

Iceland

The constitution recognizes only a municipal level of self-government and the capital city Reykjavik does not have a special status (C 1944, Art. 78; Council of Europe: Iceland 1998, 2006, 2010, 2018). Iceland has an intermediate level of governance, the eight *landshlutasamtök* (regions) created for statistical purposes. The average population of the regions is about 35,000. Until 1988, Iceland had twenty-three *sýslur* (counties), which were responsible for inter-municipal cooperation (Harloff 1987). Local authorities may establish regional associations (Council of Europe: Iceland 2006, 2013; Law No. 45/1998, Arts. 81–86), and to date, eight exist. Their boundaries follow for the most part the old electoral districts. Regional associations (or federations) may run services on behalf of the local authorities such as refuse disposal or schooling. All local authorities belong to the Icelandic association of local authorities, which is a regular negotiation partner with the central government on behalf of the local authorities.¹ In addition, Iceland is divided into task-specific districts for health, sanitary inspection, or tax collection (Council of Europe: Iceland 1998).

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¹ Samband Islenskra Sveitarfélaga. Sambandið. “Icelandic Association of Local Authorities” and “Regional Association” <<http://www.samband.is/um-okkur>>.

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