerland participates, needed modernisation and that such modernisation was a key stepping stone and prerequisite to consolidating and expanding the bilateral relations further. The Council considers that the mutually beneficial EU-Switzerland relationship implies shared responsibility for its long-term success and sustainability.
84. Therefore, the Council considers that the signature of the agreement related to Union Programmes on 10 November 2025 and the signature of the rest of the broad package of agreements on 2 March 2026, mark an important moment towards deepening, modernising and expanding the relationship between the European Union and Switzerland.

85. The package of agreements will contribute to the smooth running and continued development of the European Union and Switzerland's comprehensive partnership to its full potential, enhancing predictability, legal certainty, and stability for citizens and economic operators on both sides. For businesses in particular, simple and more predictable market access conditions can help reduce administrative burdens for trade.
86. In this context, the Council welcomes that the package establishes a level playing field that fosters fair competition while upholding high regulatory standards. The Council stresses also the importance of dynamic alignment with evolving EU rules in key areas, ensuring long-term coherence and mutual benefit and of a robust dispute settlement mechanism guaranteeing a role for the Court of Justice for matters of EU law.
87. The Council welcomes that the package of agreements will modernise the main frameworks governing Switzerland's participation in fields related to the internal market, notably the free movement of persons, mutual recognition in relation to conformity assessment, as well as air and land transport. These changes will allow citizens and businesses on both sides to fully benefit from the rights these agreements provide and will create a level playing field in the future.
88. The Council also welcomes the extension of the EU-Swiss relationship to new areas of cooperation such as electricity, health and food safety, that which will as well benefit citizens and business on both sides.
89. The Council particularly welcomes the establishment of a permanent mechanism for Switzerland's regular and fair financial contribution support to economic and social cohesion within the Union, commensurate with the depth of the partnership, demonstrating Switzerland's continued commitment to solidarity and shared prosperity. The Council recalls that Switzerland's regular financial contribution is aimed at encouraging the continuous and balanced strengthening of economic and social relations between the Union and its Member States and Switzerland, reflecting the benefits drawn by the Switzerland from its participation in the Internal Market, while responding to important common challenges.

90. The Council underlines the importance of the Agreement on Switzerland's participation in Union programmes, which enables its association to several programmes in the area of research, digital, education and health. The Council welcomes the fact that Switzerland is already associated to Horizon Europe, Digital Europe, EURATOM R&T and ITER, through the provisional application of the Agreement on Union Programmes, thereby already delivering beneficial results for EU and Swiss researchers and innovators, for stakeholders deploying digital technologies to market, as well as for the nuclear fusion and fission communities on both sides. The Council notes that the provisional application of the Agreement on the European Union Agency for the Space Programme (EUSPA) improves cooperation between the Union and Switzerland in satellite navigation. The Council expects Switzerland's association to Erasmus+ as of 1 January 2027 as both sides committed to in the Agreement, to foster academic excellence and enhance cross-border mobility for students and educators.
91. The Council calls on all parties to build support for the broad package of agreements and ensure its successful swift ratification and entry into force, to maximise the positive impacts on citizens, businesses, and the broader EU-Switzerland partnership.
92. The Council underlines that the successful conclusion of the package of agreements is essential for the stabilisation and further development of the EU-Switzerland relationship, and that the status quo would not be a viable alternative since cooperation under existing frameworks would steadily erode as EU legislation evolves, risking economic and political instability at a time when close partnership is indispensable to address shared challenges. Long-term participation in key Union programmes, as well as the benefits of new agreements on health, food safety and electricity depend on swift ratification.

