

Information provision - Iceland

Overview

Relevant EU legislation

Iceland is not bound by EU legislation. A similar national legal framework applies through [Foreign Nationals Act, No. 80/2016](#) (16 June 2016) and [Administrative Procedures Act | Stjórnarsýslulög, No. 37/1993](#) (30 April 1993)

National legislation

[Foreign Nationals Act, No. 80/2016](#) (16 June 2016)

[Administrative Procedures Act | Stjórnarsýslulög, No. 37/1993](#) (30 April 1993)

Competent authority and other stakeholders

Area/stage of the asylum procedure	Competent authority
Reception	Police Lögreglan Directorate of Immigration Útlendingastofnun
Registration of application	Police Lögreglan Directorate of Immigration Útlendingastofnun
Lodging of application	Police Lögreglan Directorate of Immigration Útlendingastofnun
Dublin procedure	Directorate of Immigration Útlendingastofnun
Assessment of application	Directorate of Immigration Útlendingastofnun
Communication of first instance decision	Directorate of Immigration Útlendingastofnun

Area/stage of the asylum procedure	Competent authority
Content of protection	Directorate of Immigration Útlendingastofnun Directorate of Labour (VMST)
Appeal procedure	Directorate of Immigration Útlendingastofnun
Communication of second instance decision	Immigration and Asylum Appeals Board
Resettlement	n/a

Provision of information in the asylum procedure

Access to procedure

Once an asylum application is submitted, the police informs the applicant that the application has been registered with the Directorate of Immigration (UTL). Specific timelines are not provided at this stage. Applicants are told that the Directorate will contact them by SMS once their process begins. Following this, they are registered with the Directorate of Labour (VMST), which handles all aspects of service provision, including housing, financial support and health services. At this point, applicants are given an asylum ID card, a SIM card, a payment card and important information on the services offered by VMST.

Additionally, applicants are provided with leaflets about human trafficking and a brochure entitled "Your Right – Important Information for Immigrants in Iceland". This brochure, available in multiple languages including Arabic, Spanish, Ukrainian and Icelandic, contains information on gender equality, financial matters, marriage, divorce, cohabitation, domestic violence, sexual violence, child custody, legal aid, unemployment benefits, rent benefits and residence permits. It also provides contact information for institutions and agencies that offer support in these areas, including those assisting victims of violence and promoting human rights.

Information is typically provided in an individual setting, where applicants can ask questions and seek clarification. For further details, applicants can visit the reception at UTL, which is open between 9 AM and 2 PM on weekdays, or they can access information through the directorate's website or the main email address (utl@utl.is). At this stage, the applicants receive only basic information, with

further details shared during the asylum interview, where they can ask more specific questions to the representative conducting the interview.

The information is provided primarily by the competent authorities: the police, the VMST and the UTL. For unaccompanied minors, Child Protective Services accompany the minor during the initial police interview and offer additional information relevant to their specific needs. Furthermore, there is specialised material for applicants who may be survivors of human trafficking. These materials, including pamphlets, are made available to applicants who may be identified as survivors or who seek them on their own initiative when registering with the VMST.

Iceland does not operate a detention facility, meaning that third-country nationals in detention do not require specific information on detention procedures. However, asylum applicants can access comprehensive information through publicly available resources listed on various official websites.

For applicants with special needs, there is specific material that addresses their unique circumstances. The material is provided by the police, the VMST and the UTL, and can also be made available upon the applicant's request.

To access these resources and find more details on the asylum procedure, applicants can visit the following websites:

- [Directorate of Immigration General information](#)
- [Asylum Rights and Procedures](#)
- [Q&A on International Protection](#)
- [Information for Ukrainian Citizens](#)
- [Information on Residence Permits for Human Trafficking Victims](#)

Dublin procedure

Applicants in Iceland are informed about the application of the Dublin III Regulation during the beginning of their asylum interview. This information is provided by a case officer from the Directorate of Immigration (UTL) before the questioning begins. After receiving this information, the applicant is given the opportunity to ask any questions or speak privately with their 'spokesperson' (legal representative).

The responsibility for providing information on the Dublin procedure lies with the person conducting the interview, typically the case officer from the UTL. The applicant is informed of all necessary

elements, including the reasons why they are part of the Dublin procedure, which country is responsible for processing their asylum claim, and the role of the translator and spokesperson in the process.

