

FIT FOR THE FINNS – THE FINNS PARTY’S ELECTION PROGRAMME FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION 2011 / SUMMARY

This election programme for the Finns Party is more than an opinion, it is a commitment!

Principles of the Finns Party

- Humans are, by nature, highly social beings – this should be recognized by the government as a basic premise.
- The accumulation of material goods is not a goal in itself but a means to assist in leading a dignified life.
- A precondition for a democracy is the recognition of a national citizenry that determines its future through equal possibilities for participation.
- The Finns Party promotes decision-making mechanisms based on the activity and desires of a well-informed population.
- The Finns Party are opposed to rule by an unconcerned and faceless bureaucracy. Rather, the Party maintains that policies must be initiated and made operable by elected officials – and that these policies and processes must be transparent and absolutely not capricious.
- The Finnish people must preserve the right to make independent decisions for matters regarding Finland.
- The Finnish nation was, first and foremost, established to safeguard and further the interests of the Finnish people – and this function and responsibility cannot be abrogated.

For the protection and furtherance of Finnish culture

- Finnishness is a unique element of the world’s culture. It is something to be valued as the cornerstone of Finnish society. It must be preserved.
- Multiculturalism is one of the relevant attributes of the 21st century world. Being Finnish is one aspect of that world and its part in it should be promoted and defended.
- For the Finns Party, patriotism means selflessness for the cause of the Finnish community.
- The Finnish language is one of the treasures of the world’s linguistic landscape. It must be cherished and protected – not only for Finns but for what it offers to the richness of the world of words and ways of expression.

- Public financial resources should be directed towards furthering what indeed is Finnish – other cultural endeavours – real or imagined – can find funding on the commercial market.
- The Finnish Broadcasting Company must operate as a Finnish organization oriented primarily towards Finland and how it interfaces with the world.
- The Swedish offerings of the Finnish Broadcasting Company should certainly carry on – but must be cut back.
- Veikkaus – the Finnish gaming monopoly - must be maintained with its revenue spent entirely on supporting culture, sports, science and youth work – now and into the future.
- While Finland has a relatively small population it is nevertheless geographically large. This has resulted in a very interesting diversity within the country – with local cultures having very much their own distinct cultural offerings. This variety must be recognized and supported – with encouragement for the local populations to participate in its preservation and development.

For the balanced social welfare system in the Nordic tradition

- Health and well-being are the foundations for the nation's success and must take precedence in attention.
- Each citizen's personal responsibility for their own well-being must be emphasized, while basic security should be maintained as well as improved.
- As a rule, basic services must be produced by the public sector, Out-sourcing such services should be very carefully analyzed and evaluated.
- Administrative measures can bolster the efficiency of funding services, but local control should be maintained wherever possible – centralization should not be a goal in and of itself.
- Aside from structural reforms, a re-evaluation of priorities and values is needed – the initiation for this lies with the elected officials.
- Attention should be focused on the public service perspective of the health system – not the operational preconditions of the health business.
- Care for the elderly must be thought of exactly as 'care for the elderly' and ideological policies primarily emphasising commercial principles must be put aside.
- Family care must be administrated by the Social Insurance Institution (KELA).
- Appropriations for rehabilitating war veterans must be increased without delay, and the 'degree of disability' limits must be abolished.
- War orphans must be registered as soon as ever possible.

- **Treatment of the disabled is one very significant measure of a society's tolerance and goodwill.**
- **The disabled must receive services aimed at truly helping them.**
- **Health checks should be used to prevent severe and costly illnesses wherever possible.**
- **Responsibility for funding medical care provided by specialists must be taken over by the state.**
- **Tax incentives and other government programs must be used to guide citizens toward a healthier life-style – this is necessary to avoid growing health-care costs which will otherwise get out-of-hand.**
- **Alcohol taxation must be increased and the advertising of alcohol must be restricted. Healthy foodstuffs should be made less expensive, and taxes on unhealthy ones should be increased.**
- **Narcotics and their use should be combated by all possible means.**
- **Citizens must be active and authorised participants in the reforming and renewal process – they should not be left as passive subjects.**
- **Children are clearly the future of the Finnish nation and a great emphasis must be placed on their health, education and development.**
- **Poverty in families with young children must be combated by changing the unjust aspects of the Social Assistance Act.**
- **Medium-income families with young children must have their position improved by reintroducing child deductions in taxation.**
- **Child benefits of high-income families should be reduced.**
- **There must be a possibility for choice in day-care services.**
- **The Finns Party supports a traditional concept of family.**
- **The general trends of income levels should carry more weight in the determination of the pension index.**
- **Youth employment must be supported by increasing the pension accrual rate.**

