



**Proposals from the VR Board for amendments
to the union's bylaws**

VR's Annual General Meeting 26 March 2025

Proposal no. 1

Article 1 Name, Area of operation

Current wording:

The name of the union is VR, and it is the labour union of employees in commerce, services and offices. Its area covers the legal venue of Reykjavík, Kópavogur, Hafnarfjörður, Garðabær, Seltjarnarnes, Mosfellsbær, Kjósahreppur, Reykjanesbær, Grindavíkurbær, Suðurnesjabær, Sveitarfélagið Vogar, Vestmannaeyjar, Árnessýsla, Rangárvallasýsla, Vestur-Skaftafellssýsla, Húnaþing vestra, Akranes, Hvalfjarðarsveit, Langanes region, Vopnafjörður county, Múlaþing, Fljótsdals county and Fjarðarbyggð region. The residence and venue of the union is in Reykjavík.

Revised wording:

The name of the union is VR, and it is the labour union **for retail, service, and office workers, specialists, and managers**. Its area covers the legal venue of Reykjavík, Kópavogur, Hafnarfjörður, Garðabær, Seltjarnarnes, Mosfellsbær, Kjósahreppur, Reykjanesbær, Grindavíkurbær, Suðurnesjabær, Sveitarfélagið Vogar, Vestmannaeyjar, Árnessýsla, Rangárvallasýsla, Vestur-Skaftafellssýsla, Húnaþing vestra, Akranes, Hvalfjarðarsveit, Langanes region, Vopnafjörður county, Múlaþing, Fljótsdals county and Fjarðarbyggð region. The residence and venue of the union is in Reykjavík.

Proposal no. 2

Article 2 Object, paragraph 1

Current wording:

The object of the union is to strengthen and support the interests of commercial, service and office workers in the area where it operates by working on the advancement of issues that may improve the rights, culture and conditions of wage earners in the country.

Revised wording:

The object of the union is to strengthen and support the interests of commercial, service and office workers, **specialists and managers** in the area where it operates by working on the advancement of issues that may improve the rights, culture and conditions of wage earners in the country.

Proposal no. 3

Article 3 Membership, paragraph 1

Current wording:

The union is open to all commercial, service and office workers.

Revised wording:

The union is open to all commercial, service, and office workers, **specialists, and managers, both university-educated and others.**

Explanation for proposals No. 1, 2 and 3.

It is considered appropriate to clarify who can be a member of VR. The current bylaws state that members can be those working in retail, service, and office jobs. Many office workers within the union are specialists in various fields, so it is deemed necessary to emphasize that the union is open to specialists.

Furthermore, the union has always been open to all office workers, including managers, but it is also considered important to explicitly state this in the bylaws.

VR is open to all office workers, regardless of job title or education. Over time, job roles have evolved, and new job titles have emerged for office workers within the union. Educational requirements have also changed—for instance, a university degree is now required in roles where a commercial diploma was previously sufficient for office workers. Therefore, it is considered necessary to clarify that the union is open to all, regardless of their educational background.

Proposal no. 4

Article 3, paragraph 2

Current wording:

Membership is open to those who work in the area of operation of the union as wage earners or are independently employed in the labour market..

Revised wording:

Membership is open to those who work in the area of operation of the union as wage earners **under the VR collective agreement** or are independently employed **within VR's field.**

Explanation for proposal No. 4.

Union membership is based on VR's field of work, as stated in Articles 2 and 3 of the bylaws. It is important to emphasize this requirement so that members are employed under the collective agreements negotiated by the union.

Proposal no. 5

Article 3, paragraph 3

Current wording:

Members who lose their jobs in the labour market can continue as members in exchange for the payment of union dues out of payments from the Unemployment Insurance Fund where it acts as intermediary in deducting the dues and remitting to VR. If they are not members of VR at the beginning of unemployment benefits, they need to have paid dues to VR not less than 36 months over the past five years before the application of unemployment benefits.

Revised wording:

Members who lose their jobs in the labour market can continue as members in exchange for the payment of union dues out of payments from the Unemployment Insurance Fund where it acts as intermediary in deducting the dues and remitting to VR. If they are not members of VR at the beginning of unemployment benefits, they need to have paid dues to VR not less than 36 months over the past five years before the application of unemployment benefits. **The same applies to members who receive payments from the Parental Leave Fund.**

Explanation for proposal no. 5

It is proposed that members on parental leave should have the same rights as those receiving payments from the Unemployment Insurance Fund.

