

June 2023



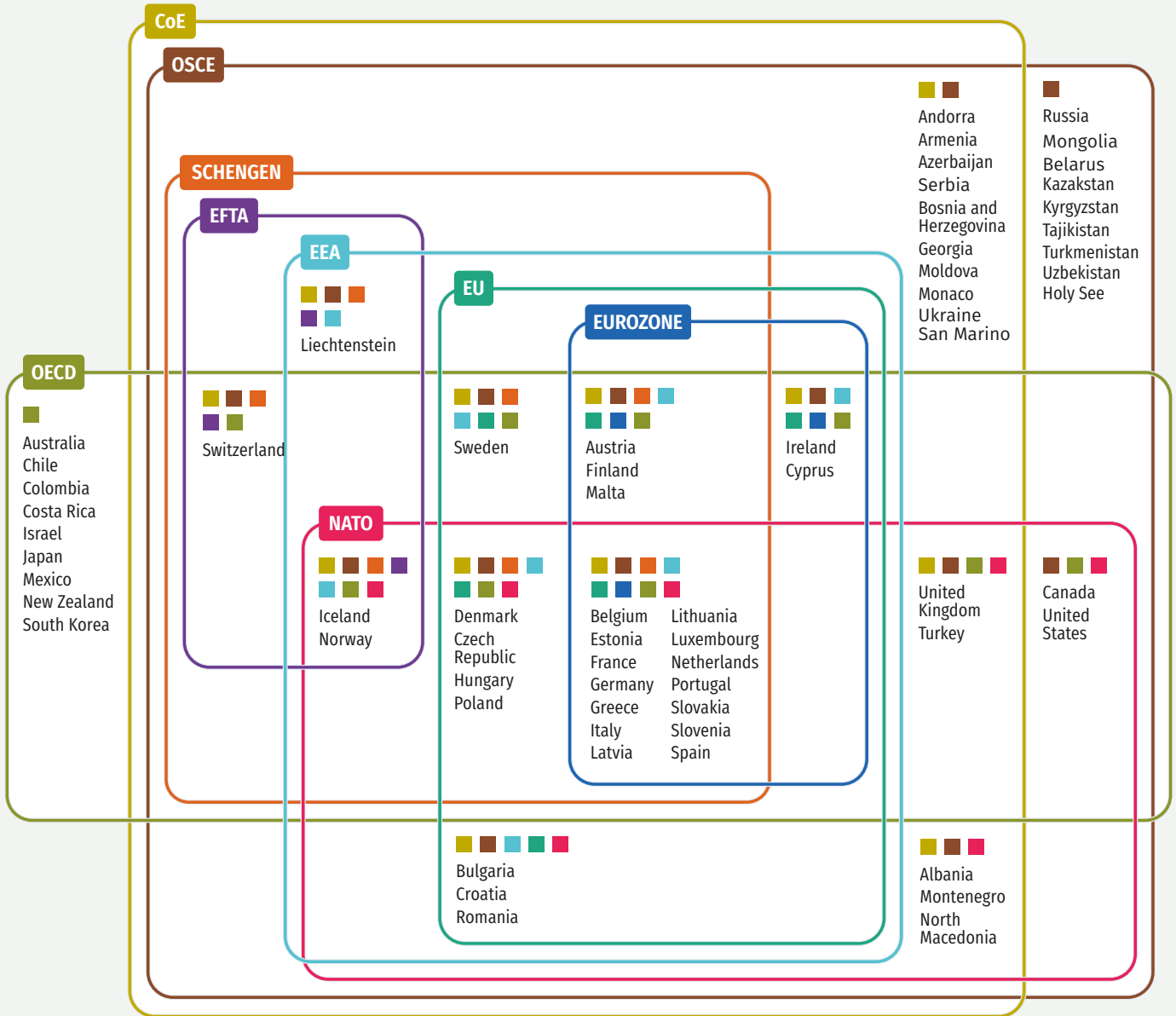
Foreign Affairs

Excerpt from the Report of the Minister for Foreign Affairs to the Parliament 2022

