

Political Guidelines

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1. WE BELIEVE IN THE FUTURE

We live in a fantastic era. The number of democracies is on the rise. People raise from the thralls of starvation, oppression and illiteracy. The wealth of the world as a whole is increasing. The past ten years have been a fantastic journey with a rapid and fascinating development.

It has become possible for people to keep in constant touch across the globe via mobile phones and text messages. News reach out to the whole world simultaneously. Ten years ago only a few people had been out on the Net and hardly anybody who did not work with it knew what broadband was.

Research and new technologies offer completely new opportunities – for industry as much as for health services and the provision of care. Medicines become cheaper and more accurate. New methods of treating glaucoma, gastric ulcer and cancer have meant a silent revolution for the sick in Sweden. In Swedish municipalities and industries the production of energy has been altered – we consume less, but get more.

Not only are the economies of the world more and more closely interwoven, but so are we human beings. Never before has the rising generation had such great opportunities to travel and to meet new people, cultures and impressions as the generation of today has.

Several global developments are going on that will change conditions for everybody.

During the first years of the new millennium the globalisation of economies and markets has affected people's everyday life. Wage earners face new threats of low wages and less security. Enterprise owners face hardening international competition.

The learning society labour market is under constant development. The number of jobs within the service sector is growing. The demand for education increases – in all sectors. Everybody will need to get an education, again and again.

Demographic development affects the world. The inhabitants in Europe are growing older. The fact that more and more people live longer and enjoy healthier lives is a fantastic success. But it entails new demands on welfare, and it changes the patterns of both consumption and production.

People are able to commute and travel as they have never done before – within and across national borders. In Sweden more and more people move between regions. New opportunities open up to study, work or live in another country for a certain period of time. In Sweden every fifth person has a foreign background. Variety enriches and widens our horizons.

Global heating and climate changes put the struggle against environmental pollution in a completely new light. Storms, torrential rains and heat waves- it is getting obvious that solidarity must extend across national borders and generation gaps.

These great developments affect our everyday lives. They change our questions about the age in which we live and our future, our concerns and our expectations. Can I take the children to the beach or is the sea full of algae? What shall I do if my company moves its production abroad? Will the welfare state still be there when I am older? Dare I dream of having a family and getting a place to live?

At the same time – development gets us closer to many of the aims we have struggled for!

With strong development in Sweden and growing resources we must reduce the gaps further, press down income gaps and increase investments in justice and welfare. With the wealth of the world growing and an increasingly widespread understanding that there is a connection between the developments in different countries, we will have greater opportunities than ever to eliminate poverty in the world.

For a reformist labour movement it is a compelling opportunity.

We will build a bridge to the future – a bridge that is open to everybody.

The bridge we build will cross national borders. The bridge over reinforced European co-operation will provide democratic counterbalances to the global capital that moves its positions forward. By setting the goal of one percent for development aid, we create more chances for people and countries and the opportunities for new markets to grow. When children in the world are exploited, exposed to violence and deprived of schooling and medical care – then we strengthen the work for children’s rights. When people are forced to flee from oppression and war, they must be met with solidarity.

We will build a bridge to a future with full employment. An active labour market policy, a stable economy and world-class industry form the basis. We will compete with competence – not lower wages! The bridge will be built on enterprise and a strengthened international trade union struggle. We will fight for collective agreements at a time when the security of wage earners is challenged by right-wing forces.

Our bridge will be built on a strong basis of knowledge and research. We Social Democrats believe in the human being, in her curiosity and will to stretch limits. We want a school for everybody – where knowledge and skills come first and where each pupil will be given the support that is needed to reach their goals. The expansion of university education continues. We invest public resources equivalent to one per cent of the GNP in research. When the innovation climate is decisive for the economic success of our country, we invest in competence and new scientific discoveries.

We will build the green “People’s Home”. With purposeful investments in new and resource effective technology and the will to lead the way, we will end Swedish dependence on oil by 2020. When the environment and the climate are threatened, we push on even harder internationally and speed up the “green” adaptation.

We will build a bridge on integration and equality. Sweden must be a secure country in solidarity. People in all parts of Sweden must enjoy development – regardless of whether they live in the suburbs of big cities or in communities in sparsely-populated areas. Discrimination on the grounds of age, gender, origin, sexual orientation and disability can never be accepted. Every person is of equal value. When xenophobia spreads, we intensify the struggle for plurality – against racism, anti-Semitism and Islam phobia. Equality has increased. Being a feminist party, we Social Democrats are proud of this, but far from satisfied. We want equality in the use of parental insurance. With a public sector that leads the way the labour market will become more equal.

Welfare and security must be distributed according to needs – not the capacity to pay. Sweden must become the best country in the world to grow old in. That is why large investments in geriatric care will be made over the next ten-year period. Good health care must become even better. Accessibility must increase. Our country must continue to be the most child-friendly country in the world. The difficult position of the young in the labour and housing markets must be improved. Nobody should feel left outside. We know that secure people are prepared to take risks – and that nothing could be more important than this at a time of great changes. When the market threatens the basic principles of welfare, we restrain profit motives and state that welfare must be paid jointly via taxes.

The Swedish welfare model is successful. International studies repeatedly confirm it – Sweden is one of the most modern countries in the world. Sweden manages well in the ongoing adaptation of society. Here new jobs are developing when old ones disappear. We have high taxes – and a strong economy on the upswing with well educated and creative inhabitants. We have shown that development becomes stronger if everybody is allowed to participate and nobody is left outside.

Our welfare model creates equalized and equal opportunities. We must not abandon it. We must develop it and make it stronger.

In this work everybody is needed. The welfare state is upheld by you and me together. It is a contract between people, an agreement on rights as well as duties, a promise of personal responsibility and care for each other. Ultimately welfare is a practical expression of democracy and of every person's equal value.

As we write in our party program:

“Our aim is a society without divisions into lower and higher orders, without class differences, sexual segregation or ethnical divisions, a society without prejudices and discrimination, a society where everybody is needed and has a place, where everybody has the same right and the same value, where all children can grow up to become free and independent adults, where everybody can control their own lives and daily routines, and in solidarity and equal cooperation work for the social solutions that serve the community best.”

Everybody must participate. It is as simple as that.

2. FULL EMPLOYMENT – JOBS FOR EVERYBODY

2.1 Introduction

Work is a precondition for welfare, prosperity and peoples' personal development. People who have a job have higher self-esteem, better health and experience greater freedom than the person who is out of a job. That is why full employment is the predominant aim of Social Democracy.

In order to manage growth and welfare we must take advantage of all the knowledge and will to work that there is among those who are excluded from the labour market today. This is a great challenge, but also an important opportunity. If we are to manage this, an offensive labour market and economic policy is required. Reforming working life and the organisation of work is also necessary. We must have a working life that is adapted to human beings, that takes advantage of our differences and allows us to organise our lives and our work according to the different stages of life.

The modern labour market must also make room for those who are not highly productive in the eyes of the employers at all the stages of life. We need strong labour legislation as well as a sense of responsibility on the part of employers.

Now the winds of change are blowing through the Swedish labour market. As is the case in other countries. New companies and organisations are established; others are restructured or closed down. Completely new trades develop. New occupational titles come into existence as new services or demands change. Old jobs and tasks – quite often heavy or dangerous ones – disappear as technology develops. Today there are many computer consultants and information experts – occupational groups that were unknown only a few decades ago – but fewer textile – and shipyard workers than before. We change work more often than we used to do. In Sweden alone we have a turnover in 900 000 jobs every year. This will lead to fewer gold watches but also to more experience and increased knowledge and skills from a rich working life. But the periods of unemployment will also be more frequent. No trade or occupation is spared from redundancies. In this sense there is no secure employment. Companies and organisations are restructured when business is good as well as bad. Everything must be done a little faster, a little better, a little more effectively all the time. This requires secure and competent labour. This requires that companies should take social responsibility when closing down.

This in turn explains why Sweden – with our Swedish welfare model – manages well in international competition. The development of productivity in Swedish industry is among the fastest in the world.

Over the past ten years we have made large investments in order to meet this development. Large investments have been made in the fields of education and research. Government finances have been strengthened and interest rates are the lowest on record. Employment has increased by 290 000 persons since 1994. Sweden has lower open unemployment and higher employment than the average of the EU countries, especially among women and the elderly.

We Social Democrats are proud of these results. But we are not satisfied. Far too many people are still out of work. Unemployment drains people's self-esteem and increases differences in society. At the same time, unemployment is a waste of our common resources. When there are so many needs to be met, it is unreasonable not to make use of every person's skills and experience. Ernst Wigforss once asked the question: Can we afford to work? On today's labour market, the question is still as urgent. The answer is as obvious today. We can afford to work. Everybody is needed.

We Social Democrats have shown that it is possible to reduce open unemployment. In 2000, open unemployment was down to four per cent. Since then the international state of the market has changed and unemployment has increased. Now the economy is moving in the right direction again. It makes it easier to press down unemployment. The aim is full employment. The Labour Movement never can, wishes or will have any other aims.

2.2 Security on the way from old jobs to new ones

Thinking that it is time to change work can be a good feeling. There is an enticement about it – to dare take the step, to learn new things, to take more responsibility, to get to know new work mates. It is also something that is good for society. When people rise to their new tasks, our collective knowledge and resources will grow. But all those who have suffered from pains in their backs and necks, or who are having difficulties in going to sleep because of worries about their work and their boss, or those who suddenly have been given notice – they also know how infinitely heavy it can be to lose their jobs. All of a sudden people lose their sense of security, community and the sense of meaning that the job gave them. In times of rapid changes more people will be forced to take the heavy step. If people, in addition to this, are hit by a personal economic disaster, the burden can become too much.

We Social Democrats refuse to see a development where a period of unemployment involves people having to worry about their economy, maybe being forced to explain to their children that they must move to a cheaper place to live – instead of devoting themselves whole-heartedly to looking for a new job. Demands must be made, but it is unworthy of a welfare state to lay the whole economic burden of unemployment on the individual – who most often has nothing to do with jobs disappearing.

On the contrary, we are convinced that security is of vital importance if we as human beings are to manage rapid changes. Security is productive; it creates development, since secure people are prepared to take the risk of doing something. Secure people have the strength to adapt themselves, and also to see what is positive, to make a fresh effort. The person who is insecure would rather cling to what is old. There is here a clear ideological dividing line: Shall we tackle unemployment with reduced wages or by providing opportunities for education? Do the unemployed and sick have themselves to blame, or do we take collective responsibility for each other? Is being on your own a way of being strong, or are we strong together?

Every person who needs help to enter the labour market or who is in the transition from an old job to a new one must be given individual help – regardless of whether it is a

question of evaluation of skills, improvement of their qualifications, rehabilitation, specialisation or moving to a new place. The labour market policy must be shaped according to local, regional and national needs. The ambition must be to develop further and to strengthen the existing local influence on labour market policy. It is only in this way we can effectively match the resources of the unemployed to the demands of the labour market and be one step ahead, intervene when the demands of companies and the public sector vary, or if there is a risk that there may be occupations with a great shortage of skilled labour. Everybody can contribute to development – not only those with high competence and long experience, not only the fully healthy or Swedish-born.

Now Swedish wage-earners are challenged by the demands for sharply reduced unemployment benefits and a blunted labour-market policy. The labour movement wants to increase security and take up the struggle against unemployment:

A labour-market policy that is one step ahead. We want to develop new bridges to walk on, from what is old to what is new. Everybody who loses their job must be given support quickly, and the support must be adjusted to individual needs. In order to meet the challenges of the labour market better, co-operation between the employment service, trade union organisations, employers and other main figures is required. Everybody must know that they can turn to the employment service for qualified help. Trainee's jobs, "plus jobs", try-a-job schemes must be developed. The labour market policy must also be integrated into the activities provided through security and adaptation agreements by the social partners.

