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VERBATIM REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS OF 14 MARCH 2024

(C/2025/1697)

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2024-2025 SESSION

Sittings of 12 to 14 March 2024

STRASBOURG

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VERBATIM REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS OF 14 MARCH 2024

PRESIDÊNCIA: PEDRO SILVA PEREIRA

Vice-Presidente

1. Opening of the sitting

(A sessão é aberta às 9h01)

2. Negotiations ahead of Parliament's first reading (Rule 71) (action taken)

Presidente. – Informo que, relativamente à decisão conjunta das Comissões AFET e BUDG de encetar negociações interinstitucionais, nos termos do artigo 71.º, n.º 1, do Regimento, anunciada na abertura da sessão diária de terça-feira, 12 de março, não foi recebido nenhum pedido de votação no Parlamento por um número de deputados ou um ou vários grupos políticos que atinjam pelo menos o chamado limiar médio. Por conseguinte, as comissões podem iniciar as negociações.

3. Inclusion of the right to abortion in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights (debate)

Presidente. – Segue-se o debate sobre as declarações do Conselho e da Comissão sobre a inclusão do direito ao aborto na Carta dos Direitos Fundamentais da UE (2024/2655(RSP)).

Elisa Ferreira, Member of the Commission. – Mr President, honourable Members, I am speaking here on behalf of my colleague, Commissioner Helena Dalli. In fact, lack of access to safe and legal abortion can affect several fundamental rights, including human dignity and the right to equality and to the physical and mental integrity of the person.

The European Court of Human Rights has recognised the lack of access to abortion services as a violation of the right to family and private life. When it comes to competence on that matter, Article 168 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union provides that health care, including sexual and reproductive health care, falls within the Member States' competence. Member States are thus responsible for the definition of their health priorities and the organisation and delivery of health services and medical care.

The Union's competence is limited to encouraging cooperation between Member States and, if necessary, lending support to direction. However, when making use of their competences, Member States must respect the rights enshrined in their national constitutions and comply with their commitments under international law.

The Commission considers that everyone across the European Union should have adequate access to quality health care and treatment, and that sexual and reproductive health rights are at the core of gender equality. The Commission therefore supports regular exchanges between Member States and stakeholders on these matters under the Mutual Learning Programme in Gender Equality.

The Commission also continues to fund civil society organisations working on gender equality, including sexual and reproductive health and rights through the Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values programme. Furthermore, it provides support to Member States' efforts in implementing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals relevant to women's health, universal access to sexual and reproductive care, family planning, and education.

Regarding the inclusion of the right to abortion in the Charter, Article 6 of the Treaty on European Union confirms that the rights, freedoms and principles set out in the Charter have the same legal value as the Treaties. An amendment of the Charter would accordingly follow the procedure to revise the Treaties set out in Article 48 of the TEU. A revision of the Charter requires a common accord of the conference of representatives of the governments of all Member States. The revision would then be subject to approval in each Member State in accordance with national constitutional requirements.

The Commission is determined to do everything within the remits of its competence to advance fundamental rights. Thank you very much for your discussions and attention.

Nathalie Colin-Oesterlé, *au nom du groupe PPE*. – Monsieur le Président, Madame la Commissaire, chers collègues, le droit à un avortement sûr et légal est une nécessité et une question de santé publique. Alors que nous construisons l'Europe de la santé ici, dans ce Parlement, ce Parlement dont Simone Veil a été la présidente, alors que nous légiférons pour permettre à tous les citoyens européens un égal accès aux soins, une femme meurt toutes les neuf minutes d'un avortement clandestin.

Pour autant, il faut avoir un discours de vérité et cesser de tromper les citoyens. Emmanuel Macron nous promet d'inscrire le droit à l'avortement dans la charte des droits fondamentaux de l'Union européenne et souhaite se positionner ainsi comme le grand défenseur des droits des femmes en Europe. L'inscription du droit à l'IVG dans la charte est certes une belle intention, à laquelle je souscris pleinement, mais ce qu'Emmanuel Macron ne dit pas, c'est qu'elle est, aujourd'hui, techniquement impossible.

Impossible, car ce n'est pas une compétence européenne. Impossible, car la charte des droits fondamentaux ayant valeur de traité, il faut, pour la modifier, l'unanimité des gouvernements des États membres. Et, contrairement à ce qu'on vous laisse penser, pour inscrire le droit à l'IVG dans la charte, il ne suffit pas d'un simple vote à la majorité au Parlement européen, il faut que tous les gouvernements des 27 États membres soient d'accord à l'unanimité. Autrement dit, le refus d'un seul État rend impossible cette inscription dans la charte. Or, on le sait, de nombreux États freinent encore des quatre fers sur cette question. Je pense à Malte, à la Pologne, à la Hongrie.

Monsieur Macron, la campagne électorale européenne ne doit pas faire de notre Parlement un théâtre où se joue une comédie de l'Europe. Ne mentionnons pas aux citoyens sur ce qui peut réellement être fait au niveau européen. Soyons honnêtes. L'action de l'Union européenne a ses limites, celles qui sont imposées par les traités. Soyons francs. Si Emmanuel Macron avait voulu réellement défendre les droits des femmes, il n'aurait pas mis son veto à l'inclusion du viol dans la toute première loi européenne de lutte contre les violences faites aux femmes. Et, à cet égard, ses dernières déclarations sont improbables et irresponsables.

Et puis soyons transparents. Le droit à l'IVG? Oui. Mais qu'en est-il lorsque, sur notre propre territoire, en France, les structures d'accompagnement et les médecins manquent, lorsque les femmes ne peuvent avoir accès aux soins, aux services de soins requis? Ne sont-ce pas là l'urgence et la priorité de M. Macron? Il faut cesser de faire diversion. À quelques semaines des élections européennes, les femmes méritent beaucoup mieux que cela.

Robert Biedroń, *w imieniu grupy S&D*. – Panie Przewodniczący! Piekło kobiet trwa. Barbarzyński zakaz antyaborcyjny obowiązuje w Polsce, na Malcie. W wielu krajach próbuje się także ograniczyć prawa kobiet. Oczywiście ta inicjatywa grupy Renew jest niezwykle ważna. Tylko apeluję tutaj, żeby koledzy i koleżanki z tej samej grupy w Polsce usłyszeli wasz głos, bo to ta grupa w Polsce blokuje m.in. dobre zmiany na rzecz dobrego prawa pozwalającego kobietom decydować o swoim życiu i zdrowiu.

Zakaz aborcji ma swoje realne reperkusje, ale dyskryminacja kobiet i dziewczynek niestety trwa także w wielu innych dziedzinach: w sferze ekonomicznej, społecznej, kulturalnej, jeśli chodzi o wyzwania globalne, dlatego potrzebujemy Europejskiej Karty Praw Kobiet. Apeluję do Komisji Europejskiej, żeby w przyszłej kadencji rozpoczęła prace nad tym ważnym dokumentem. Nie może być tak, że w 2024 r. w Unii Europejskiej mamy standardy w wielu różnych dziedzinach, a nadal nie mamy jednego standardu, jeśli chodzi o prawa kobiet. Musimy to zmienić.

Karen Melchior, *on behalf of the Renew Group*. – Mr President, the right to decide over our own bodies is fundamental. We cannot have equality without women being able to decide over their own bodies. We cannot have equality without the right to abortion, the right to full health care, the right to decide over our own bodies.

It is not only a question of equality; it is also a question of healthcare. Abortion should be a question that is decided between a woman and her doctor. And healthcare is a European issue when it suits the Member States. So that's why I regret that the Council is not here today, because the Member States should unite in a coalition for the women of Europe, because we should provide full healthcare to all women.

For the women of Malta, 'Ahna magħkom'. We see you. We are with you.

We need abortion as a right for all women. We need access to medical abortion across borders. I ask for right to abortion to be enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights, but also for the Member States to take action and provide healthcare to women in Europe for abortion in their Member States, in excess of what is required by the European Union.

Gwendoline Delbos-Corfield, *on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group*. – Mr President, it is time for feminists, for progressives and for citizens to ask for what is needed. And in 2024, enshrining sexual and reproductive rights in the heart of our European text is a necessity for the well-being of people and specifically the safety of women. There is no healthy democracy without women's rights and gender equality. Last November, this Parliament voted to have the inclusion of these rights in the Charter of Fundamental Rights, and it is good to reaffirm it today.

But why be less ambitious? We have to reclaim the entirety of our rights and to counter the narrative of the far right and those who want to make us live in fear.

Bodily autonomy comes with contraception. Bodily autonomy comes with sexual education. The health of women can no longer be less of a priority for academics and doctors. Ignorance has always been a poison used to control a population. Of course we need abortion. Abortion gives women the power to choose their own lives. This is not a discussion. There are still too many women at risk of dying, or having to flee their country to find a solution, or seeing their life dramatically impacted by an unwanted pregnancy in the European Union. Yes!

But this is a societal and democratic issue, not a woman's problem. All people, no matter what their sex and gender, should know their body. So this is how to protect it. How to heal it. The nature of desire. What is consent? This is what we need. We need full and universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights without discrimination, including, indeed, access to safe and legal abortion.

Margarita de la Pisa Carrión, *en nombre del Grupo ECR*. – Señor presidente, señora comisaria, señorías, todos nosotros hemos sido creados como miembros de la familia humana. Nuestra existencia no depende de ser aceptada o no por otros. Considerar ejercer la «libertad garantizada» de acabar con la misma en el seno materno, como cita el cambio de la Constitución francesa, pone en tela de juicio los principios que sustentan el Estado de Derecho. La Unión Europea no debe continuar esta deriva, que supone la degradación de sus derechos fundamentales.

Ante la trascendencia de un embarazo las mujeres necesitamos apoyo, información, cariño; porque, frente al desamparo o la adversidad, la propuesta del aborto no permite una decisión realmente libre ni consciente.

Ayudemos a las mujeres a resolver las circunstancias que las abocan a esa dramática decisión: pobreza, soledad, riesgo de perder su trabajo, miedo a no ser aceptadas o a perder su libertad. Dejemos de ver la maternidad como una amenaza. Apreciemos la vida. Sabemos que ninguna madre se arrepiente de serlo. La opción del aborto nos deja tiradas. No es un servicio sanitario, lo es la atención del embarazo y de la infancia.

La mujer que se siente acogida, querida, no niega la vida y puede recibirla con esperanza.

Eugenia Rodríguez Palop, *en nombre del Grupo The Left*. – Señor presidente, en lo que se refiere al derecho al aborto, la Unión Europea tiene una deuda pendiente con las mujeres. Porque se sigue tolerando a quienes se escudan en competencias estatales en materia de salud para obstaculizar el acceso al aborto legal y seguro, retrasar su ejercicio o promover cazas de brujas; a quienes, en su férrea defensa de la vida del no nacido, apoyan prácticas que constituyen tortura y tratos inhumanos y degradantes.

Y ya sabemos que tras esa defensa lo que se esconde realmente es la sacralidad de la familia convencional, donde papá es el propietario y mamá la propiedad.

Se acabaron las medias tintas. Hay que incorporar el derecho al aborto a la Carta de los Derechos Fundamentales como un derecho autónomo vinculado a la vida y a la dignidad. Y los Estados tienen que constitucionalizarlo. Ahí está el aviso a navegantes del Tribunal Europeo de Derechos Humanos con las políticas antiabortistas de Polonia.

Por Izabela, por Dorota, por Justyna, por Andrea, por Antonia. Por las que ya no están. Por ellas, por nosotras y por las que vendrán.

Isabel Benjumea Benjumea (PPE). – Señor presidente, señora comisaria, toda persona tiene derecho a la vida. Este es el artículo 2 de la Carta que algunos en este Parlamento quieren enmendar. Es una sorprendente contradicción. Define Celso que el Derecho es el arte de lo bueno y lo justo. Por esto mismo los derechos ni se crean, ni se erigen, ni se conquistan. Los derechos se reconocen.

El respeto a la vida humana en todas sus dimensiones es el primer acto de justicia que debe aplicarse. Defender la vida humana es preservarla en todo lugar, en todo momento. ¿Cómo no compartir la belleza de la vida humana? El aborto representa un fracaso para nosotros como sociedad. Es verdaderamente un drama moral y existencial. Y ataca al atacar la existencia de otro ser humano.

Por más que lo llamen derecho, de lo que aquí estamos hablando es de una imposición ideológica. La imposición del señor Macron al resto de Europa, haciendo gala de oportunismo político para introducir por la fuerza la cultura de la muerte en todos los Estados de la Unión. La voluntad de una minoría que arbitrariamente, sin razón científica, debe decidir cuándo y cómo se concibe la vida humana para la mayoría. ¿Admitirá este Parlamento ser el instrumento al servicio de este obstinado ataque de esta minoría contra la vida que proclamamos defender?

Este mal llamado derecho no lo ampara ni la Declaración de los Derechos Humanos, ni el Tratado de la Unión, ni tampoco el Convenio. Es hora de llamar a las cosas por su nombre. Y el Derecho se instauró no para promover la muerte, sino para defender la vida.

(La oradora acepta responder a una pregunta formulada con arreglo al procedimiento de la «tarjeta azul»)

Hilde Vautmans (Renew), *blue-card question*. – I hear you saying now that it's because the elections are there that Macron will ask it. Well, I will ask you, do you know that this Parliament voted a resolution in July 2022 that we asked to put abortion in the *handvest*? Thank you very much. Because there we voted it, so it's not about elections, it's what the Parliament voted here.

Isabel Benjumea Benjumea (PPE), *respuesta de «tarjeta azul»*. – Como he dicho en mi intervención, este Parlamento está intentando imponer a los Estados miembros su voluntad, que es la voluntad de una minoría. Y me reafirmo.

El señor Macron, cuando vino aquí a anunciar sus prioridades a la Presidencia, ya anunció que pretendía hacer esto. El señor Macron está utilizando el aborto como un instrumento político para su propio interés. No caigamos en la trampa. Respetemos la subsidiariedad y respetemos el derecho a la vida.

Predrag Fred Matić (S&D). – Poštovani predsjedavajući, povjerenice, svaka priča o rodnoj ravnopravnosti prolazi ili pada na pravu žene da slobodno odlučuje o svom tijelu, jer to je temeljno pitanje kada govorimo o Europi jednakosti.

Mi smo već mnogo puta u ovom parlamentu o tome govorili i stav većine je vrlo jasan. Svaka žena mora imati pravo na siguran i legalan pobačaj. Dakako, ovdje imamo kolega koji će i danas ponavljati svoje parole i zanijekati stoljeće u kojem živimo i standarde u ljudskim pravima koje smo izborili. Ali veći problem od tih kolega su države članice koje kontinuirano niječu svoju odgovornost u osiguravanju prava na pobačaj. Istovremeno, Vijeće i Komisija stalno se skrivaju iza famoznog argumenta nacionalnih kompetencija.

Upravo zato došlo je vrijeme da svima njima kažemo dosta. Europska unija mora zaštititi pravo svake žene na tjelesnu autonomiju i unijeti pravo na siguran i legalan pobačaj u Povelji o temeljnim pravima. A kada i taj trenutak dođe, a doći će, mnoge žene u Europi to neće doživjeti upravo zato jer su ubijene od strane manjkavog i mizoginog zdravstvenog sustava. Za sve njih mi ćemo se nastaviti boriti.

(Govornik je pristao odgovoriti na pitanje postavljeno podizanjem plave kartice)

Bert-Jan Ruissen (ECR), “blauwe kaart”-vraag. – Voorzitter, collega Matić spreekt o.a. over vrouwenrechten. Ik zou hem eigenlijk een vraag willen stellen over kinderrechten.

Mijn vraag luidt als volgt: bent u op de hoogte van het Verdrag van de rechten van het kind van de VN? Bent u zich ervan bewust dat in dat verdrag staat dat ieder kind recht heeft op zorg en dat dit zowel voor als na de geboorte geldt? Hoe kijkt u aan tegen die zorgplicht en hoe verhoudt zich dat tot uw standpunt over abortus?

Predrag Fred Matić (S&D), odgovor na pitanje postavljeno podizanjem plave kartice. – Ovo je ono što smo govorili da živimo u neakvim stoljećima koja smo davno prošli i živimo u srednjem vijeku.

Mi to nećemo dopustiti, dakle stalno obrćete situaciju i obrćete teze. Ovdje se ne govori o pravima djeteta, ovdje se govori o pravu žene na siguran i legalan pobačaj i o tome nema razgovora, i o tome nema dogovora.

Marie-Pierre Vedrenne (Renew). – Monsieur le Président, le 17 janvier 1975, la France, par l'engagement de Simone Veil, garantissait dans la loi le droit à l'interruption volontaire de grossesse. Le 8 mars 2024, la France, par la voix d'Emmanuel Macron, garantissait dans la Constitution ce droit. À quelle date nous, Européens, allons-nous enfin garantir ce droit dans la charte des droits fondamentaux?

Nous nous trouvons à un moment crucial de l'histoire des droits des femmes. Ce droit, notre droit, est toujours attaqué avec une férocité sans précédent. Le droit à l'interruption volontaire de grossesse est menacé partout. Aussi, ici, dans notre hémicycle, il est de notre responsabilité d'inscrire en lettres indélébiles dans la charte des droits fondamentaux cette liberté. Chaque femme a le droit de décider de son propre avenir, et nous ne permettrons à personne de le lui enlever.

Cette bataille n'est pas seulement pour le choix, mais bien pour la dignité, l'intégrité et la liberté des femmes. Nous ne pouvons permettre à des idéologies rétrogrades de dicter ce que les femmes peuvent faire de leur propre corps. Refuser l'inscription de ce droit dans la charte européenne des droits fondamentaux revient à violer les principes les plus élémentaires du droit à la santé et des droits de l'homme. Alors battons-nous ensemble.

Diana Riba i Giner (Verts/ALE). – Señor presidente, el acceso al aborto legal y seguro es una cuestión de derechos humanos y, como tal, es obvio que debería ser incluido en la Carta de los Derechos Fundamentales de la Unión Europea. Pero que sea obvio no quita el hecho de que esta posible inclusión sea una victoria del feminismo. Porque vivimos un momento histórico en que nos toca luchar por lo más básico y lo más obvio.

Según datos de la OMS se producen 25 millones de abortos no seguros cada año, los cuales causan la muerte a 39 000 mujeres, 39 000 vidas. Parece obvio que hay que actuar, ¿verdad?

No esperen que hoy estemos agradecidos a Macron por haber puesto esta propuesta sobre la mesa. Esta Cámara también lo hizo el año pasado. Hoy damos las gracias a todas aquellas mujeres que se han dejado la piel luchando por nuestros derechos.

Por cierto, esperemos que el Gobierno francés, así como el alemán, reconsideren su posición de vetar la incorporación de la violación sobre la base de la falta de consentimiento en la Directiva sobre la violencia de género, algo que también debería ser bastante obvio, ¿verdad?

(La oradora se niega a que Margarita de la Pisa Carrión le formule una pregunta con arreglo al procedimiento de la «tarjeta azul»).

Izabela-Helena Kloc (ECR). – Panie Przewodniczący! Pani Komisarz! Szanowni Europosłowie! Każda ludzka istota ma prawo do absolutnego poszanowania podstawowego dobra, jakim jest życie. A uznanie tego prawa stanowi fundament współistnienia między ludźmi oraz istnienia wspólnoty politycznej. Nic i nikt nie może tego prawa dać, prawa do zabicia niewinnej istoty ludzkiej. Czy to jest embrión, czy płód, dziecko czy dorosły, człowiek stary, nieuleczalnie chory czy umierający. Żadna władza nie ma prawa do tego zmuszać ani na to przyzwalać. To są słowa świętego Jana Pawła II, wciąż aktualne dziś bardziej niż kiedykolwiek.

Teraz wręcz zasadne staje się pytanie, czy zapisanie prawa do aborcji w Karcie Praw Podstawowych Unii Europejskiej ma być realizacją w istocie polityki depopulacji Europy? Tę politykę sprecyzował w 1972 roku Klub Rzymski w raporcie Granice wzrostu, a obecnie szefowa Komisji Europejskiej Ursula von der Leyen z chrześcijańskiej partii PPE tak ochoczo ten raport przywołuje. Dla Polski 15 milionów ludności, czy o to chodzi? Tak, pani europoseł powiedziała „kultura śmierci”. To tę kulturę promuje lewicowo-liberalna mniejszość.

Marina Mesure (The Left). – Monsieur le Président, comprenez nos exigences et respectez nos droits. Le projet d'inscrire le droit à l'avortement dans la charte européenne des droits fondamentaux est un projet à la hauteur de notre intelligence collective, qui porte en lui des valeurs fondamentales et qui ne peut plus attendre. Un projet fondamental, car cela garantit enfin à 250 millions de femmes en Europe le droit à disposer de leur corps. Un projet qui ne peut plus attendre, car ce droit est attaqué partout en Europe par des forces réactionnaires, comme en Pologne, où le gouvernement d'extrême droite a retiré le droit à l'IVG à 20 millions de Polonaises, un droit qui pourtant avait été gagné il y a soixante-dix ans.

Mais nous le savons, les droits des femmes ne sont jamais acquis, et il suffit d'une crise pour qu'ils soient remis en cause. C'est pour cela que nous avons la responsabilité historique et le devoir aujourd'hui de sanctuariser ces droits dans notre charte, dans notre socle fondateur, dans nos valeurs communes. La France a montré la voie de l'inscription de l'IVG dans la Constitution et je m'en félicite. Il est à nous ici de montrer la nôtre en inscrivant ce droit dans notre charte et d'envoyer ainsi un message fort à toutes les femmes d'Europe et à toutes les femmes du monde.

Arba Kokalari (PPE). – Herr talman! Varför ska någon annan ha rätten att bestämma över din kropp och ditt liv? Det borde vara en självklarhet att det är du som bestämmer, men det är inte det i dag.

Rätten till din egen kropp är och ska vara en mänsklig rättighet. Trots det hotas aborträtten världen över. Det finns kvinnor i Europa som tvingas riskera sina liv och dö för att de har förbjudits att göra abort, för att staten bestämmer över deras kroppar.

Men det behöver faktiskt inte vara så här. Frankrike har precis grundlagsskyddat aborträtten och den moderata regeringen i Sverige arbetar för samma sak. Europasamarbetet handlar om att skydda våra mänskliga fri- och rättigheter och det är därför moderaterna går till val på att säkra aborträtten i hela EU. Nu är det dags att EU uppfyller det löftet för alla kvinnor i Europa. Rätten till abort måste grundlagsskyddas i hela EU.

Cyrus Engerer (S&D). – Mr President, woman number 4: 'When I went for my scan, I found I had cancer. In Malta you cannot get therapy if pregnant. According to law, I should have sacrificed my life for the foetus's life and leave my children orphaned.'

Woman number 10: 'I don't remember much of that night. He hit me so hard I was unconscious. I woke up without any clothes on me'.

Mara, 26: irrisspettivament miċ-ċirkostanzi, minkejja li t-tarbija ma setgħatx tgħix, sfurzawni nkun qabar għal disa' xhur.

Mara, 28: kelli nqatta' l-iktar lejl tal-biża' u ta' solitudni waħdi f'kamra f'lukanda.

Woman 38: 'I was in fact a hero who saved a life. I saved my own life'.

All these women have names, but if they speak, it means three years' imprisonment for their crime to survive in my country, Malta. Five hundred women per year in my country have illegal, unsafe abortions at home alone.

L-awtonomija tal-gisem hi fundamentali għal kulhadd: għal persuni trans, għan-nisa u għal kull individwu iehor.

Today is 14 March 2024, and this is the first speech by a Maltese in this Parliament in favour of choice for everyone.

Abir Al-Sahlani (Renew). – Herr talman! Jag kan inte tro att jag, år 2024, står här i Europaparlamentet och återigen försöker försvara kvinnors rätt att få bestämma över sina egna kroppar, i världens enda demokrati, där det ska råda mänskliga rättigheter och rättsstat för alla.

