

Different people. Equal opportunities.

Election Manifesto
of the Socialist Left Party of Norway (SV), 2005-2009

This Election Manifesto was adopted at the Socialist Left Party's 16th ordinary Congress, in Kristiansand, Norway, 31st of March – 3rd of April 2005.

1. Our way

SV is a socialist party. We want a world in which the use of force and war are replaced by cooperation. We want a world built on community and solidarity. We want Norway to be a country in which the priorities are made according to people's needs. SV is a green party. We want environmental considerations to be made in all policy areas. SV is a feminist party. We want a society in which all people are equal, where gender does not determine your share of power and resources, and where each individual's freedom is not being limited by sex roles. We want a society in which we can face the great challenges of our time together. People have to stand together in the struggle for freedom, peace, and employment for all, for the environment, for a just distribution and for equal opportunities for all.

Politics is about making choices and about choosing values. It is about choosing the environment over unlimited growth, about choosing solidarity and democracy over the power of money. SV stands on the side of the oppressed, not of the oppressors. SV's way is to let people live good lives in communities. It is a choice in favour of the left, against the right, both on national and international level. Our way is to promote welfare, democracy and community-based solutions.

Our society is, and will remain for all future, a multicultural and multi-religious society. Such a society must create the conditions for everyone to enjoy the same opportunities for living out their full potential, for working and participating. We must fight racism and discrimination wherever it emerges, whether from individual groups, individuals or Norwegian institutions.

In the 2005 Parliamentary elections we find ourselves at a crossroads, facing a choice between values. The right wing is dismantling the welfare state, it is awarding tax breaks to the richest, and it is tying Norway even closer to the U.S. foreign policy. We want to go in another direction. We want to abolish poverty in Norway and to level differences between people. We want to strengthen and further develop the welfare state, pushing through new reforms that will make Norway a better and more just society to live in. We want to do more on education and research and to develop economic life in a sustainable direction and with a long-term perspective. We want to respond to the global climate threat by reducing Norway's and the World's CO2 emissions, and by further developing alternative, environmentally friendly, technology. We want everyone who lives in our country to have power and real political influence on his or her everyday life, on the work places and in the local communities, as well as on how Norway develops and on its role on the international scene. Norway will side with the World's poor and oppressed. Our voice will be the voice of peace, freedom, human rights and development for all.

1.1 For freedom

The best way to defend individual freedom is by securing equal opportunities for all. This is SV's point of departure. The existence of the welfare state is a prerequisite for people to be free and to develop their full potential to the benefit of themselves as well as the community. Good community-based solutions are a prerequisite for people to have equal value and to be free. Equal opportunities is the opposite of the right's concept of freedom: A freedom for some, to the detriment of others.

The equal status of women and men is a prerequisite for the creation of a society in which everyone enjoys the same opportunities. Today, women, ethnic and religious minorities, functionally disabled persons and sexual minorities are all being oppressed. This oppression should be fought using social, political and economic means. The liberation of the oppressed is a struggle for freedom and equality, and a struggle for a better future for the whole world population.

Market forces are controlling too much of people's lives. Freedom for the individual is being limited by freedom for the market. Collective welfare systems strengthen people's ability to live their lives fully and to participate in society. A strong community is a prerequisite for individual freedom and reduces the distance to where political decisions are made.

1.2 For justice

Our political solutions will reduce the economic and social differences between people. Our goal is the creation of a society in which power, benefits and duties are distributed justly. Every single one of us should participate more in the decision-making on issues concerning us.

One of Norwegian society's greatest qualities is that people are living in all parts of the country. The current decentralized settlement pattern is under attack. The centralizing forces are stronger than ever. In SV's political work it will be of overriding importance to counter the centralization of society and to create conditions to maintain today's settlement pattern in its general form.

The right wing's alternative is capitalism with unlimited competition and economic growth. This leads to greater differences, a growing climate threat, and a strong concentration of power and money.

Privatisation undermines democratic control of basic welfare services. It contributes to people losing influence. It should not be left to the market to take care of people's basic welfare needs. We want public services, under the control and management of those elected by the people.

Quality does not come for free. We should pay collectively for our welfare. A just distribution of good community-based solutions is only possible in combination with a just taxation system. Just taxation implicates low-income groups pay less taxes, while those who earn most will pay more. This demands political governance and the will to redistribute from those who have much, to those who have little.

Our goal is fair distribution, both between those who live today, and between future generations and us.

1.3 For solidarity

We want Norway to become a country that focuses on peace and solidarity and to promote an alternative foreign policy in solidarity with the world's poor. Norway's purpose on the international arena must be to side with the world's poor and oppressed and to contribute actively to find peaceful solutions to conflicts.

The unfair distribution of the world's wealth is being maintained today, while millions of people are starving. We want to work to eradicate poverty, by increasing development aid, cancelling third world debt and introducing more fair trade, among

other things. Norway is one of the richest countries in the world. Through the Norwegian Petroleum Fund we invest billions of Norwegian Kroner abroad. Although SV already won the struggle for ethical guidelines for the petroleum fund, that measure in itself doesn't change the uneven balance of power between poor and rich countries, or Norway's position as a capitalist power. Because of this, our goal is to change the society from the bottom.

SV has always been working for a more independent Norwegian foreign policy. This is important in order for Norway to build bridges between people on international level. Norway has on several occasions contributed to solve conflicts - a role SV wants to strengthen and further develop. SV strongly opposes a development in which the great powers do as they want and undermine international law and treaties.

There is a close link between peace building and fighting poverty and social injustice. It should be Norwegian policy to further development and to fight poverty. This can for example be done in alliances with countries, social movements, trade unions and other organizations that share our view.

Our goal is to live in a just world in ecological balance. This implies a just distribution today, without destroying the resources that those who come after us will need. In order to solve the environmental problems it is important with new knowledge and new technology. But it is also necessary to change those driving forces that today exploit nature ruthlessly and that are hitting the World's poorest.

SV does not want Norway to become a member of the European Union (EU). The developments since 1994 (when a majority of Norwegians voted no to EU membership in a popular referendum; translator's notice), both in the EU and in Norway, have proved that it was wise not to become a member. SV puts special emphasis on five important reasons not to want Norway to become a EU-member. First, the EU's main objective is to secure a permanent growth for its member countries, and a higher production and turnover than each country would have achieved on its own. This is inconsistent with the goal of sustainable development and global solidarity. Second, membership complicates the struggle against unemployment and for levelling out social conditions. Third, a membership in the EU would deprive Norway of its control over natural resources such as fish, petroleum and hydro-electrical power. Fourth: The lack of democracy and transparency in decision-making within the EU. Fifth: Norway can be an independent voice and vote at international trade, environment and security negotiations, as well as develop a distinct role as the builder of bridges where conflicts threaten to turn into war. In order to do that, we should not be closely linked to European power interests through a EU membership.

1.4 For the environment

We want Norway to take the environmental challenges seriously and to secure a sustainable development. Therefore, we want to mainstream environmental considerations in all policy areas. We want a sustainable society, in which coming generations are guaranteed a livelihood and a varied life. This means that we have to manage resources in a better way, protect biodiversity and reduce emissions in order to prevent man-made climate changes. We want to boost environmental technology, and to make sure that it pays off to buy environment-friendly products.

Global environmental challenges can only be met through binding international cooperation. Norway should therefore pursue binding environmental treaties as well as cooperation with other countries and organizations to reduce environmental problems. Our goal is fair distribution, both between those living today, and between future generations and us.

1.5 For a new course

We are living in the era of opportunities. The human being has in its power technology and resources enabling it to secure a dignified life for all. Cross-border contacts are multiplying and cultural barriers are broken down. Never before have we been able to work together like we do now, for a world with freedom and a right to develop for all. But this opportunity is not being used. Our era is marked by unrestrained capitalism. Today's market liberalism, with its brutal competition and its quest for ever greater profits, leads to greater injustice, growing environmental problems and a strong concentration of power and money. Instead of cooperation, we have a new world order with one super power dictating how to do things, and war is an accepted way to solve conflicts.

We are living in the land of opportunities. In the course of more than a century Norway gradually became a more just and more democratic society. Our welfare has been based on the construction of a generous welfare state, with universal rights, with the resources being controlled by the democracy and not by the market; and with the active inclusion of the whole population as well as the whole country. During the last ten years this development has been turned around. There are not many European countries where internal economic and social differences have grown as strongly as in Norway during the 1990s. Poverty is again a growing problem, affecting children and youth among others. The political right is attacking the welfare state and wants to replace it with a privatised society making us customers instead of citizens. Unemployment is again a threat, and the rural areas are increasingly being abandoned.

These developments are caused by the right wing forces' strategic and conscientious belief in the market and in profits. It is time to set a new course. Today's market liberal system must be replaced by a society in which the resources are managed democratically. SV's goal is that the people govern on all levels. All our work is based on democratic values.

It is time for a new era of reforms in Norwegian politics. During this era we will fight joblessness, poverty and injustice together. We should all unite our forces to create the values from which – and for which – we will live in the future. And in this era we will fight together with people from all parts of the world: For a just world order founded on solidarity and cooperation.

SV's election manifesto commits us to fight for a political alternative that can last for many years to come. SV will seek power and influence in order to put into practice as much as possible of our party's policies.

This manifesto is also an invitation. We know that we will need strong alliances in order to change Norway. We will need the active participation of as many as possible of us who live in Norway; in order to reach our goals and make our values set the standard.

Our election manifesto sets a new course – towards equal opportunities, justice, and solidarity.

With this manifesto, we invite you to join us in our quest.

2. SV's alternative: Ten proposals for a new course

2.1. Emergency relief fund

Through its "petroleum fund" (a large financial reserve built up from the Norwegian state's income from petroleum production; translator's notice), Norway is the manager of great wealth. In many conflicts people die because emergency relief does not get there fast enough. SV wants to use some of the wealth on establishing an emergency relief fund, showing solidarity with people in distress.

2.2. A nation of peace

SV wants Norway to be a nation of peace and an advocate for a democratic and just world, in which conflicts are solved by peaceful means. Norway has a position that should be exploited actively: Not being a member of the European Union, and being without imperial ambitions. Norway shall not take part in preventive wars of aggression, nor shall it support the occupation of Iraq.

2.3. Abolish poverty

Norwegian society is increasingly being marked by growing differences between poor and rich. SV will promote an active policy of distribution and will fight what we call "the unequal Norway". Our goal is to abolish poverty in Norway during the next 4-year term of the Parliament (2005-2009).

2.4. An ambitious regional policy

SV wants to create the conditions for local communities to grow strong and maintain their existence, and for people to be able to live in all parts of the country. Politicians both on national and local level should take back the power that has been ceded to the market. SV wants to strengthen measures to promote regional and industrial development on local, regional and national level.

2.5. Stop the privatisation!

SV opposes privatisation and deregulation of public services. The welfare state should be strengthened and not weakened. SV wants power and responsibilities to be given back to the politicians, and to strengthen public ownership. A nonnegotiable goal, and an important strategy against privatisation, is to improve the municipalities' economic conditions.

2.6. The cultural leap

Arts and culture make society and human beings richer and give them new experiences. They strengthen the individual in its quest to develop its own creativity. Everyone should have access to a wide selection of cultural activities - through physical accessibility, reasonable prices and flexible opening hours. SV wants to

increase the budget for culture to one per cent of the national budget.

2.7. Environment-friendly energy

SV wants to change Norwegian energy policy. We want Norway to increase its production renewable energy with 40 TWh. If we succeed with that, Norway could again become a net exporter of electric power.

2.8. Growing up under good conditions

SV wants all children and youth to enjoy good, universal public services. The reform on access to kindergarten will be pursued, in order to guarantee everyone a place for their child in the kindergarten and with the maximum price 1 750 Norwegian Kroner. SV wants school as well as the after school centres to be free of charge. Teaching must be according to the abilities and needs of each pupil, and all school materials (textbooks, work books, paper etc.) must be free of charge. All children and youth shall have the right to be taught their mother tongue.

2.9. Dental health reform

There is today a lack of equal access to dental treatment and other medical treatment in Norway. This difference should be levelled out aiming at equal access (with no high costs). SV wants everyone below 21 to receive dental treatment, including tooth braces, free of charge.

2.10. Fight unemployment and social dumping

Everyone seeking work should be offered either a job or further education within one year. In addition, unemployed youth below 25 should have the right to receive a job, an offer of education, or community work training within six months. In order to achieve this we need an active industrial policy. SV also wants to fight part-time joblessness, by guaranteeing the right to a full-time job. Norwegian salaries and working conditions shall be valid in Norway. SV will tighten up legislation against social dumping, and strengthen the authorities' as well as trade unions' ability to enforce this legislation.

3. An extended democracy

Democracy is about how power is distributed and controlled for the best of society as a whole. In our society far too much power belongs to people who are not running for elections, and who can accordingly not be thrown out by voters if they make decisions that affect many people in a negative way. SV wants the power to be distributed differently.

SV will make efforts to preserve democratic freedom of action. Power is today being transferred from the democracy to the market, by means of privatizations and other attempts to remove political control over the economy. This development is being promoted by, among others, the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the European Economical Area (EEA). One effect is that power is becoming centralized in international institutions with a minimum of transparency and democratic accountability. The efforts to develop a more just society are being hampered.

3.1 Justice requires Democracy

It is important for our quality of life and our welfare that we have real influence on our working conditions and on how the local communities develop. The best way to defend a just distribution policy is to have an ever-active debate on social affairs and a vivid participatory democracy. This is also the best protection against abuse of power.

SV wants participatory democracy to be extended considerably. We will extend democracy to those strata of society where a few powerful people are making decisions today. A more just distribution of properties and resources is important to develop democracy. In order to achieve a safe, democratically based management of social economics we need strong popular movements that can stand up against owners' power and corporate power.

Elected bodies must reflect the population that has chosen them. In SV's opinion, all elected bodies, public committees, councils and governing bodies should have a gender balance as well as representation of ethnic minorities. This should be facilitated both by demanding that the parties comply, and by creating conditions for a wider range of people, for instance persons with responsibilities for children, or functionally disabled persons, to be able to accept political office.

SV wants to increase possibilities for children and youth to participate and to have influence. A number of politically imposed rights and duties take effect when people turn 16 years. SV will therefore propose to lower the voting age from 18 to 16.

Education and employment make up a great deal of the basis for active participation and influence. It is therefore a democratic problem when so many are kept out of normal working life.

In order to avoid blurred lines of responsibility SV will advocate the need for a government to have the active support of a parliamentary majority.

Today's parliamentary order with two houses, the larger house (the "Odelsting") and the smaller house (the "Lagting") is out-of-date. One reason for this is that the possibility of impeachment is being abolished. SV will therefore propose to abolish the two-house system, in order for all issues to be voted on by the Norwegian Storting (the parliament) in plenary session.

A participatory democracy must include something more than the right to choose by whom to be governed. Participatory democracy should imply that those elected could be forced to answer to their electorate between elections as well. SV will propose to introduce the option of recall elections. A recall election of the Parliament should be held when at least 25 per cent of the electorate signs a petition demanding so. Similar options should be introduced for all other elected bodies.

3.2 Direct democracy

Even though our political system is founded on the use of representative bodies, many political decisions could be made directly by the people itself. This could be done by increased use of referendums or through other variants of direct democracy.

SV wants to try out ways of decision-making where power is transferred from the municipal board to bodies in which all the municipality's citizens can meet and influence decisions. This could for instance be done when deciding on priorities in the municipal budget.

SV wants the population to have a direct right to present proposals to the elected bodies. When a sufficient number of citizens petition for a proposal to be dealt with, the elected body shall be obliged to treat the proposal just as any proposal from the political parties.

3.3 Local democracy

An active local democracy is the cornerstone of participatory democracy. SV wants decisions to be made as near as possible those affected. The most important arena for local democracy is the municipality. In larger municipalities it is important to develop democratically elected village councils, local councils or city ward councils. These should have real influence on decisions made in the municipality. The popular participation in democratic processes increases through work in such councils. In many areas, however, state-level intervention might be necessary in order to secure that the interests of all inhabitants are looked after.

The prime precondition for local democracy to be more alive is for the municipal economy to be significantly strengthened through increased transfers of money from the state. Local participatory democracy can only be given room to develop if the economy is strengthened. Such vivid and democratic municipalities constitute the alternative to local communities where responsibility and influence are being privatized away from participatory democracy.

SV wants power to be decentralized from the state level and state bureaucracy to the regional political level. Tasks related to regional development, education, culture, health, transport and communications, environmental management, and planning, should all be dealt with by regional elected bodies. This would imply the transferring of power from areas that are today not governed by elected bodies.

SV opposes the forced merging of municipalities after state level decisions. The final decision on such municipal mergers should be made locally.

There is a need for a democratically controlled level of administration between the State and the Municipality. This presupposes the transfer of tasks, authority and

resources to this regional level of administration, in order for it to become an important factor in the democratic governing of our society.

SV is in favour of granting a great deal of local freedom to decide the size of these regions. Today's counties should decide themselves whether they want to remain independent units, or merge with other counties

SV wants to restore municipal autonomy. Fewer money transfers from state level should be earmarked. However, in some cases earmarking might be a suitable tool in order to secure equal public services on national level.

The municipalities should have increased autonomy on how to use their own income. SV will propose to give the municipalities increased liberty to levy property tax.

The economic foundation of local democracy is to be found in popular support for a just taxation system, securing the welfare state independently of which municipality you live in. Differences in municipal taxes will lead to differences in the quality of municipal public services and thus create greater inequality. Differentiated municipal taxes will present new arguments to the right in their quest to further reduce economic transfers to the municipalities, thus creating more leverage for disclaiming of responsibility between the stages of administration.

The income and the expenses in the municipalities should be distributed more evenly and in a fairer way.

3.4 Economic democracy

An important goal for SV is the democratization of economic life. Those who control the capital also decide over the employees' jobs and workday. Therefore, reforms should be implemented to increase the community's possibilities of gaining control, as well as the employees' power over their own work places. SV will work to regulate the currency trade in order to prevent speculative capital transfers and to even out fluctuations in the market.

We need a strong public sector in order to manage society's resources for the best of the general public. SV therefore opposes the privatization of public services and companies. Privatized or semi-privatized companies should be brought back into public ownership. Strong public ownership is especially important when it comes to welfare services, education, valuable national resources, and infrastructure. SV will work actively to deter private interests when they make a pass for so-called "public private cooperation".

The owners' right to move or close down profitable work places is a democratic problem. SV wants the employees to have first option on buying their own working place, in cooperation with public authorities, when owners want to move the company abroad. If the company is still being moved abroad, the employees shall be entitled to supplementary payments. SV will work for a new business legislation that may prevent the moving abroad of and speculative deals with Norwegian companies.

SV wants more companies to be democratically run. SV wishes to give incentives to companies to make strategic choices combining profitability and long-term thinking, instead of the present focus on short-term profits. One incentive would be economic support for research and development, directed towards co-working and concerted action. SV wants a new company model to be established for democratic companies,

owned and managed together by the employees. The Norwegian State should create the necessary conditions for establishing such companies. SV wants to strengthen cooperative enterprises and to work for a separate legislation on cooperatives, thereby securing the framework conditions for this kind of companies in an increasingly market liberal society.

3.5 The democratic dialogue

An open debate in and on society is the very nerve of democracy. The freedom of expression must therefore be protected and widened. Today, commercialization of the public space is limiting this open debate. Wealthy groups can buy public space using commercials and ownership of the media.

SV wants ownership of the media to be spread on many hands. The subsidies to the media should be increased, in order to encourage a multi-faceted variety of newspapers. SV wants to increase the financial support for grassroots organizations and other parts of civil society. SV is in favour of a restrictive regulation of televised commercials.

A transparent public sector is decisive for democracy. Both local and central authorities must improve on this. The right of employees and union representatives to give statements to the public should be strengthened. The right to access to information on issues of public concern must not be prevented by privatization and conversion into limited companies.

Norway must not become a technologically divided society, where there is a gap between those who have, and those who don't have access to information and technology. SV will therefore work for technology and information to be accessible for all. In this context, open standards and high-speed access to the Internet, among other things, are important tools to let all inhabitants of Norway participate in the democratic dialogue.

3.6 Republic and a faith-neutral State

The monarchy is an antiquated form of government. In a modern democracy, important positions in society should not be hereditary. SV therefore wants to abolish the monarchy and introduce the republic as the form of government in Norway.

The system of a State Church is also antiquated. SV wants to disestablish it, separating the state from the church. Modern Norway is a multicultural society with religious diversity. The state should be faith-neutral. Accordingly, SV wants to abolish the quota regulations that demand a certain number of the Government Ministers to be members of the State Church.

3.7 Voluntary work and commitment

A strong sector of non-governmental organisations is a precondition for a vivid and functioning democracy. Norway has a proud tradition of a multi-faceted organisational life. These organisations have been pushing for democratic and social development. By organizing in non-governmental organizations, each of us has a greater opportunity to put into practice our commitment, to influence decisions and to create something together. A well-developed organisational life is especially

important for children and youth to have influence in society. SV wants to strengthen the non-governmental organisations' work, by securing stable and predictable framework conditions and by forging a close cooperation between organisations and public agencies.

3.8 The rights of Sámi people and national minorities

Norwegian society has been built on the Norwegian and the Sámi peoples' territory. The Sámi people must therefore have control over and codetermination in decisions that concern it.

Norway is bound by international law to follow the ILO Convention 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples' Rights, as well as the United Nations (UN) Convention on Civil and Political Rights. Together with the UN Declaration on Indigenous Peoples these give the Sámi people a real point of departure to shape their own society. The traditional rights and status that women have in Sámi society must be preserved. SV therefore wants Norwegian legislation to be revised, aiming at regulating the parts of society dealt with by ILO Convention 169.

The Sámi, based on international conventions and declarations as well as the approval of the state, have a collective right to land and water. This right must be exercised in cooperation with the rest of the population belonging to the same areas. It is important that the Sámi have control over and codetermination in decisions that concern Sámi culture in general, as well as the Sámi traditional industries (such as crafts, Sámi traditional fishery and agriculture, reindeer herding, etcetera; translator's notice) in traditional Sámi areas.

