



# Iceland



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# 1. General information

## Language



Icelandic is the official language of Iceland. It is an Indo-European language, belonging to the sub-group of North Germanic languages. It is closely related to Norwegian and Faroese, although there are slight traces of Celtic influence in ancient Icelandic literature.

For more information see <https://www.iceland.is/the-big-picture/people-society/language>.

## Administrative settings



Iceland comprises 69 municipalities.

For more information see <https://www.statice.is/statistics/population/inhabitants/municipalities-and-urban-nuclei/>.

## Population



As of 1 January 2022, Iceland had 376 248 inhabitants.

For more information see <https://www.statice.is/statistics/population/inhabitants/overview/>.

## Iceland at a glance



Iceland is a natural geographical wonder with a rich settlement history. Modern Iceland has a remarkably diverse society and economy. Fishery, tourism and aluminium production lead the country's economy. Agriculture is also important. Furthermore, several high-tech manufacturing companies operate in the country. The education level is quite high, with most people completing upper secondary and trade schools.

For more information about Iceland visit <https://www.mcc.is/> and <https://www.landnemin.is/uk> or watch the video <https://youtu.be/Bce6Rb0ASqE>.



## Emergency contacts

Note that the country code for Iceland is **+354**.

- ◆ Call centre for information on assistance to Ukrainian refugees:
- ◆ Multicultural Information Centre: **450 3090**
- ◆ New In Iceland **456 7555** (online chat box at <https://newiniceland.is>)
- ◆ The Ukrainian consulate in Reykjavik, Iceland has closed. For assistance you can contact the embassy in Helsinki, Finland: **+358 9228 9000**
- ◆ COVID-19 related assistance: **1700** or **1770** (Læknavaktin - símaráðgjöf)
- ◆ Emergency number (police and fire department): **112**
- ◆ Medical emergency: **112** or **543 2000**; for children: **543 3700**
- ◆ Human trafficking help services:
- ◆ Bjarkarhlíð, centre for survivors of violence: **553 3000**.
- ◆ Red Cross helpline: **1717**.
- ◆ Women's Shelter: **561 1205**.
- ◆ European Hotline for Missing Children: **116 000**
- ◆ European Helpline for Children and Adolescents: **116 111**
- ◆ Helpline for Women (24/7): **561 1205**. For more information see <https://www.kvennaathvarf.is/?lang=en>
- ◆ Psychological emergency/trauma counselling: **543 2085**
- ◆ Information, counselling, support for members of the LGBTQIA community: **552 7878**. You can also visit <https://samtokin78.is/english/>



## Driving licence

To drive a car in Iceland you need a driving licence. Driving licences issued in non-EEA countries are valid for up to six months after the licence holder has registered with a legal domicile in Iceland. For more information see <https://island.is/en/foreign-driving-licences>.



## Ukrainian diaspora

As of 1 January 2021, immigrants accounted for 15.5 % (57 126) of Iceland's population. 457 of them were Ukrainians. Over 2 000 Ukrainian citizens applied for international protection in Iceland in 2022. Information for Ukrainian citizens is available at <https://island.is/v/ukrainian-citizens>.



## 2. Entry to Iceland

Displaced persons from Ukraine can make an application for collective protection at the international airport in Keflavik on arrival, or at the reception centre for applicants for international protection located at Egilsgata 3, in Reykjavik.

If you are located outside of the capital area, please report to the nearest police station. Applications from displaced persons from Ukraine will in most cases be processed on the same day of registration.

### Registration

Displaced persons from Ukraine who wish to receive protection in Iceland can pre-register at <https://www.firstmedical.is/en/>. This is not an application, but it is intended to assist in speeding up the registration process. Applications for protection can be submitted only after arrival in Iceland.



# 3. Temporary protection

Iceland has created a dedicated website in Ukrainian with important information about rules of entry and accommodation of displaced persons from Ukraine: <https://island.is/v/ukrainian-citizens>.

