

Football in Iceland

With 20,000 players (men and women) registered at clubs, football is easily the most popular sport in Iceland. However, the national team has never qualified for the final competition of a major tournament, although Iceland did host the U-18 European Championship in 1997. In the draw for EURO 2004, Iceland, a country with sparse population numbers (just 290,000 people live in a country measuring 104,000 km²) were placed among the third level of seeds, a reflection of the quality of Icelandic football within Europe.

Approximately 50 players ply their trade in professional leagues around Europe, mainly in England, Germany and Norway. In the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s, the most well-known players were the current national team coach, Asgier Sigurvinsson (Standard Liege, Bayern Munich and VfB Stuttgart), Arnór Gudjohnsen (Lokeren, Anderlecht, Bordeaux) and Atli Advaldsson (Borussia Dortmund, Fortuna Dusseldorf and Bayer Uerdingen). Gudni Bergsson (Tottenham Hotspur, Bolton Wanderers) and Eyjólfur Sverrisson (VfB Stuttgart, Besiktas and Hertha Berlin) retired from top-class sport in 2003. The current star of Icelandic football is Eidur Gudjohnsen, who plays for Chelsea.

The first Goal project

At the *Goal* Bureau meeting on 15 March 2006, the Iceland football association presented a new version of the project withdrawn in 2002, namely the construction of new association headquarters in Reykjavik. The association hopes that with modern and functional facilities, football in Iceland will develop even further. In terms of finances, this project, which has been approved by the *Goal* Bureau, will be covered by *Goal*.

Financing of Goal project

Project

Technical centre in Reykjavik

Project approved on

3 December 2006

Status

Implementation

Financed by

Goal	USD	400,000
Association	USD	1,040,000
Other sources	USD	16,560,000
Total cost	USD	18,000,000

Use of FAP funds

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The second Goal project

On 3 December 2006, the Goal Bureau gave the Icelandic football association (KSI) the go-ahead for a technical centre in Reykjavik to be built on the same site as the KSI's headquarters, whose construction was made possible in the association's first Goal project. Together with the nearby national stadium, these facilities unite administration, development and practice in one place and thus perfectly embody the vision of the "House of Football".

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