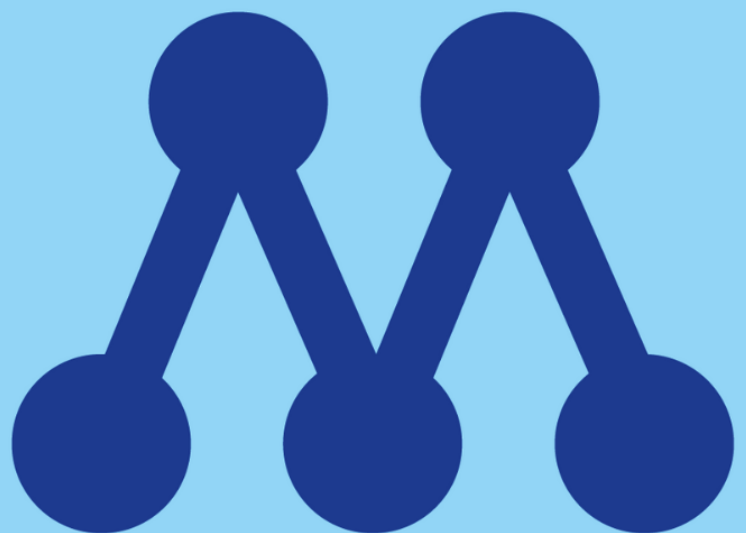


# Forward Skellefteå!

The Moderate Party's 20-Point  
Program to Address the "Northvolt  
Crisis" and Ensure Long-Term Growth



## **Introduction**

Over recent years, Northvolt has been the primary contributor to Skellefteå's rapid growth. However, recent issues, including layoffs, downsizing, and bankruptcies within the group, alongside other job losses in the region, have created a significant need for transformation among many residents and challenging conditions for several companies in the municipality.

In times like these, bold leadership and political cooperation that dares to think outside traditional boundaries are essential. Local politics in Skellefteå must unite around concrete solutions and be willing to take new initiatives to manage the crisis. The Moderate Party believes it is crucial that the Social Democrats and the political majority assume responsibility and are open to new ideas and proposals, even if they venture outside the usual. Now is the time to move from words to action to strengthen Skellefteå's position and future.

To address this situation while laying the groundwork for long-term growth, The Moderate Party presents a 20-point program, structured around local actions and national requirements, combining efforts at various levels. The program aims to handle the layoffs, strengthen the job market, and create new opportunities for both workers and businesses. Through this program, we aim to ensure that Skellefteå not only manages the "Northvolt crisis" but also strengthens its position as an attractive and competitive municipality.

## **Background**

Northvolt's establishment in Skellefteå has been central to the municipality's growth journey in recent years. The company has employed thousands of people and attracted many new residents to the surrounding area, leading to new tax revenues for the municipality and development in the nearby region. However, in September 2024, Northvolt announced layoffs of 1,600 employees in Sweden, 1,000 of whom are in Skellefteå. This has since led to terminations and the bankruptcy of one of Northvolt's subsidiaries, severely impacting the municipality, especially as these cuts also affect local subcontractors and other companies that have recently been hit with layoffs.

The current situation is a result of Northvolt's production efforts in Skellefteå not reaching the expected production rate, leading to substantial financial losses for the company. Additionally, Northvolt has faced challenges with financing and investment, worsening the situation.

The current state demands immediate action to support the employees now without jobs, as well as long-term measures to strengthen Skellefteå's job market and business environment. By combining local actions with pressure on state actors, The Moderate Party aims to create conditions for both a quick recovery and long-term growth.

## 20-Point Program to Address the "Northvolt Crisis" and Ensure Long-Term Growth

### 1. Transition for Laid-Off Workers through Transformed Recruitment Projects

Transition measures for laid-off employees are among the most urgent needs in Skellefteå. By converting existing municipal recruitment projects into transition programs, we can swiftly offer support to employees affected by layoffs. The municipality will be central in coordinating efforts with employment agencies and the business community to create new job opportunities. Prioritizing swift action and matching the right skills ensures that those who lost their jobs find new roles within a reasonable timeframe.

