

PROPOSAL OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE

on amendments to the Bylaws of ASÍ, submitted to the 47th Congress of ASÍ 2026

This proposal was discussed by the Organisation and Procedures Committee at its meetings on 16 March and 4 May 2026 and by the Central Committee of ASÍ on 6 May, 3 June and 16 June 2026. Amendments are shown in red.

Role of the Confederation

Article 3(1) is amended to read as follows:

The role of the Confederation is:

To lead the collective struggle of workers, represent affiliated unions in matters of common concern vis-à-vis employers and the authorities, nationally and internationally. To formulate and coordinate the Confederation's overall policy on employment, education and environmental, **equality, welfare and housing** and collective bargaining matters.

Explanatory notes:

Article 3 of the Bylaws of ASÍ defines its role. This is reflected in the committees of the Central Committee dealing with operations and policy matters. By long-standing tradition, ASÍ has taken particular responsibility for housing, welfare and equality issues. To formalise this role, it is proposed that these responsibilities be reflected in Article 3(1).

Who qualifies as a full member and loss of eligibility

Three new paragraphs are added to Article 16, as follows:

Full members of unions affiliated to ASÍ shall, as a minimum, be dues-paying workers within the union's organisational and collective bargaining scope who have formally applied for membership or have not responded to a notice from the union after contributions have been continuously remitted to the union for at least three months.

Affiliated unions shall include provisions in their bylaws stipulating that if an elected representative holding a position of trust within the union loses eligibility, they shall automatically vacate that position within the union and any positions they hold on behalf of that union within ASÍ.

If a delegate to an ASÍ Congress, or a person elected to another position of trust within ASÍ, ceases to be a full member of the union to which they belonged when elected, they shall automatically vacate their position within ASÍ.

Explanatory notes:

In recent years, elected members of the Central Committee have resigned after being elected. This has occurred because the individual concerned was not re-elected as chair of an affiliated union, because of disagreements within the Central Committee, and for other reasons. Following the most recent parliamentary elections, a situation also arose in which one ASÍ vice-president and one member of the Central Committee were elected to the Althingi. At the subsequent meeting of the Central Committee, the question arose as to the position on the Central Committee of the vice-president concerned, who had already resigned as chair both of their affiliated union and of their federation. Several amendments to the Bylaws are therefore proposed in order to remove any doubt as to their interpretation and application.

General provisions on eligibility: *Eligibility is the right to stand for election, whether in elections governed by national law or elections within associations under their own bylaws. The terms eligibility and qualification are often used interchangeably. The purpose of rules on eligibility and voting rights is to define the group of individuals who come together to elect from among themselves persons entrusted with governing the relevant communities or organisations and safeguarding their interests and those of all their members. This is reflected, for example, in the general rule that only Icelandic citizens vote in parliamentary elections and have the right to stand for election (are eligible). Eligibility generally goes hand in hand with the right to vote, although this is not always the case and does not apply where representatives are elected to exercise the votes of those who elect them (representative democracy). For example, the Central Committee of ASÍ is elected by delegates of affiliated organisations at ASÍ Congresses, not by the members themselves. However, all full members of unions affiliated to ASÍ are eligible for election to the Central Committee even if they have not been elected as delegates to the ASÍ Congress.*

The Bylaws of ASÍ contain clear provisions on eligibility for office within the Confederation, but no provisions on what should happen if an elected representative loses eligibility. In light of experience, this needs to be addressed.

Bylaws of ASÍ: *Article 26 of the Bylaws of ASÍ states: "All full members of unions affiliated to ASÍ are eligible to serve as delegates to the ASÍ Congress and to hold other positions of trust within the Icelandic Confederation of Labour." Who qualifies as a full member, and is therefore eligible to hold a position of trust within ASÍ, is consequently determined by the bylaws of each affiliated union. The Bylaws of ASÍ do not address the consequences where a lawfully elected member of the Central Committee, or a person elected by the ASÍ Congress or Central Committee to another position, loses eligibility because they are no longer a full member and eligible in any union affiliated to ASÍ.*

Article 26 has not been formally tested within ASÍ, as ASÍ has proceeded on the basis that affiliated unions themselves maintain their membership records and

determine who has full membership and who has associate membership. There are, however, numerous examples of elected members of the Central Committee stepping down when they no longer meet the eligibility requirements of their affiliated union, since they can hardly credibly represent the interests of that union and its members thereafter, and it is therefore natural that they should step down.

Bylaws of ASÍ affiliated unions: Under Article 26 of the Bylaws of ASÍ, if a member is a full member and eligible under the bylaws of their affiliated union, they are eligible within ASÍ. Under Article 8 of the Bylaws of ASÍ, affiliated unions have full autonomy over their internal affairs, provided that they do not contravene the Bylaws of ASÍ or resolutions of ASÍ Congresses. They are also bound by Act No. 80/1938, Article 2 of which provides that trade unions shall be open to all persons in the relevant occupation within the union's geographical area, subject to more detailed provisions in the union's bylaws. Although Article 2 does not specifically state what may or may not be included in such "more detailed provisions in the union's bylaws", those provisions must satisfy certain general requirements, and discrimination is also prohibited by law.

As regards eligibility within unions affiliated to ASÍ, it can be stated that the general rule is that all dues-paying workers who work under the union's collective agreements within its geographical area and who have either applied for membership or not responded to an invitation to do so (negative formation of membership) are regarded as full members and eligible for positions of trust within the union. Under the Bylaws of ASÍ, they are therefore also eligible to serve as delegates to the ASÍ Congress and in positions of trust elected by the Congress. However, the bylaws of many ASÍ affiliated unions, like the Bylaws of ASÍ themselves, do not contain clear provisions on the consequences if serving elected representatives lose eligibility. Nor were any such provisions included in the "Model Bylaws for Trade Unions" issued by the Central Committee of ASÍ in 1985 and again in 1997. The issue was, however, considered by the Organisation and Procedures Committee in 2002-2003 when preparing rules on the "Rights and duties of board members of trade unions and federations and their employees". The draft submitted by the Committee included the following: "If a board member, for any reason, ceases to meet the eligibility requirements for the position under the union's bylaws, they shall leave the board." This provision was removed when the bylaws were finally adopted, as it was considered more appropriate for affiliated unions themselves to decide how to regulate the matter.