The new authority established by the Norwegian parliament to administrate land in Finnmark county – "Finnmark property" ("Finnmarkseiendommen") is to be governed by a committee consisting of six representatives: Three from the Sámi parliament ("Sametinget"), and three from the Finnmark county assembly. The presidency will alternate between the representatives chosen from the county assembly and those chosen from the Sámi parliament. The Sámi parliament and the county assembly shall be free to choose their representatives.

Reindeer herding is an important carrier of Sámi culture, and it is an important Sámi traditional industry. SV will work to secure the right to the grazing lands for reindeer herding, and to protect these areas. The nature in these areas must be used in a manner that avoids overtaxing of the pasture and permanent damage to nature.

The marine resources constitute the most important renewable resource that can secure settling and employment in Finnmark County. SV will therefore propose that the use of salt-water resources along the Finnmark coast is reviewed. The point of departure should be Norway's obligations according to international law, as well as traditional local use of these resources, and the goal being that people in Finnmark are granted the right to manage these salt-water resources.

The maintenance and further development of Sámi culture contributes to further Sámi rights and equality, and to a cultural and social diversity in Norway that is of great value. SV will work to strengthen Sámi culture by facilitating the Sámi Parliament to actively promote cultural activities in the Sámi area, as well as by supporting national initiatives and institutions that impart Sámi arts and culture. Especially important is to preserve Sámi culture and language also outside the main Sámi population areas in

Finnmark. SV wants the “South Sámi” and the “Lule-Sámi” peoples to be able to secure and further develop their cultural traditions. SV wants to strengthen Sámi cultural institutions.

SV will work to strengthen the Sámi Parliament’s role as an elected body for those of the Sámi people who live in Norway. This implies that SV as a party aims to be represented in the Sámi Parliament, as well as to deepen the cooperation between the Norwegian Parliament and the Sámi Parliament.

The Sámi Parliament and Sámi organisations should play a vital role in the cooperation with neighbouring countries with Sámi population. SV will therefore propose to have Sámi representation in Nordic and regional cooperation bodies such as the Nordic Council and the Barents Council.

In 1999, five groups were defined as national minorities: Jews; the Kven / Finnish people; Rom people; Romany people; and “forest Finns”. SV wants to secure the right of the minorities to their own cultural work as well as language training through decent-sized financial support. Their history and their situation must be disseminated in school and in other institutions that are bearers of cultural heritage.

4. Justice

SV wants Norway to be a just country. There will not be freedom for all without justice. Today class divisions are growing and the richest are becoming even richer, to the detriment of the majority. SV's goal for the parliamentary term (2005-2009) is to lessen class divisions, to reduce the economically uneven division between women and men, and that no one should live in poverty nor deprived of liberty. The economically speaking most productive and successful societies are those with good community solutions. We cannot get safety – neither for pensions, nor for future jobs - by saving on the Petroleum Fund or by cutting welfare solutions.

There is a need for a massive investment in science and training, and for creating many new environment-friendly jobs. Working life should be organized in such a way that it does not ruin people's health. Those who cannot work must receive benefits enabling them to live a decent life. Everyone should have equal access to good welfare solutions. The municipal economy should be strengthened and the community should be widened and improved, instead of being downsized and privatized. A policy of solidarity implies welfare, rights and redistribution – and not charity, chance and handing-out.

4.1 Employment for all

A society in which everyone who can work, get work, is important in the fight against poverty. Today there are many who wish to work but who are not let in, or who are being squeezed out. The consequence is that many people survive on benefits instead of working. Many would have a better life if they were given employment enabling them to live on their own earnings. Providing a job to those who want a job would also mean that less human resources are being wasted.

Employment for all can only become a reality if the state takes more responsibility to create new jobs in times of high unemployment.

The state should limit the use of short-term contracts, fight discrimination against workers, secure safe working conditions on the workplaces, and give all a chance to receive further education. The probabilities of becoming employed are increased by special measures to get people into the labour market as well as by education. These measures should be high quality and lasting, and give people a real certification in order to be able to get into and stay in a job situation.

To accommodate for more people to live from their earned income instead of from benefits means to care for quality of life and justice for individuals. And it is also about using all human resources in society. This will also save public expenses.

Regulations and agreements in working life must guarantee a healthy working environment, with fewer damages to peoples' health, in order for more to become employed and to be able to work until they reach the retirement age. Increased use of overtime, more cases of employment without guarantees, and more use of temporary employment will lead to an increase in damages to peoples' health, to more people being squeezed out and thereby to a higher unemployment rate. This trend has to be stopped. It must become easier to combine employment and benefits.

The reasons for the increased use of medical leave and of being declared unfit for work have to be investigated further in order to prevent this trend to continue. SV

wants to spend more on research on how to improve the working environment and on how to prevent work-related illnesses.

4.2 Welfare, not charity

It is a public responsibility to maintain good welfare standards. SV wants to strengthen the municipal economy and will fight against privatization of public welfare services. The welfare state should be based on universal services such as free public education. Universal services means equal treatment and equal opportunities for all. It is also a more efficient way to help people in want, than individual or means tested arrangements.

Some public services are not good enough today. We can achieve better welfare standards and a more efficient organizing through cooperation between politicians, employees and users. We will not achieve this by putting services out to private tender or by privatizing to companies that only aim for profits. The best protection against privatization of the welfare is to develop better services and to use resources more efficiently.

4.3 Fair taxes

SV wants a tax system that works to finance the welfare state; to level out economic differences; to increase the creation of wealth; to create full employment; and to make consumption and production more environment-friendly. These are the main principles in a civilized tax system where the objective is to achieve justice.

In order to level out the differences those who have most and who earn most will also have to contribute more to the community, while those who have least will contribute less. The current tax system favours the richest and especially those profiting on others people's work by means of considerable investment income and dividends. SV therefore proposes to increase taxes on capital while reducing taxes on low work income. The objective is to tax work no harder than we tax capital. SV also proposes a tax on dividends. In order to ease the tax burden for those with the lowest incomes, SV proposes to raise the tax-free share of the basic income. SV also proposes to reduce individual contributions on welfare services both to the state and to the municipality. Individual contribution payments on health care equals tax on illness. SV wants the price on delivery of electric power (network rent) to be the same for all private consumers.

SV will propose measures to redistribute from private to public spending in order to finance the welfare state. SV wants to make consumption and production more environment-friendly by proposing to lower the payroll tax and increase green taxes.

Money laundering, corruption, tax evasion and working black are crimes: Theft from the community. SV wants efforts against economic crime to be increased.

4.3 Retirement pension

The Norwegian National Insurance scheme is the basis of a safe and meaningful life for our senior citizens. It is the cornerstone of the Norwegian welfare state. With it, everybody is guaranteed to receive a pension and economic differences are to some

extent levelled out. SV wants the National Insurance scheme to continue to be governed and managed by the public. We will oppose all attempts to privatize it. Any weakening whatsoever of the National Insurance scheme will imply increased privatization

SV proposes to strengthen the retirement pension. A minimum pension would be guaranteed for everyone. Upon that, all paid pension contributions would increase the size of the pension. This implies removing any "shortening" of the pension, something that today mostly affects women who have been working part time. The distribution must become better than today, and SV wants to increase payments to those with low and middle incomes

SV proposes the introduction of a system where also students and military or civil service personnel earn pension points.

Today, many employees have a private service pension in addition to the National Insurance scheme. Many of these arrangements are included in negotiated work agreements. SV respects agreements made in working life, such as "AFP" and service pension, and will not lend its support to political proposals that weaken these agreements. SV will work to maintain the level of supplementary pensions in the public sector, and for employees in private sector to receive as good arrangements as public employees

The state of Norwegian economy does not oblige us to cut retirement pension payments. The size of total payments is therefore an issue of political character.

4.5 No one is to live in poverty

SV's goal is that no one will live in poverty in Norway. Poverty affects children especially hard, and leads to isolation of those affected. Most important is to prevent people from becoming poor. There are fewer poor people in societies with small economic differences. When there are high-quality public welfare services you don't become that excluded, although you have little money. The public welfare system secures that important needs are covered, at the same time as it prevents exclusion. That is why reducing individual contribution payments on welfare services is part of the fight against poverty.

Poverty should be fought taking a variety of measures. During the last years, a class division has been developing between those who have employment and those who are not – or mostly not - part of working life. Providing people jobs is therefore an important measure to free them from poverty. Additionally, those who for different reasons and for shorter or longer periods of time cannot maintain themselves through normal work should be guaranteed sufficient public help to keep them out of poverty.

Many of those depending on the social security to survive have experienced being sent from door to door between the different public institutions: The employment agency, the benefits agency and the social security office. These people are not being met with comprehensive, coordinated and targeted solutions.

SV wants the three above-mentioned entities to be merged into one common, public agency in order for the support network to work as one.

The services should be rights-oriented, and the measures taken should aim to help each individual to manage on his or her own.

In cases where the individual, in spite of help, is not able to sustain himself or herself, he or she should continue to receive right-oriented help. This should be organized in a such a way that the individual can maintain him-/herself as well as maintain his/her responsibility for eventual other person(s).

The benefits- and social security system is a cornerstone in our society. It guarantees freedom and safety for the country's inhabitants. However, this has not led to solving the problem of poverty, and the stigma associated with receiving benefits or social security benefits remains. A better alternative to many of today's benefits schemes would be to introduce a Guaranteed Minimum Income (GMI), equalling the rate of minimum retirement pension payments. This could also be profitable in terms of national economics, due to less need for bureaucracy. SV will propose such a reform to be discussed by parliament within the coming election term (2005-2009). Until eventually establishing the Guaranteed Minimum Income, SV wants social security benefits to have a nationally defined minimum level above current rates as established in guidelines. The social security benefits should be nationally financed. At the same time, in acute cases, there must be room for giving financial support based on the appraisal of the individual situation. The social security service should continue to be provided on municipal level, and with presence in all municipalities. The users should have the right to get an action plan, and to actions being taken according to this plan.

The minimum benefits standard of the National Insurance is now so low that a growing number of people need to receive social security money in addition to other benefits. All benefits schemes as well as the additional benefits for children should be reviewed in order to guarantee a level of payment enabling everyone to live a dignified life.

Child benefits, cash benefits for staying at home with children ("kontantstøtte"), and other similar benefits, should not be deducted from social security benefits.

The differences and the poverty level are especially high in the major cities. Efforts to improve the situation there should have priority.

An important cause for poverty is high debts. The banks should introduce stricter rules on when and how to lend out money. Also, their opportunity to publish aggressive commercials for consumption loans must be limited. SV will propose to consider an exit solution with personal bankruptcy where the debt is cancelled.

4.6 Social housing policy

In the course of the last decades it has been left to the market to provide Norwegians with a place to live in. Because of this many people can't afford to pay for their housing, and many have a weak economy due to high housing prices.

SV wants everybody to be able to live well and in safety for a reasonable price relative to his or her income. Housing costs are now higher relative to people's income than they were before the collapse of the housing market in 1987. Young people and others in the process of establishing themselves have to pay dearly both to rent and to buy.

There is therefore a need for a major social housing campaign. Crucial tools in this work would be a strong National Housing Bank with an elevated limit on borrowing and with politically controlled interest rates; housing cooperatives with a stronger not-for-profit profile; and a much stronger political control with the housing market.

In modern Norway more than 5 000 persons are homeless. This lack of housing has to be fought. Everyone must get help to find stable housing. The public housing benefit must be increased in order for all people with low income to be eligible. SV will propose a law on non-commercial renting out of flats. There should be built at least 4 000 flats annually, of which at least 1 000 student flats, until reaching the goal of a ten per cent non-commercial flats in Norway.

SV wants a stronger protection against unreasonably high rent, and with rent assessment committees wherever needed. Housing prices should be stabilized through a constant, high rate of building houses and flats with assistance from the National Housing Bank. Fixed mortgage rates should be standard when buying a house, as well as more profitable.

Those speculating in property are keeping flats empty and deteriorating for years in the cities, in order to get a permission to demolish them later. SV will propose that it be legal to settle in houses defined as proper living quarters, but that have not been in use during the last year.

The responsible for putting housing policy into practice is the municipality. It should be guaranteed favourable loans for acquiring strategically important building sites, as well as subsidies in order to be able to function actively in the fields of area development, urban redevelopment, and installation of elevators. More should be invested in the rebuilding of existing flats into universal models, on environmental projects, and on waste treatment in the construction industry.

4.7 Universal design and availability

All citizens should be equal. Lousy availability and a lack of welfare services lead to discrimination and a lack of freedom for functionally disabled persons. Barriers created by society have to be removed if we are to achieve equal opportunities and freedom for all.

The global protection against discrimination by the Anti-discrimination Act must also include functionally disabled persons. A control organ should be established in order guarantee that the law is respected.

Public transport, outdoor areas, schools, information, work places, technical solutions and services must be accessible for all inhabitants. These should be a support and not a barrier.

Society should be developed following the principle of universal design. This should be followed up by an action plan with clear deadlines and with financing directed at achieving accessibility in different areas.

Public sector makes purchases for approximately 200 billion Norwegian Kroner annually. Many purchases imply barriers for physically disabled persons. The non-discrimination, full accessibility and universal design should therefore be requested through legislation and regulations for all public purchases and contracts. SV will work for more public documents to be translated into the most common minority languages.

5. A green future

A fundamental part of SV's policy is to achieve a sustainable development. Integral in this is also our demand for solidarity with future generations. A policy for sustainable development implies the protection of life-preserving environmental resources as well as a proper management of natural resources.

The main challenge is the fact that the richest part of the world is harvesting so heavily from the environment and natural resources, that the rest of the world's population cannot have growth without going beyond Earth's ecologic limits. In several areas these limits have already been breached. Damage to the environment also has the most severe consequences for those less able to adapt.

In order to meet environmental challenges we have to:

- Maintain biodiversity and the cultivated countryside.
- Stop emissions of non-degradable toxic waste, reduce emissions of greenhouse gases, and limit air pollution in especially vulnerable areas.
- Reduce our consumption and particularly the use of non-renewable resources. Avoid excessive consumption of renewable resources.

Meeting these environmental challenges means changing both the production and consumption patterns. A more environment-friendly policy includes, among other things, a lower consumption of natural resources as well as major reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. In addition we must turn to a more environment-friendly way to produce food, and take care of the diversity of nature.

War and preparations for war cause great damage to the environment. Citizens in war-ravaged areas are facing this serious problem for years to come after the wars end. SV will work to put the public spotlight on military-made ecologic damage, both on national and international level.

There is a need for international cooperation to meet global environmental challenges. Our goal is for Norway to be a leading country on environmental issues. This means that Norway should not rest when it comes to international environmental work, and that we should be willing to go in front in order to find environmental-friendly solutions on the national level.

Both commodity prices and the framework conditions for business life and production should reflect environmental costs. It should be profitable to invest in the environment. What technologic knowledge we have in Norway should be further developed in a daring and planned manner. SV wants to develop a strategy to promote public-private sector cooperation on research, development and the putting into practice of environmental initiatives. This could help creating a technologic advantage. This advantage could be used to develop higher environmental standards as well as to set the example when deciding on regulations on best available technology.

It should pay off to be environment-friendly. SV will therefore introduce a greener tax structure, including lower tax on work and higher taxes on the use of non-renewable energy resources, on transportation and on waste. At the same time it is important not to lose the social, re-distribution perspective in the tax structure. Distribution and environment should go hand in hand in order to achieve broad popular support for the environmental policy. Effects on the local employment- and housing situation should

be considered. A green tax structure should be combined with the quota arrangements in the Kyoto Agreement. SV does not want a system that includes trading in CO₂ quotas, something that would let Norway get away without actually reducing its own emissions. Most important for SV is not which measures are taken to reduce the pollution, but that a reduction actually takes place.

5.1 An energy policy for the future

SV's vision for energy policy is to make Norway an environment-friendly energy power. The Norwegian energy sector possesses much knowledge and a great deal of competence. SV wants to use this competence to develop technology and to find ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This can be done by, among other things, by giving priority to research on and development of hydrogen as an energy agent, on how to lock up and deposit CO₂, and on the extraction of energy from solar light, wind, waves, tidal waves and biomass. Norway should become a world leader on the development of environment-friendly energy. By giving priority to more efficient use of energy and to the development of new and renewable energy sources Norway could become a net exporter of electric power, thus contributing to the replacement of nuclear power and power from coal combustion in our neighbouring countries.

SV wants a strong public ownership within the energy sector. The production and distribution of electric power should to the greatest extent possible be under elected political control and public ownership. SV wants to maintain and guarantee the current legal system by which ownership to hydroelectric power resources is reverted from private owners to the public within a certain number of years after privatisation. SV will oppose any demands from the European Union that might in effect weaken national sovereignty over these resources.

A more environment-friendly energy policy implies lowering the consumption and giving priority to renewable energy sources. The main objective is to stop growth and thereafter reduce energy consumption in Norway. SV will propose a two-price system for electric power, by which those with a high consume pay more. Additionally, increased subsidies and better financing schemes are necessary for measures to economize on energy and other measures that make people less dependent on electric power for heating.

Electric power should mainly be used for illumination and electrical appliances and in the industry. By using other kinds of energy for heating we reduce the electric power consumption and the need for building new power plants. Increased use of water-based heating systems and new, renewable energy sources such as bio-energy, wind power, solar energy, heat pumps, and geothermal heat will have the same effect.

The era of the great hydro electrical power projects is over. Norwegian nature with its water systems is unique on a global scale and should be protected. SV will therefore propose to protect the Vefsna River and other major water systems. Old power stations should be geared up in order to be more efficient.

SV welcomes micro-, mini- and small power stations wherever they do not enter into conflict with important environmental or recreational concerns.

The main cause of human made changes to the climate is the increased use of fossil energy sources such as coal, oil, and gas. The consumption therefore has to be reduced considerably. Norway must comply with its obligations from the Kyoto

Agreement. At least half of the reductions in greenhouse gas emissions should be made nationally.

Norway should be a driving force in international efforts against climate changes. It should be Norwegian policy that the rich countries commit themselves to large reductions of greenhouse gas emissions in the agreement that is to follow the Kyoto Agreement. The goal is to reduce emissions until they do not lead to dangerous climate changes. Norway's goal should be to halve its climate pollution by 2020. Specific, by-sector action plans to visualize where to carry out reductions should be developed without any delay.

The answer to the environmental problems we face in the energy sector is a major campaign on energy saving and on environment-friendly, renewable energy. A supplement to this could be gas power stations with depositing of CO₂. But it is only an option if part of a long-term, global strategy for an environment-friendly energy policy, aiming both to reduce the total energy consumption, and to make Norway a net exporter of environment-friendly energy.

SV wants the licences that have been given for the construction of three gas power plants without a depositing solution for CO₂, to be redrawn. If necessary, public financing should be offered for cleaning and depositing.

SV will propose a plan for the depositing of CO₂, aiming to reduce total greenhouse gas emissions in Norway by building gas power plants with CO₂ depositing solutions. Such plants should therefore be constructed on places where existing major greenhouse gas emissions can be controlled through depositing. Additionally, such gas power plants could contribute to the electrification of oil and gas installations in the North Sea. Today these are emitting large amounts of CO₂.

Norway should become less dependent on oil and gas. SV will oppose petroleum-related activities in the Barents Sea as well as around the Spitsbergen Archipelago. SV will propose the Lofoten Area to be a petroleum-free zone. These are areas that are exposed to big changes due to the climate threat, and their eco-systems are extremely vulnerable. Additionally, these areas are home to the world's richest fisheries and to globally unique stocks of sea birds. These areas should be spared from oil drilling. Instead of searching for oil in ever more vulnerable regions, there should be developed technology that makes it possible to exploit existing oil fields better. The state should encourage such a development.

SV will propose to strengthen oil protection measures in order to prevent accidents and to minimize consequences of any accident for health and the environment.

Norwegian energy policy should also contribute to reduce the use of atomic energy and to clean up the waste. Norway should play an active part in efforts to close down nuclear power plants in our vicinity. Norway should be a driving force in the work to clean up atomic waste, a part of which should be a controlled closing down of the nuclear reactor stations at Kjeller and Halden (in Norway). In this particular case it should be given public economic support for research and reorganization of the activity towards new industrial activity based on knowledge.

5.2 A green and daring transport policy

In order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and local air pollution we have to lessen the need for transportation of people and goods. Transportation must be carried

through in a more environment-friendly way. Our vision should be that no one suffers from bad health due to local air pollution, and that we prevent man-made climate-related damages to the environment.

The core of the transportation network in the major cities should be the public transportation.

SV will propose measures to ensure a sustainable and social traffic in and around urban areas - both on roads, bicycle roads, on the pavements, on tracks and on keels. Public transportation should have clear advantages in the traffic in the major cities, in order to be able to compete on time. When planning new neighbourhoods or residential areas, public transportation services should be integrated. A more environment-friendly transportation policy in cities and densely populated areas also implies that the financing of public transportation and transport networks increasingly be a national responsibility.

SV wants to increase public transportation subsidies in order for the fares to be competitive. Free public transportation should be tried out in the cities. SV is now ready to give the public transportation system priority before further road construction in city areas in order to strengthen it. SV will work to strengthen incentives for public transportation in the major cities. Additionally, SV will propose to increase subsidies for public transportation until it reaches fifty per cent of running expenses.

A larger share of the transportation of people should be by public transport systems. SV therefore wants to increase the budget for public transportation, both for investments in vehicles and for road networks. Also, there should be a focus on the use of bicycle to and from work in densely populated areas. In order to switch to public transportation, SV will also use road pricing to finance public transportation. SV wants a better and more flexible coordination of the use of taxi, bus, train, and boat.

Men dominate the transport sector as well as transportation politics. Equal opportunities for women and men within the transport sector is a goal for SV. Women and men have different patterns of travel. Men more frequently choose the car and go further, while women more frequently choose public transportation and have more complicated patterns of travel. Men and women's needs should have equal attention when planning the transportation policy of tomorrow.

A transportation policy that focuses on collective solutions and on limitations of the transport needs of local communities will also benefit young people. SV wants everyone between 16 and 21 to be offered a youth card. This should entitle them to discounts on public transportation.

SV will use more money on road safety. Our vision is that there should be no fatal victims or permanent injuries from traffic accidents. This implies to use more on footpaths and cycle lanes, more centre strips, increased frequency of traffic controls, and the securing of more roads against avalanches.

