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FULDSTÆNDIGT FORHANDLINGSREFERAT DEN 3. OKTOBER 2023

(C/2024/5274)

EUROPA-PARLAMENTET

SESSIONEN 2023-2024

Mødeperioden fra den 2. til 5. oktober 2023

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FULDSTÆNDIGT FORHANDLINGSREFERAT DEN 3. OKTOBER 2023

VORSITZ: EVELYN REGNER

Vizepräsidentin

1. Åbning af mødet

(The sitting opened at 9.00)

2. De politiske gruppers sammensætning

President. – Stefania Zambelli is no longer a member of the ID Group and sits with the non-attached Members as of 3 October 2023.

3. Udvalgenes og delegationernes sammensætning

President. – The Renew Group notified the President of a decision relating to changes to appointments within delegations. This decision will be set out in the minutes of today's sitting and takes effect on the date of this announcement.

4. Interimsbetænkning om forslag til en midtvejsrevision af den flerårige finansielle ramme 2021-2027 (forhandling)

President. – The next item is the debate on the recommendation by Jan Olbrycht and Margarida Marques, on behalf of the Committee on Budgets, on the interim report on the proposal for a mid-term revision of the multiannual financial framework 2021-2027 (2023/0201R(APP)) (A9-0273/2023).

Jan Olbrycht, sprawozdawca. – Pani Przewodnicząca! Panie komisarzu! Chciałbym przypomnieć, że dzisiaj Parlament Europejski przegłosuje swoje stanowisko w sprawie rewizji wieloletnich ram finansowych na lata 2021–2027.

Ale powinno to być również dla nas ważne wskazanie i ważne przypomnienie debaty, która się toczy od wielu lat w instytucjach europejskich. Czy jesteśmy w stanie rzeczywiście przewidzieć i dobrze zaplanować budżet europejski na siedem lat? Czy jesteśmy przygotowani na zaskakujące sytuacje, na nieprzewidziane okoliczności, na kryzysy? Czy budżet przygotowany na siedem lat nie powinien z góry być przygotowany na rewizję, na zmianę? Czy budżet nie powinien być bardziej elastyczny tak, by pozwalał na reagowanie?

Parlament Europejski od początku mówił o tym, że ten budżet na lata 2021–2027 jest za mały, że nie wystarczy, a jeszcze wtedy nie wiedzieliśmy o nadchodzących kryzysach. Pogląd ten podzielała również wtedy Komisja Europejska, przygotowując zestawienie potrzeb. Budżet okazał się dużo mniejszy niż potrzeby, które były wtedy określane. Mimo to została podjęta decyzja o wieloletnich ramach finansowych z przeglądem w środku tego okresu.

My od początku mówiliśmy: nie wystarczy przegląd, trzeba będzie zmienić ten budżet. A potem nastąpiły nieprzewidziane okoliczności: Covid-19, wojna w Ukrainie, w związku z czym pojawiły się pytania, czy ten budżet wystarczy, czy nie musimy go zmienić. Pierwsza odpowiedź ze strony rządów była taka, że nie będzie żadnej rewizji. Na szczęście jednak wtedy Komisja Europejska przygotowała propozycje zmiany wieloletnich ram finansowych, o czym my mówiliśmy w roku 2022.

Komisja Europejska przygotowała tę zmianę i z tą zmianą generalnie Parlament się zgadza. Zgadza się co do listy priorytetowych działań, co do tego, że trzeba będzie przeznaczyć pieniądze dla Ukrainy, że trzeba będzie wzmocnić kwestie innowacyjności, konkurencyjności na rynkach światowych, dorzucić pieniądze na migrację, ale również uelastycznić budżet po to, żeby można było reagować na nieprzewidziane okazje.

I teraz Parlament Europejski wychodzi z propozycją: zgadzamy się z propozycją Komisji Europejskiej, ale uważamy, że ona powinna być jeszcze wzmocniona. Stąd też propozycja nasza, Parlamentu Europejskiego, mówi o dodatkowych dziesięciu miliardach. To jest dosyć symboliczna suma, bo oczywiście można by ją rozbijać na bardziej szczegółowe zagadnienia, ale my jako Parlament Europejski chcemy wskazać, że są priorytetowe działania, które muszą być wzmocnione, lecz ważny jest czas.

Dlatego podejmujemy tę decyzję dzisiaj, dlatego też czekamy na decyzję Rady. Uważamy, że Rada musi podjąć szybko decyzję, ponieważ pieniądze, które były przewidziane dla Ukrainy, kończą się z końcem roku. Przecież musimy przygotować budżet na rok 2024. Dlatego też dzisiaj przychodzimy jako Parlament Europejski i mówimy: to jest nasza propozycja. Oczekujemy od Rady szybkich działań dotyczących tego, w jaki sposób zmienić te ramy finansowe, w jaki sposób znaleźć dodatkowe pieniądze na drugą część tych ram. Przecież nie tylko musimy odpowiedzieć na nowe wyzwania, ale jeszcze będziemy musieli spłacić kredyt, i my proponujemy rozwiązania, które ułatwią tego typu działania.

Dlatego też ważne jest, żeby zrozumieć stanowisko Parlamentu. Parlament nie domaga się większych pieniędzy. Parlament Europejski wspiera priorytety najważniejsze dla Unii, pokazuje, jak to osiągnąć, i wzywa Radę do szybkiego działania.

Margarida Marques, relatora. – Senhora Presidente, Senhor Ministro, Senhor Comissário, em momentos de crise, seja sanitária, económica ou guerra, a resposta é sempre mais Europa e não menos Europa.

Respostas que ponham as pessoas, as famílias, as empresas no centro. O SURE e o fundo de recuperação NextGenerationEU salvaram a vida de milhões de famílias na Europa. O Parlamento Europeu pediu em dezembro, a Comissão Europeia propôs em junho, votamos agora um mandato do Parlamento Europeu, como autoridade orçamental para rever o orçamento plurianual da União Europeia, até ao final de 2027.

A COVID, a guerra e os desafios daí decorrentes esgotaram o orçamento atual. Sete preocupações fundamentais:

Primeira, continuar a apoiar a Ucrânia e o povo ucraniano na Ucrânia e fora da Ucrânia e criar a base orçamental para mobilizar a ajuda internacional. Ao mesmo tempo, mitigar o impacto económico e social da guerra na vida dos europeus. Os europeus não podem ver todos os dias os juros a aumentarem e a crescerem os encargos dos jovens, das famílias com a casa ou com a energia.

Segunda, mobilizar meios adicionais para apoiar os cidadãos de países terceiros que procuram a Europa como sua tábua de salvação e os países que os recebem, em trânsito ou como destino final.

Terceira, proporcionar mais meios para auxiliar os governos nacionais a reagir a catástrofes naturais, como as cheias ou a seca, como as que sofremos recentemente e que seguramente se vão repetir.

Quarta, reforçar a autonomia estratégica da União Europeia. Para isso, apoiar a criação do programa STEP – o primeiro passo: tecnologias profundas, limpas e biotecnologias, valorizando a investigação e o desenvolvimento tecnológico na Europa –, apoiar a industrialização verde, apoiar mais e melhores empregos, criar oportunidades para os jovens e construir uma União justa, igualitária e coesa, sem deixar de ser competitiva no contexto global.

Quinta, assegurar que os encargos com a dívida do NextGenerationEU não vão afetar nem as políticas nem os programas europeus, designadamente a política de coesão ou a política agrícola.

Sexta, criar um instrumento permanente para dar resposta a crises que se têm sucedido com maior rapidez e complexidade, muitas vezes em simultâneo. Não podemos continuar com medidas pontuais sem causar sérios danos às políticas ou aos programas europeus ou aos objetivos de investimento para fazer a transição climática ou digital.

Precisamos de soluções permanentes, aprendendo com o que fizemos na União Europeia, na resposta às recentes crises, como a criação do NextGenerationEU ou do programa SURE.

Sétima, proteger a identidade e a dimensão da política de coesão. Não está em causa a revisão dos chamados envelopes nacionais. Fixámos prioridades para podermos assumir uma posição realista.

Finalmente, sabemos que novos alargamentos exigem reformas institucionais, mas exigem também uma nova arquitetura para o orçamento da União Europeia. O orçamento não pode ser o mesmo, nem do lado da receita nem no lado da despesa, numa Europa a 27 ou numa Europa a 30 ou a 35.

Para terminar, queria agradecer ao correlator Jan Olbrycht, com quem tive o privilégio de trabalhar, e às nossas equipas, aos relatores-sombra, ao Secretariado da Comissão dos Orçamentos.

Pascual Navarro Ríos, *presidente en ejercicio del Consejo*. – Señora presidenta, señorías, señor comisario, como saben, el 20 de junio, la Comisión presentó su propuesta de revisión del marco financiero plurianual. El Consejo ha estado trabajando intensamente en ese texto con el objetivo de concluir las negociaciones antes de que finalice el año. Como ocurre siempre con el marco financiero plurianual, algunos aspectos de esta propuesta requerirán orientación al más alto nivel político y, en este sentido, el presidente del Consejo Europeo ha propuesto añadir un debate sobre la revisión del marco financiero plurianual al orden del día del próximo Consejo Europeo de los días 26 y 27 de octubre. La Presidencia está trabajando intensamente en el marco de negociación y ya han comenzado los debates en el Coreper.

Señorías, desde el año 2020, la Unión ha afrontado retos imprevistos y sin precedentes y el informe que han presentado se refiere, evidentemente, a todos ellos. La urgencia de abordar dichos retos ha de conciliarse con los presupuestos nacionales. La Presidencia hará todo lo que esté en su mano por concluir satisfactoriamente este expediente lo antes posible y está resuelta a realizar esta labor con ánimo de cooperación constructiva con el Parlamento Europeo. Les doy de antemano las gracias por las contribuciones que hoy nos van a hacer en esta casa.

Johannes Hahn, *Member of the Commission*. – Madam President, honourable Members, dear State Secretary, first, I would like to thank the European Parliament, its President and especially the co-rapporteurs for this report, for the work done so far and the speediness the Parliament has shown in its work, as indeed time is pressing.

I can only stress again the importance of having the MFF revision in place by 1 January next year, which is also supported by the European Parliament. Failure to do so would mean that we would not be able to support Ukraine in a lasting manner to cover the most pressing needs and important reforms. We would neither be able to react effectively to the recent natural crises and emergencies that have affected our countries.

The economic and geopolitical context has dramatically changed since 2020. Within its limits, the Union budget has powered a strong EU response. As a result, the existing budgetary flexibility under the MFF is largely depleted. This hinders the EU credibility and ability to act swiftly and urgently. That is why we came forward with a targeted proposal of the MFF last June.

I welcome the fact that the European Parliament's report concurs with the priorities identified by the Commission. A structural solution to support Ukraine until 2027 via the new Ukraine facility, an instrument which will support Ukraine's recovery, modernisation, reforms and accession path via a long-term plan, but also catering for short-term needs.

Further, the situation in Lampedusa, the fallout from the Russian war of aggression and challenges at our borders demonstrate that migration is a huge European challenge that requires a European response. We must provide the means to address the most pressing needs resulting from the current situation, ensuring a swift agreement and implementation of the pact for migration and asylum.

The impact of the Russian war of aggression on Ukraine calls for strengthening partnerships with third countries. Supporting our close partners, as well as replenishing the neighbourhood, development and international cooperation instrument cushion to respond to future crises. Hence our proposals to increase heading 4 and heading 6. One is for migration and borders; number 6 for neighbours and external.

The multiplication of natural disasters and numerous humanitarian crises both in the Union and outside which we have experienced this summer highlight the importance of our emergency instruments. The initial allocations have been more than exhausted in the past two years. Needs remain high and will continue to do so for the remainder of the MFF.

It's urgent to reinforce the solidarity and emergency aid reserve and the flexibility instrument. It's also time to foster our strategic autonomy and competitiveness.

Beyond the political priorities, our MFF also requires some adjustments to respect commitments already made. It was already mentioned, the EURI line. This would reflect the uncertain nature of financing costs. And then it's about the resources of the European public administration, which are under pressure due to the inflation.

The Commission proposal is targeted and focuses on the most pressing needs. As such, it should be considered as a package. So once again we are ready to support. I am grateful for the Council to try to reach an agreement as fast as possible.

José Manuel Fernandes, *em nome do Grupo PPE*. – Senhora Presidente, Caras e Caros Colegas, Senhor Comissário e representante do Conselho, nas negociações do Quadro Financeiro Plurianual 2014-2020, o Parlamento Europeu defendeu que o orçamento de 2021-2027 não estava à altura dos desafios, não era robusto, não tinha flexibilidade, não responderia a imprevistos e que o pagamento da dívida decorrente do NextGenerationEU, dos planos de recuperação e resiliência, não devia estar dentro dos limites orçamentais.

O tempo deu-nos razão. A guerra na Ucrânia, a pandemia e a inflação mostraram que nós não podemos ter um orçamento com esta pequena dimensão e sem flexibilidade. Só a inflação representa um custo adicional de 74 mil milhões de euros.

