

TOGETHER WE ARE STRONG



CECILIA WIKSTRÖM



SWEDEN NEEDS EUROPE

In a rapidly changing world, Europe needs new visions and solutions in order to remain one of the world's most dynamic, competitive and knowledge-based economies.

Brexit, the result of the referendum on Great Britain's EU membership, is a wake-up call for all of us who believe in the European project and who see the benefits of finding common solutions to common challenges.

In a globalised world, not even Germany, Europe's economic engine, is strong enough to compete alone on the international arena.

If Europe is to remain an important and significant player on the world stage, new life has to be injected into the European project. The EU must be developed and democratised in the areas of freedom, security and justice, and deliver a true common foreign and security policy.

This is necessary if we are to safeguard our common values, protect our citizens and deal with the challenges we face; a growing terrorist threat, the refugee situation, global warming, economic growth, and so on.



The European project must be reformed so it becomes more relevant and responsive to the wishes of its citizens

We must remember that Europe has resources, educated citizens, creativity and diversity. Together, EU member states can provide protection and new life chances for the hundreds of thousands of people fleeing war and prosecutions in our immediate vicinity. Together, EU member states can require that China, the US and other major economies, achieve global climate agreements that will slow down global warming. Together, the EU can combat the growing terrorist threat and constitute a strong and powerful counterweight to Russia's increasingly authoritarian and aggressive superpower ambitions.

Together we are strong!



MIGRATION

Globally, more people than ever are fleeing their homes. Most of them are internally displaced or have fled to neighbouring countries, but some make it all the way to Europe. Most of those reaching Europe are fleeing the civil war in Syria, Daesh's genocidal acts or persecution from states run by dictators, such as Eritrea.

Right now, I am leading the EU's reform of the Dublin Regulation, which determines where a refugee's asylum application should be processed. The goal is to create a fair distribution system for asylum seekers among all the EU member states and a legally secure and humane asylum procedure for those seeking protection in Europe.

If every community in Europe with 10,000 residents had in 2015 taken its share of responsibility for the refugee crisis, they would have received 30 asylum seekers each. This should not be insurmountable. Problems arise in Europe when we fail to work together and share the responsibility to provide shelter for those in need.

We must not forget our own history. The EU is a peace project that was built from the ruins of World War II, when sixty million Europeans were on the run and sought a new homeland.





DIALOGUE WITH CITIZENS

The European Parliament's Petition Committee is the door into the EU institutions for our citizens. The EU treaties guarantee all European citizens the right to write to the European Parliament on various legislative issues they face. The only requirements are that they are directly affected by the problems and that the issues lie within EU competence. Examples of issues raised include the lack of respect for environmental regulations, impairments to the right to free movement across our borders and the violation of fundamental rights.

The recent European elections, where populists and extremists have reaped success, show that we must listen to our citizens closely and offer solutions to their everyday concerns.

As chairwoman of the Petition Committee, I want the EU to better take into account citizens' direct experiences of EU law. Those experiences can help us as legislators and should be used to improve future legislation.

We must insure that the rights and opportunities offered by EU legislation are maximized, to benefit all the citizens of Europe.

"In times of EU-skepticism, us politicians need to improve and deepen our relationship with the European citizens."



Environmental posters on a bridge:

- Poster 1: "El denkst dat er niets te zeggen heeft? Wij denken wat niet." Below: "ACTIE REACTIE IMPACT".
- Poster 2: "KONEN ACTIE EN ZET JE LEEF EN ZET JE LEEF IN DE WERELD".
- Poster 3: "REAGER EN MAAK HET VERSCHIL".
- Poster 4: "GA VOOR IMPACT OP JE LEVEN".





FOR A SAFE AND SECURE EUROPE

We will carry the scars of the horrific terrorist attacks at the airport and the metro in Brussels with us, probably forever. Similarly, the horrific terrorist attacks in Paris, the office of the magazine of Charlie Hebdo, the football stadium, the Bataclan music club and the small restaurants in the centre of Paris, left deep wounds in the soul of a many Europeans.

Soft targets are unfortunately top priority targets for terrorists.

