Last updated: July 2026

Iceland

Ratified the European Convention on Human Rights in 1953

National Judge: Oddný Mjöll Arnardóttir (15 March 2023 -)

Judges' CVs are available on the ECHR Internet site
Previous judges: Einar Arnalds (1959-1967), Sigurgeir Sigurjonsson (1967-1971), Thór Vilhalmsson (1971-1998), Gaukur Jörundsson (1998-2004), David Thór Björgvinsson (2004-2013), Robert Spano (2013-2022)

List of judges of the Court since 1959

The Court dealt with 29 applications concerning Iceland in 2025 of which 19 were declared inadmissible or struck out. It delivered five judgments (concerning ten applications), two of which found at least one violation of the European Convention on Human Rights.

Applications processed in	2024	2025	2026*
Applications allocated to a judicial formation	19	14	7
Communicated to the Government	2	3	0
Applications decided:	20	29	20
- Declared inadmissible or struck out (Single Judge)	18	17	9
- Declared inadmissible or struck out (Committee)	0	2	5
- Declared inadmissible or struck out (Chamber)	0	0	0
- Decided by judgment	2	10	6

* from January to July 2026

For information about the Court's judicial formations and procedure, see the ECHR internet site.
Statistics on interim measures can be found here.

Applications pending before the court on 01/01/2026	
Applications pending before a judicial formation:	9
Single Judge	1
Committee (3 Judges)	4
Chamber (7 Judges)	4
Grand Chamber (17 Judges)	0

Iceland and ...

The Registry

The task of the Registry is to provide legal and administrative support to the Court in the exercise of its judicial functions. It is composed of lawyers, administrative and technical staff and translators. There are currently **673** Registry staff members.

Noteworthy cases, judgments delivered

Grand Chamber

Gestur Jónsson and Ragnar Halldór Hall v. Iceland

22.12.2020

The case concerned two lawyers who were fined in absentia by the district court for contempt of court because they had withdrawn from their roles as defence lawyers in a criminal trial. In spite of the district court's refusal to allow them to withdraw from the case, the two applicants had failed to attend the hearing in order to represent their clients. The district court held that they had intentionally caused undue delay in the case.

Application declared inadmissible

Guðmundur Andri Ástráðsson v. Iceland

01.12.2020

The case concerned the applicant's allegation that the new Icelandic Court of Appeal (*Landsréttur*) which had upheld his conviction for road traffic offences was not "a tribunal established by law", on account of irregularities in the appointment of one of the judges who heard his case.

Violation of Article 6 § 1 (right to a tribunal established by law)

Noteworthy cases, judgments and decisions delivered

Chamber

Cases on Article 3 (prohibition of inhuman or degrading treatment)

R.E. and Others v. Iceland (nos. 59809/19, 8034/20, 14407/20 and 17008/20)

13.01.2026

The case concerned investigations into four applicants' complaints of sexual violence between 2012 and 2017, two of whom were minors, the European Court of Human Rights

No violation of Articles 3 and 8

No violation of Article 14

Cases on Article 5 (right to liberty and security)

Hilda Hafsteinsdóttir v. Iceland

08.06.2004

The applicant alleged that her detention in police custody on several occasions for drunkenness and disorderly conduct had not been justified. The Court noted that at the relevant time there had been no regulatory framework governing either the police's discretion over the duration of the relevant type of detention or the decision to place the applicant in detention.

Violation of Article 5

Cases dealing with Article 6

Right to a fair trial

Bjarki H. Diego v. Iceland

15.03.2022

The case concerned the trial of Mr Diego – a former Kaupþing bank official – for fraud by abuse of position following the 2008 financial crisis.

No violation of Article 6 § 1

Violation of Article 6 §§ 1 and 3 (a) and (c)

Sigurjón Þorvaldur Árnason v. Iceland, Ívar Guðjónsson v. Iceland, Sigurþór Charles Guðmundsson v. Iceland, Margrét Guðjónsdóttir v. Iceland and Karl Emil Wernersson v. Iceland

04.03.2021

The applications concerned the applicants' criminal convictions in cases related to the 2008 financial crisis and its aftermath in Iceland.

The Court has struck the applications out of its list of cases

Sigurður Einarsson and Others v. Iceland

04.06.2019

The case concerned criminal proceedings against four business executives linked to a share transaction in Kaupþing Bank before its collapse in 2008.

