

Icelanders Give Crowdsourced Constitution Warm Reception



Over the weekend, [Icelanders voted in support](#) of a constitution written by 25 ordinary individuals who sought input from the crowd.

Two thirds of those who cast a ballot [answered 'yes'](#) to the question, “Do you wish the Constitution Council’s proposals to form the basis of a new draft Constitution?” Roughly half of the country's eligible voters turned out to the polls. The vote was part of a six-question referendum that also asked citizens to weigh in on constitutional issues like ownership of natural resources and the country’s official church.

The result of the vote, however, is non-binding, meaning that the [crowdsourced constitution](#) may still not be basis for the final version written by the government.

The decision to crowdsource the country’s constitution has its roots in the 2008 global financial crisis, which hit Iceland especially hard. The country’s economic collapse led to calls for [a new, more open constitution](#), and a 25-person committee (pictured above) was chosen to write a draft to serve as a guide for the country’s lawmakers. The committee hammered together the first version back in April 2011 and after three months of soliciting feedback via [Facebook](#) and Twitter, [presented the constitution to the Althingi](#), the Icelandic parliament.

Initial reports called the [turnout rate "sluggish,"](#) as citizens were unconvinced that the government would actually heed the constitution’s suggestions. Opposition parties called for a ‘no’ vote, while the country’s Prime Minister Johanna Sigurdardottir said she supported the constitution.

The Althingi has until spring of 2013 to finalize the constitution, regardless of whether the parliament accepts or rejects the crowdsourced version.