## Where can you register for temporary protection in Iceland?

If you are already in Iceland, you can apply for protection in the reception centre for applicants for international protection at Egilsgata 3, in Reykjavík. Opening hours are between 8:00 and 16:00 on weekdays.

If you are outside the capital area, you can apply for protection at the nearest police station.

## What documents do you need for registration?

To be granted collective protection, you need to prove your identity to the Icelandic authorities by providing, for example:

- ◆ a passport (both biometric and non-biometric)
- ◆ a national ID card from Ukraine
- ◆ other documents such as a birth certificate or an expired passport.

If you do not have any identity documents, the authorities will make additional investigations to establish your identity.

## What is the procedure to access temporary protection in Iceland?

You should apply for collective protection in person at Keflavík Airport upon arrival in Iceland or in the reception centre for applicants for international protection at Egilsgata 3, in Reykjavik. If you are outside the capital area, you can apply at the nearest police station. Applications from displaced persons from Ukraine will be processed on the same day of registration.



## Which documents will you receive as a beneficiary of temporary protection?

You will receive a residence permit for humanitarian reasons for 1 year. The permit is issued under the collective protection scheme that was activated for Ukrainian citizens in March 2022. You will also receive an Icelandic ID number. For more information see <https://island.is/en/humanitarian-permit>.

The residence permit grants the same rights and access to services as the standard residence permits issued on humanitarian grounds. This means that you can benefit from social services that include financial assistance, assistance with renting housing, health care and education for children.

## Duration of temporary protection

The residence permit is granted for 1 year at the time. It can be renewed up to 3 years from the time it was first issued.

For the first 3 years, collective protection does not form the basis for permanent residence. After 3 years, it is possible to apply for a temporary residence permit which can serve as basis for a permanent residence permit. If the conditions allow it and you meet the requirements, you can receive a permanent residence permit 1 year after your temporary residence permit has been issued.

## Your rights as beneficiary of temporary protection in Iceland

People granted collective protection will receive a residence permit for humanitarian reasons and an Icelandic ID number. The permit entails access to social assistance and the right to family reunification according to the usual rules. You can find more details below.

## More information about these rights

### Accommodation

The Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour and the Multicultural Information Centre launched a call for rental housing and a website where people with available rental properties can register them for displaced persons from Ukraine: <https://www.mcc.is/is/ukraine/ukraine-housing/>. You can consult the website to find suitable accommodation. Once you have found







accommodation in approved or registered housing, you can register your legal domicile there. This will enable you to access services such health care and education for children.



## Access to labour market

Beneficiaries of collective protection have conditional access to the labour market. This means that your prospective employer needs to apply for a work permit for you. Once the application is approved you can access the labour market. Iceland has a robust labour market with diverse opportunities for people in search of work.

For more information see <https://www.landnemin.is/uk/rozdili/pracevlastuvanna>.



## Social welfare

After being granted international protection, you will be invited to visit the Multicultural Information Centre office at the reception centre. There you will receive assistance with contacting social service in the various municipalities.

Beneficiaries of temporary protection have the right to receive social services and assistance with settling in the country. There are provisions for financial assistance, housing benefits and assistance with furniture. For detailed information see <https://www.mcc.is/is/ukraine/ukraine-info/>.

Through the social services you will also have access to Icelandic and community education courses (samfélagsfræðsla). For more information <https://www.landnemin.is/uk>.



## Means of subsistence in the reception system

While in the process of receiving international protection, beneficiaries will receive a payment card for general and food allowance (the latter applies if not living in the Directorate's accommodation which provides food). This can be received from the reception centre in Egilsgata 3 in Reykjavik.

The food allowance is paid out weekly. The general allowance is paid weekly after a four-week stay:

For more information see <https://www.stjornarradid.is/efst-a-baugi/frettir/stok-frett/2022/03/04/Domsmalaradherra-heimilar-timabundna-vernd-vegna-fjoldaflotta/> and <https://www.mcc.is/is/ukraine/ukraine-info/>



## Public health

### Medical care/medical prescription

You have the right to receive health services and medicines that may be necessary for you while your application is being processed. In this case, contact the service providers where you are staying or at the immigration processing desk at the reception centre for applicants for international protection at Egilsgata 3, in Reykjavik.

