



VINNUMÁLA
STOFNUN



Living and working in Iceland





Welcome to Iceland

Moving to a new country takes courage. It also creates exciting opportunities and new beginnings. Taking the time to learn what to expect - and what is expected of you - will help you make the most of your opportunities. This brochure is intended to help you over the many hurdles faced when moving to a new country. It answers the questions most frequently asked by those moving to Iceland. It focuses on employment and working life and aims at giving the basic facts as well as guiding you to the sources of accurate information.

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Introduction to Iceland

- general information



Geography

Iceland is located in the North Atlantic, and is the second largest island in Europe, with an area of 103,000 square kilometres. About 75% of the land is more than 200 meters above sea level with most of the land being high plateaus and mountains. Glaciers cover 11,200 square kilometres while suitable agricultural land only covers 1,400 square kilometres. Only the coastline is inhabited, and there are no inhabitants in the central highlands.

Climate

Contrary to popular belief, Iceland has rather mild, coastal weather. The average summer temperature in the capital Reykjavik, is 10.6°C/51°F in July. The highest recorded temperature in the capital area is 24.7°C/77°F. The average winter temperature in Reykjavik is about 0°C/32°F in January. A branch of the Gulf Stream flows along the southern and the western coast greatly moderating the climate. It brings mild air from the Atlantic which in contact with colder arctic air results in a climate that is marked by frequent changes in weather and often strong wind. Furthermore this leads to more rainfall in the southern and western part than in the northern part of the island.

During summer, the nights are bright throughout Iceland and in the month of June the sun never fully goes down.

History

According to ancient written sources, the Norwegian chieftain Ingólfur Arnarson was the first permanent settler in Iceland in 874. Over the next centuries, people of Nordic and Gaelic origin settled in Iceland. Iceland went under the Norwegian king in 1262 and later the Danish king. Iceland became an independent republic in June 17, 1944 and has a written constitution and a parliamentary form of government. The people of Iceland celebrate the 17th of June as their Independence Day.

For ages Iceland was among the poorest countries in Europe and the population never exceeded 70.000 people. In the 20th century the industrial revolution finally found its way to Iceland with the industrialisation of the fishing fleet. In less than a century the Icelandic society has changed dramatically, now being one of the richest countries in the world and now has a population of around 300.000 people.

Today Iceland is a highly developed country, the world's fifth and second in terms of gross domestic product (GDP) per capita and human development respectively. Iceland is a member of the UN, NATO, EFTA and the EEA, and OECD.

Government

According to Iceland's constitution, the government is divided into 3 branches; the legislative, the judicial, and the executive



branches. Althingi (the parliament), where laws are made and amended, has the legislative power. Ministries, directorates and various other government agencies, carry out laws. Judicial power lies with the Supreme Court and the district courts. The president is elected by direct popular vote for a term of 4 years, with no term limit. The president's role is mostly ceremonial. Most executive power rests with the Government. Althingi is the legislative body of 63 members from 6 districts, elected for a term of 4 years by popular vote. Anyone who is eligible to vote can stand for parliament. A cabinet of ministers stays in power until the next general election or a new government is formed. There are currently eleven ministers and one prime minister. The ministers usually sit in Althingi.

Iceland has a universal suffrage, which means that every Icelandic citizen over eighteen can vote in the parliament election. Foreign nationals who have had legal residence in Iceland for five years can vote in local government elections. Danish, Finnish, Norwegian and Swedish citizens are though granted the right to vote after three years of residence. Only Icelandic citizens have the right to vote in national elections.

Language

Icelandic is one of the Nordic languages, resembles the Norse language as it was spoken centuries ago. Icelandic is the official language and is used almost exclusively in all areas of daily life in Iceland. A large majority of Icelanders also speak English as a second language as well as Danish or another Scandinavian language. Usually a fair knowledge of these languages is a precondition for many unskilled and technical jobs in Iceland and knowledge in Icelandic is not necessarily required. Learning the Icelandic language gives you though a great advantage and enhances your chances to find a more interesting and better paid job.

Information on where you can learn Icelandic follows later in this brochure.

Religion

Freedom of religion is guaranteed in Iceland by the Constitution. There is a State church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church, to which over 85% of the population belongs. Congregational activity is not strong and church attendance is low. Still the church plays a significant role in all major occasions in Icelanders' lives.

Driving in Iceland

People from the EEA countries who hold a valid, standardized European driver's license are not required to exchange their license. Europeans without this type of standardized license must exchange theirs for an Icelandic license. In Iceland drivers are obliged by law to use headlights at all times day and night. Passengers in the front and back seats of automobiles are required by law to use safety belts. Be aware that outside the capital area driving conditions may be difficult. Large sections of highways are not paved and have a loose gravel surface.

For more information regarding driving in Iceland contact any tourist information centre in Iceland. Or visit the site: www.us.is/page/english which holds information on driving in Iceland in several languages.

Currency and banks

The unit of currency used in Iceland is the Krona, abbreviated ISK. At the time of writing this brochure (18 July, 2007) 1€ = 82,47 ISK. You can check the rate of the ISK at www.sedlabanki.is All banks will exchange the most common currencies and it is a good idea to exchange your currency as there are very few shops in

Iceland that accept any foreign currency. If the banks can not exchange your currency it is likely that Forex can. Forex is located in the tourist information centre in Bankastræti 2, Reykjavik. Forex exchange rate is usually less favourable though than the banks. Most shops and businesses accept all major credit cards. Credit and debit cards may even be used in taxis. Debit and credit cards are commonly used in Iceland even for very small transactions. When you find a job you will need a bank account as most employers deposit the pay checks directly. Most banks are open weekdays from 09:00-16:00 but some of them have branches with longer opening hours. To find a branch near you the following websites should be of help: www.spar.is, www.glitnir.is, www.landsbanki.is or www.kaupthing.is

Time

Local time in Iceland is Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) all year round. So in Iceland the time is one hour later than Central European time during the winter, but two hours later in the summer time.

Keeping in touch with home

To call from Iceland - Dial 00 (or use the "+" sign on your mobile) for an international line, then the country code followed by the area code and finally the phone number.

Sometimes the cheapest way to call abroad is to use an international calling card.

To call to Iceland - The country code for Iceland is 354. No area code is necessary as all domestic calls are local.

For more information and key figures about Iceland see www.mfa.is, www.island.is and www.iceland.is



Working in Iceland



The Icelandic economy is relatively small but growth and input have been sufficient to provide Icelanders with living standards that are among the highest in the world. In 2005 the economic growth in Iceland was 7.5% and 2.6% in 2006. Use of renewable natural resources such as the country's rich fishing grounds and its hydro-electric and geothermal power capacity are the most important sources of export income. Diversification is though increasing with fast growing sectors including software and biotechnology industries, financial sector, tourism and the export of fisheries know-how. With a relatively young and well-educated work force, Iceland is increasingly complementing its natural resources with industries capitalising on human resources and technology.

The Icelandic labour market has for decades been characterised by a constant demand for labour. The demand has been especially high the last couple of years due to a booming economy, and the labour demand has mainly been met by workers from other EEA countries.