Vigorous efforts against juvenile unemployment. Many young people have great difficulties in entering the labour market. This creates feelings of being left outside, something we cannot accept. Worst affected are those who have not completed elementary and secondary schools. No young person should be out of work or lack education. Everybody must be given the opportunity to earn their own living. That is why the struggle for jobs, education or activities for the young is especially important. We want to introduce apprenticeships where the lessons in core subjects and vocational subjects take place in one or several work places. We also want to make special investments in giving unemployed academics trainee jobs in private companies and by providing employment earlier in view of coming generation changes in the public sector. People with professional experience who lack formal qualifications must be given the opportunities to validate their qualifications.

An equal community – better integration. For an immigrant most often the best way of getting to know a new country is to get a job – with work mates and new tasks. We want all those who have come to Sweden as refugees to be able to start working as soon as possible. That is why placements for the newly arrived must be improved. Everybody must be given a clear plan of action where common commitments are specified –for the individual as well as for society. This requires developed co-operation between authorities and organisations. Language studies must take place parallel with work and job shadowing, and the work on validation and certifying must be intensified. Special action must be taken against discrimination and long-time unemployment. We want to see generous employment subsidies and other types of support for those who have been

unemployed for a long time. The employment rates among immigrant Swedes must increase substantially.

Everybody is needed. Having a physical or mental disability all too often is still the same as being discriminated. Feeling left out, ignored, isolated or offended is not unusual – either in everyday life or in working life. The disabled as a group have a worse financial situation, lower education and more difficulties in getting a job than others. This acts as a signal to many people that their efforts are not needed – a signal that is unacceptable for us Social Democrats. We want everybody to have the same natural right to an active life. The perspective of the disabled must permeate policy, at all levels, in all parts. In order to maintain and create better opportunities for jobs and to make the position of people who will get a job on this basis stronger, we also want to raise the ceiling on wage subsidies. We want to guarantee that this rise will result in more people being employed in public utility companies. For public utility companies the subsidy is to remain at 90 per cent.

A raised ceiling on unemployment benefit. Income security must not be weakened by price rises. Today far from everybody will get 80 per cent of their wages when unemployed. This is an alarming development. No one who is unemployed should be forced to accept underpaid jobs with bad working conditions. In the next term of office, we want to raise the ceiling on unemployment benefit considerably so that most people will get 80 per cent of their wages in compensation when unemployed. The responsibility of trade unions must be reinforced and the burden of financing the insurance must not be laid on individuals.

2.3 Secure wage earners

High growth, high productivity, quick adaptation and more new jobs – this development is positive to a large extent and can contribute to providing better opportunities for most people, provided it occurs without increased worries and the spread of insecurity. That is why the right to work, secure employment conditions, and wages that meet the cost of living are more important than ever. It is also decisive if women are to have the same life conditions and opportunities as men.

The Swedish model is based on co-operation between the social partners, good organisation, long-term plans and clear rules and regulations. It has made the Swedish labour market uniquely stable. Everybody gains something from this – for the employers: many trying conflicts will be avoided, for the employees: real wages will increase, and for the whole of society there will be lasting growth. Over the past ten years real wage development has been record high and Swedish growth has been higher than the average of the EU and OECD.

At a time when organisations downsize and there is high demand for profitability, competition between wage earners increases. The chances of keeping your job when large changes take place will shrink if you have been absent from work frequently. Maybe that will be the case too if you speak bad Swedish or if you are somewhat older. Even the young have difficulties in getting a foothold on the labour market and are often obliged to apply for insecure time limited jobs. That is why more secure forms of

employment are important. Recently we Social Democrats have improved the protection of wages when companies go bankrupt. Now security in working life is further reinforced. It must not be possible to use parental leave as a term of notice. Employment security for parents who are on parental leave and for everybody with time-limited employment will be improved.

At an increasingly higher speed, the risk of injuries and the risk that we may be worn out at work will also increase. Employers have the ultimate responsibility for ensuring that workplaces are healthy and for making it possible for those who become ill because of their jobs to come back. Still there are heavy lifts, monotonous tasks, noise, exposure to harmful substances, dangerous solitary work and threats and violence at many work places. In addition to this, there are stress and increasingly harder demands – and sometimes incapacity and ineffective leadership among employers, unrealistic aims in work and few opportunities to have influence over your own work situation. Low-paid women are the ones who are affected the most.

We Social Democrats have carried out a broad action program against ill-health in working life, and now we see the results. The aim of halving absence due to illness by the year 2008 is within reach. But work on improved health must go on determinedly. More ways back to working life must be opened for those who are off sick and unable to go back to their old tasks or their old work. Nobody should need to “fall between two stools” because of demarcation-line problems between different authorities. The individual must be the centre of attention. Employers’ responsibility for health in working life must be underlined. The competence of safety officers must be taken advantage of.

When many people are out of work, employers are tempted to offer lower wages and take advantage of people’s desire to get back to work, to be needed and to have an income of their own. On today’s global labour market there is also cheap foreign labour obtainable. There are employers who are not slow to benefit from this. That is why we have seen several tough conflicts on the Swedish labour market lately. We Social Democrats do not accept this. We refuse to accept that wage earners are set against wage earners in an underbidding competition which is unfair to serious employers as well. Swedish collective agreements must apply to every person who works in the Swedish labour market.

The struggle against inequality and unfair differences in wages must continue.

The security of wage earners is now challenged by the demands for weakened security of employment and low-wage competition. We Social Democrats side with wage earners:

Reinforce collective agreements. The foundation for Swedish labour legislation is strong social partners and collective agreements as the most important instrument for regulating the terms of employment. Collective agreements create security at Swedish work places. Trade union organisations must be entitled to see to it that signed contracts are observed also in cases where the trade union has no members at a work place. The State, municipalities and county councils must engage serious employers who

obey the rules in accordance with the Swedish labour market. In the era of globalisation, the struggle for the security of wage-earners will also be an international struggle. Social Democracy wants to strengthen international trade union co-operation and introduce a right to international trade union sympathy actions.

Secure employment – with a right to full-time. Many people, not least low-paid women and Swedes with foreign backgrounds, are forced to go from one temporary job to another. Those employed on short term jobs have the lowest standing. They have to step in at short notice and their employment stops when they have completed their jobs. This cannot continue. The number of insecure forms of employment must decrease and permanent employment increase. Legislation should be revised with a view to increasing the influence of trade union organisations when engaging manpower companies in order to prevent these companies from dumping the terms of employment. The right of precedence when re-employing must not be put out of action when employers hire staff from manpower companies. The exemptions from the rules of priority according to the law on security of employment, LAS, must be abolished. Many women work part-time although they would much rather work full-time. The norm for employment must be full-time. That is why legislation must be strengthened so that full-time work will be a right and part-time a possibility.

Employers must take responsibility for ill-health. Class and gender differences in work related ill-health are unacceptable. Today many people, especially women, are sick-listed. Nobody should become ill because of their job. Every person must be responsible for their own health, but employers must take responsibility for ensuring that a person who is ill can go back to work. Everybody must be entitled to a statutory and quality assured company health service and preventive health work. People who get ill must be given help as quickly as possible and rehabilitation. Those who cannot go back to their former work place or former occupation must be given the same help with retraining as other job applicants.

Prevent wage discrimination. The parties on the labour market must take responsibility against wage discrimination. Women still earn only 92 per cent of the wages of men – viewed in terms of age, level of education, line of business, working hours and occupation. Equal pay for equal and equivalent work must not only be a slogan, but must also become a reality. Labour market discrimination must stop.

2.4 An economic policy for more people in work

Sweden is sensitive to the economic development of the surrounding world – almost half of all that we produce is sold for export. But Sweden is also a country that has shown the surrounding world what a target-oriented economic policy can accomplish. Thanks to the joint sacrifices of everybody during the cleaning-up of the budget and a target-oriented policy over the past ten years, an economy in crisis has changed its position into one of economic strength.

Keeping government finances in good order is a basic condition for low unemployment and high employment. We Social Democrats do not compromise with our

responsibility for our common economy. Sweden must have a strong economy with room for strains. The budget's political goals must be firm.

Growth in the economy does not automatically entail new jobs. The economy may grow substantially anyway, driven by increasingly higher productivity. But growth creates conditions for increased investments and higher private consumption, which in the long run creates new jobs, perhaps in new trades. It also gives room for higher public consumption. When Sweden becomes richer, we will be able to meet the needs within the public sector better and the medical service and schools can have increased resources and employ more people.

We Social Democrats prefer to see that a person who has been out of work for a long time is offered a subsidized job on the regular market. It can be a question of work within the field of environment protection. It can be a question of housework oriented services for the elderly – based on the needs of the elderly, not on their capacity to pay. This is good for everybody – for someone who gets a job, for someone who gets better help and for the whole social economy, since long-term unemployment risks leading to people becoming eliminated from the labour market.

We also know that developed welfare, stimulating to work in itself, also promotes economic development. It is the confidence of people who feel secure and *their* will to grow that encourages development. It is when more people set up their own business, travel, buy new white goods, do a course, change their places to live, move or start a family that new products and services – and by this jobs – will be created. Now all this is threatened by the economic policy of the Right. Reduced unemployment benefits will lead to lower wages, lower consumption and smaller investments. The attacks on the welfare state lead to more people feeling insecure. Social Democracy refuses to accept such development.

People's opportunities for work and welfare are now being challenged by the demands for a change of system – not least on the labour market. For us the goal is work for everybody. This presupposes a fair economic policy:

The struggle against unemployment comes first. Open unemployment must be pressed down, in a first step to four per cent. Employment must increase to 80 per cent. The goal is full employment. The labour market policy must have resources to help people to change from old jobs to new ones. The public sector must have the possibilities of employing people at a time when the demands for health and care increase. Everyone who is able to work must be able to get a job.

Healthy government finances with room for a proactive cyclical policy. A forceful cyclical policy is needed to avoid increasing unemployment. We want to cut down on expenditure in times of prosperity so that the costs of, for example, unemployment benefits and vocational training courses can be allowed to increase in more difficult times. The monetary policy must be combined with a proactive finance policy.

Give priority to the working line. The working line must be a major principle of Social Democratic economic policy. Everybody must have clear rights, but also duties. A

person who is out of work must be offered a job, education or a training job, at the same time as the rules for what is required for being entitled to benefits must be clear and applied consistently.

Combat fiddling and economic crimes. Economic crimes in the shape of tax evasion, bookkeeping crime, insider trading and corruption lead to reduced tax revenues and unhealthy competition. Economic crime costs many billions – every year. There is also a risk that it will undermine the legitimacy of welfare in the long run. We Social Democrats want to make vigorous efforts to combat tax evasion and we demand zero tolerance for economic crime. The struggle against bribery and other economic crimes must be intensified.

Reduce economic inequities. People's living conditions differ significantly. There are dividing lines between those who are in work and those who out of work, between men and women, between different social groups, between immigrants and natives of Sweden. Economic policies must contribute to redistributing from those with large incomes and wealth to those with large needs. The struggle against inequality and unfair wage-conditions must continue.

3. COMPETE WITH KNOWLEDGE – NOT LOW WAGES

3.1 Introduction

The human being is a thinking creature who retains her curiosity throughout her whole life. But in order to develop we need stimulation – training, education, cultural experiences, challenges, forums for debates, influence and the possibilities of taking on responsibility. Knowledge and education is a road to personal liberation, but today, perhaps more obvious than ever, it also gives a competitive advantage to the nation. Knowledge grows when it is shared by many people.