In the case of a health emergency, contact the emergency ward or call 112. Displaced persons from Ukraine must undergo a medical examination as a part of the process in receiving protection. This examination is done as soon as possible after arriving in Iceland. The examination is based on the [Act on Health Security and Communicable Diseases](#).

For more information about the medical examination see <https://www.landlaeknir.is/servlet/file/store93/item33168/Verklagsreglur%20%C3%A1%20ensku%20Okt%C3%B3ber%202017.pdf>.

### Healthcare once protection has been granted

Once you have been granted international protection or a residence permit in Iceland on humanitarian grounds, you are covered by health insurance immediately. The National Health Insurance Directorate pays part of the cost of medical treatment and of the prescription medications that meet certain requirements. Your registration is sent in by the Directorate of Immigration upon approval of your application.

Iceland's health services are divided into several parts and levels.

- ◆ Local health centres provide general medical and nursing services, including home nursing and healthcare. They deal with minor accidents and sudden illnesses. They are the most important part of the healthcare services apart from the hospitals.
- ◆ Hospitals provide services for people who need to undergo more specialised treatment and be cared for by nurses and doctors, either occupying beds as inpatients or attending out-patient departments. Hospitals also have emergency departments treating people with injuries or emergency cases, and children's wards.
- ◆ Specialists' services are mostly provided in private practices, either by individual specialists or teams working together.

For more information on healthcare in Iceland, see <https://www.landnemin.is/en/information-sites/healthcare>.





## Psychosocial support

Psychologists and physiotherapists usually have their own private practices. If need be, you can request social workers to undergo an assessment of the need for specialist assistance. If the assessment concludes that you need psychosocial support, you can be granted up to ten interviews in the municipality you reside in.

The national insurance agency does not share the cost of going to a private psychologist. However, you can apply for financial assistance to your trade union (stéttarfélag) or to the local social services (félagsþjónusta).



## Disabilities

Persons with disabilities are entitled to general services and assistance. They enjoy equal rights and living standards comparable to all other members of society. Disabled people have the right to education with appropriate support at all stages of education. They also have the right to guidance and assistance in finding suitable employment.

For more information see <https://www.mcc.is/healthcare/rights-of-the-disabled/>.

## COVID-19

All COVID-19 prevention measures have been lifted in Iceland, regardless of vaccination status. For more information on COVID-19 and vaccination, see <https://www.covid.is/sub-categories/travel-to-and-within-iceland>.



## Vaccinations for children

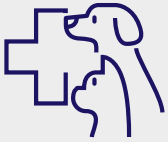
As part of the process to receive a residence permit, applicants undergo a general examination of your health status, including an investigation into what vaccinations you have received. If you have not received the standard vaccination, you will be offered vaccinations in compliance with the National Vaccination Programme. For more information see the booklet on childhood vaccination in Iceland at <https://www.landlaeknir.is/servlet/file/store93/item21251/LAN%2093074%20Bolusetningarbkl.enska.pdf>.

Furthermore, a tuberculin skin test will be performed on children, pregnant women, and persons aged up to 35 years old. If the test indicates a tuberculosis infection, a lung X-ray will be taken.





COVID-19 vaccination is not required for children in Iceland. However, the legal guardians must decide whether to accept vaccination for their children, with as much input from the children as their maturity allows. For more information about COVID-19 vaccinations for children see <https://www.covid.is/barn>.



## Mandatory veterinarian check-up for pets

The Minister of Food granted an exemption to refugees from Ukraine to accept their pets after the necessary isolation, vaccination, and treatment. For more information see <https://www.stjornarradid.is/efst-a-baugi/frettir/stok-frett/2022/06/13/Fyrstu-gaeludyr-flottamanna-fra-Ukrainu-koma-til-landsins-/>.

## Icelandic ID Number (kennitala)

When a person applies for a residence permit, they receive a SIM card for their mobile phone from the Directorate of Immigration (*Útlendingastofnun*). Once the residence permit has been issued, they will receive a residence permit card with an Icelandic ID number (*kennitala*).

