

Tobias Ulvestad

Ploughing Through Expectations

A Comprehensive Analysis of the Development of the Norwegian Agricultural Sector During the Era of the European Economic Area

Bachelor's thesis in European Studies

Supervisor: Lise Rye

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Abstract

This thesis explores the development of Norway's agricultural sector since its entry into the European Economic Area (EEA) and assesses whether these changes align with the government's initial expectations. Drawing upon literature of Europeanisation phenomenon, it aims to explore if these developments can be explained through Norway's association with the EU. Findings include both diverging and aligning developments measured against the initial expectations. Some developments, as the expansion of the EEA Agreement, were unexpected and influenced the agricultural sector, while international developments played a more significant role overall, as anticipated. Similarities between the development of the Norwegian and Finnish agricultural sectors are found, such as structural changes. Differences are found in a noticeable gap in support for farmers. The analysis suggests that Europeanisation phenomena may explain certain developments, though further research is required. The thesis utilises a three-part analysis structure, where the first part identifies initial expectations Norway had for the development of the agricultural sector, as Norway entered the EEA. The second part contains an analysis of the developments that occurred in the agricultural sector, and whether they align with the initial expectations. The third part is a comparison between the Norwegian and Finnish agricultural development over the last 30 years. It aims to contextualise the Norwegian case by comparing with Finland, which faced similar agricultural challenges as Norway but chose to enter the EU. Overall, while association to the EU through the EEA Agreement has shaped Norwegian agriculture in unforeseen ways, broader international developments have been the primary drivers of change.

Sammendrag

Denne oppgaven utforsker utviklingen av Norges landbrukssektor siden landets inntreden i Det europeiske økonomiske samarbeidsområdet (EØS) og vurderer om disse endringene samsvarer med regjeringens opprinnelige forventninger. Ved å dra nytte av litteratur om europeisering fenomenet, søker oppgaven å utforske om disse utviklingene kan forklares gjennom Norges tilknytning til EU. Funn inkluderer både avvikende og sammenfallende utviklinger i forhold til de opprinnelige forventningene. Noen utviklinger, som utvidelsen av EØS-avtalen, var uventede og påvirket landbrukssektoren, mens internasjonale utviklinger generelt spilte en større rolle, som forventet. Likheter mellom utviklingen av den norske og finske landbrukssektoren blir funnet, som for eksempel strukturelle endringer. Forskjeller blir funnet i en merkbar forskjell i støtte til bønder. Analysen antyder at europeiseringsfenomenet kan forklare visse utviklinger, selv om ytterligere forskning er nødvendig. Avhandlingen bruker en tredelt analysestruktur, der den første delen identifiserer Norges opprinnelige forventninger til utviklingen av landbrukssektoren, da Norge skulle tre inn i EØS. Den andre delen inneholder en analyse av utviklingene som har funnet sted i landbrukssektoren, og om de samsvarer med de opprinnelige forventningene. Den tredje delen er en sammenligning mellom den norske og finske landbruksutviklingen de siste 30 årene. Målet er å sette det norske tilfellet i en større sammenheng ved å sammenligne med Finland, som sto overfor lignende utfordringer innen landbruket som Norge, men valgte å gå inn i EU. Alt i alt har tilknytningen til EU gjennom EØS-avtalen formet norsk landbruk på uforutsette måter, men bredere internasjonale utviklinger har vært de viktigste årsakene for endring.

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List of Abbreviations

CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CFP	Common Fisheries Policy
EEA	European Economic Area
EFTA	European Free Trade Association
EU	European Union
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
WTO	World Trade Organisation

1 Introduction

The European Union (EU) has had various names and abbreviations since its beginning, such as the ECSC and the EEC. However, for clarity and simplicity, I will consistently refer to it as the EU in this thesis.

When Norway joined the European Economic Area (EEA) in 1994 alongside other Nordic countries, it marked a significant chapter in the nation's history. While Sweden and Finland took it a step further and entered the European Union (EU) the following year, Norway remained outside the EU, partly to shield their primary industries. The emphasis on protecting specifically the agricultural sector from international competition has long been ingrained in Norway's EU politics. It played a decisive role in the outcomes of the EU referendums in 1972 and 1994, which reflects its strategic economic interests and national identity.

This thesis aims to explore how the Norwegian agricultural sector has developed during the EEA era. This will be examined through a three-part analysis. I begin by identifying the initial expectations Norway had for the development of the agricultural sector, as Norway became an EEA member. In the second part I analyse the developments in the agricultural sector since Norway joined the EEA, and determine if they align with the initial expectations. Lastly, I aim to contextualise the Norwegian case by comparing Norway's development with that of Finland, which, though faced with similar agricultural challenges, opted for EU membership instead. Drawing on the literature of Europeanisation phenomenon, I aim to find out if Norway's relationship with the EU through the EEA Agreement can explain the developments in the agricultural sector.

In my discussion I argue that the development of the agricultural sector both aligned and did not align with the various expectations. The EEA Agreement has affected the agricultural sector due to article 19 expansions on liberalisation of trade in agricultural products, increase in immigrant workers, technical regulations on vehicles and machines, and the Veterinarian Agreement which dissolved border controls. Furthermore, agricultural import and export has increased. Yet, the EU perceives the progress as having been too slow, while actors such as the Norwegian Farmers' Union argues it has gone too far and favours the EU.

There were similarities between Norway and Finland, as both expected their agricultural sector to change significantly due to international developments such as the WTO. These predictions were correct as the agricultural sectors have been through significant transformations. Both countries have experienced similar reductions in total amount of farms and employees in the sector. There were also differences however, as Norwegian farmers currently receive more subsidies support compared to the Finnish farmers. It is a possibility that Norwegian farmers have been able to receive more support by being an EEA member than they would have been able to get as part of EU. However, I cannot argue that for a certainty as the Finnish decrease in subsidies support might be the result of a deliberate political development desired the Finnish government, or due to other factors. Further research would be required to answer that question.

