



Three Key Points
in Michelle Bachelet's
Program of Government

1) Protecting The People: A New Social Safety Net

We will put in place a comprehensive, lifetime social safety system helping people from the they take their first steps, through to education, employment and a dignified old age. The system will also offer increased protection from crime, sickness and disability.

Education: The Basis Of All Opportunity

- Ø Daycare will be provided for all children of preschool age of working mothers in the poorest 40% of the population.
- Ø Universal access to kindergarten will be guaranteed.
- Ø New school transportation subsidies for rural areas will be provided.
- Ø Higher education financing for all worthy applicants will be guaranteed through a combination of bursaries, credit, government guarantees and subsidized education savings funds.
- Ø The overall quality of primary and secondary education will be improved by establishing performance criteria, teacher evaluation and school councils.

Secure Wage Plan To Provide New, Better Jobs

- Ø We will create one million new jobs in the next four years while protecting family income. The Plan includes the following measures:
 - a) Youth Employment Subsidy: Qualifying age for apprenticeship programs will be raised to 25 and subsidy amounts will be increased to 50% of minimum wage.
 - b) Social Security Contributions: We will propose a government copayment of social security contributions for vulnerable youth aged 25 and under who hold a formal job contract.
 - c) Unemployment Insurance Fund: We will improve the unemployment insurance system through two concrete steps:

1) Extend unemployment insurance to workers –regardless of employment contract status- having made at least six consecutive payments into the Fund;

2) Double the annual public sectors contribution to the Fund with automatic increases at times of high unemployment.

Ø Business and labor will be encouraged to negotiate a mutually agreeable workday.

Ø All women wishing to join the workforce will have access to kindergarten. Women in the poorest 40% of the population will have access to free daycare.

Ø The Unemployment Contingency Fund mechanism will be used to provide additional job creation funding at times of high unemployment. We will create 20,000 new openings at the kindergarten level and will set up 800 new infant care centers throughout Chile.

Protecting the Health of all Chileans

Ø The Explicitly Guaranteed Universal Health Access Plan (AUGE) will be expanded to cover 80 medical conditions by the year 2010.

Ø Free care in public hospitals will be expanded to all persons aged 60 and over.

Ø New community-based Family Medicine Centers will be introduced.

Ø Competition in the ISAPRE health insurance market will be encouraged through standardization and simplification so consumers can understand and compare health plans. Purchase of collective coverage plans from ISAPRES will be encouraged.

Public Safety

Ø The Carabineros and Investigaciones police forces will be boosted by 1,500 and 500 officers per year, respectively, for a total increase of 6,000 new officers over 4 years.

Ø A new Ministry of Public Safety will coordinate all law enforcement agencies and related policy and implement crime prevention and control plans.

Ø New legislation will restrict criminal justice and prison benefits for repeat offenders.

Pension Reform

Ø All members of the workforce will be encouraged to save for retirement. Fully 95% of the self-employed are not doing so, while 40% of current fund members will not obtain a minimum pension.

Ø Competition in the AFP (pensión fund) market will be encouraged in order to lower costs and improve service.

Ø A blue-chip Pension Reform Commission will be convened and given until June 2006 to submit proposals to increase the quality and fairness of the pension system.

Ø Seniors 65 and over and the disabled with no pension coverage will be automatically entitled to a support pension.

2) A Quantum Leap Toward Development

Creativity, entrepreneurship and investment are the engines of growth. However, all businesses -not just big businesses- should have a chance to modernize and prosper. We will fight monopolistic behaviour, excessive concentration of business interests to the detriment of SMEs, and conducts that harm sustainable development or the environment.

SMEs and Entrepreneurship

Ø A new Small and Medium-size Enterprise Department within the Ministry of Economy will coordinate SME development policy and subsidies.

Ø New Regional Development Agencies will coordinate SME support programs throughout Chile. Coverage of the Chile Emprende plan will be expanded.

Ø The number of BancoEstado's micro-enterprise customers, credit lines and products will be expanded, with a view to having 300,000 micro-enterprise customers by the year 2008. SME debts will be rescheduled through expeditious, fair mechanisms.

Free Competition

Ø The Chief Antitrust Prosecutor will be selected by the Senior Public Service System to ensure an arm's length relationship with government. The members of the Free Competition Court will be engaged on a full-time basis.

Ø The government will have an explicit merger policy that will clearly identify the guidelines and framework for assessing anti-competitive conduct and mergers.

Ø New legislation will change penalties for anti-competitive conduct from a set fine to actual damages.

Financial Markets

Ø Oversight of financial, banking, securities, insurance and pension fund markets will be consolidated under a single Superintendent's Office.

Ø Further competition in the financial system will be encouraged, including a careful review of barriers deterring new entrants.

Ø We will continue to promote Chile as a key regional financial hub.

New Environmental Policy

Ø The Director of the National Commission on the Environment will have cabinet rank.

Ø There will be a new Superintendent of the Environment with full oversight powers.

Ø We will implement a new Environmental Protection Plan containing comprehensive institutional and legal measures.

Ø The Metro Santiago Pollution Plan will be reviewed and optimized for application in southern cities facing similar pollution issues.

Innovation and Development

Ø Innovative public and private ideas will be supported through a new Innovation Council.

Ø We will strongly encourage regional production, science and technology clusters.

Ø We stand committed to spending 1% of GDP on R&D by 2010.

3) A New Deal For Citizens

The quality of democracy depends on the quality of the relation between citizens and public institutions. In a true democratic society, all citizens have an impact and a say on public decision-making. We want a strong, empowered civil society capable of cooperative interaction with a receptive, approachable government.

A Discrimination-Free Chile

Ø Women often bear the brunt of discrimination -in the workplace, by health and social insurance providers, and even at home. Within the first 100 days of the new government we will enact a Public Sector Code of Non-Discrimination and Good Labor Practices, which will be open for voluntary adoption by the private sector.

Ø We undertake to eradicate all discrimination based on gender, language, creed, disability, income level or political belief. We will especially put an end to discrimination against women of childbearing age in ISAPRE health plans.

Citizenship and Civic Participation

- Ø Automatic voter registration at age 18, electronic voting and voting rights for Chileans abroad will all be promoted.
- Ø The binomial electoral system will be replaced with an alternative guaranteeing competition, representation, and governance.
- Ø A participatory budget review process designed to enable citizens to have both an impact and a say on local resource allocation will be implemented.
- Ø Formal citizen consultation for sector-specific policymaking will be institutionalized.

Justice for All

- Ø We will reform the civil justice system in order to guarantee expeditious, timely, comprehensible, and dynamic justice in civil matters.
- Ø A new system of local community justice will be created.
- Ø The Notary Public and Registrar system will be reviewed to ensure transparency, efficiency, and availability to all.

Decentralization

- Ø Direct election of Regional Councillors will be encouraged.
- Ø New Regional Development Agencies will be at the heart of strategic public-private partnerships in the interest of growth and development in all regions.
- Ø Regional government will be strengthened, notably through a redefinition of the role of Regional and Provincial Governors and Regional Councils.
- Ø A partnership agreement between citizens and the central and local levels of government will be proposed. This agreement will be intended to improve municipal budget allocation, efficiency, and accountability.

Culture For All

- Ø Enrolment in art schools will be increased twofold. The primary and secondary curriculum will be expanded to include more art and music instructional time.
- Ø The cultural infrastructure will be significantly improved. We aim to have a public library and cultural center in every district and town with 50,000 inhabitants or more.