Information is provided both in writing and orally. The written information is handed to the applicant, and a translator is present during the interview to ensure that the applicant understands the details. The translator reads the information aloud to the applicant in their native language if they do not understand the written material. The information is available in Icelandic, English, Spanish and Arabic. If the written material is not available in the applicant's mother tongue, an interpreter translates and reads the information during the interview.

For applicants with special needs, such as unaccompanied minors or survivors of human trafficking, the standard information may be supplemented with specific guidance tailored to their circumstances. This ensures that all applicants, regardless of their individual vulnerabilities, are adequately informed about the Dublin procedure.

Iceland does not have specific relocation procedures in the context of the Dublin III Regulation. However, when a transfer decision is made under the Dublin procedure, the applicant is notified and the decision is published electronically. The applicant's spokesperson is responsible for presenting this decision to the applicant and explaining the legal remedies available. The spokesperson typically continues to assist the applicant throughout the appeal process, ensuring that they are aware of their options and can seek legal support if necessary.

For more details:

- [Information on international protection and asylum procedures in Iceland](#)
- [General asylum rights and procedures](#)

First instance determination

Applicants are informed about their personal interview when receiving the invitation. Prior to the interview, they typically have a brief private meeting with their 'spokesperson' (legal representative), during which they are thoroughly briefed about the upcoming interview process.

The Directorate of Immigration (UTL) is responsible for providing detailed information to the applicant on the interview process, including the aim, purpose and importance of the interview, as well as the procedural specifics. Applicants are informed about their rights and obligations during the interview, the role of the actors present (such as the case officer, the interpreter and the

spokesperson), issues related to confidentiality, and the possibility of having an interpreter to facilitate communication.

Information is typically provided in an individual setting, either during the private meeting with the spokesperson or at the time the interview is scheduled. Applicants are informed by the competent authority, either in person or through written communication. Once the interview is scheduled, applicants are informed about the date and location of the interview. This information is shared through their spokesperson.

Upon completion of the personal interview, applicants are informed about the possibility of submitting further evidence, if necessary, and are provided with timelines for doing so. This is communicated verbally during the interview, and the spokesperson remains available to answer any additional questions or assist in submitting evidence or written statements. Applicants are also informed about the next steps in the asylum procedure at the end of the interview, with both verbal and written explanations provided by the competent authority.

When a decision is made, it is published electronically and sent to the applicant's spokesperson, who is responsible for relaying the message to the applicant. The spokesperson informs the applicant about the content of the decision, the implications of the decision on their rights, and any potential next steps.

If the decision grants a protection status, beneficiaries receive information about their rights and obligations. This includes details on their residence status, work rights and access to social services, as well as the procedures for maintaining their status.

If the applicant receives a negative decision, they are provided with information on the possibility to lodge an appeal, including the conditions and timelines for doing so. Additionally, they are informed about the option of assisted voluntary return and reintegration. This information is typically included in the decision notification. For a negative decision, the applicant's spokesperson ensures that the applicant is reminded of the voluntary return option and is provided with contact information (return@utl.is). Further details on this option are also available on the [Directorate's official website](#) and the [Q&A website](#), where applicants can find additional support and guidance.

To support applicants, particularly in the case of a negative decision, the directorate hands out a pamphlet from the IOM about voluntary returns, which includes contact details for assistance.

Legal assistance and representation

Applicants are informed about their right to consult, at their own cost, a legal adviser or other counsellor on matters relating to their asylum application right after they apply for asylum with the police. This information is provided by the competent authority, typically the Directorate of Immigration (UTL) and is shared in writing. During the registration process with the Directorate of Labour (VMST), applicants are presented with a document that outlines their right to seek legal counsel at their own expense. The document also includes information about their right to have a legal representative (spokesperson) appointed by the UTL, free of charge.

Applicants are asked to confirm whether they would like the UTL to appoint a spokesperson for them at no cost and whether they consent to the UTL sending personal information related to their case. At this stage, applicants are also notified that they have the option to select a specific lawyer, and if they choose to change their lawyer later in the process, they will be responsible for covering the expenses associated with the new lawyer.

The document provided includes spaces for the applicant's signature, the signature of the representative from the VMST and the date of signature.

The information is available in several languages, including English, Arabic, Kurdish (Kurmanji and Sorani), Persian (Dari and Farsi), Russian, Somali, Spanish and Urdu. The documents are handed to the applicant by a UTL representative.

