

January 2022

The effects of self-ID in Iceland

This is a translation of a summary written for some Swedish feminists about the effects Iceland has seen after self-ID was introduced towards the end of 2019.

Sp the legislation has been introduced quite recently and was pushed through behind closed doors, without media debate, no impact assessment and almost no opportunity to respond to the proposal. Unfortunately, the Icelandic Women's Lobby is captured by identity politics and presented a very positive response to the proposal.

Icelandic legislation goes further than in many other countries as it includes a new unscientific definition of sex. The wording of the new law states that sex is a collective term that INCLUDES gender identity, gender, gender expression and sex characteristics (hormones, chromosomes and sexual organs). The other factors that the definition INCLUDES are not specified anywhere in the law. In a single sentence, this definition renders the concepts of man and woman entirely meaningless as a man can now easily be a woman and a woman can be a man through the concepts of gender, gender identity and gender expression. Women's sex-based rights have been entirely lost.

Even though self id proposal doesn't explicitly define sex, the effect is the same as for the Icelandic, as legal gender will trump biological sex in every case .

Unfortunately, there isn't a lot of reliable data on the negative consequences for women in the form of statistics etc. for two reasons:

1) As the law has only been introduced recently, it will take time for the real effects to become clear.

2) There is no resistance to the law or gender identity politics on Iceland. As I said above, the Icelandic Women's Lobby is entirely captured and the few women that are concerned are too frightened to speak out or do anything.

I have some examples including sources in the form of newspaper articles, although these are unfortunately only in Icelandic. And then there's the awful official guide produced by the City of Reykjavik (capital of Icelandic) to help employees in public swimming baths/sports halls persuade women and girls that people with penises are fully entitled to shower naked next to them (see below).

One of the effects seen almost simultaneously with or just after the law was passed was that several public bodies came under pressure from the Icelandic LGBTQ lobby, samtökin 78, (essentially the same as RFSL/Stonewall) to begin removing all sex-segregated toilets from their buildings. No one asked women if they were ok with this. Complaints were made to the Work Environment Authority which partly stopped this, but the other authorities/organizations then repeatedly referred to the new legislation and their equal opportunities policy as the reason for the change, and Work Environment Authority's decision was overruled. In other words, the law is being used to cross women's boundaries and there is nothing anyone can do about it. Unfortunately, no legal challenges have been made. There are only newspaper articles about it in Icelandic.

<https://www.frettabladid.is/frettir/reykjavikurborg-gert-ad-kynjamerkja-klosett-a-ny/> (this is about the Work Environment Authority which ruled that the City of Reykjavik had to provide sex-segregated toilets, followed by this article <https://www.visir.is/g/20202003346d> stating that the City of Reykjavik is contesting the ruling and will use the new law to win the case).

This article is about the University introducing unisex toilets and its plans to introduce them in all buildings: <https://www.visir.is/g/20212177829d>

Shortly after the law was introduced, all Icelandic law texts became sex neutral, the governing bodies stated that they were required to do this as there are more than two sexes and people identify in different ways. This is a bad deal for women. The words mother and father are no longer included as terms in Icelandic legislation. Everything relating to women has been replaced with bodily functions appropriate for the context, such as birthing parent, breastfeeding parent, pregnant person etc. This is a direct consequence of the gender recognition law.

Since last year, the City of Reykjavik (the capital of Iceland) has opened up its public changing rooms so that men who feel like women can enter the women's changing rooms and vice versa. There are a lot of public swimming pools in Iceland, about 20 in Reykjavik. Swimming is a very important part of Icelandic culture, similar to the Finnish Sauna culture, and people go to the public baths every day. Everyone is required to shower fully naked before entering the pool. There are no booths or similar to ensure privacy. Accordingly, there have been sex-segregated changing rooms until 2020-2021. A unisex alternative with closed private booths and showers already exists so transgender people can already use these changing rooms when visiting the public pools.

Anyone over the age of 10 can attend the swimming baths unattended. This means that the City of Reykjavik has decided to open up women's changing rooms to people with penises and risk a situation where a 10 year old girl can find herself alone in a shower with an adult man with a penis. It's so sickening that you can't believe it's true, but they refer to the law from 2019 which states that individuals who have changed their legal sex shall have all the rights those of the same legal sex have.

