



Reykjavíkurborg

2011-  
2015

# The City of Reykjavík's EQUALITY ACTION PLAN



Based on the Act on  
Equal Status and Equal  
Rights of Women and  
Men, the Reykjavík  
Human Rights policy,  
and the European  
Charter for Equality of  
Women and Men

Reykjavík, December 2011

## **THE CITY OF REYKJAVIK'S EQUALITY ACTION PLAN**

The City of Reykjavik's Equality Action Plan is based on the Act on Equal Status and Equal Rights of Women and Men [no. 10/2008](#)<sup>1</sup> (hereafter called the Equality Act), the City of Reykjavik's Human Rights Policy<sup>2</sup> which was adopted by the City Council on May 16<sup>th</sup> 2006 and the European Charter for equality of women and men in local life<sup>3</sup> (hereafter called the European Charter for Equality), adopted by the City Council on October 20<sup>th</sup> 2009. This plan combines projects that municipalities must perform according to the Equality Act, actions related to the European Charter, and other initiatives emphasized by Human Rights Council.

### **OBLIGATIONS OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN THE ACT ON EQUAL STATUS AND EQUAL RIGHTS OF WOMEN AND MEN**

It is stated in article 12 of the Equality Act that the municipalities shall appoint gender equality committees to examine equal status and equal rights of women and men within their municipality. These committees shall advise the local governments on matters concerning gender equality, and shall monitor and take initiative on measures, including affirmative action, to ensure the equal status and equal rights of women and men within their municipality. It is also stated in article 12 of the Act that gender mainstreaming should proceed in all spheres. Each committee shall every second year submit to the Centre for Gender Equality a report on the situation and developments in gender equality issues within the respective municipality. On December 18<sup>th</sup> 2007 the Reykjavik City Council appointed the Reykjavik Human Rights Council the role of the gender equality committee.

Article 23 of the Act states that gender mainstreaming shall be observed in all policy-making and planning in the work of the schools and educational institutions, including sports and leisure activities and that at all levels of the education system pupils shall receive instruction on gender equality issues. As an employer the City of Reykjavik has certain responsibilities, see article 19 on wage equality, article 20 on job vacancies, vocational training and continuing education, article 21 on reconciliation of work and family life, and article 22 on gender-based harassment and sexual harassment.

### **THE CITY OF REYKJAVIK'S HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY**

Reykjavik city's Human Rights Policy is based on the principle of equality and aims to allow all persons to enjoy their human rights regardless of origin, nationality, skin colour, religious and political beliefs, sex, sexual orientation, age, financial situation, heritage, disability, state of health or any other status. The policy states that special emphasis on the equal status of women and men should be visible in all operations of the city. When working towards a standardized human rights policy, emphasis should be placed on a holistic view for the benefit of all city inhabitants, inasmuch as many of them belong to more than one classification.

### **THE EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR EQUALITY OF WOMEN AND MEN IN LOCAL LIFE**

The City Council has authorized the approval of the European Charter on 20 October 2009, and the mayor signed the same day. Local governments that have signed the charter formally commit to

---

<sup>1</sup> The Act can be found on this link: [http://eng.velferdarraduneyti.is/media/acrobat-enskar\\_sidur/Act-on-equal-status-and-equal-rights-of-women-and-men-no-10-2008.pdf](http://eng.velferdarraduneyti.is/media/acrobat-enskar_sidur/Act-on-equal-status-and-equal-rights-of-women-and-men-no-10-2008.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Link to policy: [http://www.reykjavik.is/Portaldata/1/Resources/mannr\\_ttindaskrifstofa/skjol/Mannr\\_ttindastefna\\_ensku\\_-\\_ma\\_2011.pdf](http://www.reykjavik.is/Portaldata/1/Resources/mannr_ttindaskrifstofa/skjol/Mannr_ttindastefna_ensku_-_ma_2011.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Link to charter: [http://www.velferdarraduneyti.is/media/acrobat-enskar\\_sidur/European\\_Charter\\_for\\_Equality\\_of\\_women\\_and\\_men\\_in\\_local\\_life2.pdf](http://www.velferdarraduneyti.is/media/acrobat-enskar_sidur/European_Charter_for_Equality_of_women_and_men_in_local_life2.pdf)

respect the principle of equality between women and men and also to recognize the need to work against the multiple forms of discrimination to ensure the equality of women and men. Also included in the approval is a recognition that equal participation of women and men in decision-making is a premise of a democratic society, the elimination of gender-based stereotypes is fundamental to achieving equality between women and men, and the integration of gender perspectives is crucial to promoting equality between women and men. Moreover, it entails the recognition of action plans that receive adequate resources are essential tools for promoting equality.