Ändå inbillar sig män i olika länder, konservativa gubbar i EU, att de har rätt att besluta över kvinnors kroppar. Jag kan inte tro det – i land efter land gör de det svårare. I Tyskland, i Rumänien, i Slovakien, i Slovenien gör de det svårare för kvinnor att göra abort, att få bestämma över sin kropp. För att inte prata om Malta där man har ett totalt förbud mot abort.

Ni gör det bara osäkert för kvinnor att avsluta en oönskad graviditet. Ni skickar dem rakt in i sjukdomar, i döden. Det är det man gör när man gör tillgången till säkra och lagliga aborter omöjligt. Det är dags att lagstadga aborträtten in i den svenska grundlagen och in i EU:s grundlagsskyddade mänskliga rättigheter. Inget annat duger. Alla ska få bestämma över sina egna kroppar, kvinnor likaså.

Alice Kuhnke (Verts/ALE). – Herr talman! Det finns många anledningar bakom en abort. Alltifrån att graviditeten är livshotande till att man helt enkelt inte vill. Det finns många skäl, men det finns bara en som ska bestämma. Det är inte kyrkan, det är inte politiker, det är inte föräldrar, grannar eller partner. Det är enbart den enskilda kvinnan som ska ta beslut om sin egen kropp.

Aborträtten ska inte kunna inskränkas av politiker med ett perverst behov av att kontrollera kvinnors kroppar. Därför måste rätten till abort bli en del av EU:s grundläggande rättigheter. Rätten till abort ska garanteras i hela EU, i varje land, för varje kvinna.

(Talaren avböjde en fråga ("blått kort") från Margarita de la Pisa Carrión)

Miriam Lexmann (PPE). – Vážený pán predsedajúci, zhrozená, pobúrená a sklamaná. Základným ľudským právom je právo na život a základným pilierom našej slobodnej civilizácie je sloboda myslenia, svedomia a vierovyznania, nie takzvané právo na potrat. Zároveň všetci dobre vieme, že kultúrno etické otázky patria do výlučných kompetencií členských štátov.

Odmietam toto hrubé podkopávanie našich zmlúv a dohodnutých kompetencií. Kolegyne, kolegovia, vy, ktorí pretláčať túto agendu v čase závažných hospodárskych a geopolitických výziev, v čase nárastu chudoby, uvedomujete si, že dôsledkom v eurovoľbách bude nárast hlasov pre populistov, extrémistov a antisystémové strany? Občania totiž prestanú veriť európskemu projektu, ktorého cieľom je ochrana mieru, dôstojnosti ľudskej osoby, bezpečnosť a prosperita.

Táto iniciatíva navyše nikdy nezíska podporu všetkých členských štátov, ale vážne ohrozí tak prepotrebnú a krehkú jednotu v Európskej únii. Spoločne s konzervatívcami a kresťanskými demokratmi zdôrazňujem, vrátime Európe hodnoty, na ktorých bola založená.

Hilde Vautmans (Renew). – Voorzitter, collega's, Europa is een baken van vrijheid en veiligheid, maar ook van liberale waarden. Het recht om te beslissen over ons eigen lichaam is essentieel voor onze vrouwen. De toegang tot abortus moet mogelijk zijn.

Als ik hier vandaag het debat hoor, dan sterkt mij dat nog meer. Ik hoor hier conservatieve, reactionaire krachten die de tijd willen terugdraaien. Ik zeg u heel duidelijk: niet in mijn Europa!

Als ik de EVP en de ECR hoor spreken, dan bevestigt het mij dat nog meer. We moeten die verworven rechten in het Handvest inschrijven, want anders zullen ze de klok terugdraaien.

Aan de EPP: neen, het is geen verkiezingsstunt van president Macron. Hij heeft tenminste de ballen gehad om vrouwenrechten in de grondwet in te schrijven. Het is geen verkiezingsstunt, het is noodzakelijk voor alle vrouwen. Ik word hier met de minuut meer feminist en ik wil afsluiten met te zeggen: "There is a special place in hell for women who don't fight for women's rights" – Madeleine Albright.

President. – Ms Vautmans, do you agree to take a blue-card question from Ms de la Pisa Carrión?

Hilde Vautmans (Renew). – No, I will not take a blue-card question because I will not give the extreme right the time to talk against women's rights here in this Parliament.

President. – You are entitled not to accept the blue-card question.

Catch-the-eye procedure

Michaela Šojdrová (PPE). – Pane předsedající, paní komisařko, dámy a pánové, hlasovala jsem proti zařazení této rozpravy a jsem proti tzv. právu na potrat, protože jsem pro právo na život. Potrat je smrt. Je to usmrčení nebo zabití života, který se vyvíjí v těle matky. A je úplně jedno, vážené kolegyně, jestli ten život má jeden den nebo devět měsíců. Není v tom rozdíl z hlediska biologického. Přesto členské státy potraty umožňují, protože jsou situace, kdy ženy se dostávají do velmi složité zdravotní nebo kritické sociální situace. A potrat je někdy východiskem, ale je to pravomoc členských států a my jim ji nesmíme brát. A ještě mi dovolu říct, že nikoho neodsuzuji, protože je to role rodiny, společnosti, aby vytvořila podmínky pro ženy, aby se nemusely takto rozhodovat, aby mohly dát přednost životu. O to tady jde.

Maria-Manuel Leitão-Marques (S&D). – Senhor Presidente, nunca pensei ter de voltar a este tema desde que, em 2007, contribuí para a vitória do sim no referendo sobre a despenalização do aborto em Portugal.

Repito: o aborto deixar de ser um crime foi aquilo sobre o que votámos. O resto fica na liberdade individual. Nenhuma mulher é obrigada a abortar, mas, se assim decidir, por razões que são as dela, deve poder fazê-lo em condições seguras e ser assistida por profissionais competentes, e não num vão de escada, escondida como uma criminosa. Reparem, aí escondem-se as mais pobres, porque as outras sempre têm acesso a clínicas ou até a viagens ao estrangeiro.

É isto que estamos aqui a discutir. É isto que queremos garantir para todas as mulheres, consagrando este direito na Carta dos Direitos Fundamentais da União Europeia.

Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE). – Senhor Presidente, vou prosseguir, depois da Senhora Deputada Maria Manuel Leitão Marques, também na nossa língua. Nós, as mulheres, temos o direito de decidir sobre o nosso corpo, ao contrário do que querem os partidos de extrema-direita e de direita, que negam os direitos das mulheres. Por isso, esse direito deve ser incluído na Carta Europeia de Direitos Fundamentais.

O direito ao aborto é um direito humano pelo qual o feminismo se tem batido ao longo de toda uma vida. O feminismo sai às ruas, desde a Galiza a outras partes da Europa. O feminismo sai às ruas para pedir ao mundo o direito fundamental de todas as mulheres a um aborto livre, seguro, gratuito e público.

Continuaremos a lutar para que não haja um retrocesso, porque os direitos das mulheres estão ameaçados. E não, não passarão.

Ladislav Ilčić (ECR). – Poštovani predsjedavajući, poštovane kolege, sva ljudska i građanska prava koja diljem civiliziranog svijeta netko uživa ograničena su pravima i slobodama drugih osoba. Apsolutna sloboda koja bi išla na štetu nekog drugog ne postoji.

I tako i kod ženskog prava na izbor. Žena mora imati pravo odlučivati o svojem životu, ali tako dugo dok tim svojim odlukama ne šteti životu začetoj djeteta. Ili vi smatrate da se ne radi o ljudskom životu? Pa recite onda vi kad počinje ljudski život? Znanost je suglasna da se radi o ljudskom životu i sve međunarodne konvencije i ustavi zapadnih zemalja smatraju pravo na život temeljnim ljudskim pravom, pa sve ono drugo što bi ugrožavalo to pravo ne može biti temeljno ljudsko pravo.

I dajte već jednom prestanite ponavljati te floskule koje je znanost već davno prokazala. Idemo radije zajedno se okrenuti i tražiti načine kako pomoći trudnim ženama. I kako na materijalni i svaki drugi način njima pomoći jer uz pozitivnu kulturu i uz podršku okoline više bi se žena odlučilo na život, a manje za pobačaj.

Clare Daly (The Left). – A Uachtaráin, bhuaigh muintir na hÉireann an ceart chun ginmhille dleathach, slán agus saor in aisce sa bhliain 2018 (dhá mhíle is a hocht déag).

Tharla sé seo tar éis blianta fada ag troid in aghaidh cosc bunreachtúil, agus staid ina raibh an ceart ag mná taisteal chun ginmhilleadh a fháil lasmuigh den tír, ach ní sa bhaile.

Bhí daoine bréan den chur i gcéill lofa seo, cur i gcéill a thug na tithe níos áine Magdalene agus na Tithe Máithreacha agus Leanaí dúinn.

Buadh an reifreann mar thuig na daoine i gceart go gcaithfeadh an tsochaí muinín a bheith acu as mná agus tacaíocht a thabhairt dóibh cibé rogha is fearr dóibh féin a dhéanamh agus iad ag tabhairt aghaidh ar thoircheas gan phleanáil.

Ba cheart go mbeadh ginmhilleadh mar chuid den Chairt um Chearta Bunúsacha an Aontais Eorpaigh.

Tomislav Sokol (PPE). – Poštovani predsjedavajući, iskustvo rada u Europskom parlamentu pokazalo je da se temom pobačaja koriste oni koji u nedostatku sadržajnih politika ideološkim temama žele privući pažnju birača. Oni to rade sustavno i ciljano želeći drugima nametati vlastita životna uvjerenja, a tome svjedočimo i danas kada na njihovu inicijativu raspravljamo o uključivanju prava na pobačaj u Povelju Europske unije o temeljnim pravima.

Suvereno stajalište ljevice i aktivista posve je jasno da ne postoji temeljno ljudsko pravo na pobačaj i naravno da nečemu takvom nije mjesto u pravu EU. Kolegice i kolege pitanje pobačaja nije u nadležnosti Europske unije, već država članica. Pravo je svake suverene države definirati vlastitu politiku na temu zaštite života u skladu s nacionalnim ustavom, tradicijom i društvenim vrijednostima, poštujući načelo supsidijarnosti kao jedno od temeljnih načela prava Europske unije.

Moto Europske unije je ujedinjeni u različitosti. Poštujete to i prestanite nametati vlastitu ideologiju onima koji je ne žele i kojima je život na prvome mjestu. I nerođena djeca imaju pravo na život.

Sara Cerdas (S&D). – Senhor Presidente, Caros Colegas, recentemente a França deu um passo corajoso ao incluir o direito ao aborto na sua Constituição.

Em Portugal vivemos 48 anos sob a ditadura e, este domingo, foi exatamente esse o número de deputados que a extrema-direita elegeu para a Assembleia da República. A mesma extrema-direita que é contra o direito ao aborto, juntamente com aqueles que falam em novos referendos a direitos já garantidos. Mas, quanto mais as nossas liberdades são ameaçadas, mais alto diremos: não passarão.

E é por isso que as lutas do passado também são as lutas do presente. As lutas daqueles que morreram, que foram presos, têm história e nós somos chamados a fazer parte dessa história, porque um povo que não reconhece o seu legado está condenado a repetir os erros do seu passado.

A União Europeia deve reforçar os valores que a definem e reinventar-se, porque incluir o direito ao aborto na Carta dos Direitos Fundamentais da União Europeia significa acesso a cuidados de saúde, caso a mulher assim o decida. Significa garantir o direito à saúde das mulheres.

Bert-Jan Ruissen (ECR). – Voorzitter, wat Macron vorige week in Frankrijk voor elkaar heeft gekregen, probeert hij nu via zijn delegatie in het Europees Parlement ook in de rest van Europa te regelen, namelijk van abortus een grondrecht, een mensenrecht te maken.

Aan al die collega's die hem daarin steunen en daarbij prat gaan op onze zogenaamde westerse beschaving, zou ik willen vragen: wat is een van de belangrijkste kenmerken van een beschaving? Is dat niet het beschermen van het kwetsbare en het weerloze? Dat zult u toch met mij eens zijn? En wat is er nu weerlozer en kwetsbaarder dan een ongeboren kindje in de moederschoot? In de beschaafde wereld past daarom geen abortus, maar zorg voor moeder en kind. Ieder mens is uniek, een godsgeschenk en dus beschermwaardig.

Mevrouw Vautmans, dat u het debat over zo'n fundamentele kwestie in dit huis uit de weg gaat – geen blauwe kaart accepteert – vind ik een volksvertegenwoordiger onwaardig. Als we het gesprek hierover niet eens meer aan kunnen gaan, dan zijn we als Europa toch wel heel ver weggezonden.

(End of catch-the-eye procedure)

Hilde Vautmans (Renew). – Ja, Voorzitter, dat is omdat hij mij persoonlijk aanvalt, natuurlijk. Ik vind niet dat ik extreemrechts nog meer tijd moet geven om tegen vrouwenrechten te pleiten. Ik ben medevoorzitter van de Interagroep Kinderrechten, dus besef ik heel goed hoe waardevol het leven van een kind is.

Vandaar ook dat we wetgeving willen om onveilige abortus tegen te gaan, mét een grens voor levensvatbaarheid. Dat is nu net cruciaal, en gezien de reactie van de PPE en de ECR denk ik dat de strijd om dit in het Handvest in te schrijven meer dan nodig is.

Ladislav Ilčić (ECR). – Mr President, so colleagues, you deny and you don't want to say when the life begins. If you want to put abortion as a fundamental right, then this would be the most important right, and you know this. So by this you would deny the basic right to life, and you don't want to have what colleague Matić said: he didn't even want to discuss when the life begins. So he is blind, and you are blind to the truth that there is another life. And we should find the balance between this.

President. – Thank you very much. We are now in fact prolonging the debate with a point of order that was not appropriate, of course.

Elisa Ferreira, Member of the Commission. – Mr President, honourable Members, thank you for this debate. In the European Union, sexual and reproductive healthcare is a Member State responsibility. Where the European Union law is applicable, every person's fundamental right to benefit from medical treatment without discrimination is protected. While of course respecting the division of competences just outlined, I consider that all women across the European Union should have equal access to preventive healthcare and treatment of a high level. Sexual and reproductive healthcare is part of this.

Let me recall that the revision of the Charter to include the right to abortion would require a common accord of all Member States, in line with their constitutional requirements. These past five years, the Commission has shown its commitment to push forward on women's rights and will continue to do so within the remit of its competence.

Presidente. – O debate está encerrado.

A votação realizar-se-á no próximo período de sessões.

4. Promised revision of the EU animal welfare legislation and the animal welfare-related European citizens' initiatives (debate)

Presidente. – Segue-se o debate sobre a pergunta com pedido de resposta oral à Comissão sobre a promessa de revisão da legislação da UE em matéria de bem-estar dos animais e as iniciativas de cidadania europeia relacionadas com o bem-estar dos animais, apresentada por Niels Fuglsang, Thomas Waitz, Günther Sidl, Sarah Wiener, Emil Radev, Michaela Šojdrová, Sirpa Pietikäinen, Heidi Hautala, Annika Bruna, Caroline Roose, Pascal Durand, Pierre Larrourou, Martin Buschmann, Manuela Ripa, Martin Häusling, Maria Noichl, Anna Deparnay-Grutenberg, Grace O'Sullivan, Mario Furore, Rosa D'Amato, Tiziana Beghin, Petras Auštrevičius, Tilly Metz, Anja Hazekamp, Sylwia Spurek, Francisco Guerreiro, Martin Hojsík, Michal Wiezik, Malin Björk, Marisa Matias, Ville Niinistö, Marianne Vind, Christel Schaldemose, Karen Melchior, Alice Kuhnke, Pär Holmgren, Marina Kaljurand, Mick Wallace, Henna Virkkunen, Róza Thun und Hohenstein (O-000059/2023 - B9-0011/2024) (2024/2604(RSP)).

Niels Fuglsang, stiller. – Hr. formand! Fru kommissær. Ærede kollegaer. Jeg er ked af at stå her i dag. Jeg er ked af, at vi skal have denne debat i dag, fordi sagen er, at vi skulle have haft en dyrevelfærdslovgivning allerede nu på bordet. For fire år siden – i 2020 – der lovede Kommissionen Parlamentet og offentligheden, at vi skulle have en dyrevelfærdslovgivning. Det løfte har man brudt. Det er et klokkeklart løftebrud, som Kommissionen er ude i, når den ikke har fremlagt det, som den har lovet. Imens – mens vi venter – så lider dyrene. Vi snakker om 300 millioner dyr, der lever størstedelen af deres liv i små bure. Vi taler om hundredvis af millioner af dyr, som rutinemæssigt lemlæstes, nemlig hanekyllinger, som kværnes eller gasses, fordi de ikke kan bruges til at lægge æg. Vi taler om seks milliarder såkaldte turbokyllinger. Kyllinger, der er avlet til at vokse så hurtigt, at deres organer ikke kan holde til det, at de ikke kan gå. Det er ren dyremishandling. Kære venner, vi skriver 2024. Vi kan ikke se os selv i spejlet i forhold til den måde, vi producerer de dyr på. Disse dyr fortjener en politik. De fortjener en plan. De fortjener et lovforslag. Der er intet lovforslag på bordet på trods af Kommissionens løfter. Eller det vil sige, at der er et lovforslag, for vi ved godt, at det ligger i skuffen. Vi ved godt, at det er klar, og derfor må min opfordring være til Kommissionen: Hold jeres løfter! Kom med det lovforslag. Lad os få det på bordet. Og hvis ikke I kommer med det i dag, så må vi forvente som minimum, at Kommissionen præsenterer en konkret tidsplan for, hvornår vi får den nye dyrevelfærdslov! Vi kan ikke stå model til dette længere. Lad os få lovforslaget på bordet.

Elisa Ferreira, Member of the Commission. – Mr President, I'll be speaking here on behalf of my colleague, Commissioner Stella Kyriakides.

In 2020, the Commission announced that, by 2023, it would revise the European Union's animal welfare rules and consider options for animal welfare labelling. As part of this revision, we announced, in 2021, the intention to propose rules to phase out and eventually prohibit the use of cages in animal farming. This was in response to the European Citizens Initiative 'End the Cage Age'.

By now, the Commission has established a vast range of policy options for these future rules. These options are supported by the fitness check of the current rules, several external studies, and 11 scientific opinions delivered by the European Food Safety Authority. And in 2021, we began a thorough impact assessment of their economic, social and environmental impacts. This is still going on.

As you know, on 7 December 2023, the Commission adopted two major animal welfare legislative proposals. The first one is a revised regulation (after two decades) on the protection of animals during transport. The second one is a new regulation dealing, for the first time, with the welfare and traceability of dogs and cats. The work on proposals to revise European Union rules on the welfare of animals at farm level at the time of killing and on establishing harmonised rules for animal welfare labelling is still ongoing.

Work is also still ongoing in relation to the follow-up to our response to the 'End the Cage Age' initiative, where we are carefully assessing important aspects to ensure that the transition to cage-free farming is also sustainable for the agricultural sector and for our food systems, in order for the said proposals to be holistic and solid. More consultations are also needed on the costs, on how long the transition periods should be, and relevant measures at import.

The strategic dialogue on the future of EU agriculture started on 25 January 2024. It should be a good place for these discussions.

We are all aware that farmers are looking for a level playing field. Some of them are not satisfied with the scattered landscape we have on animal welfare standards across the European Union. They have to consider many different and constantly changing national requirements and private schemes for animal welfare. It is therefore our responsibility to provide them with long-term stability and clarity about what will be considered acceptable when it comes to animal welfare.

Of course, reforming animal welfare implies costs. We have to take them into account and identify solutions. But reducing the fragmentation of the internal market would allow farmers to invest in their farms and profit from the market opportunities that come with animal welfare improvements.

For all these reasons, we are continuing to look at the best course of action in these areas, keeping in mind stakeholders' views and of course, the views of the European Parliament.

Herbert Dorfmann, im Namen der PPE-Fraktion. – Herr Präsident, Herr Kommissar, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Ich habe den Eindruck, wir haben heute Morgen hier eine Debatte, die wohl dem aufkommenden Wahlkampf geschuldet ist. Wenn es um Tierwohl geht, dann gibt es meiner Meinung nach drei Aspekte, und Sie, Frau Kommissarin, haben sie auch angesprochen.

Es gibt einen Aspekt, erstens, der Tiertransporte. Es hat einen Sonderausschuss gegeben, es gibt einen Abschlussbericht, wir haben als Fraktion entscheidend mitgearbeitet. Wir sind bereit, das Ergebnis dieses Sonderausschusses in eine legislative Verordnung zu gießen. Es gibt diesbezüglich einen Vorschlag der Kommission, und wir arbeiten im Haus konstruktiv mit, damit das auch passiert.

Es gibt zweitens das Wohlbefinden von Haustieren, insbesondere von Hunden und Katzen. Da gibt es Nachholbedarf in der Europäischen Union, da gibt es viele Missstände. Wir haben einen Vorschlag vonseiten der Kommission – wir werden daran arbeiten, und ich denke, es ist dringend an der Zeit, dass wir bessere Bedingungen für die rund 150 - Millionen Hunde und Katzen in der Europäischen Union auf den Weg bringen. Es wäre gut, wenn wir das auch für andere Haustiere tun würden.

Dann gibt es drittens das Wohlbefinden von in der Landwirtschaft gehaltenen Tieren. Da haben wir in der Europäischen Union eine weitgehende Gesetzgebung, und trotzdem gibt es immer wieder schreckliche Bilder. Aber diese schrecklichen Bilder würde es nicht geben, wenn die Staaten die heute bestehende Gesetzgebung einhalten und durchsetzen würden. Deswegen glaube ich, bevor wir neue Gesetzgebung machen, sollten wir dafür sorgen, dass die Staaten – und zwar alle – diese Gesetzgebung auch einhalten.

Dann gibt es neue Entwicklungen; Sie, Frau Kommissarin, haben sie auch angesprochen: Tierwohllabel. Da schießen Label wie Pilze aus dem Boden, und es wäre dringend an der Zeit, ein europäisches Label zu machen. Wir werden uns an dieser Arbeit beteiligen.

Wir waren als Fraktion auch dafür, dass wir Käfige auslaufen lassen, aber nur dann, wenn garantiert ist, dass auch importierte Waren nicht aus Käfigen kommen. Das bringt den Hühnern relativ wenig, wenn sie in Europa nicht mehr in Käfigen gehalten werden, unsere ausrangierte Käfige aber hinter der Grenze stehen und die Eier und die Hühner dort produziert werden.

Also, hier erwarten wir uns einen Vorschlag der Kommission, und wir werden dann konstruktiv mitarbeiten, damit wir auch hier vernünftige Regelungen finden.

Emma Wiesner (Renew). – Mr President, I was just wondering, there's no blue-card activation for this one, is that correct? There should be no blue-card procedure for this debate.

President. – The point is that blue cards are allowed but not in the first round of political speakers. After that, it will be possible.

Clara Aguilera, en nombre del Grupo S&D. – Señor presidente, señora comisaria Ferreira, le agradezco su participación, pero, sin menospreciarla, sí que se echa de menos a la señora Kyriakides, que está desaparecida. Al comisario Wojciechowski ni siquiera lo esperamos porque no suele estar en ningún debate ni agrícola ni ganadero. Pero, bueno, tenemos a la señora Ferreira, cuyo trabajo respeto mucho.

Creo que es un debate oportuno. La única revisión que está llegando de bienestar animal es la referida al transporte y los animales domésticos, al transporte de perros y gatos. Llega muy al final y por tanto no va a dar lugar a aprobación en esta legislatura y quedará pendiente para la próxima.

Yo creo firmemente que se debe trasladar a la siguiente legislatura todo este debate porque no estamos obligando adecuadamente a los Estados miembros a que la normativa actual se cumpla. Y, por tanto, no es tan urgente ni necesaria la revisión de las normas de bienestar animal, en mi opinión.

Estoy de acuerdo con la armonización, ¿cómo no voy a estar de acuerdo? Pero soy española y andaluza. Y cuando se habla de limitar el transporte y las temperaturas, me siento agraviada. Me siento agraviada. Porque, claro, no es lo mismo estar en un sitio que estar en otro, que ser periferia. Y mi país y mi región somos periferia en el transporte de personas y también en el de animales. Y las temperaturas están muy bien, pero también para las personas.