In Iceland, people are issued a unique identification number which is recorded in the national register. Individuals are identified with the ID numbers in the national registry system.

ID numbers are unique to each person and registered in the national register to identify each person. They are composed of ten digits. The first six of these are the individual's date of birth in the format DDMMYY. The seventh and eighth digits are randomly chosen when the ID number is allocated. ID numbers are often written with a hyphen following the first six digits, e.g., 120174-3389.



You can take your phone and ID numbers to a phone company or bank to get your name and ID number connected to your phone number. This is called 'Digital ID' (*rafræn skilríki*). Electronic certificates (also called electronic IDs) are personal credentials used in the electronic environment.

Identifying yourself online with an electronic ID is the same as presenting personal identification. Electronic IDs are equivalent to a valid signature. They are used to authenticate yourself and sign electronic documents. Most public institutions and municipalities use electronic login to service sites with electronic IDs. The same goes for banks and other services.

Visit <https://www.audkenni.is/en/electronic-certificates/afgreidslustadir-rafraenna-skilrikja-en/> to find out the locations where you can apply for

an e-certificate. You will need your phone and ID number, as well as your passport or driving license.

## Access to education

Education in Iceland is accessible from 1 year through adulthood. The Icelandic education system is composed of four main levels: pre-schools, primary schools, upper secondary schools, and universities. Adults can also access life-long learning at continuing education centres.

For more information visit <https://island.is/en/p/ukrainian-citizens> or watch the video at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bf\\_HskwlrZA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bf_HskwlrZA).

## Childcare/nursery (preschool)

Preschool is for children between 9 months and 6 years. Attending preschool is not compulsory in Iceland but over 95 % of children do.

There are no restrictions, other than age, for registering a child in preschool. Children with mental or physical development delays are often offered early entry to attend preschool, where all developmental needs are met through the provision of support services at no additional cost to parents.

To apply for preschool, you usually need an e-certificate (electronic identification).

To register your child in preschool, you need to fill an application on your municipality's website. In most cases, your child will go on a waiting list until the preschool has a vacancy. Entry into preschool is by age (older children enter first).

Contact your municipality if you need help, information on fees or on progress. Children need to undergo a medical examination before enrolling in preschool. The municipality will send confirmation with further instructions once the child is accepted into preschool.

## Primary and secondary school

Primary school is compulsory for children and young adults aged 6 to 16. Age is calculated on the child's birth year and not the birthday. The school year runs from August to May, meaning that a single school year spans two calendar years. Parents must register children in primary schools and ensure that they attend school.



To enrol in primary school, you usually need an e-certificate (electronic identification). To register your child into primary or lower secondary school, it is necessary to fill out an application on your municipality's website. Contact your municipality if you need help or if you have not received a response to your application within two weeks. Before enrolling it is necessary that children are examined by a doctor and have documentation of all the required vaccinations. The municipality will send confirmation with further instructions once the child is accepted into primary school.

## Upper Secondary School

Those who have completed lower secondary school or reached the age of 16 have the right to apply and register for upper secondary school. Students need a medical examination by a doctor to start upper secondary school. Eleven upper secondary schools have special procedures in place for receiving students from Ukraine: for more information see <https://www.mcc.is/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Skolaganga-barna-fra-Ukrainu-i-islenska-framhaldsskola-upplysingar-a-Ukrainsku.pdf>. It is recommended to find the school closest to where you reside and contact the school's listed contact person, who will provide further instructions.



## University

Anyone who has completed upper secondary education in Iceland can apply to study at university. Except for some courses like medicine and dentistry, the University of Iceland is obliged to accept all students who have an upper secondary diploma.

Iceland has eight higher education institutions, the largest of which is the University of Iceland, founded in 1911. Most traditional programmes are offered in Iceland, except for some highly specialized courses.

Iceland's universities attract hundreds of foreign students each year. Many courses are taught in English. The country is well known for exceptional programmes in Icelandic language and literature, glaciology, and geology. There are no tuition fees at the state universities. Yet it is important to know there are registration fees.

