Reception - Iceland

Reception system

Overview

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Relevant EU legislation

Iceland is not bound by the recast Reception Conditions Directive. A similar national legal framework applies, and it is specified under Chapter VI of the Regulation on Foreigners.

National legislation

Main legislation

Alþingi. (2016). Foreign Nationals Act No. 80/2016 [Lög um útlendinga nr. 80/2016] and subsequent amendments (30 April 2025).

Alþingi. (2025). Regulation on Foreigners No. 540/2017 [Reglugerð um útlendinga nr. 540/2017], as amended by Act No. 649/2025 (19 June 2025).

Alþingi. (2012). Act amending the Act on Immigration Affairs No. 116/2012 [Lög um breytingu á lögum um útlendinga nr. 116/2012] (reception of protected persons, Immigration Council).

Implementing acts

Presidential Decree on the Division of Government Affairs between Ministries in the Government of Iceland No.5 [Forsetaúrskurður um skiptingu stjórnarmálefna milli ráðuneyta í Stjórnarráði Íslands No.5] (14 March 2025)

Alþingi. (2025). Regulation on Employment Rights of Foreigners [Reglugerð um atvinnuréttindi útlendinga] (Regulation No. 339/2005).

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Alþingi. (2025). Child Protection Act No. 97/2002 [Barnaverndarlög No. 97/2002] (30 April 2025)

Alþingi. (2023). Regulation on a List of Occupations Requiring Specialized Knowledge within the Meaning of the Act on the Employment Rights of Foreigners, No. 97/2002 [Reglugerð um lista yfir störf sem krefjast sérhæfðrar þekkingar í skilningi laga um atvinnuréttindi útlendinga, nr. 97/2002]

Alþingi. (2023). Identity Card Act No. 55/2023 [Lög nr. 55/2023 um persónuskilríki] (21 June 2023).

Alþingi. (2022). Parliamentary Resolution on an Action Plan for Immigration Issues for the Years 2022–2025 [Þingsályktun um aðgerðaáætlun í málefnum innflytjenda fyrir árin 2022–2025].

Alþingi. (2018). Regulation No. 1036/2018 on monitoring and follow-up of services for disabled people with long-term support needs. [Lög nr. 38/2018 Reglugerð um eftirlit og eftirfylgni vegna þjónustu við fatlað fólk með langvarandi stuðningsþarfir.

Alþingi. (2012). Immigration Act No. 116/2012 [Lög um útlendinga nr. 116/2012] (23 November 2012).

Alþingi. (2016). Higher Education Act No. 63/2006 [Lög um háskóla nr. 63/2006].

Alþingi. (2007). Health Care Act No. 40/2007 [Lög um heilbrigðisþjónustu nr. 40/2007].

Competent authority and stakeholders

Authority responsible for reception	Directorate of Labour | Vinnumálastofnun and decentralised service centres.

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Other actors involved	• The Refugee Committee • Local municipalities • The National Agency for Children and Families | Barna- og fjölskyldustofa • The Icelandic Red Cross, Asylum Department • Directorate of Immigration | Útlendingastofnun • International Organisation for Migration (IOM) • European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) • United Nations Higher Commissioner for Refugees (UNCHR)

Organisational aspects

Reception of applicants for international protection is coordinated by the Directorate of Labour in cooperation with local municipalities. The Directorate of Labour provides basic services to immigrants to make their first steps in Iceland It also operates a counselling service applicants for international protection and beneficiaries for protection. and provides basic services to applicants for international protection. The Multicultural Department of the Directorate of Labour provides advice to immigrants and applicants for international protection.

The Ministry of Social Affairs and Housing was established on, March 15th 2025, and oversees policy making of social affairs, social security and housing in Iceland including applicants for international protection.

Decisions about where applicants will reside (Reykjavík or other designated municipalities) are made centrally according to capacity, availability, and dispersal needs for applicants for international protection. Referrals to respective municipalities are managed by the Directorate of Labour.

