



# FORWARD TOGETHER

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION MANIFESTO 2023

SFP  RKP



**FORWARD TOGETHER**

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# INTRODUCTION



Dear reader,

Freedom is the most precious thing we have. This has especially been driven home to us after Russia's brutal invasion of Ukraine. At the same time, it is a reminder that nothing can be taken for granted. Democracy, human rights and the rule of law must be protected every day. Ultimately it comes down to you and me – all of us who live in this fine land – being able to feel safe in our daily lives and enjoying good health today, tomorrow and in the future.

The world is changing. Superpowers are competing for supremacy. There are authoritarian nations in which democracy is a curse word, which want to attack us here in the West. They are working to splinter us and to weaken the EU. We shall not let that happen. The world order has been permanently redrawn in terms of security policy. It is important to keep the right company.

Finland has many strengths: we are known for our reliability, stable institutions, equality and good schools. But we can do better. We are burdened by rising debt and a labour shortage. For the SFP the roadmap is clear: we must build on our strengths and create solutions for tackling our weaknesses.

As a liberal, centre-right party, SFP works across the board to achieve a stable, modern Finland that defends the freedom of the individual and every person's equal value. We say no to hate speech and racism. We will never promote division and polarisation. We want to build society through participation and dialogue.

Parliamentary elections will be held in Finland on 2 April 2023. The elections will play a huge role in determining the direction our country will take in the next four years. The Covid pandemic left marks, not only financially, but also in our health and wellbeing.

Our children and our elderly need special attention now. We want you to rely on a health care system that works when you need it, and to enjoy wellbeing at work. Our companies need an incentivising environment in which they can operate and grow. It should always be more profitable to work than to not. We must strengthen Finland's competitiveness in order to attract further investment and, thereby, jobs. The climate crisis must be taken very seriously. Solutions are needed nationally as well as globally.

We want our children and grandchildren to swim in a clean Baltic Sea. Moving forward we should also be able to eat clean, Finnish food produced by our farmers. The green transition is a huge opportunity for us. Investments into education, research and innovation are therefore also key.

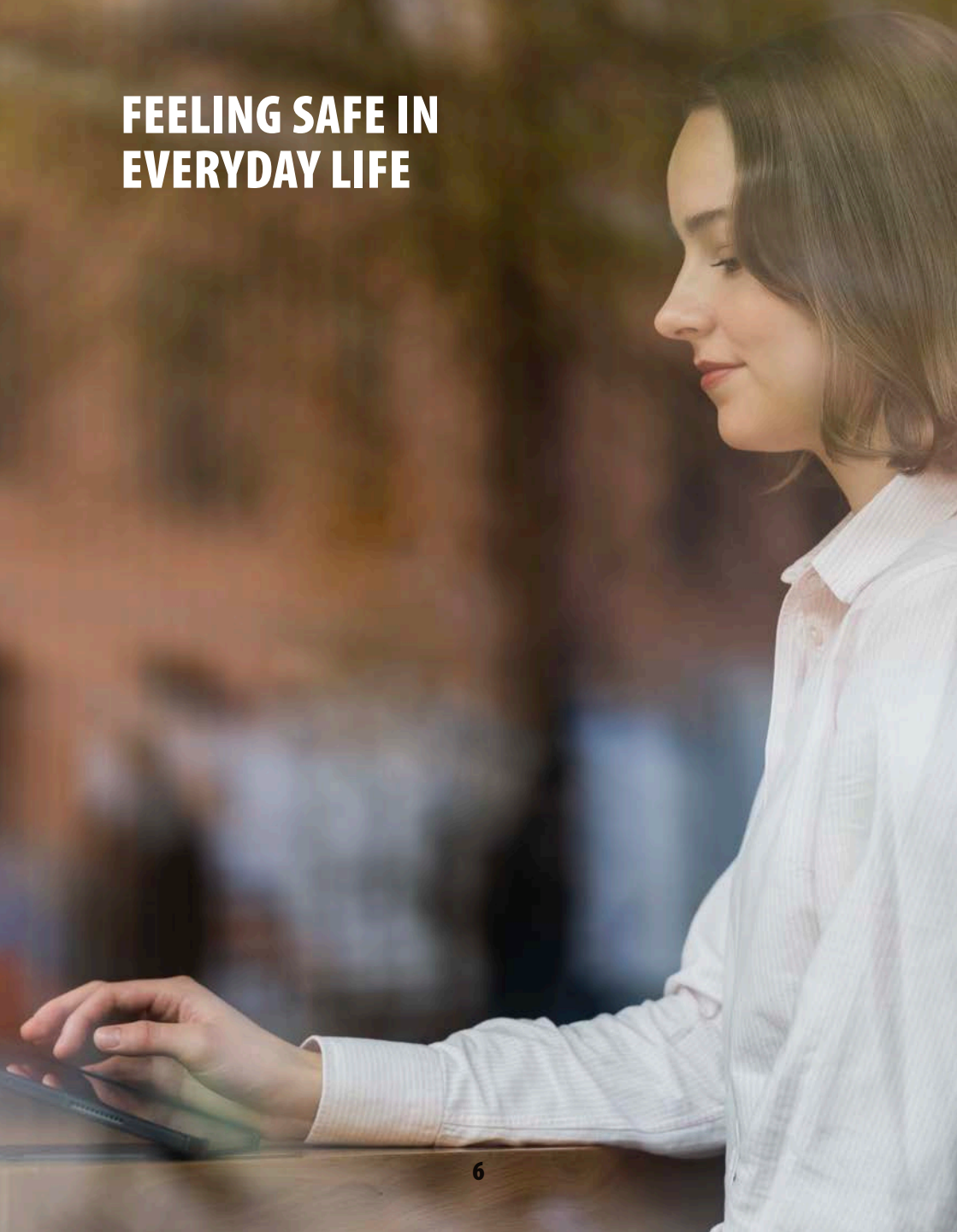
I am so thankful to live in this fine land where we can all take part in decision-making. To vote is to have an influence. And your vote counts. During the current parliamentary term, SFP has demonstrated that we are needed in the Finnish government. We have worked constructively and built bridges. We have achieved results. Finland is now on its way into NATO, something we have pushed for. Our contacts with Sweden and the rest of the Nordic region, as well as with the international arena in general, are valuable for our country.

