

**THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
BUILDING**

Parliament building

Construction of the parliament building, designed by the architect Vinko Glanz, began in 1954 and was completed in 1959. It houses the National Assembly and the National Council. The four-storey building has a floor space of 2,200 square metres. Construction of the building followed the principle of using local materials, including marble, stone and wood. The entire building is tiled with karstic marble from Kopriva, while the areas under the windows on the facade are filled with green granite from Oplotnica.

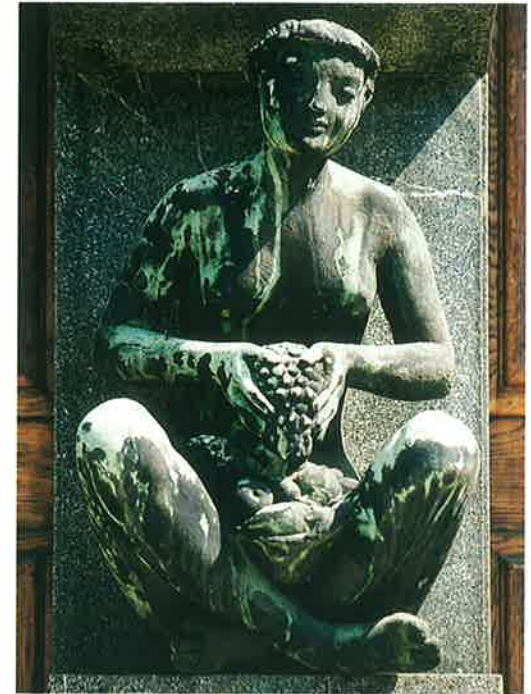


In 1991 a number of accesses were created to join the parliament building with the adjacent building on Tomšičeva ulica which abuts it. The latter building, constructed in 1879 for the Kranjska hranilnica savings bank, now serves as offices for deputy groups, working bodies and various parliamentary services.

Pressure on space partly brought about by changes to work methods and the different competencies of the parliament mean that both buildings are constantly undergoing renovation.

The main facade accent is on the portal. It rises to half way up the first floor, where its top serves as a balcony. The portal is supported on five pillars tiled with granite from Pohorje. In front of the architecture of the entrance the academy sculptors Karel Putrih and Zdenko Kalin mounted symbolic sculptural compositions.

The entire terminal part of the portal is adorned with sculptures by Putrih depicting education, family happiness, mining, electrification, justice, the textile industry, mechanical engineering, fruitgrowing, agriculture, forestry, shipbuilding and fishing. To the far right and left are male and female figures with arms aloft.





Zdenko Kalin provided the sculpture for the pillars. The sculptures depict a safe path into the future, happiness, prosperity and peace. Above are two cherubs with a wreath, symbolically bestowing glory and honour on all those who strive to create a more beautiful and fulfilling life. Kalin devoted the left and right pillars to the arts. Images of children in the middle spaces represent children's games; the outermost pillars carry sculptures of men and women armed for resistance.

The oak portal door leads to the entrance area of the parliament building, which is tiled with stone from the Bela Krajina region. The stairway walls and the walls on the second floor are covered with light stone from Hotavlje, while on the first floor the walls are covered with red stone from the same location. The paving is of green and grey granite from Pohorje.

The ground floor corridor is tiled with dark stone from Podpeč, while the third floor corridor is tiled with karstic limestone of a wonderful light brown

colour, which was used for this purpose as a construction material for the first time in this building.

The mosaics and frescos that adorn and enrich the interior of the National Assembly are the works of recognised Slovene artists: Jože Ciuha, Ivo Šubic, Marij Pregelj and Ivan Seljak-Čopič. The salons and other areas feature the works of well-known Slovene painters: Rihard Jakopič, Matija Jama, Matej Sternen, Božidar Jakac, France Slana, Ivan Grohar, Ivana Kobilca, Gojmir A. Kos, Nikolaj Omersa, Veno Pilon and Riko Debenjak, and recently also the works of contemporary Slovene painters: Jože Spacal, Andrej Jemec, Janez Boljka, Karel Zelenko, Vladimir Makuc, and Marjan Pogačnik.



The Large Hall





The Large Hall, where the National Assembly meets, was renovated in 2000 according to a plan by the architects Sonja Miculinić, Albina Kindlhofer and Darja Valič. The hall is circular, representing the period in Slovene history when village leaders would meet in a circle under a linden tree to debate and take decisions. The circle, the centre of which is emphasised by stone paving, is also a symbol of completeness, denoting the centre of legislative power and the seat of the highest democratic institution.

The guiding theme for the architects was the high-quality and Slovene origin of the materials used (cherry veneer, grey granite from Pohorje, marble from Hotavlje – as used by the original architect Glanz) and their symbolic value in Slovene tradition.

Although the Large Hall of the National Assembly has been completely renovated and fitted with the latest electronic equipment, it still adheres to the design principles of the architect Vinko Glanz, who in 1954 planned the parliament building in what would become the modernist style of the fifties. And with the deliberate use of Slovene stone the new hall indeed pays something of a compliment to the original architect.



The Large Hall has a floor space of 422 square metres and 150 seats. The seats are arranged in circular pattern and slope, as in an amphitheatre, down towards an inner circle of grey Pohorje granite, where there is a partially revolving speaker's podium.



The deputies' desks are equipped with a microphone, a voting device, a headphone socket, an identity card reader, a loudspeaker and an electricity socket for a portable computer. The deputies' seats revolve and can be moved and adjusted for height. They are covered with dark grey leather.

