



C/2024/1296

9.2.2024

VERBATIM REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS OF 1 JUNE 2023

(C/2024/1296)

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2023-2024 SESSION

Sittings of 31 May and 1 June 2023

BRUSSELS

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VERBATIM REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS OF 1 JUNE 2023

PRESIDENZA DELL'ON. PINA PICIERNO

Vicepresidente

1. Opening of the sitting

(La seduta è aperta alle 9.00)

2. Foreign interference in all democratic processes in the European Union, including disinformation – Election integrity and resilience build-up towards European elections 2024 (debate)

Presidente. – L'ordine del giorno reca, in discussione congiunta,

— la relazione di Sandra Kalniete, a nome della commissione speciale sulle ingerenze straniere in tutti i processi democratici nell'Unione europea, inclusa la disinformazione, e sul rafforzamento dell'integrità, della trasparenza e della responsabilità al Parlamento europeo, sulle ingerenze straniere in tutti i processi democratici nell'Unione europea, inclusa la disinformazione (2022/2075(INI)) (A9-0187/2023), e

— l'interrogazione con richiesta di risposta orale alla Commissione su Integrità elettorale e resilienza in vista delle elezioni europee del 2024, presentata da Raphaël Glucksmann, a nome della commissione speciale sulle ingerenze straniere in tutti i processi democratici nell'Unione europea, inclusa la disinformazione, e sul rafforzamento dell'integrità, della trasparenza e della responsabilità al Parlamento europeo (O-000018/2023 - B9-0019/2023) (2023/2625(RSP)).

Sandra Kalniete, rapporteur. – Madam President, dear colleagues, today it is my great honour to present my second report on foreign interference in all democratic processes in the European Union, including disinformation.

I often hear that democracy around the world is in retreat. I would say that is an incorrect statement. Democracy is not simply in retreat; democracy is under attack. In today's intervention, I would like to especially focus on two overarching aims of the report.

First, link our work in the ING2 Committee with following up the implementation of the recommendations of the first report, which was approved last year.

Second, we must examine the issues under the mandate of our committee vis-a-vis Russia's ongoing brutal war against Ukraine and to build on the lessons learned.

Our assessment shows that we have significantly increased our situational awareness, and several necessary steps have been launched and progress has been attained (Digital Services Act, Democracy Defence package is on the way, growing expertise acquired).

However, in view of the upcoming EU elections in 2024, we still should urge for stronger measures and more coordination to protect our European democracy.

Allow me to outline some of the priorities from our report, which would make a significant difference in making our Union more resilient.

First of all, we need to move beyond a reactive approach centred on fact-checking, debunking, etc., and instead focus on resilience-building and 'vaccination' of our societies against disinformation.

Therefore, we need to establish a dedicated EU programme to invest in our democracy in a sustainable way. It will not give a solution tomorrow and it will be expensive, but it is certainly a worthwhile long-term investment.

Another important conclusion of our report is that in tackling disinformation, the EU is still suffering from a fragmented approach, without a clear coordination mechanism and goals. We simply cannot afford splintering our resources when our democracy is at stake.

Third, we should also greatly raise the costs for perpetrators. Therefore, I reiterate that the toolbox of the EU counter-measures should include a specific sanctions regime on foreign information manipulation and interference.

Russia's imperial war of aggression against Ukraine has clearly exposed the interconnection between hostile information warfare, weaponisation of energy, attacks on critical infrastructure, and threats to the EU, to our immediate neighbourhood, as well as to global security and stability.

Europe now understands that the Cold War logic of buffer states is over. Today, grey zones in European security only create instability, risk and opportunities for hostile interference. The EU must invest in closing these grey zones and supporting the resilience and integration of Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia into our European family and NATO.

To strengthen our resilience, we must learn both from our partners like Ukraine, in building resilience and tackling disinformation, but also from our own misjudgement allowing to fall into the trap of energy dependency and elite capture in the past. When I recall the state of affairs even three years ago, I am glad to say that, today, Europe is far less naive about Russia, China, and other adversaries.

A few words about structural priorities and the new challenges we are facing. For years, we have been following a country-agnostic approach that treats all foreign influence efforts in the same way, regardless of their source country and thus the aim, scale and the impact. We should not be afraid to call out those seeking intentionally and in a coordinated way to manipulate our democracy.

Therefore, we are suggesting moving towards a risk-based approach based on objective criteria. A similar approach already has been used in the EU legislation in money laundering and terrorist financing.

An immense challenge is presented by the rapid development of artificial intelligence tools. If so far we still are able to identify what is fake, artificial intelligence will make creating disinformation at scale much easier and cheaper, and much more difficult to recognise. We await the artificial intelligence act with great expectation.

Another challenge is the speed of decision-making process. We must face the fact that today's legislation concerning consequences of the digital revolution already addresses the problems of yesterday. This is not only the EU challenge. It is a global problem to be addressed together with like-minded partners.

Moreover, I am convinced that this House in the next legislation will need a dedicated, cross-sectoral committee dealing with foreign interference and information manipulation issues, including new technological challenges.

In conclusion, I would like to thank my shadow rapporteurs for the excellent cooperation through this entire process, and also the secretariat and our political advisors.

Working on the challenges of the INGE1 and INGE2 Committees has certainly been one of the most important missions throughout my time as a Member of the European Parliament.

I truly hope that all of you can support the report.

Raphaël Glucksmann, auteur. – Madame la Présidente, Madame la Vice-Présidente, chers collègues, il est des moments dans l'histoire où l'indolence devient coupable, et la légèreté criminelle. Nous vivons l'un de ces moments, et après bientôt trois ans de travail à la tête de la commission spéciale sur les ingérences étrangères, je veux aujourd'hui partager avec vous les conclusions vertigineuses auxquelles nous sommes parvenus.

Pendant 20 ans, les dirigeants européens ont fait preuve de naïveté et de complaisance. Pendant 20 ans, ils ont laissé des tyrans s'essuyer les pieds sur notre souveraineté, et nos démocraties européennes être la cible d'attaques extérieures coordonnées et sophistiquées. Pendant 20 ans, ils ont ouvert grand les portes de nos cités à leurs ennemis.

Chers collègues: financement de partis politiques anti-Union européenne, cyberattaques, campagnes de désinformation, corruption des élites. La guerre hybride que des régimes hostiles ont lancée contre nos démocraties et que nos dirigeants ont si longtemps refusé de voir, prend différentes formes. Elle arbore différents visages. Elle prend parfois dans nos téléphones, sur nos réseaux sociaux, le visage d'un troll ou d'un bot, élevé dans les fermes d'Evgueni Prigojine à Saint-Petersbourg.

Le constat de notre commission est implacable. Les campagnes de manipulation de l'information sont une arme de destruction démocratique massive. Des acteurs privés, mus par l'appât du gain, comme la société israélienne Team Jorge, et des dictatures mues par la haine viscérale de nos démocraties, comme la Chine ou la Russie, visent à affecter le choix des électeurs, amplifier les polémiques, diviser, exploiter les vulnérabilités de nos sociétés ouvertes et encourager les discours de haine dans nos pays.

Tout ce qui polarise notre débat, entretient une atmosphère de confusion et de guerre civile sur nos réseaux, tout ce qui sape la confiance envers nos institutions répond à leur stratégie. Le chaos informationnel dans lequel nous évoluons désormais est une aubaine pour les tyrans, et un poison mortel pour les démocrates, comme l'est la corruption.

Chers collègues, la corruption des élites précipite toujours la chute des cités, et nous avons consenti à ce que le poison de la corruption se distille au sommet de nos États.

Comment avons-nous pu accepter pendant si longtemps que tant de chefs de gouvernement, de ministres, de hauts fonctionnaires aillent travailler pour les intérêts russes ou chinois? Comment la démocratie allemande, par exemple, a-t-elle pu tolérer que Gerhard Schröder parte travailler ainsi pour Gazprom, quelques semaines seulement après la fin d'une chancellerie marquée par des choix stratégiques dont son futur employeur serait le principal bénéficiaire? Comment les démocraties française, mais aussi autrichienne, belge et de tant d'autres pays européens qui se targuent d'avoir un système démocratique, ont-elles pu accepter que des ministres aillent travailler ainsi pour Gazprom ou pour d'autres entreprises qui font partie du système Poutine? Et comment acceptent-elles aujourd'hui que tant de ministres aillent travailler pour les intérêts chinois?

Nos classes dirigeantes ne doivent plus être les supermarchés dans lesquels les régimes autocratiques viennent tranquillement faire leurs courses. Il ne s'agit pas ici de morale, mais de sauvegarde de nos intérêts vitaux.

Chers collègues, la trahison de nos nations et de nos démocraties prend aussi le visage de démagogues d'extrême-droite prêts à se vendre à l'ennemi. Et des financements se transforment en asservissement quand il s'agit, pour des partis politiques européens, de répondre à une stratégie imposée de l'extérieur. C'est le cas notamment de Marine Le Pen qui, encore il y a peu à l'Assemblée nationale, a épousé la vision stratégique d'un régime auquel son parti doit aujourd'hui encore des millions d'euros.

Chers collègues, les élections se tiendront en 2024 dans un contexte de guerre en Europe et nous devons défendre leur intégrité. Nous comptons sur la Commission pour organiser dès maintenant cette défense. Je m'adresse donc à vous, Madame la Vice-Présidente: que prévoyez-vous concrètement pour lutter efficacement contre la manipulation de l'information pendant la campagne? Comment la Commission s'assurera-t-elle que les nouvelles initiatives, telles que le paquet de défense de la démocratie, seront opérantes dans les prochains mois et permettront d'assurer l'intégrité de la campagne électorale? Comment la Commission s'assurera-t-elle que les acteurs du numérique, et notamment les très grandes plateformes, obéissent enfin à nos exigences et à nos règles? Comment la Commission garantira-t-elle un niveau élevé de cybersécurité pour toutes les institutions concernées par les élections? Comment la Commission envisagera-t-elle de se coordonner avec les gouvernements des États membres pour garantir que ces élections sont protégées?

Ces élections feront suite à notre mandat ébranlé par les ingérences extérieures, qu'elles soient liées à la pandémie de COVID-19 ou au retour brutal de la guerre sur notre continent, ou même au Qatargate. L'enjeu est crucial. Nous devons montrer que démocratie ne rime plus avec faiblesse et qu'Europe ne rime plus avec impuissance. C'est tout le sens du travail que nous avons mené ensemble de manière transpartisane, avec la commission spéciale sur les ingérences étrangères depuis son instauration en septembre 2020.

Nous comptons sur vous, nous comptons sur la Commission, nous comptons sur les États membres, mais nous comptons aussi sur nous-mêmes pour protéger nos démocraties. C'est la mission la plus sacrée d'un parlementaire: protéger cette maison qui nous permet d'exprimer nos différences, la protéger contre des régimes qui suppriment chez eux les libertés et qui entendent les malmener chez nous.

Chers collègues, nous sommes forts et nous serons puissants si nous décidons de l'être. Le moment est venu de décider de l'être.

Věra Jourová, *Vice-President of the Commission*. – Madam President, honourable Members, rapporteur, the topic of foreign interference is both timely and important. I would like to thank the European Parliament and the Committee on Foreign Interference in all Democratic Processes in the European Union, including disinformation, for its hard and relevant work.

The work of the INGE Committee and this House has been a real source of inspiration for the Commission. I want to congratulate the rapporteur, Sandra Kalniete, for bringing forward this work, which seems to command broad support across this House. That is testament to the importance of the report in analysing the phenomena of foreign interference and reflecting the need for a truly whole-of-society approach.

The report explores many dimensions. It looks at interference via elite capture, national diasporas, universities and cultural events. It includes valuable and concrete recommendations on sanctions against foreign interference.

In recent years, the Commission and the European External Action Service have stepped up their work to protect our democracies from foreign interference. This was a key strand of the European democracy action plan. For example, the Commission is working intensely with platforms and I am confident that the recently adopted Digital Services Act and the revised Code of Practice on disinformation will help limit the foreign information manipulation and interference online.

The Commission is very conscious of the danger of information manipulation and interference in the electoral processes. This is why my proposal on the transparency and targeting of political advertising will introduce common high standards of transparency for political advertising services for all media. It will also limit and frame the use of personal data in targeting and amplifying political ads.

The European External Action Service, in close cooperation with the Commission, has continued its work on foreign information, manipulation and interference. The progress made on a common analytical framework and methodology in conjunction with the work on the Information Sharing and Analysis Centre, will significantly increase our situational awareness and understanding of suspicious and malicious activities and cooperation in a whole-of-society approach.

In conclusion, the European democracy action plan allowed us to undertake unprecedented legal and other actions on strengthened resilience of elections, to promote independence of the media and address disinformation. But you are right, this is not enough. Our citizens are asking us to do more. We heard this also in the Conference on the Future of Europe.

As announced by President von der Leyen, the Commission is working on the defence of democracy package with a special focus on covert foreign interference through interest representation services. The package will include a communication, a directive on transparency of interest representation, a recommendation on elections in the EU, and a recommendation of promoting the engagement and effective participation of citizens and civil society organisations in public policymaking processes. Because, while we must protect ourselves from outside interference, we must also build democratic resilience from within by supporting Member States in engaging with citizens and civil society in their policy-making processes.

The idea is for the EU to be equipped with a new generation of transparency tools to shed light on foreign influence while staying committed to freedom of expression and association. In particular, the proposed directive on transparency of interest representation on behalf of third countries would aim to ensure that companies, organisations or persons carrying out activities for third country governments that seek to influence public decision-making in the EU do so in a transparent manner.

This law will help us to better understand the financial flows to the EU from third countries that may want to undermine or destabilise our political processes. And it will help citizens to understand who is behind what they read or listen to, and also what is behind the policymaking environment. It would not ban or criminalise any such activities – the EU remains open and democratic. But we cannot be naive, and actors that receive this type of funding, irrespective of what they are, should be transparent about it.

Let me also reassure you that the proposal will be very different from national foreign agents laws proposed elsewhere, such as the withdrawn NGO law in Georgia or the Russian foreign agent legislation. The approach is very different in terms of aim, scope, supervision and sanctions.

Together with the President, we decided to take more time to consult broadly and gather more information in order to address also the concerns we heard in this House. We will reinforce the analysis underlying the proposal and upgrade it into a full impact assessment. This is important legislation and I want to make sure it will be balanced, meaningful and effective.

Now, turning back to the next elections to your parliament, we would like to explain how we will continue our close cooperation with Member States. In its communication activities ahead of the European elections, the Commission will inform citizens about the EU and its policy actions so that they can make informed decisions and engage in the European democratic debate. We will also support Member States' cooperation on election-related matters in the framework of the European cooperation network on elections and the European External Action Service managed Rapid Alert System on disinformation.

Honourable Members, since the start of last year, the Commission has been working with Member States on a joint mechanism for electoral resilience to support the exchange of expertise in areas such as disinformation and cybersecurity. In October we will organise a high-level event on elections with Member States. Our objective is to exchange best practices on how to promote the exercise of electoral rights in the 2024 elections to the European Parliament. Thank you for your attention and I am sorry for being so long, but I had too much to say.

Vladimír Bilčík, za skupinu PPE. – Vážená pani predsedajúca, odkedy Rusko zákerne vojensky napadlo nášho suseda, o čosi viac verím, že nik súdny nedovolí podceňovať hrozby od zlovoľných krajín. Je mi len ľúto, že to muselo dospieť až takto ďaleko, aby sme úplne precitli. Pri hrozbe z tretích krajín z ďaleka nejde len o vojenské nebezpečenstvo, ale aj o dlhodobé, tiché, no sústredené akcie, ktorých cieľom je podryvať našu spoločnosť, našich ľudí a naše inštitúcie.