Por isso, a nossa proposta nem é bem uma revisão, é mais uma reposição para respondermos aos desafios que enfrentamos e, para além disso, conseguirmos apoiar os cidadãos europeus.

O custo da dívida era de 15 mil milhões de EUR só em juros, em 2021-2027 vai ser cerca de 30 mil milhões de EUR. Isto significa que devemos colocar o custo desta dívida que deu origem aos PRR dentro do quadro financeiro plurianual, mas acima dos seus limites.

Para terminar, nós precisamos de montantes suficientes para projetos estratégicos que reforcem a nossa autonomia. O Conselho – é uma pergunta – concorda com o Parlamento e vai estar disponível para nos apoiar desta vez, uma vez que demonstrámos que tínhamos razão? Espero resposta.

Eider Gardiazabal Rubial, *en nombre del Grupo S&D*. – Señora presidenta, señor comisario, señor secretario de Estado, tengo solo dos minutos para convencer a los veintisiete países del Consejo de la necesidad de revisar el marco financiero plurianual, de dotarlo de más recursos para hacer frente dignamente a todos los retos que tenemos por delante.

En esta revisión no estamos hablando de ser ambiciosos o de prepararnos para el futuro, estamos hablando de dar respuestas urgentes a varias crisis y, también, del coste de oportunidad de no hacerlo. Respuestas a varias crisis, empezando por la guerra contra Ucrania, donde nuestro apoyo como Unión no está en duda, pero donde ahora tenemos la oportunidad de financiar un plan con objetivos y controles claros.

Pero no podemos concentrar toda nuestra política exterior en Ucrania: Moldavia también necesita nuestro apoyo. El Pacto sobre Migración y Asilo también necesita recursos, por no hablar de todos los refugiados a los que tenemos que proteger; como protegimos a nuestros ciudadanos en la crisis de la COVID-19: protegimos su salud y sus empleos poniendo en marcha los fondos Next Generation EU. Lamentablemente, la inflación y la subida de tipos de interés han ejercido todavía más presión financiera sobre nuestros presupuestos.

La crisis de la COVID-19 y la guerra contra Ucrania han sacado a la luz muchas de nuestras debilidades como Unión; entre ellas, nuestra extrema dependencia de terceros países y la necesidad de desarrollar una política industrial europea con inversiones clave en sectores estratégicos.

Y aquí llegamos al coste de oportunidad. ¿Estamos dispuestos a ser dependientes de todo y para todo de terceros países, para nada fiables en muchos casos? ¿A no tener voz política por culpa de nuestras debilidades? ¿A quedarnos rezagados en innovación, en transición digital o en lucha contra el cambio climático? ¿Estamos dispuestos a volver a las políticas de austeridad del 2010, a no tener fondos para ayudar a nuestros ciudadanos frente a catástrofes naturales o a no poder proteger a nuestros trabajadores en una nueva crisis?

Este Parlamento no lo está, y espero que el Consejo tampoco. En esta negociación es tan importante su contenido como su aprobación a tiempo. El señor Michel no ha tenido a bien debatir hoy con nosotros. Espero que no pierda ni un solo minuto, que se ponga codo con codo con la Presidencia española y que, con el resto de los países, logre presentar una propuesta digna y a la altura de las circunstancias para negociar con este Parlamento.

Valérie Hayer, *au nom du groupe Renew*. – Madame la Présidente, Monsieur le Commissaire, Monsieur le Ministre, chers collègues, je vous invite à vous lever contre l'extrême droite, contre la Lega, contre le Rassemblement national, contre l'AFD, contre Reconquête, qui voudraient nous faire croire que l'Europe serait un monstre budgétaire ne finançant que ses fonctionnaires. Nous devons rétablir la réalité et faire face avec courage à la réalité et à la vérité. Un courage qui manque tant aux populistes.

Parce que la réalité, c'est que les caisses de l'Europe font face à un vide abyssal. Un vide qui, s'il n'est pas comblé d'ici au 31 décembre, mènera à de très graves répercussions. Fin de l'aide à l'Ukraine. Incapacité à honorer notre dette commune. Incapacité à mettre fin à nos dépendances. Incapacité à contrôler nos frontières. Et donc incapacité à accueillir les migrants ayants droit comme à raccompagner ceux qui n'ont pas vocation à rester. Alors que ferions-nous? Pester contre l'impuissance de l'Europe, contre son incapacité à faire face aux crises et subir ? Nous le refusons.

Chers collègues, la situation budgétaire de l'Europe n'est pas préoccupante. Elle est dramatique. Alors ne laissons pas les populistes, l'extrême droite nous dire qu'il faut couper le budget de l'Europe tels des irresponsables de la finance publique et donnons à l'Europe les moyens de maîtriser nos frontières, notre industrie, notre territoire, notre avenir.

Rasmus Andresen, *im Namen der Verts/ALE-Fraktion*. – Frau Präsidentin! Überschwemmungen und Brände, die weite Teile von Europa zerstören, Kriege und globale Krisen, Brücken, die einstürzen, Schulen, die von Asbest befallen sind, und ein Schienennetz, das so marode ist, dass man in vielen Mitgliedstaaten mindestens eine bis zwei Stunden Verspätungen einplanen muss. Allein um die Klimaziele einzuhalten und moderne Infrastruktur in Europa zu garantieren, brauchen wir jährlich, so die EU-Kommission, 620 Milliarden Euro Investitionen.

Unsere Zukunft ist europäisch, und wir müssen sie jetzt organisieren. In Sonntagsreden sind sich darüber auch meistens alle einig: Die EU muss gestärkt werden, damit wir alle eine gute Zukunft haben, wir klimagerechte Infrastruktur bauen und unser Wohlstand gestärkt wird. Aber wenn es konkret wird, dann steht das Europäische Parlament meistens alleine da. So droht es auch diesmal zu sein. Bei der anstehenden Überarbeitung des Finanzrahmens verhandeln wir leider nicht darüber, was nötig wäre, wir sprechen darüber, was möglich ist.

Wir brauchen die 50-Milliarden-Ukraine-Fazilität, um unser Versprechen einzulösen, die Ukraine beim Wiederaufbau zu unterstützen und ihr einen Weg in die Europäische Union zu geben. Wir brauchen mehr Investitionen in europäische Innovation, und wir brauchen mehr Flexibilität, um auf globale Krisen oder aber auch auf Naturkatastrophen reagieren zu können. Wir brauchen eine Lösung für die explodierenden Zinskosten, damit nicht im nächsten Schritt Jugendaustauschprogramme, Umweltprogramme oder Demokratieprojekte gekürzt werden.

Der Rat ist dazu bisher leider nicht bereit. Ich muss auch ganz ehrlich sagen, Herr Minister, das, was Sie heute allein zum Zeitplan gesagt haben, war mehr als enttäuschend. Machen Sie Ihre Hausaufgaben, setzen Sie den mehrjährigen Finanzrahmen auf die Tagesordnung des nächsten Ratsgipfels oder spätestens im November auf einem Sondergipfel, damit wir zeitnah entscheiden können.

Bogdan Rzońca, w imieniu grupy ECR. – Jest rewizja finansów, bo стоимy przed ścianą. Liderzy unijni współpracowali z Rosją Putina, przed tym Polska ostrzegała. A on napadł na Ukrainę i zdewastował Unię Europejską, ośmieszając przy tym jej liderów. Wszystko w Unii miało być ambitne, ale nie było realne. Opowieści o transformacji energetycznej gospodarki legły w gruzach. Polityka klimatyczna rujnuje dziś budżet rodziny, mamy więc ubóstwo, zimne i ciemne domy. Jest kłapa gospodarcza Unii, firmy uciekają do USA i Anglii z Unii Europejskiej. Pośpiesznie wprowadzana platforma strategicznych technologii nie zapobiegnie tej kłapie, jest tylko dowodem na kłapę.

Ambitnie Unia się tylko zadłużyła i do tego stopnia chce, żeby ten dług był wspólny i prawie że wieczny. Komisja ocenia, że budżet się dewaluuje na 74 mld euro do 2027 roku. Unia chce podzielić uchodźców na lepszych, na tych, którzy są przemycańcami na południe Unii z dopłatą od unijnych, od niemieckich NGO-sów. I Komisja nie chce pomóc krajom, które pomagają Ukraincom, matkom i dzieciom z Ukrainy, które są w tych przyfrontowych krajach. I wreszcie Komisja mówi, że wszystkie kraje muszą spłacać odsetki od długu na plany odbudowy, ale politycznie Komisja blokuje pieniądze dla Polski.

Joachim Kuhs, im Namen der ID-Fraktion. – Frau Präsidentin, lieber Herr Kommissar Hahn, werter Herr Minister, werte Kollegen! Jedes Jahr nimmt der Ehrgeiz der Kommission zu und die Souveränität der Mitgliedstaaten ab. Jedes Jahr gibt die Kommission mehr Geld aus als im Vorjahr und verlangt für die Folgejahre mehr Geld. Dieses Geld wächst natürlich nicht auf einem Geldbaum, sondern dieses Geld wird von den Steuerzahlern in unseren Mitgliedstaaten beigesteuert.

Auch bei der Überarbeitung des mehrjährigen Finanzrahmens will die Kommission für die nächsten Jahre zusätzliche 65 Milliarden und der Haushaltsausschuss noch einmal 10 Milliarden draufsatteln. Liebe Kollegen, ich sage Nein zu mehr Geld! Dass Sie jedes Jahr meine 300 Kürzungsanträge ablehnen – geschenkt. Dass Sie aber, werter Herr Kommissar, mit dieser Halbzeitüberprüfung immer mehr Geld fordern für die Masseneinwanderung, für den Klimawahnsinn und 50 Milliarden dann auch noch für die Ukraine, das müssen wir nächstes Jahr unseren Wählern erklären, und da bin ich gespannt, was die dazu zu sagen haben.

Machen wir es doch einfach wie letzte Woche die Amerikaner: Die haben einfach die für den Ukrainekrieg eingepflanzten zig Milliarden komplett gestrichen, und schon gab es eine Einigung über den Haushalt in letzter Sekunde. Lieber Herr Kommissar, ziehen auch Sie die Reißleine. Streichen Sie die Unterstützung für die weitere Verlängerung des Krieges in der Ukraine. Sie würden sich dadurch den Friedensnobelpreis für die EU nachträglich verdienen – und zwar ehrlich verdienen – und dem mehrjährigen Finanzrahmen die notwendige Luft zum Atmen verschaffen.

Δημήτριος Παπαδημούλης, εξ ονόματος της ομάδας The Left. – Κυρία Πρόεδρε, το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο εδώ και χρόνια ζητά έναν πιο ισχυρό προϋπολογισμό και ζητούσαμε εδώ και χρόνια και μια αναθεώρηση του πολυετούς δημοσιονομικού πλαισίου. Η Επιτροπή έρχεται με καθυστέρηση και καταθέτει μια πρόταση —ανεπαρκή κατά τη γνώμη μας— αλλά ανοίγει έναν δρόμο.

Και τώρα είναι ευθύνη δική σας, κύριοι του Συμβουλίου, να μην βάλετε στο καλάθι των αχρήστων αυτή την πρόταση της Επιτροπής που εμείς με την έκθεσή μας ζητούμε και να βελτιωθεί. Πρέπει εσείς, της ισπανικής Προεδρίας, να πείσετε το Συμβούλιο και τον κύριο Michel να μην αναβάλλει διαρκώς την τοποθέτηση του Συμβουλίου. Γιατί η «ευρωτσιγκουνιά» και οι καθυστερήσεις του Συμβουλίου ρίχνουν νερό στον μύλο της αντιευρωπαϊκής άκρας δεξιάς. Το ακούσατε μόλις πριν: χρειαζόμαστε περισσότερη και καλύτερη Ευρώπη. Να δεχθείτε πολλές από τις προτάσεις του Συμβουλίου, κύριοι του Κοινοβουλίου και της Επιτροπής, και να αρχίσουμε από τώρα να προετοιμάζουμε τον νέο πολυετή προϋπολογισμό της Ένωσης. Γιατί; Για να αντιμετωπίσουμε τις υπαρκτές ανάγκες και τις νέες κρίσεις που έρχονται.

Δεν είναι δυνατόν η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση να λειτουργεί με έναν προϋπολογισμό της τάξης του 1% του ευρωπαϊκού ΑΕΠ. Όποιος το αρνείται αυτό, δεν θέλει την Ενωμένη Ευρώπη, υπονομεύει την Ενωμένη Ευρώπη και τροφοδοτεί τη διάλυσή της μέσω της απειλητικής ανόδου της αντιευρωπαϊκής άκρας δεξιάς.

Andor Deli (NI). – Elnök Asszony! A szolidaritás nem egy egyirányú utca. Ezt a mondatát már számtalanszor hallhattuk az EU részéről az elmúlt évek során, de sajnos úgy tűnik, hogy mégis az. Az uniós forrásokhoz való egyenlő hozzáférés biztosítása minden tagállamot egyformán meg kell, hogy illessen, ez is része az EU szolidaritásának. Az MFF-revízió kapcsán most mégis egyes uniós körök elvárnák Magyarországtól, hogy önkéntesen vállaljon újabb befizetéseket az uniós költségvetésbe, így például a helyreállítási programok növekvő kamatainak törlesztésére, miközben eddig egyetlen eurócentet sem kapott az ország ebből az alapból.