A vote for SFP is a vote for security and stability in restless times. A vote for equality, care and economic growth. A vote for the right to be served in one's mother tongue and for a bilingual Finland! Your voice is needed!

  
Anna-Maja Henriksson  
Party President



**FEELING SAFE IN  
EVERYDAY LIFE**



We are proud of the Nordic welfare state that Finland is and to whose construction SFP has contributed. In our Finland, we want people to be able to live safely, free from fear, violence and harassment. Assistance must be available every time you need it.

Finland's internal security needs reinforcing, however. We consider it important to secure the resources needed by the police, rescue services and emergency response centres. We are concerned over developments in Sweden, where criminal gangs have obtained a strong foothold. Such a trend must be prevented in Finland. The police currently lacks resources for investigating all crimes, as well as time to complete its pre-emptive work. We want to have 8,200 police officers in Finland, compared to today's insufficient 7,500.

To secure equal access to rescue services all around the country, more rescue personnel must be trained. Contract fire departments and voluntary maritime search and rescue operators play an important role within the rescue services, especially in sparsely populated areas, and their ability to operate must be secured.

In Finland we can rely on our courts of law and authorities, and trust that everyone will be treated equally before the law. The resources of our basic social institutions must be secured across the board.

On global terms, Finland's security of supply is very high. Nordic cooperation within this area should be reinforced, however.

## WE WANT

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- to secure resources for the police and law enforcement
  - to raise the income limits for legal aid
  - to guarantee sufficient resources for well-functioning rescue services and emergency response centres throughout the country
  - rescue training in Swedish to be offered in Helsinki, at least every three years
  - to prevent domestic and family violence
  - to increase the number of domestic violence shelter places and assault crisis centres
  - to intervene more effectively against hate speech and targeted harassment
  - to train police and law enforcement personnel in domestic and family abuse matters, as well as human trafficking crimes
  - to assist and protect victims of human trafficking and ensure impunity for victims of forced criminality
  - to secure the operating conditions of the national human trafficking investigation team
  - to prevent violence against police, care and rescue personnel, as well as others in customer-facing positions
  - to reduce online crime, particularly combating online sexual abuse of children and adolescents
  - to secure resources for the ombudsmen for equality, non-discrimination, the elderly and children
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# WORKING TOWARDS A RESPONSIBLE ECONOMIC POLICY

The recent years have been difficult in many ways, posing challenges for the public economy both nationally and globally. Despite this, Finland has coped well. The Swedish People's Party has consistently worked towards a responsible economic policy.

Our public economy faces significant challenges. We must address our structural deficit and stop taking on debt. To balance the economy, work is needed at many levels, reaching over several government terms. SFP wants to see Finland as a competitive nation that attracts companies to invest and create jobs. Investing in Finland must be attractive.

Digitalisation and the green transition are huge opportunities for Finland. Research, development and innovation, as well as collaboration between higher education institutions and start-up companies must be supported.

## WELFARE IS GENERATED BY ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Measures that support entrepreneurship and business ownership, as well as creating jobs will generate the growth that we need. Companies need predictability if they are to invest.

The employment rate in Finland must be raised to at least 80 per cent. For this to

happen, we must ensure that our companies have a sound environment in which to operate. Business owners must not drown in bureaucracy. It is the duty of the society to enable entrepreneurship rather than to hinder it. Entrepreneurs' social security must be improved. We must build an operating environment in which companies of all sizes can find workers and financing.

Start-up companies generate many innovations and new economic models, and we welcome that.

## WE WANT

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- to achieve an employment level of at least 80 per cent over the next government term
  - to carry out responsible, sustainable and farsighted economic policy, while stemming government debt
  - to promote collaboration between the worlds of commerce and higher education, and growth company environments
  - to have clearer rules and terms drawn up for a well-functioning platform economy
  - to implement a combination insurance system to improve social security for entrepreneurs
  - to expand the experiment on recruitment subsidy for sole entrepreneurs
  - to lower the threshold for recruiting one's first employee
  - to promote the internationalisation of businesses
  - to promote capital investment in businesses
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## TAXATION MUST INCENTIVISE WORK AND INVESTMENTS

SFP wants working always to be profitable. People must be left with more in hand when they work than when they don't. Taxation on work must be lowered and the tax progression must not steepen further.

Finland must be competitive when it comes to taxation. To attract investment and business establishment in Finland, our goal must be not to increase corporate taxation. Our tax policy must be farsighted and predictable. Other measures are also needed to promote investment, such as taxation solutions in which the tax rate on reinvested earnings is lower.

Under SFP's initiative, the current government expanded the tax credit for household expenses and raised its maximum amount. This means that more people can receive help at home and more will be able to replace their oil heating with more sustainable alternatives. We want to continue developing the tax credit for household expenses, because it creates jobs.