2 Literature review

In this section I aim to show how previous research explains why Norway's agricultural goals have been to maintain autonomy and protect the sector from international competition, and how these goals differentiate from the agricultural goals of the EU. I will then look at research explaining how this has affected Norway's EU politics.

Protecting the Norwegian agriculture has been a priority due to its poor geographical and climatic conditions. Norway is geographically located far north, which comes with cold temperatures and weather which is not optimal for agriculture. Furthermore, Norway's topography has a lot of mountains and fjords compared to many European countries, which grants less arable land. Only 3% of the total landmass area in Norway was used for farming in 1994, compared to 57% in the EU (Knudsen & Regjeringen, 1994, p. 2941; NOU 2012: 2, p. 665). The accessibility of arable land is various in different places, but in most areas the plots are steep and dispersed, which makes it difficult to operate with modern machinery. Furthermore, it makes transportation time-consuming and inefficient (Antman, 2015, pp. 16-17, 130).

Norwegian farms are generally smaller in size and less efficient compared to many European farms, which necessitates special provisions as they are sensitive to international competition. The goals for the Norwegian agricultural sector did not correspond with the goals of EU's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). The smaller size of the Norwegian farms is visible when looking at farm structures from 1990. The average agricultural area per farm in hectares were 10,2 for Norway, and comparatively 12,8 in Finland, which shares similar natural conditions, and had a similar agricultural structure as Norway in 1990. For context, the EU average at the time were 16,5 (Miles et al., 1996, p. 224). This structure of smaller, less efficient farms, is a direct consequence of the natural conditions, which makes it difficult to create efficient large-scale farms on the level of the European competitors, as it is impossible in most places. Resulting in the sector needing extra protection and support in order to compete with the more efficient farms in the EU. The similar structures and conditions present in both the Norwegian and Finnish agricultural sector in 1990 meant that they were not very compatible with the EU's CAP, which favoured large-scale efficient farms (Jahn & Storsved, 1995, p. 28). The EU's goals for agriculture has historically aimed to create a level playing field for producers by restricting measures that distort competition, while Norway's strategy has been to protect its agricultural sector from too much international competition. Norwegian agricultural interest towards the EU is therefore of a defensive nature, by protecting the sector, limiting imports, and maintaining high subsidies to ensure the continuation of agriculture in Norway. This is evident, as agricultural imports from the EU are high, while the export is low (NOU 2012: 2, p. 665; Rye, 2019, p. 56).

Norway cofounding the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) aligned with Norway's central economic and agricultural goals in its EU politics. EFTA was founded in 1960 by Norway and six other European countries, and its purpose was to promote economic integration and free trade among its members. EFTA was created as an alternative to the EU, but its creation was hastened, as the founding seven countries wanted to avoid a damaging economic division between the members of the EU and those on the outside. It helped that the countries found the intergovernmental approach of what became EFTA easier to stomach than the supranational approach in the EU. Discussions began on June 1st, 1959, in Saltsjöbaden in Sweden, and merely five months later the initial EFTA's founding Stockholm convention was initiated. Establishing EFTA aligned with Norway's

EU politics, as they sought arenas for trade and economic integration, but feared how EU membership might affect its agriculture. Which is why EFTA was a good solution, as members maintained its autonomy over the agricultural sector, and only trade in processed agricultural products were liberalised. (Broad & Griffiths, 2023, pp. 516-517).

Norway joining the EEA was a continuation of its EU politics in seeking economic integration while protecting its agriculture against international competition, however, the EEA has developed in unexpected ways and has influenced the agricultural sector, even though the sector was excluded from the Agreement. Norway and the other EFTA countries began formal negotiations with the EU for an economic trade relation in 1990, which became the EEA Agreement. It regulates the official relationship between the EFTA members (except for Switzerland) and the EU. Its main aim was to strengthen the trade relationship between the EFTA and EU countries by extending the Single European Market to the EFTA members on a mutually beneficial basis (Archer, 2005, p. 56; NOU 2012: 2, p. 44). It was of the essence for Norway to keep the agricultural sector out of this Agreement, due to Norway's agricultural goals of maintaining autonomy over the sector and protect it from international competition. Agriculture did not end up in the EEA Agreement, which was a crucial contributor to why the Agreement was accepted in Norway, as it made it more appealing to sceptics. However, an Official Norwegian Report from 2012 done on behalf of the Norwegian ministry of foreign affairs "Europautredningen", concludes that the EEA Agreement and other bilateral deals between the Norway and the EU has developed in unexpected way and indeed influenced the Norwegian agricultural sector. Furthermore, the report states that Norway's relationship with the EU can be envisioned as a patchwork quilt, which consists of different Agreements which have been gradually expanded as new Agreements are reached and attached to the old, without a clear vision or framework. If the relationship with the EU was to be formed from scratch today, it would probably be different (NOU 2012: 2, pp. 35, 660).

3 The Europeanisation phenomenon

This thesis utilises the Europeanisation phenomenon, or the process of Europeanisation, in the analysis of the development of the Norwegian agricultural sector since Norway entered the EEA. Europeanisation concerns the interactions between the EU and its member states or third countries associated with the EU, Norway being a prime example as Brussel regards it as the third country which is closest associated with the EU (NOU 2012: 2, p. 35). The definition of the phenomenon itself varies, as there is no general consensus to what the process of Europeanisation entails and it has been used in various ways in different articles, some even claiming the term too vague and debated to be used (Olsen, 2002, p. 921). However, by clearly defining its usage in this thesis, I believe it will be fruitful to utilise the term in this context. This is due to the reported Europeanisation effect the EU has on its member states and associated countries. Significant political power in Norway has been delegated to the supranational level of the EU, and Norway has been influenced to a large extent in the same way as other member states. This might have affected policy areas in the EEA Agreement which it did not originally encompass, such as the agricultural sector. Considering that Norway has implemented 3/4 of all EU legislation compared to EU member states, this is not hard to imagine (Tallberg, 2012, pp. 300-301).