Government of Iceland
Ministry for Foreign Affairs



Layers of International cooperation



- CoE** ■ Council of Europe
- OSCE** ■ Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
- SCHENGEN** ■ Schengen Area
- EFTA** ■ European Free Trade Association
- EEA** ■ European Economic Area
- EU** ■ European Union
- EUROZONE** ■ Currency union of 20 member states of the European Union
- OECD** ■ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
- NATO** ■ North Atlantic Treaty Organization

Foreign affairs in a fateful year



The world has changed rapidly in the past few years. The decade started off with a world pandemic which proved to have a profound impact on relations across the globe. As countries were recovering from the pandemic and its associated restrictions, Russia initiated a vicious, full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

The war in Ukraine was an ever-present factor in all aspects of foreign affairs in 2022. A war of aggression and territorial gains, waged by a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, drastically changes the landscape of international politics. It also underscores the importance of upholding international law and protecting the institutions in place intended to prevent abuses of power in international relations.

Horrific crimes carried out by Russia have become evident since occupied regions were first reclaimed from the invading forces. These acts were immoral and inhumane. It is vitally important that the invading forces and its leadership are held accountable for their crimes. This matters not only for the people of Ukraine but to the global community and to posterity.

Following decades where international affairs focused on identifying ways to enhance cooperation and increase prosperity through global trade, a sudden paradigm shift has occurred. Mistrust between states has increased. Greater emphasis is placed on secure supply chains with reliable partners to successfully cope with crises such as pandemics and armed conflict without disruptions in foreign trade. This new paradigm is a precarious path that Iceland must navigate safely.

These are times of uncertainty and turmoil in international affairs. In such times, we must carefully consider Iceland's position in the world. Our freedom and sovereignty is underpinned by the rules-based international order. This order includes not only rights, but duties and responsibilities. It should be our consistent ambition to represent Iceland on the global stage in a reliable and professional manner, and to safeguard the interests of the country and its reputation worldwide. In this regard, Iceland also needs to be conscious of its duty to contribute its share to the world, including through international development cooperation and by defending human rights worldwide.

One noteworthy contribution of Iceland's foreign service was its hosting of the Council of Europe Summit in Reykjavik in May. This was the fourth leader's summit held in the Council's 70 year history. This Summit was the largest international event that Iceland has undertaken and marked the conclusion of Iceland's presidency of the Council.

Thórdís Kolbrún Reykjaförð Gylfadóttir
Minister for Foreign Affairs

Ukraine

Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine on the 24th of February 2022 was a turning point in international politics and the security landscape of Europe and has affected nearly all of Iceland's international and multilateral cooperation. Russia's aggression has once again confirmed that the survival of states is contingent on a rules-based international order. This is especially the case for a sparsely populated island state with no standing military that ensures its security and defence through active cooperation with its partners.



Volodymyr Zelenskyy, President of Ukraine, addressed members of the Icelandic Parliament, the President of Iceland and the Government of Iceland in a live video address at a special session of Althingi in May 2022

Unity from day one

From the very first day of the invasion, Iceland has stood in full solidarity with its allies and close partners in supporting Ukraine and participated in the restrictive measures that were imposed against Russia in a wide array of fields. These measures have led to a sharp decrease in trade between Russia and Iceland. In 2022, Iceland granted international protection to 2,300 refugees from Ukraine in accordance with the European Union's Temporary Protection Directive.

Iceland's support

The support provided by the Icelandic government to Ukraine consists for the most part of humanitarian assistance, financial support and contributions to defence amounting to 2.2 billion ISK (EUR 14.7 million) in the year 2022. Contributions to humanitarian activities on behalf of the United Nations and other international organisations amounted to 500 million ISK (EUR 3.3 million). Economic assistance to the funds of the World Bank for Ukraine amounted to 700 million ISK (EUR 4.7 million). Around 213 million ISK (EUR 1.4 million) went to an international fund that finances specialised equipment for electricity production. Iceland organised the transport of military durables from the United States to Ukraine and initiated a joint Nordic training project in the field of explosive ordnance disposal

(EOD) and demining. Furthermore authorities, businesses and the public in Iceland supported Ukraine by sending food, electrical equipment and winter supplies, for instance through the “Send Warmth” initiative.

