

S-KVINNOR

**A WORLD OF GENDER
EQUALITY IS POSSIBLE!**



SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC WOMEN IN SWEDEN (S-KVINNOR)
POLITICAL PROGRAM 2013-2017

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“Together we can create a better future. The most important lesson from Social Democratic history is this: it is possible to change society.”

With these words, the new Social Democratic Party program begins.

S-kvinnor shares this starting point. It is possible to change society!
A world of gender equality is possible!

This political program formulates the most important starting points for our feminist reform policy, for 2013-2017. The program covers a wide range of policy areas, from economic to environmental and international cooperation. It reflects the breadth of our Social Democratic, feminist politics.

For S-kvinnor, feminism and gender equality are about the struggle for equal rights and every woman’s right to shape her own life. Feminism is about challenging and changing the whole community, which for centuries has been ruled and dominated by men. In every policy area there is space for a feminist perspective.

S-kvinnor puts the class struggle side by side with the struggle for increased gender equality. We also turn the spotlight on other power structures and types of discrimination. Our goals are, as formulated in the Social Democratic party program, *“a society without superiority and inferiority, without class distinctions, without patriarchy, racism, homophobia or transphobia, a society without prejudice and discrimination.”*

S-kvinnor wants to build a society grounded in democratic ideals and the principle of equal rights for all.

THE ECONOMY GROWS WHEN PEOPLE GROW

Full employment – the key to women’s economic independence

Full employment is the basis for a well-functioning society. It is also the basis for women’s economic independence and it is necessary in order to strengthen the position of women on the labor market and secure a good income throughout life. Regardless of background, women should have the right to the same employment rate as men, on equal terms.

Turn the trend – toward greater economic equality

S-kvinnor’s goal is a society that is both equal and equitable. We do not accept today’s non-Socialist tax policy that creates wider economic gaps and growing relative poverty among women and children. Employees, retired people, parents on parental leave, the sick and the unemployed, should all be treated equally. The general welfare policy must be strengthened.

Give priority to the common good

A general and strong welfare strengthens women’s abilities, as employees, consumers of goods and services, and as relatives. Welfare is an important issue for women, because more women than men work in the welfare system and need its services. The trend in recent years, where private spending is set above public, must be reversed. Jobs in the public sector must have good working conditions.

Recognize and enhance unpaid work in the home and family

Unpaid work in the home and family is a cornerstone of the national economy. It must be made visible and shared equitably between women and men. Women’s unpaid work caring for dependents should never compensate for deficiencies in the public sector.

Safeguard the development of a sustainable society – democracy before the market

Sweden’s prosperity is based ultimately on resources outside the market - such as natural resources and ecosystems, social trust, and human health and knowledge. Therefore, democracy must set boundaries for the market. We need a sustainable economy. Financial speculation and short-term exploitation of people and the environment must not undermine society’s long-term prosperity.

GENDER EQUALITY AT WORK AND IN THE FAMILY

Equal parents' insurance

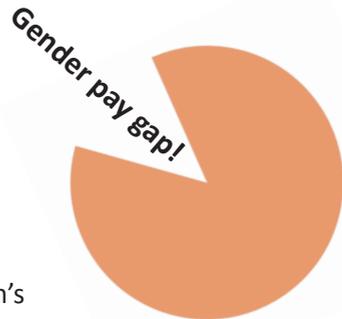
Sweden has a highly gender-segregated labor market. To break women's subordination vigorous reforms will be required. Today we know that equal parents' insurance is a key to gender equality in working and family life. Parents' insurance must therefore be individually based. A first step towards an equal share of parents' insurance is a division of the days into three parts, one part to the mother, one part to the father and one part parents can use as they like.

The right of all women to their own income, regardless of background

Far too many women lack contact with the labor market. Among women in Sweden born outside Europe, only 50 percent have a job. S-kvinnor wants to see a national action plan for women who have been left for long outside the labor market.

Equal wages

Women's wages average 14 percent lower than men's. Women as a group are salary-discriminated on the labor market. Many traditional women's jobs are also valued lower than traditional men's jobs. S-kvinnor demands annual wage surveys, and a revaluation of women's jobs. The public sector, where politics can exert direct influence, should take precedence.



The right to a full-time job

A third of all women employed in Sweden, work part-time. The right to full-time work should be resolved by the labor market partners, but this has proved difficult. S-kvinnor therefore demands legislation. Before this is enacted, Social Democratic municipalities and county councils should lead the way with the right to full-time employment. Good practice should be spread.

Improving women's working conditions and working environment

Women generally have worse working conditions than men. Women work more part-time, they have temporary employment, bad working environment and poor job-associated health. S-kvinnor wants to see more research on women's health and safety, better supervision and more union-political interaction.

Better security in case of illness and unemployment

The decline in unemployment insurance and health insurance has particularly affected women, who have lower incomes and are more prone to ill health than men are. S-kvinnor demands a well-functioning and gender equal social insurance.

