

Fact sheet for planning levels

National National Planning Policy 2015-2026 (Landsskipulagsstefna 2015-2026). Passed by Parliament as a parliamentary resolution in March 2016. Planning system of Iseland Planning system of Isela



Facts

Legal basis

Planning Act No. 123/2010, Chapter III.

Competences

The National Planning Policy is a strategic policy document on spatial planning, providing guidance for local authority plan-making and other public authorities dealing with urban development, land use and infrastructure.

Binding force

According to Art. 10 of the Planning Act, local authorities must take the National Planning Policy into account in their plan-making, but can deviate from it if sufficient reasons are presented to the National Planning Agency.

Tasks and content

According to Art. 10 of the Planning Act, the National Planning Policy shall present a policy on planning based on sustainable development and the aims of the Planning Act, and shall integrate public plans for transport, regional development, nature conservation, energy and other issues related to land use and the utilisation of marine areas. The National Planning Policy can address the whole country or certain regions. It must always include a planning policy for the central highlands and marine areas, but apart from that, the minister decides on the emphasis of the policy when he/she initiates the process of drafting a new National Planning Policy.

Process, duration, participation

According to Art. 10 of the Planning Act, the minister responsible for planning shall present a National Planning Policy proposal within two years after parliamentary elections.

The Minister of the Environment initiated the process of preparing the first National Planning Policy in 2013. The publication of the National Planning Policy 2015-2026 in 2016 followed an extensive planning and public consultation process. A draft National Planning Policy was presented for public consultation in December 2014. Parliament approved the National Planning Policy 2015-2026 in March 2016.

A new National Planning Process was initiated by the minister in 2018 and a proposal for a parliamentary resolution presented to Parliament in April 2021, but was not passed.

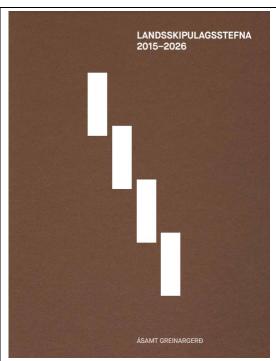
Following parliamentary elections in September 2021, responsibility for planning was moved from the Ministry for the Environment to a new Ministry of Infrastructure in December 2021.

Duration of validity

According to Art. 10 of the Planning Act, the National Planning Policy is to have a time perspective of twelve years, and is to be reviewed every four years.



Details of the plan



The National Planning Policy 2015-2026 report.

Below are examples of pages from the National Planning Policy's chapter presenting the planning policy for the central highlands (policy text on white background, explanatory text on coloured background):



1. SKIPULAG Á MIÐHÁLENDI ÍSLANDS

Staðinn verði vörður um náttúru og landslag miðhálendisins vegna náttúruverndargildis og mikilvægis fyrir útivist. Uppbygging innviða á miðhálendinu taki mið af sérstöðu þess.

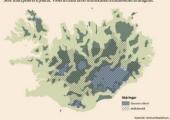




1.1 Víðerni og náttúrugæði

Viðhaldið verði sérkennum og náttúrugæðum miðhálendisins með áherslu á verndun víðerna hálendisins, landslagsheilda, mikilvægra vistgerða og gróðurlenda og verðmætra menningarminja

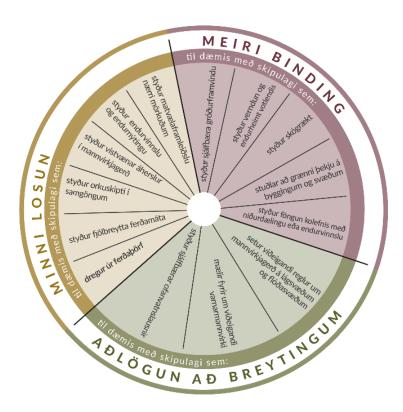
1.1.5 Umhverfismat
Við umhverfismat áætlana og framkvæmda á miðhálendinu verði lagt mat á áhrif áætlunar og framkvæmdar á víðerni og hve mikil rýmun, eða eftir atvik-endurheimt, verður á víðermun.







A proposal for an amended National Planning Policy was introduced in Parliament in 2021 (but was not passed). It introduced three new themes: climate, landscape and public health. Below are examples of explanatory diagrams from the proposal:



A diagram demonstrating examples of actions that can be applied in planning to address climate issues by reducing greenhouse gas emissions (minni losun), binding CO2 (meiri binding) and adapting to climate change (aðlögun að breytingum).



Diagrams explaining the proposal's emphasis on the 20 minute town/neighbourhood and active transport modes for the benefit of the climate, landscape and public health.



Characteristics

Location of the area

The National Planning Policy presents a planning policy within the jurisdiction of the government of Iceland. It must always include a policy on the planning of the central highlands and marine areas.

Initial situation

The legal provisions for presenting a National Planning Policy came about with the Planning Act No. 123/2010 in 2010. The National Planning Policy 2015-2026, passed by Parliament in 2016, is the first of its kind. A proposal for an amended National Planning Policy was presented to Parliament in 2021, but was not passed.

Particularities of the content of the planning policy

The National Planning Policy 2015-2026 is structured around four themes with the following strategic objectives:

- Planning of the central highlands. Protect the nature and landscape of the central highlands due to their nature conservation value and importance for outdoor activities.
- Planning in rural areas. Allow for diverse utilisation of land in rural areas, such as cultivation, tourism and outdoor activities, in harmony with nature and the landscape.
- Planning of settlement structure and urban areas. Promote sustainability with emphasis on the quality of the built environment and integrated planning of building development and transport.
- Marine spatial planning. Provide the basis for a diverse utilisation of marine areas, while maintaining their important natural resources.

The proposal for an amended National Planning Policy, presented to Parliament in 2021, introduced three new themes and strategic objectives, which cut across the four themes in the existing National Planning Policy:

- Planning for climate. Contribute to carbon neutrality and resilience against the consequences of climate change.
- Placemaking and landscape protection. Preserve and enhance landscape quality and sense of place.
- Planning for public health. Contribute to health and wellbeing.

Further information

National Planning Agency (n.d.): Landsskipulagsstefna (Engl.: National Planning Policy). Available at: https://www.landsskipulag.is (Accessed 31 August 2022).