The European Charter for Equality contains thirty articles and it is understood that the local authorities in Europe who have signed it are at different stages in their equality projects and do not necessarily focus on the same factors. A total of seven Icelandic municipalities have approved the charter. These municipalities are obliged to develop and ratify an action plan on gender equality and they have decided to work together on the implementation of the charter. The Association of Local Authorities in Iceland, who is the coordinator and liaison with the European Union on the project, signed a contract with the Centre for Gender Equality regarding advice on the induction of the Charter. The legal framework varies between countries and not all of the Charter's articles on projects fall under the auspices of the local authorities. Icelandic municipalities that have authorized the charter; Reykjavik, Akranes, Akureyri, Hafnarfjörður, Kópavogur, Mosfellsbær and Norðurþing have all decided to focus on the following articles:

Article 6. Countering stereotypes

Article 9. Gender assessment

Article 22. Gender-based violence

It is also intended to emphasize the evaluation tools discussed in the second part of the contract which is about implementations and obligations entailed in approval.

The City of Reykjavik will also put emphasis on the following articles:

Article 10. Multiple discrimination or disadvantage

Article 11. Role of the employer

Article 12. Public procurement and contracts

Article 20. Culture, sports and recreation

The action plan will be reviewed as circumstances warrant, and at least as soon as the work schedule for year 2013 on human rights issues is processed.

## CITY OF REYKJAVIK'S ACTION PLAN

### STEREOTYPES<sup>4</sup>

Reykjavik believes it is important to combat gender stereotypes as they appear both in rhetoric and imagery.



Image: Halldóra Gunnarsdóttir

#### Action 1

See article 23 of the Equality Act and article 6 of the European Charter for Equality.

Establish a working group that has extensive powers to counteract traditional gender images in all activities of the city. Including focus on:

- ✓ Work towards the elimination of gender-based stereotypes in the work of schools by including among other things, teaching gender equality issues in schools.
- ✓ Work in partnership with management and staff on specific projects, which aim to eliminate the restrictions caused by stereotypes.
- ✓ Create guidelines for City advertisements and all published material.
- ✓ Change the gender images embedded in the public environment of the city.

**Time:** 2012-2014

**Responsibility:** Human Rights Office

### GENDER ASSESSMENT AND GENDER MAINSTREAMING

The City of Reykjavik will focus on gender assessment<sup>5</sup> and gender mainstreaming in its work.



Gender eyeglasses. Designed by Hrafnhildur A. Jónsdóttir and Tinna Brá Baldvinsdóttir

#### Action 2

See article 12 of the Equality Act, article 2.1.1. in the City's Human Rights Policy and article 9 of the European Charter for Equality.

<sup>4</sup> Stereotypes and gender stereotypes are standardized and generalized ideas concerning how the genders should behave, how they are and what is appropriate for them to do.

<sup>5</sup> Gender assessment involves assessing whether sufficient account of the needs of both women and men are included in policies and services.

Work towards gender-based budgets and work plans for pilot projects and appoint a task force to conduct the projects. The task force shall, among things, create, develop and disseminate knowledge on working methods of the gender financial and operational model. Methods include an assessment on the impact of specific decisions for allocating the budget on both women and men.

**Time:** 2011-2013

**Responsibility:** The Financial Department and the Human Rights Office

### **Action 3**

*See article 23 of the Equality Act and article 9 of the European Charter for Equality.*

Introduce the integration project "Equality in Schools". Schools have access to the equality materials that were developed at Vogaskóli (Vogaschool). Examples of the materials include the presentation, "Gender Equality from the Settlement Period to Today" and other informative materials about stereotypes, teaching plans and gender-based equality issues in our society.

