



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



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Third meeting of the Accession Conference with Iceland at deputy level, Brussels, 24 October 2012

Three new negotiating chapters were opened today at a meeting in Brussels of the Accession Conference with Iceland, the third such meeting at deputy level. This marks another important step forward in the accession negotiations with Iceland. The three chapters opened are:

- Chapter 9 - Financial Services;
- Chapter 18 - Statistics, and
- Chapter 29 - Customs Union.

The European Union delegation was headed by Kornelios S. Korneliou, Permanent Representative of Cyprus to the European Union. The European Commission was represented by Director General Stefano Sannino. The Icelandic delegation was led by Stefn H. Jóhannesson, Iceland's Chief Negotiator to the EU.

With today's Conference, out of a total of 35 negotiation chapters, 21 chapters have now been opened for negotiations of which 10 chapters have already been provisionally closed. The screening process is also now almost complete. A further Accession Conference at Ministerial level is planned in December in order to take the process forward.

The accession negotiations were launched in July 2010.

P R E S S

Chapters opened

On the basis of the negotiating positions of Iceland, the Union closely examined Iceland's general state of preparations for Chapter 9 - Financial Services, Chapter 18 - Statistics, and Chapter 29 - Customs Union. On the understanding that Iceland will continue to make progress in the alignment with and implementation of the *acquis*, the EU underlined the main issues regarding the closing benchmarks to be met by Iceland in these chapters, namely:

Chapter 9 - Financial Services

- Iceland demonstrates continued progress in the successful implementation and enforcement of prudential supervision in line with the existing EU *acquis*;
- Iceland transposes the Directive on deposit-guarantee schemes in order to be in a position to fully implement it by the date of accession;
- Iceland makes progress towards transposition of the "Omnibus I" Directive regarding the new European financial supervisory authorities in order to be able to implement it by the date of accession;
- Iceland demonstrates progress in addressing existing obligations under the EEA Agreement.

Moreover, the EU agreed to Iceland's requests on legislative adaptations concerning the inclusion of the Icelandic public national entity Viðlagatrygging Íslands, a natural catastrophe insurance provider, within the exceptions foreseen under the Solvency II Directive on EU insurance regulation.

Chapter 18 - Statistics

- Iceland submits to the Commission annual financial and non-financial accounts according to the ESA 95 transmission programme requirements;
- Iceland submits to the Commission annual sector accounts broken down by main economic sectors and transactions in accordance with Table 8 of the ESA 95 transmission programme;
- Iceland submits to the Commission statistics in the area of quarterly non-financial accounts in accordance with table 1 of the ESA 95 transmission programme.

Moreover, the EU agreed to Iceland's requests on a transitional period and derogations on the compilation of statistics in certain sectors.

Chapter 29 - Customs Union

- Iceland submits to the Commission a detailed timetable and action plan on legislative alignment with the *acquis* and demonstrates tangible progress in its alignment effort in order to be able to implement the Customs Union legislation fully by the date of accession.
- Iceland demonstrates sufficient progress in developing its administrative capacity for the implementation of the *acquis* in this chapter.
- Iceland presents to the Commission a comprehensive and coherent strategy towards IT interconnectivity and demonstrates sufficient progress in developing all the related IT interconnectivity systems in this chapter.

In addition, the EU recalled that it considered it necessary to include provisions in the Accession Treaty with Iceland (to be drafted at a later stage), ensuring continued validity after accession of proof of origin issued before accession, concerning customs warehousing, inward processing, processing under customs control and temporary importation, and remission, recovery and repayment of duties.

Finally, on all three chapters, the EU underlined that it would devote particular attention to monitoring all specific issues mentioned in its common positions with a view to ensuring Iceland's administrative capacity.
