

Proposal for Parliamentary Act on Integration (Integration Act)

§ 1. This Parliamentary Act applies to foreigners who have a residence permit in the Faroe Islands.

Section 2. The Act also applies to children under 18 years of age who have a permanent residence with parents or guardians covered by Section 1.

Definitions

§ 2. In this Act, a distinction is made between:

1. Immigrants and accompanying family who have a residence permit for employment purposes according to the ordinance for the implementation in the Faroe Islands of the Aliens Act, the Act concerning the right of foreigners to obtain a residence permit for specific types of employment, or the fast-track agreement.
2. Immigrants who have a residence permit under the rules on family reunification in the ordinance for the implementation in the Faroe Islands of the Aliens Act.
3. Immigrants who have a residence permit according to the ordinance on the implementation in the Faroe Islands of the Act on temporary residence permits for persons displaced from Ukraine.

Integration Authority

§ 3. The Minister shall assign the administration of this Act to an institution under the government. This institution will be called the Integration Authority.

Municipal Integration Coordinators

§ 4. Each municipality must have an integration coordinator by July 1, 2026.

Section 2. Municipalities may cooperate with other municipalities regarding integration and integration coordinators.

Section 3. In consultation with the municipalities, the Minister may establish detailed rules regarding the integration field and municipal integration coordinators, including rules on what actions to take if the municipalities do not fulfill their obligations under this Act.

Information Meetings upon Arrival

§ 5. The municipalities must regularly organize information meetings for foreign immigrants in the municipality who have recently moved to the Faroe Islands. These meetings are organized in consultation with the Integration Authority to ensure that the information provided is consistent across the country.

Section 2. During the meeting, immigrants will be informed about their rights and obligations in the Faroe Islands. Additionally, information will be provided about what assistance the Integration Authority, the municipality, and other relevant parties can offer and where the immigrant can seek further assistance if needed.

Section 3. Municipalities may cooperate with other municipalities regarding these informational meetings.

Section 4. Immigrants covered by this Act are asked to attend an informational meeting as soon as possible after their relocation to the Faroe Islands.

Integration Interview

§ 6. The Integration Authority requires immigrants who are 18 years or older to attend an integration interview if they:

1. Have a temporary residence permit under the rules on family reunification as outlined in § 2, no. 2.
2. Have a temporary residence permit and bring children under 18 to the Faroe Islands or later have children in the Faroe Islands.
3. Have a temporary residence permit according to the ordinance on the implementation in the Faroe Islands of the Act on temporary residence permits for persons displaced from Ukraine.
4. Have a residence permit and are reunited with a child under 18.
5. Have obtained a temporary work permit for the third time.
6. Are accompanying family members of a person who has obtained a temporary work permit for the third time.

Section 2. The Integration Authority may offer an integration interview to immigrants not covered in Section 1 if they wish.

Section 3. The Integration Authority must ensure that the immigrant is informed that, to obtain a permanent residence permit in the Faroe Islands according to the ordinance on the implementation of the Aliens Act, they must generally meet the requirements for participation in an integration interview under Section 1 and for adequate language proficiency and knowledge of Faroese society and culture as described in § 7.

Section 4. The Integration Authority informs the immigrant about their rights and obligations in the Faroe Islands and about integration-promoting measures and services that support the immigrant in learning Faroese and acquiring knowledge and skills important for functioning and living in Faroese society on an equal footing with other citizens.

Section 5. The Minister may set detailed rules on what the integration interview should encompass.

Language Skills and Knowledge of Faroese Culture and Society

§ 7. Immigrants covered by this Act are offered free instruction in Faroese according to the Parliamentary Act on Faroese as a Second Language.

Section 2. Immigrants covered by this Act are also offered free courses on Faroese culture and societal matters.

Section 3. The Minister may establish detailed rules regarding the content and duration of the course on Faroese culture and society.

Sharing Personal Information with Other Authorities

§ 8. The Integration Authority provides the resident municipality with necessary personal information to enable the municipality to offer relevant courses to immigrants and inform them about recreational activities, public events, and other opportunities in the area.

Section 2. The Integration Authority informs the resident municipality and Gigni (a child welfare organization) if the immigrant has children under 18 years accompanying them to the Faroe Islands. Similarly, the Integration Authority informs the resident municipality and

Gigni if a child under 18 is reunited with parents or family in the Faroe Islands after the family has arrived to the faroe islands

Children's Integration

§ 9. The resident municipality must work to ensure a good reception for children, providing them with a safe and positive childhood, youth life, and proper integration.

§ 10. The resident municipality must offer children who do not have Faroese as their mother tongue an organized welfare plan in daycare facilities, suited to the child's age.

Section 2. Bilingual children who have a mother tongue other than Faroese and have not yet started school may be offered support to promote their linguistic development in the Faroese language in accordance with the Parliamentary Act on Primary Education.

Section 3. School-aged children who have Faroese as a second language may receive special instruction in Faroese to an appropriate extent and may also be offered instruction in their mother tongue in accordance with the Parliamentary Act on Primary Education.

Section 4. The resident municipality shall organize integration-promoting activities for youth as needed.

§ 11. Immigrants with children below the compulsory school age must be offered a home visit by a healthcare professional, according to the Parliamentary Act on Preventive Health Services for Children and Youth.

§ 12. The Integration Authority offers immigrants with children under 15 a course on child integration. The courses are prepared and organized in cooperation with relevant authorities.

Section 2. The Integration Authority may also arrange courses covering age groups other than those mentioned in Section 1.

Section 3. The Minister may, in consultation with the Minister for Child and Education Affairs, set detailed rules on the content and duration of the course.

§ 13. To ensure children are truly heard in matters that concern them, every effort should be made to allow them to speak in the language they understand best.

§ 14. Public authorities shall use interpreters in their activities when deemed necessary.

Public Information and Integration-Promoting Initiatives

§ 15. In addition to the information meeting under § 5, municipalities, together with the Integration Authority, must organize public information and guidance on relevant societal matters, the integration system, and the services and offers provided by the municipality, the Integration Authority, and others.

Section 2. The Minister may, in consultation with municipalities, set detailed rules on how information under Section 1 will be organized between the municipalities and the Integration Authority.

Section 3. The Integration Authority shall produce and disseminate informative materials on Faroese society, customs, and culture for immigrants.

§ 16. The Integration Authority guides and advises public authorities, institutions, municipalities, companies, associations, public-interest organizations, volunteer organizations, and others on integration and integration-promoting initiatives.

Section 2. The Integration Authority may provide financial support for integration-promoting

initiatives upon application.

Section 3. The Minister shall establish detailed rules on integration-promoting initiatives and financial support under Section 2, including requirements for applications and documentation, and in what circumstances support may be granted.

Entry into Force, etc.

§ 17. This Parliamentary Act will come into force on July 1, 2025, and applies to immigrants applying for a residence permit for the first time after this date.

Section 2. The provision regarding organized welfare planning in daycare facilities under § 10, Section 1 will come into force on July 1, 2026.

§ 18. The offer of free instruction in Faroese as a second language applies to all immigrants who have received a residence permit in the Faroe Islands.

Section 2. Children who already have a residence permit in the Faroe Islands are included under the provision in § 10 for an organized welfare plan in daycare facilities.

Section 3. Immigrants who already have a residence permit in the Faroe Islands may request to attend an integration interview, as outlined in § 6, receive a health visitor's visit, as outlined in § 11, and participate in a course on the integration of children, as outlined in § 12.

Chapter 1. General Remarks

1.1. Reasons for the Proposal

In recent years, the number of immigrants has increased significantly. The composition of immigrants has also changed, with more now coming for work permits, while family reunification was previously the most common reason. Those coming to the Faroe Islands are not a homogenous group; they have different backgrounds, needs, and skills. Their educational levels range from highly educated academics to individuals with little to no formal schooling. This has increased the need for an integration law.

The Faroe Islands currently has no integration law, making this a completely new piece of legislation.

Historically, the Faroe Islands have been a relatively homogenous society, both culturally and ethnically. The significant population growth due to immigration has occurred in the last 10 to 15 years. At the same time, the country is small, remote, and socially close-knit, which affects how well immigrants can integrate into society and how society accommodates them.

However, integration is not an unfamiliar concept; people who move to the Faroe Islands are, to varying degrees, integrated where they live and work. Now, with the proportion of immigrants rising from 1.5% of the population in 2010 to 5.5% in 2023, a structured approach to integration is necessary.

Due to the country's small size and limited language resources, daycare centers, schools, and institutions lack the energy, funding, and tools to manage the rapid growth in immigration and the diverse challenges that accompany it.

Most immigrants come either through family reunification or for work, and many do not understand or speak a Nordic language. Many go straight into the labor market, where the challenge may be that they lack the means to learn Faroese or gain an understanding of Faroese society and culture. As a result, it is often the case that immigrants, even after living in the Faroe Islands for many years, experience difficulties and challenges that proper integration could have prevented. Examples include a lack of knowledge about workplace safety and communication or collaboration issues between daycare centers and parents, and between schools and homes. Furthermore, there is a greater risk over time that immigrants may be excluded from society and become isolated.

New labor market research shows that many immigrants with qualifications are locked into unskilled jobs due to a lack of Faroese, and partly Danish, language skills, along with limited opportunities to acquire these necessary language skills. This is especially true for women and acts as a barrier to mobility and integration in the labor market. Limited language skills, limited knowledge of society and culture, and restricted access to the labor market can hinder effective integration. Therefore, it is essential that these issues are addressed as quickly as possible to promote well-being and provide better opportunities for immigrants to become part of Faroese society. We must also recognize, however, that Faroese society is not easy for immigrants to enter. This is partly because Faroese society is socially close-knit, and there is sometimes a tendency among Faroese people to be cautious about the unknown. Therefore, it is also important that Faroese society increasingly recognizes the skills of immigrants.

A Faroese integration law must take into account the size of the country and its resource limitations. On the other hand, it is necessary to ensure that those who move to the country feel well received and know their rights. It is also important that immigrants are provided with assistance to fully utilize their foreign qualifications and work experience in the Faroe Islands, benefiting both their own livelihoods and Faroese society. An authority like Vegleiðingarstovan, with experience in this area, could help promote this effort.

Likewise, it is necessary for immigrants to establish connections with Faroese society and culture and understand the expectations placed on citizens in the Faroe Islands. Knowledge of the Faroese language plays a fundamental role in this process.