Although there is foreseeable some reduction in labour demand, as the market will be adjusting after the upswing of last years, we expect a continuing demand for EEA workers in some sectors. These are sectors such as the constantly growing tourism sector, the health care sector, agriculture, fish industry, seasonal jobs in the meat industry some jobs in the service industry as well as diverse specialists. As the large energy and construction projects in East Iceland are coming to an end the need for construction workers will probably not be as great, though much will depend

Iceland in 2006

- Economic growth 2,6%
- Employment rate 83%
- Unemployment rate 1,3%.
- The majority of immigrants have arrived in Iceland after 1995.
- Foreign citizens living in Iceland constituted 6% of the total population and around 10% of it's labour force.
- The largest groups of immigrants in Iceland are from Poland, Denmark and the Philippines.
- Minimum salary for unskilled workers was approx. 120.000 ISK (1.397€) and the average salary was approx. 276.000 ISK (3.765€). The average working hours were 42.2 hours per week.
- The main foreign currency earnings were marine products (36%), transport (15%), tourism (13%), and aluminium (13%).

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on the future construction of new hydroelectric power plants and other infrastructure projects. You can always see some of the currently available vacancies in Iceland on the EURES websites: <http://europa.eu.int/eures/> and www.eures.is If you are looking for work in a specific profession you can also contact the EURES office and our advisers will help you get in contact with relevant companies.

A list of the most needed professions in the Icelandic labour market is regularly updated on our website: www.eures.is

Finding a job in Iceland

There are a number of ways to go about job searching, but it is a good idea to start looking for a job before you move to Iceland. Visiting the EURES Job Mobility Portal is a wise first step: www.eures.europa.eu > search for a job. The portal contains great variety of job opportunities. This website also contains general information on living and working in Iceland and information about the current situation on the labour market. You will find complementary and more specific information on the Icelandic EURES website www.eures.is. For all EURES job vacancies in Iceland, you are requested to fill out an online application form at www.vinnumalastofnun.is/eures. Make sure to fill out the form as thoroughly as possible to give the most accurate description of you and your abilities. It's important that you list all previous work experiences and education, both in your home country and abroad. It is vital that your contact information is accurate and telephone numbers and e-mail addresses active. In case you have made a CV you can attach it to the form. Still you should fill in all the fields in the form as it enables EURES to find your application when a job that meets your qualification becomes available. The form must be filled out in English.

Please do not use postal mail as it is simply too slow.

When you have filled out and submitted the application form you are welcome to contact the Icelandic EURES advisers at eures@svm.is to discuss your job opportunities. Your local EURES adviser can also assist you. To find your local EURES office, go to: <http://europa.eu.int/eures> > [EURES advisers](#).

Here are some other ways to search for a job in Iceland. For best results, you may wish to use all of the methods listed below.

Employment agencies [ráðningarpjónustur]: They often have vacancies for specialists. You may, free of charge, register with one or more private employment agencies. They will tell you what information you need to have readily available. For instance, a curriculum vitae/résumé, certificates, diplomas and references. Employment agencies are listed later in this brochure.

Read the [classified] job advertisements in the local newspapers: The three largest papers in Iceland are Morgunblaðið (www.mbl.is), Fréttablaðið (www.visir.is) and Blaðið (www.vbl.is). The employment section (Atvinna) comes out on Sundays in Morgunblaðið and Fréttablaðið, but there are often daily advertisements. Sometimes it pays to put in your own advert for employment. Note that almost all job advertisements are in Icelandic.

Speculative applications: If you know what kind of business you want to work for you may want to send them your application with CV, call them directly or visit them and ask if there are any jobs available. Also visit their website where open positions within the company are often listed. EURES can also help you find suitable enterprises.

Contact local branch of your trade union (stéttarfélag): They have information on the current employment trends within your profession and can give advice on where to start looking.



Contacts: Tell everyone you know in Iceland that you are looking for employment. Word-of-mouth via family and friends often gives good results.

Are your diplomas valid in Iceland?

Before travelling to Iceland, it is wise to find out which jobs are open for someone with your qualifications. You can also have your diploma assessed for equivalence and recognition in Iceland.

The basic principle is that valid qualifications to practice a certain profession in your homeland are also valid in other EU/EEA countries. Higher degrees, 3 years of academic studies [BA, BSc, BS] and vocational studies with a secondary school education, should be recognized all over the EU/EEA.

The Ministry of Education, Science and Culture is responsible for coordination of recognition procedures in Iceland. The Ministry does though not process all applications for recognition. Individual ministries handle the recognition for their respective spheres, for instance the Ministry of Health is responsible for recognition for medical and health professions. The best place to begin collecting the information you will need is on this website: www.menntagatt.is Which is the national reference point for assessment and recognition of qualification.

An assessment of equivalence of your diplomas will make it easier for Icelandic employers to evaluate your knowledge and skills. It may also help you get a better job with higher pay. However, lack of Icelandic language skills will limit your options for a qualified job considerably.

Europass

Europass is a standard folder that helps people to make their skills and qualifications clearly and easily understood around Europe.

Europass consists of five documents: two documents (Europass curriculum vitae (CV) and Europass Language Passport) you can fill in yourself; and three other documents (Europass Certificate Supplement, Europass Diploma Supplement and Europass Mobility) filled in and issued by competent organizations. Europass is supported by a network of National Europass Centres. You can find more information about Europass and your local Europass Centre at: <http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/> and about the Icelandic Europass centre at www.europass.is

Curriculum Vitae/Résumé

In Iceland the usual practice is to enclose a résumé/CV with your job application. The CV should preferably fill just a single page. Although it is optional, most people attach a photo, as it may help. While the details provided in CVs vary here is a list of the information that should be included. The information should be in reverse chronological order (most recent information first).

Personal details - name, address, telephone numbers, e-mail address, date of birth and marital status.

Education - this section contains your formal qualification. It should include when you studied, the name of the school, degree, and in what area your degree is.

Work experience – this is a very important part of your résumé. Include a brief description of each job/position, name of the company and when you worked there.

Other qualifications – here you should mention your language skills; spoken and written. You can also describe your computer skills, whether and what kind of drivers licence you have and other relevant qualifications.

Positions of trust/personal interests – describe in few lines non-professional interests and leisure activities. If you have lived abroad by all means mention it.



References – it is very important to name at least two people that will give you a good referral. State the names, company, job title, telephone numbers and e-mails for these individuals. Contact your referrals and make sure you have their approval. You can find an example of an Icelandic CV at www.eures.is

Cover Letter

When you send in a job application or a CV you should also include a cover letter. The letter should not be longer than one page. Your cover letter is an important marketing tool which highlights your most attractive qualifications as a potential employee. While you may use the same CV for every job you are applying for you should write a different cover letter for each job you apply for. Consider the following when writing the letter:

- If you are responding to an advertisement be sure to read it carefully, and make sure you respond to what it asks for.
- Explain why you want this particular job.
- Make it clear to the recipient that you are familiar with the company, the required qualifications and furthermore, how you satisfy these.

The Job Interview

Most Icelandic employers using the EURES service make their recruitment decisions after few telephone conversations and e-mail correspondence with the applicants. For those that are already in Iceland when job hunting the norm is to be called in for an interview. Whether you are interviewed in person, over the phone or by e-mail, the interview provides a good opportunity to ask questions concerning aspects of the job. It is a good idea to acquaint yourself with the company and its practises to be better prepared during the job interview.

The Job Application

For most unqualified and blue collar jobs, employers in Iceland use standardized application form to screen potential employees. You find these application forms on the job agencies' websites.