Municipalities play an important supporting role: they enter in service agreements with the Directorate of Labour for the accommodation of applicants for and beneficiaries of international protection. They also provide services such as schooling for children, access to healthcare, social services, for persons who are accommodated in their territory.

The Child Protection Services under the National Agency for Children and Families is responsible for supporting unaccompanied children under the asylum

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procedure, assigns custody and provides special accommodation arrangements.

The Icelandic Red Cross provides information and legal counselling, social support, assists with integration activities and the monitoring of reception and living conditions.

IOM and the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) support the Directorate of Immigration with assisted voluntary return for rejected applicants and assist with travel arrangements and reintegration.

UNHCR has offered technical advice on aligning reception standards at national level with EU and International legislative instruments.

Daily operations of the Directorate of Labour are managed by 10 service offices throughout the country with headquarters in Reykjavík. Services could be also delegated to municipalities or external providers and the Icelandic Red Cross through service level agreements.

Allocation of applicants to geographical areas within the territory

According to Article 23 of the Regulation on Foreigners, applicants for international protection, may be distributed across various regions on the national territory and such decisions are taken by the central government. The location of the applicant's reception depends on where the application is lodged and the availability of facilities in the territory. The eventual transfer to a different territory may be triggered by specific dispersal needs.

Staff and training

The reception centres are staffed by competent workers specialised in the fields necessary.

Reception phases

Reception for applicants for international protection in Iceland is regulated by the Foreign Nationals Act No. 80/2016 (Articles 27 and 33) and detailed in the Regulations on Foreigners (Articles 23 and 24). The Directorate of Labour is the competent authority responsible for organising reception, with support of municipalities and the Icelandic Red Cross. An asylum seeker is entitled to

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reception immediately after lodging an application for international protection. Material reception conditions include accommodation, food, basic services, housing, access to healthcare, and essential humanitarian support.

Iceland doesn’t have a set multi-phase reception model with separate types of reception facilities and accommodation centres. Instead, implements a phase approach as follows:

Arrival/ first reception: An applicant becomes entitled to reception immediately upon lodging an asylum application (Article 29, Foreign Nationals Act). Material reception conditions such as accommodation, food, clothing, and basic services must be provided from that point. This phase usually takes place at a border crossing point, at Keflavík International Airport or the reception centre of Iceland in Reykjavik area. Individuals expressing the intention to apply for international protection, are referred to the Directorate of Immigration for registering and lodging the application, undergo health and medical screening, identification checks and have the initial interview. Accommodation is assigned automatically by the Directorate of Labour at the reception centre, or in guesthouses or hotels near Reykjavík.

Transit / collective accommodation: Iceland does not have formal transit or specialised accommodation facilities. Applicants usually stay in individual accommodation (guesthouses, hotels) while their case is under initial assessment. Single men, families and unaccompanied children are usually accommodated separately, to ensure protection of vulnerable groups. At this stage, applicants receive meals or food allowances, basic healthcare and are enrolled in some social welfare activities.

Dispersal/ long-term reception: Iceland does not have formal transit or open/closed reception facilities. Material reception conditions and accommodation options are the same as in transit phase. When an asylum case needs to be examined under the material substantive treatment (regular procedure), the applicant may be moved to another residential housing unit than the one initially placed, such as a rented apartment or reside in municipal housing. Vulnerable groups (families, unaccompanied minors) receive specialised special accommodation by the National Agency for Children and Families in special designated accommodation centres or shelters. Some applicants may be dispersed from Reykjavík area to other municipalities depending on the capacity and availability of places. At this stage applicants receive subsistence allowances, schooling for children, and they have limited access to employment

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(option for temporary ID number *kennitalla*, which is offered upon application and under certain conditions).

Integration or outflow: Reception in Iceland ends when the a person is granted protection status (refugee status, subsidiary protection) or when the application of international protection is finally refused upon appeal at the Immigration and Asylum Appeals Board.