It is essential to work on integrating immigrants as early as possible, though integration challenges can also become evident after some time has passed. Therefore, it is important to continue working on integration, even if the immigrant has lived in the Faroe Islands for many years. Given that resources are limited, most efforts should be directed where the need is greatest.

Finally, it is necessary to establish the responsibilities of the country's authorities when people choose the Faroe Islands as their new home.

Immigrants point out many unsatisfactory conditions when they move to the Faroe Islands. Among other things, they highlight the difficulty in finding information on various matters, thereby expressing a desire to have such information centralized. They also point out that learning the Faroese language does not automatically lead to integration; the ability to participate in the labor market, political, cultural, financial, and social networks in Faroese society is equally important. One tool along the way is the integration interview, which helps lay the foundation for an individualized integration plan, emphasizing the benefits of taking various steps to become part of Faroese society.

An integration law will not solve all problems, and all aspects of integration cannot be regulated by legislation. Integration means adaptation, inclusion in the community, and blending, and the most important part of integration will therefore occur through interaction between people. This legislation is intended to support this process.

Several authorities already have significant experience with integration. The proposal aims to build on these experiences and support further work in this field.

Integration is an area of constant change and adaptation, and this proposal is intended as a starting point to legally support this work, with the expectation that the law will be reviewed and updated as society changes, ensuring that the law remains timely and reflects the realities immigrants face in the Faroe Islands.

1.2. Current Legislation

The Faroe Islands currently have no integration law, making this a completely new piece of legislation.

Residence Permits

The conditions for obtaining a residence permit in the Faroe Islands are set forth in the Aliens Act (Anordning for ikrafttræden for Færøerne af udlændingeloven), the Act concerning foreigners' access to residence permits in the Faroe Islands for certain types of employment, and agreements authorized by these laws.

According to § 11, Section 3, of the Aliens Act, an immigrant who has had legal residence in the Faroe Islands for three years under § 7 (refugees) or § 9, Sections 1 and 2 (family reunification) of the Aliens Act, may obtain a permanent residence permit in the Faroe Islands.

Even if the conditions in § 11, Section 3, of the Aliens Act are not met, foreigners may still obtain a permanent residence permit in the Faroe Islands if significant considerations support it. In practice, foreigners with residence permits under § 9, Section 2, No. 3 (significant employment or business considerations), or § 9, Section 2, No. 4 (clergy, missionaries, etc., and those granted family reunification for special reasons) may receive a permanent residence permit after seven consecutive years in the Faroe Islands on nearly the same basis, meaning the foreigner must have held the same type of employment for all those years.

Permanent residence under § 11, Sections 3 and 4, of the Aliens Act is conditional on the foreigner having a residence permit that has not been revoked, expired, or lapsed, or if the residence permit has not been extended.

Unless special reasons argue against it, a permanent residence permit under § 11, Sections 3 and 4, of the Aliens Act is also conditional on the foreigner not having committed certain criminal offenses, per § 11, Section 5, No. 2, and having no public debt of DKK 50,000 or more at the 1998 level, which corresponds to DKK 84,917.06 at the 2022 level.

In January 2020, an amendment was made to the Aliens Act (Order No. 67 of January 28, 2020, on the implementation in the Faroe Islands of the Act on the amendment of the Aliens Act (Authorization to set integration-related requirements as a condition for a permanent

residence permit in the Faroe Islands, etc.)). In the comments to the proposal (Parliamentary Matter No. 104/2018), it states:

“The Government has expressed a desire to strengthen the integration of newcomers to the Faroe Islands. Therefore, it is proposed to authorize the setting of specific rules so that an indefinite residence permit in the Faroe Islands is conditional on the foreigner having a linguistic connection to the Faroe Islands or another connection relevant to integration in the Faroe Islands. This is to ensure that the integration of newcomers to the Faroe Islands is supported in the Aliens Act for the Faroe Islands, so that the access to obtain an indefinite residence permit in the Faroe Islands may be conditional on the foreigner having a strong connection to Faroese society. This authorization may be used in connection with the government’s provision of integration-promoting offers, such as Faroese language instruction, so that a lack of participation in such an integration-related offer — similar to neighboring countries — may affect the possibility of obtaining an permanent (indefinite) residence permit.”

The conditions for obtaining a permanent residence permit are specified in § 11, Section 9, of the Aliens Act (Order for the Implementation in the Faroe Islands of the Aliens Act), which authorizes setting integration-relevant requirements as conditions for a permanent residence permit.

“Section 9. The Minister for Immigration and Integration, in consultation with the Faroese government, may set specific rules stating that an indefinite (permanent) residence permit in the Faroe Islands is conditional on the foreigner having an integration-relevant connection to the Faroe Islands.”

Uncoordinated solutions in the integration area

The work on integration has not been systematic. It has been partially based on the Ministry of Internal Affairs’ 2011 Integration Report and partially consisted of unsystematic solutions where national authorities, municipalities, and organizations identified specific needs.

The 2011 Integration Report recommended appointing an integration coordinator to coordinate integration efforts, advise authorities, and produce informational materials for immigrants. In 2015, the Immigration Office appointed an integration coordinator. In 2020, an integration advisor was appointed to assist the coordinator. The integration advisor has primarily worked on establishing direct contact with immigrants, such as through evening classes, and has also offered integration interviews to immigrants.

The Immigration Office has produced various materials on integration, including booklets on the daycare and school sectors, and has organized courses for professionals on culture, perceptions, and child-rearing. Additionally, other integration-promoting activities have been organized, such as connection and integration camps, and the Immigration Office has taken responsibility for coordinating interpretation services.

Some municipalities have integration coordinators or staff working on integration issues within the municipality. Some municipalities have an integration committee that advises the municipality on integration. However, immigrants point out that many lack a local place to turn to in their resident municipality when they need information or help with matters in their local area.

Faroese as a Second Language

In May 2024, a new Parliamentary Act on Faroese as a Second Language, overseen by the Ministry of Children and Education, came into effect. According to the Act, instruction and training in Faroese as a second language are offered to all foreigners with residence permits in the Faroe Islands who are over the age of compulsory education as per the Primary School Act. The instruction and training are generally free of charge, according to the Act.

The instruction in Faroese as a Second Language is based on the programs "Faroese as a Second Language 1, 2, and 3" (FSA1, FSA2, and FSA3). The program, intended for adult immigrants, is structured according to the international CEFR framework (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) and can therefore be compared to language training elsewhere. The curriculum is based on "The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, and Assessment" (Council of Europe, June 2008).

Additionally, instruction may be arranged in the native language or a language other than Faroese for students covered by the Act who have a first language other than Faroese. The state covers the cost of these courses according to the Act.

Furthermore, provisions regarding instruction in Faroese as a Second Language and mother tongue instruction for school-aged students and bilingual children below school age are included in the Primary School Act and the regulation on instruction in Faroese as a Second Language and mother tongue instruction.

1.3. Purpose of the Proposal

The overarching purpose of the legislative proposal is to improve the integration of immigrants. This will be achieved, among other things, by establishing certain rights and obligations for immigrants and by clarifying who is responsible for providing the various services.

The primary target group of the integration law is immigrants who obtain residence permits with the intention of eventually acquiring permanent residency. These are primarily individuals who have a spouse in the Faroe Islands and move to the country for family reunification. In some cases, they are integrated through family and close relationships that introduce them into society through various local activities such as work, sports, and community life. Others may have only their spouse to rely on for this support. Both groups require integration offers suited to their circumstances.

Foreign workers who obtain work permits in the Faroe Islands primarily come to work. Although the initial intention may not be to stay, experience shows that immigrants who apply for a work permit for the third time are more likely to settle. Therefore, this target group is also included in the integration law to support a good foundation for integrating into Faroese society if they apply for permanent residency.

Many workers bring accompanying family members, and when there are children involved, the country is considered to have a special obligation to ensure good integration. Therefore, workers with children in the Faroe Islands are part of the target group.

Successful integration is often a prerequisite for the well-being and development of immigrant children, so the work of integrating families with children should be prioritized. This also requires that the area is properly funded. Since society permits employees to bring their children to the Faroe Islands, it carries a particular responsibility to provide these children with a positive and enriching school experience. Their development in the Faroe Islands should at least keep them on par with children in their home country. Good educational outcomes require that children thrive, so ensuring children's well-being outside of school, such as through sports and other recreational activities, is also essential. This requires attention from municipalities and organizations to these areas.

Children and young people are most often integrated through daycare and schools, as they spend much of their daily lives there. This, however, requires focused efforts from daycare centers and schools, making it important to have a well-organized reception, relevant pedagogical work, and functional language development when children settle in the Faroe Islands.

Integration is a mutual adaptation of different cultures, allowing them to coexist on a common foundation. This means that the immigrant preserves their culture while adopting the Faroese culture, and, in turn, Faroese society embraces the cultures of immigrants and views diversity as a strength.

Successful integration occurs when the immigrant feels welcomed into society and can participate equally with other citizens of the country. They also know their rights and obligations, understand what Faroese society expects of them, and know where to seek help and information if needed.

Good integration also means that the immigrant feels they can utilize their skills and education and contribute to society in alignment with the fundamental values and customs of Faroese society.

As more people choose to move to the Faroe Islands, the need grows to structure integration and establish clear guidelines for both authorities and immigrants.

The proposal is primarily aimed at adult immigrants and families with children below school age, as these groups currently have no provisions in existing legislation. School-aged children are already covered by the Primary School Act and by regulations established under the authority of that Act.

1.4. Summary of the New System in the Proposal

Target Group

Many foreigners move to the Faroe Islands, and their conditions for becoming part of society can vary greatly. The main target group of the Integration Act is immigrants who obtain residence permits with the intention of eventually securing permanent residency. These are primarily individuals with a spouse in the Faroe Islands who move here for family reunification.

Foreign workers who receive work permits in the Faroe Islands primarily come to work. Although they may not initially plan to stay, experience shows that immigrants who receive a work permit for the third time are more likely to settle. Therefore, this target group is also

included in the Integration Act to support a solid foundation for integrating into Faroese society if the immigrant applies for permanent residency.

Many workers bring accompanying family members, and when children are among them, the country has a special obligation to ensure good integration. Therefore, workers with children in the Faroe Islands are also part of the target group.

