

Young people

General election day, September 17th, is the day when Sweden's future is to be decided, and it will be up to you and me to cast our vote. We all share the same responsibilities, and all votes are equal. Should we further and improve our welfare system, or should we downgrade by taking one out of every five tax krona out of the public coffers? Should we continue developing the Swedish welfare model – or should we abandon it?

No-one wants fewer opportunities of leading a decent life just because they're young. Young people demand – and are entitled to – welfare and security. That's why we, the Social Democrats, consider a robust national youth policy to be extremely important.

Today there are far too many young people who can't seem to make ends meet. If you can't manage school you may find it more difficult to find a job. Unemployment makes you more vulnerable and, if you're unlucky, may even lead to illness. And without an income you probably won't be able to find a place to live. We want to change all that. Sweden can't afford to disuse the potential that young people have to offer.

Most important of all is that young people are able to take part in the decision-making process. We, the Social Democrats, are taking active steps to ensure that more young people are included in decision-making bodies. To encourage young people to vote in the upcoming election, the Social Democratic government has decided that Swedish schools will hold elections of their own in the autumn.

Education

Education is everyone's right – that goes without saying. Nobody should have to leave upper-secondary school without completing his or her education. That's why schools need more resources. Pupils participating in individual study programmes should be able to study on a full-time basis. Vocationally-oriented programmes at upper-secondary school level will



be improved. We will also be introducing a new apprenticeship training scheme enabling you to acquire skills while working. In addition, student grants for upper-secondary studies will be increased by a further 100 kronor a month. We will also provide an extra 17,500 places at post-secondary level so that more people will be able to enjoy a college or university education.

Work

Everyone is entitled to a decent job and a wage which they can live on. Today many young people are marginalized because they find it difficult to break into the labour market. That's why we're taking special steps to bring jobs to young people. No young person will have to face unemployment for more than 100 days. We've introduced a special employment support scheme for young people in long-term unemployment. The responsibilities of local authorities for keeping track of out-of-work young people and offering them some form of employment have been more clearly defined. The Employment Office has been given directives to keep track of young people without a job and intervene more quickly where necessary.

Accommodation

Many young people today find it difficult to find a flat of their own. Whether or not you can find somewhere to live should not depend on the size of your wallet. We're therefore ensuring that more inexpensive rental accommodation is being built along with affordable student flats. Landlords often demand that prospective tenants have a permanent job, which prevents many young people from acquiring a home of their own. We want local authorities, backed by government support, to guarantee that the rent will be paid. We say No to special young people's flats a lower standard or less attractively situated than the norm.

Health and recreation

More and more young people suffer from stress. Mental ill health is on the increase, especially among young girls. We, the Social Democrats, want to divert more resources to children's and young people's psychiatric services. We want more recreation centres and other meeting places where young people can feel that their spare time is meaningful and enjoyable. We also recommend that more resources be put into efforts to raise health standards in schools.

The alternative

Against our policies stand the Moderates and their right-wing allies. The Moderates want to lower standards and increase sorting and screening in schools. They want to remove upper-secondary individual study programmes and force seventeen and eighteen-year-olds to continue studying at compulsory-school. They want to lessen our ambitions for students attending vocationally-oriented study programmes. They want to weaken our labour market policies, thereby forcing many young people into unemployment.



The Centre Party has proposed making it possible for anyone under 26 to be fired with immediate effect. In France, thousands of people of all ages have protested against this proposal. Nevertheless, the Centre Party wants to introduce a similar system here in Sweden.

The Moderates' policies will make it more difficult for young people to acquire a flat of their own. They want to remove the state subsidy that makes it possible to build inexpensive rental accommodation and student flats. They also want to abolish the housing allowance payable to young people under 29 without children. All this will lessen the opportunities for young people to live an independent life of their own.

In our Sweden, everyone is welcome. Which Sweden will you choose?

