



This is enough. We can do better.

SDP's EU election manifesto 2024

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Introduction

Finland joined the European Union in 1995. Now, almost 30 years later, the European Union can be viewed as a partner that is more important than ever before. Following the Russian offensive war on Ukraine, the security situation in Finland has shifted permanently and shown us how important it is that we are not alone. The COVID-19 pandemic, on the other hand, reminded us of the importance of European collaboration. These years have shown us that we truly are stronger together.

The future of the European Union is at stake in these elections. We, the Social Democrats, work for a European Union that will serve Europeans and Finns even better than before. The EU needs to be stronger than before and take a greater responsibility for its own defence. The EU must strive for self-sufficiency in terms of critical materials and guarantee that everyone will have access to vital necessities, such as medicines and affordable energy. Europe must also actively seek solutions to combat the rising expenses and improve purchasing power.

The Social Democrats' EU will be determined at its work in solving issues of climate change and loss of biodiversity; defending labour force rights and creating a stable operating environment for companies. Our Europe will stand up for the rights of citizens against big corporations and social media giants and make sure that technology will be developed in a way that contributes to the well-being and equality of people. The EU must fight against tax evasion and harmful tax competition.

The EU will help us secure our borders and support Eastern Finland and other areas affected by the cessation of Russian trade. The EU produces comprehensive security that is in the best interest of all Finns.

In these elections, decisions will be made on Europe's course and its soul. The European Union was established as a guarantee for peace and to secure equality,



democracy and the rule of law. Once again, the EU is amidst an ongoing battle of values. Respect for the rule of law, democracy and human rights and promotion of equality are some of the things that can no longer be taken for granted, with some attempting to undermine these values.

Traditional right-wing parties are ready to enable this type of development by cooperating with the far right, if it advances their goals of dismantling the welfare state and weakening labour rights and the income of ordinary people. We have already had a taste of this in Finland, where the governmental cooperation of the National Coalition Party and the Finns Party has resulted in increasing inequality and the division of society. It has also slowed down important climate action and resulted in repeated attacks against the media, organised workers and other cornerstones of Western democracy. In these elections, we will decide if we are going to let these same types of trends expand and continue in the EU.

The SDP works against policies that increase inequality and actors seeking to dismantle the rule of law, both in Finland and in Europe. The SDP and the European Socialists & Democrats are the only real counterforces to the far right. We will defend democracy, the rule of law, peace and equality. Hate speech and racism will have no place in our Europe, and the equality of people will also be ensured.

We want to build a European Union that will keep everyone included and increase the prosperity of all; one where security will grow within its societies as internal stability, trust and faith in the future.

We are committed to non-compromising work for the purpose of building a strong, open and fair European Union. We, the Social Democrats, will focus on work for hope and a better future. The kind of Europe described in this election manifesto. The degeneration of Europe and Finland needs to be stopped now. We can do better.

Safe and Democratic Europe

The EU must be better equipped to face security threats and concerns arising from wars and increased inequality, and the strengthening of extremist movements. Security will be built by strengthening the defence of Europe and the EU Member States, but also by strengthening democracy and the sustainability and fairness of societies. Strong societies will be better able to resist hybrid influencing and exceptional circumstances. Democracy and the rule of law need their defenders. Security is reinforced by strong democracies.

Security means comprehensive security. This refers to harmonious societies where the people prosper. Democracy's voices must be diverse, and everyone must feel included and physically safe in society. There remains a lot to be done in all these respects in Europe.



We suggest

We will reinforce European defence and cooperation in defence policy. We will increase and strengthen the production capacity of the defence industry. We will improve preparedness and response to cyber and hybrid threats. We will increase Europe's self-sufficiency when it comes to the production of defence materials and defence technology.

We will seek to establish the post of Commissioner for Defence and advocating for a Finnish Commissioner to be appointed for this post. We will strengthen the status of defence policy in the EU by setting up a Council of Ministers for Defence and a Defence Committee of the European Parliament.

We will continue to provide support of Ukraine against the brutal and illegal offensive war by Russia. The battles in Ukraine are not only about the freedom of Ukraine but also the security of all of Europe. We will increase financial, military, political and humanitarian support for Ukraine. We will increase sanctions against Russia and take more determined action against the evasion of sanctions. We will prepare for the post-war reconstruction phase.