Applicants are informed of the right to free legal assistance in the appeal procedure, and they receive detailed information about it once an appeal is necessary. This information is also provided in writing by the competent authority, and applicants are made aware that they are entitled to free legal assistance and representation if they wish to appeal a negative decision.

Resettlement and humanitarian admissions

Iceland does not implement resettlement and humanitarian admission programmes.

Content of protection

Beneficiaries of protection receive information on their rights and obligations associated with their protection status when their spokesperson (legal representative) announces the decision of the Directorate of Immigration (UTL). They are then directed to the directorate's website for further details, including information about international protection, subsidiary protection and residence

permits on humanitarian grounds. This information covers the validity of their protection status, the renewal process, the right for family reunification and the right for obtaining permanent residence. The applicant is invited to register with the UTL by SMS and meet with a case officer who can offer additional guidance.

Beneficiaries of protection are informed about integration activities during an interview with the Multicultural Centre (MCC), which is part of the Directorate of Labour (VMST). The applicant receives general information about integrating into Icelandic society, including details about schooling, employment, housing options and social services. A translator is provided if needed. The MCC representative guides the beneficiary through this process. If further assistance with employment or information about the labour market is needed, the applicant is directed to a follow-up interview with the VMST.

Education-related information is also provided during the MCC interview, covering details about access to education and who is responsible for covering costs at various stages. This is explained one-on-one by a representative of MCC, with a translator available if necessary.

In terms of healthcare, beneficiaries of protection are informed that the VMST is responsible for their healthcare needs during the first 8 weeks after a positive decision or 30 days after a negative decision. After being registered with the national registry, beneficiaries will be covered by the health system and can access health services at nearby institutions as needed. The social services in their municipality also provide guidance on healthcare. This information is shared both one-on-one and through various online resources, such as the websites of the VMST, the MCC, Icelandic Health and the Human Rights Office.

For residence permits, beneficiaries receive information when their spokesperson announces the positive decision. They are notified by SMS that they will be invited to register with the UTL, where their photo will be taken for the residence permit card. More information about residence permits based on international protection, subsidiary protection or humanitarian reasons is available on the directorate's website. The spokesperson and case officer from the UTL guide them through the process, explaining who the permits apply to, the implications of each type of permit and information on travel documents.

For more information:

- Residence permit for international protection: <https://island.is/dvalarleyfi-a-grundvelli-althjodlegjar-verndar> / <https://island.is/en/residence-permits-on-grounds-of-international-protection>
 - Residence permit for subsidiary protection: <https://island.is/dvalarleyfi-a-grundvelli-vidbotarverndar> / <https://island.is/en/residence-permit-on-grounds-of-subsi-dary-protection>
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- Residence permit for humanitarian reasons: <https://island.is/dvalarleyfi-af-mannudarastaedum> / <https://island.is/en/humanitarian-permit>

Provision of information in reception

Reception conditions

Applicants in reception receive information about their rights, obligations and reception conditions as soon as the asylum application is registered. After registration, they are referred to the service team of the Directorate of Labour (VMST), which provides all the necessary information both orally and in writing during the service interview. The interview takes place in the housing facility where the applicant is staying. The information is shared verbally and written material is often provided.

The material is developed by the Directorate of Labour and is available in several languages, such as English, Arabic, Spanish, Kurdish (Kurmanji and Sorani), Persian (Dari and Farsi), Russian, Somali, Spanish and Urdu.

Applicants are also provided with a legal representative ('spokesperson') that assists them through the asylum procedure.

VMST staff inform applicants about their access to healthcare services. This information is typically provided in the service interview and outlines the steps they need to take to access healthcare services. The VMST is responsible for applicants' healthcare needs during the first 8 weeks after a positive decision or 30 days after a negative decision.

Employment-related rights are explained to applicants by VMST staff during their service interview. The information includes details about the rights of beneficiaries of protection to access employment, including any legal restrictions or allowances.

Information about access to education is provided during the same service interview. VMST staff inform applicants about their educational rights, including the availability of language courses and other integration programmes, and how to access education.

For more information:

- [VMST's general information about services for applicants for international protection](#)
- [VMST's information about reception services](#)

In detention

Iceland does not operate a detention facility, meaning that third-country nationals in detention do not require specific information on detention procedures. However, asylum applicants can access comprehensive information through various official websites.