Individuals displaced from Ukraine are also included in the target group. Although these individuals have temporary residence permits in the Faroe Islands, there is significant uncertainty about how long they will remain in the country. The Immigration Office already offers welfare and integration interviews to this group, and these services should continue.

Integration as a Condition for Permanent Residency

The plan is to establish certain requirements for obtaining permanent residency in the Faroe Islands.

§ 11, Section 9, of the Aliens Act (Order for the Implementation in the Faroe Islands of the Aliens Act) authorizes the Danish Minister of Immigration and Integration to set specific integration-related requirements as a condition for permanent residency, in consultation with the Faroese government.

This means that the Faroese government and the Danish Minister of Immigration and Integration must agree on the conditions, which will then be set out in a regulation.

The initial requirements proposed include:

- The obligation to attend an integration interview
- Passing a test in Faroese as a Second Language at level 1 (FSA1)
- Participation in a course on Faroese culture and societal matters

A prerequisite for setting integration requirements is that relevant integration-promoting services are available in the Faroe Islands, such as integration interviews and instruction in Faroese language, culture, and social knowledge.

Successful integration partly depends on the immigrant learning the language, and therefore a requirement to pass a Faroese as a Second Language test at level 1 (FSA1) is set as a condition for obtaining permanent residency. In this way, immigrants intending to settle in the Faroe Islands are encouraged to learn Faroese and become familiar with Faroese society. A prerequisite for this, however, is that sufficient language instruction is available and that all individuals have the opportunity to participate in the courses. In August 2024, 270 students registered for Faroese as a Second Language. Currently, 2,709 adult foreigners reside in the Faroe Islands, and the FSA system needs adequate funding to meet the demand for language instruction.

In exceptional cases, according to the Order for the Implementation in the Faroe Islands of the Aliens Act, the requirement to pass a Faroese test can be waived. Exceptional circumstances may include age, illness, mental health challenges, or learning difficulties.

In addition to Faroese as a Second Language instruction, immigrants are invited to a course on Faroese culture and society. This course will be organized by the Integration Authority in

consultation with the Ministry of Children and Education, the Education Authority, and other relevant authorities.

Participation in the course is required for permanent residency, but no examination will be required.

The Ministry of Justice will request that Danish authorities specify in a regulation that permanent residency will be conditional on the applicant attending an integration interview with the Integration Authority, passing the Faroese as a Second Language test at level 1, and participating in a course on Faroese culture and society.

The aim is for these rules to take effect when this law comes into force.

Sharing Personal Information with Other Authorities

Children and young people are primarily integrated through daycare and schools, as they spend a large portion of their daily lives there. However, this requires targeted efforts from daycare centers and schools, making it essential to have well-organized reception, relevant pedagogical work, and targeted language development when children settle in the Faroe Islands. In this regard, it is proposed that the residential municipality and Gigni (a child welfare organization) be informed by the relevant authority about children who have been granted residence permits in the Faroe Islands.

Integration of Children

The plan is for Gigni to be able to visit the homes of foreign families with children under school age and to offer parents the opportunity to join parent groups. This will place foreign families on equal footing with Faroese families, who all receive a visit from a health visitor when their children are young. Additionally, this offer aims to facilitate the family's ability to form connections with Faroese society.

Pedagogues, assistants, and teachers responsible for children in daycare centers and schools have the responsibility to ensure the children's well-being and development. Children need security and stability to thrive, and successful integration requires that the child's fundamental needs for safety and attachment are met.

It is therefore stipulated that the residential municipality must provide a structured welfare plan appropriate to the child's age for children who do not have Faroese as their mother tongue in daycare. This requires that pedagogues receive training in multicultural understanding.

The most important role in ensuring good integration for children belongs to the parents, who must encourage their children to learn Faroese and to connect with other children in the community, for example, by playing with other children and supporting their participation in recreational activities.

When families with children come to the Faroe Islands, there can be significant cultural differences between Faroese child-rearing practices and those in the country they come from. To ease this transition, support the child's integration process, and clarify what is expected of parents regarding child-rearing in Faroese society, the plan is to offer parents a brief course on the integration of children. The Integration Authority, together with Gigni, is expected to

be responsible for these courses. Gigni's main expertise is working with, guiding, and advising individual families according to their needs and supporting the development of both the child and the family. Other courses may also be organized, such as on challenges faced by teenagers in a new country.

The Role of Municipalities

Municipalities must work to promote good integration. The municipality is the nearest authority to where the immigrant resides, and it is primarily the municipality that faces the impacts when an immigrant's integration is unsuccessful and they encounter difficulties in adapting and flourishing. It is therefore crucial that immigrants feel part of their local community.

The municipalities in the Faroe Islands vary greatly in size and resources, so they should collaborate with other municipalities on integration.

It is believed that integration coordinators should be appointed to represent all areas in the Faroe Islands. An integration coordinator can develop the integration process and organize integration-promoting activities within the field. The coordinator can reach out to individual immigrants and immigrants as a whole, with the goal of making immigrants feel part of their local community.

Integration-promoting activities can be organized in cooperation with municipalities, national authorities, and other relevant parties. This could include setting up a system of host families, a mentoring program, cultural exchanges such as cooking events, and encouraging the children of immigrants to participate in sports and recreational activities in the municipality.

Information Meetings

As a general principle, all immigrants need information about the society, educational offerings, and their overall rights and obligations. Many have also pointed out that it is difficult to find this information when they arrive in the Faroe Islands, and they do not know where to go for help if needed. To address this need, it is proposed to hold regular informational sessions nationwide, which immigrants can attend as soon as possible after their arrival. These sessions are designed for group participation.

Municipalities, in consultation with the Integration Authority, will organize these meetings. Other relevant parties, such as Gigni, representatives from schools and kindergartens, recreational associations, evening schools, and trade union representatives, may also participate. The meetings will offer an overview of immigrants' rights and obligations, educational opportunities, and the support available from municipalities and the Integration Authority, along with guidance on where to access further assistance. Immigrants are encouraged to attend these meetings.

Integration Interview

Immigrants arriving in the country need detailed information about educational and integration services. Skills and needs vary, but integration services are especially relevant to those who come through family reunification, as they have chosen to settle in the Faroe Islands. Therefore, it is required that they attend an integration interview as soon as possible.

For individuals and families with limited skills in Faroese and limited knowledge of Faroese society, a specific integration plan can be established to support their integration goals.

In addition, there are those who come to the Faroe Islands to work. These individuals typically come only to work, but experience shows that many of them stay in the country. If integration efforts only begin after they have been in the country for seven years, there is a risk that they will never fully integrate into society. Therefore, it is required that immigrants who are in the Faroe Islands on a work permit attend an integration interview when they obtain their work permit for the third time. Work permits must be renewed annually until the immigrant is granted permanent residency. This means that immigrants on work permits must attend an integration interview after they have been in the Faroe Islands for two years and have received a one-year extension of their work permit.

A new group in the Faroe Islands is Ukrainians who have received residence permits through the special law for Ukrainians (Order on the Implementation in the Faroe Islands of the Act on Temporary Residence Permits for Persons Displaced from Ukraine). This group is in a particularly vulnerable position, as they have fled war and have no permanent home. The Immigration Office already offers welfare and integration interviews to this group, and these services should continue.

Finally, there are those who come to the Faroe Islands with children. It is recommended that families attend an integration interview regardless of whether they come through family reunification, work permits, or the special law for Ukrainians. This ensures that children are as well-integrated as possible. This group also includes adult siblings who are guardians and reunite with siblings under the age of 18.

In such cases, a specific plan may also be established, which is particularly relevant for families with children. For children, it is essential that home and institutions collaborate well, and institutions need parents to be aware of the importance of integration and how best to help their child become part of the local community. The child then becomes part of the parents' integration plan.

The integration plan, which should consider the intentions, wishes, skills, and circumstances of the immigrant, will be developed in cooperation with the immigrant. This is done to ensure that the immigrant takes responsibility for achieving the set goals.

In connection with the integration interviews, the Ministry of Justice is open to initiating a process with the Ministry of Children and Education and the Confederation of Faroese Employers to explore the possibility of expanding the career guidance and foreign diploma evaluation services provided by Vegleiðingarstovan to include those who have recently arrived in the Faroe Islands. At the same time, a mentoring program and a work placement program on the labor market should be developed.

When benefits such as opportunities for further education, skill development, and language acquisition are in sight, this can encourage immigrants to invest in their own integration. The mentoring program and work placements on the labor market can also help address challenges faced by immigrants, such as limited networks, lack of knowledge about, and connections to, the Faroese labor market.

The integration interviews are intended for adult immigrants and their spouses but may also be relevant for children and young people, especially those aged 15 to 17.

If necessary, it is possible to hold multiple interviews, as well as to adjust or modify any existing integration plan.

Public Information and Integration-Promoting Initiatives

When municipalities, together with the Integration Authority, organize public information and guidance on relevant social matters, the integration system, and the services provided by municipalities, the Integration Authority, and others, the concept of "integration" should be understood in a broad sense to support immigrants in all aspects that can facilitate their access to and strengthen their connection with Faroese society.) (INCLUSION BEFORE INTEGRATION)

The Integration Authority must work to promote an inclusive and welcoming culture and raise awareness of the benefits of integration and the contributions of immigrants to Faroese society. The Integration Authority should organize skill-building courses for integration coordinators and professionals working with integration and organize public awareness campaigns, that are also aimed for public media.

The Integration Authority should produce and disseminate informational materials about Faroese society, customs, and culture through appropriate media.

The target group should benefit from these materials, so it is essential that they are accessible, easy to find and understand, readily available through digital media, and ideally translated into several languages. Digital materials also help avoid content that may quickly become outdated.

Information materials should, as much as possible, visually communicate the message with minimal text.

Information materials cannot serve as a standalone solution for promoting integration but can be part of a system that includes interviews, integration plans, and Faroese as a Second Language instruction.

Interpretation

It is stipulated that public authorities must use interpretation services in their activities when needed. The need for interpretation varies by situation, so each authority must assess when an interpreter is necessary. The authority requesting the interpretation service covers the cost.

For schools and daycare centers, using an interpreter may be crucial in the early stages when communicating with parents about their children. This is particularly relevant in sensitive conversations, such as those involving concerns about the child's well-being. Experience from Eiði shows that interpretation at general information events, such as parent meetings and in other informal settings, can prevent many misunderstandings and ease cooperation with parents.