The railway is a modern and environment-friendly way of transportation. The current standard of the railway network is far from good enough. Most of the Norwegian network is single-track, and on many locations modern trains are forced to drive on bad railway lines. SV opposes the privatization and splitting up of the railway services. SV will work for all public transportation to be on public hands

Choosing the train should be attractive as well as profitable. If we are to succeed with this, we need a major campaign. It signifies that the train should be made competitive compared to cars and buses, both on short and long distances. Just as important is to accommodate for the transfer of passengers and goods from airplane to train. In order to achieve this, the train has to become competitive compared to plane between the main population centres of Southern Norway. The duration of the journey by train must be reduced significantly compared to today. Rail networks should be developed and framed to receive high-speed trains on those lines where possible. This should be combined and supplemented with an increased development of local and regional traffic in the city areas.

For every one Norwegian Krone invested in building main roads, two Kroner should be invested in the modernization of the railway.

Public transportation should be bettered also in rural areas. However, on many places there is no real alternative to private cars. The quality of and security on many roads must be improved. SV will prioritize financing of roads to rural areas

Too much goods is being transported on the road in Norway. This is harmful to the environment and it creates dangerous traffic situations. The goal should be that a larger share of goods is being transported by boat and by rail. In order to do this, it will be necessary to upgrade both the rail network and harbours, and to accommodate for solutions that simplify a change of the means of transportation.

Transportation policy should be developed in order to respect biodiversity.

We should also reduce the need for transportation by giving priority to local food production.

5.3 A green everyday life

Modern consumers are daily exposed to substances that might be harmful both to the environment and to human health. The continuous process of developing new products exposes human beings and nature to a potentially harmful impact. SV does not want any new chemicals to be allowed until they have been proven not to be harmful neither to nature, nor to people.

One consequence of earlier mindless use of chemicals are depots and waste dumps containing large amounts of toxic waste, including products such as PCB which copy hormone patterns. We aim to secure that all toxic waste is being treated in a responsible manner, and that old toxic depots are cleaned up. Products that contain such chemical substances should be labelled in order to prevent consumers from being unknowingly exposed

SV wants it to become easier to be a politically conscious consumer. As consumers we have not only the right to know what we are buying, but also how it has been produced. Better labelling and information to the consumer will make more people able to make their purchases according to their beliefs. SV will work to reduce the pressure for consume, especially the one that is directed towards children and youth. SV therefore wants to limit commercials.

Public authorities should use their importance as a major customer in order to further environmentally friendly production and consume. A systematic, environment-friendly policy of purchases can make it more profitable to provide "green" products

and services. It might also promote the development of new and more environment-friendly technology.

We produce more and more waste in Norway. This problem cannot be solved by clearing, cleaning and recycling only. SV will make more emphasis on actions to limit the production of waste, and to promote re-using of products. In addition, good conditions should be provided to recycle materials and energy, and for a secure end processing of the waste.

SV wants to keep the current system with a basic waste tax on non-returnable packaging for beverages.

Norway still has a cultivated countryside that is rich and diverse. But on many places it is now growing over. This traditional countryside should be kept up in order to protect its cultural and biological diversity. The main action to be taken is to keep up agriculture in rural areas with its stocks of animals. SV also thinks that subsidies for cultivating the countryside should be increased, and that plans for the care of the landscape must be rigidly followed in protected areas.

Norway has important natural sites and it is our duty to protect and take care of them. However, the protection should also make sense for those who live in and make their living from the vicinity of the protected areas. There should be a close and harmonious interaction between protection and use of the protected areas as well as the areas bordering to these.

5.4 Outdoor life and biodiversity

Nature's wealth of plants, animals and other organisms, as well as their biotopes and landscapes, must be safeguarded for the future. The fight against climatic changes is also an important element in the work to maintain and protect the world's biodiversity. In Norway, being in the border zone of its area of extension, even small climatic changes will provoke changes to the biodiversity. Sustainability and protection of the diversity of species must be a precondition to all use of genetic and biological resources. SV opposes proposals to extend patent rights to include patent on life. The best guarantee that nature is protected is that many can enjoy it by living an active outdoor life. In many cases it can be just as important to aim for sustainable use, as for protection.

Everyone must be able to use Norwegian nature for recreational purposes. We should secure good conditions for a diverse and humble outdoor life, among other things by guaranteeing the so-called "every man's right". (This is a traditional Norwegian legal institute, granting any person the right to trespass in and use nature outside the home fields; translator's notice.) Norway has a great potential to offer rich experiences of the nature. By experiencing and becoming fond of the nature, people also develop a better understanding of the importance of protecting it. SV wants everyone to have the possibility to experience nature, and that the nature is used in school as an integrated part of the teaching. For SV it is very important to achieve an administration of the beachfront that prevents its deterioration and secures the "every man's right" and the liberty to trespass. Green areas in and around the cities should be kept and developed in order for them to be used by their inhabitants as often as possible.

The nature gives us limitless options for recreation. In order to take care of nature and outdoor life, motorized traffic outside of the home fields should be limited. SV will work to limit this traffic.

According to SV, Norway should contribute to the protection of nature and biodiversity both in Norway and internationally. SV will work for Norway to be in the forefront regarding the protection of its biodiversity, and also regarding the complying with international agreements on biodiversity. Norway has a special responsibility to protect certain forms for nature.

In order to protect the diversity of species in Norway, SV will work to secure viable stocks of all species that naturally belong in the country. One of the actions taken would be protecting the species that are now threatened by extinction. If we are to protect the threatened species of plants and animals in Norway, then their biotopes have to be protected as well. Among areas with extraordinarily rich diversity of species are coniferous forests and marshlands. SV wants 3 per cent of Norwegian forest to be protected by the end of the next election term (2005-2009). It is especially important to protect the forest areas where the diversity of species is largest. It is also very important that the forest is protected in close cooperation with municipalities and landowners. SV opposes any new acquisitions of land by the military Services. SV will close down the now militarized regional training field "Regionfelt Østlandet". SV opposes further construction in virgin nature, in order to save Norway's last wilderness areas. SV wants local communities that are affected by protection to be actively involved in the administration of the protected areas.

Implanted species are regarded to be among the severest threats against the marine environment. In accordance with international agreements, Norway is obliged to manage unwanted implanted species. The king crab" is not primarily a resource, but a potentially very dangerous species in our eco-system. SV wants to manage it as an unwanted implanted species, using unlimited fisheries as one measure in order to reduce the stock as much as possible.

Norway has international obligations to secure good living areas for wild reindeer as well as wild salmon. This demands special considerations when developing projects that might affect the habitat of these species. The wild salmon stocks are threatened by extinction in many river systems. These stocks should be protected, among other things by limiting how and where to develop aquaculture. SV wants to secure viable stocks of the four big predators in Norwegian nature. It must be possible to combine the protection of these species with environmental-friendly production of meat and milk based on rough grazing.

Norway also has a special responsibility to ease the pressure on the Arctic and Antarctic regions. This pressure is present as overtaxing of fish stocks; man-made changes to nature; polluting activities such as petrol drilling; and the accumulation of toxic waste.

Poor segments of the population depend most on natural resources, and they are those who are affected first - as well as hardest - by loss of biodiversity. Norwegian trade policy as well as development policy should therefore contribute to preserve the biodiversity in poor countries.

Every year a total of rainforest corresponding to half of Norway's territory is being cut down and destroyed. The rain forest is one of the Earth's oldest and richest eco-systems. Its protection is the responsibility of the international society. SV will work

to make the protection of biodiversity, especially in exposed rainforest areas, a priority in Norwegian foreign and development policy. In addition, all importation of non eco-certified tropical wood should be prohibited.

5.5 A new policy for protection

The biodiversity, biotopes and landscapes must be saved for the future. This demands from us that we protect natural areas both in Norway and internationally. The best way to guarantee that the biodiversity and landscapes are being taken good care of is by developing the protection together with those being affected.

By guaranteeing local participation, we can reduce the conflict level in protection cases. The local communities must also be guaranteed to have influence after the decision on protection has been made. SV therefore looks favourably on the idea that municipalities and regions could take over the responsibility to administer protected areas, as well as on trying out voluntary protection agreements in order to reduce tensions between local and central political levels.

SV will work to make protected areas a basis for continued settlement as well as for local economic development. National parks could become an important brand, given increased use of financial resources on marketing. Also, the national park centres should be strengthened. The protection should not be stronger than necessary and should not be hampering economic development that doesn't enter into conflict with the object of protection. SV will contribute to develop strategies for the use of nature. These should respect both the qualities of protection, and the needs of local communities for economic development

Forests that belong to cities constitute a very little part of Norwegian territory. However, they are in effect what give access to nature to more than half of the country's population. These forests are in many cases threatened by urban development plans, intensive logging, road construction and motorized traffic. SV wants to take care of the needs for outdoor life that depend on these vulnerable areas, by proposing a special legislation to protect such forests.

5.6 Protection of culture

The protection of culture is important in order to strengthen the cultural identity of various groups, as well as to preserve cultural monuments for our descendants. SV will follow up the maintenance plan from the Central Office of Historic Monuments in order to preserve cultural monuments. However, SV wishes for Norwegian cultural protection policy to be adjusted in order to reflect a broader picture of the history of our society. A good protection of culture depends of the population's knowledge and enthusiasm. SV therefore wants to prioritize good measures to disseminate information and knowledge, especially directed towards children and youth. SV also wants to strengthen the Norwegian Fund for Cultural Monuments.

6. Welfare and the quality of life

The welfare state is necessary in order to create a more just society. The individual finds freedom and safety in good community-based solutions. The welfare state of tomorrow should be adapted to each and one of us, regardless of where we live and how thick our wallet is.

The Norwegian welfare state faces many challenges and it is under attack by those who want to privatise. Due to a growing gap of income in our society, those who have most money are able to buy better welfare services and better education than what the public can offer. The right wing is weakening the welfare state's fiscal basis by cutting taxes and thereby public revenues. SV wants to go in the opposite direction, redistributing from private to public spending.

SV wants the municipality to continue to be the best provider of welfare services. In order to achieve that, the municipality has to be strengthened. Guaranteed employment is an important precondition for a well-functioning welfare society.

SV wants to guarantee the welfare state of tomorrow. This implies that we will work to secure a good and predictable economic basis for universal welfare services. It also implies that we will oppose privatisation and deregulation of public services.

Decisive for people's everyday-life are municipal decisions and what services are offered. It is necessary to have a democratic decision-making process in order for the inhabitants to be able to influence decisions and define responsibilities.

The state and the municipalities must have the overall responsibility for securing the welfare. However, in SV's opinion, civil society – the "third sector", voluntary organisations, idealistic foundations, different forms of self-organization and a variety of cooperatives – should also play an important role. The real division is not between "public" and "private" solutions, but between activities that serve the community on the one hand, and companies that secure profit for a minority on the other hand. SV wants to guarantee the sustainability of institutions and the organization of civil society, as well as to accommodate for cooperation between different community-based solutions and for cooperation and the sharing of tasks between the state, the municipality and the third sector.

6.1 Quality is not to be cheap

The standard and scope of municipal welfare services depend on a good municipal economy. A good municipal economy is therefore crucial to guarantee a society with small differences, a good educational system, accessibility and quality of welfare and care for those who need that. Tax breaks that lead to cuts in public spending will bring us increased differences and a continued shortage of resources and services on the public level. SV will give priority to a better education and to better welfare services for the old, the disabled and those who are ill. SV will not give priority to further tax breaks to the richest.

The greatest threat against municipal autonomy and local democracy is the lack of correspondence between municipal tasks and available financing. The consequence: Private consumption will increase much more than public spending and the general gap between private wealth and municipal services will grow. SV wants the growth in public spending to be higher than the growth in private consumption. SV wants the municipalities to have more long-term and predictable economic terms. The

municipalities should be compensated for losses in tax revenues in the course of the year. It is also important that municipal tasks and state financing correspond better. The municipalities should be fully compensated for all tasks transferred to them from the state, as well as room to solve tasks that are not entrusted upon them by law, such as local community development and economic development

6.1.1 Higher standards

The welfare state of tomorrow will provide decent treatment and a high standard to all. Everyone who needs help should be treated with respect. Unnecessary bureaucracy and the abuse of power by public servants must be eliminated. The dignity of each individual should be hedged about, and the legal protection strengthened. Den

The welfare state of tomorrow will be a good employer. Public employees should enjoy good working conditions as well as participate in decision-making in their work place. This should also be the case for employees in publicly owned companies. SV will propose a set of guidelines for a good public employer policy

Tomorrow's welfare state will be developed through teamwork with the employees and their unions. High-quality welfare services depends on having employees with high and relevant competence close to the users

Today important welfare services are being provided by voluntary organisations. An important condition for such cooperation is that the organisations respect the different beliefs and values of those who need help

Good public services are decisive in order for women to have the same opportunities as men to seek employment. In order to avoid burdening women with an increased share of unpaid care work, we need a good public health service and especially welfare services for the elderly.

The state and the municipalities are employers of a significant number of women in the low-paid worker category. SV will therefore work for the state, the municipalities and publicly owned companies to keep a strong gender profile in their employer policy and in their pay and incomes policy.

6.1.2 Really equal treatment for functionally disabled persons

In the welfare state of tomorrow there should be equal opportunities and freedoms for all. The universal design standards should be used also when designing the welfare services. The services should be individually adapted and guaranteed in order for each individual to have freedom to run his or her life by him or herself. The payment of contributions on welfare services should not lead to increased costs for functionally disabled persons.

SV wants to make it easier to combine work and benefits, and give an economic encouragement to employers who arrange to hire functionally disabled persons. Rehabilitation for working life should be adapted to the needs and potential of each individual. The system by which one can get a user-controlled assistant should be strengthened, and the transportation service for functionally disabled persons should have national guidelines as well as financing.

The programmes of the Norwegian National Housing Bank to make more houses accessible for functionally disabled persons must be strengthened.

6.1.3 Universal health services

SV wants everyone, regardless of residence, age or financial situation, to have access to good health services. In addition the inhabitants' influence over decisions in the health sector should be strengthened.

SV will give higher priority to preventive health and social work. Crucial factors for preventive health work are good living conditions with the absence of noise and pollution, and social meeting places and varied spaces where to play, practice sports, and enjoy outdoor life in the local environment.

A comprehensive package of municipal services is important – among other things by developing outpatients' hospital treatment, help in people's homes, and rehabilitation programmes including capacity on rehabilitation flats for patients who have been released from hospital. This would also reduce pressure on the hospitals, and make possible a more efficient use of scarce resources.

Children and youth below 18 should be guaranteed by law to receive necessary somatic or psychiatric help, or help to treat alcohol or drug addiction, within 3 weeks. It should be a duty by law to run youth health stations. In addition, SV wants to strengthen the service offices for young people and give all school students access to better health services.

6.1.4 Hospitals

SV wants the regional political level to have the overall responsibility for the specialized health services. This should be evidenced through ownership, organizing and financing, as well as through priorities within health policy.

The Norwegian Parliament should adopt national health plans that give directions for the National Health Service structure.

SV will propose a political reform to secure political control over the health services via regional institutions. A regionalized public health service will guarantee that inhabitants in all parts of the country receive equal services. SV wants to abandon the public enterprise model, and oppose the establishing of a hospital directorate.

SV will work for the hospitals to be given sufficient resources to realize their tasks. We want a stronger political control and transparency with regard to hospitals, in order to guarantee a responsible spending of financial resources among other things.

6.1.5 Mental health care

An increasing number of people are suffering from mental health problems. On several occasions the Norwegian Parliament has decided to give priority to mental health care. However, in spite of these decisions, the treatment capacity is still too low. SV will therefore work in order for the mental health care, as well as education and specialization of key psychiatric personnel, to receive better financing. In that way we could improve mental health services for children and youth. We want to strengthen preventive measures within psychosocial work by giving primary school

more human resources with professional competence in social studies. Also, the mental health care should be strengthened with more local emergency capacity. No one who needs immediate help should be turned away.

There is a need to strengthen all levels of the mental health care structure. This must include municipal services, regional psychiatric services, and hospital-based specialized health services. The hospital-based services should not be taken away until being absolutely sure that the services have been established on another level.

According to statistics, persons suffering from a mental health condition have the worst living conditions in Norway. Not only is the capacity of treatment too low. But also, due to prejudice and lack of knowledge, many do not seek help nor are identified by the health care structure. A frequent experience is that one has to become seriously ill in order to get help.

SV wants to guarantee improved welfare services for mentally ill persons. Persons who suffer from a chronic illness should be offered a specially adapted flat as well as work place. One should focus much more on user-controlled measures for activities and rehabilitation, and systematically increase user participation on all levels.

6.1.6 Dental health reform

SV wants dental illnesses and dental repair to be treated equally as other health services and to be financed in the same way. As a first step, all persons below 21 should receive free dental health services including payment of the costs for tooth braces. Costs related to extensive dental treatment should be refunded to a greater degree, in order to avoid financial misery for those affected. Later on, a share of the costs should be refunded until the goal has been reached: Full equal status with other health services.

6.1.7 A safe old age

Growing old is a natural part of life. It is important to fulfil the right to be active and to participate for as long as possible. The average life expectancy in Norway is ever increasing. Therefore we must make sure that those elderly persons who are well and able to work can participate in working life for as long as possible, as well as contribute in society in general. At the same time, everyone should feel secure that a good network of care and welfare is in place when they need it. The care and welfare services for elderly people should be a public liability also in the future

Many elderly and ill persons experience that municipal care and welfare services suffer from deficiencies both regarding their quality and quantity. This causes a feeling of insecurity, anxiety unnecessary suffering, both for the person directly affected and for her or his relatives. The increased duration of life and the increased number of elderly, some of them with demanding needs for care and welfare is challenging the care services' ability to develop in terms of quality and quantity in years to come.

SV will, by way of a variation of measures, make sure that everyone who needs will receive an individually adapted health and care solution. They will experience quality, and feel secure. The care sector should also take into account that Norway has become a multicultural society.

The elderly as a group will enjoy the same social rights as the rest of the population. It is important that also the weakest among the elderly enjoy services that give them a quality of life equal to the one of the population in general. SV will work for a just allocation of financial resources to the elderly.

SV wants to strengthen the staff in municipal caring and welfare services. Thus the employees will dispose of sufficient time to actually care for and give a feeling of security to the elderly. It is necessary to secure the sufficient recruitment of well-qualified employees. In order to be able to do that, the salaries and working conditions for these professional groups should be improved. There also have to be opportunities for professional qualifying, training and upgrading courses.

Parallel to the increased duration and life and to people being released earlier from hospitals, many elderly and ill persons need extensive treatment and care in their municipalities. SV therefore wants to increase the personnel in municipal institutions in order to have around-the-clock care. Frequently, residents of municipal institutions do not receive sufficient medical treatment, care and follow-up. SV wants to introduce a minimum standard for the presence of physicians at Norwegian nursing homes.

6.1.8 Preventive and health-promoting work

SV favours a much more systematic attention to preventive health and social work. This will spare many individuals and families great trouble, as well as lead to significant reductions in costs for society. Everyone agrees that problems should be prevented. Still, the preventive work is the first to fall victim when cutting the budgets. Preventive work should depart from long-term strategies. The main focus should be on local networks.

Many of the illnesses and damages to the health of people in Norway are life-style illnesses caused by smoking, an unhealthy diet and lack of physical activity. Others are due to environmental factors such as toxic waste and air pollution. Social conditions and class are also important for how long you live and for the developing of life-style illnesses. SV wants to increase research on such links, and follow up with proper measures and counselling.

The improvements of health and the increased age of living during the last century are to a great deal due to preventive work against infectious diseases. However, the increased globalization causes diseases to be carried across the borders. New, resistant bacteria and new viruses are great challenges that we have to face. SV will therefore prioritise more disease control measures. Preventive action against life-style illnesses, toxics and infectious diseases will reduce the need for more resource-demanding treatment later on.

Good preventive work also includes good follow-up work in the municipalities. The system by which a regular doctor is being assigned to the patient has proven to be positive for the patients. However, reports suggest that preventive work is suffering in many municipalities. SV wants to change this. It is decisive for the preventive health work that people's local environments include social meeting places and a variety of options to play, to practice sports and to enjoy outdoor life. SV will give this priority.

The main focus of the preventive work must be on children and youth. Activities realized within the natural environments of children and youth should receive financing. Especially important are measures that are based on active participation. It is a precondition for success that the municipal economy is sound and that

responsibilities to run a systematic preventive work are well defined. Preventive work means constructing society.

The rehabilitation of heavy drug addicts and alcoholics is a very difficult, expensive and long-term work. Rehabilitation is absolutely necessary. But society will profit from spending much more than it does today on efficient preventive work. The main focus should be on children and youth who belong to the risk-groups when it comes to developing addictions. This effort should mainly be directed towards individuals. Also the general preventive work with youth and children must be sustained. There should be made more efforts on developing alcohol-free activities for youth.

Heavily addicted persons often also suffer severe physical and psychological problems combined with lack of proper housing as well as financial trouble. These persons should be offered a better follow-up than they have today. The threshold to use the services offered should be as low as possible.

SV will work to adapt psychiatric treatment programmes also to drug addicts and alcoholics. It is our goal that all drug and alcohol addicted persons should have the right to treatment without delay, in an unbroken help-line. This should include, in addition to the treatment in itself, a comprehensive offer of aftercare developed according to individual needs and in a close and binding cooperation between the people in need, local care resources and the specialized services.

Many people die or have their life ruined while waiting to get into treatment or for other care services. We must get rid of waiting lists, and the group in question should have varied and easily accessible services.

6.2. Criminal justice policy

Legal protection is the corner stone of any state that is ruled by justice. SV will therefore work for a well-developed system including the right to receive legal aid free of charge.

6.2.1 Preventive work

Efficient preventive work presupposes knowledge about local conditions. Decentralization, as well as community police with knowledge of the local environment, is important.