Por lo tanto, en la evaluación de esta normativa —a la que habrá que ir poco a poco, y no me niego a ello en absoluto: creo que hay que mejorar todos los aspectos del bienestar, incluido el de los animales— hay que ir poco a poco. Y hay que evaluar los impactos sociales, económicos y ambientales.

Y también hay que tener en cuenta cómo están la ganadería europea y los sectores ganaderos. Y no están bien. Hemos abierto un diálogo con ellos: aprovechemos el diálogo antes de tomar decisiones en la legislación de bienestar animal. Respetemos a los ganaderos europeos también y escuchémoslos, porque a lo mejor nos darán ideas para mejorar esta situación.

Michal Wiezik, za skupinu Renew. – Vážení pán predsedajúci, legislatíva o dobrých životných podmienkach zvierat je 20 rokov stará. V Európskej únii zatiaľ ročne porážame 22 miliónov ton prasiat, 13 miliónov ton hydiny a 7 miliónov ton hovädzieho dobytká. Áno, v štatistikách meriame zvieratá na tony, akoby ani nešlo o jedincov.

Dodnes však bolo úspešných päť európskych iniciatív, ktoré volajú po lepších životných podmienkach zvierat. Čakáme preto na legislatívnu aktivitu Komisie ohľadom zákazu klieťkového chovu, čakáme na publikovanie revidovaných návrhov, no napriek príslubom čakáme márne a to je neprijateľné.

Ako volení zástupcovia občanov sme povinní reflektovať na ich požiadavky, no svoju prácu nevieme náležite vykonávať, ak Komisia váha a podkopáva vlastnú dôveryhodnosť a dôveru v unikátny európsky nástroj priamej demokracie. 84 % Európanov a Európaniek žiada vyššie štandardy pre chované zvieratá, traja zo štyroch ľudí chcú pri kúpe produktov vedieť viac o tom, v akých podmienkach bolo zviera chované. Je najvyšší čas im vyhovieť, pretože *„If it matters for Europeans, it must matter to Europe“*.

Caroline Roose, au nom du groupe Verts/ALE. – Monsieur le Président, dans l'Union européenne, 300 millions d'animaux sont élevés dans des cages chaque année, alors que l'on sait que cela mène à des souffrances immenses. Dans l'Union européenne, des millions d'animaux sont mutilés pour satisfaire les exigences de l'élevage industriel. Dans l'Union européenne, 330 millions de poussins mâles sont mis à mort chaque année par gazage ou broyage le premier jour qui suit leur éclosion, alors que des techniques de sexage in ovo permettraient de l'éviter. Dans l'Union européenne, des centaines de millions de poissons sont élevés dans des fermes aquacoles, alors que l'Union européenne n'a aucune règle pour assurer que ces poissons ne souffrent pas. Toutes ces souffrances sont le résultat de notre inaction. Pourtant, 84 % des citoyennes et des citoyens européens pensent que le bien-être des animaux doit être davantage protégé.

Alors qu'elle l'avait promis, la Commission européenne a décidé de ne pas publier avant les élections sa proposition de réforme des règles européennes sur le bien-être des animaux. C'est la décision de personnes qui ont estimé que leur réélection valait davantage que la vie de millions d'animaux. Le 9 juin, les citoyennes et les citoyens européens iront voter. Le sort des nouvelles directives sur le bien-être animal est entre leurs mains.

Alors aujourd'hui, je ne m'adresse plus à la Commission, je m'adresse aux citoyennes et aux citoyens européens qui s'inquiètent du sort des animaux, et je leur dis: lisez les programmes, regardez les votes des différents partis au Parlement européen et, le 9 juin, votez pour celles et ceux qui défendront vraiment les animaux.

Veronika Vrecionová, za skupinu ECR. – Pane předsedající, jistě se všichni shodneme, že týrání zvířat do civilizované společnosti nepatří, a bohužel kolem sebe neustále takové případy vidíme a mlčíme. Dva konkrétní příklady za všechno. Za první, klecové chovy – v České republice jsme již schválili zákaz klecových chovů od roku 2027. Vyzývám proto Evropskou komisi, aby zařadila do pracovního programu na rok 2025 návrh na zákaz klecových chovů v celé Evropské unii. Je i vědecky dokázáno, že zvířata, která žijí v dobrých životních podmínkách, mají lepší, kvalitnější výnosy, maso, vejce. Druhým příkladem jsou psi uvázaní na řetězu 24/7, celý život. Je to zcela zbytečné trýznivé zacházení se zvířaty. Podobných příkladů bych mohla vyjmenovat daleko více a doufám, že příští Komise se tomuto tématu bude pozitivně věnovat.

Anders Vistisen, for ID-Gruppen. – Hr. formand! Hver eneste dag, time, minut lider millioner af dyr i EU, og de lider, fordi EU tillader det. Vi har lige hørt fra Kommissionen, at man forsvarer sin inaktivitet med, at der er forskelligartede regler i medlemsstaterne. Måske skulle Kommissionen koncentrere sig en lille smule mere om at hæve det katastrofale lave niveau af dyrevelfærdsbeskyttelse i stedet for at skyde på de medlemsstater, der rent faktisk forsøger at gøre noget ved problematikken og går foran. Men det lyder som om, at Kommissionen er mere optaget af at lave total harmonisering på dette område end af at forsvare dyrenes vilkår og rettigheder. Og der er nok at tage fat på. Vi har produktionsdyr, der lider under helt uacceptable produktionsformer, som overhovedet ikke burde være gældende i Europa anno 2024. Vi har kulturelt religiøst betinget dyremishandling i form af f.eks. tyrefægtning eller halalslagtning, som Kommissionen aldrig nogensinde har taget noget som helst skridt for at gøre op imod. Og vi har en kæledyrindustri, der ser ud til

at komme længere og længere ud af kontrol med hvalpe- og killingefabrikker med kummerlige forhold for disse dyr, der efter sigende skulle være menneskets bedste ven, men med den form for venner, så tror jeg hellere, at de vil bede sig fritaget. Så kom nu i gang. Kom op af stolen. Vi skal ikke vente 5 år mere på at se handling fra Kommissionen, mens dyrene lider.

Anja Hazekamp, *namens de The Left-Fractie*. – Voorzitter, waar zijn de beloofde wetten voor dieren? Waar is het verbod op de kooien in de veehouderij? Waar zijn de nieuwe regels voor dieren die worden opgesloten in stallen en na een kort en ellendig leven worden geslacht?

Varkens hebben hun staartjes nodig. Kalfjes moeten kunnen opgroeien bij hun moeder. Eendjes moeten kunnen zwemmen in het water. De afgelopen tien jaar heeft de Partij voor de Dieren samen met tientallen organisaties hiervoor gestreden.

Mijn hart breekt wanneer ik denk aan al die dieren die nu in de steek worden gelaten. Hoelang? Hoelang moeten de dieren nog wachten? Geen dag langer! Wij willen nog voor de Europese verkiezingen alle beloofde wetten voor dieren. Er is geen excuus!

Laura Ferrara (NI). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, la legislazione europea sul benessere animale richiede un'urgenza revisione per gli scopi che deve prefiggersi e per rispondere alle aspettative dei cittadini.

Più di un milione e mezzo di firme hanno sostenuto le iniziative «Basta animali in gabbia» e «Basta pellicce in Europa» per contrastare crudeli e insostenibili pratiche produttive e di allevamento; ciò dimostra come sia radicata la responsabilità etica di prevenire dolore, sofferenza, maltrattamenti degli animali.

Anche la produzione agroalimentare che coinvolge determinate specie deve utilizzare sistemi che garantiscano un elevato livello di benessere, come richiesto dagli obiettivi ambientali, di sicurezza alimentare e di salute pubblica della strategia «Dal produttore al consumatore».

La Commissione ha degli ineludibili impegni nell'aggiornare il quadro normativo in materia; deve fornire degli strumenti di sostegno e finanziamento alle imprese europee rispettose del benessere animale, proteggendole da importazioni che possono determinare concorrenza sleale.

La Commissione non disattenda le proposte legislative promesse. Un mondo migliore per gli animali è possibile ed è vantaggioso per tutti.

Daniel Buda (PPE). – Domnule președinte, doamna comisară, doamnelor și domnilor colegi, bunăstarea animalelor se află pe agenda publică la nivel european, fiind o preocupare majoră atât pentru cetățeni, cât și pentru decidenții politici.

Încă de la început aș sublinia un lucru pe care l-am constatat în calitate de raportor al Comisiei de anchetă privind transportul animalelor, și anume nerespectarea legislației privind bunăstarea animalelor de către statele membre. Este un adevăr dureros, dar trebuie să-l recunoaștem pentru a putea face progrese reale în acest domeniu. Altfel spus, oricâtă legislație am adopta, dacă ea nu este respectată, nu ne vom putea atinge obiectivele.

Dar o posibilă viitoare legislație trebuie să fie făcută în deplină colaborare cu fermierii. Aceștia sunt piatra de temelie a întregului sistem agricol și reprezintă factorul-cheie în acest domeniu. Trebuie să le ascultăm și să le luăm în considerare preocupările pentru a dezvolta politici care să fie eficiente, aplicabile și durabile în timp, și nu desprinse de realitate, astfel încât să distrugem sectorul zootehnic din Uniunea Europeană.

Vreau să-i asigur pe toți cetățenii, dar și pe fermieri, că vocea lor este auzită și că în acest proces suntem cu toții parteneri.

Isabel Carvalhais (S&D). – Senhor Presidente, Senhora Comissária Elisa Ferreira, debatemos, hoje, a promessa de revisão da legislação europeia em matéria de bem-estar animal.

Já muito se disse e muito certamente se dirá esta manhã. Mas porque fui correlatora da Comissão de Inquérito sobre a Proteção dos Animais durante o Transporte, não poderia deixar de estar aqui para sublinhar o fracasso da atual Comissão em matéria de legislação de bem-estar animal, porque a verdade é que neste mandato já nada ou muito pouco será feito.

Eu sei, por experiência, como as questões do bem-estar animal são delicadas, parecendo por vezes irreconciliáveis, e sei o quanto exigem do ponto de vista negocial, e sobretudo exigem tempo, muito tempo – tempo que neste mandato já não existe. Eu espero, pelo menos, que o tempo que resta sirva para escutar todos os setores, as ONG, os cientistas, mas também todos aqueles que, no mundo rural, têm na pecuária extensiva, em particular, e no pastoreio o seu modo de vida. Que prestam, por isso, serviços ecossistémicos tão importantes, e por vezes tão pouco valorizados, e que evitam a desertificação dos nossos territórios.

Aproveito esta intervenção para perguntar à Senhora Comissária como é que esta questão do bem-estar animal está já a ser abordada no âmbito do diálogo estruturado com os agricultores e com os pastores, compreendendo que não seja a sua área, e que outros comissários aqui deveriam estar para responder a estas questões, e desde já lhe agradeço pela sua presença.

Róża Thun und Hohenstein (Renew). – Panie Przewodniczący! Tak się składa, drogie Koleżanki i drodzy Koledzy, że w Parlamencie Europejskim zasiadam już od dłuższego czasu i pamiętam bardzo dobrze, z jakim ogromnym zaangażowaniem pracowaliśmy nad Europejską Inicjatywą Obywatelską. Wierzę i jestem całkowicie przekonana, że jest to świetny instrument do wzmacniania demokracji partycypacyjnej, ale działa tylko wtedy, kiedy ci, którzy zostali wybrani do tworzenia prawa, słuchają obywateli i reagują na głos obywateli konkretnymi rozwiązaniami. Inicjatywa obywatelska, która nazywa się „koniec epoki klatkowej”, zebrała 1,4 miliona podpisów. Komisja obiecała zająć się tym tematem, ale, Szanowna Pani Komisarz, minęły już cztery lata. Nie twierdzę, że Komisja niczego w tym czasie nie zrobiła. Zrobiła dużo, ale stan jest taki, jak to słyszymy na tej sali: 300 milionów zwierząt hodowlanych spędza życie w klatkach, często w niewyobrażalnie koszmarnych warunkach.

Więc moje pytanie do Komisji Europejskiej za pośrednictwem Pani Komisarz jest takie: czy może Pani jasno i wiążąco odpowiedzieć, kiedy będziemy mieć konkretną propozycję legislacyjną, która nareszcie zmieni ten haniebny stan rzeczy?

Tilly Metz (Verts/ALE). – Herr Präsident, Herr Kommissar! Eine erfolgreiche Europäische Bürgerinitiative auf die Beine zu stellen, ist eine Riesenarbeit, die es verdient, ernst genommen zu werden. Die Bedeutung der Europäischen Bürgerinitiative als Mittel, die europäische Gesetzgebung aktiv zu beeinflussen, darf nicht untergraben werden. Denn hier steht wirklich die Glaubwürdigkeit der EU-Institutionen auf dem Spiel.

Ich möchte die Kommission heute zum erneuten Mal daran erinnern, dass ein großer Teil der europäischen Bevölkerung eine Verbesserung in Sachen Tierwohl in Europa erwartet. Daher erwarte ich, dass alles unternommen wird, um Tierschutz zu einer Priorität im neuen Mandat zu machen.

Und dazu gehört die Veröffentlichung der Vorschläge zum Ende der Käfighaltung von sogenannten Nutztieren, zur Schlachtung und zur Tierschutzkennzeichnung sowie ein konkreter Fahrplan zum Ausstieg aus Tierversuchen. Dazu gehören aber auch Bemühungen, Tierschutzgesetze in den Mitgliedstaaten besser umzusetzen und dies auch zu überprüfen und Verstöße zu bestrafen.

Ich spreche hier im Namen von vielen Mitstreitern und Mitstreiterinnen im Bereich Tierschutz: Wir sind wütend, wir sind enttäuscht – wir möchten endlich Veränderungen sehen.

Beata Mazurek (ECR). – Panie Przewodniczący! Szanowni Państwo! Dzisiejsza debata niestety potwierdza, że część europarlamentarzystów na tej sali nie rozumie powagi obecnej sytuacji w sektorze rolnym. Przypomnę tym z Państwa, którym to umknęło, że od kilku tygodni na ulicach miast europejskich trwają zmasowane protesty rolników przeciwko kolejnym nakładanym na nich nierealistycznym wymogom w zakresie ochrony środowiska i dobrostanu zwierząt.

Do Państwa, sygnatariuszy tego pytania, już nie apeluję, ale Komisję Europejską proszę, aby trzymała się swoich zapowiedzi w zakresie rezygnacji z nakładania obciążeń dla rolników. Jakiegokolwiek kolejne projekty w zakresie dobrostanu zwierząt wymagają przygotowania większej liczby ocen i prowadzenia dialogu ze środowiskiem rolniczym w całej Unii Europejskiej, a nie tylko tendencyjnie, z tendencyjnie wybranymi organizacjami pozarządowymi. Bo tylko dialog daje szansę na to, że zmiany, które Państwo proponujecie, będą przez rolników akceptowane.

Rosanna Conte (ID). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, garantire il benessere degli animali è un obbligo morale, oltre che un dovere civico verso i nostri amici a quattro zampe che portano amore e affetto nelle nostre vite, ma anche verso tutti quegli animali destinati a fini commerciali.

Per questo dobbiamo adottare controlli rigorosi negli allevamenti e nei traffici di animali d'affezione, così da scongiurare qualsiasi forma di abuso e maltrattamento, assicurando al contempo che gli acquirenti siano consapevoli dell'importanza di scegliere fonti etiche.

Parallelamente dobbiamo vigilare affinché anche il settore zootecnico adotti le migliori pratiche e rispetti le norme UE, che sono le più rigorose al mondo. Questo non solo garantisce il benessere degli animali, ma anche la qualità dei prodotti che consumiamo.

Tuttavia non dobbiamo cadere nell'errore di demonizzare un intero comparto per l'inosservanza di pochi. Punire severamente chi trasgredisce, assolutamente sì, ma senza dimenticare che la stragrande maggioranza degli operatori lavora con dedizione e rispetto verso gli animali.

Non possiamo permetterci di adottare misure ideologiche che rischiano di mettere in ginocchio intere aziende senza portare alcun beneficio reale per il benessere degli animali.

Solo lavorando insieme, istituzioni e settore, possiamo assicurare un futuro migliore anche per gli animali che meritano il nostro rispetto e la nostra protezione.

(L'oratrice rifiuta una domanda «cartellino blu» di Niels Fuglsang)

Nikolaj Villumsen (The Left). – Hr. formand! Virkeligheden er, at dyrene gang på gang bliver glemte. Virkeligheden er, at dyrene lider under ekstremt lange transporter, i små elendige bure og flås i den brutale pelsindustri. Virkeligheden er, at det burde være stoppet for længst.

Kære Kommissær. I havde lovet at fremlægge lovgivning om bedre dyrevelfærd. Det løfte har I svigtet! I svigter de knap tre millioner borgere, der skrev under på kravet. I svigter jeres eget løfte om en forbedring af lovgivningen. I svigter de fikserede søer, burhønsene, minkene. I stedet for at stoppe dyreplageriet, så bøjer I jer for landbrugslobbyen og deres lakajer på højrefløjen. Det giver borgerne et klart valg. Lad os sammen bruge Europa-Parlamentsvalget til at give dyrene en stemme. Lad os sørge for, at dyrene ikke igen bliver glemte. Lad os sørge for, at dyreplageri hører op.

(Taleren accepterede at besvare et blåt kort-spørgsmål)

Daniel Buda (PPE), întrebare adresată conform procedurii „cartonașului albastru”. – Sunt nevoit să intervin, stimați colegi, deoarece mie mi se pare că dumneavoastră, o bună parte a colegilor din această sală, nu sunteți la curent cu ceea ce înseamnă propunerea Comisiei Europene privind Regulamentul legat de transportul animalelor.

Domnule coleg, aveți cunoștință de faptul că Comisia Europeană a trimis către Parlament pentru a se discuta și dezbate Regulamentul privind transportul animalelor? Pentru că mie mi se pare din dezbaterile de aici, că nu sunteți la curent cu legislația propusă de Comisia Europeană. Cunoașteți acest lucru?

Dezbateri săptămână viitoare, în cadrul Comisiei AGRI, acest regulament.

Nikolaj Villumsen (The Left), Blåt-kort-svar. – Tak for spørgsmålet. Ja, jeg er fuldstændig klar over, hvad Kommissionen har lagt frem, og det er fuldstændigt utilstrækkeligt. Virkeligheden er, at millioner af borgere gang på gang har skrevet under, har krævet, at der blev fremlagt lovgivning, der kunne stoppe det dyrplageri, der foregår på landevejene i Europa. Alligevel sidder Kommissionen gang på gang borgerne overhørig. Det er ikke i orden. Det er et svigt og det svigt, det er det, vi siger fra over for i dag, og jeg håber, at borgerne vil bruge Europa-Parlamentsvalget den niende juni til at sige fra.

Maria Angela Danzi (NI). – Signor Presidente, signora Commissaria, onorevoli colleghi, salvaguardare la salute degli animali e prevenirne le malattie serve a tutelare la salute pubblica, le produzioni animali, la sicurezza degli alimenti e il relativo approvvigionamento, nonché le economie rurali e l'ambiente.

Dietro le grandi promesse abbiamo partorito un topolino e questo tradisce le aspettative di tutti. Basta abusi e sofferenze inutili negli allevamenti: fornire agli animali più spazio, abbassare le temperature insostenibili e ridurre al minimo i tempi di viaggio è una necessità.

Abbiamo allevatori che rispettano il benessere animale e l'ambiente e dobbiamo proteggerli e sostenerli per favorire un modello di produzione e consumo di carne sostenibile, e invece tuteliamo gli allevamenti intensivi.

A chi ci accusa di pensare più agli animali che alle persone, rispondiamo che l'equilibrio dell'ecosistema in cui viviamo è una condizione inscindibile per la qualità del futuro di ognuno. La salute è solo una, lo ricordiamo a tutti.

Juan Ignacio Zoido Álvarez (PPE). – Señor presidente, señora comisaria, cientos de miles de agricultores y ganaderos llevan meses en las calles de toda Europa pidiendo medidas urgentes para la supervivencia del sector primario en la Unión Europea, pero parece que muchos no se quieren enterar. Todavía hay quienes insisten en apretarles mucho más las tuercas, en seguir añadiéndole al sector primario más exigencias, más requisitos. En esta ocasión, con la legislación en materia de bienestar animal. Y, además, sin tener en cuenta las especiales condiciones geográficas y climáticas del sur de Europa, como España, Portugal o mi propia región, Andalucía.

Porque, a pesar de que en la Unión Europea contamos con los más altos estándares de bienestar animal de todo el mundo, para los herederos de Timmermans nunca es suficiente. Por eso, desde el Grupo del Partido Popular Europeo insistimos en la necesidad de poner freno a esta sobrecarga legislativa. No perjudiquemos más al sector ganadero por razones de mera ideología.

(El orador se niega a que Niels Fuglsang le formule una pregunta con arreglo al procedimiento de la «tarjeta azul»).

Brando Benifei (S&D). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, i cittadini europei hanno a cuore il benessere degli animali e i dati dell'Eurobarometro parlano chiaro.

I cittadini chiedono all'Unione europea che il benessere degli animali d'allevamento sia tutelato di più: una limitazione della durata del trasporto degli animali e anche una maggiore tutela del benessere degli animali da compagnia.

Sono troppi, però, gli interessi economici che prevalgono sul lavoro svolto dal Parlamento europeo, che ha più volte chiesto di rivedere norme in vigore che sono obsolete, limitate e spesso inapplicabili.

Il dietrofront della Commissione europea sul divieto di utilizzo delle gabbie negli allevamenti è uno schiaffo all'impegno dei tanti che si sono spesi nella campagna «End the Cage Age», un'iniziativa dei cittadini europei firmata da 1,4 milioni di persone.

Adesso basta. Chiediamo un piano chiaro, con scadenze temporali precise; delle riforme promesse, nello specifico quattro proposte, è stata presentata solo una debole proposta di regolamento sul trasporto degli animali.

Io sono convinto che dopo le prossime elezioni europee dovremo istituire un Commissario europeo per il benessere degli animali; ce lo chiedono i cittadini ed è un primo passo che non è solo simbolico, è un passo avanti necessario.

Emma Wiesner (Renew). – Herr talman! Kycklingars näbbar klipps av utan bedövning, grisknorrar klipps av eller äts upp av andra grisar. Kastrering och slakt sker utan bedövning. Tvångsmatning av ankor, och tupp- och tjurfäktning.

Det här låter som medeltidsfasoner, men det är fortfarande lagligt i EU. Inte i Sverige, men i EU. Lagen som skulle ha presenterats förra året har inte dykt upp, för att den konservativa gruppen har gjort allt i sin makt för att det här ska fortsätta vara tillåtet. Det är vidrigt.

Vi i Centerpartiet kommer att fortsätta tjata och göra allt vi kan för att grisarna ska få behålla knorren och kycklingarna behålla näbben. Det är dags nu. Hur kan EU-kommissionen låta sig kidnappas och bromsas av landsbygdspopulister? Det är ovärdigt. Hög djurvälstånd är bra för djuren, bonden och alla oss som hoppas att antibiotika ska fortsätta verka när vi blir sjuka i framtiden.

Martin Häusling (Verts/ALE). – Herr Präsident, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Man muss sagen, das waren fünf verlorene Jahre für den Tierschutz in Europa.

1,4 Millionen Menschen haben gefordert, dass die Käfighaltung abgeschafft wird. Was ist passiert? Nichts. Es wurde ein Verbot der wirklich sehr qualvollen Pelztierhaltung gefordert. Was ist passiert? Nichts. Und jetzt, am Ende der Legislatur, kommt die Kommission mit einer Vorlage zu Tiertransporten. Jetzt, wo jeder weiß: Das kriegen wir sowieso nicht durch.

Also, ich würde mir schon ein bisschen mehr Engagement der Kommission in vielen Punkten wünschen. Ich würde mir auch wünschen, wenn Vorwürfe gegen Mitgliedsländer da sind, die gegen das Recht verstoßen, dass die Kommission dann auch handelt; das macht sie nämlich nicht.