## WE WANT

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- to reduce taxation on work and pensions
- to promote entrepreneurship by keeping corporate taxes at a competitive level
- to have lower corporate taxes on profits that are reinvested in a company's operations
- to ensure that dividend taxation on unlisted companies takes into account the entrepreneur's risk-taking
- that inheritance and gift tax be abolished in the long term and replaced by taxation upon realisation of the asset

- that inheritance and gift tax be abolished entirely in relation to generational shifts in businesses and agriculture
  - agricultural production buildings to be free from real estate taxation
  - real estate taxation that does not unfairly burden owners of small houses or properties in the archipelago, for example
  - that donations made by private individuals and companies to charities and non-profit organisations, including higher education institutions, be tax-deductible
  - to make the temporary increase in the tax credit for household expenses permanent and to continue developing this tax credit
  - to make it possible for companies to make tax deductions related to research and development
  - to combat the grey economy and aggressive tax planning
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## WE WANT TO SEE MORE PEOPLE AT WORK

The labour market is undergoing constant change, and employment legislation needs to keep up with this. For this to be possible, new ways of thinking are required among labour organisations and political decision-makers. Accepting a job must always be profitable. Working after retirement should also be incentivised.

We want to allow local bargaining for all types of businesses, even those in non-unionised sectors. At the same time, we want employees to have influence in companies via a representative on the board or in another governance body.

Finland is in a labour shortage crisis. The retirement rate and the need for addition-

al recruitment mean that foreign labour is needed, and therefore we want to see measures for increasing and facilitating labour migration. Finland will face great challenges in maintaining its public services and functioning industry and commerce, unless we see a significant rise in our population.

It is important to make it easy for young people to access the labour market. This requires close collaboration between educational institutions and employers, as well as conscious efforts to make the shift to working life easier.

On SFP's initiative, the government has launched a national development programme for wellbeing at work. This programme must be ambitiously continued through the next term. The aim must be to halve sickness absenteeism related to burnout and ill-being at work within the

next five years. Work environments that foster wellbeing are crucial if we are to reduce the number of disability pensions.

We need better and more effective employment services. The TE Offices must be able to respond to diverse needs for support. Support for the long-term unemployed must be extended. The challenges related to the lack of correspondence between job openings and jobseekers must be addressed.

The family leave reform, for which SFP has long advocated, has created opportunities for parents to share parental leave. Efforts to change attitudes within the labour market are also needed if the proportion of leave taken by fathers is to increase. Our aim is to extend earnings-related family leave until the child turns 18 months.

## WE WANT

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- to graduate earnings-related daily allowance rates and make them more incentivising by being higher at the start. We want earnings-related daily allowances to apply to everyone. Accepting a job must always be profitable.
- to see a flexible labour market with local bargaining
- to scrap labour market testing for foreign labour
- to establish a guaranteed processing time for work permit or residence permit applications for workers; the work permit processing period must not exceed 30 days.
- to give the long-term unemployed real opportunities for returning to the workforce
- that successful pilot projects related to individual cross-sector support be expanded to apply to further groups of long-term unemployed people
- to continue improving opportunities for partially disabled workers to remain in or return to the workforce
- to incentivise employers to offer further education opportunities and encourage life-long learning
- to ensure that the national development programme for wellbeing at work is ambitiously continued through the next government term
- to bring about reforms that lead to sickness absenteeism being halved and disability pensions being reduced
- to see equality in the labour market, closing the gender pay gap
- to extend income-related family leave until the child turns 18 months



# **NO FUTURE WITHOUT WELLBEING AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE**



## FINLAND SHOULD HAVE THE BEST SCHOOLS IN THE WORLD

High-quality education is one of the cornerstones of our society. We must have sufficient, competent personnel for our schools, day cares and afternoon clubs. We want all children to receive the support they need.

Our early childhood education must guarantee equal opportunities for all children and we want as many children as possible to attend it at an early stage. Availability of labour is a challenge in many parts of the country. This must be solved by increasing the attractiveness of the sector and encouraging more people to apply for training. Bureaucracy must be simplified to give personnel more time to spend on the actual children.

It is worrying that an increasing number of students are finishing lower secondary school without the requisite skills in reading, writing and mathematics. We want to break the trend of boys, in particular, falling behind. In this respect we must ensure that resources correspond to the existing challenges.

All students, teachers and other school personnel must be entitled to safe, harassment-free schooldays. Everyone must be able to have a sense of belonging and community. More grownups are needed in our schools.

Research shows a rise in unhappiness among girls. In Finland we have a shortage of school psychologists and curators, especially Swedish-speaking ones, and need to train more of them.

We must let vocational education providers adjust in peace to the latest reforms. Contact teaching is also needed in vocational education.

General knowledge must have a greater emphasis in upper secondary education, and therefore the Matriculation Examination must be reformed so that it better accounts for general knowledge.

We want to scrap quotas for first-time applicants to higher education. Higher education admission criteria must not govern children's study choices in upper secondary school to the extent that they now do.

The Marin cabinet raised income limits for student financial aid by 50 per cent. We want to raise them further. We want to enhance psychological wellbeing among students by improving their financial status.

## WE WANT

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- to safeguard the right to a proper education by securing access to sufficient teachers and other qualified personnel in schools and early childhood education
- to make early childhood education free in the long term
- to implement a two-year preschool system
- to secure access to high-quality teaching materials in Swedish
- to see more Swedish-language school psychologists and curators being trained
- to ensure access to and sufficient resources for student welfare services in schools
- to develop school coach activities to support the everyday lives of children and adolescents
- to prevent marginalisation, for example by reinforcing collaboration between schools, youth workshops and outreach youth work
- to invest in and develop study guidance at all levels
- to ensure information on Sami culture is included in the curriculum
- to offer more language immersion and language showering
- to develop teaching in both Swedish and Finnish to ensure it is more attractive to pupils in primary and secondary education
- to keep the second national language as a compulsory subject in the Matriculation Examination
- to reform the Matriculation Examination so that it better measures general education
- to make apprenticeship agreements a viable alternative within secondary vocational education
- to reinforce secondary vocational education, guaranteeing contact teaching
- to scrap quotas for first-time applicants to higher education
- to investigate the possibility of taking into account upper secondary school diplomas and exams in basic arts education in higher education admissions
- to keep higher education free of charge in the future
- to make the basic funding of higher education institutions farsighted and predictable
- to increase the number of student aid months and scrap the division into two phases
- to safeguard the livelihoods of students by gradually increasing study grants and further raising income limits for student financial aid, while ensuring that the number of aid months is not affected by earnings during aid-free months
- to reduce gender segregation within education
- to develop sex education, including handling of consent issues