Proposal no. 6

Article 6 Cancellation, paragraph 2

Current wording:

Persons who cease working as a wage earner in commerce, services or offices or begins employment under auspices of other unions, shall be removed from the membership register.

Revised wording:

Persons who ~~cease working as a wage earner in commerce, services or offices or~~ begin employment under auspices of other unions, shall be removed from the membership register.

Explanation for proposal No. 6.

In light of proposals that clarify the scope of VR members' fields of work in several provisions of the bylaws, it is proposed that this article should not specify particular fields of work. Instead, it should state that anyone who takes up employment outside VR's field of work and falls under the jurisdiction of another trade union should be removed from the union's membership register.

Proposal no. 7

Article 10 The Board, paragraph 1

Current wording:

The Board of the union shall consist of 15 principal members and three alternates. The chairman shall be elected for a term of four years. Other principal members shall be elected 7 at a time for a term of four years, thus 7 members alternately leave the Board every other year. Alternates shall be elected for two years at a time. If a Board member leaves employment in commerce, services or offices or begins employment under the auspices of another union, a member shall be elected in his/her place at the first Board meeting thereafter. The Board of the union shall set its own Rules of Procedure. The Board elects a vice chairman and secretary and allocates its tasks in other respects.

Revised wording:

The Board of the union shall consist of 15 principal members and three alternates. The chairman shall be elected for a term of four years. Other principal members shall be elected 7 at a time for a term of four years, thus 7 members alternately leave the Board every other year. Alternates shall be elected for two years at a time. ~~If a Board member leaves employment in commerce, services or offices or begins employment under the auspices of another union, a member shall be elected in his/her place at the first Board meeting thereafter.~~ The Board of the union shall set its own Rules of Procedure. The Board elects a vice chairman and secretary and allocates its tasks in other respects.

Explanation for proposal No. 7.

The provision stating that a board member must step down if they no longer work within VR's field of work is repeated in the bylaws—both in Article 10 and in Article 11, which covers broader eligibility criteria for board members. The provision in Article 11, requiring a board member to step down if they no longer meet eligibility requirements, was amended at VR's 2024 annual meeting to also cover eligibility related to the union's field of work. Previously, it addressed financial independence, ownership stakes in companies, positions within companies, and whether the board member had been convicted of a criminal offense. Since this is not a substantive change, it is proposed that the provision be removed from Article 10 while remaining unchanged in Article 11.

Proposal no. 8

Article 11 The qualifications of Board members

Current wording:

Board members according to Article 10 and, as applicable, Board members of funds according to paragraph 3 of Article 26 shall be employed in the area of operation of the union. The same rule applies to other elected representatives on the union's boards and councils. A Board member shall be financially independent and may not, in the past 5 years, have suffered a judgement for a punishable offence. Board members may not own more than a 5% share in a company operating in the area covered by the union. The same applies even if their share of ownership is less than 5%, if the spouse of a Board member or his/her children have a controlling share in such a company. Board members may not be employed as managing directors of a company, institution or organization where they have the same legal position as if they were the employer. Board members who cease to qualify according to the above during the term of office are automatically and immediately removed from the Board and replaced by their alternates until the end of the term. The same rule applies to other elected representatives in the union's boards and councils. Candidates for the Board of VR shall fulfil the above qualifications before the candidacy deadline, cf. 20.3, paragraph 3, taking into account paragraph 7 the same article.

Revised wording:

Board members according to Article 10 and, as applicable, Board members of funds according to paragraph 3 of Article 26 shall be employed in the area of operation of the union. The same rule applies to other elected representatives on the union's boards and councils. A Board member shall be financially independent and may not, in the past 5 years, have suffered a judgement for a punishable offence. Board members may not own more than a 5% share in a company operating in the area covered by the union. The same applies even if their share of ownership is less than 5%, if the spouse of a Board member or his/her children have a controlling share in such a company. Board members may not be employed as managing directors of a company, institution or organization where they have the same legal position as if they were the employer. **Board members who lose eligibility as stated above during their term or resign from the board shall automatically and immediately step down, and alternates shall take their place until the next board elections.** The same rule applies to other elected representatives in the union's boards and councils. Candidates for the Board of VR shall fulfil the above qualifications before the candidacy deadline, cf. 20.3, paragraph 4, taking into account paragraph 7 the same article.