**Time:** 2012-2015

**Responsibility:** Human Rights Office

### **Action 4**

*See article 23 of the Equality Act.*

Ensure that students in all city schools receive training on gender equality. Develop a collection of teaching materials available to all teachers to support this teaching.

**Time:** 2012 - 2015

**Responsible:** Department of Leisure and Schools and the Human Rights Office

### **Action 5**

*See article 15 of the Equality Act and article 2.1 of the City of Reykjavik's Human Rights Policy*

All candidacies for the City council are encouraged in writing to ensure equal representation of men and women on their list of candidates and to ensure equal representation of both genders when appointing representatives for committees, councils and boards, no less than 40% for those with three or more representatives, cf. article 15 of the Equality Act.

**Time:** Before elections

**Responsibility:** The Human Rights Council

### **Action 6**

*See article 15 of the Equality Act, article 2.1 of the Human Rights Policy, and article 2 of the European Charter for Equality.*

Take a survey of the gender proportions on committees, councils and boards. Present the information to the Mayor, the Chairperson of the City Council, the Human Rights Council and publish it on the city's website.

**Time:** Annually

**Responsible:** Human Rights Office

### **Action 7**

*See article 9 of the European Charter for Equality.*

Present gender statistics in the city, and gender utilization of city services.

**Time:** Annually on 8 March

**Responsible:** Human Rights Office

## MUTIPLE DISCRIMINATION OR DISADVANTAGE

The City of Reykjavík recognises that discrimination on any and all grounds is prohibited. The city's human rights policy is based on equality rules, meaning that everyone should enjoy human rights regardless of their origin, ethnicity, nationality, skin colour, religion, belief, gender, sexual orientation, age, economy, descent, disability, health, or other status.

### Action 8

*See Chapter 1 of the Reykjavík City Human Rights Policy and article 10 of the European Charter for Equality.*

To uphold the City of Reykjavík's Human Rights Policy, which emphasizes an integrated approach, of equal benefit to all inhabitants and recognising that they may belong to more than one social group and might therefore be subject to multiple discrimination.

**Time:** 2012 – 2014

**Responsible:** The Human Rights Council and the Human Rights Office

## ROLE AS EMPLOYER

### EQUAL WAGES

Reykjavik conducted a survey on salaries in 2010. The study conveyed that the wage gap between men and women was primarily in overtime wages and car allowances.

### Action 9

*See article 19 of Act on Equality, article 2.2.3 of the Human Rights Policy, and article 11 of the European Charter for Equality.*

Analyse the overtime wages and car allowances of city employees and whether managers and department heads follow the rules.

**Time:** Annually

**Responsible:** Human Resources in cooperation with the Human Rights Office

### Action 10

*See article 19 of the Act on Equality, article 2.2.3 of the Human Rights Policy, and article 11 of the European Charter for Equality.*

Conduct an evaluation on gender-based wage gaps.

**Time:** next evaluation to be done in 2012 based on salaries paid in October 2011. Evaluation is to be repeated in 2013.

**Responsible:** Human Resources in cooperation with the Human Rights Office

## VACANCIES, VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND LIFELONG LEARNING

### Action 11

*See article 20 of the Equality Act, article 2.2.2 of the Human Rights Policy, and article 11 of the European Charter for Equality.*



*Image: Halldóra Gunnarsdóttir, taken in the Reykjavik City Hall*

Compile key information about the number of managers by sex in general, but also within specific groups. When hiring for new jobs and the choice is between equally qualified persons of the opposite sex, the applicant who is in the under-represented gender in the profession should be hired.

**Time:** Annually

**Responsible:** Human Resources in cooperation with the Human Rights Office

#### **Action 12**

*See articles 20 and 26 of the Equality Act and article 2.2.1 of the Human Rights Policy*

Managers shall be made aware of the fact that vacant positions that are open for applications shall be equally accessible to women and men. Attention will also be focused on the fact that it is only permissible to advertise specifically for one sex if the aim of the advertiser is to promote gender equality within the profession.