Several affiliated unions do, however, contain such provisions in their bylaws, and a few examples are set out below. Article 12(2) of the Bylaws of Verkalýðsfélag Suðurlands states: "...If a board member loses eligibility during the term of office, they shall immediately leave the boards of Verkalýðsfélag Suðurlands...." Article 23(2) of the Bylaws of Framsýn states: "...If a board member loses eligibility during the term of office, they shall immediately leave the board of Framsýn. The same rule applies to other elected representatives on the union's boards and councils...." Article 32 of the Bylaws of RSÍ states: "The term of office of a

representative is the period between ordinary federation congresses and a union may not elect more than once during a term of office unless an elected representative dies or ceases to meet the eligibility requirements and the alternate representative is unable to serve....” Article 11(1) of the Bylaws of VR states: “...Board members who cease to meet the above requirements during their term of office shall automatically and immediately leave the board and alternates shall take their place for the remainder of the term. The same rule applies to other elected representatives on the union’s boards and councils....” The Bylaws of VR also contain a specific provision on full membership based on board remuneration. Article 3 states: “A full member whose full membership is based wholly or partly on the payment of dues from remuneration for serving on boards or councils within the union or on its behalf is not eligible for election. This provision does not apply to elected representatives who are also employees of the union.” Article 30 of the Bylaws of VM is similar, although the wording is less explicit: “...Board members must satisfy the general eligibility requirements for membership under these Bylaws and have legal capacity....” Although the wording is not as clear as might be desirable, it applies to serving elected board members throughout their term of office.

Finally, it should be noted that, as with membership of the Central Committee of ASÍ, there are many examples of elected board members of ASÍ affiliated unions stepping down when they no longer satisfy the eligibility requirements or take up other employment.

National law: *As noted above, trade unions enjoy autonomy over their internal affairs. This is based both on the Bylaws of ASÍ and on provisions of the Constitution and international human rights conventions. General principles of interpretation apply when interpreting their bylaws, and regard may, among other things, be had to how comparable matters are regulated and interpreted in national law. A few examples follow. Article 50 of the Constitution of Iceland states: “If a Member of the Althingi loses eligibility, they shall forfeit the right conferred by their election.” Under Article 46, the Althingi itself decides whether a member has lost eligibility, and under Article 65(4) an alternate takes the member’s seat for the remainder of the term in such circumstances. These rules are reflected in the Elections Act No. 112/20214, which applies to elections to both the Althingi and local authorities. Under Article 30(1) of the Local Authorities Act No. 38/2011, a local authority member must leave the council if they lose eligibility, and under Article 29(1) it is the local authority itself that determines whether the member has lost eligibility. Under Article 42 of the Private Limited Companies Act No. 138/1994, the Register of Enterprises may remove from the register board members who cease to be qualified (eligible) if the company’s board fails to do so. The same rule applies to other companies under Act No. 30/199, to co-operative societies under Article 27(2) of Act No. 22/1991, and to foundations engaged in commercial activities under Article 15 of Act No. 33/1999.*

It can be said that the Constitution and general legislation are based on the natural and logical principle that elected representatives must not only satisfy eligibility requirements at the time of election, but throughout their term of office, and must vacate their seat if they lose eligibility.

Need for amendments: Having regard to the Bylaws of ASÍ and its affiliated unions, the practice under those bylaws and national law, the general conclusion can be drawn that if an elected board member loses eligibility (qualification) under the requirements established by the relevant union, organisation or institution, they should leave their position in their own affiliated union and, at the same time, within ASÍ, with an alternate taking their place. This may be implemented in two ways. In some cases, rules contain clear provisions that the person concerned automatically vacates their position, as is the case, for example, with Verkalýðsfélag Suðurlands, Framsýn and VR. Where the rules do not contain clear provisions for automatic removal, it must be assumed that the board of the organisation concerned decides the matter if the board member does not resign voluntarily, as is the case with the Althingi and local authorities, and indeed with companies and co-operative societies, which may be subject to action by the authorities to remove a board member from the register if the boards themselves fail to act.

The Bylaws of ASÍ contain no specific rules on eligibility other than that all full members of affiliated organisations are eligible to serve as delegates to the ASÍ Congress and to hold positions of trust within ASÍ. In other words, eligibility within ASÍ is determined by the individual's eligibility under the bylaws of the affiliated union to which they belong. This means that the procedure may differ, ranging from individuals automatically leaving office under the bylaws of their affiliated union and thereby simultaneously leaving positions of trust within ASÍ, to other cases where further action is required. The general principle then appears to be that the board on which the individual sits should decide the matter, as applies to the Althingi and local authorities.

If the bylaws of the relevant affiliated union contain no clear provisions on the matter and its board fails to act when its representative has lost eligibility, it falls to the Central Committee of ASÍ to respond and decide whether the person concerned should vacate positions of trust within ASÍ. Under the Central Committee's general rules of procedure, the Central Committee would refer such cases to the Organisation and Procedures Committee for consideration and an opinion before the Central Committee takes a final decision that the person who has lost eligibility must leave the Central Committee.

