

Small States Security and Defence

Iceland

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Small States

Security and Defence – Country Overview

- Overview for Iceland
 - Historical background
 - Danish rule since the 14th century
 - Sovereignty 1918
 - No military
 - Forever neutral
 - UK/US occupation from 1941
 - Independence 1944
 - Founding member of NATO in 1949
 - US Defence agreement 1951
 - US military departed Keflavik base in 2006
 - NATO air policing – Reliance on Article 5 – US Defence Agreement still active

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Security and Defence – Country Overview

- Overview for your country
 - Island state in the North Atlantic Ocean – in the Arctic region but not an Arctic coastal state - between the US and Europe
 - Main challenges – Especially related to the size of the country
 - Geographic location
 - Climate change
 - Cyber threats
 - Hybrid threats
 - Search and rescue capabilities
 - Health, criminality, food security etc.

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Security and Defence – Country Overview

- Government and administration
 - Ministry for Foreign Affairs
 - Defence Directorate
 - The Icelandic Coast Guard
 - Law enforcement agency, responsible for search and rescue, maritime safety and security surveillance, and law enforcement in the seas surrounding Iceland
 - The National Security Council founded in 2016
 - National Security Policy
 - Threat Assessments
 - A national defence budget - €13,4 million in 2018
 - NATO and the US Defence Agreement remain the cornerstones of Iceland's defence and security

Small States National Defence

- Iceland has no military but the Icelandic Coast Guard is
 - Responsible for operation defence tasks in Iceland including operation of NATO – Keflavik Air Base, Security Zones and Iceland Air Defence Systems
 - The NATO Iceland Air Defence System is an integral part of NATO Integrated Air and Missile Defence System
 - NATO Air Policing is a peacetime collective defence mission safeguarding the integrity of the NATO Alliance Member's Airspace
- Agreements with other countries/international organisations
 - NATO membership – founding members since 1949
 - US defence agreement since 1951
 - Nordic collaboration – NORDEFECO and bilateral agreements, i.e. Norway
- Where does your country seek shelter in security and defence matters?
 - US, NATO and the Nordic countries – See: *Reassessing the Stoltenberg report on Nordic Cooperation*

Small States National Defence

- Provide examples of costs and benefits that your country gets from EU cooperation in security and defence. What is the national debate?
 - Iceland joined Schengen in 2001 making free travel possible. In recent years there has been an increased debate that membership of Schengen has made Iceland more vulnerable to organized crime and an influx of asylum seekers.
 - Police cooperation
 - Schengen Information System
 - Europol
 - The Icelandic Coast Guard participates in Frontex missions in the Mediterranean
 - Iceland more integrated in many areas than actual EU members

Small States Role in Peacekeeping

- Provide examples of your country's work in peacekeeping
 - Contributions since the 1950's include various peacekeeping missions - increasingly important since the 1990's
 - Iceland Crisis Response Unit (ICRU) established in 2001
 - Contributing to multilateral organizations and secondments of civilian experts – UN agencies, NATO and the OSCE
 - Iceland's national action plan on the implementation of UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security vital
 - Other international engagements:
 - Iceland signed the Rome Statute on 26 August 1998 – ratified on 25 May 2000

Conclusion: Main future security challenges

- Looking forward, what are the main future challenges for your country in security and defence matters?
 - Iceland's geographic location and smallness poses several threats such as challenges associated with
 - Climate change
 - Natural hazards – i.e. volcanic eruptions, earthquakes and floods
 - External threats – i.e. increased military tension in the Arctic and spill-over effects
 - Hybrid and cyber security challenges
 - Food security
 - Epidemics
 - Organized crime