I will be using Tallberg's definition of Europeanisation, which is as follows: "Europeanisation describes national changes in reaction to regional integration in Europe" (Tallberg, 2010, p. 16). Börzel & Panke generally draws a distinction between two different kinds of Europeanisation phenomenon perspectives, namely "bottom-up" and "top-down" Europeanisation (Börzel & Panke, 2019, p. 113). This thesis will utilise the latter, as the bottom-up perspective delves into how national states affect the EU system, which is not relevant to Norway as it is not a member state and does not have formal influence within the EU.

The top-down perspective focuses on how the EU shapes the domestic institutions, political processes and policies of its members states, and third countries like Norway from the top and downwards. It emphasises how states download practices from the EU, which includes institutions and policies, along with the adoption of norms, and other general practices from the higher levels of the EU (Archer, 2005, p. 88). These institutional changes may happen as the EU require alterations to national institutions in order to fit in with EU regulations. The top-down perspective searches for the factors at EU level which causes domestic change in the associated countries. The EU may alter opportunity structures for the domestic actors, as a misfit between the EU and a domestic norm in Norway for instance often calls for a domestic adaption of said norms (Börzel & Panke, 2019, pp. 113, 116; Cole, 2008, p. 87).

4 Approach

This thesis aims to explore how the Norwegian agricultural sector has developed during the EEA era. I chose Norwegian agriculture and the EEA as a case due to the significant and interesting role agriculture has played in Norway's EU politics, and because the EEA Agreement is the most comprehensive and far-reaching Agreement Norway has ever entered into (Tallberg, 2012, p. 287). I chose to compare Norway with Finland due to their relatively similar agricultural challenges, making it interesting to explore how their different connections to the EU may have influenced the developments of the agricultural sectors.

The thesis statement will be explored through a three-part analysis. First, I will outline Norway's initial expectations regarding the agricultural sector upon joining the EEA, in order to have something to measure the development of the sector against. In the following section, I will assess developments in the agricultural sector since Norway's EEA accession, to determine if they align with the initial expectations. I will mainly be focusing on significant developments in terms of trade, regulations, and the structure of the agriculture. Lastly, I aim to contextualise Norway's case by comparing its agricultural development to that of Finland. I attempt to find out if the development in the Norwegian agriculture is specific, connected to the EEA Agreement, or if it has been general, akin to the development we find in the EU country Finland. I draw upon the literature of Europeanisation phenomenon, aiming to find out if Norway's relationship with the EU through the EEA Agreement can explain the developments in the agricultural sector.

I have employed a qualitative document analysis methodology in this thesis. This is a content analysis and involved systematically reviewing a range of documents, including articles, books, and transcripts, to collect data that addresses the research questions posed. As I progressed with the research, I gained a deeper understanding of the topic, which influenced the selection of documents I included in the study. This repeating process required flexibility in the research plan, with adjustments made in response to emerging findings (Grønmo, 2004, pp. 187, 201). Initially, my focus was on documents related to the EEA, trade expansions, and the agricultural sectors of Norway and Finland.

Throughout this process, it has been essential to employ categorisation, source criticism, and contextual assessments of the texts. I have evaluated and interpreted the content in relation to the research question, comparing documents and identifying commonalities to group them into categories. As more content was examined, these categories were reviewed and refined. I aimed to determine the central elements of each category, defining their boundaries and working towards theoretical generalisation. However, a challenge of the qualitative approach is the potential influence of the researcher's perspective on text selection and interpretation. To avoid this, I have sought to explore a diverse range of documents, including those outside my established categories, to ensure a comprehensive analysis and avoid confirmation bias (Grønmo, 2004, pp. 190-193; Moses & Knutsen, 2019, pp. 33-34).

5 Expectations to the EEA Agreement concerning the agricultural sector

5.1 Context for the Norwegian parliamentary proposition nr. 100 (1991-92) document

This section will give context for the political landscape in Norway when the Norwegian parliamentary proposition nr. 100 (1991-92) was presented. Translated from Norwegian, the proposition carries the title "On consent to the ratification of the Agreement on the European Economic Area (EEA), signed in Oporto on 2nd May 1992". It covers the negotiated terms regarding the EEA, and the expectations the Norwegian government had to the status and development of the agricultural sector when Norway entered the EEA. The Norwegian government consisted entirely of Labour party representatives when this proposition was presented in May 1992. Originally the conservative parties in Norway formed a coalition government after the parliamentary election in 1989. However, the negotiations for the EEA Agreement began that year, and it created tension between the governing conservative parties. The main conflicting parties were the Conservative party ("Høyre") which wanted EU-membership, and the Centre party ("Senterpartiet") which was against. The disagreements escalated in the autumn of 1990 to a large conflict, which broke the sitting government. The Centre party then wanted the Labour party as the new governmental party, which resulted in Gro Harlem Brundtland becoming prime minister for a third time, and her new Labour-government being appointed on the 3rd of November 1990 (Graneng & Rye, 2024b, 2024c; Regjeringen, 2024).

Neither the Labour party manifesto nor the Labour party governmental platform, both from 1990, take a position on the question of EU membership. However, it is stated in both documents that Norway needs to secure access to the EU's internal market, and that this will be the focus as they proceed with the negotiations for the EEA Agreement. Furthermore, the manifesto does not mention the interests of the agricultural sector in relation to the EEA negotiations (Graneng & Rye, 2024a). The governmental platform does not even mention the agricultural sector at all (Graneng & Rye, 2024d). In 1992, Brundtland claimed that the EU would not be the answer to all of Norway's challenges, but that membership would grant the country better odds of facing them, and that Norway's interests would be best secured through EU-membership. This later resulted in the Norwegian application for EU-membership (Rye, 2019, p. 158).

5.2 The expectations for the development of the agricultural sector

This section will examine the expectations concerning agriculture formulated in the Norwegian parliamentary proposition nr. 100 (1991-92).