## FINLAND AS THE WORLD'S CHILD-FRIENDLIEST COUNTRY

We want Finland to be the world's child-friendliest country. Finland must continue to be a safe place in which to grow up. Finland's policies have been successful in many respects. Our child mortality is low and all children have the subjective right to day care. To increase child wellbeing, we also want to ensure every child's right to at least one hobby.

We want to increase support for families with children by investing in pre-emptive work. Child impact assessments must be used as tools in decision-making. We also want to continue with child budgeting in order to promote the children's rights.

The child protection situation must be improved. A shortage of personnel and way too many clients per employee have led to an unsustainable situation in many parts of the country.

## WE WANT

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- to extend the child welfare clinic service until the age of 10 years
  - to secure sufficient resources for child protection
  - to see better cross-sector collaboration between the authorities (school, early childhood education, social services, police force, etc.) to ensure children's best interests can be protected
  - to have the Finnish model for free extra-curricular leisure activities adopted in all municipalities
  - to ensure school playgrounds and buildings are also accessible outside of school hours
  - to make things easier for single-parent households by scrapping the link between income support and the single-parent child benefit supplement
  - to investigate the opportunity of allowing grandparents or other close persons of working age to take paid childcare leave on the same terms as a child's parents
  - to ensure child impact assessments are used as tools in decision-making
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## CARING FOR OUR YOUNG

The last few years have been exceptionally tough, especially for young people. More and more children and adolescents are increasingly unwell. The Covid pandemic with its remote learning and reduced social contacts left marks that must be addressed.

We want to formulate a youth package with cross-sector solutions to reinstate the wellbeing and mental health of affected young people before the situation escalates further. The package will include, among other things, a therapy guarantee, long-term investments into education and efforts to ensure that no young person is left without a job or study place.

The threshold must be low for young people to seek assistance. No one should be given the runaround. Therefore we need more low-threshold mental health services. The first contact must be available without waiting, for instance via a simple chat service. It is especially important to be served in one's first language when it comes to mental health services.

All young people must feel that they have a place in the society and meaningful content in their lives via education, work or leisure interests. We want to reduce school stress for our young people.

We must focus on preventive work to combat marginalisation and exclusion. Outreach youth work plays a significant role in finding young people in the risk zone.

## WE WANT

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- to formulate a youth package to reinstate young people's wellbeing and mental health
  - to see more low-threshold mental health services, including chat services
  - to ensure everyone can be served in their first language when it comes to mental health services
  - to invest in preventive measures, such as outreach youth work, to combat marginalisation and exclusion
  - to see young people being included in decision-making and being consulted at all levels in society
  - to ensure that there are enough meeting places for young people
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# HEALTH AND WELLBEING SERVICES CLOSE TO YOU

## FINLAND MUST HAVE HIGH-QUALITY HEALTH CARE

You must be able to receive care services close to where you are, regardless of your place of residence.

Our aim is to have a system of named doctors and named nurses for senior citizens and persons with continuous care needs, because the ability to visit familiar care personnel creates a feeling of security and has been proven to improve health care outcomes.

The health care personnel situation must be addressed. To improve occupational wellbeing and the attractiveness of the sector, we must see better leadership and a more favourable division of tasks, coupled with more flexible working conditions. We need a national programme with diverse measures for solving the personnel shortage in health care.

According to the Language Barometer, there are great deficiencies in Swedish-language services within social services and health care. In some of Finland's bilingual municipalities, problems were also found in the provision of Finnish-language services. In order to secure health care

and customer services in both languages, we need well-functioning service paths that take into account language needs.

We want the promotion of mental health to become a national priority. It is crucial that people can receive care quickly, with a low threshold, and in their mother tongue. We must ensure that we have sufficient personnel to provide early mental health services. There is an acute shortage of psychotherapists, particularly Swedish-speaking ones. Therefore tuition fees for psychotherapist training must be scrapped.

People who feel well are more resilient in the face of adversity, and that is why preventive health care is so important, in terms of both mental and physical health. Today's sedentary lifestyle leads to diverse health issues, and so we want to motivate people to move. We want to see active measures for preventing drug abuse.

The right of women to bodily autonomy is unquestionable.

## WE WANT

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- for people, regardless of their place of residence or income level, to have access to a doctor when they fall ill
  - to create a system of named doctors and named nurses for senior citizens and persons with continuous care needs
  - to ensure that the operating conditions of the wellbeing services counties are secure, with sufficient funding
  - to see the seven-day health care guarantee within primary care and the six-month guarantee within specialist care working in practice
  - the promotion of mental health to become a national priority
  - to see a low threshold for seeking assistance, which includes safeguarding the accessibility and scope of mental health and substance abuse care
  - to increase the attractiveness of the social service and health care sector, as well as the number of study places
  - to have working mental health care in the patient's own language, which implies training enough psychotherapists also in Swedish. Psychotherapist training must be free.
  - to have burnout listed as a diagnosis that is applicable for paid sick leave
  - to secure the right of smaller hospitals to carry out ordinary outpatient surgeries and maintain public 24-hour emergency care
  - to see persons with disabilities and special needs being guaranteed care and support for their equal participation in society
  - to give persons under the age of 25 access to free contraceptives
  - to investigate whether the right to terminate pregnancies before the end of the twelfth week of gestation should be written into the Constitution
  - to have the age range for free breast cancer screenings expanded to between 40 and 74 years of age
  - to ensure the right of undocumented migrants to receive health care, social services, day care and education
  - to see active measures for preventing and combating drug abuse
  - to have substance abuse services linked to psychiatric care more closely than before
  - to carry out a trial for supervised drug consumption rooms in Finland
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## IT MUST BE SAFE TO BE ELDERLY

Everyone must have opportunities for living safe and active lives in their later years.