We will work with determination to secure peace in the EU's neighbouring areas and across the world. As tensions increase globally, competition tightens between superpowers and conflicts emerge around the world, a Europe is needed that actively engages in peacebuilding and has a more powerful voice.

We will improve Europe's security of supply and crisis resilience. We will step up the production of medicines and vaccines in Europe by engaging in cooperation with pharmaceutical companies. We will improve the availability of medicines by seeing to the relevant regulations and enabling new innovations. We will ensure Europe's self-sufficiency when it comes to technology and industries. We will increase European research and production in vital fields. We will be determined in our actions to decrease the risks caused by excessive financial and production dependencies on non-EU countries.

We will root up hybrid influencing, disinformation, hate speech and racism that weaken security and enable extremist movements. We will defend the free and diverse media, as it is an unparalleled pillar of democracy and the rule of law. We will work to promote the freedom of the press.

We will hold on to democracy, openness and the principle of rule of law, all of which are fundamental values of the EU. Violations of the principle of rule of law should mean financial consequences and sanctions to EU Member States. We will safeguard and reinforce democracy throughout the European Union and ensure that human rights are respected everywhere and in all circumstances.



We must see to it that the EU is capable of making decisions in all circumstances and that a single EU Member State cannot stand in the way of decisions that are fundamental to the EU, such as questions related to economy and security. We will increase the use of qualified majority voting in questions of foreign and security policy, human rights and the rule of law, among other important questions.

We will be quicker in our reactions to violations of democracy, the rule of law and fundamental rights in the Member States. We will ensure timely and comprehensive enforcement of the rule of law mechanism. We will not make way for violations of the principles of rule of law in the manner committed by Hungary.

The EU must be open to accepting new members, but it must remain strict about fulfilling the membership criteria both before and during EU membership. During negotiations with candidate countries, it must be ensured that their legislation corresponds to the norms of the European Union comprehensively, including working life and employee rights.

The EU must continue to build and secure a rules-based world order. It is in the best interest of small countries like Finland that all states adhere to the rules and regulations on which we have agreed together. The EU must actively reinforce the institutional functional capacity of global institutions like the United Nations and their development and invest in work for peace in its neighbouring areas and globally. Efforts to support the countries of the global south must continue to prevent them from drifting to the spheres of influence of Russia and China.

The internal unity of the EU must be ensured, so that we are sufficiently strong and can influence the development of the whole world and promote the realisation of democracy and sustainable development outside Europe as well.

The European Union needs a harmonised immigration policy in which the responsibilities of the Member States are equally divided and which will help maintain societies' stability and secure human rights and compliance with international agreements. The external borders of the European Union that has no internal borders must be efficiently and comprehensively protected, and action must be taken against the smuggling of immigrants. The EU must be ambitious in its efforts to promote labour immigration.

We must prevent violence in homes and on the streets. We will make an effort to combat domestic violence and see to the extensive implementation of the Istanbul Convention. We will increase resources allocated for promoting the well-being of children and young people. We will continue the work against human trafficking and abuse in cooperation with other European countries, also across borders.

We will combat violence against children both online and offline, by promoting the protection of children and their rights in digital environments. We will promote



comprehensive legislation for the removal of online materials that display sexual violence against children. We require that social media platforms improve their efforts at protecting children and young people and providing information for the purpose of preventing and investigating abuse. We will prevent and combat mental health problems by taking determined action to regulate how social media works.

We will continue the implementation of the European Child Guarantee to cut down child and family poverty. We will promote the EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child. We will promote the voices of young people being heard in decision-making and society. We will encourage young people to get involved and make a difference in democracy, as this can be a factor that decreases the attraction of extremist movements. We will promote the EU Youth Initiative.

We will promote gender equality and women's rights. We will promote the realisation of the rights of minorities and ensure that everyone will be able to participate in society without fear of harassment, cyber targeting or violence. We will put in place legislation against harassment, especially against women and minorities, including digital violence. We will ensure that all citizens can be included in a democratic, safe and well-functioning society.