Magyarország csak az idén egymilliárd eurót fizet be az uniós költségvetésbe, teljesítve ezzel az előírt kötelezettségeit. Ugyanakkor három milliárd euróval tartoznak nekünk. Úgy tűnik, szívesen fogadják a magyar befizetéseket, de az országot jogosan megillető uniós források kifizetésére a politikai nyomásgyakorlás miatt továbbra sem tudunk számítani. A jelenlegi gazdasági és politikai helyzetben az MFF felülvizsgálatának hatalmas stratégiai és politikai jelentősége van, de a tárgyalások gyors lezárása érdekében vissza kellene térni a szolidaritás valódi fogalmához.

Siegfried Mureșan (PPE). – Madam President, dear colleagues, whenever people in Europe are in need, the European Union is helping through the budget of the European Union. People, enterprises, regions which were in difficult situations in COVID had to face economic and social consequences of the pandemic, and high energy prices, inflation were helped from the budget of the European Union.

This MFF was agreed in 2020. Since then, we had to do many things which were not initially foreseen, which were not planned, and which none of us could envisage, particularly linked to the illegal invasion of Russian armed forces into Ukraine. We did more than we had to do initially. We did more than we planned with this MFF. We are now seeing that it reaches its limits. In the draft budget of the European Union for next year presented by the Commission, in four out of seven headings of the budget, we have a margin of EUR 0, which means no capacity to react if something happens. We have to correct this, and the revision of the multiannual financial framework is the right place and the right time to correct this, so that we can better protect our borders, care for people in Ukraine who came to Europe and continue to help people facing all of the difficulties. This is why, Minister, representatives of the Council, we urge you to put forward a negotiating position of the Council as soon as possible, so that the Council and Parliament can sit together, can agree on the budget for the next for the next seven years.

On the revision of this seven-year MFF, I would like to congratulate Jan Olbrycht and Margarida Marques as our two rapporteurs. They will receive a strong mandate and a strong majority today.

Just one word, in the end, to the net contributing members in the Council who complained that a bigger budget might mean more contributions. Contribution of member states this year are 20% reduced. The member states are not paying in more for the time being.

President. – I just have to inform you that we have a technical problem right now. The clock is not working, so when you see 38 seconds on the screen, that is frozen. We just have to do that right now because we would like to continue with the plenary debate with our mobiles, so I am very sorry for that. You have all prepared your speeches and I am quite sure that you are aware of that, and we will solve the problem as soon as possible.

Indeed the clock looks as if it is working again now, hopefully. Thank you for your understanding.

Rovana Plumb (S&D). – Madam President, the current Multiannual Financial Framework was adopted under completely different context: before the pandemic, before the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine and all the other challenges to our Union that followed. To continue addressing the challenges of today and tomorrow, a timely agreement on all the components of the MFF revision is absolutely necessary to respond more effectively to evolving needs, address funding gaps and increased flexibility and crisis responses. The revision must provide new funding for new political priorities and ensure a stronger and more agile EU budget that meets the highest standards of transparency and democratic accountability. The Parliament is working hard and is committed to having a revised MFF in place on 1 January 2024. We call on the Council to show courage and responsibility and come to the negotiating table as soon as possible, as we urgently need to agree on increased means for our union in order to tackle together the crisis we are facing.

We also want to accelerate the convergence of all regions of the Union and to stop any further attempts to deplete cohesion policy funding. It is crucial that the funding of cohesion policy remains adequate and is not undermined neither in the current MFF nor in the post 2027 MFF.

Moritz Körner (Renew). – Frau Präsidentin, Herr Kommissar! Natürlich setzt dieser Bericht die richtigen Schwerpunkte. Wir brauchen mehr Geld, vor allem in der Unterstützung der Ukraine und auch für weitere Prioritäten des Parlaments, und natürlich müssen wir die Zinsen für NextGenerationEU, die gestiegen sind, auch bezahlen. Aber es wird eben schwierig, in den Mitgliedstaaten mehr Geld für den EU-Haushalt zu bekommen, denn auch dort sind diese finanziellen Zwänge da, auch dort muss mehr für Zinsen ausgegeben werden.

Deswegen sollten wir doch mal schauen: Wir haben mit NextGenerationEU 750 Milliarden Euro on top gepackt, und schon jetzt sehen wir, dass das Geld schlecht abfließt; wir sehen, dass die Kohäsionsgelder noch schlechter abfließen. Wir sollten so mutig sein, hier auch neue Prioritäten zu setzen und Geld dort umzuschichten, das dort nicht gebraucht wird.

Gleichzeitig erreichen uns aber auch heute neue Medienberichte, dass die Kommission plant, Teile der Gelder an Ungarn wieder freizugeben, um die ungarische Unterstützung zu bekommen, mehr Geld für den EU-Haushalt herbeizuführen. Ich will hier ganz klar für das Parlament sagen: Wenn Sie in diese Richtung gehen, Frau von der Leyen, dann werden Sie den erbitterten Widerstand des Europäischen Parlaments bekommen. Es kann nicht sein, dass wir uns die Zustimmung zu mehr Geld mit einem dreckigen Deal mit Orbán erkaufen. Es darf keine Rabatte mehr auf Rechtsstaatlichkeit geben in Europa.

Damian Boeselager (Verts/ALE). – Madam President, Commissioner, Minister, colleagues, we have said that there are many challenges that the European Union is facing – amongst them, a crazy dictator putting tanks into Ukraine and neighbouring countries that hopefully soon will be a candidate, and obviously the global competitiveness challenge due to the overdependence of supply and demand on China and the need to create, massively, green jobs and phase out brown ones.

But all these challenges need cash, need funding to be addressed, and if we look at what has been proposed by the Commission with the placet of the Council, it is not enough. I mean, 50 billion for Ukraine is a good start, but it will not be sufficient to even cover the pensions and wages if the US doesn't live up to its part of the deal. This will not be enough to trigger reconstruction. When it comes to a common investment strategy, I'm sorry, but we know that Germany alone spent around 10 billion for one single factory in Magdeburg, so it cannot be enough to just have, you know, 6 billion out there to strategically invest. This will not be good for the single market.

Let's get real. We need to address the challenges of our time. For that, we need a budget that is actually worth it.

Johan Van Overtveldt (ECR). – Minister, commissaris, voorzitter, een grondige revisie van het meerjarig financieel kader dringt zich op. Dit budgettaire raamwerk voor de periode 2021—2027 is niet meer aangepast aan de noden en uitdagingen van vandaag, laat staan aan die van morgen.

Met de opeenvolging van de pandemie, de energiecrisis en de oorlog in Oekraïne werden er telkens opnieuw budgettaire vehikels in het leven geroepen die losstaan van de reguliere begroting en die bijgevolg ook onttrokken worden aan de normale democratische, parlementaire controle. Gebrek aan ernstige, consistente controles zet de deur wagenwijd open voor oneigenlijk gebruik van fondsen, of zelfs erger.

Collega's, dat is echt een probleem. Dat die evolutie quasi geruisloos passeert, is minstens even zorgwekkend. Ik zal daar in dit halfroond steeds op blijven wijzen.

Met de revisie van het MFK is het hoog tijd dat er meer duidelijkheid komt, met respect voor het Parlement en met respect voor het subsidiariteitsbeginsel. Maar we moeten ook realistisch zijn. Enerzijds kunnen de lidstaten de EU niet blijven vragen om steeds meer te doen met min of meer dezelfde middelen, maar anderzijds mogen de Europese instanties, met dit Parlement op kop, een ernstige doorlichting van alle uitgaven niet blijven afwijzen.

Het doel zou moeten zijn om de efficiëntie van de gebruikte middelen voortdurend te toetsen en te verhogen, om op die manier niet alleen, maar ook budgettair financiële ruimte te creëren.

De opmaak van de begroting is vandaag te veel een grabbelton, met daarin voor elk wat wils. Ik pleit ervoor om met de nodige verantwoordelijkheidszin zowel inkomsten als uitgaven ernstig en consistent onder de loep te nemen.

Eric Minardi (ID). – Madame la Présidente, Monsieur le Ministre, Monsieur le Commissaire, Mesdames et Messieurs, toujours plus d'argent, toujours plus d'emprunts, des plafonds toujours plus hauts. Pour quel résultat? Le constat est sans appel: la Commission européenne a épuisé en trois ans des fonds initialement prévus pour sept ans. Oui, le contexte mondial, suite à la crise du COVID et à la guerre en Ukraine n'est pas favorable. Cependant, nous n'avons pas à dilapider nos fonds auprès de pays tiers. Aujourd'hui, nous évoquons une révision de 31 milliards d'euros. À cela, il faudra ajouter quelque 69 milliards d'euros hors du cadre financier pluriannuel. M^{me} von der Leyen tente visiblement de rattraper une gestion budgétaire européenne plutôt questionnable.

Cette manipulation des citoyens de l'Union européenne ne peut pas durer. La Commission a le devoir de se préoccuper des crises qu'ils traversent. L'inflation principalement, mais aussi la précarité de l'emploi. Voilà pourquoi il serait judicieux d'abandonner la folie des grandeurs qui se joue actuellement. L'Union européenne n'est pas une ONG. Le peuple européen a besoin de nous. La rétribution versée doit avant tout profiter aux Européens. L'Union européenne doit faire des économies dans son budget et certaines de ses dépenses.

Younous Omarjee (The Left). – Madame la Présidente, pour la révision de ce CFP, je fais partie de ceux qui demandaient l'augmentation du Fonds européen d'aide aux plus démunis, car la pauvreté explose. Mais avez-vous écouté hier soir à cette tribune le commissaire Schmit? Il disait: il faut dépenser immédiatement l'argent disponible. Il y a des milliards qui peuvent être utilisés pour réduire la précarité. Et le commissaire Schmit exhortait les États membres à consommer l'argent disponible du FEAD.

Je pose la question: combien reste-t-il exactement? Y a-t-il donc des millions qui dorment aujourd'hui dans les caisses, en particulier pour la France car non dépensés par l'État et qui n'ont pas été donnés aux banques alimentaires qui, vous le savez tous, sont aujourd'hui exsangues et menacées dans leur existence même? Et si tel est le cas, ce serait un véritable scandale car les programmes, normalement, doivent être clôturés au 31 décembre 2020. Donc, lorsqu'on demande des augmentations, très bien, mais encore faut-il d'abord dépenser les fonds et bien les absorber.

Nicolas Bay (NI). – Madame la Présidente, chers collègues, comme d'autres espaces économiques dans le monde, l'Union européenne est touchée par l'inflation et les conséquences de la guerre en Ukraine. Mais alors que n'importe quel ménage penserait simplement à réduire ses dépenses, la Commission a une formule magique: demander toujours plus d'argent aux États, c'est-à-dire aux contribuables européens et notamment français, puisque la France fait partie des pays contributeurs nets au budget de l'Union européenne.

La Commission nous montre une fois de plus qu'elle dépense sans compter l'argent des autres, notre argent. Pas moins de 65 milliards d'euros, dont 13 milliards au titre de l'immigration. Si au moins cet argent servait à expulser les clandestins ou à monter une opération navale pour empêcher l'invasion de Lampedusa et de nos côtes. Mais nous savons qu'il sera en réalité dilapidé pour faciliter la venue de millions de faux demandeurs d'asile.

Pour gonfler son budget, la Commission compte également sur les ressources propres. En clair: des taxes et des impôts supplémentaires qui sont, comme toujours évidemment, répercutés à la fin sur le consommateur. On va ainsi ajouter une couche européenne au millefeuille fiscal qui spolie déjà les Français: pourcentage sur le revenu des États membres, prélèvement d'une partie de la TVA, taxe sur les emballages plastiques, mécanisme carbone aux frontières, taxe temporaire – mais qui en réalité deviendra définitive – sur les bénéfices des entreprises.

En somme, l'Union européenne fonctionne comme la France de Macron: toujours plus d'impôts, toujours plus de centralisme bruxellois...

(La Présidente retire la parole à l'orateur)

Janusz Lewandowski (PPE). – Pani Przewodnicząca! Panie Komisarzu! Wieloletnie ramy finansowe, jak nazwa wskazuje, mają wieloletni horyzont. I na tym polega ich wartość, bo to jest pieniądź przewidywalny, inwestycyjny – tego na ogół brakuje w budżetach krajowych i lokalnych – który umożliwia finansowanie inwestycji ze swej natury wieloletnich. Jest to szczególnie istotne dla takich krajów jak Polska, które są w cywilizacyjnym pościgu.

