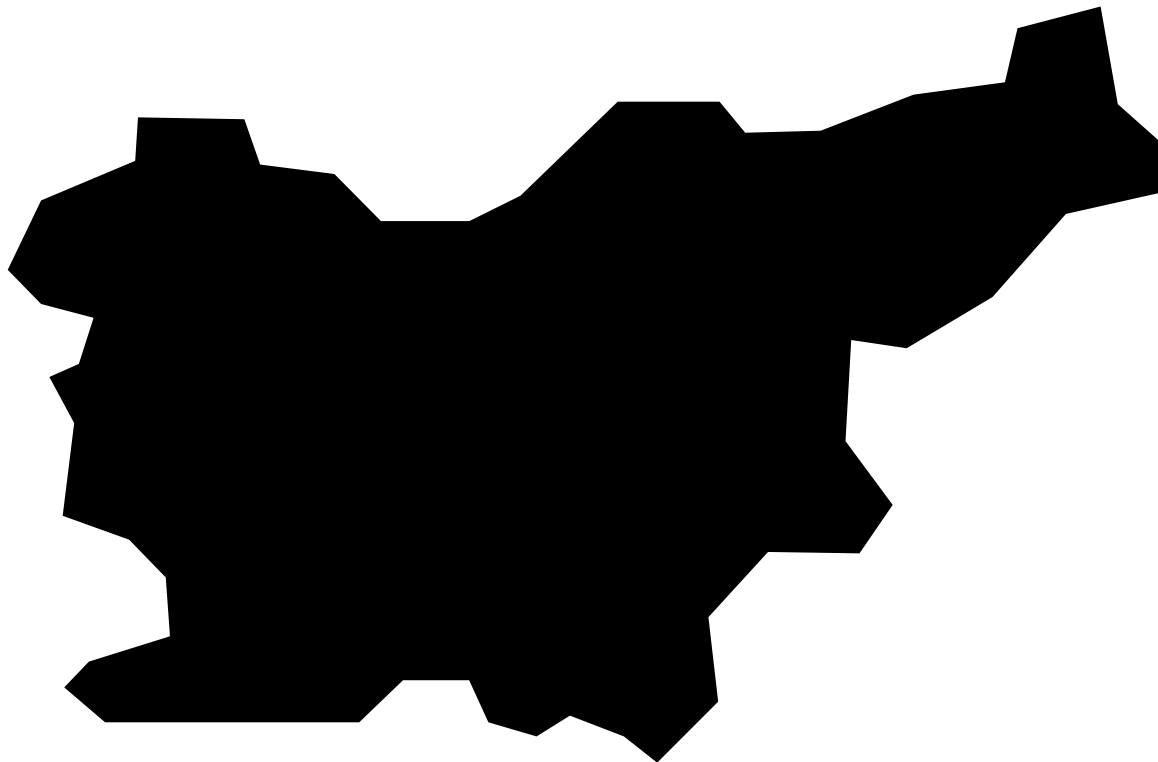


Social Rights Monitor 2025 - Country Report - Slovenia



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About SOLIDAR

SOLIDAR is a European network of progressive Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) working to advance social justice through a just transition in Europe and worldwide. We represent over 50 member organisations based in 26 countries (19 of which are EU countries), among which national CSOs in Europe, as well as some non-EU and EU-wide organisations, working in one or more of our fields of activity.

The network is brought together by its shared values of solidarity, equality and participation.

SOLIDAR voices the concerns of its member organisations to the EU and international institutions by carrying out advocacy actions, project management and coordination, policy monitoring and awareness-raising across its different policy areas.

What is the Social Rights Monitor (SRM)?

The Social Rights Monitor assesses the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights (EPSR) at national level from a civil society perspective. The EPSR – also known as the Social Pillar – is a set of 20 principles that guide the action of the European Union in the realm of social affairs and policies. In other words, it is intended to be a compass guiding the EU towards a more social Europe. For too many people, however, the implementation of these principles at national and EU level is not yet a reality.