JOB AGENCIES

Vinnumálastofnun / Public Employment Services:

Reykjavik area:

<http://www.vinnumalastofnun.is/svmhb/>

West Iceland (Akranes):

<http://www.vinnumalastofnun.is/svmvl/>

Westfjords (Ísafjörður):

<http://www.vinnumalastofnun.is/svmvf/>

North West Iceland (Blönduós):

<http://www.vinnumalastofnun.is/svmve/>

North East Iceland (Akureyri):

<http://www.vinnumalastofnun.is/svmne/>

East Iceland (Egilsstaðir):

<http://www.vinnumalastofnun.is/svma/>

South Iceland (Selfoss):

<http://www.vinnumalastofnun.is/svms/>

South West (Keflavík):

<http://www.vinnumalastofnun.is/svmsn/>

EURES European Employment Services

Engjateigi 11

Tel.: 554 7600

EURES advisers: Dröfn

Haraldsdóttir, Valdimar

Ólafsson & Þóra

Ágústsdóttir

www.eures.is

eures@svm.is

Ráðningarþjónustan ehf.

Krókhálsi 5a

Tel.: 588 7700

Fax: 588 8700

www.radning.is

radning@radning.is

Vinna.is

Borgartúni 27

Tel.: 511 1144

www.vinna.is

radningar@vinna.is

The forms are only available in Icelandic except the EURES application form www.vinnumalastofnun.is/eures Employers use the application to determine who they are going to call for a job interview so be careful to fill it out correctly.

Mannval

Tel: 564 4264

Fax: 564 4262

www.mannval.is

mannval@mannval.is

Strá MRI

Suðurlandsbraut 6, 4th
floor

Tel: 588 3031

Fax: 588 3044

www.stra.is

stra@stra.is

Hagvangur

Skógarhlíð 12

Tel.: 520 4700

www.hagvangur.is

radningar@hagvangur.is

Job.is

Tel: 552 3335

www.job.is

nettengsl@job.is

Capacent

Borgartúni 27

Tel.: 540 1000

Fax: 540 1099

www.capacent.is

capacent@capacent.is

Ábendi ehf.

Bankastræti 5

Tel.: 517 5050

www.abendi.is

abendi@abendi.is

HH Ráðgjöf

Fiskislóð 81

Sími: 561 5900

Fax: 561 5909

hhr@hhr.is

www.hhr.is

*Please note that most of the information that these web pages provide are only available in Icelandic.

Taxes and workers rights



Everyone working in Iceland must pay taxes. The taxation system in Iceland is a PAYE system (Pay-As-You-Earn). Employers are required to calculate and deduct taxes from all salaries and wages paid out to employees. There is one main income tax bracket which in 2007 is 35.72%. All those with a tax card are entitled to a personal tax credit of 32.150 ISK per month. This means that usually about 27% of your wages goes to taxes after the personal discount. Income under the limit of 90.006 ISK a month is free of income tax. To receive a tax card go to your local or inland tax office. You find their addresses at www.rsk.is > International > Addresses

Applicants must have an identification number (kennitala), and be prepared to show personal identification with a picture. In order to have the right amount of tax deducted, you have to give your employer the tax card.

Example showing how income tax is calculated

Salary for one month	150.000
4% deduction of pensions premium	6.000
Taxable income	144.000
Tax rate 35,72% x 144.000	51.432
Personal tax credit	32.150
Withholding tax	<u>19.287</u>
Paid salary after taxes	<u>124.713</u>

If you work on a farm, room and board is usually part of your salary and is also subject to taxes. Other deductions from your salary are union dues 1% and pension premium 4% (the employer pays an extra 8% to your pension fund).

For every year you work in Iceland you must fill out and submit an income report. It is usually due in March each year. When leaving Iceland you are also expected to send an income report to the tax authorities a week before you leave. This is done because your final taxes must be calculated, in some cases there may be a partial refund. Final assessment takes place on the basis of the income report in the end of July the year following the tax year. If your withholding tax was higher than your assessment you will get a refund, and if you did not pay enough you must pay the difference. If you have an agent in Iceland who can claim your tax refund or pay for you the residue, he must have a written permit from you to receive the payment. If you do not turn in an income report, the tax authorities estimate your income and tax you

Internal Revenue

(Ríkisskattstjóri)
Laugavegur 166
105 Reykjavík
Tel. 563 1100
www.rsk.is

accordingly. This estimation is usually high and can cost you dearly. To avoid a bill from the Icelandic tax authorities when you have returned home make sure your tax return is sufficient.

Most people nowadays do their income report on-line and it is quite simple as a lot of the information is filled in advance by the authorities. Instructions are also available in many languages on the Internal Revenue webpage:

www.rsk.is > international

Those who need assistance understanding or completing their income report should contact their trade union or the Intercultural house. It is also possible to speak to the local tax authority or the Internal Revenue Directorate (Laugavegur 166, Rvk). You can also seek the help of registered auditors (many Icelanders do so) but be aware that you have to pay for their service.

Workers rights and labour laws

In Iceland the collective agreements between unions and employer's associations are generally binding, which means that they also apply to non-union members. 90% of the labour market is covered by collective agreements. Wages and other terms of employment concluded in collective agreements are legal minimum terms. Salaries lower than what is stated in the collective agreement are illegal. The minimum wage depends on both education and work experience, e.g. the minimum wage for a qualified and experienced carpenter is much higher than for an unskilled worker. Therefore make sure that you have all papers on your education and/or work experience and that you are getting paid accordingly. You can find a link to your union where you find further information on terms of employment at www.asi.is

The common practice is though that people negotiate individually with their future employers about their salaries and other

terms of employment, these wages are called market wages because they are determined by supply and demand on the labour market. Most people that work in the private sector earn closer to market wages than the union rates. According to the union rates the minimum salary for unskilled worker is 125.000 ISK (1.515 €, July, 2007) per month for full time job. As you can see on the table, the difference between union rates and market salaries can range significantly. Learning the Icelandic language substantially increases your career options and earning possibilities.

Union rates versus market wages (per month) – few examples

	Union rates	Market wages
Labourers	1.515 €	2.087 €
Tradesmen	2.262 €	3.637 €
Nurses	2.546 €	4.243 €* 4.243 €**
Engineers	2.425 €	5.769 €**

1€ = 82,47 ISK – 18 July 2007

*Wages include regular overtime and shift differential.

**Engineers with masters degree and five years of work experience.

Here are some outlines of the basic rights of workers:

- **Contract of Employment** – Workers are entitled to a written job contract no later than two months after the first day of employment. A verbal contract is legally binding the first two months. The contract should include the type and place of work, the hours, a short job description, wages, paid vacation, paydays, and the job ratios. It is illegal to work without a contract. You can find a job contract in English at www.eures.is

- **Pay Statement (payslips)** – Collective agreements require that payment of wages must be accompanied with a written pay statement (payslip). Here is an example how a payslip should look like:

Launaseðill					
Pétur Pétursson 120365-2199		Útborguð laun kr. 104.805			
Efstabóli 5		greidd með ávisun			
102 Reykjavík		Launatímabil: Agúst 2006			
Launataxi	Launa- og frádráttarlöir	Fjöldi eininga	Ein.verð	Fjárhæð kr.	Fjárhæð frá áramótum
011.00	Mánaðarlaun	1,00	122.383	122.383	367.149
011.00	Yfirvinna	10,00	1.377	13.770	34.425
	Orlof		10,17%	13.847	40.840
	Laun samtals			150.000	442.414
	Skattstofn			144.000	415.869
	Reiknaður skattur		36,72%	52.877	152.707
	Frá dregst persónuafsl.			29.029	87.087
	Afdregin staðgreiðsla			23.848	65.820
	Lífeyrissjóður			6.000	17.697
	Stéttarfélagsgjald			1.500	4.424
	Orlof lagt á reikning			13.847	40.840
	Frádráttur samtals			45.195	128.781
	Útborguð laun			104.805	313.633

- **Overtime** – A full time job is 173,3 hours per month or approximately 40 hours a week. If you work more than these hours you are entitled to overtime pay. For one hour overtime you get 80% extra on your regular pay. For example if you get 1000 ISK per hour, you get 1800 ISK per hour when you are working overtime.