The aged must receive the assistance and care they need. Home help and home nursing services must function well, and various forms of assisted living facilities must be available at a reasonable cost for those who can no longer live at home. Subsidised transport services must also be reliable and functional. Investments into preventive measures are crucial in elderly care.

We want to formulate an action plan for improving the status of family carers and securing their equal right to compensation and rest.

It must be worth it to work after retirement for all those who wish to do so. At the same time, it is important to safeguard a reasonable level of guaranteed pensions.

Transgenerational efforts can provide great health care benefits, for instance within youth work and at school.



## WE WANT

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- to establish statutory senior advice centres to which persons are invited upon turning 70
  - to ensure there are incentives for participating in the labour market after retirement, and that pension accruals continue after the general retirement age
  - to continue the staircase model for increased earned-income tax credits for those over 60
  - that the guaranteed pension ensures a reasonable livelihood
  - to have accessible, user-friendly digital services in both Swedish and Finnish, as well as advice on how to use them
  - to see well-functioning home help and home nursing services
  - to ensure there are enough places within diverse kinds of assisted living facilities at reasonable prices
  - that all family carers have equal rights to compensation and rest. We want to transfer responsibility for family care compensation to Kela. We demand an action plan for improving the status of family carers.
  - to promote opportunities for voluntary work within elderly care
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## WE WANT ALL FINNS TO FEEL WELL

You have the right to feel safe and well while living in Finland, regardless of your background, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, age and sexual orientation.

We want to see concrete measures for helping the most vulnerable members of our society. It can be difficult to find one's way in today's fragmented social benefits jungle. Bureaucracy can be a further obstacle to social security for families or individuals with multiple challenges. Today's model can lead to incentive

traps. Work on the overhaul of the social security system must continue if we are to guarantee an incentivising system with reasonable outcomes for all. It must also be viable for people to accept temporary jobs.

We need a joint expense cap for all medicine, health care and travel costs, as well as functioning debt counselling.

Thanks to SFP, the retention period for payment default entries in credit records was shortened during this government term, which makes life easier for those who are in debt.

You must have the right to be who you are. We continue to work for an inclusive society and for the rights of gender and sexual minorities.

## WE WANT

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- to see a total overhaul of the social security system, securing reasonable outcomes and incentivising work
  - to secure sufficient resources for debt counselling
  - to implement a joint expense cap for all medicine, health care and travel costs. We want to investigate opportunities for splitting the expense cap into periods so that costs are spread more evenly throughout the year.
  - to have menstrual, incontinence and diaper/nappy products lowered to the lowest rate of VAT
  - to achieve a functioning Kela taxi system
  - to reform Finland's transgender legislation to ensure it respects human rights, including those of children and adolescents
  - to achieve legal recognition of a third gender in Finland
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# THE NEW REALITY SURROUNDING US



# FINLAND MUST IMPLEMENT PROACTIVE FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICIES

Today's security policy situation is the most tense it has been since the Second World War. The risks that this implies must be taken seriously, and yet we must not turn inwards. In our increasingly insecure international circumstances, it is important for Finland to be a proactive global participant. Our security is reinforced by our respect for international treaties, structures and human rights protection mechanisms.

Finland's and Sweden's NATO membership will increase security around the Baltic Sea and northern Europe. Finland must be a constructive member of NATO. The responsibility for Finland's defence lies with us and it is important to maintain and develop our universal conscription, which forms the foundation of our national defence.

Finland's foreign policy must build upon a strategic promotion of human rights and equality.

We must also have to have the ability to handle large-scale immigration.

We must be prepared to react to and combat various types of hybrid threats.

## WE WANT

- **Finland to be an active and constructive participant in NATO**
- **to keep defence expenditure at a minimum of 2 per cent of GDP**
- **to maintain and develop universal conscription**
- **to make call-ups equal for everyone in the same age group, regardless of gender**

- **the Defence Forces to have modern and appropriate armament**
  - **to safeguard and develop the Nyland Brigade**
  - **to see Finland being a responsible peace-builder, taking active part in civil crisis management tasks**
  - **Finland to commit systematically to promoting equality and the rights of girls and women around the world**
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## OUR SHARED NORDIC REGION

Our opportunities for developing Nordic collaboration are better than they have been for a long time. Our NATO membership will automatically lead to increased defence cooperation, and now there are possibilities for increased Nordic collaboration within other sectors, too.

A strong Nordic region that acts as one generates stability and helps to reinforce the rule of law and democracy in Europe and the world. Together with the other Nordic nations, Finland must purposefully combat the forces working to dismantle equality and human rights.

It must be easy to migrate between the Nordic countries. Our efforts to remove border obstacles must continue.

Awareness must be increased among the other Nordic countries of the fact that there are several education and training programmes taught entirely in Swedish in Finland. Finland must attract students and workers from Sweden and the rest of the Nordic region.