Having regard to the Bylaws of ASÍ and its affiliated unions, the practice under those bylaws and national law, there are strong grounds for the general conclusion that if an elected board member loses eligibility (qualification) under the requirements established by the relevant union, organisation or institution, they should vacate their position within their own union and within ASÍ. Clear provisions to this effect are, however, lacking in the bylaws of affiliated unions and in the

Bylaws of ASÍ, and the purpose of the amendments to Article 26 is to state this explicitly.

First, by introducing into the Bylaws of ASÍ minimum provisions defining who qualifies as a full member. These are minimum provisions applicable where the bylaws of affiliated unions contain no provisions defining full membership. If an affiliated union chooses, for example, to grant eligibility to retired members who do not pay dues, it remains free to do so.

"Full members of unions affiliated to ASÍ shall, as a minimum, be dues-paying workers within the union's organisational and collective bargaining scope who have formally applied for membership or have not responded to a notice from the union after contributions have been continuously remitted to the union for at least three months."

Second, affiliated unions should include provisions in their bylaws on the consequences of a member losing eligibility.

"Affiliated unions shall include provisions in their bylaws stipulating that if an elected representative holding a position of trust within the union loses eligibility, they shall automatically vacate their position."

Third, a provision that if a member ceases to be a full member of a union affiliated to ASÍ, they automatically lose eligibility and their position within ASÍ.

"If a delegate to an ASÍ Congress, or a person elected to another position of trust within ASÍ, ceases to be a full member of the union to which they belonged when elected, they shall automatically vacate their position within ASÍ."

Affiliated organisations and other organisations

Article 18(2) is amended to read as follows:

Any **affiliated** organisation expelled from the Icelandic Confederation of Labour shall immediately lose all rights within the Confederation and its representatives shall lose their mandate to hold positions of trust within ASÍ.

Explanatory notes:

The Bylaws of ASÍ use the term "affiliated organisations" to refer to federations, all unions within individual federations, and unions with direct affiliation, cf. Article 5 of the Bylaws of ASÍ. Article 18(2) uses the term "organisations", which is inconsistent with the terminology used in paragraphs 1 and 3 of Article 18 and may cause misunderstanding; paragraph 2 is intended to refer to "affiliated organisations". It is proposed that this be corrected.

Convening the ASÍ Congress

Article 22 is amended to read as follows:

The ASÍ Congress **shall be convened in a verifiable manner** (in writing **or electronically**) with at least two months' notice.

Explanatory notes:

It is important that notice of an ASÍ Congress be given in a verifiable manner. The term "in writing" was previously understood to refer to ordinary postal mail. Today, postal mail is slower, more costly and, in some cases, less reliable following changes to general postal services. In recent years, ASÍ and its affiliated organisations have used electronic communications alongside written notices when convening meetings. Receipt of such communications can easily be confirmed. This amendment is intended to formalise that practice. See also the corresponding proposed amendment to Article 35 on meetings of chairs.

Representatives of federations and directly affiliated unions on the Central Committee

A new paragraph is added to Article 33 after paragraph 5, as follows:

Each federation, and the directly affiliated unions jointly, shall have one principal representative and a corresponding alternate on the Central Committee.

Explanatory notes:

For recent decades, the Nominations Committee elected by the ASÍ Congress has prepared a proposal for the election of members of the Central Committee. The practice has been that each federation, and the directly affiliated unions jointly, should have at least one principal representative on the Central Committee and a corresponding alternate. The number of principal and alternate representatives is then determined by the relative weight of the unions within ASÍ. This arrangement has worked well and has enjoyed broad support among Congress delegates, but it is based neither on the Bylaws nor regulations of ASÍ, but on the fundamental principle that all voices should be heard within the Confederation's highest governing body. A situation could arise in the election of principal representatives where a representative of a federation or of directly affiliated unions fails to be elected and therefore has no seat on the Central Committee for the following two years. The person concerned would, however, continue to attend meetings of the chairs of federations, the largest unions and directly affiliated unions, which generally play an important role in coordinating the work of the Central Committee. This situation has not arisen since the above procedure was introduced, but it has arisen in the election of alternates. In such cases, the representative of the affiliated organisation on the Central Committee has had no alternate able to take their place temporarily or permanently. The proposed amendment is intended both to ensure balance in the composition of principal representatives and to ensure that each always has an alternate who can take their place and safeguard the interests of the affiliated organisation they represent.

Number of vice-presidents

Article 34(4) and (8) are amended to read as follows:

Paragraph 4

The Central Committee shall be elected for a term of two years at a time, so that at the ASÍ Congress the President, ~~first-second~~ and ~~third~~ Vice-Presidents shall be elected separately and **thirteen** ~~eleven~~ other members. Together they shall constitute the Central Committee of the Icelandic Confederation of Labour.

Paragraph 8

If the President or Vice-Presidents are unable to perform their duties, the Central Committee shall meet without delay and elect a Vice-President from among the members of the Central Committee; otherwise the **first** Vice-President shall perform the duties of the President in their absence. ~~The second Vice-President shall act in the absence of the first Vice-President, and the third Vice-President in the absence of the second Vice-President.~~

Explanatory notes:

For most of ASÍ's history, only one Vice-President was elected. It was not until the beginning of the 21st century that there were two, and finally three at the 40th Congress of ASÍ in 2020. Under the Bylaws of ASÍ, the Vice-Presidents have no other formal role than to substitute for one another when required. They generally attend meetings of the chairs of federations, the largest unions and directly affiliated unions.

Convening alternate members of the Central Committee

Two paragraphs are added to Article 34, as follows:

A member of the Central Committee who is unable to attend a meeting shall notify the ASÍ office which alternate is to be called in their place. If that alternate is unable to attend, the procedure in paragraph 4 shall apply.

If an absence is not notified, alternates shall be called in the order in which they are listed in the proposal of the Nominations Committee or, where an election has taken place, in the order in which they were elected. The person at the top of the list shall be called first and the list shall then be followed in order. The entire list shall be exhausted before the person at the top is called a second time.