Tierwohl und Tierschutz kosten Geld, gerade für die Landwirte, ja. Aber ich glaube, wir müssen uns auch verabschieden davon, dass wir das Ziel haben, möglichst viel und möglichst billiges Fleisch zu erzeugen, denn das erzeugt Tierleid.

Helfen wir den Bauern, wenn es darum geht, ihre Ställe tiergerecht umzubauen! Ich glaube, da sind wir uns hier einig. Ich hoffe auch, dass die Worte der Bürgerinnen und Bürger endlich gehört werden, sonst nehmen uns die Bürgerinnen und Bürger nicht mehr ernst.

Annika Bruna (ID). – Monsieur le Président, le programme de travail de la Commission pour 2024 reste parcellaire par rapport à ses engagements précédents, notamment ceux portant sur l'abandon progressif des cages. Cette seule réforme profiterait à plus de 300 millions d'animaux, à condition de se prémunir contre deux effets pervers. D'une part, toutes les importations de viande, y compris d'Ukraine, doivent respecter les normes de l'Union, sinon nous n'aurons fait que déplacer le problème et ruiner nos éleveurs. D'autre part, il faut impérativement réduire la densité au sol des animaux.

J'ai donc soutenu cette demande d'un calendrier précis pour réformer le bien-être des animaux de rente, leur mode d'abattage, et enfin imposer un étiquetage qui rendra la liberté de choix au consommateur. Toutes ces questions complémentaires gagneraient à être traitées ensemble plutôt que séparément. Il faut éviter un éparpillement de textes, qui deviendraient alors inapplicables.

Nous parlons, nous débattons, les décisions traînent ou n'arrivent pas. Arrivez-vous à dormir alors que chaque jour, chaque minute, chaque seconde, des millions d'animaux souffrent de multiples et terribles maltraitements? Nous parlons ici de vies. Quelle considération leur accordez-vous?

VORSITZ: EVELYN REGNER

Vizepräsidentin

Younous Omarjee (The Left). – Madame la Présidente, je porte ici la voix des animaux pour que leurs souffrances soient entendues. C'est d'un modèle barbare, sans autre foi ni loi que la recherche du profit maximum, que sont victimes les animaux, niés dans leur souffrance et dans leur condition d'êtres vivants. Il ne peut y avoir de bien-être pour des animaux nés pour être tués, destinés à la consommation ou devenus machines à produire, et aucune justification à ces souffrances sans nom jusqu'à leur mise à mort.

Accentuons donc nos efforts dans la recherche pour avancer vers un autre modèle et débarrassons-nous de cette barbarie. Entre-temps, la Commission doit, bien sûr, faire des propositions pour atténuer la souffrance des animaux pris dans le piège de la production. Et viendra ce temps, quand l'humanité aura atteint un degré de civilisation supérieur, pour la proclamation de l'abolition de l'esclavage animal.

Marc Tarabella (NI). – Madame la Présidente, en février 2022, le Parlement européen exige de la Commission européenne qu'elle clarifie et améliore la législation européenne sur le bien-être animal. En 2022 et en 2023, deux initiatives citoyennes européennes liées au bien-être animal ont récolté plus de un million et demi de signatures. Octobre 2023: dans l'Eurobaromètre, 84 % des citoyens européens – oui, vous avez bien entendu, 84 % des citoyens – se sont exprimés en faveur d'une amélioration de la législation sur le bien-être animal. Mars 2024: rien, absolument rien. La Commission européenne fait la sourde oreille, comme si la demande du Parlement européen n'existait pas, comme si la vie des citoyens ne comptait pas, comme si le bien-être animal n'avait pas beaucoup d'importance.

En cette fin de législature, c'est l'heure des comptes, et nous ne pouvons que déplorer ce manque de proactivité de la commissaire Kyriakides en la matière.

José Manuel Fernandes (PPE). – Senhora Presidente, Senhora Comissária, Caras e Caros Colegas, em primeiro lugar é essencial que a legislação que existe seja aplicada e seja nomeadamente aplicada pelos Estados-Membros da União Europeia.

Depois, nova legislação e novas regras são bem-vindas para o bem-estar animal, mas é essencial que elas sejam equilibradas. É importante que não tragam mais burocracia, mais encargos para os agricultores e, em simultâneo também, que não tenham como consequência alimentos mais caros para os cidadãos.

Para além disso, há ainda um ponto essencial: é que as novas regras não podem distorcer o mercado interno e há que ter em conta países, como Portugal, que estão longe do centro da Europa, para não falar já das condições climáticas e geográficas, como referi, destes Estados-Membros.

O ponto final tem a ver com o combate ao comércio ilegal, nomeadamente de cães e gatos, animais de companhia, algo que é verdadeiramente inaceitável e que deve estar nestas novas regras do bem-estar animal.

(O orador aceita responder a uma pergunta «cartão azul»)

Niels Fuglsang (S&D), blue-card question. – The speaker talks about that we should avoid distortions of the internal market and red tape, and I get the impression that the speaker sees new animal welfare legislation as something which is just bureaucratic and creates red tape and distorts the internal market. Doesn't the speaker realise that we have actually hundreds of millions of animals suffering in cages that we need to get rid of, and that has nothing to do with red tape or bureaucracy or distortions of the internal market?

José Manuel Fernandes (PPE), resposta segundo o procedimento «cartão azul». – Senhor Presidente, há gente que, ao impor mais burocracia, ao introduzir regras que distorcem o mercado, ao trazer alimentos mais caros para os cidadãos, não se dão conta que estão a ser os melhores amigos da extrema-direita, não se dão conta que depois é impossível avançar para uma legislação com objetivos de bem-estar animal com os quais estamos todos de acordo. São vocês os melhores amigos da extrema-direita.

Se puser, por exemplo, que um animal não pode ser transportado durante mais de uma hora, é evidente que isso prejudica países como Portugal. É evidente que há várias pessoas que pretendem que, por exemplo, não se possa consumir carne.

Há aqui boas intenções, mas também há aqui uma ideologia que, por vezes, é inaceitável e impede que os objetivos sejam atingidos.

Juozas Olekas (S&D). – Pirmininke, gerbiama Komisijos nare, mieli kolegos. Gyvūnų gerovė yra privalomas žemės ūkio aspektas, kurį mes, gyvendami ir tvarkydami savo ekonominę veiklą pagal europietiškas vertybes, privalome užtikrinti. Ūkininkai tai taip pat supranta. Absoliuti jų dauguma siekia savo auginamiems gyvūnams sudaryti kuo geresnes sąlygas – ir dėl vertybinių savo nuostatų, siekio išvengti nereikalingo streso, ir dėl ekonominių paskatų. Geromis sąlygomis laikomi gyvūnai duoda geresnės kokybės pieną, vilną, kailį ir mėsą. Tačiau turime pripažinti, kad mūsų gatvėse traktoriais protestuojantys ūkininkai turi mums priekaištų, kad mes juos nepakankamai išklausome. Kad iš Briuselio ir Strasbūro iki ūkių nusileidžia vis nauji draudimai, apribojimai ir suvaržymai. Todėl nustatydami naujus reikalavimus mūsų ūkininkams, brangiai kainuojančius standartus, privalome surasti lėšų jų įgyvendinimui, paskatų, geresnių sąlygų įvedimui. Turime užtikrinti pakankamą paramą ir finansinį palaikymą pokyčiams skatinti.

Francisco Guerreiro (Verts/ALE). – Senhora Presidente, Senhora Comissária, desde 2019 nós tivemos grandes desafios na União Europeia. Nós começámos o mandato com o Brexit, a saída do Reino Unido – conseguimos negociar o Brexit. Tivemos também, durante estes anos todos, o Pacto Ecológico Europeu – conseguimos negociar o Pacto Ecológico Europeu e uma série de legislação para o cumprir. Tivemos uma pandemia – conseguimos combater a pandemia, conseguimos mutualizar a dívida, conseguimos comprar vacinas, a nível europeu, para ajudar os Estados-Membros e, portanto, tivemos uma ação muito positiva nos planos de recuperação e resiliência para dinamizar a nossa economia. Conseguimos combater a Rússia e tornar-nos mais independentes do seu jugo energético. Conseguimos fazer uma série de medidas legislativas que melhoram a vida dos cidadãos. Tivemos, ainda ontem, a questão da legislação em torno da inteligência artificial.

E a Comissão Europeia quer-nos fazer acreditar que não conseguimos ter uma legislação harmonizada em torno do bem-estar animal?

Isto não é uma questão de falta de medidas pragmáticas e económicas para os setores, é uma falta de vontade política. É pura e simplesmente este o ponto: é falta de vontade política.

Marie Dauchy (ID). – Madame la Présidente, Gandhi disait: «On peut juger de la grandeur d'une nation et de ses progrès moraux à la façon dont elle traite ses animaux.» Il y a encore beaucoup à faire sur le bien-être animal pour être à la hauteur de cette citation.

La législation européenne qui encadre l'abattage pose comme principe l'étourdissement des animaux avant leur mise à mort pour leur éviter de souffrir. C'est une bonne chose, mais le problème est que ce texte prévoit une exception pour l'abattage rituel, une exception qui est devenue la règle, puisque, selon le dernier rapport du Conseil général de l'alimentation, de l'agriculture et des espaces ruraux, 51 % des abattages pratiqués en France sont des abattages rituels. Dans certains territoires en France, vous n'avez même plus le choix, puisque vous n'avez plus d'abattoir conventionnel pour des raisons de simplification des tâches ou de réduction des coûts. Le manque de traçabilité empêche également de savoir si l'on consomme ou pas de la viande issue du bien-être animal.

Les abattages rituels sont des égorgements organisés, d'une cruauté absolue, issue d'un autre temps, laquelle n'a pas sa place dans nos sociétés et dans notre civilisation occidentales. Alors il est grand temps de bannir ces exceptions au culte barbares et sanguinaires, moyenâgeuses, qui ne doivent pas être au-dessus de nos valeurs et au-dessus de la souffrance animale.

Günther Sidl (S&D). – Frau Präsidentin, geschätzte Frau Kommissarin! Die Europäische Union muss sich aktuell mit enormen Herausforderungen beschäftigen, die unglaublich viele Bereiche umfassen. Ich habe aber vor diesem Hintergrund den Eindruck, dass der Tierschutz bewusst nach hinten geschoben wird. Argumentiert wird das oftmals mit der Versorgungssicherheit bei der Nahrungsmittelproduktion, dazu kommen auch noch Widerstände von Interessensgruppen.

Ich finde aber, dass der Fokus auf jene Menschen gerichtet werden soll, die beim Tierwohl genauer hinschauen und die auch eine Änderung des Umgangs mit unserer Lebensmittelherstellung fordern. Wenn wir als europäische Politik glaubhaft sein wollen, dann dürfen wir beim Tierschutz nicht auf jene hören, die sagen: „Das geht nicht“, sondern müssen Initiator für Veränderungen und Änderungen sein.

Es braucht zweifelsohne auch einen Schutz unserer heimischen und europäischen Standards, die durch Importe ausgehöhlt werden. Ein Thema, das mich derzeit sehr oft erreicht, sind auch fragwürdige und leider lukrative Geschäftsmodelle mit Heimtieren, die angeblich vor Tötungsstationen gerettet wurden. Hier braucht es ein viel entschlosseneres Hinschauen der Mitgliedstaaten und auch der Kommission.

Patricia Chagnon (ID). – Madame la Présidente, Mesdames et Messieurs les députés, comment pouvez-vous avoir l'audace de vous prétendre les chevaliers blancs du bien-être animal, alors que, dans ce même hémicycle, vous soutenez depuis deux ans l'ouverture du marché européen aux poulets et aux œufs ukrainiens? Faut-il vous rappeler que, en Ukraine, 40 millions de poules sont élevées dans des hangars étroits dans la région de Vinnytsia, au centre du pays, où la multinationale MHP enserre plus de 20 poules au mètre carré? On est bien loin du respect du bien-être animal. De surcroît, vous imposez une nouvelle concurrence déloyale aux éleveurs français et européens au profit d'éleveurs qui ne respectent rien et qui garantissent encore moins.

Votre agribashing, alors que vous fermez les yeux sur la maltraitance ailleurs, au-delà d'une flagrante injustice, témoigne de votre mépris pour nos éleveurs, qui sont parmi les plus vertueux au monde. Personne n'est dupe de votre proposition de texte, qui est surtout un prétexte pour imposer de nouvelles restrictions pour les élevages ici, tout en encourageant des importations d'ailleurs. Un deux poids et deux mesures – je dirais même d'hypocrisie – qui nous donne effectivement la chair de poule.

Marc Angel (S&D). – Madam President, dear Commissioner, dear colleagues, for many years, European citizens have been asking for a revision of the EU animal welfare legislation. Some 84% of Europeans believe that the welfare of farmed animals should be better protected, and 90% consider that farming and breeding practices should meet basic ethical requirements. And at the same time, millions of signatures have been collected for the Citizens' Initiatives 'End the cage age' and 'Fur-free Europe'. And the message that these citizens are sending us is very clear: the current EU animal welfare situation must change, and it is regrettable that the Commission has failed to implement such important instruments of participatory democracy, and that it has given priority to business interests.

The way we treat animals mirrors the kind of humans we are. Animal welfare is essential for a civilised, healthy and sustainable society, and the European Union needs to push for the highest possible standards. Time is running out. It is time for the Commission to deliver on their promises.

To conclude, I would like to pay tribute to my friend Tilly Metz and all the colleagues who participated in the Committee of Inquiry on the Protection of Animals during Transport.

Aurélia Beigneux (ID). – Madame le Président, des millions d'Européens attendent avec impatience une révision urgente de la loi européenne sur le bien-être animal. Chaque jour perdu à débattre dans le vide – et de manière stérile pour certains ou certaines –, prolonge l'agonie de milliers d'êtres vivants sensibles, sacrifiés sur l'autel de la négligence politique.

À plusieurs reprises, les Européens vous ont alertés. L'initiative citoyenne exigeant la fin des cages a récolté 1,4 million de signatures, c'est historique. Alors, refuser de répondre à cet appel est un mépris non seulement pour leurs préoccupations, mais pour ce processus démocratique.

Vous prétendez défendre la dignité, mais où est la dignité lorsque l'on traite les animaux comme de vulgaires produits de consommation? Lors d'une réunion de l'intergroupe «bien-être animal», M^{me} Kyriakides a admis que ce sujet était enterré. Alors, doit-on vraiment se contenter de cette piteuse réponse de la Commission? Non.

De plus, qu'en est-il de l'introduction d'un règlement sur l'étiquetage religieux en matière de bien-être animal? Avez-vous déjà vu les images insoutenables des égorgements rituels au nom d'une religion? Je ne le pense pas. Alors stop à cette barbarie sanguinaire. Le respect de la dignité animale ne devrait pas être une option, mais un impératif moral, que nous nous devons tous d'honorer.

Łukasz Kohut (S&D). – Pani Przewodnicząca! 38 milionów zwierząt ginie każdego roku na terenie Unii Europejskiej, by stać się futrem. To dokładnie tyle, ile wynosi populacja całej Polski. Problem ten nie jest nowy. Komisja Europejska zna go od lat, ale z jakiegoś powodu nie potrafi skrócić cierpienia zwierząt i zaproponować konkretnych rozwiązań kończących okrucieństwo, jakie jest udziałem branży futrzarskiej. Na początku tego roku mieliśmy poznać harmonogram prac w tym zakresie, a mija kolejny miesiąc i nic. Tymczasem trzy miliony ludzi w ramach inicjatyw obywatelskich powiedziało, że czas zakończyć epokę klatkową w Unii i zapoczątkować Europę bez futer. Ich głos podobno został wysłuchany, ale – co zupełnie niezrozumiałe – nie stał się jeszcze rzeczywistością.

Jak wiele zwierząt ma jeszcze cierpieć? Kiedy Komisja uzna, że już wystarczy, że wprowadzenie jak najszybciej zakazu hodowli zwierząt futerkowych nie jest opcją, tylko naszym obowiązkiem? Droga Komisjo, czas posłuchać głosu Europejczyków i usłyszeć krzyk obdzieranych ze skóry zwierząt.

Catch-the-eye procedure

Michaela Šojdřová (PPE). – Paní předsedající, kolegyně a kolegové, dobré podmínky hospodářských zvířat jsou důležité pro zvířata, ale i pro nás, pro lidi, pro spotřebitele. Je jen jedno zdraví, zdravá příroda, zdravá zvířata a zdraví lidé, proto žít v dobrých podmínkách bude pro hospodářská zvířata dobré a bude to dobré i pro nás, pro lidi. A jde také o rovné podmínky na vnitřním trhu. Členské státy, jako např. Česká republika, zrušily klecové chovy nosnic od roku 2027. My jsme počítali s tím, že Komise dodrží příslib nové legislativy, ale Komise udělala chybu. Bohužel, nepodařilo se jí totiž předložit tak složitou komplexní legislativu, ale udělala chybu v tom, že nepředložila ani dílčí revizi, např. směrnice o podmínkách ochrany nosnic z roku 1999. Je to stará směrnice, 25 let stará, a mohla už nyní začít fungovat v nových podmínkách, to znamená pro zlepšení chovu nosnic. Já doufám, že se to podaří.

Billy Kelleher (Renew). – Madam President, firstly, I welcome any proposals that would improve animal transport regulations and the obvious mistake made over the last number of years was we did not enforce Regulation 2005. I sat on the Committee of inquiry that looked at that, and it also made recommendations. And I very much welcome the proposals put forward in terms of ensuring that we transport animals in a way that respects their integrity and ensures their safety and quality of life.

But equally, we also have to accept that Ireland, specifically, is an island nation and to have access to the single internal market, it does have to transport animals off the island, so we need to ensure that the transporters are of the highest quality, in terms of ventilation, temperature, lifetime, satellite tracking, veterinary oversight, feeding systems in place and ensuring that there is quality.

But at the same time, any regulations that are brought forward must protect the integrity of the single market and must allow Ireland to have access to that market and, in the meantime, ensure that we have the highest standards to transport animals from Ireland to the continent.

Manuela Ripa (Verts/ALE). – Frau Präsidentin! Artikel 13 Unionsrecht besagt: Die EU muss dem Wohlergehen der Tiere als fühlende Wesen in vollem Umfang Rechnung tragen. Tiere sind eben keine Produkte. Dennoch werden sie zum größten Teil in Europa so behandelt. Europäerinnen und Europäer wehren sich dagegen, wie viele erfolgreiche europäische Bürgerinitiativen und viel lokales ehrenamtliches Handeln zeigen.

Die Europäische Kommission hat versagt gegenüber Millionen von Bürgern, die mehr Schutz und Wohlergehen von Tieren wollen, indem Sie die so nötigen Tierschutzgesetze entweder gar nicht oder viel zu spät vorgelegt haben, sodass sie erst nach der Wahl behandelt werden können. Sie als Kommission sind von den Interessen der Tierhaltungsindustrie getrieben, vor der Agrarindustrie-Lobby eingeknickt und verstoßen letztendlich damit gegen EU-Recht.

Daher fordern wir Sie nun auf: Tun Sie etwas gegen die tägliche Tierqual, verzögern Sie die Tierschutzgesetze nicht mehr, und schaffen Sie endlich die Stelle eines Tierschutzkommissars in der nächsten Kommission! Es ist höchste Zeit.

Jiří Pospíšil (PPE). – Paní předsedající, vážená paní komisařko, já se tématu zvířat dlouhodobě věnuji a musím tedy stejně jako moji kolegové konstatovat, že za 5 let Komise neprosadila žádnou právní úpravu, která by zlepšovala postavení zvířat. A je zde tolik otázek. Kolegové to tady říkali. Téma nelegálního obchodu s domácími mazlíčky, psy a kočkami, množírny ve východní části Evropské unie. Zvířata jsou pašována na západ a jsou za velmi podivných podmínek prodávána. Hospodářská zvířata, předložili jste nakonec legislativu, která už nebude schválena. Bude ji projednávat až další Parlament. Je to tedy pozdě. Téma klecí, pohrdáte občany, je tady 1,5 milionu podpisů a vy tento návrh nepředložíte. Mě to velmi mrzí, ale musím říci, že jsme promarnili 5 let a že nás čeká v příštím volebním období obrovské množství práce, alespoň na příkladech, které jsem zde vyjmenoval, protože pokud nebudeme v této věci nic dělat, tak nebudeme plnit vůli občanů. A my jsme zde od toho, abychom vůli občanů naplňovali. To je naší povinností.

Petras Auštrevičius (Renew). – Madam President, animal welfare-related policy area is the one where Europeans are well ahead of their governments and the European Union in general. The recent European Citizens' Initiative with 1.4 million signatures is the best example of that, while the European Commission is lagging behind with promised legislation.

Colleagues, we need a Schengen-like companion animals free movement area with a proper electronically checked identification and registration system. Good for animals, good for people. Secondly, there must be Union-level established standards for pets breeding and breeders' responsibility and registration rules.

I invite the European Commission to react to European citizens' expectations as soon as possible, inviting many non-governmental animal welfare organisations who did a good job and still do a good job, hand in hand for common cause for animal welfare.

Henk Jan Ormel (PPE). – Voorzitter, commissaris, als eerste Nederlandse dierenarts in het Europees Parlement vind ik het een heel bijzonder voorrecht om in mijn tweede speech hier aandacht te vragen voor een dierenwelzijnsonderwerp dat mij bijzonder heeft geraakt.

23 jaar geleden, op 20 maart 2001, brak in Nederland mond- en klauwzeer uit. Sinds 1991 gold in de Europese Unie een vaccinatieverbod, waardoor bij deze uitbraak op grote schaal gezonde runderen, schapen, varkens en herten zijn gedood, afgevoerd en vernietigd. Ruim 300 000 dieren werden geruimd en tientallen boeren hebben zelfmoord gepleegd.

Sinds 2003 is noodvaccinatie toegestaan en mogen gevaccineerde dieren in leven blijven. Maar vaccinatie mag pas worden ingezet als er al een uitbraak is en heeft tal van handelsbelemmeringen tot gevolg, waardoor er in de praktijk bij een volgende uitbraak waarschijnlijk toch weer tot ruimen zal worden besloten.

Ik roep op tot een verdere herziening van het Europese non-vaccinatiebeleid!

Seán Kelly (PPE). – *A Uachtarán*, we are in politics because we like politics. Farmers farm because they like farming, and above all they love animals and they go to great efforts to protect them, getting up in the middle of the night to oversee cows calving, sheep lambing, paying big veterinary bills to ensure they're as healthy as possible. And for that reason we shouldn't be putting limits on what they can do, particularly when they have to trade, which means the animals have to leave the farm.

So putting time limits, arbitrary time limits, especially for countries like Portugal and Ireland, makes absolutely no sense. By all means transport them to the highest possible standards, but do not limit the opportunity to trade, because freedom of movement is an essential pillar of the European Union.

Having said that, there are a lot of abuses in industrial units, particularly in caged birds, etc., and I do agree we need to move quickly to end the cage age.

(End of catch-the-eye procedure)

Elisa Ferreira, Member of the Commission. – Madam President, thank you for this open discussion, which once more confirms the European Parliament's expectations and the clear need for the Commission to continue its work to improve and bring more positive change for animal welfare in the European Union. If we want to make sure that the European Union food production system remains resilient and competitive long term, more needs to be done. Europe needs a robust system that meets the expectations of society, including animal welfare concerns, which is not fully the case today.

At the same time, we have to give farmers the predictability and stability they need for their animal welfare investments in order for our animal welfare endeavours to be successful. Any new rule that has to come with tailored transition periods and appropriate supporting policies, including financial support.

Animal welfare is close to the heart of many European citizens and farmers, but we want to stress also for the Commission. The Commission shares these objectives, so I expect it will remain an important policy area in the future. And I thank you very, very much for the importance of this discussion and debate.

President. – The debate is closed.

Written statements (Rule 171)

César Luena (S&D), por escrito. – Los socialistas españoles queremos que la Comisión presente las propuestas legislativas pendientes sobre bienestar animal prometidas para esta legislatura y aún no presentadas.