Icelandic support for Ukraine in 2022

775



Humanitarian contributions amounted to **775 million ISK** through UN agencies, the ICRC and Icelandic NGOs.

715



Financial Assistance amounted to **715 million ISK** through the **World Bank** and the Energy Community.

2,300



2,300 Ukrainians have been granted protection in Iceland.

670



Defense Contributions amounted to **670 million ISK**. Thereof, 250 million ISK to the NATO fund for Ukraine.

Isolation of Russia

Russia's flagrant violations of international law, including the UN Charter, resulted in stern responses of the General Assembly which convened an emergency special session, the eleventh in its history, where 140 of the 193 member states of the UN aligned themselves in support of the UN Charter in response to Russia's invasion. Five resolutions have now been adopted by the emergency special session. Russia's membership of the United Nations Human Rights Council was suspended and Iceland is among 43 member states of the International Criminal Court that have referred Russia's alleged atrocities to the International Criminal Court Prosecutor. Russia has been isolated in multilateral cooperation, expelled from the Council of Europe and excluded from regional cooperation projects.



Thórdís Kolbrún Reykfjörð Gylfadóttir Minister for Foreign Affairs met with the President of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, in Kyiv in November.

News from the Ministry

Iceland sends nine tons of warmth to Ukraine

12 December 2022. Icelanders sent nine tons of winter equipment to defence forces in Ukraine. These were shoes and shelter clothing from Icelandic outdoor companies, as well as 3,500 pairs of woollen socks, which were donated by Icelandic and Ukrainian knitters. Coast Guard personnel packed the goods and a Canadian military aircraft transported them to their destination.

Nordic and Baltic foreign ministers visit Kyiv

28 November 2022. Thórdís Kolbrún Reykfjörð Gylfadóttir, together with her colleagues from the Nordic and Baltic countries, visited Kyiv. During their visit, the Ministers met representatives of the Ukrainian government, including President Volodymyr Zelensky, and reviewed the damage caused by the Russian military attacks on Kyiv.

Iceland reaffirms its support for Ukraine in an address to the UN Human Rights Council

28 February. In her address to the United Nations Human Rights Council, Thórdís Kolbrún Reykfjörð Gylfadóttir, Minister for Foreign Affairs, strongly condemned the Russian invasion of Ukraine and reaffirmed the Icelandic government's support for Ukraine. In the address she emphasised that Russia's war is not only a war against Ukraine, but also a war against the values of democracy, rule of law and human rights.

International cooperation

Russia's invasion of Ukraine serves as a dire reminder that international law, human rights, and democratic values need to be protected in order for them to guarantee the safety and well-being of small states. Iceland aligns itself with the states defending these fundamental rights and freedoms and takes an active role in international organisations.



| Minister for Foreign Affairs Thórdís Kolbrún Reykfjörð Gylfadóttir addresses the United Nations General Assembly in September 2022.

Resolution on establishing an independent fact-finding mission in Iran adopted

In November, Iceland and Germany initiated a special session in the Human Rights Council that adopted a resolution on establishing an international fact-finding mission to investigate alleged human rights violations committed against peaceful protesters in Iran. The human rights situation in Iran is serious. Hundreds died in a wave of protests following the death of the Kurdish Masha Amini in police custody last September. The resolution was adopted with 25 votes in favour, 6 votes against and 16 abstentions and extends the mandate of the Special Rapporteur to monitor and report on the situation to the Human Rights Council.

A special discussion on the human rights situation in Afghanistan requested

Iceland has repeatedly drawn attention to the dire situation of women and girls in Afghanistan at the United Nations Commission on Human Rights Council and was among the countries which requested a special session on the human rights situation there during the Council's session last year. The Minister for Foreign Affairs gave a speech on behalf of the Nordic countries and the Baltic states. Iceland was also a co-sponsor of the resolution to re-establish the mandate of the Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council in Afghanistan which was adopted in September 2022.



The Foreign Ministers of Iceland and Germany, Thórdís Kolbrún Reykjörd Gylfadóttir and Annalena Baerbock, during a press conference after the special session of the HRC.