Musíme preto reagovať rýchlo a premyslene, nepodceňovať hrozby a čerpať z toho, že sme silné európske spoločenstvo. Som rád, že práve dnes schvaľujeme správu pod taktovkou spravodajkyne, kolegyne Sandry Kalniete a verím, že Európska komisia čoskoro príde s ďalšími krokmi na obranu demokracie. Potrebujeme ich ako soľ.

Platformy, na ktorých sa naši občania dozvedajú informácie a čítajú správy, musia rešpektovať naše európske pravidlá už teraz. Nesmie sa stávať to, čo sa, žiaľ, deje v niektorých štátoch, že máme doslova prekonšpirované prostredie a občania sa nevedia vyznať v tom, čo je a čo nie je pravda. Ak to podceníme, dámy a páni, môžeme byť veľmi nešťastní, pretože takéto prostredie plné lží má dôsledky pre výsledky volieb a áno, aj európske rozhodnutia. Potrebujeme zabezpečiť slobodné a férové voľby. Už v najbližších mesiacoch vo viacerých krajinách vrátane Slovenska a o rok sa európski občania vyberú k volebným urnám v celej Európskej únii. Musia tam ísť informovaní a nie zmätení, klamstvami a dezinformáciami. Voľby, dámy a páni, sa však nerozhodujú len v deň volieb. Dôležité je predovšetkým demokratické a slobodné prostredie, v ktorých sa odohrávajú, vrátane kampane. Členské štáty a európske inštitúcie sa musia navzájom inšpirovať, aby bola naša demokracia otvorená i odolná voči tým, ktorí si neprajú nič iné, len ju narušovať. Moje otázky na Komisiu, pani podpredsedníčka, sú dnes veľmi krátke. Kedy budú plánované návrhy súčasťou bežného života? A ako vieme európskej demokracii pomôcť už dnes?

Andreas Schieder, *im Namen der S&D-Fraktion*. – Frau Präsidentin, Frau Vizepräsidentin, werde Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Unsere Demokratie ist verwundbar. Und das europäische offene Gesellschaftsmodell ist bedroht – feindliche Einflussnahmen aus dem Ausland, Desinformationskampagnen, hybride Bedrohungen, Cyberangriffe und, und, und. Diese Bedrohungen nehmen zu und werden bis zur Europawahl im Juni 2024 noch viel, viel stärker werden. Und dagegen müssen wir uns schützen.

Der vorliegende Bericht will einerseits wachrütteln – endlich klarmachen: Wir müssen hier etwas tun! –, aber auch die Resilienz unserer offenen, lebendigen Demokratie mit einer Fülle von Maßnahmen stärken. Im Bericht findet sich eine lange Liste von vielfältigen Ansätzen: das Verbot von ausländischen Parteispenden, die gemeinsamen europäischen Regeln für politische Kampagnen, Wahlkämpfe und Parteienfinanzierung, die wir so dringend brauchen, *Elite Capturing* durch staatsnahe Unternehmen von Drittstaaten wie Russland, China, dem arabischen Raum, mehr Transparenz und Verantwortung aber auch von Internetplattformen – mehr Argumente, weniger *Fake News* ist hier das Grundprinzip.

Wir müssen aber auch unsere Kapazitäten hier im Europäischen Parlament stärken und rasch die Arbeit am Paket zur Verteidigung der Demokratie mit der Europäischen Kommission beginnen und die Umsetzung ganz, ganz rasch machen.

Liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen, die Zeit der Naivität ist vorbei. Und das heißt auch hier im Haus, im Europäischen Parlament die richtigen Schlüsse zu ziehen aus Katar- und Marokko-Gate und mehr Transparenz, strengere Regeln und weniger Lobbyismus im Halbschatten, im Verborgenen hier im Haus zuzulassen.

Ich möchte zum Abschluss aber auch der Berichterstatterin Sandra Kalniete, den Schattenberichterstattern aus den verschiedenen Fraktionen und auch dem Vorsitzenden Raphaël Glucksmann für die gute Zusammenarbeit im Dienste unserer offenen, lebendigen Demokratie danken.

Bart Groothuis, *on behalf of the Renew Group*. – Madam President, Commissioner, colleagues, in the same week that this House rings the alarm bells on malign foreign interference, disinformation, growing hatred and the declining trust in our democracies, often enabled by social media, in that same week, the CEO of Twitter decides to abandon the EU's code of practice directed to counter disinformation and malign interference. And earlier, the CEO of Twitter had already fired the majority of his staff dealing with such problems.

Mr Elon Musk seems to think that he's in the American Wild West. Well he's not. He's operating in Europe, too, and there's a new sheriff in town here in Europe. From this August onwards, the Digital Services Act enables the European Commission to fine up to 6% of the yearly revenue of Twitter.

Dear Commissioner, I urge you to set an example and show how Europe deals with companies undermining our democracy, undermining our security. Because the report we vote on today shows how Russia, how China, how they vehemently continue to do so if we don't regulate or act.

Viola von Cramon-Taubadel, *on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group*. – Madam President, Commissioner, colleagues, first I would like to thank our rapporteur, Sandra Kalniete, for her overall very good cooperation. Over a year ago, I stood right here praising the report that should have become the EU blueprint for combating disinformation. The fact that we needed a second report to reiterate says everything.

Playing catch-up during a huge digital transformation risks rendering the EU irrelevant. We have countless examples of how modern wars are fought not only with guns but also with disinformation. If you are threatened by tanks, everyone knows what this means and why we need to protect our citizens. Hybrid threats are much more sophisticated. Democracy should never be taken for granted. It must be defended. Malign actors compromise our democracy by interfering in our elections, co-opting our officials – our Chair has mentioned that, acquiring our critical infrastructure, spreading disinformation. Russia and China choose these methods only because they have high payoffs and low punishment. This equation finally needs to change.

To prevail over foreign interference, we need three core qualities: unity, commitment to democratic principles and resilience. First, unity is our strength. Malign foreign actors have an interest to divide us, because together we are too strong. In this line our group regrets very much that some colleagues attempted to use this report for their own political agenda, which might lead to cracks in our unity.

Second, we must be aware of dangers of gazing into the abyss. Our democratic principles should be the guiding light. We should not compromise on freedom of expression, media, assembly or scientific research in this process. Let us win this fight without betraying our democratic DNA.

Lastly, resilience is our guarantee for prevailing. It is based on critical thinking, highly educated citizens, and on our resourcefulness. United, resilient and equipped with democratic principles we will triumph over those who wish harm to our democracy and to our societies.

Beata Szydło, w imieniu grupy ECR. – Pani Przewodnicząca! Pani Komisarz! Na wstępie dołączam się do podziękowań dla pani przewodniczącej, pani sprawozdawczyni Sandry Kalniete za przygotowanie tego sprawozdania i konstruktywne podejście do naszej współpracy.

Obce ingerencje w procesy demokratyczne są faktem. Szczególnie po rozpoczęciu brutalnej wojny przez Putina na Ukrainie i po aferze Qatargate mamy namacalne dowody na to, że nie możemy przechodzić obojętnie obok sygnałów, które pojawiają się na temat tych ingerencji. I dobrze, że to sprawozdanie powstało. To jest dobry punkt wyjścia do rozpoczęcia dalszych prac nad wzmocnieniem naszych procesów demokratycznych.

Żałuję, że w sprawozdaniu pojawiły się zapisy, które uderzają bezpośrednio w niektóre państwa członkowskie. Szczególnie chodzi mi o zapisy dotyczące dezinformacji na temat praw osób ze środowiska LGBTI. Zapisy, które nie mają podstaw do tego, ażeby tutaj się znaleźć.

Ale z drugiej strony dobrze, że pojawiły się takie zapisy, które dotyczą przeciwdziałania wpływom Rosji, Chin i Iranu, zapisy wspierania Ukrainy, Tajwanu. Zwrócono także uwagę na polityczne wpływy Rosji w niektórych państwach i przywoływane już tutaj przykłady współpracy polityków, na przykład niemieckich, na rzecz rosyjskich firm.

Szanowni Państwo, warto też wyciągnąć wnioski z tego wszystkiego. I apeluję także do Komisji, żeby Komisja Europejska również miała pewną refleksję, że nie zawsze trzeba tak schematycznie podchodzić do tego, jakie procesy zachodzą i co dzieje się w poszczególnych państwach członkowskich tylko dlatego, że opozycja z tego państwa aktualnie atakuje dany rząd. Wczoraj debatowaliśmy na temat powstania w Polsce podobnej komisji jak nasza komisja INGE, która to komisja chce zbadać rosyjskie wpływy w życiu społecznym, politycznym, gospodarczym Polski. Zupełnie niezrozumiała debata, zupełnie niezrozumiały atak. I mam nadzieję, że Komisja zrozumie, że chodzi właśnie o to, ażeby wyeliminować rosyjskie wpływy z życia politycznego w poszczególnych państwach członkowskich. W naszym przypadku chodzi tutaj o to, ażeby zbadać, jakie wpływy Putin miał na to, co działo się w Polsce.

Anna Bonfrisco, a nome del gruppo ID. – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, grazie alla relatrice Sandra Kalniete. Lo spirito di unità sul testo della collega dimostra che è interesse di tutti difendere le voci libere dei popoli europei da ogni forma di interferenza straniera, compresa la disinformazione.

È un impegno che comincia dalla lotta all'antisemitismo, ad esempio, la madre di tutte le sfide nella battaglia globale delle narrative dannose per la nostra democrazia. È così, infatti, che gli autoritarismi di questo mondo saranno più isolati. È così che gli Stati membri potranno coltivare radici culturali giudaico-cristiane più robuste. È così che i cittadini potranno attestare forti valori costituzionali, liberali, democratici e occidentali.

Da qui nasce il dovere dell'Unione europea di impegnarsi di più, signora Commissaria, con il resto del mondo, a partire, ad esempio, dal Mediterraneo allargato. Infatti, il grave ferimento dei soldati in Kosovo, di cui 14 italiani, è anche figlio delle interferenze straniere in quell'area. Ed è con lo stesso spirito che siamo impegnati a rendere il mondo un luogo di pace e di dialogo e dove affrontiamo tutte le minacce ibride ai nostri confini e quelle che entrano dentro di noi, a condizione che lo facciamo però nella ricerca della verità e non della strumentalizzazione politica.

Clare Daly, on behalf of the The Left Group. – Madam President, President Trump and Brexit should have been a wake-up call for neoliberals, but rather than accept their own responsibility and make amends, they chose to pretend that they hadn't really lost. They found a foreign scapegoat, ramped up the blame game, and so the myth of Russian interference was born. Does Russia meddle? Of course it does. But the Kremlin did not swing elections in 2016. That is a paranoid conspiracy theory and always has been. Every investigation – the Mueller report, the UK ICO report, the Durham report – showed the opposite. If Russia meddled, it had no effect; inconsequential, it is not an existential threat to our democracy. But the big lie is too useful to let go.

Russian interference is now the go-to slur for anything or anyone who disagrees. The anti-war movement? Kremlin stooges. Catalan independence? Putin puppets. Journalists, climate actions, trade unions – Russian agents. Every slander more cynical than the last. This is a sign of a deeply unhealthy political culture. We warned at the beginning that this would end in tears. Now we've NGOs in uproar over the foreign agents law, the Polish Government accusing the opposition of Russian collusion. I stand by our minority report. This report is a travesty to an open society. Some of its provisions likely breach EU fundamental rights law. If introduced, it will be abused. We need to put a stop to this madness now.

Mislav Kolakušić (NI). – Poštovana predsjedavajuća, poštovani kolege, dragi građani – dezinformacije. Jedini koje sigurno neće zamijeniti umjetna inteligencija su *mainstream* kvazi novinari. Nijedna inteligencija, pa niti ona umjetna, ne može toliko lagati i izmišljati kao oni pa će njihova propagandna radna mjesta ostati sigurna. U Hrvatskoj i Europskoj uniji, što si veći lažljivac i potpuno amoralan lik, to je veća šansa da te proglašene novinarom. Bez obzira jesi li završio neku školu ili nisi, ti možeš postati, u danu, znanstveni novinar. Danas su činjenice i istina najveći neprijatelj novovalne vakserske CO₂ demokracije. Međutim, svakim danom sve je više građana koji su svjesni lažnih informacija koje im se svakodnevno serviraju putem *mainstream* medija. Kako se boriti protiv njih? Treba ih jednostavno isključiti i ignorirati kao da ne postoje.

Javier Zarzalejos (PPE). – Señora presidenta, señora vicepresidenta, la verdad es que el magnífico informe del que es autora nuestra colega Sandra Kalniete habla por sí mismo. Es un documento del que nos podemos sentir orgullosos quienes hemos participado en esta comisión porque, para empezar, es una contribución crucial a la toma de conciencia de lo que representan esta amenaza y este desafío. Y, en segundo lugar, porque creo que es un informe que cumple con la necesidad de objetividad a través de hechos probados, con recomendaciones y con iniciativas, y que realiza el seguimiento de la aplicación del primer informe que aprobó esta comisión.

Estamos ante un desafío que se desarrolla en las sombras y, frente a la oscuridad, lo mejor es arrojar luz. Este informe arroja luz sobre la dimensión del desafío y sobre quiénes son sus responsables. Por tanto, es importante que hablemos con nombres y apellidos de China, de Rusia, de Venezuela; que hablemos de estrategias de influencia maligna como Qatar y como Marruecos; que seamos conscientes de que allí donde exista una crisis habrá interesados en incendiarla. Y nosotros tenemos algunas experiencias: algunas experiencias, como la del proceso secesionista ilegal en Cataluña, que contó con el apoyo y con el acompañamiento de agentes rusos.

Dentro de un año se van a celebrar elecciones al Parlamento Europeo. Seamos conscientes de que, de nuevo, se intentará condicionar la decisión libre de nuestros sistemas democráticos.

Gabriele Bischoff (S&D). – Frau Präsidentin, Frau Vizepräsidentin, Kolleginnen! Ich möchte als Allererstes den Kolleginnen und Kollegen danken, die hier eine so gute Arbeit geleistet haben, um den Schleier der Naivität, was ausländische Einflussnahme anbelangt, zu heben. Und das war beileibe keine einfache Arbeit.

Aber ich bin auch in Sorge – in Sorge, wenn ich höre, dass das Demokratiepaket immer weiter verschoben wird, wenn wir wissen, dass das Datum für die Europawahlen feststeht und wir bis dahin ein stärkeres Schutzschild gegen Einflussnahme brauchen. Aber ich möchte auch noch einmal unterstreichen, wie wichtig die Zivilgesellschaft – eine unabhängige Zivilgesellschaft – für eine stabile Demokratie ist.

Und deshalb bin ich sehr besorgt, dass einige auch diese Debatte nutzen wollen, um genau diese unabhängige Zivilgesellschaft zu diskreditieren. Wir müssen den Rahmen schaffen, damit auch die Zivilgesellschaft ihre Rolle spielen kann, damit die Demokratie, die Rechtsstaatlichkeit geschützt wird. Und deshalb bin ich froh, dass Frau Jourová noch einmal unterstrichen hat, dass unser Ansatz sich von anderen Autokratien unterscheidet, wie wir Desinformation und Einflussnahme bekämpfen.