Radicalisation and terrorism know no boundaries. EU member states need to develop more comprehensive de-radicalisation programmes specifically targeting jihadists returning from terrorist organisations in the Middle East. The ability to prosecute the fighters now returning to Europe who committed war crimes must be strengthened. The EU Intelligence Centre must be extended to countries in an automatic and legally secure way in order to share information about suspicious people and analyze the threats.

The defence of our democracy, freedom and liberties, requires a credible agenda that can prevent our young people from becoming radicalized, and to strengthen the ties that bind us together. We must continue to live freely and at the same time develop and implement preventive measures to stop our youth from striking against their own fellow citizens in Europe.

We must ensure that the rights and opportunities offered by EU legislation are maximised, to the benefit of all the citizens of Europe.

CULTURE

I have repeatedly emphasized my cultural engagement while in the European Parliament, most recently in cooperation with the Robert F Kennedy Center.



Speak Truth to Power: “At a time when personal courage seems to be in short supply, it is more important than ever to stand up for what you believe in and to be reminded that we can all do something for our fellow citizens”.

The life journeys of over fifty human rights activist from all around the world, who have risked their lives in their fight for human rights, underpins the play “Speak Truth to Power” that was brought to the European Parliament in February 2014. The performance was dedicated to Dawit Isaak, the only EU-citizen currently being held as a prisoner of conscience in Eritrea for over 15 years.

Among the participants on stage were the actors Lena Olin, Dylan Bruno and Dennis Heysbert, as well as several colleagues, such as the president of the European Parliament, Martin Schulz, the liberal group leader Guy Verhofstadt and myself.

MORE ABOUT ME

I was born in Kalix, in the north of Sweden, but have lived in Uppsala since the 1980's. I hold a bachelor degree in theology from the University of Uppsala, and have been a practising priest in the Swedish Church since 1994. I am the mother of two children.

In 2002 I was elected member of the Swedish Parliament from the constituency of Uppsala, and re-elected in 2006 due to the number of preferential votes. As of 2009, I am a Member of the European Parliament for the Swedish Liberals.

I have written several books including the book “När livet går sönder” (When life falls apart), a publication awarded book of the year in its genre in 2004.

I am chairwoman for the committee of Petitions (PETI). I am also coordinator for the ALDE-group in the Committee of Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) and substitute in the Committee of Legal Affairs (JURI).

Did you know? I was awarded a prize for having Uppsala's most powerful personal trademark in 2014 with the motivation: “Uppsala's most influential politician – in Europe. As visible in the EU headquarters in Brussels as in the cathedral in Uppsala. Cecilia keeps ahead of the game in both the European Parliament and the media.



Ranked as the 12th most influential Member of the European Parliament out of 751 members*



*av votewatch.eu

CURIOSITIES

Talent: Good at finding transnational political compromises

Best gift:

A book, preferably poetry

Favourite drink:

Kalix tap water and champagne (not mixed)

Hobbies:

Reading, theatre, music and being with people I like.

Travels to:

Uppsala-Brussels and as often as possible to Greece and Cyprus.

Surprise:

Has studied theatre in New York.

Speaks and writes Greek

MOTTO

**KEEP THE HEAD
COOL, THE HEART
WARM & THE HANDS
CLEAN!**



THE CHALLENGES OF THE FUTURE

It is with joy and commitment that I every day fight to create a stronger Europe for its citizens. I do my very utmost to continue being a strong liberal voice that really makes a difference in the European Parliament.

These are my goals for this term:

To establish a fair and functioning European asylum policy.

To establish a European FBI that can combat serious cross-border criminality.

To create a mechanism that monitors EU member states, in order to make sure that no violations of freedom or basic rights occur.

To work for less regulation, more free trade and a strong single market, that in turn provides more jobs and improves welfare.

The EU has the resources, well-educated citizens, creativity and plurality. Together we can meet the challenges of tomorrow in a globalized world. We must dare to believe in the possibilities the future holds.

Together, we are strong!"



MY TEAM IN BRUSSELS

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I'm looking forward to hearing from you!



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