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Answer given by Mr Sinkevičius
on behalf of the European Commission
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The departure of the United Kingdom (UK) from the European Union means that the UK now participates in annual consultations as an independent coastal state. The negotiations between the EU, Norway and the United Kingdom on the setting of fishing opportunities were therefore more challenging than in previous years. This situation also impacted on the access arrangements between the EU and Norway for the Skagerrak and the North Sea, which have been delayed for this reason. While the EU has made it clear that such delay was regrettable and, in some case, unjustified, the Commission acknowledges that this may have had an impact on the Danish sector.

The Commission was in direct contact with both the Danish Administration and the Danish sector throughout the consultations with Norway. This was also raised to the Norwegian counterparts at political level.

After continued and intense consultations, Norway has signed both the bilateral (EU-Norway) and the tri-lateral (EU-Norway-UK) agreement and reopened access to EU fleets, who have in the meantime returned to their fishing grounds in Norwegian waters.