Nathalie Loiseau (Renew). – Madame la Présidente, aujourd'hui à Chisinau, plus de 40 dirigeants européens viennent dire leur soutien à la Moldavie. Mais chaque jour, à Chisinau, la Russie mène une guerre hybride contre ce pays. Elle utilise tous les moyens en sa possession pour tenter d'affaiblir, de déstabiliser et de soumettre un pays souverain qui a fait le choix de la démocratie et de l'Europe. Désinformation, cyberattaques, achat de votes ou de manifestants, fausses alertes à la bombe, chantage à l'énergie, tentatives de coup d'État, tout est bon.

Aujourd'hui démarre en Moldavie une mission civile de l'Union européenne pour aider ce pays à lutter contre les menaces hybrides. C'est une mission d'un type entièrement nouveau. Je salue sa création, mais ne nous faisons pas d'illusions: ce que la Moldavie subit tous les jours, nous le subissons également. Les ingérences étrangères contre nos démocraties nous ciblent pour ce que nous sommes. Notre commission spéciale en a fait le constat accablant depuis deux ans.

Je dois dire devant vous que je ne suis pas encore certaine que notre Union soit passée du constat à l'action. Il y a bien ici et là des initiatives, mais pas encore de vision d'ensemble. J'attends avec impatience les propositions de la Commission pour protéger nos démocraties. J'espère qu'elles seront à la hauteur et suffisamment ambitieuses face au défi qui nous est lancé.

Markéta Gregorová (Verts/ALE). – Madam President, dear colleagues, Commissioner, six days ago, Twitter left the voluntary code of practice on disinformation; the voluntary code, by the way, which even Chinese spyware TikTok promised to follow.

Commissioner Breton promised Elon Musk that the Digital Services Act is coming anyway. I cannot emphasise enough how glad I am that there is at least one regulation. But will the DSA really protect our elections? The defence of democracy package is promising one directive on foreign funding and only recommendations to Member States on election integrity. The integrity of our electoral processes is being tested like never before in the midst of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and the global conflict between democracies and autocratic regimes. We need to bolster election integrity. And you said it yourself, Commissioner Jourová, There is not enough in the defence of democracy package. So why is there not a majority in the Commission to come up with more than recommendations again? It is a matter of political will and nothing else and we all know that.

Ryszard Czarnecki (ECR). – Pani Przewodnicząca! Pani Komisarz! Ważna debata o ważnym problemie. Szkoda, że niestety jest to przykład pewnej hipokryzji. Ja się bardzo cieszę, jako koordynator mojej grupy politycznej ECR w tej komisji, że my podejmujemy bardzo ważne wyzwania. Można w Parlamencie Europejskim – dobrze. Można, panie przewodniczący Glucksmann, w parlamencie francuskim – słusznie, dobrze. A dlaczego nie można w Polsce? Powołaliśmy taką komisję, jest ona pod bardzo silnym atakiem, a przecież chodzi o to samo, chodzi o zewnętrzne, obce wpływy, i to przez wiele lat.

W tym sprawozdaniu, jak już mówiła przed chwilą moja koleżanka, pani Beata Szydło, są rzeczy zupełnie niepotrzebne. Myśmymy jednak głosowali za tym sprawozdaniem, ponieważ uznaliśmy, że w sumie są tam rzeczy ważne. Tak, Rosja, chociaż nie tylko Rosja, żeby było jasne, chce nam przeszkadzać. Rosja nas infiltruje – trzeba o tym mówić głośno. To sprawozdanie jest tego dowodem. Tylko nie zamykajcie usta tym, którzy chcą robić to samo we własnych krajach.

PŘEDSEDNICTVÍ: DITA CHARANZOVÁ*místopředsedkyně*

Gunnar Beck (ID). – Frau Präsidentin, Frau Kommissarin! Gehen Wahlen nicht so aus, wie es Brüssel wünscht, folgen sogleich Vorwürfe, Russland hätte manipuliert oder den Sieger finanziert. Dabei betreffen doch die beiden größten Fälle ausländischer Einmischung in unsere Politik hier die EU selbst.

Erstens: Im Katargate-Skandal wurden 1,5 Millionen Euro bei EU-Abgeordneten daheim oder in Koffern gefunden, plus 22 Millionen auf Konten in Panama – Zahlungen, mit denen sich Katar und andere Regierungen Stimmen in diesem Haus kauften.

Zweitens: Vor den italienischen Wahlen im September 2022 drohte Ursula von der Leyen den italienischen Wählern: Sollte es zur Bildung einer euroskeptischen Regierung kommen, würde die Kommission geeignete Maßnahmen ergreifen – bis hin zur Streichung üppiger Gelder aus Brüssel.

Beides, liebe Kollegen, sind eklatante Beispiele für ausländische Einmischung in den demokratischen Prozess. Russische Vermögen werden eingefroren auf bloßen Verdacht. Wieso aber beschlagnahmen sie nicht die Vermögen der Familie von der Leyen und setzen sie auf die Sanktionsliste? Denn hier liegen Amtsmissbrauch und Vorteilmahme auf der Hand.

Ivan Vilibor Sinčić (NI). – Poštovana predsjedavajuća, Izvješće o vanjskom upletanju u sve demokratske procese u Europskoj uniji. Naravno, autorima ovog dokumenta, nemojmo se zavaravati, ne smeta svako vanjsko uplitanje, nego samo nepodobno vanjsko uplitanje. Kao i uvijek, ideja ovog dokumenta je obračun s onim strankama i vladama koje ne misle kako im Bruxelles kaže da trebaju misliti i ne rade onako kako im Bruxelles kaže da trebaju raditi. Nije demokracija i nisu poštení izbori ako birači ne izaberu miljenika Bruxellesa. Demokracija je samo ako naši pobijede.

Što se tiče vanjskih uplitanja, evo jedan primjer kako se to radi po Europi: procurili su podaci s online sastanka koji je održan nedavno u Bugarskoj u procesu formiranja koalicije i vlade. Među ostalim, moglo se čuti kako se kadrovira u institucijama, u demokraciji. Promijenit ćemo voditelje obavještajnih i istražnih službi. Sva imena već su sinkronizirana i odobrena od strane ambasade naših atlantskih partnera. Ovo nije usamljen primjer među europskim zemljama. Je li ostalo što osobne časti i nacionalne časti u europskoj politici ili je prevladalo sluganstvo i poslušništvo? Ambassade ne smiju kadrovirati, čije god jesu, jer je to smrt suvereniteta.

Benoît Lutgen (PPE). – Madame la Présidente, chers collègues, d'abord merci et bravo à la rapporteure pour la qualité du travail. Vous avez maintenant, au niveau de la Commission, un plan d'action assez complet pour protéger effectivement notre démocratie. En tout cas, je souhaite que la Commission présente rapidement des propositions pour mettre en œuvre les propositions émises par le Parlement.

Plus largement, s'il y a des formes d'ingérence en Europe, c'est aussi parce qu'il y a des Européens qui accueillent à bras ouverts toute une série de pays comme la Chine, la Russie hier ou le Qatar aujourd'hui, et peut-être encore demain, dans toute une série de domaines.

Protégeons aussi nos ports, nos aéroports, pour éviter qu'ils ne passent dans des mains chinoises, avec toutes les conséquences que cela peut avoir pour nos démocraties, la réalité de nos terres agricoles et forestières. Protégeons aussi même le sport – quand je vois que, dans certains pays, il y a effectivement un accueil très favorable à des investissements de pays tiers qui n'ont pas tout à fait les mêmes valeurs démocratiques que les nôtres et qui utilisent effectivement ces moyens-là dans des secteurs stratégiques aussi importants que l'énergie, que le numérique, que l'alimentation.

Dans ces secteurs stratégiques, l'autonomie de l'Europe, ce sera la porte fermée, la plus fermée possible à toute forme d'ingérence.

Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz (S&D). – Madam President, the content of the second INGE report shows that while the threat of foreign interference remains high and ever present, the methods and techniques of our adversaries are evolving. And now, on the day of adopting the updated report, we are already facing a new challenge: misinformation and disinformation fuelled by artificial intelligence, most famously the recent example of ChatGPT.

We cannot be naive: technology will keep evolving and we are already starting to witness AI-created fake photos and videos that are nearly indistinguishable from reality. As their creation and distribution becomes easier and cheaper, bad actors will become more sophisticated in their use, just like they had mastered the use of fake news before.

This time we cannot be just reactive. It is crucial that the defence of democracy package and the Artificial Intelligence Act not only cover existing and known issues, but also are forward-looking enough so that new laws and regulations will not become obsolete the day they are adopted. The health of our democracies depends on it.

Morten Løkkegaard (Renew). – Fru formand! Det europæiske fællesskab befinder sig midt i en hybrid krig, som vi ikke er godt nok forberedt på. Det er et faktum. Cyberangreb, spionage, systematiske desinformationskampagner og sabotage af kritisk infrastruktur – listen over hybride trusler er lang. Der er akut behov for at ruste EU til at tackle truslerne fra autokrater som Putin. Derfor er det en god dag i dag, hvor Europa-Parlamentet lancerer anden runde af vores anbefalinger til at bekæmpe den hybride krig og de trusler, der er der. Vi skal blandt andet kunne sanktionere lande, der kontinuerligt fører hybrid krig mod EU-lande, og vi skal også kunne retsforfølge individer i EU, som systematisk spreder desinformation på sociale medier. Der er en lang række gode forslag i den betænkning, som netop er vedtaget, og det er derfor glædeligt. Tillykke til vores ordførere, med at det er lykkedes at komme igennem med det her med et massivt flertal. Nu er det så op til Kommissionen at føre disse forslag ud i livet. Det ser jeg frem til.

Gwendoline Delbos-Corfield (Verts/ALE). – Madam President, foreign interference is not something that we can take lightly, especially when EU values and our democracies are called into question. In order to safeguard our democracies we all know that the most important is to improve transparency. This is crucial. This means not only for us as Members of this Parliament, but also for think tanks, foundations and the private companies that we work with.

However, we need to get the balance right. At times, this narrative of monitoring and legislating against foreign interference veers dangerously close to calling for the censorship and criminalisation of NGOs. But without defending a free and functioning civil society, we cannot claim to defend EU values. Civil society organisations are precisely the actors that have defended EU values, worked to prevent foreign Russian interference in the EU and in its neighbourhood countries, and put pressure on us to act to prevent further authoritarian backsliding. If we criminalise civil society, we run the risk of undermining the very values upon which this Union is built.

Rob Rooker (ECR). – Voorzitter, commissaris, collega's, het "Hoofddirectoraat voor de bescherming van staatsgeheimen in de pers", zo heette het in de Sovjet-Unie. "Het Centraal Propagandadepartement", zo heet het in China. En met het zogenaamde EU DisinfoLab hebben ook wij ons ministerie van Waarheid, dat bepaalt wat mensen mogen zeggen.

Hoe ver gaat de EU in haar kruistocht tegen dissidente meningen? Begin vorig jaar verbood de EU de Russische tv-zender Russia Today en nu ligt hier de buitenlandse beïnvloeding bij verkiezingen onder de loep. Ik ken nog wel een paar voorbeelden, zoals dat van een Nederlandse ICT-ondernemer die enkele jaren terug bij de Duitse verkiezingen meer dan 1 miljoen EUR doneerde aan de Grünen. Of dat van een Amerikaanse filantroop die 20 000 EUR aan Volt doneerde en meer dan 200 000 EUR aan de voorcampagne schonk bij het Oekraïne-referendum in Nederland.

Gaat de EU hier ook achteraan? Ik verwacht het niet. En dan is de conclusie: dit gaat niet echt over democratie, maar over het inperken van de vrijheid van meningsuiting. Dat is nog nooit een goed idee geweest en ook nu niet.

Jaak Madison (ID). – Madam President, first of all I think the foreign interference for the elections in the EU is not very important topic because we have just now 10 colleagues here in the room. So probably it's not the best question what you want to discuss.

Secondly I think it's really worrying how some countries in the world are trying to interfere in elections in Europe or in the US, but at the same time when we are criticising some countries, we have to be really careful about what we are doing ourselves about interference, because we are expecting that when we are criticising some other countries that we ourselves are absolutely perfect – we are following our democracy, our rule of law ideas and we are not interfering elections in some countries in the EU.

Just for one small example, in 2019 after elections in Estonia, parliamentary elections, we were forming the government with our Conservative Party together with the Centre Party from the Renew Group, and the Renew started investigation because they were forming a government with the conservatives, after elections in Estonia...

(The President cut off the speaker)

Miroslav Radačovský (NI). – Vážená pani predsedajúca, keď som si prečítal túto správu, tak som dospel k záveru, že tí, čo ju spracovali, si zaslúžia Nobelovu cenu za dezinformácie a Sacharovovu cenu za vedenie hybridnej vojny. Len tak stručne článok 105. Európska únia je znepokojená Číňanmi, že zavliekajú svojich občanov cez nejaké nelegálne policajné stanice do Číny. No to už je na hospitalizáciu. No Čína má tak malý počet obyvateľov, že musí svojich Číňanov zavliekať domov. To skutočne niekomu Covid ohrozil mozog a nie pľúca. V článku 86 sa spomína Slovensko. Ja neviem, odkiaľ tieto informácie Európska únia dostala. Že vraj homofóbia, xenofóbia Slovákov je príčinou toho, že boli zavraždení dvaja mladí ľudia na Slovensku. No tých dvoch mladých ľudí predsa zabil človek, o ktorom ani nevieme, kto je, čo je, prečo ja a aký je. Ja som bol, slúžil som v armáde. Bolo tam tisíce chlapcov, bol som 30 rokov sudcom, mám aj svoj vek. Ja som nezažil to, aby na Slovensku existovali nejaké homofóbne alebo iné prejavy. To si nikto zo Slovákov takúto, takto urážať Slovákov nikto... *(predsedajúca prerušila rečníka)*... Toto je pamflet, ktorý netreba ani čítať ani sa k nemu... *(predsedajúca odobrala rečníkovi slovo)*

(Rečník súhlasí so zodpovedaním otázky položenej zdvihnutím „modrej karty“)

Markéta Gregorová (Verts/ALE), otázka položená zvednutím modrej karty – Paní predsedajúcej, za prvé bych chtěla napravit tu dezinformaci, kterou tady pan Radačovský řekl ohledně čínských policejních stanic. Samozřejmě, že ten článek 105 je napsaný na základě toho, že ano, skutečně tady ty čínské policejní stanice byly a ty občany odváděly.

Nicméně to není otázka. Ta otázka je: Proč si tedy myslíte, že dva slovenští občané, mladí lidé, zemřeli střelbou nedávno v klubu Teplárna, pokud to nebylo kvůli homofobii na Slovensku? Nestydíte se za to?

Miroslav Radačovský (NI), odpoveď na otázku položenú zdvihnutím modrej karty. – to kvôli tomu, že tam pani prezidentka si vodí návštevy zahraničné a robí hanbu Slovensku? Za 30 rokov, čo som bol sudca, slúžil som v armáde, mám svoj vek som nezažil ... *(predsedajúca prerušila rečníka)*... ale to nie je dôvod, aj keby to tak bolo, my máme svojich, svoje lesby radi. To sú naše lesby, naši homosexuáli a nikto nám nebude zasahovať do toho tu a označovať ako za národ xenofóbov... *(predsedajúca odobrala rečníkovi slovo)*

Salvatore De Meo (PPE). – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, signora Commissaria, le elezioni europee si svolgono anno nel 2024, sullo sfondo della guerra di aggressione russa contro l'Ucraina e con la pressione di regimi autoritari che cercano da anni di attaccare le democrazie in generale e quella europea, dove la libertà e la difesa dei diritti umani, i nostri valori, unitamente alla prosperità economica, sono elementi che fanno paura.