Competition for both jobs and consumers is global. New knowledge, new research and new technology develop at a high rate. Swedish companies compete with companies from the new industrial countries with very low wage costs. In spite of this, Sweden manages the competition very well. Since 1994, long-term foreign investments in Sweden have increased fourfold as a proportion of the GNP. Swedish exports have increased at an enormous rate. The investments in education at all levels have increased – and Sweden is among the countries in the world that invest most in education, development and research as a proportion of our economy. In an international perspective we take out a large proportion of patents on Swedish inventions.

If Sweden is to continue to be a leading nation of knowledge, we must go on investing in both the breadth and the cutting-edge of knowledge - from pre-school to research communities, but also in vocational training, adult education and competence development of the staff. Nothing can be more important than life long learning at a time when so much depends on our ability to constantly absorb new knowledge. Sweden must also become better at making the most of the knowledge that is derived

from research in the whole of Sweden. In this way we can learn new things and develop with new knowledge. In this way Swedish companies can keep up with international competition. In this way Sweden can develop with more jobs and higher growth in today's knowledge and service based society.

As global development proceeds, there is in every country a growing need for strong metropolitan areas that focus on international competitiveness. Every region in the EU and the world make increasingly purposeful investments to strengthen their positions. In order to keep Sweden together, economic growth is required. Then all the regions – from the countryside to the big cities - must be strengthened and be given the opportunity of making use of their own resources. Not until then can all of Sweden grow.

3.2 Knowledge for everyone

Tomorrow's research students and building workers, small businessmen and nurses, teachers and shop assistants go to pre-school today. Through play and curiosity, with many friends and teachers providing both knowledge and security the first steps are taken into life long learning. After leaving pre-school the children should pass on with a belief in their own ability and with a desire to learn. For both boys and girls it is important that we succeed in recruiting men to occupations within child care. By introducing a maximum rate, the fee to pre-schools has been reduced dramatically and almost every child takes part in pre-school activities, also the children of the unemployed and those who are on parental leave. In the long run we want pre-school to be free of charge.

Pre-school is the social activity that the users – in this case the children's parents – are most satisfied with. Children's groups can be smaller now that more child minders and pre-school teachers are being employed. Our electoral promise of 6000 more people being employed at pre-school will soon be fulfilled. But we must continue to work on quality. Pre-school also needs specialists – like dieticians, gender pedagogues and assistants who have a command of children's mother tongues. Many parents work unsocial hours. If needed, a modern society must provide child care in the evening, during the night, at weekends and during holidays.

At the party congress of 2001, we Social Democrats decided to increase the number of staff in schools. After a major investment in more teachers and other specialists, we now see clear results. Both in elementary and secondary schools the number of teachers has increased. When all the newly employed are in place in 2006, at least 15 000 more teachers and other specialists will have been employed, which is equal to an increase in the number of staff by ten per cent. In addition to this, work continues on an overall quality program for school, overall quality accounts for all schools and pre-schools, a state school inspection and a new authority for the development of school whose most important task is to support the schools in deprived areas. The control of independent schools must be sharpened. Each child is entitled to objective and comprehensive lessons. That is why teaching in all schools must be non-confessional.

Still there is a lot of work waiting to be carried out. Still many children and young people pass through elementary school and secondary school without completing the core subjects. The knowledge and skills in maths and reading must be better. We want to take special action to improve maths lessons in the whole educational system and invest more in reading lessons, especially for the younger ones. We must never accept that any pupil passes through school without having had the opportunities to acquire sufficient knowledge and skills. The knowledge-based society must be for everyone, not only a few.

Although Sweden still has the most equal school system in the world, there is a tendency for segregation to grow. We would like to see a comprehensive school that is a meeting place for children from different social backgrounds and cultures. All children are not alike and all schools do not have the same conditions. But to us Social Democrats it is obvious that all children should be entitled to go to a good school. That is why the resources for school must be distributed according to the needs of pupils, not only according to the number of pupils. School must be free of charge and the possibility of charging for school meals in secondary schools must be abolished. It is only in this way we can achieve equal schools, schools for everybody. The goal is clear: Every school must be a good school. Pedagogic development and variety must be encouraged in every school. Children are different – and there are many ways of learning. Independent schools can serve as a complement to municipal schools, but establishing new independent schools must not lead to poorer teaching and pedagogic opportunities for the children in municipal schools. The risks of segregation must be especially considered when approving the establishment of an independent school and the influence of municipalities when establishing independent schools must be strengthened considerably.

Today the vision of a school for everybody is challenged by the demands for elitism, short-term profit and an early separation of pupils. We would like a school which provides every child with the same opportunities for good knowledge and skills:

Clearer demands and expectations, better support and more follow-ups. Every pupil must be able to leave elementary school with satisfactory grades. School must have clear demands and expectations and provide the support and help that you as a pupil need to achieve your goals. It goes without saying that the pupils should be met at the level of development and attainment where they actually are. Each child who leaves school must do so with satisfactory knowledge and with a belief in their own ability and a desire to learn more. As early as in the first form, we want everybody to have an individual development plan, which must be evaluated and followed up jointly by teachers and parents. In order to improve the national equivalence and the possibilities of follow-ups, we want to make the goals of the curriculum clearer and develop the individual development plan further. No pupil must be left out in the knowledge based society.

Security and peace to study. All pupils who want to learn something must have peace and quiet and show respect for each other. The condition for a good learning environment is that pupils should have a desire to learn and have influence over their everyday lives. That is why the work on basic values in school is a decisive factor in its success. Every school must have a competent and certificated staff with clear fields of

responsibility and authority. Teachers must have the necessary qualities to teach and to guide the pupils in their work to acquire knowledge. We want to strengthen competence development, develop work places and see more certificated teachers. Bullying and other kinds of violation must stop and sexual segregation must be prevented. Discrimination at schools must be prohibited, as in working life. We want all schools to have regulations drawn up by staff, pupils and parents, all together.

Every school must be a good school. We want to take special action to raise the schools that today have the poorest results. Often these schools are in the areas where there are many children with a foreign background. Above all, we want to make the most of all the knowledge of other languages and use culture as a lever in this work. The resources to schools must be distributed according to needs.

Modern vocational training – which breaks obsolete sex roles. We want to make a major investment in vocational training programs in secondary schools by improving teachers' competence and by developing study and vocational guidance, among other things. Teaching methods must be developed, attraction increased and defects reduced. We want to create a modern secondary school apprenticeship where a larger part of the training takes place in working life. Young girls and boys must be encouraged to study together, for example by new educational directions. We want vocational training to correspond better to the demands of working life – both as to content as well as to scope. Regional co-operation projects between municipalities, businesses and trade unions must be encouraged.

3.3 Life long learning

Every day research breakthroughs happen in our country. It can be important discoveries which quite suddenly revolutionize science. But mostly it is a question of small steps which all together suddenly result in practical, useful knowledge like medicine, alternative fuels, more effective computers, smarter production methods or a deeper understanding of society, history or the economy.

There are a lot of things we never hear of; still many of these discoveries affect our lives. Research forms the basis of a great deal of our industry, research findings give us longer lives, better opportunities to realize our dreams of life and an easier life.

Access to education and knowledge is important for the individual, and a decisive factor for the development of our country. With a skilled population we will as a nation also be stronger in competition. Today more and more jobs require university degrees. There are fewer and fewer jobs for those who have not received any education beyond elementary school. A knowledge-based society like Sweden faces the challenge of both broadening knowledge, so that more people can share it, and at the same time making strategic choices in order to be at the cutting edge of development in important research fields.

Over the past ten years, we Social Democrats have made considerable investments in knowledge – and it has borne fruit. More than a million grown ups have built up their competence through The National Program to Raise Skills. 100 000 new places have

been created at university since 1994, and the socially biased recruitment to university has declined strongly. Today as many Swedes from foreign backgrounds are represented at university as in society as a whole, and the proportion of students from working class backgrounds has almost doubled.

We want to develop the skilled vocational training (KY) as an attractive post-secondary form of education. It must be found in more places and be closely connected to local working life. Women and men must have equally good opportunities for further training. Folk high-schools and educational associations reach the groups of people who might never have studied otherwise. Adult education can be the bridge to further studies, the first important step towards university education. Cultural activities, courses of lectures, open seminars and discussions, short training courses and distance education also play an important role for democratic debate and the spread of insight and knowledge.

The vision of a university for all social groups and in the whole country has always been challenged by the opinion that higher education is reserved for only a few people. We want to continue to invest in knowledge for everybody at a time when the demands for knowledge increases:

More students at university. We want more people to have the opportunity to study at university. The aim is that half of all young people will have started university studies by the age of 25. We want to see a development where more people pass their exams and complete their education sooner. That is why we are open to intensive study programmes, with shorter summer breaks and a student grants system that stimulates to a quicker completion of courses. Both colleges of higher learning and universities must be given the opportunity to develop into attractive seats of learning at international level. The work to break socially biased recruitment requires further action with the main focus on the schools where few pupils pass on to higher education. Knowing that there is a place to live when you are at university is important, not least for those who do not have a circle of contacts. We want the expansion of university to be related to the demands for student housing. Today clearly more women than men study at university and as many women as men begin postgraduate studies. The distribution according to sex is uneven in many courses. We need more male students and more women in leading positions at university. All education – from pre-school to university – must be permeated by a gender perspective.

A job that allows for development for everybody. Having a job that allows for growth and development must be a possibility for everybody. We strive for the good job, where everybody's knowledge and skills are taken advantage of and everybody can participate and have influence over their work. We want the labour market partners to take joint responsibility for developing models for creating a stronger innovation climate at working places. Traditional suggestion schemes, regular competence development and the encouragement to set up new business are a few examples of what can be done.

Learning throughout life. Education gaps must be counteracted. That is why the investments in life long learning must continue with well developed guidance, a wide choice of training courses and advantageous and flexible student grants. We Social

Democrats want to continue to invest in adult education and popular education. University must be open to everybody – regardless of place of residence, age or background. We want to increase the possibilities for recurrent studies also when you are in work, alongside your ordinary work. Individual competence development must be developed. In this way everybody's influence over their own development can increase, at the same time as the attainment level in the whole of Sweden is strengthened. Collective responsibility for this lies with the State, employers, trade union organisations and the individual. Life long learning must also meet our different needs of education, ranging from basic to complementary education. Flexible solutions are required. Distance education and local learning centres are important tools.

Acknowledge knowledge. In order to define the knowledge and experience that people have acquired in working life or outside Sweden effective validation is required. That is why we want to see national guidelines on validation, drawn up in close co-operation with the labour market partners and the education sector.

Growing with knowledge and cultivation. Culture for everybody is a classic Social Democratic aim. Class, sex, ethnicity or disability must not prevent people from experiencing or practising cultural activities. Cultural life must be open to new artistic expressions and new ways of meeting the audience. The basis for this is a strong publicly financed cultural sector. The investment in free entrance to museums has led to a significantly increased number of visitors – especially among those who were not used to visiting museums. We want it to be seen in cultural life that Sweden consists of people from many countries, with many languages, traditions and cultures. The multi-cultural year 2006 is the starting point for a cultural policy that will give everybody in Sweden access to culture on equal terms. We also want to invest in educational associations, folk high-schools and the adult education of popular movements – and in the open meeting places required for their activities. Libraries in municipalities must be given better opportunities to increase quality and to provide activities to encourage reading. School libraries need to be given a stronger role.

Better Swedish for Immigrants. We all have different abilities to learn a new language. Someone who already speaks four languages can easily learn a fifth language, while the one who did not learn to read and write as a child has difficulties in learning a new language as an adult. Teaching Swedish for immigrants must be one of our most important tools for integration. We want to improve the quality of Swedish lessons for immigrants, SFI, and adjust the lessons much better to each person's needs and capacity. Language teaching must start immediately and it must be possible for it to take place parallel with work, practical training, studies or the validation of competence.

