



Vör - From Temporary Tents to Permanent Resilience ↗

A Blueprint for Sustainable,
Year-Round Cruise Infrastructure

Application by:

Port of Reykjavik

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Vör Cruise Terminal

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Reykjavik's Dual-Use Cruise Terminal and Year-Round Port-City Meeting Place

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Ports around the world face a common challenge: *how to invest in cruise infrastructure that creates value throughout the year.* At the **Port of Reykjavik**, that challenge became an opportunity to rethink what sustainable cruise infrastructure could be.

Developed, built and operated by Faxaflóahafnir (Ports of Faxaflói), Vör replaces temporary passenger facilities with permanent, climate-resilient infrastructure designed for the demanding conditions of the North Atlantic. Rather than creating a building used only during the cruise season, 6 months of the year, the project was conceived as a year-round public asset serving both the port and the city.

During the cruise season, Vör provides **safe, secure** and **efficient** facilities for transit and turnaround cruise operations. During the winter months, the same building transforms into one of Reykjavik's largest waterfront venues, hosting conferences, book fairs, concerts, cultural events, weddings and community gatherings.

Vör demonstrates that the most **sustainable infrastructure** is infrastructure that serves many purposes, many people and every season. By combining resilient infrastructure, safer passenger operations and year-round community use, the project creates lasting value for cruise passengers, residents and the Port of Reykjavik alike.

Summary: From Temporary Tents to Permanent Resilience

Before Vör, cruise passenger reception in Reykjavík relied on temporary tent facilities. While these supported the rapid growth of cruise tourism, they were never intended as a permanent solution for one of Europe's leading North Atlantic cruise gateways. Iceland's demanding weather conditions, including periods of high winds that occasionally damaged or displaced temporary structures, reinforced the need for safer, more resilient and environmentally responsible infrastructure.

Ports of Faxaflói responded with a **€21 million** investment in **Vör**—a permanent, climate-resilient cruise terminal designed not only to improve passenger operations, but also to maximise the long-term value of public infrastructure.

The terminal strengthens passenger safety, security and operational resilience while supporting future passenger-flow requirements linked to the **EU Entry/Exit System**. Developed in close cooperation with Police and Customs authorities, Vör is designed to accommodate up to 3,500 passengers at any one time and can process a peak daily passenger throughput of approximately 7,000 passengers during turnaround operations.

What makes Vör unique, however, is not simply its operational capability but its **year-round purpose**. Rather than becoming an underused seasonal facility, the terminal transforms during the winter months into one of Reykjavík's largest waterfront venues, hosting book fairs, trade shows, concerts, cultural events, weddings, company celebrations, conferences and community gatherings.

By giving one building two complementary seasonal functions, Vör demonstrates how sustainable port infrastructure can create lasting value for both the port and the city. The project directly contributes to the World Ports Sustainability Program through three areas of interest: **Infrastructure, Health, Safety and Security**, and **Community Building**.

Resilient Infrastructure

Building for Every Season

Ports around the world face increasing pressure to invest in infrastructure that is not only operationally efficient, but also resilient, adaptable and sustainable over the long term. Vör demonstrates how a single investment can meet these objectives while creating value far beyond its primary purpose.

Developed, built and operated by Ports of Faxaflói, Vör replaces temporary, weather-dependent passenger facilities with permanent, climate-resilient infrastructure designed for the demanding conditions of the North Atlantic. The project improves operational reliability, passenger comfort, safety and security while providing a modern gateway to Iceland for cruise visitors.

Rather than creating a building used only during the cruise season, Vör was deliberately designed as a year-round public asset. During the summer it supports cruise and turnaround operations. During the winter, the same space becomes one of Reykjavík's largest waterfront venues, ensuring that valuable public infrastructure remains active throughout the year.

By combining resilient infrastructure with efficient use of space and public investment, Vör provides a practical blueprint for sustainable, year-round cruise infrastructure that other ports can adapt to their own needs.

Key Facts

- Building size: 5,500 m²
- Investment: €21 million
- Simultaneous passenger capacity: Up to 3,500 passengers
- Peak daily passenger throughput: Approximately 7,000 passengers
- Event capacity: Up to 2,000 standing / 900 seated guests
- Primary function: Cruise passenger and turnaround operations
- Year-round function: Conferences, exhibitions, cultural events and community gatherings



Health, Safety and Security

Safer Passenger Operations Through Better Infrastructure

Safety and security were among the primary drivers behind the development of Vör. While the temporary tent facilities previously used at the Port of Reykjavík supported a period of rapid growth in cruise tourism, they were never intended as a permanent solution for passenger operations in Iceland's demanding North Atlantic climate.

