



Fisheries Training Programme

2025-2026
A Practical Handbook for Fellows

Welcome!

A warm welcome to fellows from the GRÓ Centre for Capacity Development, Sustainability and Societal Change and the GRÓ Fisheries Training Programme. In this handbook, you will find useful information to help you prepare for and enjoy your stay in Iceland. We recommend reading it before your arrival to make the most of your experience.

We hope your time in Iceland will be filled with growth, learning, and memorable moments!

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GRÓ Fisheries Training Programme (GRÓ FTP)

The Fisheries Training Programme in Iceland was originally established under the auspices of the United Nations University. In 1997, a formal agreement was signed between the Icelandic Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the United Nations University and the Marine Research Institute of Iceland, officially founding the United Nations Fisheries Training Programme.

The programme began operations in January 1998 and ran for 22 years under the name UNU-FTP, educating over 400 fellows from more than 60 countries. Its initial focus was on developing a core six-month training programme for practising fisheries professionals from less developed countries. Over time, the FTP expanded its scope to include scholarships for former fellows pursuing master's and doctoral studies at Icelandic academic institutions, and it now also collaborates on the development of short courses delivered in partner countries

Through collaboration with a broad network of partners, the Fisheries Training Programme (FTP) aims to advance Iceland's contribution to the UN Sustainable Development Goals by promoting the sustainable use and management of living aquatic resources in less developed countries.

FTP's core objectives are to strengthen institutional and individual capacities by delivering high-quality training, education, and research opportunities. The programme supports the professional development of fisheries professionals and places cooperation, capacity building, knowledge-sharing, and research at the heart of its mission.

On the 1st of January 2020, FTP joined hands with UNESCO through its membership in GRÓ International Centre for Capacity Development – Sustainable use of Natural Resources and Societal Change. As a Category 2 Centre under the auspices of UNESCO, GRÓ offers opportunities to engage with UNESCO and further enhance FTP's international partnerships and capabilities.

Funded by the Government of Iceland and hosted within the Icelandic Marine and Freshwater Research Institute, GRÓ FTP is managed by a small team of dedicated staff. Iceland was chosen as the host country in part due to its uniquely close collaboration between the fishing industry, academia, government, and research institutions – providing exceptional access to expertise across a wide range of disciplines within a highly developed fisheries sector.

Organisation of the six-month training programme



The introductory part occupies the first weeks of the programme and gives a holistic view of fisheries. It aims to provide fellows with insights into various disciplines within fisheries and their connectedness. Here you will receive a comprehensive overview of fisheries in an international context, sharpening your understanding of fisheries in your home countries and what is needed for a fisheries sector to evolve. The introduction consists of a series of lectures, site visits and assignments, touching upon the subjects of professional communication, leadership, and goal-setting. The FTP places emphasis on environmental conservation and gender equality which are integral to sustainable fisheries and the development of the fisheries sector.

On completion of the introductory part, you join a specialist line according to your area of expertise. Here the focus is on one specific area of fisheries and your experience and knowledge are honed throughout a six-week programme of lectures, assignments and site visits. During this time, you develop ideas for a final project in collaboration with your supervisors.

The FTP offers training in four areas of specialisation:

- Fisheries Policy and Management (FPM)
- Aquatic Resource Assessment and Monitoring (ARAM)
- Quality Management of Fish Handling and Processing (QM)
- Sustainable Aquaculture (SAq)

The programme culminates in a three-month individual project, during which fellows work closely with a dedicated supervisor to conduct research on a pressing issue relevant to their work at home. This project integrates the experience and practical skills acquired during the introductory and specialist training phases. Fellows apply

project design skills to develop and present a research proposal, followed by independent research conducted in close collaboration with their supervisor.

Final projects most often incorporate data from fellows home countries, ensuring relevance and practical application. Upon completion, fellows submit a research paper which is published on the FTP website. Additionally, each fellow prepares an information poster summarising their research and presents their findings at an open dissemination meeting.