## WE WANT

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- the Nordic region to be the world's most integrated area
  - the Nordic countries to intensify their cooperation on the European, Trans-Atlantic and global levels
  - to continue work on instating a Nordic e-ID
  - to make students in the Nordic region aware of the Swedish-language study paths available in Finland
  - to increase student exchanges between the Nordic countries
  - to increase the compatibility of vocational and higher education degrees in the Nordic region
  - the Nordic countries to work together to promote the Nordic welfare model and equality in international situations
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## THE EU IS IMPORTANT FOR FINLAND

The world order is shifting. Russia and China are striving to create spheres of influence. It is important for Finland and other democracies to join forces.

SFP knows that the best way to make Finland's voice heard is through the European Union. Finland must be a proactive and constructive actor within the EU. We must be at the forefront of working towards a more modern, more equal, more sustainable and competitive union that stands for our shared values related to human rights, the rule of law and democracy.

The EU's joint stand against Russia after Russia's brutal attack on Ukraine demonstrated the importance of acting jointly and swiftly. A shared European voice also reinforces Finland's status in the world.

The EU's shared value base and the rule

of law must run through the actions of all member states. It is important for the EU actively to follow its member states' national policies and to have mechanisms to prevent violations, misuse of EU funds and corruption.

A functioning single market in the EU is crucial for a small, export-dependent economy such as Finland. Membership in the EU means that our industry and commerce and Finnish businesses have a home market that is among the largest in the world.

The European Union must also be capable of renewal, and excessive EU bureaucracy must be removed. The principle of subsidiarity – the idea that decisions should be taken as close to the population as possible – is important. We must continue to observe all the member states' distinctive characteristics when planning new legislation.

## WE WANT

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- Finland proactively and constructively to influence EU policies and development
  - to see more active cooperation between the Nordic EU member states
  - decision-making processes in the EU to be democratic, clear and transparent
  - the EU to monitor the implementation of the rule of law in its member states, with measures taken against violations
  - the EU to continue to develop its joint foreign policy alignments and to be a powerful voice for human rights and global responsibility
  - to ensure sufficient agricultural subsidies
  - Finland to promote measures within the EU that improve the condition of the Baltic Sea and the Arctic region
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## WE FULFILL OUR INTERNATIONAL DUTIES

In our aid policy, we must promote the rule of law, democracy and the development good, open government. A functioning democracy, human rights and an active civil society are prerequisites for sustainable social development. In its future aid policy, Finland must emphasise the rights of girls and women, including their right to an education.

Our Finland is open and respects everyone. Our asylum policy must follow on from our international duties. We want to have humanitarian protection reinstated as grounds for a residence permit, to ensure that asylum seekers have access to functioning legal aid, and that the family reunification process actually works. We want to boost our international efforts for human rights. Asylum applications must be processed without undue delay in an individual procedure in which legal protection is guaranteed. Vulnerable persons must be identified at the start of the asylum process.

The Sami are the only indigenous peoples of the European Union. It is our responsibility, even in the future, to secure the Sami people's right to their languages, cultures and livelihoods. Finland must ratify ILO Convention 169.

Finland needs more immigrants and we must become better at integrating those who come here. The best paths for integration are a job or education, through which one can have a sense of fellowship and learn the language naturally. This is why we want all new arrivals to have opportunities for jobs or education as soon as possible. It must be possible to become integrated using either Swedish or Finnish. We combat all forms of racism and discrimination.

## WE WANT

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- the target for international aid to be 0.7 per cent of GDP, with 0.2 per cent of GDP going to the most vulnerable nations
  - the aid policy to be based on human rights, on promoting the rights of children and women to an education, and on reinforcing democracy
  - Finland to work for the participation of women in development and peacebuilding efforts around the world
  - to work for the ratification of ILO Convention 169 (the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention)
  - to have the Act on the Sami Parliament passed
  - to ensure that the immigrant quota system makes up a significant proportion of Finland's international responsibility
  - that asylum seekers to the EU be spread more fairly between the member states
  - humanitarian protection to be reinstated as grounds for a residence permit
  - to make family reunifications easier
  - to give asylum seekers the right to the Finnish maternity package
  - that persons from third countries who obtain a higher education degree in Finland will automatically receive a permanent residence permit
  - companies to commit to respecting human rights throughout their production chains
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**WE ONLY HAVE  
ONE PLANET**

## **WE MUST SAVE THE CLIMATE AND BIODIVERSITY NOW**

We want Finland to be climate neutral by 2035. For this to happen, it is important to continue working on ambitious climate policy nationally, at the EU level and internationally. Global warming must be limited to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

Finland must be at the forefront when it comes to climate-smart and environmentally friendly technology. This holds great potential for our businesses. For businesses to have the courage to invest in development and innovation, farsightedness and predictability are needed also in our energy policy.



The circular economy and sharing economy are sectors of the future in which Finland should be a pioneer.

We must sustainably reinforce our energy self-sufficiency. Therefore we must promote the green transition, abandon fossil fuels and increase renewable energy production. Vehicle emissions must also be reduced.

The eutrophication of the Baltic Sea demands sustained action. We must pur-

posefully work towards reducing emissions, especially into the Archipelago Sea.

It is crucial that we work decisively to preserve and strengthen biodiversity throughout the country.

Our politics must encourage sustainable lifestyles and eco-friendly choices. We must use our resources wisely and reuse them where possible. Recycling must be made more efficient, making better use of industrial by-products.