Similarly, interpreters should be used for the information meetings organized by municipalities when immigrants arrive in the country. This involves essential information that immigrants must understand and have the opportunity to ask questions about.

Most interpreters in the Faroe Islands are private individuals who are not formally trained. They may encounter very personal and sensitive situations they are not prepared for. Therefore, the provision of short skill-building courses for private interpreters should be considered.

1.5. Public hearing parts and overview of comment from the public

These parts got the proposal for hearing:

Barna- og útbúgvingarmálaráðið

Almanna- og mentamálaráðið

Heilsumálaráðið

Uttanríkis- og vinnumálaráðið

Umhvørvismálaráðið

Fíggjarmálaráðið

Útlendingastovan

Undirvísingarástýrið

Gigni

Almannaverkið

Vinnuhúsið

Kommunufelagið

Kommunurnar

Integratióssamskiparin í Tórshavnar kommunu og fólk, sum arbeiða við integratióin í ymisku kommununum

Barnaverndarstovan

Reyði Krossur Føroya

Fróðskaparsetur Føroya

Dátueftirlitið

Barnabati

MEGD

Føroya Pedagogfelag

Føroya Lærarafelag

Samtak

Starvsfelagið

Felagið Føroyskir Sálarføðingar

Føroya Sosialráðgevarafelag

Føroya Kommunulæknafelag

Ítróttasamband Føroya

The legislative proposal was also publicly available on the government's consultation portal and on the Ministry of Justice's website.

The review period lasted from June 19 to August 1, 2024.

In connection with the work on drafting an integration law, consultation meetings were held in Klaksvík and Tórshavn for migrants, with around 80 participants.

Therefore, an English summary was also posted on the public consultation portal, on the Ministry of Justice's website, on the Immigration Office's website, and on social media, so that migrants who do not understand Faroese had the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the proposal and provide comments. The refugee coordinator in Tórshavn municipality also had the proposal translated into English and posted it on social media.

The review document is attached as Appendix 1.

1.6 Recommendations from the Language Council on the Choice and Use of Terms

In relation to the work on drafting the Parliamentary Act on integration, the Ministry of Justice consulted the Language Council on the use of terms such as "accompanying family," "immigrant," "immigration," and "integration." The Language Council responded as follows:

Accompanying Family

We recommend using the term *samfylgjandi familja* for the Danish term *medfølgende familie*, and this is linguistically appropriate.

Since 2018, the Immigration Office and the media have used the term *samfylgjandi familja*, as shown on various websites. It is clear in online materials that *samfylgjandi familja* is used specifically in this (legal) context and carries the same meaning as the Danish *medfølgende familie*.

Immigrant and Immigration

The terms *tilflytari* (immigrant) and *tilflyting* (immigration) are widely used and are common in this context, as shown by searches in various types of text collections and online sources.

Neither *tilflytari* nor *tilflyting* is found in the Faroese Dictionary. In the DA-FØ dictionary from the Faroese Dictionary Foundation, the Danish *tilflytter* is translated only as *tilflutt fólk* (people who have moved) and *tilflytning* as *tilflutningur* (arrival/movement). In Sprotin's DA-FØ dictionary, *tilflytter* is translated as both *tilflutt fólk* and *tilflytari*, and *tilflytning* as *tilflutningur*.

Based on the above sources, *tilflytari* is used for people who have moved either from abroad to the Faroe Islands or from one part of the Faroe Islands to another.

Dictionaries suggest using the term *tilflutningur* in connection with people moving from abroad to the Faroe Islands.

Tilflyting does not appear in dictionaries, while digital text collections and institutional texts use *tilflyting*. It appears that *tilflutningur* is not used in this context.

The use of *tilflutningur* shows that it is generally used in connection with goods or materials, for example:

- "Now that we know that the movement (*tilflutningur*) of pollutants in the air here in the Faroe Islands..."
- "The flow (*tilflutningur*) of outdoor air should be able to be limited in certain periods."
- "Transport (*tilflutningur*) of goods."
- "When a slight delay occurs in the movement (*tilflutningur*) due to relocation, traffic conditions, or similar."

The feminine noun *tilflyting* is used for the situation when people move from abroad to the Faroe Islands. Therefore, we recommend that it is appropriate to use the term *tilflyting* when referring to people moving from abroad to the Faroe Islands.

Integration

In Faroese, "integration" is spelled with "-tión," and the borrowed term is declined as a feminine noun.

Chapter 2. Consequences of the Proposal

2.1. Financial Implications for the State and Municipalities

The proposed legislation has financial implications for the state.

Integration Authority

The Immigration Office has employed an integration coordinator since 2015. The coordinator has provided guidance on integration to public institutions, municipalities, voluntary organizations, and others, and has overseen the production of various materials. Additionally, integration advisors have been hired with the primary task of creating procedures and materials for integration interviews. This proposal assigns additional responsibilities to the

Immigration Office, where the institution will need to guide municipalities to a greater extent, conduct training for professional groups, hold meetings with municipal integration advisors, provide guidance on information meetings, conduct integration interviews, and inform the public, while also producing materials and managing interpretation services.

Therefore, the plan is to organize the Immigration Office into two departments, one handling immigration matters and the other handling integration matters.

The Integration Authority will need at least two additional full-time positions to handle the responsibility of collaborating with municipalities on arrival information meetings, providing guidance on integration, multiculturalism, and inclusion, organizing courses on Faroese culture and society, and conducting courses for parents on child integration alongside other authorities. This requires increased funding.

Funds must be allocated for the training of private interpreters, and funding must be provided for the integration fund, which will be used to finance integration initiatives.

All of this will result in additional costs for the Immigration Office.

Ministry of Justice

The new integration law and integration work in general require considerable resources. The integration law serves as a legal framework to support cross-disciplinary initiatives where multiple authorities collaborate across sectors. For this reason, it also be necessary to strengthen the Ministry of Justice with an additional full-time position.

Gigni

The proposed legislation has financial implications for Gigni. The plan is for Gigni to visit immigrants with children below school age. Additionally, Gigni, together with the Integration Authority, will organize courses for parents on child integration, either in the form of a two-day course lasting eight hours or eight sessions of two hours each, and coordinate parent groups for immigrants. It is also envisioned that Gigni will collaborate with the Integration Authority on interviews with immigrants who have children. To be able to provide these services, Gigni will need two additional employees, as well as increased funding to organize courses and parent groups. Furthermore, two health visitors will need to undergo further training abroad to be able to organize courses on child integration and visit foreign families.

This initially requires a budget allocation of DKK 1.2 million.

Vegleiðingarstovan (Guidance Office)

The plan is for Vegleiðingarstovan to expand its career guidance and foreign diploma evaluation services to include immigrants. This will require an additional full-time position at Vegleiðingarstovan.

Education Authority

The legislative proposal sets a requirement of passing the Faroese as a Second Language (FSA1) test at level 1 as a condition for obtaining permanent residency. This requires sufficient funding to regularly offer the courses to meet demand. The courses must also be scheduled so that immigrants who work shifts or at sea can participate. Therefore, instruction

must be available both during the day and evening, as well as online. Faroese as a Second Language is organized across three locations: the Upper Secondary School in Kambsdalur, Glasir in Tórshavn, and Miðnám in Suðuroy.

Over 270 immigrants have registered for Faroese as a Second Language courses this fall. This is a high number, and to adequately organize Faroese as a Second Language instruction, funding must be increased.

There is a need for 8.5 full-time positions: seven for teaching and 1.5 for management and administration. This need may increase now that a certain level of Faroese proficiency is required to obtain permanent residency.

DKK 5.6 million has been allocated to Faroese as a Second Language in 2024, but the need is DKK 7 million. As a result, the Education Authority can only plan for Faroese as a Second Language instruction until December 2024. If the necessary funding is not secured after this period, they will be forced to reduce activity by one-third.

Additionally, more teachers must be trained to teach Faroese as a Second Language. So far, only one cohort of approximately 20 teachers has completed the training, and currently, there are no plans to continue this program. Twenty teachers are far from sufficient if both foreign children and adults are to receive instruction in Faroese as a Second Language. Therefore, funding is needed to continue the program at the University of the Faroe Islands. The training is organized as a diploma program at the BA and MA levels, covering five semesters and equivalent to 60 ECTS credits. The cost for 28 students to complete the training is approximately DKK 2.6 million.

The course on Faroese culture and society must be organized in collaboration with the Education Authority. This will also require additional funding for the Education Authority.

Multiculturalism, Cross-Cultural Communication, and Inclusion

Resources should be allocated to develop instruction in multiculturalism, cross-cultural communication, and inclusion and to create a curriculum for such courses for pedagogues, teachers, and nurses. Furthermore, continuing education in multiculturalism should be offered to relevant professionals. This area falls under the responsibility of the Ministry of Children and Education.

Municipalities

The proposed legislation has financial implications for municipalities, as they are required to have integration coordinators. However, municipalities may collaborate to share an integration coordinator.

Furthermore, municipalities will bear the expenses for child care, which, according to the proposal, must ensure welfare plans appropriate to the age of children in municipal care who do not have Faroese as their mother tongue. This expense is tied to the needs of each municipality, making it difficult to assess the exact costs. Municipalities may share these expenses.

Municipalities must also organize information events in consultation with the Integration Authority, which also entails additional costs.

2.2. Administrative Implications for the State and Municipalities

The proposal has administrative implications for the state. Additional requirements are being set for integration services, initiatives, and actions, necessitating an expansion of the administration.

The proposal has administrative implications for Gigni, as Gigni will need to organize more integration initiatives for families.

It also has administrative implications for the Education Authority, which must help develop a curriculum in Faroese culture and society, and for Vegleiðingarstovan, which must expand its career guidance and foreign diploma evaluation services to include immigrants.

The proposal has administrative implications for municipalities, as they are required to have an integration coordinator. Furthermore, municipalities must undertake additional integration responsibilities as specified in the proposal.

2.3. Implications for Businesses

The proposal itself does not have direct implications for businesses.