Thanks to the contribution of our members and their networks on the ground (the National Strategy Groups), SOLIDAR monitors the extent to which social rights are respected, upheld and promoted for all people living in the EU. The Social Rights Monitor also investigates the health of civic space and social and civil dialogue in the EU, as well as the extent to which a just transition is being pursued. Therefore, the thematic areas covered by the Monitor are the following: Equal opportunities and access to the labour market; Fair working conditions; Social inclusion and protection; a Just transition; and Civic space. The first three correspond to the three chapters of the EPSR, while the last two have been added to give a fuller picture of social justice in Europe.

Thanks to first-hand data gathered by national civil society organisations, the Social Rights Monitor constitutes a direct channel of policy recommendations between the national level and EU policymakers. It thus amplifies the voices and needs of the most marginalised groups. The Monitor dedicates a section to “advocacy messages” which result from the national-level analyses in each thematic area and are addressed to EU policymakers.

Countries are assigned a score for each thematic area out of a maximum of 100 points. This makes immediately visible how each country is performing in each area and enables comparison with other countries. The numerical scores originate from the National Strategy Groups’ (NSGs) assessments of national developments related to social rights, civic space and just transition. Negative developments in an area result in lower scores. NSGs rate these developments for each country by replying to Linkert-scale questions. This means that the score of a country’s thematic area is given by adding up all the rates given to the questions concerning that thematic area and expressing the score out of 100. The overall score of a country is the average of the thematic areas scores. Further details on the questionnaire and data gathering are provided in the section “About: What is the process?”

Since the SRM score reflects the NSG’s assessment of changes—either improvements or deteriorations—in each of the five areas over the past 12 months, it does not represent the overall status of these dimensions in absolute terms. Instead, it highlights recent trends. For example, a country with a historically strong welfare state might receive a low score if recent reforms have significantly weakened social rights or pose a risk of doing so. This does not imply that the overall situation is poor, but rather that recent developments are cause for concern and may undermine social standards over time.

Therefore, the SRM should not be used to compare the overall situation of social rights across countries—official statistics are more appropriate for that purpose. Instead, it serves as a tool to track short-term national trends and to understand the perspectives of civil society organizations (CSOs) on these developments.

What is the process?

The Social Rights Monitor is a tool that amplifies the voice of progressive civil society at national level. Its content is based on the inputs provided by the National Strategy Groups (NSGs) set up by SOLIDAR’s members and partners, which are active in the countries analysed. They consist of NGOs, associations, movements, trade unions, academia and thinktanks, ensuring that the perspective of civil society is mirrored in the Social Rights Monitor’s analysis. The Monitor reflects the experiences of these organisations, which are active on the ground, and the experiences are complemented by scientific data gathered through desk research.

The data elaborated in the Social Rights Monitor are gathered by SOLIDAR’s secretariat through a questionnaire distributed to the National Strategy Group Leaders (our national members) and completed with information produced by each group. From 2023, this questionnaire has been carried out online.

Based on the picture that emerges from the Monitor, SOLIDAR and the NSGs together devise policy recommendations for EU policymakers. These aim to make social rights, a healthy planet and an enabling, free, protected civic space a reality for all in Europe. The key recommendations stemming from the analysis are used as a basis for SOLIDAR's social affairs advocacy work.

The SRM is published every year, around the end of November/beginning of December and its findings cover the period going from June of the previous year to May of the year of the publication. This timeline is due to the fact that the NSGs submit their questionnaire by the end of May of the publication year.

How do we use it?

SOLIDAR's main role as a European-level civil society network is as a bridge between EU institutions and their policies on the one hand and our progressive members working at the national level on the other. The Social Rights Monitor is a valuable tool to gather information from the ground and bring it to policymakers' attention. This ensures that the voices of the most neglected social groups are duly taken into account. For example, the SRM complements the European Semester, by providing a more-complete assessment of Member State policies. Regrettably, the Semester is still too focused on countries' economic and financial performances and does not provide sufficient guidance on upward social convergence in the European Union.

SOLIDAR disseminates the findings of the Social Rights Monitor in various ways, including through the Social Europe Conference, an annual event at which it is presented, and which also explores a topic of priority for social Europe. More generally, the Monitor is one of the main ways through which the SOLIDAR network presents its positions on social affairs, so its findings are mainstreamed throughout our advocacy work.