Ale siedem lat to długi okres. Trzeba doliczyć 2-3 lata na uzgodnienia i negocjacje. Zwłaszcza teraz, kiedy żyjemy w burzliwym okresie, wśród wielu niewiadomych, jedno jest pewne – będziemy narażeni na szoki zewnętrzne, tak potężne jak pandemia czy wojna, które wymagają kosztownych reakcji i które nie mieszczą się w ciasnych ramach budżetu uchwalonego i uzgodnionego przed wojną. Zatem potrzebna jest rzeczywiście istotna rewizja.

Komisja przedstawiła rewizję, *fresh money* – o co zawsze zabiegał Parlament – rzędu 66 mld euro. Najmniej sporna część to jest oczywiście pomoc dla Ukrainy, ale są inne potrzeby, też dobrze adresowane. Niemniej zdaniem Parlamentu jest to rewizja niewystarczająca, dlatego będziemy zabiegali przede wszystkim o elastyczność budżetu, oczekując, że zasili już w roku 2024 budżet roczny.

Pedro Silva Pereira (S&D). – Senhora Presidente, é evidente que o atual quadro financeiro plurianual europeu já não chega para responder às consequências de crises imprevistas, como a pandemia ou a guerra de agressão russa contra a Ucrânia, ou para fazer face aos crescentes desafios de autonomia estratégica da União Europeia e das transições verde e digital.

É muito urgente resolver este problema. A proposta da Comissão para o reforço intercalar do orçamento plurianual é um passo importante na direção certa, mas não dá resposta a todas as necessidades.

Precisamos de uma revisão mais ambiciosa, mas também mais flexível. É, por isso, que este Parlamento deve apoiar de forma clara a proposta apresentada pelos nossos correlatores para um reforço orçamental adicional de 10 mil milhões de EUR que permita responder melhor às necessidades de financiamento sem prejudicar prioridades fundamentais, como as políticas de coesão.

Confiamos agora que a Presidência espanhola tudo fará para obter no Conselho a vontade política necessária para um bom acordo e um acordo rápido que possa entrar em vigor já no início de 2024.

Eva Maria Poptcheva (Renew). – *Frau Vorsitzende, sehr geehrter Kommissar Hahn, estimado Secretario de Estado,* just over 1% of the economic output of the whole European Union – this is the reality of the budget of the greatest democratic project that the world has seen in the past centuries.

We are facing enormous challenges: climate change, geopolitical instability, demographic decline, labour shortages. The only way to face them is with a strong economy, and the key word here is competitiveness. Because while the other economic superpowers of this world are pumping in billions to support their industries, we find ourselves arguing about a couple billion, more or less, for a new strategic platform called STEP.

We Europeans have to decide whether we want our industries to be competitive, and we have to decide if we run this race together with a strong budget for the European Union, investing in innovation, skills and leveraging private investment, or if you want to do it alone in a race to the bottom of national subsidies. The time to act is now.

Denis Nesci (ECR). – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, revisionare il QFP vuol dire dare una nuova visione agli obiettivi politici che l'Europa si pone nei prossimi anni. Alla luce del nuovo contesto, fortemente stressato dal rialzo continuo dei tassi e dal conflitto in Ucraina, alla Commissione chiediamo di osare di più su tre punti cruciali del quadro, per i quali occorrono coraggio e la consapevolezza che si tratta di passaggi decisivi per la tenuta economica e sociale dell'Europa.

Non c'è alcun dubbio che la guerra in Ucraina ha avuto pesanti ripercussioni su paesi che versano in condizioni di maggiore povertà, come l'Africa. Chiediamo pertanto di indirizzare più risorse alle politiche per l'immigrazione, sia per rispondere alle forti spinte di stabilità sociale e geopolitica dei paesi del Nord Africa, sia per mitigare e governare i flussi che rischiano di incidere pesantemente su territori di frontiera, come l'Italia.

Pretendiamo, inoltre, che la revisione preveda più risorse sul meccanismo di flessibilità, attraverso cui sarebbe più facile mobilitare i fondi di coesione, per esempio, e garantire più competitività per l'economia e i mercati degli Stati membri.

Infine, accogliamo con favore l'attenzione posta sulla capacità di investimenti per la nuova piattaforma STEP, perché senza questo approccio è difficile proiettarsi nelle sfide alle quali l'Europa è chiamata.

Alessandro Panza (ID). – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, signor Commissario, signor Presidente del Consiglio, il quadro finanziario pluriennale è fondamentale per la politica europea, poiché senza risorse finanziarie adeguate i grandi progetti rimangono proclami vuoti.

È cruciale ricordare che stiamo impiegando i soldi dei cittadini, che vivono una crisi economica senza precedenti e ai quali non possiamo e non dobbiamo chiedere ancora più risorse. Dobbiamo lavorare, invece, affinché ogni euro speso sia utilizzato in modo efficiente per il bene comune.

Sebbene il finanziamento di nuovi progetti sia cruciale per lo sviluppo dell'Unione europea, è innegabile che non possiamo trascurare il mantenimento delle infrastrutture esistenti, dalla viabilità alla manutenzione del territorio in degrado e abbandono anche dal punto di vista idrogeologico, a causa della mancanza di risorse. L'approccio del nuovo a tutti i costi, dimenticandoci di quanto già esistente, ha dimostrato di essere insostenibile a lungo termine.

Con fondi a disposizione limitati è necessario massimizzare l'efficacia del loro impiego. Possiamo farlo investendoli in un piano straordinario di manutenzione per preservare ed efficientare ciò che già abbiamo costruito. Investire nella ristrutturazione delle infrastrutture sarà un volano per l'economia, creerà posti di lavoro e aumenterà la competitività dell'Europa a livello globale.

È inoltre imperativo affrontare il problema della burocrazia eccessiva, che troppo spesso ostacola l'accesso ai finanziamenti: solo semplificando le procedure permetteremo a un maggior numero di progetti di vedere la luce sfruttando appieno il potenziale dei fondi disponibili.

Mick Wallace (The Left). – Madam President, in June, EU Member States had already committed 72 billion in support for Ukraine. On top of that, we have the 50 billion Ukraine facility and the proposed 20 billion Ukraine assistance fund for military equipment. All going to plan, by December the EU will have committed 142 billion – 100 billion from the budget – to keeping the war going, its fallout and the reconstruction. Not to mention the cost of inflation from promoting the same war.

The EU's decades of neoliberal capitalism have seen public services decimated, inequality rise and public spending lowered. These policies have contributed to a crisis in housing, healthcare, transport, labour conditions, cost of living and the environment. Yet the EU's priorities are security and defence. We need a housing and infrastructure revolution, but instead we're maxing out the budget on handouts to the defence sector and incentives for disaster capitalists.

You can't keep serving the elites at the expense of the people. Reconstruction of Ukraine will cost more than a trillion. How much of that are the EU taxpayers going to pay?

Anna-Michelle Asimakopoulou (PPE). – Κυρία Πρόεδρε, η παρούσα έκθεση είναι μια καλή έκθεση για την Ευρώπη, είναι μια καλή έκθεση για την Ελλάδα και χαίρομαι που η σημερινή έκθεση περιλαμβάνει πρόταση για περαιτέρω αύξηση του προϋπολογισμού κατά 10 δισεκατομμύρια ευρώ, εκ των οποίων τα 2 δισεκατομμύρια για το αποθεματικό αλληλεγγύης και επείγουσας βοήθειας για την αντιμετώπιση, μεταξύ άλλων, και των φυσικών καταστροφών.

Όπως γνωρίζετε, οι πρόσφατες καταστροφικές πλημμύρες και πυρκαγιές που έπληξαν την πατρίδα μου, την Ελλάδα, καθώς και τα πρωτόγνωρα φαινόμενα που είδαμε να συμβαίνουν και σε άλλες χώρες της Ευρώπης, προξένησαν ανείπωτες ζημιές με δυσθεώρητο κόστος αποκατάστασης. Είναι σαφές, κυρίες και κύριοι συνάδελφοι, ότι πρέπει να αυξηθούν οι πόροι για την αντιμετώπιση φυσικών καταστροφών και είναι αναγκαίο οι ευρωπαϊκοί θεσμοί να επιδείξουν ευελιξία στη χρήση των χρηματοδοτικών εργαλείων για την αποτελεσματικότερη αντιμετώπιση των συνεπειών της κλιματικής αλλαγής και την εν γένει προσαρμογή των κρατών μελών σε αυτή. Αυτά, μεταξύ άλλων, συμφωνήθηκαν και μεταξύ του Έλληνα πρωθυπουργού Κυριάκου Μητσοτάκη και της Προέδρου von der Leyen.

Κυρίες και κύριοι συνάδελφοι, η κλιματική κρίση επιφέρει μια νέα καταστροφική κανονικότητα. Συνεπώς, η Ευρώπη μπορεί — και πρέπει — να αποτελέσει φωτεινό παράδειγμα για να πρωτοστατήσει στην αντιμετώπιση ακραίων φυσικών φαινομένων, στο πνεύμα της πρότασης του Έλληνα πρωθυπουργού στη Γενική Συνέλευση των Ηνωμένων Εθνών για τη δημιουργία μιας Παγκόσμιας Συμμαχίας για την Προσαρμογή.

Ο μόνος τρόπος να εξασφαλίσουμε ότι οι πολίτες θα συνεχίσουν να συμμετέχουν στην πράσινη μετάβαση είναι να βρεθεί μια λογική ισορροπία μεταξύ του μακροπρόθεσμου μετριασμού των επιπτώσεων της κλιματικής κρίσης και των άμεσων αναγκών για προσαρμογή σε αυτή.

Victor Negrescu (S&D). – Doamna președintă, domnule comisar, domnule secretar de stat, dragi colegi, bugetul european pe termen lung nu mai corespunde nevoilor noastre actuale. Nu avem suficiente fonduri pentru obiectivele noastre comune. Este nevoie de revizuirea rapidă a bugetului pe termen lung pentru a răspunde noilor realități și exigențe economice și politice. Este inacceptabil faptul că, în prezent, cheltuim mai mult pe dobânzi la bănci decât alocăm pentru programul nostru emblematic „Erasmus”. Bugetul european trebuie să fie un motor de creștere economică, capabil să genereze un nivel de trai mai bun și dezvoltarea sustenabilă a tuturor regiunilor europene.

Provocarea legată de bugetul european este, de fapt, o luptă pentru ce fel de Europă ne dorim fiecare. Dacă ne dorim o Europă puternică, coezivă și echitabilă, avem nevoie de un buget consistent la nivelul ambițiilor noastre colective. Din păcate, există voci antieuropene care vor o Europă mai mică, fragilă în fața competitorilor noștri externi și incapabilă să facă față Federației Ruse. Dacă aceste voci vor câștiga teren, proiectele finanțate din fonduri europene existente în toate comunitățile noastre vor dispărea. Haideți să convingem guvernele europene să accepte o revizuire a bugetului european pe termen lung, care să transpună prioritățile Uniunii Europene în mod eficient și să răspundă noilor provocări.

Mauri Pekkarinen (Renew). – Arvoisa puhemies, sota on suuri tragedia. Ukrainaa on autettava, mutta sodalla on suuria taloudellisia vaikutuksia myöskin niihin maakuntiin, jotka ovat Venäjän rajan maakuntia. Suomella on 1340 kilometriä yhteistä rajaa. Meillä on monia maakuntia, joiden kannalta yhteistyö Venäjän kanssa aikaisemmissa tilanteissa oli tärkeää. Rajanylityksiä jo pelkästään oli parhaimmillaan noin 14 miljoonaa rajanylitystä vuodessa. Voitte arvata, mikä suuri taloudellinen vaikutus sillä on ollut, kun nyt tuota liikennettä, niin kuin on perusteltu, ei tällä hetkellä ole.

Miten on komissio tässä tilanteessa toiminut? Komissio on heikentänyt noille alueille, noihin maakuntiin, tulevaa Interreg-rahaa. Täysin käsittämätöntä, täysin käsittämätöntä! Kun Brexit tapahtui ja UK lähti, EU otti 5 miljardia euroa niiden alueiden, jotka kokivat menetyksiä, tilanteen korjaamiseksi. Tuohon kaikkeen verrattuna se, mitä tapahtuu nyt noilla raja-alueilla, on ihan eri asia. Minä toivon, että jo tässä välitarkastuksessa komissio huomioi nämä menetykset ja korjaa ennen kaikkea Interreg-vääryyden, joka on tapahtunut.

Teuvo Hakkarainen (ECR). – Arvoisa puhemies, otan saman asian esille, mistä olen aina puhunut täällä tai yleensä puhun. Muuttoliikkeen sisäiseen ja ulkoiseen hallintaan esitetään peräti 17 miljardia euroa lisää. Tämä tarve poistuu lyhyessä ajassa, kun EU sulkee ulkorajansa laittomalta maahantulolta. Tästä olen usein puhunut. Vain näin Eurooppa pelastuu kymmenien miljoonien muukalaisten valloitusvyyryltä.

Kalusto ja miehistö rajojen sulkuun on olemassa, odottavat vain lähtökäskyä. Elpymisvälineistä koituvat velanhoitomenot esitetään sijoitettavaksi vuotuisten menojen enimmäismäärien ulkopuolelle. Tämä on itsepetosta. Eivät velat ja korot taikatempuilla mihinkään häviä.