However, it is expected that integration-related responsibilities will be placed on businesses. As the workplace plays a crucial role in individuals' well-being, businesses share responsibility in ensuring successful integration. For example, businesses may be inclined to allow employees time to attend various integration-promoting courses and, in some cases, collaborate with the Integration Authority on the process of helping employees adapt well to Faroese society. Consequently, the business sector may face potential financial and administrative implications in achieving these goals. It is not possible to determine the precise extent of these implications, as the circumstances are constantly changing.

Additionally, businesses are expected to participate in developing a mentoring and internship program for immigrants. This can help alleviate the challenges immigrants face with limited knowledge of and connections to the Faroese labor market and a restricted network.

2.4. Environmental Implications

The proposal has no environmental implications.

2.5. Implications for Specific Areas of the Country

The proposal has no implications for specific areas of the country.

2.6. Implications for Specific Social Groups or Organizations

The proposal is expected to lead to positive social outcomes for immigrants in the Faroe Islands.

2.7. International Agreements in the Area

The proposed legislation is considered to be in line with the UN International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, cf. Act No. 289 of June 9, 1971, on

the prohibition of discrimination based on race, etc., and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, cf. Order No. 6 of January 16, 1992, on the UN Convention of November 20, 1989, on the Rights of the Child.

2.8. Cross-Border International Agreements

The proposed legislation is considered to be in accordance with the Hoyvík Agreement (an agreement between the governments of Iceland on one side and Denmark and the Faroese Government on the other), the European Convention on Human Rights, cf. Order No. 136 of February 25, 2000, on the implementation in the Faroe Islands of the European Human Rights Convention, and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, cf. Order No. 20 of November 15, 2017, on the UN Convention of December 13, 2006, on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

2.9. Border Barriers

No known border barriers exist in this area. The proposal is not expected to create any border barriers.

2.10. Penalties, Administrative Fines, Enforcement, or Other Major Interventions

The proposed legislation does not include provisions for penalties, administrative fines, enforcement, or other major interventions.

2.11. Taxes and Duties

The proposed legislation does not include any provisions on taxes or duties.

2.12. Fees

The proposed legislation does not include any provisions on fees.

2.13. Does the Proposal Impose Obligations on Natural or Legal Persons?

The proposal imposes an obligation to attend an integration interview for immigrants who have residence permits under the rules for family reunification in § 9, Section 1, No. 2; immigrants applying for a work permit for the third time; immigrants who have work permits and children under the Order for the Implementation in the Faroe Islands of the Aliens Act; and immigrants with residence permits under the Order on the Implementation in the Faroe Islands of the Act on Temporary Residence Permits for Persons Displaced from Ukraine. The Integration Authority must ensure that the immigrant is informed of the requirements, including language proficiency and knowledge of Faroese society, for obtaining permanent residency in the Faroe Islands.

The proposal requires municipalities to have integration coordinators. However, municipalities may collaborate to share an integration coordinator.

Furthermore, municipalities are required by the proposal to ensure welfare plans in daycare facilities that are suitable for the age of children who do not have Faroese as their mother tongue and to organize information events in consultation with the Integration Authority.

2.14. Does the Proposal Grant Authority to the Minister, an Institution Under the Government, or Municipalities?

The proposal authorizes the Minister to set specific rules on the area of integration and on integration coordinators in consultation with municipalities. The proposal also authorizes the Minister to establish detailed rules regarding the integration interview. Additionally, the Minister may set specific rules regarding the content and duration of the course on Faroese culture and society, integration-promoting initiatives, and financial support for these initiatives.

The proposal authorizes the Minister, in consultation with the Minister of Children and Education, to establish specific rules for the course for parents on child integration.

The proposal authorizes the Integration Authority to provide the residential municipality and Gigni with necessary information, such as name, address, and personal ID number, so that they can offer relevant services to immigrants.

2.15. Does the Proposal Grant Public Authorities Access to Private Property?

The proposal does not grant public authorities access to private property.

2.16. Does the Proposal Have Other Consequences?

The proposal is not expected to have other consequences beyond those mentioned above.

2.17. Talvan: Yvirlit yvir avleiðingarnar av lógaruppskotinum

	Fyri landið ella landsmyndug- leikar	Fyri kommunalar myndugleikar	Fyri pláss ella øki í landinum	Fyri ávísar samfelags- bólkar ella felagsskapir	Fyri vinnuna
Fíggjarligar ella búskaparligar avleiðingar	Ja	Ja	Nei	Nei	Nei
Umsitingarligar avleiðingar	Ja	Ja	Nei	Nei	Ja
Umhvørvisligar avleiðingar	Nei	Nei	Nei	Nei	Nei
Avleiðingar í mun til altjóða	Nei	Nei	Nei	Nei	Nei

avtalur og reglur					
Sosialar avleiðingar			Nei	Ja	

Chapter 3. Specific Comments

3.1. Comments on Individual Sections

Regarding § 1

The Act applies to all foreigners who obtain a residence permit in the Faroe Islands for the first time after July 1, 2025. This includes foreigners who obtain residence permits under the Order for the Implementation in the Faroe Islands of the Aliens Act, the Act on Residence Permits in the Faroe Islands for Certain Types of Employment, the Order on Temporary Residence Permits for Persons Displaced from Ukraine, and the Fast-Track Agreement. This also includes foreigners who have been absent from the Faroe Islands for a period and must therefore restart the process to obtain permanent residency.

The rights set out in the Act also apply to foreigners who already have a residence permit. See also the comments on § 18.

Nordic citizens (those who have residency rights in Denmark, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, or Finland) are free to move to the Faroe Islands, settle, and work without special permission, so the Act does not apply to them.

The Act also includes children whose parents or guardians have a residence permit under the aforementioned laws. Children with one Faroese parent are also included in the Act. This means that integration-promoting initiatives may also be offered to these children if they need help adapting to Faroese society.

Regarding § 2

The Act distinguishes between different groups with residence permits. These groups are:

- Immigrants with work-related residence permits, such as work permits, sports permits, au pairs, interns, researchers, doctors, missionaries, etc.
- Immigrants who are reunited with a spouse, children, parents, or adopted children and therefore have obtained a residence permit with the intention of a permanent stay.
- Individuals displaced from Ukraine.

The groups include the following types of residence permits:

Work-Related Residence Permits

- Individuals displaced from Ukraine.
- Residence permits for employment (§ 9, Section 2, No. 3, in the Order for the Implementation in the Faroe Islands of the Aliens Act).

- Sports permits under the sports agreement (§ 9, Section 2, No. 3, in the Order for the Implementation in the Faroe Islands of the Aliens Act).
- Fast-track residence permits for employment with a fast-track-approved employer (§ 9, Section 2, No. 3, in the Order for the Implementation in the Faroe Islands of the Aliens Act).
- Au pairs (§ 9, Section 2, No. 3, in the Order for the Implementation in the Faroe Islands of the Aliens Act).
- Interns (§ 9, Section 2, No. 3, in the Order for the Implementation in the Faroe Islands of the Aliens Act).
- Researchers (§ 9, Section 2, No. 3, in the Order for the Implementation in the Faroe Islands of the Aliens Act)
- Ph.D. students (§ 9, Section 2, No. 3, in the Order for the Implementation in the Faroe Islands of the Aliens Act)
- Missionaries (§ 9, Section 2, No. 3, in the Order for the Implementation in the Faroe Islands of the Aliens Act)
- Unpaid internships / voluntary work (§ 9, Section 2, No. 3, in the Order for the Implementation in the Faroe Islands of the Aliens Act)
- Doctors and similar professionals under the sports agreement (§ 9, Section 2, No. 3, in the Order for the Implementation in the Faroe Islands of the Aliens Act)
- Self-employed individuals (§ 9, Section 2, No. 3, in the Order for the Implementation in the Faroe Islands of the Aliens Act)
- Highly qualified workforce (§ 1 of Act No. 462 of June 17, 2008, for the Faroe Islands on foreigners' access to residence permits for certain types of employment)
- Residence permits based on labor market connection (§ 2 of Act No. 462 of June 17, 2008, for the Faroe Islands on foreigners' access to residence permits for certain types of employment)
- EU citizens (§ 3 of Act No. 462 of June 17, 2008, for the Faroe Islands on foreigners' access to residence permits for certain types of employment)
- Accompanying family members of all individuals with these residence permits

Family Reunification

- Reunited spouses and stable cohabiting partners (§ 9, Section 1, No. 2, a, b, c, and d, in the Order for the Implementation in the Faroe Islands of the Aliens Act)
- Reunited children (§ 9, Section 1, No. 3, in the Order for the Implementation in the Faroe Islands of the Aliens Act)
- Reunited parents over 60 years (§ 9, Section 1, No. 4, in the Order for the Implementation in the Faroe Islands of the Aliens Act)

Ukrainians

- Special law for persons displaced from Ukraine (§§ 1 and 2)

The Act is primarily intended for immigrants who have received temporary residence permits with the intention of obtaining permanent residency through family reunification. This is because this group intends, from the start, to remain in the Faroe Islands.

However, it has been observed that many individuals who receive work permits choose to stay in the Faroe Islands, and it is therefore considered appropriate to offer them various services to ensure a positive integration process.

People displaced from Ukraine may not know how long they will remain in the Faroe Islands. Some may also choose to establish permanent residency in the Faroe Islands after the war ends, as they have built a life here. Given the uncertainty of their stay, it is necessary to offer them the opportunity to integrate into Faroese society.

The purpose of this classification is to distinguish between the different services needed by each group, based on the likelihood that the immigrant will stay in the Faroe Islands.

Regarding § 3

It is specified that the Minister assigns the administration of the Act to an institution under the government, which will be called the Integration Authority. The plan is to establish the Integration Authority within the Immigration Office, but it will operate independently of the immigration area. This means that the Immigration Office must be organized into two departments, one handling integration and the other handling immigration.

The Immigration Office, established in 2008, manages matters under immigration law and also addresses integration. In November 2015, an integration coordinator was appointed within the Immigration Office. The integration-related tasks the Immigration Office has handled so far have been based on an ad hoc approach, addressing needs as they arise.

With this proposal, the plan is for the Immigration Office to take on additional responsibilities within the field of integration. To ensure independence, the Immigration Office should be organized into two departments. In addition, the institution will be assigned more tasks and greater responsibility, which will require additional staff and increased funding to fulfill the duties imposed by the Act.

The relevant Minister is responsible for ensuring that the budget allocation and other resources are sufficient for the Integration Authority to operate effectively.