Explanatory notes:

By established practice, a principal member of the Central Committee who is unable to attend a meeting informs the ASÍ office and indicates which alternate

should be called in their place. The second paragraph is based on Article 3 of the rules on convening alternates to the Central Committee, which states: "If a member of the Central Committee who is unable to attend does not request that any particular person be called in their place, alternates shall be called in the order in which they are listed in the proposal of the Nominations Committee or, where an election has taken place, in the order in which they were elected. The person at the top of the list shall be called first and the list shall then be followed in order. This method shall be applied by going through the entire list before the person at the top is called a second time."

These rules were adopted, and the practice developed, to fill a gap in the Bylaws of ASÍ. It is now proposed that the gap be filled in the Bylaws themselves so that there can be no doubt about the procedure.

Convening meetings of chairs

Article 35(3) is amended to read as follows

Such a meeting of chairs shall be convened **in a verifiable manner** (in writing **or electronically**) with at least three weeks' notice, although this period may be shortened in special circumstances.

Explanatory notes:

It is important that notice of meetings of chairs be given in a verifiable manner. The term "in writing" was previously understood to refer to ordinary postal mail. Today, postal mail is slower, more costly and, in some cases, less reliable following changes to general postal services. In recent years, ASÍ and its affiliated organisations have used electronic communications alongside written notices when convening meetings. Receipt of such communications can easily be confirmed. This amendment is intended to formalise that practice. See also the corresponding proposed amendment to Article 22 on the ASÍ Congress.

Submission of reports and accounts

Article 47 is amended in its entirety to read as follows:

The heading of the Article is amended to read:

"Reports and accounts of affiliated organisations".

By 15 June each year, affiliated unions shall submit the following information to the ASÍ office:

a. Membership numbers as at the end of the previous year.

b. The board of the union and the boards of its funds, departments and councils.

c. Activities during the previous operating year.

d. Their annual accounts, and the annual accounts of funds under their administration, for the preceding year, certified by authorised public accountants in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards.

The Confederation office shall provide forms for reporting under points a, b and c.

In preparing annual accounts, the regulations approved by the Central Committee shall be followed.

By 15 June each year, federations shall submit to the ASÍ office information on the federation's board and its activities during the previous operating year.

Explanatory notes:

It is proposed that all information from unions be submitted together within half a month of the annual general meeting, which must be held no later than the end of May each year, cf. Article 16(2) of the Bylaws of ASÍ. Under the current Article 47, information on membership numbers must be submitted by 1 March and information on boards and annual accounts by the end of May. Since annual general meetings may be held as late as the end of May each year, and all the above information should be available when the annual general meeting is held, a two-week period is provided for submitting the information to ASÍ. The information is necessary for preparing ASÍ Congresses and calculating levies. Under the current provision, it appears possible to interpret the reporting obligation, apart from information on membership numbers, as applying to both unions and federations. In practice, federations are required only to provide information on their boards and activities. This ambiguity is now removed, and the heading of the Article, which currently refers only to affiliated unions, is amended so that it also covers federations in respect of boards and activities.

The current Article 47 reads as follows:

At the beginning of each year, or no later than 1 March, affiliated unions shall submit to the ASÍ office a report on membership numbers as at the end of the previous year. The Confederation office shall provide forms for this reporting.

By the end of May, affiliated organisations shall submit to the ASÍ office information on the board of each organisation and its activities during the previous operating year. The Confederation office shall provide forms for this reporting.

By the end of May, affiliated organisations shall submit to the ASÍ office their annual accounts, and the annual accounts of funds under their administration, for the preceding year, certified by authorised public accountants in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards.

In preparing annual accounts, the regulations approved by the Central Committee shall be followed.

Submission of reports and accounts - sanctions

Article 41(7) and (8)

When calculating levies for those that have not submitted annual accounts under Article 47 **(3)** for the preceding year, an estimate shall be used. The estimate shall be based on information on membership dues income for the year before the preceding year. Those membership dues revenues shall be adjusted by the change in regular wages of members within ASÍ, according to Statistics Iceland data for the second quarter of the year in which the levy is assessed, plus a 10% surcharge.

If annual accounts under Article 47 **(3)** are submitted after a levy has been estimated for the union under paragraph 7, but before the end of the assessment year, the estimate shall be revised and the levy assessed in the ordinary manner **plus a 10% surcharge**. The resulting assessment shall then be final.

Explanatory notes:

The reference to Article 47(3) is removed from paragraphs 7 and 8 of Article 41, on the assumption that the proposed amendments to Article 47 are adopted. When considering the amendments to the Bylaws, it is therefore natural to vote first on the amendments to Article 47. It is also proposed in paragraph 8 that a 10% surcharge be added to the levies of unions that fail to submit their annual accounts on time under Article 47. This is intended to encourage affiliated unions to submit on time, as timely submissions ensure that the total levy is calculated correctly each year and facilitate the organisation of Congresses.

Annual accounts of ASÍ

Article 46(1), (2) and (3) is amended to read as follows:

The annual accounts ~~of ASÍ funds~~, together with the consolidated financial statements, for each calendar year shall be submitted to the Central Committee no later than April each year. The annual accounts shall be audited by an authorised public accountant in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards.

In preparing the annual accounts^s, regard shall be had to guidelines approved by the Central Committee. The Industrial Disputes Fund shall be kept separate from the Confederation's other funds and separately accounted for in the accounts^s of the Confederation Fund.

The accounts^s shall be submitted for final approval to the ASÍ Congress.

Explanatory notes:

The accounts of individual funds have been subject to separate statutory audits even though they form part of the annual accounts and consolidated financial statements each year. This has resulted in significant additional cost. On the recommendation of the authorised public accountant, it is proposed that this practice be discontinued. Although the Bylaws of the Confederation could be interpreted as not requiring an amendment, it is proposed that any doubt on this point be removed.