- **Periods of rest** - Workers are entitled to a minimum consecutive period of 11 hours of rest during each 24-hour period and at least one day of rest per week immediately succeeding the daily minimum period of rest.

- **Holiday allowance (orlof-slaun)** - The general rule is that you are entitled to two vacation days for each month worked. In all wage contracts, there is a clause concerning holiday allowance. The holiday allowance should be calculated at the time of each wage payment, with a minimum of 10,17% of total wages. The holiday allowance enables you to go on holiday and still receive your regular salaries. When working on a temporarily basis though, the holiday allowance is often paid out directly with your monthly salaries.

If you are in doubt or suspect that you are not being treated fairly by your employer you should turn to your union, the EURES office or the Intercultural Centre.

- **Pension Funds** – In Iceland it is mandatory to pay to a pension fund. The employee pays a percentage of his salary (4%) and the employer's contribution is 8%. Pension funds are transferable between EEA countries and will be paid out in the country of residence by the time of retirement. For information regarding Pension funds visit: www.ll.is
- **Compensation for accidents occurring while on the job** - Insurance against occupational injury covers employed persons working in Iceland. The occupational

injury insurance covers accidents in the course of work and is paid by the employer. For further information see: www.tr.is/media/erlend-mal/English.pdf

- **Absence from work due to sickness** - Worker who is unable to perform his normal duties due to sickness or accidents is entitled to wages for a limited period of time. The first year your right is two paid days a month but increases as you work longer. This though does not apply during the first month of employment.
- **Intructions on occupational health and safty in Iceland** – can be found in many languages on: <http://www.vinnuettirlit.is/is/utgafa/fraeslu-og-leidbeiningarrit/>
- **Termination of Employment** - The Icelandic labour market is flexible when it comes to recruiting and laying off staff. Both employers and workers are though subject to notice periods. The notice periods vary between unions and also depend on the length of employment. The general rule is that if you have worked less than three months the notice is one week, a month if you have worked for 3-6 months and 3 months if you have worked for longer than 6 months. Termination should always be accompanied by a written letter. Your union can give you more detailed information about their notice period rules. You find their addresses on: www.asi.is/desktopdefault.aspx/tabid-7/24_read-30
- **Public holidays** – There are 15 public holidays in Iceland. They are called “red days” as they are marked in red on Icelandic calendars.

For more information about labour laws contact the The Icelandic Confederation of Labour at www.asi.is The confederation has published brochures about workers’ rights in 9 languages. These brochures as well as ASI’s handbook: “Icelandic Labour Law, A Summary of Basic Rights and Obligations on the Private Labour Market” can also be found on www.eures.is

Don´t forget:

- ✓ To save all your pay slips and to make copies of your time card.
- ✓ That your union contract only insures your minimum rights.
- ✓ To request membership in your union in writing. Just because you are paying dues doesn’t always mean that you are enrolled.
- ✓ That your union membership entitles you all kinds of service from the unions, such as legal assistance in labour disputes, vacation housing, reimbursements for language classes, professional training, and discounted prices at sports clubs.
- ✓ To carefully check your pay slip and ask your colleagues in case something is unclear to you. You can also visit the EURES office or the Intercultural house if you need further help.
- ✓ Do not hesitate to ask questions regarding your rights. If you have inquired at work, called your union and you are still not sure, call The Icelandic Confederation of Labour (Alþýðusambandið) tel. 535 5600, The EURES office tel. 554 7600, The Multicultural and Information Centre (Fjölmenningarsetur) tel. 450 3000 or The Intercultural Center (Alþjóðahús) tel. 530 9300.



Housing and cost of living



While it is of course best to secure accommodation before you move to Iceland this may not always be possible. If you need a temporary accommodation during your first days in Iceland, a guesthouse or youth hostel may be the best short term solution while you are looking for a more permanent housing. The cheapest options are the Youth Hostel (Farfuglaheimilið), Sundlaugavegur 34, 105 Reykjavik, tel. (354) 553 8110 and the Salvation's Army Guesthouse, Kirkjustræti 2, 101 Reykjavík, tel. (354) 551 1106. The minimum price for one night is around 33 € (July 2007). For a listing of hotels and guesthouses in Iceland go to: www.gisting.is

Rental Housing

The Icelandic market for privately owned homes and apartment flats is large, around 75-85% of the housing stock. The market for rentals is therefore limited. Rent in Reykjavik and the capital area is generally more expensive than in other areas. To find an apartment you may want to use all of the tips below.

- Put up advertisements – you can put up an ad saying that you are looking for a flat on billboards of universities, supermarkets, local kiosks, community centres, health care clinics and any other public notice boards. Also read the advertisements there and see if there is any accommodation available.

- Word-of-mouth – Tell everyone you know, even people you work with that you are looking for an apartment. Often apartments for rent are not advertised in the papers as they are rented through acquaintances before people get the chance to advertise them.
- Use the internet – The following websites that are connected to the newspapers have listings that are updated daily. These ads are all in Icelandic. Look for “Húsnæði í boði” on the following sites: www.visir.is, www.mbl.is, and www.vbl.is.
- Use online rental agencies – www.leiga.is, www.rentus.is and www.leiguskra.is Note that all these websites are in Icelandic.
- Advertise in the newspapers – for a small fee you may place an ad stating that you are looking for a room or an apartment.
- Use the rental agency Leigulistinn - in exchange for a monthly fee of 2.850 ISK this agency provides their customers with a current list of available housing for rent. Call everyday and ask if there are any new listings. Leigulistinn, Skipholt 50b, 105 Reykjavík, tel. (354) 511 1600, www.leigulistinn.is

When renting a house or flat it is usual to pay a month in advance and a security deposit. You should always have a written, signed lease. For more information on leases or to print out a lease in English, Polish or Icelandic, go to <http://eng.felagsmalaraduneyti.is/forms/>



Rent Subsidies (Húsaleigubætur)

All those who are renting a flat, have signed a lease for at least 6 months, and are at least 18 years of age can apply for compensation. Application forms are in the reception areas of your local Social Services Office (þjónustumiðstöð). Each application is valid for one year, therefore, applications must be renewed annually. Social service offices are located in all municipalities in Iceland and there are several offices in Reykjavik. For information about your Social Service Office call 411 1600.

You should never sign your name to anything unless you understand, completely what you are signing.

Note: If you rent in an industrial complex or some other form of housing that is not legal as a residential area you will NOT receive rent subsidies.

Buying a Flat

All those who have a residence permit can buy a flat in Iceland. For more information on purchasing a home contact your bank or the State Housing Finance Fund (Íbúðalánasjóður). Their website has information in English, Polish, Serbian, Croatian and Danish.

Íbúðalánasjóður

Borgatúni 21
105 Reykjavík
Tel (354) 569 6900
www.ils.is

Cost of living

The estimated cost of living in Iceland as of October 2006 is about 96.000 ISK (1164 € 19 July 2007) per month. You should expect to pay 40.000 ISK a month for renting a single room with access to kitchen and bathroom. For a small apartment you pay at least 70.000-80.000 ISK a month. The average price per square meter is about 1.200-1.500 ISK in the suburbs but higher in the downtown area.