Practical information for arriving Iceland

Travelling to Iceland

GRÓ-FTP arranges international flights to Iceland for all fellows. The flight route request template outlines the conditions under which tickets are purchased. Each fellow is guaranteed one item of checked luggage included in their itinerary; any additional luggage must be covered by the fellow. It is therefore important to review the baggage allowance for all tickets issued by FTP. If a fellow's travel itinerary includes an overnight layover (or a specifically requested daytime stopover), FTP will arrange accommodation at an airport or transit hotel en route.

First weeks in Iceland

Arrival at GRÓ House in Reykjavík

Depending on your airport arrival time, you will be travelling to the city (45-minute drive) together with any other fellows who land at the same time or similar time. This is normally by shared taxi and FTP will inform you of the arrangements. An FTP representative will welcome you on arrival at the GRÓ House and introduce the house to you. You will be given the necessary access key/s. Waiting in your room, you will find a bus card, SIM card (for your Icelandic telephone number), and pre-paid gift/visa card (which contains financial support until a bank account can be opened in your name). Instructions will also be available.

Medical check-up and UTL procedure

In the first days after arrival, FTP has booked medical check-up and photo sessions as required by the Directorate of Immigration's residence permit instructions. The medical checkup includes blood test, chest X-ray, and a short interview with a doctor regarding your health. The group will be divided according to the availability of appointments at the health centre (Tuesday 18th November and Thursday 20th November). All fellows will be taken to Immigration for a registration and photo session on Tuesday. For these procedures, do not forget to bring your passport. When these requirements are fulfilled, Immigration processes and issues your residence permit card which FTP will collect when ready and distribute. Once the residence permit has been approved, your Kennitala (Icelandic version of an official identification number or Social Security Number which is comprised of your date of birth and 4 random digits) will be activated. This is needed to open a bank account in Iceland. All this can take two to three weeks to process.

Bank accounts

As soon as the Kennitala (Social Security Number [example: 221186-XXXX]) has been approved, FTP staff will take you to the closest Landsbankinn branch to open a bank account. You will need to bring your passport to the bank for identification. After the

bank account is created, your financial support will be deposited into that account at the beginning of the month.

Your accommodation in Iceland

GRÓ FTP's host institute is the Marine and Freshwater Research Institute (MFRI), located in the harbour town of Hafnarfjörður, just outside Reykjavík. This is where the entire group of fellows will be based for the Introduction, or the first five weeks of the six-month programme. During this initial period, fellows have the opportunity to become acquainted with the institute, its researchers, and each other before moving on to later phases of the training.

It is important to note that fellows will not remain in the same accommodation for the entire six months. Housing arrangements change depending on the stage of the programme and its location, and fellows should be prepared to move between different residences. These transitions are a normal part of the programme and are designed to bring fellows closer to the institutions, universities, or communities where their training and research take place.

The different housing periods are explained in detail below, so that fellows can plan and know what to expect during their stay in Iceland.



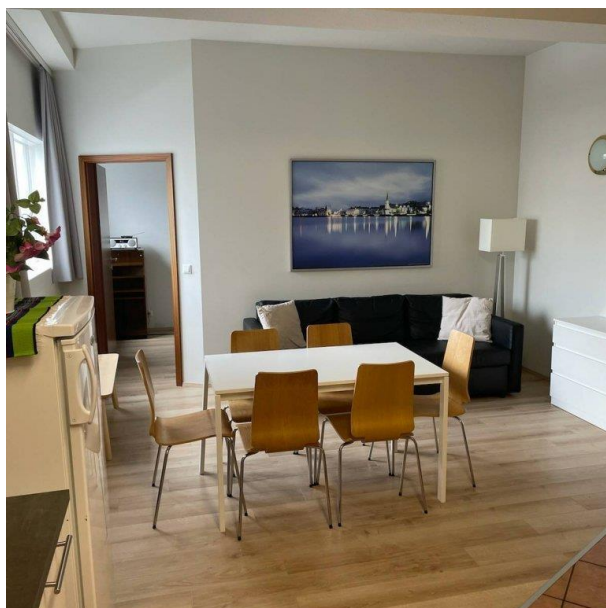
The Marine and Freshwater Research Institute in Hafnarfjörður.