Il lavoro della commissione ING è stato solo il primo passo nel riconoscere e affrontare le ingerenze straniere che tentano di entrare nei nostri processi decisionali, utilizzando la manipolazione delle informazioni e altre tattiche per indebolire i nostri governi democratici. Oggi più che mai, in previsione delle prossime elezioni, dobbiamo respingere ogni tipo di intrusione che tenti di condizionare o compromettere l'integrità dei nostri processi elettorali.

Il nostro impegno deve proseguire con una strategia coordinata dell'Unione europea contro ogni forma di ingerenza, che tenga conto della complessità della natura multidimensionale delle minacce, rafforzando la nostra sicurezza informatica e la resilienza delle nostre comunità. I nostri cittadini ci hanno chiesto un'Europa più forte e più credibile che potremmo avere solo contrastando anche chi tenta di minare le nostre istituzioni.

Mercedes Bresso (S&D). – Signora Presidente, signora Commissaria, onorevoli colleghi, la nostra democrazia e i processi liberi e partecipati con cui la esprimiamo e la pratichiamo sono un bene preziosissimo, non dobbiamo darlo per scontato e dobbiamo difenderlo in tutti i modi.

La relazione della Commissione sulle interferenze straniere dimostra che siamo entrati nell'era della consapevolezza. Però non basta essere consapevoli. Dobbiamo con urgenza colmare le lacune che tuttora esistono nelle nostre legislazioni e che ci rendono permeabili alle strategie di interferenza di potenze straniere. Strategie che sono diverse ed articolate, così come devono essere le nostre risposte.

Nella relazione che voteremo ci sono proposte precise per rafforzare la resilienza delle istituzioni, proposte su cui ci aspettiamo una risposta pronta da parte della Commissione. Le prossime elezioni europee saranno un passaggio delicato per la nostra democrazia, per cui servirà grande attenzione. Viene tracciato un cammino al quale dovremo dare continuità, strutturando in maniera consolidata anche il nostro lavoro qui in Parlamento.

Maite Pagazaurtundúa (Renew). – Señora presidenta, señora comisaria, si el informe que vamos a votar hoy causa tanto escozor en los populistas de ultraizquierda y en los de ultraderecha, señora Kalniete, significa que usted ha hecho un gran trabajo.

El hecho es que la Unión Europea es un actor central en las democracias del mundo y que las autocracias la atacan muy intensamente porque somos sociedades abiertas y tenemos que seguir siéndolo. Pero lo que no podemos hacer es asistir a la impunidad de la injerencia y de la desinformación dañosa. Tenemos que gobernar bien, con transparencia, evitando todas las formas de corrupción, por supuesto, la corrupción electoral o la corrupción de la injerencia o la cooptación de líderes, sin trampas.

La semana pasada se revelaba una supuesta trama de venta de votos en Melilla (España) para interferir en las elecciones; se sospecha que ha habido injerencia directa de Marruecos. Nueve detenidos. Además, ya han ocurrido otros hechos anteriormente: esta es la cuestión, la injerencia marroquí no es una sorpresa para nadie en este Parlamento. Como también son conocidas las conexiones de Rusia con partidos políticos, con políticos o con la injerencia en las actividades contra la democracia europea en Cataluña.

Lo que está claro es que necesitamos normas, que las recomendaciones de esta Comisión que van a ser votadas tienen que ser consideradas por la Comisión Europea, y que tenemos que convertirlas en leyes y defendernos; porque el hecho es que nos van a atacar.

Anders Vistisen (ID). – Fru formand! Ethvert forsøg på at gå imod demokratiet og gå imod de demokratiske spilleregler er naturligvis problematisk, og derfor skal man heller ikke acceptere misinformation eller desinformation, men jeg har på fornemmelsen, når jeg hører debatten her i salen i dag, at det mest handler om den desinformation, der går flertallet imod. Det at man bevilliger enorme summer af skatteborgernes kroner til at propagandere for EU lige før et EU-valg, det har I jo allesammen været for. Det at taletiden her i parlamentet godt kan overskrides, hvis man siger noget pænt om unionen, men bliver afbrudt, hvis man siger noget mindre pænt, det har I jo ikke noget problem med. Det at give bøder til politiske modstandere for at bruge deres ytringsfrihed i Europa-Parlamentet, synes man, er en fin måde at opdrage de medlemmer, som vælgerne har valgt, men som I er uenige med. Så hvis man virkelig vil bekæmpe misinformation og desinformation, så skal man hylde ytringsfriheden. Under den kolde krig havde Rusland langt mere misinformation, end vi ser i dag. Alligevel smed vi ikke kommunister på universiteterne i fængsel i Danmark. Vi forhindrede ikke kommunistpartiet i at stille op. Vi brugte vores ytringsfrihed til at bekæmpe idiotien. Og det er ytringsfriheden, der er det bedste sollys, ikke jeres kontrol med dem, I er uenige med.

Laura Ferrara (NI). – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, la minaccia delle ingerenze straniere, pur aumentando in occasione delle elezioni nazionali ed europee, si manifesta di fatto in molteplici forme e in maniera continua in tutta l'Unione europea.

Disinformazione e manipolazione delle informazioni sui media tradizionali e sui social, attacchi informatici mirati alle infrastrutture critiche, traffico di influenze, corruzione, finanziamenti occulti che coinvolgono soggetti politici e funzionari sono solo alcune delle ricorrenti pratiche per influenzare i processi democratici ed elettorali.

Il ruolo delle tecnologie in questo campo è sempre più forte, come dimostra la pubblicità basata sui dati personali e algoritmi opachi su cui si regge il modello commerciale delle piattaforme online, sfruttato sempre più massivamente per plasmare e polarizzare l'opinione pubblica.

E allora, oltre agli sforzi per migliorare la trasparenza e l'integrità delle nostre istituzioni, unitamente alle attese misure del Defense of democracy package, è fondamentale rafforzare la democrazia dall'interno e ciò si ottiene promuovendo una cultura civica di impegno democratico e partecipazione attiva dei cittadini.

Sunčana Glavak (PPE). – Poštovana predsjedavajuća, kolegice i kolege, čestitam kolegici Kalniete na odličnom izvješću, a osvrnut ću se samo na neke izazove kao što su izazovi koji prijete integritetu izbora, dezinformacije, digitalni napadi i politički pritisci. Oni su zapravo kontinuirani.

Integritet izbora je ključna komponenta demokracije i povjerenja građana u političke procese. Jedan od načina na koji možemo ojačati integritet izbora izgraditi otpornost jest unapređenje sigurnosti i transparentnosti izbornog procesa. To uključuje osiguranje kvalitetnih biračkih registara, pouzdane identifikacije birača, sigurnog prikupljanja i prebrojavanja glasova te stroge kontrole financiranja političkih kampanja. Važno je uložiti napore u obrazovanje građana jer obrazovani građani manje su podložni manipulacijama i dezinformacijama.

Kolegice i kolege, industrija dezinformacija uključuje ozbiljne igrače. Nemojmo se zavaravati: njihova prisutnost stalna je. To nije nikakva kratkoročna prijetnja i zato zahtijeva našu proaktivnost.

Nacho Sánchez Amor (S&D). – Señora presidenta, quiero agradecer a la señora Kalniete y a los negociadores que hayan vuelto a incluir un apartado específico sobre elecciones en el segundo Informe de la Comisión Especial sobre Injerencias Extranjeras.

Las elecciones son un objetivo porque son trascendentes políticamente, pero también porque son vulnerables. Hay mucha gente que solo se engancha a la información política cuando llegan las elecciones. Se produce una mayor tecnificación, una mayor digitalización. Las redes sociales crean un entorno en el que esas elecciones pueden ser muy vulnerables.

Además, por una investigación reciente de periodistas de investigación europeos, hemos descubierto que hay un mercado mundial de la interferencia electoral que ha afectado a varias elecciones en África. Tenemos que ser especialmente cuidadosos con las elecciones europeas. No solo porque afectan a un actor muy relevante, sino también porque las elecciones europeas —siendo unas solas elecciones— se celebran en veintisiete países, con veintisiete sistemas electorales e infraestructuras electorales diferentes. Por lo cual, basta con encontrar el eslabón débil de la cadena para provocar una interferencia que afectará no solo a ese país, sino a todas las elecciones europeas.

Por tanto, la seguridad y la integridad de las elecciones europeas tienen que estar muy arriba en nuestra agenda en esta última parte de la legislatura.

Catch-the-eye procedure

Радан Кънев (PPE). – Г-жо Председател, днес обсъждаме изключително важния въпрос за намесата в изборния процес в държавите от Европейския съюз. В моята родина България обаче се вижда следващата стъпка на враждебната намеса във вътрешните ни работи, и тя е намесата в следизборния процес, в самото формиране на държавно управление. Днес сме свидетели на абсолютно безпрецедентен опит за блокиране на създаването на общо управление между първите две политически сили в държавата. Опит, в който очевидно участват, от една страна, организираната престъпност, от друга страна, компрометираната прокуратура, която е призвана да се бори с нея.

От една страна, службите за сигурност, от друга страна, петата колона в българската политика, срещу която тези служби би трябвало да ни защитават. И всичко това се случва под егидата на българския президент и на ръководеното от него служебно правителство. Отправлям това послание към Вас и като призив за подкрепа, но и като много сериозно предупреждение накъде води разпадането на правовата държава.

Juan Fernando López Aguilar (S&D). – Señora presidenta, durante su mandato, esta comisión, que ha estudiado las interferencias extranjeras en los procesos democráticos, ha producido un documento de conclusiones muy relevante. Me interesan sobre todo sus conclusiones tercera y quinta porque son las que conectan las plataformas tecnológicas —y la necesidad de someterlas a un marco regulatorio europeo— con la defensa ante las injerencias extranjeras.

Porque las grandes empresas tecnológicas no tienen como objetivo producir una opinión pública libre a través de un debate pluralista, sino exclusivamente explotar algoritmos que radicalizan y confrontan a sus usuarios. Es por eso que la inteligencia artificial supone una vuelta de tuerca en una revolución tecnológica que amenaza con poder fabricar y difundir imágenes y voces falsas con apariencia de veracidad.

La Unión Europea tiene que estar a la vanguardia en la defensa de su idea de democracia, no solamente por ella misma, sino por la democracia en el mundo. Y a ello apunta el documento de conclusiones.

Beata Mazurek (ECR). – Pani Przewodnicząca! Unia Europejska jest wciąż podatna na obce ingerencje oraz dezinformację. Putin doskonale wiedział, kto będzie najsilniej wspierał Ukrainę podczas wojny. Dlatego przez ostatnie lata próbował zdyskredytować nas, mój kraj, Polskę na arenie międzynarodowej, podważając działania podejmowane przez demokratycznie wybrany polski rząd.

Niestety, wielu z Państwa powtarzało te niezwyfikowane frazesy. Tymczasem, o czym wspomina dzisiejsze sprawozdanie, to elity polityczne w Niemczech realizowały program Gazpromu i wyrażały stałe poparcie dla dostaw gazu z Rosji, uzależniając od nich całkowicie swój kraj, co dało Putinowi możliwość kształtowania europejskiej polityki przez zakręcanie kurka z gazem.

Nie zapominajmy także o skandalu korupcyjnym ujawnionym tu, w Parlamencie Europejskim, który wyraźnie pokazał brak odporności instytucji unijnych na nadużycia i ingerencję ze strony państw trzecich.

Zachęcam wszystkich Państwa do głębszej refleksji na temat funkcjonowania instytucji europejskich. Tylko wzmocnienie uczciwości, przejrzystości i odpowiedzialności może odbudować nadszarpniętą wspomnianą aferą wizerunek Unii w oczach wszystkich obywateli.

Thierry Mariani (ID). – Madame la Présidente, à quoi va servir ce rapport? Principalement à contrôler davantage le paysage médiatique en Europe. À l'article 33, vous voulez contrôler les experts qui interviennent sur les médias dits traditionnels. À l'article 35, vous voulez un comité européen des médias dont nous ne doutons pas qu'il diffuserait l'idéologie de la Commission européenne. Le ministère de la vérité n'est pas très loin. Vous voulez toujours davantage contrôler internet, et notamment la plateforme Twitter, dont l'attachement à la liberté d'expression hérisse le poil de la Commission.

Vous continuez à répandre l'idée que la Russie voulait influencer les prochaines élections européennes, sans apprendre des manipulations commises par les démocrates américains, dont les accusations viennent une nouvelle fois d'être balayées par deux rapports différents du département américain de la justice. Ces rapports affirment clairement qu'il n'y a aucune preuve d'une ingérence russe dans la campagne présidentielle américaine.

Quand on lit ce rapport, finalement, on est en droit d'être inquiets. Ceux qui ne partagent pas vos conceptions sont soit manipulés, complotistes, ou agents. Ils ont peut-être tout simplement une opinion différente. Garderont-ils ce droit encore longtemps?

Mick Wallace (The Left). – Madam President, we are exceptional in both our victimhood and in the righteousness of our actions. When the EU backs military and right-wing coups in Brazil, Peru, Bolivia and Sudan, this is not interference in democratic processes; it's a defence of democracy. When the Council imposes crushing sanctions on disobedient countries, killing tens of thousands of men, women and children and displacing more, somehow this isn't foreign interference, this is about protecting human rights. This is a lie. To quote High Representative Josep Borrell, our sanctions are a means of 'coercive capacity'.

The report highlights the need to turn this coercive capacity against people in the EU suspected of engaging in this new and vaguely defined crime of foreign interference. Who will judge if someone is guilty? The Council? They don't even adhere to basic standards of due process. They are an unaccountable political body who operate in secret. It's about time people started to look and see and focus on the growing threat to basic civil liberties coming from Brussels.

Александър Александров Йорданов (PPE). – Г-жо Председател, военната агресия на Русия стана възможна, защото руското общество от десетилетия съществува в условията на дезинформация. В основата на тази дезинформация е все още силната комунистическа интерпретация на историята. Но същото днес наблюдаваме и в някои държави от Западните Балкани, които са кандидати за членство. Например, дискриминационната политика на Скопие спрямо българите в тази страна и изобщо антибългарската политика на Северна Македония е резултат от десетилетна дезинформационна комунистическа пропаганда. Същевременно основна причина за политическата криза и дестабилизация в България през последните две години е руското проникване в българския политически, стопански и културен елит. В този момент българският президент се явява не обединител на нацията, а фактор за дестабилизация на България. Хибридната война на Русия срещу България и Европа продължава. Това е опасно.

Maria Grapini (S&D). – Doamnă președintă, sigur, dezbatem un lucru foarte important, mai ales că este un an înainte de alegeri. Clar, dezinformarea duce la o alegere greșită, le induce cetățenilor un alt drum. Problema este: cum facem? Am definit foarte clar ce înseamnă ingerință străină, pentru că vedem, acum a apărut un conflict în Serbia și Kosovo, conflictul din Ucraina, primim informații greșite și cred că dezinformarea este cel mai grav lucru, care duce la alegeri greșite și la imixtiunea în actul democratic dintr-un stat membru.