- **The Moderate Party in Skellefteå proposes** transforming municipal recruitment projects into transition efforts to quickly support laid-off employees and prepare them for new jobs.

### 2. The "Skellefteå Promise" – A Strong Initiative for Jobs and Education

The "Skellefteå Promise" is a new labor market initiative inspired by the "Växjö Promise," aimed at quickly helping laid-off workers return to employment. This involves Skellefteå Municipality actively coordinating job matching and training efforts in close cooperation with businesses, the region, the County Administrative Board, and other relevant actors. Through results-based education, where educational providers are compensated based on how well their participants secure employment, we ensure that the workforce gains the skills demanded by businesses. The "Skellefteå Promise" also involves creating effective collaboration between different actors to meet urgent labor market challenges in the region, as well as setting clear requirements for those seeking benefits to make full-time efforts to find work.

- **The Moderate Party in Skellefteå proposes** implementing the "Skellefteå Promise" to coordinate training and job matching with a focus on results-based education and close collaboration with businesses.

### 3. Finance and Capitalization Fair

To meet the need for capital and investment among companies in Skellefteå, including major players like Northvolt, it is crucial to create platforms where companies can meet potential investors and financing solutions. Northvolt's current economic challenges, including production delays and capital needs, make it essential to act quickly to secure financial support and new investors. Skellefteå Municipality can help by organizing a finance and capitalization fair, where businesses can access capital and networks, promoting growth and innovation, and stabilizing companies in a critical situation.

- **The Moderate Party in Skellefteå proposes** that the municipality organize a finance and capitalization fair to assist companies in the region, including Northvolt, in accessing capital and financing opportunities.

#### 4. Investments in Schools – for an Attractive Environment for Families

Skellefteå's future relies on a strong school system, and we aim to make the municipality more appealing to families and newcomers. By investing in smaller class sizes, improved learning environments, and increased student support, we create the conditions for a safe and high-quality education. A strong school system is not only an investment in our children but also a factor that makes Skellefteå a more desirable place to live and grow up in.

- **The Moderate Party in Skellefteå proposes** a clear investment in smaller classes, improved learning environments, and increased resources for schools to strengthen the municipality as an attractive place for families.

#### 5. Investments in Vocational Training – Strengthening the Workforce and Skills

To meet labor market demands and enhance companies' access to the right skills, we want to invest in apprenticeships and adult vocational training. Through close collaboration with local businesses, we can offer training programs tailored to the industry's rapid changes. This ensures that both young people and adults gain the skills needed to contribute to the local job market and that businesses can recruit trained staff locally.

- **The Moderate Party in Skellefteå proposes** that the municipality increase resources for apprenticeships and adult vocational training to strengthen the workforce and ensure the supply of skills for the local business community.

#### 6. Reduced Municipal Tax

To increase Skellefteå's appeal to both businesses and individuals, we propose a reduction in municipal tax. Lower municipal taxes increase local consumption and contribute to an improved business climate. Additionally, it enhances companies' ability to recruit skilled staff, making the municipality more attractive for new investments. By boosting both purchasing power and economic incentives, we can ensure that Skellefteå remains an attractive place to live and work.

- **The Moderate Party in Skellefteå proposes** lowering the municipal tax to increase local consumption, improve the business climate, and enhance recruitment opportunities for local businesses.

#### 7. Municipal Services for Businesses

The municipality's role in supporting companies through quick and effective service is crucial to strengthening the business climate in Skellefteå. By introducing service guarantees, the municipality can ensure that companies receive prompt responses on permits and processing, helping them to start their operations more quickly. Small and medium-sized businesses, which often have fewer administrative resources, will especially benefit from faster processing and simpler procedures.

