



ICELAND

BODILY INTEGRITY

In 2021, activists continued to advocate for the prohibition of all non-consensual and medically unnecessary surgeries against minors, that are not necessary for the child's long-term health, and can be avoided or postponed until the person can provide informed consent. In December last year, the Icelandic parliament adopted a ban, with the exception of hypospadias and micropenis. Decisions must be unanimously agreed upon by a multidisciplinary team of medical experts and confirmed by a ministerial committee of a child psychologist, a paediatrician, and a human rights expert. Interventions, unless life saving, will be postponed in the meantime. A committee must be formed within the next three years to review and strengthen the law.

EDUCATION

As a follow-up to their school well-being survey findings from 2020, Samtökin '78 secured a contract with the School of Education at the University of Iceland and the municipalities of Grindavíkurbær and Snæfellsbær. Samtökin '78 has rapidly expanded its education work in the last three years and hired three contractors to deliver training.

EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

The 2020 Equal Gender Rights Law, which moves away from the previous wording on equality between a "male and female" and gives recognition to those registered with a gender marker beyond these two options, entered into force on 6 January.

FAMILY

The Children's Law was amended to allow for gender-neutral registration for parents.

FOREIGN POLICY

In February, Iceland, Norway, and Liechtenstein cancelled a major grant to Poland for its continued crackdown on LGBTI people and the public support of "LGBT-free zones".

In March, the Minister of Environment sent a public letter to Pope Francis asking him to withdraw his decision on banning Catholic priests from performing same-sex marriage ceremonies.

FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY

The Western region of Iceland held its first Pride march this year, in the city of Borgarnes.

Reykjavik Pride was held in person this year, but with COVID-19 restrictions to keep participants safe. Pride events were held in seven cities.

FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION

The West Iceland LGBT+ Association (Hinsegin Vesturland), the Western region's first LGBT+ organisation, was founded in February.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

Rainbow flags were raised across the capital on the occasion of IDAHOBIT on 17 May.

A rainbow pedestrian crossing was unveiled in August on the occasion of Pride week in the capital, along the city centre's Ingólfsstræti.

HEALTH

The number of LGBT people turning to Samtökin '78 for counselling increased by 538% over the past five years. Between 2019 and 2020, the increase was 47%.

A new trans team at the Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at Landspítali hospital was established in the summer. One of its members had worked with Samtökin '78 and Trans Ísland in the past, and civil society welcomed their inclusion. In 2020, the Department announced that the team, which has supported trans and gender non-conforming youth, including by counseling or providing them with hormone blockers, will end its work due to budget cuts.

INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

Samtökin '78 received a four-million ISK grant this year, on top of the previous 15 million, to provide special counseling for trans people, professional assistance to doctors and nurses at Hospitals, information in the field of sexual health, and to combat social isolation and poorer mental health among LGBTI individuals.

LEGAL GENDER RECOGNITION

Legal recognition for non-binary people became available from 6 January onwards. As of December, 15 people are known to have used this option and changed their gender marker.



PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC, CULTURAL AND POLITICAL LIFE

In April, the Reykjavík City Council issued guidelines for managers and staff of gyms and pools on how to welcome trans people to their facilities. The Pirate Party used this opportunity to highlight that many trans people avoid sports facilities in fear of harassment, which is a public health concern.

In May, the Reykjavík City Council elected Alexandra Briem of the Pirate Party to be the Council's speaker for the next year. Briem is the first trans person to hold the position.

"It means a lot to me personally, because it validates that as an individual and as a politician I'm entrusted to take on this position, and as a transgender woman, I am not excluded by a glass ceiling from taking part in politics and taking prestigious offices because of social prejudices." - Alexandra Briem to the Reykjavík Grapevine



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