Explanation for proposal No. 8.

The requirement that board members or the chair must step down immediately applies only to those who lose their eligibility based on the criteria outlined in the article. However, the same requirement—that a board member must automatically and immediately step down—should also apply to those who resign from the board. It is only logical that they must vacate their position immediately. Therefore, it is proposed that this be explicitly added to the article.

Additionally, it is proposed that alternates replace board members who must step down and that they serve until the next board elections, regardless of the original board member's term length. If the term of the departing board member has not ended by the next board election, additional full board members will be elected in accordance with the remaining term length of the departing member. If additional board members are elected under these circumstances, they shall rank below those elected for full terms. **Example:** Seven board members are to be elected for four-year terms. If one board member with two years remaining on their term resigns, the seven candidates who receive the most votes, considering gender balance, will be elected for four-year terms. The next candidate in line will be elected for a two-year term, followed by the alternates.

In the last sentence of the article, an incorrect reference to Paragraph 3, Article 20.3 is corrected.

Proposal no. 9

Article 13 Board meetings, paragraph 1

Current wording:

The Board holds meetings as often as needed, and all meeting activity shall be recorded in a special book of minutes. A meeting is lawful when a majority of Board members attends a meeting. The chairman convenes meetings and chairs them. The chairman sees to it that a book of minutes is kept and preserved in a safe manner.

Revised wording:

The Board holds meetings as often as needed, and all meeting activity shall be recorded in a special book of minutes, **in accordance with the board's current rules of procedure**. A meeting is lawful when a majority of Board members attends a meeting. The chairman convenes meetings and chairs them. **The Board Secretary** sees to it that a book of minutes is kept and preserved in a safe manner.

Explanation for proposal 9.

The board's rules of procedure specify how meeting minutes should be recorded. This proposal suggests adjusting the wording of the paragraph to align more closely with the board's rules. The rules specify that the secretary is responsible for ensuring that minutes are recorded and preserved. It is proposed that this wording be updated accordingly for consistency.

Proposal no. 10

Article 14 Consultative Council, paragraph 2

Current wording:

The Consultative Council shall consist of the Board and their alternates, the board of the Youth Council of VR, the chairman of the VR Senior Citizens 'Council, the departmental boards that are created with the merger of other commercial employee unions of the regions and 82 representatives elected in a general election for a term of four years at a time. The chairman of the union is also the chairman of the Consultative Council, and he/she convenes it to a meeting at least 4 times a year and as needed.

Revised wording:

The Consultative Council shall consist of the Board and their alternates, **the Youth Council of VR**, the Chair of **the board of the VR Senior Citizens 'Council** the departmental boards that are created with the merger of other commercial employee unions of the regions and 82 representatives elected in a general election for a term of four years at a time. If the Chair of the Seniors' Council does not meet the eligibility requirements according to Article 3 of VR's bylaws, they shall have the right to speak and propose motions at Consultative Council meetings but not the right to vote. The Chairperson of the union also serves as the Chair of the Consultative Council and convenes meetings **as needed or when at least four Board members or 15 representatives from the Consultative Council submit a written request for a meeting.**

Explanation for proposal 10.

Two corrections to a resolution from the 2024 Annual General Meeting, namely that the Youth Council is granted full membership in the Consultative Council, as the Youth Council does not have an actual board. Previously, it was stipulated that only the board of the Youth Council would sit in the Consultative Council. Secondly, it is corrected that the representative of senior members in the council is the Chair of the Senior Council, not the Senior Division.

Regarding the eligibility of the Chair of the Senior Council, Article 2 of the Senior Council's rules states: *"The VR Senior Council is appointed every other year, with three members elected by members aged 65 and older, for a two-year term, along with two alternates."*

Paragraph 5 of Article 3 of VR's bylaws on membership states: *"Senior members receiving an old-age pension who have been members of the union for at least five consecutive years before retiring shall remain VR members but do not have eligibility for election."*

Thus, senior members of VR, as defined in Article 3 of the bylaws, do not have eligibility for the Consultative Council but may run for the Senior Council according to its rules. However, the Chair of the Senior Council automatically sits on the Consultative Council. This proposal suggests that in cases where the Chair of the Senior Council is a senior member as defined in Article 3 of VR's bylaws, they

shall have the right to speak and submit proposals at Consultative Council meetings but shall not have voting rights.