The police reform adopted by Parliament has caused a weakening of police capacity around the country. A number of local police stations have been closed down and this has led to uneasiness in a number of local communities. SV wants to strengthen local police work, to better the readiness of the police all over the country and stop the closing-down of local police stations

SV wants all municipalities to employ a coordinator in order to put into practice the programme Cooperation on Local Actions to Prevent Crime (SLT by its Norwegian initials). We want the law to be changed in order for municipalities to be obliged to include crime prevention in the municipal development plans. All professional groups working with children must obtain obligatory knowledge about violence, harassment and lack of care. SV wants a continued restrictive policy on the consumption and sale of alcoholic beverages. SV also wants the police to remain unarmed. No child should be imprisoned. Instead, we want interdisciplinary

alternatives to be developed for children who do not fit in today and who end up in prison.

6.2.2 Equality before the law

SV will fight for equality before the law. It is not acceptable that those who have sufficient power and money or who are willing to turn to threats get away. SV wants increased international cooperation to fight organized crime and to make it easier to disclose criminal behaviour. We want to abolish the tax havens and to work for improved transparency in financial circles. SV opposes reforms and trends that make it easier to conceal crimes

The police should be allowed to apply necessary methods in order to investigate into and solve serious crimes. However, the methods used must be balanced against the need for protection of privacy as well as the risk of abuse. SV does not want to allow bugging of rooms, as this might be extremely offensive to innocent persons affected. SV advocates a reform to provide much more people than today with legal aid free of charge.

SV will resist attempts to leave the exercising of power to commercial, private companies. Public security is a public responsibility. The lack of resources should not become an argument to let private security agencies take over this responsibility. In that case, security would have become a question of money.

6.2.3. Swift and fitting reactions

SV wants to remove the wait-lists for serving of sentences. We want to strengthen the courts. The DNA registry should be extended and be guaranteed financing. The Forensic Medicine Department must be given more resources and the line of responsibilities must be clarified. SV wants alternatives to traditional serving to be used to a greater extent, especially in the cases of first-timers, young criminals, drug addicts and mentally ill persons. All convicts who have a drug addiction should be offered treatment, either as an alternative to prison term or as a treatment while serving the sentence. Good educational programs in prisons are also important for the rehabilitation of the inmates. SV therefore wants to guarantee the inmates' right to education.

Alternatives such as obligatory community work, youth contracts, programmes to treat alcoholism among drivers, and counselling to solve conflicts should be used increasingly. SV will strengthen the follow-up of convicts through the care institution for serving in freedom as well as through local partnerships between municipalities, businesses and national institutions.

SV wants there to be more focus on, as well as harsh reactions against, domestic violence, harassment, sexual harassment, violence witnessed by children, and rape. The treatment programmes for violent persons and sexual offenders should be strengthened.

6.2.4 Better programmes for victims and relatives

SV will propose a law to make obligatory the availability of shelters for mistreated persons as well as shelters for incest victims. The state should pay the main share of the costs. SV will propose that shelters for rape-victims are established in all counties. Also there must be a high capacity on follow-up and counselling for those who have fallen victims to crime. SV wants to improve the compensation programmes and give the offended full rights as a part to the case

Victims of crime who are granted compensation should have this paid on advance from the state. In that way the victims will not suffer twice by the perpetrator's situation.

Victims of trafficking should be granted temporary residence permits in Norway. In the case of women who come to Norway for the purpose of family reunification, SV wants the Norwegian Directorate of Immigration, UDI, to be obliged to inform her if the man in question has been convicted for violence or harassment or if a ban on visiting has been imposed. If the marriage breaks up before three years have passed, and the woman in question has been subjected to physical or sexual harassment, SV wants it to be much easier for her to be granted the right to stay in Norway than it is today. (According to Norwegian legislation, if someone has been married and living in Norway for three years other rules come into effect and it becomes easier to be granted a permanent residency on an individual basis; translator's notice) SV also asks for a study on whether the Norwegian citizen in the couple should be obliged to support the other party for up to three years.

7. Culture

Aesthetic and ethic values are promoted both in the arts and in the broader cultural life: When people experience, participate, feel empathy and have scope for their abilities. Cultural activities are in themselves valuable, both for the individual and for the society as a whole. At the same time, cultural life will always influence as well as be influenced by incidents and structures in all parts of society. SV wants to give arts a much more outstanding position in the public space. This will be evidenced through media policy, educational policy and by how our joint physical environment is shaped, etcetera.

Cultural activities can be a way to promote the importance of democracy, solidarity and human rights. But it can just as well be a channel for egoism, fanaticism, nationalism or violence. SV wants to promote a liberal culture policy. We support cultural activities that are multicultural, that promote solidarity and democracy. However, this will never mean that we will block out art and culture that promote other values or ideologies than ours. By promoting freedom of speech and diversity, cultural life can contribute to an open and democratic dialogue about basic values and goals for the future. It is important for SV that this diversity is not being shrunken away by commercialization of culture.

The cultural facilities must be accessible for the whole population. This can be done by means of physical arrangements as well as reasonable prices. By participating in cultural activities people might get a feeling of community between generations and different social environments. It is therefore important for culture policy to be open to everyone – geographically, socially and in terms of age – and to foment interplay between amateurs and professional artists. The geographical accessibility of culture should be guaranteed by continued financing of institutions such as the All-Norwegian Theatre ("Riksteateret") and the All-Norwegian Concerts ("Rikskonsertene") (institutions that bring theatre and music to all around the country; translator's note).

Culture and arts enrich society and enable us as human beings to develop our own, creative skills. Access to culture should be for everyone and it should be ensured through physical arrangements, reasonable prices and flexible opening-hours. SV wants to increase the budget for culture to one per cent of the national budget.

7.1 The great cultural leap

SV has grand ambitions when it comes to culture policy. We want the status of arts and culture in Norway to make a great leap from what it is today, to what it can become. We are aware that such a leap will cost money. Therefore we want to increase the share of culture in the national budget to one per cent by the year 2014. At the same time we will propose a separate cultural law in order to guarantee the inhabitants' access to important culture activities.

No artists, no arts. SV wants to make it possible for more artists to earn their living from their artistic work. This should be made possible both by generally increasing the cultural budget, and by specific measures such as public spending for arts, grants, and other funding programmes.

For SV, the right to experience culture is a basic right. A cultural leap for all therefore demands well-functioning arenas for culture in all parts of the country. Local and

regional cultural centres and meeting-places should be further developed. At the same time, there should be more room for culture where people normally spend their time, such as in school, in hospitals or in the prisons. SV wants to reintroduce the “culture boat” that sails along the whole coast as an arena for the spreading of culture.

Through a better municipal economy we want to encourage increased cultural work on local level. We also want to strengthen the work of the voluntary culture associations, both economically and by the delegation of power.

SV especially wants to support the right of children and youth to experience as well as exercise culture. There should be more culture schools, in order for all who wish to find place for a reasonable price. SV wants aesthetic subjects to have higher status and to become one of the basic skills in school. The dissemination of culture within the so-called “cultural satchel” should be extended to include all children and youth from kindergarten to high school. We also want a system with culture cards to be introduced in order for children and youth to have low-priced access to cultural experiences.

Culture policy should reflect the fact that Norway is a multicultural society. SV wants better meeting-places to be created between majority and minority cultures. Those working with multiculturalism should receive increased support. We want more artists with minority background to be recruited to national cultural institutions. An acceptable method to reach this goal could be through quota allocations. SV wants to strengthen Sámi culture by improving the Sámi Parliament’s facilities to promote an active culture policy. Initiatives and institutions disseminating Sámi culture should receive support

International cultural cooperation facilitates the impulsive exchange between different artistic circles at home and abroad. Additionally, international cultural cooperation is a good way to promote Norway abroad. SV therefore want to strengthen the international cultural cooperation and also to continue the development of cultural cooperation with countries in the South

SV wants Norwegian language and literature to be strengthened. This could be done by maintaining the fixed price system for books and by introducing a new system for the public investment (for libraries, schools, etcetera) in factual prose. An important principle is the equal treatment of the two official written variants of Norwegian language: New Norwegian and Standard Norwegian. SV does not want to continue the experiment in Oslo by which the school students could choose whether to learn both or only one of the two written Norwegian languages. Instead, we want to strengthen the teaching of New Norwegian both as first-choice and second-choice variant of the language. Both textbooks and computer programmes should be available in Standard Norwegian and New Norwegian. Especially important for the further strengthening of New Norwegian would be the development of a general online encyclopaedia in New Norwegian. SV also wants New Norwegian to be strengthened in public institutions, in accordance with the language law. Foreign-language speakers living in municipalities where the first-choice variant is New Norwegian should receive their Norwegian classes in that variant. SV will work to secure a sustainable development for the Sámi written language. Also other minority languages should have a higher status in public spaces in Norway.

Knowledge society presents us with higher demands for up-to-date information. SV wants to bring back the public libraries as modern meeting places where everyone has free of charge access to books, newspapers, information technology and new media.

There should still be at least one library in each Norwegian municipality. SV also want the museums to be strengthened as an arena for cultural experiences, dissemination of knowledge and reorientation. We need dynamic, local museums, collections and country courtyards in order to be able to realize fully the cultural satchel.

SV wants to strengthen music life. The system for public investment in Norwegian phonograms should be extended, and there should be established regional centres for rock music as well as folk music. The Norwegian cinematic success must be supported in its further development, with increased production subsidies as well as a rearrangement of box office subsidies. We want to maintain and strengthen municipal cinemas all over the country. Regarding dramatic art, SV especially wants independent groups to receive increased economic support and to have more predictable long-term conditions. SV wants to provide the conditions for a greater variety in Norwegian pictorial art and handicraft design: We want there to be done more for arts, architecture and design in public spaces.

The great cultural leap is a long-term campaign for culture policy. In concrete terms, in governing bodies SV would start with the putting into practice of a 15-point programme that was presented together with the Norwegian Labour Party (AP by its Norwegian initials) in February 2004.

7.2 Sports and outdoor life

Sports and outdoor life provide us with positive experiences and give us the chance to live our lives fully. Sports also help to improve our health, and through sports are developed a sense of community work and respect for the others. Sports let us define new goals; achieve new levels of physical development and control. Among the results are a better-lived life and personal satisfaction for each individual participant.

SV sees the provision of as good as possible conditions for sporting and outdoor life as a public responsibility. The voluntary work that is done within sports and outdoor life represents a great value and it contributes to create local meeting places and to make people better neighbours. For SV, the athletic and outdoor life organizations' work represents a great value to society and should be strengthened and further developed.

It is necessary to underline the link between popular sports activities and the recruitment to top-level athletics. Both groups are continuously setting themselves new, higher goals. SV wants to provide the conditions for both popular and recreational sports, champions and top-level athletics to develop on their own terms and according to the different ambitions and conditions of the participants. SV wants to maintain the national high-school education in sports and to work for more sports centres to be accessible on a national level.

SV wants to emphasize the importance of leadership development and good social environments in the athletic associations. The scope of recruitment should be widened. Accordingly, also the public funding to the associations should be increased in order to make them strong enough to meet the challenges of a very diverse membership. Parallel to this, those few talents who want to reach top-level of their sport should be provided the necessary conditions. In order to strengthen sports and

bring it in the direction as mentioned, there is a need for public engagement on a broad scale.

SV wants to underline the extraordinary potential of top-level athletics as a means to build bridges between people from different countries, and especially between young top-level athletes and through exchange programmes for young athletes who are still under education. SV wants to see this work in a solidarity perspective as well as in a North/South perspective.

Public, up-to-date sports centres should be built in all parts of Norway. These must be available for ordinary athletic associations' activities. The challenge from private fitness studios and private or commercial athletics advisor services should be met with public, non-commercial alternatives which are available when the users need them and want them. This especially concerns adults and elderly people who practice athletics or recreational sports.

SV wants to turn the spotlight in a critical way on the unwanted side effects of sports. The anti-doping efforts should be increased. SV supports anti-doping work in top-level athletics. However, public funds should also be spent on parts on youth athletics, popular and recreational sports in order to fight doping.

The needs of functionally disabled persons within sports should receive more attention. Sports centres should also be for these users and one must have this in mind when building or renovating such centres. Local clubs and associations that work actively to include this segment of users should receive even more public support than they now do on national, regional and local level. It should be a high priority to make outdoor sports both in the forests, at the seaside and in the city parks accessible for functionally disabled persons.

SV will defend the "every man's right" (the traditional Norwegian legal institute, by which any person is granted the right to trespass in and use nature outside the home fields; translator's notice). SV will work to secure good access to nature experiences and outdoor life through the cities' and population centres' development plans. SV will work to reduce motorized traffic outside the home fields to a minimum, and make sure that some municipalities that frequently abuse dispensation rules do not water regulations out.

7.3 Mass media policy

SV's policy on mass media aims to improve their quality and diversity; to guarantee the existence of critical media that can disclose the dark sides of society; and to promote ethical responsibility among mass media.

The Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation (NRK) should be further developed as a broadcasting institution for all. This implies commitments on culture, language (including sign language), minorities, functionality, freedom of speech, and democracy.

The system by which the Norwegian press is being subsidized should be used in order to maintain a broad diversity both politically and in terms of language. In a society where the rich have more and more power, the interests of those with least power should be the ones that are supported. It should also be possible to give press

subsidies to alternative Internet media. These could then contribute to a levelling of the access to reach out with information.

SV wants the Internet to be a digital common land. The major corporations' control of Internet services should be limited.

8. Children and youth

No task in society is more important than providing good conditions for children to grow up. As a part of the community, we are responsible for providing safety for all children and for letting them play and learn. SV wants to strengthen our joint pledge for children and youth. They are the future. All children born in Norway have the right to Norwegian citizenship. All children have the right to have a nationality.

8.1 Children's rights should be strengthened

The point of departure should be the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. With this, we will strengthen the rights of children and youth through all parts of the legislation. SV wants to improve the financial conditions of the municipalities, thereby making them more able to prioritize good conditions for children and youth to grow up. However, the economic situation is not the only reason why children and youth are not being prioritized. Also, other pressure groups are being more listened to. SV wants to strengthen the right that children and young people have to receive help from the Childcare service; their right to speak their mother tongue; their right to a place in the kindergarten; and their right to cultural experiences. SV wants to increase the possibility for children and youth to participate in society.

8.1.1 Preventive work pays off

The importance of preventive work within the field of “growing up” has been disregarded. This is the case both for the positive measures, such as the provision of leisure facilities, and for measures to prevent mistreatment or lack of care. SV wants to make preventive work among children of youth a legal obligation. Natural partners here are kindergartens, schools, health centres, social officers, and leisure clubs for youth. They can all play an important part in the work to let children and youth fulfil their potential. For many, adolescence is an especially difficult time and it is important to provide good leisure time activities. This could be for example municipal youth clubs, in which the self-development of young unorganized persons is stimulated and where they meet a social environment free from commercial or other pressure.

It is necessary to coordinate the work of the different bodies working with children and families, in order to achieve a systematic effort to prevent problems. SV therefore wants the health centres to be developed into interdisciplinary competence centres. All families with children should receive the services they need somewhere within their municipality.

8.1.2 The right to kindergarten

SV wants to make the right to a place in kindergarten law. Further on, SV wants to introduce a free-of-charge basic time in kindergarten. The maximum price system should be continued, and the price further lowered. In a long-term perspective kindergarten should become a completely free-of-charge service.

Lower prices and full coverage will not mean a loss of quality in the kindergartens. Kindergartens should provide the children with good conditions under which to grow

up, they should keep them active and let them develop. SV wants more kindergarten employees to have a diploma in education. Both private and public kindergarten employees should have a negotiated wage and pension agreement.

The struggle for equal opportunities for men and women in society is linked to the possibility of being economically independent and to the right to education and work. In order for these rights to become a reality, it is necessary to provide satisfactory arrangements for child-care during the working day. The right to a place in the kindergarten therefore remains one of the crucial demands in the struggle for the equal status of women.

More flexible kindergarten hours are also important in order for more people to take part in working life. SV wants to provide the conditions for more kindergartens to have longer opening-hours.

There is still a lack of kindergartens in many municipalities. It is an absolute goal that there be full coverage already early in the coming election term (2005-2009), in order for all parents who wish so to receive place for their children in kindergarten. All children should have the right by law to a place in kindergarten

SV wants to discontinue the "cash support" system during the coming election term (this is a system by which a parent who chooses to stay at home with a small child instead of sending the child to a kindergarten, receives a monthly financial support from the state; translator's notice). The "cash support" has worked to preserve traditional patterns of sex roles. Due to the inequality of wages between women and men, it is mostly women who stay home and receive the state financing. The consequence is that more women have become full-time housewives or work only part-time. Adding the fact that the need for places for small children in kindergartens has not been met, it becomes obvious that parents of small children have no real free choice between staying home with the children and sending them to the kindergarten. In addition, due to the "cash support", some children for whom it would be especially important to attend to the kindergarten are being kept at home.

8.1.3 The Child Care Service: Preventive work and safety net

The Child Care Service should receive better financing than it does today. It should be made more accessible and have the competence to secure that children and youth are growing up under good conditions. Scarce resources should not be an argument not to intervene swiftly if children in Norway are suffering from mistreatment or lack of care. There must be a good cooperation between the Child Care Service and other bodies and services.

The Child Care Service should emphasize more the importance of preventive work. At the same time it should provide a safety net for children who need more care than what their family can give them. Its supervisory role towards public and private childcare institutions should be strengthened.

8.2 Defend the communal school

A good school is of vital importance to secure a good adolescence as well as for a society where solidarity, democracy and productivity prosper. SV will work for a fascinating communal school: A school that relates to the fact that children and youth are not homogenous groups, and a school that contributes to level social inequalities in society. SV does not want the schools to compete about pupils. This would not improve the quality, but it would create increased differences.

The natural first choice for everybody in Norway should be a strong, public school. SV will oppose the development by which those with most financial resources choose private solutions for their children. The parents should be able to rely on the public school to provide the best education for their children. It is important for the children that they can attend a school in their local area together with other children with varied social background. A good public school is in itself a benefit, and it contributes to the development of good and safe local communities.

SV wants fewer private schools. In order to achieve this we want Norwegian legislation as well as regulations for public financing of private schools to be reviewed again. SV does not want commercial operators to run private schools. Private schools that do not respect Norwegian legislation should not be granted licence. SV wants to reduce public financial support for private schools

SV wants to extend the school day as well as to guarantee high quality and a good learning environment. Such an extended school day would give an opportunity to increase the multiplicity of teaching methods.

SV wants aesthetics to become one of the basic skills in school. We want to strengthen the so-called “cultural satchel” and to initiate a closer cooperation between the school and municipal music- and culture schools. This will let all children participate more in cultural activities. The school day will be benefiting from a greater diversity both of teaching methods and goals for the learning.

SV wants to listen to children’s needs to be children on their own terms and according to their own interests. Play should be used as a learning method, and unorganized play and physical activity should become an important part of an extended school day. The current leisure school (“SFO” in Norwegian) does not work satisfactory. The share people have to pay as contributions should be lowered, and the quality should be improved. SV wants employees in the SFO to receive an obligatory education.

The school should become a modern arena for learning, where information and communications technology (ICT) are used as tools for learning and communication. The school students should learn to relate to the information society that they are a part of. Important factors in order to achieve this are good infrastructure, the use of digital contents, and teachers who are skilled to use ICT for educational purposes.

8.2.1 A school that pays attention to everyone

In a good school the teaching is adapted to the skills and needs of each individual. SV wants to create a school where each pupil is being paid attention to, giving her the chance to develop based on her individual needs. Such a school must possess sufficient professional knowledge and skills to be able to create an inclusive communal school, in which also children with learning disabilities and functionally

disabled children belong. The school must also have resources, freedom and latitude to be able to create a teaching programme adapted to local conditions. I

The fundamental institution that secures a just, participatory government is exactly a good public school for all. SV wants school students who are knowledgeable, who have a critical mind and who reflect on things. SV wants a school that lays the groundwork for participation in the debates on society and for taking co-responsibility for the development of our future

The school is responsible to provide all school students with knowledge and learning, individually and as a social group. SV wants to strengthen the pupils' right to specially adapted education, in order to reduce the number of pupils who leave school without knowing reading, writing and mathematics, to a minimum. There is a need for a shift in focus from testing skills to a more varied and individually adapted teaching and education. The school students will receive personal counselling as well as counselling on their choices of jobs and further education, both in primary school, on high school and during apprenticeship. A great deal of the learning takes part through a practical and social approach to the material. The school should reflect this in how it organizes the learning process. SV wants to increase the number of teachers and other staff in school.

Equality between the sexes in the school today is of great importance for the equal treatment of men and women in the future. The school should therefore contribute to making the school students more aware about gender issues and about how the pattern of sex roles affects their lives. The efforts that are made for equality between the sexes in school are also important in order to encourage woman and men to choose less traditional careers.

School has become multicultural. It is of utmost importance that the school students learn Norwegian. Research shows that learning one's mother tongue also helps in order to learn Norwegian. It is also of great value for the school student to learn his or her own mother tongue. In addition, it is important for Norway that many of its citizens know several languages. The teaching of one's mother tongue in school shall be a right that everyone has. Further on, efforts should be made to recruit more youth with minority background to take higher education

SV's school is founded on cooperation. SV wants to give each individual school more freedom concerning how it chooses to organise itself and which educational methods it uses. All should be kept within the limits set by national learning goals. All school students should receive education in a set number of obligatory subjects, however, how many hours of education each student receives in each of the subjects could be varied according to the students' abilities and background

SV opposes the standardized, nationwide exams in which all school students are tested and then ranked against each other. These exams divert the focus of the education and contribute to people's impression that there are A-schools and B-schools. SV wants a selection of the school students to be tested in order to be able to compare the Norwegian school professionally to educational systems in other countries. But these results should not be made public. In this way, the tests could work as a useful way of developing the education, and not only as a ranking tool

SV wants to propose to abolish the denominational public school in Norway (public school is by denomination Christian; translator's notice). The subject "Christianity,

Religion and Beliefs” should be replaced with a new subject that is inclusive and neutral to beliefs

Mobbing in school is a grave problem for those children affected. More should be done with specific efforts to end it. SV wants to establish a programme with financing for such measures. This should also include efforts to eradicate gender-based bullying as well as sexual harassment – a frequent problem in school.

SV wants all schools to provide a free lunch meal to the pupils.