Strengthen the role of research. Sweden must be a leading research nation. We want to set as a goal that the government resources invested in research should amount to one per cent of GNP annually. Sweden would be an even richer country – from an economic as well as a human point of view – if we became better at making the most of all new research findings. We want university to co-operate with industry and the surrounding society in a systematic way that encourages and supports the students and scientists who want to transform their new knowledge into goods and services, or set up their own businesses. All seats of learning must have an organisation for this.

3.4 Growth and enterprise in the whole of Sweden

Today being the owner of an enterprise means a constant search – for new customers, new markets, new products, new production methods, new partners and new co-workers. In competition with others being good is not enough– most often you must be the best.

Running a business in Sweden is a relatively easy thing to do – in any case, when compared to what it is like in other countries. It is however insecure and requires a lot of effort. Being a small businessman means that you must invest time and private savings. If business is bad, you must cover economic losses yourself; if business is good you can make a huge profit – both economically and as regards quality of life. All of society gains from such a success. That is why it is important that there are as few obstacles as possible. Over the past ten years the creation of new business in Sweden has increased – and the number of bankruptcies has been halved. But it is not enough. We want it to become easier to set up and to run a business, and easier for companies to grow. We increase the supply of risk capital. We also want to promote exports from small companies. Wherever they are in the country they must be given stimulation and advice.

Business owners who obey laws and rules and pay their taxes properly should not face competition from unserious businessmen. Illegal jobs, tax evasion, cartels and economic crime must be combated. The increased mobility in Europe must not be unfair to companies which obey Swedish laws and Swedish collective agreements.

Sweden is a huge country, a country where development looks different from place to place and between different parts of the country. For a long time parts of the country have wrestled with a negative population development. But in many places development has now changed. Better communications have enabled comfortable and cheap housing close to beautiful scenery within commuting distance of population centres. The expansion of universities has created new jobs in many regions – and attracted new groups of young people to move there. In 2004 more than half of the municipalities of the country had a positive population development.

The metropolitan areas face special challenges. In order to make their full growth potential available so that it benefits the whole country, an overall national approach is required. We want the national level, together with the representatives of the metropolitan areas, to draw up a strategy in order to develop the resources of the big cities. In such a strategy there must be special room for integration, the struggle against crime, housing, transport and educational questions.

A good living environment with a wide choice of social services, education and culture improves the living quality of citizens and adds to the attraction and growth of regions. We also want the national level, together with the representatives of all regions, to draw up a strategy in order to develop the resources of the regions and the countryside. In these strategies there must be special room for integration, the struggle against crime, housing, transport and educational questions.

In a densely populated world where communications are fast and cheap and silence is an article in short supply, completely new opportunities open up also for Swedish tourism and the entertainment industry. In the countryside of Sweden there is plenty of room for recreation and tourism. If fishing is to be sustainable, the wild fish population must be preserved. Consumers with strong demands on quality and production methods make the market grow for goods and services that are ecological and produced close to home. This is where agriculture, healthy animals and the food industry have real opportunities. Sweden is many steps ahead in the adaptation to ecological production, which also opens up the possibility of increased exports. The growing demand for renewable energy and fuels provides opportunities to keep the landscape open with new crops. The forest is our green gold – and one of the fundamental conditions for basic industry to develop rapidly towards new products and new markets.

The opportunities for welfare, jobs and enterprise in every part of the country are today challenged by the attacks on the municipal equalisation system and the expansion of university and research. We want to create opportunities for growth in the whole of Sweden:

Investing in small business. Today there are about 110 000 small entrepreneurs in Sweden. The after-hours supermarket on the corner, the pizzeria in the centre, the florist in the market place – but also industrial designers, clothes designers and IT-consultants. We want small companies to be able to employ and to be prepared to take the risk of employing. What is most important for growth is a healthy economic policy. It creates opportunities for a strong demand for the goods and services of companies. In addition to this, special incentives can be needed. We want to give a tax reduction to the solo businessmen who employ people. We want to reduce the time that company owners must spend on administration. Rules must be simplified, the demands for providing information must be reduced and turnaround times be shortened. Furthermore, we want to review the security for small businessmen and especially stimulate female enterprise, to promote co-operative and other enterprise in the social economy.

A special focus on strategic business. Sweden is in a leading position in a series of fields. This we should be proud of – but we must also develop them. In a world where competition increases, we must invest strategically and give priority to our investments. We want to develop future-proof development programs for the aircraft/space, wood/forest, metallurgy, vehicle, IT/telecommunications, pharmaceutical and biotech industries.

Tourism and the experience industry are future trades. Together with the tourist industry, we want to develop and improve investments in the marketing of Sweden. The experience industry is a growing business with great potential. We want to develop a national strategy to attract great international events to our country.

Investments in infrastructure. In an easy and secure way we must be able to go to and from our work places, schools, our recreational activities and social services. In an easy and effective way companies must be able to deliver goods and services to customers within and outside the country. With an expanded infrastructure municipalities and

counties grow together and this creates larger labour markets and increases people's freedom. Thus the infrastructure is of crucial importance for growth, employment and welfare. We want to continue investing in infrastructure. The existing road and railway network must be quality assured and new investments made. The Swedish State Railways and other State actors must work for transport solutions that are effective and sustainable in the long run. Security requirements must not be disregarded. The investments require long-term plans and co-operation between local, regional and national levels. When companies make decisions on new investments, the possibility of good communications is a decisive factor. We Social Democrats see infrastructure as a strategic resource and we will use it to meet future structural transformations. During the coming congress period we Social Democrats want to increase investments in roads, and finance them in a way that is efficient from a national economic point of view. We want to see investments in infrastructure that will connect Sweden with the new growing markets in our immediate surroundings. The airlines play an especially important role in this respect. We also want a national strategy to be drawn up to develop the strategic ports of Sweden.

Expanded public transport. We must have secure public transport with high accessibility at a reasonable price which creates conditions for equal travelling. The Swedish State Railways and Government authorities are important main figures who must work for effective transport solutions that are sustainable in the long run. Transport authorities are responsible for local and regional public transport. Public transport must be developed so that the possibilities of commuting by bus, commuter train, train and ferry across major regions will improve, which is important also in sparsely populated areas. Those who have the know-how to deal with this are found at regional levels, but transport authorities and the State must take on collective responsibility where the responsibilities for cost and activities hang together. Furthermore, the extent, quality and price of public transport must be followed up continuously.

New possibilities of development in the regions of the country. All regions have different conditions for growth and development. Forest, agriculture, fishing, nature, food and culture – the future businesses are many. We cannot afford to let parts of the country fall behind. We would all lose on that. The best knowledge of local conditions is to be found locally – not centrally. That is why we want to continue to develop the regional development policy. Also in the future there must be a democratically controlled, directly elected regional level with separate power of taxation in Sweden.

4. WELFARE – NEW DEMANDS, NEW OPPORTUNITIES

4.1 Introduction

The Swedish welfare state is based on the simple but excellent idea of every person's equal value. We all have dreams of how life will be. The journey of life will be made by each and every one of us and our conditions for the journey differ greatly. But we will all need help some time during the journey. We cannot know for sure that we will not be

out of work some time, and none of us can expect to escape illnesses. Nobody should need to feel insecure and everybody must be given the knowledge that enables us to grow and develop together with others. Society must be constructed so that there is a place for everybody. The mission of Social Democracy is to level out economic and social divisions and increase equality.

Everybody has the right to a good start in life. We want good child care with developed pedagogy, we want schools where the pupils feel secure and have peace to study and where it is clearly followed up how they manage. Everybody must be given the opportunity to develop their knowledge and skills and have a chance to enter higher education.

We want an active labour market policy and generous unemployment benefits, since the unemployed must be able to feel secure and have the possibility of moving on from what is old to what is new.

We want public health services and good health insurance because it creates effectiveness but above all because we can all of us be affected by illnesses. We want a secure pension system and good care of the elderly because everyone must be able to retain their dignity and security even when they are older. Security must not depend on whether you can afford to pay for it. It does not suit a modern society in the 21 century.

Over the past ten years we Social Democrats have modernised and improved the welfare state. As the finances of municipalities have improved and new resources have been provided by the State, the number of employees within health, schools and care has increased. The fees for pre-school and the care of the elderly have been reduced dramatically by the introduction of a maximum fee. Parental insurance has been prolonged – the number of fathers on parental leave has been doubled. The resources for medical care have increased heavily. The economy of the public sector has improved.

Now there are good opportunities to make the welfare state even stronger – for everybody, not only a few.

4.2 A welfare state for everybody

Besides work, there is nothing that levels out living conditions and increases justice as effectively as general welfare. We Social Democrats want the welfare state to provide the best quality of life for everybody regardless of backgrounds or incomes.

The welfare state must be financed in solidarity. Nobody should think of buying a private health insurance to be able to receive care of high quality within a reasonable period of time. We reject insurance-based care with the driving force of the market. The needs, not the purchasing power, must be the basis of the system.

Welfare must be of high and equal quality in the whole country. People moving out and low birth rates are difficult challenges to many municipalities. But nevertheless everybody must be able to count on having a share of welfare whenever they need it, wherever they live. The local income and cost equalisation system must guarantee that

all municipalities and county councils will have equally good opportunities to meet the inhabitants' demands for welfare – also at a time when demands are changing.

Social insurance should provide security of income when you are ill, out of work and on parental leave. When insecurity increases, the belief in the future and optimism decrease but so do consumption and investments. Secure people are prepared to take risks – insecurity inhibits.

Welfare is for everybody and must not exclude anybody. But there are situations and events in life when the general system is not enough. Then other social safety nets must catch those who need our solidarity and care. That is why we have social authorities and different service organizations. That is why we have income support, which used to be called social benefits, and other special benefits.

The number of people in need of social allowance for their support is a clear measurement of how well society is able to break unemployment, poverty, drug/ alcohol addiction and isolation. Sweden belongs to the group of countries that have the lowest proportion of households with a weak economy. Since 1994 the number of households with income support has decreased by about 40 percent. But this is not enough. We want to combat unemployment and tighten the safety nets of the welfare state so that the demands for income support will continue to decrease.

The building of the welfare state is far from complete. We must constantly be prepared to refine, reinforce and improve welfare activities to meet the demands of a new era. In order to simplify and improve the social services for citizens and companies public administration must serve as a model as an active user of IT. The development of the electronic services in the public sector must be promoted. The aim is to improve and render the public sectors effective, increase the accessibility to important social services and make it easier for citizens to understand and to participate in public decision-making processes.

Medical science makes constant progress, which opens up fantastic opportunities but it also creates a demand for new resources so that everybody will have access to good treatment. Improved public health results in us living increasingly longer lives – which makes for new demands on the care of the elderly and health care. For example, the fact that Sweden today is a multi-cultural community creates new opportunities for the care of the elderly.

The welfare state constantly faces new challenges. It is not completed. Public commitment is not decided once and for all. But the basic welfare principles—of financing in solidarity and distribution according to people's needs—we must not modify.

Today the vision of justice and security for everybody is being challenged by the demands for lower benefit levels, higher fees and an increased profit from welfare. Social Democracy wants to improve the welfare state:

The welfare state must keep its promises. The parents of small children must be given their day care place, the elderly a place in suitable sheltered housing. The guarantee of a limited waiting period to people seeking care must be a reality. Social insurance must provide security of income. Benefit levels must be good and the ceiling on health insurance and parental insurance must be raised.

Security when life changes. It may happen to all of us that we lose our jobs or get ill. Then it is important to have economic security and access to activities which will help us get back to work. The activities must be based on the needs of the individual. Different major actors are responsible for different activities. Then the co-operation between the regional social insurance offices, municipalities, job centres and county councils is necessary. In this way people will be provided with adapted activities, the right allowance and they do not risk falling between two stools. Those not entitled to allowance must be informed quickly and, if needed, get help to proceed to the right authority. It is unacceptable for people to have to wait for an answer for long periods of time and the period before the decision has been made must be shortened to a minimum. Sickness benefit applications being turned down must not apply until after the date of the decision.

