



VERBATIM REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS OF 7 JUNE 2021

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2021-2022 SESSION

Sittings of 7 to 10 June 2021

STRASBOURG

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VERBATIM REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS OF 7 JUNE 2021

PRESIDENZA DELL'ON. DAVID MARIA SASSOLI

Presidente

1. Resumption of the session

Presidente. – Dichiaro ripresa la sessione del Parlamento europeo interrotta venerdì 21 maggio 2021.

2. Opening of the sitting

(La seduta è aperta alle 17.11)

3. Statement by the President

Le Président. – Chers collègues, je vous souhaite la bienvenue à Strasbourg, que vous soyez dans l'hémicycle ou connectés. C'est un jour très important pour le Parlement européen. Après plus de 15 mois, nous sommes de retour à notre siège, à Strasbourg.

Nous avons vécu une période terrible, avec des millions de morts et beaucoup de souffrance. Notre vie quotidienne a changé et beaucoup de nos citoyens se sont retrouvés dans une situation économique et sociale difficile. Tous nos pays se sont arrêtés, et avec eux le monde s'est arrêté aussi. La reprise de nos activités normales à Strasbourg est un signe de confiance et d'espoir pour toutes et tous.

Grâce à la contribution de chacun et chacune d'entre vous – députés, groupes politiques, personnel –, nous avons pu assurer le fonctionnement de notre institution et faire en sorte que l'Union européenne puisse prendre des initiatives pour protéger la vie de nos citoyens.

Le Parlement européen a dû adopter des mesures extraordinaires et de nouvelles méthodes de travail pour permettre à notre assemblée d'exercer ses fonctions et de faire usage de ses prérogatives.

Le Parlement a toujours insisté sur la nécessité de sortir de cette crise plus forts et plus unis en assurant une transition écologique et numérique juste et équitable et en construisant une société plus égalitaire, où les plus vulnérables d'entre nous, qui ont également été les plus touchés par la crise, ne seront pas laissés pour compte.

Grâce à notre travail parlementaire, nous avons contribué à améliorer tous les instruments de sortie de crise: le «Next Generation EU», le mécanisme de relance et de résilience, l'état de droit et la conditionnalité, le cadre financier pluriannuel et les ressources propres. Nous continuerons à travailler sur la législation sur le climat, l'agenda numérique et le pacte sur l'immigration et l'asile.

Maintenant que nous sommes de retour dans notre maison à Strasbourg, je voudrais remercier les autorités françaises pour leur soutien et leur coopération au cours de ces mois et les citoyens de Strasbourg pour leur compréhension et leur hospitalité sans faille. J'en profite pour saluer M^{me} la maire, qui est présente avec nous aujourd'hui pour l'inauguration de cette plénière.

Strasbourg est un symbole de l'unité européenne, de la paix et de la diversité. C'est sur cette terre qu'est né le besoin absolu d'Europe. Il est satisfaisant de voir qu'après 15 mois de pandémie, la confiance en l'Europe progresse dans l'opinion publique de nos 27 pays. Nous ne devons pas perdre de vue la douleur et le sacrifice de nos citoyens.

Aujourd'hui, Strasbourg est à nouveau le symbole du renouveau. Je vous souhaite à toutes et à tous un bon travail pendant cette plénière chargée!

- 4. Approval of the minutes of the previous sittings: see Minutes**
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15. State of the SMEs Union – Implementation of better regulation agenda / Reduction target for administrative burden (debate)

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

— la dichiarazione della Commissione sullo stato dell'Unione delle PMI [2021/2709(RSP)], e

— la dichiarazione della Commissione sull'attuazione dell'agenda «Legiferare meglio» - obiettivo di riduzione degli oneri amministrativi [2021/2710(RSP)].

Ricordo agli onorevoli deputati che anche in queste discussioni non è prevista la procedura «catch-the-eye», né saranno accettate domande «cartellino blu».

Inoltre, come è avvenuto durante le ultime tornate, sono previsti interventi a distanza dagli Uffici di collegamento del Parlamento nei vari Stati membri.

Saluto il Commissario Schinas per la sua presenza in Aula e gli do la parola per iniziare la discussione sullo stato dell'Unione delle piccole e medie imprese.

Nicolas Schmit, *membre de la Commission*. – Monsieur le Président, honorables membres, je ne suis pas le commissaire Schinas, je ne suis pas le commissaire Breton, mais ce dernier m'a demandé de le remplacer puisqu'il est engagé dans des négociations importantes en relation avec les vaccins, donc vous comprenez tout à fait qu'il ne puisse pas être parmi nous.

Je le fais avec d'autant plus de plaisir que, en tant que commissaire en charge de l'emploi, je sais que les petites et moyennes entreprises jouent un rôle fondamental dans la création d'emplois, surtout dans le contexte de la relance.

Mr President, I would like to express my gratitude to the European Parliament for its strong support to SMEs, earlier reports on the topic and for putting the state of European SMEs on the agenda. Since the beginning of its mandate, this Commission has put SMEs high on the agenda. The President, already in her first speech before this Parliament, committed to a new SME strategy, and we published it within the first 100 days, shortly after the world plunged into a pandemic and an unprecedented crisis that hit SMEs hard.

The SME Performance Review shows that across the EU, value added in SMEs fell by 7.6% in 2020. 1.4 million SME jobs were lost. At all stages, our support to SMEs has been, and remains, central in the short term to facilitate immediate relief, in the long term to stimulate the recovery. We have approved state-aid measures allowed under the Treaty in special circumstances. This enabled a rapid response to companies' liquidity needs, thus avoiding further layoffs and bankruptcies. We reinforced lending to SMEs with EUR one billion from the EU budget in order to help 100 000 - European businesses and leverage EUR eight billion of financing.

The demand to use these products was unprecedented across the European Union. The COVID Guarantee Fund by the EIB Group is expected to mobilise up to EUR 200 billion in financing for European companies, mostly SMEs.

The SME Strategy remains our compass for the long-term recovery. Its priorities – digitalisation, sustainability and resilience – have only gained in importance. All 33 actions of the SME Strategy have started. The Recovery and Resilience Facility gives a major boost to the strategy. Member States are proposing reforms and investments that will benefit SMEs, such as for digitalisation, upskilling and vocational training, as well as through public procurement opportunities. We are now in the process of assessing the national plans.

SMEs and start-ups should benefit from a stronger single market, increased resilience and the accelerated green and digital transitions, fostering SMEs potential for quality job creation. This is why SME dimension is strongly present in the updated industrial strategy.

Let me give you an overview of the key actions, starting with the twin transition. First, digitalisation. Digitalisation is a key enabler. By 2030 we want 90% of SMEs to reach at least a basic level of digital intensity and 75% of companies to use cloud, AI and big data. We will support SMEs along the way close to their home. Their access points will be local European digital innovation hubs, the European Enterprise Network and industrial clusters. Together they will provide advice and lead any small company to specialised testing and experimentation to help deploy innovative products and services.

Data is raw material for new business models. We work on making sure SME data is more secure and we incentivise data sharing and we reuse, while preserving our values and ensuring fair access to data for SMEs.

Let me turn to the Green Deal. This is Europe's growth strategy, and we should make sure that SMEs benefit from it. Start-ups and scale-ups offering clean tech solutions are facing a deployment challenge. To this end, we are developing a digital clean tech investment initiative to pool European, national and private funding for scaling up businesses in this area. We also look at hydrogen solutions – batteries' life cycle, carbon capture solutions, device repair and refurbishment and electro-mobility – as business opportunities for SMEs. Setting rules that allow for technological advances and market entry for smaller companies is essential. That is also why we prepare the Intellectual Property Action Plan and offer IP vouchers for SMEs.

Access to finance is key. SMEs will need to make substantial investments at times where many of them are short of liquidity. A dedicated SME window under InvestEU could trigger EUR 45 billion of investment in more than 170 000 - SMEs by 2023.

The Commission is also expanding support for scale-up capital and for initial public offerings to provide finance across all stages of an SME's life, from start-ups to growth and to exits to public markets. Finally, let us not forget our Structural Funds, Horizon Europe and the European Defence Fund, with its built-in incentives and considerable resources to attract SMEs. I would just add also the European Social Fund+.

A resilient and SME-friendly business environment is important. In that context, financial support alone is not enough. We also need the right framework conditions in which SMEs can prosper and fully benefit from the single market as their launchpad for growth. Not being paid on time can be an existential matter for SMEs, in particular in crisis times. The Commission is improving the effectiveness of the Late Payment Directive and monitoring SMEs liquidity through a new late payment observatory.

Digital, green, innovative and socially-responsible procurement creates opportunities for SMEs. The Public Procurement Directives have considerably lowered the administrative burden for SMEs. Procurement eForms have introduced an SME-friendly label. It allows SMEs to spot specific business opportunities easily.

Collaboration can boost SME performance. The important projects of common European interest, as well as industrial alliances and partnerships, will see increased participation of SMEs and start-ups.

Let me now touch upon an important topic for this debate: the regulatory burden. Reducing this burden remains a key priority. The Better Regulation communication reinforces our commitment to evidence-based policymaking through improved consultations with stakeholders, better analysis of impacts, and a strong attention to efficient regulation. The «one-in-one-out» principle allows us to better address cumulative burden.

SMEs often experience burden more strongly than other companies do. This is why our Better Regulation efforts take into account the need to foster small business recovery and build their resilience. We will reinforce the SME test and complement it with the SME filter to identify those initiatives with significant impact on SMEs at a very early stage in the preparatory process. Careful assessment of the impacts on SMEs will ensure that our action is targeted, achieves its objectives and does not add unnecessary costs.

Finally, SMEs need a strong voice in EU policymaking. The pandemic has hit SMEs across the industrial ecosystems in an unprecedented way. At the same time, SMEs will be the key to green and digital recovery. That is why we will reflect further on how to best design the mandate and role of the next European SME Envoy and how to structure the work of the network of the National SME Envoys to make sure our actions are anchored locally and respond to the realities and needs of small businesses.

While the Commission shares the SME community's eagerness to appoint an SME Envoy, we have decided to take some extra time to conclude the appointment. Let me assure you there is no void in the interim. The Network of SME Envoys is operating at full speed across borders and is chaired in the interim by the deputy EU SME Envoy.

To conclude, supporting and embracing small businesses is both necessary and vital to recovery and twin transitions. It will take a concerted effort for all of us, and I know the European Parliament shares this sense of urgency, and I count on our continued and effective cooperation, our joint objective of promoting SMEs in the European economy.

VORSITZ: OTHMAR KARAS

Vizepräsident

Cristian-Silviu Buşoi, *au nom du groupe PPE*. – Monsieur le Président, je suis heureux d'être ici à Strasbourg et de participer au débat sur les petites et moyennes entreprises, qui représentent la colonne vertébrale de l'industrie européenne.

SMEs make up 90% of European businesses. Around 60% of all enterprises today are family-run businesses and provide up to 50% of all private sector jobs in the European Union. Yet SMEs remain particularly vulnerable. They still find it hard to deal with administrative burdens, to access finance, to operate across internal borders and, even more so, to export outside the Union. Moreover, the current pandemic has also had an impact on SMEs. In addition to its impact on public health, COVID-19 has caused a major impact and massive dislocation among small businesses. The impact has also varied across sectors, with retail, arts and entertainment, personal services, food services and tourism on the one hand, versus businesses that were better able to move to digital or remote methods on the other.

The Committee on Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE), which I chair, and the PPE Group, which I represent, ask for a more ambitious and comprehensive European industrial policy and an SME policy that is easy to implement and that will enable our SMEs to thrive and scale up where possible. The SME dimension is at the core of the updated industrial strategy. However, more needs to be done.

Last but not least, I would like to draw attention to the importance of the SME envoy, the need for strong support inside the European Commission, and the need to make the official appointment as soon as possible, in order for the network to provide structured and systemic assistance. We shouldn't forget that SMEs are a key driver of innovation, employment, sustainable and inclusive growth and social cohesion in our societies.

Josianne Cutajar, *on behalf of the S&D Group*. – Mr President, thank you for this important debate. The creation of jobs, the skilling of workers, the social value of work, 'thinking small first' – support to SMEs means all of this. That support to SMEs is progressive. With today's debate we pay tribute to the efforts that many entrepreneurs have been making, leading with micro, small and medium businesses, especially in this last difficult year and a half.

Yet a high-level discussion alone is surely not the solution for all the challenges European SMEs are facing. Whilst the recovery phase has started, the liquidity relief measures that have so far helped SMEs weather this crisis must be continued for an adequate period of time. We need to move from the short to the long term, funnelling investments to small firms – investments that make them truly resilient and better equipped for the twin transition.

We should guarantee equal opportunities for all, including for female entrepreneurs and for SMEs operating on islands in the most peripheral areas of our Union. Boosting once again the confidence of our small entrepreneurs cannot happen without investment and innovation, eliminating unnecessary bureaucratic hurdles along the way. We cannot fail this time. We cannot miss this opportunity.

Martina Dlabajová, za skupinu *Renew*. – Pane předsedající, žádná společnost se nestala velkou ze dne na den. Na začátku je vždy malý tým a až řada faktorů rozhodne o tom, zda se firma rozroste nebo nikoliv. Tak či onak, unijní ekonomika nestojí na úspěchu nikoho jiného než právě malých a středních firem, které tvoří devadesát devět procent evropských podniků. Dnešní den považuji za historický úspěch. Je to milník, od kterého se začíná skutečně pracovat pro malé a střední firmy. Já jsem poctěna, že jsem k tomu mohla osobně přispět.

Malé a střední podniky se musí spolehnout na to, že s nimi budeme zacházet rovnocenně jako s těmi velkými a že je nebudeme utápět ve zbytečné regulaci. Vytvoření férových podmínek musí být naprostá priorita. Všichni víme, že tento přístup nebýval běžný a automatický. Ano, vždy se mluvilo o páteři evropské ekonomiky, ale ve skutečnosti „skutek utek“. Schválně: Kolikrát se do připravované legislativy až zpětně doplňovalo *including SMEs*? Mnohokrát, a to bylo špatně! Jsem ráda, že i Komise ví, že potřebujeme rozhodnou akci. Projev o stavu malých a středních podniků v Unii je toho symbolem i důkazem. Jsem totiž přesvědčena, že jedině zodpovědným skládáním účtů a vzájemnou diskusí, do které se zapojí i ti, kterých se to týká, tedy malé a střední podniky, to dokážeme. Tyto firmy si zaslouží být opravdovou prioritou a my je nesmíme zklamat.

Pojďme se scházet pravidelně. Pojďme z toho udělat každoroční tradici, nikoliv však prázdnou tradici. Pojďme věci posunout. Pojďme skutečně pracovat pro ně, malé a střední podniky po celé Evropě.

Henrike Hahn, im Namen der Verts/ALE-Fraktion. – Herr Präsident! Nutzen wir die Corona- und Klimakrise als Chance ...

(Die Verbindung zum Außenbüro ist abgebrochen)

Paolo Borchia, a nome del gruppo ID. – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, signor Commissario, bentornati. Solo pochi mesi fa la plenaria ha approvato a larga maggioranza una mia relazione di iniziativa con la quale cercavamo di dare qualche buona idea per aiutare il mondo della piccola e media impresa europea alla ripartenza post pandemia.

Adesso però serve passare dalle parole ai fatti. Il documento di cui sono stato relatore, ad esempio, ci segnala che in epoca pre COVID negli Stati Uniti c'erano il triplo delle imprese che erano in espansione rispetto a quelle europee. Chiaramente questo non vuol dire che sia colpa di Bruxelles, ma sicuramente dovrebbe farci riflettere sul fatto che alcune ricette che sono state adottate in passato magari non sono state ottimali, non hanno dato una mano a chi fa impresa.

Sul tema della burocrazia, io mi auguro che ci sia contezza che, per lunghi periodi, la Commissione europea ha vissuto fasi di nevrosi legislativa. Ma, signori, rendiamoci conto che la burocrazia costa. Un artigiano, un piccolo imprenditore, oggettivamente fatica a rimanere al passo con un contesto normativo che cambia un giorno dopo l'altro. Quindi ben venga la semplificazione, ben venga, Commissario, il principio *«one in, one out»*, ma lasciamo lavorare questa gente.

Per quanto riguarda il settore creditizio, se le banche non tornano a fare le banche siamo finiti. Serve riflettere sulla vigilanza unica e sulle sue conseguenze e, soprattutto, serve evitare che le banche siano costrette a cedere dei crediti leggermente deteriorati che, soltanto con un po' di pazienza, le piccole imprese magari riuscirebbero a ripagare.

Per quanto riguarda il clima e l'ambiente, mi rendo conto che è il tema più divisivo in quest'Aula. Io sono esterrefatto che, nonostante una recessione senza precedenti, nessuno, dico nessuno, abbia riflettuto se obiettivi molto ambiziosi, frutto di regole scritte prima del COVID, siano ancora praticabili con queste tempistiche, oppure se al contrario serva rivedere la tabella di marcia.

Io ne avevo parlato l'anno scorso a proposito della direttiva sulle plastiche monouso, venendo tacciato di eresia. Quindi evviva l'aria pulita, evviva la qualità delle acque, tutti ci teniamo, ma senza investimenti astronomici e soprattutto senza il sacrificio di chi lavora questi obiettivi non si raggiungono.

Robert Roos, namens de ECR-Fractie. – Voorzitter, commissaris. Vandaag is het tijd om de balans op te maken: heeft de Commissie geleverd, is er vandaag positief nieuws te melden voor het midden- en kleinbedrijf? En kunnen ze een vermindering van de administratieve lasten tegemoet zien? Ik ben beperkt tevreden met het werk van de Commissie. De opdracht van mij en mijn collega's is niet helemaal serieus genomen. Het is geen goed signaal naar onze ondernemers. Eén regel in en één regel uit is echt te weinig. Ook is het niet goed dat de EU voor het mkb gaat denken. De EU moet het mkb de ruimte geven om te ondernemen. Minder regels dus. Mijn ervaring na twee jaar Europees Parlement is namelijk dat ruimte voor ondernemerschap echt bevochten moet worden. En die strijd gaat na vandaag onverminderd door. Vandaag is er een eerste kleine stap gezet, maar de weg is nog lang. Ik roep de Commissie dan ook op om meer te doen en ons te blijven informeren over de concrete stappen die zij zet om de administratieve druk te verminderen. Want

onze ondernemers hebben daar recht op.

Sandra Pereira, em nome do Grupo *The Left*. – Senhor Presidente, o cenário das pequenas e médias empresas na União Europeia é heterogéneo. Muitas delas lutam diariamente contra o esmagamento pelos grandes grupos económicos e a concorrência desigual e desleal, levada a cabo por grandes empresas e multinacionais que contribuem para o dumping social, a desregulação das relações laborais e a insolvência.

Com a COVID-19, o contraste entre os Estados-Membros na capacidade de intervenção no apoio às PME agravou desigualdades entre estas empresas e, simultaneamente, chamou a atenção para as diferentes especificidades nacionais. Importa, pois, que os Estados possam intervir no apoio à solvência das PME em dificuldades, sendo que tais apoios devem pressupor a manutenção dos postos de trabalho, a defesa dos salários e o respeito integral dos direitos dos trabalhadores.

Para que os Estados-Membros possam apoiar as pequenas e médias empresas nos processos de transição nos domínios da sustentabilidade e da digitalização, é fundamental a eliminação das imposições e dos condicionalismos da União Europeia, através da chamada governação económica, e que os Estados disponham de meios, designadamente financeiros, para promover essas transições no quadro da Política de Coesão.

Ivan Vilibor Sinčić (NI). – Poštovani predsjedavajući, pravo stanje poduzetništva i poduzetničkih sloboda u Hrvatskoj nažalost najbolje se vidi u drvoprerađivačkom sektoru. Kad imate u prostoru ravnice, živite od te plodne ravnice. Kad imate more, živite od mora, ali kad u prostoru imate šumu, ne daju vam da živite od tih šuma.

Drvoprerađivački sektor preuzela je partitokracija koja posluje po principu nahrani podobne, a izgledni nepodobne, odnosno sve ostale. Nikada se više šuma u Hrvatskoj nije sjeklo, osobito ilegalno, a nikada nije bilo teže doći do sirovine. Umjesto da se razvija poduzetništvo, prerada i dizajn, cilj je izvoziti golu sirovinu.

Možete kao poduzetnik imati ugovor o otkupu sirovine, ali ne znači da ćete je doista i dobiti. Možete tužiti, ali dok se okonča sud vas više neće biti jer bez drva jednostavno ne možete poslovati. Ovakvom skandaloznom politikom uništava se tržišno natjecanje, guše se poduzetničke slobode i ono najvažnije umjesto održivog gospodarenja šumama imamo devastaciju života, devastaciju ruralnog prostora, devastaciju biljnog, životinjskog, gospodarskog, na kraju krajeva i ljudskog života.

Henrike Hahn, im Namen der Verts/ALE-Fraktion. – Herr Präsident! Nutzen wir die Corona- und Klimakrise als Chance zur Veränderung! Kleine und mittlere Unternehmen sind das Rückgrat der Wirtschaft, und KMU müssen in Europa die bestmögliche Unterstützung bekommen, um resilient, wettbewerbsfähig und nachhaltig zu wirtschaften.

Der Green Deal ist ein Konjunkturprogramm, und das „Fit for 55“-Paket befeuert die Entwicklung von kleinen und mittleren Unternehmen in ihrer Transformation. Die Richtlinie für erneuerbare Energien kann KMU den Zugang zu erneuerbaren Energien erleichtern, die Nachfrage im Binnenmarkt stimulieren und mit Investitionen neue lokale grüne Arbeitsplätze schaffen. Die Wiederaufbauprogramme in den Mitgliedstaaten sollen KMU Darlehen und Zuschüsse geben und steuerliche Anreize hervorbringen, mit der Möglichkeit, in Solarenergie zu investieren.

Beim Thema Energieeffizienz sind vor allem KMU, die in der Baubranche und im Bereich energetische Renovierung arbeiten, besonders betroffen, und sie werden einen regelrechten Boom erleben. Wir brauchen *Green Hubs* als Beratungsdienste für die Transformation und die Umsetzung nachhaltiger Geschäftsmodelle. Wir brauchen spezielle KMU-Ratgeber und —Angebote.

Und das muss auch ganz klar gesagt werden: Die Reduzierung von komplizierten, unnötigen Regelungen für KMU ist wichtig, aber beim „One in, one out“-Prinzip ist eine Betriebsblindheit, eine mechanische Pauschalregelung sicher kein guter Weg. Erstens müssen wir herausfinden, welche Regeln und Vorschriften für Unternehmen warum ein Problem sind, und daraus lernen, was wir besser machen können. Denn weniger Regulierung reicht normalerweise nicht aus, Wachstum anzukurbeln oder Arbeitsplätze zu schaffen, denn Annullieren statt Evaluieren ist ganz sicher kein kluger Ansatz.

Und zweitens sind Regelungen, die die EU grüner und nachhaltiger machen, eben keine Bürde, sondern Gestaltungsinstrument, positiver Anreiz, Innovation, Planungssicherheit und Jobmotor für die Unternehmen, und darum geht es in der Zukunft. Wir machen das Beste aus der Corona- und Klimakrise, um KMU und Startups in Europa zu stärken.

Henna Virkkunen (PPE). – Mr President, Mr Commissioner, Europe needs more entrepreneurs, because that is the only way to create growth and new jobs. The impact of the Corona pandemic has hit SMEs hard across Europe. Businesses still need support to recover, but at the same time, reforms are needed to support their future growth and success.

We expect a lot from the EU Commission when it comes to small European enterprises. It is very important that this State of the SMEs Union debate has come to life for the first time now due to the EPP Group's insistence over the past year. In particular, we want to see the concrete implementation of the 'One in, one out' principle applied to upcoming EU rules.

In 2019, the new EU Commission committed itself to better legislation, reducing bureaucracy and improving conditions for our small and medium-sized enterprises. Unfortunately, quite little has happened since then.

In December 2020, the European Parliament endorsed the call for binding targets to reduce administrative burdens in the EU and asked the Commission to present an impact assessment by June 2021. We expect the EU Commission to deliver on this request by this month. SMEs need legislation that encourages them to grow, innovate and invest. Unnecessary bureaucracy is not what they need, and therefore we should reduce it.

Carlos Zorrinho (S&D). – Senhor Presidente, Senhor Comissário, a recuperação do impacto na economia, ao mesmo tempo que a União prossegue com a sua aposta no Pacto Ecológico, na segunda vaga de digitalização e na concretização do pilar dos direitos sociais, é uma oportunidade para reforçar o papel das PME enquanto referências na aplicação de políticas de inclusão, de qualificação e de inovação.

Temos que ser pragmáticos! As PME precisam de sistemas de apoio ajustados às suas características, com uma monitorização e avaliação eficazes, mas leves e flexíveis. Estas empresas compensam os riscos de dimensão com as vantagens da adaptação rápida às dinâmicas dos mercados e das cadeias de valor. Não podem, por isso, ser esmagadas com modelos de escrutínio de regulação que não respeitem esta característica diferenciadora.

No momento em que a União regulamenta a nova geração de financiamentos e o funcionamento dos mercados e serviços, em particular dos mercados digitais, é fundamental assegurar que as PME serão cada vez mais um fator-chave de qualificação na inovação tecnológica, na sustentabilidade social e ambiental e na capacidade competitiva da economia europeia. A realização deste debate é, aliás, um excelente sinal de compromisso interinstitucional neste sentido.

Mauri Pekkarinen (Renew). – Arvoisa puhemies, me tarvitsemme EU:ssa toimia, joilla pk-yritysten digitalisaatiota edistetään, rahoituksen pullonkaulat poistetaan ja hallinnollista taakkaa kevennetään. Mutta meidän tulee mielestämme mennä vielä syvemmälle.

Koulu opettaa monia nuoria toisen työhön. Se antaa valmiuksia tehdä palkansaajana työtä ja sekin on tavattoman tärkeää. Mutta antaako koulu perehdyttäessään nuoria yhteiskuntiimme riittävästi perustietoja siitä, mitä yrittäjyys on, sekä siitä, mitkä ovat yrittäjyyden arvot ja ihanteet sekä merkitys kaikelle yhteiskunnalliselle kehitykselle? Ja kertooko koulu siitä, että yrittäjyys voi olla joku päivä myös monen nuoren oma vaihtoehto? Minun toiveeni on, että osana pk-yritystemme innostamista uuteen nousuun kannustamme nuoriamme yhä useammin jo peruskoulussa yrittäjyyteen kasvatuksen ja koulutuksen keinoin.

Philippe Olivier (ID). – Monsieur le Président, en présentant la stratégie industrielle de l'Union, la Commission européenne nous invite à une réflexion économique opportune.

C'est le moment de poser la question des handicaps que vous imposez à nos entreprises: l'inflation des normes – dont certaines sont absurdes –, la concurrence faussée – je pense notamment aux travailleurs détachés –, l'impossibilité d'accès aux marchés publics de nos PME-TPE.

Transition numérique et écologique, dites-vous. Sur la transition numérique, on ne pourra que vous dire «enfin!». L'Europe a vu à cause de votre inertie bureaucratique la révolution numérique lui échapper. Ce sont les Américains et les Chinois qui ont pris une avance décisive.

Sur la transition écologique, gardez-vous d'une tentation qui sous-tend votre démarche, celle de l'écologie punitive. Les grandes révolutions – et la révolution écologique en est une – ne se font que par l'adhésion et non par la contrainte, par la collaboration positive et non par l'enrôlement forcé. La révolution culturelle coercitive, c'est celle de Mao Tsé-Toung, cela procède du totalitarisme et cela ne fonctionne pas. Usez donc de l'incitation plus que de la répression.

Cette réflexion écologique vous commande également de revoir votre logiciel mondialiste, celui qui programme, par exemple, la spécialisation des régions du monde par type d'activité. La Chine, usine du monde? Belle idée. On a vu ce que cela a donné pendant la COVID: la pénurie pour nos pays, l'humiliation d'une Europe incapable de produire des masques en papier. Aujourd'hui, être proche, c'est être écologiquement vertueux et cela signifie être pénalisé. C'est être contraint à des normes environnementales ou sociales écrasantes et être concurrencé par des pays qui s'affranchissent de toute règle. La révolution écologique que nous appelons de nos vœux est la révolution localiste: celle qui tourne le dos aux traités de libre-échange pour des traités de juste-échange permettant un commerce maîtrisé et vertueux. La révolution localiste, c'est mettre en œuvre partout des circuits courts pour produire, consommer et recycler sur place. Le maître-mot ne doit plus être la mobilité, mais la proximité.

(Die Aussprache wird unterbrochen)

16. Voting session

Der Präsident. – Bevor wir mit den Aussprachen fortfahren, werde ich die heutige Abstimmungsrunde eröffnen. Die Dossiers, über die wir abstimmen, sind der Tagesordnung zu entnehmen. Die Abstimmungsrunde findet zwischen soeben, 18.01 Uhr, bis 19.15 Uhr statt.

