

Looking for work in *Iceland*

Looking for work in another country requires more than just the obvious CV translation. You will be confronted with issues that probably didn't even cross your mind when you decided to go for an international career, but don't underestimate the big impact they can have on the outcome of your adventure! Think for example about the different rules and habits regarding immigration, job application procedures, the selection procedures and the management culture.

Expertise in Labour Mobility has prepared practical factsheets to support you in your job hunting abroad. A thorough preparation will give you a head start in the country of your choice. Here is some info on Iceland:

Work permits in Iceland

- Citizens of the EEA are free to move and work wherever they want to, within the EEA (including Iceland).
- You must apply for a residence permit. This is valid for five years and should be issued within six months of your arrival.
- Contact the Icelandic embassy in your home country for more information on work permits.

The application procedure in Iceland

- Finding an apprenticeship is a good introduction to the Icelandic labour market.
- Selection and recruitment agencies play an important role in the marketplace.
- Speculative applications are always a good way to find a job in the small community of Iceland.
- Language is important. You are not expected to be fluent in Icelandic, but an interest in the language is very much appreciated.

Writing a CV in Iceland

- The key focus of your CV should be to persuade the employer to invite you for an interview. Therefore, your CV is a marketing tool, which should be adapted to the market in which you intend to use it.
- You can choose between a functional CV or a CV arranged in chronological order.
- Finish your CV with a professional and an academic reference.

The application letter in Iceland

- In Iceland there are no traditional rules on how an application should be written. Try and write a covering letter in Icelandic, or otherwise in English or a Scandinavian language.
- Emphasise your motivation and qualifications for the job.
- Include copies of diplomas, testimonials of former employers and other supporting documents.

Do's

- Be prepared for two application interviews in Iceland.
- Pay attention to your appearance, it should be rather formal.
- Mention your linguistic abilities when applying for a job in Iceland.
- Look interested – ask questions.
- Provide examples to illustrate your achievements.
- Ask for an explanation if you don't understand the question you have been asked.

Don'ts

- Sit until invited with an Icelandic interview.
- Interrupt the interviewer in Iceland.
- Act too familiar in business situations; Icelandic people always keep a certain conventional distance with foreigners.
- Criticise former employers.
- Go over the top – stay calm and stick to the facts.

Management culture in Iceland

- In Icelandic companies, decisions are made at all levels of the organisation and employees have full responsibility for their actions.
- Communication is open and consultation occurs between all levels.
- At meetings in Iceland, people prefer flexibility and familiarity. Formalities and rules are unwanted.
- In negotiations, always take your time and do not be too pushy trying to convince people of your ideas – it often has the opposite result!
- It is very uncommon to use 'Sir' or 'Miss' when addressing someone.
- Icelanders will not keep their business and private life separate.

This information is based on the Looking for work in Iceland guide (ISBN 90-5896-0102), written by Expertise in Labour Mobility. This one-pager is one step to making your international career aspirations become reality. The full Looking for work in Iceland guide tells you everything you need to know. If you want to order or more information about our services, have a look at www.labourmobility.com.



Good luck with your application in Iceland!