## WE WANT

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- the proportion of renewable energy to increase, with fossil fuels being abandoned during the 2030s at the latest
  - to invest in research, development and innovation that aim to increase our energy and resource efficiency and reduce energy needs
  - to develop incentives for environmentally friendly investments, aimed at both business and private individuals, for example in the form of funding for energy-saving home renovations
  - Finland actively to work towards ambitious targets at the EU level to continue reducing emissions and increasing renewable energy production
  - to reduce vehicle emissions by having well-functioning public transport, as well as making investments into charging and refuelling infrastructure, for example
  - to promote the development, production and adoption of domestically produced, low-emissions fuels
  - all new buildings to be energy-efficient, with an increase in wood construction
  - to boost our carbon sinks through sustainable, farsighted and active agriculture and forestry
  - to formulate a climate compensation model for forest owners who maintain carbon sinks
  - to preserve biodiversity through sustainable use of natural resources and the protection of existing ecosystems
  - to make further pushes for reducing eutrophication of the Baltic Sea and, through sustained efforts, to improve the situation of the Archipelago Sea so that it can be taken off HELCOM's Hot Spots list
  - to promote sustainable fishing
  - to prohibit all emissions of untreated wastewater and washing water from ships into the Baltic
  - to see proper rainwater handling. Dumping of snow into the sea must not be permitted, either.
  - to formulate a compensation model for scrapping of old boats and motors
  - to increase the recycling rate in Finland
  - to promote a sharing economy through legislation and financial instruments
  - to have the environmental burden of products and buildings calculated for their entire life cycles
  - to boost the attention given to the circular economy and sustainable development in school curricula
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# FINLAND'S SUCCESS FACTORS

## OUR COMPETITIVENESS DEPENDS ON RESEARCH AND A KNOWLEDGEABLE POPULATION

To cope with global competition, Finland must invest more in research and development. We suggest investing 4 per cent of our GDP in RDI, with public funding making up at least 1.3 per cent of GDP. We must promote even better collaboration between industry and commerce, higher education and growth company environments. One issue is that many innovative growth companies are quickly sold to foreign investors because there are not enough capital-rich investors in Finland. We must promote ownership in order to keep more growth companies in domestic hands in the long term.

Finns' financial knowledge should be strengthened, as a means for us to prevent over-indebtedness. With better financial

knowledge, more Finns would have the courage to invest in shares and funds. Small-scale investments could be incentivised with a tax-free starting amount.

## WE WANT

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- for private financing of RDI to be developed, for example through tax relief
  - to encourage savings and investments in order to reinforce domestic ownership
  - to see teaching of economics and entrepreneurship being increased at all educational levels
  - to strengthen competitiveness and accessibility by investing in functioning traffic solutions
-

## FINLAND AS A DIGITAL PIONEER

Digitalisation is one of the puzzle pieces that make up a successful Finland and must be promoted across the public and private spheres. Investment is needed to reach the global forefront when it comes to digitalisation, and to attract private investment and top-level expertise to Finland.

Digitalisation implies huge changes in how people carry out their work, as well as in how services are produced. It has also led to whole new operating models, such as the platform economy.

Functioning internet connections are a prerequisite for offering digital services on the same terms and of the same quality, regardless of place of residence. Even though digital services are becoming more common, people must also be able to receive services in traditional ways.

Digital services must, from the very start, be developed in parallel in both Finnish and Swedish, in order to ensure that both language groups receive equal treatment. There must also be a sufficient supply of digital learning materials in Swedish.

It is important to increase our competence as regards data system development.

Our society is vulnerable to various kinds of cyberattacks. Higher investment is needed in cyber security, on broad terms.

## WE WANT

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- to work towards making Finland a leader in new technologies
  - Finland to have a road map for digitalisation
  - simple digital support services to be available for the entire population
  - to have both national languages taken into account in digital solutions from the start
  - accessibility to be taken into account in the development of new services from the start
  - there to be sufficient resources for promoting cyber security, and to make Finland a pioneer in this area
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# A LIVING, DIVERSE CULTURE

## BILINGUALISM IS AN ASSET FOR FINLAND

We want to see a Finland where everyone can carry out their daily lives in our two national languages: Swedish and Finnish. SFP is the best champion of a dynamic, bilingual Finland. Our bilingualism must be fostered, ensuring it also works in practice.

To ensure that the availability of services in both languages is secure in the future, we want to revise official language skill requirements, so that Swedish speakers are also able to hold public sector jobs without complete fluency in Finnish.

SFP has overseen the formulation of a new Strategy for the National Languages of Finland during the ongoing parliamentary term. Now we want to see its measures put into practice.

Various types of language supplements should be more widely applied to encourage and incentivise employees to use their second national language.

We want language teaching in schools to start at an earlier stage, and to ensure that enough lessons are dedicated to it. We also want to increase investments in language immersion, language showering and other tried and tested language learning methods. We must train more language immersion teachers to satisfy the current demand for immersion and showering among families with children.

## WE WANT

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- to see the measures listed in the new national language strategy being put into practice
  - to have reciprocal and customised language competence requirements implemented in the government
  - language supplements to be used and to be sufficiently incentivising
  - the National Certificate of Language Proficiency tests in Finnish and Swedish at the highest level to be free of charge
  - to continue working towards Swedish-language solutions concerning education, culture, non-government organisations, mass media and the Church
  - to secure public services in both the national languages and for special-needs groups. We want to see more Swedish-language and Nordic TV programmes on YLE, as well as more subtitled programmes.
  - to maintain and strengthen Finland-Swedish Sign Language
  - language impact assessments to be made at an early stage of legislation and other plans
  - that everyone can rely on being properly served in Swedish by Finland's courts of law, the National Enforcement Authority, the police and the other authorities
  - to have enough police officers, emergency centre operators and other personnel being trained in Swedish
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## A DYNAMIC CULTURAL SECTOR AND DIVERSE EXERCISE OPTIONS CREATE WELLBEING

Culture, the arts and exercise play an important role in our society, boosting wellbeing and creating jobs.