Iceland has a coordinated programme for the reception and integration for beneficiaries of international protection. Beneficiaries are entitled to municipal services for housing and integration including language classes, healthcare, support in seeking employment and subsistence allowance for housing which is provided by the municipalities. According to the programme *'refugees can stay at the reception centre for asylum seekers up to 8 weeks after receiving protection'.*

When the applicant receives a final negative decision is offered the option for voluntary return. The reception entitlements end when the deadline for voluntary departure expires. However, services provided to the applicant up to maximum 30 days after the final decision. After that period the person, is not considered that resides legally in Iceland and must leave the country. The rejected applicants who accept voluntary return, are supported by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and Frontex who, in cooperation with the Directorate of Immigration support travel arrangements and/or reintegration support.

Finally, a person who withdraws an application for international protection loses the right to service 3 days after withdrawing his/her application.

Contingency planning

Iceland does not have contingency planning in the context of reception.

Facilities

Overview of different types of reception facilities according to national classification

Under the Foreign Nationals Act No. 80/2016 and the Regulations on Foreigners (Article 24), Iceland has a limited reception capacity for applicants for

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international protection.

Reception of applicants for international protection starts at the Reception Centre where applicants undergo registration, basic health checks, vulnerability assessment and lodging of their application. The reception centre is under the responsibility of the Directorate of Labour which provides basic services for applicants for international protection.

There are no collective reception and accommodation centres in Iceland. Applicants in transition are initially accommodated in residential premises in municipalities under service level agreements with the Directorate of Labour.

During the examination of the asylum application and until final decision is issued, applicants are accommodated in residential housing which is mostly small-scale rented apartments or houses dispersed in local municipalities. These premises also accommodate families and individuals whose application is examined under the regular procedure.

Iceland does not operate closed or detention-type reception or pre-return centres. Applicants remain under open housing accommodation arrangements but may be moved for organisational reasons. The Foreign Nationals Act does not specify a legal time limit during which an applicant for international protection can stay in reception other than the date of the final decision on the applicant's case.

Premises at the border

Name of the reception facility	Not any
Access description	Not any
Management	Not any
Type of applicants accommodated	Not any
Number of centres	Not any
Capacity	Not any

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Location of the centres within the country	Not any

Initial reception centres

Name of the reception facility	Reception centre for applicants for international protection
Regime	Open
Management	Directorate of Labour | Vinnumálastofnun
Type of applicants accommodated	Applicants for international protection
Number of centres	1
Capacity	Information is currently not available
Location of the centres within the country	Reykjavík, urban area

Collective accommodation centres

Name of the reception facility	Not applicable
Regime	Not applicable
Management	Not applicable
Type of applicants accommodated	Not applicable
Number of centres	Not applicable
Capacity	Not applicable

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Location of the centres within the country	Not applicable

Individual accommodation centres (such as private houses, flats, hotels)

Name of the reception facility	Residential premises for provision of basic services for applicants for international protection.
Regime	Open
Management	Directorate of Labour | Vinnumálastofnun
Type of applicants accommodated	Applicants for international protection
Number of centres	27 properties and 93 hotel rooms according to information published by the Directorate of Labour (5 June 2025)
Capacity	Information is currently not available
Location of the centres within the country	17 locations in 3 municipalities, most of them in the capital area.

Temporary solutions when housing capacities is temporarily exhausted

Name of the reception facility	Not any
Regime	Not any
Management	Not any
Type of applicants accommodated	Not any
Number of centres	Not any
Capacity	Not any

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Location of the centres within the country	Not any

Reception facilities for applicants with special needs

The national legislation (Foreign Nationals Act, Article 33 and Child Protection Act , Articles, 4, 21-23 and 25) provides for dedicated reception facilities and targeted measures for applicants for international protection who have special needs. Vulnerable groups, including unaccompanied minors, single women, families with children, survivors of trauma or torture, persons with disabilities, and individuals with serious health conditions, are accommodated in facilities designed to meet their specific needs.

The Directorate of Labour remains the coordinating competent authority for reception conditions, while daily management and specialist care are typically carried out by local child welfare services, municipal social workers, health authorities, or trusted Civil Society Organisations, depending on the specific population and facility.