We will introduce the themes of decreasing inequality, promoting the rights of women and children and sexual and reproductive health as the global basis of the EU's common foreign and security policy. We will direct the development cooperation funding into decreasing inequality, strengthening democracy and climate action, and promoting human rights. We will continue building partnerships with developing countries. We will offer support for the development of national economies and strengthening their societies. We will increase cooperation between companies in the EU and those in developing countries.

A Europe that defends the labour force

The European Union must be the best friend of employees and defend their rights from those seeking to weaken them. Work must be done at the European Parliament for increasing and extending labour rights.

It is in the best interest of every European that labour rights are guaranteed, and that prosperity increases across Europe. Thriving, competent and motivated employees are an asset for Europe and its businesses. Europe is struggling with a serious shortage of skilled workers and competing for the best employees with other regions. Ensuring fair working life and guaranteeing secure conditions for employees will be a pull factor for Europe and can ensure the availability of a skilled labour force in the future.



We suggest

We will ensure that all people living in Europe have the right to prosperity, equality, fair working life and income.

We will ensure that labour rights are fulfilled, and that no one is discriminated due to their citizenship or permit status. We will guarantee the status of trade unions across the EU and promoting social dialogue. We will increase employee well-being and investing in work-life management across Europe.

We will safeguard employee rights in changes affecting work, whether it means the development of technology and AI or the expanding platform economy. We will ensure that employees are able to develop their competence and retrain, so that they will have the skills that correspond to the needs of the changing working life in the future.

We will ensure that entrepreneurship in the platform economy is genuinely voluntary and that the assumption of employment relationship for parties remains. We will guarantee platform workers the minimum terms and conditions of employment, the right to annual leave, pension, and social security payments.

We will protect the European market from economic operators who do unfair business. We will exclude products and services from the market if they were produced in an unethical manner, for example by forced labour irrespective of their place of production. We will ensure comprehensive corporate social responsibility regulations means that it is impossible to succeed in the European market by social dumping.

We will continue removing obstacles of labour mobility within the EU and improve the opportunities for the workforce and jobs to find each other. We will enable cross-border remote working everywhere in the EU. We will facilitate cross-border remote work by drafting a clear and predictable framework for the taxation and social security questions involved.

We will ensure fair pay and sufficient social security for all employees. We will continue to promote gender equality in the European labour market and remove pay gaps between genders.

We will improve the status of young people in the labour market. We will seek to ensure that all young people can find a job, a study place or an internship by reinforcing the Youth Guarantee and ensuring sufficient resources for it. We will continue to develop the international work exchange schemes for young people and promote the mobility and international experiences of young employees and students.

We will support people with disabilities and partial work ability in finding work, remove obstacles of employment for them and seek to achieve changes in attitudes.



We will narrow health inequalities within the EU. We will tackle key national diseases by preparing strategic orientation for Member States on how to prevent, diagnose, treat and rehabilitate them.

Mental health issues are one of the most significant reasons for premature work incapacity. We will search for solutions on how to reduce burnouts and mental stress and promote work-life management. We will reduce the mental health issues of young people by making young people's mental health a top priority in the EU health programme and investing in the implementation of the strategy of mental health for the European Union.

Sustainable and competitive Europe

Creating prosperity, security and work for Europeans must be the goals of the European Union. The European values, from democracy to equality and the rule of law to human rights, will be best achieved when the economy develops and prosperity increases. For this to be realised, the economy must be sustainable. Only an economy that is strong, competitive and renewing can fulfil the promise of prosperity and continue to promote the European values on a global scale as well. It is important that vitality and prosperity are increased throughout the EU by developing regions as a part of the EU's competence-building efforts.

We suggest

We will reinforce the EU's competitive ability and ensuring that we do not fall behind due to wars, pandemics or other disasters and accelerated protectionism. We will ensure that competition is fair and continuing our work to improve labour rights.

We will invest in European security of supply, self-sufficiency and competence. We will ensure that the Europeans will lead progress, whether we are talking about technology, innovation, the green transition, bioeconomy or industry.

The increasing competition between superpowers, the need to accelerate the green transition and demands for strategic autonomy have increased competition on investments. Many EU Member States unscrupulously take advantage of state subsidies to boost their own industries, which is often harmful to productive development, fair competition and Finland.

