

No 70/2007

YOUTH ACT

THE PRESIDENT OF ICELAND

makes public: Althingi has approved this Act and I confirm it with my assent:

CHAPTER I

General provisions

Article 1

The purpose of this act is to support children and young people for participation in youth activities. Youth activities are organised club or leisure activities intended for children and young people to use their spare time working in concert for ideals, goals and interests which they themselves value. In all organised youth activity social, preventive, pedagogic and educational values should be considered, aiming to enhance the personal qualities and democratic awareness of participants. All activities involving children and young people should focus on their well-being and encourage them to show initiative and active participation. This act is intended for youth activities for children and young people, especially aged 6 to 25.

Article 2

This act covers:

1. The operation of clubs and club organisations that manage youth activities on an open voluntary basis, provided that the clubs and organisations are based first and foremost on volunteer work and self financing.
2. Youth activities run by the national authorities, municipalities and schools, as far as applicable and where no other laws or regulations apply.
3. Other operations that focus mostly on unaffiliated youth in organised youth activities.

Article 3

The national authorities and municipalities will, in co-operation with youth clubs and youth organisations support young people in participating in a diverse youth activities possible. State funding for the operation of the youth organisation is subject to parliamentary decision in the general budget.

Funding for the operation of local youth clubs and youth organisations depends on decisions made regarding the municipal budget plans.

Chapter II

Governing of youth affairs

Article 4

The Minister of Education is the highest authority on youth affairs according to this act.

Article 5

The Minister appoints nine representatives to the Youth Council. Five representatives are appointed according to recommendations made by youth organisations, as further stipulated in a regulation. Two representatives shall be appointed by the Association of Municipal Authorities in Iceland. The Minister appoints the Chairman and Vice-Chairman for the Youth Council without recommendations. The appointment term in the Youth Council is two years.

Article 6

The purpose of the Youth Council is to:

1. Consult the national authorities and municipalities on youth affairs.
2. Recommend focus areas and policies in youth affairs.
3. Give advice and opinion on issues regarding youth activities.
4. Seek ways to enhance and improve youth activities of clubs, organisations schools and municipalities and encourage cooperation between these groups in the field of youth affairs.
5. Plan meetings and conferences on youth affairs.
6. Participate in foreign cooperation on youth affairs as determined by the Minister.
7. Promote training and education for leaders, instructors and volunteers.
8. Conduct any other business assigned to it by the Minister.

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

Expenses incurred through work and projects of the Youth Council shall be paid from the State Treasury.

PART III Youth Fund

Article 7

The Parliament allocates funds annually to the Youth Fund for promoting youth activities. The Youth Fund may receive independent donations.

Article 8

The Board of the Youth Fund shall have three Directors appointed for a term of two years. The Chairman of the Youth Council is the Chairman of the Youth Fund, but the Council appoints two Directors and two Alternates. The Minister appoints one of the Directors of the Youth Fund as Vice-Chairman.

Article 9

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

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

The Minister allocates grants from the Youth Fund after receiving recommendations

from the Fund's Board.

The Minister may set more detailed rules regarding grants from the Youth Fund.

Chapter IV

Work environment in youth activity

Article 10

Those working with or in charge of children and young people in youth activities should be legally of age and should have received training and education and have acquired knowledge or experience for the job.

Group leaders, instructors, volunteers and other staff are not permitted to consume alcohol or other intoxicating substances during organised youth activities or while on trips with children or young people.

Individuals who have been convicted for violations of Chapter XXII of the General Penal Code, number 19/1940 may not be hired to work with staff mentioned in article 2 who works with children and youth under the age of 18. The same applies to those who have been sentenced for violation of the Narcotics Act number 65/1974 in the last five years. This provision includes also those who are entrusted with the management of children and young people under 18 years old within a framework of volunteer work.

Administrators of schools, day-care centres, summer camps, sport and recreation centres and other such institutions or places where children and young people congregate or stay for a long or short time and to whom article 2 applies, have the right to information from the penal registry upon that individual's consent, on whether a particular individual who has applied to them for employment has been sentenced for violations covered by paragraph 3.

For operations by state, municipality or other parties that fall within the scope of this Act, care shall be taken that they meet conditions of laws and regulations on accessibility, facilities, health and safety.

CHAPTER V

Support of municipalities or youth activities.

Article 11

Municipal governments set rules on how independent youth activities in their area are to be supported. Municipalities operate youth committees or similar committees as determined by the municipal government.

Municipal governments see to it that local Youth Councils are set up. The purpose of these Youth Councils is, among other things, to advise municipal governments on local youth issues in the respective municipality. Municipal governments issue more detailed rules on the purpose and selection for their Youth Councils.

CHAPTER VI
Youth research
Article 12

The Minister promotes regular youth research which will then be used in framing future guidelines for youth affairs.

The Minister appoints a five person advisory committee on youth studies. One of these persons shall be appointed according to recommendation by the Youth Council, one according to recommendation by youth organisations and one according to recommendations by the Association of Municipal Authorities. The remaining two persons are appointed by the Minister without recommendation. The Minister appoints two committee members as Chairman and Vice-Chairman. The term of the committee is three years.

CHAPTER VII
Other issues
Article 13

The Minister can, in a regulation, set further provisions on the implementation of this act.

Article 14

This Act enters into force immediately.

When this Act enters into force the Act number 24/1970, on youth issues expires.

Done at Bessastadir, 28 March 2007.

Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson

(L. S.)

Thorgerdur Katrín Gunnarsdóttir