**Time:** Annually

**Responsible:** Human Resources

#### **Action 13**

*See article 20 of Equality Act and article 2.2.4 of the Human Rights Policy*

View employee attitude surveys to see if women and men are given the same opportunities for career development and lifelong learning opportunities. If not, the reaction should be to investigate who is not receiving the same opportunities and find ways for them to receive the opportunities they are lacking.

**Time:** 2011 and 2013

**Responsible:** Human Resources

### **RECONCILIATION OF WORK AND FAMILY LIFE**

The personnel policy states, "Reykjavik wishes to create conditions for its employees to coordinate the demands of their professional and private lives as much as possible. Reykjavik wishes its employees to have as flexible working hours as possible. Men and women should be able to reduce their working hours temporarily due to family responsibilities. Employees shall have the option of part-time and flexible working hours as circumstances permit. Managers should encourage expectant fathers to exercise their right to paternity leave. Furthermore, they should encourage men to stay home with sick children equally to women. "

#### **Action 14**

*See article 21 of the Equality Act, article 2.2.6 of the Human Rights Policy and article 11 of the European Charter on Equality*

Information about the coordination of work and private life should be collected by means of an employee attitude survey every two years. If the survey reveals that people in certain work places find it difficult to coordinate family and professional life, ways to change the situation must be set in place. The guiding principle should always be that people should be able to reconcile their family responsibilities and their professional obligations.

**Time:** 2011 and 2013

**Responsibility:** Human Resources

### Action 15

See article 21 of the Equality Act, article 2.2.6 in the Human Rights Policy and article 11 of the European Charter on Equality

Management training should be informed about the emphasis of coordinating professional and family life that is stated in the Act on Equality, the Human Rights Policy and the Personnel Policy.

**Time:** Annually

**Responsibility:** Human Resources

### GENDER-BASED HARASSMENT AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The city's personnel policy states, "any employee who by words, gestures, or behaviour - threatens, disrupts or provokes others in the workplace, bullies another employee, or sexually harasses, has violated basic rules of conduct in the workplace. Such behaviour can lead to a reprimand and dismissal". Furthermore, the human rights policy states that sexual harassment is completely prohibited in the workplace, and that city supervisors or shop stewards should be notified of such behaviour are bound, in cooperation with other supervisors and administrators, immediately to act appropriately to resolve it. Victims should not suffer from the measures taken for that purpose. Severe or repeated harassment can result in immediate removal from the work place. Procedures for responding to such behaviour must be accessible to employees.

An employee survey conducted in Reykjavik in 2009 said 8.6% confessed to have suffered harassment from co-workers in the past 12 months, thereof were 8.3% women and 9.4% men. The definition given in the survey covers more than sexual harassment.<sup>6</sup> In the 2008 staff survey 11.4% answered this question with a yes. It is important to continue to work against harassment in the city's workplaces.

### Action 16

See article 22 of the Equality Act, article 2.2.7 in the Human Rights Policy and article 11 of the European Charter on Equality

Gather information via employee attitude surveys about harassment in the work place every other year.

**Time:** 2011 and 2013

**Responsibility:** Human Resources

### Action 17

See article 22 of the Equality Act, article 2.2.7 of the Human Rights Policy and article 11 of the European Charter on Equality

Once a year, bring special attention to the fact that gender-based, sexual and other harassment is not tolerated at the city's work places. Every year there is a day of action against bullying in

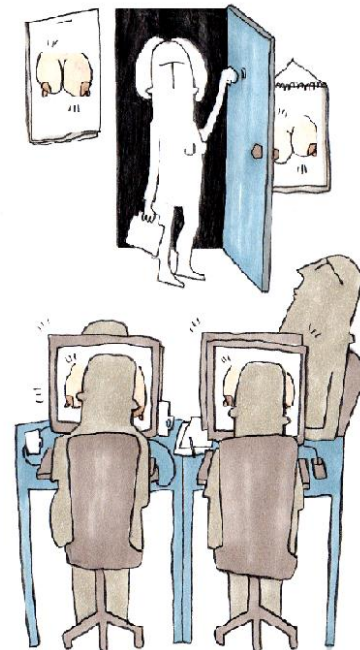


Image: Rán Flygenring

<sup>6</sup> In the survey harassment is defined as: the victim is treated with belligerence during interactions, being shamed, provocative or degrading comments, insinuations, back talks, contempt and insulting him with sexual language, touch, and gestures.