93. The Council recalls that the agreements were negotiated as a package that is carefully balanced to reflect the mutual interests of the EU and Switzerland, and should be concluded as a package. Access to the benefits of participation in fields of the Internal Market must remain linked to the corresponding institutional, regulatory and financial obligations. The package of agreements constitutes a coherent whole, whose integrity needs to be preserved in order to deliver the intended benefits for citizens, businesses, and the broader bilateral relationship. The Council will decide on the conclusion of the package of agreements after the completion of all relevant referenda in Switzerland, taking into account the overall balance of the package.
94. The Council welcomes the recent signature, on 5th March 2026, of the Joint Declaration on Strengthened Cooperation on Foreign and Security Policy, which also establishes an annual high-level political dialogue. The Council appreciates the various several thematic and geographic dialogues and consultations that cover a broad range of common interest. The Council appreciates the growing EU- Switzerland cooperation on security and defence, notably on hybrid and cyber threats, FIMI, non- proliferation and disarmament, as well as on respective peace mediation engagements in the field.
95. The Council appreciates the coordination of positions on issues of mutual interest in multilateral fora, in areas such as condemning Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, fighting climate change and environmental protection, promoting human rights, rule of law, international criminal justice, compliance with international humanitarian law, democracy, and sustainable development and notably preserving and reforming the multilateral system with the UN at its core.
96. The Council appreciates Switzerland's support to Ukraine in the context of the Russian aggression against Ukraine, including the organisation of the Burgenstock Summit on Peace in UA and the trilateral US-Ukraine-Russia meeting in Geneva, the provision of humanitarian and refugee support. The Council welcomes the Ukraine Support Programme and encourages Switzerland to further enhance this comprehensive support to Ukraine.

97. Furthermore, the Council welcomes Switzerland's alignment to EU's restrictive measures and encourages Switzerland to continue pursuing a close and consistent application of restrictive measures including preventing their circumvention.
98. The Council expresses appreciation at Switzerland's long-standing ad-hoc contributions to CSDP missions and operations and notes current participation in EUFOR Althea. It further welcomes the signature, on 5th March 2026, of the Framework Participation Agreement which facilitates Switzerland's participation to such missions and encourages Switzerland to strengthen this support, including for the CSDP missions in Ukraine. The Council also welcomes the recent update of Switzerland's Administrative Agreement with the European Defence Agency and its participation in the Hub for Defence Innovation, as well as the Council approval on Switzerland's joining the PESCO projects on military mobility and cyber ranges.
99. The Council welcomes the cooperation with Switzerland on the governance of the Schengen area and cooperation on asylum under the Dublin system. It appreciates the reliable commitment to the effective application of the Schengen acquis in accordance with the agreed common standards, fundamental principles and norms.
100. It notes the conclusion, in 2024, of the supplementary agreement enabling Switzerland's participation in the Instrument for Financial Support for Border Management and Visa Policy (BMVI) in 2021-2027. It welcomes Switzerland's operational launch of the Entry/Exit System (EES) and acknowledges the effective integration of the new Schengen Information System/SIRENE procedures into the border management, migration and law enforcement processes; at the same time the Council encourages Switzerland to pursue further improvements to guarantee a more effective use of the system.

101. The Council welcomes the signature, in March 2026, of the Agreement on the transfer of Passenger Name Record data between the EU and Switzerland. It calls for the early ratification of this key instrument, that will strengthen the parties' ability to fight terrorism, serious and organised crime, drug trafficking and child exploitation.
102. The Council welcomes that the 2004 Agreement on automatic exchange of financial account information to improve fight against tax evasion, after a first amendment in 2015, was further updated and expanded in December 2025, in line with the consolidated Common Reporting Standard (CRS) of the OECD and Directive (EU) 2023/2226. Given the close economic ties between the EU and Switzerland, the effective functioning of the Agreement on the automatic exchange of financial account information strengthens the parties' ability to tackle tax fraud, evasion and avoidance in a manner consistent with international standards.
103. The Council appreciates Switzerland's contribution to the reduction of social and economic disparities in the Union as well as the fight against irregular migration based on the Second Memorandum of Understanding signed in June 2022.
104. The Council welcomes net-zero commitment by 2050 by Switzerland, a like-minded partner in multilateral climate action, and encourages continued collaboration to advance the Paris Agreement, and shared climate objectives.
105. Recognising the spirit of solidarity demonstrated by the European Union in response to the devastating fires in Crans-Montana, the Council welcomes the swift activation of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM), through which the Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC) facilitated seamless coordination between national authorities, healthcare providers, and emergency services, including support for medical evacuations of patients to several Member States and deployment of specialised medical teams. The EU's commitment to standing in solidarity with Switzerland in times of crisis underscores the value of joint preparedness and rapid response to crisis.

