

Iceland

Health at a Glance provides the latest comparable data and trends on population health and health system performance. This Country Note shows how Iceland compares to other OECD countries across indicators in the report.

How does Iceland perform overall?

This section shows key indicators, and also how often Iceland is above the OECD average on relevant indicators (where data are available for Iceland).

Health status


Key indicators:

Life expectancy was 83.2 years, 2.9 years above the OECD average. Preventable mortality was 93 per 100,000 (lower than the OECD average of 158); with treatable mortality at 49 per 100,000 (lower than the OECD average of 79). 5.9% of people rated their health as bad or very bad (OECD average 7.9%). Diabetes prevalence was lower than the OECD average.

Iceland performs better than the OECD average on 89% of indicators

(Based on 18 indicators, data missing for 1 indicator)

Risk factors


Key indicators:

Smoking prevalence, at 7.2%, was lower than the OECD average of 16.0%. Alcohol consumption was lower than the OECD average; at 7.4 litres per capita versus 8.6. Obesity prevalence was 21.4%, higher than the OECD average of 18.4%. There were 4.6 deaths from air pollution per 100,000 population (OECD average 28.9).

Iceland performs better than the OECD average on 58% of indicators

(Based on 12 indicators, data missing for 1 indicator)

Quality of care


Key indicators:

Acute care: 30-day mortality after stroke was 3.1% (OECD average 7.8%), and 1.7% after AMI (OECD average 6.8%). Primary care: There were 308 avoidable admissions per 100,000 population, less than the OECD average of 463. Safe prescribing: Iceland prescribed more antibiotics than on average in the OECD. Preventive care: 54% of women were screened for breast cancer, similar to the OECD average of 55%.

Iceland performs better than the OECD average on 56% of indicators

(Based on 27 indicators, data missing for 6 indicators)

Access to care


Key indicators:

All of the population is covered for a core set of services. 68% of people were satisfied with the availability of quality healthcare (OECD average 67%). Financial coverage, with 84% of spending covered by mandatory prepayment, was higher than the OECD average of 76%. Out-of-pocket spending, at 15% of health expenditure, was lower than the OECD average of 18%. 3.4% of the population reported unmet needs (OECD average 2.3%).

Iceland performs better than the OECD average on 90% of indicators

(Based on 10 indicators, data missing for 8 indicators)

Health system resources


Key indicators:

Iceland spends \$5314 per capita on health, similar to the OECD average of \$4986 (USD PPP). This is equal to 8.6% of GDP, compared to 9.2% on average in the OECD. There are 4.4 practising doctors per 1,000 population (OECD average 3.7); and 15.0 practising nurses (OECD average 9.2). Iceland has 2.8 hospital beds per 1,000 population, less than the OECD average of 4.3.

Iceland is above the OECD average on 54% of indicators

(Based on 28 indicators, data missing for 4 indicators)

Note: Overall comparisons of health status, risk factors, access, quality and resources are unweighted and therefore not measures of performance; OECD averages for quality of care are based on Chapter 1 (and differ slightly from averages in Chapter 6 due to differences in country coverage)

On which indicators does Iceland perform well or badly?

The graphs below show selected indicators from *Health at a Glance 2023* where the performance of Iceland deviates markedly from the OECD on average. For more details on the data presented, please refer to the full report, using the graph references provided (e.g. g5.1).

Iceland: ● Better ● Worse ● Higher ● Lower ● OECD average ● Other OECD countries