The Finns Party's educational policy

- **School class sizes must not be increased. There is a need for a decree on maximum class sizes – and associated appropriations should be appropriately ear-marked.**

- A maximum number of immigrant students should be set for each school so that school similarity can be maintained.
- Arts, crafts and physical/visual design classes must be increased. Finland has a rich, world famous tradition in these fields and they must continue to be developed and nurtured.
- More emphasis should be placed on physical education – this is a matter for both physical and mental health,
- Numeric grades should be abolished and other metrics of performance quality developed.
- Numeric grades for conduct must be given at an earlier stage and included in school leaving certificates.
- The Swedish language should be made optional where appropriate – and there should be recognition of developing versatile language skills. Proficiency in the Finnish language must nevertheless be maintained.
- Religious education should see no changes.
- Village schools must be preserved. They are important icons of a vital village life.
- The trend towards centralising secondary level educational institutions must be halted.
- Financial aid for students must be index linked. Parental income should not have an effect on financial aid for a student who is of age and living on their own.
- A bachelor's degree should be the main qualification for teachers in many areas of study.
- The allocation process for university funding must increasingly take into account the actual lengths of time for graduation. Caution must be taken not to promote subsidization of 'professional students.'
- Enrolment rates of universities should be reduced.
- The requirement of Swedish proficiency for public officials should be removed where appropriate.

The creation of strong municipalities

- The number of municipalities must be reduced and bureaucracy cut back, but without forced mergers. At the same time the quality of municipal government should be improved and the authority of municipalities strengthened.
- Inter-municipal administrative structures are not appropriate for decision-making on the most important issues of basic health care and social services.
- The grass-roots level of democracy must be saved from a rule by a faceless, unconcerned bureaucracy

- **Decision-making at the provincial level across all matters and policy implementations is not suitable – local input and expertise must be maintained.**
- **Referendums at the municipal level should be introduced, especially with regard to proposed municipal mergers.**
- **Municipal managers should be installed via municipal elections – this means that a ‘managerial’ system is replaced in essence by a mayoral one.**

The European Union (EU) –a problematic situation at present

- **The EU in its present form and development do not facilitate democratic rule – that is, rule by the people.**
- **The idea of democracy was not one of the prime founding principles of the EU.**
- **The Finns Party wishes to reduce the EU’s role in issues that only concern Finland. The scope of independent decision-making for Finland must be increased.**
- **The Finns Party would reserve the role of the EU to be one concerned with the area of commerce and free trade.**
- **EU expansion to the east and the accession of Turkey must not take place. The more fragmentary the cultural base of the Union becomes, the more bureaucratic and oligarchic its administrative structure will be – and the less chance for democratic influences.**
- **Decisions on transfer of power to the EU should not be made without advisory referendums.**
- **The EU’s subsidiarity principle should be respected and put into operation when applicable and not be given just lip service.**
- **Rather than being only an obedient pupil, Finland should become an active skeptic and raise relevant questions.**
- **Finland’s net payment to the EU should be reduced.**
- **The Finns Party rejects the mutual loan guarantee arrangements and the EMU joint bonds.**
- **Amendments in EU treaties that increase centralization must not be accepted.**
- **Finland should make preparations for the possible dissolution of the EMU and the EU in their present forms.**

Foreign and security policy of the Finns Party

- **Membership in the EU must not be included in the Finnish Constitution.**
- **The powers of the President of Finland must be maintained or expanded.**
- **Organising referendums enhances representative democracy.**

- **NATO membership for Finland must be rejected.**
- **General conscription must be preserved**
- **Finland should only be involved in UN approved peace-keeping missions - not as a military participant.**
- **Mutuality should be the deciding principle in the question of foreign land ownership in Finland.**
- **Finland's internal security derives from a united nation.**
- **Development aid should be replaced by crisis aid for specific crises.**

For a more balanced and rational immigration policy

- **Immigrants who are legitimate employees or entrepreneurs are welcome in Finland.**
- **Integration policy should be based on "when in Rome, do as the Romans do."**
- **Immigration not related to work should be limited via minimising financial incentives and through a more stringent family unification policy.**
- **Processing of asylum applications should be accelerated.**
- **A mutual European policy of "burden-sharing" must be rejected.**
- **Refugee quotas must be adjusted to financial situations.**
- **Sensible and creative housing policies can prevent the formation of ghettos.**
- **Criminal immigrants must be deported to their home countries.**
- **Finnish citizenship should be a reward and honor.**
- **Access to government services must be more based on where people are – not on their possible ability to travel to places further away.**