Carlos Coelho (PPE). – Senhora Presidente, Caros Colegas, Senhor Comissário, Senhor Ministro, saúdo o amplo compromisso deste Parlamento, refletido no forte apoio dos grupos políticos democratas e europeístas à resolução que estamos prestes a aprovar. O Quadro Financeiro Plurianual é uma ferramenta essencial para todos os Estados-Membros da União e, por isso, saudamos o reconhecimento por parte da Comissão, da necessidade urgente da sua revisão.

A proposta da Comissão, porém, carece de ambição para lidar com todas as necessidades e desafios que temos pela frente. Propomos um aumento adicional de 10 mil milhões de euros ao montante proposto pela Comissão, visando, entre outras iniciativas, proporcionar um apoio inequívoco e sustentado à Ucrânia, financiar a nova plataforma de tecnologias estratégicas para a Europa e responder à gestão dos fluxos migratórios. Apelo aos Estados-Membros, especialmente à Presidência espanhola, sobretudo num ano que antecede as próximas eleições europeias, para que não forneçam aos antieuropeístas pretextos para criticar a União Europeia por falta de ação devido à falta de financiamento e problemas na adoção do Orçamento para 2024.

Com este relatório, o Parlamento demonstra que está preparado para negociar. Espero que o Conselho faça o mesmo com celeridade.

Nils Ušakovs (S&D). – Madam President, dear colleagues, in this House I represent Latvian voters who live at the border region of Latgale, bordering both Russia and Belarus. European money is crucial for the people of Latgale because – and I know it very well – they face more social and economic hardships these days than an absolute majority of other European regions. The stability, prosperity and security of Europe is equally depending both on what is going on in Brussels, Berlin and Paris and what is happening in cities like Daugavpils or Rēzekne in Latgale.

The MFF revision is about our ability to provide the Union with the tools we need to overcome crises. In our case, our major tool is money – thank God not weapons or the lives of our soldiers. The MFF revision is also about our ability to adopt and implement heavily complicated decisions, and this ability is what is making us a functional Union which is based on values.

Charles Goerens (Renew). – Madame la Présidente, au cours de la présente période de financement pluriannuel, nous n'avons pour ainsi dire connu que des crises. Si la crise budgétaire dans la plupart de nos États membres ainsi qu'une nouvelle crise de l'euro nous ont été épargnées jusqu'à maintenant, c'est dû au fait que l'Union européenne avait eu la sagesse de se doter d'un plan de relance fort de quelque 800 milliards d'euros.

Cela m'inspire deux constats. Premièrement, tous les frugaux et radins de ce monde avaient tort de s'obstiner à plaider le moins-disant budgétaire ou l'asphyxie financière de nos États membres. Deuxièmement, nous vivons, grâce à cette augmentation de moyens budgétaires, dans une sorte d'état de grâce qui a pour effet de nous épargner de nouvelles crises graves au niveau de l'Union européenne et de réduire au silence ceux qui, naguère encore, plaidaient la sortie de leur pays de l'Union européenne.

Si vous êtes moins optimiste, reconnaissez au moins que ces crises ont été gelées grâce à l'effort budgétaire. Ces considérations nous invitent à faire preuve de lucidité afin de permettre à l'Union européenne de relever les défis qui sont devant nous. La réponse n'est pas que budgétaire, mais elle est aussi budgétaire.

Jorge Buxadé Villalba (ECR). – *(inicio de la intervención fuera de micrófono)* ... perfecto para que los de ahí fuera, los que pagan nuestras nóminas y sufren las consecuencias de sus políticas, puedan saber cómo piensan y qué votan ustedes.

Este Parlamento pide aumentar 76 000 millones de euros el marco financiero porque su puñetera Agenda 2030 tiene que ser ejecutada. Pero ni un euro más a agricultores, ganaderos y pescadores.

Este Parlamento pide 1 300 millones de euros más para gastos ordinarios y financieros, pero ahí fuera hay quienes no pueden pagar las hipotecas. No reduce ni un euro de gasto ideológico, ni jets privados, ni coches eléctricos supercaros para que sus señorías calmen su conciencia climática después de apretar el botón verde y destruir cualquier sector productivo, como la industria del automóvil.

Piden 1 600 millones más para gestionar fronteras. Vamos, para seguir financiando a las ONG en el Mediterráneo y la acogida de inmigrantes. Pero eso no es gestionar fronteras: eso es gestionar una derrota y la miseria. Y otros 9 000 millones más para colaboraciones e inversiones con los países de la vecindad. Pero ahí fuera nuestros compatriotas lo que piden es protección frente a la vecindad, la del este y la del sur.

¿Y cómo quieren pagar la fiesta? Con nuevos impuestos y subiendo los impuestos. Ustedes viven absolutamente fuera de la realidad. Solo espero que el año que viene la realidad les devuelva a su casa.

Karlo Ressler (PPE). – Poštovana predsjedavajuća, povjereniče, kolegice i kolege, proračun je uvijek temelj svakog europskog djelovanja, u državama članicama, u našem susjedstvu, a i šire.

U vrijeme tektonskih promjena svijeta koji se mijenja iz temelja to je očitije nego ikada prije. Iscrpili smo višegodišnji financijski okvir, iscrpili smo i nemamo na raspolaganju instrumente za bilo kakve moguće buduće krize. Komisija to prepoznaje. Parlament je to prepoznao i ranije upozoravao na to već neko vrijeme.

Instrument za Ukrajinu je dobar, pozitivan i treba ga pozdraviti. Međutim, svima nam je ovdje jasno da on nije i neće biti dovoljan.

U političkom smislu svaku našu neodlučnost iskoristit će i s lijevice i s desnice različite ekstremne političke skupine, političke skupine koje žele podrivati Europu, političke skupine koje ne razumiju europske politike, ali koje razumiju zabrinutost građana.

Što više oklijevamo, slabit će povjerenje građana. Nažalost, u nekim dijelovima to se već i događa. Već sada potrebno nam je snažnije financijsko djelovanje po pitanju nezakonitih migracijskih kretanja, po pitanju zadržavanja ozbiljnih načina financiranja kohezijske politike.

Vrijeme je za povratak zdravorazumskim politikama, vrijeme je za povratak financijski održivim politikama, vrijeme je za ozbiljnu, sustavnu i temeljitu reviziju višegodišnjeg financijskog... (*predsjedavajuća je govorniku oduzela riječ*)

Ilan De Basso (S&D). – Fru talman ! Tvärtemot vad många hävdar så finns det en enorm kraft i EU:s budget. Men då måste vi också prioritera de områden som kan göra störst skillnad för vanliga medborgare. Vi vet att konsekvenserna av Rysslands hänsynslösa invasion av Ukraina kommer att prägla vår vardag för lång tid framöver. Och i tider av krig och ojämlikhet är det som alltid de mest utsatta som får betala det högsta priset. Vår gemensamma uppgift är att skapa ett mer jämlikt Europa.

Men likväl måste medlemsstaterna ta sitt ansvar. I annat fall kommer vi inte att lyckas med våra ambitioner. Och det gäller inte minst stödet till Ukraina. Därför, fru talman, måste EU:s budget ha tydligare fokus på våra gemensamma utmaningar och det som inget enskilt medlemsland klarar på egen hand. Och våra prioriteringar avgör ytterst på vilken sida vi tänker stå för framtiden.

Johan Nissinen (ECR). – Fru talman! Varje dag går flera miljoner hårt arbetande européer till jobbet. Det är själva ryggmärgen i den europeiska ekonomin. Det är tack vare deras hårda arbete och att de betalar skatt som vi över huvud taget har en budget att besluta över. Vi EU-parlamentariker har därmed en skyldighet att förvalta dessa medel på ett så effektivt och bra sätt som möjligt.

Tyvärr så gör inte EU det och har istället blivit slöseriets högborg som sprätter pengar omkring sig. Alltför många politiker här inne vet inte hur det är att ha ett hederligt arbete där man har begränsade resurser och måste förhålla sig till en budget. Därför vill parlamentet likt en bortskämd rikemansunge spendera mer och mer för att det är någon annan som betalar. Hur illa man än spenderar pengarna så kommer det aldrig att drabba ledamöterna i den här kammaren.

Det är nu dags att ta ansvar på riktigt och stoppa slöseriet tillsammans. Det är först då som vi kan titta de hårt arbetande européerna i ögonen och säga att vi gjorde allting vi kunde för att förvalta deras pengar så mycket som möjligt.

Matthias Ecke (S&D). – Frau Präsidentin, Herr Kommissar! Der vorgelegte Bericht über den Vorschlag für eine Halbzeitrevision des Mehrjährigen Finanzrahmens 2021-2027 trägt der neuen weltwirtschaftlichen Lage Rechnung. Warenströme werden instrumentalisiert und Lieferketten geopolitisch überfrachtet. Wer heute nur nach dem billigsten Preis schaut, wird bald in leere Lager blicken.

Die EU braucht in kritischen Sektoren eine neue strategische Autonomie. Wir müssen Produktionen in diesen Bereichen verbessern, hochskalieren oder wieder ganz neu aufbauen. Diese Autonomie kann auch staatliches Geld kosten, aber sie darf natürlich nicht nur aus nationalen Beihilfen erfolgen. Deswegen haben wir Sozialdemokraten einen echten EU-Souveränitätsfonds gefordert. Ich bedauere, dass Präsidentin von der Leyen dieses Versprechen aus ihrem Arbeitsprogramm gebrochen hat.

Stattdessen haben wir nun einen Vorschlag für die Technologieplattform STEP bekommen. Das ist ein kleiner, pragmatischer Ansatz, der auf den Aufbau neuer Strukturen verzichtet und primär Mittel für zentral verwaltete Programme erhöht. Das ist keine schlechte Idee, aber nicht viel. Dennoch kann STEP nur ein erster Schritt sein, und hier hat die Kommission den *pun intended*. Wenn sich diese Plattform bewährt, muss die Kommission eine dauerhafte Lösung unterbreiten.

Jonás Fernández (S&D). – Señora presidenta, señores representantes de la Comisión y del Consejo, en este interesante y largo debate yo creo que ha quedado clara la posición del Parlamento. Y me uno a las palabras de mi colega Eider Gardiazábal sobre la necesidad de responder desde este presupuesto a los retos y a los desafíos, no ya del futuro sino del presente inmediato.

Y hablando del presente inmediato me gustaría hacer una pregunta directa a la Comisión. Hay 90 000 millones de euros disponibles en el marco del Mecanismo de Recuperación y Resiliencia que los Estados miembros no han solicitado, y tenemos hasta final de año para utilizarlos. Tenemos muchas labores que hacer y 90 000 millones de euros que quizá se pierdan. Me gustaría preguntar a la Comisión si está pensando en proponer algo al Consejo y a este Parlamento para poder hacer uso, como digo, de esos 90 000 millones de euros que se perderán a final de año si no hacemos algo entre todos.

Eero Heinäluoma (S&D). – Arvoisa puhemies, rahoituskehysten tarkistaminen on todella välttämätöntä yksin sen varmistamiseksi, että voimme antaa kaiken tarvittavan tuen Ukrainalle. Ukrainan kansa taistelee olemassaolostaan.

Venäjän hyökkäys ja edelleen jatkuva sota synnyttää monenlaisia vaikutuksia koko Eurooppaan. EU:n raja-alueet kuuluvat niihin, jotka kärsivät Venäjän toiminnasta: raja-alueyhteistyö, kauppa ja turismi ovat pysähtyneet.

Rahoituskehysten tarkistamisen yhteydessä, on perusteltua tunnustaa nämä EU:n raja-alueiden tarpeet. Puola on etulinjan maa pakolaisten vastaanotossa. Suomessa itäiset maakunnat kuuluvat suuriin menettäjiin Venäjän kaupan pysähtymistä. Yksin Etelä-Karjalan maakunnassa kärsitään miljoonan euron menetykset joka päivä. On tärkeätä, että parlamentti MFF-päätöksen yhteydessä huomioi myös EU:n omien alueiden ihmisten tarpeet. Näinhän teimme, kun Ukrainan sotaa paljon pienempi murros Brexit tapahtui kolme vuotta sitten.

Catch-the-eye-procedure

Eugen Tomac (PPE). – Doamna președintă, domnule comisar, Putin a readus războiul în Europa și ceea ce face Rusia astăzi merită un răspuns pe măsura acestei provocări fără precedent. Cred că este esențial să înțelegem că investițiile în estul Europei, în partenerii noștri care fac față cu foarte mare dificultate și efort agresiunii Rusiei, trebuie susținute, pentru că sunt investiții în pacea și stabilitatea noastră. Evident că Ucraina trebuie susținută necondiționat și resursele noastre pentru obiective realiste care trebuie să le atingem trebuie concentrate și spre această țară puternic afectată, dar, domnule comisar Hahn, vă rog să nu uitați și de Republica Moldova, pentru că Uniunea Europeană trebuie să aibă în continuare această abordare geopolitică și să susțină Moldova să se integreze cât mai rapid.