The tasks that the Integration Authority is expected to handle include the following:

- **Develop Diverse Information for Immigrants**
Independently and in collaboration with municipalities, authorities, institutions, and organizations, the Integration Authority will develop comprehensive information for immigrants, providing clear and practical guidance on living in the Faroe Islands. The content should include rights and obligations, specific advice on integrating into Faroese society, and guidance on welfare, culture, customs, social norms, social contracts, family life, the importance of the Faroese language and learning Faroese, and perspectives on life in the Faroe Islands from immigrants' viewpoints. This information should be available in multiple languages and distributed through various channels such as websites, podcasts, social media, videos, brochures, and similar formats.
- **Develop Comprehensive Information, Advice, and Guidance for Those Receiving Immigrants**
Independently and in collaboration with municipalities, institutions, and organizations, the Integration Authority will develop information and provide advice and guidance to those welcoming immigrants. This includes Faroese spouses, employers, daycare centers, primary schools, upper secondary schools, and social organizations. Content should cover topics such as good reception practices, cross-cultural communication, cultural differences, and inclusion. Information for Faroese

spouses may include expectations, advice and guidance on communication, conversation topics, family life, and where to seek help if challenges arise.

- **Personal Integration Plans**
Offer selected immigrants personal integration interviews and integration plans. These plans should consider the background, skills, and wishes of the individual in alignment with opportunities in the Faroe Islands, ensuring a personalized approach to their integration.
- **Professional Development for Integration Professionals**
Organize workshops, courses, and conferences on integration for professionals, institutions, organizations, and employers. These events may cover best practices in integration, cultural understanding, cross-cultural communication, and ways to support the inclusion of immigrants in various areas.
- **Support for Integration Initiatives and Research**
Provide financial and practical support and guidance for initiatives that promote integration. This may include funding research projects exploring new integration methods, as well as practical initiatives focusing on main topics such as knowledge, inclusion, participation, democracy, equality, welfare, governance, and cross-cultural exchange that bring immigrants and Faroese people together.
- **Coordinate Integration Meetings**
Hold regular integration meetings with municipal integration coordinators to ensure equal integration efforts across the Faroe Islands and to share experiences and challenges in the field. Additionally, organize regular information meetings for new immigrants in collaboration with municipal integration coordinators, where immigrants can ask questions and receive guidance and tools for daily life in the Faroe Islands.
- **Support Democratic Access and Participation**
Strengthen immigrants' awareness of democracy and political participation. Ensure they understand their rights and responsibilities as active participants in the democratic processes in the Faroe Islands. Highlight opportunities for involvement at various levels of society, encourage immigrants to use their voices, and support them in being heard on issues that concern them. This can be achieved through courses, informative events, written materials, public debates, and data development on participation in municipal and parliamentary elections.
- **Public Information Campaigns**
Develop and disseminate public information campaigns and educational materials aimed at fostering an inclusive culture and informing about the benefits of integration and the contributions immigrants bring to Faroese society.

n addition to its other tasks, the Immigration Office has specific, comprehensive responsibilities related to the Faroe Islands' 2022 decision to accept Ukrainians under special legislation.

Tasks currently handled by the Immigration Office include conducting supervision interviews, assisting with residence permit applications, providing subsistence allowances and individual expenses, issuing payments in the asylum phase, coordinating health screenings, securing and overseeing housing, ensuring and operating alternative housing solutions (transitional housing), directing individuals to municipalities, organizing weekly social and communication evenings for Ukrainians, conducting welfare and integration interviews, collaborating with the University of the Faroe Islands on welfare assessments, regular coordination with other authorities and organizations, and managing interpretation services.

The proposed legislation entails expanded administration. Furthermore, funding must be allocated for various information activities, courses, different types of integration-promoting initiatives, and an integration fund. See further details under “financial implications.”

Regarding § 4

It is specified that each municipality must have an integration coordinator by July 1, 2026. Municipalities in the Faroe Islands vary greatly in size and resources, so it is specified that municipalities may collaborate with other municipalities on integration efforts and on sharing an integration coordinator.

Several municipalities are already working on integration, but the organization and prioritization of these efforts vary widely across the country.

An integration coordinator can advise the municipality on integration and inform immigrants about available services in the municipality or municipal area if multiple municipalities share a coordinator. Information could include schools, daycare centers, leisure activities, sports clubs, and other community resources.

The wording that the municipality must "have" an integration coordinator indicates that if a person is already assigned to handle integration in the municipality, it is not necessary to hire a new person. However, this provision encourages municipalities to prioritize integration to help immigrants engage with the local community. The integration coordinator may also take on other responsibilities within the municipality if capacity allows. If the person handling integration lacks training in multiculturalism and cross-cultural communication, they should receive a course on professional development or continuing education in these areas by July 1, 2026.

The integration coordinator can work on integration-promoting initiatives in collaboration with national authorities and other relevant parties. The integration coordinator should monitor integration-related challenges to resolve them as quickly as possible.

As mentioned in the comments on § 3, the Integration Authority is expected to organize training courses for professionals working in integration. Additionally, the Integration Authority is expected to hold regular integration meetings with municipal integration coordinators to ensure equal integration efforts across the Faroe Islands and to share knowledge about experiences and challenges in the field.

Although not mandated by law, it is recommended that an advisory integration committee be established alongside the integration coordinator. This committee could include representatives of immigrants and their spouses as well as representatives from the municipality. Such a committee could assist the integration coordinator by identifying needs in the area and ensuring that immigrants have a voice, so that initiatives important to immigrants are implemented.

The Minister, in consultation with municipalities, may establish specific rules regarding possible areas of integration and requirements for integration coordinators. This means that municipalities should be consulted regarding the content of regulations or other rules, though the Minister retains final decision-making authority.

Regarding § 5

It is stipulated that immigrants who have obtained a residence permit in the Faroe Islands should be invited to an information meeting as soon as possible after their arrival. Immigrants should receive clear notification that valuable information will be provided at the meeting and that it is an event they are encouraged to attend.

These meetings should be organized in groups within the area to which the immigrant has moved. The annual number of information meetings will therefore depend on the number of immigrants arriving in the area. However, the meetings should be held frequently enough to ensure that everyone is invited to an information meeting within three months of arrival.

The municipalities, in consultation with the Integration Authority and the integration coordinator, are responsible for organizing the information meeting. This means that the municipality is responsible for the meeting, but the Integration Authority provides guidance on content so that meetings are as uniform as possible across the country.

At the meeting, immigrants should receive general information about their rights and obligations in the Faroe Islands, as well as opportunities to receive instruction in Faroese, attend courses on Faroese culture and society, and take part in courses for parents on integrating children. Information should also be provided about Faroese Legal Aid, which offers free advice on legal matters. Furthermore, guidance should be offered on where to obtain medical assistance, recreational activities available in the area, and any special social events for immigrants. There should also be information on services available for children and families. Other parties, such as representatives from Gigni, schools, daycare centers, sports clubs, evening schools, and unions, may also participate in the information meeting.

The information meetings should be conducted in a language that the immigrants understand. If this is not possible, interpreters should be used.

The most important aspect of the meeting is that the information is comprehensive and that the immigrant understands where they can seek assistance if needed.

In addition to the initial information meeting upon arrival, municipalities may organize other information sessions as needed. This is outlined in § 15 and the specific comments on this section.

Regarding § 6

It is stipulated that the Integration Authority must ask immigrants aged 18 and older to attend an integration interview. The purpose is to inform immigrants about matters that are

important for their stay in the Faroe Islands, both temporary and permanent. Immigrants specified in the regulation are required to attend the interview unless they have a valid excuse.

If an immigrant does not attend without a valid reason, this may be noted in the assessment of how well-integrated the immigrant is.

The groups required to attend an integration interview are as follows:

- Those with temporary residence permits under the family reunification rules according to § 2, No. 2:
 - This includes spouses and stable cohabitants who are reunited, children reunited with their parents, and parents over 60 who are reunited with adult children. These residence permits are issued as temporary permits with the intention of becoming permanent.
- Those with temporary residence permits who have children under 18:
 - This group includes all families who bring children under 18 or later have children in the Faroe Islands, regardless of the type of residence permit they have received.

Those with temporary residence permits according to the "Anordning om ikrafttræden for Færøerne af lov om midlertidig opholdstilladelse til personer, der er fordrevet fra Ukraine" This includes Ukrainians who have been granted temporary residence permits in the Faroe Islands.

Those with residence permits who are reunited with a child under the age of 18. In certain cases, a child may be reunited with a parent, older sibling who is the guardian of younger siblings, or another relative who is the guardian of a child under 18.

Those who have been granted a temporary work permit for the third time, and their accompanying family members

A work permit is always limited to one year, so it must be renewed each year. If an immigrant has been in the Faroe Islands for seven years and has worked for the same employer, they can apply for permanent residence. Experience shows that many of those who come to the Faroe Islands with a work permit tend to stay in the country. If the integration process only begins after they have been in the country for seven years, there is a risk that they may never fully integrate into society. Therefore, it is required that those who hold work permits attend an integration interview after receiving a work permit for the third time, meaning the worker has been in the Faroe Islands for two years, as there is then a high probability that the person will remain. If the individual with a work permit has family members with them, they should also be invited to the integration interview. Family members of a person with a work permit are referred to as "accompanying family" since their residence permit is dependent on the residence permit of the spouse or parent.

The Integration Authority must specifically inform the immigrant about their rights and obligations in the Faroe Islands. Information should also be provided about integration-promoting initiatives and services that help immigrants learn Faroese, gain knowledge, and acquire skills important for living and participating in Faroese society on an equal footing with other citizens. The information should be easy to understand, and interpreters should be

used if necessary. Special emphasis should be placed on informing about the conditions for obtaining permanent residence in the Faroe Islands.

The requirements for permanent residence, as a rule, are as follows:

- Attending an integration interview
- Passing the Faroese as a Second Language Level 1 Exam (FSA1) TOO LOW!
- Participation in a course on Faroese culture and society

These requirements are set by regulation with authority from § 11, section 9, of the "Anordning om ikrafttræden for Færøerne af udlændingeloven," in consultation with the Danish Minister for Immigration and Integration.

It is essential that immigrants understand the requirements for obtaining permanent residence in the Faroe Islands as soon as possible so that they can promptly work on improving their language skills and gaining insight into social, cultural, and related matters. The goal is to encourage immigrants to start the integration process as soon as possible.

