



# DEFEND LIFE.

**The parliamentary election  
program of The Greens 2023**



**Vihreät  
De Gröna**

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*This programme is a summary of the Greens' key objectives for the 2023 Parliamentary Elections.*

*The Greens' goals for the next parliamentary term are set out in more detail in the Political Programme of the Greens 2023—2027.*

# The Greens' top 10 priorities in the parliamentary elections

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# You can choose Finland that defends life

**FINLAND OF THE FUTURE IS BUILT NOW.** Over the past four years, we have led Finland on the road towards carbon neutrality, started to restore the prior status of education and reformed family leave so that it can be used on equal basis. However, a lot remains to be done. As many as 2,667 of Finland's natural species are endangered. Learning outcomes have deteriorated dramatically. Mental health problems are increasingly common. Many people are strapped for cash as prices are soaring. The fossil fuel crisis has put Finns in a tight spot.

Some people want to give up rather than deal with the problems. We do not. History has proven that Finland is a country capable of overcoming the difficulties that lie ahead and able to renew itself.

Your choice makes a difference at the parliamentary elections. Should we turn the tide towards the past or the future? Should we do everything we can to save the planet?

To tackle the challenges of today and tomorrow, we need more, not less climate and environmental action. We must side with children and young people and lift families with children out of poverty, not push them deeper into distress. In schools, we need to get the basics right so that everyone



has the chance to learn and succeed. We must educate more competent professionals for Finland, so that we have enough nurses, early childhood teachers, mechanics and engineers. We need to make sure that people get the care they need, whether it's a question of helping to deal with a broken mind or a broken leg, or living with an illness. We must invest in art and science in order to overcome crises and learn new things. We must treat each other, other animals and our planet fairly and respectfully.

We, the Greens, want Finland to be a country that protects the most valuable of all: the unique environment that we share and the promise of the welfare state not to abandon anyone by leaving them to sink or swim. We want to build a Finland where nature thrives and everyone has the chance to succeed and thrive.

This is the time to decide Finland's direction after the elections. On the following pages, we present the Greens' top ten priorities in the parliamentary elections this spring.

**The choice is yours.**

**Defend life.**



# 1. Protect biodiversity and animal rights, improve animal welfare

**FINNISH NATURE IS A PRECIOUS ASSET** that only we in Finland can protect. The majority of Finns are in favour of a significant increase in nature conservation, and for many people, the local forest is an important lifeline in everyday life. We humans are totally dependent on nature, and nature has value in itself. It is up to us to ensure that nature can flourish.

The loss of species and degradation of habitats must be halted quickly. The Greens want to protect the untouched forests, mires and waterways in this country. Destroyed and degraded natural environments must be restored and nature must be integrated more into the urban environment. The environment must be protected more intensively in all human activities, such as construction and mining projects. Renewal of forestry is also necessary in order to safeguard the valuable natural environment, including carbon sinks and stocks. Fair and effective solutions must be found to reduce felling to sustainable levels.

Animal welfare is discussed more and more, and many people are questioning the way animals are currently treated. Animals have a value independent of humans, and incalculable in monetary terms, and human beings have a special responsibility towards other animals. Taking responsibility means that our consumption habits must change significantly and the status of both farmed and wild animals must improve.



## 2. Mitigate the climate crisis and ensure Finland's energy independence

**THE CLIMATE AND ENERGY CRISIS** affect the lives of everyone in Finland. Finland must stop importing fossil fuels quickly and stop using peat while increasing investments in sustainable domestic energy solutions and energy saving. The change must be fair for all: the Greens want to ensure that those who are already struggling to make ends meet in their daily lives will not be made to pay the price for tackling climate change.

Finland has already succeeded in reducing emissions, but a lot remains to be done. The carbon sink of our forests has collapsed, and the land use sector has become a source of emissions rather than a sink. The Greens want to reverse this trend. We need new practices in forest policy and the whole nation must cooperate to ensure that our forests can continue to provide wellbeing for Finland as a whole. Carbon sinks must be increased and carbon stocks protected, including in agriculture and construction.

Tackling climate change will involve immense new investments and create a huge number of jobs and large export markets. By resolutely setting our course towards tackling climate change, we will have a positive, climate-friendly society ahead of us. Success cannot be achieved by backward climate policy, but by leading the way.

## 3. Opportunities for everyone to learn and succeed

**FINLAND HAS BECOME AN EQUAL WELFARE STATE** and one of the most successful countries in the world thanks to education and expertise. However, learning outcomes have started to decline and learning gaps are widening in our country. With regard to young adults with a high level of education, Finland is below the average in international comparisons. Skilled labour is in short supply across the board.