Billy Kelleher (Renew). – Madam President, I welcome the multiannual financial framework review and to say at the very outset I welcome the commitments to Ukraine in terms of its support in loans and grants for the short, medium and longer term. There is no doubt, when you look at what is happening with regard to the war of aggression by Russia, that it is creating a humanitarian catastrophe in eastern Ukraine. It is also destroying the eastern part of Ukraine. But we also, as citizens in the European Union, are suffering from higher inflation, higher interest rates and significant challenges in everyday life.

But it is important that this institution stands firm with supporting Ukraine in its efforts to remove Russia from its borders. And the longer term support required not just for Ukraine itself, but for the broader eastern European region, is very significant and very welcome.

When we look at migration and the external challenges, we also need to put strong emphasis and efforts on people trafficking and undermining those people traffickers, supporting people in the countries where they are coming from and ensuring that if there is crossings in the Mediterranean that we have proper search and rescue properly funded to ensure that we save lives on the seas when they are in jeopardy.

João Pimenta Lopes (The Left). – Senhora Presidente, que o orçamento era insuficiente, já o sabíamos desde a sua aprovação. Um orçamento que, hoje, é ainda mais exíguo face ao aumento das taxas de juro, à inflação indissociável das consequências das sanções, – como da especulação e dos aproveitamentos, e que, como dizem no próprio relatório, faz aumentar o valor das bolsas à Áustria, Dinamarca, Alemanha, Holanda e Suécia, reduzindo as suas contribuições, que outros países têm que pagar – e ao desvio de verbas para a guerra.

A resposta que o Parlamento preconiza tão pouco surpreende: mais dinheiro para a guerra, para opções políticas determinadas pelos interesses dos grandes grupos económicos e das grandes potências da União Europeia, a insistência em novos recursos próprios, através dos quais procuram diminuir a função redistributiva do orçamento.

O que a difícil situação exige é um orçamento reforçado, baseado no Rendimento nacional bruto dos Estados, cujas opções de investimento devem estar alinhadas com as reais necessidades e a realidade económica e social de cada um dos países. Mais dinheiro para os serviços públicos, para desenvolver a produção nacional, para o combate às desigualdades e assimetrias, para a defesa da cooperação e da paz.

Λευτέρης Νικολάου-Αλαβάνος (NI). – Κυρία Πρόεδρε, η παραπλανητική συζήτηση σχετικά με τα πολλά ή λίγα χρήματα του πολυετούς δημοσιονομικού πλαισίου της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης προσπαθεί να αποκρύψει τον στόχο του: να πριμοδοτήσει με χρήματα των εργαζομένων τους ομίλους που ήδη «ξεκοκαλίζουν» τους πακτωλούς του Ευρωπαϊκού Ταμείου Ανάκαμψης. Η αναθεώρησή του γίνεται γιατί έχουν δοθεί δεκάδες δισεκατομμύρια για ενίσχυση του ιμπεριαλιστικού πολέμου στην Ουκρανία, για την καταστολή των κατατρεγμένων από τις ιμπεριαλιστικές επεμβάσεις.

Μπροστά στην κρίση που έρχεται, λοιπόν, θέλετε να εξασφαλίσετε την καπιταλιστική κερδοφορία. Για τον λαό, όμως, που υποφέρει, για τους πλημυροπαθείς και τους πυρόπληκτους, η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση ομολογεί ότι τα χρήματα του λεγόμενου Κεντρικού Αποθεματικού Ταμείου Έκτακτης Ανάγκης του Ταμείου Αλληλεγγύης της ΕΕ δεν προορίζονται για εκείνους, αλλά αποτελούν προίκα για τους κατασκευαστικούς ομίλους.

Ο ελληνικός λαός να μην συμβιβαστεί με τα ξεροκόμματα της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης και των κυβερνήσεών της, με στήριγμα το ΚΚΕ και τη λαϊκή συσπείρωση να διεκδικήσει άμεσες αποζημιώσεις στο 100% των ζημιών με ευθύνη του κράτους, αξιοποιώντας όλα τα διαθέσιμα κρατικά και ενωσιακά κονδύλια, να διεκδικήσει πραγματικά μέτρα ανακούφισης με βάση τις σύγχρονες ανάγκες.

(End of catch-the-eye procedure)

Johannes Hahn, Member of the Commission. – Madam President, dear State Secretary, thank you all for this debate. I have listened carefully to the arguments raised by the rapporteurs and honourable Members, and I remain convinced that the Commission has made a balanced and targeted proposal in June to support our priorities and to cover our legal obligations.

The challenges are growing while our resources are limited, too limited, it was said by almost all speakers. It is therefore of utmost importance to have an agreement as soon as possible to ensure that, once again, as of 1 January 2024, we can continue supporting Ukraine and address other urgent needs. We need as much progress as possible already before the October European Council so that we have an agreement shortly after.

May I remind you on the very strict, legally binding conciliation deadlines, where the conciliation expires on 13 November, and this is why it requires efforts on all sides. So, I encourage both the Council and the European Parliament to consider their positions carefully.

I have to say we have made clear several times that there is no more space for redeployments. Mr Fernandes, I understand your idea about the unaddressed loans, but it is about several loans which are dedicated to Member States, and you might be aware that there is a legal constraint that it is not possible to transfer loans into grants. I suppose this is the idea behind your proposal. At the same time, the MFF revision has to stay targeted, focusing on the main priorities.

To conclude, let me reassure you that my team and I will provide all the necessary support to have successful negotiations to reach an agreement on time. I think this is also very much important ahead of the European elections to signal to our citizens that we are able to take decisions and that we have a forward-looking perspective at the European level.

Pascual Navarro Ríos, presidente en ejercicio del Consejo. – Señora presidenta, señor comisario, señorías, querría agradecer a todos ustedes sus intervenciones, y también dar las gracias a los ponentes, los señores Olbrycht y Marques.

He escuchado atentamente sus prioridades políticas y puedo asegurarles que el Consejo está plenamente comprometido a avanzar, lo antes posible, en un acuerdo para esta revisión del marco financiero plurianual.

Como mencioné en mi introducción, las discusiones sobre el marco de negociación —lo que llamamos la caja de negociación o la propuesta de negociación— están progresando en el Consejo a todos los niveles y acaban de entrar en discusión en el Coreper. Esperamos que puedan alcanzarse unas bases de acuerdo lo antes posible.

Confío en que en estas negociaciones seremos capaces de formular las mejores respuestas a los múltiples desafíos que tiene la Unión y contaremos, por supuesto, con la colaboración de la Comisión. El objetivo de la Presidencia es alcanzar un acuerdo sobre la base de la propuesta de la Comisión, lo antes posible.

Jan Olbrycht, Sprawozdawca. – Pani Przewodnicząca! Panie Komisarzu! Słuchając tej debaty wyraźnie widać, że większość Parlamentu jest za propozycją rewizji. Ale ktoś może powiedzieć, czy my w ogóle stoimy na ziemi, czy zachowujemy się racjonalnie? Kiedy Komisja proponuje zwiększenie budżetu, Rada tak naprawdę daje do zrozumienia, że go nie zwiększy, a my odpowiadamy, żeby jeszcze bardziej go zwiększyć. Czy to jest racjonalne? Czy to jest pragmatyczne? Czy my wiemy, co robimy? Czy jesteśmy poważni w tej debacie? Tak, jesteśmy racjonalni i jesteśmy pragmatyczni. My dokładnie chcemy pokazać jako Parlament, jakie są priorytety Unii Europejskiej. Chcemy pokazać, że wspieramy propozycję Komisji Europejskiej i ona idzie w dobrym kierunku, ale jest po prostu niewystarczająca. Chcemy wyraźnie powiedzieć, że nie można obiecywać obywatelom różnych działań, a potem nie zabezpieczać na to środków.

Nie można działać w taki sposób, żeby robić więcej za mniej. To jest po prostu nieakceptowane i to powoduje niezadowolenie i również wzrost ruchów antyeuropejskich. Parlament Europejski jest racjonalny, nawet jeżeli proponuje 10 miliardów więcej. Czy to się uda? Zobaczymy, ale na dzisiaj oczekujemy zdecydowanego ruchu ze strony Rady. Czekamy, że Rada nam powie, że rzeczywiście utrzyma pakiet? A nie podzieli go na kawałki, nie będzie nam przynosiła małych zmian po to, żeby ratować sytuację. Tak więc wzywam wszystkich kolegów do przegłosowania naszego stanowiska, bez względu na to, czy uważacie, że to jest racjonalne, czy nie. Ale zapewniam, że wiemy, co robimy.

Margarida Marques, relatora. – Senhora Presidente, como referi no início deste debate, fixámos prioridades para poder-mos assumir uma posição ambiciosa, mas realista.

Conhecemos a pouca vontade de alguns Estados-Membros de contribuírem ou de aprovarem já novos recursos próprios para aumentar o orçamento da União Europeia, mesmo confrontados com estes novos desafios, cujas respostas, sabemos, são europeias e não nacionais.

Temos consciência de que partimos para uma negociação difícil, mas a unidade do Parlamento e o empenho político de todos e de todas é essencial para a coerência necessária entre ambição política europeia e recursos orçamentais europeus e para que o Parlamento Europeu possa respeitar os compromissos com os cidadãos que nos elegeram.

O debate de hoje, aqui, deu-nos argumentos preciosos para a negociação. Muito obrigada a todos. Esperamos que este relatório, que dá o mandato ao Parlamento, seja aprovado tal como o apresentamos, para que a posição do Parlamento continue a ser realista e para assegurar a unidade do Parlamento.

Senhor Ministro, teve a oportunidade de nos ouvir. Contamos com a Presidência espanhola para que a revisão do quadro financeiro plurianual se possa fazer atempadamente e possa ter já implicações no Orçamento de 2024.

Fico satisfeita que nos diga que o Conselho está comprometido. Espero que este compromisso possa, por um lado, partir da proposta da Comissão, que é ambiciosa mas não suficiente, e, por outro, conjugá-la com a posição do Parlamento para que a União Europeia possa, de facto, ter um orçamento ambicioso que responda também à ambição política.

President. – The debate is closed. Thanks to all participating in the debate. The vote will be held today.

Written statements (Rule 171)

Sara Cerdas (S&D), *por escrito*. – Precisamos urgentemente de uma revisão do Quadro Financeiro Plurianual (QFP) para responder aos inúmeros desafios, em especial para mitigar o impacto social e económico da guerra, reforçar a autonomia estratégica, implementar o Novo Pacto em matéria de Migração e Asilo e responder à difícil situação geopolítica, num mundo onde a UE se quer posicionar como líder na transição verde e digital socialmente justa. Precisamos de assegurar uma maior flexibilidade do QFP para responder às necessidades emergentes, em concreto para apoiar os Estados-Membros a responder às consequências dos desastres naturais, provocados pelas alterações climáticas, considerando que estes fenómenos serão cada vez mais frequentes e possivelmente mais intensos.

Destaco a necessidade de um mecanismo de gestão de crises para garantir que o setor do turismo esteja adequadamente preparado para futuras crises e apelo, uma vez mais, à necessidade de um financiamento específico da UE para o turismo. Destaco a proposta da Comissão Europeia, que aumenta o QFP em +66 mil milhões de euros e +33 mil milhões em empréstimos, bem como apoio a posição do Parlamento Europeu no montante adicional de 10 mil milhões de euros. Uma atualização importante para financiar adequadamente as ambições políticas da UE e garantir a sua rápida implementação.

Eugen Jurzyca (ECR), *písomne*. – Nesúhlasím s požiadavkou na dodatočné zvýšenie výdavkov. Verejné financie členských štátov sú podľa Európskej komisie už dnes v problémovom stave: v strednodobom horizonte sú v pásme nízkeho rizika verejné financie len ôsmich členských štátov. Ostatné štáty sú v pásme stredného alebo vysokého rizika. Európsky rozpočet si preto nemôže dovoliť ďalší rast výdavkov, ale potrebuje ich prioritizáciu, a teda presun výdavkov z menej efektívnych kapitol do programov s vyššou pridanou hodnotou pre občanov.

Benoît Lutgen (PPE), *par écrit*. – La révision de notre cadre financier ne doit pas être un simple ajustement. Le monde a changé depuis l'adoption du cadre budgétaire 2021-2027 au plus fort de la pandémie. Nous avions à l'époque soutenu la vision exceptionnelle qu'est Next Generation EU. Nous croyions qu'il permettrait de relancer économiquement notre Union après le choc qu'elle a subi suite au coronavirus. Et, en effet, beaucoup a été accompli par les plans de relance nationaux soutenus par l'UE. Mais l'inflation et la guerre en Ukraine ont lancé de nouveaux défis. Nous devons faire face à des taux d'emprunts plus élevés sur les marchés. Nous devons soutenir notre allié ukrainien face à l'agression russe. Et nous devons également augmenter les fonds européens pour soutenir notre propre défense. C'est pourquoi je ne peux qu'appuyer ce rapport intermédiaire. L'augmentation du financement de l'UE qu'il envisage est pour moi le minimum pour faire face à ces défis. Surtout, ces défis soulignent la nécessité de créer rapidement de nouvelles ressources propres pour notre Union. S'il veut répondre aux demandes des citoyens, le cadre financier qui sera négocié lors de la prochaine législature devra démontrer un financement solide et pérenne pour nos ambitions !