Es kommt dasselbe Abstimmungsverfahren zur Anwendung wie in den letzten Tagungen. Alle Abstimmungen sind namentliche Abstimmungen. Erklärungen zur Abstimmung können schriftlich eingereicht werden. Ausnahmsweise dürfen die Erklärungen zur Abstimmung höchstens 400 Wörter umfassen.

Ich erkläre damit die Abstimmungsrunde für eröffnet. Das Ergebnis der Abstimmungen wird morgen um 9.00 Uhr bekannt gegeben.

17. State of the SMEs Union – Implementation of better regulation agenda / Reduction target for administrative burden (continuation of debate)

Der Präsident. – Wir setzen nun die gemeinsame Aussprache über die Erklärung der Kommission (2021/2709(RSP)) und die Erklärung der Kommission (2021/2710(RSP)) fort.

Eugen Jurzyca (ECR). – Pán predsedajúci, je dôležité, aby sme nezaťažovali firmy a občanov zbytočnými povinnosťami. Vitam preto pracovný prístup Komisie nepridávať administratívnu záťaž navyše. Bude ale potrebné sa týchto pravidiel aj držať. Komisia by mala každý rok pripraviť analýzu, či naozaj nestúpila celková záťaž firiem. Samozrejme, všetky tieto analýzy by sa mali zverejňovať. Dôležité je aj spätné hodnotenie prijatej legislatívy, aby sa nestalo, že si ich jednotlivé krajiny uplatňujú rôzne v neprospech firiem a občanov, čo sa občas stáva. Myslím si, že Komisia by mala zvážiť aj ďalšie nástroje. Napríklad používanie doložiek o skončení platnosti, tzv. sunset clause, kde by bola istota, že dočasné opatrenia by po určitom čase prestali platiť. A nestalo by sa, že firmy stále musia niečo vykazovať, aj keď je to už zbytočné.

Γιώργος Γεωργίου (The Left). – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, κύριε Επίτροπε, 24 εκατομμύρια μικρομεσαίες επιχειρήσεις στην Ευρώπη προσφέρουν εργασία σε 100 εκατομμύρια εργαζόμενους και αποτελούν τη ραχοκοκαλιά της οικονομίας μας. Ωστόσο, σήμερα, λόγω της πανδημίας και των πολιτικών που επιβλήθηκαν, πολλές από τις μικρομεσαίες επιχειρήσεις ματώνουν, αργοπεθαίνουν και βάζουν λουκέτο. Η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση δεν μπορεί να σφυριάζει αδιάφορα. Ακόμη και η Ευρωπαϊκή Κεντρική Τράπεζα ομολογεί ότι σταδιακά θα αυξηθεί με δραματικό τρόπο το ποσοστό των μικρομεσαίων επιχειρήσεων που θα κλείσουν.

Ζητούμε να ληφθούν άμεσα και δραστικά μέτρα προς την κατεύθυνση της παροχής κινήτρων για βιώσιμη ανάπτυξη, αύξηση της έκτακτης βοήθειας από την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση, στήριξη από τα κράτη μέλη — υπό την προϋπόθεση της διατήρησης των ποιοτικών θέσεων εργασίας. Ζητούμε να σταματήσουν οι εκποιήσεις, να βοηθηθούν οι μικρομεσαίες επιχειρήσεις, να αποκτήσουν πρόσβαση σε ευρωπαϊκά προγράμματα και χρηματοδότηση. Χωρίς τέτοια μέτρα, απειλείται η βιωσιμότητα των μικρομεσαίων επιχειρήσεων και οι συνέπειες θα είναι δυσβάσταχτες για τους λαούς της Ευρώπης. Αυτό θέλουμε;

Enikő Győri (NI). – Tisztelt Elnök úr, Képviselőtársaim! Örülök, hogy a kis- és középvállalkozások fontosságában egyetértünk, de ezentúl végre konkrét lépésekre lenne szükség. Négy témát emelnék ki. Először, hogy a jogszabályok kkv-tesztje működjön végre a gyakorlatban. Egyúttal felhívom a Parlament és a Tanács figyelmét is arra, hogy módosító indítványok esetén vegyék figyelembe azok kkv-kra gyakorolt hatását. Másodszor, hogy a Bizottság frissítse a tavaly márciusi kkv-stratégiát a Covid-válság hatására tekintettel. Harmadszor, a Bizottság és a tagállamok tegyenek meg mindent azért, hogy a nemzeti helyreállítási tervekben a kkv-k prioritást élvezzenek. A Bizottság adjon szabad kezét a tagállamoknak, hogy azok minél hatékonyabban segíthessék uniós forrásokkal a kkv-k talpra állását. Végezetül, Ursula von der Leyen ígéretet tett az adminisztratív terhek csökkentésére. Kérdezem, mikor látunk már végre abból valamit, hogy egy új szabály létrehozásával egy régi eltűnik. Ehelyett a Bizottság és a baloldal tovább akarja növelni a vállalkozások terheit, legyen szó adóról vagy fenntarthatóságról. Így azokkal csak veszítünk a versenyképességen, és az EU lemarad a nemzetközi versenyfutásban.

Jens Gieseke (PPE). – Herr Präsident, Herr Kommissar Schmit, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Die Kommission bleibt Weltmeister im Ankündigen, aber nach blumigen Reden liefert sie nicht oder schlecht. Wir warten auf klare, verbindliche Regeln, *One in, one out*, Folgeabschätzung, unabhängige Kontrolle. Wir brauchen einen verbindlichen KMU-Test. Dem Mittelstand ist mit Ankündigungen nicht geholfen. Die Kommission muss nun endlich liefern. Mehr Ehrgeiz – wie sonst auch in der Klimapolitik.

Auch beim KMU-Beauftragten gibt es wenig mehr als große Ankündigungen. Die Kommission muss nachlegen, damit die Benennung des KMU-Beauftragten nicht zur reinen Luftnummer wird. Vazil Hudák wäre sicherlich keine Idealbesetzung. Als Banker ist er nicht der Mann, den der Mittelstand jetzt braucht. Wir brauchen nämlich weniger Regulierung, proportionale Gesetzgebung, Lösungen für das Problem der Lieferengpässe z. B. in der Holz- und Bauwirtschaft. Wer schon vor der Benennung als KMU-Beauftragter einen Beraterjob beim georgischen Präsidenten annimmt – das können wir nicht ernsthaft wollen.

Unklar bleiben auch die Kompetenzen – versteckt zwischen irgendwelchen Kommissaren. Und darauf haben wir anderthalb Jahre gewartet? Das geht nicht.

Wir fordern eine Anbindung an die Kommissionspräsidentin, volle Durchgriffsrechte und auch eine angemessene Personalausstattung. Wir fordern das Ende von blumigen Ankündigungen und im Juli — Fit for 55 – zehn Vorschläge. Wir erwarten dann auch zehn Vorschläge für die Streichliste.

Patrizia Toia (S&D). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, oggi le PMI stanno riprendendo quota in Europa grazie all'indice manifatturiero che sale, qualche analista dice addirittura che vola. In tanti paesi europei, anche nel mio paese, ci sono buoni risultati, grazie agli stimoli che ci sono stati oltre che alla ripresa della domanda.

Ma io penso che proprio per questo noi dobbiamo essere anche molto attenti. In questa ripresa già si manifestano degli indicatori di crisi sui quali noi possiamo agire come Europa. Penso in particolare alla scarsità delle materie prime, anche perché si sono interrotte certe catene di approvvigionamento, con tanti problemi sulle rotte dei trasporti, e penso alla mancanza di alcuni strumenti indispensabili.

Questo sta comportando il fatto che molte piccole e medie imprese, oltre alle grandi, stanno acquisendo ordini e firmando ordini sapendo già che non potranno rispettare queste scadenze, e quindi pagheranno delle penali. Questo è un elemento critico su cui invito l'attenzione della Commissione – mi fa piacere che ci sia il Commissario Schmit, molto sensibile e attento a tutti questi aspetti – perché si possa intervenire.

Il secondo punto, che è quello veramente complicato e strategico, è la sfida che noi abbiamo di accompagnare nell'avventura della transizione le PMI con soluzioni che vadano bene per loro, di taglio adatto a loro e non imposto dall'alto.

Dragoș Pîslaru (Renew). – Domnule președinte Karas, domnule comisar Schmit, contextul epidemiologic în care ne aflăm ne-a afectat pe toți, întreaga activitate economică.

Însă, de departe, cel mai mare impact a fost resimțit de companiile mici, de micii antreprenori care și-au văzut activitatea restricționată sau chiar închisă, care nu au avut predictibilitate și nici rezervele marilor companii pentru a depăși acest impas.

Avem o ocazie unică la nivel european pentru a demonstra solidaritate, inițiativă, dezvoltare și inovare în sprijinul micilor antreprenori. Pentru a dovedi că ne pasă, trebuie să ne uităm cu atenție la strategia pentru IMM-uri într-o Europă sustenabilă și digitală și să identificăm moduri de a stimula inovarea. Ca să creăm o adevărată uniune a IMM-urilor trebuie să dezvoltăm ample ecosisteme industriale și de servicii, rețele de clustere și centre de inovare digitală. Avem nevoie de a îmbunătăți accesul la finanțare și la piețe și să reducem birocrăția și costurile administrative. Doar așa vom putea respecta principiul *think small first* și, într-adevăr, să ne respectăm antreprenorii în Europa.

Isabella Tovaglieri (ID). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, signor Commissario, purtroppo delle PMI ci si ricorda soltanto nel momento del bisogno. Durante la pandemia, infatti, con grande fatica e sacrifici le PMI hanno tenuto in piedi l'Italia e l'Europa. E ora che stiamo uscendo dall'emergenza sanitaria sono ancora loro a doversi sobbarcare l'onere della ripresa economica.

Mi domando dove fosse l'Europa quando si trattava di mettere in campo politiche mirate per rafforzare il sistema delle PMI. *Plastic tax*, *Green Deal*, *Nutriscore* sono tutte misure a danno e non a sostegno del nostro tessuto imprenditoriale. Se si esclude il dossier portato in quest'Aula dalla Lega, un piano d'azione per questo settore strategico ad oggi ancora non c'è.

Nel frattempo si continua a gravare le PMI di ulteriori nuovi oneri europei, come la *Plastic tax* appunto. Si chiede loro di procedere spedite nell'innovazione digitale, ma al contempo le si frena con una burocrazia arcaica e complessa. Ci si attende che si adeguino alla transizione verde, ma contemporaneamente si pretende che restino sui mercati in maniera competitiva, dove però spadroneggiano colossi commerciali del tutto liberi di inquinare l'ambiente.

A queste contraddizioni si aggiunge una nuova emergenza: le materie prime. Essenziali per la manifattura e per la transizione ecologica e digitale, sono diventate introvabili e costosissime. Per gli approvvigionamenti l'Europa si è legata mani e piedi alla Cina, incapace di pianificare il proprio fabbisogno e senza riuscire a difendere i propri interessi economici.

Purtroppo, il conto di questi errori lo pagheranno ancora una volta le PMI, la Cenerentola delle politiche comunitarie a cui, per paradosso, è affidato il salvataggio e il futuro dell'Europa.

Geert Bourgeois (ECR). – Voorzitter, in grote lidstaten verkoopt de retailsector meer en meer alleen nog producten uit eigen land. Vlaamse kmo's moeten bijvoorbeeld noodgedwongen productie verhuizen naar Frankrijk. Dit is onaanvaardbaar, feitelijk protectionisme dat ons kroonjuweel de interne markt kapot maakt. Ik herhaal mijn verzoek aan de Commissie om hiertegen op te treden. Verder vraag ik een veel, veel sterker ondersteuningsbeleid voor onze kmo's. Er moet zo snel mogelijk een eengemaakte kapitaal- en digitale markt komen, en meer steun voor onze kmo's om deel te nemen aan onderzoeksprogramma's en om hun intellectuele eigendomsrechten te beschermen. En tot slot moet in elk vrijhandelsverdrag een kmo-hoofdstuk worden opgenomen dat gemonitord en gehandhaafd wordt.

Maria da Graça Carvalho (PPE). – Senhor Presidente, Senhor Comissário, caros colegas, a estratégia europeia para as pequenas e médias empresas deve, em meu ver, orientar-se em torno de quatro grandes desígnios: investimento, incluindo a criação de condições para que o acesso a este seja uma realidade para todos; inovação, como facilitadora da recuperação económica e da adaptação à dupla transição verde e digital; mercado interno, incluindo o mercado interno digital – precisamos de um mercado interno coeso e sem fragmentação; e, por último, o combate à burocracia, bem como à redução dos custos administrativos para as empresas.

A propósito deste último ponto, sendo ambição do Grupo PPE, Partido Popular Europeu, reduzir em, pelo menos, 30 % estes encargos para as pequenas e médias empresas, pergunto à Comissão Europeia: o que será feito para que esta simplificação de procedimentos seja uma realidade nos pacotes legislativos sobre a inteligência artificial e sobre os serviços e mercados digitais que estão agora em apreciação?

Bettina Vollath (S&D). – Herr Präsident, Herr Kommissar! 99 % aller Unternehmen in der EU sind kleine und mittlere Unternehmen. Wir müssen – gerade angesichts der großen Herausforderungen durch die Pandemie – in unserer Gesetzgebung Zugänge wählen, welche die KMU unterstützen, aber dennoch die Verbraucherinnen und Verbraucher schützen.

Statt z. B. die KMU einfach von der menschenrechtlichen Sorgfaltspflicht auszunehmen, sollte ihnen spezifische Hilfe zur Verfügung gestellt werden, damit auch sie ihre Sorgfaltspflichten erfüllen können. So helfen wir den KMU und schützen zugleich Mensch und Umwelt im Rahmen eines ausgewogenen Ansatzes, der bei allem Schutz für Unternehmen den Menschen nicht vergisst.

Auf Basis der Agenda für eine bessere Rechtsetzung können wir so Rechtsakte schaffen, die Unternehmen nicht überlasten, Menschen und Klima schützen und Bürokratie abbauen.

Liesje Schreinemacher (Renew). – Voorzitter, commissaris, het afgelopen jaar tikten de beurzen record na record aan. Maar hoe anders was dat voor veel van onze mkb'ers die juist zo veel te verduren kregen? En dat terwijl meer dan 100 miljoen Europeanen hun baan te danken hebben aan het mkb. We moeten er dus voor zorgen dat deze banenmotor blijft draaien. En het is goed dat we het vandaag hebben over verduurzaming en digitalisering van deze bedrijven. Maar dat kan alleen als zij daarvoor voldoende middelen tot hun beschikking hebben en als ze op tijd betaald worden, zeker nu. Grote bedrijven kunnen goede voorwaarden uitonderhandelen en gemakkelijk leverancierskrediet krijgen. Maar voor het mkb gaat het nu om vaak lastige procedures en lange termijnen. Zelfs als het gaat om facturen die door de overheid zelf betaald moeten worden. Wat gaat de Commissie hieraan doen? En heeft de SME Envoy dit probleem ook op het netvlies? Dus ja, helemaal eens. Verlaag de administratieve lastendruk, stop nationale standaarden en zorg voor duidelijke informatie voor ondernemers. Maar overheden, betaal ook gewoon je rekeningen op tijd.

France Jamet (ID). – Monsieur le Président, Monsieur le Commissaire, mes chers collègues, oui, les petites et les moyennes entreprises sont les poumons économiques de nos pays. En France, elles sont plus de trois millions et représentent plus de 80 % des emplois. Et pourtant, on ne cesse de s'acharner sur elles: charges sociales intenable, administration tatillonne, fiscalité violente et injuste avec les petits et si complaisante avec les gros. Ajoutons à cela le libre-échange effréné dans lequel l'Union européenne pousse nos nations et livre nos entreprises à la concurrence déloyale des multinationales. Après les conséquences désastreuses des choix sanitaires et économiques de l'Union européenne, les dispositifs financiers ne suffisent malheureusement pas à sauver de la faillite nombre d'entre elles. Et si la pandémie a accéléré un changement de société au profit des multinationales, engendrant la disparition méthodique des TPE et des PME, elle ne doit surtout pas nous engager dans un processus irréversible de globalisation et un changement de société que nous refusons.

Le localisme, les circuits courts et la préférence nationale à la commande publique sont autant de solutions qu'il est urgent de mettre en place pour sortir par le haut de la crise.

Raffaele Stancanelli (ECR). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, signor Commissario, migliorare il modo in cui l'Unione europea legifera e garantire che la legislazione dia un servizio migliore ai cittadini e alle imprese è un processo necessario e indispensabile, soprattutto nel difficile momento in cui ci troviamo.

Da troppo tempo si percepisce una distanza notevole tra chi legifera e i cittadini, facendo apparire molte leggi come calate dall'alto, senza tenere in debita considerazione le reali necessità della società e del sistema produttivo. Per questo motivo ho accolto con piacere e con favore il riferimento che il Commissario ha fatto all'attuazione dell'agenda «Legiferare meglio».

Mi auguro però che non siano soltanto parole, perché l'agenda «Legiferare meglio» potrà garantire la qualità della regolamentazione attraverso un sistema di consultazione più snello, una riduzione al minimo degli oneri per i cittadini e le imprese che hanno subito troppo, compensando i nuovi oneri con la rimozione di quelli equivalenti nello stesso settore, e infine un approccio lungimirante e non a breve e medio termine.

Angelika Winzig (PPE). – Herr Präsident, geschätzter Herr Kommissar, geschätzte Kolleginnen und Kollegen! *Better regulation* war der Grund, weshalb ich mich als Unternehmerin politisch zu engagieren begann. Diese Vorlage der Kommission ist aus wirtschaftspolitischer Sicht begrüßenswert, wir dürfen aber nicht glauben, dass sich damit automatisch die Situation für die KMU verbessert. Die vorgeschlagene verstärkte Kommunikation mit den Stakeholdern halte ich für begrüßenswert, wenn es darum geht, dass eine verstärkte Zusammenarbeit mit Unternehmen – und hier vor allem mit KMU – stattfinden wird, denn diese Gruppe ist eindeutig unterrepräsentiert; das haben wir heute schon gehört.

Auch von der „One in, one out“-Regelung und mit der *Fit-for-Future*-Plattform erwarte ich mir eine Verbesserung der Belastungen, eine Minderung der Belastungen für KMU, damit dieser Regulierungswahnsinn endlich ein Ende hat. Auch das Integrieren der strategischen Voraussicht und der Folgenabschätzung in den Legislativprozess muss im Hinblick auf die europäische Wettbewerbsfähigkeit unserer Betriebe unbedingt stattfinden. Gerade jetzt, wo Unternehmerinnen und Unternehmer aufgrund von Green Deal, Transformation und Digitalisierung in eine ungewisse Zukunft blicken, sind wir im Parlament hier gefordert, alles zu tun, um den europäischen Betrieben das Leben zu erleichtern.

Bedenken Sie immer: Nur Unternehmerinnen und Unternehmer schaffen Arbeitsplätze, und davon brauchen wir zurzeit jede Menge. Lassen wir endlich Taten den Worten folgen und beginnen wir mit der Umsetzung!

Robert Hajšel (S&D). – Mr President, European SMEs are facing a really serious insolvency risk, increased on average by 23% in the aftermath of the Corona crisis. Not all Member States were able to use the European funds made available by the Commission in a rapid and effective way. My country, Slovakia, also could do much better.

Despite the fact we all believe in the ability of SMEs, the backbone of our economy, to adapt to new challenges, now is not only about restarting our economy and helping those who lost, but also supporting those who survived, to undergo the twin transition. The EU has to help them to build resilience. We need concrete actions in terms of effective and transparent regulations and to reduce administrative burdens in order to improve their competitiveness.

We have to support creating sustainable jobs, reskilling and upskilling of workers and reducing social inequalities. Twenty-five million European SMEs providing about 70% of jobs should get our support in order to allow them to benefit from a globally-integrated economy without undermining workers' rights and social and health standards.

Ondřej Kovařík (Renew). – Mr President, looking at the state of European SMEs today, we can clearly see the heavy impact of the pandemic across the majority of sectors, from supply chain disruptions to employee absences, temporary shutdowns to simply being unable to provide goods and services of the quality and quantity that customers need. Some companies have been quick to hone in on growing areas of the economy, such as developing more digital or online-based solutions, while others simply lack the skills and knowledge to do this. The key aspect of our support to SMEs is to ensure that in the Union both access to finance and the fostering of a favourable small business environment are promoted.

For SMEs, the recovery will have many obstacles. We can help to overcome them by offering support at EU level, whether that be financial support through various schemes and programmes, or other types of support such as reducing barriers to business through better regulation. We need to do all we can for SMEs if we are to continue to offer opportunities for innovation, job creation and growth in the EU.

Bogdan Rzońca (ECR). – Szanowny Panie Przewodniczący! Jesteśmy w Parlamencie Europejskim, w bardzo ważnym miejscu, gdzie tworzy się prawo, i to prawo musimy właśnie tworzyć w ten sposób, żeby uwzględniać potrzeby i oczekiwania małych i średnich przedsiębiorców.

Mali i średni przedsiębiorcy dobrze wiedzą, co robić. Oni też chcą uczestniczyć w zmianach klimatycznych, w cyfryzacji swoich firm. Potrzebują środków i myślę, że też powinniśmy dzisiaj dać zielone światło Komisji Europejskiej, żeby dała szybciej zaliczkę małym i średnim przedsiębiorcom, bo oni szybciej wystartują po kryzysie do odbudowy swoich firm.

Wierzę w to mocno, że ten galop do wielkich celów klimatycznych, który został tutaj przygotowany, także w Parlamencie, musi zostać spowolniony, bo inaczej, jeśli będziemy działać nieproporcjonalnie w stosunku do małych i średnich przedsiębiorstw, to te wymogi, które tu zostały przygotowane, po prostu zabijają kolejne małe i średnie przedsiębiorstwa. A chcemy im pomóc, a są środki. Dajmy więc im możliwość funkcjonowania. Oni powinni mieć naprawdę więcej czasu i możliwości. I likwidujemy te obciążenia, które po prostu powodują, że małe i średnie przedsiębiorstwa muszą składać bardzo wiele informacji w złych systemach prawnych. To je gubi i obciąża. To powoduje, że buksują w miejscu, a nie rozwijają się. Dajmy więc im szansę poprzez mądre ustawodawstwo i dobre reakcje po kryzysie covidowym.

Ivan Štefanec (PPE). – Pán predsedajúci, malé a stredné podniky tvoria najviac pracovných miest a sú chrbtovou kosťou európskej ekonomiky.

Ako ukázal nedávny prieskum SME Europe, mnohé z nich čelia existenčným ťažkostiam. Potrebujú zásadne zlepšiť prístup k finančným zdrojom a odbúrať existujúce byrokratické bariéry. Mnohé z nich sa potýkajú aj s problémami, ktoré nie sú spojené s európskou reguláciou, ale s interpretáciou európskych predpisov na národnej úrovni.

Takzvaný gold plating výrazne znižuje konkurencieschopnosť týchto dôležitých tvorcov pracovných miest.

Vítam teda diskusiu, ktorá chce zredukovať byrokráciu v duchu princípu one in one out, ale je dôležité pozrieť sa aj na implementáciu týchto predpisov.

Teda Európska komisia by sa nemala starať len o európsky právny rámec na európskej úrovni, ale som presvedčený, že by mala aj sledovať implementáciu týchto predpisov na národnej úrovni.

Oceňujem zriadenie pozície SME Envoy a verím že pozícia, po ktorej sme dlho volali, bude spolupracovať s nami v Európskom parlamente s cieľom zlepšiť pozíciu malých podnikov.

24 miliónov malých a stredných podnikov si zaslúži pozornosť nielen z hľadiska zníženia regulácie, ale aj z hľadiska reálnej podpory v súčasnej situácii, keď prežili len vďaka svojej inovatívnosti.

Táto európska regulácia nesmie byť brzdou, ale naopak pomáhať by mala pri akcelerácii rozvoja malých podnikov.

Lina Gálvez Muñoz (S&D). – Señor presidente, señor comisario, las pymes son esenciales tanto para la sociedad como para la economía europea. Dan trabajo a cien millones de personas, desde los sectores más tradicionales hasta los más punteros. Además, sabemos que han sufrido especialmente durante la pandemia y, por ello, llamamos a la UE a actualizar la Estrategia para las Pymes teniendo en cuenta las nuevas circunstancias, como ya se ha hecho con la Estrategia Industrial, y a adoptar un plan de acción para las pymes que las acompañe en la transición hacia un futuro digital y sostenible, reforzando el desarrollo de capacidades y reduciendo en la medida de lo posible la carga administrativa, sin que eso repercuta en los derechos de las y los trabajadores, las normas sanitarias o la protección medioambiental.

Asimismo, pedimos a la Comisión que esa Estrategia para las Pymes tenga en cuenta el impacto particular y desproporcionado que la COVID-19 ha tenido en las mujeres como gestoras, trabajadoras, emprendedoras, y en las barreras que encuentran estas mujeres en el acceso a la información, las herramientas, los servicios financieros y tecnológicos, que limitan su capacidad para expandir sus actividades.

Nicola Beer (Renew). – Herr Präsident! Europa – das ist der Mittelstand. Der Mittelstand, das ist Europa – mit seinen Jobs, seinen Ausbildungsplätzen, seiner Innovationskraft, seinem Unternehmergeist – ein Unternehmergeist, der nicht nach Subventionen fragt, sondern nach Perspektiven –, Unternehmen, die oft als *hidden champion* weltweit etabliert sind, gleichzeitig regional verwurzelt, die soziale Verantwortung übernehmen für Beschäftigte, für den Nachwuchs ihrer Heimat.

Dieser Mittelstand wurde besonders hart von der Krise getroffen, und es kamen keine Minister mit großen Schecks vorbei. Doch nur mit diesem Mittelstand, mit seinen Tugenden, seiner Leistungsbereitschaft, kann Europa wieder aus der Krise kommen – stärker, moderner, nachhaltiger als zuvor. Und deshalb muss nun jede Maßnahme in Europa konsequent den Mittelstand und seine Beschäftigten unterstützen. Investitionen in Infrastruktur und Bildung, Planungssicherheit, Handlungsspielräume. Was ein Handwerker, ein Gewerbetreibender, ein Freiberufler nicht umsetzen kann, darf nicht beschlossen werden.

Und noch mehr: Wir müssen Bürokratie abbauen. Da reicht mir „*One in, one out*“ nicht! Das ist der Status quo. Wir brauchen „*One in, two out*“, damit wir die Belastungen reduzieren.

Wir sollten auf unsere Mittelständler hören, dann werden wir die digitale und grüne Transformation ohne soziale Verwerfungen bewältigen können.

Angelika Niebler (PPE). – Herr Präsident, Herr Kommissar, verehrte Kolleginnen, verehrte Kollegen! Gerade die kleinen mittelständischen Unternehmen werden durch die Corona-Pandemie besonders getroffen. Das ist umso bitterer, als wir alle wissen, dass diese kleinen mittelständischen Betriebe der Innovationsmotor bei uns in der Europäischen Union sind. Das beste Beispiel dafür ist die Firma BioNTech, ein mittelständisches Unternehmen, 100 Mitarbeiter, das heute mit seiner mRNA-Technologie so vielen Menschen Hoffnung schenkt – einer Technologie, die hoffentlich auch einmal bei der Bekämpfung von Krebs eine große Rolle spielen wird.

Wir müssen die administrative Last unserer Unternehmen radikal abbauen, Hindernisse, Hemmnisse für unsere Mittelständler abschaffen. Und es ist angesprochen worden: Die Regelung „*One in, one out*“ ist gut, die brauchen wir, aber sie reicht bei weitem nicht aus. Weniger ist mehr.

Ich glaube, wir brauchen ein Belastungsmoratorium für unsere Unternehmen. Es darf kein legislativer Vorschlag, Herr Kommissar, mehr auf den Tisch des Hauses hier im Parlament kommen, in den Rat hineingehen, der nicht zuvor einer kritischen Gesetzesfolgenabschätzung unterzogen wurde.

Wir müssen den KMU-Test wieder zum Leben erwecken. Es muss klar sein: Wenn etwas Neues von unseren Unternehmen gefordert wird, welche Belastungen kommen damit auf unsere Unternehmen zu? Am besten wäre es, möglichst wenig Belastungen – gerade jetzt, in dieser schwierigen Zeit – für unsere Unternehmen vorzusehen. Die digitale Transformation und die Vorgaben für den Green Deal, das wird unsere Unternehmen besonders fordern. Deshalb: Entlastung ist das Gebot der Stunde.

