

Child Protection Reports, Service Requests and Applications: Trends and Developments, 2022–2025

July 2026

The National Agency for Children and Families handles child protection matters throughout the country. Its role is to provide and support services based on the best knowledge and practices at any given time. This report presents information on applications for services provided by BOFS, statistical information on services provided by Barnahus and reports to child protection services during the period 2022–2025.

Similar number of applications in 2024 and 2025

A similar number of applications were received for BOFS treatment services in 2024 and 2025, with 173 and 170 applications respectively. This represents a decrease from the peak recorded in 2023, when applications for MST were particularly high. Applications for residential treatment facilities totalled 39 in 2024 and 38 in 2025, continuing a downward trend. Applications relating to boys were slightly more common in 2024, while the gender distribution was almost equal in 2025.

Requests for foster care placements broadly consistent with previous years

There were 134 requests for foster care placements in 2024 and 144 in 2025. In 2024, supported care accounted for the largest share of requests for the first time (42.5%), whereas temporary foster care once again accounted for the largest share in 2025 (50.7%). Requests for permanent foster care were unusually low in 2023 but returned to levels more consistent with previous years in 2024 and 2025.

Responsibility for processing foster parent applications was transferred to the Quality and Supervisory Authority of Welfare in 2022, while BOFS retained responsibility for providing professional reviews prior to licensing. Requests for such reviews fell to 40 in 2024 but increased to 63 in 2025.

More investigative interviews relating to physical abuse and domestic violence

The number of forensic interviews conducted at Barnahus fell in 2024 but increased again in 2025 to 296. A total of 186 investigative interviews were conducted in 2025, 31.0% more than in 2024. Investigative interviews relating to physical abuse and domestic violence exceeded those concerning sexual abuse for the first time in 2024, and this trend continued in 2025. Exploratory interviews numbered 106 in 2024 and 110 in 2025, remaining below the levels recorded in 2022 and 2023.

Placement days pursuant to Article 100 of the Criminal Procedure Act

The number of placements in Emergency Care at Stuðlar was 225 in 2024 and 240 in 2025. In 2025, girls accounted for the majority of children staying in Emergency Care, a departure from previous years. Placement days pursuant to Article 100 of the Criminal Procedure Act remained exceptionally high, with each year exceeding the combined total recorded during 2015–2023.

Reports to Child Protection Services

The National Agency for Children and Families receives monthly data from all child protection services across the country, 23 in total, on the number of reports they receive.

Each report is categorised by the child protection services according to its nature or main presenting concern: child neglect, child abuse, a child's risk-taking behaviour, or concerns that the health or life of an unborn child may be at risk. Only one primary reason is recorded for each report.

Further information on the categorisation of reports is [available here](#).

	2023		2024		2025	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Child neglect	6.301	41,4	6.815	40,7	7.008	38,1
Abuse against a child	3.896	25,6	4.151	24,8	4.718	25,6
Risk taking behaviour	4.931	32,4	5.648	33,7	6.547	35,5
Unborn child at risk	104	0,7	124	0,7	150	0,8
Total	15.232	100	16.738	100	18.423	100

¹Since 1 January 2020, it has been possible to register gender as non-binary, in accordance with the Act on Gender Autonomy No. 80/2019.

Most reports received in 2025 related to neglect. The second largest category concerned risk-taking behaviour, while approximately one quarter of all reports related to abuse against a child. This proportion was consistent with that observed in previous years. A total of 150 reports were received concerning an unborn child.

Applications for BOFS treatment services

This section provides an overview of the number of applications for specialised treatment services provided by BOFS, including Multisystemic Therapy (MST) and residential treatment facilities by year.

BOFS provides specialised treatment services for children and adolescents with complex behavioural, substance use, and psychosocial needs through Multisystemic Therapy (MST), an intensive family- and community-based intervention, and residential treatment homes offering 24-hour treatment and care in a structured environment.

Further information about residential facilities is [available here](#) and MST is [available here](#).

	2022		2023		2024		2025	
	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%
Residential treatment facilities ¹	46	28,9	55	26,1	39	22,5	38	22,4
Multisystemic Therapy	113	71,1	154	73,9	134	77,5	132	77,6
Total	159	100	209	100	173	100	170	100

¹ Lækjarbakki, Bjargey, Esja (formerly called Blönduhlíð) and Stuðlar treatment centre. Lækjarbakki closed in 2024. Esja opened in 2025.

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The number of applications for treatment services provided by BOFS varied from year to year. Between 2013 and 2023, an average of 162 applications were received annually, with the lowest number recorded in 2013 (137 applications) and the highest in 2023 (209 applications).

In 2024, 173 applications were received for BOFS treatment services, compared with 170 in 2025. Although this represents a decrease from the peak recorded in 2023, the number of applications remained above the average for the preceding decade. Applications for residential treatment facilities continued to decline, falling to 38 in 2025, the lowest number recorded during the period.