Reykjavík #1

The GRÓ House, Grensásvegur 14, 108 Reykjavík, Iceland

The GRÓ House is the Reykjavík home of the GRÓ six-month fellows from our sister programmes (GRÓ FTP, GRÓ GTP & GRÓ LRT) and occasionally hosts GRÓ M.A./M.Sc. and PhD scholarship recipients and visiting guest lecturers invited by the four GRÓ Programmes. The house is located on Grensásvegur 14, close to a major

shopping and recreational area with convenient access to bus routes. The GRÓ House is a three-storey building with units for 27 fellows located on the two upper floors. There are 19 en-suite units and 8 units with shared bathrooms, in addition to three communal rooms where fellows can gather, cook, eat, etc.



Dining table in one of the communal rooms.



Each room unit is equipped with basic cooking facilities.

This accommodation is for everyone at the beginning of their programme. You will be housed together with the other FTP fellows until the specialization lines starts in January when the Fisheries Policy and Management fellows will go to Akureyri to their line of specialisation which is hosted by the University of Akureyri (see below for accommodation). Those remaining in the house will stay until the third week of February 2025 when our fellows move into alternative accommodation to make way for the GRÓ LRT fellows (see below for accommodation in Hafnarfjörður).

To get to Hafrannsóknastofnun (Marine and Freshwater Research Institute) from the GRÓ House, you will have to take 2 buses: Bus 2 from Grensás stop until Hamraborg or Sunnuhlíð and Bus 1 until Fjörður or Suðurbæjarlaug and then it's a short walk to the Marine and Freshwater Research Institute in Hafnarfjörður.

Reykjavík #2

Information about late-February to mid-May housing will be given to you after arrival.

This guesthouse accommodation called Hostel Fjörður is for those in the Aquatic Resource and Monitoring, and Sustainable Aquaculture lines and means that they can be closer to the MFRI during their research period. ARAM and SAq fellows will be housed in this accommodation until the end of the programme in May. The Quality Management fellows can remain in their rooms in the GRÓ House until the end of the programme since this is more convenient for them to travel to Mátis where their specialist line is based.

For the fellows who are moved to Akureyri for the specialisation line, they return to join the whole group just before the graduation, where they will be housed in the same accommodation, Hostel Fjörður, until the departure flight times.

Akureyri

More information will be provided after your arrival.

The accommodation in Akureyri is called the Hrímland Guesthouse, and is for those in the Fisheries Policy and Management specialization line who will be going to Akureyri at the beginning of January until right before graduation. The staff in the Fisheries Policy and Management line will provide further information and support during the stay in Akureyri.

Important notes on the accommodation

The rooms in the GRÓ House vary in size: a few larger en-suite rooms on the 2nd floor, some smaller en-suite rooms on 3rd floor, and several rooms with shared bathrooms (bathroom access from the hallway) on 3rd floor. When you move to the next accommodation FTP staff try to allocate rooms bearing in mind the principle of offering all fellows equal housing throughout the period, if it is possible.

<i>If you think you are lost, please rely on Google Maps. It will be the most reliable guide on how to get to different locations in Iceland. It will show you estimated walking distances and the most convenient transport routes.</i>

Fellowship Finances

GRÓ FTP allowance

GRÓ FTP provides and pays for fellows housing which includes shared bathroom and kitchen facilities and provides fellows with a living allowance of 5,500 ISK/day until the end of 2025 with an inflation-related increase in 2026. In November and into December, your monthly allowance will be provided in the form of a pre-paid gift/visa card because it can take some weeks to open bank accounts and arrange access to banking facilities. In addition to the monthly allowance, fellows receive a one-off settling-in allowance to the value of 50,000 ISK. The settling-in allowance is intended to cover any initial expenses that might be necessary, e.g., a warm coat and good winter shoes.

