

Youth Act

2007 No 70, 28 March

Date of entry into force: 5 April 2007 *Amended by* Act No 126/2011 (entry into force 30 September 2011).

Any reference in this Act to “the Minister” or “the Ministry” not accompanied by express mention of or reference to a specific field of responsibility shall be understood as being a reference to the **Minister of Education, Science and Culture** or to the **Ministry of Education, Science and Culture** as responsible for the implementation of this Act.

Section I General provisions

■ Article 1

The purpose of this Act is to support the participation of children and young people in youth activities. As used herein, the term ‘youth activities’ designates organised social or leisure activities where children and young people meet in their spare time to work together on ideals, goals and interests which are valuable to them. In all organised youth activities, due regard should be had to their value in terms of their social, preventive, pedagogic and educational aspects, the aim of which is to enhance the personal qualities and democratic awareness of the participants. All activities involving children and young people must be guided by the objective to safeguard their well-being and encourage their initiative and their active participation. The scope of this Act is youth activities for children and young people, in particular those 6 to 25 years of age.

■ Article 2

The provisions of this Act apply to:

1. The work of clubs and organisations that manage youth activities on an open non-professional basis, provided that those clubs and organisations rely for their activities mainly on volunteer work and self-financing;

2. Youth activities run by central government or local authorities or by schools, as far as applicable and where no other laws or regulations apply;

3. Other activities focusing primarily on unaffiliated youth participating in organised youth activities.

■ Article 3

Central government and local authorities seek to ensure, in cooperation with youth clubs and youth organisations, that young people have access to highly diverse youth activities. Central government funding for the operation of national unions of youth organisations is to be decided by the Althing in the annual Budget Act.

Funding for the operation of local youth clubs and youth organisations is to be decided in each municipality’s budget plan.

Section II Management of youth policy

■ Article 4

[The Minister]⁽¹⁾ has responsibility for the general administration of youth policy pursuant to this Act.

⁽¹⁾Act No 126/2011, Article 459.

■ Article 5

Nine representatives are to be appointed by the Minister to the State Youth Council. Of these, five are to be appointed on the nomination of youth organisations, as further stipulated in a Regulation.⁽¹⁾ Two representatives are to be nominated by the Association of Local Authorities in Iceland. The Chair and Vice-Chair of the State Youth Council are to be appointed by the Minister without nomination. The term of appointment of the Council is two years.

⁽¹⁾Regulation No 1088/2007.

■ Article 6

The role of the State Youth Council is to:

1. Advise public authorities on youth policy;
2. Make proposals for priorities and policy-making in this area;
3. Provide opinions on issues related to youth activities;
4. Seek ways to strengthen the youth activities of clubs, organisations, schools and local authorities, and to encourage cooperation on youth policy between these actors;
5. Organise meetings and conferences on youth policy;
6. Participate in international cooperation on youth policy as further decided by the Minister;
7. Facilitate training and education for leaders, instructors and volunteers;
8. Perform any other tasks assigned to it by the Minister.

The Minister may issue more detailed rules regarding the operation of the State Youth Council.

Expenses incurred through the work and tasks of the State Youth Council are to be paid by central government.

Section III Youth Fund

■ Article 7

The Althing provides annual appropriations to the Youth Fund for the purpose of promoting youth activities. The Fund may accept independent donations.

■ Article 8

The Board of Directors of the Youth Fund is to be composed of three members, appointed for a two-year term. The Chair of the State Youth Council serves as Chair of the Board of Directors; additionally, the Council nominates two further principal members and an equal number of alternate members. The Minister appoints one of the principal members to serve as Vice-Chair of the Board of Directors.

■ Article 9

The role of the Youth Fund is to support the following categories of projects carried out by youth clubs and youth organisations:

1. Special projects set up for children and young people and/or with their active participation;
2. Training of leaders, instructors and volunteers;
3. Innovation and development projects;
4. Joint actions of youth clubs and youth organisations.

Grants from the Youth Fund are allocated by the Minister based on proposals submitted by the Board of Directors.

The Minister may issue more detailed rules⁽¹⁾ regarding the allocation of grants from the Youth Fund.

⁽¹⁾Rules No 60/2008.

Section IV Work environment in youth activities

■ Article 10

Those working with or in charge of children and young people in youth activities should, as a general rule, be legally of age and possess the necessary training, education, knowledge or experience for the job.

Group leaders, instructors, volunteers and other staff are prohibited from consuming alcohol or other intoxicating substances during organised youth activities and while on trips with children or young people.

Persons who have received a sentence for violating the provisions of Section XXII of the General Penal Code, No 19/1940, must not be hired as employees of entities covered by Article 2 which carry out youth activities with children and young people under 18 years of age. The same applies to persons who have received a sentence for violating the Narcotics Act, No 65/1974, in the preceding five years. This provision also covers people entrusted with responsibility for children and young people under 18 years of age within a volunteering framework.

Those working as administrators of schools, preschools, summer camps, sport and recreation centres or other similar institutions, or of places where children and young people congregate or stay for longer or shorter periods of time, such places being covered by Article 2, have the right to request information from the penal register confirming whether a person seeking employment in their establishment has received a sentence for violations referred to in the third paragraph, having obtained consent for this from the person in question.

Legal and regulatory provisions on accessibility, required facilities, health and safety must be complied with in regard to any activity covered by this Act, whether it takes place under the responsibility of central government, a local authority or any other person or entity.

Section V Local authorities' support for youth activities

■ Article 11

Municipal councils set their own rules on the support to be provided for independent youth activities. Each local authority should operate a youth committee or other comparable committee as decided by its municipal council.

Municipal councils are responsible for setting up local youth councils. The role of local youth councils includes advising municipal councils on matters concerning young people living in the municipality concerned. Municipal councils should lay down more detailed rules on the role of local youth councils and their composition.

Section VI Youth research

■ Article 12

The Minister is to promote regularly conducted research in the field of youth studies to support future policy planning in this area.

Five members are to be appointed by the Minister to an advisory panel on youth research. One member is to be appointed on the nomination of the State Youth Council; one on the nomination of youth organisations; and one on the nomination of the executive board of the Association of Local Authorities in Iceland. Two members are to be appointed by the Minister without nomination. The Chair and the Vice-Chair are to be appointed by the Minister from among the panel's members. The term of appointment of the panel is three years.

Section VII Miscellaneous provisions

■ Article 13

The Minister may issue a Regulation containing further provisions on the implementation of this Act.

■ Article 14

This Act shall come into force forthwith.

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Disclaimer: This is an English translation. The original Icelandic text, as published in the Law Gazette (Stjórnartíðindi) is the authoritative text. Should there be discrepancy between this translation and the authoritative text, the latter prevails.