

ÚTLENDINGASTOVAN
IMMIGRATION OFFICE

Welcome to the Faroe Islands



Welcome to the Faroe Islands!

A short guide to help you get started and feel at home.



This folder provides a basic overview of what it means to live here as a newcomer.

It introduces key topics such as residence permits, rights and responsibilities, integration courses, language learning, family life, work, education, and the welfare society.

The information is general and some rules and services may depend on your residence permit and personal situation, so always check what applies to you.

Use this as a starting point to familiarize yourself, and feel free to ask questions if anything is unclear.

A Road Map for Newcomers to the Faroe Islands

This roadmap gives an overview of the steps many newcomers experience when settling in the Faroe Islands. Everyone's journey is different.



1 Arrival and residence

- Receive your permit and register your address



2 Getting oriented

- Learn about your rights, duties, and Faroese society



3 Integration support

- Access courses, consultation, and language support



4 Language learning

- Enroll in Faroese language classes



5 Career advice

- Receive career advice and recognize your qualifications



6 Family and daily life

- Support schools and adjust to family life



Some steps may happen at the same time or in a different order.

To live and work in the Faroe Islands, you must first obtain a residence permit. Below are some general information about the main types of permits that people usually apply for.

Temporary permits

Family reunification permit



Normally, a family reunification permit may be granted to the spouse, cohabiting partner, or minor children of a person residing in the Faroe Islands. The residing person is either in a relationship or married to a Faroese individual.

Work Permit



To work in the Faroe Islands, you must have found a job and a signed contract to apply for a work permit.

Accompanying family member permit



Family members of a work permit holder can apply for an accompanying family-member permit to live and work in the Faroe Islands, provided that the sponsor meets the financial support requirement.

Let's speak the same language



People often refer to a family visa or work visa, but in the Faroe Islands, the correct term is permit. Visa used for short-term stays, whereas a family reunification permit or a work permit is intended for living and working in the country.

A permanent residence permit allows you to live in the Faroe Islands indefinitely. You no longer need to renew your permit every year or continue meeting the requirements that applied to your original family reunification or work permit.

Holders of family reunification or work permits must meet certain requirements to be eligible for a permanent residence permit.

Permanent Residence permits

If you have a family reunification permit

- Live continuously in the Faroe Islands for **3 years**.
- Pass a test in Faroese as a Second Language.
- Attend an integration course and integration consultation.



If you have a work permit

- Live and work continuously in the same type of industry in the Faroe Islands for **7 years**.
- Pass a test in Faroese as a Second Language.
- Attend an integration course and integration consultation.
- Have no criminal record or significant public debt



Note.

The information provided about permits is general. It is important that you read the specific requirements for each type of permit. For more details, please visit www.utlendingastovan.fo

Rights, Duties, and Expectations of You

As a newcomer with a residence permit in the Faroe Islands, it is important to become familiar with your rights, duties, and the expectations placed upon you.

This helps you feel safe, respected, and prepared to build a new life here.

The Faroe Islands is a democratic welfare society. This means that everyone has rights, responsibilities, and shared expectations.



You have rights and freedoms that protect you.



You have duties that come with living here.



There are expectations for how you participate in community life.

Your Rights

Your rights are the freedoms you have and the support you can receive while living here. They ensure access to health care, education, fair treatment, and participation in society.



Protection by law

Everyone is protected by Faroese law, the Danish constitution, and by international human rights.



Freedoms

You have freedom of speech, religion, opinion, and association.



Gender Equality

All people—men, women, boys, and girls—must be treated equally.



Safety

Physical, psychological, financial, or emotional abuse is illegal and not tolerated. You should never have to live in fear.

Children's Rights



Children have the right to receive an education, learn Faroese and Danish, maintain and use their mother tongue, be heard, receive information, play and feel safe. Physical and emotional abuse is illegal. Parents are responsible for their children's care, safety, and development.

Your Rights (continued)



Marriage Equality

Same-sex couples have equal rights to marry and raise families.



Voting Rights

After living in the Faroe Islands for 3 years in a row, you can vote and run as a candidate in municipal elections.



Family and Private Life

You have the right to family life and personal privacy.



Personal Information

You have the right to ask public institutions for information about your own case or other matters related to your inquiry.

Social Rights



Social rights include access to public services when needed, such as health care, education, and financial support. Some financial services may depend on your type of residence permit and could affect your permit status negatively — always ask if you are unsure.

Your Duties

Your duties are the responsibilities you have while living here. They are about respecting others, following the law, and contributing to the welfare society.



Follow the Law

Everyone must respect Faroese laws, treat others with dignity, and reject violence and discrimination. Report illegal activity and seek help if your rights are violated.



Work and Pay Taxes

The welfare system is built on shared responsibility. If you can work, you are expected to contribute. You have a duty to pay taxes on your income. Working without paying taxes is illegal.



Support Your Family

If you are married and/or have children, you are responsible for their financial support.



Compulsory Education

Education for children is compulsory for nine years starting from the year the child turns seven. You have a duty to ensure that your child receives an education.

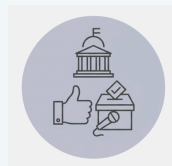
Expectations of You

As part of your integration process, you are expected to take part in Faroese society, and you are welcome to maintain your own cultural identity. These expectations support your ability to settle, thrive, and eventually apply for permanent residence.



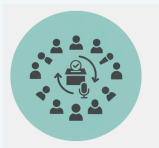
Understanding the System

You are expected to learn how the political, welfare, and education systems work. This helps you manage daily life and become more self-reliant and independent.



Respect Democratic Values

You are expected to respect and embrace freedom, democracy, equality, and diversity as the foundation for peaceful living.