Nobody should be left out. Homelessness and isolation do not belong in modern welfare society. We want to see more cheap flats with tenancy right and expanded addiction care. We want to see more outreaching teams in psychiatry and special forms of housing for those who cannot manage to live on their own for different reasons. Those with addiction problems who try to get help must be entitled to quick detoxification and treatment. Aftercare must be strengthened with housing, employment and a new social network. Within the EU Sweden must push for lower levels in the import of alcohol and increased minimum taxes on alcohol. Alcohol taxation and the sales monopoly of the Swedish Alcohol Retailing Monopoly are important tools and must be defended. Alcohol is not like any other product and it should not be covered in the same way as other products by the rules of the internal market of the EU.

The law on support and service for certain disabled people offers the possibilities of living an active life to those with mental and physical disabilities. The law presupposes that people are equally treated in the whole country and that they have the right to settle down wherever they want to. In order to live up to the intentions of legislation better, the organising and financing of the activities need to be revised. The revision must give particular consideration to where the main responsibility lies for the activities to be arranged, in order to give everybody the right to settle down wherever they want to and to guarantee that they are treated equally in the whole country. What must be given special attention is the responsibility for the disabled who need extensive and specialised activities which today most often can be offered only at certain places in the country. An important principle of all public sectors is that the responsibility for decision-making and the financing of activities should be held together.

The welfare state should be run mainly by public bodies. Profit motives in welfare must be restrained. Society must make great demands on their suppliers of goods and services. Tax money must not be used to subsidize bad working conditions or an

impaired working environment. When private entrepreneurs provide activities on behalf of municipalities, county councils and the State they must meet the same high demands on quality, insight and access as the public sectors do. When purchasing services, authorities, municipalities and other public employers must engage serious companies which follow the rules of the Swedish labour market. Tax money must not be used to contribute to the dumping of wages and worsened employment conditions. That is why we must also ratify convention 94 of the ILO on public purchasing.

The employers of the welfare state must take the lead. Over the next ten years, tens of thousands of people will need to be recruited to the public sector. If we are to manage this, offering meaningful jobs will not be enough – the public sector must become a model employer. We want, in close co-operation with the trade union movement and public employers, to achieve the goals that have been set by a joint working group consisting of the Social Democratic Party and Municipal Workers Union. Absence due to illness must be reduced by systematic work on the working environment and early rehabilitation activities. The number of full time jobs must increase, the large number of temporary jobs must decrease, the opportunities for competence development increase and influence and participation be strengthened. The public sector must serve as a model for creating the possibilities of combining work with parenthood. The welfare sector must take the lead – not lag behind. And of course, the same conditions must apply to all publicly financed activities – no matter the form of operation.

4.3 A better health and medical service

When we are affected by illness or injuries we must have the best possible medical care of high international quality. We must be judged by our medical needs and nothing else. Those most in need of care must receive care first and we must always be able to rely on the medical service to treat us equally. The thickness of the wallet, ethnic affiliation, gender or age must not be the deciding factor. Everybody must have access to the best care. Publicly financed medical care must not open up to “VIP lanes”. Hospitals must not be allowed to be transferred to companies which are run on the basis of private profit motives. Swedish health care and medical service are of high quality. A comparison made by international experts between the medical services in different countries shows that the Swedish medical care is absolute world-class, at the same time as it does not cost more than it does in industrial countries on average.

Since 1994 the resources provided to the medical service have increased. The proportion of the GNP as to the medical service has increased from 8.2 percent to 9.2 percent. The waiting periods have been reduced and the queues have been shortened. The number of glaucoma operations has increased from 32 000 to 80 000. The number of hip joint operations has increased by 30 percent.

We Social Democrats want to make the provision of care even better. We want a medical service where the patient is the centre of attention, without queues, where you quickly and easily can get in touch with your care centre and book an appointment. Those who need treatment should not wait long. We now carry out a national guarantee for limited waiting periods which leads to the queues for medical treatment disappearing. Nobody should have to wait more than three months before they receive

treatment that has been planned and decided on. The patient must always be the starting point for all meetings in care. Technological and medical advances create new opportunities. Medical records and the handling of medicines can be made more effective, the information must be gathered and follow the patient. The medical service must invest with a view to future challenges and needs and be allowed to make use of increasing proportions of the common resources of society

The Swedish medical service is now being challenged by demands for raised fees, privatization and “VIP lanes”. Social Democrats say no to such development. Instead, we want to develop the medical service for everybody:

Quicker contact, better treatment, eliminated queues, right to see a permanent doctor. We Social Democrats want to increase accessibility and improve treatment in medical care. The local health service must be expanded. We want to establish national medical advice by telephone – where everybody will be able to get quick and professional advice on both what you can do to help yourself and how to get treatment if needed. Everybody who does not need emergency treatment must be able to get a doctor’s appointment within a week.

Medical care on equal and equalized terms. We Social Democrats cannot accept any “VIP lanes” in medical care. No publicly financed medical service should give priority to the customers of private insurance companies. Hospital care must not be permitted to be transferred to companies run on private profit motives. Medical care must be of equally good quality in the whole country, and it must be equally good for men and women. Knowledge and awareness in medical care must increase; assessments and statistics divided into gender are important tools. The whole chain – from research, pharmaceutical development, treatment, care and reception in medical care – must be equalised. We want to strengthen supervision over medical care.

Improved public health. Health and medical care play a key role in the work on public health through their competence and broad contacts. Preventive health care needs to be developed, for example as regards mental ill-health among the young and accidents due to falling among the elderly and also life style related illnesses. In order to secure the supply of influenza vaccine we want Sweden to contribute to increasing the production capacity of the vaccine.

Your teeth must not become a class sign. Thanks to earlier investments in dental care and free dental care for children and young people, more and more people in our country have good dental health. But in recent years the prices have risen and many people are forced to give up their dental care for economic reasons. We are deeply concerned about this development. Everybody has the right to good dental health. So, we Social Democrats want to introduce a new dental insurance that will reinforce preventive dental care and give a good protection against high costs. Too many people give up regular, preventive dental care. That is why we want an improved dental insurance with incentives to visit the dental service regularly. The costs of dental care are at a reasonable level for most people thanks to good dental health, but almost every person needs to undergo major treatments a few times in their lives and then the costs can be very high for the individual. That is why we want an improved dental insurance

to reduce the highest costs of dental care considerably. The new dental care insurance should be shaped so that also dental care based on the pay-as-you-go systems can be developed. A dental reform for everybody will be presented before the election and will be in effect at the beginning of the next term of office.

4.4 The children of the welfare state.

More and more children are being born in Sweden. The fact that birth rates have increased is a clear sign of a belief in the future. Investing in children and parenthood is one of the most important investments we can make for the future.

Over the past ten years we have made a number of reforms which have led to progress and improvements. Child allowance has been increased by several hundred SEK per child and month. A maximum fee has been introduced in pre-school. The number of children living in families with very low economic standards has decreased by a fifth. Parental insurance has been prolonged by one month and the level of parental insurance has been raised.

There are still large differences between children and children in Sweden. Some children are born into reduced circumstances where single parents have to turn every penny to make both ends meet. Others are born into families where resources, contacts, security of language and ample opportunities are a natural thing. Some children will always have advantages. That is why a policy supporting the children who are born into poorer conditions is so important.

Swedish family policy has led to an international study voting Sweden the best country to grow up in. It is not a coincidence that is so –family policy remains a classic Social Democratic field of reform.

Sweden has the best parental insurance in the world. It is generous and flexible. With pre-schools of high quality, free maternity and child health care and general child allowance it gives both mothers and fathers the opportunities to combine children with work. Our progressive family policy has contributed to Sweden coming out on top as regards childbirth as well as the rate of female gainful employment.

In spite of these successes, our family policy is being challenged by demands for shorter parental insurance, child-care allowance and raised fees in child care. This we cannot accept:

Parental insurance equalized between men and women. There is an uneven distribution between parents who choose parental leave. Mostly women go on parental leave with the result that children have less access to both their parents. In order to increase equality between the genders measures must be taken to strengthen the position of women on the labour market. A reduction in the number of temporary jobs, a right to full-time, equal pay for equal jobs and reinforced legal protection for pregnant women and people on parental leave must be carried out. The rise of the income ceiling on parental insurance provides good opportunities to achieve equality between parents as to who chooses to go on parental leave and increased access for children to both their

parents. In addition to these measures we are prepared to develop other proposals based on the parental insurance report in preparation so that a major part of the parental insurance will be tied to either parent. The aim is clear. We Social Democrats want equality in the claim for parental insurance.

Better support to the children who are worst off. We must never let the children down who have a tough time. The children who grow up in families with violence, alcohol/drug abuse or economic problems must be given better support, among other things, by developed co-operation between municipalities and county councils. This must be done so that the children who are worst off will be discovered in time. We want measures to be taken immediately when children fare badly or risk getting into abuse or criminality. The worrying development of mental ill-health among the young, especially among teenage girls, must be stopped. This also applies to the problem of overweight among young people. We also want to improve child and youth psychiatry, among other things, by shortening waiting times and improving quality. Children who fare badly or have mental health problems must never wait for help. We Social Democrats want to strengthen the economy of the families with children. Already in October this year child allowance was raised by 100 SEK per child and month. Furthermore, an allowance for families with two children or more is being introduced. Student grants will be raised to the same level as child allowance and these two must follow each other.

Improve the economy of the very poorest families with children. Child allowance is an important part of the general welfare policy. When child allowance is raised, even the very poorest families with children must enjoy the rise. That is why a decision on a raise in child allowance must also include a decision on a raise in the national norm for income support for children.

Reinforce children's rights. Every child must be respected and be given opportunities for development and security, participation and influence. Every child has inviolable human rights. Slightly more than 15 years ago, the UN General Assembly took the decision to introduce a convention on children's rights– the United Nations children's convention. We want the work on children's convention to continue with great intensity.

Invest in the culture for children and young people. Still there are some children who are given more opportunities than other children are given. But all children have the right to culture. Being able to use your own creativity – and to take part in other people's creativity – is a way of understanding yourself and discovering your environment. We want to give all children and young people the possibility of developing their creativity and experiencing professional culture in their every day life. We want to invest special resources to strengthen the culture for children and young people. The aim is that Sweden will play a leading role in the field of children's culture and youth culture and serve as a model in Europe.

Sports for everybody – on equal terms. This applies to everybody – also children and young people with special needs. Idealistic forces in the sports movement take great action to engage and activate children and young people at a time when competition starts at an increasingly earlier age. Sports must be accessible to everybody; sports at

broad level and sports at elite level must be able to co-operate without exclusion. The opportunities for spontaneous sports and exercise should be provided in the immediate surroundings. We want to continue to support the sports movement and child athletics. Girls and boy must be given support on equal terms. Sports must contribute to public health, democracy and integration for people of all ages.

More playgrounds, recreation centres and other meeting places. Play and new challenges stimulate children to grow and develop, especially if they can share it with others. But the need for good meeting-places does not stop existing when the children are teenagers. We want to see more exciting playgrounds, more recreation centres and meeting places in the municipalities of our country – where children and young people can develop their interests and are together in a non-commercial and drug free environment.

4.5 A good life – which all the elderly deserve

Every year it is possible for more and more Swedes to celebrate their hundredth birthday. We live a healthier life, and we grow older and older. It is a fantastic development. More people can enjoy many healthy years also after they retire. The fact that the length of life in Sweden is among the longest in the world is proof of Swedish prosperity and our deliberate investments in welfare for everybody.