The card has been issued by Arion Bank. Please familiarise yourself with the rules regarding the gift card by visiting the bank website at <https://www.arionbanki.is/english/individuals/payment-cards/gift-cards/>. As soon as fellows can open a bank account, GRÓ FTP will transfer the monthly allowance into your accounts in the beginning of each month.

Please note that once you get a bank account and a debit card, you will be able to withdraw money from any cash point machine/ATM or withdraw directly from the cashier in the bank. You will also be able to open an online account and transfer money online. However, your initial pre-paid gift/visa card can only be used at service outlets that accept Visa payment cards without a PIN number (most outlets). Unfortunately, you cannot use your card at a cash machine, but you can withdraw the balance from any branch of Arion Banki. (See the information under the heading pre-paid currency card below.)

Your pre-paid currency card (VISA) from Arion Bank

Your pre-paid card will be issued by Arion Bank. www.arionbanki.is. Please familiarise yourself with the rules regarding the gift card by visiting the bank website (has English website). As previously stated, as soon as fellows can open a bank account, GRÓ FTP will transfer the monthly allowance into your accounts in the beginning of each month.

On the bank website, you can find the information which is copied below about your card. Please remember that once the card is lost, it is unlikely you will get it back, so please treat it like cash. **According to the bank, it is possible that you will not be able to even retrieve the money from the lost card, so it is important to not lose the card.**

Please note that you will not be able to take cash out of the gift cards due to some policy changes in Icelandic banking and gift cards. You will have to use all the money on the card until the balance is zero. You can check the balance online through the

link listed below. Though not guaranteed, you might be able to take cash out once you have a bank account ready.

Important points:

1. Sign your card before use.
2. You can use the card at sales outlets which accept VISA card payments without a PIN number.
3. You **cannot** withdraw cash from the card from the cashiers of any Arion bank.
4. **You CANNOT use the card at ATM/cash point machines.**
5. You can check the balance of your card at <https://www.arionbanki.is/english/individuals/payment-cards/gift-cards/>

Other Fellowship benefits

Your GRÓ FTP fellowship includes:

- One return air ticket to and from Iceland (economy class). 1 check-in item on the journey to Iceland and 1 check-in item on the journey home.
- Living allowance of 5,500 ISK/day (rate for 2025) paid to each GRÓ FTP fellow.
- Housing arrangements are paid for GRÓ FTP fellows.
- Emergency medical and accident insurance during the 6 month-stay in Iceland. Please note this does not cover incidental doctor's visit to cover general health.
- Immigration fees.
- Free bus pass for travel in the capital area.
- Free SIM card and Icelandic telephone number. Wifi is free at MFRI and in the GRÓ House, but for roaming WiFi packages are available.
- Each fellow is provided with a laptop computer upon arrival in Iceland and which is theirs to keep on the successful completion of the programme.
- Each fellow is provided with a settling-in allowance.

Reimbursement of receipts

All the costs that you had to pay in connection with your application and visa (eg. transport to VFS, transit visas, visa application fees and international postal costs) will be reimbursed in January 2026. During orientation week, you will receive a reimbursement form, where you should list all your costs which are claimable, accompanied by the receipts and short description of what each of them is. Make sure to bring all the receipts so that they can be refunded correctly. To get a refund, there must be a receipt, and usually, it is clear what is refundable and what is not. If there is a question about refunding, FTP staff will consider and inform you.

Iceland

Iceland, a small island nation in the North Atlantic, is renowned for its breathtaking natural beauty—glaciers, volcanoes, geysers, and waterfalls which make up a dramatic landscape found nowhere else on earth. In the latter part of 2025, the country's population is nearing 400,000, with about 20% made up of immigrants. Most Icelanders live in and around the capital, Reykjavík, making it the vibrant heart of the nation's social, cultural, and economic life.