The agricultural sector was to be kept outside of the EEA Agreement, with the understanding that existing national agricultural policies would not be affected. This exclusion was significant, as agricultural policies were not integrated into the established EFTA collaboration and preserving national autonomy over agricultural policy was a main goal for Norway. This was partly due to the substantial differences in agricultural policies within EFTA, between EFTA members, and the EU, as suggested by previous research in section 2.

The import protection for agricultural products, internal subsidies arrangements and export subsidies are key elements of price and market regulations in agricultural policy within both EFTA countries and the EU. The Norwegian government anticipated that these elements would remain unchanged by keeping agricultural policy outside the EEA Agreement. This is an important point, given the significant role agriculture has played in Norway's EU politics. Norway's agricultural sector requires special protection and provisions due to its challenging geographic and climatic conditions, which render it unable to compete with the efficiency of European farms. Consequently, maintaining national autonomy over the sector has been a priority. As such, there was an expectation that Norway would retain sole control over the sector without external influence, even as a member of the EEA (Stortinget, 1992, p. 16).

Establishing a free trade Agreement with agricultural products within the EEA was not under consideration, however, there was a mutual desire to expand the trade with agricultural products between the EU and Norway. Since the import protection both within the EFTA countries and the EU was an important part of the agricultural policy, it rendered the feasibility of a free trade Agreement in agricultural products unlikely. Regarding processed agricultural products, akin to the free trade Agreements between EFTA and the EU, the premise was that compensation for price differences in input goods from the agricultural sector should be viable by means of export subsidies and import fees on relevant goods. These goods were otherwise to be subject to free trade (Stortinget, 1992, p. 16). The desire for trade expansion were formally included in the EEA Agreement through a clause in article 19, which sought to have regular negotiations to discuss the possibility of liberalising the trade in agricultural products on a mutually beneficial basis:

"The Contracting Parties undertake to continue their efforts with a view to achieving progressive liberalisation in agricultural trade."

(EØS-loven-EØSI., 1994)

The formulation mirrored existing bilateral free trade Agreements between the EFTA countries and the EU, which featured a similar development clause for trade in agricultural products. While including free trade in agricultural products into the EEA Agreement were not on the agenda, Norway evidently expected and sought a gradual increase of trade in agricultural products, provided the expansions happened on a mutually beneficial basis. One way Norway expected increased trade was through means of quota increases for import and export. For instance, among other deals, Norway reached an Agreement with the EU to increase the cheese trade by expanding import and export quotas (Stortinget, 1992, p. 16).

The Norwegian government expected border controls to be continued in order to maintain the high Norwegian standards of the plant and animal health regulations of the EFTA countries. In the EU there existed substantial regulations concerning food safety and veterinary conditions when the EEA Agreement was being negotiated in the early 1990s. The premise for accepting parts of these veterinary regulations was for border controls to be continued between EFTA countries and the EU. This was to ensure that the high standards of plant and animal health in the EFTA countries was maintained, especially preventing the spread of sicknesses among animals. It was therefore settled that the parts of the veterinary regulations which presumed the removal of border controls was not to be implemented in the collaboration between the EFTA countries and

the EU. Thus, Norway expected the border controls to EU countries to continue as they had been (NOU 2012: 2, p. 646; Stortinget, 1992, p. 16).

I have now listed the most significant expectations Norway had to the agricultural sector as an EEA member, which are stated in the Norwegian Parliamentary proposition nr. 100 (1991-92). I will now look at another document which states a significant expectation Norway had towards the future development of the agricultural sector. This document from April 1994 covers EU-membership negotiations. It is titled: "20th April - Supplementary statement by the Minister of Trade regarding the outcome of negotiations with the EU on terms for Norwegian membership". While Norway did not enter the EU, I still find the expectation formulated in this document towards the agricultural sector to be relevant and interesting, as it was independent of Norway's relationship with the EU.

In the EU-membership negotiations document from the 20th of April 1994, it is stated that the Norwegian agriculture was facing challenges that needed adjustments to the sector due to international developments, regardless of Norway's association to the EU. The document states that there have been previous parliamentary majority for improving Norwegian agriculture, hopefully enabling the sector to face the international developments, and consequent challenges, which are facing the sector. One of these international developments are caused by the Agreements such as the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) Agreement, the precursor to the WTO. Additionally, the document states that the Norwegian market for agricultural products have been shielded for a long time, and that it too, will face challenges as new international developments emerge. (Knudsen & Regjeringen, 1994, pp. 2941-2942). Hence it is evident that Norway expected that its agricultural sector would have to adjust to international developments, like the GATT Agreement, regardless of its association with the EU.

6 Developments

This part of the thesis will cover the main developments that has occurred in the Norwegian agricultural sector after Norway entered the EEA and discuss how these align with the initial expectations for the development of the agricultural sector.

6.1 The Veterinarian Agreement

The Veterinarian Agreement is a set of rules and regulations from the EU which was implemented into the EEA Agreement in 1998. It contains comprehensive regulations concerning agriculture, including veterinary conditions, food safety, animal sickness prevention, border controls, and trade with animals and animal products (NOU 2012: 2, p. 646).

The regulations were closely associated with the CAP and the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), and they partly aimed at simplifying trade between countries while reducing the sickness spread. Parts of the veterinary regulations were implemented into the EEA from the beginning, including rules for trade with animals and animal products, and measures for protection against animal sicknesses. However, important parts of the veterinary regulations were kept out of the EEA Agreement, due to the EFTA countries seeking to continue the use of border control as a measure against spread of animal diseases (Archer, 2000, p. 98; NOU 2012: 2, p. 646).

The border controls between Norway and EU countries on export and import were thus continued as Norway entered the EEA, however this started to create problems for the Norwegian seafood export. There were significant disadvantages by having border controls to the EU countries, which is Norway's largest market for seafood export. Due to the veterinary border controls, Norwegian trailers with seafood deliveries to EU countries could risk delays at the border checkpoints, which happened frequently. This created financial and logistical challenges as the risk of spoiling the fish increased. This problem grew even worse when the EU made the Veterinarian border controls even stricter against third countries from January 1997 (NOU 2012: 2, p. 646).

