



**Socialni teden**  
**14. - 19. september 2009**

Človek pred izzivi socialnih sprememb

Social Academy, Caritas Slovenia, Jesuit Refugee Service, Youth Guild, The Union of Christian Business Executives of Slovenia, Slovenian Catholic Professionals, Association of Kolping social activities of Slovenia, Slovenian National Scout and Guide Fellowship, Slovenian workers association and Council of catholic laymen of Slovenia.

Prepared a Social week entitled

### **MAN FACING THE CHALLENGES OF SOCIAL CHANGES**

in the week between 14th and 19th September 2009 and adopted the following

#### **DECLARATION**

In the last year we are witnessing one of the biggest financial, economic and social crises in the last couple of decades. Unlike some other crises, the one we are going through now cannot be sufficiently explained only with the so called theories of cycles, according to which the periods of economic growth and fall are supposedly repeating periodically without any crucial social changes. This crisis is far deeper, but unfortunately the majority of lay and professional (economic) public is not aware enough of that.

Today's lifestyle cannot last in the long-term. We are facing challenges of social changes, for which all of us have to take responsibility, each of us according to our level of influence and power. We need to act immediately, for our common future.

**The only long-term exit from the crisis is possible with real changes in habits and everyday decisions at an individual level, and a reform of regulatory framework at the level of country, economy and civil society in the direction of human dignity, solidarity and ecological responsibility.**

Organiser of the first Social week in our country see the following main challenges on the basis of debates:

1. Establish trust as a basis of interpersonal, economic and institutional relations.

Growing distrust, incited by interhuman alienation, economic frauds and political pettifoggery, encourages individuals to shut down and thus paralyses social tissue, which is strictly necessary for operation of legal and social country.

## 2. Reduce consumption of goods.

Consumption of goods and also non-renewable resources increased quickly in the last decades, which caused deeply moving changes in the Earth's surface and climate changes. Planet Earth has limited capacities, which is why at the increasing consumption we can compare it with a closed bottle, in which pressure is getting bigger and bigger. Each person is called to searching the personal "enough point", that is a point, when a decent human life passes over to excessive and unnecessary luxury. Thinking that we can spend the well-deserved money in whatever way we want to, proved too narrow – we have to spend responsibly!

<http://www.socialna-akademija.si/teden>

## 3. Change fundamental economic paradigms.

Earlier ways of measuring economic success and development are not sufficient, since they don't include important elements. Gross domestic product as fundamental economic indicator includes only capital and not also a human being and many indirect "costs" (long-term environmental damage, long-term medical risks, long-term influence on values, family life, happiness and satisfaction of people...). An individual is a value above capital, which is why we need to direct a lot of attention to a question of how we get to profit and also to questions as for what (for what purpose) we use it and distribute it, while we long for profit. Accumulation of wealth is not socially responsible without sustainable approach.

## 4. Strengthen solidarity and cohabitation among generations.

Interpersonal interdependence we as citizens feel, calls upon establishment of deeper solidarity and cohabitation among generations (questions of young people, pension scheme...). Changes in this field need a reflective approach with a lot of human sensitivity.

## 5. Strengthen upbringing for values through the entire life of an individual.

The basis of the necessary changes are honest and informed people with love for their relatives, ready to work for common good. This is why an upbringing for authentic human values is of major importance. Essential role in upbringing belongs to family, which has to be acknowledged by society and assured a central place, be protected and helped with decent living. As second one we expose educational system, which has unfortunately become too valueless, competitory and directed to only professional education and not adjusted to real needs of a society and individual. Educational system is never value-neutral! A broad social consensus is needed about which common values of nation we want to bring up with it. As third we mention civil society (non-governmental organisations and religious community), which has enormous potential to become really alive social binder and the key factor of life-long learning and education of responsibility. Enough financial means have to be assured for the operation of civil society and assure its plurality.

Organisers of the first Social week believe that all of us are responsible for our future. Each person's contribution is important regardless of how powerful or influential he is (or feels)

in a society. Slovene Catholics want to contribute to a more sympathetic and just society with good deeds and care for our future and want to cooperate in order to achieve these goals with all people of good will in Slovenia.

Enciklika of the pope Benedikt XVI. entitled Caritas in Veritate (Love in fact; 2009) is addressing us first to search for truth and to love relatives in all burning questions today. Confronting with real challenges and contributing to common good in love are not only our duties, but also an urgency for sustainable development of human and nations.

Ljubljana and Celje

19 September 2009