Life in Iceland offers both rewards and challenges. The cost of living is notably high, especially when it comes to housing, food, and transportation; yet this is balanced by an exceptional quality of life. Iceland boasts strong healthcare and education systems, a low crime rate, and a comprehensive social safety net. It consistently ranks among the world's top countries for safety, happiness, and overall well-being. Iceland is also a global leader in gender equality and environmental stewardship, with a robust economy powered by tourism, fisheries, and renewable energy—much of which is harnessed for aluminium smelting.

Culturally, Iceland is remarkably vibrant for its size. The country has a thriving music and arts scene, deeply rooted literature and folklore traditions, and an increasing cultural diversity brought by immigration. Its residents enjoy a lifestyle closely tied to nature, with endless opportunities for outdoor adventures: hiking across lava fields, skiing in the mountains, chasing the Northern Lights, or soaking in natural hot springs.

For the Fisheries Training Programme, Iceland's small and close-knit population makes it uniquely easy to connect with industry leaders, academic experts, and local communities. The fellows will benefit from unparalleled access to the country's fisheries sector and research opportunities that would be difficult to replicate elsewhere. While some fellows note the challenges of high living costs and the unpredictability of winter weather, most leave with lasting friendships, valuable professional insights, and unforgettable memories. The combination of Iceland's distinct culture, welcoming locals, and awe-inspiring natural surroundings ensures the experience remains a meaningful chapter in their lives.

Weather in Iceland



Weather in Reykjavik

Iceland's climate is cool and varied, with distinct seasonal shifts. Winters are cold, with minimum temperatures often dropping below freezing, while summers are mild by northern standards. In Reykjavík, summer temperatures average around 13°C (55°F), whereas winter maximums hover near 0°C (32°F). Rainfall is steady throughout the year—typically 25–50 mm per month—and many days bring some form of precipitation.

Despite its name, Iceland is not as icy as many might imagine. Thanks to the warming influence of the Gulf Stream, which flows along the southern and western coasts, parts of the country enjoy a relatively temperate climate compared to other locations at similar latitudes. The south coast tends to be warmer but is also windier and wetter, while the north is generally drier and colder.

One of the most famous features of Icelandic weather, however, is its unpredictability. Sunshine, rain, wind, and even snow can all occur in the same day, making it essential to be prepared for anything. Locals often joke that if you don't like the weather, you only need to wait a few minutes.

For more details—and even some lighthearted videos exploring Iceland's weather—you can visit: <https://guidetoiceland.is/travel-info/climate-weather-and-northern-lights-in-iceland>

Weather in Akureyri

Our Fisheries Policy and Management fellows spend four months living in Akureyri, the largest town in northern Iceland and a hub for both fishing and academia. Nestled at the base of Eyjafjörður fjord, Akureyri offers a distinctly different climate from Reykjavík and the south coast. Because it lies outside the warming influence of the

Gulf Stream, the north is generally cooler, with longer-lasting snow and sharper seasonal contrasts.

Despite its northern latitude, Akureyri's winters are not as severe as one might expect. Snow typically begins to settle in October and remains until April, though depending on yearly conditions, the surrounding mountain peaks often keep their snowcaps year-round. The region receives less rainfall than the south, thanks to prevailing wind patterns, making it somewhat drier, though still cold. Summers in Akureyri are mild, with extended daylight hours creating a bright, lively atmosphere.

For fellows, living in Akureyri provides not only an immersion in Iceland's northern climate but also a close connection to its fishing industry and academic community. The town's combination of small-city charm, surrounding mountains, and fjord views makes it a memorable setting in which to study, work, and experience daily life in Iceland.

Warm Clothes

“There's no such thing as bad weather in Iceland, just bad clothing!”

