

Information for voting on the amalgamation of Reykjavik's municipal employees' association and the Union of Public Servants

Electronic voting will take place from 12:00 November 6 till 12:00 November 9 2018

WHAT DOES THE AMALGAMATION INVOLVE?

DEAR MEMBERS

Ever since 1997, Reykjavik's Municipal Employees' Association (Starfsmannafélag Reykjavíkurborgar) and the Union of Public Servants (SFR) have worked extensively together on many projects. These include training of union representatives, publication of newsletters, cooperation in wage agreements, training for members, entertainment, cultural events, wage surveys and selection of Institution of the Year, along with general services to members. The unions have much in common and thus the question of amalgamation has often cropped up in recent years. The excellent cooperation has certainly played a major role, none less than the necessity of forming a larger and stronger trade union to take on agreements concerning the wages and rights of members in coming years. A large amalgamated union would be stronger in this arena.

Over the last year, a great deal of work has been carried out on investigating the advantage of amalgamating the unions. The matter has been discussed at committee meetings of the unions as well as joint meetings of union representatives and representative bodies, while special forums have been held with members. As a continuation of this work, it has now been decided to present the matter to members and to put the decision on amalgamation in their hands with a referendum, November 6-9, 2018.

All members of Reykjavik's Municipal Employees' Association and the Union of Public Servants receive this leaflet. Amalgamation of the unions is a major issue and it is essential that all members study it carefully. We encourage you to do that and take part in the coming ballot.

The vote, which will be electronic, starts at 12 noon on November 6 and ends at 12 noon on November 9.

WHAT DOES AN AMALGAMATED TRADE UNION MEAN?

The fundamental role of trade unions is to take care of the interests of their members, advance their living standards, and provide their members with support and top-rate service. When amalgamation is examined, it is important to look primarily at the key operations of the unions before implementation of individual items is decided. The following should be kept in mind when taking a position:

- Amalgamation means a larger and stronger union for lobbying. The strength lies in the numbers.
- The labour market and future projects call for well-organised, strong trade unions.
- The unions have similar social structures and the same interests. Decades of experience of excellent extensive cooperation will be well utilised in an amalgamated union.
- The employees' joint knowledge provides opportunities for more specialisation and increased services for members.
- Amalgamation means the operation will be more cost-efficient.

WHAT ABOUT WAGE AGREEMENTS AND RIGHTS?

Members will have the same wage agreements as before amalgamation and maintain their collectively agreed rights.

All members will maintain their social rights that they have acquired in their trade union. This applies equally to rights to grants from union funds as to vacation points.

SERVICES TO MEMBERS

In an amalgamated union, emphasis will be put on increased services to members. The joint knowledge of employees provides an opportunity for more specialisation and increased services for members.

It will be possible to split the office into several divisions that will reflect the roles and tasks of the new union, for instance with a special service division, a wage division, an education and information division, and a law and rights' division.

AN AMALGAMATED UNION COULD LOOK LIKE THIS

- The number of members of an amalgamated union would be about 10,300.
- The assets of union funds would be valued at around **613,500,000 kr.**
- The assets of industrial dispute funds would be valued at around 1.5 billion kr.
- The assets of vacation funds would be valued at around one billion kr.
- The annual turnover of vocational training funds and sickness benefit/endowment funds would be about **614,000,000 kr.**
- Vacation cottages and apartments, **3** of which would be in Spain.

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Further information can be found on the websites of the unions **strvs.is** and **sfr.is**.