Number of applications by gender

	2022		2023		2024		2025	
	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%
Boys	72	45,3	103	49,3	100	57,8	86	50,6
Girls	84	52,8	101	48,3	73	42,2	84	49,4
Non-binary ¹	3	1,9	5	2,4	0	0,0	0	0,0
Total	159	100	209	100	173	100	170	100

¹Since 1 January 2020, it has been possible to register gender as non-binary, in accordance with the Act on Gender Autonomy No. 80/2019.

The proportion of applications relating to boys and girls has remained broadly similar in recent years, although boys accounted for a slightly higher proportion of applications in 2024.

Requests for Foster Care

This section provides an overview of the number of requests for foster care placements received each year.

Foster care involves placing a child with approved foster parents when child protection services determine that alternative care is needed due to the child's circumstances, developmental needs, or family situation. Foster care may be provided on a temporary or permanent basis, depending on the child's needs and long-term circumstances. For children with severe behavioural or emotional difficulties, supported care may be arranged, providing enhanced support and specialist guidance within a foster family setting.

Further information about foster care is [available here](#).

	2022		2023		2024		2025	
	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%
Temporary care	86	60,1	79	56,0	53	39,6	73	50,7
Permanent care	19	13,3	9	6,4	24	17,9	27	18,8
Supported care ¹	38	26,6	53	37,6	57	42,5	44	30,6
Total	143	100	141	100	134	100	144	100

¹ Supported care is a form of temporary foster care for children with elevated needs.

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The number of requests for foster care placements was lower in 2024 than in 2023. The largest number of requests related to supported care, with a total of 57 requests received. This was the first year in which supported care accounted for the highest number of requests.

In 2025, the number of requests was more in line with previous years. A total of 144 requests were received, the majority of which related to temporary foster care (73 requests). The second highest number of requests related to supported care, with 44 requests received.

An unusually low number of requests for permanent foster care was received in 2023. However, over the past two years, the number of requests has been more consistent with the levels observed in previous years.

Requests for foster care placements were slightly more common for boys than for girls in both years.

Foster care requests by gender

	2022		2023		2024		2025	
	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%
Boys	73	51,0	70	49,6	68	50,7	74	51,4
Girls	70	49,0	70	49,6	64	47,8	68	47,2
Non-binary/unknown ¹	0	0,0	1	0,8	2	1,5	2	1,4
Total	143	100	141	100	134	100	144	100

¹Since 1 January 2020, it has been possible to register gender as non-binary, in accordance with the Act on Gender Autonomy No. 80/2019. The category also includes requests relating to unborn children, for whom gender has not been recorded.

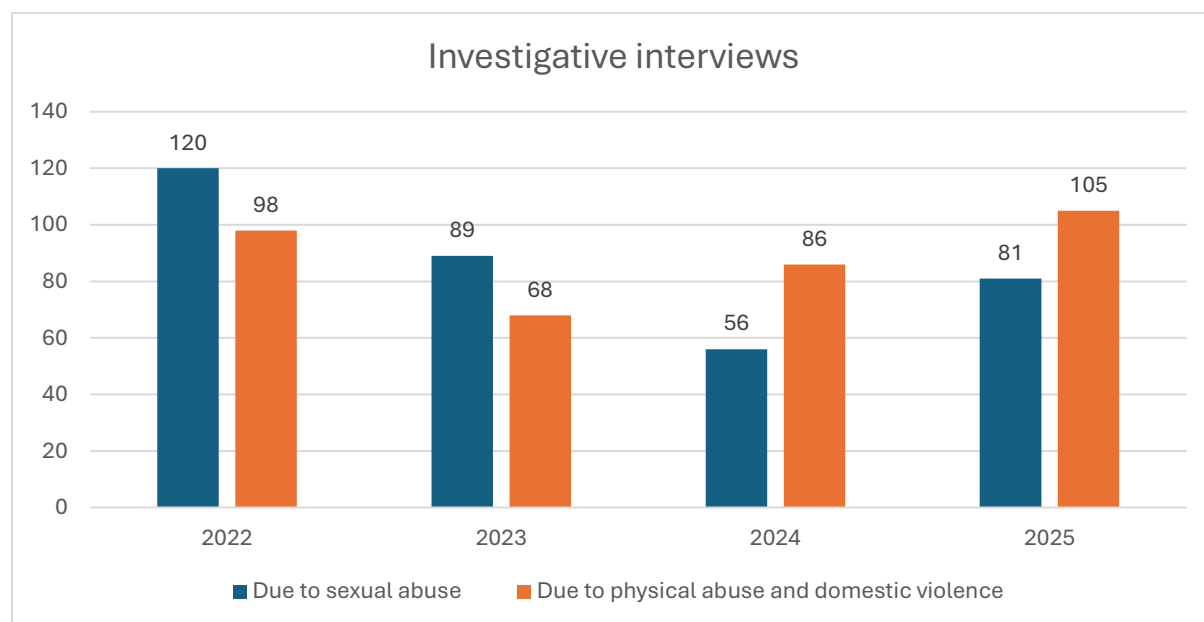
Service provided by Barnahus

This section provides an overview of the services provided by Barnahus Children's centre and the number of children receiving services each year.