Voices for democracy and human rights in Belarus supported

Since the authorities in Minsk began persecuting people who voiced their opposition in the run-up to the 2020 presidential election and in its aftermath, Iceland has actively supported democracy and human rights in Belarus by calling out deficiencies in the implementation of democracy and human rights. Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, the leader of the opposition in Belarus, visited Iceland several times and met with the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Presidency of the Council of Europe

The presidency of the Council of Europe was one of the largest tasks undertaken by the Icelandic foreign service in years. It began in November and finished with the Council of Europe Summit in Reykjavik in May. The Minister for Foreign Affairs took over the presidency on behalf of Iceland in November. The presidency emphasised the core values of the Council of Europe; democracy, the rule of law and human rights. Additionally, the Icelandic government's policies on gender equality, the rights of children and the environment were emphasised. In her address to the Committee of Ministers, the Minister for Foreign Affairs spoke about strong obligations in demanding times which Iceland was willing to shoulder during the presidency. Iceland has now held the presidency of the Council of Europe three times since its accession in 1950.

News from the Ministry

Presidents and Foreign Ministers of the Baltic States visit Iceland

26 August 2022. The foreign ministers of the Baltic states and Iceland signed a Joint Declaration today at a gathering in Höfði, Reykjavik, celebrating three decades of diplomatic relations between the countries. In the Declaration, the countries reaffirm their sincere commitment to cooperation, condemn the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and underscore their solidarity with the Ukrainian people.

Icelandic ingenuity in focus at a conference on climate issues in Washington D.C.

22 September 2022. The focus of the Our Climate Future: US-Iceland Clean Energy Summit was Icelandic innovation and green solutions that can be used in the fight against climate change on a global scale. Thórdís Kolbrún Reykjörd Gylfadóttir, Minister for Foreign Affairs, emphasized the importance of international cooperation in the fight against climate change.

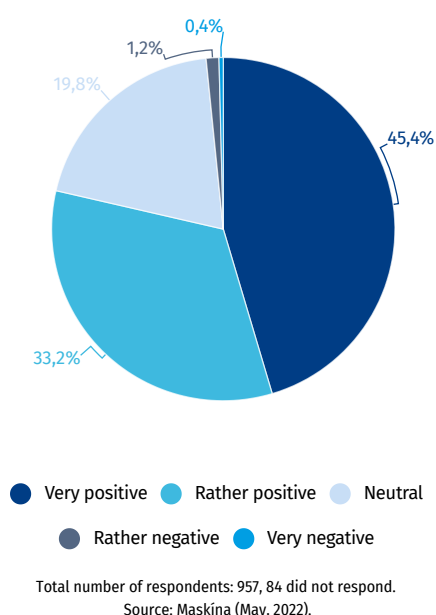
The Nordic Council of Ministers suspends its cooperation with Russia

3 March 2022. The Nordic cooperation ministers strongly condemn Russia's baseless and indefensible invasion of Ukraine. Therefore, the Nordic Council of Ministers has decided to immediately stop all cooperation with Russia and Belarus; the collaboration had spawned hundreds of projects in areas such as health, climate and environment, research and journalism and the media.

Member of the Executive Board of UNESCO

Iceland is a member of the Executive Board of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) for the term of 2021-2025. At the same time, Iceland is a member of UNESCO's governing committee on human rights. The committee addresses media freedom, the profession of teachers, the general right to education and cultural rights.

How positive or negative are you towards Iceland's membership in the United Nations?



| Foreign Ministers of Nordic and Baltic countries visited Ukraine in November.

Wedge driven between partners

Russia's war of aggression has driven a wedge between participants in various regional institutions. In the Arctic Council, seven Member States, including Iceland, decided to suspend formal cooperation with Russia that had taken over the presidency from Iceland in 2021. Various projects within the Council have since been resumed without the participation of Russia. Norway took over the presidency in 2023. Russia has also been excluded from all participation in the Council of the Baltic Sea States. Cooperation with Russia in the Barent Euro-Arctic Council and in the Nordic dimension was suspended as well.

