

Curriculum Vitae
Dr. María Rún Bjarnadóttir
mariarunbjarna@gmail.com

EDUCATION

DECEMBER 2021

PHD IN LAW, UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX

Thesis: 'Does the internet limit human rights protection? Sexual privacy online and the limits of the law'. I identify the challenges technological advancement presents for state parties to uphold the protection of privacy online. Drawing on the work of Chris Marsden on platform regulation, building on the theoretical framework of sexual privacy by Danielle Citron, and the framing of image based abuse by Clare McGlynn, I recommend legislative and policy options rooted in the European Human Rights framework.

30+ presentations during my time of study, including at the UN HQ in New York and Geneva.

As Doctoral Tutor, conducted seminars in Justice, Equality and Society, and in IP law on copyright and trademark law.

Awards and recognition:

- Recipient of research grants from the highly competitive Gender Equality Fund in Iceland 2016 - 2018.
- Winner of the Adam Weiler Doctoral Impact Award 2021. Annual award given to an exceptional doctoral researcher at Sussex University who demonstrates the potential to achieve great impact in their field.

OCTOBER 2008

MAG. JUR. IN LAW, UNIVERSITY OF ICELAND

Thesis: The Country Code Top Level Domain .is.

Managing Director of the Legal Aid Program of The Law Students Association 2006–2007.

Organized and managed weekly free legal aid for the public with of 50+ law students and 10+ lawyers.

JANUARY 2006

B.A. IN LAW, UNIVERSITY OF ICELAND

Thesis: The Negative Freedom of Association under Article 10 of the ECHR.

Chair of Orator, the Law Students Association 2004 – 2005. Advocacy for 300+ fellow students.

President, European Law Students Association (ELSA), Iceland Chapter 2003 – 2004.

EXPERIENCE

FEBRUARY 2021 - CURRENT

DIRECTOR FOR INTERNET SAFETY, NATIONAL COMMISSIONER FOR POLICE, ICELAND

Lead development and implementation of extensive policy efforts against online sexual abuse in Iceland. This includes reshaping police education and training as regards online violations, and draft and lead implementation of new procedures in police investigation of online abuse. Shape and lead the rollout of a national messaging campaign targeting young people, the general public and possible offenders with the aim of preventing online sexual abuse. Propose and implement added support for victims of online abuse.

DECEMBER 2021 -

COMMITTEE MEMBER, GREVIO

Elected a member of the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO), an independent expert group tasked with monitoring and reporting on the Istanbul Convention in member states of the convention.

JUNE 2020 - OCTOBER 2020

EXTERNAL LEGAL ADVISER, MINISTRY OF JUSTICE, ICELAND

Drafted a criminal reform bill aimed at protecting sexual privacy online. Redefine the criminal protection for a core area of privacy by introducing a new clause framing violations of sexual privacy as a sexual offence.

JANUARY 2020 - MARCH 2020

RESEARCH OFFICER, UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX

Conducted research on 'Online Disinformation and Electoral Regulation: Evidence-based Policymaking'. Led and organised invite-only workshops in Brussels, Brighton and Washington D.C. with 70+ stakeholders.

OCTOBER 2019 - AUGUST 2022

GENERAL SECRETARY, THE NORDIC LAWYERS CONFERENCE, ICELAND CHAPTER

Spearhead the preparation of the triennial conference attended by 1000+ lawyers across the Nordic region. Main contact point for 70+ speakers, suppliers, and the boards of all national chapters of the organization.

MARCH 2019 - CURRENT

VICE CHAIR OF THE BOARD, ICELANDIC MEDIA COMMISSION

Regulate a national media market within the EU internal market. This includes regulating advertisements, sponsorships, and product placements in Icelandic media and conducting hearings regarding complaints against media for breach of the Media Act. Support diversity and pluralism in the media while ensuring freedom of expression, accessibility and right to information. Lead the board in the Chair's absence.