The Integration Authority, together with the immigrant, can develop an initial plan for their first period in the Faroe Islands if deemed beneficial. The goal is to provide the immigrant with a strong foundation to settle in and thrive. Such a plan will be tailored to the individual and should therefore be based on an assessment of the needs of each immigrant.

The Integration Authority can also assess the skills and work experience that immigrants possess and determine how these can be best utilized in the Faroe Islands. In such cases, the Integration Authority can collaborate with entities such as Yrkisdepilin, Vegleiðingarstovan, and Vinnuhúsið.

The Ministry of Justice, along with the Ministry of Children and Education and Vinnuhúsið, is willing to explore the possibility of expanding Vegleiðingarstovan's offerings to include career guidance and the assessment of foreign qualifications for newcomers to the Faroe Islands. Additionally, a mentoring program and a workplace internship program should be developed.

This can encourage individual immigrants to invest in their skill development if the guidance highlights opportunities and support for further education, language development, and other initiatives that provide greater job satisfaction, quality of daily life, and a sense of belonging within the community. The mentoring and internship programs can also ease the challenges that immigrants face due to limited knowledge of the Faroese labor market and a limited network.

If the immigrant is part of a family with children, the guidance should also address steps that parents can take to give their children a good start in the Faroe Islands. Information should also be provided on the expectations of daycare centers and schools for children's daily participation and, in general, on expectations regarding child-rearing in Faroese society. The importance of speaking the native language with the child should also be emphasized, as research indicates that the ability to acquire new language skills is closely tied to proficiency in one's native language.

The integration interviews are intended for adult immigrants and their spouses, but it may also be relevant to discuss the integration of children and young people. In special cases, young people aged 15 to 17 may be invited to a separate integration interview. Multiple interviews can be conducted if necessary, and it is possible to adapt or modify an integration plan if required.

The Integration Authority may also refer immigrants to Faroese as a Second Language classes if needed. Faroese as a Second Language classes are voluntary, but it is essential to make it clear to immigrants that permanent residence in the Faroe Islands is contingent on passing an exam in Faroese as a Second Language. For more details, see the comments on § 7 and the Parliamentary Act on Faroese as a Second Language.

The integration interview is primarily intended for immigrants who apply for a residence permit for the first time after the law comes into force. However, it is stipulated that the Integration Authority may offer integration interviews to other immigrants if they wish. Additionally, the entry-into-force rules in § 17 specify that immigrants may request an integration interview themselves, as it can provide practical assistance to immigrants.

It is also specified that the Minister may establish detailed rules regarding the scope and content of the integration interview

Regarding § 7

Migrants covered by the Act and who are above compulsory schooling age according to the Act on the Public School will be offered free Faroese language instruction in accordance with the Act on Faroese as a Second Language.

Successful integration depends partly on migrants learning the language. Therefore, meeting the test requirement on Faroese as a Second Language level 1 is mandatory for obtaining permanent residence. In this way, migrants who intend to live in the Faroe Islands are encouraged to learn Faroese and get to know Faroese society.

The requirement to pass a Faroese as a Second Language test at level 1 as a condition for permanent residence is expected to increase applications to participate in the courses. In August 2024, 270 students enrolled in Faroese as a Second Language. Currently, 2,709 adult foreigners reside in the Faroe Islands. Therefore, it will be necessary to increase funding for the FSA courses so that everyone has the opportunity to attend such a course. If funding does not keep up, it will be difficult to impose a language proficiency requirement in Faroese for obtaining permanent residence.

In special cases, it is possible to waive the requirement to pass a test in Faroese according to the **Order for the Faroe Islands on the Immigration Act**. Special cases may include age, illness, psychological challenges, and learning difficulties.

It is also stipulated that the same migrants are offered a free course on Faroese culture and society. The goal of this course is to help migrants understand their rights and responsibilities in society, take an active role in democracy with both influence and accountability, and participate in cultural life and events. The integration authority will be responsible for organizing these courses in close cooperation with the Ministry of Children and Education and the Directorate of of Education. Other relevant authorities may be involved as needed.

Since information about Faroese culture and society is also part of Faroese as a Second Language instruction, this course is intended to go deeper and cover more practical topics. This may include the political system, the school system, daycare institutions, family matters, legal aid, insurance, pension conditions, labor unions, etc. The course topics should be as practical as possible to assist participants in their daily lives.

A curriculum will be prepared for the courses. The courses should be conducted in a language that the migrant understands. If this is not possible, an interpreter must be used.

The Faroese language instruction and information on Faroese culture and society are for adult migrants and young people above compulsory schooling age who do not have Faroese as their mother tongue. Instruction should, as much as possible, take into account the culture and background of the migrants and their situation in Faroese society.

The main purpose of the Integration Act is to ensure that migrants have the opportunity to utilize their skills and talents and to participate in society on an equal footing with other citizens, in line with the society's fundamental values and traditions.

Attendance will be mandatory for the course in Faroese culture and social conditions, but no examination will be required.

The minister is authorized to set detailed rules on the content and duration of the course on Faroese culture and social conditions. The Ministry of Children and Education and the Directorate of Education will be consulted in this process.

Regarding § 8

It is established that the integration authority provides the residence municipality with the necessary information so that the municipality can offer the migrant relevant courses and inform them about leisure activities, public events, and more in the area. Necessary information primarily includes general details about identity and contact, such as name, address, phone number, and email. This does not involve sensitive personal information. The migrant is informed about which information the integration authority provides to the residence municipality and the purpose of this.

If the integration authority assesses that the migrant needs certain or special integration services, it can provide the residence municipality with sensitive personal information, such as details about ethnicity, significant social challenges, health information, or other private matters. However, this is conditional on the migrant giving explicit consent for these specific details to be shared with the residence municipality.

Subsection 2.

It is established that the integration authority must notify the relevant municipality when migrants with children come to the Faroe Islands. The municipality informs the school and daycare institutions, which should then take the necessary steps to ensure the children's appropriate linguistic, social, and cultural development.

It is also established that the integration authority must inform **Gigni** when migrants with children arrive in the Faroe Islands. The purpose is to ensure that all children in the Faroe Islands have access to health services and that health professionals are aware that these families may need additional support to ensure the children's well-being and development.

It is recommended that special parent groups be offered to families with preschool-aged children, as this can provide valuable support to the family in adapting to Faroese society.

The information provided consists solely of general identity and contact details, such as name, address, phone number, and email. Parental consent is not required for this notification, but parents must be informed about which information is provided and the purpose of it.

It is further established that the integration authority will inform the residence municipality and **Gigni** if a child under 18 is reunited with parents or family in the Faroe Islands after they have arrived. When children are reunited with parents after the parents have come to the Faroe Islands, it is not always guaranteed that daycare or school will be informed that a child has arrived in the Faroe Islands.

In certain cases, additional support may be needed for the family and children if they have been separated for a long period. This provision ensures that help can be provided promptly, if necessary, and that the school and daycare are kept informed.

Regarding § 9

It is established that the residence municipality must work to ensure a good reception, a safe and secure childhood and youth, and good integration for children. Good integration means integration that is suitable for its purpose. This involves, among other things, that the residence municipality ensures foreign children can participate in education and leisure activities on an equal footing with Faroese children. This work is primarily carried out through communication with the parents. Additionally, it is necessary for relevant authorities and institutions with professional responsibility to collaborate on the well-being and development of the children. Since the residence municipality does not have specialized pedagogical knowledge, it is essential to consult those with expertise and experience in working with children and multiculturalism.

Children and young people are mostly integrated in daycare centers and schools, as they spend a large part of their daily lives there. However, this requires a focused effort from daycare centers and schools, making it essential to have a well-organized reception and relevant pedagogical activities when children settle in the Faroe Islands.

The integration authority can provide guidance to the local municipality on cultural differences and intercultural collaboration. Additionally, the integration authority can facilitate the exchange of knowledge and experiences on welcoming and integrating children in daycare centers and primary schools and other relevant experts in the field.

According to § 12 of this law, parents of children under 15 years old are invited to a course on child integration. See also comments on § 12.

The resident municipality and the integration authority should prioritize migrants with children in their guidance and counseling efforts. The guidance and counseling should place special emphasis on what parents can do to help their children learn Faroese and become active in leisure activities in their community, for example, by encouraging them to form friendships with other children.

Emphasis should also be placed on the importance of parents learning Faroese, maintaining good relationships and cooperation with daycare centers and schools, and attending parent meetings, social events, and more.

Research shows that a strong foundation in the mother tongue enhances the ability to learn a new language. Therefore, it is also crucial that parents continue to speak their mother tongue with their children.

The provision suggests that professionals working in integration participate in workshops, courses, and conferences organized by the integration authority. These may cover best practices in integration, cultural understanding, intercultural communication, and how to support the inclusion of migrants in various areas.

Likewise, the curriculum for Faroese programs such as pedagogy, nursing, and educational sciences should include multicultural understanding, intercultural communication, and inclusion.

There is a need to train more teachers to teach Faroese as a second language, as only one class of 20 teachers has received this training, which is far from meeting the demand.

This requires that the area be prioritized and given the necessary funding for activities.

Regarding § 10

It is established that the residence municipality must provide children who do not have Faroese as their mother tongue with a structured well-being plan at daycare centers, appropriate to the child's age. School-aged children are not included here, as they are covered by the regulation on Faroese as a Second Language and mother tongue instruction, which states in § 1, subsection 1:

“The goal is that students of school age who do not have Faroese as their mother tongue shall acquire the ability to speak, read, and write Faroese.”

Good integration of children under school age must emphasize well-being. Well-being is crucial for language development. When children feel safe, they are more inclined to explore their environment, which includes trying out a new language. Emotional security gives the child confidence to try new words and communicate with others. Well-being also influences the development of areas in the brain related to language. A child who thrives has better conditions for developing cognitive skills essential for understanding and using language.

Additionally, a child who is thriving participates more actively in social interactions, which is an essential part of language learning. Through play, conversations with adults, and interactions with peers, the child develops their vocabulary and communication skills. A thriving child is also more motivated and curious, which leads them to learn new things, including language. When children feel good and are interested, they are more open to learning new words and concepts. Conversely, stress and lack of well-being can hinder language development. If a child is not thriving and is stressed, it can affect their ability to focus and remember, which are crucial for learning language. Therefore, the child's well-being is essential for developing and mastering language in a healthy and effective way.