Leszek Miller (S&D). – Panie Przewodniczący! Szanowni Państwo! Małe i średnie przedsiębiorstwa są kołem zamachowym unijnej gospodarki. To one zapewniają blisko dwie trzecie wszystkich miejsc pracy i generują połowę europejskiego PKB. To samo dotyczy państw członkowskich. Województwo wielkopolskie, skąd pełnię mandat posła, od lat jest liderem w Polsce, jeśli chodzi o liczbę aktywnych małych i średnich firm zatrudniających tysiące osób. Żeby firmy te mogły sprawnie funkcjonować także na arenie międzynarodowej w ramach jednolitego rynku, konieczne jest stanowienie lepszego prawa, redukcja administracyjnych obciążeń i kosztów.

Uważam, że Komisja Europejska prezentuje w tej mierze słuszne stanowisko. Doświadczenia związane ze zwalczaniem skutków pandemii dowodzą jednak, że powinniśmy unikać pełnego automatyzmu w ograniczaniu obciążeń administracyjnych, co zakłada proponowana przez Komisję Europejską zasada *one in one out*. Obciążenia te powinny mieć zawsze charakter proporcjonalny i niezbędny. Dlatego uważam, że Komisja, proponując zredukowanie obciążeń, powinna kierować się przede wszystkim względami ich celowości i skuteczności, a nie zwykłą arytmetyką.

PŘEDSEDNICTVÍ: DITA CHARANZOVÁ*místopředsedkyně*

Riho Terras (PPE). – Lugupeetud istungi juhataja, head kolleegid! Üle aasta kestnud tervisekriis ning erinevate piirangute rakendamine on seadnud paljud Euroopa ettevõtted väga keerulisse olukorda. Eriti tugevalt on kannatanud väikese ja keskmise suurusega ettevõtted, nagu täna siit ka juba korduvalt mainitud. Seadusloomes tuleb pidevalt jälgida, et halduskoormus ei koormaks üle väikeettevõtete administratiivset võimekust ning ei tekitaks neile ebaproportsionaalselt suurt halduskulu. Iga õigusakti eelnõule peab eelnema mõjuanalüüs, mis võtab arvesse ka kavandatava õigusakti võimalikku mõju väikeettevõtetele. Olemasolevat bürokraatiat tuleb vähendada ning iga uue reegli kehtestamisel tuleb vastavalt vähendada olemasolevat halduskoormust. Euroopa Rahvapartei on aastaid nõudnud VKEda kontakt- ja tugisõidu ametikoha loomist Euroopa Komisjoni. Selle ametikoha mandaat peab olema horisontaalne ning kontaktisik peab alluma otse komisjoni presidendile. Enam kui aasta peale kriisi algust on komisjon jalgu järele lohistades mingi koha loonud, kuid paraku jääb õhku rippuma rohkem küsimusi kui vastuseid selles osas, mis on antud ametikoha mandaat ning tõsiseltvõetavus. VKEda kaasamine ei tohi olla vaid pealiskaudne. Aitäh!

Maria Spyraiki (PPE). – Madame la Présidente, Monsieur le Commissaire Schmit, chers collègues, c'est une grande émotion pour moi de revenir à Strasbourg, la ville où notre siège symbolise l'Europe et ses valeurs.

Επιστρέψαμε και μαζί επιστρέφει και η οικονομική δραστηριότητα στις χώρες μας, σταδιακά και με ασφάλεια. Στην πατρίδα μου στην Ελλάδα, ξέρετε, οι μικρομεσαίοι δεν είναι οι επιχειρήσεις που απασχολούν 250 ανθρώπους. Είναι μικρές και πολύ μικρές επιχειρήσεις, και για αυτό χρειάζονται πολύ λιγότερο βάρος — σε ό,τι αφορά τα εμπόδια στη νομοθεσία— και πολύ μεγαλύτερη στήριξη, εξειδικευμένα προγράμματα, *tailor-made financial instruments*, τα οποία θα μπορούσαν να δώσουν την ώθηση στην ψηφιακή και την ενεργειακή τους μετεξέλιξη, τη δημιουργία *cluster* ομοειδών μικρομεσαίων για κοινές προσπάθειες, για από κοινού διοικητική και λογιστική υποστήριξη. Χρειάζονται άμεση, προσβάσιμη και κατανοητή τεχνική βοήθεια, ώστε ο μετασχηματισμός να μην μείνει στα χαρτιά, αλλά να ανθίσει και να βοηθήσει την ανθεκτικότητα των επιχειρήσεων και των μικρομεσαίων στη νέα εποχή. Χρειάζεται να μειωθεί στο ελάχιστο ο χρόνος πληρωμής από τα κοινοτικά και τα εθνικά κονδύλια, και μάλιστα για τις καθυστερήσεις να υπάρχουν επιπτώσεις.

Επίτροπε Schmit, πράγματι, οι πρωτοβουλίες της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης δεν φτάνουν μέχρι και στην τελευταία επιχείρηση στο Διδυμότειχο, στον Εύοσμο, στο Άργος Ορεστικό, στη Χίο, στην Ελλάδα, παντού. Η πολιτική για τους μικρομεσαίους χρειάζεται αναβάθμιση και απλοποίηση άμεσα. Ο ορισμός του ειδικού απεσταλμένου για τις μικρομεσαίες επιχειρήσεις μπορεί να συμβάλει, προτείνοντας λύσεις για την καθημερινότητα και τα προβλήματά τους. Είναι τώρα η ευκαιρία μας να μετεξελιζόμαστε στην Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση.

Isabel Benjumea Benjumea (PPE). – Señora presidenta, señor comisario, la Unión Europea cuenta con más de veinticinco millones de pymes, lo que supone el 99 % de todas las empresas de la Unión. Estas son responsables de la empleabilidad de alrededor de cien millones de personas y del 56 % del producto interior bruto de la Unión. Sin lugar a dudas, son nuestro pulmón económico.

La pandemia del coronavirus ha supuesto la contracción económica europea en un 6,3 % en 2020 y la caída en picado de la creación de empleo. Aplaudo, por eso, las políticas fiscales y monetarias de emergencia puestas en marcha durante la crisis. Sin embargo, no es suficiente. Y no lo es no solo por el impacto de la COVID-19 sobre la solvencia y la capacidad de las empresas europeas, sino porque Europa necesita una estrategia de atracción de capital y apoyo a la creación y desarrollo de pymes mucho más ambiciosa.

Es esencial adaptar las políticas a la evolución de la crisis. No basta con la Estrategia para las Pymes lanzada por la Comisión en el año 2020 ni con actualización de la Estrategia Industrial de mayo de este año. Hay que reducir la carga normativa y hay que aumentar las opciones de financiación de las pymes para que no dependan tanto de la deuda bancaria.

Por todo ello, pido un mayor esfuerzo y que se priorice mucho más la importancia de trabajar para que haya más pymes en la Unión Europea y sean más competitivas.

Markus Ferber (PPE). – Sehr geehrte Frau Präsidentin, Herr Kommissar, liebe Kolleginnen, liebe Kollegen! Es ist ja wunderschön, dass wir heute eine Debatte über die Strategie für kleine und mittlere Unternehmen führen. Aber wo findet das im täglichen Leben eigentlich statt in der Arbeit der Kommission? Lesen Sie eigentlich alles, was Sie uns hier vorschlagen? Wenn ich nur mal nichtfinanzielle Berichtspflichten, Mindestlohn, Lieferkettengesetz nennen darf, dann stelle ich mir schon die Frage: Wo ist da noch KMU-Strategie zu erkennen?

Ich habe selber in einem mittelständischen Unternehmen gearbeitet. Da hilft es mir nichts, wenn ich ausgenommen bin, aber über Lieferbeziehungen an große Unternehmen die Dinge durchgereicht bekomme. Und ich frage das auch die Kolleginnen und Kollegen, die heute so flammende Plädoyers gehalten haben. Und dann lese ich die Änderungsanträge – ich schaue insbesondere hier in die leeren Reihen der linken Seite –, da ist von dem nichts mehr zu erkennen, was heute gesagt wurde.

Wenn wir uns klar zu den kleinen und mittleren Unternehmen bekennen, dann müssen wir ihnen auch wirklich helfen, und das heißt, sie ihre Arbeit machen lassen. Die halten sich an die Regeln, die halten sich an die Gesetze. Die brauchen nicht jeden Tag aus Brüssel gesagt bekommen, wie sie was zu tun haben.

Nicolas Schmit, Member of the Commission. – Madam President, thank you for this very rich and interesting debate. It indeed reflects our shared determination. In order to get over this crisis successfully, we need SMEs at the heart of our recovery. The EU economy as a whole will manage future shocks only if SMEs are resilient, competitive and innovative. It will only be possible to secure jobs for Europeans if SMEs thrive and grow.

There is one issue which I haven't heard so much about. This is the issue of entrepreneurship. I think we have to favour and promote entrepreneurship in Europe. This is, by the way, an important objective of our Skills Agenda. We need more entrepreneurs in Europe because without entrepreneurs, we have no companies, and without companies, we have no innovation, no new jobs. Let me assure you, the Commission is doing everything it can to support SMEs and cushion the impact of the pandemic. Now is the moment to relaunch, rebuild and support development, and we will take on board your concerns and your suggestions in rolling out these SME actions.

Many of you are calling to reduce the administrative burden on SMEs. Rightly so. The Commission is firmly committed to further cutting red tape, to reducing and simplifying regulations, and to making them as cost-efficient as possible for SMEs where they cannot be abolished. We will systematically apply an SME test in our impact assessments and look at further improvements. We need transparency in these processes. We also have to focus on the broader issue of quality legislation, as Mr Ferber said.

We have strengthened the role of the SME Envoy Network, which will actively contribute to the work of the 'Fit for Future' platform, and the Commission will be able to present an overview of all new costs and savings in the annual burden survey. You also asked about the nomination of an EU SME envoy. SMEs need a strong voice now more than ever before. They continue to be highly affected by the pandemic, from liquidity to solvency problems, and the need for digital and green transitions has only accelerated them.

While the Commission shares Parliament's eagerness to appoint an SME envoy, we need the right experience and skill set, as well as balance in terms of the representativeness of the SME community across the EU. SMEs are, as has been sufficiently underlined, the backbone of our economy and deeply woven into the social and local fabric of our union. Only together with you, honourable Members, and all of our Member States and their regions, will we be able to effectively support SMEs in the recovery and make their path to a green and digital transition as smooth as possible. I believe that these transitions are major opportunities for the development of SMEs, but we need to provide them with adequate support to promote their innovative capacity.

I would like to insist on one issue which has perhaps not been mentioned so much, although when I'm talking to SMEs, when I'm talking to employers, I hear that one of their major problems – which is perhaps even more important than the regulatory burden – is not being able to find the right skilled people. This is a major issue. We have to make sure that the SMEs get the right skilled people because they will not be able to master, to manage, the digital transition, the green transition, without having the right skilled people. So we have to help them, to support them, to invest in their people. That's precisely the purpose of the Pact for Skills, that's the purpose of the Skills Agenda, as the big companies can afford it, while the smaller companies have more difficulty in devoting more money to upskilling and reskilling their

employees, and in finding the young people they need with the right skills.

Here also I want to insist on another aspect which is important when we are talking about SMEs. They play a fundamental role in training, in educating and skilling young people. Their role in vocational training is key; therefore, we have to support them when we are talking about vocational training. Everyone is now in favour of vocational training, but who is doing the vocational training? The thousands and thousands of SMEs are doing the vocational training and therefore, precisely in this crisis, they had trouble taking on more apprentices. They were in trouble continuing apprenticeships, so we have to support them. Incidentally, one of the initiatives under the Commission's Young Employment Support (YES) programme was precisely to support SMEs in order to offer sufficient apprenticeships despite the crisis, despite their financial difficulties, to young people. They are playing a fundamental role precisely in giving good employment prospects to the young.

We all share these endeavours and we all want to strengthen the European economy. We all know that to strengthen the European economy we need strong SMEs.

President. – The joint debate is closed.

Written statements (Rule 171)

Атидже Алиева-Вели (Renew), *в писмена форма*. – Малките и средни предприятия (МСП) несъмнено са двигатели на икономиката на ЕС. Те имат ключова роля, защото създават изключително много работни места, особено по време на пандемия, когато хиляди души губят работите си. Днес, МПС са изправени пред двойно предизвикателство – те трябва превъзможат негативните последици, породени от Ковид 19 и постепенно да се преодоляват предизвикателствата, свързани с адаптацията към условията на Зелената сделка. Много от тях, за съжаление, страдат от липса на ликвидност, което води до увеличение на броя на фалитите.

Европейската стратегия за МСП трябва да се основава на създаване на условия за иновации и инвестиции, както и да се стимулира предприемачеството. С нея трябва да се определят конкретни възможности за достъп до адекватно финансиране, както и да осигури навременното им информиране за тях. Смятам също така, че административната тежест на МСП трябва да се намали. Те трябва да използват времето си за развитие, а не да се натоварват допълнително с бюрокрация. Стратегията на МСП е ключ към целта ни за цифрова Европа.

Затова с радост подкрепям създаването на възможности за квалифициране на работниците и обучението им през целия живот. Подкрепата за МСП е необходима и жизненоважна за успешния Зелен преход. Трябва да им покажем, че ги разбираме и работим за тях.

Adam Bielan (ECR), *na piśmie*. – Małe i średnie przedsiębiorstwa są trzonem gospodarki Unii Europejskiej. Niestety to one okazały się szczególnie podatne na skutki kryzysu gospodarczego spowodowanego pandemią. W tym kontekście priorytety takie jak cyfryzacja, zrównoważony rozwój i odporność tylko zyskały na znaczeniu.

Za niezwykle istotne uważam także zmniejszenie obciążeń administracyjnych. W 2019 roku nowa Komisja Europejska zobowiązała się do lepszego ustawodawstwa oraz ograniczenia biurokracji dla małych i średnich przedsiębiorstw. W tym kontekście działania Komisji w obszarze redukcji obciążeń regulacyjnych zasługują na poparcie. Wydaje się, że wprowadzenie zasady „one in – one out” pozwoli w sposób kompleksowy ograniczyć obowiązki informacyjne i inne obciążenia nakładane przepisami na MŚP.

Jednak wymagane są dalsze kroki. MŚP potrzebują przepisów, które zachęcą je do rozwoju, innowacji i inwestycji, a działania Unii Europejskiej w tym kontekście powinny być bardziej zdecydowane. Dodatkowo, powinniśmy położyć szczególny nacisk na wzmocnienie europejskich łańcuchów dostaw oraz rozwiązań problemu wąskich gardeł w dostawach.

Wyrażam nadzieję, że Komisja jak najszybciej zatwierdzi krajowe plany odbudowy tak, aby środki na odbudowę firm po kryzysie mogły być jak najszybciej rozdysponowane i były impulsem do dalszego rozwoju.

Andrea Caroppo (PPE), *per iscritto*. – Le microimprese svolgono un ruolo chiave nell'economia europea ed ancor più, in quella di taluni Stati membri come l'Italia. Per questo l'Europa aspira ad essere attraente per l'avvio di una piccola impresa, la sua crescita ed espansione, sostenendo la transizione verso sostenibilità e digitalizzazione, riducendo gli oneri normativi e migliorando l'accesso a mercato e finanziamenti. Tuttavia, per le loro caratteristiche peculiari, le microimprese sono state le più colpite dalla crisi COVID-19 2020-2021 e sono preoccupanti i numeri relativi ai cali del fatturato, nonché alla rinuncia o al ridimensionamento degli investimenti programmati: la stessa Commissione UE afferma che è improbabile, che il valore aggiunto delle PMI, ritorni ai livelli del 2019 entro la fine del 2021. Non

sembra più rinviabile, dunque, un aggiornamento formale della «Strategia per le PMI per un'Europa sostenibile e digitale» presentata nel marzo 2020 che tenga in considerazione l'impatto della pandemia di COVID-19 e le mutate condizioni di quadro economico ed internazionale. Per quanto la strategia industriale aggiornata del maggio 2021 consideri le conseguenze della crisi COVID-19 e la situazione specifica delle PMI, occorrono strategie e misure esclusive per le PMI, considerato pure che esse sono i veicoli principali dell'innovazione nei vari ecosistemi.

András Gyürk (NI), írásban. – A kis- és középvállalkozások mintegy 100 millió munkahelyet és a GDP több mint 50%-át adják az Európai Unióban. A kkv-k, illetve a családi és egyéni vállalkozók túlélése az európai gazdaság működésének záloga. Ezért bír kiemelt fontossággal, hogy a kis- és középvállalkozások a koronavírus-járvány visszaszorításával egyidejűleg hatékony segítségben részesüljenek. A sikeres cselekvés három tényezőn – bürokráciacsökkentés, többletforrások biztosítása és a tisztelet megadása – múlik. Örömteli, hogy az Európai Bizottság is felismerte a kkv-kra nehezedő bürokratikus terhek csökkentésének fontosságát. A jelenlegi helyzetben felelőtlen magatartás lenne az európai baloldal ideológiai elvárásaival terhelni a kkv-kat. Ezért az „egy be, egy ki”-elv gyakorlati alkalmazása terén tett erőfeszítések üdvözlendők. Azonban a bürokráciacsökkentéssel párhuzamosan a kkv-knak juttatandó támogatások és programok kiterjesztésére is szükség van. Sem a felülvizsgált iparpolitikai stratégia, sem a Bizottság eddigi nyilatkozatai nem foglalkoztak kellő mértékben ezekkel a kérdésekkel. Kidolgozott programokra és célzott forrásokra van szükség a kkv-k digitális és zöld átállásának hatékony segítéséhez. Végül, az Európai Bizottságnak meg kell adnia a kellő tiszteletet a kis- és középvállalkozásoknak. Érthetetlen, hogy másfél évvel hivatalba lépését követően a Bizottság képtelen volt az uniós kkv-követ feladat- és hatáskörének kialakítására. E hiányosság pótlása nem elégséges, de szükséges lépés a kkv-k véleményének megfelelő mértékű figyelembevételéhez a szakpolitikai döntések során.

Victor Negrescu (S&D), în scris. – Companiile mici și mijlocii din toată Uniunea Europeană au fost puternic afectate de pandemie. Multe dintre ele s-au confruntat cu dificultăți de finanțare prin prisma accesului limitat la piață și gradului redus de digitalizare. Această situație ne arată încă o dată fragilitatea mediului economic european și riscurile la care sunt expuse IMM-urile din UE. Din păcate, șocul pandemiei s-a resimțit puternic la nivelul micilor antreprenori, iar multe companii cu dificultăți de capitalizare și-au redus activitatea sau chiar au falimentat. Este, din păcate, cazul României, unde majoritatea IMM-urilor nu sunt bancabile și au trebuit să consume în tot acest timp ultimele resurse proprii pentru a supraviețui. Mai mult, în absența unor măsuri de sprijin coerente din partea Guvernului de dreapta din România, o parte dintre companii și-au încetat activitatea sau au preferat să crească prețurile. Soluția poate veni de la Uniunea Europeană, atât printr-o reglementare adecvată, cât și prin mecanisme de sprijin prin planurile de redresare. Din păcate, anumite state, printre care și România, au ignorat apelul IMM-urilor. Haideți să nu îi uităm pe micii antreprenori și să găsim împreună soluțiile pentru salvarea economiei locale europene!

Karol Karski (ECR), na piśmie. – Badania pokazują, że odbudowa po kryzysie zajmie lata, a w przypadku niektórych sektorów nie przewiduje się powrotu do stanu przedpandemicznego aż do roku 2024. Dodatkowo te ostrożne prognozy są uwarunkowane wzmiankami o tym, że szybkość odzyskania formy zależy też od efektów kampanii szczepienia się, sytuacji epidemiologicznej, polityk narodowych, zdolności biznesu do adopcji. Należy liczyć się z opóźnionymi bądź niezarejestrowanymi do tej pory skutkami epidemii, które także mogą odegrać negatywną rolę. Tymczasem to MŚP w sposób największy zostały dotknięte kryzysem, między innymi problemem zatorów płatniczych. Wielu z nich eksperci obecnie określają jako „phantom companies”, czyli takie, które faktycznie zaprzestały działalności i istnieją tylko przy pomocy narodowych pandemicznych środków wsparcia, które mają się skończyć jesienią. Tymczasem MŚP odgrywają bardzo ważną rolę, między innymi w sektorach strategicznych, gdzie dominują w segmencie dostawców drugiego i trzeciego szczebla. Istnieje więc ryzyko ich przyjęcia przez pozaeuropejskie podmioty, co stworzy problemy dla bezpieczeństwa poszczególnych państw członkowskich, jak bezpieczeństwa Unii. Dlatego zarówno na poziomie narodowym, jak i unijnym powinno się monitorować segmenty strategiczne, m.in. pod kątem stanu ich europejskich MŚP w celu zagwarantowania zachowania ich roli w łańcuchach wartości.

Alfred Sant (S&D), in writing. – Beyond the steep drop in their value added, jobs provided by SMEs decreased by more than 1.4 million in the past year of COVID-19 crisis. Yet the systemic handicaps SMEs face on a European scale stretch farther than the pandemic. Thus, on average, the costs to comply with new rules are 10 times higher relatively for small businesses than they are for large enterprises. When new legislation is being mooted, like in the digital area, we all stress the need for regulations to maintain proportionality. In practice, new rules are being designed for the larger enterprises, and then get scaled down for SMEs. Inherently, this means that rules carry a bias against small size, which should be continually kept in mind by legislation-makers. Applying the rules should not hinder SMEs capacity to grow and create

jobs. More and more new rules are being needed to address a wide variety of global challenges from climate change to technological innovation. Inbuilt in the design of such legislation must remain the priority of helping SMEs become more resilient in the face of ongoing challenges while minimising, simplifying and streamlining administrative requirements. I welcome the fact that the European Union seems to be applying more thoroughly its 'think small first' principle.

Marco Zanni (ID), *per iscritto*. – Le piccole e medie imprese sono le realtà che hanno più sofferto il periodo di chiusure. Le misure intraprese fino ad oggi, meritano una riflessione e ritengo che ora sia giunto il momento di pensare a iniziative coraggiose, utili al rilancio di questo settore. Uno dei principali ostacoli che le PMI italiane devono affrontare quotidianamente è la burocrazia, e per questo diventano a mio avviso, cruciali, la semplificazione e lo snellimento delle procedure. Quanto ai requisiti regolamentari, sarebbe stato opportuno porre dei margini di flessibilità maggiori, soprattutto per le operazioni di cessione che riguardano il contesto del credito all'economia reale e alle PMI, così da ridurre gli impatti sui bilanci delle banche. Un altro tema molto divisivo da prendere in considerazione, riguarda il clima e l'ambiente. Come ho già ribadito più volte, stiamo correndo il grosso rischio, di mettere le nostre aziende di fronte ad obiettivi talmente ambiziosi, da essere irrealizzabili sul lato pratico. Un esempio concreto ed attuale è la direttiva sulla plastica monouso, che sta minacciando il lavoro di migliaia di cittadini europei.

Per tali motivi, mi aspetto una risposta concreta ed efficace da parte delle Istituzioni, in grado di rilanciare questo settore fondamentale per l'economia.

18. Composition of committees and delegations: see Minutes

19. Competition policy – annual report 2020 (debate)

President. – The next item is the debate on the report by Johan Van Overtveldt, on behalf of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs, on competition policy – annual report 2020 (2020/2223(INI)) (A9-0168/2021).

Margrethe Vestager, *Executive Vice-President of the Commission*. – Madam President, I would very much like to begin by thanking the rapporteur, Johan Van Overtveldt, and all the shadow rapporteurs for their comprehensive report. I think it provides an excellent basis for today's debate. I think this engagement deserves our warm thanks.

The time and effort put into this report show the Parliament's interest in competition policy and how this is seen as an important policy area. That's because it goes to the very heart of the choices we need to make for Europe to recover from the pandemic. We need to recover in a way that is strong and sustainable, and of course to continue to offer Europeans what they deserve: societies that include them and provide for them. This is also a Europe that seizes the opportunity that comes with the green and digital transitions that give companies of all sizes a fair chance to compete on their merits on a level playing field, to the benefit of the businesses themselves and obviously for us as consumers.

The past 15 months have put a strain on every individual, every human that lives on this planet. Our societies and our economies have been under great strain and, as it happens, it has shown the importance of well-functioning markets for things to continue, for value chains to deliver, for goods to be brought to supermarkets, for hospital equipment to be available, and for protective gear to be there. Competition policy is essential to reach that goal.

The passing months have also shown that our rules remain relevant, that they serve us well and that they can be swiftly adapted if need be. When the crisis hit, our state aid rules enabled quick and effective support to address the economic consequences of COVID-19, while at the same time maintaining the integrity of the single market. The State Aid Temporary Framework enabled Member States to make use of the full flexibility of rules to support their businesses. Since March 2020 the Commission has adopted more than 500 decisions and approved over EUR 3 trillion in aid.

The temporary framework is currently set to apply until the end of this year. We continue to monitor its ability to offer the necessary support, especially for those sectors that are hardest hit, and we know that has everything to do with humans travelling, sleeping, eating – in short, hospitality, culture, tourism. We will continue to look at it because obviously it is important that we can still give support where the crisis has hit, while progressively phasing out the crisis rule once the situation allows for it.

But this year we have not only dealt with the crisis. Along with keeping up the pace of our enforcement, we have worked to ensure that our competition rule book remains fit for the challenges, including those from the green and digital transition. We have launched a reflection process on how competition rules can contribute to the objective of the European Green Deal, and indeed we did it in the Parliament. We are now in the process of reviewing key state aid rules to ensure that they are fully fit for purpose. Just today, we have launched a public consultation on the new climate, energy and environmental state aid guidelines. They will play a key role in enabling the green transition, while maintaining a level playing field in the single market.

We also looked at the jurisdictional and procedural aspects of our merger rules, and we have issued new guidance on the application of the referral mechanism by Member States to the EU level, to work very closely with national competition authorities to enable us to review what we sometimes call killer acquisitions, including in digital markets, things that would otherwise go unnoticed. We are revising our market definition notice to take stock of developments, and also, of course, revising our vertical and horizontal block exemption regulation.

So it is indeed a busy year. Looking forward, not only do we look at competition rules as such, and not only do we enforce them vigorously, but we also seek regulatory solutions to address systemic behaviours arising on large digital platforms with a gatekeeping role. In December last year, we adopted the Digital Markets Act proposal. It aims to ensure that digital markets within our Union remain open and contestable so that companies, both large and small, have fair opportunities to compete online, as they do offline.

The Digital Markets Act will tell the very large gatekeepers what to do and indeed what not to do. It will enable us, in close cooperation with national competition authorities, to act and to sanction gatekeepers who do not respect the rules. The proposal has progressed very well in Council, and I am very happy to see how the pace is picking up in Parliament. I really appreciate that engagement and that interest because we need the regulation and we need it fast. I very much look forward to continuing the discussion with Parliament's committees and Members over the coming months.

Last, but not least, in addition we've just tabled a proposal to deal with foreign subsidies because they can be very distortive. As you will know by heart, for 60 years our state aid rules have been ensuring that aid granted by Member States is targeted, proportional and does not undermine fair competition in the single market. But similar rules for subsidies do not exist for subsidies granted by foreign states, so our proposal aims to make this imbalance a thing of the past. Companies that receive subsidies from non-EU countries will need our approval before they implement big mergers in Europe, in addition to clearance under the EU merger regulation. Companies will have to tell us what subsidies they have received when they bid in large public tenders and, again, won't be able to win and to close those tenders without our OK. We'll have the power on our own initiative to investigate any company to see if it has received foreign subsidies that harm fair competition in Europe.

We have a lot on our plate. I appreciate your interest and engagement, and I think it is really well reflected in the report that is the basis for today's discussion. Thank you very much. I am committed to continuing to work closely with you and I look forward to today's debate.

Stéphanie Yon-Courtin, *rapporteuse pour avis, commission du marché intérieur et de la protection des consommateurs*. – Madame la Présidente, Madame la Vice-présidente exécutive, Monsieur le rapporteur, chers collègues, je me réjouis de pouvoir m'exprimer sur le rapport annuel sur la politique de concurrence depuis cet hémicycle à Strasbourg. Avant toute chose, je veux remercier le rapporteur pour son excellent travail et sa coopération tout au long des négociations.

La pandémie que nous avons traversée et dont nous commençons à entrevoir la fin, au moins sur le plan sanitaire, a illustré le rôle fondamental de notre politique de concurrence. La mobilisation rapide et efficace de la Commission européenne, avec la mise en place du cadre temporaire en matière d'aides d'État, a notamment permis aux États membres de pouvoir aider, comme il le fallait, les entreprises touchées brutalement par les conséquences économiques de la COVID.

Cette situation exceptionnelle n'a pas vocation à rester définitive. Nous devons rapidement reconstruire notre économie sur des bases solides en préservant la concurrence au sein de notre marché unique. Toutefois, un retour à la normale ne signifie pas revenir au monde d'hier. Nous avons tiré les enseignements de cette crise en matière d'autonomie stratégique et d'harmonisation de notre marché unique. Notre politique de concurrence est un des outils pour y parvenir et pour combattre toute distorsion de concurrence qui fragiliserait notre économie, nos économies et notre marché intérieur.