OCTOBER 2018 - FEBRUARY 2020

EXTERNAL LEGAL AND POLICY ADVISER, PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE, ICELAND

Proposed criminal reform and policy measures to strengthen the protection of sexual privacy on a national level. Policy proposals integrated into Government strategy on sexual violence 2021 - 2025.

JANUARY 2017 - JANUARY 2022

ADJUNCT/TEACHING FELLOW, UNIVERSITY OF AKUREYRI

Delivered and convene a module I designed on Cybercrime in the Icelandic Police Education Program. In 2021, the same applied to the Violence and Power module in the same program.

AUGUST 2016 - CURRENT

INTERNATIONAL LEGAL AND POLICY CONSULTANT, RUNE CONSULTING EHF.

United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute October 2020

- Delivered training on online hate speech and gendered hate speech for 300+ participants.

NIKK (Nordic Information on Gender) February - June 2017

- Drove Icelandic part of a Nordic research on legal issues of hate and threats online.

Icelandic Centre for Human Rights August 2016 - August 2017

- Conducted research, organised seminars, and led engagement with counterparts across the Nordic region in a research project funded by the Nordic Council of Ministers on online hate and abuse.

Advisory Committee for the parliamentary bill to ratify the Istanbul Convention in House of Commons, UK.

- Advised on preparation and drafting of the bill, passed in both houses of Parliament in 2016.

MAY 2016 - APRIL 2019

COLUMNIST, FRÉTTABLAÐIÐ NEWSPAPER

Biweekly column on current affairs published in a newspaper with the largest distribution in Iceland.

OCTOBER 2015 - DECEMBER 2016

EXTERNAL LEGAL ADVISER, MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR, ICELAND

Authored Icelandic Government's responses before the European Court on Human Rights. The cases are:

- Einarsson v Iceland [Application 24703/15] from 7 November 2017 Halldórsson v Iceland [Application 44322/13] from 4 July 2017, Arnarson v Iceland [Application 58781/13] from 13 June 2017, Traustason and others v Iceland [Application 44081/13] from 4 May 2017 and Ólafsson v Iceland [Application 58439/13] from 16 March 2017].

The core issue of all the cases was balancing freedom of expression and the right to privacy in media and/or internet based platforms under the European Convention System framework.

JANUARY 2011 - SEPTEMBER 2015

SENIOR LEGAL ADVISER, MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR, ICELAND

Led and contributed to the development, drafting and consultation of a number of Government policy initiatives in the field of human rights, including chairing the steering group that drafted a National Action Plan on Human Rights 2012 - 2014.

Primary point of contact for stakeholders in the field of human rights.

Led the intergovernmental preparation for the first UPR review of Iceland in 2012, liaised with domestic stakeholders, reported to Ministerial Committee, drafted the report, and was a delegation member in the Human Rights Council. Designed an intergovernmental follow up mechanism for treaty body recommendations.

Member of the Icelandic delegation during the examination of the national report before the Human Rights Committee (2012), ECOSOC (2013) and the CRC (2011).

Government point of contact and lead subject expert on privacy policy. Participated in member state scrutiny and subsequent transposition of GDPR through the relevant EU, EEA, and EFTA channels.

MARCH 2008 - JANUARY 2011

LEGAL ADVISER, MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES

As the Secretary of the Telecommunication Infrastructure Fund advised the board and the Minister on the rolling out of 4m€ infrastructure initiative to provide broadband services in rural Iceland.

Lead legal adviser on telecommunication and postal services. Liaised with the regulator, and led intergovernmental and external engagement with businesses, NGOs and special interest groups on telecommunication and postal service policy on a national level.

Drafted national legislation implementing EU acquis. Partook in Nordic and European telecommunication policy work through the relevant mechanisms including EFTA.

COUNCIL OF EUROPE

The Expert Committee on Combating Hate Speech (ADI/MSI-DIS), from September 2020 – December 2021

- Chaired a group of 15 experts elected to draft a recommendation on a holistic response to hate speech approved by the Committee of Ministers in June 2022. Also served as Gender Equality Rapporteur.