The ranks tighten even further

Formal and informal cooperation between the Nordic countries and the Baltic states is of great importance for Iceland's foreign policy. The cooperation has grown closer in recent years and the ranks are expected to tighten even further with the historic applications of Sweden and Finland to join NATO. The highlight of the cooperation last year was the joint trip of the Ministers to Ukraine. Iceland holds the presidency in Nordic cooperation in 2023 for which preparations were made last year.

Bilateral relations

Bilateral relations with foreign states and institutions are an important component in the promotion of Iceland's interests and foreign affairs advocacy. As elsewhere, Iceland has in particular emphasised Russia's war of aggression in Ukraine, human rights and international law in its bilateral relations. Cooperation with neighbouring European states is an immensely important factor in defending Iceland's interests. Iceland has joined restrictive measures imposed by the European Union on Russia and has aligned with many of the statements issued by the EU in the field of foreign affairs and within international organisations.



Thórdís Kolbrún Reykfjörð Gylfadóttir, Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Arkadiusz Mularczyk, Deputy Foreign Minister of Poland, cut the ribbon and open the Embassy of Iceland in Warsaw in December.

Climate, natural resources and environmental issues

International cooperation in the policy areas of climate, natural resources and environmental issues is a principle task of Iceland's foreign service. It is vital that Iceland's voice is heard in the crafting of new solutions and responses to challenges of climate change, exploitation of natural resources and environmental challenges. Active participation includes Iceland being a board member of the Nordic Development Fund, cooperating with the World Meteorological Organization, supporting low-income countries in improving meteorological observations to increase their resilience to climate change, and also in supporting the work of the UN Development Programme assisting developing countries in their national contributions towards the goals of the Paris Agreement.

News from the Ministry

Iceland condemns Russia's invasion of Ukraine

24 February 2022. The Government of Iceland strongly condemns Russia's attacks on Ukraine and expresses deep concern for the destruction and suffering that Russia's invasion of Ukraine will inevitably cause. NATO has taken necessary measures by increasing and strengthening its response and defence capabilities. The North Atlantic Council met this morning to consult on the basis of Article 4 of the North Atlantic Treaty.

Female Ministers for Foreign Affairs met on the situation of women in Afghanistan

8 March 2022. The situation of women and girls in Afghanistan was discussed during a teleconference of female foreign ministers. During the meeting, the ministers listened to a presentation by Afghan human rights activists who spoke about their experiences and the situation faced by women and girls in Afghanistan since the Taliban takeover in August last year. Thórdís Kolbrún Reykfjörð Gylfadóttir, Minister for Foreign Affairs, said she was grateful to hear from Afghan human rights activists.

Iceland opens an Embassy in Warsaw

1 December 2022. Iceland opened a new embassy today in Warsaw, the capital of Poland. Thórdís Kolbrún Reykfjörð Gylfadóttir, Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Arkadiusz Mularczyk, Deputy Foreign Minister of Poland, attended a reception held at the premises of the embassy on this occasion. The embassy in Warsaw is Iceland's 27th diplomatic mission abroad. In addition to Poland, the embassy represents Iceland in Ukraine, Bulgaria and Romania. Hannes Heimisson is Iceland's ambassador in Warsaw.

International trade

As a small and open economy, Iceland relies on clear and predictable rules to govern the international trade system. These rules are codified and agreed through institutions like the WTO and through other trade agreements. Russia's invasion of Ukraine, global trade tensions and restrictions adopted in response to the COVID-19 pandemic have greatly impacted the economies of states across the globe. Iceland continues to advocate for trade liberalisation and fair competition on international markets, but strong currents are reshaping international trade relations in ways that cannot be overlooked.



| The EFTA ministerial meeting was held in Borgarnes.

Added weight of security concerns

The notion that common commercial interests and intertwined international markets are sufficient to guarantee peace and progress has been called into question in recent years. Trade with authoritarian states, where the rule of law and democracy are not respected, comes with risks that businesses and states are increasingly considering when forming their policies.

The EEA Agreement has proven its worth in turbulent times

The EEA Agreement is the single most significant trade agreement Iceland has signed, providing a 450 million person home market for goods, services, capital and people. The EEA cooperation is underpinned by shared values and wide ranging cooperation with partners in the European Union. The benefits that Iceland has gained in the 30 years since the signature of the EEA Agreement are tangible and multi-faceted throughout the society. The Agreement has proven its worth and continues to do so in these current times of turbulence.