Je me réjouis que la Commission européenne, en dépit de la crise, ait continué à avancer sur des sujets cruciaux tels que la concurrence déloyale sur le plan international, avec l'instrument sur les subventions étrangères, ainsi que sur les déséquilibres en matière de concurrence en ligne, avec l'acte sur les marchés numériques.

Il y a bien un pilote dans l'avion et nous savons où nous allons. Le Parlement européen doit aussi prendre toute sa place dans le cockpit pour être informé et pour être associé à la feuille de route ambitieuse en matière de politique de concurrence et de relance pour les années à venir.

Relance et concurrence sont deux problématiques intimement liées aux objectifs que nous nous sommes fixés en matière de politique commerciale, industrielle, environnementale, numérique, de protection des consommateurs et de compétitivité.

Fulvio Martusciello, *a nome del gruppo PPE*. – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, signor Commissario, noi abbiamo lavorato con grande energia a questo dossier. Ancora una volta, anche quest'anno, abbiamo individuato una serie di punti che sono distorsivi, a nostro parere, della concorrenza.

Ogni anno facciamo sempre lo stesso lavoro. Mi chiedo quanti punti che abbiamo individuato nelle relazioni degli scorsi anni sono stati poi attuati, sono stati poi valutati dalla Commissione. Non sarebbe il caso che la Commissione, prima di farci avventurare in questo lavoro, ci desse conto di come ha utilizzato il lavoro dell'anno precedente?

Io ho fatto uno studio e ho visto che, ad esempio su quello del 2017, la Commissione ne ha analizzati pochi, 2 o 3 su 181 che ne avevamo individuati. E ritengo che il primo punto distorsivo della concorrenza, Commissario, sia la differenza di tassazione fra gli Stati membri, l'utilizzo che fanno alcuni Stati membri delle politiche fiscali per potersene avvantaggiare.

Io sono partito da Napoli, dalla mia città nel sud Italia, e mi sono fermato a fare il diesel e l'ho pagato 1,7 EUR. Poi mi sono fermato in Lussemburgo e il diesel l'ho pagato 1,1 EUR, perché il Lussemburgo usa la leva fiscale per attrarre investimenti, per attrarre consumatori, e naturalmente le stesse cose accadono in altri paesi dell'Unione.

Questa è la vera anomalia, il vero elemento distorsivo della concorrenza, insieme all'accettazione placida che avviene del boicottaggio. Abbiamo cercato di inserire, a più riprese, in questa relazione la condanna assoluta del boicottaggio dei prodotti provenienti da un'area geografica soltanto perché provenienti da quell'area geografica. Ebbene non ci siamo riusciti per l'ostruzionismo messo in campo dalle forze di sinistra presenti tra i relatori d'ombra. Eppure questo è un altro elemento che, ad esempio in Italia, ha distorto la concorrenza, producendo danni irreversibili nei confronti di aziende che sono state discriminate soltanto perché provenivano da un'area geografica.

Allora noi lavoreremo anche l'anno prossimo sulla stessa relazione INI e ci aspettiamo però una forte inversione da parte sua, Commissario, perché attui e analizzi e valuti quello che noi, il Parlamento sovrano, le indichiamo come priorità.

Marc Angel, *on behalf of the S&D Group*. – Madam President, dear Commissioner, dear colleagues, let me start by thanking the rapporteur, Johan Van Overtveldt, and the shadow rapporteurs, for the excellent cooperation we have had.

Competition policies are one of the main competencies of the European Union, and as a socialist I am very glad that today we are debating a report that takes into account that competition rules are not only about regulating to ensure fair conditions, but also about the role they play in the achievement of the digital and the environmental transitions.

Competition is not only about low prices, it's about quality and innovation of products and of production chains. These are crucial elements if we want to reach the goals of the Green Deal. And we have to reach these goals, because they are not just a 'nice to have', they are a must!

Therefore, I want to underline once more how important it is not only to foster innovation through competition but also for Member States not to distort this phenomenon. Even each justified State aid must be in line with the Green Deal, with the Sustainable Development Goals and our pillar of social rights.

This report also takes into account that loopholes in the existing legislation exist when it comes to the digital markets.

While we are all aware that data is a source of considerable economic power and leverage, often procedures – especially in the antitrust field – are way too slow to keep up with fast-developing business models in the digital markets and also because ex ante interventions are so far forbidden.

Meanwhile, the European Union is watching gatekeepers become ever more powerful – the recent data scandals show us the necessity to act: for example, the Facebook-WhatsApp merger, where Facebook lied about its technical abilities on using data from WhatsApp for personalised ads on Facebook. In fact, one could also call the unwillingness of the CEOs of the GAFAs (Google, Amazon, Facebook, Apple) to appear in front of this Parliament as the next scandal.

The upcoming DMA (Digital Market Act) is thus a very good opportunity, which must be used to complement competition policies. Nevertheless, there is also room for improvement when it comes to antitrust and merger procedures, and lastly also to the sanction mechanisms – a conclusion that has already been drawn many times before in this annual report, and where the Commission finally must act.

Allow me at the end to underline that the European Commission needs to continue actively monitoring and removing unjustified geo-blocking, and as an MEP from Luxembourg, a small Member State, I also call on the Commission in view of a fully functioning Single Market to address the anti-competitive effects of the so-called Territorial Supply Constraints.

Claude Gruffat, *au nom du groupe Verts/ALE*. – Madame la Présidente, chère commissaire Vestager, chers collègues, 2020 n'aura pas été une année de crise pour tout le monde. Pour certaines entreprises, c'est même une année mémorable et terrible: 2020, c'est l'année des records en termes d'aides d'État.

En France, 100 % des grandes entreprises ont touché des aides publiques exceptionnelles, sans aucune conditionnalité écologique ou sociale. Quand nos TPE et PME luttent pour leur survie, 26 de nos 40 champions nationaux reversent 51 milliards d'euros de dividendes à leurs actionnaires, soit 22 % de plus que l'an passé: l'équivalent budgétaire français de l'Éducation nationale ou des dépenses de personnel des hôpitaux publics. Pour Bruno Le Maire, le ministre français des finances, c'est dans les moments de crise qu'il faut profiter de l'argent de l'État. En disant cela, il ne s'adressait pas aux demandeurs d'aide alimentaire dont le nombre explose, ni aux étudiants désespérés, ni aux soignants en *burn-out*, ni aux neuf millions de pauvres en France. Il s'adressait aux grands patrons, qui ont bien saisi le message.

Crise ou pas, l'économie, pour eux, se résume à faire passer la richesse de la poche des contribuables à celle de l'actionnaire. Et ceci sans contrepartie, sans ruissellement, mais avec concentration des richesses, avec licenciements, avec évasion et opacité fiscales, avec négation de l'urgence climatique.

Chers collègues, sans conditionnalité associée aux aides d'État, le monde d'après ressemblera furieusement au monde d'avant en pire, et nous ne l'acceptons pas. Trop de conséquences néfastes en découleront. C'est grave.

Maximilian Krah, *im Namen der ID-Fraktion*. – Frau Präsidentin, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Es ist bemerkenswert, dass wir über einen Bericht diskutieren, und der Berichtersteller hat ihn selbst nicht vorstellen können. Vielleicht zeigt das auch, dass dieser Bericht in eine falsche Richtung geht.

Wettbewerbsrecht dient dazu, durch faire Bedingungen für jedermann Wohlstand zu schaffen. Und der Glaube, durch Aufweichung der starren Regeln des Wettbewerbsrechts und durch mehr staatliche Intervention könne man Wohlstand schaffen, ist ein Trugschluss. Sozialismus klingt immer gut, aber er wirkt meistens schlecht, und wir können daher auch dem vorliegenden Bericht nichts Gutes abgewinnen. Vielleicht ganz gut, dass der Berichtersteller ihn nicht vorstellen konnte.

Der erste Punkt ist, dass dieser Bericht fordert, dass die Übergangsfristen, die wir wegen der Pandemie eingeführt haben und die zu Lockerungen des Wettbewerbsregimes führen, verlängert werden. Dies führt dazu, dass wir später – und so ist die Intention des Berichterstatters eigentlich gar nicht – zum Wettbewerbsrecht, wie wir es vor der Pandemie hatten, zurückkehren. Das halten wir für falsch. Ausnahmen sind deshalb Ausnahmen, weil sie auf bestimmte Situationen antworten, aber eben nicht dauerhaft bestehen. Wir brauchen ein strenges, korrektes Wettbewerbsrecht, und wir brauchen keine Ausnahmen, um mehr Beihilfen auszuzahlen und damit weitere Haushaltsdefizite anzuhäufen.

Das Zweite, was wir kritisieren, ist, dass eine Anpassung der EU-Wettbewerbspolitik an die Pariser Klimaziele gefordert wird. Dies führt dazu, dass ein zunehmend sehr großer Bereich der Wirtschaft von den Wettbewerbsregeln ausgenommen wird. Da wir mittlerweile ja alles zu einer Klimafrage erheben, heißt das, dass wir weitere Einschränkungen unseres Wettbewerbsrechts vornehmen müssen und Wildwuchs Tür und Tor geöffnet wird.

Und schließlich fordert der Bericht wiederum, dass die Patente für medizinische Forschungen aufgehoben werden. Bereits der Rat hat sich dagegen ausgesprochen, und wir haben bei der Diskussion über die kleinen und mittelständischen Unternehmen soeben das Beispiel BioNTech gehört. Es gäbe kein BioNTech, wenn diese Empfehlung umgesetzt würde. Wir brauchen Patentschutz, damit es Entwicklungen gibt.

Und deshalb lehnen wir den Bericht ab, denn er geht in jederlei Hinsicht in die falsche Richtung. Das Gegenteil von gut ist gut gemeint. Wir brauchen Wettbewerb. Wettbewerb schafft Innovation und Arbeitsplätze. Und wir brauchen keine Ausnahmen vom fairen Wettbewerb.

José Gusmão, *em nome do Grupo The Left*. – Senhora Presidente, esta crise mostrou que não há conjunto de regras europeias que aguente uma crise. Orçamentais, regras de sistema financeiro, regras de competição, sempre que a União Europeia e a zona euro enfrentam uma crise, têm que suspender todas as suas regras fundamentais. O que deveria motivar uma reflexão, mas, aparentemente, ela não consta deste relatório.

As regras de concorrência foram suspensas para que a Alemanha pudesse, graças à também suspensão das regras orçamentais, injetar dezenas de milhares de milhões de euros nas suas empresas públicas ou privadas. A Comissão Europeia, que sempre aplicou, aliás, as regras de forma altamente discricionária e desigual entre Estados-Membros, aplica agora também a suspensão das regras de forma igualmente discricionária e desigual entre Estados-Membros. E, curiosamente, continua a não ver problemas de concorrência no *dumping* fiscal, no *dumping* social, no *dumping* laboral e no *dumping* ambiental, que continuam a ser o modelo de negócio de grande parte dos Estados-Membros da União Europeia. Discricionarieza em tudo, incluindo nos critérios.

Clara Ponsatí Obiols (NI). – Madam President, three Spanish Prime Ministers and more than 20 Ministers sit on the boards of the big utility corporations, cashing millionaire rewards from the very same companies their governments had privatised and set the market rules for. It is hardly a surprise or a coincidence that a recent Commission report warns that Spain is the European champion of market barriers in electricity and that consumers there pay the top rates across the EU.

The upcoming allocation of recovery funds with SMEs' limited capabilities to submit large projects will only increase market distortions. These funds must not be a free lunch for oligopolies to wipe out smaller competitors. But in Spain, the large IBEX 35 corporations stand ready to swallow the lion's portion of the recovery funds. Endesa wants 23 billion, Naturgy wants 14 billion, Enagás more than six billion. Unless you, the Commission, are much more vigilant than you have been up to now, European taxpayers will soon be directly filling crony capitalism and revolving doors in Spain. And let me just mention that we are very happy to be back in Strasbourg and walking free in the French Republic.

Johan Van Overtveldt, *rapporteur*. – Madam President, let me flag you clearly that I was available here from the beginning of the session, even before Commissioner Vestager spoke, and we continuously got the signal that we were connected. So I don't know what's happening, but I find this really outrageous and I would like to ask you to check on your side how this is possible.

Madam President, Vice-President, Commissioner Vestager, colleagues, we've reached the point where the biggest crisis in decades is gradually coming under control – although 'control' has to be treated with care in this context. The vaccination campaign is key to recovery. I remain convinced that the EU has missed opportunities and has lost time. We will continue to carry this backlog in the recovery phase, and I hope that lessons will be learned from this.

In that recovery phase lies another challenge for the European institutions. The resources from the Recovery Fund must achieve their purpose. There is no place for inefficiencies, for irregularities, for illegal use.

But the recovery does not only depend on additional resources. The way the EU organises itself and prepares itself for the future will be equally decisive. Innovation and competitiveness will be important drivers. That was already the case pre-Corona, and it is of course now also the case.

The present report highlights some important elements related to our competitive environment, our growth potential and our relationship with major international players. We are also confronted with digital powers that know no territory or borders. Free and fair competition is crucial to drive innovation and growth and give consumers more choices, lower prices and better quality. We call for strict and impartial enforcement of EU competition rules. But these rules must also be updated concerning, of course, the digital age.

Recently, the debate has focused very much on the digitax, and yes, everybody agrees that the internet giants also have to make a fair contribution to tax receipts. That is important. But the big challenge in our relationship with these players lies elsewhere. The big tech companies are well organised enough to absorb and/or pass on those digital taxes to users and consumers.

The real challenge we face is the monopoly of these companies. After all, a digitax does not change that situation. It smothers smaller, innovative companies – they do not even get the chance to grow, with all the associated consequences in terms of innovation, growth and even employment.

This report examines the role of these digital players in more detail, and the relationship with governments and consumers. It welcomes the Commission's determination to address unfair terms and practices of platforms acting as gatekeepers and eliminate illegitimate obstacles to online competition in the European digital single market. However, the slowness of anti-trust investigations mismatches fast-moving digital markets.

The report is particularly critical of the Commission's handling of the Google search bias case, as well as the takeover of the WhatsApp messenger service by Facebook.

Structural unbundling of big tech monopolies may be desirable for restoring competition in digital markets, given the limits of fines and the failure of past behavioural remedies in certain anti-trust cases. The report calls on the Commission to review its merger and acquisition rules when it comes to asserting personal data.

In summary, we ask the Commission to monitor the evolutions in the digital market with persistence, efficiency and the appropriate speed. The report is, of course, not limited to the digital market. At the tail-end of the COVID crisis are important challenges on the road to efficient recovery. In that regard, we welcome the adoption of the temporary framework for state aid measures established in response to the unprecedented COVID-19 crisis.

We call on the Commission to be sure and monitor the proper use and distribution of the different EU funding measures in response to the COVID-19 crisis, which should be in accordance with EU competition and state aid rules. We are in need of a post COVID-19 roadmap for better-targeted state aid in order to promote competitiveness and safeguard jobs.

We also urge the Commission to pay attention to the role of the foreign-based state-owned enterprises that are supported and subsidised by their governments in ways that the EU single market rules prohibit for EU entities. There has to be some serious concern about distortive state-funded competition from foreign undertakings acquiring European undertakings.

Last but not least, the report calls for reflection on possible distortions of competition arising from the European Central Bank's corporate bonds purchases.

We're at an absolutely historical point for our economies, for the welfare of our citizens. Do we succeed in bringing about a sustained and healthy recovery? Appropriate monetary and budgetary policies are much needed, but so is also a robust competition policy.

Let us avoid the historic mistake made by the American President, Franklin Roosevelt, in his New Deal. Roosevelt's National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) of 1933 contained many solid, constructive and much-needed measures, but this NIRA also limited competition, allowed cartels, allowed collusion and even stimulated price fixing. A lot of research has gone into NIRA and the results are unequivocal. The results of these anti-competitive measures were a substantial rise in inflation, a reduction of growth by at least 25%, and substantially less job creation.

Let us avoid these kinds of mistakes. Let us take robust competition policy and its implementation very seriously.

President. – Thank you very much Mr Van Overtveldt, and my apologies. I was not aware of any problems in connection and I will definitely report the case. Thank you very much. We continue with the debate.

Lídia Pereira (PPE). – Senhora Presidente, o mercado interno da União Europeia é uma das maiores conquistas da integração. Para a minha geração, que não conhece as fronteiras fechadas de outros tempos, há três pilares desse mercado único que, progressivamente, terá de ser mais verde e mais digital.

Em primeiro lugar, a liberdade de circulação de pessoas, bens, serviços e capitais. Em segundo lugar, o modelo social europeu em que assenta a nossa economia social de mercado. Em terceiro lugar, a política de concorrência que, quando é justa, leal e equilibrada, protege os consumidores e ajuda a nossa economia a crescer e a inovar.

Alguns políticos nacionais atacam a política de concorrência europeia quando as decisões não lhes agradam. O caso do governo português com a TAP, a companhia aérea nacional, é exemplo disso mesmo. O que estes políticos não percebem (ou fingem não perceber) é que são as regras da concorrência europeias que protegem a competitividade das empresas de países como Portugal.

A pandemia mostrou que temos um quadro de regras suficientemente flexível para enfrentar emergências. O que precisamos agora é de olhar para os desafios do futuro, que é cada vez mais digital e *online*. Garantir que as mesmas regras se aplicam a quem vende o mesmo produto ou presta o mesmo serviço, seja na nossa rua ou no nosso ecrã.

Está na hora de irmos mais longe.

Paul Tang (S&D). – Madam President, last Friday the Commissioner announced she has opened a formal antitrust investigation into Facebook in cooperation with the UK Competition and Markets Authority, and the claim is that Facebook has constructed an unfair advantage on the online advertising sector. This goes under the heading: better late than never.

Today we will discuss the annual competition policy report looking back at 2020, and over a year ago we adopted a report with similar parts, in which a vast majority of Parliament called on the Commissioner to propose legislation restricting Facebook's main revenue stream: digital advertising. For years, the market share of Facebook and Google have increased at an exponential rate, and today we are facing a duopoly. So Parliament cannot but repeat itself that there is a significant problem insufficiently tackled.

I am glad that the Commission has put forward legislation that will address part of the market dominance of some giants, but as shadow rapporteur on the digital market tax I have to express my great concern. Market definition is still the same; neither the Digital Markets Act nor the Digital Services Act will change the digital advertising market fundamentally, and interoperability measures for core services are missing. So in short, the motto – if you choose to accept it, Commissioner – is: let's move fast and break monopoly power.

Jean-Lin Lacapelle (ID). – Madame la Présidente, madame la Commissaire, chers collègues, dans l'idéologie libérale qui a inspiré les traités européens, la concurrence a toujours été le seul objectif. Esclaves de la théorie selon laquelle la concurrence optimiserait sans cesse la créativité et le rendement, vous avez édifié un monde où tous les acteurs économiques sont censés en permanence se montrer vigilants et performants.

Cette course à la rentabilité, qui a sacrifié des millions d'emplois, a constitué un système inhumain et stupide qui a permis aux grandes entreprises, par la mondialisation, par la délocalisation, d'échapper au contrôle de leurs États et d'abuser de leurs règles dans les pays où il n'y en a aucune. Vous commencez à prendre la mesure de cette catastrophe et vous nous proposez une réforme des aides publiques d'État qui va enfin favoriser la recherche et les projets européens, notamment dans le numérique, alors qu'hier, vous refusiez ce volontarisme au motif que ce n'était pas équitable vis-à-vis des pays extra-européens.

Notre groupe a toujours dénoncé la concurrence déloyale et ses ravages. Les correctifs qu'apporte l'Union européenne, en revanche, ne sont pas suffisants. C'est une véritable rupture idéologique qu'il faut mettre en place, en renouant avec le protectionnisme intelligent, en instaurant la préférence nationale dans certaines commandes publiques, en relançant la croissance par l'investissement. Ce projet doit être celui de la raison comme de la paix sociale, en opposition avec le conflit permanent de la concurrence.

Nous avons eu raison depuis trente ans. Il est temps de tourner la page et de nous faire confiance.

Manon Aubry (The Left). – Madame la Présidente, ma très grande entreprise ne connaît pas la crise. En 2021, les géants du CAC 40 vont verser 51 milliards d'euros à leurs actionnaires. C'est 22 % de plus que l'an dernier. Un véritable miracle, n'est-ce pas? En fait, pas vraiment, car toutes ces entreprises, comme Total ou Sanofi, ont touché des aides de l'État. Et le scandale ne s'arrête pas là, car le CAC 40 prévoit de supprimer en même temps 30 000 emplois rien qu'en France.

Pendant qu'on laisse les PME mourir, on subventionne l'enrichissement des actionnaires, et l'Union européenne, si prompt à bloquer toute aide aux entreprises publiques, applaudit des deux mains. Cette politique au service d'une poignée de privilégiés a trop duré. L'État et l'Union européenne doivent reprendre la main et conditionner les aides. Pas un euro d'argent public ne doit servir à supprimer des emplois, faire de l'évasion fiscale ou détruire la planète. C'est un levier stratégique essentiel pour la bifurcation écologique et l'emploi. Mais c'est aussi et surtout un impératif de justice face aux inégalités qui explosent.

Enikő Győri (NI). – Tisztelt Elnök úr, Képviselőtársaim! Örülök, és a jelentéstevő munkáját dicséri, hogy az állami támogatások mellett a jelentésben hangsúlyt kap a versenyképesség, még ha az – mint azt sok vitában magam is megtapasztaltam – szitokszó a baloldal szótárában. A versenyképesség a jövő záloga, ha nem akarunk lemaradni az USA és Ázsia mögött. Ezért értek egyet azzal is, hogy az állami támogatások átmeneti szabályozása az európai gazdaság talpra állásáig legyen érvényben.

Amit sajnálok, hogy az adózás tekintetében megjelenik a jelentésben a baloldali narratíva. Bár a szöveg elismeri, hogy az adópolitika tagállami hatáskör, az adócsökkentést támogató országokat célkeresztbe állítja. Tegyük meg mindent azért, hogy a multik, de senki ne kerülhesse el az adófizetést, de akkor ismerjük el: a tisztességes adóverseny hozzájárul a versenyképesség növeléséhez, hiszen arra ösztönzi a vállalatokat, hogy az Unió területén maradjanak. Büszkén mondhatom, hogy Magyarország az egyik legjobb példája annak, hogyan lehet adócsökkentés révén növelni az állami bevételeket, az uniós átlag feletti gazdasági növekedést és csökkenő munkanélküliséget elérni. Meg kellene érteni végre, a belső versenyképességtől az EU versenyképessége is nő.

Alfred Sant (S&D). – Madam President, (*inaudible*) triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic has been especially severe for enterprises, mostly SMEs, in tourism, hospitality and culture, not least those based in EU island regions. Determination of major transport connections and interruption of ongoing business relations cannot be brought back to their original base overnight. State aid is crucial, but needs time to work effectively.

Some would like a so-called return to normal on economic regulation, and for this to happen as soon as possible. But this has no real-life logic to back it, only dogma. The idea that the re-application of state aid rules must follow the same tempo as the epidemiological situation is absurd. The two follow different time clocks.

Rather, the exceptional measures adopted under the temporary framework for the hospitality and culture sectors as affected by the COVID-19 crisis must be maintained, no matter what the received wisdom about competition and what the rules say. Yes, the lessons of the 2008 financial crisis must be kept in mind, but they cannot be taken as the be-all-and-end all compass by which to navigate today's storm. Otherwise, we risk the collapse of major sectors of activity, like tourism and culture.

ΠΡΟΕΔΡΙΑ: ΔΗΜΗΤΡΙΟΣ ΠΑΠΑΔΗΜΟΥΛΗΣ

Αντιπρόεδρος

Carmen Avram (S&D). – Domnule președinte, domnule comisar, stimați colegi, felicit echipa care a lucrat la acest dosar, pentru reiterarea mesajului ferm al Parlamentului European: în piața internă nu există loc pentru practici neloiale, iar drepturile celor 450 de milioane de cetățeni nu se negociază.

Anul trecut pandemia a lovit necruțător producătorii europeni de hrană. Deși au făcut eforturi supraomenești pentru a garanta securitatea alimentară, producătorii au fost nevoiți să se lupte cu practicile neloiale întinse ale retailerilor. Un studiu european recent arată că aproape 20 % dintre producătorii chestionați, inclusiv corporații, se plâng de avalanșa de abuzuri din 2020 și știu ce s-a întâmplat și în țara mea, România.

Asta în timp ce importatorii au beneficiat de măsuri mult mai avantajoase pentru produsele lor care au standarde și prețuri mai joase.

În concluzie, așa cum arată și acest raport, Comisia trebuie să se asigure că regulile de competiție vor fi respectate prin măsuri mai ferme care să garanteze un preț corect pentru munca fermierilor și un acces facil nediscriminatoriu pe rafturile hipermarketurilor și aplicarea principiului reciprocității în toate acordurile comerciale cu țări terțe.

Anul 2020 nu trebuie să devină un precedent periculos.

Victor Negrescu (S&D). – Domnule președinte, doamnă comisar, dragi colegi, proiectul european este profund legat de existența unei competiții corecte și reale. Fără reguli și standarde comune, încrederea în instituțiile europene riscă să scadă tot mai mult. De aceea, în contextul pandemiei, este extrem de important ca toate statele europene și, în mod special, IMM-urile, să aibă acces la aceleași oportunități.

În același timp, facilitățile oferite trebuie să permită inițiativelor private, cu un grad scăzut de digitalizare, să facă față noilor provocări. Din păcate, statisticile arată că doar anumite state europene au putut să sprijine companiile, generând o destabilizare importantă a pieței interne. Majoritatea ajutoarelor de stat, facilitate de către noile reguli europene, au fost oferite de câteva state membre, conducând la o competiție inegală. Comisia Europeană trebuie să se asigure că acest lucru nu va perturba piața și să identifice noi mecanisme prin care și companiile din țările mai puțin dezvoltate să aibă acces la finanțări.

Margrethe Vestager, *Executive Vice-President of the Commission*. – Mr President, thank you, and first and foremost I would like to thank the rapporteur for his words. I think it was really important that Johan came on board to give us this overview, because I think it shows the debates that the rapporteurs and the shadows had engaged in during this work. I was especially struck by the last sentences: not to repeat historical mistakes, to make sure that when we recover we use the drivers of fair competition to help us recover, that we do not shy away and basically let the bigger ones get most of the recovery.

The words on the temporary framework: I do understand why that creates a lot of debate, but looking forward – also reflecting on some of the last remarks – I think it's really important that we are cautious not to create a cliff-edge. The temporary framework is set to stop by the end of this year, but we already now are sharing with Member States the different things that can be done for the sectors which are really, really challenged – tourism, culture, mobility, hospitality – for instance, to create a fund where a state guarantee crowds in private investment in order to enable capital for the businesses where capital has been completely depleted. That is the thing to do. And just this week, we sent a number of questions to Member States to get their insight as to what is needed in order to make sure that we make the most of the support that was already given.

One feature that I will mention here is the feature that you can actually transfer what was given as a loan into a grant in order not to nullify all the efforts done to make businesses survive this crisis when the states asked them to close the door – because this is so different from any other normal crisis; this is a situation where the states, because of the health situation, asked businesses to close their doors. Here I think it is fully legitimate for the states, for us as taxpayers, to step in, to make sure that they have a fair chance of coming back, doing the best they can and serve us and be available for the green and the digital transition.

On exactly that question, what a state does must be in accordance with the legislation, but taking direct commitments on social affairs or green, that has to be really considered. And this is why, as of today, we have launched a consultation on the climate, energy and environmental aid guidelines. Where and how do we in the best possible way enable the transition while still maintaining the drivers of fair competition? And one of the questions asked initially sheds light on one of the things I'm aware of on a very daily basis: competition law enforcement is a strong instrument, but we are not alone in the world. On the contrary, we need a lot of other things to happen at the same time for businesses, for customers, for consumers, to meet a fair and level playing field. There may be a number of single market issues, and here now we have the single market enforcement task force, where Member States and the Commission come together to make sure that the barriers that have been rising here, there, left, centre, that they have been taken down, because this is basically what we need.

We need to do this together to make sure that we make the best of the competitive drivers while at the same time transitioning our economy. And as several of you have mentioned, this work sometimes seems slower than how the market is driving us. But it is still, I think, really important to accept that we cannot compromise on the quality of our work. We cannot compromise on due process because we live in a Union based on the rule of law. And this is why vigorous competition law enforcement, the regulation that you're now looking at: that combination will be of the essence.

I want to thank you very much, and looking at the different recommendations of this year's report, I hope that, if nothing else, then last year you will say that I have lived up to the recommendation that we are encouraged to continue the structured dialogue, the really close working relationship between us and the European Parliament, because that support is crucial, and it is for your voters, for the European citizens, to feel that they deserve affordable goods, innovative products, choice and quality delivered from the marketplace.