From November through May, warm outdoor clothing is essential for daily life in Iceland. Many of our fellows arrive from much warmer climates and understandably do not have winter gear suitable for Iceland's conditions. Clothing here is best approached in layers. Indoors, you will find that homes, offices, and classrooms are comfortably heated thanks to geothermal energy, so lighter clothing is usually sufficient. Outdoors, however, proper winter gear is crucial.

A good-quality, insulated coat that offers full coverage is the foundation of your wardrobe. Along with it, you'll need a warm hat, gloves, and—most importantly—sturdy footwear with reliable grips to manage icy conditions and slippery pathways. Layering with thermal undergarments or sweaters beneath your coat helps you adapt easily to shifting temperatures, especially since Iceland's weather can change rapidly within a single day.

Because proper winter gear can be very expensive if purchased new in Iceland, we encourage fellows to make use of their settling-in allowance and explore the many second-hand clothing shops across the country. These are excellent places to find high-quality coats, boots, and accessories at more affordable prices. Investing wisely in the right clothing not only keeps you warm and safe but also makes your stay in Iceland much more comfortable and enjoyable.

Important phone numbers and opening hours

Emergency police, fire department and ambulance service (Tel: 112)

Emergency Department, City Hospital, 24 hr service, Tel. 525 1700.

Doctors on duty at the City Hospital, 24 hr service, Tel. 525 1000.

The main police station is at Hverfisgötu 113-115, Tel: 444 1000.

What to do if you are ill and need to see a doctor

There are health care clinics in all neighbourhoods in the capital area. Here, general health care services are provided, and people **generally go there first** for illnesses or other health related problems. Please consider whether your illness requires medical consultation/treatment first. If you have a cold or flu, the best thing to do is go to bed, rest, and drink lots of fluids.

Health centre nearest to GRÓ House:

- Address: Heilsugæslan Álfheimar 74, openings hours 08:00-16:00
- Tel. 513 5700, each visit costs 10,500 ISK.

Healthcare after opening hours:

- Læknavaktin, Austurvegur – Háaleitisbraut, openings hours 17:00-22:00
- Tel. 544 4113 – each visit costs 16,000 ISK.

Insurance

The current insurance we have for everyone at Sjóvá is only for health and accident issues. The fellow is responsible for the first 25,000 ISK only, and any costs extra will be borne by GRÓ FTP. After reaching 50,000 ISK, the insurance will take over for an amount up to 2,000,000 ISK.

The coverage by the insurance, however, does not include taxi fees (unless it is emergency and must take a taxi), prescription glasses, and non-urgent medical procedures. Therefore, it is important that you bring all the receipts, and we will go over them together. More information will be given to you later after you have arrived in Iceland. Please check <https://www.sjova.is/en/individuals/insurance/medical-cost-insurance/> for further information.

Medicine

Pharmacies have similar opening hours as general stores. Please note that not all pharmacies are open on the weekends. Pharmacies in Iceland offer general off-the-counter medicine. If you have very specific medicinal needs, you will need to get a prescription from a doctor. In the area you are going to live, there are 2 pharmacies: Apótek and Lyfja Skeifunni.

Monday – Friday: 9:00-18:00

Dentists

There are several dental surgeries in Reykjavík. If you need their services, they also have an emergency number at weekends. **Tel: 568 1041 or 575 0505**

Note: If you need to go to a dentist while you are staying here in Iceland, it is not the responsibility of the GRÓ FTP to cover dental costs but we can find someone for you and arrange a time for you.

Banks & currency

Banking hours are normally 9:00-16:00 weekdays. In Reykjavík, there are numerous ATM's (cash-point machines) open 24 hours. The unit of currency in Iceland is the króna (ISK). Icelandic bank notes are issued in denominations of 500, 1000, 5000 and 10000 kr., coins in circulation are 100, 50, 10, 5 and 1. GRÓ FTP will help you open a bank account once your Icelandic Social Security ID number has been registered. The bank we use is called Landsbankinn, since there are accessible branches around the city. Check www.landsbankinn.is for more information.