Take Part in Society

Even if you do not have citizenship or voting rights, you still have the right to take part in a democratic society by sharing your opinions, joining conversations, and becoming part of local groups or associations to feel more connected and to make a difference. As a member of a democratic society, you are encouraged to use this right.



Community Participation

You are expected to learn about Faroese culture and traditions, and to join local life through activities you enjoy such as clubs, sports, events, or by meeting new people. Having a personal network is important in a small community. You are encouraged to share your own culture and traditions and be open to others.

Expectations of You (continued)

Language Learning & Integration Support



You have the right to free Faroese language classes, integration course, family course, and an integration consultation. If you plan to apply for permanent residence, you are expected to attend these sessions under the new Integration Law. English may help you with at first, but Faroese is essential for building connections, finding work, and becoming independent.

Integration of Children



As a parent, you are responsible for the integration and well-being of your children, with support from Faroese society. This means helping your children learn the Faroese language, supporting their education and school participation, attending parent-teacher meetings, attending the free parenthood course, signing them up for sports and leisure activities, and helping them to build friendships with other children. These efforts help your children feel included, succeed in school and become part of the community.

Interpretation



Your Right to an Interpreter

You have the right to ask for an interpreter when you need help understanding important information.

This applies to situations such as meetings about your residence, health appointments, conversations with schools, daycares, or other official discussions where you must fully understand what is being said.



How to Request an Interpreter

Inform the person you will be meeting with as early as possible that you need an interpreter and which language the interpretation should be in.

Depending on the situation, interpretation may be provided free of charge. Please check beforehand who will pay.



What an Interpreter Does

- Interpreter translate everything neutrally and confidentially.
- They do not give opinions or advice.
- Their role is to ensure accurate communication.
- Clear communication helps you make good decisions and understand your rights and responsibilities.

Integration Consultation



You can request a free integration consultation at the Integration Office. The consultation provides general information, advice and guidance related to being a new resident in the Faroe Islands and also discuss your future plans and what steps can be made.

Interpretation will be used if you don't understand Faroese or English.

Please remember

In order to be eligible to apply for a permanent residence permit, you must have done the following:

- Passed Faroese as a Second Language
- Attended in an integration consultation
- Participated in integration course

We recommend that you complete these three requirements as soon as you received your permit.

Integration Course

The Integration Course is a free course offered by the Integration Office to newcomers who have received a residence permit in the Faroe Islands. The purpose of the course is to help you understand Faroese society, culture, everyday life and important rights and responsibilities. By joining the course, you get useful knowledge that makes it easier to settle in, navigate public services, and take part in the community.



What you will learn

- Faroese history and culture
- Daily life, work, and traditions
- Welfare system and public services
- Children's rights and education
- Understanding laws and your responsibilities

Who is it for?

Any adult individuals who move to the Faroe Islands and fall under the Integration law will be invited to take the course. The program is organized by the Integration Office.

Our goal is to help you build a good foundation for life here, better understanding of Faroese society, and feel included and informed from the very beginning.

Family Course

If you are new to the Faroe Islands and have children or are expecting a child, you can join a free course designed to help you support your child's growth learning, and well-being in a new country.

What you will learn



Children's Rights



Language and development



Family dynamics and migration stress



Parental well-being

What you will learn

Parenting in a new country can be different. This course helps you gain useful knowledge, connect with other parents, and become more confident as a parent in the Faroe Islands.

Faroese as a second language



As a newcomer, you can take Faroese as a Second Language (FSA) courses to develop your Faroese language skills and better integrate into Faroese society. These courses are organized under the national framework for Faroese as a Second Language.

Benefits of attending

- Improve your Faroese language skills
- Better understand Faroese society and culture
- Gain opportunities for further Faroese education

Practical Information

- Free of charge
- Courses last about four months
- Available in three locations: Tórshavn, Kambsdali, and Vágur

For details and how to sign up, please go to www.uvs.fo

Welfare system



The welfare system is based on the idea that the community works together to make sure everyone has access to basic services and support. These services are mostly paid for through taxes, which all residents contribute to.

Maintaining a strong welfare society makes the Faroe Islands a better place for everyone.

Examples of Welfare Services and Support



Access to healthcare services for all



Free access to education



Assistance during difficult times

What is expected from everyone



Working and paying taxes



Taking care of your family



Following laws and rules

Education



Education is highly valued in the Faroe Islands and is available to both children and adults. Most education is free, and the system is flexible, allowing people to change paths, gain new skills, or continue to higher education later in life.

Education for Adults

- Faroese as a Second Language (FSA) courses for adults, offered free of charge.
- Short introductory Faroese courses offered by municipalities for a fee.
- Adult education and training program that allows you to gain new skills, change careers, or qualify for further education.

No matter your background, there are options to help you continue learning, strengthen your skills, and build your future in the Faroe Islands.

Vegleiðingarstovan

Vegleiðingarstovan provides free consultation and counselling on both education and job opportunities. Whether you hold an education or not, Vegleiðingarstovan can work with you on finding your next steps.

www.vegleiding.fo

Your next steps

Starting a new life in the Faroe Islands can feel overwhelming, but remember, support is available to guide you through this journey.



Your Support



You can contact Útlendingastovan for advice and support.



Municipal integration coordinators are also available locally to answer questions and provide guidance.

Your next steps

- Take time to sightsee and participate in local events and festivals.
- Ask a local about clubs or groups that reflect your hobbies or interests.
- Learn some Faroese before starting work (learning the basics can help a long way.)
- Ask for guidance about education recognition if you hold non-Nordic higher education degree.
- Be proactive when job hunting; don't hesitate to call or visit potential employers in person.

Don't feel like you are alone in this journey. Many others have gone through similar experiences. Be open and talk with others about your challenges and struggles.



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