Accrual and transfer of entitlements between sickness funds

Article 49(1), (2) and (5) is amended to read as follows:

Paragraph 1 becomes paragraph 2 and paragraph 2 becomes paragraph 1.

Current paragraph 2

A person who has acquired an entitlement to grants from the sickness fund of one ASÍ affiliated union shall acquire entitlement to grants from a new ASÍ affiliated union, in accordance with the rules applicable there, after one month, provided that they remained entitled through the former union until then **and no contribution statement has been received by the new union during that month**. When applying for grants from a new ASÍ affiliated union, the applicant shall provide a statement of grants received from the sickness fund of the former ASÍ affiliated union during the previous 36 months.

Current paragraph 1

A person who has acquired an entitlement to daily allowances and death benefits from the sickness fund of one ASÍ or BSRB affiliated union shall acquire that entitlement from the new affiliated union, in accordance with the rules applicable there, after one month, provided that they remained entitled through the former union until then **and no contribution statement has been received by the new union during that month**. When applying for daily allowances or death benefits from the sickness fund of a new ASÍ affiliated union the applicant shall provide a statement of daily allowances and death benefits received from the former sickness fund during the previous 12 months.

Article 49(5), first sentence

The sickness funds of affiliated unions shall guarantee minimum benefits in cases of illness and accident, as set out below, to fund members in respect of whom a 1% contribution has been **received paid—without objection** for at least six months:

The final paragraph shall be deleted.

~~Article 49(4) enters into force on 1 July 2006 in respect of entitlements accrued from 1 January 2006. Confirmation from an actuary or authorised public accountant under Article 49(3) shall be submitted for the first time in 2007 with the annual accounts for the 2006 financial year.~~

Explanatory notes:

The reordering of the paragraphs is based on the fact that paragraph 1 of the current Bylaws concerns the transfer of entitlements between ASÍ and BSRB affiliated unions, whereas paragraph 2 concerns the transfer of entitlements between ASÍ affiliated unions. It is more logical to deal first with transfers within ASÍ and then with transfers to BSRB affiliated unions. The other amendments to the first and second paragraphs are intended to clarify the transfer entitlement. Most affiliated unions follow the literal wording of these paragraphs and simply provide a 30-day entitlement after a transfer, but disputes have arisen where a pay date falls within the first month of employment with a new employer. For example, if a worker starts work for a new employer on 10 December 2025, becomes ill on 15 December 2025, is paid wages on 1 January 2026 and returns to work on 10 January 2026, it could be argued that the worker does not have the full 30-day entitlement from the former union, but only for the period from 15 to 31 December 2025, and then from the new union from 1 to 10 January 2026 because wages have been paid. This has not, however, been the general interpretation of the sickness funds of ASÍ affiliated unions, as contributions are remitted well after wages are paid, and may even fall into arrears. To ensure that no members fall between two stools, it is proposed that the position be stated clearly. As regards the amendment to paragraph 5, cases have arisen where, due to incorrect registration with a trade union, the union that received contributions in respect of a member has denied that member entitlement from its sickness fund, despite full payment of contributions, on the grounds that the member should have belonged to another union. In such cases, there are examples of the union concerned paying to the union to which the person should have belonged an amount equivalent to one month's contributions and advising the member to claim their entitlement there. It is proposed that any doubt be removed by stating in the first sentence of paragraph 5 that a union that receives contributions without objection thereby assumes responsibility for the relevant entitlements and may not refer elsewhere a member who, in good faith, believes that they have entitlements in the funds of the union to which contributions have been remitted. Finally, it is proposed that the commencement provision in the final paragraph be formally deleted from the Bylaws.

Increase in the ASÍ levy for workplace inspections

The first sentence of Article 41(2) is amended to read as follows:

"The annual levy shall be calculated as ~~7.85%~~ **8%** of the combined membership dues income of the union funds of unions and branches within each federation, or of a directly affiliated union, for the preceding calendar year."

Transitional provision:

"The 0.15 percentage-point increase in the annual levy shall enter into force on 1 January 2027 in respect of income for 2026. Before the end of 2027, the Central Committee of ASÍ shall, following discussion at the autumn meeting of chairs in 2027 and after an assessment of the development, implementation and cost of expanded centralised workplace inspections, decide whether to submit to the 2028 ASÍ Congress a proposal for a further increase in the levy to fund centralised workplace inspections."

Explanatory notes

Introduction

The proposal provides for a 0.15 percentage-point increase in the annual levy paid to ASÍ in order to finance the development of expanded centralised workplace inspections by ASÍ.

Key changes: *The levy increases from 7.85% to 8% of membership dues income. The aim is for the increase to partly fund the operation of a new joint inspection system.*

Purpose of the proposal: *To further develop centralised workplace inspections under ASÍ. To increase coordination, professionalism and continuity in workplace inspections. To provide better support to trade unions and strengthen action against labour market violations.*

Current situation and problems: *Inspections are currently carried out mainly by affiliated unions. The scale of inspections fluctuates considerably from year to year. The work is often carried out alongside other duties and can be demanding and risky. There is a lack of coordination and specialisation.*

Proposed solution: *To begin developing and defining the role of a central team of inspection officers at ASÍ. The aim is for inspections to be organised nationwide; carried out in cooperation with affiliated unions; conducted in teams (for safety and professional reasons); and for ASÍ to be responsible for operational management and organisation.*

Division of responsibilities: ASÍ would carry out centralised inspections, coordination and specialisation. Affiliated unions would continue to carry out inspections and be responsible for follow-up on cases.