Problema pe care eu o pun acum aici – și vreau să fiu înțeleasă corect – este că trebuie să vedem ingerințele străine din toate părțile, pentru că aleargă domnul Soroș în toate statele membre și în țara mea și finanțează anumite ONG-uri, anumite persoane care, evident, dezinformează. Cum facem să oprim dezinformarea? Da, noi reglementăm aici, dar problema este de aplicare în statele membre și cred că și statele membre au o obligație extrem de mare, împreună cu Uniunea Europeană, să oprească odată dezinformarea și să nu mai fie ingerințe străine în actul democratic. Cetățenii să decidă.

Liudas Mažylis (PPE). – Pirmininke, vice Pirmininke, kolegos. Būtinybė stiprinti ES atsparumą – žodžiai, kurių pastaraisiais metais skirtinguose kontekstuose nesiliaujame vartoję. Realus karas, vykstantis dėl pasibaisėtinų Rusijos veiksmų Ukrainoje, dar labiau sustiprino poreikį didinti mūsų atsparumą. Į tai įeina ir pasipriešinimas užsienio valstybių kišimuisi į demokratinį procesą ES. Dar labiau suintensyvėjęs piktavališkas elgesys tikėtinas 2024-aisiais, prieš būsimus Europos Parlamento rinkimus. Viliuosi, kad atsakingos institucijos ir ES valstybės narės rimtai pažvelgs į INGE ir INGE2 komitetų rezoliucijose pateiktas rekomendacijas ir jas kuo skubiau atsakingai įgyvendins. Kol mes tebediskutuojame kaip reikėtų elgtis, priešiškos valstybės, tokios kaip Rusija, jau šiandien vykdo realius veiksmus Europoje, kenkiančius mūsų demokratijai. ES atsako, kuris atliktas iki dabar, akivaizdžiai nepakanka.

(End of catch-the-eye procedure)

Věra Jourová, Vice-President of the Commission. – Madam President, honourable Members, it's a tough task to use two minutes to react on such a broad and such an important debate. One year before elections, we discussed here about a crucial phenomenon which is foreign interference and endangering of our electoral processes.

I agree with many of you who said that we are strong, but we need to be stronger because we face many – some new, some older – new threats and really high pressure, especially in light of the Russian aggression in Ukraine, increase of abuse of technologies against our democracies and so on. And I agree with Ms Bischoff, who said that we should stop only analysing. We have to act. And we are acting: I don't have time to enumerate all the initiatives which have been already adopted and the plans we had. I just want to say that whatever we do, we have to do it in a European way. So to take decisive actions, to adopt legislation to invite the society, because everybody who wants to keep a democratic system and live in a democratic system has some task or some role, be it the politicians here – I have to comment also that I agree with those that who say that the foreign interference cannot be efficient without having internal proxies

in the EU. And I think that we also have to look at this.

So to react in a European way is to invite everybody to contribute, be it politicians, independent media, be it civil-society organisations, be it citizens. Because I believe that the main pillar of democratic system is a well-informed and engaged citizen.

So I think there is something for everyone and to do it in a European way means that by an efficient fight against foreign interference and endangering electoral processes we have to guarantee that the freedom of speech will be fully protected, the freedom of assembly, the freedom of entrepreneurs, and that we will strengthen these important principles which we definitely need in the time of crisis.

I sharply disagree with those who said that we are close to the Ministry of Truth. It's not true. Whatever we do, all our initiatives, on the contrary, are directed on stronger protection of the freedom of speech.

So this is from my side. I want to thank you for your report, for the very inspiring discussion. And I promise that the Commission will not only get inspired, but also take further actions in order to protect the EU against the foreign pressures and all the risks which we see now for our democratic system.

Sandra Kalniete, rapporteur. – Madam President, dear colleagues, Madam Commissioner, I want to thank you for this very detailed discussion we had here. But even during that discussion, it was so evident how the tentacles of disinformation are reaching the politicians from the far right and from the far left. This is very regrettable and that's why we are working, trying to find the ways to protect our democracy. What I would like to reiterate is that the EU must focus more on resilience-building and vaccination of our societies against disinformation to protect our democracy.

It has been a long journey for us all, but I am confident that our Parliament and our Union has come out stronger and more aware of the threats we face and the vulnerabilities we have.

So I am looking forward to the vote and hope that you all will be able to support the report, which is not only mine, but a collective endeavour.

President. – The joint debate is closed. The vote will be held today.

Written statements (Rule 171)

Sara Cerdas (S&D), por escrito. – As próximas eleições europeias vão realizar-se entre 6 e 9 de junho de 2024, aproximadamente dentro de um ano. Em 2019, a abstenção atingiu recordes e, no caso de Portugal, as últimas eleições europeias tiveram uma taxa de abstenção de 69,3 %, a mais alta desde 1987.

A desinformação contribui para a falta de confiança nas instituições, destrói o discurso público e, em última análise, enfraquece as democracias, o que indiretamente contribui para o aumento da abstenção. Dada a importância de combater tanto a abstenção, como a desinformação, a Comissão Europeia deve adotar estratégias que combatam a manipulação da informação e a desinformação de forma eficaz e rápida. Uma maior cooperação com as plataformas digitais, a adoção de mecanismos de cibersegurança e prevenção contra ataques de hackers e uma maior coordenação com os Estados-Membros para garantir que as eleições europeias estão bem protegidas contra a interferência estrangeira, ameaças híbridas e desinformação, serão medidas necessárias para assegurar a integridade e a confiança pública nas próximas eleições europeias.

Karol Karski (ECR), na piśmie. – Problem dezinformacji oraz wrogiej propagandy nie jest kwestią nową. Już w trakcie poprzedniej kadencji z inicjatywy mojej grupy, to jest Europejskich Konserwatystów i Reformatorów, Parlament Europejski przyjął dwa sprawozdania dotyczące początkowo rosyjskich działań w tym zakresie, a następnie szerzej samego zjawiska oraz tego, jak podatne są społeczeństwa demokratyczne na tego typu wpływy. Głosowane dzisiaj sprawozdanie posła Sandry Kalniete jest doskonałym przykładem, jak złożony i skomplikowany jest ten problem oraz jak wielu sfer życia dotyczy. Od wojny hybrydowej, poprzez farmy trolli, stosowanie sztucznej inteligencji, ataki na krytyczną infrastrukturę, programy zbierające informację o użytkownikach ukryte w aplikacjach, których używamy na co dzień, aż po tzw. „deep fakes” oraz instrumentalne wykorzystanie platform społecznościowych – dezinformacja przybiera różne, czasami bardzo niebezpieczne, postacie. Jednocześnie to, jak bardzo kompleksowa jest ta sprawa, pozwala zrozumieć, że poszczególne państwa nigdy nie będą w stanie w pełni obronić się przed zagrożeniami i jak ważna jest koordynacja wysiłków na poziomie międzynarodowym. Doskonałym przykładem jest tu NATO, ale również w ramach UE mamy olbrzymie pole do działania, które powinniśmy w pełni wykorzystać.

Urmas Paet (Renew), *kirjalikult.* – Euroopal on vaja kooskõlastatud strateegiat välissekkumise ja teabega manipuleerimise vastu, et suurendada ELi vastupanuvõimet ja tagada Euroopa Parlamendi 2024. aasta valimiste puutumatus. Enne 6.–9. juunil 2024 toimuvaid Euroopa Parlamendi valimisi kasvab välissekkumise ja valeinfo oht ning sageneda võivad demokraatia õõnestamise püüded ja keerulised inforünnakud. Selle taustal on oluline käsitleda eelkõige võimalikku sekkumist veebiplatvormidel, kriitilise tähtsusega taristu ja strateegiliste sektorite kaitset, valimisprotsesside kindlust, poliitilise tegevuse varjatud välisrahastamist ja küberrünnakute tõrjumist. Eriti tuleb keskenduda Venemaa ja Hiina murettekitavale sekkumise ohule ELis, ELiga ühineda soovivates riikides (nt Lääne-Balkanil) ja maailma lõunapoolsetes riikides. Hukkamõistu väärt on ohtlik nn ostetav desinformatsiooniteenus, mille puhul valitsused ja valitsusvälised osalejad tellivad valimisprotsesside vastaseid rünnakuid näiteks pimeveebist. Selleks et kolmandate riikide keelatud rahastus ei pääseks ELi poliitilisse süsteemi, peab Euroopa Komisjoni lihtsustama annetuste jälgimist. Lisaks peaksid liikmesriigid ohjama kolmandate riikide annetusi riiklikele erakondadele. Tähelepanu tuleb ka pöörata majandusliku sõltuvuse, spionaaži ja sabotaaži ohule, mis kaasneb ELi elutähtsa taristu sattumisega välisettevõtete kontrolli alla. Ühtlasi tuleb kõigil riiklikel valitsustasanditel ja ELi institutsioonides keelustada rakendus TikTok ning ELi Nõukogu ja Euroopa Komisjoni peaksid keelama ohtlikumatest riikidest, eriti Hiinast ja Venemaalt pärit seadmed ja tarkvara (nt ByteDance Huawei, ZTE, Kaspersky, NtechLab või Nuctech).

Pirkko Ruohonen-Lerner (ECR), *kirjallinen.* – On tärkeää tiedostaa, että ulkopuoliset vihamieliset tahot pyrkivät systemaattisesti sekaantumaan päätöksentekoon sekä kansallisella että EU:n tasolla. Ilmiö ei ole mitenkään uusi. Pidän hyvänä sitä, että asiasta on nyt herätty puhumaan laajemmin. Keinoja epäasiallisen vaikuttamisen torjuntaan löytyy paljon. Esimerkiksi poliittisten puolueiden, puolueyhdistysten ja ehdokkaiden saamat rahalahjoitukset toimintansa ja vaalikampanjoidensa rahoittamiseen tulisi saada nykyistä selkeämmin päivänvaloon. Suuret vaalibudjetit ovat liian usein avainasemassa poliittisten kampanjoiden onnistumiselle. Rahalla voidaan ostaa vaikutusvaltaa, joten olisi äärimmäisen tärkeää saada kaikki poliittinen rahoitus ja erityisesti vaalirahoitus nykyistä avoimemmaksi. Tämä koskee niin puolueita kuin yksittäisiä ehdokkaita. Rahalla ostetaan laadukkaita mainoskampanjoita, näkyvyyttä, toistoja ja sitä kautta uskottavuutta. Ilman isoja satsauksia ehdokkaat on vaikea saada sanomaansa suuren yleisön tietoisuuteen. Ehdokkaille lahjoittamansa taloudellisen tuen avulla eri tahot pyrkivät ostamaan tukea omille näkökannoilleen ja intresseilleen. Vaalirahoituksella poliittikkoon luodaan riippuvuussuhde, mistä seuraa, että valituksi tultuaan edustaja ei välttämättä olekaan äänestäjän asialla vaan jää kiitollisuudenvelkaan rahoittajalleen, mitä sitten maksaa, kun äänestää rahoittajallensa tärkeistä lainsäädäntöhankkeista. Jos vihamieliset tahot onnistuvat vaikuttamaan päätöksentekoprosessiin, kansalaisten luottamus demokraattisiin instituutioihin ja vaaliprosesseihin horjuu, mikä heikentää entisestään koko järjestelmän uskottavuutta. Vaalirahoituksen sääntelyä ja valvontaa on yleisesti tiukennettava. Avoin ja läpinäkyvä vaalirahoitus, sen valvonta ja seuranta on välttämätöntä, jotta voidaan varmistaa, että poliittiset kampanjat eivät ole riippuvaisia epäilyttävistä ulkopuolisista lähteistä.

Alfred Sant (S&D). – The EU is right in seeking to monitor and suppress foreign interference in all democratic processes in the EU, including disinformation. Foreign interference in the internal affairs of nations did not start yesterday as the resolution implies. It has been done 'legally' and 'illegally' by the US, European powers, the former USSR, for donkey's years. Should we forget about this as we proclaim our attachment to the defence of democratic processes?

There are many ways by which interference in democratic processes can be run from outside. Some are clearly indefensible. Others are at the margin of being between ambiguous and less than transparent. As of now, the EU and Member States themselves apply the latter strategy quite openly. In the past, a Maltese Labour Party government argued against foreign interference in national politics and legislated against it. For this, it was ostracised.

What is now being attempted here lacks historical balance and carries a Eurocentric emphasis that rings false in third countries which have been, and still are, subject to Western meddling in their internal affairs. So though I agree that outside interference in the internal affairs of nation states and the EU should be monitored and rolled back, I disagree with the approach that is being proposed.

3. Coordinated action to address antimicrobial resistance (debate)

President. – The next item is the debate on the oral question to the Commission on coordinated action to address antimicrobial resistance by Pernille Weiss and Tiemo Wölken on behalf of the PPE and S&D groups (O-000027/2023 – B9-0022/2023).

Tiemo Wölken, Verfasser. – Frau Präsidentin, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen, sehr geehrte Frau Kommissarin, liebe Stella, schön, dass wir uns hier heute sehen zu einem wirklich sehr, sehr wichtigen Thema: Antimikrobielle Resistenzen.

Es ist eines der unterschätztesten Gesundheitsthemen. Schon seit 2017 gibt es ja einen Aktionsplan der Europäischen Kommission, und passiert ist relativ wenig. Deswegen ist es gut und notwendig, dass wir jetzt wieder über das Thema reden. Ich möchte mich zunächst bei der Kommission dafür bedanken, dass sie ihre Empfehlungen an die Mitgliedstaaten herausgegeben hat. Ich hoffe, dass die Mitgliedstaaten diese Empfehlungen dann auch annehmen werden.

Wir als Europäisches Parlament stehen sehr geschlossen hinter dem Vorschlag, und ich möchte mich bei allen Kolleginnen und Kollegen bedanken, die mit uns zusammen diese Anfrage zur mündlichen Beantwortung eingereicht haben. Es sind ja nicht nur wir, das ist auch die EVP, das ist Renew, das sind die Grünen, das sind die Linken – also wirklich eine ganz, ganz breite, geschlossene Mehrheit.

Ich finde, wir erwähnen wichtige Punkte: Das Konzept „Eine Gesundheit“ zu stärken, das dafür sorgt, dass wir Gesundheit als Gesamtpaket denken – von der Umwelt aus über die menschliche Gesundheit, aber auch die Tiergesundheit –, das ist von zentraler Bedeutung. Wir müssen den Antibiotikaeinsatz weiter reduzieren, sowohl in der menschlichen Verschreibung als auch in der Tiergesundheit – da, wo es geht, damit wir diese lebensrettenden Medikamente weiter behalten und sie nicht noch weiter ihre Schutzwirkung verlieren.

Wichtig ist auch, dass wir die Umweltmaßnahmen sehr viel stärker beobachten. Wir unterstreichen in unserer Entschließung auch noch einmal, dass wir insbesondere auch darauf achten müssen, dass wir Wasser untersuchen, um zu testen, ob es eine neue Antibiotikaresistenz gibt. Wir wollen, dass Menschen mehr Schnelldiagnostiktests benutzen, bevor Antibiotika verschrieben werden. Und wir wollen insbesondere auch nochmal das Gesundheitspersonal schulen, da, wo noch Verbesserungsbedarf ist.

Aber wir dürfen auch nicht die Augen davor verschließen, dass wir mit den bisherigen Antibiotika in eine Sackgasse laufen. Deswegen müssen wir auch alternative Behandlungsmethoden in den Fokus nehmen und vor allen Dingen dafür sorgen, dass Antibiotikaforschung wieder in der Europäischen Union passiert. Insofern, Frau Kommissarin, vielen Dank, dass Sie sich heute die Zeit nehmen und mit uns diskutieren. Ich glaube, es wird eine sehr spannende und eine sehr wichtige Debatte.