La Estrategia «De la Granja a la Mesa» recogía el compromiso de la Comisión de revisar la legislación de bienestar animal a más tardar en el tercer trimestre de 2023. El respaldo ciudadano a la necesidad de revisar esta legislación es, además, remarcable, como demuestran las iniciativas ciudadanas europeas «End the Cage Age» (Acabemos con las jaulas) y «Fur Free Europe» (Europa sin pieles), con más de 1 millón de firmas de apoyo cada una.

No obstante, en su programa de trabajo para 2024, la Comisión confirmó que solo publicaría la propuesta sobre la protección de los animales durante el transporte, y se refirió a la necesidad de más evaluaciones y diálogo sobre las demás propuestas. En este marco, los socialistas damos la bienvenida a la propuesta sobre el bienestar de los animales de compañía presentada en diciembre de 2023, pero pedimos a la Comisión que siga avanzando para armonizar la legislación sobre bienestar animal y que dialogue las medidas con el sector para hacer propuestas basadas en datos científicos que minimicen cualquier potencial efecto negativo.

5. Return of Romanian national treasure illegally appropriated by Russia (debate)

President. – The next item is the debate on the Commission statement on the return of Romanian national treasure illegally appropriated by Russia (2024/2605(RSP)).

Elisa Ferreira, Member of the Commission. – Madam President, on this topic, I'll be speaking on behalf of the High Representative / Vice-President, Josep Borrell, who is at the moment at the United Nations.

Honourable Members of the European Parliament, you have invited the Commission to speak on the return of the national treasure of Romania. Romania's national treasure was transferred to the tsarist Russian Empire during the First World War for protection but was never returned in its entirety to Romania, neither by the USSR nor by the Russian Federation. This remained a recurrent topic on the agenda of the Romanian-Soviet and then Romanian-Russian bilateral discussions. The treasure includes the National Bank of Romania's gold reserves, Queen Mary's jewels, archives and other historical and cultural valuables, and exposes yet another violation of international law by Russia.

While the topic continues to be a bilateral issue between Romania and Russia, the European Union stands ready to support the Romanian authorities' efforts to obtain the full restitution of its national treasure, if they so request. This will be a long-term endeavour, as currently there is not a sufficient level of trust between the European Union and Russia to suggest that we could get any meaningful outcome from Russia. As a consequence of the illegal annexation of Crimea in 2014 and Russia's illegal, unprovoked and unjustified full-scale war of aggression against Ukraine since 2022, the policy dialogues and the mechanism of cooperation between the European Union and Russia have been suspended.

Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine marked a fundamental turning point in relations between the European Union and Russia. As long as Russia's illegal war against Ukraine continues, we'll continue calling it out for war crimes and for blatant violations of international humanitarian law. We will maintain our political, military, economic and humanitarian support for Ukraine and will continue applying restrictive measures against Russia, which already include the largest sanctions packages in our union's history. At the same time, we continue to support Russian civil society, human rights defenders and independent media who speak out against the regime.

Eugen Tomac, în numele grupului PPE. – Doamna președintă, doamna comisară, stimați colegi, în primul rând, încep prin a vă mulțumi pentru suportul pe care l-ați acordat demersului nostru privind această rezoluție importantă.

În mod deosebit, vreau să îi mulțumesc domnului președinte Băsescu, pentru modul cum a coordonat ieri negocierile, pentru ca astăzi să avem un document cu o valoare istorică pentru România, aici, la vot în plenul Parlamentului.

Acum un an aduceam pentru prima dată în discuție subiectul tezaurului României sechestrat la Moscova. O făceam atunci în contextul discuției noastre referitoare la traficul ilicit de produse culturale în Uniunea Europeană.

Astăzi sunt onorat că avem în Parlamentul European o dezbatere dedicată exclusiv acestui subiect, întrucât este un episod unic în istoria relațiilor internaționale. Nu există nicio dispută similară în lume.

Tezaurul României nu a fost furat în vreme de război. El a fost predat spre păstrare în siguranță, în baza unui acord bilateral între Guvernul României și Guvernul Rusiei țariste. Vorbim de tablouri, bijuterii, bunuri de valoare din bisericile și mănăstirile României, arhivele instituțiilor publice, precum și peste 91,5 tone de aur reprezentând tezaurul Băncii Naționale a României.

O parte din bunurile culturale și religioase au fost returnate în perioada sovietică, însă aurul României este și astăzi sechestrat în Rusia. Subliniez, peste 91,5 tone de aur. Este o creanță legală a României asupra Rusiei, pe care Moscova însă nu o recunoaște, iar asta nu ne surprinde. Cine, dacă nu Rusia, se pricepe cel mai bine să dezinformeze, să denatureze trecutul, să fure teritorii, să distrugă destine?

De aceea, vă cer sprijin pentru un vot în ceea ce privește această rezoluție prin care cerem returnarea tezaurului României înapoi.

Rovana Plumb, în numele grupului S&D. – Doamna președintă, doamna comisară Ferreira, tezaurul României reținut ilegal de Rusia reprezintă o dispută nu foarte cunoscută la nivel internațional, deși România s-a străduit consecvent în ultimii o sută de ani să rezolve situația pe canale diplomatice bilaterale.

Aducerea subiectului în sesiunea plenară a Parlamentului European și, prin aceasta, pe agenda Uniunii, este un gest politic ce stă în continuarea unui secol de eforturi constante pentru a corecta o situație injustă.

România are un drept de creanță deplin valabil din punct de vedere istoric și juridic asupra depozitului său de aur de 91,5 tone, dar și a unor obiecte religioase și de arhivă evacuate la Moscova în perioada 1916-1917, pe baza unor garanții, pentru a le pune la adăpost în contextul Primului Război Mondial.

Uniunea Sovietică, și apoi Rusia, s-au bucurat și continuă să se bucure de beneficiile generate de folosirea acestor valori, fie ele materiale sau spirituale. Dar pe cine mai surprinde acum atitudinea brutală, comportamentul brutal al Moscovei? Ce dovadă mai bună să avem că, indiferent de regimurile politice din Rusia, atitudinea acesteia rămâne aceeași?

Dezbaterea acestui subiect în plenul Parlamentului European este importantă din mai multe perspective.

În primul rând, vrem să aducem la cunoștința publicului și a decidenților europeni această situație specifică a României. Creăm premisele că, dacă, după încheierea războiului de agresiune al Rusiei asupra Ucrainei, vor exista negocieri între Uniunea Europeană și Rusia, subiectul returnării tezaurului României să fie inclus pe agenda de discuții de către Uniunea Europeană.

Facem apel la solidaritatea europeană, plasând pe agenda Uniunii acest subiect.

Solicităm Comisiei să coopereze cu statul român, cu Banca Națională a României și cu alte instituții relevante pentru a mobiliza eforturi coordonate în vederea restituirii fără întârziere a tezaurului României.

Nerestituirea tezaurului României de către Rusia reprezintă un atac la adresa patrimoniului național, dar totodată și al celui european.

Astfel, așa cum se prevede în tratatele europene, trebuie să acordăm o atenție deosebită conservării avuțiilor naționale ale statelor membre. În acest sens, apreciez și salut eforturile substanțiale ale Uniunii în protejarea patrimoniului național, cultural și istoric prin punerea în aplicare a legislației și mecanismelor de cooperare care reglementează restituirile bunurilor culturale și patrimoniale preluate ilegal de pe teritoriul statelor membre.

Totodată, cerem Comisiei Europene să extindă domeniul de aplicare al politicilor Uniunii care reglementează protecția bunurilor culturale, până la includerea recuperării avuțiilor naționale relocate în timp de război, în temeiul acordurilor bilaterale.

Stimate colege și colegi, România nu a renunțat la dreptul său niciodată și nici nu o să o facă vreodată. Există o singură soluție: Rusia să-și respecte obligațiile, iar Uniunea să stea alături de România prin instituțiile și demersurile sale pentru a se pune în practică ceea ce este corect și legitim.

Vlad-Marius Botoș, în numele grupului *Renew*. – Doamna președintă, doamna comisară Ferreira, dragi colegi, îi mulțumesc în primul rând colegului meu din Dreapta Unită, Eugen Tomac, pentru această inițiativă privind rezoluția tezaurului României.

Este o problemă care trenează de mai bine de o sută de ani. România a semnat o înțelegere scrisă cu Rusia pentru ca aceasta să păstreze în siguranță tezaurul țării noastre până la finalizarea Primului Război Mondial. Înțelegerea a fost semnată de ambele state și a acoperit obiecte culturale, arhive, bijuterii, dar și 91,5 tone de aur. Rusia s-a angajat prin tratat să returneze toate aceste valori, însă au trecut mai bine de o sută de ani și România a primit înapoi doar o parte din valorile culturale și de arhivă, dar nu aurul românesc.

Tratatele semnate trebuie respectate. Românii au dreptul să primească înapoi propriul tezaur. Este inadmisibil ca o țară să sechestreze tezaurul național al altui stat. Este un caz unic în lume și trebuie soluționat cât mai repede prin retrocedarea integrală și imediată a întregului tezaur.

Cristian Terheș, în numele grupului *ECR*. – Doamna președintă, solicit returnarea imediată și necondiționată a tezaurului României sechestrat ilegal de către Rusia de peste o sută de ani, împreună cu despăgubiri și dobânzi la zi, pentru faptul că națiunea română nu s-a putut bucura și folosi în interes propriu de acest tezaur care îi aparține de drept.

În 1916 și 1917, când peste jumătate din România era ocupată pe durata Primului Război Mondial, România și-a trimis în Rusia tezaurul, pentru a fi păstrat, ca după război să-i fie restituit. Transferul acestui tezaur, care cuprinde atât aur, cât și obiecte de artă, religioase, arhive foarte vechi, s-a făcut pe baza unor documente de inventar semnate atât de partea română și rusă, cât și de ambasadorul Franței în Sankt Petersburg, ca martor.

În 1917, însă, odată cu Revoluția Roșie, bolșevicii lui Lenin, ajunși la putere în Rusia, au desconsiderat actele semnate de Rusia țaristă, că vor returna tezaurul României, astfel că acesta nu a mai fost returnat după Primul Război Mondial. Atitudinea bolșevică a fost continuată de autoritățile sovietice, iar apoi, după dezmembrarea U.R.S.S., de către autoritățile Federației Ruse, condusă în prezent de Vladimir Putin.

De peste o sută de ani, așadar, Rusia continuă să refuze restituirea integrală a tezaurului României, încălcându-și propriile angajamente semnate, deținând de aceea ilegal, în tot acest timp, bunuri care nu sunt ale Rusiei.

Pe data de 15 februarie 2024, în Comisia PETI s-a dezbătut petiția 1968/2023, inițiată de ONG-ul român „Împreună aducem bunăstare”, prin care societatea civilă din România a solicitat sprijin instituțiilor europene ca România să își recupereze din Rusia tezaurul național.

Acest tezaur nu este doar o colecție de obiecte culturale, artistice, tone de aur și bijuterii, ci este o mărturie a moștenirii națiunii române pe care a primit-o de la generațiile anterioare.

Din păcate, cazul României nu este singular, Rusia deținând și azi patrimoniul cultural și tezaure de la alte țări europene pe care le-a jefuit în decursul timpului, cum ar fi Polonia, Lituania, Letonia, Estonia și altele.

Solicit de aceea, instituțiilor europene să se implice în a sprijini demersurile României și ale tuturor țărilor europene pentru a-și recupera tezaurele și bunurile sechestrate ilegal și astăzi de Rusia.

Traian Băsescu (PPE). – Doamna președintă, doamna comisară, chiar dacă am avut senzația că ați greșit, subiectul nu era Ucraina, ci tezaurul României.

În ultimii o sută de ani, Rusia i-a văduvit pe români de trei lucruri dragi și acestea sunt:

libertatea, prin impunerea unui regim de dictatură comunistă după al Doilea Război Mondial,

tezaurul României depozitat la Moscova spre păstrare și returnare și niciodată returnat

și al treilea lucru: pământul Basarabiei, rupt din trupul României prin pactul criminal Ribbentrop-Molotov.

Lucrurile au evoluat. Legat de cele trei furturi, românii duc o luptă continuă pentru a redobândi ceea ce este a lor.

Astfel, românii și-au recâștigat libertatea prin Revoluția din decembrie '89. Pactul Ribbentrop-Molotov își estompează efectele prin începerea procesului de aderare a Republicii Moldova la Uniunea Europeană, iar prin ceea ce facem astăzi înseamnă că Parlamentul European devine parte a luptei pe care o duce România pentru recuperarea tezaurului.

Mulțumesc Parlamentului, mulțumesc instituțiilor Uniunii Europene, cărora rezoluția de astăzi le trasează sarcini de implicare în soluționarea litigiului.

Dacian Ciolos (Renew). – Doamna președintă, dragi colegi, această dezbatere despre furtul tezaurului național al României arată foarte clar ce traume istorice au trăit cetățenii români, dar și ceilalți cetățeni ai Europei de Est din vecinătatea Rusiei.

Iar acest lucru sper să contribuie la înțelegerea mai bună în vestul Europei a modului în care regimurile totalitare de la Kremlin, de-a lungul istoriei, au jefuit și jefuiesc, atacă și încearcă să subjuge țările din proximitate. Azi e cazul Ucrainei, a Republicii Moldova. Au trecut prin asta și România, Polonia, țările baltice, nu cu mulți ani în urmă.

Mi-aș dori ca această dezbatere să ne ajute să înțelegem că lipsei de scrupule trebuie să-i răspundem cu fermitate în cazul Rusiei. Măsurile ferme împotriva Rusiei lui Putin, inclusiv economice, și folosirea activelor înghețate ale acestui regim Putin, fără amânare, sunt răspunsuri justificate în acest context.

România a plătit deja prețul dictaturii și al imperialismului rusesc și asta trebuie să servească de lecție Europei de azi.

Kosma Złotowski (ECR). – Pani Przewodnicząca! Pani Komisarz! Rosja jest nie tylko państwem terrorystycznym, ale także złodziejem i grabieżcą. Wszystkie państwa Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej odczuły to w przeszłości na własnej skórze. Dobra kultura, infrastruktura przemysłowa czy zasoby naturalne w państwach zdominowanych i okupowanych przez carski, sowiecki, a teraz putinowski reżim były i są kradzione oraz wywożone przez dziesiątki lat. Rumuńskie złoto jest tutaj jednym z najbardziej spektakularnych przykładów takiego rabunku, który nigdy nie został rozliczony.

To, co dzisiaj obserwujemy na Ukrainie, to efekt bezkarności Moskwy, na którą świat pozwalał przez stulecia. Rosja, która wspólnie z nazistowskimi Niemcami wywołała drugą wojnę światową, powinna ponosić za ten konflikt taką samą odpowiedzialność moralną i finansową jak jej sojusznik z 1939 roku. W przeciwnym razie będziemy niszczyć, zabijać i rabować dalej, także na zachodzie Europy.

Liudas Mažylis (PPE). – Madam President, Commissioner, colleagues, robbing cultural historical treasures is a very usual behaviour of Russia since Tsarist times.

For instance, exhibits from Lithuanian museums were taken out to Russia in the middle of the 19th century and are still not returned. Important historical documents are robbed by Russia too and are secretly kept without possibility to even be acquainted with them. Exactly the same was done by Bolsheviks with Romanian national treasure, including almost 100 tonnes of gold.

Totalitarian regimes in Russia change, but the will to return treasures to their owners does not appear. Now the same continues on the Ukrainian territories occupied by Russia. The task of the occupants is far from only getting financial value. They also seek to humiliate neighbouring countries and to break down their national identity. Russia refuses to follow corresponding UNESCO and other conventions.

Anyway, at least one precedent is already created. There is the decision of the court of 2023 to return Scythian gold formerly exposed in Crimea – which is now occupied by Russia – back to Ukraine, and not Russia. Let us believe that justice can win.

Vlad Gheorghe (Renew). – Doamna președintă, de-a lungul istoriei, Rusia a furat tot timpul de la români. Ne-a furat teritorii, Basarabia și Bucovina de Nord, ne-a furat patrimoniul cultural, tezaurul, și ne-a furat bani. Valoarea aurului pe care pur și simplu rușii l-au furat, e undeva la cel puțin 5 miliarde de euro acum.

Acum întrebarea e ce facem, îi lăsăm să fure în continuare? Stăm în continuare pe banii lui Putin și ai rușilor care sunt aici, în Uniunea Europeană, și ne plângem că nu ne dau de bună voie hoșii tezaurul înapoi sau le luăm banii? Măcar atât, dacă atât putem. Dacă banii lor sunt aici, de ce nu spune Europa: „Ia-le banii!”? De ce nu face chestia asta?

Dragi colegi, dacă vă e frică de Putin, nu aveți ce să căutați aici. Înaintașii noștri, care au făcut România, România Mare, n-au avut frică de dictatori, de tot felul de tirani. Cei care au făcut Uniunea Europeană n-au avut nici ei frică de tirani, pentru că nu mai aveam țări, nu mai aveam Uniune Europeană dacă se întâmpla asta.

Așa că nu vă mai fie frică. Luați-le banii odată!

Catch-the-eye procedure

Daniel Buda (PPE). – Doamna președintă, tezaurul României reprezintă o rană deschisă în inima poporului român, o cicatrice dureroasă a trecutului, care ne amintește de nedreptățile comise.

Este timpul să punem capăt acestui capitol întunecat și să ne asigurăm că Rusia răspunde pentru această faptă barbară.

În plin război mondial, când teritoriul național era ocupat în proporție de două treimi, conducerea țării decidea mutarea tezaurului pe teritoriul Rusiei, stat aliat la acea vreme. Au trecut 108 ani de când cerem să ne fie restituit tezaurul, mai exact, cele 41 de vagoane încărcate cu 91,5 tone de aur fin, dar și alte obiecte cu o valoare inestimabilă.

Acest episod din istoria României este dovada vie că Rusia este orice, dar nu un aliat, iar încrederea noastră trebuie să reprezinte o lecție învățată pentru oricare stat care vede în Rusia un posibil partener. Este momentul ca cele 41 de vagoane să se întoarcă acasă, să ne recuperăm prejudiciul, iar Rusia să plătească pentru toți acești ani de așteptare.

Felicit Parlamentul European pentru implicarea în rezolvarea acestei probleme.

Maria Grapini (S&D). – Doamna președintă, doamnă comisară, stimați colegi, rezoluția de astăzi este un semn că România are nevoie de solidaritate. Suntem membri ai Uniunii Europene, avem nevoie de susținere.

Doamnă comisară, ați spus că este o problemă bilaterală. Da, dar care este scopul Uniunii, până la urmă? Să știți că România nu acum cere pentru prima dată returnarea tezaurului și să se încheie odată cu jaful făcut de Rusia. De peste o sută de ani în istorie, România și-a cerut aceste drepturi. Nu a reușit. Este momentul ca această rezoluție, sigur, cu sprijinul tuturor colegilor care sigur vor vota, să fie preluată ca un document, doamnă comisară, și nu pusă la o parte, pentru că aici, în acest Parlament, am votat foarte multe rezoluții și nu s-a întâmplat nimic cu ele.

Cetățenii din România așteaptă acest semn. Există sau nu solidaritate atunci când un stat membru este neîndreptățit? Este dreptul cetățenilor să își recupereze acest tezaur, pentru care generații în șir au lucrat pentru a-l avea.

Vă cer, aşadar, doamnă comisară, să puneţi în lucru această rezoluţie care astăzi se va vota. Este dreptul României să spere la solidaritate.

Mick Wallace (The Left). – Madam President, all artefacts, national treasures and artworks stolen or plundered by countries throughout history should be returned, and Russia should return the Romanian national treasure.

But in here we seldom apply the same level of scrutiny to our own Member States. Take France, for example. The French have engaged in two of the worst cases of plundering of artwork in the last 500 years: firstly under Napoleon, and secondly under the Vichy government. As of 2024, half of all the artwork stolen by Napoleon still remains in France. And, God knows, British museums are stuffed with stolen artefacts. Any chance that they might start returning it to the rightful owners?

In recent times, we have had money stolen from the Afghan central bank by the Americans and the Swiss and some UK banks. Any chance that they might return that, because it is needed for humanitarian purposes in Afghanistan? We have also had UK banks who have stolen money from Venezuela. There's gold in London belonging to the Venezuelans, but the Brits have stolen it. Maybe the EU should put some pressure on everyone to return what they have stolen. There are a lot of thieves around!

Seán Kelly (PPE). – *A Uachtaráin*, I agree completely with this resolution, and it reminds me of possibly the first copyright dispute in the world. In Ireland, almost a thousand years ago, there was a dispute over the ownership of a manuscript. We had judges at that time known as druids, and the druid, in his summary, said, *'do gach bó a lao, do gach leabhar a údar'* – 'to every cow its calf, to every book its author'. And if the druid was here today, he would add, *'do gach tír, a stór'* – 'to every country its treasure'.

It's not acceptable that the treasures belonging to Romania are still being held in Russia. Whatever the legitimacy was there initially when they went there, it is now time to return them. And I join with colleagues in calling on Russia to do the honourable thing and return to Romania what belongs to them.

Do gach tír, a stór, do gach bó, a lao, do gach leabhar, a údar.

(End of catch-the-eye procedure)

Elisa Ferreira, European Commission. – Madam President, honourable Members, the debate today illustrates how Russia follows a consistent pattern of violations of international law. Russia's war against Ukraine is a blatant violation of international law – including the United Nations Charter, goes against the European Union's objective to strengthen the multilateral rules-based order and is a threat to all countries, not just to Europe.

Russia's political leadership must be held fully accountable for the violations of international law and international humanitarian law it has committed. As long as Russia continues to wage a war of aggression against Ukraine, there can be no return to normal relations.

And trying to address in particular the comments made by honourable Member Traian Băsescu and honourable Member Maria Grapini, that in the meantime left, I would like to underline in my initial words a sentence in which it was said that while the topic of Romanian treasures continues to be a bilateral issue between Romania and Russia, the European Union stands ready to support the Romanian authorities' efforts to obtain the full restitution of its national treasure, if they so request.

So, in a nutshell, the basic messages are that the European Union remains open to support Romania on the matter of restitution of its national treasure and archives by Russia. But at this moment, policy dialogues and mechanisms of cooperation with Russia are suspended following the war of aggression against Ukraine. But we are ready to take up the issue of restitution of Romanian national treasures in the future, when the situation allows.

So in a very open and frank way, this is the message that the Commission can at this moment, unfortunately, give to the Parliament, thanking again the Parliament for this debate and this initiative.

President. – I have received six motions for resolutions¹ to wind up this debate.

The debate is closed. The vote will be held today.

1 See minutes.

Written statements (Rule 171)

Victor Negrescu (S&D), *în scris*. – Anul acesta se împlinesc 107 ani de când tezaurul țării mele, România, a fost însușit ilegal de către Federația Rusă, care își ignoră în continuare obligațiile ce îi revin conform dreptului și cutumelor internaționale.

Prin rezoluția noastră tragem un semnal de alarmă asupra acestei situații și solicităm accelerarea procedurilor pentru restituirea integrală a elementelor care compun tezaurul României, parte din patrimoniul național al țării mele.

Totodată, solicităm Comisiei Europene să întreprindă toate demersurile necesare și să identifice rapid o soluție, astfel încât domeniul de aplicare al politicilor UE referitoare la protecția bunurilor culturale să fie extins pentru a cuprinde și recuperarea bunurilor de patrimoniu național mutate pe timp de război.

Trebuie să menținem acest subiect pe agenda europeană, mobilizând toți actorii relevanți până când tezaurul României va fi integral restituit și drepturile țării mele respectate.

6. Deterioration of living conditions in the EU (debate)

President. – The next item is the debate on the Council and Commission statements on the deterioration of living conditions in the EU (2024/2656(RSP)).

As we are moving towards voting time, there are no blue cards or catch-the-eye procedure for this debate.

Nicolas Schmit, *Member of the Commission*. – Madam President, indeed, millions of European citizens have seen their living conditions deteriorating. They have been the victims of the financial crisis. The COVID pandemic has affected them in their daily lives, followed by inflation fuelled by energy and food prices. And for all these fellow citizens, the main question is how to make ends meet every month. And this affects those people at risk of poverty. But, more and more, it also affects the so-called middle classes. And that's why it is important for this House and the European Union to show that we really take these concerns seriously. This is important also for Europe.