The supermarkets "Bónus" and "Krónan" usually offer the lowest price on food. Here is a short list of prices of some every day items in the capital area.

Bread (1 kg.)	1,52 €
Milk (1 l.).....	0,87 €
Coffee (550gr.).....	3,60 €
Bread cheese (1 kg.)	10,88 €
Chicken (1 kg.).....	4,83 €
Red apples (1 kg)	1,30 €
Onion (1 kg.).....	0,83 €
Beer (1 pint in a winestore)	2,30 €
Big Mac meal (with drink and fries)	9,69 €
Hot dog from a stand	2,55 €
Bus ticket	3,40 €
Reykjavík area bus card:	
3 months:	154,00 €
1 month:	67,90 €
Gasoline (1 l. 95 okt.)	1,48 €
Renting a flat (a month per. Sq.m.)	17,72 €



Note: These prices are from July 2007, 1 €=82,47 ISK. Income, cost of living figures and the rate of Euro can vary from time to time. Therefore Income and Cost of living information are updated regularly at www.eures.is

Registering as a legal resident in Iceland



A citizen of an EEA/EU country (except for Romania and Bulgaria) may stay and work in Iceland for up to three months from arriving in the country, or stay up to six months if seeking employment. In addition Swiss nationals can work in Iceland without a work permit.

If you intend to stay longer than three months you must apply for a residence permit. It is recommended that you do so directly after arrival in Iceland or as soon as you have found a job. The

conditions for receiving a resident permit for an EEA citizen are that you can provide for yourself.

To apply for a residence permit go to The Directorate of Immigration (Útlendingastofnun) located at Skógarhlíð 6, 105 Reykjavík. You can also print out the application form and find related information at www.utl.is

All EEA/EU citizens are free to set up a business in Iceland.

The 30 EEA countries are:

Austria	Germany	Lithuania	Slovenia
Belgium	Greece	Luxembourg	Spain
Cyprus	Hungary	Malta	Sweden
Czech Republic	Iceland	Netherlands	United Kingdom
Denmark	Ireland	Norway	(Bulgaria and Romania)*
Estonia	Italy	Poland	
Finland	Latvia	Portugal	
France	Liechtenstein	Slovakia	

*The Icelandic government has decided to apply temporary restrictions for citizens from Bulgaria and Romania. The restrictions will be in effect at least till 1st of January 2009. This means that Bulgarian and Romanian citizens need work permit to work in Iceland.

When you apply for residence permit you will need to submit the following:

- A completed application form for a residence permit signed by the applicant.

The Directorate of Immigration

Útlendingastofnun
Skógarhlíð 6
105 Reykjavík
☎ 510 5400
www.utl.is

- A valid passport, the validity of the passport must extend at least three months beyond the expected stay in Iceland.
- 1 passport-size photo
- Icelandic Personal ID Number – kennitala
- Verification of employment – a copy of your signed contract of employment. This should include the duration of the contract and whether it is a full or part-time employment.
- You will be asked to present proof of health insurance. This is done with an E-104 certificate issued from your home country. If you are not eligible for this insurance you may purchase a 6 month health insurance package at most private insurance companies in Iceland.
- Confirmation of school admission when applying for a residence permit for the purpose of studying.
- Certificate of custody when applying for a child younger than 18.

When the application has been processed, the applicant will be informed by a written notification. The average processing time is about 60 days. The fee for a first permit of a person over the age of 18 is 4000 ISK and 2000 ISK for persons under the age of 18. Your application will not be processed until it has been paid for. A first-time residence permit for an EEA/EU citizen is usually issued for five years. However, if the job contract is for longer than three months, but shorter than one year, the permit is issued for the corresponding period. A first-time permit for a dependant family member of an EEA/EU citizen will be issued for the same period of time as the wage-earner's permit.

EEA citizens do not need a work permit. Non-EEA citizens married to EEA citizens are also free to move to Iceland, but must have a work permit before taking up employment.

Residence Permits for Children under 18

Only legal parents or guardians may apply for children under 18 years of age. When applying for a residence permit for a child under 18, the applying parent or guardian must show proof of housing that meets requirements concerning the number of individuals in residence. The parent must also show sufficient income to provide for himself and the child. A parent who applies for a residence permit for a child needs to earn at least 82.015 ISK per month. Couples need to earn 150.152 ISK per month.

Children born in Iceland

Children of foreign citizens born in Iceland do not automatically receive a residence permit; this needs to be applied for after the birth of the child. It is very important to do this, especially in cases where the child is taken out of the country, e.g. on summer vacation to the parents country of origin. Children who have not

What should I do first after entering Iceland?

1. Visit the EURES office: www.eures.is
 - there you get help and advice on finding a job and apartment, applying for an ID number (kennitala) and other necessary formalities
2. When you have found a job:
 - Sign a contract of employment (form on www.eures.is).
 - After receiving a kennitala you can open a bank account.
 - Apply for a tax card.
 - Apply for a residence permit.
 - Make sure that you know your rights. For instance are you being paid the correct wage?
3. When you find an apartment or place to live be sure to fill out a change of address form at the national Registry: www.thjodskra.is

If at any time you need help or information contact the EURES office (www.eures.is) or the Intercultural Centre/Alþjóðahús (www.ahus.is)

attained citizenship must have a residence permit in order to re-enter the Schengen area.

REMEMBER TO RENEW YOUR RESIDENCE PERMIT BEFORE IT EXPIRES.

Personal ID number (kennitala)

All people born in Iceland and all people legally residing in Iceland are issued an Icelandic personal identification number. This number, kennitala, is issued by the National Registry (Þjóðskrá). This personal ID number is a ten digit number. The kennitala is very important in Iceland and is widely used to identify people, for instance it is necessary for health care, banking, enrolling in schools, and even renting videos. The kennitala is your identity number. Your kennitala is connected to you and all your personal

information such as, your correct name, your legal address, your age, and your civil status.

Only an institution, business or employer may apply for your kennitala. Usually employers apply for kennitala on behalf of their employees. If you have not yet found a job the EURES office can help you apply for a kennitala. The average processing time is about one week. Whenever you move back to you native country or change address, you must notify the National Registry by filling out the proper forms. All personal information connected to the kennitala is guarded by strict laws, regulated by the Data Protection Authority in Iceland.

The National Registry/Þjóðskrá

Borgartún 24

Tel. (354) 569 2900

www.thjodskra.is

What should you bring with you?

- A valid passport, which does not expire for at least 3 months past the period that you want to stay.
- Documents for transferring your health and social security rights. The E-104 certificate for health and sickness insurance if you are here for employment, or your European Health Insurance card if you come as a tourist as it is only valid for short term stay. If you do not bring these documents you are not insured the first 6 months of your stay and have to pay in full for all medical assistance as well as medicines.
- Diplomas and certificates proofing your education and/or vocational training. It is a good idea to translate your documents into English and/ or Icelandic before coming to Iceland.
- Have your former employers or colleagues write references for you. The references need to be in English and/or Icelandic.
- Contact you local social security service and tax office to find out how working in Iceland will affect your status regarding taxes and benefits, and be sure to obtain the appropriate forms and certificates.
- Sufficient funds to get you started until your first salary. For instance money for accommodation, rent deposits, food, application processing fees for residence permit etc. (be aware that pay day is usually the first day of the month so it may be a while until your first pay check).
- Enough money for a return ticket in case you change your mind about staying in Iceland or you don't find a suitable job in Iceland.
- The E-301 form in case you happen to get unemployed after working for some time in Iceland.