We should react to the needs of industrial policy and simultaneously restore the strict state aid policy in the EU. The best way to achieve this is to introduce a common European financial instrument for supporting investment, used to promote the best projects that comply with clear, commonly set standards.

It must be one of the EU's goals to increase the number of high-growth export companies that play by fair rules and enter new export markets. We will react to the



growing risks of world politics by drafting a strategy for reindustrialisation on the EU level.

We will ensure that social responsibility, human rights, climate change action and biodiversity will not be overlooked. We will prepare comprehensive corporate social responsibility legislation that will guarantee the human rights of employees and consumers. We will invest in circular economy and the development of new, sustainable products and technologies. We will invest in research and development and innovations.

We will ensure that the transition to an ecologically sustainable economy will be a fair process that does not increase inequality. We will ensure that the EU will make it possible to support low-income individuals on a national level and support such measures.

We will make the EU into the leading economy in terms of competence and new technologies. We will accelerate new breakthroughs in research and technology by substantially increasing EU investments in research, development and innovations and combining the resources of the Member States.

The EU must explore the alternative of collecting funding, for example by introducing environmental taxes, emission trading fees or taxing the financial markets.

We will ensure that the share of Finland and Finnish operators receiving EU funding will increase. The EU regional development funds must be allocated, in line with their original goals, to regions that are at risk of falling behind without funding. The importance of the EU regional development funds will be substantial in Eastern and Northern Finland due to the security situation at Finland's eastern border. We will offer support to tackle the leverage effect of the war in Ukraine weakening the vitality of border areas.

We will make sure that Finland is accessible. We will ensure that Finnish transport projects receive EU funding by engaging in long-term national transport system planning projects. We will improve the transport connections between Finland and the rest of Europe by seeing to the extension of the EU core network (Ten-T) and making sure that Finland receives funding for transport investments.

We will secure the security of supply in Finland by seeing to working marine transport and comprehensive rail connections with the Nordic countries. We will make sure that rising costs of sea transport do not weaken the relative competitive ability of Finland in the EU.

We will develop the economic and monetary union to better react to the needs of the Member States and potential future crises. We will ensure that the EU will favour public



investments in infrastructure, well-being and education of people and solutions of sustainable development.

We will root out tax evasion and combat the shadow economy and harmful tax competition both in the EU and beyond. We will fight against harmful tax incentives and other forms of harmful tax competition. We will make tax evasion less profitable by issuing stricter sanctions. We will ensure that the decisions on measures against harmful tax competition and tax evasion are taken with qualified majority voting, so that a single Member State cannot stand in the way of combating tax evasion. We will restrict company tax subsidies and only grant subsidies for green transition measures and other essentials.

We will ensure that the implementation of the recently achieved new EU Financial Regulation framework will take place in a prompt and reliable manner. We will promote each Member State's responsibility for their own debts and economies. Each Member State must have the responsibility for the sustainability of their financial policies and the completion of required structural reforms and future investments, also in the future. The EU economic and budgetary policy must, for their part, make public investments related to the green transition possible, promote employment and decrease inequality.

The EU treaties do not include provisions on common EU forestry policy. We will ensure that decision-making in forestry questions will remain in the hands of the Member States.

A Europe that protects the climate and nature

Climate change and nature loss are global issues and a threat to the societies in Europe. Finland and all the Nordic countries face these threats first of all in the Arctic areas, which are warming four times faster than the rest of the world, causing significant problems to the environment and local livelihoods. The EU must lead the way and take prominent action in its climate and environmental policies.

We suggest

The EU must adhere to the climate neutrality goal of 2050 and strive for achieving climate neutrality around 2045. We must ensure the incentives and investments needed to achieve this goal. On the EU level, decisions must be made to cut down all key sources of emissions and offer incentives for carbon sinks and carbon sequestration, which will also have to apply to environmental damage and nature conservation. We will promote the circular economy and effective and sustainable use of resources.

Ensuring biological diversity and halting nature loss must be one of the EU's top goals. We must take action to save the seas and other waterways, particularly the Baltic Sea.