Carlos Zorrinho (S&D), *por escrito*. – Num contexto em que o Quadro de Financiamento Plurianual 2021-2027 se tem mostrado insuficiente e inadequado em termos de volume, estrutura e regras para dar resposta às múltiplas crises e para financiar as necessidades da União Europeia, a proposta do Parlamento Europeu em debate acrescenta aos 100 mil milhões de euros propostos pela Comissão Europeia, 10 mil milhões de euros: 3 mil milhões para a Plataforma Europeia de Tecnologias Estratégicas, 1000 milhões para as migrações e gestão de fronteiras, 1000 milhões para a política externa, 3 mil milhões para a gestão flexível e 2 mil milhões para reforçar a ajuda humanitária e a resposta aos desastres naturais, acrescentando aos 2,5 mil milhões já propostos para este efeito pela Comissão Europeia. A resposta europeia à crise pandémica e aos impactos da guerra são exemplos claros de que para assegurar a sua relevância geopolítica e fornecer as respostas de proximidade que os cidadãos europeus necessitam e ambicionam, a União tem que dispor de mais recursos financeiros comuns. É fundamental que a revisão intercalar em curso, uma vez aprovada a proposta do Parlamento, possa ser rapidamente negociada com o Conselho, por forma a entrar em vigor no início de 2024.

5. Europæisk retsakt om mediefrihed (forhandling)

President. – The next item is the debate on the report by Sabine Verheyen, on behalf of the Committee on Culture and Education, on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a common framework for media services in the internal market (European Media Freedom Act) and amending Directive 2010/13/EU (COM(2022)0457 – C9-0309/2022 – 2022/0277(COD)) (A9-0264/2023).

Sabine Verheyen, *Berichterstatterin*. – Frau Präsidentin, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Ohne freie Medien kann es keine Demokratie geben. Wie Alexis de Tocqueville bereits bemerkte, ist die Presse das „wichtigste demokratische Instrument der Freiheit“. Während wir stolz auf unsere hohen demokratischen Standards sind, dürfen wir nicht die Augen vor dem besorgniserregenden Zustand der Pressefreiheit weltweit verschließen, einem Trend, der auch Europa betrifft.

Das Europäische Medienfreiheitsgesetz ist ein entscheidendes Instrument, um diesen Herausforderungen zu begegnen. Medien sind nicht einfach ein beliebiges Geschäft. Über ihre wirtschaftliche Dimension hinaus tragen sie zu Bildung, kultureller Entwicklung und Inklusivität in der Gesellschaft bei und schützen grundlegende Rechte wie die Meinungsfreiheit und den Zugang zu Informationen. Daher muss die doppelte Natur der Mediendienste im Europäischen Medienfreiheitsgesetz anerkannt werden.

Wir haben einen gut ausbalancierten Text gefunden, der dieser Doppelrolle der Medien gerecht wird und sie vor Einflussnahme schützt. Wir haben sichergestellt, dass die Medienaufsicht politisch unabhängig ist, schaffen Transparenz über die Besitzverhältnisse von Medienunternehmen und setzen Mindeststandards für die freie Arbeit der Journalisten sowie den öffentlichen Rundfunk. Wir geben Medienanbietern außerdem die Möglichkeit, sich selbstständig an die europäische Ebene zu wenden, wenn nationale Regulierung es ihnen unmöglich macht, ihrer Aufgabe nachzukommen.

Zusätzlich haben wir die großen Online-Plattformen einbezogen, die als Gatekeeper in unserem digitalen Leben fungieren. Diese hauptsächlich nichteuropäischen Plattformen haben erhebliche Macht bei der Entscheidung darüber, welche Inhalte uns erreichen, zu welchen Inhalten wir Zugang haben, und streng kontrollierte europäische Medieninhalte dürfen nicht willkürlichen Entscheidungen solcher Plattformen unterliegen.

Wir haben viele Fälle gesehen, in denen Plattformen legale und seriöse Inhalte ohne ersichtliche Gründe blockiert haben. Das zeigt uns, dass wir diesen Schutzmechanismus brauchen. Diese Absicherung gilt nicht für illegale Inhalte, und ich möchte an der Stelle noch mal sehr klar sagen: Das Gesetz über digitale Dienste bleibt von dieser Regelung in Artikel 17 vollkommen unberührt. Es geht hier um den Schutz von Qualitätsjournalismus, wissenschaftlichen Artikeln und investigativem Journalismus, der nicht der Willkür von Plattformen unterworfen werden soll.

Jetzt können wir als Abgeordnete zeigen, ob es uns ernst ist, freie Medien zu schützen – Medien, die bereits einer Regulierung in Form von Medienaufsicht oder anerkannten Regulierungsmechanismen in Europa unterliegen wie einem Presserat oder einem Selbstregulierungsmechanismus.

Wir haben wichtige legislative Meilensteine bereits erreicht – ob das im Bereich der Bekämpfung von SLAPP-Klagen ist, ob das das Gesetz über digitale Dienste bzw. das Gesetz über digitale Märkte ist, die AVMD-Richtlinie oder sogar auch die Richtlinie über das Urheberrecht. Jetzt geht es darum, unsere Medienlandschaft und unsere Journalisten im Sinne der Vielfalt und Freiheit zu sichern. Mit dem Europäischen Medienfreiheitsgesetz gehen wir einen weiteren wichtigen Schritt für den Schutz unserer Medien und unserer Demokratien, und deshalb bitte ich Sie, das Dossier heute Mittag bei den Abstimmungen zu unterstützen.

Geoffroy Didier, *rapporteur pour avis de la commission du marché intérieur et de la protection des consommateurs*. – Madame la Présidente, la liberté d'expression est un bien trop fragile pour en ignorer les principes. Grâce au Digital Services Act dont j'ai été l'un des rapporteurs du Parlement européen et qui est en vigueur depuis le 25 août, les réseaux sociaux et les moteurs de recherche sur Internet ont l'obligation légale de supprimer tous les contenus manifestement illicites, comme des menaces de mort ou du cyberharcèlement. Personne ne doit avoir le droit de réduire au silence qui que ce soit en le menaçant ou le harcelant.

Désormais, grâce au Media Freedom Act, dont j'ai aussi l'honneur d'être l'un des rapporteurs, nous consolidons cette liberté d'expression, cette fois en interdisant aux réseaux sociaux eux-mêmes de supprimer arbitrairement des contenus d'information au seul motif qu'ils dérogeraient aux conditions générales d'utilisation ou à l'idéologie du propriétaire du réseau social. En quelque sorte, Twitter ne pourra plus, par exemple, supprimer les comptes de certains journalistes.

La haine est illégale. Mais la censure l'est tout autant. Nous ne sommes ni le modèle américain qui laisse tout dire et tout faire, ni le système chinois qui ne laisse rien dire. Le voilà, notre modèle culturel européen.

Ramona Strugariu, *rapporteur for the opinion of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs*. – The European Media Freedom Act was not born from our mere appetite to create a sandbox to test our ability to legislate on everything everywhere. It was born from a profound need to protect perhaps the most important yet the most fragile pillar of any functioning democracy – free media. And it is not about regulating media. It is about creating the safest possible space for media freedom and media professionals. Why? Because in spite of all soft law guarantees, we still see a great deal of abuse against independent journalists and media professionals. Emilia Șercan from my country is just one example of a strong independent journalist who has been standing tall and facing the pressure and harassment until today. But there are hundreds alike. With the Media Freedom Act, Emilia and those like her who fight for the truth will have an ally, an ally that protects their sources as journalists would rather face death than reveal their sources, an ally that protects their editorial freedom, that ensures transparency, that allows them to do their job without fear of pressure, threat or political interference. I would like to thank again, the Commission for their bold proposals. To all of the colleagues that I worked with on this file and I am looking forward to securing a strong text together with the Council.

Every single politician who wakes up in the morning to look for quality news and correct information, founding its activities and actions on this correct information should know why free press is so important and needs to be protected. Democracy will never survive in the darkness of the unspoken truth.

Věra Jourová, *Vice-President of the Commission*. – Madam President, honourable Members, I think everything was said in the last sentence of Madam Strugariu about freedom of speech and the role of media for our democracy. For me, this is a big moment because it all started here in this House.

I remember very well the debate in March 2021 when we had just another frustrating debate about what we can and what we cannot do, and we discussed political interference in editorial freedom, about political pressures, about governmental attempts to silence free media. I remember myself saying repeatedly, we cannot do anything. We do not have the law, and then in the discussion being encouraged by your contributions and your similar conviction that the media should be protected better, I heard myself saying, yes, we will prepare the law. So here we are today.

I have to continue by thanking the rapporteurs – Madam Verheyen and the rapporteurs of the associated committees, Ms Strugariu and Mr Didier, as well as the shadow rapporteurs and Members for the intensive work on the European Media Freedom Act.

It was not an easy way to get here. The pressures against this law were enormous, and at the beginning, you may remember, many thought that this was mission impossible. I am so glad we are here today and we discuss seriously about the possible outcome that might create totally new conditions for European media to flourish, to do the job, and to be the strong pillar of our democracy.

Because the result of our debate in 2021 was that media must not be just another business on our single market. The role for democracy was and is obvious. We worked hard with my colleague Thierry Breton and all the colleagues in the Commission to deliver what many thought was not possible.

So what we try to achieve through the law is that we want to put for the first time in EU law that states should not interfere in editorial decisions, that no journalist can be spied on for doing their work, that no public service media should become a propaganda channel of one party. We require transparency of media ownership, transparency and fairness in the allocation of state advertising. We ask the media themselves to take measures to protect editorial independence and disclose conflict of interest. There is a strong focus in the Act on encouraging self-regulation and ethical standards.

We also strengthen the European coordination of national media regulators with the European Board for Media Services. We are creating new mechanisms such as mutual assistance to ensure coordination and solidarity in dealing with serious threats such as Russian propaganda.

The Act includes new requirements for Member States, which the Member States should follow when it comes to national measures which affect the media and to assess media concentration. Finally, we propose more safeguards for media in the online environment.

Honourable Members, you have worked intensively and fast on the Media Freedom Act and I am grateful to see that Parliament's report recognises the importance of all the building blocks of our proposal. I note with great interest how you want to strengthen further the protection of journalists and the transparency of media markets.

I also note the importance of the debate in Parliament regarding how media content is moderated on very large online platforms. Let me emphasise that the media freedom is a piece of a broader puzzle. Let me mention the Audiovisual Media Services Directive, the Copyright Directive, and of course also the Digital Services Act and the Code of Practice against disinformation.

We believe that there is harmony, not cacophony, that all these rules and all these pieces of legislation work very well together.

I welcome the ambition of this House to turn this proposal into a reality this year. We don't have much more time, but I am convinced that also with the Spanish Presidency, we can achieve the goal. I rely on them also. We have an opportunity which we should not miss, and there is an urgency to act.

So I want to thank you for your work and look forward to the continuation.

Tomasz Frankowski, *w imieniu grupy PPE*. – Pani Przewodnicząca! Pani Komisarz! Bez wolnych mediów nie ma demokracji. Nie bez powodu media zostały uznane za czwarty filar demokracji, a ich rolą jest zapewnienie przejrzystości posunięć władz i podnoszenie świadomości społecznej.

W przeciągu ostatnich lat media jako czwarty filar zaczęły jednak tracić na wiarygodności. Z rosnącym niepokojem obserwujemy trendy, które zaczęły się pojawiać w niektórych państwach członkowskich Unii Europejskiej, których nie sposób określić inaczej jak cenzura i propaganda. Dlatego właśnie kluczowe jest teraz niezwłoczne działanie na poziomie unijnym. Media posiadają potencjał kształtowania opinii społecznej, dlatego z wielką ostrożnością należy obserwować wzrastające tendencje do szerzenia fake newsów i dezinformacji.

Nie możemy zapominać, że wolność ekspresji jest jednym z podstawowych praw człowieka. Prawidłowe wyważenie potrzeb – z jednej strony zapewnienie tej swobody i ochrony treści, a z drugiej strony ochrona użytkowników – wymaga największej ostrożności.

Również instytucjonalizacja wymogu ochrony dziennikarskich źródeł informacji odgrywa kluczową rolę w zapewnieniu wolności mediów. Podczas gdy niektóre państwa członkowskie zapewniają całkowitą ochronę dziennikarzy przed identyfikowaniem ich źródeł informacji w postępowaniach karnych czy administracyjnych, inne zapewniają tylko ochronę ograniczoną, a jeszcze w innych ochrona sprowadza się do ogólnej zasady prawnej, która jest tylko ładną formułką.