The challenges of integrating children differ from those for adults. The differences between successful integration of children and adults are mainly due to different developmental stages, needs, and social roles.

Children are more open to new experiences and learning and generally possess cognitive flexibility, enabling them to learn new languages and adapt to new cultures faster than adults.

At the same time, children are developing their identities, so integration plays a significant role in shaping how they see themselves and their place in society. In contrast, adults have already developed an identity and basic cognitive structures, which can make it more challenging for them to learn new languages and adapt to new cultural norms. Adult integration often requires them to reconsider values and habits, which can be challenging. Social integration also occurs differently for children and adults. Children are usually integrated through daycare and school, where they interact with peers and learn the social norms of the new society. Play and social activities are essential for their integration, as children learn much through interaction with other children.

Children need security and stability to thrive, and successful integration requires meeting their fundamental needs for safety and attachment. At the same time, children need support to navigate between two cultures, which can be unsettling for them.

Language and culture affect integration differently for children and adults. Children learn languages quickly, especially when they are with others who speak the language, and their integration into the new culture can often proceed quite smoothly. However, they may also experience a split between the culture they learn at school and daycare and the culture they have at home.

In summary, good integration for children involves supporting their cognitive and social development in a new cultural context.

Subsection 2.

It is established that bilingual children under school age can be offered support to enhance their linguistic development in the Faroese language. This is authorized under § 4, subsection 7, of the Public School Act. Such an offer should be established.

Subsection 3.

There is authorization under § 5, subsection 6, of the Public School Act to offer school-aged children instruction in their mother tongue in addition to special instruction in Faroese.

“The Minister can also decide to offer bilingual students instruction in their mother tongue.”

There is also authorization under § 2, subsection 3, in the regulation on Faroese as a Second Language and mother tongue instruction, which states that “students who are migrants may also be offered instruction in their mother tongue.”

Research shows that the ability to learn new languages is closely linked to mother tongue proficiency.

Despite the above Act and regulation authorizing the offer of mother tongue instruction to children and despite research indicating that the ability to learn new languages is closely tied to mother tongue proficiency, this authorization does not appear to be used due to a lack of funding for such an offer. It is recommended to establish an offer for mother tongue instruction, where an appropriate person is available to teach the child in their mother tongue.

Subsection 4.

It is established that the residence municipality must arrange integration-promoting activities for youth according to need.

Adolescence can be challenging for many, but it can be especially difficult as a migrant youth when finding one's identity between two cultures. Some young people have recently arrived in the country and therefore struggle to find their footing in public schools. Language skills are also easier to acquire when there is a reason to use the language, such as through social connections with others. Therefore, municipalities should closely monitor the well-being of young people who have recently arrived in the country.

Regarding § 11

It is established that migrants with children below compulsory schooling age can be offered a home visit by a health visitor. This is already stated in § 5 of the Act on Preventive Health Services for Children and Young People, where all children under school age can receive this offer. Typically, the offer is given at birth, but since **Gigni** has not had information about migrants arriving in the country with children, it has not been possible to extend this offer to them. The intention is for Gigni to visit the home when foreign families with children under school age arrive. In this way, foreign families are placed on equal footing with Faroese families.

The purpose of this provision is to inform migrant families about services available to their children in the municipality and what parents themselves can do to support their children's well-being in a new country. To ease the transition and support the integration process for the child, parents are informed about what is expected of them in the Faroe Islands, such as providing packed lunches for their children, attending parent meetings, and supporting their children's participation in recreational activities. Gigni also has the option to invite parents with preschool-aged children to join a parent group. The health visitor can then participate as needed and cover various topics in consultation with the parents.

Regarding § 12

It is established that the integration authority offers migrants covered by the Act and who have children under 15 years old the opportunity to participate in a course on child integration.

There can be significant cultural differences in parenting between the Faroe Islands and the country from which migrants come. Therefore, the plan is to offer a short course for parents on child integration to support the transition between cultures and outline what the Faroese society expects of parents and child-rearing.

The integration authority, which has experience in integration, will conduct these courses together with Gigni. Gigni's primary expertise lies in working with, advising, and supporting individual families according to their needs and fostering the child and family's development. Other professionals, such as social workers, pedagogues, and teachers, may be involved in the course as needed.

The course will place particular emphasis on what parents can do to help their children learn Faroese and become active in community life, such as encouraging them to make friendships with other children.

Emphasis will also be placed on the importance of parents learning Faroese, maintaining good relationships and cooperation with daycare centers and schools, and attending parent meetings, social events, and more.

Research also shows that strong mother tongue skills enhance the ability to learn new languages. Therefore, it is crucial that parents continue to speak their mother tongue with their children.

After completing the course, Gigni may invite participants to join a parent group.

It is also possible to offer courses for parents on the integration of children in other age groups, such as teenagers. These courses could address the challenges a child may face when entering school in the Faroe Islands in middle or upper grades. Here, emphasis can be placed on the importance of supporting the child in learning the language to maximize their educational experience, so future educational opportunities are not hindered.

The course is a voluntary offer for migrants.

It is important to conduct the course in a language that the migrant understands or to use an interpreter.

The Minister is authorized, in consultation with the Minister of Children and Education, to set detailed rules on the content and duration of the course.

Regarding § 13

It is established that if children need to be heard in matters that concern them, every effort should be made to hear them in the language with which they are most comfortable.

According to the Administrative Act and the general administrative principle of hearing the involved party, children over 12 years old must always be heard in matters concerning them. Children under 12 should be appropriately heard in matters affecting them unless it is deemed to be harmful to the child. Only in exceptional cases can decisions concerning children be made without prior consultation with them.

Regarding § 14

It is established that public authorities must use an interpreter in their operations if deemed necessary. The duty to use an interpreter is part of the administrative guidance responsibility under the Administrative Act. The purpose of the guidance responsibility is to ensure that citizens receive necessary information about their legal status and thus prevent disadvantage due to lack of knowledge, errors, or misunderstandings. Therefore, the authority must usually ensure that the recipient can understand the guidance provided.

In addition to the guidance obligation under the Administrative Act, other specific laws may impose guidance responsibilities on authorities. This applies, for example, in the social sector, where the Social Assistance Act imposes an expanded guidance duty.

Legal principles stipulate that the guidance obligation corresponds to the extent of an intervention. The more intrusive a decision is, the greater the duty to guide.

There is currently no interpretation service in the Faroe Islands. The 2011 Integration Report highlighted the need for such a service and recommended establishing one. When an interpreter is necessary, a private individual is often used due to their knowledge of Faroese,

Danish, or English and the language that requires interpretation, even though the person may not have formal training in interpretation. This can lead to negative consequences when discussing sensitive issues. Therefore, the possibility of establishing an interpretation service should be explored. Private individuals used as interpreters should at least receive skill-enhancing training to carry out the task effectively.

The authority requesting the interpretation service will cover its cost.

Regarding § 15

It is established that municipalities, together with the integration authority, should organize public information and guidance on relevant social issues, the integration system, and services provided by the integration sector, the integration authority, and others.

This implies that the residence municipality holds the primary responsibility for information and guidance in its area. The term “integration” here is understood broadly, meaning support for migrants in all matters that can ease their access and strengthen their connection to Faroese society. The integration authority should inform and guide the municipality.

The target group should benefit from the materials, so it is crucial that these materials are publicly accessible, easy to understand, and readily available through digital media, preferably in multiple languages. Using digital materials helps avoid content that quickly becomes outdated.

The integration authority should organize skills courses for integration coordinators and professionals working with integration, conduct public awareness initiatives, and produce and distribute informative materials on Faroese society, customs, and culture through appropriate media.

It is also established that the Minister, in consultation with municipalities, can set more detailed rules on how information is organized between municipalities and the integration authority.

Regarding § 16

It is established that the integration authority should guide and advise authorities, institutions, municipalities, and voluntary organizations working on integration. The goal is to ensure that integration services across the country are as uniform as possible and that activities and initiatives continue to develop.

It is also noted that integration takes place throughout society and that society as a whole shares the responsibility to ensure that migrants become part of Faroese society on an equal footing with other citizens.

The municipality may need personal information for various activities under the Integration Act. In accordance with data protection requirements (GDPR), necessary information can be shared if the processing is required for public interest or tasks within public authority. Initially, this does not involve sensitive information, but rather details such as name, address, phone number, and email.

If exceptional circumstances require collecting and sharing sensitive personal information, this can only be done with explicit consent from the individual and only if the information can be shared in accordance with data protection rules. This might include information on

ethnicity, significant social challenges, health information, or other private matters. Reference is made to the Data Protection Act. See also comments on § 8.

It is also established that authorities, institutions, municipalities, organizations, etc., can apply for support for integration-promoting activities and initiatives. This may include initiatives specifically aimed at children and young people or initiatives targeting migrants from certain countries. Such activities and initiatives should be considered integration-promoting for both larger and smaller groups of migrants.

The integration authority grants support according to rules set by the Minister. The rules should define what integration-promoting activities mean, when and how support can be granted, requirements for applications, documentation of expenses, reporting on the activity, and oversight of the allocated support.

The idea is also that reports on successful activities can be added to an idea bank to inspire future integration-promoting initiatives.

Regarding § 17

The proposal is planned to come into effect on July 1, 2025. This will allow the integration authority, **Gigni**, and others to prepare materials for integration interviews, courses on Faroese culture and social conditions, courses for parents on child integration, and to establish action plans.

The proposal will apply to migrants who receive a residence permit for the first time after it comes into effect. This includes foreigners who have been away from the Faroe Islands for a period and therefore must restart the process to obtain permanent residence.

Subsection 2.

It is established that the provision on a structured well-being plan will come into effect on July 1, 2026. This is to give daycare centers and municipalities more time to prepare.

Regarding § 18

Although the proposal applies to migrants who receive a residence permit for the first time after it comes into effect, the offer of free instruction in Faroese as a second language will apply to all migrants who hold a residence permit in the Faroe Islands.

Additionally, children who already have a residence permit in the Faroe Islands are entitled to a structured well-being plan at daycare centers appropriate to the child's age.

Migrants who already have a residence permit in the Faroe Islands may request an integration interview, a visit from a health visitor if they have children under school age, and participation in a course on child integration if they are interested in these services.