Barnahus provides specialised services for children who are suspected victims of, or witnesses to, sexual abuse, physical abuse, domestic violence, and other forms of violence. It also provides consultation and training for professionals working with children.

Further information about Barnahus is [available here](#).

	2022	2023	2024	2025
Forensic Interviews	378	291	248	296
a. Investigative interviews	218	157	142	186
<i>Due to sexual abuse</i>	120	89	56	81
<i>Due to physical abuse and domestic violence</i>	98	68	86	105
b. Exploratory interviews	160	134	106	110
<i>Of which, unaccompanied children</i>	28	14	10	2
<i>Of which, asylum-seeking children</i>				
<i>accompanied by a parent or guardian</i>	1	1	0	0
Psychological assessment and treatment	156	131	104	163
Medical examination	6	4	14	4



Forensic interviews conducted at Barnahus comprise two main categories: investigative interviews conducted for judicial proceedings and exploratory interviews conducted on behalf of child protection services. The number of forensic interviews decreased in 2024 compared with the previous year but increased again in 2025.

A total of 186 investigative interviews were conducted in 2025, slightly more than in 2023 and 2024. Interviews relating to physical abuse and domestic violence accounted for the majority of investigative interviews in both 2024 and 2025, in contrast to previous years. The number of investigative interviews concerning sexual abuse declined substantially between 2023 and 2024 but increased again in 2025.

A total of 106 exploratory interviews were conducted on behalf of child protection services in 2024 and 110 in 2025. This represents a lower number of exploratory interviews than in previous years.

Services provided in Barnahus, by gender¹

	2022		2023		2024		2025	
	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%
Boys	132	34,9	70	24,1	85	34,4	108	36,5
Girls	245	64,8	221	75,9	162	65,6	184	62,2
Non-binary ²	1	0,3	0	0,0	0	0	4	1,4
Total	378	100	291	100	247	100	296	100

¹Gender of children participating in investigative and/or exploratory interviews. The same child may have participated in both during the reference period.

²Since 1 January 2020, it has been possible to register gender as non-binary, in accordance with the Act on Gender Autonomy No. 80/2019.

More girls than boys received services in 2025, consistent with the gender distribution observed in recent years. The number of girls receiving services decreased between 2023 and 2024 but increased again the following year. In contrast, the number of boys receiving services increased over the same period, following a 47% decrease between 2022 and 2023.

Emergency care at Stuðlar

The following section provides an overview of the number of children, placements, and placement days in Emergency Care at Stuðlar between 2022 and 2025.

	2022	2023	2024	2025
Number of placements	136	199	225	240
Total placement days: pursuant to Articles 25 or 31 of the Child Protection Act No. 80/2002.	638	1.154	1.348	926
Total placement days: pursuant to Article 100 of the Criminal Procedure Act No. 88/2008	15	147	759	567
Number of children	58	72	73	69

Placements by gender

	2022		2023		2024		2025	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Boys	42	72,4	43	59,7	42	57,5	32	46,4
Girls	16	27,6	29	40,3	31	42,5	37	53,6
Total	58	100	72	100	73	100	69	100

The number of placements in Emergency Care at Stuðlar was 225 in 2024 and 240 in 2025, representing an increase compared with 2022 and 2023. The number of placement days reached 1,348 in 2024, an increase of 16.8% compared with the previous year. Placement days decreased again in 2025, although they remained higher than in 2022.

A total of 73 children stayed in Emergency Care at Stuðlar in 2024, compared with 69 in 2025. Boys accounted for the majority of children in 2024, whereas girls were in the majority in 2025. The gender distribution in 2025 differs from the pattern observed in recent years.

Requests for Reviews of Foster Parent Applications

On 1 January 2022, the Government Agency for Child Protection (Barnaverndarstofa) was dissolved and the National Agency for Children and Families (BOFS) was established. Following this organisational change, responsibility for processing foster parent applications was transferred to the Quality and Supervisory Authority of Welfare (GEV), while BOFS was assigned the role of providing professional reviews of applications prior to the issuance of licences.

The figure below shows the number of requests for reviews received by BOFS. It is not possible to determine whether BOFS received requests for reviews in relation to all foster parent applications submitted to the Quality and Supervisory Authority of Welfare.

	2022		2023		2024		2025	
	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%
Capital area ¹	32	61,5	38	55,1	18	45,0	31	49,2
Other parts of Iceland	20	38,5	30	43,5	21	52,5	32	50,8
From abroad	0	0,0	1	1,4	1	2,5	0	0,0
Total	52	100	69	100	40	100	63	100

¹ Capital area: Reykjavík, Hafnarfjörður, Garðabær, Kópavogur, Seltjarnarnesbær, Mosfellsbær and Kjósarhreppur