Special housing arrangements vary according to the applicant's situation. Unaccompanied minors are typically placed in dedicated child protection shelters or specialized reception centres operating under the national child welfare framework (Barnahús), overseen by the National Agency for Children and Families. These facilities are run by municipal child protection services or licensed NGOs (Save the Children) under the supervision and standards set by the Agency, which are aligned in the Child Protection Act. For instance, the National Agency for Children and Families sets detailed rules and procedures on placement, safeguarding, and care standards for minors and unaccompanied minors, including provisions for integrating unaccompanied children within mainstream child welfare services when appropriate.

Victims of human trafficking or applicants with severe psychological and mental health conditions may be accommodated in safe houses or specialized units, often managed by NGOs under agreements with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour. These arrangements ensure additional privacy, security, and access to trauma-informed services.

Applicants with disabilities or serious health conditions are generally accommodated in mainstream reception centres coordinated by the Directorate

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of Labour (VMST). However, adapted rooms, specialized support services, or tailored assistance can be provided when required, often in collaboration with local health authorities and social services.

According to guidance from the National Agency for Children and Families, these facilities operate within the general reception framework but include targeted measures to safeguard and meet the specific needs of vulnerable groups, for example by integrating unaccompanied minors into mainstream child protection facilities alongside Icelandic children, ensuring equal access to education and care.

Material reception conditions provided in kind and cash

Definition of material reception conditions

Material reception conditions are laid down in the Regulation on Foreigners (Articles 25-30) and in Foreign Nationals Act (Article 33). The national legal framework specifies that an applicant for international protection shall have access to food and housing, healthcare, children education, transportation, maintenance (subsistence) allowance social support and access to legal aid.

Material reception conditions provided in kind

Type and purpose	The applicant is guaranteed housing, meals, and other basic services. Basic services refer, among other things, to medical care, schooling, kindergarten for children, leisure activities, and transportation within the municipalities for appointments with the national authorities. Clothing is provided by the Icelandic Red Cross in accordance with a service agreement the organisation has with the Directorate of Immigration.

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Duration and recurrence	The national legislation does not refer to specific frequency for the provision of the material reception conditions in kind. Subsistence allowance is provided weekly, after four-weeks of stay at premises of the Directorate of Labour. (Article 29, Regulation on Foreigners). Food and housing subsistence allowance are also provided on weekly basis (Article 29, Regulation on Foreigners)

Financial allowances and vouchers

Type and purpose	According to Article 25 of the Regulation on Foreigners , The maximum subsistence allowance is ISK 28,000 per family per week. The weekly rates are: • Individual: ISK 8,000 • Married or cohabiting couple: ISK 13,000 • Child: ISK 5,000 The allowance may be partly paid for specific meals: 30% for breakfast, 30% for lunch, and 40% for dinner.
Duration and recurrence	Weekly

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Calculation and amount	According to information available by the Red Cross, the amount is different depending on the size of the family. After the first four weeks, the main applicant and his/her spouse or partner will receive an extra ISK 2,700 each week, raising the head of household's allowance from ISK 8,000 to ISK 10,700 and the partner's from ISK 5,000 to ISK 7,700. Each child will also get an extra ISK 1,000, bringing their weekly amount to ISK 6,000 per child. This additional support is meant to help cover personal hygiene items or basic non-prescription medicine. The total allowance for a family cannot exceed ISK 28,000 per week. Expectant mothers will receive a baby pack from the Directorate of Labour (VMST) containing essentials like diapers and sanitary pads. After giving birth, they should request an increase in their weekly support to help cover diaper costs.
Applicants granted allowance	The Directorate of Immigration shall condition the payment of the subsistence allowance on the applicant's requirement to report to the Directorate, attend interviews and notifications to which they have demonstrably been summoned, and agree to abide by the house rules of the accommodation in which they reside. The Directorate of Immigration shall deduct from the subsistence allowance any costs incurred due to damage to housing or belongings, or other expenses that the Directorate must cover, provided that these are not a result of the normal use of the individual. A foreigner working without a work permit is not entitled to subsistence allowance. An applicant who has been issued a temporary residence and work permit is responsible for their own subsistence, thereby ending the municipality's service to them.
Modalities of provision	Weekly subsistence allowance is provided in one debit card per family.