PRINCIPALITY OF ANDORRA

106. The Principality of Andorra and the European Union are like-minded and close partners bound by shared values and principles of democracy, human rights and the rule of law. Over the years, Andorra's relations with EU have been strengthened through a series of cooperation agreements, with 2025 marking thirty years of diplomatic relations between Andorra and the European Union.
107. The Council welcomes progress towards signing and provisional application of the Association Agreement with Andorra and San Marino. It looks forward to the swift adoption of the relevant Council Decisions in view of its provisional application.
108. This unique far-reaching agreement will open a new chapter in the relations between the EU and Andorra. Building on the existing cooperation and customs agreements, it will extend the internal market's four freedoms and flanking policies, as well as establish a framework to develop and promote dialogue and cooperation in areas of common interest, such as research and development, education, social policy, the environment, consumer protection, culture or regional cooperation. The agreement includes mechanisms to ensure the integrity of the internal market and a level playing field and takes into account the specificities of each country and their particular situation, in line with the Declaration on Article 8 of the Treaty on European Union.
109. The Council notes that Andorra will hold a referendum on this Agreement, encourages stakeholders to continue their public outreach to increase awareness of the mutual benefits of this Agreement and stands ready to support the debate about the Agreement.
110. The Council expresses its appreciation for the strengthening of the administrative capacities in Andorra to ensure a swift alignment on the EU acquis, as well as robust supervision and enforcement in line with EU standards. The Council stands ready to offer administrative and technical assistance to this goal.

111. The Council appreciates Andorra's support to Ukraine and welcomes the close coordination and alignment with the EU, including through close contacts and alignment with EU CFSP positions, declarations and restrictive measures. The Council recalls its support for further strengthening cooperation between Andorra and the EU, through the establishment of a framework for bilateral political dialogues, as well as a structured process for Andorra's alignment with the EU on CFSP matters, notably by including Andorra in the group of countries that are systematically invited to formally align with CFSP Declarations by the High Representative on behalf of the EU and EU restrictive measures.
112. The Council commends Andorra's engagement in international fora and welcomes the continued cooperation between Andorra and EU in multilateral fora in particular in the UN framework and the Council of Europe.
113. The Council welcomes Andorra's joining of the EU-led Global Pledge to triple renewable energy and double annual efficiency improvements by 2030 and that Andorra is part of the Carbon Neutrality Coalition and the Global Methane Pledge, as well to its commitment to achieve climate neutrality by 2050. In this respect the Council encourages progress towards meeting the Paris Agreement objectives.
114. The Council acknowledges Andorra's continued constructive, transparent and open cooperation with the EU, which aims at ensuring that all principles and criteria of the EU Code of Conduct on Business Taxation are effectively applied. The Council welcomes the signing of the Amending Protocol to the Agreement providing reciprocal Automatic Exchange of Financial Account Information and improving international tax compliance between Andorra and each of the EU Member States, which entered into force on 1 January 2026.
115. The Council welcomes the finalisation of negotiations on the amendment to the Monetary Agreement with Andorra, ahead of the application of the Association Agreement.

116. The Council welcomes the successful implementation of the Framework Agreement between the European Investment Bank and Andorra, marked by the approval of Andorra's first financing operation with the EIB.
117. The Council welcomes the finalisation of negotiations on the Agreement between the EU and the Principality of Andorra on several aspects in the field of border management, which provides for the lifting of border controls between, respectively, France and Andorra as well as Spain and Andorra; thereby strengthening economic and social ties. The Agreement addresses the consequences of the Entry/Exit System and the European Travel Information and Authorisation System ('ETIAS') on third-country national residents in Andorra and improves the security and trust as regards the residence permits issued by Andorra to third-country nationals. Moreover, it strengthens police cooperation and confirms the visa-free status of EU nationals in Andorra and the visa-free status of Andorran nationals in the Schengen area.

REPUBLIC OF SAN MARINO

118. The Republic of San Marino and the European Union are like-minded and close partners bound by shared values and principles of democracy, human rights and the rule of law. Over the years, San Marino's relations with EU have been strengthened through a series of cooperation agreements.
119. The Council welcomes progress towards signing and provisional application of the Association Agreement with Andorra and San Marino. It looks forward to the swift adoption of the relevant Council Decisions in view of its provisional application.
120. This unique far-reaching agreement will open a new chapter in the relations between the EU and San Marino. Building on the existing cooperation and customs agreements, it will extend the internal market's four freedoms and flanking policies, as well as establish a framework to develop and promote dialogue and cooperation in areas of common interest, such as research and development, education, social policy, the environment, consumer protection, culture or regional cooperation. The agreement includes mechanisms to ensure the integrity of the internal market and a level playing field and takes into account the specificities of each country.
121. The Council expresses its appreciation for the strengthening of the administrative capacities in San Marino to ensure a swift alignment on the EU acquis, as well as robust supervision and enforcement in line with EU standards. The Council stands ready to offer administrative and technical assistance to this goal.
122. The Council appreciates San Marino's support for Ukraine and welcomes its close coordination and alignment with the EU, including through engagement and alignment with EU Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) positions, declarations, and restrictive measures. The Council also values San Marino's commitment to solidarity, particularly through the provision of humanitarian assistance to Ukraine, including the reception and support of refugees.