The school has a special responsibility for all children and youth who spend shorter or longer periods of time receiving alternative education in or outside institutions. This requires good coordination and cooperation between different organs and professions. SV wants to make sure that these children’s rights according to the law on education are being respected.

A good school requires good teachers and well-qualified leaders. Every teacher should have a plan for his or her own further education. Those who know everyday-life in school best are each individual teacher and each school. SV wants to end the strong national control with how schools spend their time and resources. There should be put more emphasis in the teachers’ further education on the use of ICT for educational purposes, on new learning methods and on digital media.

SV wants to reduce the number of pupils per teacher. It is especially important to encourage men to become a teacher. It would also be desirable to recruit to school from other professions. The schools therefore should have the means to recruit talented, highly educated teachers and school leaders, as well as to hold on to their employees. Teachers should be given the opportunity to leave school for a limited period of time in order to work in other professions.

8.2.2 A better primary school

During the coming election term (2005-2009), SV will give priority to a shape-up of primary school. SV wants an extensive primary school reform, aiming to achieve a greater variation of learning methods and learning arenas; to have more practical learning; and greater freedom of choice in a close cooperation between the school and local society.

SV wants to abolish exams and the awarding of marks in primary school. Alternative evaluation systems should be introduced. One such system could be the “comprehensive evaluation” concept, by which all pupils are given continuous feedback on their work effort and results based on their academic ability ranges. This would encourage them and promote learning in a more efficient way. The current system, by which the pupils are awarded marks, is encouraging the swotting up before exams rather than actual learning. It creates an urge for competition instead of cooperation. The pupils should be heard in the efforts to develop different evaluation systems.

School must be able to provide the pupils with security and support also in other fields than the learning process. Counselling and school health service should be strengthened in junior high school. The school should make sure that the pupils have a real chance to participate

SV wants to award extra financing for development-oriented primary schools that use alternative learning techniques and learning materials. In order to speed up the rehabilitation of Norwegian school edifices, SV wants to strengthen the system by which the state pays the interest rates on loans taken up by the municipalities to build and rehabilitate.

8.2.3 High school

The high school students should have more real options to choose between. Their education should become more flexible and adapted. The school students taking humanities subjects should also be allowed to choose some practical training. This would improve the learning environment, and would be easy to implement at schools offering both humanities and vocational training. Such combinations would be away to encourage humanities students to think less traditional when choosing their profession

The most important criteria when accepting students to high schools should be where they are living. SV will work to maintain a good and multi-course high school education also in rural areas. Youth should not be forced to move from their home places in order to obtain a high school education.

Related to the high school education the students should be given knowledge about and encouraged to create new jobs. Such offers should also be developed at technical high schools and postgraduate colleges. It is also important that all school students are taught about which rights and duties they will have in working life. SV will propose that trade unions are invited to all high schools in order to inform about labour rights and tell about the advantage of unionizing

The current exam system is not very relevant for the working methods that the school students will meet in real working life. SV will therefore work for new ways of testing to be increasingly introduced. Additionally, the school should make an evaluation of whether the students have passed or not. That, together with entrance exams, should be the criteria for admission to the institutes of higher education. Our goal is the abolishing of the marks system in high school.

Having an education is becoming more and more important in order to be able to compete on the job market and orient oneself in society. SV therefore wants the right by law to a high school education to be valid for all. The current limitation to a certain age group should be removed. SV also wants to strengthen counselling in school. The prospective high school students should have a right to be offered an education in their first-choice subject.

Folk high schools make out a valuable educational alternative beside high school. The folk high schools should be guaranteed a good financing.

The idea that the education should be free of charge is being violated when school students themselves have to buy expensive textbooks and other learning materials. All learning materials for high school should be free of charge. SV wants to replace loans with full scholarships for high school students who have to live away from home in order to receive their education.

SV wants to strengthen the adult education in Norwegian language. Popular education, both as an educational tool and as a tool for democratization, should have

good conditions. Non-formal adult learning is an important arena for grown-up immigrants. Through the non-formal adult learning we take care of the language training, cultural exchange and thereby a better integration

The work of the adult learning associations is an important brick in the wall of knowledge. SV wants to provide good and stable financial conditions for these associations. (Adult learning is a long tradition in Norway and is offered by and organized by a number of adult learning associations. 21 such associations are now organized in the Norwegian Association for Adult Education; translator's notice)

SV will work to strengthen the development of so-called "youth enterprises" (enterprises established by young people; translator's notice) through the high schools.

8.2.4 *More physical activity*

Children and youth spend a substantial part of their childhood in kindergarten, school and leisure school ("SFO"). For SV it is especially important that physical activities are encouraged here.

SV wants the surroundings of children and youth to be fitting for sports, games and outdoor life regardless of social stratum, cultural background or where you live. Kindergartens, leisure time clubs and schools should therefore put much more emphasis on outdoor activities, sports and outdoor life.

8.3 Technical education

A rapidly changing society poses demands for competence and an ability to adapt. The technical education should therefore prepare each individual on the increasingly big changes in industry and in working life. SV will work for the establishment of measures and encouragements to guarantee a stable tendency of admission of apprentices. This should also be a guarantee against changes in the market. It is not acceptable that those who wish to graduate with a craft certificate or a master workmanship certificate should not be able to find apprenticeship. This is important, not the least in order to satisfy the need for competence within the different trades. Apprentices should be guaranteed counselling during their apprenticeship. It is especially important that those who have chosen something different from the traditional are being followed up.

SV will work for the right to apprenticeship to be guaranteed by law. This right must then be followed up with budgetary measures.

As it is today, youth do not have the chance to try out working life until after they have made their final choice and started as apprentices after the second year of (technical) high school education. There should be an option to alternate between work and school during the whole learning time

The number of female apprentices has increased substantially, however, there are still too few girls choosing apprenticeship in traditionally male professions. Also, too few boys choose traditionally female-dominated professions. SV will work to end the gender-based segregation of the labour market.

9. Norway the information power

SV has a vision to transform Norway into an information power. This requires the use of research-based information in education, in the debate on society and in the development of new industries. Knowledge and insight as such are valuable, they are useful for a variety of interests in society and they form the basis of a strong democracy. SV wants to develop educational and research institutions that function as the guardians of democracy. They will contribute with information in the process of developing society, and satisfy the need for a competent work force. They will prompt a technologic development in the direction of an economically and ecologically sustainable industry.

The academic diversity at the universities should be continued, and the education be based on research. The post-graduate colleges should be specialized and profession-oriented in their teaching as well as research. We will build up secure and long-term financed institutions that enjoy a high degree of autonomy but that are publicly owned. SV will make an initiative to a global review of how higher education and research is financed. All public higher education must be free of charge

A crucial precondition for a well-functioning democracy is the presence of critical intellectuals who have sufficient time and resources to both perform scientific work and contribute in the public debate. Such people can only be found in institutions with a high degree of autonomy, internal democracy and stable financing.

9.1 Higher education

A prerequisite for academic creativity and the processing of knowledge is freedom from economic and commercial restraints. SV therefore wants to give the institutes of information more freedom. How they develop professionally, and how they organize, should be decided by the institutions' internal democracy. Where a dean is chosen, the dean should also be the president of the governing board. Parallel to giving the institutions more freedom, we demand from them increased cooperation with the outer world. No one should be prevented from studying at universities or post-graduate colleges for economical reasons.

SV takes a critical stand to the tendencies to commercialisation and standardization, which we have seen in higher education during the last years. The Quality Reform can be seen as a part of an international trend, where the goal is to make higher education a tool to serve business interests. One of the ways this is done is by making research more dependent on external financing. The students receive more follow-ups and a more vocation-oriented education. But they also have less freedom in their study situation. SV therefore wants an extensive and in-depth review to be made of all aspects of the Quality Reform.

Education and learning based on Information and Communications Technology (ICT) will make it easier for more people to obtain higher education without having to move from their homes. SV wants an increased use of ICT in order for more people to have this benefit. At the same time this will increase the flexibility in the study situation and progression of each individual student.

The number of students that study each subject is going to vary. The subjects are necessary in order to guarantee a diverse education scheme. SV does not want financing systems that give advantage to popular subjects and indirectly lower

standards at smaller subjects. SV will work to secure the survival also of less popular subjects.

The Higher Education Quality Reform has changed the educational situation. The academic year has become longer. There are more lectures and more evaluations. But the reform is not completed until the students' everyday life has been improved. This includes building more student flats; increasing the grant for travel costs; making it easier to study and have children at the same time; raise the general scholarships to the level of minimum retirement pension (all Norwegian students today have the right to receive a scholarship provided they do not have a sufficiently high income themselves; translator's notice); and the introduction of a politically regulated interest rate on student loans.

Both youth in high-school education and youth in higher education lack well-defined social rights during illness and personal crises. SV wants to consider a system by which youth under education are guaranteed their rights just as normal workers.

Due to the need for further and complementary education, thousands of new students will require education at universities and post-graduate colleges in the years to come. This education should be extended and adjusted in order for the students to receive good educational services. In effect, the educational schemes should be adjusted to the need to combine with paid work

SV wants to strengthen the decentralized post-graduate college education.

SV will work to widen the entrance criteria at higher education institutes in order to guarantee a more equal recruitment. As many courses as possible should be open for all interested students, at the same time maintaining the high quality of the education.

Functionally disabled persons should be guaranteed real access to take higher education. SV wants to do this by reinforcing their right to adaptation: Through entrance criteria; universal design of physical environments as well as IT environments; physical remedies; and the adaptation of learning materials and exams. Also living conditions, transportation and welfare services on campus should be adapted for functionally disabled persons.

Society as well as business life is becoming more and more internationalized. This makes it important to provide the necessary conditions for all students to be able to receive high-quality education abroad, both for complete degrees and shorter courses. Economic and social background should not be an impediment to take such education. It is important that more students are able to obtain degrees in non-English speaking countries. This would secure a broad spectre of international competence.

9.2 Further and complementary education

SV, together with trade unions, has been actively promoting the introduction of the right to further and complementary education as a right by law. Having such a right makes it possible to bridge the education gap in society. However, it depends on a full implementation of the reform on further and complementary education. SV will therefore work for the development of joint funding schemes between the state, employers and workers, guaranteeing the financing of living costs for adults who receive further and complementary education.

Further and complementary education is an important means to find jobs for more people. It will strengthen people's individual chances on the labour market – both for those who already have a job, for job seekers and those receiving benefits. It is wise to invest in further and complementary education, as it – among other effects – forms a more solid base for profitable work places. SV wants further and complementary education to be offered also as decentralized studies.

9.3 Research

More research has to be done in Norway for our country to become one of the world's leading information powers. In the long term, Norway should use at least the same share of its Gross National Income (GNI) on research, as do the other Nordic countries

The publicly financed research infrastructure should be strengthened through better financing of universities, post-graduate colleges and research institutions. It is therefore important to maintain the basic funding of these institutions.

SV wants to promote research cooperation between institutes, institutions and private sector. More information-based companies can be founded, based on the findings from research. At the same time, the direct public financing should be increased and private sector should be encouraged in order to achieve high-quality research applied in the business sector.

SV wants public sector to do more by supporting and providing loans to applied sciences within the companies. Research and development applied in the business sector are important tools for a pro-active business development. Research and innovation should be criteria when awarding public contracts

Increased research means a need for more researchers. More research scholarships should be awarded in order to recruit new researchers. Also, more research posts should be financed for those who have made their doctorate.

There are too few women among Norwegian researchers today. SV will propose measures to increase the percentage of female researchers, mainly by awarding encouraging scholarships and by defining better criteria for the awarding of post-doctorate posts. But it could also become necessary to earmark some research posts for female researchers.

A broad humanistic research and critical social sciences are of special importance. SV wants to strengthen a diverse gender research, as well as strengthening the gender perspective within each discipline. It is important that the research benefits both sexes.

By means of research, the knowledge base can be built for groundbreaking changes in society. Competent researchers who participate actively in international networks and who can be a part of such processes as well as carry them to the society are of a high importance.

The law on biotechnology is being changed, permitting pre-implantation diagnostics and research on fertilized embryos. SV wants a permanent evaluation of all aspects of the law in view of technological development and changes in legislation and practice in other countries.

Currently, 90 per cent of medical research is centred on the rich world's health problems, and focusing on illnesses that are more frequent among men than among women. Norway should contribute with funding for research that aims to improve the health condition of people in developing countries, thereby levelling the research efforts in the medical field.

Norway, being a producer of energy, should apply sciences to achieve an efficient and sustainable use of energy. The goal is for Norway to become one of the world's leading nations on alternative energy research. The great wealth earned on petroleum and natural gas should be taken well care of for future generations, but at the same time it should be used to encourage research on alternative and less polluting energy sources.

For SV, research and development are important elements in the shaping of a sustainable economic life and a well functioning public sector. The cooperation between universities / post-graduate colleges and business life / public sector should be strengthened. At the same time, research should be free and independent in order to prevent major business interests and the hunger for short-term profit from dominating it. This is important within fields such as medicine and biotechnology, whose research should be available for everyone. Universities and post-graduate colleges should be guaranteed public funding that enables them to develop the cooperation with business life on their own terms, based on a global social responsibility. Universities and post-graduate colleges should have an economic platform that enables them to think long-term and to respect research ethics, maintaining a close cooperation both with economic life and public administration.

9.4 Liberate the users

SV will defend the consumers' rights at buying and selling of products and services. Private companies that impose strict licence agreements on normal consumer goods are controlling a growing part of people's life. At the same time people's right to use products they bought themselves is being limited by laws increasingly protecting the producers and not the users.

SV wants to make the protection of file formats illegal, except in cases where this is important due to the need for protection of privacy or other special interests. The control with the contents should stay with the person who has made the contents, and not with the producer of the tool it was made with.

10. A forward-looking policy for economic life

SV's policy for the economic life aims to abolish unemployment and to create wealth within the limitations of a sustainable development. This implies more development work and more use of new knowledge and technology, in order to create a sustainable and competitive economic life that is looking towards the future.

Market liberalism is undermining the future of Norwegian economic life. Today great wealth is being lost to finance speculation, or it is being invested in unproductive real estate. Businesses that earn money are frequently being closed down, and the production lines are moved abroad. The political majority has given away the tools that could have prevented this development. SV wants to let the democracy decide over economic life to a greater degree than today, in order to make sure that the needs of society are given priority over the whiffs of business administration.

We can achieve improved competitiveness through specific and targeted measures to increase productivity without harming the employees and the environment. Among such measures are research, education and competence building, better regulations for depreciation on machinery and equipment, and increased focus on innovation and design. In addition, a well-functioning welfare state with universal services will bring with it higher productivity and increase the creation of wealth.

Norway's high wage level as well as level of costs is closely related to high productivity, and thereby also competitiveness. SV wants to provide the necessary conditions for big companies to prioritize research and development in Norway. Through state ownership we will influence the companies to develop long-term strategies with information development and innovation as key elements.

10.1 A forward-looking policy on economic life

SV wants to develop political tools to strengthen economic life. The creation of viable jobs must be a major responsibility of state, regions and municipalities. This is necessary in order to manage resources in a more efficient way, as well as in order to develop a global strategy on what will be our means of survival in the future. The tools of Democracy include public ownership as well as different funding schemes for the development of private and cooperative enterprises including worker-controlled firms.

SV wants to reinforce the scheme of measures to support economic life. The research and development contract scheme should be strengthened but with a clarification of what kind of tasks should and should not be realized by private sector

SV wants to create a separate legislation for worker-controlled enterprises, as well as a special company template that fits them. Existing environment certification rules should be strengthened. Public contracts should preferably be awarded to certified companies.

Norway is already leading in some fields related to environmental technology. SV wants to strengthen and further develop these sectors, and to make environmental technology more profitable, by establishing a major environmental technology programme

The answer to a number of challenges that face the future economic life lies in planning the energy supply. There is a need for a broadly composed commission on technology policy. The commission should discuss how to supply our future needs for electric power and other energy, and in relation to this, which technologies should be further developed.

It's a positive thing when people create their own jobs. SV wants to provide counselling and funding for young people who wish to create their own enterprise.

SV sees the need for establishing new enterprises in order to create sufficient wealth to maintain and further develop our welfare society. It's a positive thing when people create their own jobs. SV will create better funding schemes as well as counselling services for these. Municipal business funds should receive a significant increase in state funding through regional development funds

The state should continue to be an active owner of key Norwegian companies. This should be reflected in a long-term strategy for the development of economic life, as well as in the State's positions as an owner in general meetings and boardrooms.

10.2 Industry policy

SV wants industry in Norway to be developed to combine increased sustainability with competitiveness on international markets. The industry is important both for the employment, the creation of wealth and the pattern of living. It generates earnings and promotes development as well as creates scientific environments that the country needs. We aim for increased local use of the resources and a further industrial processing in Norway.

The number of jobs in industry has been decreasing since the 1970s, both in Norway and in other countries in the Western world. This has to some degree been caused by registration abroad, but the main reason has been a technological development that meant increased, but less manpower-intensive, production.

10.2.1 Petroleum and natural gas activity

The extraction of petroleum and natural gas is a predominant activity in Norway. Now the oil companies want vulnerable offshore oilfields to be opened up for drilling. This is the case in the Lofoten area and the Barents Sea. At the same time, extraction rates on existing fields are low. SV wants to shift the focus of investments away from opening up new and vulnerable areas, and over to a greatest possible degree of exploitation of the fields and regions that are already opened up. SV's policy on concessions and technology development will reflect this.

Natural gas should be used for industrial purposes where this gives profitability in a socioeconomic context. However, this should only be done if the total environment-damaging emissions or other pollution does not increase.

Norway should make efforts to assure that the extraction of oil and natural gas in the Russian North is performed with as little as possible risk of damage to nature and the environment.

SV opposes any exploratory drilling for and extraction of oil in the Skagerak Sea. This is both to secure the fisheries for the future, and in order to promote a growing tourist industry along the Skagerak coastline.

10.2.2 The Process Industry

The Process Industry is the cornerstone of many societies. SV wants these companies to be given long-term contracts on the use of electric power, against commitments to save energy and to maintain the activity.

SV wants traditional knowledge about industry to be preserved. Short-term profits on the stock exchange and business group strategies on internationalisation must not impede the realization of profitable industry projects.

Many profitable companies have been closed down because it seems possible to gain even more profits in other countries. Many jobs in the process industry can be lost if this pattern of development is allowed to continue. SV want this tendency to be met by public investments in research, development and implementation of new technology, in order for Norwegian process industry to be in front when international regulations are decided upon. We will support efforts to introduce energy-efficient production methods and the recycling of energy.

SV supports measures to achieve increased productivity and the reorientation to new products within the Norwegian process industry. This could be increased automation, the establishment of programmes for creating more wealth on local level, strengthening and improvement of education and research, and more use of environment-friendly components and products.

10.2.3 The ship building industry

Norwegian shipyards and contractors are world leading when it comes to technology and productivity. Their competence makes them competitive on the global market. SV will contribute to maintain the strong position of Norwegian shipbuilding- and contracting enterprises.

The state funding for the ship building industry should be readjusted to be a development funding instead of a cash support scheme. The funding should go to shipyards wishing to develop or build new and better ships, to their internal capacity building or to yards that develop ship according to new and better environmental standards. SV would like to contribute to the further development of a world-leading contracting industry on different kinds of maritime equipment and offshore technologies.

10.2.4 Construction and real estate industry

More than 300 000 persons are employed in the construction and real estate industry. It is the largest trade in several Norwegian counties. It is also an important arena for the management of the country's energy and environment.

SV supports the requests from the construction and real estate industry for a major campaign to make their trade more innovative. We want more financial resources to

be made available through the Norwegian Resource Council. SV wants to support the work on environmental-friendly energy being done by Enova, by improving the way the industry handles challenges related to energy and the environment (Enova is a public enterprise owned by the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Petroleum and Energy, Its mission is to contribute to environmentally sound and rational use and production of energy; translator's notice). SV wants an active national policy of encouraging the industry's capacity and competitiveness on quality, energy and the environment when awarding public contracts related to construction and real estate.

10.3 The private service sector

Approximately 1,3 million persons work in the private service sector today. This is four times as many as in the industry. SV wants to include this sector – which has been politically overlooked - more when developing policies for the economic sector in general.

10.3.1 The financial sector

The access to financial credits is a decisive factor for a viable economic life. SV will therefore work to prevent single companies from dominating too much the financial sector. SV is in favour of increased state ownership of banks, as well as to use actively the state's power as a shareholder in business banks. The savings banks should be maintained as a strong sector, something that is especially important for economic life in rural areas.

10.3.2 The commodities branch

The commodities branch is among the largest employers of women. SV wants commodities trade to be further developed, for example by means of competence building. The labelling of products with regard to fair trade, environment and labour conditions should be obligatory.

The last years have seen more shopping centres along the highways or in other ways favouring transport by car. This development undermines local and city centre-based shops, the environment is being polluted due to the increase in car traffic, and it becomes harder to get to the shop if you are not a car-owner. SV wants city and municipal plans to be designed to reduce the need to use a car when shopping. The financial support for small shops in the countryside should be continued.

10.3.3 The travel business

Travel business is an important and growing branch. SV will work to strengthen this branch by creating more jobs as well as by developing nature-, wildlife- and cultural tourism. Norway should be better marketed abroad as a place to visit for its unique nature. Innovation Norway, among others, would be instrumental in such marketing.

A living countryside is a prerequisite for diversified tourism in all parts of the country. It is important that the branch has access to local investments and capacity in order to develop new tourism packages together with municipalities and counties.

The travel business' main challenge is to combine tourism with the respect for Norwegian countryside life and the environment. SV therefore wants to promote nature-based tourism, including eco-tourism. We will propose a licensing system for eco-tourism enterprises.

10.3.4 Maritime transportation

SV aims to increase the share of goods transported by rail and by sea, thereby reducing the share transported by air and on the roads. Environment-friendly transportation should be encouraged both nationally and internationally, through eco-taxes relative to the level of emissions from the different means of transportation.

The freight ships now average more than 30 years of age and are sources of considerable levels of pollution. A modernization programme should be established in order to raise the competitiveness of these ships and with great emphasis on the reduction of pollution.

