



**Maria João Rodrigues MEP was in Slovenia to discuss Progressive Reforms with the Slovenian government today.** The trip, made on behalf of the Party of European Socialists (PES) was part of a series of meetings to exchange views with PES member parties on its Programme of Progressive Reforms - a detailed social-democratic agenda for building sustainable and broadly-shared prosperity in Europe. The PES programme of progressive reforms shows the way towards higher economic growth, quality jobs, better environment and a real equality of opportunity.

As Vice-President of the Socialists & Democrats group in the European Parliament and Chair of the PES Working Group on progressive reforms, Maria João Rodrigues discussed the Programme of Progressive Reforms with the Slovenian Social Democrats (SD) in Ljubljana. She met with the President of the Republic of Slovenia **Borut Pahor**, State Secretary for Social Affairs **Martina Vuk**, State Secretary for Agriculture **Marjan Podgorsek**, Vice President of the Parliament **Matjaz Nemec** and SD members of parliament, as well as prominent party members, former Finance Minister **Franci Krizanic** and former Education Minister **Jernej Pikalo**.

At a public event organized by **Foundation Progresiva** (Društvo Progresiva) **Maria João Rodrigues** stated:

***“Reforms have been a key feature of the political and economic debate in Europe since the onset of the crisis. We are proposing a serious alternative to the neoliberal push for deregulation and privatisation, which has made people worse off, without making European economies stronger. Rather than reforms that compete on the lowest standards, we want reforms that create jobs and promote a strong European social model. We need modern public administration, good education, investment in jobseekers' skills, good-quality childcare, accessible healthcare and fair taxation. These progressive reforms will enable people to do business and create prosperity based on fair competition. Thanks to us, the European Semester of policy coordination is slowly changing from an exercise in austerity to a process bringing Europe towards sustainable growth. We will coordinate our political family's efforts in the national capitals and in Brussels to show that our alternative is not only needed, but also possible.”***

Further meetings with PES member parties on Programme of Progressive Reforms will be held in the EU countries in the coming months.