123. The Council recalls its support for further strengthening cooperation between San Marino and the EU, through the establishment of a framework for bilateral political dialogues, as well as a structured process for San Marino's alignment with the EU on CFSP matters, notably by including San Marino in the group of countries that are systematically invited to formally align with CFSP Declarations by the High Representative on behalf of the EU and EU restrictive measures. The Council commends San Marino's engagement in international fora and welcomes the continued cooperation between San Marino and EU in multilateral fora.
124. The Council appreciates San Marino's commitment to reducing its greenhouse gas emissions and welcomes its first nationally determined contribution (NDC) under the Paris Agreement in 2016, in which it committed to reducing emissions to 20% below 2005 levels by 2030. In this respect, the Council invites San Marino to set its targets for 2035 emission reductions and for achieving climate neutrality. The Council also welcomes San Marino's endorsement of the Global Pledge on Renewables and Energy Efficiency at COP28 and commends its commitment to advancing the global clean energy transition.
125. The Council acknowledges San Marino's continued constructive, transparent and open cooperation with the EU, which aims at ensuring that all principles and criteria of the EU Code of Conduct on Business Taxation are effectively applied. The Council welcomes the signing of the Amending Protocol to the Agreement providing reciprocal Automatic Exchange of Financial Account Information and improving international tax compliance between San Marino and each of the EU Member States, which entered into force on 1 January 2026.
126. The Council welcomes the finalisation of negotiations on the amendment to the Monetary Agreement with San Marino, ahead of the application of the Association Agreement.

127. The Council welcomes the finalisation of negotiations on the Agreement between the EU and the Republic of San Marino on several aspects in the field of border management, which provides for the lifting of border controls between Italy and San Marino, thereby strengthening economic and social ties. The Agreement addresses the consequences of Entry/Exit System and the European Travel Information and Authorisation System ('ETIAS') on third-country national residents in San Marino and improves the security and trust as regards the residence permits issued by San Marino to third-country nationals. Moreover, it strengthens police cooperation and confirms the visa-free status of EU nationals in San Marino and the visa-free status of Sammarinese nationals in the Schengen area.

PRINCIPALITY OF MONACO

128. The Principality of Monaco and the European Union are like-minded and close partners bound by shared history, culture, shared values and principles of democracy, human rights and the rule of law. Over the years, Monaco's relations with EU have been strengthened through a series of cooperation agreements.
129. The Council takes note of the decision of 14 September 2023 to suspend negotiations on an Association Agreement, acknowledging that the conditions were not in place for their successful conclusion. In this context, the Council reaffirms that the European Union continues to consider Monaco a privileged partner and invites Monaco to further strengthen its close cooperation with the Union and that Monaco remains welcome to join the future Association Agreement alongside Andorra and San Marino.
130. The Council appreciates Monaco's support to Ukraine and welcomes the close coordination and alignment with the EU, including through close contacts and alignment with EU CFSP positions, declarations and restrictive measures. The Council also values Monaco's commitment to solidarity, particularly through the provision of humanitarian assistance to refugees.
131. The Council recalls its support for further strengthening cooperation between Monaco and the EU, through the establishment of a framework for bilateral political dialogues, as well as a structured process for Monaco's alignment with the EU on CFSP matters, notably by including Monaco in the group of countries that are systematically invited to formally align with CFSP Declarations by the High Representative on behalf of the EU and EU restrictive measures.
132. The Council welcomes Monaco's forthcoming Presidency of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe from May to November 2026, noting that this will mark its first Presidency since its accession in 2004. The Council commends Monaco's engagement in international fora and welcomes the continued cooperation between Monaco and the EU in multilateral fora in particular in the UN framework and the Council of Europe.