Free Trade Agreements

74



Free Trade Agreements with 74 states and territories (two thirds of world population).

85



Trade agreements, **Investment** or **Free Trade Agreements**, with 85 countries and territories.

120+



Air Service Agreements and MoU's that authorize flights to over 120 countries.

46



Double Taxation Agreements with 46 countries. Negotiations ongoing with more states.

Good access to index capital

International investment in innovation and start-ups has increased significantly in recent years. Iceland has proven to be among the states where entrepreneurs in innovative enterprises have the best access to venture capital. Competitive innovation always takes place across borders and Iceland's foreign policy prioritises the needs of innovative international entrepreneurship.

Successful EFTA ministerial meeting in Borgarnes

Iceland's membership of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) has been an important component of ensuring Iceland's prosperity. Iceland chaired the EFTA Council in the second half of 2021 and the first half of 2022. The chairmanship came to an end with a ministerial meeting in Borgarnes. EFTA Ministers decided to terminate negotiations with Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan, which had been on hold since 2014, and announced preparations for modernising the free trade agreement between EFTA and Ukraine.

News from the Ministry

EFTA countries start free trade negotiations with Thailand and Kosovo

20 June 2022. Thórdís Kolbrún Reykfjörð Gylfadóttir, Minister for Foreign Affairs, chaired the ministerial meeting of the EFTA countries in Borgarnes. The ministers discussed the challenges the international trade system faces after the pandemic, and Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the ongoing free trade negotiations of the EFTA countries, as well as announcing free trade negotiations with Thailand and Kosovo.

EUIPO's Grand Board rules in favour of Iceland

22 December 2022. The European Union Intellectual Property Office's Grand Board of Appeal has rejected all of the requests of the British retail chain Iceland Foods Ltd regarding the use of the word mark Iceland. The company can no longer stop Icelandic enterprises from identifying themselves with their country of origin when marketing their goods and services in the European Economic Area.

Signing of a double taxation agreement with Australia

12 October 2022. Thórdís Kolbrún Reykfjörð Gylfadóttir, Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Kerin Ann Burns Ayyalaraju, Australia's ambassador to Iceland, signed a double taxation agreement between Iceland and Australia. The agreement covers income taxes and aims to prevent double taxation of trade between the countries and to combat tax evasion. The agreement is part of the government's policy to increase the number of double taxation agreements.

Security and Defence

The guiding principle in defence and security matters is protecting the independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of Iceland, the security of its citizens, and ensure the functioning of essential government structures in times of crisis. Iceland ensures its external security and defence through active international cooperation, both multilaterally and bilaterally. The cornerstones of Iceland’s security and defence remain the NATO membership and the bilateral Defence Agreement with the United States.

Radically changed security situation

The member states of NATO and other European countries face unprecedented challenges in the area of security and defence. In response to Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine, NATO has significantly reinforced its defence posture. Iceland actively participates in the restrictive measures imposed by Western countries towards Russia and provides support to Ukraine in various ways.

NATO’s new Strategic Concept

NATO’s 2022 Strategic Concept is largely impacted by Russia’s invasion of Ukraine and changed security prospects in Europe. The new Strategic Concept reinforces the solidarity and unity of the allies, based on transatlantic relations and democratic values. The Strategic Concept emphasizes the need to significantly strengthen deterrence, defence, and response capabilities of the alliance, in line with NATO’s fundamental objective of collective defence, laid out in the fifth article of its founding treaty.

Iceland’s contribution to NATO in 2022

10



Iceland provided NATO with **ten civil experts** in 2022 who worked around the world on a variety of projects.



Operation of the Iceland Air Defence System, a part of the NATO Integrated Air and Missile Defence System. The radar stations cover a large area in the North Atlantic.