Poverty remains acute in Europe. It has not significantly declined in the EU over the past few years, and citizens are quite rightly concerned. In particular, child poverty, affecting about 20 million children, has even increased over recent years. Some groups remain more at risk than others. This concerns young people women, ethnic minorities and migrants in particular.

Obviously, the economic and social strains we face due to the multiple crises have negatively impacted households all over Europe, leading with the increased cost of living and the reduced purchasing power and available income. We know that lower-income households are mostly affected by increases in prices, such as energy and food prices. A rising number of people have fallen into energy poverty. Almost 1 in 10 Europeans is unable to keep their home adequately warm.

On top of that, housing affordability is an increasing challenge in the Union in almost all Member States. In 2022, almost 1 in 10 persons lived in a household where total housing costs represented more than 40% of their income, with a significant increase since 2020. Obviously, although housing is not directly an EU competence, there is a strong demand now, also from Member States, for the EU to take a stronger role in tackling the European-wide housing crisis.

We cannot turn a blind eye to the problem of the working poor in the EU. This is why wage policies and the legislation on adequate minimum wages that the EU has adopted and Member States have now to implement are of key importance. It's also about part-time work imposed especially on single parents — and when I say single parents, I mean, in most cases, single mothers — that cannot rely on affordable childcare and therefore cannot have a full-time job and decent pay.

We have seen how statutory minimum wage policies have been successful in protecting the purchasing power of workers with lower incomes in many Member States, and that's why the implementation of the Directive on Adequate Minimum Wages is key. By the way, there are a lot of good examples that increasing minimum wages quite strongly does not destroy jobs. We see that in the European Union now that those countries who have done that, they have even seen their unemployment rate reduce quite dramatically.

Real wages significantly dropped in 2022 and to a lesser extent in 2023. Furthermore, upward wage convergence has been stalling. While in 2024 real wages are expected to somewhat rebound, they would remain well below pre-pandemic levels for most countries. And in this context, it is crucial that euro area countries support wage developments that mitigate purchasing power losses, especially for low-income earners. Furthermore, it is essential that Member States promote collective bargaining on wage setting and ensure an effective involvement of social partners.

We frequently forget that wages represent a very important part of our internal demand. And precisely this internal demand in the EU has remained rather sluggish in recent years. This also explains why our growth is now quite low.

Given the repeated shocks and crises, effective policies and exceptional social transfers have helped prevent a major worsening: job protection during the pandemic, namely through the SURE instrument, resilience of employment, as well as increases in statutory minimum wages and income support measures have helped mitigate the negative social impact of the pandemic, high energy prices and inflation. But no significant progress in reducing poverty and inequalities has been achieved, notwithstanding a recent high employment rate. This is why we need to step up our efforts towards our target of reducing, by 2030, the number of persons at risk of poverty or social exclusion in the EU by at least 15 million, including at least 5 million children.

To sustain these efforts, this needs to be complemented by reaching the targets on employment and particularly skills. Technological change creates skills shortages. Companies are complaining about these skills shortages. That is why it is absolutely important and urgent to invest more in human capital and, finally, to give everybody an equal opportunity precisely to get the right skills and the right educational level.

We should also further tackle inequalities, not only to ensure better cohesion within our societies, but also because high inequalities have a negative impact on economic growth. We need holistic approaches that combine social and economic policies as well as fair taxation. Wages are generally much more taxed than other sources of income.

We must live up to our commitments. Strong welfare systems and quality jobs are needed to fight poverty and address these new challenges. In line with this, we need to put a larger focus on social investment policies and reforms. This has been the spirit of the RF and will also be the spirit of the fiscal structural plans under the revised economic governance framework, as also discussed during Tuesday's Ecofin Joint Council Meeting.

Social investments and reforms, complemented by well-functioning social protection systems, thus have an important role in mitigating social risks and promoting upward social convergence. Tackling poverty and social exclusion is at the centre of the European Pillar of Social Rights and its action plan. I just mentioned the European Child Guarantee, the Directive on Adequate Minimum Wages, the Council recommendation on adequate minimum income, the European Platform on Combatting Homelessness, and so on. These need to be fully implemented now. We also support Member States by providing guidance through the European Semester and with EU funding, especially the ESF which, for example, invests EUR 45.5 billion in social inclusion.

The actions we have put in place have set in motion our joint undertaking to make Europe fairer and more inclusive, but we need to be consistent in the implementation and do more to ensure our social cohesion. Social cohesion is essential. Social cohesion is essential also for competitiveness, to strengthen Europe, to make it stronger in a dangerous geopolitical context. We have to have strong solidarity between European Member States as well as inside our Member States. We should leave nobody behind. This is also about jobs, but not just any jobs: good-quality jobs with high productivity, with fair wages and good working conditions.

We share a common goal that precariousness, poverty and social exclusion should be eradicated in Europe. And that is, finally, the objective of our social market economy system.

Markus Ferber, *im Namen der PPE-Fraktion*. – Frau Präsidentin, Herr Kommissar, liebe Kolleginnen, liebe Kollegen! Zunächst einmal ein ganz herzliches Dankeschön an die linke Seite dieses Hauses, dass wir uns heute mit dem Thema Verschlechterung der Lebensbedingungen in der Europäischen Union beschäftigen dürfen. Das gibt nämlich eine gute Chance, auch einmal darüber zu reden, was die Gründe sind, warum die wirtschaftliche Entwicklung in Europa so schlecht ist. Denn – ich sage es ganz offen – daran tragen diejenigen Schuld, die heute diese Debatte beantragt haben, und das sollte auch einmal sehr deutlich angesprochen werden.

Wir haben in den letzten Jahren gesehen, dass der Standort Europa in allen internationalen Rankings, was die Wettbewerbsfähigkeit betrifft, immer weiter nach unten gerutscht ist. Das kommt nicht von ungefähr – das hat handfeste Gründe. Und die lassen sich nicht nur auf ein schwieriges geopolitisches Umfeld oder auf zu geringe Mindestlöhne zurückführen, wie wir es gerade gehört haben.

Die Steuerlast ist hoch, die bürokratischen Pflichten sind ausufernd, die Energiepreise sind exorbitant, Zukunftsinvestitionen finden außerhalb Europas statt – das nagt an der Wettbewerbsfähigkeit unserer Wirtschaft und damit natürlich auch an unserem Wohlstand. Wenn der Kuchen nicht mehr größer wird, die Wirtschaft also nicht wächst, und gleichzeitig aufgrund demografischer Entwicklungen immer größere Aufwendungen für Sozialausgaben notwendig werden, dann engt das zwangsläufig die Spielräume ein.

Sowohl die Kommission als auch wir im Parlament und der Rat müssen sich also die Frage stellen: Wie können wir zu mehr Wettbewerbsfähigkeit und Wachstum beitragen?

Deswegen nur ein paar wenige Punkte: weg vom Ordnungsrecht und Mikromanagement, hin zu marktwirtschaftlichen Lösungen, weg von immer neuen Berichtspflichten, hin zu einem Belastungsstopp, echtem Bürokratieabbau und einer Konsolidierung des europäischen Rechts, weg von einer Klima- und Umweltpolitik, die gegen die Unternehmen gemacht wird, hin zu einem Ansatz, bei dem Wirtschaft und Politik gemeinsam diesen Wandel gestalten, und weg von immer neuen konsumtiven Ausgaben, hin zu strategisch wachstumsfördernden Investitionen und Produktivität steigernden Strukturreformen.

Dann sind wir auf dem richtigen Weg, und dann brauchen wir auch keine solchen Debatten mehr führen.

Agnes Jongerius, *namens de S&D-Fractie*. – Voorzitter, meer dan een miljoen mensen in Nederland leven in armoede en veel van hen werken voor onleefbaar lage lonen. De prijzen voor huur, energie en boodschappen zijn behoorlijk gestegen en veel bedrijven hebben van die inflatie geprofiteerd.

De Europese richtlijn betreffende toereikende minimumlonen die vorig jaar dankzij het werk van commissaris Schmit en dit Parlement is aangenomen, biedt hoop. Maar dan moet de richtlijn wel zorgvuldig en juist worden ingevoerd. En laat ik zeggen: de klok tikt. Elke week die we langer dan noodzakelijk wachten op de aanpassing van het minimumloon, is een week waarin kinderen zonder ontbijt naar school gaan, waarin mensen niet naar een feestje durven te gaan omdat ze geen geld hebben voor een cadeautje of een week waarin ze aarzelen: betaal ik de huur of betaal ik de energierekening?

Gelukkig zijn er landen die niet wachten tot de twee jaar voorbij zijn en ik ben blij dat de commissaris dit debat aangrijpt om een oproep te doen aan die andere groep. Namelijk: de beste manier om armoede te bestrijden is het verhogen van de lonen. Minister Van Gennip moet het goede voorbeeld volgen en niet toegeven aan werkgevers die steggelen over een extra verhoging van 1,2 %. Er is meer nodig om de armoede in Nederland tegen te gaan. De klok tikt. We hebben nog 247 dagen.

Klemen Grošelj, *v imenu skupine Renew*. – Gospod predsednica. Spoštovani. Notranji trg glede cen ne deluje, kot smo si želeli in načrtovali. Na eni strani imamo rast cen, ki ogroža blagostanje državljanov in državljanov, kmete, ki so nezadovoljni z odkupnimi cenami. Opažamo nenavadna in ekstremna nihanja cen surovin.

Resda je k inflaciji in dvigu cen prispevala energetska kriza in visoke cene energentov, a na drugi strani vidimo visoke dobičke energetskih družb, bank, ki so, vsaj kar se tiče obrestnih mer, igrale, milo rečeno, dvomljivo igro. Trgovske verige, ki obvladujejo ogromni delež prodaje živil in hrane, ki so poslovale rekordno.

Seveda ni težava, če podjetja dobro poslujejo. Vendar pa je odgovornost regulatorjev, da spremljajo dogajanje na trgu in zagotavljajo, da so ti dobički rezultat zakonitega poslovanja in ne nepoštenih poslovnih praks, kot so zloraba tržnega položaja ali manipulacije trga.

Komisija in države članice imajo mehanizme, s katerimi lahko posredujejo in skozi fiskalne ukrepe in mehanizme varovanja konkurence na trgu preprečijo neupravičeno bogatenje in zlorabe na trgu.

Še več, če do njih, če je do njih prihajalo, morajo takšno poslovno prakso tudi kaznovati. Torej, kaj še čakamo?

Sara Matthieu, on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group. – Madam President, dear colleagues, for one out of five Europeans, life has become a series of painful choices. As the cost of living pushes people to the edge. They have to be careful using public transport due to the high ticket prices. They have to choose the cheapest food, or they cancel their health insurance for themselves or for their children. Going on holidays, going to a concert, that's really out of the question, so it's all about managing everything the cheapest way possible or even going without. And it's youngsters, it's women, it's people with disabilities that run the highest risk of getting trapped in poverty and social exclusion.

But the good news is, dear colleagues, we can change that. Poverty is a political choice, it's not a natural state, and soon we will welcome the Social Summit in La Hulpe. I'll be there, of course, to take this as an opportunity to embark on the Union's social ambition, because if we're serious in the fight against poverty, we need a directive on adequate minimum income, just like the Parliament has demanded.

And Commission, of course, we also look forward to your legislative proposals in the next term on the right to disconnect, on mental health at work, on the right for workers for education and training. And we are also eager to find out how you will tackle the housing crisis throughout Europe. People in poverty are counting on us, dear colleagues, we cannot let them down.

Elżbieta Rafalska, w imieniu grupy ECR. – Pani Przewodnicząca! Panie Komisarzu! Ostatnie dane za 2022 rok mówią o tym, że 6,7% Europejczyków, to jest 28,9 miliona Europejczyków, zagrożonych jest deprywacją materialną i społeczną. Jeszcze więcej osób zagrożonych jest ubóstwem: to 16,5% i dotyczy 73 milionów Europejczyków, przy czym zróżnicowanie między krajami członkowskimi jest bardzo duże – między 10% a 23%.

W moim kraju, w Polsce, ten wskaźnik wynosi 13,7% i należy do jednych z najniższych. To nie spadło z nieba. To efekt skutecznej polityki rządu Zjednoczonej Prawicy, skutecznych działań społecznych, dobrej sytuacji na rynku pracy, wzrostu gospodarczego oraz wzrostu minimalnego wynagrodzenia.

Ale to, proszę Państwa, może się zmienić. Nowy rząd, rząd Donalda Tuska, od 1 kwietnia wstrzymał zerową stawkę na żywność, co może w największym stopniu uderzyć w osoby najuboższe.

Mathilde Androuët, au nom du groupe ID. – Madame la Présidente, alors que les prix de l'énergie se sont emballés dans un marché européen inadapté, alors que nos économies subissent l'endettement de la crise consécutive à la COVID-19, plus de un Européen sur cinq est menacé de pauvreté ou d'exclusion sociale, selon Eurostat. Et la France y fait figure de mauvaise élève. Sans surprise, l'enquête démontre que l'inflation est le premier souci des Français. Suivent l'insécurité et l'immigration, en décalage avec la moyenne européenne, laquelle place l'immigration en tête des préoccupations.

Faisant fi de données pourtant fournies par elle, la Commission invite les États membres à plus d'insécurité économique et à moins de redistribution de ses fonds et de ses richesses à ses concitoyens et à leurs services publics, et ce pour acheter américain ou chinois, pour financer l'Ukraine ou l'arrivée en masse de populations immigrées, ce qui génère de nombreux déséquilibres sociaux, économiques, culturels et sécuritaires.

Rien de surprenant donc à ce que 65 % des Français indiquent ne pas avoir confiance dans l'Union européenne. Quand appliquerez-vous donc ce principe de démocratie? Faites les politiques que l'on vous demande: nous protéger et nous faire prospérer!

Sandra Pereira, em nome do Grupo *The Left*. – Senhora Presidente, pedimos este debate porque queremos discutir a degradação das condições de vida das pessoas. As desigualdades sociais continuam a aumentar sem políticas e vontade política que as travem e revertam. Realço a ausência do Conselho neste debate.

Em Portugal, 5 % da população detém 42 % da riqueza. Paralelamente, em 2023, mais de uma em cada cinco pessoas encontrava-se em risco de pobreza após transferências sociais. Os pedidos de despejo aumentaram 17 % face a 2022. Outro dado: no meu país, 61 % da prestação da casa, em média, vai para pagar os juros.

Mas há soluções. Haja vontade política para as concretizar. Promova-se o emprego com direitos aumentando salários. Aumentem-se as pensões. Regule-se e reduza-se o horário laboral para as 35 horas para todos. Assegurem-se serviços públicos universais, gratuitos e de qualidade, com o reforço do SNS e da escola pública. Crie-se uma rede pública de creches. Garanta-se o direito à habitação. Revertam-se as taxas de juro impostas pelo BCE. Tributem-se os lucros dos grandes grupos económicos.

José Manuel Fernandes (PPE). – Senhora Presidente, Senhor Comissário, Caras e Caros Colegas, a União Europeia, as Instituições, deram aos Estados-Membros instrumentos que permitem melhorar as condições de vida da população, dos cidadãos da União Europeia, melhorar os seus salários, e que não estão a ser utilizados. O Plano de Recuperação e Resiliência não está a ser bem executado nem executado como devia nos Estados-Membros. Os fundos da política de coesão têm um atraso enorme. É essencial que eles sejam utilizados para a competitividade e coesão das economias na União Europeia.

Para além disso, era importante apoiar as famílias e as empresas, por exemplo com instrumentos que permitiriam a capitalização das mesmas, e não está a ser utilizado o *InvestEU*.

Por outro lado, a diminuição da carga fiscal era essencial, também ela, para melhorar os salários dos cidadãos europeus, nomeadamente dos portugueses.

Está, sobretudo, nas mãos dos Estados-Membros utilizarem os recursos que o orçamento da União Europeia lhes fornece.

Robert Roos (ECR). – Voorzitter, Europa verarmt. Hier in dit Parlement wordt net gedaan alsof dat een natuurfenomeen is, een soort orkaan die ons overkomt. Dat is niet zo. Slecht beleid is de oorzaak. Slecht beleid, vaak hier gemaakt. Ik zeg het hard: de gevestigde partijen – jullie – zijn daar verantwoordelijk voor – groenen, socialisten, liberalen, christendemocraten.

Wat mensen thuis heel goed weten, weten politici gek genoeg niet: dat je een euro maar één keer kunt uitgeven. Iets kiezen betekent iets anders niet kiezen. Politici hier kozen ervoor om de grenzen open te zetten en om vervolgens niets te doen aan de massale toestroom van kansloze immigranten. Dus ging er geld naar hen, niet naar onze mensen. En politici kozen ervoor om onze betrouwbare energie af te danken. Het moest allemaal hernieuwbaar, het klimaat moest worden gered. Dus werd energie duurder, waardoor mensen minder overhouden.

Twee doelbewuste beleidskeuzes: ze leiden tot onze verarming en tot het verlies van onze identiteit. Het goede nieuws is: dit is geen orkaan, het is geen natuurverschijnsel. Het kan anders, als we in juni maar voor verandering stemmen.

Seán Kelly (PPE). – A Uachtaráin, in Éirinn, tá athrú cuimsitheach tagtha ar an gcaighdeán maireachtála agus ar ár ngeilleagar de bharr go bhfuilimid mar bhall den Aontas Eorpach ó 1973.

Tharla sé seo de bharr ciste á athrú, ciste struchtúrtha agus go háirithe, an Margadh Aonair, a chabhraigh go mór linn, ár n-infreastruchtúr a fhorbairt agus ár ngnónna éagsúla, beaga, meánmhéide agus móra a fhás.

De bharr an dul chun cinn seo, táimid anois ag íoc isteach i mbuiséad an Aontais níos mó ná mar a fhaighimid amach as ach, ní fadhb é seo, ach taispeántas ar an dul chun cinn iontach atá déanta ag Éire.

Ní hionann sin agus a rá nach bhfuil fadhbanna againn, tá, agus go leor díobh, go háirithe tithíocht agus daoine gan dídean agus tá a lán le déanamh chun na fadhbanna sin a réiteach go fóill. Bímid ag obair i gcónaí chun cothromaíocht ó thaobh coinníollacha maireachtála a fheabhsú inár dtír agus san Aontas.

Iuliu Winkler (PPE). – Elnök Asszony! Lecsapott a megélhetési válság az Európai Unióra. Az emberek sorozatos válságokkal néznek szembe: világjárvány, háború, energiaválság, infláció. Ezek gazdasági hatásai sokakat a csőd szélére sodortak. Nem mindenki tudott talpra állni. A felgyorsított zöld átállás költségei további terheket rónak mindenkire. Az emberek egy része úgy érzi, hogy lemarad. Igazuk van! A mindennapi mobilitás nem válhat fényűzéssé, kifűteni a lakást nem szabad, hogy luxus legyen.

Szemléletváltásra van szükség. Olyan úniós intézkedésekre, amelyek növelik a társadalmi kohéziót, nem rombolják. Komolyan kell vegyük az emberek jogos aggodalmait. Az Uniónak vissza kell térnie az alapítók értékeihez. Új társadalmi szerződésre van szükség Európában. Újra az embereket kell politikáink központjába helyezzük, olyan igazságos átmenetet biztosítva, amelyben senki nem marad le.

Nicolas Schmit, membre de la Commission. – Madame la Présidente, je pense que ce débat valait tout à fait la peine car, comme je l'ai dit au début, des dizaines de millions d'Européens se posent chaque jour la question de savoir pourquoi leurs conditions de vie se sont détériorées. Il est clair que la croissance économique ainsi qu'une économie solide sont absolument nécessaires, personne ne le conteste. L'investissement dans la compétitivité et dans la productivité est donc important pour une économie. Mais, finalement, la productivité est aussi largement le résultat de la situation de tout un chacun et de l'investissement dans le capital humain.

J'ai lu hier dans un journal économique – que je lis tous les jours et qui n'est a priori pas un journal de gauche, comme certains voudraient peut-être le dire – que jamais auparavant la distribution des dividendes n'avait été aussi bonne. Donc, si la distribution des dividendes est extraordinaire et si le rachat des actions par un certain nombre d'entreprises a atteint des niveaux exceptionnels, c'est que, quelque part, l'économie ne va pas si mal. Le problème est de savoir qui en profite.

Chers amis, je dirais donc que nous devons, bien sûr, continuer à investir dans notre économie, à investir dans la productivité, à investir dans le changement technologique, notamment la technologie de l'information, mais aussi dans la transformation verte de notre économie, sans oublier les politiques sociales. Car si les politiques sociales ne sont pas à la hauteur, eh bien, en fin de compte, ce sont nos sociétés qui en payeront le prix.

President. – The debate is closed.

Written statements (Rule 171)

Dominique Bilde (ID), par écrit. – Quelle façon merveilleuse vous avez de finir ce mandat. Depuis 2019, vous avez voté près d'une centaine de textes d'aides en tout genre. Vous avez distribué des millions pour à peu près tout et en particulier pour les conséquences de vos propres politiques intenables en matière de commerce, d'agriculture, ou encore d'énergie. Pour ne pas avouer vos échecs, vous alimentez depuis des années des perfusions d'aides, renflouant ou créant des fonds européens dans tous les sens, avec un suivi des dépenses qui laisse à désirer. Et après tout ça, après cette gabegie de dépenses, après ce gâchis d'argent public, vous venez quand même, honteux, reconnaître que les conditions de vie se dégradent. Comment osez-vous? Vous qui avez rendu l'UE dépendante de l'extérieur pour son énergie en brisant nos filières nationales. Vous qui faites rentrer des produits de mauvaise qualité et tuez nos agriculteurs et notre industrie. Vous encore, qui nous forcez à baisser nos standards de vie au nom de votre sacro-sainte harmonisation. Vous, enfin, qui faites entrer des millions de migrants dans nos pays, les condamnant eux à des vies misérables et nous à l'insécurité. Cette situation, c'est votre échec, ayez au moins la décence de l'assumer car les citoyens, eux, ne sont pas dupes.

Cindy Franssen (PPE), schriftelijk. – Meer en meer gezinnen hebben het moeilijk om de eindjes aan elkaar te knopen. De almaar stijgende kosten voor levensonderhoud nemen een steeds grotere hap uit het budget. Armoede treft vandaag nog steeds 95,6 miljoen mensen, of 21,7 % van de EU-bevolking. We hebben ons, in het kader van het actieplan voor de Europese pijler van sociale rechten, ertoe geëngageerd om tegen 2030 15 miljoen mensen uit de armoede te halen. We moeten dit engagement echt nakomen! We moeten ook kinderarmoede aanpakken en de intergenerationele armoedecyclus doorbreken. De Europese kindergarantie, waarmee we de toegang tot opvang, onderwijs, huisvesting, gezondheidszorg en gezonde voeding willen garanderen, is een belangrijk instrument. De lidstaten, de EU, maatschappelijke organisaties en de sociale partners moeten allemaal samenwerken om de strijd tegen armoede aan te gaan. Armoede onder werkenden is ook nog steeds te groot. In 2022 liep volgens Eurostat 8,5 % van de werknemers in de EU het risico op

armoede op het werk. Adequate Europese minimumlonen zijn dan ook van het allergrootste belang om dit een halt toe te roepen. Met de goedkeuring van de richtlijn Europese minimumlonen in juni 2022 is hiertoe een belangrijke stap gezet. We moeten dit zeker van nabij blijven opvolgen zodat werken voor iedereen loont!

(The sitting was suspended for a few moments)

VORSITZ: OTHMAR KARAS

Vizepräsident

7. Resumption of the sitting

(Die Sitzung wird um 12.06 Uhr wieder aufgenommen)

8. Request for waiver of immunity

Der Präsident. – Meine Damen und Herren, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Bevor wir zur Abstimmung kommen, habe ich eine Mitteilung zu machen. Die zuständige polnische Behörde hat der Präsidentin einen Antrag auf Aufhebung der parlamentarischen Immunität von Herrn Ryszard Czarnecki übermittelt. Dieser Antrag wird an den Rechtsausschuss überwiesen.

