

EU foreign affairs ministers have this week decided to open accession negotiations with Montenegro. Meanwhile the EU has opened three more negotiation “chapters” with Iceland on transport, social policy and financial control.

The European Union says it is ready to open formal talks with Montenegro on the Balkan country's bid to join the 27-nation bloc. However the statement by EU foreign ministers said Montenegro's efforts to tackle corruption and organised crime would be closely monitored. The statement follows a report from European Commission last month that Montenegro had made progress towards meeting EU standards, especially in the area of rule of law and fundamental rights. The statement says the EU will discuss justice and human rights issues with Montenegro early on, in a new approach aimed at allowing maximum time for reforms to take place.

Meanwhile, Iceland has now opened 18 chapters with the EU, wrapping up 10 of those already in negotiations that began in June 2011. Reykjavik already fulfils many EU policies thanks to its membership in the European Economic Area. Nations applying for EU membership must negotiate 35 policy chapters with the 27-nation bloc, a process that can take many years to finish.

“This is the fastest that a candidate state has moved since 2006,” EU Enlargement Commissioner Stefan Fuele said after a new round of accession talks with Icelandic Foreign Minister Oessur Skarphedinsson in Brussels.

But more difficult negotiations are expected when the two sides open talks on fishing, a major source of revenue for the North Atlantic island.

More information [here](#) ^[1].

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Links

[1] http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/genaff/131206.pdf