For more information see <https://www.iceland.is/the-big-picture/people-society/education/> and <https://study.iceland.is/study-in-iceland/universities-in-iceland>.



## Recognition of education titles

Submitting your previous qualifications and educational degrees for recognition can improve your opportunities and status in the labour market and generate higher wages.

For qualifications to be assessed, you need to provide satisfactory documentation certifying previous studies, including copies of examination certificates, with translations by certified translators. Translations may be in English or a Nordic language.



ENIC/NARIC Iceland carries out assessments of overseas qualifications and studies. They provide individuals, universities, employees, professional organisations, and other stakeholders with information on qualifications, education systems and assessment processes. Visit the ENIC/NARIC website for more information: <https://www.enic-naric.net/iceland.aspx>.

The documentation to submit may include the following:

- ◆ subjects studied and length of study in years, months, and weeks;
- ◆ vocational training, if part of studies;
- ◆ professional experience;
- ◆ rights conferred by the qualifications in your home country.

## More information on temporary protection



For more information on the EUAA response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, visit <https://euaa.europa.eu/euaa-response-russian-invasion-ukraine>.

To know more about temporary protection in specific country(ies), visit <https://whoiswho.euaa.europa.eu/temporary-protection>.



## 4. International protection

Persons who are subject to persecution in their home country or face the risk of capital punishment, torture or inhumane or degrading treatment or penalty have the right to asylum as refugees in Iceland. An asylum seeker, who is not deemed to be a refugee, may be granted a residence permit on humanitarian grounds if compelling arguments recommend this (e.g. serious illness or difficult circumstances in the home country). The Directorate of Immigration processes applications for international protection at the first administrative level. However applications are to be submitted to the police.



More information on international protection can be found at <https://utl.is/index.php/en/asylum-and-international-protection>.

### **Beneficiaries of temporary collective protection applying for international protection**

If you are covered by temporary collective protection and apply for international protection, your application may be deferred for up to 3 years from the time when you first received a residence permit. Once the authorisation to grant collective protection has expired, or when three years have passed since you first received a residence permit, you will be notified. Your application for international protection will only be processed if you express unequivocally, with a certain timeframe, that it is your wish to carry it on.





# Annex I . Repository of sources


General information		
Service	Website	QR
General information about Iceland	<a href="https://www.statice.is/statistics/population/inhabitants/municipalities-and-urban-nuclei/">https://www.statice.is/statistics/population/inhabitants/municipalities-and-urban-nuclei/</a>	
Ukrainian embassy/consulate	<a href="https://finland.mfa.gov.ua/">https://finland.mfa.gov.ua/</a>	
Emergency contacts	<a href="https://www.112.is/en">https://www.112.is/en</a>	
Driving licence and vehicle registration	<a href="https://island.is/en/foreign-driving-licences">https://island.is/en/foreign-driving-licences</a>	
Entry requirements	<a href="https://island.is/en/p/ukrainian-citizens">https://island.is/en/p/ukrainian-citizens</a>	



Temporary protection		
Eligibility criteria Registrations Requirements Procedure/Registration	<a href="https://island.is/en/p/ukrainian-citizens">https://island.is/en/p/ukrainian-citizens</a>	
Accommodation		
National accommodation system	<a href="https://island.is/en/p/ukrainian-citizens">https://island.is/en/p/ukrainian-citizens</a>	
Private housing/registration	<a href="https://www.skra.is/english/people/change-of-address/moving-within-iceland/">https://www.skra.is/english/people/change-of-address/moving-within-iceland/</a>	
Public health		
Healthcare aid for Ukrainian refugees	<a href="https://www.mcc.is/fagfolk/upplýsingar-fyrir-flottafolk/healthcare-brochure/">https://www.mcc.is/fagfolk/upplýsingar-fyrir-flottafolk/healthcare-brochure/</a>	
COVID-19 info	<a href="https://www.covid.is/sub-categories/travel-to-and-within-iceland">https://www.covid.is/sub-categories/travel-to-and-within-iceland</a>	