As a response, the Norwegian government began already in 1995 to seek an implementation of the Veterinarian framework into the EEA Agreement. This was not without controversy however, as the Veterinarian regulation had inherently linked fisheries and agricultural policy, making them inseparable. In practice, for the fishing export to gain access to the EU's internal market without border control, Norway and the other EFTA countries would have to accept a similar discontinuation of border control for import of animals and animal products. This sparked a fiery debate within the agricultural sector and among political parties in parliament who was generally opposed to EEA membership (NOU 2012: 2, p. 646).

Implementing the entire Veterinarian regulation was controversial as the regulations did not just encompass rules for Veterinarian conditions, but also heavily regulated the food production and food safety measures. Specific regulations included: hygiene, labelling, use of additives, documentation, border control, technical trade requirements, and rules for supervision and control of slaughterhouses and food businesses (NOU 2012: 2, p. 646). This would have major implications for both the consumers and the entire food industry, as it would not just affect the production of food fit for exportation, but also the production of food to be consumed domestically. Despite the controversy, all of the Veterinarian regulations were implemented into the EEA Agreement in 1998 after years

of negotiation (Melchior, 2015, p. 27). This was a significant expansion of the EEA Agreement, as the Veterinarian regulations have grown to become the quantitatively largest part of the whole Agreement, with approximately 40% of the total legislative acts. Thus, in this case the interests of the agricultural sector had to yield for the interests of seafood export, which made up 7% of Norway's total export in 1997. Prioritising fisheries over agriculture marked a departure from Norway's traditional approach to its EU politics, where the agricultural sector historically has wielded greater influence (Gaasland, 2015, p. 35; NOU 2012: 2, pp. 76, 646).

The inclusion of the entire Veterinarian regulation into the EEA Agreement contradicted Norway's initial expectations. These expectations, outlined in section 5.2, included the preservation of national agricultural policies and the maintenance of border controls to uphold plant and animal health standards within EFTA countries. Yet, the incorporation of the entire Veterinarian framework into the EEA Agreement undermined these expectations, as the border controls was dismantled, and food production and safety practices in Norway were altered. This divergence from the original negotiation aims highlights an unforeseen consequence, as the fisheries sector's economic interests were prioritised over agriculture.

I would argue that Norway's decision to incorporate the Veterinarian framework into the EEA Agreement displays the effects of Europeanisation on Norway, as the practices of the EU was implemented on a national level in order for Norway's export of fish to be able to access the internal market of the EU without border controls. Furthermore, the Veterinarian regulations did not just affect food production for export, but also food production for domestic consumption. The gradual turn towards the EU then becomes apparent as the Veterinarian regulations has become the quantitatively largest part of the EEA Agreement. Displaying the EU's significance and influence on Norway's domestic affairs, through how the agricultural sector has been majorly affected by the Veterinarian expansion within the EEA Agreement.

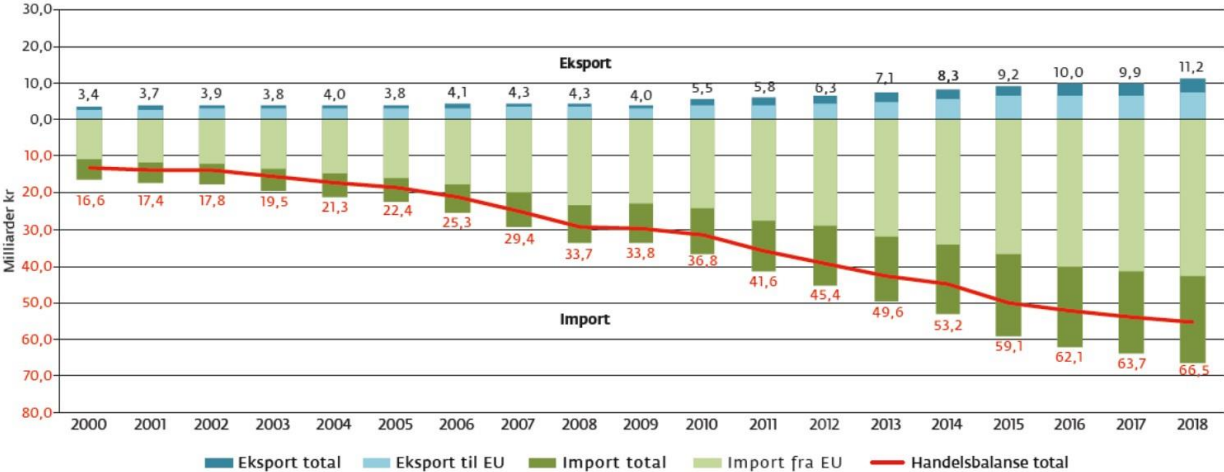
6.2 The three article 19 expansions on trade in agricultural products

This section will cover the trade expansions which has been made under article 19 of the EEA Agreement. The article states that renegotiations for the conditions for trade in agricultural products are to occur every few years, with the aim of a gradual liberalisation. The negotiations shall be conducted within the framework of parties' respective agricultural policy, and removal of trade barriers are to happen on a mutually beneficial basis. Since the EEA was established in 1993, three article-19 expansions have been made between Norway and the EU. The first went into effect from July 1st, 2003, the second from January 1st, 2012, and the third went into effect from 1st of Octobre 2018 (Stortinget, 2019, p. 2). In the following paragraphs, I will briefly outline the main expansions to paint a picture of the gradual development. I will mostly rely on a document titled "The EEA Agreement and trade in agricultural products between Norway and the EU". This document was presented to the Norwegian parliament in 2019 and covers the main developments in trade with agricultural products between Norway and the EU since Norway entered the EEA. I will discuss how international developments and association with the EU can explain the developments in the Norwegian agricultural sector since Norway became an EEA member.