Proposal no. 11

Article 15 Departments

Current wording:

The Board of the union is authorised to operate departments within the union by professions/sectors and regions. The role of a department is, inter alia, to promote the joint interests of employees in professions/sectors and regions, support their education and deal with wage issues for the professions/sectors and regions. The Board of a department is elected at a departmental meeting. A departmental Board is composed of not less than 3 members who divide tasks amongst them, and alternates shall be equal in number. The term of office is 4 years. The departmental Board can receive funds pursuant to the further decision of the Board of the union to use for purposes of education and culture within the profession. A department shall set further rules of operation for itself that the Board of the union confirms.

Revised wording:

The Board of the union is authorised to operate departments within the union by professions/sectors and regions. The role of a department is, inter alia, to promote the joint interests of employees in professions/sectors and regions, support their education and deal with wage issues for the professions/sectors and regions. The Board of a department is elected at **an annual meeting**. A departmental Board is composed of not less than 3 members who divide tasks amongst them, and alternates shall be equal in number. The term of office is **two** years. The departmental Board can receive funds pursuant to the further decision of the Board of the union to use for purposes of education and culture within **the department**. A department shall set further rules of operation for itself that the Board of the union confirms.

Explanation for proposal 11.

Three changes are proposed here. First, it is proposed that the department board be elected at the annual meeting rather than at a department meeting, in order to align the bylaws with the actual election process in the departments. The second change concerns the length of the term for department boards. At the 2024 Annual General Meeting, it was approved to extend the term for the Chair, Board, and Consultative Council of VR. This change was also applied to the union's departments. The VR Board now proposes reverting this change, as a four-year term may be too long for department boards. It has been challenging to staff department boards, and this difficulty may increase now that the term length has been extended.

And last, a correction is made to the wording of the sentence regarding the allocation of department funds, which currently states that the board has funds at its disposal for educational and cultural matters within the profession. The correct wording is that department boards may allocate these funds for educational and cultural matters within the department.

Proposal no. 12

Article 20. On the election of the chairman and the Board, paragraph 1

Current wording:

The Chairman shall be elected in individual elections every four years. Seven Board members shall be elected every year for a term of four years and three alternate members for a term of one year in individual elections.

Revised wording:

The Chairman shall be elected in individual elections every four years. Seven Board members shall be elected **every other year** for a term of four years and three alternate members for a term of years in individual elections.

Explanation for proposal 12.

A mistake occurred when changes were made to the bylaws at the 2024 Annual General Meeting, as this paragraph was not updated in line with those changes. This is now corrected here.

Proposal no. 13

Article 20. On the election of the Consultative Council, paragraph 1

Current wording:

Every other year an election shall take place to elect 41 representatives in a list election for the Consultative Council for a term of four years. If a Council member becomes unqualified to sit on the Council, cf. paragraph 3, Article 11, during the first year after his/her election, the vacancies in the next Council election shall be increased in excess of the 41 in accordance with the vacancies that have emerged with members being disqualified. Those who thereby are added to the list of candidates shall nonetheless only sit for a term of one year.

Revised wording:

Every other year an election shall take place to elect 41 representatives in a list election for the Consultative Council for a term of four years. If a Council member becomes unqualified to sit on the Council, cf. paragraph 3, Article 11, during the first year after his/her election, the vacancies in the next Council election shall be increased in excess of the 41 in accordance with the vacancies that have emerged with members being disqualified. Those who thereby are added to the list of candidates shall nonetheless only sit for a term of **two years**.

Explanation for proposal 13.

A mistake occurred when changes were made to the bylaws at the 2024 Annual General Meeting, as this paragraph was not updated in line with those changes. This is now corrected here.

Proposal no. 14

Article 20.3 On ballots and the ranking on lists, paragraph 4

Current wording:

Candidacies shall be submitted to the office of the union with names and ID numbers (kennitala) of the candidates. The written endorsement of 15 members are needed for candidacies for the Board. A written endorsement of 50 members is needed for the candidate for chairman.