9. Voting time

Der Präsident. – Als nächster Punkt der Tagesordnung folgt die Abstimmung.

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

9.1. The immediate risk of mass starvation in Gaza and the attacks on humanitarian aid deliveries (B9-0189/2024, B9-0190/2024, B9-0191/2024, B9-0192/2024, B9-0186/2024, RC-B9-0187/2024, B9-0187/2024) (vote)

9.2. The repressive environment in Afghanistan, including public executions and violence against women (B9-0172/2024, RC-B9-0175/2024, B9-0175/2024, B9-0177/2024, B9-0185/2024, B9-0188/2024, B9-0193/2024) (vote)

9.3. The case of Rocío San Miguel and General Hernández Da Costa, among other political prisoners in Venezuela (RC-B9-0179/2024, B9-0179/2024, B9-0181/2024, B9-0182/2024, B9-0183/2024, B9-0184/2024) (vote)

9.4. Subscription by the Union to additional shares in the capital of the EBRD and amendment of the Agreement establishing the EBRD (C9-0009/2024) (vote)

9.5. Financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union (recast) (A9-0180/2023 - Monika Hohlmeier, Nils Ušakovs) (vote)

9.6. Industrial property: protection of Community designs (A9-0315/2023 - Gilles Lebreton) (vote)

– Vor der Abstimmung:

Gilles Lebreton, rapporteur. – Monsieur le Président, chers collègues, le règlement et la directive qui assurent la protection des dessins et modèles en Europe ont fait preuve d'efficacité, mais ils ont plus de 20 ans. Il fallait donc les moderniser. C'est à cette tâche que procède le paquet «dessins et modèles» qui vous est présenté aujourd'hui.

L'architecture du système actuel, qui donne satisfaction, est conservée. Deux systèmes de protection des dessins et modèles continuent donc à coexister. Le système européen, d'une part, valable pour l'ensemble de l'Union et géré par l'Office européen de la propriété intellectuelle, basé à Alicante, en Espagne, et le système national de chacun des 27 États membres, d'autre part. Chaque créateur de dessins et modèles pourra donc continuer à choisir le système qui lui convient le mieux.

Les modifications les plus importantes consistent à adapter la protection des dessins et modèles à l'évolution des technologies numériques, comme l'imprimante en trois dimensions, et aussi à introduire dans la directive la clause de réparation qui existait déjà dans le règlement. J'attire particulièrement votre attention sur cette clause de réparation. Elle est très importante car elle permettra notamment de libéraliser le marché de la plupart des pièces de rechange des automobiles, ce qui devrait entraîner la baisse de leurs prix au plus grand profit des consommateurs.

Une autre nouveauté est à noter: les textes permettent aux États membres de refuser l'enregistrement de dessins ou modèles qui porteraient atteinte à leur patrimoine culturel, au sens que l'Unesco donne à cette expression.

En conclusion, les textes qui vous sont présentés sont le fruit d'un large consensus. Je remercie l'ensemble des rapporteurs fictifs de leur soutien, sans lequel rien n'aurait pu se faire, et je tiens, pour terminer, à souligner l'esprit constructif dont ont fait preuve la présidence espagnole du Conseil et le représentant de la Commission lors du trilogue.

9.7. Industrial property: legal protection of designs (recast) (A9-0317/2023 - Gilles Lebreton) (vote)

9.8. Reporting requirements for infrastructures for spatial information (A9-0037/2024 - Ivan Vilibor Sinčić) (vote)

9.9. Reporting requirements in the fields of food and food ingredients, outdoor noise, patients' rights, and radio equipment (A9-0038/2024 - Ivan Vilibor Sinčić) (vote)

9.10. Protocol amending the Agreement between the European Union and Japan for an Economic Partnership (A9-0081/2024 - Danilo Oscar Lancini) (vote)

9.11. Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Albania on operational activities carried out by the European Border and Coast Guard Agency in the Republic of Albania (A9-0036/2024 - Lena Düpont) (vote)

9.12. Nomination of a member of the Court of Auditors – Carlo Alberto Manfredi Selvaggi (A9-0061/2024 - Matteo Adinolfi) (vote)

– Vor der Abstimmung:

Matteo Adinolfi, relatore. – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, oggi ci apprestiamo ad esprimere un voto sul dottor Manfredi Selvaggi, candidato italiano alla Corte dei conti europea e professionista di notevole competenza ed esperienza nel campo della finanza pubblica e della gestione contabile.

Oltre ad avere un curriculum di spiccato spessore a livello nazionale, con due lauree conseguite a pieni voti, ed essere diventato il più giovane magistrato della Corte dei conti italiana ad aver superato il concorso, il dottor Manfredi Selvaggi può vantare notevoli esperienze a livello internazionale.

Infatti ha ricoperto il ruolo di referente per la Procura europea (EPPO) e di membro del Comitato che funge da punto di contatto fra l'Italia e l'Ufficio europeo per la lotta antifrode (OLAF).

Nel 2020 e 2021 ha inoltre partecipato al progetto CATONE, creato dall'OLAF e finalizzato allo scambio di informazione tra gli uffici nazionali di coordinamento antifrode e i magistrati della Corte dei conti di diversi Paesi europei.

Durante la sua audizione in commissione CONT ha risposto ai numerosi quesiti in modo impeccabile, enunciando le sue priorità per garantire un'adeguata supervisione finanziaria a livello europeo e ricevendo una maggioranza netta e trasversale di voti a favore.

Per questi motivi ritengo che una figura altamente qualificata come quella del dottor Manfredi Selvaggi possa rivestire un ruolo determinante nel promuovere la fiducia e la solidità delle istituzioni europee.

9.13. Return of Romanian national treasure illegally appropriated by Russia (RC-B9-0169/2024, B9-0169/2024, B9-0170/2024, B9-0171/2024, B9-0176/2024, B9-0178/2024, B9-0180/2024) (vote)

9.14. The time the European Commission takes to deal with requests for public access to documents (B9-0162/2024) (vote)

9.15. Creation of a European initiative for an annual designation of European capitals for children (B9-0174/2024) (vote)

9.16. Cohesion policy 2014-2020 – implementation and outcomes in the Member States (A9-0049/2024 - Andrey Novakov) (vote)

9.17. The adoption of the Special Measure in favour of Tunisia for 2023 (B9-0173/2024) (vote)

Der Präsident. – Damit ist die Abstimmungsstunde geschlossen.

(Die Sitzung wird um 12.40 Uhr unterbrochen)

PŘEDSEDNICTVÍ: DITA CHARANZOVÁ

místopředsedkyně

10. Resumption of the sitting

(The sitting resumed at 15.00)

11. Approval of the minutes of the previous sitting

President. – The minutes of yesterday's sitting and the texts adopted are available. Are there any comments?

As there are not, the minutes are approved.

12. Proposal for a Union act

President. – I should like to inform you that, pursuant to Rule 47(2), the President has declared admissible a proposal for a Union act on the repeal of legislation derived from the European Green Deal, submitted by Jorge Buxadé Villalba and three other Members.

This proposal is referred to the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety, as the committee responsible, and to the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development, for opinion.

13. Healthy lifestyle and active ageing in the EU (debate)

President. – The next item is the debate on the Commission statement on healthy lifestyle and active ageing in the EU (2024/2622(RSP)).

Elisa Ferreira, Member of the Commission. – Madam President, honourable Members, people across Europe are living longer and healthier lives. At the same time, birth rates are in decline, putting pressure on our workforce. We should embrace the challenge to mobilise the older generation to make a meaningful contribution to our economies and societies where they can.

This is also about giving citizens the freedom and the choice to live dignified lives because older citizens have a lot to offer: from knowledge and skills transfers in the workplace to building community and social cohesion. We should avoid reducing seniors to their purchasing power and narrowly focusing only on end-of-life issues like pensions or care, because longevity acknowledges not just ageing, but the significant shift in life length, compelling us to exploit the flexibility and capabilities of age.

This is about ensuring that these extended years are healthier, that they are productive and that they are fulfilling. In order to have healthy longevity, we must promote health across the life cycle. We need to work together with social partners to adapt work practices and harness the full potential of technology to this end. We must tackle stereotypes about different generations and fight age-based discrimination.

In a longevity society, we also need to recognise the needs of older people. The COVID-19 pandemic hit the European Union's ageing population especially hard. It saw higher rates of severe illness, mental health issues and loneliness. Loneliness carries a stigma and makes it hard to tackle effectively. This is why the Commission's Joint Research Centre has launched a data collection effort to give us a stronger knowledge base on how to prevent and how to cope with it.

The Commission supports lifelong disease prevention and active ageing under the Healthier Together – EU Non-Communicable Diseases Initiative. To that end, we work with Member States on health issues relevant for an ageing population, like healthy lifestyles, prevention of non-communicable diseases, mental health and dementia.

Through the EU4Health programme, we have made substantial support available for action on cancer, cardiovascular diseases, diabetes and other non-communicable diseases. By 2030, we can expect 13.4 million people to suffer from dementia in Europe. In order to mitigate its impacts, we are supporting Member States and stakeholders through a coordinated approach to prevent and manage dementia.

Moreover, we have a comprehensive approach to mental health, which focuses on involving vulnerable groups like our elderly and addresses loneliness through the transfer of best practices in Member States.

But we should also encourage flexible retirement schemes and workplace adaptations that recognise the value of older workers. Increased investment in lifelong learning and reskilling programmes will ensure that our ageing population remains dynamic.

Additionally, urban planning must evolve to create age-friendly cities that are accessible and inclusive, promoting inter-generational interaction and community cohesion.

I warmly welcome the strong support from the European Parliament in making healthy lives and active ageing a priority.

Antonius Manders, *namens de PPE-Fractie*. – Voorzitter, commissaris, ontzettend jammer dat we hier geen resolutie over hebben kunnen schrijven, want ik denk dat dit een ontzettend belangrijk onderwerp is voor de toekomst van de Europese Unie en de toekomst van onze gezonde maatschappij. Maar tijdens uw bijdrage noemde u heel veel belangrijke onderwerpen waar wij iets aan kunnen doen door een gecoördineerde aanpak vanuit de Europese Unie.

Iedere dag vanaf je geboorte word je een dag ouder. Ik ben op 14 maart 1956 geboren. Inmiddels ben ik 68 en gelukkig probeer ik op een gezonde manier nog ouder te worden. Dit debat gaat over het besparen, en het valt me op dat wij in de politiek veel liever geld uitgeven dan dat we nadenken over besparen. Ik noem u wat: 300 miljard kosten voor hart- en vaatziekten binnen de Europese Unie, een op de acht mensen lijdt aan obesitas, 80 % van alle zorgkosten komt voort uit welvaartsziekten, volgens de WHO.

Covid heeft ons aangetoond dat gezonde mensen veel minder snel ziek worden. Dus als we nu de kosten gaan bekijken van de covidcrisis, als ik die 300 miljard noem, als we actief iets gaan doen met gezondelevensstijlinterventies, dan kunnen we van al die miljarden, volgens de WHO tenminste, 17 % besparen. Dan hebben we meteen geld genoeg om arme kinderen te helpen. Dan hebben we geld genoeg om gezonde steden te maken. Dan hebben we zelfs geld genoeg om de Europese Unie te verdedigen, aan de defensie bij te dragen.

Waarom willen wij roken aanpakken? En waarom willen wij een teveel aan suikers, een teveel aan vetten en een teveel aan zouten in ons voedingspatroon niet aanpakken? Dat begrijp ik niet. Want roken levert in ieder geval voor de gezondheid schade op, maar voor de staatskassen heel veel geld aan belasting. Te veel suikers, te veel zout en te veel vetten kosten alleen maar geld omdat mensen daar ziek van worden.

Door de reclames die elke dag over ons heen komen, met name in achterstandswijken, wordt het eten alleen maar ongezonder. Die kinderen hebben geen kans, want die worden door de media, door de reclamecampagnes, feitelijk al heel jong ziek gemaakt.

En dan praat ik nog niet over de Nutri-Score. Ik wilde bijvoorbeeld vandaag mijn kleinzoon trakteren. Ik denk: "Ik koop een pizza." Die had Nutri-Score B, dus ik denk: "O, dat is wel een gezonde pizza." En wat bleek? Die wordt vergeleken met een veel ongezondere pizza. Dus stop met die Nutri-Scores en zet erop wat er wel in zit en wat goed is voor ons. Ik hoop dat de Commissie in het volgende werkprogramma wellicht een commissaris aanwijst voor gezonde levensstijl.

Milan Brglez, v imenu skupine S&D. – Gospa predsednica. Spoštovana komisarka, kolegice in kolegi. V Evropskem parlamentu moramo govoriti o staranju, ker se mu nihče ne more izogniti in ker se stara evropsko prebivalstvo, ki ga predstavljamo. Bolje moramo izkoristiti prednosti dolgožive družbe, obenem pa se boriti proti kultu večne mladosti ter diskriminaciji na podlagi starosti ali starizmu.

Starejši niso ovira za družbo, ampak so njene enakovredne članice in člani, ki morajo biti spoštovani, vključeni v politično in družbeno življenje ter imeti povsem enake pravice.

Življenjski slog je pomemben za aktivno in zdravo staranje, a nas trg ne sme prepričati v pravljico, da si je zdravje in kakovostno življenje možno kupiti.

Namesto neoliberalne dogme o zdravju kot individualni odgovornosti morajo države ob podpori Evropske unije skrbeti za vlaganje v javne storitve, ki omogočajo dostojno in kakovostno življenje ter dostojno in kakovostno starost.

Na to, kako bomo živeli v starosti, vplivajo dostopne kakovostne storitve od zdravstva do dolgotrajne in paliativne oskrbe, kakovostna delovna mesta, ustrezna stanovanja, dostopnost varne in zdrave hrane, čisto okolje ter medgeneracijska solidarnost.

Komisija in Parlament sta se v tem mandatu uspela poenotiti glede pomembnosti politik za dostojno starost ter začela govoriti podoben jezik glede demografskih sprememb, vendar to ni dovolj.

Po juniju 2024 moramo narediti konkretne korake za vključevanje vidika staranja in pravic starejših v vse politike, na čelu s sprejetjem evropske strategije o enakosti glede na starost ter obnovitvijo medskupine za medgeneracijsko solidarnost.

Catherine Amalric, au nom du groupe Renew. – Madame la Présidente, Madame la Commissaire, l'espérance de vie a augmenté de cinq ans entre 2000 et 2015, estime-t-on, même s'il y a des différences selon les régions du monde. Cette augmentation est essentiellement liée aux progrès sanitaires. Mais, dans le même temps, le vieillissement de la population s'accompagne d'une augmentation de prévalence des maladies chroniques et des cancers, ce qui met en question la garantie d'accès aux soins et la capacité des systèmes de santé à ne laisser personne de côté. L'objectif doit être l'amélioration de l'espérance de vie en bonne santé.

Pour cela, la prévention a un rôle majeur. Le volet «prévention» est particulièrement abouti dans le plan européen de lutte contre le cancer, des cancers qui, on le sait, sont évitables pour 40 % d'entre eux. Les facteurs de risque ciblés permettent aussi de lutter contre beaucoup d'autres pathologies dont le risque augmente avec l'âge. À ce titre, nous pouvons regretter que la révision des législations sur les produits du tabac et sur l'étiquetage nutritionnel se fassent attendre, de même que pour le règlement sur les produits chimiques et leur classification.

La pluridisciplinarité de la prévention est au centre du principe inscrit dans nos traités: «Health in all policies». La santé, en effet, dans les politiques relatives à l'environnement et au climat, à l'emploi, au sport, à l'éducation, au logement et à toutes les luttes contre les inégalités. Ce sont là autant de leviers d'amélioration de la santé de nos concitoyens, tout au long de leur vie.

Ana Miranda, em nome do Grupo Verts/ALE. – Senhora Presidente, Senhora Comissária, continuamos a falar na mesma língua. O envelhecimento da população na Europa, tal como no meu país, a Galiza, é um facto indiscutível. Na verdade, por exemplo na Galiza temos que falar de perda e envelhecimento populacional.

Quanto à perda populacional, desde 2009 a Galiza perdeu quase 100 000 habitantes. Ainda esta semana falava sobre isso com a Senhora Comissária Šuica, já que, segundo dados do Instituto de Estatísticas do ano de 2009 – precisamente quando o Partido Popular voltou a assumir o governo da Galiza – viviam na Galiza 2 796 089 pessoas, ao passo que no ano de 2023 esse número caiu 3,7 % para 2 696 177 pessoas.

Por outro lado, enquanto diminuía a população da Galiza, aumentava o envelhecimento. Se, no ano de 2003, o índice de envelhecimento populacional da Galiza era de 168 por cada dez menores de 16 anos, havia quase 200 pessoas com mais de 64. Duas décadas depois, no ano de 2023, esse índice era de 218 pessoas idosas – os nossos idosos, tão queridos, como era a minha mãe, que faleceu de Alzheimer.

Tendo em conta estes dados das administrações públicas, temos que apostar em políticas que tenham em conta o conceito de envelhecimento ativo defendido pela Organização Mundial da Saúde. A Organização Mundial da Saúde define esta fase como o processo no qual há que otimizar as oportunidades de participar na sociedade, para melhorar a qualidade de vida das pessoas à medida que envelhecem.

As políticas ativas de envelhecimento devem ser mais investimento público, mais apoio a lares para a terceira idade, mais apoio público. Que os avós não tenham que ser os que suportam a crise. Que os avós e as avós não sejam os que têm que cuidar dos filhos e netos, como acontece e aconteceu em todas as crises cíclicas.

A Europa envelhece, mas temos que cuidar dos nossos idosos, ampará-los porque não podem suportar o peso das crises, nem o peso das doenças. No meu país, por exemplo, muitos idosos aguardam muitos meses para ir a um médico. Isso não é o que os nossos idosos precisam.

Elżbieta Rafalska, w imieniu grupy ECR. – Pani Przewodnicząca! Pani Komisarz! Żyjemy dłużej i dobrze, to pewne osiągnięcie cywilizacyjne. W ciągu ostatnich 5 dekad wydłużył się wiek życia kobiet i mężczyzn o 10 lat, a według prognoz na 2070 rok średni wiek życia mężczyzn wyniesie 86 lat, a wiek życia kobiet to będzie 90 lat. Pytanie jest inne: co zrobić, żeby jak najdłużej pozostawać w zdrowiu? Co zrobić, żeby być aktywnym i samodzielnym? Oczywiście największy wpływ na to ma (była tu o tym też mowa w innych wystąpieniach) zdrowy tryb życia.

Ja chciałabym się odnieść do jednego z tych elementów, bo w takim krótkim wystąpieniu nie sposób jest omówić wszystkie. Otóż chciałabym powiedzieć parę zdań na temat ruchu. Ruch jest atrybutem życia. Aktywność fizyczna, wydajność fizyczna, wydolność biologiczna, wszystko zależy właśnie od sprawności fizycznej. Bo jeśli nie będziemy sprawni fizycznie, będziemy skazani na drugą osobę, czy to będzie osoba w rodzinie, czy to będzie system opieki państwa. Na dobrą aktywną starość nie możemy zacząć pracować w wieku 50-60 lat. To musi się rozpocząć wcześniej. Promocja musi dotyczyć już jak najmłodszych osób, a potem ta aktywność musi być podtrzymywana tak długo, jak tylko się da.

Joachim Kuhs, im Namen der ID-Fraktion. – Frau Präsidentin, Frau Kommissarin, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Die Gesundheit unserer Bevölkerung sollte eine der Hauptaufgaben und Prioritäten unserer Mitgliedstaaten sein. Gesund alt zu werden ist ein Privileg, das nicht jeder genießt. Gerade deshalb wäre es wichtig, die Altenpflege wieder bezahlbar und zugänglich zu machen.

Ein gesunder Lebensstil – der bei jedem natürlich anders aussehen kann – kann vorbeugend zu einem gesunden Leben und zu einem erträglichen und würdigen Altern beitragen. Doch was nützt der beste und gesündeste Lebensstil, wenn wir als EU das durch unsere Gesetze und Regelungen konterkarieren? Denn zahlreiche Studien zeigen, dass Stress katastrophal für die Gesundheit ist, und unsere Mitbürger hatten in den letzten Jahren unheimlich viel Stress.

Erstens: Stress durch die Teuerung und gerade für die Rentner hohe Wohnungs- und Energiekosten. In Deutschland müssen daher viele Rentner inzwischen Pfandflaschen sammeln – gesund ist das sicher nicht.

Zweitens: Stress wegen einer fragiler gewordenen Gesundheit infolge der Corona-Pandemie, der freiheitsentziehenden Lockdowns und des rigiden Impfregimes, das teilweise bis heute noch anhält.

Und drittens: Ich muss es leider sagen: Stress, weil wir drohen, in einen Krieg mit Russland hineingezogen zu werden, was besonders bei der älteren Generation die Furcht vor einem Dritten Weltkrieg heraufbeschwört. Und dieser Stress wird derzeit von unseren eigenen Regierungen und auch den EU-Institutionen verursacht.

Noch einmal: Dieser Stress ist real, und er kann nicht gesund sein. Daher stelle ich die Frage: Warum unterhalten wir uns eigentlich überhaupt über einen gesunden Lebensstil und über das gesunde Altern, wenn wir doch die Grundvoraussetzungen dafür zerstören? Das ist im Grunde genommen genauso widersprüchlich, wie wenn wir versuchen wollten, eine Wunde zu heilen, die wir selbst geschlagen haben.

Beenden wir so bald wie möglich die Stressfaktoren, und dann lassen wir die Menschen in unseren Ländern gesund und in Würde ihr Alter so gestalten, wie es ihnen am besten gefällt! Wir in der EU brauchen das nicht auch noch regeln oder meinen, wir müssten uns auch darum kümmern. Das machen unsere Alten schon selbst – und ich zähle mich selbst dazu, mit 68.

Emmanuel Maurel, *au nom du groupe The Left*. – Madame la Présidente, Madame la Commissaire, après avoir rétabli l'austérité budgétaire en février, la Commission nous invite à débattre sur le «bien vieillir» en mars. Je ne sais pas si c'est de l'aveuglement ou de l'hypocrisie, mais je trouve assez stupéfiant qu'on ne puisse imaginer qu'il n'y a aucun lien entre les deux. Je vais quand même rappeler des faits: l'écart d'espérance de vie entre les plus pauvres et les plus aisés en Europe dépasse toujours largement dix ans. Un homme de plus de 60 ans ne disposant que de 500 euros par mois ne vivra que 72 ans, tandis qu'un homme disposant de 6 000 euros par mois vivra 85 ans. Pour les femmes, l'écart est à peine inférieur: 80 ans d'espérance de vie pour les plus pauvres, 89 pour les plus riches.

Alors je sais bien – et vous l'avez dit depuis le début de ce débat – qu'il existe d'autres paramètres qui rentrent en jeu dans l'espérance de vie et dans la qualité de vie des personnes âgées. Vous avez parlé du sport, de la prévention d'un mode de vie sain, de la lutte contre la solitude. Tout ça, c'est exact, mais, sans revenus décents et sans services publics de qualité, eh bien il est impossible de bien vieillir, et encore moins de mener, comme vous le disiez, un vieillissement actif.

Le moyen le plus efficace de réduire les inégalités de revenus entre retraités, et donc de donner à tous la chance de bien vieillir, c'est d'abord et avant tout d'appuyer un système collectif par répartition, et non pas d'encourager des politiques économiques qui détruisent ce système au nom de la réduction des déficits. Plus on allonge la durée de cotisation des retraites, plus on fait appel à la capitalisation, plus on reporte l'âge légal de la retraite, comme la Commission le demande à chaque fois au nom de la réduction des dépenses, et plus le phénomène de la pauvreté des seniors s'aggrave. Nous avons des exemples, des exemples tragiques, de seniors obligés de pallier l'insuffisance de leurs revenus en continuant de travailler. Vous avez des reportages récents où des personnes de 67-68 ans sont obligées de bosser, notamment pour Uber Eats, de devenir livreuses uniquement pour pouvoir vieillir dans des conditions à peu près décentes. C'est vrai partout en Europe, y compris en France, où, après cinq réformes des retraites, nous assistons à un phénomène très inquiétant.

