



# Iceland

Iceland applied for EU membership in July 2009. The EU-Iceland accession negotiations started in July 2010. At Iceland's request, the accession negotiations were put on hold in December 2013. In March 2015, Iceland requested not to be regarded as an EU candidate country, which the Council noted.

## Archived content

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## EU membership application

Iceland's **application for EU membership** was submitted on 17 July 2009.

At its meeting on 27 July 2009 the Council invited the Commission to submit its opinion on Iceland's application. The Commission delivered **a positive opinion** on 24 February 2010 and recommended the opening of accession negotiations.

[Council conclusions on Iceland's application for membership,  
27 July 2009](#)

# Accession negotiations

## Start of negotiations

At a meeting on 17 June 2010, the European Council noted that Iceland met the Copenhagen criteria and decided that **accession negotiations** should be opened. The Council agreed on a framework for negotiations with Iceland on 26 July 2010, officially starting the accession negotiations.

[European Council conclusions, 17 June 2010](#)

## Status of negotiations

On 17 December 2013, the Council noted the advanced stage reached in the accession negotiations with Iceland and took note of the **Icelandic Government's decision to put accession negotiations on hold**. The Council underlined its belief that Iceland's accession would be a matter of mutual benefit. The Council also indicated that the EU was ready to continue the negotiation process, should Iceland decide to resume them.

On 12 March 2015, in a letter to the presidency of the Council, the Foreign Affairs Minister of Iceland confirmed that the government of Iceland had no intention to resume its accession talks and stated that Iceland should not be regarded as a candidate country for EU membership. The Foreign Minister reiterated **the importance of continued close relations and cooperation between the EU and Iceland** based, in particular, on the EEA Agreement. The presidency of the Council took note of the letter.

Following the general elections in Iceland on 25 September 2021, the coalition government of Iceland set out a political programme that reiterated its position that Iceland was not seeking EU membership and that it would focus on implementing and developing the EEA agreement in a manner that will ensure Iceland's interest and sovereignty.

# Accession conference meetings

Once accession negotiations have been opened, the negotiations take place at an **intergovernmental conference** (also called an 'accession conference') between ministers and ambassadors of EU member states and the candidate country. The negotiations look at 35 different policy fields (called chapters). These meetings can be at either ministerial level or at deputy level.

Out of the 35 negotiation chapters, 27 chapters were opened for negotiation, of which 11 chapters were provisionally closed.

**Before the accession negotiations were put on hold**, the EU and Iceland held accession conference meetings between July 2010 and December 2012. The last accession conference took place on 18 December 2012 at ministerial level.

[Accession Conference with Iceland at ministerial level - 18 December 2012](#)

## See also

[Enlargement: Iceland \(European Commission\)](#)