The Steering Committee on Anti-Discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion (CDADI), from October 2020 – January 2022

- Take part in fulfilling the Committee's role to promote equality and build more inclusive societies, i.e. advising the Committee of Ministers on anti-discrimination, diversity, equality, and inclusion, with a focus on preventing and combatting hate speech and discrimination.

Consultant – Council of Europe Children's Rights Division, December 2020

- Drive the launch of handbook for policy makers on protecting the rights of children in digital environment. Advice on follow up measures and subsequent policy efforts.

PUBLICATIONS

PEER REVIEWED

- *Gender equality in sports; the role of local authorities.* Tímarit lögfræðinga. Vol. 69, No. 3. (2019).
- *Gender Equality in sports; does the state have a role?* Stjórnsmál og stjórnarsýsla. Vol 14, No. 2. (2018).
- *Defamation on social media. The case of Egill Einarsson v. Iceland.* Ulfjotur.com, 31. Dec. 2017.
- *Does the internet limit human rights protection? The case of revenge porn.* Journal of Intellectual Property, Information Technology and E-Commerce Law. 7 (3) 2016.

A SELECTION OF NON-PEER REVIEWED PUBLISHED WORK

- *When there are seven? Women on the Icelandic Supreme Court.* (Ulfjotur.is, 9 October 2020).
- *Image based sexual abuse in Iceland; legal and policy responses.* Report for the Icelandic Prime Minister's Office. January 2020.
- *Revising the Gender Equality Act considering societal and technological changes.* Report for the Intergovernmental working group on revising the Gender Equality Act. January 2019.
- *Below the line. Free Speech, Privacy and Online Publishing at the European Court of Human Rights.* Young Human Rights Lawyer Journal. December 2017.
- *Online abuse is driving women out of public life. It's time to act,* Democratic Audit UK, Jan. 2018.
- *Gender and hate speech online. Icelandic perspectives.* Danish Institute for Human Rights. Hadefulde ytringer i et nordiskt perspektiv. Copenhagen. 2017. P. 39 – 45.
- *Domestic violence in Strasburg.* Journal of the Icelandic Bar Association. 22 (3) 2016. P. 34-35.

MEMBERSHIPS, VOLUNTEERING

CO-FOUNDER and BOARDMEMBER, *Nordic Digital Rights and Equality Foundation* December 2020 – January 2022

ASSOCIATE FELLOW *Higher Education Academy*, UK from October 2017 -

MEMBER/ BOARDMEMBER *Icelandic Lawyers Association* from 2011 –, from 2022 -

VOLUNTEER (supporting the resettlement of refugees in Iceland) *Icelandic Red Cross* from 2006 - 2009

LANGUAGES

Icelandic – native / English – fluent / Swedish and Norwegian – advanced / Danish – basic

APPOINTED BY THE MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR, ICELAND, TO THE FOLLOWING COMMITTEES AND ROLES:

[Expert Panel on Gender Identity Disorder](#). 2012-2015.

- The task of the Expert Panel was to confirm what gender applicants belong to, and if applicable, confirm if the applicant is eligible for gender reassignment surgery.

[The National Committee on Humanitarian Law](#). 2012-2015.

- Standing Advisory Committee to the Minister of Foreign Affairs regarding humanitarian law policy.

[Intergovernmental Committee tasked with drafting a National Action Plan on Human Rights in Iceland](#). 2011 - 2015.

- Chairperson of the Committee. Drafted a National Action Plan on Human Rights presented by the Minister of the Interior to Parliament. Further acted as a follow-up entity with regard to the UPR process.

[The Awareness Awakening](#). 2013 - 2015.

- Intergovernmental body based on the Council of Europe Lanzarote Convention, tasked to organize and conduct a national awareness campaign to end violence against children.

[Task force to prepare the ratification of the UN Convention on the rights of people with disabilities](#). 2012-2015.