Πρόεδρος. – Η συζήτηση έληξε.

Η ψηφοφορία θα διεξαχθεί αύριο.

Γραπτές δηλώσεις (άρθρο 171 του Κανονισμού)

Andrus Ansip (Renew), *kirjalikult*. – Konkurentsipoliitika on oluline vahend ühtse turu tugevdamiseks. Aus konkurents tagab ka tugeva tarbijakaitse. Viimastel aastatel on nii ettevõtted kui ka tarbijad kogenud aga majanduse digitaalset muutust. See areng on tekitanud lünki traditsioonilises konkurentsipoliitikas ja monopolidevastane mudel on nendele muutustele reageerimisel osutunud liiga aeglaseks. Seetõttu tervitan Euroopa Komisjoni keskendumist meie konkurentsipoliitika ajakohastamisele, et tulla toime digitaalsektori väljakutsetega. Olin siseturukomisjonis konkurentsipoliitika arvamusraporti autor, milles keskendusin nn vääravahil rollis olevatele platvormidele. Eriti, kui tegemist on näiteks e-kaubandusega, on mõnede platvormide domineerimisel tõsised tagajärjed tarbijate valikuvabadusele ja paljude Euroopa

ettevõtete turulepääsule. Euroopa Liit peab kohandama konkurentsivahendeid vastavalt turu hiljutistele ja tulevastele arengutele ning selleks on alanud ka parlamendis läbirääkimised digiturgude õigusakti üle, millega kehtestatakse sisule juurdepääsu kontrollijatele kohustused ja keelud, mida nad peavad oma igapäevategevuses järgima.

Roberts Zīle (ECR), rakstiski. – Pagājušais gads ir bijis izaicinājums visas mūsu dzīves jomās. Ekonomika ir ļoti cietusi, un mūsu uzdevums ir nodrošināt, lai atveseļošanās noritētu ar iespējami mazākiem zaudējumiem. Šis ziņojums akcentē mūsu konkurences un attīstības potenciāla izaugsmes iespējas. Digitālajai videi nav teritoriālā ierobežojuma, kas nozīmē, ka mūsu izpratne par šo nozari ir patstāvīgi jāaktualizē, it īpaši attiecībā uz lielajiem tehnoloģiju uzņēmumiem. Ja mēs vēlamies saglabāt neatkarību un godīgus konkurences noteikumus, mums jāņem vērā šajā ziņojumā minētais.

20. The gender dimension in cohesion policy (short presentation)

Πρόεδρος. – Το επόμενο σημείο στην ημερήσια διάταξη είναι η σύντομη παρουσίαση της έκθεσης της Monika Vana σχετικά με τη διάσταση του φύλου στην πολιτική συνοχής (2020/2040(INI)) (A9-0154/2021).

Monika Vana, rapporteur. – Mr President, I am very glad to have the opportunity to present this report on the gender dimension in cohesion policy, which comes at a very timely moment. I would first like to take this opportunity to thank all the shadow rapporteurs, including you, Chair, for the work and the good cooperation on this report.

The principle of gender equality is a core value of the European Union, applicable to all EU activities and policies. Among the EU policy instruments, cohesion policy is an especially impactful tool and, by the way, a large part of the EU budget. At the next plenary, the Common Provisions Regulation (CPR) is expected to be adopted, the overarching regulation for cohesion policy funds. The CPR will already include gender equality as a horizontal principle.

This report on the gender dimension in cohesion policy is based on a study for the Committee on Regional Development (REGI) on gender equality and cohesion policy for the previous funding period, and includes areas for improvement in the upcoming period. Regarding the negotiations on the report, I want to say that, while there was unanimous agreement that the topic is of crucial importance for REGI and for the whole European Parliament, there were very big differences in approach and aims and how best to achieve them among the groups. But I think that, with this report, we have now managed to strike a balance between the views of the different groups. Most importantly, we were able to formulate a strong position of the European Parliament and to give concrete recommendations for improvements in this upcoming Cohesion Fund period.

Let me mention some of the most important points. The report emphasises the importance of a coordinated governance framework on gender equality, national guidelines and technical support. It highlights the partnership principle and the cooperation between the EU level and the national, local and regional levels. The report stresses that all programmes in cohesion policy should ensure gender equality throughout their preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. In this report, we stress the need for a gender equality strategy with clear objectives and targets at national and regional level as ex-ante requirements, and we call for ex-ante and ex-post gender impact assessment. We stress that measurable indicators, where appropriate, should also enable the support of gender equality to be monitored.

Furthermore, the report highlights gender budgeting and the closing of the gender data gap. As I mentioned, the partnership principle is very important. We mention training and capacity building of managing authorities, guidance documents and the role of the European Institute for Gender Equality. Very important in this report is also the call on the Commission that Member States and their respective authorities should follow the principles of the rule of law, including the principle of non-discrimination.

Last, but not least, we recognise in this report the burden placed on women as principal caregivers in formal and informal settings, as well as their social value, especially during the COVID-19 crisis, and the rise of domestic violence and the need for projects and more fight against domestic and other kinds of gender-based violence. We know, of course, that this report is only a starting point to improve gender equality in cohesion policy, and we still have a lot of work ahead of us. Let's work together on that. We are very happy that the Commission is present today.

Finally, I want to ask the Commission, after the final vote of the Parliament tomorrow, to take note of the position of the European Parliament and to really make gender equality a cornerstone of EU cohesion policy, to go beyond words and to strengthen gender equality in practice.

Virginijus Sinkevičius, *Member of the Commission*. – Mr President, it is an honour to address you today on behalf of my fellow Commissioner Ferreira.

One of the saddest features of crisis – and the current one is no exception – is the aggravation of old inequalities. We see this at this regional level; we see this at the social level; and we see it in terms of gender.

On two key front lines in this battle, the home front and the health care front, women have borne the brunt of the battle, because they are the majority of home workers and they are the majority of health care workers. From childcare to layoffs, from health risks to domestic violence, women have struggled and women have suffered. In terms of gender equality, hard fought gains – the work of decades – risk being rolled back.

So this report is very timely and I thank the Regional Development Committee (REGI) and the rapporteur, Ms Monika Vana, for their excellent report, and the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM) for their opinion.

As the report notes, cohesion policy plays a crucial role in gender equality. It plays a crucial role in two critical ways. First, by cohesion investments, we invest in better quality childcare and we promote access to that childcare. We invest in support for female entrepreneurs, female researchers and female innovators. We ensure equal access to upskilling and training, and we invest in other services from public transport to IT, to health care, education and other social services – essential services, which are particularly crucial for women. Zooming out from these targeted actions, these investments will help ensure that women participate equally in the Green and Digital Transitions.

Secondly, we support gender equality by our process. Gender equality is a crosscutting principle for all cohesion policy investments. You are right, gender equality is not a competing objective, but a shared goal. It must be taken into account at every step, from the preparation of programmes to project selection and implementation, to programme monitoring and evaluation. And bodies fighting for fundamental rights, for non-discrimination and for women, are key partners at each step of the process. So by investment and a comprehensive process, we support gender equality. But we agree with the report's recommendation that more must be done.

Already, in the new programme starting this year, we are reinforcing requirements. First, it is now a precondition of funding, what we call an enabling condition, that projects respect the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, including the requirement on gender equality.

Second, there is now a system for tracking gender-related expenditure across cohesion policy funding, and this will allow for better monitoring of gender equality in our investments.

The report also points to a lack of knowledge among stakeholders, and the Commission continues to build capacity in this area. We organised technical seminars with managing authorities, and we communicate with stakeholders on concrete actions they can take to promote gender equality. So the Commission is providing a comprehensive framework to promote gender equality in cohesion policy.

But EU funding alone cannot do everything for gender equality and I call on Member States to make the maximum use of every element of this framework. We in the Commission will continue to support Member States: where a lack of capacity is a bottleneck, technical assistance is at their disposal. We will continue to do everything we can and to consult with this Parliament and work together in this crucial area.

I assure you of our commitment in programme preparation and beyond. We cannot allow women to be left behind in the recovery. We cannot lose a decade or more of hard-won gains in terms of equality, and we will not if we work together.

Πρόεδρος. – Η εξέταση του σημείου αυτού έληξε.

Η ψηφοφορία θα διεξαχθεί αύριο.

21. EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030: Bringing nature back into our lives (debate)

Πρόεδρος. – Το επόμενο σημείο στην ημερήσια διάταξη είναι η συζήτηση επί της έκθεσης του César Luena, εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής Περιβάλλοντος, Δημόσιας Υγείας και Ασφάλειας των Τροφίμων, με θέμα «Στρατηγική της ΕΕ για τη βιοποικιλότητα με ορίζοντα το 2030 — Επαναφορά της φύσης στη ζωή μας» (2020/2273(INI)) (A9-0179/2021).

César Luena, ponente. – Señor presidente, señor comisario, señorías, tras un largo camino vamos a debatir, por fin, el informe sobre la Estrategia sobre la biodiversidad de la Comisión. Quiero hacer varios agradecimientos: en primer lugar, a los científicos, porque gracias a ellos tenemos las evidencias y las señales de que hay que actuar de una manera clara y determinada. Gracias, también, a los activistas, sobre todo a las ONG y a los jóvenes, especialmente a los jóvenes, a los que yo lo que les digo desde aquí, desde el Parlamento Europeo, es que no paren, que sigan empujando e impulsando.

A todos los ponentes alternativos —a Alexander, a Soraya, a Marco, a Ville, a Alexandr y a Nikolaj—, muchísimas gracias por vuestro trabajo. También a los ponentes de opinión de otras comisiones: de Agricultura y Desarrollo Rural, de Comercio Internacional, de Asuntos Exteriores/Derechos Humanos y de Pesca. Por supuesto, a la Comisión, por la que siempre nos hemos sentido muy acompañados en este largo año de debate. Y a todos los equipos técnicos de los Grupos y a la Secretaría de la Comisión de Medio Ambiente, y a las compañeras Mary y Sonia, que han hecho un trabajo espectacular. Quería que los agradecimientos constaran y, por eso, este minuto para ellos.

¿Qué es el informe? Este informe, señorías, es un texto bastante equilibrado, bastante negociado, bastante pactado y, por eso, pido que respaldemos este texto tal como está, tal como ha salido, con muchísimos votos a favor, de la Comisión de Medio Ambiente.

Es un informe que respalda buena parte de las afirmaciones, de las propuestas que hizo la Comisión Europea y que lógicamente es reivindicativo, que también empuja e impulsa en algunas partes que ahora voy a detallar. Pero les digo: merece la pena y creo que así lo quieren también esos activistas de los que hablaba, los jóvenes, las ONG... Creo que merece la pena que respaldemos el informe equilibrado, pactado, tal como ha salido de la comisión.

Miren, siete ideas que hemos incorporado: la creación de una ley sobre biodiversidad. Si tenemos una Ley Europea del Clima (en el próximo Pleno, en Bruselas en esta ocasión, la aprobaremos), ¿por qué no vamos a tener una ley sobre biodiversidad? Una ley que haga que los objetivos sean vinculantes, que sean obligatorios y que además nos marque unos plazos también para el año 2050, pero con pasos intermedios, por ejemplo, en el año 2030. Por tanto, una ley sobre biodiversidad.

El plan de recuperación de la naturaleza que va a presentar la Comisión a finales de año. Queremos que esos objetivos de restauración, de protección, de preservación de la naturaleza, de al menos el 30 % de nuestros ecosistemas, sean también obligatorios. Eso, señorías, es ambición. Y, por cierto, también con un objetivo específico de restauración para los polinizadores.

El suelo. Para quienes siguen este debate, que seguro que son muchas personas, además de todas las diputadas y los diputados: no hay un marco legislativo común para el suelo. ¿Cómo es posible? Y nosotros defendemos que la Estrategia y que futuras legislaciones de la Unión Europea lo contemplen. Y, además, también una estrategia sobre la desertificación en la Unión Europea. Creemos que es una prioridad y que hay que abordarla.

Hay una crisis planetaria, no solo una crisis climática, y la crisis planetaria es una crisis del clima y una crisis de biodiversidad. Por eso, pedimos un plan de acción a largo plazo de la Unión Europea sobre clima y biodiversidad. De verdad que ya no tiene sentido que tratemos estas cuestiones y las enfoquemos políticamente, también aquí en este Parlamento, por separado. Señor comisario, no tiene sentido. Es necesario un plan de acción conjunto.

Derecho a un medio ambiente sano. No sé si ustedes han reparado en ello, pero no hay un derecho fundamental a un medio ambiente sano. Es un principio, señorías, un principio, pero no es un derecho, y lo que pedimos en este informe, y ha respaldado con muchísimos votos la comisión, es que sea un derecho fundamental, que esté en la Carta de los Derechos Fundamentales.

Erasmus Verde. Creemos que es muy importante que podamos impulsar una educación a través de proyectos de conservación y de restauración de los ecosistemas y que impliquemos a los alumnos y a las alumnas de los sistemas educativos, de los sistemas universitarios, en esos intercambios para proteger y preservar la naturaleza.

Termino este séptimo punto, y antes de cerrar mi intervención, con los bosques, que son un poco objeto de la polémica y la división de opiniones geográficas e ideológicas que tenemos en este Pleno. Yo creo que el informe es, como decía, equilibrado y moderado. Y creo que es adecuado priorizar la visión proteccionista, conservacionista, la visión sostenible frente a una gestión más forestal, más industrial. Y creo que es la visión adecuada en una Estrategia sobre la biodiversidad, en un informe de esta Casa, del Parlamento Europeo, que es una institución pionera mundial en la preservación del medio ambiente. Y creo, por tanto, que esa visión, que nos dice que protejamos los bosques primarios, los bosques antiguos, es la que tiene que prevalecer. Y por eso les pido, señorías, que contemplen este debate, que estudien con detenimiento las enmiendas y que voten en contra, y que apoyen el informe que salió de la Comisión de Medio Ambiente.

Creo que pedimos muchos compromisos, sobre todo a sectores agrícolas, ganaderos, pesqueros. Creo que para ellos también hay que ofrecer comprensión, tiempo, porque también tenemos que defender, querida compañera Isabel, la cohesión social. Creo en ello, creemos en ello, y, por tanto, cuando hablamos de ambición, hablamos de una ambición realista y de una ambición posible. Y, por eso, a todos estos sectores, desde el Parlamento Europeo, les decimos que los comprendemos y que los vamos a apoyar, que hay que hacer una transición, pero que la transición tiene que ser sostenible y también social.

Insisto, señorías: creo que hemos tenido un año para hacer un trabajo equilibrado, moderado, que representa a muchísimos grupos de la Cámara, y creo que es importante que este Pleno respalde lo que salió de la comisión.

Saskia Bricmont, *rapporteure pour avis, commission du commerce international*. – Monsieur le Président, chers collègues, l'IPBES, qui est l'équivalent du GIEC de la biodiversité, tire la sonnette d'alarme: jusqu'à 827 000 virus présents dans la nature – comme la COVID-19 – pourraient impacter les humains. L'impact économique actuel des pandémies est 100 fois supérieur au coût estimé de leur prévention. Limiter les facteurs d'émergence et de dissémination des zoonoses, comme les déforestations ou encore l'agriculture intensive, est donc un impératif.

Il faut oser changer de cap pour éviter d'entrer dans une époque de confinement chronique pour cause de pandémie, et reconnaître que la santé humaine est intrinsèquement liée à la santé de la nature. Merci M. Luena, rapporteur de la stratégie «biodiversité», d'avoir intégré les recommandations de mon avis centrées sur les interactions entre le commerce international et la biodiversité, car pas moins d'un tiers des espèces menacées de disparition le sont en raison du commerce international. Or les leviers existent: le respect de la biodiversité au sein des accords commerciaux via des études d'impact préalables et des sanctions en cas de non-respect, la lutte contre le commerce illégal d'espèces sauvages et un moratoire sur toute importation d'espèces animales depuis des pays à risque, la suppression des investissements nocifs à l'environnement, la reconnaissance et la punition des écocides.

Nous appelons la Commission européenne à appliquer ces recommandations afin d'assurer la cohérence des politiques sur la scène internationale et de positionner l'Europe comme leader au moment du Sommet mondial sur la biodiversité qui se tiendra en octobre prochain.

Isabel Carvalhais, *relatora de parecer da Comissão da Agricultura e do Desenvolvimento Rural*. – Senhor Presidente, Senhor Comissário, caros Colegas, a perda e biodiversidade representa um dos maiores desafios do nosso tempo. Saúdo e aplaudo, por isso, o elevado nível de ambição expresso nos objetivos e nas metas apresentadas pela estratégia da biodiversidade e que o relatório do meu colega César Luena acompanha. Uma ambição que busca despertar para ações políticas que sejam verdadeiramente transformadoras e geradoras de caminho de maior sustentabilidade.

A agricultura, obviamente que, enquanto atividade gestora de recursos naturais, interliga-se de forma profunda com a biodiversidade, nela ancorando a sua produtividade e resiliência. Por isso, não poderá deixar de estar na linha da frente de ações concretas e eficazes na defesa da biodiversidade e que sejam igualmente ações justas e equitativas, nas quais não seja subestimada a sua dimensão social.

O esforço pela promoção da biodiversidade é um esforço de todos. Deve poder contar com a participação efetiva de toda a sociedade, muito em particular de quem trabalha a terra, e que deverá também, por essa razão, poder partilhar os seus conhecimentos e experiências, de modo a criar um sentimento de verdadeira apropriação deste caminho. Premissa que será vital para o êxito efetivo desta estratégia.

Virginijus Sinkevičius, *Member of the Commission*. – Mr President, let me first thank the rapporteur, Mr Luena, as well as the shadow rapporteurs and the entire Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety, but also the committees for opinion – the Committee on International Trade, the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development, the Committee on Fisheries and the Committee on Foreign Affairs – for their engagement and in-depth work on this very important report.

Biodiversity is truly a cross-cutting issue and we can only succeed in reversing its decline if we have all the relevant actors on board. I therefore appreciate the broad and honest debate in this House, as well as your spirit of compromise, which has allowed for large support for the draft resolution you have tabled for this plenary.

When the Commission published the EU Biodiversity Strategy in May last year, it drew on a clear scientific evidence. Healthy nature shapes the environment and the climate in which humanity can thrive. Science is telling us that biodiversity, the unique fabric of life on the earth, is under intolerable strain.

Decades of unsustainable human activities have changed our climate, altered ecosystems, polluted our environment, over-exploited species and caused the spread of invasive alien species. If we continue down this path, we risk irreparable damage to the foundations of our well-being and prosperity. Let us not forget that almost half of global GDP, some EUR 40 trillion, depends on nature.

We would undermine our chances of coping with climate change. We would even expose our children to an existential risk. We have no alternative, no excuse, and indeed very little time. But we must seize the moment and bring radical changes in the way we produce, consume and trade.

Looking back on the first year of implementing the Biodiversity Strategy and the impressive list of deliverables, I can see a lot has been done but we still have so much more to do. We are making progress on the implementation of 100+ actions which we committed to deliver by 2030.

The Commission has drafted guidance and engaged with national authorities and stakeholders in the design of measures to implement the EU biodiversity commitments. We have made progress in preparing new legislation underpinned by in-depth impact assessment, as well as new policy strategies on a range of topics from nature restoration to forests and soil. We're working with Member States to ensure that biodiversity will be high on the list of national priorities when funding and investment decisions are made under EU long-term budget, in particular under common agricultural policy funds, as well as in the national recovery and resilience plans.

The process for preparing the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework at the 15th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in China is also gathering speed. The EU has positioned itself as the global leader. We now have to leverage this position and build a coalition for a global biodiversity framework that can achieve the vision of living in harmony with nature, in tandem with the world's efforts to tackle climate change.

It is important that we all recognise that this is an agenda of common interest with no feasible alternative. We know what needs to be done to put the EU and global biodiversity on the path to recovery. And we have a unique opportunity to steer a fair transition and create multiple wins in the post-COVID-19 recovery. This is our chance to demonstrate that effective protection, restoration and mainstreaming of biodiversity throughout all sectors is possible and brings tangible benefits to all.

As regards the external angle, sustainability is a central pillar in the trade policy review communication of the Commission of February 2021. It aims to further enhance the contribution of trade in achieving the objectives of the European Green Deal, while of course respecting our international obligations.

The road ahead will not always be straight and it certainly won't be easy, but there are plenty of reasons to be optimistic. With the European Green Deal we have new political momentum. The ambition of the Biodiversity Strategy was endorsed by the Council, and I very much look forward to seeing also the European Parliament's resolution adopted. I hope its encouraging ambition can be maintained. Your strong support, your proposals and your continued involvement in the implementation of our strategy will be essential for the success of our efforts in the EU and around the world.

Bettina Vollath, *Verfasserin der Stellungnahme des mitberatenden Ausschusses für auswärtige Angelegenheiten*. – Herr Präsident! „was brauchst du? einen Baum [...] [um] zu ermessen wie groß wie klein das Leben als Mensch wie groß wie klein wenn du aufblickst zur Krone“. Das sind Auszüge aus einem Gedicht von Friederike Mayröcker. Sie hat die unglaubliche Größe der Natur erkannt. Am Freitag ist sie im Alter von 96 Jahren gestorben.

Auch wir alle haben nicht mehr viel Zeit. Laut der *climate clock* verbleiben nur noch 6 Jahre 207 Tage 17 Stunden und ein paar Minuten, um wirkungsvoll zu handeln.

Der Mensch hat nicht das Recht, sich hemmungslos an der Umwelt zu bedienen. „Wie können wir es wagen?“ hat Greta Thunberg zu recht gefragt.

Es ist unsere große Verantwortung, jetzt zu handeln. Mit der EU-Biodiversitätsstrategie können wir erreichen, dass saubere Umwelt als Menschenrecht und Schutz der Artenvielfalt als gesellschaftliche Aufgabe anerkannt werden. Denn um „zu denken [...] zu träumen zu schreiben [...] zu sehen [...] [brauchen wir] [...] das Gras die Blume[n] den Himmel“ schreibt Mayröcker sinngemäß am Ende ihres Gedichtes.

Gabriel Mato, *ponente de opinión de la Comisión de Pesca*. – Señor presidente, señor comisario, un sí rotundo, alto y claro, a una estrategia de biodiversidad, pero un no igualmente rotundo, alto y claro a una estrategia que no solo no cuenta con los agricultores y pescadores, sino que va más allá y los señala como los causantes de todos los males.

Cualquier estrategia debería implicar a los sectores que son fundamentales para proveer de alimentos a una población siempre creciente y tener en cuenta, además de los aspectos medioambientales, los aspectos económicos y sociales. No podemos aceptar que se apunte con el dedo acusatorio a un sector como la pesca o a algunos de sus artes, ignorando otras muchas actividades que son infinitamente más dañinas para los ecosistemas y la biodiversidad.

Cuando regulamos tenemos que ser justos y equitativos y utilizar argumentos basados en estudios científicos rigurosos porque, de no hacerlo así, ¿saben a qué nos conduce? A perder la credibilidad, a ser criticados por establecer criterios inabordables y, lo que es aún peor, a que los ciudadanos a quienes representamos en este Parlamento nos vean cada día más alejados de la realidad.

Alexander Bernhuber, *im Namen der PPE-Fraktion*. – Herr Präsident, sehr geehrter Herr Kommissar! Es freut mich ganz besonders, dass wir ein Jahr, nachdem die Europäische Kommission die Biodiversitätsstrategie vorgestellt hat, als Europäisches Parlament nun hier unsere Ideen präsentieren können.

Wir hatten in den vergangenen Wochen wirklich schwere und lange Verhandlungen, und ich möchte ein großes Danke an César Luena sagen, der die Verhandlungen hier geleitet hat und wirklich die unterschiedlichsten Interessen der einzelnen Fraktionen, aber auch der einzelnen Interessensvertreter, der einzelnen Gegebenheiten der Regionen und Länder vereint hat. Und ich freue mich, dass wir uns bei den meisten Punkten wirklich einigen können.

Dennoch braucht es einige ambitionierte Strategien mit Auswirkungen auf allen Ebenen. Wir müssen jetzt darauf achten, ob all diese vorgeschlagenen Maßnahmen auch wirklich ihre Wirkung zeigen, ob wir sie auch wirklich umsetzen können, und ob sie auch wirklich die Biodiversität steigern.

Bei einigen wenigen Punkten habe ich aber Sorge, dass wir hier in zu kurzer Zeit zu viel von manchen Branchen verlangen. Gerade das Thema Forstwirtschaft ist für mich hochsensibel, und es ist für mich klar, dass wir einen Wald schützen und nützen können und müssen. Nachhaltige Forstwirtschaft bietet hier eine große Chance und nur ein kleines Risiko, um hier einen Beitrag für den Klimawandel zu leisten.

Für mich ist es aber auch wichtig, dass wir bei all diesen Maßnahmen und Reduktionszielen auch an das Thema Versorgungssicherheit mit Lebensmitteln in Europa denken. Denn es darf nicht passieren, dass wir in Europa so grün und nachhaltig werden wie noch nie, wir es aber nicht schaffen, ausreichend Nahrungsmittel in Europa für uns selbst zu produzieren, und dass wir auf Importe aus Drittstaaten angewiesen sind. Und wenn dann noch Produktionsbedingungen in Drittstaaten nicht eingehalten werden und unseren Standards nicht entsprechen und dadurch noch zusätzlich Umwelt zerstört ist, dann ist das keine Biodiversitätsstrategie, die wir wollen.

Ich hoffe, wir schaffen es mit unserer Biodiversitätsstrategie in unserem Haus, diesen Mittelweg zu schaffen, Europa weiterhin als Vorreiter voranzuführen und den Rest der Welt mit unseren Ideen mitzunehmen.

Mohammed Chahim, *on behalf of the S&D Group*. – Mr President, first of all I want to congratulate my colleague, César Luena, and all the others involved in this report.

The biodiversity crisis is one of several big crises we have to solve in the coming years next to the climate crisis, and they, of course, are heavily interlinked. Even though the effects of the biodiversity crisis are not always directly noticed by human beings – for example, the extinction of certain species or the effects on microorganisms – these changes often have big consequences. Biodiversity is more than counting trees. Biodiversity loss will directly affect our way of life. There is a high urgency for our planet and our people.

Maybe one of the few positive things about the recent corona crisis is the fact that many people have reconnected with nature. This has helped us realise that nature is not only important for our ecosystems but also for our well-being. Lockdowns have also put a number of insect-harming practices on hold, creating a friendlier world for bees and butterflies: insects that are essential for our ecosystem. Humans need nature, and many scientists say it is clear that the Earth is entering its sixth mass extinction event, meaning that three quarters of all species could disappear in the coming centuries.

So it is high time for the Commission to act. With this report, Parliament gives a clear job. I am really happy that this report supports targets for protected areas and also legally-binding targets for restoration. This report is fairly balanced and broadly supported by NGOs and stakeholders. So I suggest we, as a Parliament, do the same and send a strong message for biodiversity today.

María Soraya Rodríguez Ramos, *en nombre del Grupo Renew*. – Señor presidente, señor comisario, gracias por la presentación de esta Estrategia, y muchas gracias, César, por el trabajo que has impulsado en este Parlamento. Les quiero pedir hoy que apoyen el informe aprobado ampliamente por la Comisión de Medio Ambiente y voten en contra de las enmiendas presentadas al Pleno, porque en la Comisión de Medio Ambiente hemos trabajado en un proceso ambicioso, equilibrado y consensuado.

Es un proceso ambicioso porque queremos evitar un nuevo fracaso. Queremos evitar que, como sucedió con la Estrategia presentada en el año 2011, no consigamos ninguno de los objetivos. Desde el año 2011 hasta este momento podemos hablar de la historia de un fracaso. Vamos perdiendo paso a paso de forma intensa cada día más especies y deterioramos más ecosistemas valiosos. Y no estamos hablando de especies raras en extinción, estamos hablando de polinizadores, de mariposas silvestres, de aves, de pastizales. Eso se está deteriorando día a día. Y, por lo tanto, para que esto no sea un fracaso esta Estrategia habla de principios de protección claros: 30 % en superficie terrestre y marina; 10 % de protección estricta. Pero, a su vez, habla de que debe ser vinculante, porque debe cumplirse.

Y, para que podamos actuar en esta dirección, tenemos que hablar —claro que sí— de la agricultura, de la silvicultura, de los bosques europeos, que no son una suma de árboles, sino que son un ecosistema preciado que debe mantenerse y debe estar dentro de las competencias europeas. En definitiva, el coste de no actuar es inmenso. Es nuestra vida. Es nuestra salud. Si colapsan los ecosistemas, colapsa nuestro sistema.