The series of Article 19 expansions in trade with agricultural products included mostly tollfree quota increases which did not displace Norwegian production but supplemented it. Initially, toll-free quotas were expanded, favouring the EU within Norway’s market dynamics. In the first expansion, quotas for cheese were raised to 4000 tons for both imports and exports, alongside mutual toll-free quotas of 800 tons on meat, and tolls on certain imports reduced by 25%. Furthermore, the EU was granted concessions which included preferential treatment in the Norwegian market over other states. Subsequent expansions continued this trend, with further increases in quotas for cheese and meat, establishment of temporary quotas on various meats which became part of WTO quotas, and introduction of a new quota for early potatoes. In total, the toll was removed on 186 products, albeit constituting only approximately 14% of agricultural products in the Norwegian customs tariff, marked a significant change. The third expansion saw further increases in quotas on cheese, meat, potatoes, and lettuce, with beef import quotas increasing by 1600 tons, and toll-free ingredients included for the export of animal food. Interestingly, the import quotas for cheese rose to 8400 tons, while the export quota remained at 7200 tons. Despite these expansions, the majority of agricultural imports to Norway do not displace domestic production, consisting largely of items either not produced domestically, produced in limited quantities, or required seasonally, with Norway remaining reliant on imports for certain items, such as lettuce, either seasonally or year-round (Stortinget, 2019, pp. 3-9).

Despite significant growth in agricultural trade between Norway and the EU since the establishment of the EEA, with imports reaching 66.5 billion kroner in 2018, an increase of 4.5% from the previous year, the EU remains dissatisfied with the pace of liberalisation. Import from the EU constitutes around 64% of Norway’s total agricultural imports. Trade in agricultural products increased by 10.5% from 5 million tons to 5.5 million tons in 2018. Conversely, Norway exported 1.1 million tons of agricultural products valued at 11.2 billion kroner, primarily to the EU, marking a 10% increase in quantity and a 13% increase in value. Despite this robust trade relationship, the EU identifies agricultural trade as an area lacking in collaboration with Norway, contrasting sharply with the overall strength of their trade partnership (NOU 2012: 2, pp. 76, 302; Stortinget, 2019, p. 6).

Figure 6.2.1: Development of Norwegian agricultural import and export since 2000



(Stortinget, 2019, p. 7)

The increase in agricultural trade appears to have favoured the EU, as noted by the Norwegian Farmers' Union, which criticises the unequal balance of the trade relationship between Norway and the EU. The Norwegian Farmers' Union express scepticism about the trade relationship's alignment with the original goals of the EEA Agreement. While Norwegian agricultural exports increased by 229.4% between 2000 and 2018, imports surged by 300.6%, outpacing exports. The Norwegian government's attempts to shield sensitive products are noted, but the Farmers Association warns that increased imports could ruin the competitiveness of Norwegian productions, in combination with high salaries and expense levels in parts of the Norwegian food industry. While this may be true, I would argue it would be difficult to reverse these expansions. Norway is a small country with poor preconditions for agriculture and are thus dependent on imports. The EU is much larger, and has expanded in terms of member states, and its agricultural sector has become more effective through specialisation. I would argue that these conditions make it difficult for the trade relationship to remain the same as the EU grows. Considering Norway's growing affiliation with the EU, this trend seems difficult to stop, as agricultural imports into Norway have indeed risen alongside its growing affiliation with the EU (Stortinget, 2019, pp. 9, 11-12).

The Article 19 agricultural trade expansions somewhat align with Norway's initial expectations for the EEA Agreement, as outlined in section 5.2. These expectations included anticipating regular negotiations and expansions for trade liberalisation in agriculture on mutually beneficial terms, albeit without specific quantification. However, between 2000 and 2018, Norwegian agricultural imports surged by 300.6%, while exports increased by 229.4%, potentially tilting the trade balance towards the EU. Despite this, the EU has expressed dissatisfaction, believing the liberalisation should have progressed further. From Norway's perspective, the pace of liberalisation has arguably been reasonable, though some, like the Norwegian Farmers' Union, contend it has gone too far. It's conceivable that expecting the trade relationship to remain unchanged or to be reversed as Norway's affiliation with the EU grows, might be wishful thinking. While the expectations for Article 19 and trade liberalisation in agriculture have been partially met with regular negotiations and increased trade, whether it's been on entirely equal terms remains debatable. Though it might seem like the EU is benefitting the most from this trade arrangement. However, this complex issue warrants further exploration beyond the scope of this thesis.

The increase in agricultural imports and exports facilitated by the EEA Agreement displays the Europeanisation phenomenon. Over the past three decades, trade with the EU has significantly expanded, leading to Norway's growing dependence on the EU and its internal market. This trend suggests a partial adoption of EU practices at the domestic level, which can be explained by the Europeanisation phenomenon. Despite Norway's continued defensive measures to protect its agricultural industry, the escalating trade and Article 19 expansions indicate a gradual alignment with EU norms and policies. This shift has sparked controversy within Norway, highlighting the complexities of its evolving relationship with the EU.

7 Comparing Norway's development with Finland

This section will compare the developments of the Norwegian and Finnish Agricultural sector since Norway entered the EEA.

Comparing the expectations between Finland and Norway offers an intriguing insight into their agricultural sectors' different developments. Despite both countries having relatively small agricultural sectors and facing similar challenges, Finland's EU membership in 1994 marked a significant departure from Norway's stance. Norway's rejection of EU membership kept its agricultural sector outside the EEA collaboration, resulting in distinct expectations for its future development. These included maintaining its agricultural policy unaffected by the EEA Agreement, retaining border controls to uphold plant and animal health standards, and anticipating regular negotiations on agricultural trade under Article 19 of the EEA Agreement. However, Finland, as an EU member, took part in the EU's CAP, which meant that Norway's expectations towards the development of its agricultural structure was not applicable in Finland. Still, both countries initially shared some expectations regarding challenges facing their agricultural sectors due to international developments.