Social Rights Monitor Overview

SCORE: 32

Slovenia has made progress in multiple areas. Migrants and refugees are more included. The minimum wage continues to be comparatively high. And access to healthcare has improved. EU funds are being used to expand educational opportunities and teachers' capabilities and to advance the green transition. Civic space is significantly better than in previous years. However, further action is required in youth employment. There is still a significant gender gap. And housing continues to be expensive.

The NSG for Slovenia was led by SOLIDAR's member **Povod**.



Equal Opportunities and Access to the Labour Market

SCORE: 36

Inclusion of migrants, refugees, asylum seekers and minorities

Several initiatives have significantly improved the inclusion of migrants and refugees in Slovenia. The initiatives form part of a comprehensive approach, encompassing legislative reforms and educational opportunities, as well as digital and local participation.

One is the Education Pathway to Slovenia, a scholarship project run by the Slovenian authorities and the Euro-Mediterranean University in cooperation with UNHCR.^[1] The project allows refugee students who already have a bachelor's degree to pursue a master's degree in Slovenia. It provides them with comprehensive support, including assistance with social integration through, for instance, access to higher education and financial support, to ensure that they integrate smoothly into Slovenian society.

Slovenia's immigration laws were reformed in 2023 to remove administrative barriers and to streamline the immigration process.^[2] The main goal was to attract and retain foreign workers to fill labour and skills shortages. The Foreigners Act was amended to simplify the issuance and renewal of temporary residency permits in 2023.^[3] Permit cards no longer need to be served by post, facilitating the process for people with less stable housing situations. The storage of fingerprints required for these cards and for permit extensions has been extended to five years from the extremely short 30 to 60 days period that was previously set. This greatly relief migrants from the administrative burden linked to permit cards. Changing jobs or employers now only requires approval from the Employment Service, while before also the approval of the Administrative unit (upravna enota) was necessary. And workers' self-sufficiency is only verified when work permits are issued or renewed and is no longer subject to periodic reviews. Amendments to the Employment, Self-employment and Work of Foreigners Act reduced the waiting period for international protection applicants to access the labour market from nine to three months.^[4] In April 2025, the government also announced its intention to further amend the Foreigners Act.^[5] The new amendments introduce several significant changes, many of which are closely tied to the amendment of the Employment, Self-employment and Work of Foreigners Act (ZZSDT-E). Key reforms include the enhancement of the EU Blue Card system to make beneficiaries of international protection eligible, and the introduction of a temporary residence permit specifically for digital nomads. The amendment also extends the validity period of certain permits and allows for in-country applications for first-time residence permits, removing the need for applicants to apply from abroad. Additionally, it simplifies access to employment for other categories of residents, strengthens protections for workers while ensuring stricter employer compliance under the ZZSDT-E, and broadens the scope of immediate family reunification rights.

Good practice:

The elementary school Livada in Ljubljana is highlighted by the NSG as a good practice to promote the integration of migrants. The school is part of the "Challenges of Intercultural Coexistence" project, which is co-financed by the ESF+.^[6] The school provides migrant children with language courses, as well as practical courses on how to integrate into Slovenian society, with the possibility of

additional individual and/or group support. Similarly, the adult education centre Jesenice aims to facilitate the inclusion of migrants by taking their cultural background into account through cultural mediators.[7] In doing so, it seeks to facilitate and strengthen the building of trust between the migrants and local communities. Lastly, the NSG highlights that migrants and beneficiaries of international protection are entitled to free Slovenian language courses through the "Initial Integration of Immigrants Programme".[8] The programme is co-financed by the AMIF and the duration of these courses is linked to the duration of their status.

Education, training and lifelong learning

The Slovenian Institute for Adult Education (SIAE) is currently implementing several EU-funded projects that invest in and improve adult education. "Strengthening Lifelong Learning", for example, is running from 2023 to 2029 to train and upskill educators engaged in developmental and professional work with adults. It has a €5 million budget to cover activities including the development of materials, programmes and tools.[9] "Competences of Adult Education Professionals 2024-2028" has a €3.5 million budget to train educators and managers in inclusion in education and how to cope with social and environmental changes. Another SIAE project is called "Raising Awareness".[10] The Institute and various adult education providers will organize promotional campaigns to inform citizens and encourage lifelong learning.