Ville Niinistö, *on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group*. – Mr President, this is the first time the European Parliament gets to vote on a biodiversity report that has targets based on science. Politicians have only recently started to listen to scientists who are telling us that it is the web of nature, ecosystems and biodiversity that our very own existence depends on. And these ecosystems are under threat both in Europe and globally. We must now halt the decades-long and increasing loss of nature on this planet and in our own environment. Our food systems and other biological reasons we have all depend on healthy and resilient, biodiverse ecosystems. Scientists now tell us that we must protect at least 30% of land and water to stop biodiversity loss.

This report is based on realistic and sufficient action to protect our European nature and our own future, in forests and in cities, in rivers and in meadows. On behalf of the Greens, I urge Parliament to support the report in its entirety. Then we can press for similar goals globally in the UN COP15 this autumn.

On land, the majority of biodiversity is in forests. Unfortunately, the EU's forests are not in good shape. We are told by the forest industries not to worry. Sustainable forest management will fix it, they say. Unfortunately, this is not true as our forests are not currently managed sustainably.

The report says that between 2011 and 2021 close to one third of EU forests were assessed as having a bad conservation status, and over half were assessed as having a poor conservation status. Therefore I urge, my dear colleagues, that we must vote yes for this landmark report in its entirety. We must vote yes for protecting all remaining old growth and pristine forests. A large portion of our endangered species live in these forests and they must be protected. We must vote yes for allowing pro-forestation. We must endorse a legally-binding biodiversity law and a legal solid framework. We must support more sustainable agricultural systems with fewer pesticides and less excessive use of fertilisers. Dear colleagues, I urge you all to side with science and support this living planet and its rich nature.

Ivan David, *za skupinu ID*. – Vážený pane předsedající, lékaři uplatňují zásadu *primum non nocere* – především neškod. Měly by se jí řídit i unijní orgány.

Několik příkladů: přísně chráněné vydry dokáží v krátké době vyhubit veškeré ryby a raky, hlavně v horních tocích, a to včetně chráněných druhů nákladně uměle rozmnožovaných. Pak se vydry přestěhují tam, kde ryby ještě nevyhubily. Ochrana sojek a strak vede k ubývání zpěvného ptactva. Úbytek je nesmyslně připisován zemědělcům. Omezování chovu dobytka vede k nedostatku chlévské mrvy, snížené schopnosti půdy zadržovat vodu a snížené úživnosti pro hmyz, kterým se živí ptáci. *Green Deal* vede ke snížení zemědělské produkce v Evropské unii, a tím ke zvýšení dovozu z Jižní Ameriky, kde rozšíření produkce vede k likvidaci deštných pralesů, a tím se snižuje biodiverzita. Vzkazují některým takzvaným ochráncům biodiverzity: Především neškodte!

Anna Zalewska, *w imieniu grupy ECR*. – Panie Przewodniczący! Panie Komisarzu! Przepraszam za wcześniejsze wejście, dyscyplinuje nas godzina policyjna we Francji.

Strategia bioróżnorodności jest bardzo ważna, bardzo ważna dla przyszłości świata, dla przyszłości natury, przyrody. Żeby była zrealizowana, żeby te ambitne cele osiągać, musi spełniać kilka warunków, o których tutaj nie ma mowy.

Ktoś to musi zrobić. Rolnicy, leśnicy, rybacy. O nich tutaj jest mało, oni potrzebują naszego wsparcia. Strategia bioróżnorodności nie wskazuje źródeł finansowania. To duży kłopot, bo żeby zrealizować ambitne cele, trzeba wskazać, w jaki sposób będziemy te cele osiągać.

Wreszcie mamy sporo bardzo nieostrych definicji, które będą kłopotem przy wdrażaniu tejże strategii. I na koniec: w strategii pojawiają się elementy, o których już dyskutowaliśmy i które już zapisaliśmy w prawie klimatycznym. Tu pojawiają się jeszcze raz, w zupełnie innym, niezgodnym brzmieniu. To źle wróży wdrażaniu tejże strategii. A jest przecież ważna.

Nikolaj Villumsen, *for The Left-Gruppen*. – Hr. formand! Naturen er i krise. Millioner af dyre-og plantearter risikerer at gå tabt for evigt, hvis vi ikke stopper katastrofen. Trods flotte ord i EU's 2020 biodiversitetsstrategi er udviklingen i de sidste ti år gået i den forkerte retning. Naturen har ikke råd til, at vi fejler igen. Tiden er ikke til halve løsninger, hensigtserklæringer eller krydsede fingre. Vi har brug for en bindende europæisk biodiversitetslov, der sætter naturen først, som forpligter os og fremtidige politikere til at genoprette den. Vi har brug for et europæisk biodiversitetsråd med de fremmeste forskere, der kan råbe op, når nogen forsøger at snige sort landbrugspolitik ind ad bagdøren forklædt som naturpleje.

Vi skal give naturen den plads, den behøver. Mindst 30 procent af alle hav- og landområder i hvert medlemsland skal beskyttes, og 10 procent skal være strengt beskyttet. (*lyd mangler*) vores bedste beskyttelse mod nye pandemier. Uden bier og bestøvere vil vi mangle mad, uden flere træer og naturområder, når vi aldrig vores klimamål, uden en genopretning dør naturen.

Ivan Vilibor Sinčić (NI). – Poštovani predsjedavajući, danas ćemo teško naći plažu, šumu, livadu pa i vrh planine bez komada otpada. Otpad se nalazi, nažalost, i u spiljama i jamama na kilometar dubine kao i na dnu mora koja sve više sliče smetlištima. Najgora od svega je plastika, koja je teško razgradiva. U okolišu se ona usitnjava na sve manje i manje dijelove – mikroplastiku, pa i još manje dijelove – nanoplastiku, koja ulazi u sve pore života. Doslovno pijemo i jedemo plastiku i dolazi do kontaminacije sveg života na zemlji.

Najveći udar na bioraznolikost u skorije vrijeme svakako je otpad od covid krize odnosno prije svega govorim o maskama. Govorimo o bilijunima i bilijunima dakle o tisućama i tisućama milijardi maski koje su korištene u ovoj krizi. Mnoge od njih završit će u okolišu. Dolazi do uništavanja života u moru, ali i na kopnu. Prema znanstvenim istraživanjima samo jedna maska u jednome danu može ispustiti nekoliko stotina tisuća plastičnih mikro vlakana koja dalje kontaminiraju sve oko sebe. Ovo su, nažalost, strašne posljedice krive politike u covid krizi bazirane više na kultu mišljenja i dogmi nego na stvarnoj znanosti i znanstvenoj potpori istraživanjima.

Jessica Polfjärd (PPE). – Herr talman! Att klimatet och miljön är frågor där det europeiska samarbetet kan göra skillnad på riktigt råder det inget tvivel om. Det innefattar såklart även arbetet med att bevara den biologiska mångfalden. Därför stöder jag ambitionen i EU:s nya strategi. Men för att vi ska kunna ta oss an alla dessa utmaningar på ett effektivt sätt så behöver vi också ett politiskt ramverk som respekterar medlemsländernas traditioner och skapar rätt förutsättningar för hela samhället att ställa om. Framför allt behöver vi en politik som utgår från det samspel som finns mellan människa och natur, en politik som inte endast ser människan som ett problem, utan faktiskt också som en del av lösningen.

Runt om i Europa har vi en lång tradition av ansvarsfullt och hållbart förvaltande av vår natur. Det är tradition, och den måste både uppmuntras och stärkas. Vi ser den här traditionen bland bönder som brukar sin jord med målet att kunna göra så inte bara i dag, utan under en lång tid framöver. Vi ser det bland skogsbrukare som arbetar med förvaltarstanken att vårda det man äger för kommande generationer och vi ser det bland engagerade jägare som inte bara respekterar, utan aktivt förvaltar, den biologiska mångfalden.

Därför ser jag med oro på de politiska röster som inte bara vill inskränka medlemsländernas egen kompetens utan även begränsa individens äganderätt och möjligheter att ta del av en hållbar förvaltning av naturen. Jag hoppas därför att vi alla i Europaparlamentet kan stå upp för en politik som uppmuntrar till en långsiktigt hållbar miljöpolitik som fungerar för hela samhället.

Jytte Guteland (S&D). – Herr talman! Jag vill inledningsvis tacka föredraganden Cesar Luena för hans goda arbete. Sedan 1970 har vi sett en 60-procentig minskning av populationen av olika ryggradsdjur. Vi lever mitt i den så kallade sjätte massutrotningen. Jag vill se ett samhälle där vi människor gör framsteg genom innovation, inte genom ett respektlöst och ohållbart utnyttjande av våra djur och vår natur. När vi inte respekterar våra ekosystem och när vi inte tar biologisk mångfald på allvar så slår det tillbaka på mänskligheten. Våra ekosystem är förutsättningen för allt liv – för mat, för vatten, för vårt virke. Det fångar upp koldioxid, skyddar oss mot översvämningar och ger turismen återhämtning.

Det finns experter som menar att ett förebyggande arbete med biologisk mångfald hade kunnat undvika pandemin. Ekosystemen är tätt sammankopplade och känner som bekant inga landsgränser. Därför måste vi samarbeta inom EU om det här. En försämring i ett land ska inte behöva gå ut över den biologiska mångfalden eller över övriga medlemsländers situation. Alla måste ta ansvar. Vi ska skydda vår natur på ett sätt som respekterar de som redan brukar exempelvis skogen på ett hållbart sätt, givetvis.

Strategin för biologisk mångfald är en viktig del av den gröna given. Den ökar ambitionen för att skydda de skogar och de hav som har de högsta naturvärdena, vår vackra urskog och våra öppna landskap. Strategin slår ett stort slag för det ekologiska jordbruket, med mål för minskad användning av miljöfarliga bekämpningsmedel. Genom att stötta betänkan- det så skyddar vi utrotningshotade arter och ser till att tre miljarder nya träd planteras inom EU. För djuren, för barnen och för oss själva så står jag därför bakom strategin för biologisk mångfald.

Pascal Canfin (Renew). – Monsieur le Président, nous le savons, la biodiversité et la nature disparaissent sous nos yeux. Et depuis trop d'années, nous continuons de regarder ailleurs. Aujourd'hui, avec le vote sur la stratégie «biodiversité» européenne, nous avons la possibilité de montrer qu'enfin, nous prenons cette crise au sérieux. «Au sérieux», cela veut dire se donner des objectifs concrets et inédits: 25 % de bio dans l'agriculture en 2030, moins 50 % de pesticides dans la prochaine décennie. Mais aussi des leviers concrets: 30 % du territoire européen – sur terre comme sur mer – protégé. Cela veut dire aussi changer les règles du jeu pour ne plus autoriser des pesticides qui tuent directement les abeilles. Autant d'exemples concrets qui sont de nouveaux outils, de nouveaux objectifs qui figurent dans cette stratégie.

J'espère, chers collègues, que nous serons nombreux demain à soutenir massivement cette nouvelle stratégie, ces nou- veaux objectifs, ces nouvelles politiques européennes pour enfin montrer que nous prenons au sérieux la disparition de la nature.

Anna Deparnay-Grunenberg (Verts/ALE). – Mr President, one of the main drivers of the alarming decline in biodi- versity is without question the problem of deforestation and the decline of healthy forests, not only in tropical regions, but also in Europe. I'm not telling you any secrets when I say that our forests are the best allies we have to tackle both the biodiversity and the climate crisis. Also our common goals, which were defined to bring nature back into our lives and to fulfil the EU Green Deal, are in many ways dependent on the vitality of our forests. If it's not possible to reconcile the many demands on forests and wood products with a real sustainable way, close to nature, of managing our forests, the EU will literally be sawing off the branch we are sitting on.

Therefore, it is indispensable, on the one hand, that we strictly protect our remaining old growth in primary forests and, on the other hand, that we prohibit destructive practices such as clearcutting in managed forests. Clearcutting is proven to have a disastrous impact on biodiversity and on the carbon storage abilities of forests so we have to relearn to co- create with nature and not against nature, and we need appropriate legislation.

Finally, I want to thank the European Commission for the clear, ambitious strategy we have and to thank the rapporteur. We, as Greens, want to send a strong signal to support the vote tomorrow as it is.

Gianantonio Da Re (ID). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, la strategia dell'Unione europea sulla biodiversità per il 2030 costituisce un progetto per favorire il passaggio ad un'agricoltura più sostenibile.

Le misure proposte dalla Commissione non devono diventare delle nuove imposizioni per i nostri agricoltori. L'obiettivo di riservare entro il 2030 almeno il 25 % dei terreni agricoli all'agricoltura biologica non tiene conto delle realtà territoriali e delle caratteristiche delle nostre aziende agricole. La scelta di tale tipologia produttiva dovrebbe essere una libera scelta da parte dei nostri agricoltori e non un'imposizione che risulterebbe penalizzante soprattutto per le realtà agricole più piccole.

Inoltre, è indispensabile tener conto della diversità dei sistemi agricoli nazionali e regionali e della loro vulnerabilità nelle condizioni climatiche avverse, pensiamo agli ingenti danni subiti recentemente dall'agricoltura nelle regioni del Veneto e del Friuli-Venezia Giulia.

La transizione verso sistemi agricoli più sostenibili non deve essere un obbligo ma una scelta caratterizzata dalla gra- dualità e supportata da adeguati e concreti sostegni economici ai nostri agricoltori. Non accettiamo le imposizioni di Bruxelles. La nostra agricoltura deve essere aiutata e non penalizzata. Biodiversità sì, ma con tempi e modi ragionevoli.

Андрей Слабаков (ECR). – Стремежът да се направят някакви свръхкомпенсации изглежда е някаква основна човешка черта. Начинът, по който тази стратегия безразсъдно въвежда мерки – така нареченото „за доброто на хората и природата“, много прилича на начина, по който едно време комунистите преизпълняваха своите петилетни планове. Със същия резултат ще бъде.

Уважаеми колеги, в стремежа си да покажете колко сте загрижени за природата изпадате в крайности, които само ще навредят. Забраната за всякаква дейност – горскостопанска, ловно или риболовна дейност на териториите на „Натура 2000“, е повече от абсурдна. Изглежда ми странно как политиката ви прави пълен кръг и се връща към интересната стара фраза „Когато един човек има проблем, е трагедия, а когато са един милион – статистика“. Мисля, че знаете коя е тази фраза.

В много държави „Натура 2000“ покрива 10-15%, а в България са 35% от територията. Вие имате ли представа колко са полезни дейностите въобще в тази територия и въобще някой ходил ли е в „Натура 2000“, когато е изготвял този план? Първо, тези дейности контролират вредните видове, предпазват от разпространение на болести или от прекалено размножаване на някои други видове. В България тази мярка би засегнала стотици хиляди, а в Европа милиони хора. Искам да ви кажа, че малкият и средният бизнес практически в тези райони ще бъдат тотално унищожени. Тези хора така си изкарват прехраната. Там няма индустрия. Ако им бъде отнето това право, те ще напуснат и без това обезлюдените райони. Имам още 30 секунди, извинявайте, защото говоря от името на Пиетро Пиоки, имам още 30 секунди.

Silvia Modig (The Left). – Arvoisa puhemies, luonnon monimuotoisuus on paitsi itseisarvo myös olennainen osa ilmastonmuutoksen ratkaisemisessa. Mitä vahvempi biodiversiteetti, sitä parempi on planeettamme sopeutumiskyky väistämättä edessä olevaan lämpenemiseen. Hyväksymämme biodiversiteettistrategia on jo kolmas lajiaan ja luonnon monimuotoisuus jatkaa heikkenemistään. Näin ei voi yksinkertaisesti enää jatkua, koska käsissämme on hätätila. Kuudes sukupuuttoaalto on käynnissä. Siksi annan vahvan tukeni tämän hyvän mietinnön vaatimukselle sitovasta lainsäädännöstä.

Suurimmat syyt luonnon heikkenemiseen löytyvät maankäytön muutoksista niin maa- kuin metsätaloudessa. Meidän on pystyttävä muuttamaan näiden toimintamalleja kestäväälle pohjalle. On selvää, että vapaaehtoiset toimet eivät riitä. Jos riittäisivät, ei meillä olisi tätä katastrofia käsissämme. Biodiversiteetti ansaitsee ja tarvitsee Pariisin sopimuksen kaltaisen kansainvälisen yhteisymmärryksen ja sitoumuksen lopettaa monimuotoisuuden kato.

Dorien Rookmaker (NI). – Mr President, let's be honest. The main cause of the loss of biodiversity is not mentioned in this report. It is the simple fact that there are simply too many people on this planet. We are the main cause of loss of biodiversity. Unless we stop population growth, all this talk is useless. We are postponing decisive action. We should take responsibility and promote curbing population growth worldwide.

You can urge, stress, regret, express, note and call on the Commission as much as you like. As long as we do not acknowledge we have to curb population growth, all efforts are in vain. I will vote for this report although I know it won't be enough, but it's the least I can do.

Norbert Lins (PPE). – Herr Präsident, Herr Kommissar, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Im Zuge der Corona-Pandemie ist vielen Bürgerinnen und Bürgern wieder bewusst geworden, wie wichtig eine stabile und regionale Lebensmittelproduktion ist. Dass die Arbeit der Bäuerinnen und Bauern dabei einen der wichtigsten Beiträge zum Erhalt der Artenvielfalt leistet, wird leider oft übersehen. Deshalb ist mir heute wichtig, zu betonen, dass die Sicherstellung der Ernährung unserer Bevölkerung und der Erhalt der biologischen Vielfalt zusammengehören.

Wenn wir über die Biodiversitätsstrategie der Europäischen Union sprechen, muss die Frage, wie Ökologie und Ökonomie zusammengebracht werden können, im Mittelpunkt stehen. Wir müssen darüber diskutieren, wie Artenvielfalt im Rahmen einer modernen und leistungsfähigen Landwirtschaft bewahrt und gefördert werden kann.

Kein anderer Bereich ist so direkt auf den Schutz der biologischen Vielfalt angewiesen wie die Land- und Forstwirtschaft. Im Gegenzug bietet unsere heimische Kulturlandschaft vielen Tier- und Pflanzenarten einen Lebensraum. Es sind unsere Landwirte, Forstleute und Fischer, die unsere Äcker, Wälder, Teiche und Seen seit Jahrhunderten bewirtschaften und pflegen. Sie alle arbeiten tagtäglich am Schutz und am Erhalt der biologischen Vielfalt und sichern so die Grundlage für unsere Ernährung.

Mir ist es wichtig, dass kooperativen Lösungen vor Ort der Vorzug vor Ordnungsrecht gegeben wird. Mehr Akzeptanz entsteht dadurch bei den Bäuerinnen und Bauern. Es entsteht ein Miteinander von Landwirtschaft und Umweltverbänden. Deswegen würde ich mich freuen, wenn Sie die Änderungsanträge des Landwirtschaftsausschusses morgen unterstützen würden.

Delara Burkhardt (S&D). – Herr Präsident, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Das hier ist der Goldregenpfeifer. Sie haben ihn noch nicht gesehen? Das liegt daran, dass er immer seltener wird. Das ist kein Zufall, sondern menschengemachtes Artensterben. Der Goldregenpfeifer leidet unter dem Verlust seines natürlichen Habitats: Moore, die zur Besiedlung, zur landwirtschaftlichen Nutzung trockengelegt werden. Aber nicht nur ihm geht es schlecht: 63 % der Arten, 81 % der Ökosysteme befinden sich in einem schlechten Erhaltungszustand.

Die gute Nachricht ist aber, wir können was ändern: mehr Flächen unter Schutz stellen, auch geschädigte Ökosysteme wiederherstellen – all das mit mehr rechtlicher Verbindlichkeit. Und bei der Nichtumsetzung von EU-Naturschutzrecht müssen wir härter durchgreifen. Wir müssen Wälder klimaresilient umbauen, und auch die Landwirtschaft muss ihren Beitrag leisten.

All das steckt in dem ENVI-Bericht. Stimmen Sie ihm morgen zu, damit der Goldregenpfeifer und zukünftige Generationen sich freuen können!

Elsi Katainen (Renew). – Arvoisa puhemies, luontokato on pysäytettävä. Uskon, että se on jokaisen meidän mielipide ja tavoite. Keinoista ja niiden kokonaiskestävyydestä löytyykin jo hyvin erilaisia äänenpainoja.

Mielestäni eurooppalaista luontoa ei voi laittaa yhteen muottiin, kuten ympäristövaliokunta on nyt valitettavasti tehnyt. On nähtävä kokonaisuuksia, sillä osaoptimoinnilla ei saavuteta kestäviä ratkaisuja. Erityisesti metsät ja niiden kunto vaihtelevat jäsenvaltioissa todella paljon. Meillä Suomessa on jo nyt yli puolet koko EU:n suojelluista metsistä ja suurimmat metsävarat. En voi hyväksyä sitä, että asetetaan tiukkoja suojelutavoitteita esimerkiksi vanhoille metsille sopimatta siitä, mitä vanhoilla metsillä tarkoitetaan. Sen määrittely kuuluu jäsenmaille.

Maatalousvaliokunnan muutosehdotukset, joita ympäristövaliokunta ei ole halunnut kuulla, tuovat mietintöön kokonaisnäkemyksiä ja tasapainoa. Tukemalla näitä ehdotuksia olemme johdonmukaisia myös metsästrategian kanssa, jonka juuri hyväksyimme.

Bas Eickhout (Verts/ALE). – Mr President, first of all I want to thank the rapporteur and the Commission for a very good report on biodiversity. And I think we all know biodiversity is at the heart of our economy. Without bees, there's no food. Without clean oceans, there are no fish. So we need to protect our biodiversity, not only for nature, but also for ourselves.

And this has to be done globally, but also at the European level, because I hear a lot of colleagues are pleading here and saying, well we need to look at the science. Well, the science is very clear. There is an ongoing loss of biodiversity globally and in Europe.

And how do we solve that? We solve that by addressing all the drivers that are leading to a loss of biodiversity. And we have to do that together. Absolutely. But we don't do that by denying. We need better sustainability criteria. We need forest protection. We need that our agriculture system has less pressure on our nature and our biodiversity for ourselves and for our future economy and our kids.

Jadwiga Wiśniewska (ECR). – Panie Przewodniczący! Panie Komisarzu! Szanowni Państwo! Popieram cel, jakim jest ochrona bioróżnorodności, ale proszę zwrócić uwagę, że potrzebujemy doprecyzowania określeń zawartych w definicji w tym dokumencie. Oczywiście, że opowiadam się również za tym, żeby bardziej racjonalnie i w sposób bardziej zoptymalizowany wykorzystywać nawozy i środki ochrony roślin.

Należy jednak zwrócić uwagę, że zbyt ambitna strategia może zagrozić bezpieczeństwu żywnościowemu, a także obniżyć konkurencyjność europejskiego rolnictwa. Musimy być tego świadomi i musimy zastanowić się, czy Unia Europejska jest gotowa subsydiować rolnictwo, żeby właśnie w sposób bardziej szeroki walczyć o zachowanie bioróżnorodności.

Koszty tych działań będą bowiem wysokie, ale oczywiście nie ma ceny, jakiej nie można by zapłacić za ochronę przyrody, za ochronę środowiska. Zatem pytam Pana Komisarza, czy jesteśmy gotowi ponieść koszty, bo te koszty nie mogą uderzyć w rolników, w leśników, w ludzi którzy żyją z rolnictwa i zabezpieczają nam żywność.

Manuel Bompard (The Left). – Monsieur le Président, chers collègues, l'urgence climatique et environnementale est là. La sixième extinction de masse des espèces est à l'ordre du jour. Il est donc impératif d'agir de manière rapide et cohérente. La stratégie pour la biodiversité que nous examinons aujourd'hui s'attaque sérieusement à ce défi, mais il serait bien hypocrite de célébrer un texte non contraignant et de ne rien dire de la politique agricole commune à venir.

L'agriculture intensive reste, en effet, l'une des principales causes de perte de la biodiversité. Les scientifiques le répètent: nous devons transformer radicalement la PAC pour favoriser une agriculture plus respectueuse de l'environnement. Ce n'est malheureusement pas ce qui est prévu. La nouvelle PAC et sa déclinaison nationale menacent par exemple l'agriculture biologique, alors que l'on trouve en moyenne 30 % d'espèces de plus sur les surfaces cultivées en bio.

J'en appelle donc à la cohérence de notre Parlement. Oui à une stratégie ambitieuse pour maintenir et préserver la biodiversité, mais non à une politique agricole commune qui nous enferme dans un modèle insoutenable pour nos agriculteurs comme pour la planète.

Edina Tóth (NI). – Tisztelt Elnök úr, Képviselőtársaim! A világhírvány nyomán megfigyelhettük hogy az emberiség és a biodiverzitás közötti kölcsönös függőség annyira mély, hogy az utóbbi sebezhetősége egyben a mi sebezhetőségünket is jelenti. A biodiverzitás hanyatlásának megállítására irányuló munkát és erőfeszítéseket természetesen minden szinten támogatnunk kell. Azonban a mostani baloldali jelentés jelenlegi formájában nem megvalósítható és nem megfelelően definiált célokat tűz ki. Fontos, hogy új megállapodást kössünk az élővilággal. Ez egy folyamatban lévő óriási munka, mely széles körű konszenzust követel és a pusztítást a szennyezőknek kell helyreállítania.

A mostani egészségügyi veszélyhelyzet egy olyan figyelmeztetés, amelyet közösen kell meghallanunk. Irreális és megfoghatatlan célkitűzések helyett alapjaiban kell újra gondolnunk kapcsolatunkat az élővilággal, a természetes ökológiai rendszerekkel és a biológiai sokféleséggel.

Pernille Weiss (PPE). – Hr. formand! At passe godt på naturen er for de fleste mennesker et både naturligt og etisk anliggende. Det er der også god grund til. For selv om mennesket basalt set jo selv er natur, så har vores moderne liv i alt for mange år sløset med opgaven. Derfor er det godt, at EU er i gang med strategier og et stærkere og grænseoverskridende samarbejde for biodiversiteten. Det giver derfor også rigtig god mening, at Europa-Parlamentet nu giver vores bud på ingredienser og indsatser.

Der er bare ikke nogen grund til at gøre det med hovedet under armen, men det er lige præcis det, vi er i gang med at gøre, hvis vi forbyder al rekreativ jagt og fiskeri i samtlige særligt sårbare områder. Som om, at det netop er dem, der med hjertet bruger deres fritid i naturen, der er skyld i problemerne. De er ikke en trussel. Det er jo for pokker dem, der klogt kan holde øje og lære alle os andre at opføre os ordentligt i naturen. Især de kommende generationer skal da lære at løfte naturkulturarven af voksne, der forstår opgaven ude i virkeligheden og ikke kun ser verden fra politisk korrekte skriveborde. Derfor stiller PPE ændringsforslag, der sikrer jægere og fiskere, under kontrollerede forhold, fortsat adgang til vores natur, så de kan hjælpe os med at få biodiversiteten på ret køl igen. Det kan jeg slet ikke forestille mig, at der er nogen i dette rum, der har noget som helst imod.

Manuel Pizarro (S&D). – Senhor Presidente, a recuperação e a proteção da biodiversidade são fundamentais para o ambiente, para a economia e para a sociedade. Só com espécies e *habitats* saudáveis teremos um ambiente resiliente preparado para reagir a desequilíbrios como as alterações climáticas.

As pescas e a aquicultura dependem de um ambiente saudável e diverso. Por isso, desde muito antes do Pacto Ecológico Europeu, têm-se adaptado para técnicas de pesca e produção com menor impacto no ambiente. Há passos a dar nessa direção, mas não pode ser ignorado o esforço de adaptação que a pesca e a aquicultura têm vindo a fazer.

Devemos ter uma estratégia ambiciosa. Temos de garantir que há equilíbrio e sustentabilidade na exploração dos recursos e na preservação do ambiente. Este equilíbrio não pode, no entanto, passar por excluir todas as atividades. Devemos, ao contrário, garantir que elas são realizadas com adequada sustentabilidade em todos os domínios.

Pierre Karleskind (Renew). – Monsieur le Président, Monsieur le Commissaire, chers collègues, industries lourdes, transports, agriculteurs, pêcheurs, consommateurs: il s'agit bien d'impliquer toutes et tous dans la construction de cet effort pour la biodiversité. Ce sont des objectifs ambitieux et contraignants qui nous permettront d'obtenir, de conserver et, plus encore, de restaurer la biodiversité en Europe d'ici 2030.

Nous devons comprendre que tout est lié: ce qui se passe sur Terre et ce qui se passe en mer. Les différents écosystèmes marins et terrestres sont reliés entre eux. Les pêcheurs ne pourront pas seuls restaurer la biodiversité marine, de même que les agriculteurs ne pourront pas seuls, par leur action, restaurer la biodiversité terrestre. Bien plus que cela, ce sont bien souvent eux les premières victimes de la perte de la biodiversité – bien sûr, avec les écosystèmes eux-mêmes.

Alors, parce qu'il nous faut relier tous les secteurs d'activité, tous les acteurs, il nous faudrait peut-être aller – je le pense, mais vous en êtes convaincu, Monsieur le Commissaire – vers l'approche écosystémique. Je crois que tout cela doit être intégré et c'est pour cela probablement que, demain, dans la nouvelle politique commune de la pêche, il nous faudra mettre tout cela.