Violation of Article 6 § 1 on account of a judge's lack of impartiality

No violation of Article 6 §§ 1 and 3 (b) in respect of the alleged denial of access to data

No violation of Article 6 §§ 1 and 3 (d) in respect of the alleged failure to summon witnesses

Haarde v. Iceland

23.11.2017

The applicant is a former Prime Minister of Iceland who was impeached for negligence on account of his handling of the country's 2008 banking crisis and found criminally liable. He complained that his trial, which was initiated after a Parliament vote, had not been fair and that the legal provisions used for his criminal conviction had been vague and unclear.

No violation of Article 6

No violation of Article 7 (no punishment without law)

Sara Lind Eggertsdóttir v. Iceland

05.07.2007

Concerned parents' complaint that proceedings against the State alleging medical negligence in respect of their daughter, born with severe physical and mental handicaps, were unfair (notably because the Supreme Court had based its findings on the opinion of employees working at the hospital where their daughter was born).

Violation of Article 6 § 1

Right to an independent and impartial tribunal

Sigurdsson v. Iceland

10.04.2003

The applicant lost a court case against the National Bank of Iceland in 1997. He complained that, on account of the close financial relationship between the judge and her husband on the one hand and the National Bank of Iceland on the other, his case had not been heard by an independent and impartial tribunal.

Violation of Article 6 § 1

Cases dealing with private of family life (Article 8)

Z v. Iceland (no. 3538/21)

13.01.2026

The case concerned the investigation into Z's complaint that she had been sexually assaulted at a festival when she was 16 years old.

Violation of Article 8

No-violation of Article 14 read in conjunction with Article 8

A and Others v. Iceland (nos. 25133/20 and 31856/20)

15.11.2022

The case concerned custody proceedings between 2017 and 2020 by which A and B had had their custody of X and Y removed. This had been following criminal proceedings against A for alleged sexual abuse of X and Y for which he had been ultimately acquitted as the courts found the allegations had not been proven beyond reasonable doubt.

No violation Article 8

Valdís Fjölnisdóttir and Others v. Iceland

18.05.2021

The case concerned the refusal to recognise a parental link between Ms Fjölnisdóttir and Ms Agnarsdóttir and X. The latter had been born to them via a surrogate mother in the United States, but neither of the first two applicants is biologically related to him. They had not been recognised as the child's parents in Iceland, where surrogacy is illegal.

No violation Article 8

Egill Einarsson v. Iceland

07.11.2017

The case concerned the complaint by a well-known blogger about a Supreme Court ruling, which found that he had not been defamed by the words "Fuck you rapist bastard" used in an Instagram post about him.

Violation of Article 8

Inadmissible applications

Benediktsdóttir v. Iceland

16.06.2009

Concerned the applicant's complaint under Article 10 (freedom of expression) and 8 (right to respect for private and family life) that her private e-mails had been unlawfully published in the media – in the context of a criminal investigation against members of a multinational company (the Baugur Group).

Application declared inadmissible as manifestly ill-founded

Gunnarsson v. Iceland
20.10.2005
Complaint by the Secretary General of the Independence Party – under Article 8 (right to respect for private life), Article 6 (right to a fair trial), and Article 14 (prohibition of discrimination), taken in conjunction with Article 6 and 8, – about defamation proceedings he had brought against a journalist who had published an article strongly criticising leaders of the Independence Party concerning the acquisition of a large part of the shares of the Icelandic Investment Bank by a group in Luxembourg.
Application declared inadmissible

Freedom of expression cases (Article 10)

Olafsson v. Iceland
16.03.2017
The applicant, Mr Ólafsson, was an editor of the web-based media site *Pressan*. He published articles insinuating that a political candidate had committed sexual abuse against children. The Supreme Court of Iceland held Mr Ólafsson liable for defamation. He complained to the European Court of Human Rights that this liability had violated his right to freedom of expression.
Violation of Article 10

Erla Hlynsdottir v. Iceland (no. 3) (no. 54145/10)
02.06.2015
The case concerned the complaint by a journalist of having been found liable for defamation of a Mr A because of an article she published at the time Mr A was being tried for importing drugs.
Violation of Article 10

Erla Hlynsdottir v. Iceland (no. 2) (no. 54125/10)
21.10.2014
The case concerned the complaint by a journalist of having been found liable for defamation following the publication in 2007 of an article about a high-profile criminal case involving the director of a rehabilitation centre and his wife, who were suspected of sexual abuse.
Violation of Article 10