Unemployment benefits and social security



Unemployment

Persons aged 16-70 years are entitled to unemployment benefits if they have been working legally for at least 3 months in Iceland. The premium to the Unemployment Insurance Fund is paid by your employer (Employers' contribution, Tryggingagjald). You are entitled to unemployment benefits if you are:

- unemployed
- living in Iceland (have a residence permit or are a citizen of one of the Nordic countries).
- have worked legally for at least 3 months during the last 12 months
- actively seeking a job
- capable of working and willing to take all general job offers

If you have worked in Iceland for three months in at least 25% position you have earned the right to minimum benefits, which entitles you to ¼ of the basic rate. With the E-301 form which is a statement of your work periods in your home country/ other EEA country, you can transfer your rights to unemployment and thus become eligible to full benefits, given that you have altogether worked full time for 12 months. It is therefore wise to take with you an E-301 form when coming to work in Iceland. From

January 1. 2007 the basic rate of unemployment benefit is 114.244 ISK per month (1.385 €, July 2007). The first three months you will receive income based benefits which are 70% of your average wages the last six months but never more than 185.400 ISK per month.

If you are unemployed and receiving benefits in your home country you can come to Iceland to search for a job on benefits from your home country for up to three months. To transfer your benefits you must obtain an E-303 form at your local employment service. In the same way people who receive unemployment benefits in Iceland can apply for E-303 to search for work elsewhere in the EEA.

For more information visit: www.vinnumalastofnun.is or www.eures.is

Social Security

Before moving to Iceland you should contact the social security agency or health insurance programme where you were insured prior to your arrival to Iceland to obtain an E-104 form. The form will ensure you health insurance coverage in Iceland immediately on the transfer of residence. If you intend to stay longer than three months in Iceland you need to apply for a residence permit from the Directorate of Immigration and submit an E-104 certificate to the SSSI (State Social Security Institute, Tryggingastofnun)



as soon as possible. The SSSI then issues a certificate of health insurance. A citizen of an EEA State who does not possess a residence permit, and is therefore not registered as resident in Iceland, cannot enjoy health insurance coverage. In order to secure health insurance at the start of employment, the best course is to apply for and obtain a residence permit before coming to Iceland. (Further information on residence permit visit: www.utl.is) Private insurance companies cannot issue E-certificates.

Social Security Institute

(Tryggingastofnun ríkisins)

Laugavegur 114-116

☎ 800-6044

www.tr.is

If you don't intend to stay for longer than three months you should bring with you the European Health Insurance Card. That ensures you health insurance coverage on a temporary stay up to three months.

Those who are covered by social security in Iceland are entitled when needed to hospitalization, general medical assistance by physicians and specialists, home nursing, x-ray exams, per diem sickness benefits, physiotherapy, medications, dental treatment for children, occupational injury insurance, invalidity pensions, old-age pensions, death grants and child pensions.

Employees who are temporarily posted in Iceland by their employers can continue to enjoy coverage under the public health insurance scheme of their home countries, subject to certain conditions, with all the applicable rights and obligations. Such employees can apply for an E-101 certificate from the insurance agency in the home country, together with an E-106/European health insurance card. This also applies to self-employed persons. The certificates need to be presented to the SSSI for registration. If you can not obtain the necessary documents from your home country (E-104/101), you can buy a private health insurance to cover the six months period until you get coverage by the public insurance system. See for example www.tryggingamidstodin.is

For further information please consult the SSSI website, www.tr.is.

Parental Leave Fund

(Fæðingarorlofsjóður)

Engjateigur 11

☎ 515-4850

www.faedingarorlof.is



Parental leave

Parents who have been working in Iceland for at least six months prior to the birth of their child are entitled to payments from the Parental Leave Fund for up to 9 months. Both the father and the mother have a three months period exclusively to his/her disposal and the three months left the parents can arrange between themselves at their own convenience.

Payments from the Parental Leave Fund are dependent on your average salaries the past two calendar years. Payments during parental leave are 80% of your past salaries, though never less than 100.604 ISK* a month given you have been working 50% or more. The payments never exceed 518.600 ISK a month. Parents who have had residence in Iceland for 12 consecutive months, but have been outside the labour market or studying are also entitled to certain minimum payments following the birth of their child. Full time students are entitled to 98.209 ISK a month and those who have not been working outside the home or in less than 25% job are entitled to 43.899 ISK. The Directorate of Labour administers the payments from the Parental Leave Fund.

(Note: all amounts apply to year 2007).

Occupational Injury Insurance

If you get injured in the course of work, such injury is normally covered by occupational injury insurance. The same amount applies to all persons and is decided by law. Invalidity pensions and death grants in respect of accidents are paid, as are child pensions. Also, medical and medicinal costs etc., already paid by the in-

jured person can be reimbursed. Those who have so requested in their tax returns are also insured against injury sustained during housework. Further information can be found at:

www.tr.is/media/erlend-mal/English.pdf

Health Care

Iceland is divided into health care regions, each with their own primary health care centres, some of which are run jointly with the local community hospital. The primary health care centres are responsible for general treatment and care, examination, home nursing as well as preventive measures such as family planning, maternity care and child health care and school health care. The health care centres are open from 8-16 Monday to Friday for those who have made an appointment. From 16-18 doctors are available for consultation without an appointment but you can expect a somewhat higher fee. This service is open to all regardless of insurance. Those that can not show proof of insurance will though pay higher fees. To find the health care centre closest to your home look for "Heilsugæslustöð" in the phonebook. If you are in the capital area you can also find the information at www.heilsugaeslan.is/?PageID=14

For medical problems that arise after the closing time of the health care centres you can use a service called "Læknavakt", located at Smáratorgi 1, Kópavogur, tel. 1770 or you can call 8482600 if you are closer to Akureyri.

Læknavakt is open on a walk-in basis from 17:00-23:30 weekdays, and from 09:00-23:30 on weekends and holidays. The service charges higher fees for its service than the health care centres as it is an after-hours service.

Telephone lines are open for advice between 17:00-08:00 on weekdays and 24 hours on weekends and holidays. House call requests are available during the same hours.

According to recent laws concerning patients' rights, individuals who are covered by national health insurance, and do not speak Icelandic as their first language or mother tongue are entitled to an interpreter at no charge to themselves. Note that usually you have to request this service in advance.

Emergency services

Emergency and trauma services (Slysa- og bráðamóttaka) are located at the National University Hospital (Landspítali-háskólasjúkrahús) in Fossvogur, just off Bústaðarvegur in 108 Reykjavík. If you are not sure if your injury is an emergency you may call the hospital at 543 2000 and ask them for advice. If you need immediate assistance or an ambulance then call 112. Be prepared to state your name, what the problem is and your location.

**Emergency Telephone
number**

For Police, Ambulance or Fire:

call 112

Education in Iceland



A fundamental principle of Icelandic education is that everyone should have equal opportunities to acquire an education, regardless of sex, economic status, residential location, religion, possible handicaps, and cultural, social or ethnic background.

The educational system is divided into four levels:

Pre-school (leikskóli) - for children between the ages of 2 and 6.

Primary school (grunnskóli) - 6-16 years of age.

Upper-secondary school (framhaldsskóli) - For those who are 16-20 years of age or anyone that has completed compulsory education or has reached 18 years of age.