Reykjavik. Within the city's work places this day should be used to emphasize that gender-based, sexual and other forms of harassment is not tolerated.

**Time:** Annually

**Responsible:** Human Resources

#### **Action 18**

*See article 22 of the Equality Act, article 2.2.7 in the Human Rights Policy and article of the European Charter on Equality*

Go over all regulations for responding to harassment in each department, make changes where necessary and ensure that they are accessible. This should be complete before the day of action against bullying.

**Time:** Annually

**Responsibility:** Human Resources see to dissemination of information within the departments and the Human Rights Office appoints a central working team.

#### **Action 19**

*See article 22 of the Equality Act, article 2.2.7 of the Human Rights Policy and article 11 of the European Charter on Equality*

Participate in innovative projects which relate to investigating pornography in the workplace, publishing of educational material about such, its effects and how it is connected to gender-based and sexual harassment.

**Time:** Icelandic Venture Capital completed in 2011, publish educational materials in 2012

**Responsible:** The Human Rights Office

### **PUBLIC PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTS**

Reykjavik recognizes its responsibility to promote equality of women and men when it comes to government procurement, including contracts for goods, services and construction.

#### **Action 20**

*See article 12 of the European Charter on Equality*

Find ways to obligate Reykjavik's contractors and sub-contractors to work towards gender equality.

### **CULTURE, SPORTS AND RECREATION**

Reykjavik stresses the importance that both women and men may enjoy culture and sports and special attention is drawn to the achievements of both men and women in these areas. Reykjavik also considers important to break gender stereotypes in both sports and culture.

#### **Action 21**

*See article 20 of the European Charter of Equality*

Reykjavik a UNESCO City of Literature will ensure that both men and women are reflected in the city's literature.

**Time:** 2012 until and including 2014

**Responsibility:** Reykjavik UNESCO City of Literature

### **Action 22**

*See article 20 of the European Charter of Equality*

The City Library will, among other things, work against gender-based stereotypes by special projects that will focus on authors who have swum against the stream of gender stereotypes.

**Time:** 2012

**Responsible:** The City Library in cooperation with the Human Rights Office

### **Action 23**

*See article 23 of the Act on Equality, article 2.3.2 in the Human Rights Policy and article 20 of the European Charter of Equality*

Analyse gender participation in neighbourhood sports clubs and cooperate with the clubs in promoting the participation of both girls and boys in sports.

**Time:** 2012 until and including 2014

**Responsible:** The Human Rights Office

### **Act 24**

*See article 23 of Equality Act, and article 20 of the European Charter of Equality*

Add to contracts with sports teams, when they are made, the requirement of equal rights and work ethics.

**Time:** 2012 until and including 2014

**Responsible:** The Sports and Leisure Department and the Human Rights Office

## **GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE**

Reykjavik recognizes that gender-based violence is a violation of fundamental human rights and social evil which no one should have to live with. A study of violence against women revealed that 42% of women in Iceland have been victimized at some point in life.<sup>7</sup>

### **Action 25**

*See article 22 from the European Charter of Equality.*

Develop an action plan that will work towards the elimination of gender-based violence that will include the following:

- ✓ Measures to prevent gender-based violence.
- ✓ Education about gender-based violence for staff.
- ✓ Information in Icelandic, English and Polish on where victims can seek support.
- ✓ Cooperation between service and support providers.

**Time:** 2012-2014

**Responsibility:** The Human Rights Council, the Human Rights Office and other professional departments within the city.



*Mynd: Halldóra Gunnarsdóttir*

<sup>7</sup> Elísabet Karlsdóttir & Ásdís A. Arnalds. (2010). Research on violence against women. The experience of women aged 18-80 years in Iceland, 4. Research Institute of Children and Family. Prepared for the Ministry of Social Affairs.

**ASSESSMENT (see Part II of the Convention, the implementation of the Treaty and the obligations arising from it)**

Those who sign the agreement undertake to cooperate to assess possible improvements in the implementation of the Treaty. Reykjavik will put forward measures and cooperate in developing ways to assess performance.