Björk Eidsdottir v. Iceland (no. 46443/09) and Erla Hlynsdottir v. Iceland (no. 43380/10)
10.07.2012
The cases concerned defamation proceedings against two Icelandic journalists for their articles about the working conditions in a strip club and an alleged assault at another strip club, respectively.
Violation of Article 10

Thorgeir Thorgeirson v. Iceland
25.06.1992
The applicant, a journalist, was convicted of defamation of civil servants following the publication in 1983 of two articles on police brutality.
Violation of Article 10

Inadmissible application

Carl Jóhann Lilliendahl v. Iceland
11.06.2020
The case concerned the applicant's conviction and fine for homophobic comments he had made in response to an online article.
Application declared inadmissible as manifestly ill-founded.

Cases concerning freedom of assembly and association (Article 11)

Vörður Ólafsson v. Iceland
27.04.2010
Complaint by an employer in the building sector who was a member of the Master Builders' Association ("MBA") about a statutory obligation under Icelandic law to pay an industrial charge to the Federation of Icelandic Industries ("FII"). He was not a member of the FII, nor was the MBA affiliated to it.
Violation of Article 11

Sigurdur A. Sigurjónsson v. Iceland
30.06.1993
Concerned the request by an Automobile Association to revoke the applicant's taxi licence after he had stopped paying his membership fees to the association.
Violation of Article 11

Inadmissible application

Association of Academics v. Iceland

07.06.2018

The case concerned restrictions on the right to strike and the introduction of compulsory arbitration.

Relying on Article 11 of the European Convention on Human Rights, the applicant association, which represented 18 of its member unions, many in the health-care sector, complained that the Icelandic State had violated its members' right to freedom of assembly and association by passing an Act in June 2015 which prohibited strikes that had been going on for several months during a period of collective bargaining. The law also provided for a binding decision on employment terms by an arbitration tribunal.

Application declared inadmissible.

Among other findings, the Court held that taking account in particular of the assessment made by the domestic courts of the effects of the strike on the health-care sector, the measures could be regarded as "necessary in a democratic society".

Cases concerning article 14 ((Prohibition of discrimination)

Arnar Helgi Lárusson v. Iceland

31.05.2022

The case concerned Mr Lárusson's access to municipal buildings which housed cultural and social institutions in Reykjanesbær as a wheelchair user.

No violation of Article 14 read in conjunction with Article 8 (right to respect for private and family life)

Protection of property case (Article 1 of Protocol No. 1)

Kjartan Ásmundsson v. Iceland

12.10.2004

The case concerned the applicant's complaint that he had lost his pension rights – which he had been receiving for 20 years – after his disability had been re-assessed.

Violation of Article 1 of Protocol No. 1

Inadmissible applications

Guðjonsson v. Iceland

02.12.2008

Concerned the applicant's complaint – under Article 1 of Protocol No. 1 (protection of property) and Article 14 (prohibition of discrimination) – that he had been deprived of his exclusive right within a farm's net zone to fish lumpfish and other species.

Application declared inadmissible as manifestly ill-founded.

Bergsson and Others v. Iceland

23.09.2008

Complaint by ten land owners – under Article 6 (right to a fair trial), Article 1 of Protocol No. 1 (protection of property) and Article 14 (prohibition of discrimination) – about a dispute over boundaries between public and private land.

Application declared inadmissible

Right to free elections (Article 3 of Protocol No. 1)

Guðmundur Gunnarsson et Magnús Davíð Norðdahl c. Islande

16.04.2024

The case concerned alleged irregularities in the recount of votes in the Northwest constituency in the 2021 *Althingi* election, subsequent changes in the allocation of levelling seats (*jöfnunarsæti*), and the examination of the post-election complaints by *Althingi*.

Violation of Article 3 of Protocol No. 1

Violation of Article 13 (right to an effective remedy) in conjunction with Article 3 of Protocol No. 1

Cases concerning the right not to be tried twice (Article 4 of Protocol No. 7)

Bjarni Ármannsson v. Iceland

16.04.2019

The case concerned the applicant's conviction for aggravated tax offences which had allegedly violated the principle of *ne bis in idem*.

Violation of Article 4 of Protocol No. 7

Johannesson and Others v. Iceland
18.05.2017
The application had been lodged by two individuals and one company, who complained that they had been tried twice for the same conduct of failing to make accurate declarations for tax assessments: first through the imposition of tax surcharges, and second through a subsequent criminal trial and conviction for aggravated tax offences.
Violation of Article 4 of Protocol No.7

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