In a 1992 report from the Finnish Department of Foreign Affairs discussing the potential EU membership, they anticipated that the development of Finland's agricultural sector in the following years would be characterised by international developments regardless of association with the EU. Similarly, as outlined in section 5.2, Norway foresaw significant changes in its agricultural sector due to international developments, regardless of association with the EU. Finland anticipated the need to partly dismantle and rebuild its agricultural structure, alongside developing national policies to align with international demands, such as the WTO framework. When discussing EU membership in 1992, Finland anticipated that the consequences of membership would impact the agricultural sector the most, affecting the entire food chain and its workforce (Laaksonen & Apukka, 1992, pp. 3-4). However, Finland was unsure of exactly how membership would affect the agricultural sectors' development, due to the uneven application of the EU's CAP across member states. Finland sought support schemes similar to its own in the CAP, tailored to its climatic and specific conditions. However, this was not possible on a permanent basis as it was deemed anti-competitive and incompatible with the EU's policy (Miles et al., 1996, p. 225). Despite historically similar agricultural structures, Norway and Finland found themselves with divergent expectations for their agricultural sectors, reflecting their contrasting positions. Nonetheless, both countries anticipated significant sectoral changes due to international developments, regardless of association with the EU (Laaksonen & Apukka, 1992, pp. 3-4).

Norway and Finland have both experienced similar trends in their agricultural sectors over the last 30 years, marked by a halving of the number of farms and a significant decline in agriculture's share of total employment. As anticipated in 1994, both countries' agricultural sectors needed to adapt to forthcoming developments, regardless of EU association. This reduction in farm numbers has been consistent between 1995 and 2020. Despite this, agricultural land use has remained stable, around 22 million hectares in Finland and 10 million hectares in Norway. This indicates that remaining farms have grown in size, becoming more efficient, requiring fewer people while covering more land. Moreover, the decline in agriculture's share of total employment by over 50% in Finland

and over 60% in Norway during the same period further underscores this trend towards increased efficiency (Stortinget, 2022, pp. 6-7).

It is the international developments, such as the framework of the WTO, which has affected the development of the Norwegian agricultural sector the most after 1994, though association to Europe has also affected the sectors in both Norway and Finland. While the EEA agreement has influenced the development of the Norwegian agricultural sector and trade with the EU, international developments have played a more significant role (NOU 2012: 2, p. 657). However, the international developments have not happened in a vacuum, and since Norway entered the EEA, many of its sectors have been Europeanised (NOU 2012: 2, p. 807). This is less accurate for the agricultural sector, but I would argue that it might have accelerated international developments, and partially explain the growing reliance on imports from the EU. Furthermore, Norway and Finland's association with the EU has affected the agricultural sectors through the free flow of immigrant workers, who have become pivotal, as the sector increasingly relies on this workforce (Mattila et al., 2021, p. 14; NOU 2012: 2, pp. 663-665). The use of immigrant workers through the EEA agreement has most likely contributed to the increase of production, and secured the profitability of many farms, and thus slowed down the speed of the number of farms being closedown. Moreover, the EU have also affected the Norwegian agricultural sector through the means of technical requirements on machines and vehicles used in the sector, such as tractors (NOU 2012: 2, pp. 663-665).

The total support for Norwegian and Finnish farmers has decreased, with Finland experiencing a more pronounced decline, possibly linked to its EU membership, notably in import protection reductions. Since 1994, estimated producer support in Norway and EU member states have decreased. In 1993, OECD figures showed that Norwegian farmers enjoyed nearly 3.5 times higher producer prices than the international market, while EU countries had prices about 1.5 times higher (Stortinget, 2022, p. 4). Import protection has since decreased for both Norway and the EU. Before Finland joined the EU, its producer prices were about double those in the EU. In 1994, agricultural support comprised around 64% in Finland and over 70% in Norway, but by 2021, the EU's producer prices were only 3% higher than the international market, contrasting with Norway's 45% higher prices. Finnish farmers relied on budget support for approximately 37% of their income in 1995, rising to about 43% in 2000, but declining thereafter to 28% in 2020. Norwegian farmers saw a more stable reliance on budget support, accounting for around 36% in 2000, 32% in 2010, and approximately 33% in 2020. Additionally, while Norwegian farmers' net income remained relatively stable in the 21st century, Finnish farmers experienced a notable decline (Stortinget, 2022, pp. 1, 3-4, 14).

Over the past three decades, both Finland and Norway have seen increased import and export of agricultural products and food, alongside a slight decline in food self-sufficiency. Import values far exceed export values in both countries, with Finland's imports being three times larger than exports in 2019, and Norway's imports being over six times larger than exports in 2021. Finland's food self-sufficiency has decreased since 1994, although it remains fairly high for certain products like wheat for bread and dairy. Norway's self-sufficiency rates have also declined. However, Norway is over 98% self-sufficient in dairy products but lower on vegetables and wheat for flour (Stortinget, 2022, pp. 11-13).

Norway and Finland have seen relatively similar developments since 1994 on the structural level due to the international developments, however, support for Finnish

farmers have decreased more comparatively with Norwegian farmers. Both countries expected significant changes to its agricultural sector due to international developments, such as the WTO framework. These expectations were fulfilled as there has been major structural changes in the agricultural sector, with a drastic reduction of employees and farms, though the remaining farms have grown in size. Furthermore, both countries have seen similar increased levels of import and export in this time period, in addition to a reduction in self-sufficiency of food and the reduction in production of certain products and increase of others. However, there are some differences as well. The economic support for farmers has been reduced in both countries, but it has been more drastic for Finnish farmers. Norway has been able to maintain a higher support level, though it too has decreased.