Two other projects highlighted by the NSG include the University of Ljubljana's establishment in September 2024 of the UNESCO Chair on Teacher Education for Sustainable Development.[11] This initiative will pursue research, teacher development and community engagement to improve educators' capabilities with a special focus on global challenges such as digitalization and climate change. The other project is a two-year pilot launched in 2024 to promote digital citizenship.[12] It features collaborative activities, partnerships with CSOs and workshops with Council of Europe experts on digital citizenship education.

Good practice:

The SIAE has established 35 Guidance Centres for Adult Education across Slovenia to provide free and accessible services for adults seeking education or career development.[13] The centres aim to promote lifelong learning and participation in adult education and to support vulnerable groups such as the unemployed, migrants and minorities. Since 2021, the centres' guidance on adult education has been a public service that makes adult education more inclusive. The centres have also implemented EU-funded projects, such as "Strengthening Lifelong Learning" and previous editions of "Competences of Adult Education Professionals".

Youth employment

The youth unemployment rate was 11.2% in May 2025, 1.2 percentage points higher than in the same month of 2024. However, the rate has fluctuated in recent years. Its recent low, in January 2023, was 7.1%. Its recent high, in July 2024, was 13.6%.[14] [15]

The NSG highlights the increased focus on career counselling services, including more-comprehensive training for counsellors and closer collaboration with employers. However, Slovenia dedicates relatively few resources to labour market programmes compared to other OECD countries. Additional efforts are needed for vulnerable groups, such as migrant youth, young mothers and young Roma. [16]

Good practice:

Improved collaboration between schools and employers has benefited youth employment, as education has become better attuned to the needs of the labour market, according to the NSG. Job matching and access to training have been facilitated by better job counselling services, greater opportunities for mentorship and training in real work environments and the use of digital platforms. These improvements are thanks to coordination between the Employment Service of Slovenia (ESS) and local providers of education and training.

Gender equality

Slovenia has made significant progress in gender equality, according to a report by the Ministry of Labour Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities[17]. This was partially confirmed by the European Institute for Gender Equality's (EIGE) Gender Equality Index 2024, yet the EIGE highlights some areas for improvement.

The Gender Equality Index ranks Slovenia 12th in the EU, with a score of 70.1 out of 100,[18] which is slightly below the EU average of 71.0 despite consistent improvements in recent years. The biggest improvement was in power, in which the indicator increased 2.9 points, mainly due to improvements in the political sub-category. However, the percentage of women on the board of Slovenia's central bank decreased from 50% in 2022 to 20% in 2023. Although women are more likely than men to have tertiary education, the full-time employment rate of women is 11 percentage points lower than that for men. While this gap is below the EU average of 15 percentage points, the gap between single women and single men in Slovenia was extremely high in 2022, at 30 percentage points.

The gender pay gap for monthly gross wages was estimated at 6.1% in 2022.[19] Whilst men's wages were higher in all occupations, the gender pay gap was particularly pronounced for service workers including shop and market sales workers, for whom the gap was

18.1%.[20]



Fair Working Conditions

SCORE: 28

Adequate minimum wages

Slovenia continues to have one of the highest statutory minimum wages in the EU. The minimum gross monthly wage was €1 278 in the first semester of 2025, the eighth highest in the EU according to Eurostat data.[21] The minimum wage in Slovenia was over 60% of the median gross monthly wage, according to Eurostat data for 2022.

However, there are several challenges identified by the NSG, especially for low-paid and precarious workers. Sectoral differences are significant, and workers in hospitality, retail, and agriculture often earn far less than the national average. Wages in urban areas are often inadequate to cover rapidly rising housing, energy and food costs. The minimum wage is shaped by labour market dynamics and social dialogue, so it should take inflation into account. But the real value of wages can be inadequate for young workers and families.