Revised wording:

Candidacies shall be submitted to the **Election Committee** of the union with names and ID numbers (kennitala) of the candidates. The written endorsement of 15 members are needed for candidacies for the Board. A written endorsement of 50 members is needed for the candidate for chairman. **Candidacy documents may be submitted to the Election Committee in paper form at the union's offices or electronically.**

Explanation for proposal 14.

Candidacies must be submitted to the Election Committee, and this is reiterated in this amendment. It is also proposed that candidacy documents may be submitted in paper form at the union's offices across the country or in electronic form, i.e., scanned and sent electronically to the Election Committee.

Proposal no. 15

Article 20.3 The implementation of elections, paragraph 10

This article discusses the start of elections; the wording in the English translation is precise and does not require any changes.

Proposal no. 16

Article 20.3 Election of representatives to the **congresses** of The Commercial Federation of Iceland and The Icelandic Confederation of Labour

Current wording:

A general election is authorised to be held for representatives to the congress of The Commercial Federation of Iceland and to the annual meeting of the Icelandic Confederation of Labour, and it shall be held in accordance with the regulations of the Federation of Labour in this respect.

Revised wording:

A general election is authorised to be held for representatives to the **congresses** of The Commercial Federation of Iceland and The Icelandic Confederation of Labour, and it shall be held in accordance with the regulations of the Federation of Labour in this respect.

Explanation for proposal 16.

The Icelandic Confederation of Labour holds a congress every other year, not an annual meeting, and this is updated here, both in the title of the article and in the text.

Proposal no. 17

Article 23 Annual General meetings, paragraph 1

Current wording:

The annual general meeting of the union shall be held before the end of April each year and no later than 14 days after the election to the Board has taken place. The meeting shall be advertised on the web sites of the union and the largest news media sites or in another verifiable way or in another proven manner with a notice of at least 10 days. The union's Board may hold the Annual General Meeting online in part or in full and shall ensure that non-discrimination is observed among the participants of the meeting, whether they attend the meeting on site or online. The online participation of members in such web-based Annual General Meetings shall always be confirmed by approved electronic identifiers. The annual general meeting shall possess the highest authority in matters of the union.

Revised wording:

The annual general meeting of the union shall be held before the end of **March** each year and no later than 14 days after the election to the Board has taken place. The meeting shall be advertised on the web sites of the union and the largest news media sites or in another verifiable way or in another proven manner with a notice of at least 10 days. The union's Board may hold the Annual General Meeting online in part or in full and shall ensure that non-discrimination is observed among the participants of the meeting, whether they attend

the meeting on site or online. The online participation of members in such web-based Annual General Meetings shall always be confirmed by approved electronic identifiers. The annual general meeting shall possess the highest authority in matters of the union.

Explanation for proposal 17

In VR's bylaws, Article 20.3, Paragraph 9, on the execution of elections, it states: "Elections for trustee positions in the union shall be completed no later than March 15 each year." In VR's bylaws, Article 23, on annual general meetings, it states: "The union's annual general meeting shall be held before the end of April each year and no later than 14 days after the board elections have taken place." It is clear that the annual general meeting must always be held in March, and this is corrected here.

Proposal no. 18

Article 24 The agenda of the Annual General Meeting

Current wording:

The agenda of the annual general meeting shall be as follows:

1. Election of a meeting chairman.
2. Election of a meeting secretary.
3. Report of the Board on the activities of the union for the past year.
4. Accounts of the union for the past year presented for approval.
5. Amendments to laws and regulations if presented.
6. The declaration of the Board and the Consultative Council.
7. The election of a chartered auditor and audit firm as well as two examiners from the union.
8. Determination of dues.
9. Determination of Board member pay.
10. Other issues.

Revised wording:

The agenda of the annual general meeting shall be as follows:

1. Election of a meeting chairman.
2. Election of a meeting secretary.
3. Report of the Board on the activities of the union for the past year.
4. Accounts of the union for the past year presented for approval.
5. Amendments to laws and regulations if presented.
6. The declaration of the **Chairman**, Board and the Consultative Council, **when appropriate**.
7. The election of a chartered auditor and audit firm as well as two examiners from the union.
8. Determination of dues.
9. Determination of Board member pay.