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Material reception conditions for vulnerable persons

According to the Act on Foreigners, all applicants for international protection including vulnerable groups are entitled the same level of material reception conditions. Additionally, unaccompanied minors, single women, families with young children, survivors of trafficking, persons with disabilities, and those with severe health or psychological conditions are entitled to special accommodation arrangements to ensure their well-being. Material reception conditions such as financial support are adjusted according to the applicant's personal situation to ensure security and dignity for living. Unaccompanied minors fall under the child protection system overseen by the National Agency for Children and Families, which places them in dedicated child welfare units or foster care. Similarly, healthcare is also adjusted to the applicant's needs and emergency. Pregnant women receive additional subsistence in kind and in cash until delivery which is adjusted when the child is born.

Rights and obligations during reception

Provision of information and counselling

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Modalities of information provision on benefits and obligations related to reception conditions	When an asylum application is registered, applicants immediately receive information about their rights, responsibilities, and reception conditions. They are then referred to the Directorate of Labour's (VMST) service team, which provides detailed information both verbally and in writing during a service interview held at their operational centres. During the service interview, VMST staff explain how to access healthcare services, which services VMST covers and informs applicants about their employment rights, any work restrictions. Information on education rights, including language courses and social wellbeing initiatives, is also provided at this stage. The VMST Multicultural Information Centre, publishes information material available written material in different languages (English, Arabic, Kurdish, Persian, Russian, Somali, Spanish, and Urdu). Information and counselling are also provided by the Multicultural Information Centre, by online representatives, via e-mail or a dedicated hotline, as part of services offered by the VMST. The Icelandic Red Cross operates open interview centres in three locations at Reykjavík, Reykjanesbær Akureyri, where applicants for international protection can receive information and counselling. A dedicated hotline is also available.

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Provision of legal assistance on the reception conditions available	Foreign Nationals Act, Article 13, specifies instances where legal aid is provided to an applicant for international protection. Pursuant to articles 24 and 30 of the Foreign Nationals Act, the spokesperson appointed by the Directorate of Immigration is responsible to provide information and counselling on the rights and obligations to the applicant, represents the applicants legal interests and ensure the best interest of children applicants.
House rules	The Directorate of Labour has established the following house rules for residential facilities. According to them, residents must respect other household members and staff, keep quiet times between 10 pm and 8 am, maintain clean rooms and dispose properly the trash. Smoking, alcohol, drugs, and unauthorized photos or recordings are not allowed. Doors must stay closed, and security is available 24/7. Violations may lead to warnings, reporting to the police or deductions from child support.

Freedom of movement within the territory

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Assignment of a particular area of residence to applicants	In Iceland, applicants for international protection generally have the right to move freely within the national territory once they are registered with the Directorate of Immigration and accommodated in reception facilities. There are no general legal restrictions on freedom of movement for asylum seekers across the country. However, certain temporary limitations may apply in specific circumstances, such as when applicants are housed in designated reception centres located in particular regions. Transfers between centres can occur based on administrative decisions related to the organisation of reception capacities and dispersal policies. During such transfers or in case of specific security concerns, movement may be momentarily limited. Restrictions on movement do not apply universally to all applicants, but may be imposed on a case-by-case basis for reasons including public order, effective case processing, or specific administrative needs. Applicants subject to the Dublin Regulation may face stricter controls, particularly if awaiting transfer to another EU member state.

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Reporting obligations	Pursuant to the provisions of the Foreign Nationals Act (Articles 20 and 23), all applicants for international protection have an obligation to report regularly to the Directorate of Immigration or to the reception facility where they reside. Reporting typically includes in-person check-ins at designated intervals, which may vary depending on the stage of the asylum procedure. Failure to comply with reporting obligations can lead to suspension of reception benefits, delays in the processing of the asylum application and it could also trigger removal procedures (Regulation No. 808/2019 on the Reception of Asylum Seekers). These measures aim to maintain contact with applicants, ensure orderly processing, and uphold the integrity of the reception system. Exceptions or additional conditions may apply in specific cases, including applicants subject to the Dublin Regulation.