Benefits: Better and more targeted inspections. Stronger protection of workers against violations. Increased knowledge, cooperation and efficiency. Strengthening of the labour movement and cooperation with public authorities.

Uncertainties: Workplace inspections within ASÍ are based on Article 4 of the Bylaws of the Confederation, which states that an objective of ASÍ is "To provide a forum for joint policy-making and coordination of the work of affiliated organisations."

The statutory powers relating to workplace inspections are vested in inspection officers, cf. Article 3 of the agreement between ASÍ and SA on workplace ID cards and the conduct of workplace inspections. The definitions in the agreement state: "Inspection officer: An employee of a trade union or employers' organisation authorised by the ASÍ-SA Consultative Committee to carry out workplace inspections." Subject to the approval of the ASÍ-SA Consultative Committee under Article 7 of the agreement, employees of trade union organisations may serve as inspection officers. Article 7 states: "Trade unions, their organisations and employers' organisations may request that the ASÍ-SA Consultative Committee designate one of their employees as an inspection officer."

Accordingly, the general rule is that employees of trade unions may serve as inspection officers, while employees of ASÍ may do so only with the approval of the ASÍ-SA Consultative Committee. A prerequisite for establishing uncontested, centralised and effective inspections carried out by ASÍ employees is therefore that the ASÍ-SA Consultative Committee approve them as inspection officers pursuant to Article 7 of the ASÍ-SA agreement.

The development of centralised inspections carried out by ASÍ employees has not been formally raised in the ASÍ-SA Consultative Committee. However, informal communications with SA's chief legal counsel have indicated that no objections are expected. Development of the project can therefore begin. Some uncertainty may nevertheless remain regarding its further development.

Background to the proposal

Following a workshop of the Central Committee in early 2025, the ASÍ office was instructed to develop proposals for centralised workplace inspections within ASÍ. A memorandum on the current arrangements for workplace inspections, the challenges arising from those arrangements and broad proposals for implementation was presented to the Central Committee during the summer and to an ASÍ meeting of chairs in October 2025. The proposals developed further through discussion at those meetings and in light of the views expressed there. More detailed implementation proposals were then presented to the Labour Market Committee and the Central Committee in March 2026.

Main elements of the proposal

The amendment increases ASÍ revenue in order to begin further development of a joint centralised workplace inspection system within ASÍ. The aim is to employ full-time inspection officers at the ASÍ office to carry out workplace inspections throughout the country. Inspections will be prepared and carried out in consultation and cooperation with affiliated unions, particularly for visits outside the Capital Region. Where appropriate, inspection officers will prepare reports following inspection visits and provide them to the relevant trade unions. They will also prepare referrals concerning more serious cases of labour market violations for the cooperation forum against labour market violations led by the Administration of Occupational Safety and Health (VER). Trade unions will continue to be responsible for safeguarding conditions within their organising areas and for following up cases that may arise from workplace inspections in those areas. Centralised workplace inspections should be regarded as an enhanced specialist service for affiliated unions that also strengthens the labour movement in its cooperation with public authorities that carry out labour market enforcement.

The current workplace inspection arrangements, the main challenges and the principal considerations regarding greater centralisation are described below, together with the proposed structure and the role of centralised inspections in relation to trade unions.

Current workplace inspection arrangements

Workplace inspections are based on Act No. 42/2010 on Workplace ID Cards and Workplace Inspections[1]. The Act can be traced back to the 2009 Stability Pact concluded by ASÍ, BHM, BSRB, the Icelandic Teachers' Union, the Federation of Employees of Financial Institutions (SSF), the Confederation of Icelandic Enterprise (SA), the Government and the Icelandic Association of Local Authorities. The purpose of the Act is to "ensure that employers in the domestic labour market and their employees comply with applicable laws, regulations and collective agreements." The Act authorised representatives of ASÍ and SA to carry out workplace inspections. It also authorises inspection officers to call the police, for example if they are denied access to workplaces covered by the Act. Inspection officers may also seek assistance from the Administration of Occupational Safety and Health (VER) if an employer fails to comply with its obligations concerning workplace ID cards, and VER may impose daily fines in such cases.^[1]

In addition to the Act, an agreement between ASÍ and SA[2] further defines how inspections are to be carried out and the sectors covered by the legislation.^[2]

The Act also provides that inspection officers shall transmit information contained on workplace ID cards to the public authorities responsible for labour market enforcement so that those authorities can carry out their own supervisory functions.

During the first years after the Act was adopted in 2010, SA carried out inspections alongside ASÍ and the trade unions. It has been many years since SA withdrew from the practical conduct of inspections, and today this work is carried out solely by the labour movement.

ASÍ authorises individuals to carry out inspections by issuing special inspection officer ID cards. Trade unions nominate representatives, usually staff members but sometimes board members, and submit a request to ASÍ staff, who issue the ID card and provide access to Finn, the registration and data system used for workplace inspections, as well as obtaining a specific confidentiality undertaking from the person concerned. The role of the ASÍ office in relation to inspections currently consists of providing the general framework and various forms of support to inspection officers. ASÍ staff issue and renew inspection officer ID cards, maintain the inspection officers' mailing list, organise training days and other training, hold status meetings on Teams approximately every two weeks, and operate Finn. The ASÍ workplace inspection project manager also assists unions with inspections as required.

Since the workplace inspection legislation was enacted in 2010, inspections have been carried out by trade unions without central operational management or nationwide coordination, although there has generally been considerable cooperation between unions, particularly in the Capital Region. Some unions have employed representatives who work mainly or exclusively on inspections, but it is more common for union office staff to carry out inspections alongside their other duties.

Challenges in the current arrangements

The main challenges facing workplace inspections by ASÍ and the trade unions are, on the one hand, fluctuations in the scale of inspections and, on the other, the demanding working environment faced by inspection officers.