- Chairperson of the committee. Oversaw and lead impact assessment, legislative amendment proposals, and co-ordination with various stakeholders.

[Expert Committee on LGBTI rights](#). 2014-2015.

- The Committee was tasked with drafting an Action Plan on the improved rights of LGBTI people. The plan was presented by the Minister of Welfare to the Icelandic Parliament.

[Expert Committee on improved legal framework on foreigners from outside the EEA area](#). 2011 – 2013.

- Tasked with examining the legal framework on foreigners from countries outside the EEA area. The Committee produced a report with proposed legislative amendments.

[Expert Committee on the rights of people with disabilities](#). 2011-2012.

- Drafting of regulations based on the Act on Persons with Disabilities aimed at diminishing the use of force in care for people with disabilities.

[Gender Equality Officer at the Ministry of the Interior](#). 2011 – 2012.

- Gendered review of policies and contracts the Ministry engaged in to ensure compliance with gender equality obligations of the Government.

PRESENTATIONS, TALKS, KEYNOTES

UPCOMING

- *Gendered online abuse; responses and remedies*. Nordic Side Event. CSW, United Nations HQ, New York. March 2023.
- *Digital forms of abuse against children*. The 12th Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect. Reykjavík. 21- 24 May.
- *Findings from NORDREF research on perpetrators of online gendered abuse*. University of Gothenburg, Sweden. June 2023.
- *A woman's world?* Gender and Law Conference. University of Gothenburg. October 2023.

2022

- *Is the law to blame? Metoo in context*. Reykjavík University. Online. 20 January.
- *Preventing and responding to online gendered abuse*. Nordic Talks; organised by NORDREF. City theatre of Reykjavík. 21 January.
- *Digital forms of violence*. Equality days, University of Iceland. Online. 16 February.
- *Online abuse and elections*. Presentation for candidates running for public office. Online. 7 March.
- *Hate speech. National and International perspectives*. Nordic Safe Cities. University of Iceland. 2 June.
- *Digital forms of gendered abuse*. The Nordic Welfare Committee. Online. 29 June.
- *Human rights and the Internet*. Plenary session. OSCE HQ, Vienna. 13 September.
- *Preventing digital violence against children*. The Annual Human Rights Summit in Iceland. Nordica Hotel. 20 September.
- *Re-framing the Response to Sexual Harassment in the Workplace*. Recognising Sexual Violence; Developing Pathways to Survivor-Centred Justice. University of Iceland. 28 September.
- *Safeguarding young people from sexual abuse. Role and responsibilities of Upper Secondary Schools*. Association of Icelandic Headmasters. Online. 14 October.
- *Is it illegal to hate? Hate speech in Icelandic context*. National consultation on hate speech. Harpa. 25 October.
- *Digital Sexual Abuse. Recent legal reform*. The Judicial Administration in Iceland. Reykjavík. 27 October.
- *Gendered cybercrime is not inevitable. Examples from Iceland*. Council of Europe. Strasbourg. 6 December 2022.

2021

- *Laws on gender equality in sport*. Reykjavík. 9 September.
- *Regulatory responses to hate speech* Eurodig. Online. 28 June.
- *Gendered hate speech in a Nordic perspective – Does the legal framework reflect the reality women face online?* The Finnish Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. Online. 11 June.
- *The Act on Sexual Privacy – background of the legislation and application of the law*. The Icelandic Association of Prosecutors. Online. 16 April.
- *When the Private is Made Public: Digital Surveillance and Sexual Privacy*. Democracy in a Digital Future. Reykjavík/online. 26 March.
- *Freedom of Expression online and the events in the US Capitol*. The Icelandic Association of Political Scientists. Webinar. 1 February
- *Gendered Hate Speech*. My Hateful Valentine. Online. 15 February.