Post office

The closest post office for the fellows to visit is on Siðumúla 3-5, Reykjavík 108, or delivered to a drop box on Faxafen 7 in the Skeifan district. Opening hours are from 09:00-17:00 only weekdays.

Time

Iceland is on Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) throughout the year and does not go on daylight saving time.

Public holidays from November - May

Business, banks and most stores are closed on the following holidays:

December 24 th Christmas Eve	December 25 th Christmas day
December 26 th Boxing Day	December 31 st , New Year's Eve
January 1 st New Year's Day	April 2 nd to 6 th Easter Holiday
April 23 rd First day of summer	May 1 st Labour Day
May 14 th Ascension Day	May 24 th Whitsun

Churches

The established religion in Iceland is Lutheran. The state church in Iceland is the Evangelical Lutheran Church. Most services are held every Sunday at 11:00, but it is best to consult the website of the church in question. The Philadelphia Church has weekly services in English. Address: Hátún 2, 105 Reykjavík. In addition, there is a Catholic Church and two Islamic communities.

Skeifan District

The GRÓ House is located next to the district called Skeifan, where you can find almost everything you need. There are 3 supermarkets (Bonus, Krónan, Hagkaup), electronics store (Elko), house goods (Rúmfatalagerinn), liquor shop (Vínbúðin), books and stationary shop (A4), vegan supermarket (Vegan búðin) and special stores that sell food items from outside Iceland and Europe (Dai Phat Asian Supermarket, Istanbul Market).

Kringlan Indoor Shopping Centre (has 2 grocery shops).

Monday - Friday	10:00 - 18:30
Saturday	11:00 - 18:00
Sunday	12:00 - 17:00

Grocery shops/Supermarkets

Bonus	Opens everyday	10:00 – 21:00
Krónan	Opens everyday	9:00 – 21:00
Hagkaup	Opens 24 hours	
Netto	Opens everyday	6:00 – 00:00

Kólaport - Flea market and Second hand stores

You can buy both food (unique example horse meat) and clothes

Saturday – Sunday: 11:00 - 17:00.

Location: Tryggvagötu 19, Old Harbour Grófin Reykjavík Kvosin, 101 Reykjavík

Second-hand clothes shops

Red Cross stores

Monday - Friday: 10:00 - 18:00

Saturday from: 12:00 - 16:00.

Location: Laugarvegur 12 and Laugarvegur 116, 101 Reykjavík.

Fermata/Verzlanahöllin

Monday - Friday: 11:00 - 18:00

Saturday - Sunday: 12:00 - 17:00

Grettisgata 4, 101 Reykjavík.

Góði hirðirinn (Köllunarklettsvegur 1, 104 Reykjavík?)

Monday – Friday: 12:00 – 18:00

Saturday: 12:00 – 16:00

Alcohol stores in Reykjavík

The shops are called Vínbúðin, and there are nine liquor stores in Reykjavík, all run by the State. Website: vinbud.is.

Monday - Friday: 10:00 - 20:00

Saturday: 11:00-18:00

Places you can get winter clothing

Icewear (there is an outlet on Laugavegur branch)

66°North (there is an outlet store in Skeifan)

Nordic Store (Hand-knit sweaters or good winter jackets)

The Handknitting Association of Iceland (Hand-knit products)

How to travel in Iceland (Reykjavik and Akureyri)

Public transport and your bus pass in Reykjavik

On arrival, fellows will be provided with a bus card which is registered in each person's name. This card allows you to travel without charge as often as you wish on public buses within the capital area. The public bus operator is called Strætó. The new bus card system is called Klappið, which is still part of the old bus operator.

Go to the website bus.is or straeto.is, where you can access information about bus routes and times. The website allows you to enter in your destination and locate the next available bus. The STRÆTÓ App is worth downloading onto your phone if you have a smart phone to track buses. With this app, you can see exactly where the next available bus is on the route in real time.