Higher education or university (háskóli) – For those that have completed upper-secondary school and have a matriculation examination “stúdentspróf” or equivalent.

Pre-schools

You can apply for a pre-school placement for your child when the child is 6 months old. Applications can be found at the pre-schools, the pre-school head office at Tryggvagata 17 or online at <http://rafraen.reykjavik.is/pages/umsoknumleikskola/> Parents pay a monthly fee to have their child in pre-school. Pre-schools are to be available to all children who have not reached compulsory school age. Very few pre-schools accept children less than one year old, and the youngest children are usually 2 years old,

although there are some exceptions. In municipalities where there may be insufficient room to accommodate all applicants, the children of single parents and students are often given priority. Until you get your child placed in a pre-school you can find a day care mother (dagmamma). Day care mothers take care of children in their own homes and this service is administered by the social services of the local municipal authority.

For more information go to your local pre-school, your local service centre or contact the main office in your community. Information about pre-schools for parents of foreign origin is also available on: www.reykjavik.is/desktopdefault.aspx/tabid-1492

Reykjavik

Menntasvið og leikskólasvið Reykjavíkurborgar

Fríkirkjuvegi 1

411 7000

www.leikskolar.is

menntasvid@reykjavik.is

Hafnarfjörður

Þjónustuver bæjarins (city info)

Strandgata 6

www.hafnarfjordur.is

Kópavogur

Fannborg 2, 2nd Floor

570 1600

helgam@kopavogur.is

Primary School

Primary school is compulsory and free of charge. According to Icelandic law all students with a different mother tongue than Icelandic have the right to two hours a week of special teaching in Icelandic while they are getting a grasp of the language as the language of instruction is Icelandic. In some areas of the country there are reception schools (móttökudeild). In Reykjavík these schools offer one-year classes for students from 9 – 15 years of age, who do not have enough knowledge of Icelandic to enable them to attend regular classes. After this students may attend their local school where they may still receive extra help if needed. For more information about these special reception schools contact your local school office or social services in your neighbourhood.

Information brochure on elementary schools for parents of foreign origin is available in many languages:

www.reykjavik.is/desktopdefault.aspx/tabid-1493

Upper secondary schools

Education at the upper-secondary level is free but students pay a registration fee and the cost of textbooks. Students in vocational education also pay a materials fee. Education at this level is not compulsory but around 90% of all students continue to upper-secondary school. After matriculation examination (studentsprof) they have the right to enter university. There are about 40 upper-secondary schools in Iceland. There are no student loans available for students in Upper secondary schools. There is however tax

discount available to parents. This discount is not automatic like child benefits. Parents must fill out the appropriate information on their tax forms. The amount of the discount is affected by the student's income. For more information call the tax office (Ríkisskattstjóri, Laugavegi 166) at 563 1100 or check their homepage at www.rsk.is. Parents are obligated by law to financially support their children until they are 18 years of age. Students between the ages of 18-20 years old who are studying or learning a trade may apply for an extension of support. The student makes this request at the SSSI.

Higher education

The University of Iceland runs the Office of International Education, which is a service organization for all higher education institutions in Iceland. For information regarding higher education please visit www.ask.hi.is or send an e-mail to ask@hi.is. You can also visit their office at Neshagi 16, it's open from 10.00 to 12.00 am. and 12:30 -16:00 pm. (tel.: +354 525 4311).



Icelandic for foreigners



Following schools offer lessons in Icelandic for foreigners:

Mímir-símenntun ehf.

Grensásvegur 16a, Skeifan 8, Öldugata 23, Þönglabakki 4 [Mjódd]. ☎ 580 1800, www.mimir.is, mimir@mimir.is
Evening and day classes. Private lessons and special classes for those speaking Polish, Russian, Scandinavian, Thai, Vietnamese and Eastern European languages. Also offer work related Icelandic in the work place.

Námsflokkar Hafnarfjarðar –

Miðstöð símenntunar í Hafnarfirði

(Center for Continuing Education in Hafnarfjörður)

Skólabraut 1 ☎ 585 5860, www.namsflokkar.hafnarfjordur.is

For beginners and more advanced. Classes are both taught at Námsflokkar and in the work place.

Endurmenntun Háskóla Íslands

(Continuing Education - University of Iceland)

Dunhagi 7, 107 Reykjavík ☎ 525 4444, www.endurmenntun.is, endurmenntun@hi.is Courses are divided up into written language, grammar and spoken language.

Landnemaskólinn (The Settlers School)

Courses organised by the trade union Efling. For information, call Efling ☎ 510 7500, efling@efling.is or Ingibjörg Stefánsdóttir at Mímir-símenntun 588 7222 or www.mimir.is

Kvöldskóli Kópavogs (The Kópavogur Evening School)

Located in Snælandsskóli on Furugrund, 200 Kópavogur ☎ 564 1507, 564 1527, www.kvoldskoli.kopavogur.is, kvoldskoli@kopavogur.is

Alþjóðahús (The Intercultural Centre)

Hverfisgata 18 ☎ 530 9300, www.ahus.is, info@ahus.is.
Icelandic lessons with an emphasis on daily language, speech and communication. They also offer work related Icelandic, Icelandic for parents and courses on writing and reading Icelandic as well as teaching for specific language groups and specially designed courses for the work place. Day and evening courses. For more information call 530 9300 or send an e-mail to info@ahus.is.

Betri árangur (Better Results)

Suðurlandsbraut 6 ☎ 897 7995 ik@mk.is
Icelandic courses with special emphasis on personal service and the needs of each student. There is also a course where parents may attend with their children. Small groups.

Símennt Háskólans í Reykjavík (The Department of Continuing Education at the Reykjavik University)

Ofanleiti 2 ☎ 599 6353, www.ru.is, thorunns@ru.is
Icelandic for those who have little or no knowledge of Icelandic.
Emphasis on the grammar and spoken language used in every day life.

On-line Courses

Námsflokkar Reykjavíkur www.vefskoli.is offers distance learning on the internet. ☎ 551 2992, gigja@inwind.it

Icelandic Online. www.icelandic.hi.is Free Icelandic lessons on the internet. Managed by Hugvísindadeild, the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Iceland.

Outside the capital area

Alþjóðastofan (Akureyri Intercultural Centre)
Rósenborg, Skólástígur 2, 600 Akureyri. ☎ 460-1234, astofan@akureyri.is, www.menntasmidjan.is 5 levels of Icelandic for foreigners. Specializes in courses for foreign women.

