

Report of parliamentary consultative panel

Executive Summary in English ([Full Report in Icelandic](#))

Focus areas and priorities

Iceland's defence and security policy shall be based on the National Security Policy, which aims to ensure the independence, sovereignty, democratic governance, and territorial integrity of Iceland, the safety of its citizens, the defence of the country, and the protection of the governmental system and critical national infrastructure.

The National Security Policy is grounded in the commitments of the United Nations Charter and guided by the nation's core values: democracy and respect for the rule of law and international law, humanitarianism and the protection of human rights, equality and sustainable development, disarmament, and the peaceful resolution of disputes. A fundamental premise of the National Security Policy is Iceland's status as a country without standing armed forces, which ensures its defence and security through active cooperation with other states and within international organisations.

According to Article 3 of the Defence Act No. 34/2008, the Minister for Foreign Affairs is responsible for the overall management of defence matters and for the formulation and implementation of Iceland's defence and security policy on the international stage. Such a policy has not previously been formally presented.

The main pillars of Iceland's defence and security policy are its membership of NATO and the bilateral defence agreement with the United States. Solid and deepening cooperation with European Allies and Canada support these main pillars. Iceland's primary objective is to be a trustworthy and reliable Ally, to build resilience, human capital, and defence-related infrastructure.

International Cooperation

1. **Increase participation in the work and operations of NATO**, as the primary forum for Western defence cooperation.
2. **Strengthen defence cooperation with the United States** based on the 1951 bilateral defence agreement, with the aim of aligning it with the countries' shared defence interests and relevant risk factors.
3. **Enhance participation in regional defence cooperation**, with emphasis on Nordic defence cooperation (NORDEFCO), the Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF), and cooperation among the seven Arctic Allies. Develop bilateral relations with the Nordic and Baltic states, the United Kingdom, France, Poland, and Germany, as well as Canada.

Domestic Defence Preparedness, Knowledge, and Capability

4. **Ensure the availability of subject matter expertise, plans, infrastructure, and equipment** to meet security challenges and fulfill commitments.
5. **Increase investment in infrastructure** that serves both defence-related and civilian purposes and supports Iceland's defence, surveillance, and operational capabilities.
6. **Secure increased funding for defence-related and civilian projects and investments** that enable Iceland to enhance preparedness, participation, and fulfill its obligations.
7. **Strengthen the resilience of Icelandic society**, civil protection, and the protection of civilians in armed conflict.
8. **Enhance analytical capability and information sharing** regarding challenges and threats that may affect Iceland.
9. **Promote and host more frequent and extensive defence-related exercises** with participation of Icelandic response agencies in line with likely threat scenarios.
10. **Encourage investment, development, and innovation** in the field of defence and security.
11. **Strengthen training, education, and research** in the field of defence and security.
12. **Improve strategic communication** about defence and security to foster democratic discourse and public understanding of the field.

Challenges in the Legal and Institutional Framework

13. **Undertake a comprehensive review of legislation and regulatory frameworks** related to defence and security, including a revision of the Defence Act. It is essential that Icelandic legislation in this area is clear and coherent regarding the responsibilities and authorities of government bodies, decision-making, division of tasks, and the role of Parliament in oversight and involvement.
14. **Strengthen the institutional framework for defence** with the aim of ensuring coordination, efficiency, accountability, and oversight, while also further enhancing inter-agency cooperation within the public administration on defence and security-related tasks.