140



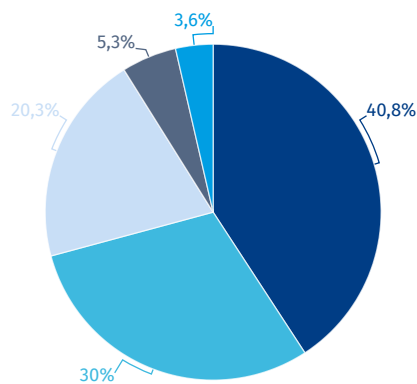
Operation and oversight of **140 NATO defence structures** in Iceland.

101,000+



Host country support for NATO country personnel. More than 101.000 overnight stays for foreign personnel in 2020.

How positive or negative are you towards Iceland’s membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)?



- Very positive
- Rather positive
- Neutral
- Rather negative
- Very negative

Total number of respondents: 957, 100 did not respond. Source: Maskina (May, 2022).

Air policing and defence-related projects

Iceland's contribution to NATO activities includes NATO air surveillance, supporting air policing and exercises of allied and partner countries. Iceland provides host nation support and logistical assistance to forces of allies and partners and ensures the operation of defence related facilities and equipment. Iceland's participation in NATO's military commands has been enhanced to increase information sharing and to follow developments around Iceland. The significant increase of Iceland's defence budget in recent years has enhanced Iceland's capacity to strengthen NATO's collective defence. Readiness capacity and defence-related infrastructure, mainly in the security area at Keflavik Airport, has been enhanced in cooperation with the United States and NATO.

Bilateral cooperation with the United States

Cooperation with the United States on defense and security, based on the bilateral Defense Agreement, is increasing. Examples of activities include rotational presence of ASW airplanes operating from Iceland and regular joint defence exercises. In April 2022, the defence exercise „Northern Viking“ took place in Iceland, with naval and amphibious elements. It is expected that cooperation with the United States on defence and readiness in the North Atlantic will further increase in the coming years.



The defence exercise „Northern Viking“ took place in Iceland in April with naval and amphibious elements.

Increased regional cooperation

Iceland has increased participation in regional security and defence. Cooperation among the Nordics is strengthening within the framework of NORDEFECO. Vigorous cooperation takes place within the Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF) and Iceland assumed the chairmanship of the Northern Group in the first half of 2022, a platform for cooperation among like-minded Northern European NATO countries on security and defence. The defence ministers of the group met in Reykjavik in June 2022.

News from the Ministry

Defence exercise Northern Viking 2022 to take place in Iceland

11 April 2022. The defence exercise Northern Viking 2022 took place in Iceland and surrounding waters. The main purpose of the exercise is to practice the defence of sea routes around Iceland and of important security infrastructure, as well as search and rescue operations at sea and on land. Northern Viking is a periodic joint defence exercise of Iceland and the United States, with the participation of other allied and partner nations.

Iceland accepts the protocols on the accession of Finland and Sweden to the North Atlantic Treaty

6 July 2022. Bergdís Ellertsdóttir, the Ambassador of Iceland to the United States, today delivered to the U.S. Department of State the instruments of accession to the protocols to the North Atlantic Treaty on the accession of Finland and Sweden. The Parliament, Althingi, adopted a Parliamentary Resolution on June 7th authorizing the Government to accept the protocols once they were ready.

Iceland supports EOD and demining efforts for Ukraine

September 2022. Defence Ministers of 26 nations met in Copenhagen for a conference jointly hosted by Ukraine, Denmark, and the United Kingdom. The conference, organised to complement the efforts of the Ukraine Defense Contact Group, aimed to develop concrete steps to enhance and sustain long-term support to Ukraine. Thórdís Kolbrún Reykfjörð Gylfadóttir, Minister for Foreign Affairs, presented a concept for a joint Nordic training project in the field of explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) and demining.

Development cooperation

Iceland’s international development cooperation, based on the SDGs, aims at reducing poverty and hunger and promote well-being based on human rights, gender equality and sustainable development. To achieve this, Iceland works with partner countries, multi-lateral organisations, NGOs and the private sector, with emphasis on effectiveness and results. A revised development policy for the period 2024-2028 is under way.

Increased funding for International Development Cooperation

Iceland’s contributions to development cooperation have been steadily increasing, in 2022 amounting to 0.35% of Iceland’s GNI. Despite sharp increase in national income after the pandemic and treasury deficits, it was decided to maintain the percentage in 2023 and that the additional funds would be allocated to support Ukraine.