Education is at the watershed again. Investments in the funding of education, secured by the Greens during this parliamentary term, have made up for the deficit caused by previous cuts, but we must continue to defend education in order to safeguard the foundations of an equal society and to restore Finnish expertise to the international top.

The Greens want to ensure that all children have access to high-quality early childhood education, basic education and the support they need throughout their educational path, all the way to vocational schools, upper secondary schools and higher education. Instead of the current constant flurry of projects, we need to focus on the basics and ensure that there are caring adults who have the time and resources to support children and young people. We must make room and provide support for exploring, and a wide range of different life paths, ensuring everyone the right to

## 4. Reform the economy and boost employment

**SOLID PUBLIC FINANCES** are required to ensure funding of the welfare state and green investments. The economy must support people's wellbeing and social justice and fit within the limits of the environment's carrying capacity. The weak economic development is eroding the funding of services and social security. The decline in working age population is putting pressure on public finances, and the shortage of skilled employees is evident in almost all sectors.

The policy implemented by the Greens will promote new investments, entrepreneurship and employment growth. Investments in education, research and development, and green investments, will pay back and lay the foundation for future success. The Greens promote well-functioning markets and an entrepreneur-friendly society that minimises barriers to entrepreneurship and ensures fair competition between businesses.

Tax increases and spending cuts are also necessary to balance public finances. The Greens would shift the focus of taxation from labour to taxes that discourage unsustainable consumption. We do not want to implement cuts that affect the disadvantaged or undermine the future of society, such as education. Instead, we need to cut subsidies that are harmful to the environment, for example, and patch the gaps in the tax base.



## THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION PROGRAM 2023

Business subsidies must be examined critically, as continued dependence on subsidies prevents economic renewal. However, it is worthwhile for the government to promote the renewal of businesses and industries as well as the green transition by way of temporary investments, for example in new technologies. The Greens would finance these investments by prudently selling state-owned companies that do not fulfil an essential function in society.



## 5. Revival of science, art and culture

**THE GREENS WANT** civilisation, science, art and culture to flourish in Finland. We defend the freedom and intrinsic value of art and research.

High expertise, science and research constitute important capital for Finland. The Greens want to ensure stable, sufficient and predictable funding for research. We want to raise Finnish research to the international top.

In recent years, the emphasis on economic gain has undermined higher education institutions' capacity to engage in long-term scientific work, innovative basic research in particular. The Greens aim at a significant increase in research funding to enable us to develop new solutions to future challenges.

We want to ensure a diverse cultural offering and opportunities for every-one to enjoy culture. Investing in culture will pay off because culture enhances wellbeing, gives people opportunities to express themselves, strengthens the economy and creates jobs. A vibrant cultural life benefits individuals, communities, municipalities and regions alike. The threshold to enter a library, theatre, concert, museum or gallery must be low for everyone. Children in particular must have access to cultural activities regardless of their background, place of residence or wealth. The operational preconditions of non-governmental organisations and voluntary activities must be ensured.

## 6. Renew the patchwork of social security with universal basic income

**FOR THE GREENS,** reducing poverty is one of the key political goals. First the pandemic, and then the sudden rise in the cost of living due to the energy crisis, have exposed clearly the gaps, bottlenecks and dead-ends in Finland's outdated social security system. The crises have contributed to higher inequality in people's incomes and wealth. Poverty, particularly among families with children, has long-lasting impacts, and the risk of an intergenerational spiral of inequality grows.

Social security cuts are not the way to build a just society. Instead, the patchwork of the Finnish social security system must be updated for the 2020s. Universal basic income, which we, the Greens, have been advocating for a long time, would solve many of the problems related to inactivity traps and the flexibility and coordination of benefits. Universal basic income would be an unconditional benefit of 600 euros for all adults in Finland, which would replace current benefits that are lower, and would ensure that working always pays off. The universal basic income with supplements would be at least equal to the current basic security. Taxation would gradually make the universal basic income not available to those who do not need it. The universal basic income would help reduce having to send those who seek benefits from one door to another, and empower them to plan their lives.



The universal basic income is a major reform, but poverty must be reduced with faster measures as well. The Greens want to increase basic security and reduce bureaucracy by introducing more automation to the granting of subsidies and benefits. A better functioning social security system will enable restoring income support to what it was originally meant to be, a genuinely temporary, last-resort type of assistance.