Periods of severe weather occasionally damaged or displaced temporary structures and tents, reinforcing the need for infrastructure that is safe, resilient and **built to last**.

Vör provides a permanent, purpose-built environment for passenger handling, improving **safety, accessibility**, operational control and resilience against weather-related disruption. The terminal also delivers a significantly improved experience for passengers and the many organisations involved in cruise operations.

The project strengthens security and border-control readiness through close cooperation with Police and Customs authorities, who have played an active role in designing passenger flows into and out of the country. The terminal has also been planned to support the implementation of the **EU Entry/Exit System (EES)**, ensuring that passenger movements remain secure, efficient and future-ready.

By replacing temporary facilities with permanent infrastructure, Vör demonstrates that investments in safety and security can also improve operational resilience, environmental responsibility and the long-term sustainability of port operations. The result is a **safer, more efficient** gateway to Iceland for passengers, authorities and the Port of Reykjavík alike.



Community Building

Beyond the Cruise Season

The true measure of sustainable infrastructure is not how well it performs during its busiest months, but how much value it creates throughout the year.

During the cruise season, Vör serves passengers arriving in and departing from Reykjavík. As cruise activity slows, the terminal transforms into one of Reykjavík's largest waterfront venues, hosting book fairs, trade shows, concerts, cultural events, weddings, company celebrations and community gatherings. Rather than standing empty, the building remains active — serving a different community, but the same purpose: **bringing people together**.

Community engagement was central from the outset. A national naming competition attracted 6,025 submissions from 3,384 participants, making it the largest naming competition ever held in Iceland. In a country of fewer than 400,000 people, this reflected an exceptional level of **public participation** and a strong sense of ownership before the building had even opened.

That connection was strengthened through a public family festival, welcoming residents into the working port with maritime, educational and cultural activities.

By giving one building two complementary seasonal functions, Vör strengthens the relationship between the Port of Reykjavík and the **community** it serves. The port gains resilient, year-round infrastructure, while the city gains a new waterfront meeting place — demonstrating how sustainable port development can create lasting value for both.

Vision & Leadership

Leadership Through Better Infrastructure

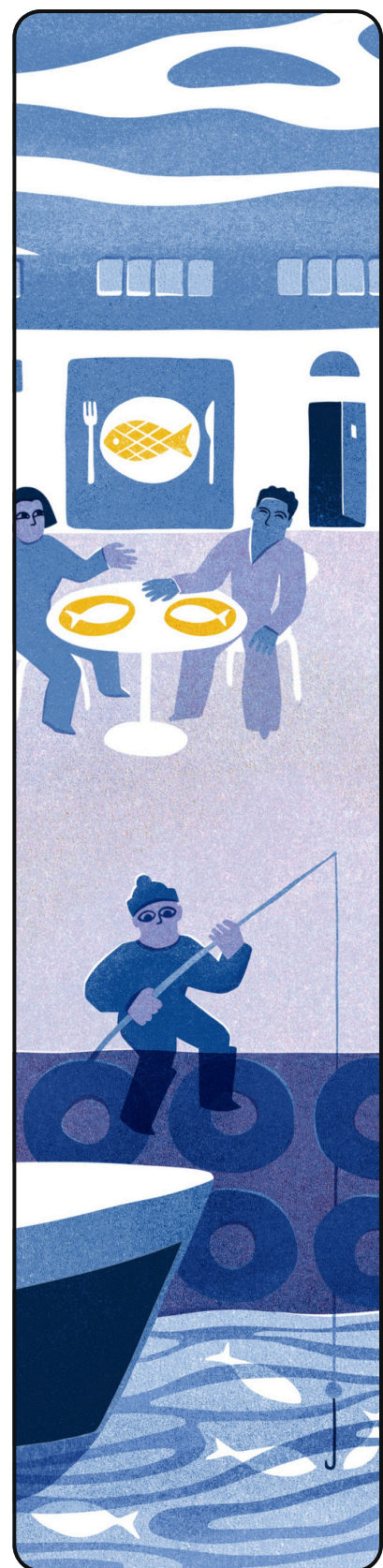
Infrastructure shapes how ports serve people, communities and the environment for decades to come. Vör reflects Ports of Faxaflói's belief that long-term investments should deliver operational excellence while creating lasting **value for society**.

The project is a flagship example of our vision to enhance the quality of life in Iceland. While Vör improves the experience of international cruise passengers, it also creates a year-round **gathering place** for the people of Reykjavík, ensuring that valuable waterfront infrastructure continues to serve the community long after the cruise season has ended.

