

# Election statement

## María Rúnarsdóttir, president of the Icelandic Association of Social Workers

I am nominated for election as an Executive Committee member of IFSW Europe on behalf of the Icelandic Association of Social Workers.

I graduated as a social worker in 1998 and have since then been working most of the time in strategical planning for the City of Reykjavík. Since 2012, I have been the president of the Icelandic Association of Social Workers. I want to involve Icelandic Social Workers in more social action and to share experiences with Social Workers from all over Europe. I think it is important for Social Workers to be proactive in terms of social policy making because social workers have good knowledge on where social actions are needed the most. Social Workers all over Europe have common experiences despite cultural and/ or traditional differences in our societies.

I was elected a member of IFSW European Executive in September 2015 and my main projects have been the preparation of the 2017 IFSW European Conference that is held in Iceland in May 2017. In 2015 I proposed that IFSW Europe established a network for social workers in Europe working with refugees. At the DM Meeting in Reykjavík, I want to discuss by which means IFSW Europe can build the network and what should be the main aims and projects.

I am interested in continuing my work in IFSW Europe Executive. I think it is interesting to be involved in Social Work at a European level and hope that I can be of some use in the work of IFSW Europe will I get your vote.

Yours sincerely, María Rúnarsdóttir, president of IASW.

# María Rúnarsdóttir – CV

Born on the 11<sup>th</sup> of December 1971

Living and working in Reykjavík Iceland

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## Board Experience

I have experience in being on several Boards ever since I started studying Social Work at the University in Iceland in 1994.

I was on the Student Board as well as the student 's member of the Social Work Faculty Board at the University in Iceland.

When I graduated, I became a member of the Icelandic Association of Social Workers Board as well a member of the Union Committee in charge of Wage Setting Negotiations.

In my work for Reykjavík City I worked closely with the politicians on strategical planning and I have been working for a Steering Committee appointed by politicians in charge of transferring the services for People with Disability from the State to the Local Government, Reykjavik City. I also worked as a project manager for politicians in Reykjavik on services for Immigrants in policy planning.

## Other Work experience

I have been the President of the Icelandic Association of Social Workers since 2012. IASW is the professional association for social workers as well as the union for the profession. For the last 3-4 years, there has been major swifts in the Icelandic Working Market and ongoing wage negotiation.

IASW members are nearly 500 including students and retired social workers. The Association hosts a yearly conference with 350 participants where social workers and others discuss the several issues of social work and recent developments in welfare services. IASW

Before I was elected the president of IASW, I worked for the City of Reykjavik, since my graduation in 1998. In my work for Reykjavik City I have extended experience in Social Planning especially on Housing, Financial Assistance, Rehabilitation and Services for People with Disability. I also participated in planning the services of the Capital and now Reykjavík has six Service Centres in charge of all family and social Services in the specific area.

I have participated in two European Projects funded by the Leonardo da Vinci Program, both referring to better services for People with Disability and more involvement of users themselves.

I have also been a member of a Nordic Collaboration on Public Transports for People with Disabilities.

In 2010-2012 I was leading the Transference of the services for People with Disability from the State to Reykjavík City.

## Education

I qualified as a Social Worker from the University of Iceland in 1998, with a Bachelor's degree in Pedagogy. I have started a MA study in Social Work with focus on the Working Market. I have participated in several seminars on negotiations, project management and strategical planning.