

CONSTITUTION OF THE REPUBLIC OF ICELAND

(No. 33, 17 June 1944, as amended 30 May 1984, 31 May 1991, 28 June 1995 and 24 June 1999)

III.

Article 31

Althingi shall be composed of 63 members elected by the people by secret ballot on the basis of proportional representation for a term of four years.

Electoral districts shall be no fewer than six and no more than seven in number. Their boundaries shall be defined by law; however, the National Election Board may define the boundaries of the electoral districts in Reykjavik and its vicinity.

For each respective electoral district, six seats shall be allocated in accordance with the outcome of elections within that district. The number of parliamentary seats for each electoral district shall in other respects be defined by law, subject however to the provisions of the fifth paragraph.

Seats other than those allocated to the electoral districts shall be distributed within each respective electoral district with the purpose of providing individual political parties with representation reflecting to the fullest possible extent each party's total number of votes. However, only political parties having received at least five per cent of all valid votes cast nation-wide shall be eligible for such distribution.

If the number of voters on the voting register represented by each parliamentary seat, allocated or distributed, becomes in one electoral district one half of the number represented by each parliamentary seat in another electoral district, the National Election Board shall revise the number of seats representing each electoral district with the aim of reducing this difference. This shall be provided for in further detail by law.

Provisions of law relating to election district boundaries and the methods of allocating seats in Parliament can only be amended by a two-thirds majority in Althingi.

Article 32

Sessions of Althingi are held in one chamber.

Article 33

All persons who, on the date of an election, are 18 years of age or older and have Icelandic nationality have the right to vote in elections to Althingi. Permanent domicile in Iceland, on the date of an election, is also a requirement for voting, unless exceptions from this rule are stipulated in the law on elections to Althingi.

Further provisions regarding elections to Althingi shall be laid down in the law on elections.

Article 34

Every national having the right to vote in elections to Althingi and an unblemished reputation is eligible to be elected to Althingi.

Supreme Court Judges, however, are not eligible.

IV.

Article 35

Althingi shall convene for a regular session every year on the 1st of October or, if the day falls on an official holiday, on the following weekday, and continue in session until the same date the following year, unless the election period of Members of Althingi has elapsed earlier or Althingi has been dissolved.

The opening date of the regular session of Althingi may be changed by law.

Article 36

Althingi is inviolate. No person may disturb its peace or violate its freedom.

Article 37

Althingi shall normally convene in Reykjavik, but under special circumstances the President of the Republic may order that Althingi convene at another place in Iceland.

Article 38

Members of Althingi and Ministers are entitled to introduce bills and draft resolutions.

Article 39

Althingi may appoint committees of its Members in order to investigate important matters of public interest. Althingi may grant authority to such committees to request reports, oral or written, from officials as well as from individuals.

Article 40

No tax may be imposed, altered or abolished except by law. Nor may loans, indebting the State, be taken or any real estate belonging to the State or the use thereof sold or in any other way disposed of, except by authority in law.

Article 41

No disbursement may be made unless authorized in the budget or the supplementary budget.

Article 42

A budget proposal for the coming fiscal year, containing a report on the revenue and expenditure of the State, shall be submitted to each regular session of Althingi upon it being convened.

Article 43

The financial accounts of the State, its institutions and administrative bodies, shall be subject to an audit by, or under the supervision of Althingi, as provided by law.

Article 44

No bill may be passed until it has received three readings in Althingi.

Article 45

Regular elections to Althingi shall take place not later than at the end of the electoral term. The beginning and end of the electoral term is on the same day of the week in a month, counting from the beginning of the month.

Article 46

Althingi decides whether its Members are legally elected and also whether a Member has lost eligibility for election to Althingi.

Article 47

Each new Member of Althingi shall take a pledge to uphold the Constitution when his election has been approved.

Article 48

Members of Althingi are bound solely by their conviction and not by any instructions from their constituents.

Article 49

No Member of Althingi may be subjected to custody on remand during a session of Althingi without the consent of Althingi, nor may a criminal action be brought against him unless he is caught in the act of committing a crime.

No Member of Althingi may be held accountable outside Althingi for statements made by him in Althingi, except with the consent of Althingi.

Article 50

If a Member of Althingi loses eligibility for election to Althingi, he forfeits those rights that the election brought him.

Article 51

Ministers are entitled to a seat in Althingi and, by virtue of their office, have the right to participate in its debates as often as they may desire, but they must observe the rules of procedure. They have the right to vote only if they are at the same time Members of Althingi.

Article 52

Althingi elects a President, who presides over its proceedings.

Article 53

Althingi may not take a decision unless a quorum of more than half of its Members are present at the meeting and take part in the voting.

Article 54

Each Member of Althingi may request, subject to the permission of Althingi, information from a Minister or an answer regarding a public matter, by tabling a question or requesting a report.

Article 55

Althingi may not admit for consideration any matter unless introduced by one of its Members or a Minister.

Article 56

Should Althingi not find cause to take a decision on a given matter it can refer it to a Minister.

Article 57

Meetings of Althingi shall be held in public. Nevertheless, the President of Althingi, or the quorum stipulated by the rules of procedure, may request that all those not Members of Althingi be excluded. The meeting shall then decide whether the matter shall be debated in a public or a closed session.

Article 58

The rules of procedure of Althingi shall be determined by law.