SV wants Norwegian labour conditions and conditions of pay to be in force onboard Norwegian-registered ships. All Norwegian-owned ships should be obliged to have a wage agreement. SV will work through international forums to abolish the international competition on tax levels. Tax havens should not be considered legal registration for airplanes or ships that arrive in Norway. SV will also work for this principle to be adopted internationally.

SV will work for the tugboat capacity to be reinforced all along the coastline.

10.3.5 Information and Communications Technology (ICT)

ICT is and is going to be important for a great deal of business development in Norway. Distances become less important, and knowledge and information increasingly become important components in new products and services.

Equal access to broadband Internet access - regardless of where in Norway you are - is important both for business life and for public enterprises. The building of broadband network infrastructure cannot be left to the market alone. SV sees high-speed Internet access as infrastructure, and wants a minimum bandwidth standard to be guaranteed for all households and businesses.

Norwegian public sector is one of the World's most advanced. This is an advantage that should be used actively to develop electronic services that ease people's access to state and municipal offices. SV will propose that the state develop public-sector solutions together with the IT sector. Norway should make the leap from being a passive IT-importing nation, to being a leading nation on the development of IT solutions for public sector.

The public sector could strengthen the IT businesses for instance by offering shared information for low prices. In that way public information could lead to an increased creation of wealth. Public information technology should be based upon open standards.

Closed-source code and a monopoly-like situation in the software market are impeding the further development of software. SV wants public sector to use open-

source computer programmes as well as to encourage the development of open-source software.

Software patents impede innovation within the software sector. SV will work actively both on national and international level to prevent Norway from becoming part of a legislation that allows the patenting of software.

10.3.6 Knowledge-intensive services

Knowledge-intensive services constitute an important and growing share of economic life. Their importance for other activities is wide-ranging. Examples are architects, advisors on engineering and ICT, law firms, accountant's offices and other kinds of consulting firms. Some of the firms are global operators with several hundred employees. SV wants knowledge-intensive commercial services to be more visible and to be better accommodated for in the national policy for the economic life.

Scientific institutions are to a growing degree being organized commercial service-providers. SV wants proper limits and conditions for such a development to be defined.

10.3.7 Culture as economic enterprise

SV acknowledges the great value of cultural enterprises for Norwegian economy and employment. The cultural enterprises, both as such and as providers to other parts of economic life, have a significant potential for growth and development. SV wants to do more to realize this, for instance by making producing and selling products and services easier for artists. The cultural enterprises constitute a natural component in the innovation system and in the policy on economic life both on regional and national level.

10.4 Food production

10.4.1. Agriculture

A strong agricultural sector is important both for the country's food security, for the pattern of living in rural areas, and for the preservation of Norwegian cultural life. SV wants to maintain a sustainable agriculture by preserving and strictly protecting the agricultural land. What remains of the country's grain-growing lands is the backbone of our food security and agricultural production. Newly cleared lands could never replace these lands. They should be especially protected against construction in the highly populated areas.

SV will work for the agricultural sector to exist under conditions that allow it to continue its work in the direction of a more environment-friendly agriculture. There must be room both for ecological farming, and for other environment-friendly production. The needs for food security and for maintaining the rural population segments signal the importance of farming on various resource bases and with different production methods. In order to achieve a more just distribution SV wants an upper limit on how much subsidies one single farm is allowed to receive.

The grazing lands in the rough-grazing areas (in Norway these are mainly mountainous areas; translator's notice) should be exploited better. In order to achieve this, the financial conditions for animal husbandry should be improved in all parts of the country and especially outside the central agricultural lands. A well-cultivated countryside with livestock provides the conditions to promote tourism and other culture-based income sources.

Animal husbandry should go hand in hand with good animal health and a high level of ethics. SV wants to strengthen the protection of animals rights in Norway and internationally. All kinds of production involving animals should be governed by strict rules protecting the conditions of the animals.

In the case of the introduction of new animal rights legislation, prompting a need for further investments on the farms, SV wants these investments to receive public funding.

All member countries of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) should have a right and an obligation to secure basic foodstuffs for their population. All variants of export subsidies for agricultural products should be banned. SV will contribute to develop a fairer trade - by supporting ethical trade and by improving the poor countries' market access to Norway and on the global market. It is possible to maintain a strong Norwegian agriculture at the same time as buying products that Norway cannot produce, from developing countries

SV will prioritize a sustainable and environment-friendly agriculture, instead of even lower food prices. SV wants stable and predictable conditions for Norwegian agriculture, encouraging farmers to long-term investments. The prospects of employment and a positive development are preconditions for future generations to choose a life in rural areas and to become farmers.

10.4.2 The food-processing industry

Approximately 40 000 persons now work in the food-processing industry. SV's goal is to provide this industry with – as far as possible - Norwegian raw materials, to competitive prices and without compromising food quality or environmental standards.

The food-processing industry faces major challenges because of the lifting of customs barriers. SV will support measures to develop the food, beverages and tobacco industries through wealth-generating programmes, research and targeted production for the niche market.

10.4.3 Fisheries and fish industry

The fisheries make up a considerable share of Norwegian exports. They are also the decisive factor for employment and for the survival of many settlements along the coast. The fish give profits, jobs, a place to live, and sustainability.

Sustainable management is a necessary precondition for profitable fisheries. SV wants the resources to be managed in accordance with the eco-system. We want more openness around negotiations on and regulations of fish quotas. The Norwegian

Parliament should be involved and heard prior to such negotiations. SV will make efforts to increase the influence that regional political bodies have on how the fisheries are managed, and try out different models of allocation and management. Two legal instruments – the Law on the participation in fisheries (“deltagerloven” in Norwegian) and the Law on the marketing of raw fish (“råfiskloven” in Norwegian) should be strengthened as tools for a more profitable fisheries sector. This is also a measure to prevent centralization and privatization of the common marine resources. Fishing quota sales should be prohibited.

Economic and environmental crime within the fishery sector is undermining the management regime. It is unacceptable, and SV wants measures to be taken against such crime. The Coastal Guard should receive sufficient financing to be able to employ their maximum capacity. Also the Directorate of Fisheries should increase its controls both on land and on the sea.

The cause of the low profits within fisheries is said to be surplus capacity. The problem with the fleet is not primarily a surplus of fishing vessels, but too high catch capacity and too big capital investments compared to the output the resource can give.

SV wants the fleet to be diverse, consisting of offshore and in-shore vessels that can be tools to create wealth and secure the living on land. SV wants the fleet of industrial trawlers to be phased out within a period of ten years. The resources that are freed should be transferred to the in-shore fleet. SV wants to give priority to the conventional in-shore fleet because it catches larger fish, it has less by catch of small fish, and it creates more jobs per unit. SV wants to transfer resources from the fisheries on open sea to the coastal fisheries fleet, starting with an allocation of 75 per cent of the white fish quotas to the in-shore fleet.

SV wants to allocate quotas to young people as a means of recruitment to the fisheries. The buying and selling of quotas diminishes the rentability of the fisheries. This is because the need for financial capital increases and thus the immediate profits increasingly go not to the sector but to financial institutions. SV wants a new management regime that guarantees the non-privatization and non-capitalization of our common property. One should consider various models to make sure that those investing in fishing rights are not left without guarantees

During the last years, the land-based production units have gone through large-scale structural changes. The most flexible and profitable are the small and middle-sized firms. In the fisheries, a cyclical resource, too large capital investments and too high demand for raw materials will make the industry vulnerable to natural variations in fisheries as well as to fluctuations in the market. Important future-oriented strategies for the fish industry would be to focus on quality, to develop by-products as well as bio-products, penetration of the niche market, developing the home market, and better marketing and logistics. SV wants an added-value programme to be established for the fish industry. Also there should be more focus on the research on and development of marine resources.

10.4.4 Aquaculture

Aquaculture, or fish farming, bases itself on renewable natural processes. Norway has a vast, clean and protected marine area as well as a favourable climate for the

production of high-quality seafood. The added value from aquaculture can be raised, for example by increasing the degree to which the food is being processed in Norway.

SV wants to increase the public research and development spending on aquaculture. This is essential in order to create new jobs, and especially applies to farming on new species, development of new products, and marketing. SV will emphasize the importance of developing secure facilities to prevent escapes. The fish-farmers should be encouraged to farm on local, renewable resources as well. Feed quotas should be set for fish farming in order to limit the harvesting.

Aquaculture licences should be used as a tool to strengthen the economic development and improve living conditions along the coast. They should neither be freely tradable, nor actionable. SV will propose a locally imposable tax on production area in order to guarantee added value on location. This tax should be differentiated according to the nature of the fish farm, and should replace the concession fee as a municipal tribute

SV wants a major research programme to be established in order to improve the environmental standards of Norwegian aquaculture. SV strongly opposes the planting and harvesting of genetically modified species. SV wants a concession policy that aims for sustainability and profitability

10.5 Regional development

The overall objective of the regional policy is to let people live and work where they want, thus maintaining the main settlement patterns. National spending for regional policy has been reduced by more than 50 % during the last decade. The position of regional distribution policy has been weakened within all sectors of national economic life. Employment within the public sector in rural areas has been scaled down, at the same time as the number of state employees in the Oslo metropolitan area has increased sharply. For the future SV wants public jobs to be decentralized.

National policy on innovation, research and development is poorly fitted to the needs of traditional industries. It is too narrowly defined to secure a sufficient degree of innovation and business development in rural areas. The existing regional fund for areas with weak economic activity should be enlarged, and regional research funds established. SV will work for a better regional distribution of national measures to strengthen economic life, in order for these measures to fit better to the needs in rural areas. Public measures and incentives for economic development in regions should be strengthened significantly.

To a much greater degree than today, measures to develop economic life should be targeting job creation for women. Focusing on typical female-dominated sectors such as tourism and small-scale production could do this. SV will work to establish programmes to create academic jobs within sectors where there are women with relevant education.

10.5.1 Transport and Communications

Good transport and communications solutions are vital for employment, settlement patterns and the production of wealth in Norway. Our current settlement pattern is mostly based on the extraction of resources such as fish, energy, industry, forestry,

and agriculture. But it has also been influenced by tourism and outdoor life activities. A decentralized settlement pattern is a precondition for a sustainable management of natural resources. SV wants a proactive transportation policy to reduce the disadvantages of distance and to provide local communities all around the country with necessary conditions to develop themselves.

Major parts of the rural road network are distinguished by their low standards, by bottlenecks and axle weight limits. This reduces the competitive ability of rural based businesses. There is a significant danger of land- or snow slides along many Norwegian roads, something that creates a sense of unease in many local communities. SV will give priority to the improvement of the rural road network. The roads should be made safer by giving increased funding for, among other things, the prevention of land- or snow slides, maintaining the roads open also during winter, and more cycle lanes and footpaths

A number of ferry services are not good enough. SV wants to improve ferry services by increasing the frequency of ferries, lowering the fare and using more gas powered ferries.

Both the regional and the main national airports are important parts of Norwegian infrastructure. The airplane is important due to long distances, difficult geographic and climatic conditions, and lack of alternative transport. In parts of Western and Northern Norway the airplane is public transport. The airfares between regional airports should be lowered where there are no fully satisfactory alternatives

Postal services, telecommunications, transport, broadband and the public welfare services also function as important tools in regional policy. SV will claim back political control with these services and make sure that prices are the same in all parts of the country.

10.6 Active and long-term ownership

An active and long-term ownership is a prerequisite for the further development of Norwegian economic life. The policy for the economic life should aim to encourage this kind of ownership, both in private and publicly own businesses. The creation of wealth is today being restrained by the craving for short-term profits.

Public ownership of infrastructure and within key economic sectors should be extensive, thus guaranteeing the democratic and efficient control over how society develops. Publicly owned companies should be founded by the state as well as by regions and municipalities and spearhead the developing of important industries. State ownership should be much more extensive and much more active than it is today. Norway faces a number of challenges regarding the future organization of transport and infrastructure, business development, energy and pollution. Such companies as Telenor (telecom), Statkraft (energy), Posten (postal services), Statoil (petroleum), NSB (railways), and Hydro (oil, energy, and aluminium) are all fully capable to participate in meeting these challenges. SV therefore wants to reverse the privatization process and thereafter to use these companies actively to reach important social goals. State ownership should be significantly more active than it is today. The Norwegian Parliament should discuss an ownership strategy for all state-owned companies at regular intervals.

As a part of the process towards a more active and long-term private ownership, SV wants an increased share of the added value from a company to be re-invested in the same company for development purposes. The degree to which the ownership is active and long-term should also be of significance when considering whether to grant public funding for private business establishment, research and development.

The future creation of wealth is also hampered by the acquisition and dismantling of enterprises by speculators. SV wants to prevent this by proposing a law on the acquisition of enterprises, by which the new owners could be obliged to guarantee the jobs in question before their take-over of the enterprise is permitted. In addition, companies applying for licences should be asked to present their plans for research, competence building and development of new products. .

A good way to achieve long-term ownership is by increasing the workers' influence. SV will therefore propose a higher worker's representation in the companies' governing bodies. The workers should be given the right to buy out the owners and take over enterprises which otherwise would be registered abroad or closed down. SV will also propose a separate law on worker-controlled firms and workers' co-operatives

Economic life in Norway is far too male-dominated. SV will therefore propose regulations by which the boards of all enterprises should have at least 40 % women

During the last years the democratic control with key industries has been weakened through privatisation of state-owned enterprises. SV wants to prevent further privatisations of important Norwegian enterprises. The strategic acquirement of shares in or the re-nationalisation by buying back some Norwegian companies should be considered.

10.7 Productivity and employment

The monetary policy sets the context in which trades and industries vulnerable to competition have to work. It should therefore be governed taking into consideration the employment situation and development of economic life, and not only aiming for low inflation. The Norwegian Parliament should define the objectives for the monetary policy. The Executive Board members of the Norwegian National Bank ("Norges Bank") should be nominated by the Parliament.

It cannot be left to monetary policy alone to run the Norwegian economy. SV will use the national budget actively as a tool to ensure a stable employment situation and activity.

SV wants to encourage investments in productive activity instead of real estate and financial markets. It is therefore correct to levy higher property and real estate taxes. SV will also propose other regulative measures to make it less profitable to bind up large amounts of money in real estate. Good welfare solutions, education and research prompt an increased productivity and higher economic growth. It is therefore not true that a lowest possible tax level is what mostly favours business life. SV will use increased revenues from capital and taxes on profits, spending them on targeted measures to protect Norwegian industries and jobs.

11. Equal rights and opportunities, and equal value

SV will fight all types of discrimination. More should be done to protect human rights, to promote systematic work against discrimination, and for a comprehensive legal protection against discrimination. SV wants to direct special attention to the discrimination based upon sex, colour, ethnic background, religion, disability or sexual preferences.

Women have the right not to be discriminated because of their sex. This should also apply for religious communities. SV therefore wants to remove the passage in the law on equal rights where exception is given to religious communities' internal affairs. The United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women should be incorporated into Norwegian law through the Law on Human Rights.

11.1 Women's Liberation

SV is a feminist party. This signifies that SV acknowledges that women are being suppressed – politically, socially, culturally, and economically – both in Norway and in the rest of the World, and that we will fight for women's liberation on all these fields. The struggle for women's liberation is more than anything a struggle for justice. It is one of SV's fundamental tasks.

Power and resources are unequally distributed between the sexes. Women have less power than men, they own less, earn less, and the wage gap is growing. SV's goal is to strengthen women's position in all parts of society, and that women gain more power and influence.

The struggle for equal rights and opportunities and for equal value will be incorporated in all SV's political work. SV will make efforts to visualize the imbalances and to level the differences through gender analysis of budgets and accounts. SV aims at equal representation in all boards, councils, committees and panels.

In today's society your sex limits your opportunities as an individual. SV wants a kind of society where your individual freedom is more important than your sex. Conditions in working life are decisive for the equality between women and men. Without economic equality there will not be a real equality. Women in Norway work a lot, but the rewards they receive are smaller than men's when it comes to salaries, pensions and influence.

In the Norwegian society, women depend more than men of a good welfare state. A well-functioning welfare state takes over many tasks that are mainly performed by women. It also gives women better job opportunities. The struggle for a well-functioning welfare state is therefore also a struggle for equality between women and men.

Women are being discriminated against in working life. Female-dominated professions generally pay less than male-dominated professions. SV will therefore work for a more equal recruitment in order to remove the difference between male- and female-dominated professions. For example, more women should be employed in leader positions. Also, the wage differences between women and men should be levelled in "jobs of equal value". SV also supports allocation according to sex, for

instance by admission to educational courses where one sex is severely under-represented.

Working life should be changed in order for both women and men to be able to combine a professional job with taking care of children. Equality between the sexes also means that the father takes more part in the care of his children. This is going to change the tolerance of society, not to say employers, towards female and male employees with small children.

SV wants the maternity and paternity leave to be extended by 10 weeks from the current 42 weeks, to 52 weeks enjoying full compensation of covered earnings. Nine weeks should be reserved for the mother, as it is also today. One third of the remaining time should be reserved for the father

It is important that the father earns independent rights to a paternity leave. All discrimination between parents should be abolished.

The struggle for equality of sexes within the family and in society meets resistance within all cultures. However, women with a minority background might experience a double oppression: Both because of their colour, ethnical background and tradition, and because they are women. SV will therefore work to improve the position of women with a minority background

For many women with a minority background it is very difficult to find a job. By getting a job, they could achieve increased economic independence and participate more in society. SV therefore wants special measures to be taken in order for women with a minority background to find work.

11.1.1 Reproductive rights and women's health

For SV women's rights over their own body is essential in the struggle for equality between the sexes. This right is far from obvious: It is under multiple attacks. We can observe this for example in the attacks on women's reproductive rights, in the increased focus on "the perfect body" and in the lower priority given to women's health.

The struggle for the right to abortion on the woman's demand has been the central issue in the struggle for women's liberation in Norway. SV wants this right to be extended from the 12th (as it is now) until the 16th week of pregnancy. The committees should no longer be allowed to decide over the woman's body during this period

The beauty ideals presented in commercials creates a dangerous "beauty pressure" on children and youth. This pressure is being exploited by the slimming- and beauty industry. The result is an increasingly serious social problem. SV will work to reduce this pressure, for example by restricting marketing and pressure against consumers and by imposing age limits.

SV will work for a stricter and more uniform practising of marketing rules in order to prevent discrimination against women. The law on marketing should be amended in order to facilitate clampdowns on discriminatory commercials. SV will propose to outlaw all marketing of cosmetic surgery and slimming remedies. The age limit for undergoing cosmetic surgery should be set at 18 years, with exceptions for medical reasons.

An increasing number of youth suffer from eating disorders. It should be possible to receive good treatment in all parts of the country. SV wants the health centres to develop programmes for youth, including preventive work among young people. SV wants associations working with eating disorders to receive public funding.

Women's health has for a long time been a matter of low priority in the Norwegian health system. One example of this is the relative lack of research on traditional women's illnesses and on how women become ill. Further on, illnesses and injuries contracted by women during working life are seldom defined as job-related injuries, depriving the women of important benefit rights. SV will therefore propose to earmark funding for research on typical women's illnesses. Also the register of "accepted" job-related injuries and illnesses should be extended in order to include also those injuries that befall women in working life.

11.1.2. Violence against women

Domestic violence and sexual abuse and harassment constitute major societal problems. SV wants the penalties for sexual abuse and harassment to be increased. The most important is of course to prevent sexual abuse and harassment from happening. Also, the victims should be encouraged in order for more cases to be reported to the police. More cases should actually lead to convictions

The combating of violence and sexual abuse and harassment should be reinforced. Among the measures should be the setting up at the hospitals emergency wards of a specially capacitated ward for victims of violence. The in-home alarms service for battered women should be improved, and there should be more financing available for the treatment of abusers and violent behaviour. SV wants it to be clearly stated that in cases of domestic violence it should be the violator who is removed from the home, further on applying much stricter and immediate sanctions against threats or violations of injunctions on visiting. SV wants the women's refuges and the support centres for incest victims to be state funded as a separate budget line.

Pornography and prostitution are based on the humiliation and exploitation of women and constitute an immensely profitable market for the financial interests behind. Police and prosecutors should enforce more actively the laws against pornography, pimping and the running of brothels. SV will also propose that all prostitutes receive more help in order for them to be able to get out of prostitution. SV will oppose any weakening of the legalisation against pornography, as well as propose to extend the law to include sexually discriminating pornography. SV wants to strengthen public awareness about and attitudes against buying sex.

Sexual harassment should be viewed as a social, structural and cultural problem instead of just as an individual problem or the result of some men not behaving normally. Studies show that sexual harassment is frequent both in school and at work places. It is necessary to take the offensive with a campaign against sexual harassment, including better financing of research, mapping and specific projects, and increased support for organisations wanting to work against sexual harassment.

11.2 Lesbian and Gay rights

SV will fight the discrimination based upon sexual preferences. The time has come to introduce the full equality between heterosexuals and homosexuals in their right to marry. SV wants the legislation on marriage to be gender neutral and valid for all people. Thereby the law on partnership would be replaced by full equal treatment.

The right to adopt a child should be granted based on suitability, not on the applicants' sexual orientation. SV will propose the equal right for homosexuals to be considered as adoptive parents.

SV will work to stop the current discrimination of gays and lesbians in the Health and Safety at Work Act. SV will propose to include the protection of gay and lesbian, bisexual and transsexual rights in both national and international human rights legislation

11.3 An inclusive society

Norway is a diverse, multicultural society. All persons should have the same access to work, education and to participate in social life in Norway. Our goal is an open society in which everyone can perceive that they are treated as individuals regardless of faith, ethnicity, or cultural background.

Norway has an obligation to guarantee all its inhabitants the respect of their basic human rights, and to fight racism and discrimination. SV wants to strengthen the legal protection of minorities' rights. SV will also support the creation of an ombudsman's office for the protection against ethnic discrimination.

Harassment, racism and violence directed against ethnic minorities should be fought tirelessly. The police should monitor well the goings on in right-wing extremist circles. SV will propose measures against the recruitment to neo-Nazi groups. Laws against discrimination, harassment and violence should be stricter implemented. Police and court must have the necessary insight and knowledge in order for the law to work according to its purpose

Mutual trust and respect are prerequisites for a successful integration into a multicultural society. There should therefore be room for differences in culture, religion, and in how people choose to live. SV will oppose bans on dress or dress codes that express cultural, social or religious identity

A good public school, where all pupils meet as equals regardless of their different backgrounds, is the most important contribution to building a future, inclusive society.