The humanitarian situation has deteriorated in recent years, due to climate change, as well as man-made and natural disasters.

Bilateral development cooperation

In Iceland’s partner countries, Malawi and Uganda, emphasis is placed on poverty reduction and improved living conditions in selected districts with the aim of providing better access to quality education, healthcare, clean water and sanitary facilities. A new country strategy for Malawi was submitted for approval and a country strategy for Uganda is well under way. The Minister for Foreign Affairs visited Malawi in

December where she met with officials and visited projects supported by Iceland. Preparations for the opening of an embassy in Freetown, Sierra Leone in the fall of 2023 are under way.

Bilateral Development Cooperation 2022

13,000



13 thousand children in 10 primary schools in the Mangochi district in Malawi receive a **daily school meal** through the partnership between WFP and the Government of Iceland.

21,000



21 thousand **energy saving stoves** are in use in Malawi which reduce the usage of firewood and CO2 emissions by 2.4 tons.

27,000



27 thousand **books** delivered to partner schools in Uganda’s Namayingo district through partnership between the Government of Iceland and district authorities.

360



360 women and girls received **information on sexual- and reproductive health, including obstetric fistula**, in Sierra Leone.

Multilateral development cooperation

Iceland has four key partner organisations in multilateral cooperation: The World Bank, the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). Iceland emphasises the provision of core contributions which enable institutions to organise their work in accordance with their policy and objectives. Iceland also provides earmarked contributions for specific projects, policy areas and countries, and provides seconded experts and JPOs.

Multilateral Development Cooperation 2022

2,862 million ISK



Total contributions to Iceland's priority partner organisations, World Bank, UNICEF, UNFPA and UN Women, were **2.862 million ISK**.

80%+



Over 80% of Iceland's development cooperation projects include specific **gender equality objectives**.

17



Iceland supports the programme on the **Elimination of Female Genital Mutilation** across **17 countries**.

980 million ISK



Support to **least developed countries** through IDA amounted to **980 million ISK**.

Humanitarian issues

The humanitarian situation has deteriorated in recent years, due to climate change, as well as man-made and natural disasters. Russia's unlawful invasion of Ukraine has negatively impacted food and energy prices, and further excavated the financial difficulties in low and middle income countries. Iceland increased its contributions to humanitarian assistance significantly, responding to emergency situations in individual countries and with higher core contributions to key organisations.

GRÓ – Centre for Capacity Development, Sustainability and Societal Change

GRÓ is operated under the auspices of UNESCO, aiming to disseminate Icelandic expertise to low- and middle-income countries. The four GRÓ Training Centres offer programmes, on gender equality, geothermal energy, land restoration and sustainable fisheries. The four programmes provide training and education to a large number of fellows from low-income countries.

Cooperation with the private sector

Iceland has teamed up with the private sector through the SDG Partnership Fund, to support the development of business, job and value creation in developing countries.

News from the Ministry

Increased contributions to climate action in developing countries

23 February 2022. The Icelandic government has decided to increase donations to support climate action in developing countries, in accordance with the final statement of the COP26 climate conference in Glasgow. These are donations to four organisations and funds that have the distinction of working with the world's poorest countries in their fight against climate change.

Nineteen students graduate from GRÓ – Land Restoration School

15 September 2022. GRÓ – Land Restoration Training Programme graduated nineteen experts, seven women and twelve men, from eight countries. The Land Restoration Training Programme is one of four training programmes run under GRÓ - International Centre for Capacity Development, Sustainability & Societal Change. The aim of the Centre is to build skills and knowledge in developing countries in areas where Icelandic expertise is useful.

Half of the children have Icelandic SOS parents

4 December 2022. Half of the children at the SOS orphanage in Lilongwe, the capital of Malawi, have Icelandic SOS parents. Thórdís Kolbrún Reykjörð Gylfadóttir, Minister for Foreign Affairs, visited the SOS Children's Village today, on the first day of a working visit to Malawi, Iceland's longstanding partner country in international development cooperation.

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