

Luni, 7 aprilie, sau marți, 8 aprilie, Congress Center Multifunctional Hall (Level 1)

Speech delivered by Ms. Pollyanna-Hanellore HANGAN, on behalf of the Parliamentary Romanian Delegation to the IPU, on the *General Debate*:

Parliamentary action for social development and justice

Honorable President, esteemed parliamentarians,

It is a great honor to address you today, on a cause that we all share in terms of responsibility: social development and justice.

Today we are facing major challenges driven by demographic changes and financial and economic crises. In light of the pressure on public budgets and the risks of structural deficits in the labor market in the future, it is the duty of Parliament to support and adopt measures to modernize social policies in order to ensure efficiency and sustainability in their funding.

In this context, in 2017, the European Union established the European Pillar of Social Rights, a mechanism aimed at improving living and working conditions across the Union, which includes, among other things, analyzing the impact of digitalization on the labor market, including the introduction of Artificial Intelligence. As members of Parliament, we have the responsibility to support these initiatives and collaborate on adapting national legislation to these new realities.

At the national level, an important reform is the Hub for Digital Services in the field of social assistance, which will facilitate the provision of electronic public services and ensure the interoperability of information systems at all levels. These reforms, supported by Parliament, will assist in modernizing social assistance, aiming to improve the quality of life, reduce poverty, and promote social inclusion.

Through the 2024-2028 Governance Program, the Ministry of Labor, Family, Youth, and Social Solidarity has assumed ambitious objectives aimed at supporting families with children. Additionally, the modernization of the social assistance system and increasing access to social services remain clear priorities within this program.

In the National Strategy for Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction for the next period, essential policies are outlined for the social protection of vulnerable groups: children, the elderly, people with disabilities, and others at risk of social exclusion. These policies are supported by us, the parliamentarians, through legislation and the allocation of appropriate financial resources.

Additionally, in the context of collaboration with European Union partners, we have developed and implemented a roadmap for quality jobs, supporting national policies already in place, such as the introduction of the

European minimum wage. In this regard, we continue to strengthen dialogue with social partners to address both the needs of workers and the requirements of the business environment.

Regarding vulnerable citizens, we place a high priority on combating poverty, through strategies and action plans, aimed at improving access to housing and supporting those facing homelessness or precarious working conditions. These tools, together with the reforms and strategies already in place in the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (PNRR), will strengthen public services and contribute to reducing poverty and social exclusion.

At the same time, as part of the National Plan, Romania has committed to a major pension system reform, aimed at ensuring its sustainability and reducing existing inequalities.

With regard to the green and digital transitions, which are shaping the future of the labor market, it is necessary to accelerate citizen training processes so that their skills meet the requirements of the new economy.

Romania has already adopted strategies in adult education and supports the participation of Romanian universities in European university alliances, in order to reduce gaps and promote cultural and academic diplomacy.

In conclusion, ladies and gentlemen, I would like to emphasize that social development means leaving no one behind. It is our duty, as parliamentarians, to adopt economic policies and legislative measures that reduce poverty, promote equal opportunities, and combat discrimination in all its forms, for sustainable social development.

Thank you!