Employment and vocational training

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Time limit to access the labour market	According to information available by the Icelandic Red Cross, asylum seekers do not receive a kennitala (Icelandic national ID/social security number) upon arrival. The *kennitala* is a legal prerequisite for concluding a formal employment contract in Iceland. Under Icelandic law, strict regulation of employment and workers' rights is maintained through this system. Without a kennitala, an individual cannot be legally employed, which means that asylum seekers are prohibited from entering the labour market until they obtain a work permit and receive a kennitala. This restriction is intended as a protective measure to prevent irregular work, exploitation, or underpaid labour. By requiring employers to verify legal work status through the national ID system, the state aims to reduce the risk of labour abuses and uphold fair working conditions for all workers. Companies are legally banned from employing individuals who do not hold a kennitala, and violations can result in fines or other sanctions for employers.

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Criteria to access the labour market	The national legislation provides that applicants for international protection may apply for a temporary *kennitala* (national ID number) and a temporary work permit during the asylum procedure. The application is submitted to the Directorate of Immigration which processes such permits in cooperation with the Directorate of Labour. The temporary work permit (Regulation on employment rights of foreigners n.339/2005) must be requested by a prospective employer. The application process requires the employer to submit the necessary forms and to ensure that taxes and mandatory health insurance contributions are paid for the applicant while employed. Holding a temporary work permit does not influence the outcome of the asylum application. An applicant's employment status or work history in Iceland as relevant to the legal merits of the claim. If an asylum claim is rejected including after any appeals and final decisions, the temporary kennitala, and the right to work both cease to be valid. The applicant is then legally required to leave Iceland, and any employment must stop immediately.
Employment support for applicants	Until an asylum seeker is granted the right to work, typically after a certain waiting period and under defined conditions, they remain economically dependent on the state's reception system, which provides basic subsistence support.

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Adults' access to vocational training	In Iceland, the Foreign Nationals Act does not explicitly provide for asylum seekers' access to vocational education or training, and there is no statutory right to participate in such programmes while an asylum claim is pending. In practice, according to information available by the Icelandic Red Cross, access to vocational training is linked to the applicant's right to work; an asylum seeker with a temporary work permit and temporary kennitala may be eligible for certain short-term vocational courses open to legal residents, but this depends on the requirements of training providers and the labour market system, which generally demand a valid ID, residence status, and sometimes an employment contract. Applicants under the Dublin III Regulation typically do not receive a work permit and therefore have no access to formal vocational training. Some civil society organisations and municipalities offer non-formal skills workshops and language classes, but these do not lead to recognised qualifications.
Access to tertiary education	In Iceland, there is no explicit legal right for asylum seekers to enrol in tertiary or higher education under the Foreign Nationals Act, and access is governed instead by each university's admission rules under the Higher Education Act No. 63/2006. In practice, according to information available by the Icelandic Red Cross, enrolment generally requires a valid ID number (kennitala), certified prior qualifications, and payment of tuition fees. Most asylum seekers do not have a permanent kennitala and therefore cannot enrol as regular degree students while their claim is pending, unless they obtain a temporary kennitala through a work permit and meet other admission conditions. Applicants for international protection who undergo the Dublin procedure are effectively excluded from higher education access due to the lack of a valid kennitala and short expected stay.

Healthcare

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Medical screening	Applicants for international protection must undergo a medical screening soon after the application for international protection is registered. The appointment is scheduled by the Directorate of Labour.
Level of healthcare	In Iceland, applicants for international protection are entitled to access healthcare services similarly to nationals, but certain procedural differences apply. Upon registration with the Directorate of Immigration, asylum seekers receive a temporary ***kennitala*** (Icelandic ID number), which is essential for accessing public services, including healthcare. Healthcare for asylum seekers is primarily provided by the public healthcare system, which includes primary care centres, hospitals, and emergency services. They have access to necessary medical treatment, including general practitioner consultations, emergency care, maternal and child health services, as well as mental health and psychosocial support.