Access to education		
Information on accessing education and enrolling to public schools	<a href="https://island.is/en/p/ukrainian-citizens">https://island.is/en/p/ukrainian-citizens</a>	
Higher Education	<a href="https://www.iceland.is/the-big-picture/people-society/education/">https://www.iceland.is/the-big-picture/people-society/education/</a>	
International protection		
Information on how to apply for international protection	<a href="https://utl.is/index.php/en/asylum-and-international-protection">https://utl.is/index.php/en/asylum-and-international-protection</a>	
Information platforms (websites):		
Information on temporary protection procedures and various rights (dedicated official website of Iceland for displaced persons from Ukraine)	<a href="https://island.is/en/p/ukrainian-citizens">https://island.is/en/p/ukrainian-citizens</a>	



<p>Information on living and moving to Iceland developed by the Multicultural Information Centre of Iceland – webpage dedicated to displaced Ukrainian citizens</p>	<p><a href="https://www.mcc.is/ukraine/ukraine-info/">https://www.mcc.is/ukraine/ukraine-info/</a></p>	
<p>Frequently asked questions on education, employment, financial support, health, housing, and Ukraine crisis</p>	<p><a href="https://www.mcc.is/fags/">https://www.mcc.is/fags/</a></p>	
<p>European Commission's dedicated page for persons fleeing Ukraine</p>	<p><a href="https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/stronger-europe-world/eu-solidarity-ukraine/eu-assistance-ukraine/information-people-fleeing-war-ukraine_uk">https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/stronger-europe-world/eu-solidarity-ukraine/eu-assistance-ukraine/information-people-fleeing-war-ukraine_uk</a></p>	
<p>UNHCR Iceland</p>	<p><a href="https://www.unhcr.org/neu/is/">https://www.unhcr.org/neu/is/</a></p>	
<p>List of institutions and NGOs aiding refugees</p>	<p><a href="https://www.samband.is/english/">https://www.samband.is/english/</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.raudikrossinn.is/english/projects/domestic-projects/refugees-and-migrants/refugees-and-migrants/">https://www.raudikrossinn.is/english/projects/domestic-projects/refugees-and-migrants/refugees-and-migrants/</a></p> <p><a href="https://2021.reykjavik.is/en/municipal-service-centres">https://2021.reykjavik.is/en/municipal-service-centres</a></p>	



	<a href="https://www.hafnarfjordur.is/en">https://www.hafnarfjordur.is/en</a>  <a href="https://www.kopavogur.is/is/ibuar/velferd-">https://www.kopavogur.is/is/ibuar/velferd-</a>  <a href="https://www.gardabaer.is/english/">https://www.gardabaer.is/english/</a>  <a href="https://mos.is/ibuar/velferd/felagsleg-radgjof-">https://mos.is/ibuar/velferd/felagsleg-radgjof-</a>  <a href="https://www.borgarbyggd.is/is/thjonusta/felagsthjonusta">https://www.borgarbyggd.is/is/thjonusta/felagsthjonusta</a>  <a href="https://www.arborg.is/en">https://www.arborg.is/en</a>  <a href="https://www.reykjanesbaer.is/is/thjonusta/velferd-felagsthjonusta/felagsleg-adstod">https://www.reykjanesbaer.is/is/thjonusta/velferd-felagsthjonusta/felagsleg-adstod</a>	
EUAA resources		
Service	Website	QR
General information on temporary protection	<a href="https://euaa.europa.eu/euaa-response-war-ukraine-vidpovid-euaa-agentstvo-evropeyskogo-soyuzu-z-pitan-pritulkuna-viynu-v-ukraini">https://euaa.europa.eu/euaa-response-war-ukraine-vidpovid-euaa-agentstvo-evropeyskogo-soyuzu-z-pitan-pritulkuna-viynu-v-ukraini</a>	
Information on temporary protection in a specific country(ies)	<a href="https://whoiswho.euaa.europa.eu">https://whoiswho.euaa.europa.eu</a>	



