

**Question for written answer E-010424/2012
to the Commission**
Rule 117
Morten Løkkegaard (ALDE)

Subject: The new Norwegian tariff barriers

There is a cooperation agreement between the three EFTA Member States Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein and the EU: the EEA Agreement. This means that the EU's internal-market provisions also apply in those countries. The EEA Agreement does not encompass the EU Customs Union, fisheries or agriculture, however.

Norway's 2013 budget imposes tariffs on a large number of products from Denmark and other countries: 277% on particular cheeses, 429% on lamb and 344% on beef. Unlike the tariffs on meat and cheese, which do not come into effect until 2013, the tariff on potted plants, for instance, is already reality (with a new 72% tariff being imposed on hydrangeas, for example, in order to protect Norwegian market gardens).

The EEA Agreement requires countries to work towards gradual liberalisation of trade in agricultural products.

In view of this, does the Commission consider that Norway is complying with that obligation? Can the Commission confirm that Norway's new tariffs do not accord with the spirit of liberalisation in trade agreements, but, rather, constitute a trade barrier which is harmful to trade in a WTO and EEA context?