

= Icelandic Naming Committee =

The Icelandic Naming Committee (Icelandic : Mannanafnanefnd ; pronounced [?man?a?napna?n?mt]) ? also known in English as the Personal Names Committee ? maintains an official register of approved Icelandic given names and governs the introduction of new given names into the culture of Iceland .

= = Composition and mission = =

The Naming Committee was established in 1991 to determine whether new given names not previously used in Iceland are suitable for integration into the country 's language and culture . The committee comprises three appointees who serve for four years , appointed by the Minister of Justice ? one to be nominated by the Icelandic Language Committee , one by the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Iceland , and one by the university 's Faculty of Law .

A name not already on the official list of approved names must be submitted to the naming committee for approval . A new name is considered for its compatibility with Icelandic tradition and for the likelihood that it might cause the bearer embarrassment . Under Article 5 of the Personal Names Act , names must be compatible with Icelandic grammar (in which all nouns , including proper names , have grammatical gender and change their forms in an orderly fashion according to the language 's case system) . Names must also contain only letters occurring in the Icelandic alphabet , and with only occasional exceptions , a name 's grammatical gender must match the sex of the person bearing the name .

As of the end of 2012 , the Personal Names Register (Icelandic : Mannanafnaskrá) contained 1 @, @ 712 male names and 1 @, @ 853 female names .

= = Controversies = =

= = = Jón Gnarr = = =

Jón Gnarr , former mayor of Reykjavík , protested the committee 's denial of his request to legally drop " Kristinnsson " from his name despite his desire to disassociate himself from his father . Jón pointed out that if Robert Mugabe moved to Iceland , as a foreigner he would be allowed to keep that non @-@ conforming name , but that native Icelanders were not allowed to have non @-@ conforming names . He was also unable to legally name his daughter " Camilla " after her grandmother ; it was instead spelled " Kamilla " because C is not part of the Icelandic alphabet . Jón was allowed to legally change his name in 2015 .

= = = Blær Bjarkardóttir Rúnarsdóttir = = =

The committee refused to allow Blær Bjarkardóttir Rúnarsdóttir (born in 1997) to be registered under the name given to her as a baby , on the grounds that the masculine noun Blær (" gentle breeze " in Icelandic) could be used only as a man 's name . Blær ? identified in official records as Stúlka (" girl " in Icelandic) ? and her mother , Björk Eiðsdóttir , challenged the committee 's decision in court , arguing that Blær had been used by Nobel Prize ? winning Icelandic author Halldór Laxness as the name of a female character in his 1957 novel The Fish Can Sing (Brekkukotsannáll) . One other woman in Iceland was already registered at the time with the name Blær , and two declensions (sets of case forms) ? one masculine and one feminine ? exist for the name .

On 31 January 2013 , the Reykjavík district court ruled in the family 's favour and overruled the naming committee , finding that Blær could in fact be both a man 's and a woman 's name and that Blær had a constitutional right to her own name , and rejecting government claims that it was necessary to deny her request in order to protect the Icelandic language . After the court 's decision

, Iceland 's interior minister confirmed that the government would accept the ruling and would not appeal the case to the country 's Supreme Court . The chair of the naming committee , as well as a spokesman for the Ministry of the Interior , said the ruling in Blær 's case could prompt the government to revisit the current laws on personal names .

= = = Duncan and Harriet Cardew = = =

The committee refused to accept the names of Duncan and Harriet Cardew ? Icelandic @-@ born children of a British father and an Icelandic mother ? because their names did not meet the criteria for being added to the registry of approved names . The children had originally used passports with the substitute names Drengur (boy) and Stúlka (girl) ; however , in 2014 , Icelandic authorities refused to renew Harriet 's passport at all without a legally acceptable name . Since the Cardews were about to travel to France , they obtained emergency British passports for Duncan and Harriet ; the parents also announced they would file a formal complaint objecting to the naming committee 's rejection of their children 's names and the passport office 's refusal to renew their Icelandic passports . The Cardews announced in June 2016 that they had won their case and their children 's names would be recognised . As a result of this case , the Icelandic Interior Ministry announced it had begun the legislative process to abolish the Naming Committee .