Setting taxes to the ability to pay

- **The Finns Party is opposed to the concept of a flat tax.**
- **The Finns Party is opposed to environmental taxes – also called green taxes. Similarly the Party rejects energy tax increases as well as urban congestion charges.**
- **The value added tax (VAT) should not be increased**

- **Conspicuous consumption should be discouraged by increasing the tax rates for high incomes – in other words a more progressive tax system.**
- **Taxation of capital income should be increased and made progressive**
- **Company dividend taxes should be increased by reducing the tax-free deductible.**
- **Taxation revenue should be increased by targeting successful companies – but strategically so as not to kill the goose that lays the golden egg.**
- **The Finns Party is not in favour of creating an international competition for lowest tax rates – present levels should be maintained. Good reasons to do business from Finland should be developed in other ways.**
- **The Finns Party believes that the ‘wealth assets’ tax should be reinstated.**
- **Community-oriented social policies should be made evident and publicized - in so doing citizens can be encouraged to pay taxes willingly.**

Putting Finland’s world of work and entrepreneurship first

- **The Party believes the climate policies should be re-thought and replaced with specific emission parameters.**
- **Industry is the mainstay of Finland’s economic well-being – significantly via the subcontracting process – and must be assured a solid future.**
- **Efforts are needed to provide secure and stable investment environments for state and employment pension organizations.**
- **The State’s ‘productivity programme’ must be shelved.**
- **The ‘grey’ economy should be eradicated via creative measures.**
- **The Party supports cutbacks in subsidies for large firms.**
- **Genuine jobs can be created by tax cuts for small and mid-sized companies.**
- **Common sense and skill are needed in assessing competitive biddings: overall economical advantageousness should be taken into account.**
- **An increase in the level of funding allocated to basic improvements of the road and rail network is needed. Sulphur dioxide taxes in their current form must be removed..**

Creation of diverse domestic energy sources

- **Self-sufficiency is a key argument in energy policy solutions**
- **Renewable sources of energy must be developed - in addition to nuclear power.**

- Biofuels will guarantee decentralised energy production
- Electrification is a great opportunity for Finland's electrical industry
- Energy conservation and recycling are fundamental bases of an effective energy policy

Justice must prevail

- The courts and police must be given increased resources
- Punishment must be made more severe rather than more lenient. Electronic monitoring is not comparable to an actual prison sentence.
- Petty crime is to be taken seriously and brought under control.
- Investments in investigating financial crime would not only serve justice but would have an actual rapid payback moneywise.
- Hate crime is not to be tolerated and legislation is needed.
- Planning crime must be considered a punishable offense and suitable legislation developed.
- Immigrants found guilty of crimes should be deported.
- Begging and inappropriate solicitation should be banned.
- Recognized self-defence should not be punishable.
- Laws should apply equally to everyone – equal justice under the law – there should be no recognition of cultural or economic differences in the judicial system.
- Constitutional Law Committee should be replaced by a Constitutional Court.
- The Election Act must be reformed

Rural policy of the Finns Party

- The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and the Ministry of the Environment should be combined to form the Ministry of Natural Resources.
- There must be no property tax on agricultural and forestry land.
- Subsidy levels of Articles 141 and 142 of the Treaty of Accession for Finland must be maintained.
- Freedom from genetic modification will be an advantage for Finnish exports – as well as a factor concerning domestic marketing and consumption.
- Self-sufficiency in foodstuffs will ensure preparedness for crises of whatever nature.

- **The decree - “Treating Domestic Wastewaters in Unsewered Rural Areas” should be repealed.**
- **Recreational hunting opportunities must be safeguarded**
- **Local conditions and wishes – as set out by the subsidiarity principle - should be applied to game and predator policy.**
- **Forest owners with initiative should be granted better possibilities of managing their forests.**
- **Public access rights via the principle of ‘Everyone’s Right’ must be maintained and enforced.**
- **Domestic energy supplies should be promoted: biofuels offer major opportunities.**
- **Local food, thank you. Local products should be promoted – transportation efficiencies can often be very significant. Local specialities also offer commercial opportunities.**
- **Fur farming with humane practices should be supported.**
- **The equine industry has a definite place in the future for employment and development.**
- **Timber use for construction should be encouraged and developed with research funding and other means.**
- **The Finnish countryside is a valuable and renewable resource!**