



Mission of the Faroes to the EU

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The Faroese have had a busy representation office in Brussels since 1998 with diplomatic activities gradually changing focus from improving the 1996 Trade Agreement to facilitating cooperation in science, technology, and aviation.

FOLLOWING the implementation of the 1996 Trade Agreement between the Faroe Islands and the European Union, the Faroese agenda with regard to the EU was limited to setting up office in Brussels and make good efforts to improve that Trade Agreement. In the last few years, however, the focus has shifted toward establishing cooperation in key areas including science and technology and aviation, said Gunnar Holm-Jacobsen, head of the Mission of the Faroes to the European Union.

“For the first few years the Mission dedicated most of its resources to improving the 1996 Trade Agreement,” Mr. Holm-Jacobsen said. “As far as concerns trade in goods, the feeling is that we have something now that basically works. But we’ve still got a long way to go toward our goal of reaching agreement on the free movement of goods, services, capital, and people.”

That goal forms part of what is outlined in a newly drafted resolution regard-

ing the Faroe Islands’ policy on Europe, recently tabled to the Faroese Parliament, the Loegting. The policy resolution is set to clear the air of uncertainty over the political will of the Faroese in relation to the EU — confirming that the country will not be seeking membership in the near future, although prominent political figures have suggested change.

“In its current wording, the new policy will essentially consolidate the work that has been carried out while providing guidelines on further development,” Mr. Holm-Jacobsen said.

On a daily basis, the Mission’s activities cover a range of matters, such as maintaining existing agreements, representing Faroese authorities vis-à-vis EU authorities and embassies in Brussels as well as in various international fora, following developments within the EU in issues of particular interest, following up on requests from individuals and businesses.

Membership for the Faroes in the

Pan-Euro-Med Cumulation of Origin System was achieved in 2005, making Faroese seafood exports to the EU less cumbersome as raw materials from third countries could be used without affecting originating status.

Last year, the Agreement between the European Union and the Government of the Faroes on Scientific and Technological Cooperation was signed, associating the Faroe Islands to the so-called Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development.

Efforts to join the European Common Aviation Area (ECAA) are likewise beginning to yield results after questions over member state competency have been resolved.

Mr. Holm-Jacobsen said: “A pragmatic solution has been found through Denmark’s expansion of its ECAA membership and we expect that before the end of this year, the Faroes will enjoy the same status as associate members.”