Opposite the main entrance to the hall is the President's desk and the government seats. The position of the President of the National Assembly is additionally equipped with a central voting device and screen. On a marble wall behind the President's desk is a bronze relief of the Slovene coat-of-arms by academy sculptor Marko Pogačnik, made to mark Slovenia's achievement of independence in 1991.

Across the corridor from the Large Hall is the National Assembly's press centre and a large salon and a small salon intended principally for official receptions.

The vestibule of the Large Hall

The vestibule of the Large Hall was refurbished in 2000. Its spaciousness is now emphasised by tonalite paving stone from Pohorje. The most important wall in the vestibule, which contains the entrance into the Large Hall, is harmonised with the redesign of the hall: the doors are lined with grey leather, and between the doors the wall is covered with large tiles of Hotavlje marble.

The area in front of the Large Hall contains a mural by academy painter Slavko Pengov depicting the history of the Slovene nation from the Slav colonisation to the start of postwar renewal. The images start with the time of the migration of nations that accompanied the



collapse of the Roman empire and the settlement of Slovenes. The mural shows a group of men, women and children emerging from the dark background of the Slovenes' ancient homeland. A man of strong build hammers posts into the ground, a symbol of their desire to settle this land. In the shelter of the settlement, wise men meet in council under a linden tree.

The next scene shows the ducal stone in the centre and a depiction of the Carantanian people electing their duke at the castle of Krn. This custom, which was preserved far into the Middle Ages, long after Carantania had lost its independence, represents a unique political and administrative contract in European history. American president Thomas Jefferson used this famous ritual in drawing up the American Declaration of Independence. He searched all over the world for examples of democracy for his declaration and was inspired by the democratic enthroning of the Carantanian dukes.

The suppression of a rebellion against Bavarian rule led by Ljudevit Posavski, who was joined by the Slovenes, had fatal consequences for the Carantanian Slovenes: Carantania became an ordinary county of the Frankish state.





In the 10th century the Slovene land was invaded by Magyars, who occupied a large portion of it. Trouble then followed when a new enemy, the Turks, appeared at the Slovene borders. By 1508 the Turks had killed or enslaved around 200,000 people from the Slovene lands.

Turkish invasions, inadequate defence and new feudal burdens led to resistance among the peasants. The mural depicts a major Croatian and Slovene peasant revolt in 1573.

The 16th century saw the growth of Slovene towns and the flourishing of crafts, trade, culture and the arts. Primož Trubar (1508-1586) represents the country's cultural progress. He is holding his *Spelling Book* (Tübingen, 1550), the first printed book in Slovene, which laid the foundations for the development of spelling and grammar, the Slovene literary language and literature. Alongside Trubar is Janez Vajkard Valvasor (1641-1693), historian, geographer, ethnographer, topographer, soldier and commander, who travelled throughout the Slovene lands researching his celebrated *Glory of the Duchy of Carniola* (Nuremburg, 1689).

The next group on the mural shows representatives of the Enlightenment, the "Zois circle": Baron Žiga Zois, Anton Tomaž Linhart (who later became a dramatist and historian), Valentin

Vodnik (a poet who enthusiastically welcomed the creation of the Illyrian Provinces) and Matevž Langus (painter and portrait artist), who adopted French Enlightenment ideas.

This is followed by the "Prešeren circle": in the centre stands the imposing figure of France Prešeren (1800-1849). By his side are the Slavacist and Prešeren's mentor Matija Čop (1797-1835) and the patron of the arts and collector of ethnographical material Andrej Smole (1800-1840).

The revolutionary year of 1848 is represented in the mural by the Austrian coat-of-arms and the Vienna parliament. Progressive elements among Slovenes at the time drafted a Programme for a United Slovenia, designed to accelerate the social and national development of the Slovene people. Images from the end of the 19th century depict workers' movements, and the start of the 20th century is represented by the writer Ivan Cankar (1876-1918), the First World War and the creation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes.

The last part of the mural is dedicated to the Second World War and the national liberation struggle, right up until liberation in 1945 and then a period of enthusiasm and desire for national renewal.

In the vestibule of the Large Hall is a sculpture of Wrestling Boys by France Kralj from 1942.



The gallery

The gallery is intended for journalists and the public, and during protocol events is also used by the diplomatic corps and invited guests. It was renovated in 2000. It has 106 dark grey leather seats arranged in three rows. The gallery has four booths for interpreters that are also used by radio and television reporters during live broadcasts from the National Assembly.

The vestibule of the gallery was also renovated, with the outstanding feature being the marble tiling on the pillars, floor and walls.



The Small Hall

The Small Hall, which measures 262 square metres and has 120 seats, is where the National Council meets. It is also used for public presentations of opinions, for judges taking the oath, seminars, colloquiums and other events. The hall slopes down towards the presiding officer's desk as in an amphitheatre. There are galleries on either side of the hall for the press and public. The hall is panelled with bleached ashwood. A characteristic of the walls in the Small Hall is the avoidance of sharp corners, giving the architecture a moulded appearance.



REPUBLIKA SLOVENIJA
DRŽAVNI ZBOR



National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia
Šubičeva 4

1000 Ljubljana
Tel: +386 1 478 9400
Fax: +386 1 478 9844

Internet: www.dz-rs.si

Information Department

Tel: +386 1 478 9717
Fax: +386 1 478 9656

International Relations Department

Tel. : +386 1 478 94 83, 478 94 84
Fax.: +386 1 478 98 59

Commission for European Affairs

Tel. : +386 1 478 95 05
Fax.: +386 1 478 98 58



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