To further improve services to companies, we also want to service-secure municipal authority actions. This involves the municipality conducting training for officials to improve their

interactions and increase competence in business matters. Additionally, we propose that regular surveys be sent to companies to gather their opinions on the municipality's service and interactions. This will allow us to identify areas for improvement and adjust the municipality's services to meet businesses' needs.

A well-functioning and accessible business climate gives local companies the opportunity to grow and recruit.

- **The Moderate Party in Skellefteå proposes** introducing service guarantees for processing times, securing municipal authority actions through staff training and business surveys, and increasing dialogue with businesses to adapt the municipality's services and support to meet businesses' needs.

#### 8. Review of Fees for Businesses

To strengthen the business climate in Skellefteå, we want to conduct a review of municipal fees that impact companies. Fees that are not proportional to the services offered risk unnecessarily burdening the business community and hindering growth and investment opportunities. One example is alcohol serving permits, where fees can be unreasonably high relative to the oversight actually conducted.

We also want to explore the possibility of linking service guarantees to compensation or fee discounts if the municipality fails to meet its commitments. This could create fairness and a clear incentive to improve municipal services towards businesses.

- **The Moderate Party in Skellefteå proposes** a review of municipal fees to ensure they are fair and reasonable, aiming to facilitate business growth and development.

#### 9. Establishment of a Business Council under the Municipal Council

To ensure strong collaboration between the municipality, the business community, and the education sector, we propose establishing a Business Council under the Municipal Council. This council would serve as a platform for strategic discussions on how best to support and develop the business environment in the municipality while strengthening connections with higher education and research.

- **The Moderate Party in Skellefteå proposes** establishing a Business Council under the Municipal Council to promote dialogue and cooperation between the municipality, the business community, and the education sector.

#### 10. Procurement and Competitive Tendering

An effective way to promote competition and improve the quality of municipal services is to allow private actors to challenge municipal operations through the so-called "right to challenge." This means that companies or other actors can propose how they can operate municipal services more cost-effectively and with higher quality. By increasing competitive tendering for more municipal services, Skellefteå can create better and more competitive solutions.

Expanding procurement and competitive tendering also allows small and medium-sized businesses to grow and establish themselves in the market, contributing to a more dynamic business environment where new ideas and innovations can emerge. Additionally, it can create more jobs and stimulate local entrepreneurship by allowing more companies to participate in municipal activities and develop their services in cooperation with the public sector.

- **The Moderate Party in Skellefteå proposes** expanding procurement and competitive tendering, including introducing the right to challenge where private actors can challenge municipal services.

#### 11. External Review of Unfair Competition in Skellefteå

To ensure fair competition conditions for companies in Skellefteå, we want to conduct an external review of unfair competition. This review aims to identify and address instances where municipal activities may distort the market and make it difficult for private companies to compete on equal terms.

Several areas within municipal operations have been highlighted as potentially negatively impacting the local business environment. Examples of such areas include publicly funded restaurant and café services, gyms and fitness centers, as well as camping, gardening, and household services. In these sectors, municipally-run businesses may sometimes gain competitive advantages through subsidies or other favorable conditions, making it difficult for private actors to compete fairly.

- **The Moderate Party in Skellefteå proposes** conducting an external review to identify and address unfair competition in the municipality. This review should cover areas where municipal operations may have a distorting effect on the local market and ensure fair conditions for all businesses.

#### 12. Corporatization of the Business Department and Expansion with Export Support

To better meet the needs of the business community, especially during rapid changes in the market like the "Northvolt crisis," we propose that Skellefteå's Business Department be corporatized and transformed into "Skellefteå Business Region." This new company would continue to support local businesses but under more flexible conditions. The company can also expand its work with export support, establishment, and international business networks.

Skellefteå Business Region will gather resources to strengthen local businesses and provide advice on business development, establishment, innovation, and procurement. The organization will also play an important role in helping companies with international ambitions through collaboration with the Chamber of Commerce and other export-promoting entities.