2020

- *Disinformation and the “lamestream” media.* CIGR Annual Conference. Online. 1. May.
- *A gendered response to Online Sexual Privacy?* CEDAW side event. United Nations HQ, 11. March. (Cancelled due to Covid-19).
- *Online stalking and Icelandic legislation.* Akureyri University annual Policing Conference. Akureyri. 19. February.

2019

- *Sexual Privacy.* Webinar hosted by the Icelandic Prime Minister’s Office. 11. December.
- *Emmeline Pankhurst facing misogyny. What should Twitter do about it?* Penn University PilotLab webinar. 25. November.
- *Can elections be made fairer by regulating fake news?* Sussex Salon. Brighton. 19. November.
- *Image based sexual abuse in a Nordic context.* CIGR Annual Conference. London. June.
- *Image based sexual abuse. Nordic perspectives.* Keynote. Annual Meeting of Digital Responsibility Denmark. Copenhagen, 10. April.
- *Online abuse in a gendered perspective.* Keynote. Scandinavian Research Council for Criminology. Denmark, 8 – 10 May.
- *Image based sexual abuse in Iceland. Proposed legal and policy measures.* Reykjavík, 18. February.

2018

- *Context, Content and Consent.* High-level side event, Human Rights Council. United Nations HQ, Geneva. June.
- *Online abuse and Women and (a lack of) legal response.* CEDAW side event. United Nations HQ, New York. 13 March.
- *Gender equality – what is the role of the state?* University of Reykjavík. Reykjavík. February.
- *Do we need a legal response to #metoo?* The Icelandic Biannual Equality Summit. Reykjavík. 7 March.
- *Who is the guarantor of human rights online?* Winchester Conference on Trust, Risk, Information, and the Law. Winchester. 25 April.
- *Who decides? Expression online and the enforcement of human rights.* Digital reality – legal issues. Reykjavík, 13 June.

2017

- *What’s gender got to do with it? Content regulation online.* Gender and hate in the online sphere. Seminar. Falmer, Sussex University 2. November.
- *What is hate speech? Icelandic legal context.* Hate speech in Iceland. Conference organized by the Icelandic Youth Forum. Reykjavík. 22. September.
- *Image based sexual abuse – legal issues in Icelandic context.* Key-note presentation at the Icelandic Women’s Rights Movements conference on Image based sexual abuse. Reykjavík, 18. September.
- *Gender equality and sports. Legal issues.* Annual meeting of gender equality committees in local authorities. Stykkishólmur/online. 15. September.
- *Is the internet a place for women?* Poster presentation. Connected Life Conference, Oxford Internet Institute. Oxford, June.

- *Revenge porn*. The Annual Law Symposium. Reykjavík. 5. May.
- *Protecting human rights online. A task for states or corporations?* InfoLaw Group PhD Work in progress workshop, Falmer, University of Sussex, 3. May.
- *Revenge porn from a human rights perspective*. Talk organized by RIKK – Research institute for gender and diversity at the University of Iceland, and UNU-GEST, the United Nations University Gender Equality program. Reykjavik, 21. March.
- *“Fuck you rapist bastard” – The Icelandic Supreme Court case No. 214/2014*. Art/Law Research Cluster, University of Sussex. PhD Workshop. Falmer, March.
- *Who is responsible for the protection of human rights on the internet?* Centre for Human Rights, University of Sussex. Challenging human rights disenchantment 50 years on from the ICCPR and ICESCR. Falmer, January.

2016

- *Does the internet limit human rights protection? The case of revenge porn*. IALS Annual Workshop: Restricted and Redacted: Where now for human rights and digital information control? London, 9 November.
- *Istanbul and the internet. Internet related issues in the Council of Europe Istanbul Convention*. Istanbul Convention – the Golden Standard. Conference organized by The Centre for Gender Equality. Reykjavík. 8. April.

2015

- *Does the internet limit human rights protection? The case of revenge porn*. PhD Forum on Law and Governance in the Digital Era. Amsterdam 20 November.
- *Online hate and issues of responsibility*. The Icelandic Biannual Equality Summit. November.