Stella Kyriakides, Member of the Commission. – Madam President, honourable Members, first of all, I want to thank you for the ongoing support of all our work on fighting AMR and for putting this question here today, which I think is extremely important.

Many of us have been calling antimicrobial resistance the silent pandemic, and we are all aware that we can no longer say that it is silent. The pandemic has further highlighted the challenges we are facing with antimicrobial resistance, and we know that over 35 000 EU citizens every year lose their lives from antibiotic-resistant infections. And this is a number that is rising, because bacterial resistance is also rising, so we need to give it the highest priority.

We need to take action that needs to be both ambitious and also urgent. We have proposed the reform of our pharmaceutical legislation and this came with a Council Recommendation on AMR to strengthen our response. And through the recommendation, we have asked Member States to ensure the prudent use of antimicrobials and that unused and expired antimicrobials are disposed of in a very safe way.

We have put forward measurable EU national targets on antimicrobial consumption and resistance to be achieved by 2030. More prudent use measures are proposed in the legislation. For example, we have adequate pack size, we have plans and reporting of resistance to microbes, we have prescription status. So there is a great deal we need to do. And I want to say here that what we are trying to achieve can only be achieved if we have a toolbox of measures that is in place in order to fight AMR.

On the veterinary side, the legislation on veterinary medicinal products and medicated feed will help to meet our farm to fork strategy targets of halving overall EU sales of antimicrobials used for farmed animals and agriculture by 2030. The recommendation invites Member States to implement infection prevention and control measures so that we curb the spread of antimicrobial resistant pathogens. And it calls particularly for stronger measures in healthcare settings and long-term care facilities. This is building on what we have learned during the pandemic of the situation that we saw in long-term care facilities and in healthcare settings.

With EU funding support, Member States are encouraged to take measures to improve the health and the welfare of food-producing animals in order to decrease the spread of infectious diseases. And if we manage to do this, we will reduce the use of antimicrobials. However, reducing the use of antimicrobials has an impact on sales volumes and on the return of investment for marketing authorisation holders. And this is responsible for the current market failure and the lack of new antimicrobials.

Let me just share with you that the last antimicrobials that came onto the market, the novel ones, were in the 1980s, so we clearly need to do something urgently to bring innovation in, to bring new antimicrobials into the market. And this is why we're using push incentives by research and innovation funding and pull incentives to reward successful development and secure access to effective antimicrobials.

And that is why we have proposed what is possibly a world pioneering measure: the transferable data exclusivity vouchers to develop new antimicrobials. To be clear, these will be granted under extremely strict conditions to minimise the cost to health systems and to ensure a fair return on investments to developers, often small SMEs.

We have also presented procurement mechanisms for access to new and existing antimicrobials, and this would guarantee revenue for marketing authorisation holders regardless of sales volumes. Other medical countermeasures such as alternative treatments, diagnostic tests and vaccines targeting antimicrobial resistance pathogens are also covered here.

At the global level, the proposed recommendation looks to the Member States and the Commission to support concrete actions on AMR in the pandemic agreement currently being negotiated at the G7 and G20. I would also want to say, in addition, on bacteriophages, which has often been discussed, the revised pharmaceutical legislation would make it possible to establish an adapted, tailor-made framework to take the specificities of these medicinal products into account. And really, as we have often said, we need a One Health approach to tackle AMR, and that is a priority for the EU's global health strategy. And that's why we have encouraged, at EU level, the Member States to exchange and cooperate via the AMR One Health network.

So I have really gone through a list of the measures that we are taking, the actions that we are putting into place to tackle AMR. But I want to close by saying that I believe that we all come from a common point and that is that we urgently need to address antimicrobial resistance. We cannot afford not to act. We need to have ambitious actions and we need to ensure that we combine bringing new, innovative antimicrobials onto the market, but at the same time having awareness of prudent use and of what we need to do to strengthen our health systems. So I look forward to hearing your views and look forward to working with you on this important topic.

Tomislav Sokol, u ime kluba PPE. – Poštovana predsjedavajuća, povjerenice, kolegice i kolege, bakterije otporne na antibiotike svake godine uzrokuju više od 670 tisuća infekcija, od čega umire otprilike 35 tisuća ljudi u Europskoj uniji. Antimikrobna otpornost problem je koji ni jedna država članica ne može sama riješiti te je zajednički europski odgovor nužan, kao što smo već danas čuli.

Ovdje treba posebno naglasiti važnost razmjene podataka kako bismo u stvarnom vremenu imali informacije o antimikrobnoj otpornosti i potrošnji antimikrobnih sredstava na svim razinama. Zbog toga je ključno da što prije dovršimo pregovore i uspostavimo europski prostor za zdravstvene podatke.

Dalje: posebno je važno stvoriti europski pravni okvir koji će jače poticati istraživanje i inovacije, budući da neuspjeh u razvoju i proizvodnji djelotvornih novih antibiotika pogoršava posljedice antimikrobne otpornosti. U tom smislu, smatram da prijedlog Komisije o reformi farmaceutskog zakonodavstva ide u dobrom smjeru, ali naravno, poboljšanja su uvijek moguća. Osim toga, bitno je na razini država članica osigurati odgovarajuće infrastrukturne i ljudske resurse za sprečavanje i kontrolu infekcija te za programe za poboljšanje usluga vodoopskrbe, odvodnje i higijene.

Na kraju, moramo dodatno uložiti u razboritu uporabu antimikrobnih sredstava, provedbu smjernica EU-a i osmišljavanje mjera za zdravstvene djelatnike, kako bi se zajamčilo da se pridržavaju smjernica o liječenju uobičajenih infekcija.

Heléne Fritzon, *för S&D-gruppen*. – Fru talman! Kommissionär! Jag vill börja med att tacka mina kollegor för det goda arbetet med resolutionen.

Antimikrobiell resistens är en ödesfråga för EU och världen. Ska vi lyckas motverka den måste vi samarbeta internationellt, och därför är det så viktigt att vi på EU-nivå tar kampen mot antibiotikaresistensen. Vi måste se till att budskapen från den här resolutionen också återspeglas i revideringen av EU:s läkemedelslagstiftning. Och vi behöver göra ännu mer.

En avgörande fråga är hur vi ska få fram ny antibiotika. Om vi blickar mot mitt hemland – Sverige – ser jag att det är möjligt. I Sverige har vi fått tillgång till flera nya läkemedel tidigare än andra länder i Europa, bland annat genom den ersättningsmodell för vissa antibiotika som ju liknar det voucher-system som kommissionen har föreslagit.

Jag ser fram emot att utveckla detta förslag i revideringen av läkemedelslagstiftningen. Det är dags för EU att på allvar kliva fram.

Billy Kelleher, *on behalf of the Renew Group*. – Madam President, I welcome the urgency with which this issue is now being dealt with, and I welcome the fact that it was part and parcel of the pharmaceutical strategy in terms of combating antimicrobial resistance and the 'one health' approach.

As referenced, it is a silent killer: 35 000 people approximately die every year in the European Union. That number is rising. There are 700 000 infections across Europe every year. So it's putting additional pressure on our health systems right across Europe as well, so we do have to address it very, very quickly. Overprescribing, Commissioner, is a clear issue that has to be addressed. We are becoming very dependent on antibiotics as the first line of defence in terms of dealing with illnesses and sickness. And certainly that is an area that we have to address.

The issue of innovation and research – I welcome the push pull factor that you referenced, but we do really have to ramp up the research and innovation into new antibiotics and into antimicrobial resistance as well, to support companies in the areas of research, so that we can bring forward new medicines that will be able to address the issue of antimicrobial resistance. So I commend this and hope that it will be pushed forward as quickly as possible.

Tilly Metz, *au nom du groupe Verts/ALE*. – Madame la Présidente, chère Commissaire, chers collègues, je suis heureuse que le Parlement européen prenne une nouvelle fois position pour demander aux États membres d'être cohérents dans leur action contre l'antibiorésistance.

On parle de pandémie silencieuse, mais les conséquences sont criantes. Plus de 35 000 personnes meurent chaque année dans l'Union à cause d'une bactérie résistante aux antibiotiques, et cela ne fera qu'augmenter, dépassant le nombre de patients décédant du cancer. Sans parler des coûts sociétaux qui dépasseront ceux de la crise financière de 2008.

Le message central de cette résolution est qu'il est grand temps d'agir, et ce en amont. Nous savons que l'usage actuel abusif des antibiotiques pour la santé humaine et animale ne contribue en fait qu'à amplifier l'antibiorésistance, de même que le rejet des produits pharmaceutiques et agricoles dans l'environnement. Alors changeons nos pratiques et appliquons l'approche «One health» afin d'être cohérents. J'appelle aussi les États membres à mettre à disposition les ressources nécessaires pour mettre en place les plans nationaux de lutte contre l'antibiorésistance.

Joanna Kopcińska, *w imieniu grupy ECR*. – Pani Przewodnicząca! Szanowna Pani Komisarz! Niewłaściwe stosowanie środków przeciwdrobnoustrojowych doprowadziło na przestrzeni czasu do narastającego problemu oporności na środki przeciwdrobnoustrojowe do tego stopnia, że zagrożenie to zostało uznane za jedno z dziesięciu największych globalnych wyzwań dla zdrowia publicznego. Dlatego kiedy w zeszłym roku adresowałam interpelacje do Komisji odnośnie do kryteriów wyznaczania środków przeciwdrobnoustrojowych, w otrzymanej odpowiedzi przewijało się pojęcie solidarnych i wspólnych wysiłków ekspertów z zakresu medycyny, weterynarii, z organów krajowych, agencji unijnych i środowisk akademickich, tak aby sprostać temu zagrożeniu dla zdrowia publicznego.

Dzisiaj podobnie jest z głosowaną rezolucją, która diagnozuje problem AMR właśnie jako wspólne wysiłki. I choć dobór niektórych środków może budzić kontrowersje, to niemniej jednak dla mnie, jako osoby związanej przede wszystkim z polityką zdrowia publicznego, właściwe jest przyjęcie takiej metodologii prac, która przed 2050 r. przyczyni się do zmniejszenia liczby ofiar śmiertelnych. W przeciwnym razie śmierć poniesie ponad 10 milionów osób rocznie, a to więcej niż przewidywana liczba łącznych zgonów z powodu nowotworów i cukrzycy.

Kateřina Konečná, za skupinu *The Left*. – Paní předsedající, asi všichni uznáváme nutnost bojovat s antimikrobiální rezistencí a moc děkuji za tu rezoluci, kterou tady dnes máme. I nový farmaceutický balíček je ústy Komise prezentován tak, že má pomoci s touto tikající bombou. Bohužel dopadlo to jako vždycky. S řešením antimikrobiální rezistence v novém balíčku se prostě nemohu ztotožnit. Asi největším zlem je samozřejmě navržená pobídka, která by odměnila vývojáře nových antibiotik takzvaným prodejním poukazem, tedy voucherem, který by umožnil speciální neomezenou roční ochrannou exkluzivitu pro lék dle výběru dané společnosti. Jako by to nestačilo, tak s těmito vouchery bude dál následně možno také obchodovat. To je přece ale naprosto skandální!

Komise zde nejenom, že reálně neřeší problém antimikrobiální rezistence, ale navíc ještě vytváří sekundární spekulativní trh s léky. Co se asi tak stane? Na které léky myslíte, že dané společnosti vouchery uplatní? No samozřejmě na ty nejdražší a nejvíce poptávané léky ze svého portfolia, aby na úkor například pacientů se vzácným onemocněním a našich veřejných systémů zdravotního pojištění maximalizovali své zisky. S tím se já ani má skupina prostě nemůžeme a nehodláme smířit.

Peter Liese (PPE). – Frau Präsidentin! Liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen, es ist wirklich dramatisch. Vor einigen Jahren starben 30 000 Menschen jährlich in der EU an Antibiotikaresistenzen. Jetzt sind wir schon bei 35 000 und es wird jedes Jahr schlimmer. Deswegen müssen wir endlich aufhören mit dem Schwarzer-Peter-Spiel.

Viele meiner Berufskollegen – Humanmediziner – sagen, in der Tiermedizin muss gehandelt werden. Die Tiermediziner sagen, in der Humanmedizin muss gehandelt werden. Die Grünen sagen, wir brauchen strengere Kontrollen. Liberale und wir Christdemokraten sagen zu Recht, wir brauchen Innovation, wir brauchen auch die Vouchers.

Meine Meinung ist: Wir brauchen dies alles. Wir müssen aufhören, die Vorschläge zu kritisieren und zu sagen, man müsste es irgendwie anders machen. Alle Vorschläge, die auf dem Tisch liegen, müssen umgesetzt werden. Und wer wie Kateřina Konečná rummäkelt an dem Voucher, der soll einen besseren Vorschlag machen. Es ist vorbei mit dem Schwarzer-Peter-Spiel, wir müssen dieses Problem endlich anpacken!

Sara Cerdas (S&D). – Senhora Presidente, Senhora Comissária, Caros Colegas, há três grandes fatores responsáveis pelo aumento da esperança média de vida nos últimos 100 anos: o acesso à água potável e saneamento básico, a vacinação e os antibióticos. No entanto, nos últimos anos a resistência aos antimicrobianos aumentou por diversas razões já aqui mencionadas. Aliás, prevê-se que em 2050 venha a ter tantas repercussões económicas como teve a crise de 2008.

Precisamos, assim, de mudar. E é imoral também que, perante este problema, 8 % dos antibióticos para consumo humano ocorram sem prescrição e que 73 % de todos os antibióticos sejam utilizados em animais criados para consumo alimentar. Este é mais um grave problema à escala mundial e nenhum Estado-Membro conseguirá lidar com ele individualmente.

Precisamos, assim, de mais coordenação e cooperação entre os Estados-Membros e a Comissão Europeia, de planos de ação nacionais focados e consequentes, e de inovação científica para novos métodos terapêuticos e também de diagnóstico.

Os microrganismos não conhecem fronteiras e a saúde global está em risco. Assim, precisamos de atuar urgentemente.

Véronique Trillet-Lenoir (Renew). – Madame la Présidente, vous avez raison, Madame la Commissaire, contrairement à ce qu'on entend, la résistance aux antimicrobiens n'est pas une pandémie silencieuse. 35 000 morts par an dans l'Union et chaque jour dans nos hôpitaux, des patients infectés par des bactéries multi-résistantes. Ce fléau illustre douloureusement le concept de «One Health» et il impose une réponse ambitieuse à tous les échelons de la gouvernance:

au niveau des États membres, sensibilisation des citoyens et formation des professionnels; au niveau européen, incitation à la recherche et au développement via les PIEC et grâce à HERA; au niveau international, dans le cadre du futur accord de l'OMS sur les pandémies.

Nous adressons ici un message uni à la Commission et au Conseil. Il faut des mesures législatives fortes. Le Parlement européen dispose avec la révision de la stratégie pharmaceutique d'un outil approprié dont il saura se servir.

João Pimenta Lopes (The Left). – Senhora Presidente, o aumento das resistências antimicrobianas e o uso generalizado de antibióticos são reconhecidos problemas de saúde pública que exigem ação e decisão política.

Importa rejear a instrumentalização desta questão por aqueles, como as multinacionais farmacêuticas, que privilegiam o lucro sobre o direito à saúde. Como rejear abordagens de responsabilização do indivíduo que mascaram o impacto da opção política da falta de investimento nos serviços públicos de saúde, no agravamento desta situação, dificultando quer a prevenção, quer a adequada gestão da resistência antimicrobiana.