- **The Moderate Party in Skellefteå proposes** transforming the Business Department into "Skellefteå Business Region" to provide better support to businesses, with a particular focus on export, establishment, and business development.

### 13. Trade Strategy for Skellefteå – A Driver for Local Growth

To promote long-term growth in Skellefteå, we propose developing a trade strategy that strengthens trade within the municipality. The strategy should be part of urban planning and focus on creating better conditions for retail and service businesses throughout both the city and the municipality.

By proactively working with physical planning, infrastructure, and business support, the municipality can create conditions for local commerce to thrive. This includes allocating land for new retail, simplifying transportation, and collaborating with businesses to support commerce in line with population growth.

The strategy should also contribute to vibrant neighborhoods by placing retail in a way that promotes meeting spaces and improved accessibility, strengthening the local economy.

- **The Moderate Party in Skellefteå proposes** developing a trade strategy to strengthen local commerce, focusing on urban planning and growth throughout the municipality.

### 14. Local Infrastructure and Construction Projects

Investments in local infrastructure projects are essential to maintain employment in the region, especially for subcontractors affected by Northvolt's downsizing. We want to ensure that these projects increasingly go to local companies through improved requirements in procurement processes. Additionally, we want to focus on smaller projects and renovations that can be carried out below threshold values that allow for simplified procurement and direct procurement, enabling local businesses to quickly access these projects.

We also want an overview of opportunities to expedite investment decisions to ensure that local companies can quickly secure assignments and continue their operations.

- **The Moderate Party in Skellefteå proposes** conducting an overview of the possibility of accelerating investment decisions, improving requirements, and using simplified procurement processes so local companies have a better chance of winning contracts and carrying out smaller projects and renovations.

### 15. Developer Plans to Accelerate Construction Processes

To speed up construction processes in Skellefteå, we propose introducing developer plans. These plans allow developers, such as property developers and companies, to take a more active role in the planning process and manage large parts of it themselves. The municipality will oversee and support, but developers will take greater responsibility for designing and implementing parts of the detailed planning work.

We also support digitalization and automation in the construction process. Municipalities that have introduced AI-based oversight and assessment have managed to speed up handling

simpler applications, freeing up time and resources to focus on more complex cases. Using digital tools for simpler reviews can further streamline the process and reduce waiting times.

This model promotes collaboration, shorter planning times, and better resource utilization, which is important for meeting the demand for new homes and business premises in Skellefteå.

- **The Moderate Party in Skellefteå proposes** introducing developer plans to streamline construction processes, allowing developers to manage parts of the planning process with municipal support and oversight. We also support digitalization and automation to speed up the handling of simpler cases.

#### 16. Restructuring Grants for Local Companies

To support small and medium-sized companies affected by the crisis, we propose introducing restructuring grants. This tool has proven successful in previous crises by helping companies restructure and adapt to new market requirements. Restructuring grants would provide companies, especially small and medium-sized ones with limited financial buffers, the resources needed to develop new business areas, retain staff, and strengthen their operations.

The Moderate Party in Skellefteå will advocate for restructuring grants as support for small and medium-sized companies affected by the "Northvolt crisis." We will actively work to secure state support for this business initiative and necessary measures.

- **The Moderate Party in Skellefteå request** that the state introduce restructuring grants for small and medium-sized companies in Skellefteå affected by the "Northvolt crisis" to facilitate restructuring and strengthen competitiveness.

#### 17. Temporary Extension of Job Search Period for Laid-Off Workers in Skellefteå

It is crucial that people from non-EU countries who have been laid off receive a fair chance to find new employment. Current regulations allow only three months before they must leave Sweden if they cannot find a new job, which creates significant uncertainty. By extending this period to six months, we can give them a greater opportunity to continue contributing to the local job market.