Voilà donc l'effet des réformes structurelles auxquelles on nous invite chaque jour ici, et qui ont des conséquences concrètes pour la vie des personnes âgées. Alors, si vous voulez vraiment bien vieillir, cessez cette logique «austéritaire», cessez de couper toujours dans les budgets sociaux, et les retraités des classes moyennes et de la classe ouvrière vous en seront reconnaissants. Parce que, sinon, tout ce débat, en réalité, c'est de l'hypocrisie.

Seán Kelly (PPE). – *A Uachtaráin*, in the blue zone of Okinawa in Japan, once known as 'the land of immortals', they have a term 'ikigai', which defines older people's sense of purpose and their feeling of being needed well into their hundreds.

The European population is ageing rapidly. The number of Europeans aged over 65 will double in the next 50 years, and the number over 80 years will treble. With a shrinking labour force – no longer able to provide for the needs of the growing number of older people – it is clear that Europe's current attitudes towards ageing and retirement are unsustainable. Older people can and do contribute valuably to our society and the workforce.

The EU needs to support social services to shift from institutional care to home and community care. By enabling older people with care needs to stay in their homes for as long as possible, their quality of life can be significantly improved, and we enable them to continue to contribute actively to their communities. They can have purpose and feel needed and we can have *ikigai* in Europe.

Finally, I think I'm not a bad example myself of ageing actively and, hopefully, gracefully. I'm an *ikigai*!

Matjaž Nemec (S&D). – Gospa predsednica. Naše zdravje je naše največje bogastvo. Tega se prevečkrat ne zavedamo, ali pa nas zares predrami šele takrat, ko je prepozno. Zato nikakor ne smemo tako fizičnega kot mentalnega zdravja jemati za samoumevnega.

Na zdravje človeka vpliva tako rekoč vse okoli nas: napredek, podnebne spremembe, industrijska proizvodnja hrane. Poleg tega pa se Evropa, tako kot večina zahodnega sveta, sooča še s hitrim staranjem prebivalstva.

A tovrstnim učinkom poskušamo vsak dan ubežati z napredkom v izobraževanju ter zavedanju ljudi o pomembnosti zdravega načina življenja. Poleg tega pa še z razvojem tehnologij ali pa z večjo dostopnostjo do obsežnih raziskav, ki omogočajo hitrejša ali bolj natančno diagnosticiranje na eni strani ter učinkovitejši in naprednejši način zdravljenja na drugi strani.

To so dosežki, ki jih velja prepoznati, vendar pa ti prinašajo tudi pomembne in zaželenе družbene, ekonomske in zdravstvene izzive. Pričakovana življenjska doba se in s tem potreba po zdravstvu povečuje hitreje kot leta življenja, preživeta v dobrem zdravju. Temu naravnemu fenomenu se ne more izogniti nihče od nas. Zato morata spodbujanje blaginje starejših in dolgotrajna oskrba biti ena izmed naših osrednjih prioritet.

Temu smo zavezani tudi socialni demokrati širom po vsej Evropi. Pričakovati je, da bodo ravno staranje in vse vrste sprememb naši največji izzivi v prihodnosti. A to moramo začeti naslavlјati že danes.

Valter Flego (Renew). – Poštovana predsednice, poštovane kolegice i kolege, mi ovdje često znamo pričati o velikim temama, o težkim temama, o geostrateškim interesima, o ogromnim infrastrukturnim projektima i nažalost često zaboravimo one najpotrebijije. Često zaboravimo naše građane treće životne dobi, kojima nije baš jednostavno.

A znate, nije jednostavno biti starija osoba u jednoj Hrvatskoj ili u Švedskoj ili Nizozemskoj. I nije svejedno starjeti s 300 ili 400 eura mirovine ili pak s 1300 ili 1400. I nije svejedno starjeti ako čekaš na pregled kod doktora mjesec ili dva ili pak godinu. I nije svejedno starjeti ako živiš u kući sam ili s tri generacije.

Iz tog razloga moja molba je da zajedno s državama, gradovima i regijama više imamo projekata i programa koji će poticati aktivno starenje, koji će se brinuti o zdravlju naših sugrađana i da Europa još jednom ovdje bude koordinator i partner državama.

Ryszard Czarnecki (ECR). – Pani Przewodnicząca! Pani Komisarz! Szanowni Państwo! Może szkoda, że nie ma tutaj z nami naszego byłego kolegi europoła Alexandra Stubba, który został wybrany na prezydenta Finlandii, a który niedawno, mimo, że jest niewiele młodszy ode mnie, zajął szóste miejsce na mistrzostwach świata w triathlonie. To jest przykład zdrowego trybu życia!

Natomiast myślę, że w tej debacie powinniśmy zwrócić szczególną uwagę na osoby starsze, na seniorów. Obowiązkiem nie tylko państwa, ale także samorządów, nie mówiąc o Unii Europejskiej, jest szczególna troska o te osoby. Każdy z nas będzie kiedyś seniorem. Myślę, że objawem pewnego człowieczeństwa ludzi władzy jest to, czy myślą o takich ludziach, a także co dla nich robią, aby ludzie ci byli pełnowartościową częścią społeczeństwa, zwłaszcza że to oni przez lata pracowali na nasz dobrobyt.

Catch-the-eye procedure

Marek Paweł Balt (S&D). – Pani Przewodnicząca! Cieszę się ze stanowiska Komisji Europejskiej i pani komisarz Ferreiry i popieram to stanowisko. Chciałbym też dodać, że seniorzy po osiągnięciu wieku emerytalnego powinni być zachęcani, a nie zniechęceni do dalszej działalności zawodowej i społecznej. Seniorzy muszą mieć bezwarunkowe prawo otrzymania wypracowanej emerytury i dalszej zawodowej aktywności. Nie można dyskryminować emerytów, płacąc im mniej i powierzając im mniej odpowiedzialne zadania. Emeryci muszą mieć zagwarantowane prawo do takich samych wynagrodzeń jak ludzie w wieku produkcyjnym.

Mick Wallace (The Left). – Madam President, not everybody can afford a healthy lifestyle, but the State can certainly help. The EU has a GDP of almost EUR 20 trillion at the moment, and there's more wealth in circulation throughout the Union than there's ever been since its inception.

In my own country, Ireland, tax receipts for 2023 totalled EUR 88 billion – the highest figure ever recorded – with corporation tax amounting to EUR 25 billion alone. Yet at the same time, living standards are deteriorating across Member States. In Ireland, as of today, there's over 13 500 people homeless and over 4 000 of them are children. So we have record tax receipts and we have record homeless figures.

And Ireland is not alone. Across Europe last year, 45 million people could not afford to keep their homes adequately warm. In 2022, food prices went up 11% in Europe and energy prices 27%, as a direct result of the war in Ukraine. We are promoting a US proxy war at the expense of our citizens. We should think again.

Clare Daly (The Left). – Madam President, when we talk about a healthy lifestyle, I think there's no doubt about it but the cost of living crisis and anxiety are one of the main obstacles to healthy, active ageing.

Now, this morning, the Parliament debated the deteriorating living conditions in the Union. We know that, between 2021 and 2022, the prices of basic products rose by almost 17% at EU level. Seeing your savings disappear because of rising prices on basic goods and vital services, no longer being able to turn up the heating on your home because of the impact of electricity bills, no longer being able to feed yourself properly or look after your home: these are all serious concerns for people, particularly the elderly.

So we can't discuss health without discussing social inequality. And we cannot do this without recognising the economic crisis – part of which was fuelled by our suicidal response to Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine.

Rather than working for a diplomatic solution, we have instead penalised ourselves. And when the Pope calls for reason and rationale and dialogue, he's vilified and demonised. This madness has to stop. We need a Europe that is suitable for all.

(End of catch-the-eye procedure)

Elisa Ferreira, Member of the Commission. – Madam President, honourable Members, I didn't refer to it, but it is obvious that I'm speaking today on this topic on behalf of my colleague Commissioner Stella Kyriakides. And what I would like to share with you is our gratitude for this discussion and to reinforce our shared commitment to improving our citizens' health in a longevity society. I think this mutual commitment is clear.

We are delivering on that commitment through concrete and ambitious actions, together with Member States and stakeholders, but with your support also. If we put healthy and active ageing and lifelong prevention higher on the political agenda, it will make a real difference in people's lives.

And let me just add a small detail of my own, bearing in mind what I have as a competence and responsibility. Cohesion policy has a lot of instruments and is being used exactly also to create conditions for this better quality of life in all regions of Europe, in all countries of Europe – trying to reply to some of you that mentioned it.

We must in fact turn our ageing society into a longevity society, as put forward in the Commission's demography toolbox. We must build a longevity society that values longer lifetime spent in older age, that empowers older citizens, and that nurtures the welfare and well-being of all generations and all society and all regions across Europe.

That is how we achieve a more inclusive, sustainable and healthier society in which people of all ages can thrive and live life to the full. And in doing that, we lay solid foundations for a robust health Union, a healthier future for all Europeans and, inevitably, also for our economy.

President. – The debate is closed.

Written statements (Rule 171)

Jarosław Duda (PPE), na piśmie. – Jako współprzewodniczący Zespołu Poselskiego do spraw Solidarności Międzypokoleniowej chciałbym podziękować Komisji Europejskiej za dzisiejszą debatę. Uważam, że do kwestii zdrowego starzenia się należy podejść systemowo, z perspektywy całego cyklu życia. Wiele nawyków, podejść i wartości trzeba zaszczepić już w młodym wieku. Jeśli chcemy, aby seniorzy byli w przyszłości sprawni i aktywni, musimy nauczyć nasze dzieci, jak zdrowo się odżywiać, zachęcić je do aktywności fizycznej. Z dzieci opychających się chipsami i fast foodami i siedzących całe dni przed komputerem nie wyrosną zdrowi, aktywni dorośli, a tym bardziej zdrowi, aktywni seniorzy. Jak dowodzą badania, dla zdrowia i sprawności umysłowej ogromne znaczenie ma też uczenie się

przez całe życie. Ważne jest, aby dzieciom i młodzieży zaszczyć chęć zdobywania nowej wiedzy, umiejętności i ciekawość świata, a także zadbać o dostosowaną, bogatą ofertę kształcenia ustawicznego dla osób starszych. Zdrowy, aktywny tryb życia i uczenie się przez całe życie mają kluczowe znaczenie dla tego, abyśmy do późnej starości pozostawali zdrowi i mogli cieszyć się życiem. Poza tym warto lepiej wykorzystywać postęp technologiczny, żeby znosić bariery utrudniające osobom starszym samodzielne, aktywne życie i wydłużanie kariery zawodowej. Serdecznie zachęcam moich kolegów posłów i kandydatów do podpisania i promowania Manifestu Age Platform „Europa dla wszystkich grup wiekowych”.

Pirkko Ruohonen-Lerner (ECR), kirjallinen. – Masentumisen välttämiseksi on osattava sopeutua vanhenemiseen ja jatkettava aktiivista elämää. Täytyy lähteä ulos ja osallistua elämään. Pysähdymme helposti työuran jälkeen liiaksi, vaikka haaveet, tekeminen ja elämänilo kuuluvat myös vanhuuteen. Ikääntyessä on tärkeää, että voimme pitää yllä myönteisiä muistoja menneestä elämästä ja itsestä. Niitä täytyy pitää yllä muistelemalla, mielellään yhdessä. Vanheneminen on hidas suru. Me menetämme fyysisiä kykyjämme, aivotkin hidastuvat – onneksi kuitenkin hitaasti, että meillä on aikaa sopeutua. Myös iäkkäillä pitää olla haaveita. Iäkkään ajatus liikkuu paljon laajemmin kuin nuorella. Sitä ei huomioida tarpeeksi elämässä. Meillä ikääntyneillä on historiantajua. Historian muistelu ja kulttuurin välittäminen jälkipolville on todella tärkeää. Ikääntyviä ihmisiä lääkitään yhä tehokkaammin. Lääkkeiden yhteisvaikutuksia ei kuitenkaan aina oteta tarpeeksi huomioon. Esimerkiksi Yhdysvalloissa lääkitysvirheiden aiheuttamat kuolemat ovat lisääntyneet jyrkästi viime vuosikymmeninä. Lääkehoidon haittavaikutuksia on ehkäistävä henkilökohtaisella lääkityslistalla, jossa kaikki lääkkeet ja niiden vaikutukset ja yhteisvaikutukset näkyvät. Se tulisi olla myös potilaalla itsellään. On tärkeää pysyä koko ajan liikkeessä. Myös hoivakodeissa oleville ikäihmisille tulisi tarjota mahdollisuutta aktiiviseen vanhuuteen. Jumppaa, laulua, teatteria, taidetta, leivontaa, musiikkia, niin pitkään kuin se on mahdollista – niin mieli pysyy virkeänä.

Stefania Zambelli (PPE), per iscritto. – L'invecchiamento generale della popolazione è una realtà con la quale conviviamo da diversi anni e che nel futuro sarà un tema sempre più rilevante.

Purtroppo, molto spesso questo tema è declinato al negativo: tendiamo a considerare gli anziani più come un peso che come una risorsa. Dobbiamo per questo invertire la retorica.

La promozione di stili di vita sani, di un'alimentazione equilibrata come la dieta mediterranea e di un'attività fisica quotidiana è un elemento chiave perché tutta la società guadagni dall'invecchiamento della popolazione. Se, infatti, i nostri anziani invecchiano rimanendo in salute, è tutta la società che ne guadagna: minor spesa per i sistemi sanitari e maggior contributo al mondo del lavoro e del volontariato. Non dimentichiamo inoltre il valore sociale di una sana popolazione anziana nell'aiuto alla famiglia, ai figli e ai nipoti.

Per questo è essenziale promuovere uno stile di vita sano a tutti i livelli della società, dai più piccoli fino ai più anziani.

14. Explanations of vote

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

14.1. Financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union (recast) (A9-0180/2023 - Monika Hohlmeier, Nils Ušakovs)

Oral explanations of vote

Anders Vistisen (ID). – Fru formand! Der er ikke styr på EU's penge. For 29. år i træk har Den Europæiske Revisionsret, vores egne revisorer, valgt at fortælle os, at man ikke kunne godkende EU's budget. Den seneste rapport viser, at 4,2 procent af midlerne kan man simpelthen ikke gøre rede for. Derfor er det et problem, ja, faktisk skandaløst, at man år efter år her i Europa-Parlamentet vedtager budgetprocedurer uden at tage højde for, at man aldrig har fået godkendt budgettet i første omgang. Det er på tide, vi tager skeen i den anden hånd, tager det alvorligt, at der er tale om skatteborgerfinansierede midler, og sørger for den forpligtelse, vi først og fremmest har, nemlig at vores regnskaber kan godkendes. Det burde være simpel logik, at det er den første opgave, et Parlament skal varetage. Desværre har vi endnu engang vedtaget en rapport, som ikke sikrer, at vi for 30. eller 31. år får godkendt budgettet i Revisionsretten.

14.2. The time the European Commission takes to deal with requests for public access to documents (B9-0162/2024)

Oral explanations of vote

Clare Daly (The Left). – Madam President, I voted in favour of this resolution because I think the public's access to documents really plays a crucial role in ensuring that EU institutions operate transparently. It is absolutely critical for investigative media, for interest groups, for civil society or for individual citizens.

And let's be honest, the Ombudsman's special report reveals significant and systemic delays in access to Commission documents. In 85% of the cases, the Commission failed to take a decision within the legal deadline. This amounts to maladministration, it is absolutely outrageous and it shows total contempt for the citizens of Europe.

Emily O'Reilly has said that the institutions are still struggling to adapt their registration and disclosure obligations to the realities of modern communication tools. Obviously, she means Ursula von der Leyen hasn't copped on that she's supposed to keep text messages and so on. I was delighted to see the amendment pass that reminded the Commission that Parliament can institute infringement proceedings in this area.

14.3. Creation of a European initiative for an annual designation of European capitals for children (B9-0174/2024)

Oral explanations of vote

Mick Wallace (The Left). – Madam President, the idea of creating a designated capital for children, if it were to focus on children and how we mind them and how we treat them, it would be certainly be a positive.

In Dublin today, in our home city, they reckon that almost 1 in 5 children are at risk of poverty. Now, Ireland is deemed a very wealthy country, and you'd wonder how, in God's name, that could be the case. Well, sadly, successive governments have engaged in neoliberal policies that do not prioritise the interests of the most vulnerable in society. That should change, and it would be great if the European Union could play a positive role in addressing that.

And speaking of children, let's not forget that there are 12 000 children who have been killed by the Israeli regime in Gaza. There are 180 births a day at the moment in Gaza, and the healthcare facilities for birth and for postnatal care have been destroyed. God help us!

14.4. Cohesion policy 2014-2020 – implementation and outcomes in the Member States (A9-0049/2024 - Andrey Novakov)

Oral explanations of vote

Piernicola Pedicini (Verts/ALE). – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, io ho votato a favore di questa risoluzione, ma non posso fare a meno di segnalare quelle pratiche nazionali che di fatto annullano l'efficacia delle politiche di coesione a livello territoriale.

Perché la Germania ha ridimensionato il divario tra Est e Ovest? Perché negli altri paesi dell'Unione la politica di coesione ha funzionato, mentre il Sud Italia si allontana sempre di più dagli standard europei?

E allora non mi stancherò mai di ripetere che, se da una parte, i fondi europei sono destinati ai territori più in difficoltà, dall'altra i governi italiani, da sempre, hanno sottratto le risorse ordinarie, vanificando ogni politica di coesione.

Prima il governo ti dimezza il personale; quindi le Regioni e i Comuni non riescono ad assorbire i fondi europei; a quel punto il governo dice che sei incapace e attua il potere sostitutivo con i progetti sponda, che trasformano le risorse destinate al Sud in risorse spalmate su tutto il territorio nazionale.

Noi diciamo che bisogna ripristinare il criterio di addizionalità delle risorse europee e introdurre un vincolo di territorialità che deve essere fatto rispettare direttamente dalla Commissione europea, perché ormai dei governi italiani non ci si può più fidare.

Clare Daly (The Left). – Madam President, I voted for this policy because I believe that the neglect of rural communities really is immense. It's partly reflected in the economic issues which are behind the protest movement being led currently by our farmers. But it's also partly reflected in the terrible damage being done to these communities on an environmental front.

Situations like in Ireland, where our Environment Minister has greenlighted a lithium prospecting project in Moylisha Hill in Wicklow, his department strongly advising Coillte, a State company, to allow access to those lands – even though hydrological advice says that drilling through the rock in this area will compromise very valuable water supply.

The Minister says that we have to consider mining when it could be done in an environmentally sensitive way. It can't be. It's time to drop it. We need to invest properly in our rural communities.

Anders Vistisen (ID). – Fru formand! Pengene bliver ved med at fosse ud af EU's kasser. Hver gang man ikke formår at lave udvikling i Sydeuropa, i Østeuropa, er svaret det samme: Send flere penge! Denne gang er det EU's såkaldte samhørighedsfonde, der er tale om. Men prospektet er jo, at det bliver meget, meget værre. Man er ved at invitere 8-10 nye lande ind i EU, og når man ser på Rådets beregninger, vil det medføre en ekstraregning i form af penge til landbrugsstøtte, samhørighedsfonde på 35 milliarder kroner i Danmark alene. Det er jo vanvittigt, at man her i Parlamentet bliver ved med at kræve og kræve og kræve penge uden at tage et ansvar for at skabe den vækst, der skal til for at understøtte Europas fremtid. Derfor må man sige, at pengekassen skal lukkes i! Der skal ikke bruges flere penge på samhørighedspolitik, på landbrugsstøtte. Vi er nødt til at sætte en stopper for disse vanvittige programmer, der kun medfører, at medlemsstaterne ikke tager et ansvar for økonomisk udvikling.

Mick Wallace (The Left). – Madam President, cohesion policy funds are intended to encourage even development in the EU, including regional development. Ireland has obviously received significant cohesion funding, but it is not clear these funds reach all those areas in need.

Cape Clear Island off the coast of Cork is a place of beauty, but the long-term survival of life on the island, its culture and heritage are at risk. The population of Cape Clear has stagnated with a dramatic 25% drop from 2016 to 2022, and right now there's only a handful of kids in the national school on the island. The islanders identify housing as the main policy failure.

There are some amazing community leaders on the island. They have a plan to build four family homes on the island for rent, for the sole use of new full-time residents. The houses would function as transitional accommodation to attract new families. I think the government and the local authority in Cork need to work together with islanders to try and make this happen. Everything is possible – *tout est possible*.

14.5. The adoption of the Special Measure in favour of Tunisia for 2023 (B9-0173/2024)

Oral explanations of vote

Clare Daly (The Left). – Madam President, I was really glad to see this motion tabled, and I voted for it. It is past time for this Parliament to get serious about clipping the Commission's wings, because the Commission, and particularly its President, are out of control. And if you care about the rule of law, that should really bother you.

It's not just that the Commission is going on mandate-free solo runs in relation to the Tunisia deal; we've also had Ursula von der Leyen, without any mandate, undermining Member State policy towards Europe's biggest trading partner, China, siding with her bosses in Washington over the heads of the European governments she's supposed to work with. We've had her flagrantly usurping Member States' prerogatives in relation to foreign policy, with her trip to Israel, and her repeated declaration of Europe's unconditional support for that gang of genocidal maniacs.

And in response from this slow-rolling coup – nothing. A few quiet words of concern behind the closed doors of the Council. Not good enough! We have laws. We have Treaties. When someone starts incinerating, it should concern us all. Hopefully today's motion is a small signal that Parliament is finally waking up to that.

Anders Vistisen (ID). – Fru formand! Nu ser vi konsekvenserne af den håbløse migrationspolitik til Europa. For ingen har ønsket at tage et ansvar, og derfor har svaret her fra Huset og fra Kommissionen og fra Rådet været: Lad os prøve at udlicitere det. Lad os lave aftaler med islamiske despoter i Nordafrika, i Tyrkiet, og lad os lade dem holde migrationsstrømmene tilbage. Det kan jo lyde besnærende. Det kan lyde fristende, at man ikke selv skal håndtere sine problemer, men sandheden er jo, at man har gjort sig fuldstændig sårbar over for afpresning, at mere vil have mere, og at der tit er tale om regimer som her for eksempel Tunesien, hvor man ikke kan tale om stabile samarbejdsrelationer. Vi er nødt til i Europa at tage ansvaret for vores egen skæbne, og i det ligger der ikke, at man bare kan forhandle med en diktator i Mellemøsten eller i Nordafrika og tro, de løser vores migrationsudfordring for os, hvis de får en pose penge med i baglommen.

Mick Wallace (The Left). – Madam President, we talk a lot in the EU about human rights, EU values, defending democracy from the threat of authoritarianism. Meanwhile, the Commission President and the right wing are doing deals with the likes of Tunisia to outsource the EU borders to repressive dictatorships. Hardly surprising, given von der Leyen's support for the genocides in Gaza by the fascist Israeli regime. It seriously challenges EU claims to have anything to do with progress and humanity.

For hundreds of years we have genocided and plundered using our gains to enrich ourselves. We have strangled many independent movements with death traps and forced development through structural adjustment programmes. In North Africa and the Middle East, people flee NATO regime change wars and their fallout, climate change caused by the developed North, and the neoliberal impact of the IMF and the World Bank. And what do we do? We pay corporate lawyers to detain and kill the people looking for a better life than the one that we've helped to create for them.

President. – That concludes the explanations of vote.

15. Approval of the minutes of the sitting and forwarding of texts adopted

President. – The minutes of this sitting will be submitted to Parliament for its approval at the beginning of its next sitting.

If there are no objections, I shall forward the resolutions adopted at today's sitting to the persons and bodies named in the resolutions.

16. Dates of forthcoming sittings

President. – The next part-session will take place on 10 and 11 April 2024.

17. Closure of the sitting

(The sitting closed at 15.50)

18. Adjournment of the session

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

Key to symbols used

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

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

Abbreviations used for Parliamentary Committees

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

Abbreviations used for Political Groups

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