

General debate: “Parliamentary action for social development and justice”

Dear Chairperson, dear colleagues,

Social development and justice, which we have placed at the heart of this Assembly, are deeply intertwined with our core societal values. Yet, despite ongoing efforts to build a just and solidarity-based society, we continue to face challenges that require deeper reflection and more decisive action.

Slovenia takes pride in its commitment to reducing poverty risk, but this does not mean that full social justice has been achieved. A segment of the population still experiences some form of social exclusion, whether due to poverty or limited access to basic necessities and services. This is particularly true for vulnerable groups such as the elderly, the homeless, the long-term unemployed, people with disabilities, and members of various ethnic communities.

A key challenge in social development is ensuring equal opportunities for all, regardless of origin, gender, age, or social status. Justice also requires active policies that guarantee equal access to education, employment, healthcare, and other essential public goods.

Slovenia has devoted particular attention to this issue in recent years, implementing several measures to address it. Notably, we have increased the amount of social assistance benefits in cash and expanded the range of income supplement beneficiaries. Also, we have ensured that all pensioners with a full pensionable service receive a guaranteed minimum old-age pension.

Beyond providing social assistance, subsidies, and reduced payments, significant attention is given to the social activation programme, under which we will continue to allocate resources to support individuals facing long-term unemployment and social exclusion.

I would also like to highlight two key political priorities of my country. First, the establishment of a comprehensive long-term care system to improve the affordability and accessibility of essential services, particularly for elderly individuals in vulnerable social situations, many of whom are women. Second, the development of a sustainable system for financing and constructing affordable rental housing.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Promoting social development and justice is a shared responsibility of society as a whole. Only through collective effort and a clear vision of equal opportunities for all can we build a sustainable and just society. Parliamentarians play a crucial role in this process, and I therefore welcome today's debate, which I believe marks a meaningful step forward in our shared efforts.

Thank you.