



A Feminist Europe – it's about values!

During its existence, the European Union has promoted several issues that are important to women and equality and affect our lives every day. Many directives that have already been adopted in the European Union have strengthened women's position in working life and regarding pay as well as promoted non-discrimination and equality. However, it has been estimated that at this rate, it will take another 300 years for us to achieve gender equality. At the moment, gender equality and the rights of women and girls are being challenged on various fronts globally. The rise of populism and the far right are genuine threats to human rights, promoting equality, and lasting peace.

The Social Democratic Women in Finland work for a Europe that promotes the Sustainable Development Goals, peace, democracy, human rights, a feminist foreign policy, as well as economic and climate justice. The European Union must support the implementation of the Pillar of Social Rights. In the coming parliamentary term, gender equality must be a strategic goal for the European Union. Also, equality and the rights of women and girls must be acknowledged comprehensively in the work of the Commission.

The election theses of the Social Democratic Women fall under three themes: security, work, and health. For us, the European Union is larger than its size when it comes to work for peace, equality, and human rights.

A secure Europe

The Europe that the Social Democratic Women want stands by equality, prevents violence, and addresses discrimination. There is no room for sexism, racism, antisemitism, Islamophobia, homophobia, or other forms of discrimination in Europe. The implementation of human rights must be ensured in all of Europe. The anti-gender movement is one of the biggest threats to gender equality and human rights. The Social Democratic Women want a Europe without discrimination.

- Gender-based violence is made a eurocrime to root out violence.
- The European anti-discrimination directive is advanced.
- Legislative measures are used to address discrimination, harassment and online targeting and shaming of as well as hate speech against women and minorities, with punishments harmonised on the European level.

Every week, 50 women die in Europe because of intimate partner violence. One in three women has experienced physical and/or sexual violence. One in two women has experienced sexual harassment. Gendered violence and intimate partner violence must be abolished.

- Women and girls have autonomy over their own bodies, such as the right to a safe abortion and wide-ranging sexual and reproductive health services. The right to a safe abortion is included in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.
- The directive to combat violence against women is fully implemented.



- Digital violence is recognised as part of violence against women.
- The obligations of the Istanbul Convention are implemented in all member states.

Europe is an active part of the world, defending peace and cooperation and combatting the climate crisis. The rise of nationalism poses a great threat to the fight against climate change. The European Union promotes lasting peace and stability in Europe but also globally. Women build peace and security.

- UN Security Council resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security and the related action plan are implemented.
- Participation of women in negotiations and summits is promoted.
- The European Union sees climate change as a global security threat, and it cannot be stopped without the active role of women. The gendered impacts of the climate crisis must be acknowledged.
- The rights of refugee girls and women are promoted and gendered structures are taken into account.

Equal working life and livelihood

Equality in working life must be increased. The European Union must actively tackle unemployment, poverty, and social segregation. In Europe, everyone must be able to work with a living wage. The hourly earnings of women in the European Union are still, on average, nearly 13% lower than those of men. The gender pension gap in Europe is, on average, 30%, which affects women's economic independence and pensioner poverty. The European Union must recognise unpaid work by women, in particular. For example, 75% of informal caregivers are women.

- Unjustified gender pay gaps are abolished, and equal pay must be given for the same and equal work. The implementation of the Pay Transparency Directive in EU member states is monitored.
- Working life must be fair to everyone, which is why it is important to pay attention to recruitment to allow for diversity. The European Union promotes exploration of methods that can be used for requiring anonymous recruiting or positive discrimination in certain circumstances.
- A directive to ban unpaid internships is promoted.

The workplace and public spaces must be safe spaces for all. In the European Union, up to 32% of the cases of sexual harassment take place in the workplace. All kinds of harassment at work must end. The European Union agreed upon the first directive on combating violence against women and domestic violence in early 2024. However, the directive does not define criteria for sexual harassment at the workplace. Also the well-being of workers must be paid attention to on the European level. Employees must have the right to define the limits of work and leisure. Particularly remote work, which increased as a result of the pandemic, has made setting the limits more difficult.

- Sexual harassment at the workplace must be abolished. This is included in the directive on combating violence against women.
- The Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive must be tightened up. Action is taken for the European Union to have effective means to intervene in companies' actions that pollute the environment, increase the risk of child labour, and violate fundamental workers' rights.
- Everyone must have the right to detach from work outside working hours. We promote a directive that gives employees the right to detach from work during their free time.

Europe as a health union

The European Union must also be seen as a health union. After the global pandemic, it is high time that European countries start cooperating also in the health and welfare sector. The health union must invest in prevention in the treatment of diseases, particularly in the treatment of mental health conditions, cancer, and gynaecological disorders. Women's health is insufficiently researched and the funds channelled to gynaecological research are insignificant.

- Europe's Beating Cancer Plan is strengthened. The European Union invests in equal access to cancer diagnosis and treatment. It is also important to support improving the quality of life for cancer patients and survivors.
- Around 84 million people in Europe are affected by mental health problems. The EU's comprehensive approach to mental health will be taken forward.
- In health investments in Europe, women's health and gynaecological research are key priorities.

High-quality healthcare is a fundamental human right. Europe as a health union supports public healthcare while respecting national systems. The prices of medicines must be fair and transparent and their availability must be guaranteed.

- Period poverty is addressed. The tax on period products must be abolished and the availability of free-of-charge products must be increased. The stigma associated with periods is dispelled through comprehensive and informative campaigns. Menstrual and menopausal symptoms must be legitimate reasons for sick leave.
- Investments are made in sexual and reproductive healthcare on a European scale. The right to birth control and abortion are enshrined in the EU treaties.
- Legislation related to non-commercial surrogacy is harmonised in Europe.