

## **Why be a mentee?**

To:

- become more involved and gain greater influence in Sweden
- learn more about Swedish society and get new contacts
- meet a mentor who can help you find your way in to political life
- broaden your views and gain new knowledge and skills
- learn more about trade unions or about how associations work, and how they can influence various decisions or work with opinion-building
- develop new knowledge, ways of thinking and perspectives

## **Who can be a mentee?**

Mentees are young women from foreign backgrounds who have the interest and willingness to learn more about the work of trade unions, political parties and associations, and wish to actively take part in society's decision-making processes.

## **A mentee should want to**

- change society
- be involved and participate in public debate
- learn more about the work of trade unions, political parties and/or associations
- take initiatives, set goals and develop herself
- share her experiences

# An IKF project that is changing the world

Women's Power – the mentoring programme, will promote young immigrant women's influence and involvement in the development of society, through increased participation in the democratic decision-making processes in Swedish society.

Be part of a dynamic network!



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# Mentoring programme

Opening doors to the boardrooms

## **Why be a mentor?**

To:

- strengthen democracy
- contribute to increased integration and diversity in decision-making bodies
- contribute to greater competence in committees and boards
- broaden your network
- share knowledge and experiences
- see another individual grow and develop
- take the opportunity to develop cultural competence
- develop through taking on new thoughts and perspectives

## **Who can be a mentor?**

Women who have been active for some time in an association, a trade union or political organisation, and who are willing to share their knowledge, experience and network with a young woman from an immigrant background.

## **A mentor should**

- share her knowledge, experience and contacts
- pass on to a mentee knowledge of both the formal and informal codes that are used in decision-making bodies
- open doors to new worlds and perspectives
- support and inspire
- be able to take initiative and at the same time be a good listener
- dare to be herself





We want a different division of power – now!

Internationella Kvinnoföreningen i Malmö (The Association of International Women) wants to promote young immigrant women's participation in politics, trade unions and the work of associations.

Research shows that immigrant women are poorly represented in society, and those born in a country other than Sweden are a group for whom representation has worsened during recent decades. This type of discrimination is a direct threat to democracy's legitimacy. Furthermore, under-representation of people with foreign backgrounds is particularly noticeable higher up in power structures, at municipal, regional and national level. At the **parliamentary level, there are only 9 women and 12 men with foreign backgrounds, out of a total of 349 members of the parliament.**

The mentoring programme is also important as a way of increasing awareness of the significance of representation and greater diversity in decision-making bodies.

"To be an immigrant woman in Sweden today is a challenge, when it comes to asserting your rights – in part as an immigrant, in part as a woman. In other words, there is the risk of double discrimination – double oppression."

"It's important that we women make our voice heard. That we participate, but it isn't always possible to do that. Maybe we aren't represented – we maybe don't occupy the posts that give us the power to speak. In most cases, women are represented by men. This is not acceptable."

"Women and men must both equally be able to represent society, regardless of whether they come from Sweden or Greece, or Iran, or Italy, or Sudan. Being a person is not the same as being a man."

"A different division of power between women and men. That is what we are working for."

*Speech by Margareta Winberg at the conference, Integration and Equality in the Nordic countries, 2003*

## Experiences and Comments:

” My experiences as mentor have always been positive and have given me at least as much as I hope the mentee has got from it. It becomes a dialogue and a mutual exchange, which is valuable. ”

*Pia Kinhult (m), regional councillor and mentor*

” I’ve learnt a lot about the five master suppression techniques: Making Invisible, Ridiculing, Withholding Information, Damned If You Do And Damned If You Don’t, Heaping Blame and Putting to Shame. I didn’t know anything about these before. ”

*Monika Dobreskov, mentee*

” We made good contact. She is a little uncertain about what she wants to do, for example, if she wants to be a full-time politician. She meets all the requirements for that – she is well-educated, has the language, the ideas, everything. It’s just a matter of believing in herself. We need young women in politics. ”

*Ulla Bagge (s), mentor*



” Through participation, you’ll be trained to take responsibility for the association’s work, but you’ll also gain more understanding of society as a whole. ”

*Jelica Ugricic, Chairperson IKF*

” I need to make contacts, socialise and discuss with women who have the same ambitions as me. I’m really interested in politics and what’s happening in society. ”

*Diana-Denise Marica, mentee*

” Girls often put forward their views immediately. Think instead about waiting your turn, speaking slowly and repeating your message. Don’t be afraid to pause when you speak; it’s then that people think about what you’ve said. ”

*Maria Brännström, teacher in rhetoric*

” The first impression can be decisive and it is important to present yourself in the right way. Success at the negotiating table can depend on what is said during the first 30 seconds of a meeting. ”

*Vesna Maldaner, journalist*

# We start processes that lead to increased integration

The association is independent of religion and politics, and works with women of all nationalities.  
All the association's activities are built on the fundamental democratic values of:

**Integration**

**Equality**

**Prevention of racism and oppression**

Internationella Kvinnoföreningen i Malmö (IKF) is in a process of continuous development and change. IKF acts as a meeting place and a centre for ideas, education, employment and growth, for regional, national and EU-development.

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