

Smári McCarthy

Smári McCarthy is an Icelandic politician, programmer, innovator, political activist and writer. He is known for his work relating to direct democracy, transparency and privacy. In October 2016 he was elected to Althing – the Parliament of Iceland – from the Pirate Party.

McCarthy has actively engaged in the field of software development - his software project *Wasa2il* was nominated for the Prix Ars Electronica Prize in 2013. He has written various articles and essays on democracy, governance, information and privacy. These articles have been published by such publishers as *New Internationalist* and *ARC Journals*. McCarthy puts forward an idea of replacing the existing representative democracy, which “leads most people to be unsatisfied most of the time”, with “liquid democracy”.

McCarthy entered the political scene in November 2012, co-founding *Píratar* (*The Pirate Party*) alongside a former member of the Icelandic political movement *The Movement* Birgitta Jónsdóttir and several prominent Internet activists. Establishment of the *Pirate Party* was influenced by the ideology of the Swedish Pirate Party formed in 2006 with an aim to bring about Internet copyright reform.

Core policies of the Icelandic Pirate party include direct democracy, transparency, civil rights, the right to self-determination, public access to information and responsible decision making. These policies are generated through vast participation of individuals while consensus is reached and disputes are settled via an online voting system.

In its manifesto prior to the 2016 parliamentary election *The Pirate Party* put forward goals **to adopt the new constitution; ensure a just distribution of the wealth generated by Iceland’s natural resources; re-establish free health care; increase public participation in decision making; restore trust and tackle corruption.**

In the 2013 Icelandic parliamentary election *The Pirate Party* won 5.1% of the votes, achieving 3 seats in the Parliament. McCarthy was the party’s lead candidate in Iceland’s South Constituency but did not win a parliamentary seat. He became a parliamentarian in the 2016 election. The growing popularity of *The Pirate Party* resulted in 14.5% of the votes and 10 seats in *Althing* – the oldest Parliament in the world. Correspondingly, *The Pirate Party* came third in Icelandic election results.

McCarthy used to work in Sarajevo as the chief technologist of the Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project (occrp.org), which is a consortium of investigative centres, media and journalists operating in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, Central Asia and Central America. He has expressed support for Edward Snowden as well as the leaking of Panama Papers.

For further information see:

- Smári McCarthy website: <http://smarimccarthy.is/>
- Smári McCarthy on Liquid Democracy: <https://thesentientreview.wordpress.com/2016/04/09/>
- Podcast: Smári McCarthy on Panama Papers, 'pirates,' + power: <http://www.iftf.org/future-now/article-detail/podcast-smari-mccarthy-on-panama-papers-pirates-power/>
- The Pirate Party website: <https://piratar.is/en/>
- Online Voting System (Icelandic): <https://x.piratar.is/polity/1/>