Since 1994 a number of improvements have been made. The care of the elderly has been developed and a maximum fee has been introduced. Security for those with the smallest margins has improved by means of a special allowance for the support of the elderly and raised housing supplements. But it is not enough. Many old people still live with small economic margins. The care of our elderly is still not good enough – and many female relatives still take responsibility for older relatives. Still far from all the elderly feel that their skills and experience are made the most of.

The positive development of an increasing number of elderly people will also lead to new challenges. In ten years' time the demand for geriatric care will start to increase heavily and in addition it will have a different appearance – ranging from healthy elderly people who do not need any support at all or only a little help in their homes and a few meeting-places to those who have many different illnesses at the same time and those who suffer from dementia.

We want to draw up a national plan of action to develop geriatric care so that the new demand can be met. Geriatric care must go through the same fantastic development as child care has done – so that both those who receive care and their relatives can have confidence in it. Users must be given greater influence over the shaping of geriatric care. Geriatric care *must* have competent staff allowed to develop their skills at the working place, good activities and satisfied users. Care is a much greater matter than the bare necessities of life. It is a matter of a sense of community, joy and human feelings.

Nothing would please many elderly people more than being able to continue working and contributing their involvement and competence. Among the vital pensioners of our country there is a bank of knowledge and experiences that everybody can make use of.

When we are older we can make long-awaited contributions to club activities but also to professional life. This asset must be taken advantage of. The policy on the elderly is not only a question of health and care but also of the possibilities of living a rich life. We want to develop the cooperation with pensioners' organisations and voluntary activities.

Now the security of the elderly is being challenged by the demands for higher fees for medical care, more expensive dental care and higher fees for medicines. This we cannot accept. Instead, we want to give all the elderly the possibility of a good life:

Geriatric care of high quality meeting different needs. The quality of geriatric care must be developed constantly – both for those who live in their own housing and for those in sheltered housing. Also home nursing must be improved. Elderly people with many illnesses at the same time must be given help also in their homes by qualified staff. We want to see expanded housing with specially trained staff for people suffering from senile dementia. When people suffer from senile dementia they often lose their language skills and need care in their own native language. That is why we want to improve senile dementia care also for all those with another mother tongue than Swedish, the language skills of the staff must be taken advantage of. Also health and care for younger people suffering from senile dementia need to be improved. Elderly women and men must be given access to home-help services and geriatric care on equal terms.

Secure housing. Everybody must have the right to live comfortably also when they are older. We want to invest in such a way that everybody who wants to and is able to will be able to stay in their own homes; this presupposes a social housing policy. Preventive work can reduce ill-health and the need for care. By social networks, expanded daily activities and natural meeting places loneliness and isolation can be broken. We want to continue to develop the support to relatives. Housing provision must take into consideration that more and more elderly people need adapted forms of housing of their own, for example senior citizen housing and service apartment blocks with access to common rooms and other facilities. At the same time we need more special housing. Nobody should need to move away from a partner after having spent a whole life together only because his or her life partner has become ill. We want to introduce a guarantee for couples in the care of the elderly. We want the elderly to get help with housework services at a reasonable price and of high quality through the municipalities. This is more important than subsidising cleaning for families who already can afford to pay for themselves.

Raised competence in geriatric care. Staff development is a decisive investment in improving the quality of geriatric care. Today many of those who work in geriatric care lack special training – although most of them have qualifications and experience without having papers to prove it. Besides, it is often difficult for all those who have worked for a long time in geriatric care to develop their skills at work. That is why we want to invest in competence development for the staff at all levels in geriatric care and develop a competence ladder with a lowest level and clear steps for development at work.

Secure finances for everybody. Far from every pensioner has a good financial position. Today 200 000 pensioners only have a guarantee pension. After the rent, telephone and

electricity bills have been paid, there will not be much left to live on. We want to improve the housing supplements for pensioners.

4.6 Build new houses, rebuild houses

Leaving home is an important step to take on your way to adult life. The feeling that you can manage on your own without admonitions, lectures or friendly indulgence, is a leap forward in life. Then your home is important throughout your whole life. Living comfortably – in a housing area where you feel secure, in a flat, a terraced house or a detached house that is beautiful to look at, with your loved ones – is a central part of what we call life quality. A lot of things have happened over the past ten years. Interest rates have been pressed down to record low levels. The housing costs for both house owners and tenants have been reduced in proportion to income. In the election of 2002 we Social Democrats promised that 120 000 new homes would be built during our term of office – and that promise will be surpassed. The building of homes is increasing heavily.

But the needs are still great. In many places there is a shortage of vacant flats with right of tenancy – and the flats that exist are often arranged for through contacts, not through just agencies. The elderly who have lived for a long time at the same place and really want to stay in their homes can be forced to move because the block of flats lacks a lift. Many families with children, not least among the Swedes from foreign backgrounds are cramped for space in their homes. Segregation is difficult to break. Especially women often feel unsafe in their housing area.

The vision of a good home for everybody is challenged by the demands for market rents, the selling out of flats with right of tenancy and cuts in the public subsidies for building. We Social Democrats consider the home a social right:

The housing policy – a part of general welfare. Social housing policy is an important part of the Swedish welfare policy. The principle is that a place to live should be a basic right of citizens. Housing policy must be general. At the same time, those who are worst off on the housing market today, especially the young, must be offered good opportunities to get a home of their own. Besides, the housing policy must contribute to creating opportunities for tenants to have greater influence and responsibility, regardless of the form of housing and income levels. Housing production must be general and meet today's and coming generations' need for housing at a reasonable cost.

A functioning housing market must be characterized by freedom of choice where the right of tenancy is also an available alternative. The public housing sector is the guarantor of the existence of tenancy right, not least in our metropolitan areas. That is why we must stand up for and develop the public housing sector – not sell it out. Rent determining, the utility value system and by that the legal protection of tenancy must be defended and developed so that they can work under new conditions on the housing market.

Build the future “People’s Home”. We want to build new houses, we want to build in an intelligent way and we want to build beautiful houses. The prices of new

construction must be lowered. We want to combat monopolies and cartels in the building industry. The consumption of energy must decrease. All new construction must be ecologically sustainable and in order to increase competition more building systems in wood must be developed. It is important that there are flats with tenancy rights, as well as tenant-ownership, co-operative flats and privately owned small houses in our housing areas, and that there is neutrality between the different forms of tenancy. New flats with tenancy rights can be built in the areas of detached houses and new detached houses in the areas with blocks of flats to break segregation. We also want to make more State and municipal owned land accessible to new construction and improve planning processes. The State and municipalities must be able to apply this flexibly, within the framework of a general protection of beaches, to support regional development in sparsely populated areas. We also want to give young people increased financial resources in order to facilitate their establishment on the housing market.

Repair our houses and districts. Within the next 15-20 years more than half a million flats and small houses will be repaired – especially in the areas of high rise housing from the late sixties. We want to make the most of this opportunity. By rebuilding and repairing we can strengthen and develop our housing areas, improve services and living environments. In this way we can also make housing areas less anonymous and safer. When renovation starts, old properties must not only be repaired. They must also be improved. We will have the opportunity to save energy, to make whole districts accessible and to renew them. Joint responsibility for such a program lies with house-owners and municipalities. A state commitment is necessary for, among other things, the efficient use of energy. Everybody must be able to live comfortably.

A housing market where everybody has a place. Having a place to live in is a right that must apply to everybody. This also requires that places for people to live in are provided in a fair and open way according to clear rules and criteria. Nobody should be discriminated. It is important that there is a well run and modern housing office near people. The municipality or municipalities must take on collective responsibility for this.

4.7 A more secure everyday life

Social Democracy wants to build a safer country in a safer world. It is important to reduce people's feelings of insecurity in everyday life. The view on safety and security has changed. We do not worry about a military invasion any more. But crime has changed and become coarser.

Organised international crime has got a hold in some Swedish towns and communities. Human beings, drugs, alcohol and tobacco are smuggled across our borders into our country. Black money is transferred between banks and companies in different countries in order to be washed white. It is increasingly usual that restaurant and shop owners are blackmailed, and so are witnesses or staffs within the judicial system. The foundation for law and order must not be threatened. Escapes and robberies have become more violent. People are subjected to hate crimes on the grounds of their opinions, their origin or their sexual orientation. Popularly elected politicians are threatened. Women are subjected to threats and violence on grounds of their gender, sometimes on grounds of so called honour. The person who is subjected to hate crime or is threatened in

another way must immediately have the support from society that is required for him or her to be able to live a secure life. More efforts must also be made to take preventive measures.

More policemen can never solve such problems on their own. Broader action is required.

We can never combat crime without also attacking its causes. Crime arises from inequality, insecurity, abuse and segregation. The criminal debut is often made early in life. Less segregation, preventive work, expanded care of addicts, outreaching teams in psychiatric care, investment in the work of voluntary organisations and special efforts directed against those who commit crimes at an early age must be given priority. We must give priority to young people who find themselves in a risk zone. In some areas criminal activity is so extensive that some young people find it difficult to resist the pressure to join gangs of adolescent criminals.

One of the basic principles of democratic society is that people should be able to feel secure from crime. Legislation must be modern and law and order strong. Everybody reporting a crime must be able to rely on the police to take the report seriously and investigate the crime. Witnesses must be protected. Victims of a crime must be given help and support.

Since 1994 the funding provided to the police force has increased by 50 percent. Two new police training programmes have been started and the number of policemen increases steadily. Extensive investments have been made in law and order. Alternatives to imprisonment, like electronic tags, have been developed. Security in correctional institutions has been improved, and the number of escapes decreases. Legislation to protect women from abuse by men has been sharpened. Any dealing with child pornography has been criminalised in practice. Buying sexual services has been forbidden, a new law against trafficking in human beings has been introduced and the number of prostitutes on the street has diminished heavily. The fight against prostitution requires further efforts.

Security in everyday life is challenged by social divisions and injustices, by drug/alcohol abuse and social maladjustment, but also by new types of organised crime. We Social Democrats want to combat both crime and its causes:

Combat crime in everyday life. We have made considerable investments in the police force to reduce everyday crime. The number of policemen has now been increased for five consecutive years. The number of burglaries and the number of car thefts has decreased steadily for the last few years. But we are not satisfied. Crime must decrease even more. Each break-in into a flat or a car, each assault in the street is a serious offence which inevitably will have consequences. The trade in illegal weapons must be combated. Considerably more crimes must be solved. That is why the police force must be given even better tools, among others, better opportunities to use DNA evidence. The police force must be available for everybody – in the whole country. A training programme for the police will be introduced at different places round the country in order to make it easier to recruit and employ police in the more sparsely populated areas.

A change in training methods will allow for more specialisation and research. Leadership within the police force must be developed. There will be more police officers with a different ethnic background. The police must work during the hours when they are needed the most. It must be easy to get in contact with the police.

A better correctional system. We put more effort into correctional services whose primary task is to prevent the recurrence of criminal behaviour. Care and treatment form the basis of a humane criminal correction system. We intend to put more resources into the competence of warders and prison staff as well as in developing the work carried out by the criminal services. The number of escapes has fallen heavily over the past years. But continued action is needed to intensify security around the most dangerous inmates and those who are most inclined to escape. At the same time, those who want to get away from the path of crime must be supported. We want to individualise correctional treatment. The time in institution must be adjusted to the individual. It must be profitable to work actively on one's situation. Consequences for the individual must follow from abuse, criminality in correctional institutions or escapes. The help given to inmates when changing from the correctional institution to freedom must be developed and their relatives as well as close relations must become involved in the treatment process in order to reduce the number of relapses.