133. The Council welcomes Monaco's strong commitment to environmental protection and the fight against climate change. The Council appreciates Monaco's strong commitment to ocean conservation, including through the BBNJ Agreement, which entered into force in January 2026 and represents a decisive step towards the protection of the high seas and which Monaco was among the first countries to ratify in May 2024.
134. The Council commends Monaco's participation in the EU-led Global Pledge adopted at COP28, aimed at doubling the global rate of energy efficiency improvements and tripling renewable energy capacity by 2030 and carbon neutrality by 2050. The Council further appreciates Monaco's commitment to a sustainable ocean economy, including new financial pledges amounting to over EUR 8.7 billion by 2030. Building on this progress, it welcomes Monaco's hosting of the Blue Economy and Finance Forum on 28 and 29 May 2026.
135. The Council acknowledges Monaco's continued constructive, transparent and open cooperation with the EU on tax good governance, in compliance with the processes and criteria set out by the Council for the purpose of establishing the EU list of non-cooperative jurisdictions for tax purposes. The Council welcomes the signing of the Amending Protocol to the Agreement providing reciprocal Automatic Exchange of Financial Account Information and improving international tax compliance between Monaco and each of the EU Member States, which entered into force on 1 January 2026.
136. The Council acknowledges Monaco's tangible progress, as reflected in the FATF evaluation of June 2025, in improving its AML/CFT framework and recognises the efforts made by the Monegasque authorities to implement all recommendations. The Council also takes note of MONEYVAL's evaluation of 2024, which confirmed that progress has been achieved, that Monaco's framework is compliant with international standards, and that efforts are underway to exit the FATF so called grey list. In this context, the Council welcomes Monaco's National Strategy and Action Plan for 2025–2027, aimed at addressing these issues effectively.

FAROE ISLANDS

137. The Faroe Islands are like-minded, close and important partners of the EU, bound by shared values and principles of democracy, human rights and the rule of law. Over the years, the relations between the Faroe Islands and the EU have been strengthened through cooperation in areas such as trade, aquaculture, research, innovation and Arctic and North Atlantic matters.
138. The signing of the Memorandum of Understanding on enhanced cooperation between the European Union and the Government of the Faroe Islands on 14 March 2024 marked a step toward deepening this partnership in fields of common interest such as green and digital transition, climate change, environment and energy, arctic matters, marine biodiversity, education, taxation, food security and scientific cooperation.
139. The Council appreciates the Faroe Islands support to Ukraine and welcomes the alignment with the EU restrictive measures in the context of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. The Council furthermore recognizes the efforts to ensure their effective implementation.
140. The Council emphasises the importance of balanced trade relations and sustainable fisheries management. In this respect, the Council strongly deplores decisions of the Faroe Islands to agree on quota allocations for mackerel outside a comprehensive and inclusive Coastal States sharing arrangement and without the participation of the European Union.
141. The Council expresses serious concerns about these arrangements which risk to undermine the long-term sustainability of the fish stock and run counter to the principles of responsible fisheries management and international cooperation. The Council also regrets the setting by the Faroe Islands of excessive unilateral quotas on mackerel as well as on Atlanto-Scandian herring and the lack of constructive cooperation with the EU. The Council stresses the need for the Faroe Islands to engage constructively within the framework of the Northeast Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC) with a view to ensuring the long-term sustainability and to achieving a fair sharing of fishing opportunities.

142. The Council reaffirms its strong willingness to reach comprehensive sharing arrangements that ensure responsible, stable and sustainable management of shared stocks in the North-East Atlantic, in line with scientific advice, international obligations and taking into account historical rights, and calls on the Faroe Islands to engage constructively and in good faith to that end. The Council strongly invites the Faroe Islands to cooperate with the European Union on the adoption of management measures for North-East Atlantic stocks, and noting the EU proposal in NEAFC in that respect, to tackle the issue of transshipments at sea.
143. The Council welcomes the Faroe Islands' commitment to environmental protection and the fight against climate change. It appreciates the Faroe Islands' strong focus on renewable energy and their target of achieving 100% green electricity by 2030, which aligns with their international climate commitments under the Paris Agreement.
144. The Council welcomes the Faroe Islands' wish to cooperate in the field of education and in this regard to participate in the Erasmus+ programme.
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