

## Iceland's application for membership of the EU approved by EP Committee

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After the European Council decided last week that the accession negotiations should be opened with Iceland, the European Parliament's Committee on Foreign Affairs largely endorsed this conclusion today by 53 votes in favour to 1 against.

"There was a large consensus on the eight compromise amendments to the text before the committee that I proposed and that covered roughly half of the 55 amendments that were tabled" declared Cristian Preda MEP, the EP's standing Rapporteur on Iceland.

"The most important issues for me and my colleagues were the involvement of the Icelandic civil society in a wide public debate on accession, as well as the fulfilment by Iceland of its obligations as an EEA member and of the accession criteria", he added.

It is clear that fisheries, as well as whaling, will play an important part in accession negotiations. Cristian Preda MEP commented on this by saying that "I deem it best at this moment to wait for the beginning of negotiations in order to see the position that Iceland will adopt".