Benoît Biteau (Verts/ALE). – Monsieur le Président, chers collègues, après le vote de l'état d'urgence climatique en 2019 et celui sur le pacte vert en 2020, une fois de plus, le Parlement européen montre la voie d'une transformation écologique ambitieuse des politiques publiques européennes. Je tiens donc à féliciter César Luena pour l'excellent texte qui est aujourd'hui soumis au vote de notre Assemblée.

Je me réjouis également, plus particulièrement, de la perspective de l'adoption par notre Parlement de l'objectif de 25 % de surfaces agricoles en agriculture biologique en 2030, qu'il faudra toutefois confirmer à nouveau lors du vote de la stratégie «De la ferme à la table». L'agriculture est à la fois une cause incontestable et une victime évidente de l'effondrement de la biodiversité. Et à ceux qui continuent d'opposer écologie et économie, biodiversité et productivité, je leur demande: comment pourrions-nous atteindre une sécurité alimentaire face à des écosystèmes qui ne sont plus viables, qui ne sont plus en équilibre? Heureusement, l'agriculture porte aussi de nombreuses solutions, comme l'agriculture biologique.

Cependant, je suis aussi très inquiet. Les arbitrages finaux de la PAC restent encore à déterminer, mais la direction prise ne permettra pas d'atteindre les objectifs du pacte vert. Comment s'assurer que les États membres chercheront à les atteindre? Rien ne nous le garantit. Les agriculteurs bio français qui manifestaient la semaine dernière contre la baisse de leurs aides en sont témoins. Donc, pour sortir de la zone rouge, il va falloir faire vert – et vite.

Mazaly Aguilar (ECR). – Señor presidente, todos estamos unidos para preservar y aumentar la biodiversidad en la Unión Europea, pero no creo que la mejor forma de conseguirlo sea a través de objetivos poco realistas, con ataques injustificados a la PAC o con una falta total de reconocimiento y empatía hacia los agricultores, los ganaderos o los cazadores, que, con sus respectivas actividades, son guardianes de la biodiversidad.

Para construir una estrategia creíble no hay que atacar al sector agrícola o pesquero, como acostumbra a hacer el vicepresidente Timmermans, sino valorar los esfuerzos que están realizando esos sectores.

La mayor amenaza a la biodiversidad es el abandono de las tierras de cultivo y la despoblación del medio rural porque la agricultura no es rentable. Y no lo es porque cada vez hay más obligaciones verdes sin base científica, más costes y más desequilibrio en la cadena de valor.

Hay margen de mejora, pero los cambios en nuestro modelo agroalimentario solo tendrán éxito si le damos al sector plazos razonables y financiación adecuada para afrontar la transición, como, por ejemplo, en el ámbito de los productos fitosanitarios, donde hay que dar alternativas viables para que los agricultores puedan seguir produciendo.

Anja Hazekamp (The Left). – Voorzitter, de natuur verkeert in een ongekennde crisis en keer op keer breken we de belofte om het verlies aan biodiversiteit te stoppen. We ondermijnen daarmee de fundering van al het leven op aarde.

Visserij en landbouw en met name de vee-industrie zijn de grootste drijvers van het biodiversiteitsverlies. Een echte revolutie naar een duurzaam voedselsysteem is daarom broodnodig. Gezond voedsel is plantaardig, lokaal, gifvrij en met respect voor dieren, natuur en milieu. Dat moet het doel zijn van deze biodiversiteitsstrategie en ook van de Farm to Fork-strategie.

Bovendien moeten we voorkomen dat de energietransitie, die hard nodig is om de klimaatcrisis te stoppen, de biodiversiteitscrisis juist verergert. Bomen horen in het bos en niet in energiecentrales, maar mooie doelen hebben we al vijftien jaar en nog dagelijks sterven planten en diersoorten uit. Het is nu tijd voor wetgeving.

Voorts ben ik van mening dat de Europese landbouwsubsidies moeten worden afgeschaft.

Christine Schneider (PPE). – Herr Präsident, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Der Wald ist Lebensraum für viele Tiere, Pflanzenarten; ja, er ist Naherholungsraum, und er ist Rohstofflieferant. Deshalb möchte ich den Blick in der Biodiversitätsstrategie auf die Multifunktionalität der europäischen Wälder richten.

Unsere Wälder sind artenreiche Ökosysteme und Wirtschaftswälder zugleich. Die Bewirtschaftung schließt den Schutz und die Förderung der Biodiversität nicht aus, ganz im Gegenteil. Wir brauchen eine naturnahe Forstbewirtschaftung mehr denn je. Gerade aktuell sind unsere Wälder durch die Dürren und den Schädlingsbefall geschwächt. Deshalb muss das Schadholz aus dem Wald, um unsere gesunden Bäume zu schützen.

Und es ist richtig und wichtig, dass wir uns ambitionierte Ziele setzen; aber sie müssen auch realistisch erreichbar sein, wissenschaftlich fundiert, die Folgen abgeschätzt und nicht aus dem Bauch heraus begründet werden.

Mit der Biodiversitätsstrategie müssen wir einen Weg finden, bei dem Natur und Artenschutz Hand in Hand mit der Landnutzung gehen, ob in der Forst- oder in der Landwirtschaft – für den Artenschutz und für die Ernährungssicherheit in Europa.

Wir brauchen Aufklärung statt einseitiger Verdammung bestimmter Bewirtschaftungs- und Ernährungsweisen. Wir brauchen die biologische Vielfalt. Sie ist Basis für unsere Ernährung, fruchtbare Böden und sauberes Wasser. Dies erreichen wir durch mehr Kooperation statt immer mehr Verboten.

Cyrus Engerer (S&D). – Nixtieq nibda billi nirringrazzja lil siehbi César Luena tax-xoghol kollu li ghamel fuq dan il-file daqstant importanti. Importanti ghalix qeghdin nghixu fi żminijiet bla preċedent fl-istorja tal-umanità. Għandna emergenza tal-klima u emergenza ekoloġika li, fost l-oħrajn, ir-riżultat tagħha llum hu li għandna wiehed minn kull tmien speċi ta' flora u fauna li huma friskju ta' estinzjoni – u jekk din ir-realtà magħrufa mhix se għegħelna nitgħallmu minnha u nbiddlu l-metodi tagħna, mhux biss se naslu għal estinzjoni ta' dawn l-ispeċi, iżda saħansitra nagħmlu aktar hsara lis-saħħa tagħna l-bnedmin ukoll.

Din il-ġimgha, għaliex smajt hafna diskors fuq l-ekonomija u l-kummerċ, il-President tal-Kamra tal-Kummerċ Maltija, Marisa Xuereb, għamlet appell minn qalbha favur l-ambjent u se nirrepetih hawnhekk illum. Għadna fiż-żmien. Mhux qeghdin tard wisq biex inbiddlu l-mod ta' kif nahdmu biex insalvaw il-futur tagħna. Però, m'ahnix qeghdin kmieni lanqas, u l-ebda ambizzjoni ma tista' titqies wisq żejda.

Din l-istrategija li tipprotegi l-bijodiversità, għall-ewwel darba bbażata fuq ix-xjenza, u li tagħmel tibdil żgħir għal dak li m'dorrijin nagħmlu, li però jhalli riżultati kbar, u allura hija pass fid-direzzjoni t-tajba sabiex nipprotegu l-ambjent u lilna nfusna.

Karin Karlsbro (Renew). – Herr talman! Arter och ekosystem hotas av klimatförändringar och mänsklig påverkan. Det är inte bara en förlust i sig; det gör oss fattigare och sårbarare och riskerna för framtida pandemier ökar. När vi går mot den nödvändiga omställningen från en fast fossilbaserad ekonomi finns det risk att vi ökar trycket på naturen.

Skyddet av den biologiska mångfalden och de ekosystemtjänster som naturen ger oss i form av mat och vatten, virke och bioenergi, kolbindning, vattenrening och pollinering måste därför stärkas. Högt ställda krav på skydd av biologisk mångfald behöver absolut inte vara ett hot mot ett lönsamt brukande av skog och mark. Tvärtom. Men vi måste jobba tillsammans. Vi har ett ansvar för att våra barn och barnbarn ska kunna fiska i Östersjön. Samma ansvar som vi kräver av andra länder i världen. Det behövs en renässans för naturvården i Sverige och i Europa.

Grace O'Sullivan (Verts/ALE). – Mr President, after the lockdown in what feels like one of the longest and darkest winters of our lifetime, many people across Ireland and Europe are heading to the seashore to enjoy the sunshine and splash in the sea. Unfortunately, too many beaches suffer from failure to protect biodiversity and sensitive ecosystems. In 35 places in Ireland alone, beaches are still polluted with raw sewage, as highlighted in a recent Sea Change campaign this month, and on the spectacular Skellig Islands, a UNESCO World Heritage site, sea birds have been building their nests from tonnes of plastic discarded in the oceans each year.

So this week, here in the European Parliament, we must call for urgent action to protect marine biodiversity by creating bigger and better marine protected areas, by having legally-binding targets for plastic-free oceans by 2030 and by calling for an ambitious global ocean treaty. Tomorrow it is high time to take action, to seize the moment and to support a strong EU biodiversity strategy that protects nature – marine and terrestrial – systemically and fundamentally. So please, vote for nature.

Bert-Jan Ruissen (ECR). – Voorzitter, commissaris, wie spreekt over biodiversiteit spreekt over Gods schepping, waar we allen verantwoordelijkheid voor dragen. Toch kan ik, en ik zeg het met spijt in mijn stem, de nu voorliggende resolutie helaas niet steunen.

Ten eerste, omdat de resolutie de zeer ambitieuze doelstellingen van de Commissie kritiekloos overneemt, hoewel de Commissie ons om onduidelijke redenen nog geen enkele effectbeoordeling heeft laten zien.

Ten tweede, omdat studies van de USDA laten zien dat de biodiversiteitsstrategie samen met de Farm to Fork-strategie leidt tot een fors lagere voedselproductie en tot hogere consumenten prijzen.

Ten derde, omdat de bodemberoerende visserij in deze resolutie zeer onterecht aan de schandpaal wordt genageld. De praktijk laat zien dat duurzame visserij en bodemberoering wel degelijk samen kunnen gaan.

Verantwoord rentmeesterschap is een kwestie van zoeken naar het juiste evenwicht tussen economie en ecologie en juist dat ontbreekt in deze resolutie. Hopelijk kan er via gescheiden stemmingen nog wat worden gecorrigeerd.

Agnès Evren (PPE). – Monsieur le Président, Monsieur le Commissaire, notre biodiversité est en péril. C'est un consensus scientifique. Il y a urgence à sortir des postures et des beaux discours et à agir enfin.

Agir, d'abord, à l'échelle mondiale, lors de la COP 15, avec un accord juridiquement contraignant assorti d'objectifs ambitieux, chiffrés et mesurables, car il ne faut pas répéter l'échec des objectifs d'Aichi.

Agir, ensuite, à l'échelle européenne, nationale et aussi locale. Protéger et restaurer notre biodiversité, ce n'est pas uniquement sauver des baleines à l'autre bout du monde. C'est mettre en œuvre tout ce qui est possible pour que notre air, nos eaux, nos forêts, nos sols soient préservés.

Les objectifs proposés dans cette stratégie vont dans le bon sens: 30 % de zones protégées en Europe, dont 10 % strictement, c'est réaliste et nécessaire. Mais tout ceci devra être réalisé avec ceux qui chaque jour subissent les impacts de nos législations et de la perte de biodiversité: nos agriculteurs, nos pêcheurs, les exploitants de forêts. Ils doivent absolument être soutenus, accompagnés et indemnisés si leur activité est impactée. C'est une condition sine qua non si nous voulons relever le défi.

Joachim Schuster (S&D). – Herr Präsident, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Auch der internationale Handel trägt in seiner aktuellen Form erheblich zum Verlust der biologischen Vielfalt bei. Dieser Fakt ist durch zahlreiche Studien belegt. Ich begrüße es daher, dass die Kommission dies in ihrer durchaus ambitionierten Biodiversitätsstrategie anerkennt.

Was jedoch gerade in Bezug auf den internationalen Handel schmerzlich fehlt, ist, dass dieser Erkenntnis konkrete und wirkungsvolle Maßnahmen folgen. Es reicht nicht, nur vorsichtige Korrekturen in Freihandelsabkommen anzupeilen. Es muss vielmehr darum gehen, das internationale Handelssystem konsequent zugunsten der biologischen Vielfalt umzugestalten.

Das heißt zum Beispiel, dass der Handel mit nachweislich biodiversitätsschädigenden Produkten beendet werden muss. Und das bedeutet auch, dass insbesondere Entwicklungsländer bei eventuell notwendigen Umstrukturierungen ihrer Land- und Forst- oder Fischwirtschaft unterstützt werden müssen.

Der Erkenntnis, dass es wichtig ist, Biodiversität zu bewahren, müssen konsequente Taten folgen. Dieses Parlament hat morgen die Möglichkeit dazu, einen ersten Schritt zu tun, indem es den Biodiversitätsbericht verabschiedet, allerdings ohne Verwässerung.

Ulrike Müller (Renew). – Herr Präsident, sehr geehrte Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Fakt ist: Wir nutzen immer mehr Land. Fakt ist auch: Unsere Landnutzung muss besser mit Umwelt- und Artenschutz in Einklang gebracht werden. Dafür müssen wir die Land- und Forstwirte aber nicht als Problem, sondern als Partner behandeln. Zentral ist da ein klares Bekenntnis zum Eigentum. Das muss der Ausgangspunkt der europäischen Biodiversitätsstrategie sein.

Der Bericht des Unterausschusses klingt leider eher so, als wollten wir aus der Natur ein Naturkundemuseum machen. Mit der Realität hat dies wenig zu tun. Erstens schließen sich die Bewirtschaftung und die Artenvielfalt nicht aus – im Gegenteil. Die traditionelle Teichwirtschaft zeigt beispielhaft, dass beides im gegenseitigen Einvernehmen sehr von Vorteil sein kann.

Zweitens ist die Landnutzung nicht nur die Lebensgrundlage in den ländlichen Räumen, sondern leistet durch die Produktion von Lebensmitteln, Materialien und Energien einen wichtigen Beitrag zum Klimaschutz. Die Strategie sollte dies klar anerkennen.

Jutta Paulus (Verts/ALE). – Herr Präsident, meine Damen und Herren, lieber Herr Kommissar! Artenvielfalt ist das Netz, das uns trägt. Nur durch Biodiversität werden unsere Lebensgrundlagen – saubere Luft, trinkbares Wasser, fruchtbare Böden – erhalten.

Wir in Europa verurteilen es, wenn in Indien die letzten Tiger gejagt werden oder in Brasilien der Regenwald vernichtet wird, aber wir ignorieren, dass bei uns zuhause viele Ökosysteme zerstört wurden oder gefährdet sind.

Das gilt insbesondere für unsere Moore und Feuchtgebiete, die über Jahrhunderte entwässert oder für den Torfabbau zerstört wurden. Dabei sind Moore unsere Verbündeten im Artenschutz, im Klimaschutz und auch bei der Klimaanpassung.

Deshalb fordere ich dich, lieber Virginijus, in deiner Funktion als Umweltkommissar auf, eine umfassende Moorstrategie zu entwickeln, um diese wichtigen Ökosysteme wirksam zu schützen und wiederherzustellen. In deinem Heimatland Litauen werden rund um Baisogala Moore renaturiert. Solche Projekte brauchen wir in der ganzen EU, und dafür brauchen wir eigene Ziele für Moore im Renaturierungsplan.

Herbert Dorfmann (PPE). – Herr Präsident, Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Biodiversität ist die Grundlage unseres Lebens. Alles, was auf dieser Erde lebt, ist letztendlich ein Ergebnis von Biodiversität und ist ein Ergebnis der Eigenschaft der Natur, sich anzupassen und sich zu verändern. Für dieses natürliche Gleichgewicht gibt es Gefahren, und selbstverständlich ist auch die sehr intensive Landwirtschaft eine Ursache davon.

Aber Landwirtschaft – das sollten wir nie vergessen – ist auch eine Quelle von Biodiversität; und es geht in der Gemeinsamen Agrarpolitik auch darum, gerade jene Landwirtschaft zu unterstützen, die eben auch Quelle von Biodiversität ist.

Was mich sehr wundert, ist, dass in der Mitteilung der Kommission zur Biodiversität kein Wort über die Problematik der großen Beutegreifer steht. Ich glaube, man will dieses Thema einfach nicht ansprechen, verschweigen oder noch schlimmer: Indem wir es schönreden, werden wir der Sache nicht gerecht werden. Es gibt nämlich nicht nur das Recht von Wölfen und Bären. Es gibt schon auch das Recht von Bäuerinnen und Bauern und das Recht der von ihnen gehaltenen Tiere.

Christel Schaldemose (S&D). – Hr. formand! Naturen skal fylde mere i Europa, for naturen er presset. Arter uddør med en hastighed, der næsten ikke er til at forstå. Naturen svinder ind, og det skal vi gøre noget ved. Med EU's biodiversitetsstrategi, lægger vi faktisk en ambitiøs plan for, hvordan vi får genoprettet naturen i Europa. Det trænger den til. Flere naturområder i EU skal beskyttes, så vi kan få flere insekter og et mere mangfoldigt planteliv. Men beskyttelse må ikke blive lig med »ingen adgang til naturen«, tværtimod. Vi skal sikre en ansvarlig og bæredygtig adgang til de beskyttede naturområder, som vi for eksempel har set i Kerteminde Kommune ved Urup Dam.

Men beskyttede naturområder gør det ikke alene. Vi skal alle tage et ansvar. For eksempel skal landbruget gøre markant mindre brug af pesticider, end de gør i dag. Det er rigtig vigtigt. Plads til naturen kræver, at vi alle tager hensyn, men gør vi det, så kommer det også os alle sammen til gode. Naturen skal fylde mere i Europa.

Martin Hojsík (Renew). – Pán predsedajúci, dnes sme tu preto, aby sme začali konať. Pretože príroda je v ťažkostiach a my s ňou.

Vedci nás varujú, že pri súčasnom tempe ničenia prírody a klimateckej krízy bude do konca storočia čeliť vyhynutiu tretina až polovica všetkých druhov.

Obetou tohto masového vymierania by bola aj naša civilizácia. A vyhynutie je navždy. Nie, nie je to len o rúbaní Amazonu. Veď aj na Slovensku je vyše polovica chránených druhov v zlom stave. Častokrát preto, že im ničíme ich domov, divočinu. Musíme nechať priestor divočine, ale aj sa citlivo starať o kultúrnu krajinu. V súlade s prírodou.

Musíme konať preto, aby aj naše deti zažili hlucháňa, jasoňa červenookého a aby si mohli pričuchnúť k lykovcovi muránskeho.

Aby sme zachránili život na tejto planéte vrátane toho, ktorý ľudské oko nevidí. V pôde pod našimi nohami. V pôde, ktorú zabíjame toxickými pesticídmi, tými istými pesticídmi, ktoré zabíjajú aj opel'ovače, bez ktorých by na našich stoloch chýbalo jedlo.

Preto potrebujeme, pán komisár, európsky zákon o ochrane pôdy. Monitoring a záväzné ciele na ochranu opel'ovačov a desatinu Európy pre divočinu, teda bez zásahu.

Rosa D'Amato (Verts/ALE). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, la biodiversità dei mari europei, e in particolare del Mar Mediterraneo, sta declinando ad un ritmo vertiginoso e non possiamo stare fermi di fronte a questo disastroso degrado.

Negli ultimi cinquant'anni abbiamo perso quasi la metà degli organismi marini a livello globale. È il momento di agire ed è fondamentale votare a favore dell'introduzione di obiettivi vincolanti che consentano di proteggere il 30 % delle acque europee e di proteggerne rigorosamente il 10 %, mettendo fine all'impatto devastante di attività come trivellazioni, inquinamento dei trasporti marittimi, scarichi urbani e industriali, rifiuti marini, inclusa la plastica, e della pesca industriale.

Non lasciamo spazio ai tentativi di alcuni gruppi politici di abbassare il livello di ambizione raggiunto con emendamenti che sono deleteri. Serve una gestione efficace delle aree marine protette, che devono essere vera sintesi tra sostenibilità ambientale e socioeconomica e quindi gestite con i pescatori. Diamo spazio e modo ad ecosistemi e habitat preziosi di ricostituirsi e alla pesca artigianale sostenibile di sopravvivere.

Michał Wieszik (PPE). – Mr President, dear colleagues, from our position we usually try to strengthen cooperation and assume competence at EU level in areas where it brings added value. There is an area where we lack, where we are left to think that the EU has no role to speak and legislate on: the forest-related policies.

Amendments tabled to the report are asking for protection, the restoration of ecosystems – but not the forest ecosystems. We should not worry, because there are forestry experts who for centuries protect forest ecosystems and their biodiversity, miraculously integrating conflicting activities.

In reality, however, we are losing forest biodiversity. We are transforming natural forests into fragile plantations, and we even dare to harvest wood in Europe's last primary and old growth forests, claiming that strict protection of less 3% of European forests is too much. Impact of such claims are detrimental.

Dear colleagues, please vote in favour of the original paragraphs of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI) report for the sake of forests and biodiversity.

Nicolae Ștefănuță (Renew). – Domnule comisar, un ucigaș tăcut a făcut ravagii în Europa, în timp ce noi eram preocupați de pandemie. În timp ce oamenii nu puteau să respire, nici natura nu a mai putut să respire. Chiar în seara asta, în România, una din cele mai frumoase cascade, cascada Bigăr, s-a surpat sub acțiunea omului. Tăierile ilegale de pădure au crescut nesupravegheat în perioada asta. Din România au dispărut, din păcate, ilegal, 300 000 de hectare de pădure, o pădure de talia statului Luxemburg.

De ce ne interesează pe noi asta în Parlamentul European? Pentru că pădurile românești absorb anual 6 % din dioxidul de carbon european, deci ne interesează pe toți ce se întâmplă. Orice pădure lipsă înseamnă tot atâta deșert sau teren inundabil în loc. Domnule comisar, avem nevoie de un moratoriu european privind defrișările în zonele protejate. Comisia trebuie să vină cu o definiție clară a zonelor strict protejate și să încurajeze să o faceți. Așteptăm să opriți acest ucigaș tăcut al naturii noastre.

Pär Holmgren (Verts/ALE). – Herr talman! Vi är tyvärr med full fart på väg mot den sjätte massutrotningen. Senaste gången det hände var ju när dinosaurierna försvann. Det är givetvis i så fall den första gången som vi människor orsakar en massutrotning, men också första gången som en djurart överhuvudtaget på den här planeten är på väg att göra det. För att undvika detta måste vi givetvis samarbeta med naturen, inte motarbeta den. Vi behöver den biologiska mångfalden för att få mat på bordet, för att ha rent vatten att dricka och för att ha ren frisk luft att andas.

Dessutom kommer den biologiska mångfalden att vara helt avgörande om vi, våra samhällen, livet på den här planeten – och då inte minst våra skogar – ska ha möjlighet att kunna anpassas till ett varmare och förändrat klimat. Våra politiska motståndare påminner oss ibland om att vi också måste tänka på ekonomin när vi pratar hållbar utveckling, men då måste vi också komma ihåg att det är biologin som ligger till grund för ekonomin. Utan en välordnad ekologi får vi inte heller en välordnad ekonomi.

Emma Wiesner (Renew). – Herr talman! Den svenska skogen är fantastisk. Den ger oss fantastiska möjligheter till avkoppling och den ger oss fantastiska produkter och fantastiska möjligheter i kampen mot det fossila. Det var faktiskt min kärlek till den svenska skogen och vår natur som gjorde att jag blev politiker från första början.

Att bevara vår natur är oerhört viktigt och Europa måste bli bättre på att stå upp för och försvara den biologiska mångfalden. Men det måste göras med rätt politik – den biologiska mångfalden och skogen är för viktig för att mis-slyckas. Att kompromissa med äganderätt och öka den centrala styrningen utan att ta hänsyn till lokala förutsättningar är för mig helt oacceptabelt.

Därför är morgondagens omröstning en av de viktigaste omröstningar som jag kommer att göra som parlamentariker hittills. Jag hoppas att vi kan rösta för en strategi som effektivt ökar vår biologiska mångfald utan att begränsa den svenska skogens möjligheter att vara fantastisk.

Virginijus Sinkevičius, Member of the Commission. – Mr President, honourable Members, thank you very much for this very rich debate, which highlighted once again both the high stakes and the imperative to deliver on the biodiversity agenda. We are all very well aware of the challenges we need to overcome.

You have raised so many important topics tonight, but in just a couple of minutes I can only address some of them. But of course, let me recall that we will, as always, provide a detailed written reply within the next few weeks.

I have heard many of you saying tonight that we should not blame farmers or foresters, fishermen, for the bad state of our ecosystems, that we have to work with them and we have to have them on board, and that they do care about their forests, their land and their seas.

Well, Mr Mato, Mr Bernhuber, Ms Zalewska, Ms Polfjärd, I could not agree more with you. This is what I have been saying in all my speeches since we adopted the biodiversity strategy last year, and never have I or any of my colleagues pointed finger to fishermen, farmers or foresters. The Commission has always said that we need them on board and we need to support them in transition towards more sustainability.

I can only agree with Mr Lins, who said that we need cooperation and inclusiveness. Yes, we do, but the consequence cannot be lowering our ambitions. The biodiversity crisis is so much advanced that we cannot lose time. Science is very clear. And as we're listening to all stakeholders, we also have to listen to science.

And the global challenges are also huge. We can be a credible global leader only if we lead by example. So the solution can be only to go this way together, bringing all on board, listening and explaining and of course supporting those who will need to help us making this transition a success. And these are, first of all, of course, farmers, foresters and fishermen.

Over the last year, I have reached out to many of them, spoken and listened to them, and now finally I can start also visiting them on the ground. And we are supporting them through the CAP funds, through the MFF, through regional policy and through many other programmes. Ensuring the necessary funding will be one of the crucial factors for the successful implementation of the biodiversity commitments by 2030.

The MFF interinstitutional agreement, which includes a commitment to allocate at least 10% of the multiannual financial framework for biodiversity in 2026 will support the achievement of this goal. We are also developing a new tracking methodology, which we would be happy to present to the European Parliament later this year.

Let me also say a few words on forests, which were so often mentioned today. I have taken a very good note of the many interventions on forests, the last one was as well. And let me be very clear, while it is true that the overall quantity of forests has started to increase over the last years, forest ecosystems are under more and more pressure in the EU and in all Member States, and the protection of existing EU forests is absolutely crucial to achieve our climate and biodiversity objectives for 2030 and 2050.

And we are not credible in pushing any ambitious EU policy to halting deforestation and forest degradation in the Amazon or Southeast Asia if we allow for degradation in the EU old growth forests. Together with my colleagues Janusz Wojciechowski and Vice-President Frans Timmermans, we are developing a new EU forest strategy for adoption in July, building on the EU biodiversity strategy to 2030, covering the whole forest cycle and promoting the many services that forests can provide.

Today's debate is symbolic of many discussions taking place within and between EU institutions, in the Member States and at global level. These discussions will continue and intensify over the next months and years. They will sometimes be difficult, but they are also necessary to find the right balance to deal with unavoidable trade-offs, to tap into new opportunities and to secure the richness of life on this planet.

This is our shared responsibility and I am convinced that we can only succeed if we continue on this journey together. And of course, in the work ahead, we will fully consider the European Parliament's input. In the coming days, we will launch a public online tool, a dashboard, illustrating progress in the implementation of the EU biodiversity strategy for 2030. We also want to produce our first annual progress note later this autumn, and I would be happy to present and discuss progress at the European Parliament by the end of this year.

To ensure full political ownership of the EU biodiversity strategy, the Commission will also suggest a standing progress point at the Council and at the European Parliament. I look forward to our continued close cooperation on safeguarding our natural capital in the EU and globally.

Πρόεδρος. – Η συζήτηση έληξε.

Η ψηφοφορία θα διεξαχθεί αύριο.

Γραπτές δηλώσεις (άρθρο 171 του Κανονισμού)

Асим Адемов (PPE), в писмена форма. – Земеделските земи обхващат почти половината от площта на ЕС, а горите покриват около 42% от територията му. Селското и горското стопанство играят важна роля за опазване и възстановяване на биологичното разнообразие, за поддържане на здрави екосистеми и жизнеспособни селски райони като гарант за продоволствената ни сигурност. Постигането на целите на Стратегията на ЕС за биологично разнообразие за 2030 г. (в т.ч. площи за биологично производство, намаляване употребата на химически пестициди и торове, почвено здраве, опрашители, ландшафт, устойчиви селскостопански и агролесовъдни екосистеми) не следва да е в тежест на земеделските стопани. Те трябва да бъдат подкрепяни и насърчавани за прехода си към по-устойчиви производствени модели и компенсирани за предоставяните екосистемни услуги.