Looking at the scale of inspections, considerable year-to-year fluctuations are evident. The chart below compares the number of companies inspected each year in the period 2018-2025:



The decline in visits caused by gathering restrictions during the coronavirus pandemic is clear between 2019 and 2020. All gathering restrictions were lifted in February 2022 and therefore do not explain developments after that point. Other fluctuations can be attributed, among other things, to experienced inspection officers leaving their posts, while the increase from 2023 can be traced to a trade union in the Capital Region adding one full-time inspection officer. The priorities of trade unions at any given time also have an impact, and it is clear that each full-time inspection officer makes a significant difference in this context.

It should be noted that of the 975 company registrations made in 2025, 325 were made in connection with a tourism inspection campaign organised centrally by ASÍ during the summer. Excluding the tourism campaign, which lasted eight days, there were 650 registrations in 2025, compared with 827 the previous year.

The distribution of company registrations in 2025 is shown below:



The work of inspection officers is both specialised and demanding. Conditions at workplaces vary considerably, and inspection officers need broad knowledge and an understanding of the remedies and resources available. They must also know how to safeguard their own safety. The labour market has become more complex and layered in recent years, and this has, among other things, led to more confrontational interactions between inspection officers and employers. The work therefore requires cooperation and a professional community with others carrying out the same tasks. Under the current arrangements, this is a challenge because inspection officers in many places work alone on their assignments and, as noted above, often carry out inspections alongside other duties at trade union offices. The differing size of trade unions is also relevant: smaller unions cannot maintain one full-time inspection post, let alone several. It is undesirable and not recommended for inspection officers to conduct visits alone, and experience shows that it is often difficult for their colleagues at union offices to free themselves from other duties to accompany them on inspections, as there is generally plenty of work at the office.

Trade unions and their inspection officers have also described challenges in carrying out inspections in small communities where personal proximity is high and people may have daily contact, in other settings, with those being inspected, for example through the local school's parents' association. For this reason, unions have often sought assistance from the ASÍ office and from inspection officers of other unions.

Key considerations regarding greater centralisation

Act No. 42/2010 on Workplace ID Cards and Workplace Inspections assigns the social partners a role and responsibility that can, to some extent, be compared with a public function. Inspection officers are given access to workplaces to inspect workers' terms and conditions and also to transmit information from workplaces to public authorities, principally the Administration of Occupational Safety and

Health, the Directorate of Labour and Iceland Revenue and Customs. It has sometimes been said that inspection officers provide additional eyes and ears for the public authorities in workplaces.

The role of the labour movement in monitoring terms and conditions is also reflected in a number of statutory powers to request information on pay and conditions, for example under the legislation on temporary work agencies, posted workers and the employment rights of foreign nationals.

This arrangement was further strengthened by legislative amendments that entered into force at the beginning of 2025 concerning cooperation and consultation between the social partners and public authorities on measures against labour market violations, which provide that cooperation between public authorities and the social partners in this area shall be formalised.

The arrangements for labour market inspections in Iceland reflect the strong position of the labour movement in Iceland and, to some extent, resemble arrangements in the other Nordic countries, where trade unions have also historically been strong.

However, arrangements for monitoring terms and conditions are by no means the same across the Nordic countries, and the role played by trade unions varies. Broadly speaking, public authorities play a larger role in combating social dumping, exploitation and human trafficking in Finland and Norway than in Denmark and Sweden, where trade unions play a larger role.

As far as can be established, nowhere else in the Nordic countries does the labour movement have a formal and statutory role in labour market inspections comparable to that provided in Iceland by the legislation on workplace ID cards and workplace inspections.

It can be argued that this is a strength of the Icelandic labour market, as experience has shown that inspection officers, as representatives of the labour movement, are well placed to approach workers, particularly migrant workers, and gain their trust. In addition to traditional monitoring of terms, conditions and rights and holding employers to account, the labour movement has extensive experience and knowledge of how to approach victims of exploitation and human trafficking.

Workplace inspections are also important to the labour movement because they create and strengthen its links with workers and provide them with information about their rights and the importance of trade unions.

It is important to safeguard this important role of the labour movement, to carry out inspections responsibly and to exercise carefully the significant authority that comes with the role.

The fight against social dumping, exploitation and human trafficking is in the interests of all workers in Iceland, not only those directly affected by violations. If breaches of collective agreements are allowed to go unchallenged, they undermine

all the rights for which the labour movement has fought over the years. Although violations are certainly more common in some sectors than others, they occur throughout the labour market, and if they are allowed to go unchallenged in one sector there is a risk that they will spread to others.

There are therefore strong arguments for organising workplace inspections for all ASÍ affiliated unions in a coordinated, centralised manner within ASÍ, and for funding and securing their operation in the same way as ASÍ activities generally. The additional posts envisaged by the proposals set out here cannot be accommodated within the current funding of existing activities at the ASÍ office, and additional revenue must therefore be raised, as proposed in the bill to amend Article 41 of the Bylaws of ASÍ.

There is much to be gained from building greater stability and institutional memory around the conduct of workplace inspections in order to secure a foundation for specialised workplace inspections in the future. Inspection officers whom trade unions choose to retain within their own offices will also benefit from increased support from specialised central inspection officers.

It is important that the specialist work of inspection officers is recognised and that more inspection officers have the capacity to focus on inspections and develop their expertise. It is self-evident that not all trade unions can employ one or more representatives whose sole task is inspection work. A specialised team of inspection officers who do not carry out other duties alongside inspections therefore needs to be developed.

With a central inspection team managed by ASÍ in consultation with affiliated unions, it would be easier to make forward plans and organise targeted inspection campaigns in specific sectors. This would enable more systematic data collection and reporting. It would also be easier to tailor training and continuing professional development for inspection officers to current needs, for example in advance of an inspection campaign in a particular sector.