After the challenging Covid years, we must work to reinstate a blossoming cultural sector in our country. A dynamic and strong cultural sector enriches our lives and supports wellbeing. We want to see accessible and equal availability of culture for everyone.

Finns must exercise more if our public health is to improve. For this, we need diverse and proper opportunities for exercise and sports.

The third sector plays an important role when it comes to the diversity of leisure activities on offer. The work done by NGOs within sports, culture, youth activities and the voluntary fire brigade is extremely valuable. These associations create welfare and wellbeing.

### WE WANT

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- to increase the proportion of budgeted funds going to culture in the long term
  - to make culture accessible for everyone
  - to ensure our cultural policy supports diversity and a broad cultural offer
  - to ensure our cultural institutions are well set to create cultural activities for various target groups
  - enough funds to be reserved for the inclusion of arts and culture in all new public buildings
  - to secure favourable operating conditions for theatres
  - to update legislation concerning freelancers, ensuring that they also are covered by proper social security
  - to increase Finns' opportunities to exercise and to encourage more people to be physically active
  - to create conditions for offering equal opportunities and access to practice sports and other leisure activities
  - to promote and support the working conditions of our associations
  - to continue working on reducing bureaucracy for associations
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# DYNAMIC RURAL AREAS AND SUCCESSFUL URBAN AREAS COMPLEMENT EACH OTHER

## WE NEED PROPER INFRASTRUCTURE AND GOOD COMMUNICATIONS

Because Finland is a large country, it is important for our infrastructure – e.g. roads, railways, ports and airports – to be in good condition. We have a significant backlog of repairs to address. Even the minor road network needs enough resources. Proper communications are a prerequisite for a successful and competitive Finland.

Functioning rail traffic is important, both for transport connections and to reach our climate goals. We want to have a proper rail network. The existing rail network must be maintained and developed at the same time as new lines are planned.

We want to invest in smooth public transport and functional cycling and pedestrian routes. Private cars will continue to be necessary. There must be sufficient charging and refuelling infrastructure for sustainable car traffic. With regard to industry and commerce in Finland, it is important to secure favourable operating conditions for the transport sector.

Finland's geographical location makes us dependent on maritime transports. Therefore it is crucial to keep our ports and navigable channels in good condition. The ability of shipping to continue in winter must be secured. Good communications also encompass ferry and archipelago traffic, which must be guaranteed.

## WE WANT

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- greater investments into maintaining and repairing our road network
  - to ensure maintenance of the minor road network, as well as renovation of roads to which weight restrictions apply every year
  - to promote smooth public transport for a reasonable price
  - to develop and maintain our rail network
  - to continue developing the status of Helsinki Airport as an important international hub, and to safeguard conditions for regional airports
  - to ensure traffic in the archipelago works well and to electrify our road ferries
  - our ports and navigable channels to be kept in good condition to safeguard our international trade and security of supply
  - to secure conditions for winter shipping
  - Finland to make use of the opportunities awarded by digitalisation, also promoting them within the sharing economy and the transport sector
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## CITIES FORM THE CORE OF OUR GROWTH CENTRES

We need dynamic cities, as well as a lively countryside. Finland has diverse types of cities and they must be developed based on their own strengths. We want to promote liveable cities and sustainable urban policy.

Access to planned building plots is crucial for a functioning real estate market, so we want to make planning easier.

We want all those who move to Finland to have opportunities for proper integration. Good urban planning and education are elements in combating segregation.

It is a matter of national importance that the Helsinki Metropolitan Area is developed based on its own special characteristics, in order to cope with international competition.

## WE WANT

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- urban planning to be smoother and quicker
  - to work against segregation in our cities
  - to facilitate construction and access to planned building plots
  - more residential buildings and more affordable housing
  - to build healthy and sound schools, homes for the elderly and other public buildings, which must be continuously maintained
  - to see functional infrastructure connecting cities and regions, with the help of better co-ordination between cities and the government
  - cities to play an active role in the fight against climate change
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## A STRONGER COUNTRYSIDE ASSURES OUR SECURITY OF SUPPLY

Our politics must ensure that people can continue to live, work and feel well in rural areas and the archipelago. The Covid pandemic brought a swift rise in remote work. For areas with net emigration, remote work offers opportunities for turning the migration trend.

Agriculture is undergoing an entirely unprecedented profitability crisis. Measures are needed on many levels. We must review the entire production chain and look at the relevant legislation to find solutions that can help to secure the future of our farmers. Agriculture is crucial for our security of supply.

Recent events have demonstrated the importance of guaranteeing food safety in Finland in all situations. We must ensure that we have operable domestic food production and a functioning market. Clean Finnish food has great potential in the global market and we must support both product development and farsighted investments into exports.

We want to see more advice and support functions for our farmers, instead of further supervision. The workability of commercial fishing must be guaranteed.

People's concerns over wolves and cormorants must be taken seriously and nuisance wildlife management must be permitted when needed.



## WE WANT

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- to increase the development opportunities of regions and local communities based on their own special characteristics
  - it to be possible to build, live and work in the countryside and the archipelago without added bureaucracy
  - to ensure favourable conditions for farmers in Finland
  - to reinforce the role of producers in the food supply chain, thereby securing domestic food production
  - to reduce bureaucracy related to primary production
  - to see farsighted, permanent investments into exports that increase the value of Finland's clean, certified foods to see active forestry that is financially viable while being socially and ecologically sustainable
  - the granting of permits for various forms of nuisance wildlife management being simple and flexible, based on actual local conditions
  - to update archipelago legislation so that it supports the development of the archipelago while taking into account permanent residents, holiday residents and local businesses alike
  - to improve opportunities for part-time residence
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**FORWARD TOGETHER**