More women in leadership positions

It is difficult for women to reach senior management positions in the labor market in both the private and public sectors. Especially weak is the representation of women on company boards. S-kvinnor wants to see more women achieving leadership positions. S-kvinnor supports the proposed EU legislation on quotas for company boards.

A future with shorter working hours

It is now more than 40 years since normal working hours became 40 per week. At the same time many women work part-time. S-kvinnor believes that growing consumption as a result of increased productivity, should be converted into shorter daily working hours. This would benefit women's quality of life and health, and promote gender equality and a sustainable economy.

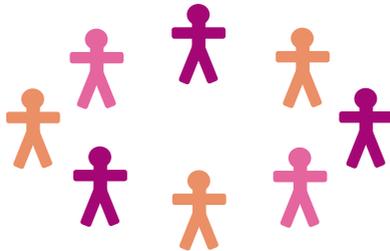
OUR CHILDREN - SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT

Equal chances in life for all children

More and more children in Sweden are growing up in relative poverty. S-kvinnor wants to see a strong policy at national and local level to reduce inequality and give all children the chance for a good life. A primary condition is women's ability to work and support themselves. General child support and well-functioning social insurance is the best way to strengthen vulnerable families' finances. The indexing of family support systems is an important reform for all families to be able to keep up with income growth.

Give all children the right to pre-school

Pre-school is an educational activity. Children who attended pre-school do better in school than other children. Therefore all children must have a right to pre-school, regardless of their parents' occupation. A long-term goal is also pre-school free of charge.



Abolish childcare allowance and childcare voucher system for parents caring for their own children

Family policy should promote women's opportunities for paid employment, regardless of class, place of residence or country of birth. The childcare allowance and the childcare voucher system for parents caring for their own children work against these family policies.

Legislate childcare at unsocial working hours

Today nearly 40 percent of all Swedish employees work unsocial hours. Yet nearly half of Sweden's municipalities have no evening, night or weekend childcare. Expansion must be a priority! All parents must have the opportunity to work.

Improve the quality of pre-school

Early intervention in children's learning and development is essential to their life chances. For this reason pre-schools must have the best possible conditions to satisfy every child's needs. S-kvinnor wishes to see smaller groups in pre-school, tailored to needs existing in every pre-school. This is a crucial prerequisite for educational work and for children to learn, develop and feel good. Well-trained staff with good opportunities for professional development are a key to success. Gender-aware education should permeate all activities in pre-school.

Improve the quality of out-of-school centers

In many Swedish municipalities the resources for out-of-school centers have been drastically reduced. That trend must be reversed. More resources and staff with good training and good working conditions create greater safety for children, parents and staff. Out-of-school centers are important as a resource in our efforts to give all children good life chances.

Make the UN Child Rights Convention Swedish law

According to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the child's best interest should always be paramount. S-kvinnor demands that the CRC become Swedish law and that its principles be applied in all cases, from asylum to custody stay, eviction and domestic violence.

WELFARE AND KNOWLEDGE THROUGH LIFE

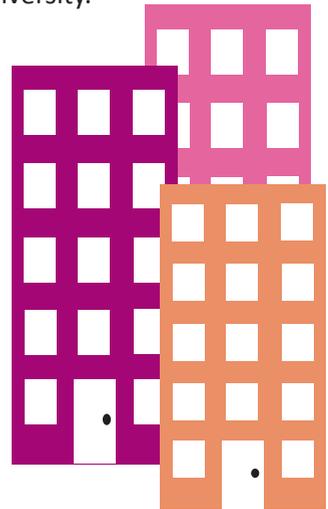
Invest in school and college

An equal and equitable education system is the foundation for women's freedom. This is why S-kvinnor wants to invest more in school. All children in the nine-year compulsory school should reach their educational goals, and all young people should manage their high school leaving certificate at the latest when they are 25. All high-school programs should lead to basic college certification and all who wish to, and have a certificate, should be able to study at training college or university.

Women and men should have the same opportunity for postgraduate studies.

More housing at affordable prices

Housing policy is an important part of welfare policy. A strong housing policy is particularly important for women, who generally have lower incomes than men and are often responsible for additional family care. Access to tenancies with reasonable rents is of great importance for flexibility in the labor market and for young people's and women's right to their own household.



Strengthen opportunities for mid-life education for women

S-kvinnor wants to see strong investment in adult education. Many women seek knowledge later in life. Traditional female jobs, such as those in education and health care, need more skills development. SFI training (Swedish for immigrants) and other education for new arrivals in Sweden must be adapted to women's conditions and needs.

Sweden needs more equality in health care

Physical and mental ill-health is strongly linked to class, gender and ethnicity. In conjunction with the choice-of-care reforms and caregiver establishment reforms, the differences increased. S-kvinnor wants to see more resources for health care and public health, on gender-equal terms.

We need a national commission for health equality, and more research on women's diseases.

Strengthen older women's economic security

A large group of older women have very low pensions, or only warranty pensions. The relative poverty rate among older women is growing. Action is needed to tackle growing inequalities and poverty.