Biological diversity must be secured with EU-level regulation that will take special national characteristics into account. We will ensure that sustainable forestry and clean food production that can be considered as assets in competition are included in the solutions to the issues of climate and the environment, and do not become a part of the problem. We will ensure that the ownership of water resources and decisions on their use remain at the national level. We will promote EU measures to cut pollution and waste that are harmful to the environment and people's health.

We will promote the EU's green transition and make sure that it will contribute to greater employment and the reform of the industries. We will ensure that the European Union will be a leader in clean technology. We will guarantee that the transition to a carbon-neutral and sustainable society will be a fair process, with regard to both people and countries.

We must ensure that consumers have access to affordable energy. We will keep developing emission trading in the EU and decrease the EU's dependency on fossil fuels. We will invest in zero-emission energy, self-sufficiency in energy resources and security of supply.

The green transition offers significant opportunities for Europe and Finland. We will remove obstacles to sustainable technology and clean-tech industries. We will make sure that company subsidies are always allocated in ways that encourage operations based on clean, sustainable business and new, innovative technologies.

We must continue to combat climate change and nature loss at the EU level, also as a part of the common foreign and security policy and development cooperation. We will ensure that the green transition will promote the transition to clean and sustainable food production and ensure fair income for farmers.

A Europe of competence, research, and innovations

Europe will succeed with the help of education and competence. Europe has all the qualities needed to be the continent with the most skilled and prosperous people in the world; one where high-quality research projects and top innovations see the light of day. By ensuring that the EU is the leading economy in competence and new technologies, we can guarantee that Europe will be able to shine in the competition with motivated and innovative employees and the best inventors in the world. This is how Europe can succeed in global competition.

We suggest

We will guarantee sufficient investments in research, development and innovations as well as competence and skilled people. We will ensure that science, research and innovations continue to penetrate all of our societies. We will base all decisions on researched information.



We will reinforce the EU's standing in science and technology and providing funds for ambitious research, development and innovation work. We will allocate funding throughout research, from basic research to start-up companies. When granting company subsidies, new and growing companies should become a priority for investment.

We will promote research, development and investment by expanding cooperation between various operators.

We will invest in elite research projects and competence. We will strive for closer cooperation between European universities, both in terms of research and student exchange. We will contribute to mobility by developing the recognition of qualifications and prior learning. We will ensure that the number of young people participating in student exchange will grow and encourage greater student exchange in vocational training.

The EU must raise its level of competence. We will set a common, ambitious goal that by the end of the 2030s, 60 per cent of the younger age classes will have completed higher education.

The Horizon programme scheduled to end in 2027 is the most significant investment by the EU in research and innovations in Europe to date, and the programme is a tool for the EU to promote the green transition and digitalisation. We will ensure funding for this programme in the future and develop its operations. We will ensure that the research work carried out with public funding and the publications are accessible to everyone in society.

We will ensure that all other shared funds will serve the reform of the economy in a more extensive manner and its transition towards carbon neutrality. We will set out to make the EU a leader in high technology and degree of processing as well as a pioneer in innovations on a global scale. We will help companies in the productisation of their new innovations and becoming more international by creating new partnerships for them.

We will ensure that the advantages of AI are not the right of big corporations only. We will ensure that EU regulations on AI, data-driven economy and digital giants are sufficient and that they provide security for individuals, markets and societies, but that they are not too specific in details, as this can freeze innovation activities or drive companies out of the EU. We will react to the market dominance of big corporations by drafting a fair set of rules for competition and labour market regulations as well as through taxation.

We will ensure that smaller companies have an equal opportunity to take advantage of technology by developing the digital infrastructure. We will defend a more liberal



market economy with various operators against the concentration of data. We will ensure that small companies and non-profit societies will be able to utilise national super computers and similar tools. We will promote the development of artificial intelligence models based on European languages.

We will ensure that the data-based economy will increase well-being by making sure that it is sufficiently regulated. We will ensure the fair use of AI in creating something new. We will ensure that artists and other professionals have the rights to the results of their work. We will see to it that new technology does not risk the status of employees, small companies and others in vulnerable positions.

We will ensure that versatile forms of culture and art will remain in the heart of civilisation, development and innovations in the future. We will take advantage of linguistic, cultural and regional diversity in increasing competence. We will support the mobility of art and culture professionals in Europe and increase the cultural budget of the EU.