If the app is confusing, you can also rely on Google Maps, and it tells you the most convenient mode of transport.

Travelling by bus (Strætó)

The main bus hubs are located at Skúlagata (downtown Reykjavik), Hamraborg (center Kópavogur) and Mjódd (Breiðholt, east of Reykjavik). The buses call at all the main bus stops served by the public bus service or Strætó b.s. (Mjódd, Grensás, Hlemmur and Lækjargata).

Further information: <http://www.straeto.is/english>

On weekdays, 07.00-19.00 most buses arrive every 15 - 20 minutes, however only every 30 minutes during the evening and at weekends.

Taxi (Hreyfill)

You need to call them to arrange a pickup. It is often difficult to stop a moving taxi or find an empty taxi at taxi stands.

Tel: +354-588 5522

Traffic rules

Driving Licenses: You can drive in Iceland for up to 3 months on your foreign licenses outside of the European Economic Area. It is recommended that you get international driving licences alongside your national licences, especially if your license is not in English.

Traffic Rules: Driving in Iceland is on the right-hand side of the road. Road signals follow the international pattern. However, the rules concerning roundabouts are very different; the driver in the inside lane of a roundabout has priority to drive off the roundabout and the traffic in the outside lane must give way.

Traffic Safety: Seat belts must be worn by all passengers. Headlights must be used at all times of the day and night, all year.

Speed Limit: The general speed limit is 40-50 km/h in urban areas, 80km/h on gravel roads in rural areas and 90 km/h on paved highway roads.

Alcohol: The laws are strict in Iceland with regard to driving under the influence of alcohol. They are also strictly enforced.

For more information, check <https://iceland.nordicvisitor.com/travel-guide/information/driving-in-iceland/>

Calling someone in Iceland.

All numbers in Iceland are seven-digit numbers (123-4567). No area codes are necessary, you dial the number directly.

International calls: When calling a country outside Iceland, you dial without interruption: the international code (00), then the country code, the area code, and finally the number. If you need help in finding a phone number abroad, you can call 118 for information.

Car Rental

If you have an international driving licence, you can rent a car, either short term or long term. For short term, you can go to company website, while long term rentals require you to contact the company to set up a quote and contract. Places you can rent cars in Reykjavík:

www.bluecarrental.is

www.hertz.is

www.thrifty.is

www.avis.is

www.europcar.com

Entertainment

Swimming pools (Sundlaug)

There are seven swimming pools around Reykjavik, the capital city of Iceland. All use geothermal water and many have outside and inside pools, hot tubs, steam bath, sun benches, gym room, massage, automatic massage, hydro massage, water gym, etc.

Website: <https://reykjavik.is/en/swimming-pools> and sundlaugar.is



Cinemas (Bíó)

Reykjavík has 7 cinemas with a total of over 20 projection halls. Most of the new films shown are from the US, although there are a limited number of European films shown as well, for example Bíó Paradís at Hverfisgata 54, website: bioparadis.is All films (on general release) are shown with the original soundtrack and subtitled in Icelandic. Occasionally, there are special film festivals with films from all over the world. See the daily papers for further details.

The Culture House (Þjóðmenningarhúsið).

Located on Hverfisgata 15, Tel: +354 545 1400. email: thodmenning@thodmenning.is

Harpa Concert Hall

This is the home of the:

The Iceland Symphony Orchestra. Website: www.sinfonia.is

The Icelandic Opera. Website: harpa.is

Tel: +354 5285050

The National Theatre

Hverfisgata 19. Website: leikhusid.is

Most performances, however, are in Icelandic.

Long distance coach station and FLY BUS

BSÍ Travel, Reykjavík Bus Terminal, located at Vatnsmýrarvegi 10. Tel: 580-5400

Tourist information

The official Tourist Information Centre is in the City Hall at Tjarnargata 11. However, you can also find unofficial tourist information offices throughout the downtown area. Opening hours: Daily 8:00-20:00.