10. Other issues.

Explanation for proposal 15

The election of the Chairpeson is announced at the annual general meeting when the election for Chairperson takes place. In accordance with amendments to VR's bylaws regarding terms of office, which were approved at the 2024 Annual General Meeting, the Chairperson is elected every four years, while board members are elected every two years, with half of the board and three alternates elected each time. Since the election of the Chairpeson is specifically announced at the annual general meeting, it is proposed that this be included in the agenda of the meeting when it is advertised, as applicable

Proposal no. 19

Article 25 Meetings of the union

This article discusses the muntres of elections; the wording in the English translation is precise and does not require any changes.

Proposals from the VR Board for Amendments to the union's laws due to the merger of VR and Leiðsögn

The proposals below assume that the previous proposals have been approved.

Proposal no. 20

Article 1 Name, Area of operation

Current wording:

The name of the union is VR, and it is the labour union of employees in commerce, services and offices. Its area covers the legal venue of Reykjavík, Kópavogur, Hafnarfjörður, Garðabær, Seltjarnarnes, Mosfellsbær, Kjósahreppur, Reykjanesbær, Grindavíkurbær, Suðurnesjabær, Sveitarfélagið Vogar, Vestmannaeyjar, Ánessýsla, Rangárvallasýsla, Vestur-Skaftafellssýsla, Húnaþing vestra, Akranes, Hvalfjarðarsveit, Langanes region, Vopnafjörður county, Múlaþing, Fljótsdals county and Fjarðarbyggð region. The residence and venue of the union is in Reykjavík.

Revised wording:

The name of the union is VR, and it is the labour union for retail, service, and office workers, **guides**, specialists, and managers. Its area covers the legal venue of Reykjavík, Kópavogur, Hafnarfjörður, Garðabær, Seltjarnarnes, Mosfellsbær, Kjósahreppur, Reykjanesbær, Grindavíkurbær, Suðurnesjabær, Sveitarfélagið Vogar, Vestmannaeyjar, Ánessýsla, Rangárvallasýsla, Vestur-Skaftafellssýsla, Húnaþing vestra, Akranes, Hvalfjarðarsveit, Langanes region, Vopnafjörður county, Múlaþing, Fljótsdals county and Fjarðarbyggð region. **The jurisdiction of tourist guides in VR covers the entire country.** The residence and venue of the union is in Reykjavík.

Explanation for proposal 20.

VR's jurisdiction now covers areas where the union operates and/or maintains offices. Due to the merger with Leiðsögn, it is necessary to revise this definition, as Leiðsögn's jurisdiction extends nationwide. It is therefore proposed that VR's jurisdiction cover the entire country for members working under the tourist guides' collective agreement with SA. Additionally, tourist guides are added to the list of job titles within the union's scope.

Proposal no. 21

Article 2 Object

Current wording:

The object of the union is to strengthen and support the interests of commercial, service and office workers in the area where it operates by working on the advancement of issues that may improve the rights, culture and conditions of wage earners in the country.

Revised wording:

The object of the union is to strengthen and support the interests of commercial, service and office workers, **guides**, specialists and managers in the area where it operates by working on the advancement of issues that may improve the rights, culture and conditions of wage earners in the country.

Proposal no. 22

Article 3 Membership

Current wording:

The union is open to all commercial, service and office workers.

Revised wording:

The union is open to all commercial, service, and office workers, **guides**, specialists, and managers, both university-educated and others.

Explanation for proposals 21 and 22.

The merger of VR and Leiðsögn calls for a revision of the union's scope, and tourist guides are added here.

Proposal no. 23

Article 2 Membership, paragraph 10

Current wording:

Those who are self-employed can become members with limited rights according to the rules of individual funds but are not eligible to stand for office in the union. Self-employed persons and / or business owners are not entitled to vote on collective agreements or strikes.

Revised wording:

Those who are self-employed can become members with limited rights according to the rules of individual funds. **They do not have eligibility for election within the union but may run for a seat on the board of the tourist guides' department.** Self-employed persons and / or business owners are not entitled to vote on collective agreements or strikes.

Explanation for proposal 19

A large portion of the tourist guides who will form the tourist guides' department in VR are self-employed. It is important that self-employed tourist guides can actively participate in the department's work.

However, since self-employed individuals in VR generally do not have eligibility for election according to Article 3 of the union's bylaws, it is proposed that self-employed tourist guides be granted an exception to this provision when it comes to holding a seat on the board of the tourist guides' department.