Combat men's violence against women. Combating violence against women is an area of priority in the policies of equality between men and women. It is the responsibility of society to prevent crime and to support and protect the women and children who are subjected to violence and sexual abuse. Every municipality must have the resources, knowledge and preparedness for this. The competence of social workers in this area must be raised. Crisis centres for women, the women's refugee services in our country makes significant contributions and must be supported. Crisis centres for men can play a significant role in treating men who are violent towards women. The development of technical means to prevent men from breaking the prohibition on contacting women will be given priority. There are few people who are as vulnerable as the children who witness or who are subjected to violence from a close relative. The protection for these children must be strengthened by ensuring that we improve our knowledge of the problems and by means of improved co-operation between different public bodies and other parties.

Combat international and organised crime. Sweden is changing and we are facing new types of crimes. International gangs settle down in Sweden. In order to combat these crimes, the tools of the judicial system must be sharpened. Today the police can use phone tapping equipment. However all criminal information is not exchanged via telephone. That is why the police must be able to use bugging equipment for the purpose of fighting crime. Bugging will – just like phone tapping today – require a court order and only be used when suspicions of gross violation arouse. The fight against organised crime is a matter of public concern. Close co-operation between municipalities, authorities and the judicial system is needed. Increased international co-operation, especially within the EU, is also necessary to fight border crossing crime. In

order to prevent terrorist crime the police must be given the possibility of phone tapping as a preventive measure. The protection of witnesses must be further reinforced.

5. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

5.1 Introduction

We all want to live in a community where the air is fresh, the water clean, forests are green and the food healthy. Strolling along in the countryside, picking berries or climbing mountains is an essential part of our quality of life. For Social Democracy the aim is to be able to deliver a better world to coming generations than the one our parents gave us. Knowledge and awareness of the connection must be raised and affect everyone.

The world is constantly becoming richer. New markets grow, people are raised from the thralls of poverty, and more people will have a chance to live a good life. At the same time development means an enormous challenge. As economy grows, the life style that we have in the Western World is being copied. But the resources of the earth will not be sufficient to handle the emissions and the pace of consumption that we in the rich world maintain, if our style of life were to be global. Sustainable development requires global equality between people, regions and countries.

The solution is not to restrain development or reduce the pace of growth. That would only mean that more people would go on suffering from poverty and destitution. One of the most important solutions lies in new technology for a more efficient use of resources, a point underlined by the congress on growth.. It is in itself a driving force. High ambitions and a more stringent environment law in the field of environment stimulate development and the use of a new environment-friendly technology. An equally important force for development is global equality between people, regions and countries in the work of achieving sustainable growth.

In Sweden we have during the past ten years worked in a systematic and target oriented way to adapt society to environment requirements. It has yielded results. Renewable energy has increased by 31 TWh over the past ten years. The emissions of sulphur dioxides into the air have been halved. The emissions of nitric oxides have fallen by 35 percent since 1990. Several species which ten year ago risked being exterminated are vigorous today.

The Swedish example attracts attention around the world. International studies show that Sweden plays a leading role in the world in increasing prosperity without increasing the pressure on the environment. Sweden is a leading country as regards the use of economic instruments of control and systematic environmental work. Sweden's influence on the EU has also led to an improvement in several environment areas. Part of the work to achieve sustainable development lies in providing better means for collective travel, available to all locally as well as at the regional and national levels. We Social Democrats want to build the green "People's Home", a long term sustainable society. Good economic progress must be combined with social justice and the

protection of the environment. It is not an unattainable vision – we are already on our way.

5.2 Secure and renewable energy supply

The greatest challenge the world is facing is climate change. Global heating, which is ongoing, is the most dramatic temperature change for over a thousand years. The ten warmest years ever measured have all taken place after 1990. Frequent heat waves, cloudbursts and gales – we are constantly reminded of the vulnerability of the environment and our great dependence on nature and the environment we live in.

Sweden is a leading country in the field of energy adaptation. Only over the past ten years industrial energy consumption has fallen by 33 percent. All over the country 1 800 environment projects have been carried out within the frame of local investment programmes. The effect is reduced energy consumption corresponding to the annual consumption of 90 000 small houses. Sweden is one out of only a few countries in the world which have already succeeded in reducing their emissions of greenhouse gases. Environmental engineering business scores great successes, as a result of a deliberate policy.

The aim is now to guarantee the supply of electricity and other kinds of energy with production methods that have a low impact on people's health, environment and climate – and to do so on internationally competitive conditions. That is why we want to develop a coherent energy and climate policy.

The market for electricity has seen substantial changes due to the deregulation carried out over the past few years. With the help of clearer rules and greater demands on the producers and distributors of electricity the supply of electricity with a low effect on health, the environment and the climate will be secured. We must base our production of energy on renewable sources, must phase out ecologically harmful energy production, and make energy consumption effective. At the same time basic industry must have a plentiful supply of energy and natural resources – at competitive prices. It is important for the global environment that this industry is provided with good opportunities for investment in our country and can thereby test new environment and energy efficient technologies. Vattenfall, the state owned company, should be able to offer its industrial customers the lowest energy prices of Europe – on a commercial basis and without getting into conflict with the competitive rules of the EU. Vattenfall will play the role of a pioneer in the work of redirecting production towards long term sustainable development. It is clear that Vattenfall can do more in this regard and can raise the level of their ambitions.

The Swedish success in energy adaptation is now threatened by the demands for increased market control and lower ambitions in the environmental field. Instead, we Social Democrats want to build the green “People's Home”. This development must be stimulated both through the tax system and by means of economic support towards the process of change-over:

Break the dependence on oil. Far too many blocks of flats are still heated with oil. About half a million owners of small houses still use their old oil boilers. Almost all cars still run on petrol. But now we can see the opportunity for a break in the trend. Technology has advanced. More and more people discover the advantages of different types of heating pumps, district heating, and pellets, and the demand for environment friendly cars and alternative fuels is on the increase. We want to speed up this development by investing in energy research and supporting the commercialisation of the results, both for the sake of the environment and for the sake of the national economy. The aim is that the dependence on fossil fuels will be broken by 2020. Then no home will need oil for its heating. Then no car driver will be one-sidedly obliged to use fossil fuels. Then there will always be better alternatives to oil. To get there, we want to develop a national program to break the Swedish dependence on oil. In addition, the emissions from the remaining necessary fossil fuels will be taken care of and stored so that they will not contribute to either climate change or environmental pollution.

Environmental and energy technology for export. High ambitions in the field of the environment and a stringent legislation stimulate the development and the use of new environment technology. Environmental engineering is one of the most rapidly growing export trades in Sweden. It is a strategic future trade. Sweden has strong opportunities to push for technological development since a considerable share of our export industry is very much into finding good solutions to the issues of energy and the environment. Society must therefore support in different ways the co-operation between our basic industries and other companies that develop technology for a more efficient use of resources. Environmental research will be given better opportunities to be commercialised. Swedish companies with new ecological technology will be given support to be able to enter the international market. This will generate new growth, new research and new jobs in Sweden.

The use of renewable electricity must increase. The aim is an increase by 15 TWh during the next ten years. Nuclear power must be phased out gradually with due consideration to employment and welfare and at the rate that nuclear power can be replaced by electricity from renewable sources as well as efforts to achieve the efficient use of energy. The energy system of the future will comprise different sources of energy, large as well as small in close co-operation. The climate investment programs in the municipalities of our country must continue and be strengthened. The expansion of wind power on land and sea will be speeded up. Today most bio-fuels are extracted from the forests; in the future it will be important for agriculture to develop its share of energy production. The green certificates are an effective means of control. The trade in emission rights within the EU will reduce the carbon dioxide emissions in the whole of Europe. It is important that the system is introduced according to the agreements in all member countries in order to prevent unfair competition.

We must all help each other. We consumers are environmentally aware and used to taking responsibility for our purchases, but it must become much easier to be an active electricity consumer. We want to see simpler electricity bills, the possibility of rapid readings, clearer rules and better compensation for power cuts. An electricity market where consumers have a strong position requires that we have fair and functioning

competition. All of society – the public sector, companies and households – need to co-operate in this adaptation.

5.3 High ambitions of the environmental policy

Sweden has become a leading country in the adaptation to ecological sustainability. But it is not enough. We can do more and do so not least by promoting new technology that leads to saving resources, which in turn can have consequences for other countries. National action is required, and continued intense work will be required in different international forums. Pollution does not stop at national borders. Pollution comes with the wind, the rain and water currents. Chemicals and dangerous material come with goods in global trade. We share the sea with our neighbouring countries.

Rich natural resources are important parts of our welfare and the right of public access as well as the protection of beaches are unique assets. At the same time natural resources are a necessary condition of many of our basic industries. The northern belt of coniferous trees has a unique ability to neutralise carbon dioxide. That is why we make high demands on forestry and nature conservation. The cultural landscape is a condition for our rich flora. At a time when agriculture goes through radical changes we want to protect the open landscape and secure biological variation.

The Baltic is severely affected by environmental problems. Massive action has been taken to improve waste water treatment, reduce the nitrogen strain from agriculture, stop fish depletion and intensify environmental control. But it is not enough. We must do more. All the countries around the Baltic must take responsibility for the environment. Now that eight out of nine Baltic countries are members of the EU, we have a new chance to improve the environmental situation in the Baltic. This we want to take advantage of.

Consumption patterns change. Since the eighties the households of the EU have doubled their consumption. Only Swedish households spend about a thousand billions SEK a year. A great deal of what we consume is a great drain on the environment and natural resources, here and now. Other things risk the living conditions of coming generations – in our country and in other countries. We want to see sustainable consumption that carries its own environment costs.

Today a good future environment is challenged by the demands for reduced resources and lower ambitions in the environmental field. We Social Democrats are firmly resolved to achieve the aim of overcoming the large environmental problems of today within one generation:

Our marine environment is under threat. Today our seas are threatened by eutrophication, toxic substances, fish depletion and oil emissions. The Baltic is particularly hard hit. We want to develop a plan of action for the Baltic which has now been classed as an especially sensitive sea area. The Western sea with its biological variety has a different set of problems, all important in themselves. Sweden will with the EU as an instrument and with an active marine policy break the trend and create an

ecological balance in our seas. We must push more for international co-operation between the countries round the North Sea and with our neighbours around the Baltic in order to speed up this process. The EU must decide on binding rules. Research and environmental control must be developed and safety at sea be improved. An international research centre for the marine environment must be established.

Environmentally adapted transport systems. A sustainable development demands that the link between economic growth and increased emissions from the transport sector must be changed. For this reason we want to promote collective transport and push for more energy efficient vehicles and environment friendly fuels. We want to see a larger share of goods being transported by rail or by sea.

Biological variety. Many plant and animal species are still threatened, and the work on preserving forest areas worth protection is still too slow. Modern nature conservation must also protect large predators – bears, wolverines, lynx, wolves and golden eagles. It is our responsibility to coming generations. But keeping a balance between different interests is difficult. There must also be the possibilities of secure animal farming and other activities for the people living in areas with a high population of predators and everybody must be able to feel secure wherever they live. We want to evaluate the consequences of the development of the flocks of predators and the problems related to the ambition to achieve the goals of a co-ordinated policy on predators. It is important that we develop forms for co-operation and for an expanded local and regional say in these matters.

Environmental policy is international. We want the leading role that Sweden plays in European and international environmental co-operation to be fortified and developed. Every international arena must be used to push for a global sustainable development. Sweden must push for a new climate agreement when the Kyoto protocol runs out in 2012. The green profile of development aid work must be strengthened. We will use aid in order to support environment friendly and renewable sources of energy production in developing countries. The EU is a significant arena in the work of achieving sustainable development. Sweden must make an active contribution towards the setting-up of a strict policy on chemicals within the EU and for international legislation on chemicals.