## **7. Tackle the crisis in the care sector, support children and young people and improve mental health services**

**THE KEY PROMISE OF THE FINNISH WELFARE** state is that people have access to the social welfare and health care services they need, regardless of their life situation, age, income level or place of residence. However, differences have grown in the health and wellbeing of people in Finland. The Covid-19 crisis, the growing demand for services, and the labour shortage have created a backlog in treatment, reflected both in backlogs in emergency departments and severe problems among children, young people and the elderly.

We, the Greens, are determined to solve the crisis in care services. This requires strengthening of basic public services, so that nobody is left on their own. Supplementary services provided by businesses and organisations can also play an important role in resolving the problem of the backlog of treatment. In order to use social welfare and health care services funds efficiently and to ensure equal access, the focus must be shifted to prevention. Services must be developed on the basis of researched data. In the public debate, social work is repeatedly at risk of being overshadowed by health care services. That is why particular attention must be paid to the development of social services as part of welfare services.

Some of the children and young people in this country are at risk of being left without a social safety net and becoming excluded. The problems of children and families must be tackled in their early stages and help must be provided promptly. The challenges of ageing must be taken seriously and new solutions be developed, for example through care services, accessible environments and an approach involving the community as a whole.



## 8. Kestävää elinvoimaa ja sujuvaa liikennettä koko Suomeen

**VIHREÄT HALUAA KEHITTÄÄ** Suomen eri alueita niiden omista lähtökohdista ja vahvuuksista käsin. Hyvän elämän ja kestävien elämäntapojen, työskentelemisen, yrittämisen ja kouluttautumisen on oltava mahdollista niin kaupungeissa kuin harvemmin asutuilla alueillakin. Vihreä aluepolitiikka torjuu eriarvoisuutta ja ilmastokriisiä kaikkialla, mutta eri alueilla toimivat erilaiset ratkaisut.

Liikenteen päästöt kotimaassa on vähintään puolitettava. Siksi joukko-  
liikenteestä, kävelystä ja pyöräilystä sekä sähköisestä liikenteestä on tehtävä houkutteleva, edullinen ja helppo vaihtoehto mahdollisimman monelle matkalle.

Maatalous Suomessa ja maailmalla on muutosten edessä. Ruoantuotannon negatiivisia ympäristövaikutuksia on vähennettävä, omavaraisuutta kasvatettava ja kannattavuus parannettava. Vihreät haluaa varmistaa viljelijän hyvinvoinnin ja reilun hinnan tuotetusta ruoasta. Eläinten hyvinvointi, sosiaalinen kestävyys ja ympäristön tila korostuvat yhä enemmän kuluttajien arvoissa ja tuovat kilpailuetua.

## 9. Defend equality, democracy and human rights

**THE MOST EQUAL SOCIETIES** are the happiest and most successful in other respects as well. Inequalities and experiences of exclusion and marginalisation exacerbate confrontations and jeopardise the functioning of our democracy. Safety is not ensured merely by being protected against external threats – internal disruptive forces must also be addressed. Discrimination and racism must be prevented throughout society.

The Greens is a feminist, anti-racist and pro-equality party. We strive to ensure that everyone has the right to be themselves, and we want to bring down structures that cause inequality in society. In particular, we must support people whose life opportunities are restricted by prejudice, difficult circumstances of various kinds, low socio-economic status or other factors related to background. We want everyone living in Finland to be genuinely part of society, to be able to study, find work and feel welcome.

Good life is built upon the experience of inclusion, safety and justice. In our justice system, everyone must have a genuine opportunity to seek and receive justice.

## 10. Promote stability, peace and security in the world

**THERE IS WAR IN EUROPE** and international cooperation is facing new challenges. Ukraine must not be left alone in the war of aggression by Russia. We must keep our eyes and our doors open to Ukraine.

International cooperation must rely on the objectives of equality, human rights, the rule of law, democracy and peace. Finland as a country can be greater than our size in solving problems that affect the world. The Greens want to fight extreme poverty and inequality in the world. We want to promote the UN's Sustainable Development Goals and increase international development and environmental funding. Finland must continue to play a strong role in working for peace and crisis management.

In order to solve the major problems of our time, we need a strong Europe. Together, the European Union is better placed than individual countries to tackle the climate crisis, the undermining of democracy and instability in our neighbouring areas. This is why the Greens want to deepen and expand European cooperation. We want to make the European Union more resilient and more social. The EU's financial and economic policy must be reformed to meet modern needs. The cornerstones of European cooperation – human rights, the rule of law and democracy – must be strengthened.



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