SV will work to strengthen the communal school and to avoid private schools.

SV will propose to abolish the denominational public school in Norway (public school is now by denomination Christian; translator's notice) and replace the current subject "Christianity, Religion and Beliefs" with a subject that is inclusive and neutral to beliefs.

Children living in Norway have a right to education. It is illegal to deprive a child of this right, for instance by taking him or her out of school without the assent of education authorities. SV wants the work to be strengthened for all children to receive an adequate education

Persons with minority background are being discriminating when seeking employment, for instance by not being called in for a job interview because their name looks foreign. This is a problem that is aggravated when unemployment is high. The fight for employment for all is therefore also important to the struggle to construct a just, multicultural society. The action plan for the recruitment of minority-language speakers to the public sector has not led to more minority-language speakers being employed. Persons with minority background still make up a disproportionate number of the unemployed. SV therefore proposes the allocation of some public-sector jobs according to minority-language background. The goal is for working life to reflect how the population is composed.

The misbalance of power between the sexes signifies that many minority-background women are being discriminated, both because of their colour, ethnic background and tradition, and because they are women. SV will work for minority women to be equally treated as men. This would imply that they become financially independent, that they have access to participate in social life and that they get the rights over their own body and sexuality.

Forced marriage is illegal. Young women and men have the right to make their own choices regardless of traditional power structures. It is up to each individual to decide who to marry, and when. SV opposes legislation aiming to prevent people from marrying together and living together. SV wants the financial requirements for family reunification to be changed.

Genital mutilation is illegal, regardless of tradition or culture. SV wants to increase efforts against genital mutilation, through better information, more school health units, and special health service for youth. SV will propose to make public charges in genital-mutilation cases mandatory.

Many minority children and –youth have difficulties in school, one of the reasons being insufficient Norwegian language skills. SV wants to improve their language skills by providing the pupils with a better education both in Norwegian and in each individual's mother tongue. The kindergarten is an important venue for learning Norwegian. SV will therefore initiate the introduction of free-of-charge basic time in kindergarten in areas with a high concentration of linguistic minorities.

Those who come to Norway as asylum-seekers, have the right to be humanely treated by authorities. This also applies to those whose applications are turned down. The state should guarantee decent living conditions for persons who, for different reasons, cannot be returned to their home countries.

The conditions of refugees and asylum-seekers in the refugee reception centres should be both financially and socially improved. The refugees and asylum seekers should be offered Norwegian language training, welfare services as well as psychiatric treatment. The legal protection of asylum seekers should be strengthened both regarding legal assistance, access to see the information on which immigration authorities decisions have been based, and the 48-hour procedure for the processing and return of “groundless” asylum seekers

Solitary underage asylum seekers should be taken care of by the child-care service, just as would be the case with Norwegian orphans. SV will make efforts for them to be followed closer and for them to be provided with the same opportunities as have other children growing up in Norway

12. A humane working life

The right to have a meaningful job is a basic human right. SV wants everyone to be able to take care of him or herself, to contribute to society and at the same time to control their own work situation to a greater degree. Our overall goals are employment for all and a democratic working life.

The problem with brutalization of working life, as seen in a row of switchover and reductions of work force, in increased pressure of work and more stress on each work place, cannot be solved on an individual basis. It is a basic social problem. The competition-mindedness among employers places this burden on public authorities through a sharp increase in benefits payments. For SV it is out of the question to place this burden on those who have been kicked out of working life by reducing their benefits and welfare. Keeping a significant part of the work force unemployed is a waste of resources. SV will work for employment for all, for the regulation of capital, and for a reform in the legislation on working hours.

12.1 The purpose of trade unions

The trade union movement is among the main driving forces for social and economic justice and for democratization of society. The trade union is facing pressure from both employers and conservative politicians wanting to weaken labour rights. Too few workers unionise. SV will propose to make the union dues 100 per cent tax deductible.

Union representatives should enjoy good working conditions on each work place, and on all levels in larger companies. SV will work for the trade union to have increased influence on the way the work is organized, on management, introduction of new technology, working hour's schemes, and working environment.

12.2 More influence

Many work places are managed according to principles not suitable for the modern, future-oriented working life. A future-oriented working life has to be democratized. SV will therefore propose the right of the employees to demand board representation in companies with more than ten employees.

Based on this, SV wants to increase the participation of employees in the companies, to begin with granting them up to 40 per cent of the votes on annual meetings / shareholders meetings.

It is a growing problem that companies pay high dividends and grant their executives significant stock options. In many cases the workers will be more interested in creating jobs within the enterprise. SV will therefore work for the employees to be able to decide on how to use some of the companies' profits.

The development of public sector depends on the employees having a greater say, in order for them to be able to share of their competence and insight. Users participation should also become more feasible. The Law on civil servants should therefore be improved, and not abolished.

Any public servant should enjoy an obvious right to express his or her opinion without having to fear sanctions. SV wants to strengthen the protection of union

representatives and employees who speak up about reprehensible situations at their working place. This should also include private enterprises.

A stronger freedom of speech in working relations both in private and public sectors is a prerequisite for a well-functioning democracy, not just for each individual worker but also for the guaranteeing of quality and security and in order to fight white-collar crime.

12.3 Employment for all

All job seekers should be offered either a job or a place in a further and complementary education scheme, within one year after their being registered as unemployed. SV wants the unemployment benefit for part-time employed persons to be increased, to reverse the measures made to cut payments by way of holiday pay, part-time post definitions and maximum income levels, and to reverse the limitations on benefit payments. SV wants the right to unemployment benefits to last three years as it was before, and not two years as is the current regime. The extra holiday payment should be reintroduced

High unemployment rates hit youth especially hard. SV will propose a Youth Guarantee, securing the right to employment, education or vocational rehabilitation within six months for everyone below the age of 25.

By launching measures against unemployment SV aims to avoid wasting resources, promoting profitable wealth creation instead. Public works should be incremented to reduce unemployment, as an active tool for job creation. There are many public works that could be initiated to great benefit for society, for instance increased social services and important public investments such as building flats and repair of school buildings. Also there are needs for improvement of the infrastructure, such as road works and the modernizing of railway lines.

We achieve full employment both by creating new jobs, and by giving employees the necessary qualifications in order to develop existing work places. SV therefore wants to increase efforts within economic-sector research and development.

The only way to guarantee full employment is by maintaining an active state and a sound municipal economy. An active state should be responsible for guaranteeing employment for all, for instance by promoting an active policy on the economic sector and through a good employment service.

One of the reasons for the higher unemployment rates in some parts of society is discrimination. Physically disabled persons and ethnic minorities are being discriminated, and in practice being kept out of working life. In many cases, job seekers with this background have great problems getting employment that matches their qualifications. SV wants to see an end to this discrimination, applying quota allocation of jobs as one of the measures.

Not everyone fits into ordinary working life. More should be done to provide jobs or vocational activities in order for these people to be able to use their resources as well.

Persons previously convicted of a crime, or who undergo rehabilitation from drug abuse or mental sufferings, often have difficulties in finding a job. SV will make efforts to improve the support for these groups to find employment

SV wants freedom of expression to be respected also what concerns the right to wear religious and political symbols or dress

12.4 Working hours

SV wants current working-hours regulations to be reformed. This could lead to more people finding employment, at the same time liberating more time to spend with family and on leisure activities. For SV, shorter working hours is a measure to improve people's welfare. The working hours should be arranged in many different ways, and according to the work situation of each individual. The work on shift and on rotating basis should be harmonized in order for the workload to correspond to working-hours arrangements.

The parties in working life in cooperation with public authorities should carry through the reform of working-hours regulations. The objective is to give each individual more leisure time, to provide space for more employees and to make it possible for more workers to continue in their jobs until they reach retirement age. SV therefore wants shorter working hours to be given without lowering salaries. This reform should be carried through gradually, the goal being the six-hour workday. SV will also propose experiments with introduction of the six-hour day in public sector

Permanent, full-time posts are essential in Norwegian working life. Full posts provide economic independence and a much-needed safety in the work situation. This again facilitates both personal and professional development. SV will propose a law guaranteeing the right to a full-time post, as well as the opportunity to work part-time.

It is important to SV that shop workers have working hours that allow them to spend leisure time and maintain a social life. SV therefore wants opening-hours in shops to be reduced and the use of special regulations to be restricted.

12.5 A humane working life

The demands from employers are becoming tougher. A brutalized working life is the result of the increased demands from the owners for profits in combination with reiterated demands for lower public spending. As a result, many employees are exposed to a pressure superior to what they can take over time. Due to increased workload and pressure, and repeated switchover, the sickness absence is increasing and the number of persons receiving disablement benefits is on the rise. The right wing responds by depriving sick persons of their right to full wage payments during sickness leave. SV will fight against any attack on the current sick pay scheme.

The number of persons on long-term sickness absence and on disablement benefits has increased extraordinarily among employees in municipal nursing and care services. The increasing pressure on municipal economies and the subsequent demands for lay-offs has led to a situation of hard pressure of work and unacceptable working conditions in many municipalities. This again leads to an increase in sickness absence and accordingly to an even more stressed work situation for the employees.

In order to break this negative trend it is important to increase significantly the number of permanent employees within the nursing and care sector. This will also make municipalities able to improve recruitment for these professions, meeting a

growing demand in years to come. SV wants to make the municipalities financially able to do this by increasing their state financing.

SV will make efforts against the increasing brutalization of working life. The objective is to have a working life where everyone can participate and no one is frozen out. This demands better cooperation on the work places as well as increased worker participation. At the same time, the Parliament should not give employers more powers to use forced overtime and short-term contracts

On several topics, such as regulations of overtime and hired workforce, the right wing has succeeded in its quest to weaken established labour rights. Because of this employers have become too powerful and the employees have become the losers. SV wants to change this situation, for instance by introducing stricter regulations on the transfer or closing down of enterprises, layoffs, switch over, outsourcing, contracting and division of companies. There should be a real right to negotiate and a real local right to strike action. SV will propose an amendment to the law on overtime work, lowering the maximum number of forced overtime hours per employee. SV wants regulations on hired workforce to be revised in order to strengthen labour rights and fend off unserious business interests.

Working life has changed in many ways since the coming into force of the Health and Safety at Work Act, in 1978. The developments over the last years, with a brutalized working life, closing-downs and switch-over, have made it crucial for workers to have their labour rights better protected by the legislation. SV wants the Health and Safety at Work Act to be strengthened, for instance by limiting the employers' use of forced overtime and short-term contracts. Union representatives should have full access to all registers of hours worked and salary-payments of each employee. Also the law should improve the position and participation of workers on their work places, including the strengthening of safety deputies and a higher worker participation in decision-making.

Afflictions caused by strain make up a problem, especially in a number of female-dominated professions. Many people do not manage to stay in the job for their complete working life. Afflictions caused by strain at work should be regarded as occupational injuries.

The parties in working life should follow up the Agreement on Inclusive Working Life. Clear goals must be defined for the recruitment of job seekers. SV wants the Agreement on Inclusive Working Life to be prolonged after the current period.

12.6 Equal pay for equal work

The distribution of economic resources is being governed by several factors. One important factor is the earned income. The differences in wages between women and men are significant. Women's monthly salary on average make up approximately 84 per cent of men's, in fact the same difference as was registered in 1997. To a certain degree an explanation to the differences might be that more women work part time. However, the greater deal of the wage gap can only be explained pointing to discrimination of women. Specific measures should be taken to abolish this discriminative practice of salary payments. SV will support the trade unions in their work, improve the Sex Discrimination Act and propose a commission on equal pay.

SV will make efforts for work of equal value to be paid equally, and for shift and rotating work to receive the same salaries.

12.7 Social dumping

It is a basic principle for SV that all work performed in Norway should be subject to Norwegian rates of pay and working conditions. Everything else is social dumping. In the wake of this often comes work in the black economy and other kinds of white-collar crime. The growing wage differences and increased exposure of the service sector to competition, for example within the European Economic Area (EEA), increases the risk of social dumping propelled by employers.

SV wants the public Health and Safety Investigations, the Tax Inspectorate and other relevant offices to be strengthened in their efforts to combat crime and social dumping. SV also wants it to become easier for trade unions to make tariff agreements fully or partly binding for others (A Norwegian law from 1994, designed as a possible compromise with the Norwegian Trade Union Confederation over the EEA, establishes a public Tariff Commission that can deem specific tariff agreements as binding also for workers and employers not covered by the original agreement; translator's notice). All work being performed by public sector or by publicly owned companies should be subject to Norwegian rates of pay and pension and working conditions.

SV will not allow work migration to be exploited as a means to weaken or keep down conditions in working life. SV is positive to increased immigration for job purposes. These employees shall enjoy the same rates of pay and working conditions as Norwegian workers have.

The use of subcontractors and hired work leads to the splitting up of contracts as well as of responsibilities. This creates a lack of transparency at the same time as tax evasion is on the rise.

SV will therefore put forward proposals to strengthen control and enforcement mechanisms through well-capacitated, coordinated public supervisory bodies, with the Health and Safety Investigations office as the main coordinator and responsible for follow-up. These supervisory bodies should also carry out controls of rates of pay and working conditions. Further on, when public institutions or publicly owned companies put out works to tender, the invitation for tenders should include the demand for Norwegian rates of pay and working conditions. Companies sending in a tender for these works should be able to prove that they pay their taxes and other dues, that their rates of pay and working conditions are in order, and that they have good health, safety and environment routines. Competition on wages, pension and working conditions should not be permitted when signing a contract between a public-sector entity and a private firm, SV want the ILO Convention 94 to be implemented.

The contractor and the client should be made responsible for the sub-contractors respecting Norwegian legislation as well as labour agreements, and that they pay their taxes and dues. SV wants union representatives at the contractor to have access to information about the rates of salary and working conditions of the sub-contractors. SV also wants a public licensing regime for temporary staffing services providers and other private hiring and employment agencies. The maximum penalty for companies violating the law should be increased, and the police should increase efforts to

investigate such crimes. SV will support the trade unions' fight against contracting-out activities. It should become easier to use boycott as a measure against employers who are doing social dumping or who refuse to make available information on their rates of salary and working conditions

SV will oppose any proposal for a new Services Directive that makes social dumping easier for European companies. SV will resist such a directive in active cooperation with allied European political parties as well as trade unions. If necessary, SV will work for Norway to veto the incorporation of such a directive in the European Economic Area agreement.

13. Peace and Solidarity

SVs' vision is of Norway as a nation of peace, making efforts to help people who have been struck by war and injustice. Our vision is of a just world, a world in which all people get their basic needs covered, and a world in which conflicts are solved by peaceful means.

Norway should promote an independent, consequent and active policy for peace, conflict solution and the building of a just peace, with the equal participation of women and men. SV will promote a comprehensive security policy, which includes military aspects as well as ecologic, resource and energy aspects.

SVs' objective is that we, together with millions of people around the world, contribute to the redistribution of power away from the rich countries, favouring global justice. The global popular movements constitute a decisive power to change the world: The international trade union movement, the international peasants organisation, women's networks, the globalisation-critical movement, environmental, solidarity and human rights organisations, and last but not the least: The peace movement. SV defines itself as part of these movements. We will contribute actively to the shaping of this new, popular internationalism from below. Norway's should be a policy for peace and solidarity.

Norway's position as a non-EU member and as a country with no aspirations to be a great power should be used actively. Our wealth should be employed in a responsible manner to promote welfare and an environment-friendly policy.

13.1 Strengthen International Law

SV's foreign policy is built on the objective to defend and further develop the rights of states and individual human beings, as stated in the United Nations Charter, in the Geneva Convention and in the UN Declarations on Human Rights. Such rights are being weakened today. On the one hand, there are indications that the right of force is again substituting international law and the sovereignty of states, specifically by the claims of the United States of America to have the right to wage so-called preventive warfare and pre-emptive strikes. On the other hand, the legal and democratic rights of the individual human being are being undermined in more and more countries. SV stands by the prohibition of war of aggression as laid down in the UN Charter and in International Law. We will oppose all attempts to weaken these instruments.

SV wants to strengthen legal protection and democratic rights. War and terror should be fought in many different ways; however, having justice and democracy can be a way to eliminate important causes of terror. SV also wants economic, social and cultural rights to be strengthened, obliging states to redistribute resources and to guarantee basic social security for all. SV wants Norway to demand that the United States of America ratify the UN Convention on economic, social and cultural rights, and that these rights are not made subordinate to interests of free trade and corporate profits.

Trans national corporations should be held responsible according to national regulation and legislation as well as to international conventions. National and international financing institutions should follow a responsible and sustainable lending policy.

SV will work to have a broader definition of what is defined as violations of international law, including cross-border white-collar crime. Additionally, SV will seek an assessment of whether corporations as legal entities can also be subjects to international law.

13.2 A better-organized World

SV strives towards a just world order, under which all countries have the opportunity to decide by themselves on the direction of their policy. As a small country, Norway depends on international rules preventing arbitrary use of power and protecting the interests of those who are weakest. SV strives towards a world order where the norm is that conflicts are solved by peaceful means.

The United Nations is the World's most important organisation for conflict prevention, conflict management and cooperation. An important work is being done to make the UN more efficient, for resources to be used more efficiently and action to be taken more rapidly. The UN can only function satisfactory if its member countries perceive it as democratic and consistent, not as a tool for rich powers. The UN should be reformed in order to improve its efficiency and its legitimacy in world society.

In this context the fundamental reforms of how the UN Security Council is composed are important. The Security Council should better reflect how the World's population is composed, and the great powers should lose their right to veto. SV wants the role of the General Assembly to be strengthened by transferring to it some of the Security Council's faculties.

Norway should make efforts for the UN member countries to fulfil their financial obligation to the organisation. Parallel to this, Norway should work for the UN to become less dependent of its member countries, by managing and collecting its own resources. Examples of such resources could be a currency transaction tax and taxes on international transportation and weapons sales. Global economy should be controlled in order for it to further, instead of hampering, sustainable and just development – and it should benefit every country, every nation and every class.

The Special and Differentiated Treatment principle, the Precautionary Principle and the “Polluter pays” Principle should be the guiding principles for globalisation as well as for economic activity. All environmental costs should be internalized, including in all forms of transportation.

Liberalisation, privatisation and market-based solutions should not be chosen where these threaten people's basic social rights such as the right to food, water, basic health services, basic education, and also the right to nature and the environment.

In a time when capital goes global, international economic cooperation has become important. SV wants international institutions whose objective is to promote a better global distribution, labour and social rights, the protection of the environment and food security, and to alleviate crisis situations. The current financial institutions, and most notably the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Trade Organization (WTO), are marked by a market liberal ideology. SV wants international institutions to promote the better distribution, welfare and environment, as well as national manoeuvring-space, and a just international trade.

The promises from the environment summit in Johannesburg, where world leaders promised to develop global, binding rules for the social responsibility of private

companies within the UN framework, must be fulfilled. The work on UN Norms in the Human Rights Committee is an important step in the right direction.

13.3 Fight against trafficking

The trafficking of human beings, and especially of women and children for the pornographic and prostitution industry, is among the World's most profitable industries. Trafficking should be fought both with measures to combat poverty and strengthen women's position, and with closer police cooperation with other countries, dismantling the criminal networks that organise this activity. Also the legal protection for, and efforts to help, those who have fallen victims to trafficking, should be increased. As long as there is a market of men buying access to other's bodies, such trafficking will continue. These markets thrive during war and conflict situations, also compromising international peacekeeping missions. The position on participation in such activities by all personnel, both in Norwegian and international service, should be zero tolerance.

13.4 Democracy and Human Rights

We cannot sit still and watch Democracy being weakened. The violation of democratic rights should never be accepted, regardless where it occurs. The democratization of states and abolishing of dictatorships are necessary measures to achieve good governance, a just distribution and the building of public health and educational services. In many cases, corruption is a serious impediment to development, and it should be fought on all levels.

SV wants Norway to work actively in order to strengthen labour, social and democratic rights in developing countries, and to give trade unions, democracy movements and social movements political and economic support. This will help to build stronger civil societies – a prerequisite for well-functioning democracies.

Following the so-called "war on terror", led by the United States of America, we have seen many deeply unsettling attacks on people's freedom. Examples are limitations of the right to expression, the right to manifestations and the right to organize, as well as increased surveillance of the civilian population. The Trojan horse that brought these with it has been the introduction of new anti-terrorist legislation, including in the European Union and in Norway. These changes represent serious violations of basic human rights. SV cannot accept that fear of terror is used to legitimize such steps. SV will stand firm as a defender of these rights.

13.5 Improved global distribution

Despite a positive development in some countries during recent years, more than one billion people still live under conditions of severe poverty. The majority of the World's poor are women. For SV it is important to include a gender perspective when fighting poverty and injustice. The gap between poor and rich countries is widening, and millions of people are being deprived of a chance to shape their own future

The access to drinking water is a human right. Water is therefore not suitable as a commodity, or as something that private commercial interests can have ownership to.

The increased privatisation of water supply and water-related services is a threat against the basic need of poor inhabitants for access to water. National and local authorities should be responsible for providing basic water supply and sanitary installations. The focal point should be the users interests.

In order to win the fight against poverty during the next decades we need to see radical changes in international trade, indebted countries must have their debt cancelled, conflicts must be solved and development aid for health, education and other areas must be increased. Many of the World's poor live in countries that are rich on resources and that also have a well-off financial elite. In these countries what is needed to fight poverty is a different policy on distribution. SV wants international institutions to pay more attention to what kind of distribution policy a country has.

SV works for a just world order. We will fight corporations and powerful countries that impede other countries from making their own choices. Poor countries must no longer be forced into opening their markets. Instead, they should be able to enjoy just rules for international trade, rules that further development. The flow of money and resources from the South to the North must be turned around, and Norwegian development policy should be changed to promoting development on the poor people's own terms.

SV will make efforts for the United Nations System to be financially strengthened. SV supports the efforts to introduce a binding international system of financing for the UN, for example through different taxes that should be paid to the UN.