Social Inclusion and Protection

SCORE: 27

Access to quality healthcare

Several legislative initiatives and reforms have significantly improved access to healthcare in Slovenia, the NSG reports. The voluntary supplementary health insurance system was replaced by a mandatory system, with a monthly contribution of €37,17. This change from a voluntary private system to mandatory public system simplifies healthcare and greatly contributes to equal access for all to necessary healthcare services. Other legislative reforms have been structural, such as the reform of healthcare financing and improvements of digital infrastructure. The NSG highlights the important role CSOs play in Slovenian healthcare, particularly in reaching marginalized populations. The “Pro Bono Clinic – Clinic with counselling service for persons without health insurance” for example, helps people who cannot afford basic health insurance and provides them with essential and urgent medical.[22]

Further legislative reforms and initiatives will be rolled out as a part of the Strategy for the Development of Health Services in Primary Healthcare to 2031. This aims to improve primary healthcare services, by making their care integrated, higher quality and better aligned with the needs of the population. It also aims to improve the work environment for healthcare professionals. It will be implemented through short-term action plans with concrete measures, which will run for two-year periods – 2025–2026, 2027–2029 and 2030–2031.[23]

Good practice:

The NSG highlights the activities of several Slovenian NGOs as good practices in ensuring access to quality healthcare.

The NGO Slovenska Filantropija, active since 1992, organises several programmes aimed at improving the access to healthcare for minority and vulnerable social groups.[24] They organise the “Pro bono clinics”, which were discussed before. In addition to this, they organise migrant and refugee support groups. These groups offer services such as interpretation, health navigation services, and education on patient rights. The NGO Slovenian Association for Mental Health (ŠENT) has been active since 1993 and organizes programmes to reduce stigma around mental illness and improve access to psychological support.[25] They mainly work on the rehabilitation of people with mental health issues. As such, they provide self-help group services, counselling, and group activities. Additionally, they have a social inclusion programme for people with disabilities, that aims to support and preserve their working capacities.[26] Lastly, they also engage in advocacy efforts for the interests of people with mental health challenges.[27]

Several Roma Community NGOs, such as Zveza Romov Slovenije focus on improving the access to health insurance, vaccination, and maternal care for Roma people.[28]

Housing

Housing affordability and availability have been persistent problems in Slovenia, as both rent and house prices have increased each year over the past decade. The cost of housing has risen 5 percentage points faster than incomes since the Covid-19 pandemic, according to the OECD.[29] Comprehensive reforms are needed in wage, pension and social policy to address the rising cost of living, according to Slovenia’s Institute of Macroeconomic Analysis and Development.[30]

Several causes are identified for the rising houses prices. Firstly, public housing supply in Slovenia is low, especially when compared to other EU countries.[31] Access to social housing remains difficult for migrants, despite improvements in recent years, which were mainly targeted at beneficiaries of international protection.[32] Migrants with an irregular status are particularly vulnerable, as they have limited access to public housing, and many landlords are biased against renting to migrants. A second problem is the severe lack of regulation of private rental. Regulations and their enforcement are inadequate: There is no inspection, and registers do not exist. That has led the private market to be dominated by informal short-term contracts. There are no rules on rent increases, the NSG reports, adding to the high unpredictability of rent and making renting still more unattractive as a long-term housing option. Lastly, it has become increasingly difficult to purchase properties. House prices peaked in 2022, but the high prices continue to affect demand.[33] Over a 10-year period, prices of newly built flats rose 10.2%, existing family houses 10.0%, and existing flats 7.3%. Few people take out mortgage loans to buy houses, and homeownership amongst the young is lower than for the middle-aged and elderly. Furthermore, inefficient spatial planning and permitting procedures hinder construction, and a considerable portion of the housing stock dates from before the 1980s. These houses are often energy-inefficient, which contributes to energy poverty in low- and middle-income households. Nevertheless, Slovenia does have better living conditions than its neighbours, the OECD reports.[34]

In March 2025, the government announced new investments through the Housing Fund of the Republic of Slovenia – accompanied by changes in the housing laws and state financial support – to create several thousand new rental units.[35]



Civic Space

SCORE: 42

The CIVICUS Monitor classifies civic space in Slovenia as “Open”, making Slovenia one of only 3.6% countries worldwide that it classifies as such. The “Open” classification shows that civic space has improved since the 2021-2023 period, when Slovenia was classified as “Narrowed”. [36] Citizens are free to form associations and protests whilst being protected by the police. Civil society organizations can operate freely and criticize the government. One reason for the improved ranking is the renewed independence of the public broadcaster RTV Slovenia, which greatly improves freedom of press.