It could be envisaged that unions would receive tailored reports for their organising areas, which could be presented to boards and/or representative councils, published on their websites, and used in other ways.

Proposed structure for centralised workplace inspections

With more inspection officers, it is expected that ASÍ could, over time, provide a minimum level of inspection throughout the country and that the scale of centralised inspections would be greater than at present, measured by registrations in Finn. It is not proposed that unions cease inspections altogether, although some unions can be expected to reduce their own inspection activity accordingly.

It is estimated that two inspection officers can visit 500 companies per year. This estimate is based on the average for the past two years. The calculations assume two-person teams because, for safety reasons, inspection officers generally do not

carry out inspections alone. The estimate is subject to the qualification that central inspection officers based at the ASÍ office will need to travel around the country more than the benchmark figures assume. Distances between workplaces are often greater in rural areas than in the Capital Region, which could result in fewer company registrations. On the other hand, a central team may make it easier to organise joint inspection visits with public authorities, principally the Administration of Occupational Safety and Health but also the police and Iceland Revenue and Customs, thereby making better use of available human resources.

The proposal provides for ASÍ to employ inspection officers to carry out centralised workplace inspections and pay their salaries. The inspection officers will be based at the ASÍ office and work under ASÍ's operational management in accordance with a structure developed in consultation with affiliated unions. This will include inspection trips around the country, with affiliated unions outside the Capital Region providing office facilities where appropriate and where circumstances allow.

The role of inspection officers is to prepare, carry out and follow up workplace inspection visits. During inspections, they provide workers with information on rights, obligations and the role of trade unions, record information in Finn, notify partner authorities of irregularities falling within their remit, and remain alert to indications of exploitation and/or human trafficking. Where appropriate, inspection officers prepare summaries concerning particular companies or workplaces and provide them to the relevant affiliated union or unions, and they submit notifications to public authorities through Finn where a case requires it. In more complex and serious cases, they also prepare written summaries for the cooperation forum led by the Administration of Occupational Safety and Health and keep the relevant trade unions informed of developments as far as possible.

Inspections are generally carried out by a team comprising other ASÍ inspection officers, trade union staff and/or representatives of partner authorities. Working methods, guidance and procedures are based on the experience of the labour movement, while the role and procedures are also expected to develop over the coming months in close cooperation between ASÍ and affiliated unions, particularly with regard to communication and the division of responsibilities between unions and federations.

As regards the institutional framework and the place of centralised inspections within ASÍ's organisational structure, the inspection function could fall under the Labour Market Committee of the Central Committee or a dedicated standing committee of the Central Committee, thereby giving that committee involvement and influence in shaping the inspection function.

Division of responsibilities between ASÍ and the trade unions

The role of trade unions would be to continue carrying out inspections as necessary, for example by following up information that the central ASÍ workplace inspection function is unable to pursue. It would also be desirable for trade union staff to participate from time to time in organised inspection trips with central

inspection officers, since unions know their own organising areas best and it is important to use that knowledge when preparing inspections in each location.

Affiliated unions will receive reports following inspections where there are confirmed or probable breaches of collective agreements or other rules affecting workers' terms and conditions. If a worker contacted by an inspection officer requests assistance with wage calculations and/or a possible wage claim, the trade union will take over the case and refer it to the appropriate staff within the union. In some cases, a follow-up visit may be required shortly afterwards, and it may then be appropriate for the trade union to carry out that follow-up.

Trade unions, and federations where appropriate, will support inspection officers in developing specialisation, including through education and training in consultation with ASÍ. Unions will also designate a contact person in their office for centralised workplace inspections and provide inspection officers with the information necessary to prepare, carry out and follow up inspections, insofar as their powers and circumstances allow.

The role of the ASÍ workplace inspection function would be to conduct inspection visits throughout the country in consultation and cooperation with unions in each region, ensure continuity and coordination, and provide a platform for building specialised knowledge and experience in inspections across different sectors.

ASÍ inspection officers will work according to a structure developed by ASÍ in consultation with affiliated unions. The team will also follow up information received either by ASÍ or the trade unions where possible, although it is clear that the inspection function cannot respond to every report. In such cases, unions will be encouraged to follow up the information themselves, with support and preparation from the ASÍ office as appropriate.

ASÍ inspection officers will receive basic training before beginning their duties and will be trained by carrying out inspections with experienced officers. Specialisation within the team is then envisaged, with particular officers specialising in sectors covered by the collective agreements of unions in Landssamband Íslenzkra verzlunarmanna, the collective agreements of Efling and unions in Starfsgreinasamband Íslands (SGS), and sectors covered by the collective agreements of Fagfélögin and unions in Samiðn. This specialisation will include familiarising themselves in detail with the relevant unions' collective agreements and acting as contacts with those unions' collective bargaining departments, so that information can flow more systematically between them. Consideration could also be given to specialised inspection officers attending meetings of the collective bargaining departments of the largest unions in order to support the flow of information and links between the unions and inspection officers.

A sound framework for communication between central inspection officers and trade unions is essential to effective inspections. The framework can be expected to develop as experience is gained.

ASÍ will continue to provide the administration and training that has so far been available to trade union inspection officers, who will continue to be invited to the status meetings and training days organised by ASÍ.

^[1]<https://www.althingi.is/lagas/nuna/2010042.html>

^[2]https://skirteini.is/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/Vinnustadaeftirlit_vidbotarsamkomulag_2013-2024.pdf

Commencement provision

Article 51 is amended to read as follows:

Article 51

These Bylaws, as last amended at the **476**th Congress 202**64**, enter into force immediately. ~~except for the amendments to Article 49(1), which enter into force on 1 December 2024.~~ At the same time, the previous Bylaws of the Icelandic Confederation of Labour are repealed.