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Access to healthcare	Applicants for international protection can access necessary health care and medicines following medical advice and consultation with a Directorate of Labour's medical officer. The Directorate of Labour covers such costs if the applicants cannot cover them. Children under the age of 18 have access to necessary health care, cf. point 1 of the first paragraph of Article 4 of the Health Care Act, No. 40/2007, while they are staying in this country. Pregnant women shall have access to maternity care and children to infant and toddler care. Applicants for international protection shall also have access to a social worker and, and upon consultation with Directorate of Labour, can be referred to a psychiatrist or psychologist. Other medical services, such as dental care or medical procedures that are not urgently needed, as well as prescription drugs that are not considered necessary, are outside the scope of services to which an applicant for international protection is entitled and shall not be provided without prior assessment by a confidential physician of the Directorate of Labour.

Education for minors

Children up to the age of 18 are guaranteed access to education under national legislation. The Directorate of Labour is responsible for ensuring that no child remains in the agency’s care for more than four weeks without being placed in a mainstream school or alternative educational provision.

According to the law every child must be enrolled in a mainstream school within 12 weeks of applying for international protection. In addition, municipalities must ensure that families have access to appropriate services, including daycare, preschools, secondary schools, and other educational resources to support the child’s development and integration.

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Socio-cultural orientation and language learning

Access to socio-cultural orientation	When an asylum application is registered, applicants are immediately informed about their rights, obligations, and the reception conditions they can expect. They are then referred to the Directorate of Labour's (VMST) service team, which provides both verbal and written information during a dedicated service interview at VMST operational centres. During this interview, VMST staff explain how to access healthcare services and clarify which costs and services are covered by VMST. Applicants are also informed about their employment rights and any work restrictions that apply.
Language classes	During the initial interview with the VMST, applicants for international protection receive information on their right to education, available language courses, and social wellbeing initiatives to support integration. Similar guidance and counselling are also provided by the Icelandic Red Cross.

Sufficient means

Arrangement of private accommodation

Information is currently not available.

Contribution to reception and healthcare costs

All applicants for international protection undergo a health screening arranged by the Directorate of Labour (VMST). Applicants are encouraged to present any existing medical records or diagnoses during this screening and to inform the nurse if specialist care is needed, although waiting times for specialist appointments can be up to three months, as is standard for all residents of Iceland. Without a referral from VMST or the attending nurse, applicants must

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cover the cost of specialist visits themselves, and reimbursement depends on the urgency of the medical issue.

For women's health, there is no age restriction on accessing a gynecologist; referrals can be requested at the initial screening or later through VMST. In case of a health emergency, asylum seekers have the right to visit any hospital emergency room or call 112 for an ambulance, with emergency services provided free of charge.

Regarding employment, asylum seekers do not have a *kennitala* (Icelandic social security number), which is required for lawful employment contracts. This restriction aims to protect applicants from illegal work and exploitation. It is possible to apply for a temporary *kennitala* and work permit through the Directorate of Immigration (UTL) if an employer is willing to submit the application and cover health insurance and related taxes. However, holding a temporary work permit does not influence the outcome of an asylum application. If the application is ultimately rejected, any temporary *kennitala* becomes invalid, and the applicant must leave the country.

Sufficient means test

Information is currently not available.

Sanction regimes, reduction or withdrawal of material reception conditions

Circumstances for reducing or withdrawing material reception conditions

The national legislation specifies that individuals working without a permit lose their right to a subsistence allowance. To receive the allowance, one must not live in full-board accommodation, must report to the Directorate of Labour, attend required interviews or appointments, and comply with residence rules. If these conditions are not met, the Directorate of Labour will instead provide food assistance. (Article 25 Foreign Nationals Act)

Possible sanctions and procedure

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There are no specific provisions in the national legislation about sanctions and the procedure to reduce material reception conditions.

Review of the sanction decision

The national legal framework does not include specific provisions about review of the sanction decisions.

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