Enabling space for civil society

Slovenia has made significant improvements in securing space for civil society and in undoing some of the damage done under the previous repressive government of ex-Prime Minister Janez Janša. For example, a new law grants amnesty to people who were fined for violating Covid-19 restrictions, as these restrictions were proven to be not compatible with the national constitution.^[37] Now, new mechanisms for civil society consultation have been established, as have additional open channels for participation.

But several problems have persisted, the NSG reports. Many CSOs in Slovenia experience funding difficulties, as public funding has been limited, especially for CSOs active on the environment and migration. This is in part due to the controversial cancellation of several public tenders (worth more than €10 million in total) by the Ministry of Public Administration in late 2023 after several resignations related to audits. Another factor is the freezing of the Fund for the Development of Non-Government Organisations due to a corruption scandal, creating severe difficulties for CSOs that have not received the funds they need.

Other forms of support for CSOs, too, have either stagnated or are absent altogether. The Law on NGOs included several support measures, yet their implementation has not progressed since 2018.^[38] The government's new NGO development strategy is still pending. More worryingly, the mandate of the Government Council for Cooperation with NGOs – an expert and consultative body of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia that among other things facilitates the dialogue and cooperation between the government and NGOs – has not been renewed.^[39] Both CSOs and activists are still subject to verbal attacks, online hate speech and smear campaigns, in particular by opposition parties. Moreover, the lack of a comprehensive legal framework to protect CSOs and defenders of human rights leaves them vulnerable to SLAPPs (strategic lawsuits against public participation).

Civil dialogue

Several initiatives have improved civil dialogue in Slovenia over the past year. The Government Office for Development and European Cohesion Policy collaborated with the SLOGA Platform of NGOs to organise cross-sectoral workshops.^[40] These involved stakeholders including CSOs, public authorities, businesses, and academia. The main topic of discussion was the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. However, these have not been organised since 2021. The Parliament for the Future of Europe – a civil society initiative to discuss and scrutinize the proposals of the historic Conference on the Future of Europe and reshape them to be more inclusive and meet the needs of vulnerable communities. – organized a series of inclusive civil dialogue events in 2023 and 2024.^[41] In these, over 50 representatives from marginalized and underrepresented groups – such as youth, migrants, Roma and LGBTIQ+ reviewed and debated proposals from the Conference on the Future of Europe.^[42]



Just Transition

SCORE: 33

Quality of jobs in the green transition

Slovenia has consistently invested in the green transition and to ensure that workers can re- and upskill into new industrial sectors. The Slovenian government has used funding from the Recovery and Resilience Plan to finance 63 direct-investment projects aimed at decarbonizing the economy, according to the European Commission's 2024 Country Report on Slovenia.^[43] These projects need to comply with a set of environmental performance criteria and the principle that they “do no significant harm”. In addition, the Ministry of Cohesion and Regional Development announced that it would use funding from the Just Transition Fund to support active labour market policies and encourage companies to transition from coal to green industries in two coal-industry-heavy regions. Such measures are needed to ensure that workers in regions dominated by traditional industries are able to up- and reskill to meet the needs of green industries, the NSG points out.

One example of upskilling is a programme financed by the Recovery and Resilience Fund to train 20 000 teachers – around 40% of the total – in digital, sustainable and financial literacy.^[44] Improving these teachers' capabilities will align education more closely with the needs of the labour market and ease students' transitions to work. The Ministry of Cohesion and Regional Development has approved the “SPIN 2.0” project to reskill workers whose jobs are at risk because of the green transition, digitization and automatization.^[45] It is one of several projects funded through the European Social Fund Plus.^[46]

With these skills, workers will be able to take up the new job opportunities created by the green transition. For example, the European Investment Bank has issued a €50 million loan to Electro Ljubljana to increase the reliability, efficiency and sustainability of its energy infrastructure.[47] Solar panels and photovoltaic installations are also receiving investments, as is renovation to improve the energy efficiency of old housing stock.[48] The electrification of transport – both private and public transport – and the circular economy are also important new sources of jobs.

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