

# Action plan for the reception of immigrants

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

STRATEGY/ACTION PLAN

 ICELAND

## Timeline



ID number 28310

## Background

Immigrants do not always seem to be able to enjoy, or take advantage of, the same opportunities as natives in Icelandic society, such as in the labour market and the education system. An example is the higher dropout rate from the education system, VET included.

## Objectives

To ensure the same opportunities in Icelandic society for immigrants as for natives, i.e. in the education system.

## Description

An action plan for the reception of immigrants was approved by the Parliament in 2016, stating that students/learners with a foreign background should have the same opportunities for education as those born in Iceland. Various steps have been taken by individual elementary and upper secondary schools to facilitate better integration, such as by cooperation with NGOs, but specific funding for the actions listed in this action plan has not yet been provided. The Directorate of Education also provides school administrators and teachers in elementary schools with support and advice on teaching, and facilitating the integration of, immigrant children who learn Icelandic as a second language. The support is funded by the 'local authorities equalisation fund', (i.e. funded by the municipalities).

2016 Approved/Agreed

2017 Implementation

2018 Implementation

2019 Implementation

In 2019, the situation remained unchanged compared to previous years.

### **2020 Implementation**

In May 2020, the Prime Minister's Office introduced an action plan for the fourth industrial revolution, 2020-23, stating that 'skills assessment and forecast updates must be informative, updated regularly, and made accessible to the public'. This is one way of maximising support for jobseekers.

### **2021 Implementation**

The Committee on the Fourth Industrial Revolution describes in its report how different groups in society (immigrants included) are affected by automation and how likely they are to be affected by the loss of jobs. Individuals with little formal education, people with foreign backgrounds and younger people are the groups most likely to be affected by these circumstances.

The 11th article (on proposed actions/activities), in the action plan for the fourth industrial revolution, states that, in the long term, 'regular assessment of skills and manpower needs in the Icelandic labour market will be carried out'. Following the national election and the change of government, in Autumn 2021, it is expected that this project will be transferred to the new Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation.

### **2022 Implementation**

On 1 April 2022, the labour minister submitted a parliamentary resolution, proposing an action plan in immigration matters for the years 2022-25. Among other things, this proposal includes the introduction of a skills assessment for immigrants. The proposal assumes that this will be the responsibility of the education ministry. The proposal continued to be processed.

### **2023 Implementation**

In 2023, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour led the work on a draft proposal for a Parliamentary Resolution on Matters of Immigrants for 2025-38, together with a four-year action plan for the years 2025-28. The policy has been presented in the consultation portal in a so-called white paper with the title A Society for Everyone - Iceland's future and policy on matters of immigrants. Although the policy itself covers a fifteen-year period, the National Action Plan is for four years, and is therefore only the first of several action plans intended to achieve the goals of the policy.

### **2024 Implementation**

In autumn 2024, the parliamentary resolution on immigration policy for the years 2025-2038, including a four-year implementation plan for the years 2025-2028 was to be taken up for discussion in parliament. The immigration policy had previously been presented in a consultation portal in the so-called White paper in the category 'Our Community - the future and policy of immigration matters in Iceland'. The proposal was not discussed in parliament because the government was dissolved, and parliamentary elections were held in November 2024.

### **2025 Implementation**

There are no updates to report for 2025. The parliamentary discussion of the immigration policy for 2025-2038 and its associated four-year implementation plan was postponed in 2024 following the dissolution of the government and the parliamentary elections. No new information regarding the policy's adoption or implementation has been released.

## Bodies responsible

- Ministry of Education and Children
- Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour
- Ministry of Education, Science and Culture (until 2021)
- Ministry of Transport and Local Government (until 2021)

## Target group

### Learners

Learners with migrant background, including refugees

## Thematic categories

### Modernising VET offer and delivery

Acquiring key competences

### Supporting lifelong learning culture and increasing participation

Providing for individuals' re- and upskilling needs

Ensuring equal opportunities and inclusiveness in education and training

## Subsystem

IVET

## Further reading

[Parliamentary resolution on the reception of immigrants](#)

---

[Prime Minister's Office: Action plan on the fourth industrial revolution](#)

---

[Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour: Action plan on immigration](#)

---

[Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour](#)

---

[Committee Report - Iceland and the Fourth Industrial Revolution](#)

---

[Motion for a Parliamentary Resolution](#)

### “ … ” Cite as

Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2026). Action plan for the reception of immigrants: Iceland. In Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2026). *Timeline of VET policies in Europe* (2025 update) [Online tool].

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/timeline-vet-policies-europe/search/28310>