Importa intervir também na alteração dos modos de produção agropecuária, combatendo a produção intensiva que emprega elevadas cargas de antibióticos ou práticas genómicas na produção de sementes geneticamente modificadas, e cujos marcadores contribuem para a resistência antimicrobiana.

Um verdadeiro combate a este problema exige mudança de políticas que promovam o investimento em serviços de saúde públicos de qualidade, promovendo uma maior prudência e vigilância e mais investigação pública neste domínio para o desenvolvimento de novas alternativas e de novos agentes antimicrobianos.

Deirdre Clune (PPE). – Madam President, AMR – antimicrobial resistance – is one of the biggest threats to public health today. The medicines that we use so widely and are so available, and that have had such an impact on our healthcare from minor to major illness, are becoming less effective as the bacteria that antibiotics are tackling are becoming increasingly resistant.

We need more innovation and new developments in this area and the World Health Organisation has been critical of the lack of worldwide action in developing new medicines. So it's significant and important, Commissioner, that the pharmaceutical legislation addresses this issue and aims to increase further development of antibiotics. But more and better medicines are not the only answer: they are part of a solution. We need a range of actions taking into account human health and welfare, animal health and production, and food and food safety.

Today, we are all aware of the effects that a worldwide pandemic can have on our health, our societies, our economies. We did not see COVID coming, but we can see AMR coming and we need action now, urgently.

Catch-the-eye procedure

Maria Grapini (S&D). – Doamnă președintă, mă bucur că discutăm acest subiect, pentru că eu cred că nimic nu este mai important decât sănătatea oamenilor și este foarte bine să punem accent pe cercetare și inovare, pentru că da, sigur, avem nevoie de noi antibiotice, de noi medicamente care să poată să pună capăt acestor cazuri. S-a spus aici: 35 de mii de decese pentru infecții microbiene. Problema pe care eu vreau să o ridic, doamnă comisar, este ca rezultatul cercetării să ajungă în toate statele membre.

Da, sănătatea este de competență națională, dar eu cred că libera circulație a cetățenilor face să fie nevoie să avem o politică de sănătate și să dăm rezultatul cercetării. Până la urmă, alocăm niște bugete tuturor statelor membre și sper să nu se întâmple ca și cu Pfizer, să livrăm bani acolo pentru cercetare și să avem rezultate negative. Eu sper într-o politică de sănătate echitabilă pentru toți cetățenii, care trebuie să poată să-și cumpere aceste medicamente sau să li se asigure gratuit, în funcție de boala pe care o au.

Juozas Olekas (S&D). – Gerbiama Pirmininke, gerbiama komisijos nare. Iš tikrųjų antimikrobinis atsparumas – tai dar viena pandemija, kuri žudo mūsų žmones. Trisdešimt penki tūkstančiai mirstančių žmonių yra didelė visų netektis. Viena iš priežasčių yra per daug platus antimikrobinų preparatų naudojimas, ypač antibiotikų, jų prieinamumas. Tiek gydant žmones, tiek veterinarijoje. Todėl manau, kad pateiktas dokumentas yra labai svarbus. Mums reikia bendresnių metodologijų, mums reikia vienesnių gydymo schemų, mums reikia didesnio koordinavimo tarp šalių narių ir komisijų ir taip pat reikia mokslo naujovių įdiegimo. Todėl sveikinu pateiktą DEKO dokumentą ir kviečiu jį palaikyti, nes manau, kad įgyvendinus jo nuostatas, mes turėsime geresnę informaciją tiek medikų tarpe, tiek mūsų piliečių bendruo-

menėje, ir galėsime sureguliuoti antibiotikų naudojimą ir sumažinti antimikrobinį atsparumą ir mirtis nuo šios pandemijos.

(End of catch-the-eye procedure)

Stella Kyriakides, Member of the Commission. – Madam President, dear Members, first of all, I want to thank you for the very fruitful exchange that we had today. A great deal has already been said, and I must say that I think that it's one of the times that we agree on where we need to go. I think that we also need to agree on the fact that there can be no quick solutions to deal with a huge public health issue like antimicrobial resistance. It's there and what we need to do is find solutions that are going to be effective, and to be able to be effective through the One Health approach.

It was mentioned that we need to have a methodology to reduce the number of deaths from AMR, and that is exactly what the Commission has proposed. Through the proposals in the pharmaceutical reform and the recommendation to the Member States what we are doing is proposing a way forward for us all to work together to bring down the number of deaths with AMR.

The transferable exclusivity vouchers were used and I am aware that this is a rather innovative approach, but we need to have an ambitious way of dealing with this problem. When we were looking at this in the proposal, I just want to assure you that the way these vouchers will be used will be under very strict conditions only for very novel antimicrobials and for a very specific number and term. So we are looking for ways to inspire innovation and bring new antimicrobials into the market.

And lastly I want to just spend the last 20 seconds of the time I have to stress the importance of public awareness. And this is where each and every person in this room, each Member of the European Parliament who has the contact with citizens, can help us spread the message of this silent pandemic on AMR. We need to raise public awareness. EU citizens need to understand what is at stake so that they monitor and have more prudent use of antimicrobials.

Thank you so much. I look forward to working with you, and I count on your support on the coming negotiations on the pharmaceutical package.

President. – The debate is closed. I have received one motion for a resolution to wind up the debate.

The vote will be held today.

(The sitting was suspended at 10.57)

VORSITZ: EVELYN REGNER

Vizepräsidentin

4. Resumption of the sitting

(Die Sitzung wird um 11.05 Uhr wieder aufgenommen.)

5. Closure of procedure for requests for the waiver and defence of Members' parliamentary immunity

Die Präsidentin. – Der Rechtsausschuss hat der Präsidentin mitgeteilt, dass die Staatsanwaltschaft des Gerichts erster Instanz in Thessaloniki in Griechenland das Verfahren gegen Emmanouil Fragkos eingestellt hat, für das die Aufhebung der parlamentarischen Immunität von Emmanouil Fragkos beantragt worden war, wie im Plenum am 13. September 2021 angekündigt. Dieses Verfahren zur Aufhebung der Immunität ist somit abgeschlossen.

Der Rechtsausschuss hat der Präsidentin weiter mitgeteilt, dass der Ausschuss zu dem Schluss gekommen ist, dass Artikel 8 des Protokolls Nr. 7 über die Vorrechte und Befreiungen in der Europäischen Union nicht auf den in der Plenarsitzung vom 21. November 2022 angekündigten Antrag auf Schutz der Vorrechte und der Befreiungen von Nikos Androulakis anwendbar ist. In Folge des Rücktritts von Nikos Androulakis als Mitglied des Europäischen Parlaments mit Wirkung vom 3. Mai 2023 genießt er nicht mehr die Immunität nach Artikel 9 des Protokolls Nr. 7, die auf die Dauer des Mandats des Mitglieds des Europäischen Parlaments beschränkt ist. Daher wird das Verfahren bezüglich dieses Antrags auf Schutz seiner Vorrechte und Befreiungen eingestellt.

Marie Toussaint (Verts/ALE). – Madame la Présidente, chers collègues, l'Europe est face à un nouveau scandale. Nous apprenons ce matin que plusieurs fabricants de pesticides ont délibérément menti aux autorités européennes.

Pendant plusieurs années et à plusieurs reprises, Syngenta, mais aussi Bayer, auraient soustrait des analyses scientifiques démontrant la toxicité de leurs produits sur la santé humaine, et en particulier sur le développement du cerveau des enfants. Ces pesticides provoquent des troubles du neurodéveloppement, de l'autisme, et impactent le quotient intellectuel des enfants.

Depuis près de 20 ans, l'Agence européenne de sécurité des aliments a donc été délibérément empêchée de garantir la sécurité sanitaire des citoyennes et des citoyens. Les commissions Santé et Environnement doivent impérativement étudier et au plus vite, ce qui peut et doit être fait face à la toxicité de ces produits trop largement répandus. Mes chers collègues, il y a toutes les raisons de croire que nous sommes face à un PesticideGate ainsi que plusieurs collègues de différents groupes l'ont souligné.

Alors, au-delà de nos divergences politiques, au-delà de nos appartenances nationales, nous devons défendre l'intérêt général européen, qui commence par la transparence, la recherche de la vérité et la bonne administration de nos institutions. Voilà pourquoi nous devons mettre en place une commission pour veiller à ce que, plus jamais, nul ne bafoue la santé et la démocratie européennes. Mes chers collègues, mentir aux autorités européennes, nous mentir, ne peut rester sans réponse.

6. Voting time

Die Präsidentin. – Als nächster Punkt der Tagesordnung folgt die Abstimmung.

(Abstimmungsergebnisse und sonstige Einzelheiten der Abstimmung: siehe Protokoll.)

6.1. Request for the waiver of the immunity of Maria Spyraiki (A9-0201/2023 - Ilana Cicurel) (vote)

6.2. Request for the waiver of the immunity of Alexis Georgoulis (A9-0202/2023 - Andrzej Halicki) (vote)

6.3. Act in Support of Ammunition Production (C9-0161/2023) (vote)

— *Nach der Abstimmung über den Kommissionsvorschlag:*

Cristian-Silviu Buşoi, Chair ITRE. – Madam President, as Chair of the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE), according to Rule 59(4) fourth subparagraph of the Rules of Procedure, I would like to request to refer the file back to the ITRE Committee for interinstitutional negotiations that we will try to conclude ASAP.

(Das Parlament billigt den Antrag auf Rücküberweisung an den Ausschuss.)

6.4. Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence (A9-0184/2023 - Lara Wolters) (vote)

— *Vor der Abstimmung über den Kommissionsvorschlag:*

Lara Wolters, rapporteur. – Madam President, I think that we had asked for a short technical break at this point, so if you will allow us that, we'll just take one minute to convene and then vote.

Die Präsidentin. – Beruhigen Sie sich im Raum! Um zügig vorzugehen, wird die Sitzung für ganz kurze Zeit – ein, zwei Minuten – unterbrochen.

— *Nach der Abstimmung über den Kommissionsvorschlag:*

Lara Wolters, rapporteur. – Madam President, I assume you gave me the floor. I couldn't hear in all the commotion of all those very happy colleagues here in the room, and I just want to take one moment to really warmly thank all of those who have worked so hard with me and with us on this, including those colleagues in EPP and in Renew who voted in favour today. So thank you so much to them. And now, under Rule 59(4), I would like to ask the chair for a referral back to the JURI Committee for interinstitutional negotiations due to start next week.

(Das Parlament billigt den Antrag auf Rücküberweisung an den Ausschuss.)

6.5. Geographical Indications for wine, spirit drinks and agricultural products (A9-0173/2023 - Paolo De Castro) (vote)

— *Nach der Abstimmung über den Kommissionsvorschlag:*

Paolo De Castro, Rapporteur. – Signora Presidente, innanzitutto chiedo il ritorno in Commissione in base all'articolo 59/4 per avviare subito i negoziati interistituzionali e approfitto davvero per ringraziare tutti i colleghi.

Un testo che ha avuto una così larga maggioranza, all'unanimità, approvato in commissione Agricoltura. Grazie davvero a tutti i colleghi.

(Das Parlament billigt den Antrag auf Rücküberweisung an den Ausschuss.)

6.6. Arrangement with the Republic of Iceland on the modalities of its participation in the European Asylum Support Office (A9-0175/2023 - Jeroen Lenaers) (vote)

6.7. Nomination of a member of the Court of Auditors – Ildikó Gáll-Pelcz (A9-0197/2023 - Ryszard Czarnecki) (vote)

6.8. Mobilisation of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund: application EGF/2023/000 TA 2023 — Technical assistance at the initiative of the Commission (A9-0195/2023 - Monika Vana) (vote)

6.9. Arrangements between the European Parliament and the ECB on structuring their interaction practices in the area of central banking (A9-0158/2023 - Salvatore De Meo) (vote)

— *Vor der Abstimmung:*

Salvatore De Meo, Rapporteur. – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, questo accordo, sotto forma di scambio di lettere tra il Parlamento europeo e la Banca centrale europea, è il frutto di un negoziato della commissione ECON, grazie al quale una serie di pratiche e di accordi informali tra la Banca centrale e la nostra Istituzione saranno formalmente definiti e strutturati, consentendo alla Banca centrale di adempiere ai propri obblighi di responsabilità e trasparenza nel rispetto dei trattati.

In questo contesto, il Parlamento funge da ponte tra la Banca centrale e i cittadini dell'Unione, esercitando un controllo democratico e trasparente, fornendo allo stesso tempo alla Banca centrale la possibilità di spiegare le sue politiche all'opinione pubblica. È importante sostenere questa proposta, così come già sostenuta all'unanimità dalla commissione AFCE.

6.10. EU Strategy for Sustainable and Circular Textiles (A9-0176/2023 - Delara Burkhardt) (vote)

6.11. Breaches of the Rule of law and fundamental rights in Hungary and frozen EU funds (B9-0257/2023) (vote)

6.12. Sexual harassment in the EU and MeToo evaluation (A9-0178/2023 - Michal Šimečka) (vote)

6.13. Strengthening social dialogue (B9-0259/2023) (vote)

6.14. Foreign interference in all democratic processes in the European Union, including disinformation (A9-0187/2023 - Sandra Kalniete) (vote)

6.15. Coordinated action to address antimicrobial resistance (B9-0258/2023) (vote)

Der Präsident. – Damit ist die Abstimmungsstunde geschlossen.

(Die Sitzung wird für kurze Zeit unterbrochen.)

7. Resumption of the sitting

(The sitting resumed at 12.16)

8. Explanations of vote

President. – The next item is the explanations of vote.

8.1. Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence (A9-0184/2023 - Lara Wolters)

Oral explanations of vote

Mick Wallace (The Left). – Madam President, the directive has arrived decades late, after so much exploitation, environmental degradation and abuse by European companies has occurred with zero or inadequate consequences for those responsible.

The text agreed by the European Justice Ministers in December was watered down and toothless. Now we have a chance to make this important directive fit for purpose. And the same groups that are trying to crush the natural restoration law proposal are tabling a raft of amendments designed to protect company directors from the responsibility to implement the directive.

That being said, there are some improvements on the Council's approach and the Commission's proposals. If it passes in its current state, more companies will be subject to regulation. Yet that will still be less than 2% of EU companies. The financial sector is still getting off lightly and the fossil fuel companies are basically off the hook for being the main drivers of mass extinction.

How regressive is this place that MEPs are trying to weaken an already inadequate text?

Jiří Pospíšil (PPE). – Paní předsedající, nakonec jsem konečnou podobu návrhu nepodpořil, a to z toho důvodu, že na jedné straně samozřejmě hodnoty životního prostředí, hodnoty lidských práv ve třetím světě jsou klíčové a důležité hodnoty. Jsem ale přesvědčen, že ta cesta, která byla zvolena ve schváleném materiálu, není správná cesta a že nakonec povede k tomu, co autoři nezmýšleli. To znamená k poškození evropských firem a k tomu, že v globálním kontextu posílí firmy, které nejsou z Evropy a které taková pravidla a omezení nemusí naplňovat. Bohužel se obávám, že tady dobrý úmysl je cestou do pekla a že v důsledku tohoto dojde ke snížení konkurenceschopnosti evropských firem a pomůže to naopak čínským konkurentům.