Improve the quality of care for the elderly

S-kvinnor wants to see more resources, professional development and better staffing in care for the elderly. We need a long-term quality plan for Swedish elderly care.

Welfare profits should be ploughed back into welfare

S-kvinnor wants equitable welfare of high quality. Need must govern the distribution of common resources. The profit motive should not dominate welfare. All public funds to private welfare should benefit the users.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN

Strengthen support to abused women in all municipalities

S-kvinnor wants each municipality to develop an action plan for preventing violence against women of any age, and children. Help for abused women and children must also be secured. Local support for women's shelters should be of equal quality, and long-term, in all municipalities.



Combating prostitution and trafficking - wherever it occurs

Between 600,000 and 2 million people worldwide are victims of human trafficking each year. This demands a continued strong policy to protect those who in various ways are being exploited. S-kvinnor seeks the prohibition of sexual purchase in all countries in the EU. S-kvinnor also wants the Swedish Sex Purchase Act to apply to Swedish citizens who buy sex abroad.

The right to abortion in the EU

Abortion law is being questioned in several countries in Europe. Abortion is banned in Poland, Ireland and Malta. Several countries have adopted or are about to adopt stricter abortion laws, or even banning abortion. Joint efforts to support the right to abortion are one of S-kvinnor's main missions in EU cooperation.

WOMEN AND MIGRATION

Strengthening women's position in the asylum process

All women should have the right to asylum based on their own grounds, and to a separate asylum investigation, with female legal representation. The Swedish two-year rule, which applies to women with a residence permit connected to their marriage, should be reviewed.



Meet newly arrived women's need for knowledge and skills

Efforts for newly-arrived women, for example civil-rights knowledge, language training and validation, should be given high priority and be designed for newcomers' different needs.

PEACE AND SOLIDARITY

International solidarity for gender justice

Through our international collaboration, S-kvinnor is seeking to strengthen sisterhood across borders and promote women's political struggle, and their opportunity to form associations. S-kvinnor wishes gender equality and women's rights to be prioritized in Swedish aid policy. We want to increase the share of aid for promoting women's reproductive rights and reproductive health.

A more active policy for peace and disarmament

S-kvinnor wants to work for a stronger and more active Swedish peace- and disarmament policy. Regarding Swedish arms exports, S-kvinnor demands that application of the regulations be tightened up in each individual case to follow the guidelines that no arms may be exported to dictatorships or countries that violate human rights. This will require more openness and transparency in the Export Control Council's treatment of export licenses.



The supply of Swedish defense materiel must also be ensured on long-term, in such a way that arms exports may be controlled as strictly as the guidelines require. S-kvinnor's long-term goals are that the extensive Swedish weapons production should be switched to civilian production and arms exports should be phased out.

Prioritize UN efforts for peace and security

Sweden's international efforts should be primarily peace-supporting and peace-keeping, under the UN flag. Participation in military, peace-enforcement operations should be a last resort, under the UN principle of the *responsibility to protect*.

Empower women in peace processes

S-kvinnor supports efforts to realize UN Resolutions 1325, 1820 and 1960 – on women, peace and security and on sexual violence in war and conflict.

SUSTAINABLE LIFE IN A SUSTAINABLE WORLD

Feminist environmental policy - for equality and justice

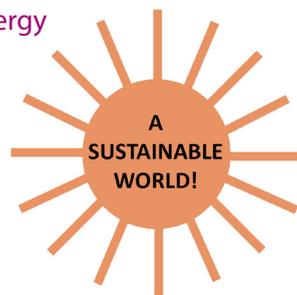
S-kvinnor wants to see an environmental policy based on the interests of women and their living conditions. Environmental policies should go hand-in-hand with a policy of welfare, equity and equality. Investment in good housing and public transport are examples of how environmental policies and welfare policies can work together.

Invest in sustainable communities and a living countryside

S-kvinnor wants to see a strong investment commitment for sustainable and secure communities and rural habitats. Segregation must be broken. Dwellings must be both beautiful and energy-smart. A sound infrastructure, footpaths, cycle paths and sustainable public transport in the whole country, will increase women's and children's range and mobility. Housing should have close access to nature and green spaces.

Phase out nuclear energy and develop renewable energy

Nuclear power must be phased out and replaced by renewable energy. A decommissioning plan for nuclear power should be developed. Strong public investment will develop renewable energy and energy-efficient solutions, which will benefit the environment and climate.



Promoting sustainable consumption and a prudent lifestyle

Prosperity and quality of life can evolve without major ecological footprints. Today women live with less environmental impact than men. More investment in cultural activities, welfare and recreational activities is needed, rather than in material consumption. This will combine welfare with good environment.

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It is possible to change society! A world of gender equality is possible!

S-kvinnor is Social Democratic feminists who place the class struggle side by side with the struggle for increased gender equality and the struggle against racism. Our association is for women throughout the whole of Sweden. Together we fight for increased gender equality in society and in our own Party.

Social Democratic Women in Sweden

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