EU-Iceland Agreement on the participation of Iceland in GOVSATCOM and in the Union Secure Connectivity Programme

2025/0351(NLE) - 17/04/2026 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to conclude the agreement between the European Union and Iceland laying down the rules for participation of Iceland in the GOVSATCOM component of the Union Space Programme and in the Union Secure Connectivity Programme, and for access to GOVSATCOM services and to the governmental services of the Union Secure Connectivity Programme.

PROPOSED ACT: Council Decision.

ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: Council may adopt the act only if Parliament has given its consent to the act.

BACKGROUND: Iceland is a close EU Space partner participating several components of the Union Space Programme, with some exceptions including the GOVSATCOM component.

On 14 December 2023, Iceland requested to start negotiations on an agreement in view of participating in the GOVSATCOM component of the Union Space Programme and in the Union Secure Connectivity Programme. On 25 February 2025, the Council authorised the opening of the negotiations on behalf of the Union.

Given Iceland’s beneficial geographical location near the Arctic region Secure Connectivity is important to support key economic sectors, in particular telecommunications and transport. A Secure Connectivity agreement with Iceland contributes to a number of EU priorities including the Green Deal, a Europe fit for the digital age, an economy that works for people and a stronger Europe in the World.

Given Iceland’s beneficial geographical location near the Arctic region, an agreement will also contribute to peace and security and the sustainable development of the Earth.

The Strategic Compass for security and defence adopted by the Council on 21 March 2022 proposes that the EU space systems offer global connectivity to security and defence actors. It also calls for the Union to work on the proposal for an EU space-based global secure communication system. An agreement with Iceland will contribute to that.

CONTENT: the draft Council decision aims at approving the agreement between the European Union and Iceland establishing the rules governing Iceland's participation in the Govsatcom component of the Union's space programme and the Union's programme for secure connectivity, as well as access to Govsatcom services and government services of the Union's programme for secure connectivity.

From a geopolitical perspective, Iceland's participation in the Govsatcom component of the EU Space Programme and the EU Secure Connectivity Programme, as well as its access to Govsatcom and government services under the EU Secure Connectivity Programme, will contribute to strengthening Europe's role as a global actor and fostering international cooperation as defined in the European Space Strategy. An agreement with Iceland will reinforce the EU's strategic position, which is an objective of the EU's Space Strategy for Security and Defence.

The Icelandic participation in Secure Connectivity and GOVSATCOM will be concluded in one agreement because both programmes are intertwined, GOVSATCOM being also the service centre for Secure Connectivity and because the same conditions apply to Iceland's participation in both programmes.

The implementation of this agreement will be monitored by the Union and Iceland through a Joint Committee set up under the Agreement.