It also delivers our role of operating secure, safe, green and efficient ports. By replacing temporary passenger facilities with permanent, climate-resilient infrastructure, Vör strengthens safety, security, **operational resilience** and the efficient use of public investment.

Finally, the project reflects our promise to evolve in line with the needs of society, industry and the environment. Rather than creating infrastructure with a single seasonal purpose, Vör demonstrates how one investment can support world-class passenger operations while strengthening the relationship between the port and the city.

More than a new cruise terminal, Vör represents a long-term commitment to resilient infrastructure that delivers lasting **economic, social** and operational value for both the Port of Reykjavík and the communities it serves.



Partners & Infrastructure

Partnerships That Made It Possible

Delivering a project like Vör required more than the construction of a new terminal. It required collaboration between public authorities, industry partners, designers, operators and the wider community to create infrastructure that serves both the port and the city.

Developed, built and operated by Ports of Faxaflói, the project brought together a multidisciplinary team of partners throughout its planning, design and delivery. Key contributors included Íslenskir Aðalverktakar (ÍAV), VSO Consulting, BROKKR Studio Architects, the **City of Reykjavík**, Múlakaffi, and **Police** and **Customs authorities**.

Partnerships have continued beyond construction. Múlakaffi operates Vör as a year-round event venue outside the cruise season, ensuring the building remains active and accessible to residents, businesses and community organisations. Police and Customs authorities have worked closely with Ports of Faxaflói to develop secure, efficient passenger flows and prepare the terminal for future border-control requirements, including the EU Entry/Exit System.

The wider community also played a direct role in shaping the identity of Vör. A national naming competition and a public opening festival invited residents to participate in the project from the outset, helping transform a new cruise terminal into a **shared** civic asset.

Together, these partnerships demonstrate that successful port infrastructure is built not only through engineering and investment, but through collaboration, shared purpose and long-term engagement with the communities it serves.

Measurable Impact

The Numbers Behind the Transformation

The success of Vör can be measured not only by the infrastructure delivered, but by the long-term value it creates for passengers, the port and the wider community. Together, these outcomes demonstrate how one investment can strengthen resilience, improve operational performance and create lasting public value.

Key Outcomes

- €21 million invested in resilient, future-ready infrastructure
- 5,500 m² multi-purpose cruise terminal and year-round public venue
- 3,500 passengers accommodated simultaneously
- Peak daily passenger throughput of approximately 7,000 passengers
- One building, two seasons – active throughout the year
- Improved passenger safety, security and operational resilience
- Prepared for the EU Entry/Exit System through enhanced passenger flows developed with Police and Customs authorities
- One of Reykjavík's largest waterfront venues, accommodating up to 2,000 standing or 900 seated guests
- Confirmed winter programme including book fairs, trade shows, concerts, cultural events, weddings and company celebrations
- 6,025 naming submissions from 3,384 participants – the largest public naming competition Iceland has seen (nearly 1% of all Icelanders participated as Iceland's population is just over 390.000)

More than a new cruise terminal, Vör demonstrates how resilient infrastructure can maximise public investment by creating year-round value for both the Port of Reykjavík and the community it serves.



Timeline

Phase	Start Date	End Date	Key Milestones
Strategic Planning	June 1 2022	December 1 2022	Needs analysis, budgeting
Board Approval & Procurement	December 16 2022	January 10 2023	Approved unanimously Open tender launched
Construction	March 25 2024	March 13 2026	Terminal delivered
Public Engagement & Naming	January 10 2026	February 15 2026	3,384 participants 6,025 submissions
Official Opening Community Festival	May 29 2026	May 31 2026	First passengers welcomed on May 4, 2026

Fact Sheet

Investment	€21 million
Building size	5,500 m ²
Simultaneous passenger capacity	3,500 passengers
Peak daily passenger throughput	7,000 passengers
Event capacity	2,000 standing / 900 seated
Summer function April - September (6 months)	Cruise passenger terminal
Winter function October-March (6 months)	Event venue and meeting place at Port of Reykjavik waterfront
Opened	May 2026

Supporting Material

01 - Videos

- Family - Opening Festival
- First large Cruise Ship visit
- Formal Opening with Mayor
- Inaugural Ship Call
- Reykjavik New Terminal and Meeting Space

02 - Images

- Family - Opening Festival
- Vör at Night

03- Venue Space

- Promotional booklet for evening events, celebrations and dinners


[Find the material here](#)



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