I expected this to generate some resistance but not a great deal was heard from members of the public. ALL women and most men I have spoken to really object to this, but they don't dare speak out because of an aggressive culture of silence, and the law contributes to this culture. Anyone who dares to criticize the law is accused of being opposed to Icelandic law and equal opportunities for all.

I think some of you have already seen the manual aimed at the employees of Iceland's public baths and sports halls about how to deal with women who complain about penises in changing rooms. It's in English and I consider it to be a manual on how to gaslight women and break down their boundaries. They say that they want EVERYONE to be welcome in the public baths, apparently this is everyone except women. If you haven't seen it yet here it is, prepared to be shocked
!!!!: https://reykjavik.is/sites/default/files/ymis_skjol/skjol_utgefing_efni/trans_folk_kyngreind_rymi_vefur.pdf

There was some news coverage of this and it's always the same woke woman from the city council:

<https://www.frettabladid.is/frettir/starfsfolk-fraett-vegna-oupplystra-laugargesta/>

<https://www.ruv.is/frett/2020/11/20/trans-folk-a-ad-geta-valid-buningsklefa>

<https://www.dv.is/frettir/2021/4/8/pirataspjallid-logadi-vegna-faerslu-doru-bjartar-segir-folk-bua-til-fantasiur-til-ad-vera-med-hraedsluarodur/>

In this radio feature she was laughing about "what are women so afraid of anyway, another woman's penis or what... hahahaha".

<https://www.visir.is/g/20212094543d>

Over the past 12 months, the following has happened.

Several upper secondary schools have stopped registering the sex of students and students can instead choose between several different pronouns. Why?... the schools refer to the new legislation which they interpret as meaning that sex no longer exists.

<https://www.visir.is/g/20212157218d?fbclid=IwAR0ifXH75I7Qj7IUWVROQ94qoJPeFuVQYPorN80oCXumqDNXPf5whysqKrY>

Icelandic only prize for literature aimed specifically at women (a longstanding and respected award) has now been changed to a literature prize for women (cis and trans), transgender people, non-binary and intersex people... Why? They refer to the new law and interpret it as meaning that everyone who isn't a "cis man" must be in the same group as

women: <https://fjoruverdlaunin.is/2021/12/02/fjoruverdlaunin-2022-tilnefningar/?fbclid=IwAR1NpxVvKWD3eH5135pBHoEa5pXxOIPQRoW5yYE91zU1PkmMuayF7D2Pios>

The Icelandic music industry, which has awarded a prize to the vocalist of the year in the categories man and woman every year since the prize was first handed out, has stated that it will no longer be awarded on the basis of sex categories, and that there will only be one prize... Why? They refer to the law which they interpret as meaning that there are so many different sexes that you can't have separate prizes for all of them. Women will lose out as a result, as the Icelandic music industry has had a well-known discrimination culture.

Here is a statement from a senior representative of the Icelandic music industry: <http://iston.is/2022/01/02/kyngreindir-flokkar-heyra-sogunni-til-a-islensku-tonlistarverdlaununum/>.

More news articles:

<http://iston.is/2022/01/02/kyngreindir-flokkar-heyra-sogunni-til-a-islensku-tonlistarverdlaununum/>
<https://www.visir.is/g/20222203796d/haetta-med-ser-verdlaun-fyrir-songvara-og-songkonu-arsins>

To summarize, the law is fuel to the fire in terms of the new unscientific view of sex that is becoming increasingly prevalent, i.e. that it is a feeling and not a biological material reality. Women have lost all their sex-based rights overnight and what is most serious is that a majority of people have no idea that it has happened. Women in Iceland no longer have the right to sex-segregated spaces. A man can take a woman's place in sports, politics, on corporate boards... etc. The law prevents women from reporting what is happening to the discrimination ombudsman or other public bodies intended to protect women's rights and prevent sex-based discrimination. In the eyes of the law, such cases now relate to a conflict between two different women or two different groups of women and then they take the more vulnerable woman's side, who is a man. It is so crazy it's hard to get your head round it.

One of the most serious effects of the law is that it contributes to an aggressive silencing and cancel culture. Before the law was introduced, slightly more critical voices were heard but now that it has been passed these voices are quickly silenced, always with reference to the amazing new gender recognition law. The authorities submit one by one, they have to follow the law.

To claim that laws like this don't affect women's rights reads like a bad joke.