В тази връзка ефективното изпълнение на стратегията следва да гарантира не само екологичната, но също така икономическата и социална устойчивост на стопанствата. Стратегията призовава и към защита на останалите вековни и девствени гори в ЕС – белите дробове на нашия континент. Близо 90% от тези най-богати на въглерод и местообитания горски екосистеми са на територията на само четири държави, сред които и България. Наш дълг е да съхраним това богатство, голяма част от което е в защитените зони по „Натура 2000“ – в района на Стара планина и Родопите.

Carmen Avram (S&D), în scris. – Strategia UE pentru Biodiversitate este un pas spre atingerea țintei de continent neutru climatic. Prin stoparea declinului biodiversității, strategia este un plan de urgență pentru prevenirea unor potențiale crize sanitare viitoare. Acest lucru nu poate fi posibil fără o lege pentru protejarea biodiversității și a solului, propuneri venite din partea S&D. Consider că fondul forestier este cel mai puternic aliat al nostru în lupta cu schimbările climatice. Însă, pentru ca pădurile europene să aducă prosperitate și beneficii de mediu și socioeconomice, este nevoie de un echilibru între protejarea lor uniformă și exploatarea sustenabilă, precum și de măsuri de toleranță zero pentru defrișările ilegale.

Consider, însă, ca Strategia pentru Biodiversitate trebuie să reflecte rolul crucial pe care fermierii îl au în protejarea și regenerarea solului, întrucât ei sunt primii beneficiari ai unui mediu înconjurător sănătos. Prin votul meu, mă voi asigura ca țintele de mediu nu vor deveni o povară și nu vor pune în pericol securitatea alimentară a Uniunii. Dimpotrivă, ambițiile trebuie să fie proporționale cu realitățile diferite din statele membre și să fie însoțite de instrumentele necesare pentru ca ele să devină realitate. Prin amendamentele depuse, am reușit să trag un semnal de alarmă asupra dispariției sturionului și a nevoii urgente de acțiune pentru salvarea acestei specii emblematicе.

Daniel Buda (PPE), în scris. – Strategia pentru biodiversitate 2030 este un plan cuprinzător, ambițios și pe termen lung al Uniunii Europene care își propune să protejeze natura și să inverseze degradarea ecosistemelor.

În ceea ce privește agricultura, impactul acesteia asupra biodiversității și importanța sa în Uniunea Europeană sunt incontestabile.

În calitate de gardieni ai pământului, fermierii joacă un rol vital în conservarea biodiversității. Aceștia sunt printre primii care simt consecințele atunci când biodiversitatea se pierde.

Agricultura a contribuit la crearea și conservarea peisajului natural. Gestionarea responsabilă și sustenabilă a terenurilor agricole are un impact pozitiv asupra dezvoltării biodiversității.

Cu toate acestea, practicile agricole neadecvate au un impact negativ asupra resurselor noastre. Dispariția biodiversității, cu alte cuvinte a faunei și florei are un impact negativ și dăunător asupra terenurilor agricole pe termen mediu și lung, ducând chiar la amenințarea securității alimentare.

Agricultura trebuie să își îmbunătățească performanțele de mediu prin metode de producție mai durabile, care să vină în sprijinul naturii. Prin urmare, nu se pot impune sarcini suplimentare fără bani suplimentari, iar fermierii trebuie să beneficieze de sprijin financiar.

Toate deciziile luate la nivelul Uniunii Europene trebuie să fie ancorate în realitate, astfel încât fermierii să aibă posibilitatea de a le respecta și implementa.

Balázs Hidvéghi (NI), írásban. – Magyarország elkötelezett a biológiai sokféleség megőrzése, a környezeti fenntarthatóság ösztönzése iránt. Az EP jelentése sajnos megerősíti a Bizottság javaslatait. Így nem biztosítható a fenntarthatóság környezeti, gazdasági és társadalmi szempontjai közötti egyensúly. E három szempontnak tökéletes egyensúlyban kell lennie ahhoz, hogy az ambiciózus célkitűzéseket végre lehessen hajtani. Nem megengedhető az élelmiszer- és alapanyagárak drasztikus emelkedése. Az erdészet vonatkozásában rossz a sorrend. Először az új uniós Erdészeti Stratégia kialakítására lett volna szükség, azonban most erdészeinket kész tények elé állítják. A fenntartható erdőgazdálkodás hozzájárul az erdők biológiai sokféleségének megőrzéséhez. Magyarország elkötelezett a fenntartható erdőgazdálkodás iránt. Erősíteni kell az erdők multifunkcionális szerepét az EU klímavédelmi és biodiverzitás-célkitűzéseinek eléréséhez. Magyarország célja az erdő- és a fával borított területek 2030-ig 27%-ra történő növelése. Az EP jelentéstervezete nem ennek megfelelően tünteti fel a fenntartható erdőgazdálkodást. Mezőgazdaságot illetően Magyarország álláspontja, hogy nem kényszeríthetünk olyan vállalatokat a gazdáinkra, amelyek minden tudományos alapot nélkülöznek. A Bizottság nem felelősségteljesen járt el: a Biodiverzitás Stratégia nem párosult megfelelő hatástanulmánnyal. Csakis ennek ismertetésében lehetne érdemi vitát folytatni, illetve bármiféle vállalat tenni. Jelenleg jogilag nem kötelező érvényűek a célszámok. El kell kerülni az olyan intézkedéseket, melyek csökkentenék az Unió versenyképességét, veszélyeztetnék az élelmiszerellátást, illetve elősegítenék a vidéki területek további elnéptelenedését.

Dan-Ștefan Motreanu (PPE), în scris. – Reducerea utilizării pesticidelor și prioritizarea agriculturii ecologice în UE trebuie să se efectueze cu finanțare adecvată, soluții alternative pentru agricultori și garantarea producției de alimente sănătoase la prețuri accesibile pentru consumatori. Subliniez faptul că, pentru a reduce nevoia utilizării pesticidelor chimice, fermierii europeni au nevoie de un set mult mai mare de soluții și metode alternative, eficiente și, foarte important, accesibile din punct de vedere financiar.

Există o nevoie tot mai mare de noi tipuri de pesticide cu risc redus și biopesticide, finanțare și utilizare la scară largă a tehnicilor de aplicare eficiente facilitate de instrumente precum agricultura digitală și de precizie, precum și de consolidarea sistemelor de formare și consiliere a agricultorilor în domeniul practicilor agroecologice.

Solicit Comisiei Europene să își bazeze viitoarele propuneri legislative pe evaluări ample ale impactului asupra sectorului agricol pentru a garanta viabilitatea economică a agricultorilor, securitatea alimentară pentru populație, evitarea creșterii prețurilor produselor alimentare și reducerea riscului ca producția locală de alimente să fie înlocuită cu importuri. Totodată, susțin că obiectivul de 25 % pentru terenurile agricole ecologice trebuie să fie stabilit la nivelul Uniunii și nu individual pentru fiecare stat membru, luând în considerare punctele de plecare extrem de diferite între statele membre UE.

Andżelika Anna Możdżanowska (ECR), na piśmie. – Bioróżnorodność to dostęp do czystej wody i czystego powietrza. Bioróżnorodność to materiały i surowce, to bezpieczeństwo żywnościowe, a przede wszystkim zdrowie zwierząt i nas ludzi. Teraz my bierzemy odpowiedzialność za przyszłe pokolenia! Inwestycje w ochronę przyrody i odbudowę jej zasobów muszą być oparte na szczegółowych badaniach, ocenie tych rozwiązań i przede wszystkim konkretnych źródłach finansowania. Ostatecznie mamy strategię obarczoną wieloma wątpliwościami, bez środowiskowych, społecznych i ekonomicznych skutków wdrożenia – za to z bardzo ambitnymi celami do osiągnięcia! Dlaczego KE nie sięgnęła do doświadczeń i wiedzy państw członkowskich? Mój kraj, Polska, jest krajem o dużej, w skali Europy, różnorodności biologicznej, gdzie obszary chronione stanowią ponad 30% powierzchni, gdzie odradzają się populacje wielu gatunków, jak wydra, żubr, bóbr. Potrafimy więc skutecznie chronić bioróżnorodność. Największe oczekiwania zostały skierowane do sektora rolnego i leśnego. Pamiętajmy, że realizacja zbyt ambitnych celów może zagrozić naszemu bezpieczeństwu żywnościowemu czy też obniżyć konkurencyjność polskiego i europejskiego rolnictwa. Nie możemy doprowadzić do importu żywności z krajów trzecich, o niższych wymogach środowiskowych. To globalnie oznaczałoby stratę, a nie korzyść dla środowiska i klimatu. UE nie może wprowadzać daleko idących zmian w zarządzaniu zasobami leśnymi. To niezwykle niebezpieczne dla zachowania ciągłości funkcjonowania zrównoważonych gospodarek leśnych w poszczególnych krajach. Lasy i leśnictwo to kompetencje państw członkowskich.

Sylvia Spurek (Verts/ALE), na piśmie. – Przemysł rolny, w szczególności przemysłowa hodowla zwierząt i uprawa roślin pastewnych, jest najpoważniejszą przyczyną degradacji środowiska naturalnego, negatywnych zmian dotyczących sposobu użytkowania gruntów i niszczenia naturalnych siedlisk, odpowiada za 80% wszystkich zmian sposobu użytkowania gruntów na świecie.

Jak wskazano w raporcie Chatham House, proces utraty nienaruszonych dotychczas ekosystemów dotyka w ostatnich dziesięcioleciach z największą intensywnością najbardziej bioróżnorodne regiony świata – głównie w wyniku przekształcania lasów w obszary wykorzystywane do celów produkcji soi na paszę dla zwierząt i do celu hodowli krów. W ciągu zaledwie 20 lat, od 1980 do 2000 r., 42 miliony hektarów lasów tropikalnych w Ameryce Łacińskiej zostało utraconych w związku z rozwojem i intensyfikacją hodowli zwierząt.

Chcąc uniknąć dalszego wylesiania, wymierania cennych gatunków czy rosnącego zanieczyszczenia środowiska, musimy odejść od wciąż obowiązującego „standardu” taniej, niezdrowej i nieetycznej żywności. Musimy odesłać do lamusa wspólną politykę rolną i dokonać radykalnej rewizji umów handlowych UE, w tym pomiędzy UE a państwami Mercosuru oraz między UE a Chinami. Spoczywa na nas odpowiedzialność za ochronę cennych i znikających w zaskarżającym tempie ekosystemów, za ochronę praw ludzi i budowę systemu praw zwierząt. Musimy wyznaczać najwyższe standardy w tym zakresie. Na razie unijne strategie to wyłącznie puste słowa, a ostatnie 20 miesięcy nowej KE zostało zmarnowanych.

Alexandr Vondra (ECR), písemně. – Jako stínový zpravodaj jsem strategii pro biologickou rozmanitost od začátku podporoval. Musíme chránit biologickou rozmanitost, potřebujeme zastavit degradaci přirozených ekosystémů. Při vyjednávání jsem usiloval především o to, aby strategie naplnila svůj cíl, tj. aby zvýšila pestrost naší krajiny, ochránila rostlinné i živočišné druhy a posílila odolnost ekosystémů vůči škůdcům a chorobám. Viz český problém s kůrovcem prohloubený dlouhotrvajícím suchem. Aktivním přístupem k udržitelnému hospodaření v krajině můžeme lesy nejen obnovit, ale i ochránit biologickou rozmanitost. Jsem rád, že jsme se s kolegy shodli, že jednotlivé cíle musí být nastaveny tak, aby byly dosažitelné na úrovni jednotlivých členských států a byly v harmonii se zájmy lidí.

Přesto bych ve strategii pár změn uvítal. Nedomnívám se například, že je rozumné, aby byl prosazen plošný zákaz např. rodenticidů používaných mj. jako jed na krysy v městských a zastavěných oblastech. Stejně tak si myslím, že bychom měli našim přátelům ve Španělsku či Itálii umožnit racionální management počtu velkých šelem v případech, když v některých oblastech přemnožení vlci útočí na stáda sedláků. Přes všechny tyto výhrady jsem ale rád, že strategie pro biodiverzitu vznikla. Její naplňování má potenciál přinést – na rozdíl od zhysterizovaného boje proti emisím skleníkových plynů – hmatatelné a pozitivní výsledky.

22. Establishing the instrument for financial support for customs control equipment (debate)

Πρόεδρος. – Το επόμενο σημείο στην ημερήσια διάταξη είναι η συζήτηση επί της σύστασης για τη δεύτερη ανάγνωση της Επιτροπής Εσωτερικής Αγοράς και Προστασίας των Καταναλωτών, σχετικά με τη θέσπιση του μέσου χρηματοδοτικής στήριξης για τον εξοπλισμό τελωνειακών ελέγχων (07234/1/2021 - C9-0196/2021 - 2018/0258(COD)) (Εισηγητής: Jiří Pospíšil (A9-0196/2021)).

Εξ ονόματος του κυρίου Pospíšil θα μιλήσει ο κύριος Schwab, ως εισηγητής.

Andreas Schwab, deputising for the rapporteur. – Mr President, it's my pleasure today to represent our colleague, Jiří Pospíšil, who was the rapporteur on the proposal for a regulation establishing, as part of the Integrated Border Management Fund, the instrument for financial support for customs control equipment. I'm also here, as EPP coordinator, to thank him for his excellent work, together with colleagues on the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO).

Im letzten Jahr hat sich gezeigt, wie wichtig funktionierende Zollkontrollen sind, als unsichere Masken und falsche Desinfektionsmittel in die Europäische Union gespült wurden. Solche Waren dürfen in Europa nicht verkauft werden, weil der Verbraucher und die Verbraucherin im Einzelnen nicht in der Lage wäre zu sehen, welche Mittel korrekt oder nicht korrekt hergestellt wurden. Deswegen brauchen wir Kontrollen in der Europäischen Union, die sicherstellen, dass der Markt zuverlässig ist.

Angeichts der Tatsache, dass nur sechs von 27 Mitgliedstaaten der Europäischen Union überhaupt Einnahmen aus dem Zoll generieren können, gibt es ein Bedürfnis, alle Zollbehörden aller Mitgliedstaaten in vergleichbaren Situationen handlungsfähig zu halten. Deswegen hat die Europäische Kommission vorgeschlagen, hier mit finanziellen Mitteln einen Ausgleich zu schaffen, damit die Kontrollen mit dem technischen Gerät vorgenommen werden können, das notwendig ist.

Natürlich gehört darüber hinaus auch die Digitalisierung zum Inventar, das die Zollabwicklung vereinfacht. Und hier hängen die Mitgliedstaaten seit mehr als 15 Jahren hinterher. Wir brauchen aber auch die Digitalisierung. Wir haben es bei den Diskussionen zwischen dem Vereinigten Königreich und Nordirland gesehen, wie wir nach wie vor nicht in der Lage sind, digitale Zollabwicklung vorzunehmen.

Deswegen wünsche ich mir, Herr Kommissar, dass die Europäische Kommission die jetzt freigegebenen Mittel dazu nutzt, auch in die Digitalisierung zu investieren und dafür zu sorgen, dass zwischen allen Mitgliedstaaten und allen Zollbehörden ein vergleichbares Niveau an technischer und digitaler Verfügbarkeit von Infrastrukturen vorhanden ist, damit wir gemeinsam dafür sorgen können, dass der europäische Binnenmarkt der sicherste Markt in der Welt bleibt.

Virginijus Sinkevičius, Member of the Commission. – Mr President, I am delighted to be here today and to take part in this debate on the future instrument for customs control equipment. The Commission welcomes the outcome of the negotiations, including the agreed budget of EUR 1 billion in the context of the multiannual financial framework negotiations, and of course I would like to thank in particular the rapporteur, Jiří Pospíšil, for his strong support and major contribution to the successful compromise that we have on the table today.

Customs officers at the external borders of the European Union need to be properly equipped in order to ensure the functioning of the Customs Union. The need for adequate and equivalent customs control is ever more pressing, given the increasing role played by customs to ensure the safety and security of the Union. Risks and threats to the security of the Union and its financial and economic interests have progressively increased and new ones have emerged during the recent years.

The surge in e-commerce, increasing digitalisation and the need to improve resilience to cyberattacks have also increased demand for effective customs control in order to prevent the diversion of flows of goods towards the weakest points in the customs control system, often referred to as ‘import point shopping’.

Let me thus highlight the importance of the CCEI: the first funding instrument entirely dedicated to strengthening Member States’ capacities to perform customs control. It comes as a response to the calls from the Member States and the European Parliament for a structured solution to provide national customs administrations with adequate and effective technical equipment for controlling goods entering and leaving the EU. It will ultimately improve and harmonise the quality of the customs controls. An important element of the CCEI is that it shall clearly demonstrate EU added value.

The CCEI will be implemented in two stages. In the first stage as a short-term approach the existing performance gaps like missing equipment or deficiencies in the control capacities related to clearly identified needs at the border crossing points and customs laboratories shall be filled in. This will contribute to achieving adequate customs controls across the Union. In the second stage as a long-term vision we will aim to achieve equivalent levels of customs controls. This will happen through common definitions of customs controls from an equipment perspective where definitely greater standardisation is needed. For that, the Commission will propose common standards related to the optimal use of equipment. What equipment should be available, where, how to use it, what is the optimal equipment from a performance perspective, the optimal coverage of customs risks and threats with the equipment, etc.

In this context, I want to stress that the equipment purchased under any of the two-step phases will need to be interoperable and information will need to be easily exchangeable across all EU Member States customs. In order to reach the ambitious policy objective, the CCEI will collect and analyse data to be able to comprehensively map the equipment readiness of all Member States. This will feed into the overall vision of improved customs controls. Data analysis will be available at a level that previously did not exist within the Customs Union.

Without further delay, the Commission services are ready to implement the instrument that will contribute to the shared long-term aim of harmonised application of customs controls. And our work does not stop there. We need to be holistic. The Commission will provide strong responses beyond the CCEI to the recent European Court of Auditors report which highlights as well the insufficient harmonisation of customs control. We will come up with a proposal to reinforce the legal framework, a new risk management strategy and joint analytics capabilities within OLAF and BUDG.

The European Parliament is also well aware of our work on the single-window environment for customs on which we need to progress quickly.

As you see, there is a lot that can be done at EU level and of course I count on your support to continue pushing Member States to take their share of responsibility in this overall ambition of customs control modernisation. I would love to hear your views and I look forward to a fruitful debate.

Antonius Manders, *namens de PPE-Fractie*. – Voorzitter, commissaris, dank u wel voor de uitnodiging om een levendig debat te voeren over dit belangrijke onderwerp. Waarom is dit een belangrijk onderwerp? Omdat de interne markt het belangrijkste is wat wij in de Europese Unie hebben. Daar hangt onze economie van af en via die economie kunnen we ook een evenwicht creëren.

Het is goed dat we met financiële middelen de douane helpen om de zwakkere partners in de havens her en der te ondersteunen en om een gelijk speelveld te krijgen, ook op douaneniveau, zodat we illegale en vaak gevaarlijke producten van buiten de Unie, die dan op de interne markt kunnen belanden, tegen kunnen houden, wat vervolgens ook nog een oneerlijke concurrentie tegengaat. Dus positief over dit stuk.

Maar daarmee zijn we er nog niet. We moeten nadenken over hoe we dat op middellange of lange termijn kunnen verbeteren en daar heb ik twee voorstellen voor. Ten eerste moeten we gevaarlijke illegale goederen buiten de Europese interne markt houden, maar ook drugs, want die komen van alle kanten binnen. Een mogelijkheid is het opzetten van een soort elektronisch sleepnet, waardoor we de goederenstromen in heel Europa kunnen volgen zodat we de illegale goederen bij de grens, in de havens, kunnen tegenhouden. Maar als dat niet kan, dan moeten we wel weten waar ze dan naartoe gaan. En op dit moment weten we dat niet.

Ten tweede, en dat is misschien wellicht het belangrijkste, en hier wil ik mee eindigen, Frontex is opgetuigd om de grenzen te bewaken en dat is met name vanwege de vluchtelingencrisis. Het zou heel goed zijn als we een soort Frontex opzetten dat de lidstaten gaat helpen met het opsporen van illegale import en het tegenhouden van drugs, om zodoende een sterke interne markt te creëren.

Adriana Maldonado López, *en nombre del Grupo S&D*. – Señor presidente, la unión aduanera de la Unión Europea se ha convertido en una de las piedras angulares de nuestro mercado único al mantener la seguridad de las fronteras de la Unión Europea y también proteger a nuestros ciudadanos europeos frente a las mercancías prohibidas y peligrosas como son las armas, las drogas o los productos falsificados. Pero también frente a contratiempos como los medioambientales, las cuestiones relacionadas con la salud, etcétera.

En 2019 las aduanas de la Unión Europea interceptaron mercancías falsas y potencialmente peligrosas por valor de 760 000 millones de euros. Si analizamos qué tipo de productos falsificados entraban por nuestras fronteras, principalmente encontramos cigarrillos, relojes falsificados, juguetes o ropa. Y, sin duda alguna, el país que más productos incautados tuvo fue China.

Por eso, creo que es importante que este instrumento financiero esté presupuestado con más de mil millones de euros en el marco financiero plurianual 2021-2027 y consideramos además que ha de tener un carácter retroactivo, porque es fundamental que tenga en cuenta dos cuestiones importantes que se mencionan en el informe.

En primer lugar, asegurar un nivel equivalente de control en todas las fronteras de la Unión Europea. De nada sirve que tengamos aduanas totalmente diferenciadas o con estándares diferenciados que lleven a las empresas a intentar entrar por unos puertos o por otros.

Y, en segundo lugar, permitir que las autoridades aduaneras de los Estados miembros puedan financiar la compra, el mantenimiento y la mejora de los equipos de controles aduaneros.

Es importante, y el informe lo resalta, que apostemos por la digitalización de todas nuestras aduanas. Es importante también que a lo largo de toda la unión aduanera evitemos que haya puntos débiles de la Unión Europea y contemos con unos productos más seguros en nuestro mercado interior que cumplan con la normativa europea. Porque de eso dependen también la vida y el día a día de muchísimos ciudadanos europeos.

Simplemente quiero resaltar el valor importante que tienen las aduanas en el mercado único y en el día a día de todos los ciudadanos europeos. Este informe lo que hace es apostar por unas aduanas más seguras, unas aduanas más digitalizadas y unas aduanas que miren por el futuro de los ciudadanos europeos.

Vlad-Marius Botoș, în numele grupului *Renew*. – Domnule președinte, domnule comisar, stimați colegi, mulțumesc raportului și mulțumesc și lui Andreas Schwab pentru prezentarea acestui raport, tocmai pentru că o piață unică europeană nu poate funcționa fără a se asigura că produsele puse la dispoziția consumatorului nu-i pun în pericol. Armonizarea legislației și cerințelor pentru mărfurile produse în interiorul Uniunii Europene trebuie însoțită de o armonizare a controlului mărfurilor intrate în piața unică europeană, produse în țări terțe. Pentru aceasta este necesar să ne asigurăm că vămile au la dispoziție echipamente eficiente, iar modalitățile de control de pe întreg teritoriul Uniunii sunt armonizate.

Dotarea cu echipamente moderne, softuri adecvate, interoperabile, în toate punctele de intrare a mărfurilor din Uniunea Europeană este o condiție *sine qua non* pentru a asigura un grad ridicat de siguranță a pieței unice. Condițiile și regulile comune pentru verificarea mărfurilor din statele membre atrag după sine o mai mare predictibilitate în transportul de bunuri și elimină orele sau chiar zilele de așteptare la frontierele între statele membre, cum este cazul frontierei pe care chiar astăzi am tranzitat-o, dintre România și Ungaria, unde coada de tiruri era din nou de câțiva kilometri.

O altă provocare pentru sistemul de vămi este aflul mare de produse care intră pe piața unică europeană prin intermediul pieței digitale. Dacă ne gândim la milioanele de produse ajunse la consumatori pe această cale, ne dăm seama că suma de aproximativ un miliard de euro, stabilită împreună cu Consiliul, pentru echipamente de verificare vamală este doar un pas și nu o soluție completă la provocările cu care ne confruntăm.

Anna Cavazzini, on behalf of the *Verts/ALE Group*. – Mr President, some people may think that customs policy is boring or not relevant for their lives, but the contrary is true. The internal market can only keep up its high product standards and the trust the consumers place in those with a strong customs control regime. The EU imports hundreds of thousands of products every day and the custom controls guarantee that the EU's high food hygiene or safety standards are not undermined. That is why it is good that we found an agreement on the customs control equipment, because customs need to be adequately funded and equipped.

For the future of the EU customs policy, I find the following points crucial. First, we need to tackle new challenges and we have to take them into account – like, for example, more e-commerce, where sometimes product standards are undermined. Second, we need better coordination between market surveillance authorities and to enhance their role as additional action. And third, we need to adapt now to upcoming legislation, like mandatory due diligence or deforestation, free supply chains, and make sure that customs authorities are well equipped to enforce that.

Carlo Fidanza, a nome del gruppo *ECR*. – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, la competitività delle nostre aziende e la tutela dei consumatori dipendono fortemente dalla capacità di reazione delle autorità preposte al contrasto delle violazioni dei diritti di proprietà intellettuale e della commercializzazione delle merci contraffatte.

Inoltre, la frode doganale sottrae fondi ai bilanci pubblici e, data la sua natura transnazionale, richiede una forte cooperazione tra le amministrazioni degli Stati membri. Sosteniamo quindi l'iniziativa di dedicare risorse finanziarie destinate all'acquisto e l'utilizzo di nuove e più avanzate attrezzature per il controllo doganale.

Lo strumento finanziario che sarà messo a disposizione degli Stati membri deriva dalla sempre più urgente necessità di rafforzare significativamente il controllo delle merci nel momento in cui esse entrano attraverso le frontiere dell'Unione, al fine di garantirne la sicurezza. Queste merci devono essere sicure e rispettose delle stesse normative dell'Unione europea che le nostre aziende sono tenute a rispettare per poter mettere in commercio i propri prodotti.

È apprezzabile anche l'intenzione di sostenere il raggiungimento di un livello adeguato e uniforme in tutti i paesi dell'Unione. Ciò consentirà di concretizzare i vantaggi dell'Unione doganale, fornendo ulteriori sostegni alle autorità doganali nella loro azione congiunta a tutela degli interessi degli Stati membri e del mercato unico.

Beata Mazurek (ECR). – Panie Przewodniczący! Panie Komisarzu! Skuteczna ochrona granicy zewnętrznej Unii Europejskiej, zwłaszcza wobec nowych i nasilających się zagrożeń, to nasz wspólny obowiązek i nasza odpowiedzialność, a nie tylko państw granicznych. Służby celne odgrywają zasadniczą rolę w kontroli przepływu towarów na granicy zewnętrznej, a także dbają o ochronę interesów gospodarczych i bezpieczeństwo obywateli. W pełnieniu tych zadań powinny uzyskać wsparcie podobne do tego, jakie od lat otrzymują inne służby graniczne i policyjne.

Projekt rozporządzenia wychodzi naprzeciw wieloletnim, konsekwentnie formułowanym przez Polskę i szereg państw członkowskich postulatom o wsparcie finansowe na wyposażenie w sprzęt kontrolny. Wdrażanie instrumentu w istotny sposób przyczyni się do odpowiednich i równoważnych wyników kontroli celnych poprzez zakup, konserwację i modernizację sprzętu, co jednoznacznie przełoży się na wzmocnienie bezpieczeństwa nas wszystkich. I na tym powinno nam zależeć.

Virginijus Sinkevičius, Member of the Commission. – Mr President, honourable Members, once again let me warmly thank you for organising this important and timely debate on the instrument for financial support for customs control equipment (CCE). I have heard some excellent suggestions and comments that the Commission will definitely take on board when implementing the instrument.

The agreement that was found on this important instrument is excellent news. The CCE will play a key role in ensuring greater uniformity and adequacy, and improve results in the performance of customs control at the external borders. The programme will offer a valuable instrument to support the Member States in ensuring that customs authorities act as one in protecting the interests of the Union. Thus, it will contribute to the overall cohesion between Member States.

I take once again the opportunity to thank Parliament for the constructive approach and for the outcome of the negotiations. The Commission looks forward to continuing the fruitful cooperation with the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection.

Πρόεδρος. – Η συζήτηση έληξε.

23. Explanations of vote: see Minutes

24. Corrections to votes and voting intentions: see Minutes

25. Agenda of the next sitting: see Minutes

26. Closure of the sitting

(Η συνεδρίαση λήγει στις 21.52)

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

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
ID	Identity and Democracy Group
Verts/ALE	Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance
ECR	European Conservatives and Reformists Group
The Left	The Left Group in the European Parliament – GUE/NGL
NI	Non-attached Members