

Icelanders turn to the ancient faith of Zuism to escape religion tax

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Over 1% of Iceland's population have registered as Zuist in the past month to escape the requirement on taxpayers to fund a state-recognised church.

Zuism, a religion based around the Sumerian gods, has been established in Iceland as a platform to campaign for secular reforms.

Icelanders must currently register their religion and pay a tax that funds religious groups including the state church. Funds go to the church or religious group to which the individual taxpayer is registered, and if they are not religious or not registered to a religious group the tax money is paid directly to the state.

The Zuist religion however promises to redistribute "the government's annual financial support equally to all members of the congregation."

The organization say that their "primary objective is that the government repeal any law that grants religious organizations privilege, financial or otherwise, above other organizations. Furthermore Zuists demand that the government's registry of its citizens' religion will be abolished."

As well as campaigning against the congregation tax, the group endorse secularist ideals and "fully support freedom of religion, and from religion, for everyone."

On the group's [website](#) it says that "the religious organization of Zuism will cease to exist when its objectives have been met."

Elsewhere, voters in the upcoming Spanish election have a choice of several parties promising secular reforms along similar lines to those being discussed in Iceland.

Podemos and Ciudadanos have both called for the self-financing of religion in Spain to replace the current model under which Spaniards can opt to give money to the Catholic Church or to social services when filing their tax return.

Podemos have stated that ""the direct financing of the Catholic church should finish".

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