Consumer power must increase. Every consumer must have the possibility of choosing the products and services that do not harm the environment or people's health. Local consumer guidance is an important resource for this purpose. The power of consumers can be strengthened by means of consumer co-operative methods. We also want to make demands on producers and shopkeepers to make food labelled 'fair trade' and ecologically produced accessible to everybody at a competitive price.

More ecological goods. We want to increase certified agricultural land and the ecological production of food-stuffs. Consumer demand decides to a great extent how much is ecologically produced. We want the public sector to increase the consumption of ecological products.

6. PEACE AND FREEDOM IN THE ERA OF GLOBALISATION

6.1 Introduction

We believe in every person's equal value and equal rights. We believe in the possibility of improving justice and spreading prosperity to more and more people. With increased prosperity and growing insights about the mutual dependence between people and countries a positive development will be possible – but it requires greater international commitment. In every country, in our movement, in our everyday life.

As long as there are hundreds of millions of child labourers in the world, as long as workers are exploited in so called economic free zones and as long as millions of children die of illnesses for which there is actually a cure –for so long, every person's equal value is not a reality. And for so long, international Social Democracy has a mission.

The deep differences between the poor and the rich in the world are our greatest international challenge. Peace is always threatened where differences and powerlessness are the greatest. The aim of Social Democracy is an equal and secure world. Peace promoting action, conflict prevention work and an active global distribution policy are our foremost tools.

Today we see classic contradictions but in a new global arena. International companies take advantage of the possibilities globalisation provides. The economy has been internationalised, but our democratic tools have often remained national. This we want to change.

We Social Democrats believe in the possibilities of globalisation, but we want to counteract its disadvantages and combat its downsides. We have a positive outlook on increased democracy, economic growth, free trade and new production patterns.

We want to co-operate with other progressive movements to combat poverty, illnesses and lack of freedom. We want to fight to strengthen basic human rights in working life. We want to fight against starvation wages, child labour and the dumping of wages. It is not possible to stop change – but it is possible to move the change in a positive direction.

Social Democracy wants Sweden to have the courage to stand up for international rights and protest against violation of human rights – regardless where it takes place. To us it is obvious that the same rules should apply to all individuals, and also to all nations. We must assert everybody's equal value and the same rights for all.

6.2 Democratise globalisation

Politics and democracy must catch up with the lead of economic globalisation. We must be better at pursuing questions on workers rights, international environmental rules and

fair terms of trade within international organisations. It is also a question of getting hold of tax havens, money wash and terrorism accounts, and a question of correctly designed service directives within the EU, and of new ways of financing development. With a more active policy we can transfer power from the international market to international political institutions.

Democratic globalisation requires respect for already existing international rules and regulations. International rights, conventions, protocols and rules and regulation must be obeyed. With common rules the rights of small states are protected, and global democracy is strengthened. When international rights are obeyed, development is directed by joint agreements and on equal terms, not by the states that have the greatest military or economic power. That is why we Social Democrats want to protect and strengthen international rights.

The International Criminal Court and other global institutions must be respected. Agreements entered into like the Kyoto Protocol and the Non-Proliferation Treaty must be observed, and so must UN resolutions. We want to work for a strong, effective and well respected judicial system based on international law and human rights. The EU must serve as a model for international co-operation.

The fight for human rights is challenged by the fact that globalisation is not shared by everyone. We Social Democrats place the human being before the market – we want to democratise globalisation and strengthen international law:

Global trade union rights. More countries must ratify the conventions of the ILO on the rights of workers. We want to increase Swedish contributions considerably to the implementation of these conventions, and also to the support of the establishment of free trade unions.

Strengthen the International Criminal Court. We will work more actively in the EU and in the UN to strengthen the International Criminal Court as was done in the case of Darfur. The Security Council must refer more cases to the International Criminal Court.

International law places the security of people first. We want to strengthen human rights. This applies to political as well as civil, social, economic and cultural rights. Modern international law places the security of people before the sovereignty of states. A state must not be able to commit gross acts of cruelty against its population without reactions from the international community. We want to be the bravest defenders of international law in the international community, and we want to turn the EU into a global clear spokesman and a model for a strong international judicial system.

6.3 A future in peace and security

Often extreme poverty and the fight for resources are the reasons why conflicts arise in the world. Ethnic and religious antagonisms are stirred up by economic and political interests. These issues demand political, economic and diplomatic efforts. We want to

work actively to solve these antagonisms and prevent conflicts instead of having to fight them. All countries are responsible for our global security.

International co-operation is needed more than ever. But today's forms of co-operation are not adjusted to today's world, nor are they effective enough. The role of the UN must be strengthened and the Security Council must better reflect the conditions of the world.

The conflict between the Israelis and the Palestinians affects, more than most conflicts do, the security of the whole world. After years of setbacks the parties need the support of the world and pressure to start the process towards peace. Being the stronger party, Israel has special responsibility to push the peace process forward. The occupation of Palestinian territories must end. The Israeli settlement policy, the building of the barrier and the high fencing in occupied territories and outrages must stop. The Palestinians, on the other hand, must clearly dissociate themselves from suicide bombings. Terrorism can never be justified. We want to see an independent, democratic and vigorous Palestine, side by side by Israel, with secure and acknowledged borders for both parties. The borders prior to the 1967 war must be the starting point. No change of the borders is acceptable unless agreed upon by the parties. The international community must assist the Palestinians in rebuilding. International presence is needed to strengthen security.

In Iraq violence continues to claim victims. We want to see a democratic, independent Iraq. The invasion of Iraq led by the USA took place in contradiction of international law. Now we must forcefully support the new democracy and give increased support to the Iraqi people that have been hard hit. We will push for international involvement in finding a solution to the long drawn out conflict In the Western Sahara. The situation for the people of West Sahara is unacceptable both from a humanitarian and political perspective. The promised referendum must be arranged as soon as possible and the right of the people of West Sahara to independence must be respected.

It is in Africa that poverty is most difficult to combat. HIV/aids, conflicts and scarce resources create great obstacles in many African countries. Security and development are each other's condition. The new African union is based on this outlook. The African union and the peace promoting work in African conflict areas need our continued support. Also the EU and NATO must to a greater extent be involved in peace promoting activities in Africa. At the same time the fight against poverty must continue forcefully.

The growth of European co-operation has been a decisive factor to the prosperity of our continent. For centuries the peoples of Europe were affected by bloody wars between the countries. Today Europe is characterised by peace. Historically this development is fantastic. We Social Democrats want basically the EU to be an international co-operation organisation where we together with the other member states can solve problems requiring collective solutions. We Social Democrats want to develop today's EU in all the areas where we through the union best can create collective solutions to collective problems – such as tougher joint measures against pollution, forceful action

against trafficking and other international crime, such as the work to create more jobs and more secure jobs.

We Social Democrats have pushed for the EU to have ten new members in May 2004. We will push for a continued expansion of the EU.

The costs of military rearmament are increasing in the world again, and the work on disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons has suffered several setbacks. We will work actively for disarmament and better control of nuclear weapons. We want to see a stronger IAEA, which will have the right to control all the nuclear technology in all countries. Trade in weapons and defence material must be reduced and controlled by means of international rules. It must be clear as to what can be regarded as the legitimate procurement of weapons for self defence and a military capacity that serves the maintenance of international law. Non democratic nations and countries that violate human rights cannot be awarded the same legitimacy in procuring weapons.

Sweden is militarily non-aligned. We want to make our country better prepared in order to be able to contribute to international peace promoting activities. The restructuring of Swedish defence forces must continue. We want to see an effective defence based on action groups with a capacity to work both in Sweden and abroad – ranging from preventive measures to peace bringing action by direction of the Security Council. We also want to provide more resources to the EU for international crisis management in accordance with the UN charter.

Peace and security in the world are threatened by poverty, oppression, terrorism and conflicts. We Social Democrats want to increase global security and fight for international justice, peace and disarmament:

A stronger and more effective U.N. We want to see a U.N. with an effective and representative Security Council where the veto is abolished. We want an organisation that can provide against conflicts and prevent genocide more effectively. The international community must be able to intervene and provide protection when the people of a country suffer from large-scale acts of cruelty and their government does not take action against it. Human rights must be given greater weight.

Peace in the Middle East. Swedish Social Democracy must continue to give strong support to the peace forces on both sides and at the same time push for greater involvement from the EU and the USA. The aim is a lasting and just peace, based on international law and UN resolutions.

Fight for disarmament. We want to continue to work for disarmament in the EU and in the UN, and to work for a world without nuclear weapons. We want tougher control against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

6.4 A more just world

For a long time Social Democracy has had the aim that Swedish development aid should amount to one percent of GNI. In 2006 we will achieve that aim. Sweden carries

great weight as a donor in the World Bank and the UN-system. It gives us both possibilities and special responsibility. Swedish assistance must be handled purposefully and effectively. We push for the same thing to apply to the assistance from the EU. The receivers of Swedish development aid must clearly strive for the goals of democracy, equality and human rights.

For long-term sustainable global development an overall view on everything ranging from development aid and fair trade to debt relief and environmental policy is required. Sweden is the first country in the world to pursue such a unanimous development policy. We will now go one step further. The overriding goals of reduced poverty must be given more weight in every area of policy making. The co-ordination of policies for global development must also be strengthened.

When people arrive in our country seeking asylum, the injustices and oppression of the world are literally on our threshold. But the great majority of the world's refugees we will never meet. They live in large refugee camps in some of the poorest counties in the world. We want to increase the support to investments in the refugee camps of the world and increase our contribution to the UN refugee organisation, UNHCR.

Sweden must pursue a generous, humane and legally secure refugee policy. Since 1994 the turnaround time for asylum issues has been shortened by 70 days in average, and asylum seeking children have the right to adequate schools and medical and dental care. Persecution because of gender or sexual orientation has become grounds for refugee status. But it is not enough. The grounds for granting asylum must be expanded and waiting times shortened. Children who have sought asylum and been refused will have the right to attend school as long as they are in the country. Asylum seekers have the right to a speedy decision. A first answer must be given within six months. In order to improve the legal rights of the individual, we want the Aliens Appeals Board to be replaced by trials before court. We also want to increase the protection for the refugee children who arrive on their own. The EU must pursue a common refugee policy guaranteeing all asylum seekers a fair trial and good reception within the whole union.

In a world where differences increase and market forces have an advantage, the fight against poverty, for democracy and freedom is challenged. We believe in solidarity and collective responsibility:

Fair world trade. Fair trade is a key question as regards reducing global differences. It is unacceptable that the industrialised world treats the developing countries unfairly with import duties and export support to their own industries or agriculture. The direct EU agricultural subsidies are equivalent to more than all the development aid of the world. We must work more intensely for abolishing EU agricultural subsidies. We want to take the initiative within the World Trade Organisation, WTO, against unjust trade barriers. We want to increase the support to goods labelled 'fair trade'.

Debt relief and the fight against poverty. A mutual international agreement is required to give full debt relief to poor countries. There must also be new possibilities for future loans for investments and to fight poverty.

Development aid for democracy, health and a clean environment. Poverty does not only mean a lack of food and money, but also a lack of power. For Social Democrats aid is a part of international solidarity. Education for all is imperative and an instrument of change. A well run system of justice and active ombudsmen are especially important for the poor. New democracies must be given sustainable support. We need to see better co-operation between the donor countries. Equality between men and women has a high priority also in the field of aid. Freedom of speech is central to the development of democracy. The issue of labour rights will be given more scope in Swedish aid programmes. The struggle against HIV/AIDS, other infectious diseases and child diseases must be given priority. In order to achieve a sustainable development we must direct efforts at measures to improve the environment such as in the field of renewable energy. We will work actively for the right of all to clean water. We will improve the follow-up and control of how aid is used. The rule is zero tolerance on corruption. Democracy and respect for human rights will be the fundamental values in all forms of aid and for this reason democratic development must be supported.

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