International developments have certainly played a significant role in the development of the agricultural sectors. The question is then if any of these developments can be explained by their association with the EU, beyond the direct impact the EEA agreement has had on the Norwegian agricultural sector through the Veterinarian Agreement and article 19 expansions. For one, Norway's association with the EU has led to an acceleration of international developments in many of Norway's sectors. While this Europeanisation phenomenon certainly is less true for the agricultural sector, it might have slightly accelerated some of the international developments. This might partially explain the growing reliance on trade and import of agricultural goods from the EU, and the slight reduction in self-sufficiency of food. Furthermore, the Finnish and Norwegian agricultural sectors have become increasingly dependent on immigrant workers, which has helped secure the profitability of many farms. The Norwegian agricultural sector has also been partially affected by the EEA agreement due to technical regulations. I would argue that Europeanisation phenomenon partly explains these developments. Lastly, it is possible that Norwegian farmers have been able to receive more subsidies as a part of the EEA, than they would have gotten if Norway was an EU member. However, I cannot argue this for a certainty, as the decrease in support to Finnish farmers might have been the result of deliberate Finnish political development, and not necessarily due to EU-membership. Further research is needed to answer that question.

8 Conclusion

This thesis has attempted to analyse the developments which have taken place in the Norwegian agricultural sector since becoming an EEA member and discuss if the developments align with the initial expectations the Norwegian government had to the EEA Agreement's effect on its agricultural policy. The results were then compared to Finland where it was relevant, as the Finnish case serves as an interesting comparison, shedding further light on the Norwegian case. I have discussed if any of the developments can be explained by the Europeanisation phenomenon, which in this thesis is used as a concept where the EU influences its member states and third countries' domestic institutions and politics. I have utilised a qualitative document analysis in order to do my research and assemble relevant and factual data to use as a foundation for my discussion. In my analysis, I spell out four main expectations the Norwegian government have to the EEA Agreement concerning the agricultural sector.

First, the expectation was that the EEA Agreement would not affect the agricultural sector as Norway were to remain outside the EU's CAP. The argument that has been presented in this thesis has been that the developments that took place did not align with this expectation, as EEA additions such as the Veterinarian Agreement, article 19 expansions, immigrant workers and other Europeanisation phenomenon's affected the agricultural sector. This fits in with previous research.

Second, Norway expected regular negotiations and trade expansions on agricultural products on mutually beneficial grounds through article 19. The analysis revealed that this partially panned out, although at a slower pace than the EU would have liked. Some actors in Norway argue that the expansions have gone too far, and that it has not happened on mutually beneficial terms, arguing that it has benefitted the EU more than Norway.

Third, Norway expected the border controls between EFTA and EU countries to be continued. This did not happen, as the Veterinarian Agreement was implemented into the EEA Agreement. The agreement saw Norway incorporate large regulations concerning food production, in order to get rid of the border controls which were causing problems for Norwegian fishing export.

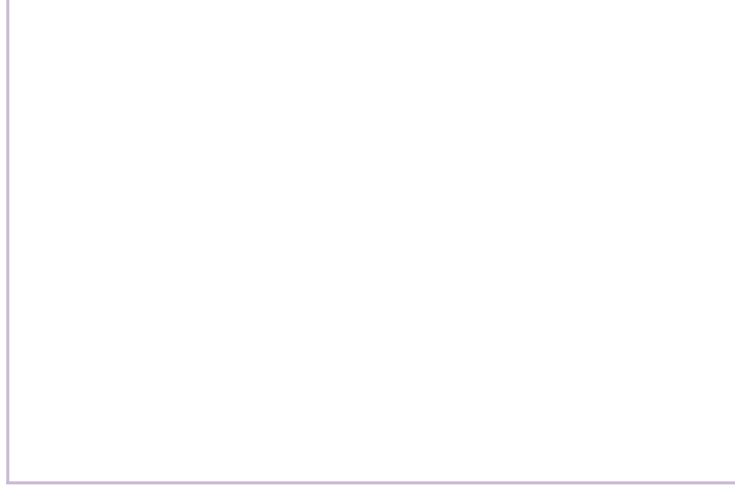
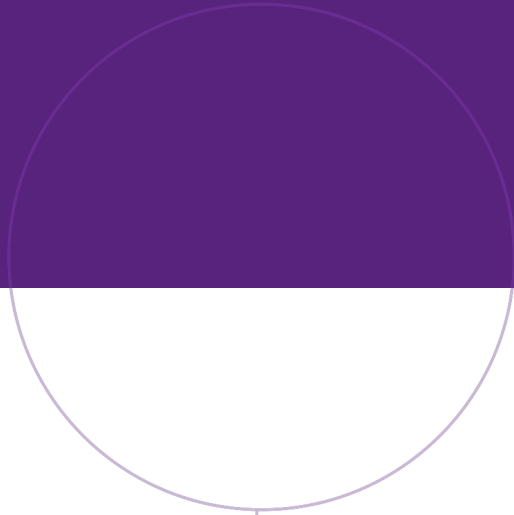
Last, my comparison revealed similarities between Norway and Finland, as both expected its agricultural sectors to face significant changes due to international developments, such as the WTO framework. Both countries expected these changes regardless of association with the EU. The actual developments also align with these expectations as both agricultural sectors have gone through significant structural changes. This includes a significant reduction in the number of farms and employees as a total of workforce, and increased imports and exports. A difference between the countries, were that reduction in support for farmers was significantly worse in Finland, though Norway reduced its support as well. I would argue that Europeanisation phenomenon partially explains some of the agricultural developments, including accelerating international developments, increasing immigrant workers in agriculture, and other technical measurements indirectly affecting the agricultural sectors, in addition to the Veterinarian Agreement. Furthermore, I discuss the possibility that Norwegian farmers have been able to receive more support as part of the EEA, then they would have got as part of the EU, based on the comparison with Finland. This is however uncertain, as other factors than EU-membership may have shaped the development in Finland, which requires further research.

Overall, the development of the Norwegian agricultural sector partially aligns with the initial expectations. The EEA Agreement has expanded in unexpected ways and affected the agricultural sector, although it was not expected to. On the other hand, the international developments are what has affected the agricultural sector the most, which was expected. Comparing with Finland I noted a relatively similar development with Norway, except for a significant decrease in support for its farmers. This brought valuable insight on the Norwegian case, granting it more context. While I discuss how Europeanisation phenomenon might help explain certain of these developments, more research is needed to comprehend and untangle all the factors which has affected Norway's agricultural evolution since entering the EEA.

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