The Moderate Party in Skellefteå will advocate at the national level for a specific initiative to extend the job search period for work permits from three to six months. We will pursue this issue with the government and other national actors to ensure that this measure strengthens the job market in Skellefteå.

- **The Moderate Party in Skellefteå request** that the state implement a specific initiative for Skellefteå to extend the period for finding new work for non-EU nationals from three to six months to secure their continued contribution to the local job market.



### 18. Educational Places and Skellefteå Universities Alliance

Skellefteå's future requires a combination of municipal initiatives and state investments. By establishing a collaboration between local universities and colleges in the form of the Skellefteå Universities Alliance, we can ensure more educational places in green technology, industrial development, and areas demanded by the local business community. The state has previously made similar investments during large-scale layoffs, so it is necessary to advocate for similar support in Skellefteå.

The Moderate Party in Skellefteå actively advocate for national decision-makers to approve the Skellefteå Universities Alliance. We see opportunities for the municipality to take an active role in promoting collaboration between educational institutions and the business community to strengthen the region's skills supply. We will also seek national support for additional educational places in Skellefteå.

- **The Moderate Party in Skellefteå request** that the state approve and finance educational places and establish the Skellefteå Universities Alliance to meet the region's future needs in green technology, industry, and training demanded by the local business community.

### 19. Start Authorization for the Norrbotniabanan Railway

The Norrbotniabanan railway is a central project for Skellefteå's future development and logistics. However, despite its significance, previous governments have not secured full funding for the project, preventing the Swedish Transport Administration from advancing with construction. We demand that the current government secure the funding needed to initiate the Norrbotniabanan project.

The Moderate Party in Skellefteå have close communication with the national level regarding the regional infrastructure needs. We are urging the government to make the necessary investments so that the Norrbotniabanan railway can be built. This effort will not only strengthen the regional infrastructure but also increase Skellefteå's long-term growth potential through improved transportation for businesses and increased accessibility for the workforce, students, and visitors.

- **The Moderate Party in Skellefteå request** that the government secure funding for the Norrbotniabanan railway and authorize the Swedish Transport Administration to begin construction.

### 20. New Route for E4 via the Eastern Bypass

The current E4 route through central Skellefteå creates high traffic congestion, negatively impacting both safety and the city environment. A new route via the Eastern Bypass would alleviate the city center, improve traffic flow, and create better conditions for both businesses and residents. This is especially important for addressing the growing needs of industries, including Northvolt and other local companies, as well as improving freight transport.

The Moderate Party in Skellefteå is working to ensure that the government not only prioritizes but also expedites the decision-making process and secures funding for this project. This is a critical investment for Skellefteå's future growth and infrastructure.

- **The Moderate Party in Skellefteå request** that the government expedite and secure funding for a new E4 route via the Eastern Bypass to reduce through-traffic, enhance traffic safety, and support future growth.

## Summary

With this 20-point program, The Moderate Party in Skellefteå aims to address the acute crisis caused by Northvolt's downsizing while laying the foundation for sustainable, long-term growth in the municipality. By combining local actions with national advocacy, we ensure that Skellefteå continues to be an attractive municipality for both businesses and residents. We propose concrete initiatives such as transition support for the laid-off, results-based education programs, and improved conditions for business growth.

Achieving this requires bold political leadership and broad cooperation among all political actors. Skellefteå must dare to think innovatively and try unconventional solutions to ensure the municipality remains strong in the future. The political majority has a responsibility to show openness to new ideas and to pursue policies that truly address the challenges we now face.

Together, we can turn this crisis into an opportunity to strengthen Skellefteå's job market and future. By acting now, in partnership with local actors and national decision-makers, we can ensure that Skellefteå continues to grow as an innovative and sustainable place to live and work. The Moderate Party in Skellefteå is committed to working on all levels to ensure that these measures are implemented, so that our municipality emerges stronger than ever and continues its development as a leader in sustainable industry, entrepreneurship, and community-building.