Marc Tarabella (NI). – Madame la Présidente, aujourd'hui est un jour important. Aujourd'hui, c'est le jour où l'Europe prend une décision décisive pour les droits des travailleurs, l'éthique et la morale, le renforcement de la protection de l'environnement. Alors que l'on commémore les dix ans de la tragédie du Rana Plaza et que l'on rend hommage aux plus de 3 600 victimes de cette tragédie, nous devons nous souvenir que ce drame est aussi la responsabilité des entreprises européennes qui ont préféré fermer les yeux sur une forme d'esclavage dont elles étaient finalement complices. Mon vote en faveur du texte était donc une évidence, ayant notamment été le rapporteur pour avis de la commission du marché intérieur dans ce dossier.

Chris MacManus (The Left). – A *Uachtarán*, I was happy to vote in favor of the CSDDD. Today's vote was an important milestone towards improving the global landscape on business and human rights.

This is a crucial piece of legislation that will finally hold multinational companies to task for the myriad human rights and environmental abuses linked to their value chains. The position established today is not perfect, but I am pleased that efforts from the right to scupper the directive were almost all unsuccessful.

We are now one step closer to proper corporate accountability and access to justice for victims. We must continue to stand in solidarity with impacted communities and insist on a strong due diligence law during the trilogue negotiations.

Clare Daly (The Left). – Madam President, I too voted in favor of this report on corporate due diligence, and I would like to thank so many members of our society who lobbied so hard in order to get this past the line. I would absolutely like to share and echo their concerns about the inevitable watering down of this crucial directive by the Council.

It is very clear that we need a strong and robust directive that helps put an end to the appalling human rights and environmental abuses committed regularly by corporations. But let's be honest about it: even though we did withstand much of the regressive amendments here today, the text itself does try to give an illusion that these companies are going to police themselves.

The recent revelations in Total's archaic management of the waste generated by the oil extraction process in Yemen in the 2000 are a perfect example of how this is not so. We have had a succession of accidents on the sites, mercury levels well above the standards found in soil and water samples, an increase in cancer cases, particularly among children – join the dots! Total flee the country and left Yemenis under the shellfire with a ruined environment. The fight for justice goes on way past today's vote.

Piernicola Pedicini (Verts/ALE). – Signora Presidente, il diritto internazionale dice che l'invasione russa è illegale esattamente come le guerre della NATO in Iraq, in Serbia, in Libia e in Siria. Sono tutte guerre illegali volute da ricchi, combattute da poveri e pagate da cittadini ancora più poveri.

Perciò questa guerra in realtà è la solita guerra ai poveri. Non ci sono soldi, ma l'Europa ha salvato le banche nelle crisi bancarie. Non ci sono soldi, ma gli Stati membri hanno subito risposto alla richiesta della NATO per uno sforzo bellico fino al 2 per cento del PIL. E se si trovano i soldi per il Covid, la pesante burocrazia impedisce di assorbire quelle risorse nelle aree più povere del nostro continente.

In questo momento ci sono milioni di cittadini europei che non hanno la possibilità di mettere cibo a tavola. Però questa Unione europea ha il denaro per le banche, ha il denaro per la guerra, ma non ha il denaro per i suoi poveri cittadini. Per questo motivo ho votato «no» alla risoluzione Asap. Noi in Ucraina non dobbiamo inviare munizioni, dobbiamo inviare soluzioni. Non dobbiamo esportare democrazia, dobbiamo esportare diplomazia.

8.2. Geographical Indications for wine, spirit drinks and agricultural products (A9-0173/2023 - Paolo De Castro)

Oral explanations of vote

Jiří Pospíšil (PPE). – Paní předsedající, tuto zprávu jsem s radostí podpořil. Považuji to za jasně pozitivní věc, na které asi je všeobecná shoda jak mezi pravici, tak i levici v tomto sále, protože touto právní úpravou, pokud bude úplně přijata, posílíme ochranu specifických zemědělských výrobků, vína a lihovin, které se vyrábějí v rámci EU a které jsou charakteristické a typické pro určitý region. Takže pro ochranu našich výrobců, zvláště těch menších a středních, ta úprava bude velkým přínosem. Mám radost, že tady dneska prošla a já ji podpořil.

Ангел Джамбазки (ECR). – Г-жо Председател, гласувах за доклада относно географските означения за вина, спиртни напитки и селскостопански продукти, защото смятам, че е от особено значение за нашите производители да могат да засилят добавената стойност на продуктите, които са произвеждани в отредени защитени територии. Добре е, че не бяха приети изменения, целящи да увеличат позволените с 15% продукти извън демаркираната защитена зона при вината. Към момента 15%-то ограничение се отнася само до гроздето, а измамата целеше то да се разшири до гроздовата мъст и вино. Това, че не минаха е добре и е полезно за винарите, лозарите и фермерите. Ето затова подкрепих и доклада, и нашите лозари и винари в този сектор.

8.3. Breaches of the Rule of law and fundamental rights in Hungary and frozen EU funds (B9-0257/2023)

Oral explanations of vote

Mick Wallace (The Left). – Madam President, the rule of law should be the rule of law and not a weapon to trouble countries when someone deems them to have stepped out of order.

The rule of law issue is only used when it suits the Commission. People like Orbán will get away with anything as long as he's doing the bidding of the EU, but then when it doesn't suit will have a go at him. His position on the war is not suiting everybody at the moment, so it is easy enough to throw stones at him.

In June last year we gave candidate status to Ukraine, but we didn't give it to Georgia. Now, if there's anyone in here thinks that the rule of law is better in Ukraine than it is in Georgia, then you're living in cuckoo land. The European Court of Auditors report just before the war wrote off Ukraine as one of the most corrupt countries in Europe, and the place was a basket case. And yet, because Georgia are not anti-Russian enough, we have an issue with the rule of law. The hypocrisy is desperate.

Ангел Джамбазки (ECR). – Г-жо Председател, убедено гласувах против тази резолюция, защото тя е поредна намеса във вътрешните работи на суверенна държава и е призив за лов на вещици. Тя цели пряка намеса на различни бюрократични нива в ЕС във вътрешните работи на суверенни държави. Такава намеса, каквато виждаме в записите на бившия български министър-председател, който съгласува с председателя на Европейската комисия, с шефовете на служби за сигурност нещо недопустимо, нарушавашо националния суверенитет. Това противоречи на идеята за съюз на суверенни държави.

Европейският съюз не е съюз на дъгичките, пропагандата, ЛГБТИ и прочие, и прочие, и прочие. Той трябва да бъде съюз на свободното движение, на икономическия просперитет, на свободата на придвижване и на икономическата свобода. Това, което се налага през такива фалшиви доклади, е тоталитаризъм, мракобесие, Оруел и подменя самата идея за Европейски съюз. Всяка една такава резолюция е насочена битка срещу демократично избрано правителство. Дали ще бъде на Полша, дали на Унгария, дали на Италия, на което и да било. Това е опит за смазване на здравия разум. Това е опит за налагане на Оруелска пропаганда и намеса във вътрешните работи.

Clare Daly (The Left). – Madam President, I voted for this report. Hungary is a rule of law basket case, but it's not the only one. We've Spain, where the UN Human Rights Committee has twice ruled that the treatment of the Catalan independence politicians by the Spanish state breaches their rights. In France, we have people's rights continuously and systematically violated under the guise of counter-terrorism, while protesters met with spectacular violence. Bulgaria is a catastrophe. Croatia kidnaps and tortures migrants knowingly and gets rewarded by the Commission with Schengen entry. Italy is rounding up and arresting humanitarian workers. The Greek Government is spying on journalists. The Irish Tánaiste is attacking the free press. Latvia is taking elderly people to take language tests or be expelled.

And what is Parliament's response to all of this? The usual cynical nonsense. Political groups blocking debates are only promoting them when they're a chance for you to have a go against your political rivals. But you reap what you sow in this stuff. If politics is prioritised over the rule of law, then the rule of law breaks down. It's time to cop on and realise the same rules have to apply to everyone.

8.4. Sexual harassment in the EU and MeToo evaluation (A9-0178/2023 - Michal Šimečka)

Oral explanations of vote

Clare Daly (The Left). – Madam President, I again voted for this report because I think the question is, are we up for the fight against sexual harassment? We know the figures: one in two women in the EU has been a victim of sexual harassment before the age of 15, more than one person in five has been the victim of violence and harassment – whether physical, psychological or sexual – in the workplace. And this could only be, maybe, the tip of the iceberg because we don't know the real statistics.

So ratifying the various international texts such as the International Labour Organization's Convention on Violence and Harassment and the Istanbul Convention are very important, but they are not enough. Until we address the deep misogyny at the heart of our societies, then this discrimination and harassment will continue.

James Connolly, the great Irish Socialist, said: 'There are none so fitted to break the chains as those who wear them.' Well, the victims of sexual harassment and violence are off their knees, they're not going to tolerate it and they are demanding that action be done.

8.5. Strengthening social dialogue (B9-0259/2023)

Oral explanations of vote

Leila Chaibi (The Left). – Madame la Présidente, chers collègues, je voudrais ici, depuis l'hémicycle de notre Parlement européen, vous alerter sur la situation du dialogue social en France. Le gouvernement français a fait passer de façon autoritaire le recul de l'âge de départ à la retraite en ignorant toutes les demandes, toutes les propositions des partenaires sociaux, en refusant de négocier avec les syndicats, puis en ignorant et en bafouant la représentation parlementaire.

Vous l'avez bien compris, cette réforme qui va impacter considérablement la vie des Français a été adoptée sans vote, sans dialogue, que ce soit avec les partenaires sociaux ou avec la représentation nationale. Le pouvoir a encore franchi un cap, hier, en allant jusqu'à retirer le droit constitutionnel d'amendement aux députés de l'opposition. Manœuvres politiciennes, attaque contre le dialogue social, contre les syndicats, tout cela marque une dérive autoritaire dangereuse.

Chers collègues, en tant que parlementaires européens, cette manière de bafouer la démocratie sociale, cette manière d'attaquer les syndicats, cette manière d'attaquer la démocratie doit nous alerter au plus haut point.

Chris MacManus (The Left). – Madam President, I strongly welcome the committee's insistence and the need for workers to have the right to avail of collective bargaining. In Ireland, this right has long been denied.

The need for collective bargaining to be protected by legislation has never been greater. An ideology of neoliberalism with hugely damaging consequences for workers and family has reigned across Ireland and Europe for too long. The High-Level Group on Collective Bargaining and Industrial Relations has done some good work, but it must translate into strong legislation for workers' rights. We saw today how those from the right will try and dilute every bit of progress. They must not be allowed to win out.

Only by giving workers the tools to bargain for themselves can they have a chance of living decent and happy lives. Collective bargaining must not be impeded or delayed, but implemented as soon as possible.

8.6. Foreign interference in all democratic processes in the European Union, including disinformation (A9-0187/2023 - Sandra Kalniete)

Oral explanations of vote

Mick Wallace (The Left). – Madam President, we talk an awful lot about foreign interference in this place. But do you know something? How come we never talk about the actual influence of the US empire on the European Union? They have invested heavily in our media. They're invested heavily in our universities. They're trying to influence the curriculum in the universities. How can we say we have democracy when the Americans are actually buying our media and interfering in our educational system? Our idea that foreign interference only comes from the Russians is comic book stuff, and it's about time the people in here copped on to themselves.

Jiří Pospíšil (PPE). – Paní předsedající, tuto zprávu jsem podpořil. Opravdu se velmi obávám zahraničních vlivů z Ruska, to znamená z této oblasti. Vidím to jinak než můj předřečník a osobně si myslím, že v této věci musíme být ve střehu a musíme permanentně debatovat o tom, jakou kybernetickou válku proti nám Putinův režim vede. A sami vidíme v praxi, jak je jenom malý krok od těchto hybridních hrozeb a hybridních válek k reálnému útoku na suverénní stát. Rusko, nositel řekněme hybridních útoků a válek vůči demokraciím, dnes útočí na Ukrajinu, na suverénní nezávislý stát. A to má nás vést k tomu, že bychom opravdu tyto hrozby pro naše demokracie v hybridní podobě neměli podceňovat a měli bychom je vnímat opravdu jako jednu z forem současných válek vůči demokratickým státům. Takže jsem návrh podpořil a jsem rád, že byl diskutován a že Parlamentem prošel.

Ангел Джамбазки (ECR). – Г-жо Председател, гласувах убедено в подкрепа на този документ, защото наметната на трети враждебни страни във вътрешните работи на Съюза и на държавите членки е неприемлива и недопустима. Помним случая Катар-гейт, в който имаше взети финансови средства, за да бъдат променяни документи на Съюза от наши колеги, европейски представители.

В същото това време министър на външните работи и заместник министър-председател на Република Северна Македония се хвали, че убеждава наши колеги как да променят документи на Съюза, свързани с докладите за напредъка на Република Северна Македония. Хвали се в интервю, че дава предложения за поправки на наши колеги. Виждаме вчера, по време на среща, водена от докладчиците в сянка, как заместник министър-председател на Република Северна Македония тук, в Брюксел, събира тези наши колеги, за да се снима с тях и да координира тяхната дейност с цел и задача. Без да се крият, те казват, че целта и задачата е да бъдат изтрети от доклада всички престъпления от омраза срещу българите в Македония, защитата на българското културно историческо наследство, и изобщо промяна от трета враждебна страна срещу интересите на гражданите на държава – членка на Европейския съюз. Това е неприемливо, недопустимо и трябва да му се сложи край. И този случай трябва да бъде разследван. Да се види тези колеги дали са се записали в някакви списъци, обявили са с кого се виждат и т.н.

President. – That concludes the explanations of vote.

9. Approval of the minutes of the part-session and forwarding of texts adopted

President. – The minutes of today's and yesterday's sittings will be submitted to Parliament for its approval at the beginning of the next sitting. If there are no objections, I shall forward forthwith the resolutions adopted at today's sitting to the persons and bodies named in the resolutions.

10. Dates of forthcoming sittings

President. – The next part-session will take place from 12 to 15 June in Strasbourg.

11. Closure of the sitting

(The sitting closed at 12.37)

12. Adjournment of the session

President. – I declare adjourned the session of the European Parliament.

Key to symbols used

*	Consultation procedure
***	Consent procedure
***I	Ordinary legislative procedure: first reading
***II	Ordinary legislative procedure: second reading
***III	Ordinary legislative procedure: third reading

(The type of procedure is determined by the legal basis proposed in the draft act.)

Abbreviations used for Parliamentary Committees

AFET	Committee on Foreign Affairs
DEVE	Committee on Development
INTA	Committee on International Trade
BUDG	Committee on Budgets
CONT	Committee on Budgetary Control
ECON	Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs
EMPL	Committee on Employment and Social Affairs
ENVI	Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety
ITRE	Committee on Industry, Research and Energy
IMCO	Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection
TRAN	Committee on Transport and Tourism
REGI	Committee on Regional Development
AGRI	Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development
PECH	Committee on Fisheries
CULT	Committee on Culture and Education
JURI	Committee on Legal Affairs
LIBE	Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs
AFCO	Committee on Constitutional Affairs
FEMM	Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality
PETI	Committee on Petitions
DROI	Subcommittee on Human Rights
SEDE	Subcommittee on Security and Defence
FISC	Subcommittee on Tax Matters
SANT	Subcommittee on Public Health

Abbreviations used for Political Groups

PPE	Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats)
S&D	Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament
Renew	Renew Europe Group
Verts/ALE	Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance
ID	Identity and Democracy Group
ECR	European Conservatives and Reformists Group
The Left	The Left Group in the European Parliament – GUE/NGL
NI	Non-attached Members