



VELFERÐARRÁÐUNEYTIÐ

Ministry of Welfare

Immigrant Affairs Act, No. 116/2012, as amended by Act No. 61/2014.

Where mention is made in this Act of ‘the minister’ or ‘the ministry’ without further definition, the reference intended is to the Minister of Social Affairs and Equality or to the Ministry of Welfare, which is responsible for the implementation of this Act. Information on the division of responsibilities between ministries according to a presidential decree may be found [here](#).

Chapter I

Aim.

Article 1

Aim.

The aim of this Act is to promote a community in which all persons are able to be active participants, irrespective of their nationality and origin. This aim is to be achieved by means including:

- a. having immigrants’ interests mainstreamed in all policymaking, administration and public services;
- b. promoting broad collaboration and integration of measures and projects by entities involved in immigrant affairs;
- c. stimulating awareness-raising, education and the sharing of information regarding immigrant affairs and a community that is free of prejudice, and
- d. encouraging and supporting studies and developmental projects in the sphere of immigrant affairs.

Chapter II

Administration.

Article 2

The Multicultural and Information Centre.

A special body, the Multicultural and Information Centre, shall be operated under the supervision of the minister.

The minister shall appoint the director of the Multicultural and Information Centre for terms of five years at a time.

Article 3

Role of the Multicultural and Information Centre.

The tasks of the Multicultural and Information Centre include:

- a. to provide the government, institutions, enterprises, associations and individuals with advice and information in connection with immigrant affairs;
- b. to give the local authorities advice on the reception of immigrants who move into their local government areas;
- c. to compile and share information on immigrants’ rights and obligations;
- d. to monitor developments in immigrant affairs in society by means including the gathering, analysis and sharing of information;
- e. to bring to the attention of the minister, the Immigrant Council and other government bodies, tips and proposals for measures aimed at enabling all individuals to be active participants in the community irrespective of their nationality and origin;

- f. to compile and submit to the minister an annual report on immigrant affairs;
- g. to monitor the implementation of projects listed in the parliamentary resolution on a programme of action on immigrant affairs (*cf.* Article 7), and
- h. to carry out other tasks in accordance with the aims of this Act and the parliamentary resolution on a programme of action on immigrant affairs and also in accordance with further decisions taken by the minister.

Institutions, enterprises and non-governmental organisations shall be obliged to provide the Multicultural and Information Centre with general information of all types that is necessary for the centre to perform the tasks assigned to it under this Act.

Article 4

The Immigrant Council.

After each general election, the minister shall appoint an Immigrant Council consisting of six persons. The minister shall appoint two members (the chairman and one representative) without nomination; at least one of these shall be from among immigrants. In addition, the minister shall appoint one representative in accordance with a nomination by the minister responsible for foreigners affairs, one representative in accordance with a nomination by the minister responsible for education, one representative in accordance with a nomination by the Association of Local Authorities and one representative in accordance with a nomination by the City of Reykjavík. Alternates shall be appointed in the same way.

If a vote is taken in the Immigrant Council and the vote is tied, the chairman's vote shall decide the issue.

The director of the Multicultural and Information Centre shall attend meetings of the Immigrant Council, with the right to address them and make proposals.

Article 5

Role of the Immigrant Council.

The role of the Immigrant Council is to:

- a. advise the minister on professional policy formulation regarding immigrant affairs and supervise the application of this policy;
- b. promote coordination and consultation between government ministries and local authorities and within the administrative sector;
- c. promote open discussion of immigrant affairs through conferences and meetings with interested parties;
- d. submit proposals to the minister each year on what the priorities of the Immigrant Affairs Development Fund should be;
- e. submit proposals to the minister each year on the allocation of grants from the Immigrant Affairs Development Fund;
- f. submit to the minister an annual report on its work, and
- g. carry out other tasks in accordance with the aims of this Act in line with further decisions by the minister.

Article 6

The Immigrant Affairs Development Fund.

A fund, known as the Immigrant Affairs Development Fund, shall be operated. The role of the fund shall be to promote studies and support developmental projects in the sphere of immigrant affairs with the aim of facilitating adaptation by immigrants to the Icelandic community and better enabling the community to meet their requirements. The fund shall receive finances allocated in the national budget.

Each year, the Immigrant Council shall submit proposals to the minister regarding priorities for the Immigrant Affairs Development Fund. Also, the Immigrant Council shall submit proposals to the minister on the allocation of grants, and the sums involved.

The minister may issue regulations containing more detailed rules on the functioning and structure of the Immigrant Affairs Development Fund.

Article 7

Parliamentary resolution on a programme of action on immigrant affairs.

The minister shall submit to the Althingi a proposal for a parliamentary resolution on a programme of action on immigrant affairs for four years at a time after receiving comments from other government ministries, institutions, the Multicultural and Information Centre and the Immigrant Council.

The proposal for a parliamentary resolution on a programme of action on immigrant affairs provided for in the first paragraph shall contain provisions on projects aimed at promoting a community in which all individuals are able to be active participants irrespective of their nationality and origin. The execution of projects, the parties responsible and costs involved shall be stated in the proposal, together with details of how the effectiveness of measures is to be evaluated.

The minister's report on the situation and developments in immigrant affairs as provided for in Article 8 shall accompany a proposal for a parliamentary resolution on a programme of action on immigrant affairs as provided for in the first paragraph of this article.

Article 8

Assessment of the situation and developments in immigrant affairs.

Every fourth year, the minister shall submit to the Althingi a report on the situation and developments in immigrant affairs. Amongst other things, the minister's report shall include an evaluation of the effectiveness of projects under the current parliamentary resolution on a programme of action on immigrant affairs at any given time (*cf.* Article 7) and a discussion of the situation and developments in immigrant affairs in the main dimensions of society in accordance with the aim of this Act.

Chapter III **Other provisions.**

Article 9

Authorisation for regulations.

The minister may issue regulations on the application of this Act in further detail, and on the functions of the Multicultural and Information Centre and the Immigrant Council.

Article 10

Commencement.

This act takes immediate effect.

Interim provisions.

I.

[The minister may appoint a director of the Multicultural and Information Centre temporarily until 31 December 2015.]¹⁾

¹⁾ Act No. 61/2014, Article 1.

II.

On commencement of this Act, the minister shall appoint a new Immigrant Council (*cf.* Article 4).

III.

Within a year of the commencement of this Act, the minister shall submit to the Althingi a proposal for a parliamentary resolution on a programme of action on immigrant affairs (*cf.* Article 7).

IV.

Within six months of the commencement of this Act, the minister shall submit to the Althingi a report on the situation and developments in immigrant affairs (*cf.* Article 8).

*[This translation is published for information only.
The original Icelandic text is published in the Law Gazette.
In case of a possible discrepancy, the original Icelandic text applies.]*