International speculation can cause great instability by moving great amounts of capital within short time. This constitutes both an economic and a democratic problem that should be confronted with different kinds of capital control mechanisms. SV will work for Norway to propose the introduction of an international tax on currency transactions. SV also supports the efforts to introduce international taxes on transportation and on the arms trade.

SV wants Norwegian companies to be specifically asked to respect the core conventions of the International Labour Organisation (ILO). These conventions guarantee the right to organize and ban child and slave labour, among other things. Transparency and information is essential, in order for consumers to be able to put pressure on companies to keep a high ethical standard.

Norway should advocate for the UN Norms on the Responsibilities of Trans-national Corporations and Other Business Enterprises with Regard to Human Rights (UN Norms), recently presented to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, to be converted into law. Norway should also work for companies, international organisations and other countries to commit themselves to the fight against corruption, notably in connection with the extraction of petroleum and other natural resources in developing countries. Participating Norwegian companies should follow the strictest international standards.

13.6 Liberation

The dominating position, both militarily and economically, of the United States of America and other great powers, is one of the main causes of sub-development and the lack of economic progress. The struggle for people themselves to be able to decide on their economic and political development is therefore decisive for economic and

political progress. The basic principle of a more civilized world order is that all countries respect the international law and justice. In the poor countries it is a prerequisite for liberation and development.

For SV, international solidarity is crucial. It means that SV supports the oppressed against the oppressors, and that we wish to help countries to liberate themselves from occupation and oppression and from the desire of the great powers to dictate political development.

SV supports the Palestinian struggle against Israeli occupation and forced exile. We support their right to establish their own state with East Jerusalem as its capital, and the right of the refugees to return home. SV will put pressure on Israel and be a driving force in the resistance against the Apartheid Wall on occupied West Bank territory, in accordance with The Hague International Court ruling.

Norway should work for the US-led occupying forces to be pulled out of Iraq, in order for a legitimate civilian government to be established. SV will oppose any Norwegian military personnel or other participation in Iraq until the occupation has been ended.

An almost unanimous United Nations has repeatedly condemned the US embargo against Cuba. SV will make initiatives to counteract the embargo in order to reduce the negative impact on Cuban society.

13.7 Health and welfare

The inhabitants of poor countries should be given access to cheap medicines. It is therefore important to prevent international agreements from restraining the production of such medicines where they are needed. Additionally great efforts must be made globally for children and youth to be given vaccines against serious diseases. Norway should support and take the initiative to global vaccination programmes. To diseases, AIDS and malaria, are especially vicious because millions of people fall victim to them and because they are still deadly. Four million people, most of them in Africa, die from AIDS every year. In 2004 more than one million people died from malaria only in the Southern Africa. Most of them were children. Medication exists today that can be used to diminish these numbers substantially. Malaria, if swift and correct treatment is being provided, is normally not deadly. The World health work should target these serious diseases that kill many people in poor countries, and that could be curtailed using relatively small amounts of money.

13.8 International agreements and the WTO

Decisions taken in far-away international bodies increasingly govern the life of people on this planet. Institutions such as the WTO, the World Bank and the IMF are deciding on the conditions for all social life.

We need international agreements in a world where people and societies are becoming increasingly interdependent. There is also a need for agreements where states renounce on sovereignty. Basic individual and collective rights should be protected by international law. Important environmental concerns can only be addressed through binding international agreements

Such agreements should not be subordinate to the trade regimes being defined by the WTO, or to decisions by the World Bank and the IMF. Where a conflict arises between WTO rules and international environmental agreements, the environmental agreements should always have superiority. The same status should be given to the ILO Conventions on labour rights.

The current international trade regime has been created according to the interests of major corporations and rich, powerful countries. The WTO's goal for world trade is therefore to have as much free competition as possible. Their ideal is that companies, banks and other enterprises compete with each other within a world economy where state intervention is made illegal. This gives businesses from rich countries advantages in their competition with poor countries.

WTO is currently in the midst of a round of negotiations (the Doha round) meant to propel this kind of liberalization. SV opposes depriving poor countries of their right to govern and of mechanisms that have been important for developing our own country into a welfare society.

Trade can be an important instrument for fighting poverty, but only if the trade is performed on conditions that also favour developing countries and the poor population segments. Poor countries should have better access to the industrialized countries markets. This can be achieved without any overall liberalization, by extending the trade preferences already being granted to developing countries.

The poorest countries should be given aid to develop products and to promote them in our part of the world. SV will work for an increase in Norwegian imports from poor countries.

SV supports the demand for all variants of export subsidies to be eliminated as soon as possible. At the same time, developing countries should enjoy an absolute right to protect sectors they want to develop as part of their national economic policy.

The trade in food cannot be compared to trade in other commodities. SV supports the principle of food sovereignty, meaning a country's right to decide unilaterally to which extent it wants to produce its own foodstuffs for its inhabitants. Norway should therefore work for all countries to be able to protect their ability to produce food and to fight famine and malnutrition.

An increase in international trade in services within the GATS agreement is now being negotiated. SV wants Norway to retract all demands made by the Norwegian government towards Third World countries to open up important service sectors for foreign competition.

In the TRIPS negotiations Norway should opt to prevent major pharmaceutical companies from obtaining patent rights blocking the access to cheap medicine to treat life-threatening diseases, such as HIV/AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis, in poor countries.

SV supports demands from most third world countries that the WTO should not be inflated with new agreements on investments, competition, public tenders and measures to increase trade. Parallel to this, SV demands transparency concerning Norwegian positions, and a democratization of WTO negotiations.

13.8.1 An inverted alternative to the WTO

SV will work for an inverted alternative to the WTO, based on the following principles: All countries should maintain their freedom to intervene using an active control of commodities, services, capital and labour markets, also when this impedes free competition in parts of these markets. Important considerations to society should not come second to competition and national non-discrimination. Which considerations to society have priority, and how to protect them, could be made specified in international agreements. Such agreements could be developed over time between groups of states, but the long-term objective is to give them a global coverage.

All countries should be able to choose by themselves the measures needed to guarantee viable local communities as well as a varied and responsible use of the resources. Those countries that wish so should be able to freely define conditions for foreign investments in companies, natural resources, and property. Every country should be able to improve its environmental standards, its consumer's rights and its health protection standards beyond what is defined by international agreements. All countries should therefore have the right to ban the importation of goods that might endanger health, environment and safety.

As a step in this direction, SV wants the negotiations and agreements on new trade regulations to be transferred to UN bodies

13.9 Cancel Third World Debt

Empowered countries are paying many times the amount they receive as aid, as debt service to rich countries. This flow of money must be turned around. Without being liberated from the debt burden, poor countries will not be able to provide welfare services and fight poverty. SV wants Norway to be a driving force for the cancellation of Third World Debt, without making the cancellation conditional on structural adjustment.

The World Bank and the IMF are completely undemocratic institutions that exercise great power over countries in the South. These institutions are the rich countries' *de facto* instruments to oblige indebted countries to cut public spending, to privatize and to open up their markets. SV wants the World Bank and the IMF to be abolished and to be replaced by democratic institutions under United Nations control.

13.10 Increased Norwegian aid

Norway should continue increasing its development aid. The first step is to comply with the goal of spending one per cent of the Gross National Income (GNI) for development aid. When that has been achieved, the Norwegian international commitment for solidarity should continue to be increased. The development aid should be clearly poverty- and gender oriented. Its quality should be critically evaluated in order to get long-term results in accordance with intentions.

SV supports the channelling of a substantial part of the aid through Norwegian voluntary organisations, as long as these can show good results and management of the funds and work closely with local authorities and other partners.

SV wants efforts for conflict management and conflict prevention to be increased. War and conflicts are important causes of poverty and underdevelopment. At the same time as it must reach the poorest, Norwegian aid must also be used to form alliances with Southern countries and institutions that might become regional and global driving forces for development.

Norwegian aid should be used to achieve development on the poor people's own terms. Micro credits for small locally controlled projects, and especially projects managed by women, are good examples of aid that works both to reduce poverty and to strengthen people's influence on their own situation.

Norway is the manager of great wealth through the Norwegian Petroleum Fund. In many cases people are dying during conflicts because emergency aid does not reach them soon enough. SV wants some of the wealth to be used on creating an Emergency Aid Fund. Such a fund would have special importance to meet catastrophes that are not given much media coverage.

13.11 Increased cooperation in the Barents Region

Being neighbour to a great power such as Russia means having to face both great challenges and great opportunities, on a regional, national and international level.

The Barents Sea offers vast maritime resources as well as petroleum resources. It is also a new route of transportation. Because of this, the Northern, or Barents Region has been receiving increased attention, bringing into the open the - some times conflicting - interests of the European Union, the United States of America, and Russia. Norway should maintain a balance between these great powers. At the same time, Norway has strong national interests in the region, and should play an active role what concerns northern developments.

The environmental dimension of Barents Region policy is very important. The main challenges are nuclear safety, safety on sea, and oil protection measures.

SV wants Norway to develop a new, uniform Barents Region policy in order to take well care of our interests in the region. The cooperation with Russia could be eased within many areas by signing a Barents Sea Agreement. Also, a set of rules for the Barents Region Cooperation, including the EU and Russia, is urgently needed.

The Barents Region Cooperation (established with the Kirkenes Declaration, 1993) is today a key part of Norway's relations with Russia. Along a state-border that also marks the division between hugely different standards of living, the Barents Region Cooperation is a well-functioning cross-border regional forum for cooperation, without precedent internationally. An extensive and multifaceted regional cooperation has been developed within business, education and research, environmental and health matters, culture and indigenous peoples cooperation, and cooperation people-to-people.

SV will build on, reinforce and further extend the cooperation already established through the Barents Region Cooperation and the Barents Regional Council.

SV will promote the founding of a Barents Institute in Kirkenes, in order to capitalize on the wealth of knowledge and information gathered during 12 years of Barents Region Cooperation. SV also wants to strengthen the role of the regions in Norway.

The establishment of a Barents Institute could become an opportunity to nurse a positive development with knowledge creating growth and jobs.

SV wants Norway to contribute more to the long-term and secure management of nuclear safety in Russia. The Norwegian environmental organisations have played an important role highlighting the problems related to nuclear power, nuclear waste, and emissions from the industry on the Kola Peninsula. SV wants the environmental organisations to receive more support for their work, both financially and through practical cooperation.

A democratic development in Russia is important for Norway. It will therefore be of high importance to support independent media, organisations and institutions working to promote democracy.

SV also wants more to be done to facilitate an increase in business cooperation between Norway and Russia, for instance by simplifying visa and customs regulations.

13.12 Nordic cooperation

SV supports the cooperation through the Nordic Council. However, reforms should be done in order to further strengthen cooperation. SV wants a closer cooperation between Norway and the other Nordic countries, notably within security policy. SV would support joint Nordic participation in United Nations peace missions. SV will also propose the formation of a joint Nordic environmental defence system, which would be responsible for environmental monitoring and disaster preparedness in our territories.

13.13 A fruitful European cooperation

SV advocates a close cooperation between Norway and the other European countries. But we want to be part of an international cooperation, not supranational as in the European Union. Europe is more than the EU, also now after the entry of many new countries in the Union. Norway should actively support the work of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and of the Council of Europe to guarantee democracy and stability in Europe. There is a need for a stronger focus on violations of human rights, notably in Chechnya and in Turkey. Norway should also contribute financially to social development and environmental protection.

SV opposes Norwegian membership in the European Union. We do not wish for a membership application to be sent during the coming electoral term (2005-2009). If, however, a majority in Parliament decides to apply for Norwegian membership, then a popular referendum should be held prior to the Parliament's decision on whether to join the EU.

Both in 1972 and 1994 (the years of Norway's previous referendums on EU membership; translator's notice) the government's position was that Norway could become a EU member based on Article 93 in the Norwegian Constitution. This article admits the transfer of sovereignty to an international organisation to which Norway adheres or will adhere, "within objectively defined fields". The EU has for a long time now been, and still is, a system in which member countries transfer sovereignty to a

much larger degree, and with a scope that can not be said to be “within objectively defined fields

SV wants a public commission to be appointed with mandate to clarify which parts of Norway’s Constitution would have to be changed in order for Norway to be legally free to join the European Union. SV sees the outcome of a popular referendum on Norwegian EU membership as binding for its Members of Parliament.

Norwegian membership in the EU would be a step in the wrong direction for Norwegian participatory democracy. This is one of the main arguments against Norwegian EU membership. Being a member of the EU would mean increased distance between voters and decision-makers on a number of fields. It would also mean that Norway renounces national control in a number of important areas that today, despite the EEA agreement, still remain under national control. The proposed new EU Constitution is also contrary to SV’s political goals.

The establishing of the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) marks an important difference between the EU as it was in 1994 and the EU as it is today. During the last decade, the average unemployment rate in the EU has been three times as high as Norway’s. If joining the EU Norway would have to accept the EMU. SV finds it wrong to leave Norwegian monetary policy to the European Central Bank. The Norwegian economy differs strongly from the Euro economy; especially what concerns the impacts of changing petroleum prices. Norway needs a different monetary policy than does the EU.

Our participatory democracy is being undermined by the EEA agreement, reducing Norway to a passive recipient of EU legislation. The agreement leads to widespread regulation of details, and harms Norwegian regional policy as well as the policy on the economic sector. SV wants the veto right to be exercised actively. The EEA agreement has significantly more disadvantages than advantages. SV wants Norway to terminate its membership in the EEA, and to replace it with a less extensive agreement on trade and cooperation with the EU. The EEA agreement should only be terminated when a new agreement with the EU is ready.

SV firmly opposes any Norwegian participation with military personnel in the EU army.

13.14 Defence and protection of society

SV wants the Norwegian Armed Forces to be built on general conscription. SV opposes the idea of professional armed forces based on enlisted troops.

Norway should get a more comprehensive policy on defence and protection of society. Too much money is being used today on military defence, and too little on protecting society, on civil preparedness and international conflict prevention. Conflict prevention and peaceful conflict management should be emphasized much more internationally than is the case today. The main threats to our safety cannot be fought militarily: The threat of climate changes, international crime and terrorism, the risk of social instability in our vicinity, and conflicts caused by growing social inequality. These threats should be confronted taking political, diplomatic, and economic measures.

Generally it is the task of the police to deal with threats of terrorism or sabotage. The National Authority for the Investigation of Economic Crimes should receive increased funding in order to be able to enforce the legislation against the financing of such activities.

SV wants to increase funding for Norwegian peace organisations that aim to strengthen peaceful relations and justice in and between nations.

13.15 A National Defence based on real needs

SV wants a modern, efficient and defensive National Defence, adjusted to the tasks of national security. Such a National Defence must also be capable to accept peace missions from the United Nations. SV opposes the current model, where building of special capacity for so-called “out of area” NATO missions is given high priority. Norway is responsible for the administration of vast sea areas, home to vital resources. The readiness along the coast should receive higher priority than today, and the role of the National Defence regarding environmental monitoring work and sea rescue operations should be strengthened. More than today, the National Defence should be geared towards enforcing Norwegian sovereignty and secure stability in our land and sea territories.

Conscripts wishing to do civilian instead of military service are now being punished with a one month longer service period. SV wants civilian and military conscripts to be treated equally, thus serving the same number of months.

SV wants to maintain the system of general conscription, linking this to community work services in order for the youth to be able to choose freely between military and civilian service.

13.6 Disarmament, proliferation of arms and Norwegian nuclear weapons policy.

The great number of nuclear and conventional arms in the World is in itself a huge security risk. There are still enough nuclear arms to annihilate all life on Earth. Norway should become a driving force in the international efforts to stop nuclear weapons proliferation, and for the nuclear powers to fulfil their obligations from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Norway should also contribute to a full nuclear disarmament by proposing that NATO abandon nuclear weapons as a part of its strategy, and by working for its member states to scrap their nuclear weapons.

Norway should oppose the U.S. plans to develop an extensive missile defence system. Norwegian facilities should not be made available for this system. Norway should also advocate the ratification by the USA of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (NTBT).

Biological and chemical weapons of mass destruction pose a great threat. SV will work for the Conventions on such weapons to be followed up, for new bans on such weapons to be passed, and to create international pressure against states that might possess such weapons.

For most people around the world, the greatest immediate threat against their safety is small arms. It is a matter of urgency to develop better regulations against the proliferation of small arms to countries with much violence. SV supports the idea of an international convention to control the trade in such arms.

13.17 Arms export

Considering the wish to maintain readiness and to develop national competence, it might be desirable to maintain a limited weapons production activity in Norway. However, as a measure against improper use, SV will oppose any production in Norway of weapons that might become part of an offensive arms strategy. SV will therefore propose a ban on Norwegian production of expanding “Nammo bullets”. If such a policy endangers jobs in Norwegian weapons industry, SV will make initiatives to offer state-financed reorganisation programmes.

SV wants full transparency concerning the future Norwegian arms export. The regulations of arms export should be enforced in a much stricter way. SV will work for the Norwegian Parliament to appoint a separate controlling body for the sales and lending of weapons to other countries.

SV will demand that all countries that buy weapons from Norway provide end-user statements. The information to the Norwegian Parliament about Norwegian arms sales should be improved, and the criteria on which countries are allowed to buy weapons should become stricter. Weapons must never be sold to countries that are in a state of war, or that violate basic human rights. These criteria should also be applied to Norway’s allied countries. For instance, SV will campaign for a full weapons embargo against Israel for as long as that country continues its violations of international law and of the Palestinian people’s rights.

13.18 A new Norwegian alliances doctrine

SV’s vision of Norway as a nation of peace is not compatible with the role played today by Norway in NATO, or with the scope of and lack of certainty about Norwegian arms exports

SV has always opposed Norwegian NATO membership, and is critical to a number of aspects about NATO. The first use of nuclear weapons is part of the NATO strategy. NATO also reserves the right to use military force on foreign territory without having a UN mandate – the so-called “out of area” strategy.

This increases the danger that Norway could become involved in aggressive warfare against international law, even when a majority of the population does not want to support the war. The participation in such wars entangles Norway in the policy of the great powers and reduces the ability as well as ambitions to play an active role in international peace diplomacy. It increases the risk of Norway being targeted by terrorists.

NATO is reinforcing its military as well as political bonds to the currently greatest threat against World peace, the United States of America. The USA refuse to become subject to international agreements, be it on arms control, international courts or environmental issues. The U.S. foreign policy is now what poses the greatest threat against World peace. It is therefore necessary for Norway to take a much more critical

position within NATO and towards the United States, than what it does today. Parallel with this, SV will cooperate with all democratic and progressive forces in the United States of America.

The NATO cooperation is not very relevant to meet the real security challenges of our time, or for the Norwegian Armed Forces. NATO obliges its member countries to rearmament and to spend more money on military forces. Additionally Norway is increasingly committing itself to develop the Armed Forces aimed at offering special forces to NATO's out-of-area campaigns, at the same time weakening our ability to meet security challenges in our own vicinity and to accept UN missions.

SV favours the termination of Norway's NATO membership. We will therefore work to develop a new Norwegian alliance doctrine and alternatives to NATO membership.

Norway is administrating a vast North Sea area, our interests in the fisheries, oil and natural gas installations, as well as dealing with the challenges to environment by the transportation of oil along the Norwegian coast and a number of challenges in the Barents Region and around the Spitsbergen Archipelago. This would make it natural for Norway to take the initiative to develop closer defence cooperation between the countries surrounding the North Sea and with Sweden, Finland, and Russia. The objective is to forge a Northern European community on defence and security policy. At the same time it is obvious that Norway must be responsible for its own defence within several areas.

This must have repercussions also for the developing and purchase of defence materials. It is important for our security that we can find solutions binding us together with countries with which we share challenges to the security.

13.19 The use of Norwegian troops abroad

All international service should be on a voluntary basis both for officers and privates. The Norwegian participation in international military operations must only be possible after being discussed in the Norwegian Parliament, and when a clear and specific mandate has already been given by the United Nations. Such missions must be performed under the auspices of the UN. All non-military alternatives must already have been exhausted, excepting situations where all involved parties in a conflict are soliciting military presence.

Norway should give priority to sending troops where they can support peace processes where Norway has contributed, as well as to UN missions. A better support network should be established for Norwegian soldiers who have taken part in such missions.

The emphasis on peace missions signifies that the Norwegian Armed Forces should no longer develop the kind of offensive Special Forces that are being prioritized today. Norwegian development aid should never be used to finance Norwegian military missions abroad

SV wants Norway to oppose the doctrine on preventive warfare.

13.20 A more welcoming Norway

Most of the World's refugees are actually internally displaced in his or her own country. They are not covered by international agreements on refugees' rights. The international community should guarantee their access to humanitarian aid, and Norway should work for the UN guidelines on the protection of internally displaced persons to be respected. Very many seek refuge in neighbouring countries, and a few refugees end up in rich countries. SV wants Norway to contribute stronger to solve the World's refugee problems. This would include both accepting more refugees to Norway, and working for a stronger international cooperation. Poor countries accept most of the refugees. SV wants a fund to be established under the auspices of the United Nations to finance protection measures for these refugees.

SV will defend the right to political asylum. Persons who come to Norway as refugees should be guaranteed a just treatment of their asylum applications, based on the recommendations from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. It is the responsibility of Norwegian authorities to prove that it is safe to return rejected asylum seekers to their country of origin.

SV does not want Norway to participate in a joint European immigration policy as long as this policy is tailored to keep out people who come from other parts of the world. Under the current regime traffickers have gained much power, and many people risk their lives in order to be smuggled into Europe. This problem will continue as long as it is so hard to be allowed to stay the normal way. SV therefore wants Norway to terminate its membership in the agreement with the European Union on asylum, refugee and visa policy (previously known as the Schengen cooperation); an agreement that is effectively making Norway the outer border of the EU and binding it to a policy that keeps out people in need and that means surveillance of all citizens

SV wants it to be possible for more people to seek work in Norway, including people from other continents than Europe. Employees working in Norway should be guaranteed the same rates of pay and working conditions, regardless of their country of origin.

SV wants the number of quota refugees that Norway receives per year via the UNHCR, to be raised to at least 3 000. We must promote a humane policy on refugees and asylum seekers, in accordance with Norway's obligations to international law and conventions. Norway's obligations on this field should not be financed through official development aid.