Fjölbrautarskóli Norðurlands Vestra (Upper-Secondary School Northwest Iceland)
Skagfirðingabraut 21, 550 Sauðárkrókur ☎ 455 8000, www.fnv.is, fnv@fnv.is

Bekkingarsetur Pingeyinga (Húsavík Academic Centre)
Garðarsbraut 19, 640 Húsavík ☎ 464 0444, www.hac.is, hac@hac.is

Fræðslunet Austurlands (Centre for Adult Education Eastern Iceland)

Tjarnarbraut 39e, 700 Egilsstaðir ☎ 471 2838, 892 2838, www.fna.ism, fna@fna.is

Fræðslunet Suðurlands (Centre for Adult Education Southern Iceland)

Tryggvagata 25, 800 Selfoss, ☎ 480 8155.
www.sudurland.is/fs/, fraedslunet@sudurland.is

Miðstöð símenntunar á Suðurnesjum (Centre for Adult Education in the Keflavik and Reykjanes area)

Skólavegur 1, 230 Keflavík ☎ 421 7500, www.mss.is, mss@mss.is

Símenntunarmiðstöðin á Vesturlandi (Centre for Adult Education Western Iceland)

Bjarnarbraut 8, 310 Borgarnes ☎ 437 2390, www.simenntun.is

Fræðslumiðstöð Vestfjarða (Centre for Adult Education, Westfjords)

Suðurgata 12, 400 Ísafjörður ☎ 456 5025, www.frmst.is, frmst@frmst.is

Viska: fræðslu og símenntunarmiðstöð Vestmannaeyja (The Educational Centre at the Westman Islands)

Strandvegur 50, 900 Vestmannaeyjar ☎ 481 1950.
www.viska.eyjar.is

Important Contact Information



EURES EUROpean Employment Services

(EES-vinnumiðlun)

Engjateigi 11, 105 Reykjavík

Phone.: 554 7600

EURES Advisers: Dröfn Haraldsdóttir, Valdimar Ólafsson & Þóra Ágústsdóttir

www.eures.is

eures@svm.is

The Intercultural Centre

(Alþjóðahús)

Hverfisgata 18

101 Reykjavík

Phone: 530 9300 fax: 530 9301

www.ahus.is

info@ahus.is

Multicultural and Information Centre

(Fjölmeningarsetur)

Árnagata 2-4

400 Ísafjörður

Phone: 450 3090 fax: 450 3005

www.fjolmenningarsetur.is

info@mcc.is

Office of International Education

(Alþjóðaskrifstofa Háskóla Íslands)

Neshagi 16

107 Reykjavík

Phone: 525 4311

www.ask.hi.is

ask@hi.is

The Educational Gateway.

National reference point for assessment and recognition for vocational qualification.

(Menntagátt)

<http://menntagatt.is>

menntagatt@menntagatt.is

(no visiting address)

Government and municipality agencies:

Directorate of Labour

(Vinnumálastofnun)

Hafnarhúsinu v/Tryggvagötu

150 Reykjavík

Phone: 515 4800 fax: 511 2520

www.vinnumalastofnun.is

Directorate of Immigration

(Útlendingastofnun)
Skógarhlíð 6
105 Reykjavík
Phone: 510 5400 fax: 510 5405
www.utl.is

Statistics Iceland

(Hagstofa Íslands)
Borgartún 21a, 150 Reykjavík
Phone: 528 1000 fax: 528 1099
www.hagstofa.is

National Registry

(Þjóðskrá)
Borgartún 24, 150 Reykjavík
Phone: 569 2900 fax: 569 2949
www.thjodskra.is

Occupational, Health and Safety Authority

(Vinnueftirlit)
Bíldshöfði 16
110 Reykjavík
Phone: 550 4600 fax 550 4610
www.vinnueftirlit.is
[www.vinnueftirlit.is/is/utgafa/fraedslu- og leidbeiningarrit/](http://www.vinnueftirlit.is/is/utgafa/fraedslu-og-leidbeiningarrit/)
Leiðbeiningar um vinnuvernd

The State Social Security Institute

(Tryggingastofnun Ríkisins)
Laugavegur 114
105 Reykjavík
Phone: 560 4400 fax: 562 4535
www.tr.is

The Ministry of Social Affairs

(Félagsmálaráðuneytið)
Hafnarhús v/Tryggvagata
150 Reykjavík
Phone: 545 8100 fax: 552 4804
<http://government.is/>

The Ministry of Health and Social Security

(Heilbrigðis og tryggingamálaráðuneyti)
Laugavegur 116
150 Reykjavík
Phone: 545 8700 fax: 551 9165
<http://government.is/>

The Ministry of Education, Science and Culture

(Menntamálaráðuneytið)
Sölvhólgata 4
101 Reykjavík
Phone: 545 9500 fax: 562 3068
<http://government.is/>

Directorate of Customs

(Ríkistollstjóraembættið)
Tryggvagata 19
150 Reykjavík
Phone: 560 0300 fax: 562 5826
www.tollur.is

Directorate of Internal Revenue

(Ríkisskattstjóri)

Laugavegur 166

150 Reykjavík

Phone: 563 1100 fax: 562 4440

www.rsk.is

Reykjavik Social Services

(Velferðasvið Reykjavíkur)

Main office

Tryggvagötu 17,

101 Reykjavík

Phone: 411 1111

www.velferdarsvid.is

velferd@reykjavik.is

Foreign Embassies and Consulates Accredited to Iceland

www.mfa.is/diplomatic-missions/foreign-missions/nr/1808

Unions:

The Icelandic Confederation of Labour

(Alþýðusamband Íslands)

Sætúni 1

108 Reykjavík

Phone: 535 5600 fax: 535 5601

www.asi.is

Federation of Skilled Construction and Industrial Workers

(Samiðn)

Borgartún 30,

105 Reykjavík

Phone: 535 6000

www.samidn.is

postur@samidn.is

Efling Union

(Efling stéttarfélag)

Sætún 1

105 Reykjavík

Phone: 510 7500 fax: 510 7501

www.efling.is

efling@efling.is

The Commercial Workers' Union

(VR, Virðing – réttlæti)

Kringlunni 7

103 Reykjavík

Phone: 5101700

www.vr.is

vr@vr.is

Association of Academics

(Bandalag háskólamanna)

Lágmúla 7

108 Reykjavík

Phone: 581 2090 fax: 588 9239

www.bhm.is

Icelandic counselling and information centre for survivors of sexual violence

(Stígamót)
Hverfisgötu 115,
105 Reykjavík
Phone: 562-6868 / 800-6868
www.stigamot.is

Women's Shelter

(Kvennaathvarfið)
PO Box 1486,
Box 121
Phone: 561 1205, 800 6205
www.kvennaathvarf.is
kvennaathvarf@kvennaathvarf.is

The Icelandic Red Cross

(Rauði Kross Íslands)
Efstaleiti 9,
103 Reykjavík
Phone: 570 4000 Fax: 570 4010
central@redcross.is
www.redcross.is

Alcoholics Anonymous

(AA Samtökin á Íslandi)
Tjarnagata 20,
101 Reykjavík
Phone. 551 2010.
www.aa.is

Foreningen Norden i Island

(Norræna félagið)
Óðinsgata 7,
101 Reykjavík
Phone: 551 0165
www.norden.is

Home and school

(Heimili og skóli)
Suðurlandsbraut 24,
108 Reykjavík
Phone: 562 7475
www.heimiliogskoli.is
heimiliogskoli@heimiliogskoli.is

The Consumers' Association of Iceland

(Neytendasamtökin)
Síðumúli 13,
108 Reykjavík
Phone: 545 1200
www.ns.is
ns@ns.is

Save the children Iceland

(Barnaheill)
Suðurlandsbraut 24,
108 Reykjavík
Phone: 545 0545
www.abotinn.is/barnaheill/index1.htm
barnaheill@barnaheill.is

EURES or EUROpean Employment Services role is to facilitate and promote the free movement of workers to counter regional imbalances in the EEA. All 30 countries of the European Economic Area + Switzerland take part in EURES through their Public Employment Services. EURES has a human network of more than 700 EURES advisers across Europe. The partnership is coordinated by the European Commission. EURES started it's operation in Iceland in 1995 under the Directorate of Labour. There are currently two EURES advisers and one EURES manager operating in Iceland.

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105 Reykjavík
www.eures.is
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150 Reykjavík
www.vinnumalastofnun.is