Musimy też pamiętać, że środki regulacji mediów mają podwójną rolę. Przede wszystkim wymiar kulturowy, który nie ustępuje aspektom ekonomicznym. Uważam, że *Media Freedom Act* bardzo dobrze identyfikuje obecne wyzwania stojące przed wolnymi mediami, chroni je przed wpływami i mam nadzieję, że zostanie fundamentem, który przywróci mediom ich pierwotną rolę.

Dlatego gratuluję Sabine Verheyen, naszej sprawozdawczyni, oraz posłom z Komisji Kultury i Edukacji za ciężką pracę, która przyczyniła się do osiągnięcia tego rezultatu.

PRESIDENZA DELL'ON. PINA PICIERNO

Vicepresidente

Massimiliano Smeriglio, *a nome del gruppo S&D*. – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, l'atto europeo per la libertà dei media è un'opportunità per l'Europa. Il Parlamento scelga con forza da che parte stare: quella dell'indipendenza dei giornalisti, garantita da un regolamento ambizioso.

La protezione delle fonti giornalistiche è un atto di civiltà. In troppi Stati membri assistiamo a tentativi di silenziare il lavoro dei giornalisti, soprattutto del giornalismo d'inchiesta. Non vi sono democrazie sane laddove i giornalisti non possono svolgere il loro lavoro e sono vittime di forme di pressione e censura.

Con le disposizioni che voteremo inseriamo salvaguardie complete: colpire tutte le tecnologie utilizzate per spiare e rimuovere i motivi di sicurezza nazionale utilizzati per limitare la protezione dei giornalisti e delle loro fonti. Non dobbiamo accettare nessun compromesso al ribasso.

Vogliamo rafforzare le garanzie a tutela dell'indipendenza dei media di servizio pubblico. Questi devono essere pienamente indipendenti e autonomi, in un sistema che garantisca piena protezione da influenze politiche e governative. Devono poter godere di una duplice indipendenza: istituzionale, che si traduce in piena trasparenza dei rispettivi *board*, e finanziaria, che si realizza imponendo agli Stati membri di assicurare un finanziamento adeguato, evitando di trasformare la pubblicità di Stato in strumento di pressione politica.

Denunciare e intervenire contro la disinformazione e le ingerenze, certamente, ma senza rinunciare alla libertà di stampa. L'articolo 11 della Carta dei diritti fondamentali dell'Unione europea riconosce a tutti il diritto di ricevere un'offerta pluralistica di informazioni. Il Parlamento chiede agli Stati membri di mettere finalmente in pratica questo diritto. Dobbiamo garantire che le grandi piattaforme non possano agire in maniera indiscriminata quando si tratta di media affidabili e veramente indipendenti.

Alcuni Stati nazionali, Ungheria in testa, faranno di tutto per ridurre la portata di questo testo. Non possiamo permetterlo. L'autonomia dei giornalisti rende le nostre democrazie più forti.

Irena Joveva, *v imenu skupine Renew*. – Gospa predsednica. V obrambi vladavine prava v Evropski uniji so bili mediji vedno zapostavljeni, čeprav vemo, da je njihova neodvisnost ključen pogoj za delovanje naše demokracije.

V nekaterih državah članicah imamo dobro delujoče medijske sisteme, žal pa mnogokje tudi njihovo popolno podrejenost. Tam so postali glavno orodje za manipulacijo ljudi za ohranjanje moči nekaterih političnih struktur: Madžarska, Poljska. A tveganje ostaja po vsej Evropski uniji. Nobena država ni imuna na to.

V mnogih so za novinarji dokazano vohunili. Dogajali so se umori novinarov in novinarjev na evropskih tleh. Dogajajo se netransparentni prevzemi medijskih podjetij za lastne interese. Javni mediji, steber kredibilnega informiranja ljudi, so marsikje – v Sloveniji na srečo več ne – najmanj podvrženi poskusom podreditve.

Skrajni čas je bil, da ustvarimo dodatne zakonske varovalke na ravni Evropske unije. Podatki o lastništvu in državnem financiranju bodo javni. Pred prevzemi bo potreben test vpliva na uredniško neodvisnost. Škodljive ukrepe držav, kot tudi pritisk lastništva, bo mogoče izpodbijati. Pravna podlaga in s tem zaščita bosta vzpostavljeni. To je največ, kar lahko storimo z zakonom. Na državah, medijih in lastnikih pa je, da to v praksi tudi izpolnjujejo. Ni čarobne palice – žal – za rešitev vseh nakopičenih težav. Ampak evropski akt o svobodi medijev je trenutno najbolj odločen korak k zagotovitvi natanko tega – svobode medijev. Nihče naj se ga ne boji, razen tistih, ki to svobodo spodkopavajo.

Diana Riba i Giner, *en nombre del Grupo Verts/ALE*. – Señora presidenta, señora comisaria, hoy este Parlamento da un paso inequívoco en la protección de la democracia en Europa. Porque, como dijo Kofi Annan, «ninguna sociedad democrática puede existir sin una prensa libre, independiente y plural».

Y son muchos los ejemplos que ilustran por qué tener una Ley Europea de Libertad de los Medios de Comunicación es un reto inaplazable para la Unión Europea. En los últimos años hemos visto medios de comunicación públicos que se han convertido en armas de propaganda de gobiernos populistas, monopolios mediáticos que se disfrazan de pluralidad, gobiernos que espían al periodismo crítico, y la expansión de la desinformación y el ruido de los que se nutre la extrema derecha.

Pero diagnosticar los riesgos solo sirve si tenemos la voluntad política suficiente para afrontar el reto y encontrar las soluciones. Y eso es lo que hacemos hoy con este texto, que esperemos que sienta las bases para un entorno mediático sostenible, resiliente y plural.

Proponemos transparencia, para que los ciudadanos sepan quién está detrás de las noticias que leen; independencia, para que los periodistas puedan hacer su trabajo sin interferencias ni amenazas; pluralidad, tomando medidas contra los monopolios mediáticos; y blindaje de los medios de comunicación públicos, cuya misión no debe verse nunca comprometida por la injerencia política. Todas estas medidas son, en definitiva, herramientas para que los ciudadanos puedan informarse mejor y con sentido crítico.

Sabemos que el texto no es perfecto y por eso proponemos enmiendas para mejorarlo. Pero como dice Maria Ressa —y como nos recuerdan las noticias que leemos de Hungría, Polonia o Italia—, «la democracia es frágil». Debemos luchar para no perder ni un pedazo, ni una ley, ni una defensa, ni una institución, ni un relato. Sabemos lo peligroso que resulta sufrir incluso el más insignificante de los recortes. Y por eso debemos mantenernos firmes. Desde Verts/ALE siempre lo hemos hecho y lo seguiremos haciendo.

Elżbieta Kruk, *w imieniu grupy ECR*. – Pani Przewodnicząca! Projektowane rozporządzenie w sprawie Europejskiego Aktu o Wolności Mediów wprowadza przepisy, które nie dotyczą poprawy funkcjonowania jednolitego rynku. Narusza tym samym postanowienia Traktatu o funkcjonowaniu Unii Europejskiej wskazanego jako podstawa prawna. Istotnie ogranicza też kompetencje państw członkowskich do kształtowania polityki kulturalnej i mediów. Ujednolicenie przepisów medialnych w całej Unii może doprowadzić w istocie do zniszczenia systemów krajowych. Deklarowany cel aktu jest godny poparcia, tyle że w rzeczywistości wiele jego zapisów nie ma nic wspólnego z ochroną wolności mediów, jak choćby kompetencje nowo tworzonej Europejskiej Rady do spraw Usług Medialnych w zakresie usług innych niż audiowizualne, w szczególności prasy i radia.

Tymczasem np. normy polskiej konstytucji, wyrażając wprost zasady wolności słowa oraz zakaz cenzury prewencyjnej i koncesjonowania prasy, stanowią rzeczywistą gwarancję niezależności prasy w naszym kraju. Nikt nie kwestionuje zasady wolności mediów. Czy jednak prawdziwym celem Komisji jest wzmocnienie tej wolności, czy pod pozorem troski o nią przejście pozatraktatowych uprawnień naruszające suwerenność państw członkowskich w tej dziedzinie?

Catherine Griset, *au nom du groupe ID*. – Madame la Présidente, Madame la Commissaire, chers collègues, pour Edmund Burke, philosophe irlandais, les médias constituaient déjà au XVIII^e siècle un quatrième pouvoir, et depuis, leur influence n'a eu de cesse de croître. Dans nos sociétés modernes et dans notre quotidien, les médias de masse sont devenus omniprésents. Si ce pouvoir d'information gigantesque est bien souvent convoité, la liberté de ces médias est l'un des fondements de la démocratie qui repose sur la liberté d'expression et d'opinion. Et il est de notre devoir de veiller à ce que cette liberté continue d'être protégée par des lois nationales.

Il y a plusieurs raisons fondamentales pour lesquelles je m'oppose à ce règlement. D'abord, parce que la Commission prend appui sur l'argument faux qu'il existe un marché européen des médias. Ensuite, parce qu'il ment en affirmant qu'il a pour objectif de protéger la liberté des médias. Et enfin parce qu'il souhaite imposer à l'ensemble des États membres un ensemble de règles contraignantes, alors que seuls quelques États sont visés. Pour résumer cette proposition législative, la Commission cherche à s'accaparer une nouvelle prérogative nationale tout en s'assurant que les Européens s'informent comme elle le voudrait et qu'enfin ils votent en conséquence.

Stelios Kouloglou, *on behalf of The Left Group*. – Madam President, you said, Mr Commissioner, that when we started working on this act, it looked like mission impossible. What we managed was exactly what is happening in the cinema. We succeeded in a mission impossible. And, well, you know, in my country, Greece, we have all the bad symptoms we were having all over Europe. We have control by the state, by the strong financial interests, we have censorship, self-censorship, we have assassinations of journalists, and also we have spying on journalists. So this act is very encouraging, is coming like fresh air for us. And that's why including the control of the of the big platforms is very, very important with what we are doing now? You said before that there have been a lot of pressure, but really that's the role of the good Parliament to fight against the political outside pressure, to fight against the financial interests, to do the good job and to promote democracy and justice. And I wanted to thank you and all the other colleagues for the work that has been done.

Dino Giarrusso (NI). – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, oggi è indispensabile parlare di Julian Assange, perché ogniquale volta discutiamo di libertà di stampa, di regole riguardo alla stampa, noi abbiamo il dovere di fare opera di memoria rispetto alla storia di Julian Assange.

Julian vive di fatto recluso da anni senza alcuna colpa, anzi, per aver fatto esclusivamente il proprio dovere di giornalista: informare i cittadini, rendendoli così maggiormente consapevoli di ciò che accade nel mondo.

Io vengo dalla Sicilia, terra dove purtroppo la mafia ha ucciso giornalisti come Pippo Fava, Mario Francese, Mauro De Mauro, Peppino Impastato, Beppe Alfano e altri. La camorra ha ucciso Giancarlo Siani. Tutti loro non avevano colpe, se non quella di raccontare la verità. Anche in memoria dei giornalisti vittime di mafia, come quelli che ho citato e la maltese Daphne Caruana, noi dobbiamo impedire che Julian Assange viva una morte anticipata, una morte in terra, recluso come un pericoloso criminale, quando invece è solo un giornalista.

Presidente, colleghi, oggi tutti noi dovremmo gridare a gran voce, senza esitazioni: «Liberate Julian Assange! *Free Assange now!*».

Paulo Rangel (PPE). – Senhora Presidente, Senhor Comissário, sabemos que a liberdade de imprensa, os meios de comunicação social livres e independentes, seja internamente, seja externamente, seja de influência interna, seja de influência externa, são essenciais à sobrevivência da democracia. Este *European Media Freedom Act* faz precisamente isso: criar condições para a independência interna e externa dos meios de comunicação social.

Mas nós só podemos fazer isso se, nas nossas práticas, também apoiarmos a liberdade e a independência dos meios de comunicação social. Assistimos agora às eleições na Eslováquia, em que houve desinformação, em que o Partido Smer, um partido populista do Grupo Socialista, foi o mais votado e do qual o S&D e o PS português nunca se demarcaram. Há cinco anos morreu Ján Kuciak e nós não ouvimos o S&D, não ouvimos o PS português demarcar-se. São cinco anos em que não se demarcaram. Que maior pressão há sobre os órgãos de comunicação social do que essa de matar jornalistas e os intimidar?

Sabemos que foi no contexto de uma investigação contra a corrupção na Eslováquia e contra a corrupção do Governo do Sr. Fico que se deu esta morte de Ján Kuciak e da sua mulher. Pois, em cinco anos, nunca vimos, nem em Portugal nem aqui em Bruxelas, o Partido Socialista português e o S&D demarcarem-se do Partido Smer e do Sr. Fico que, neste momento, estão ao lado da propaganda russa e de Putin.

Não há nada que seja mais contra a liberdade de imprensa do que estar associado a um partido e a um governante com estas características.

Alex Agius Saliba (S&D) – L-att dwar il-libertà tal-midja hija biċċa leġiżlazzjoni importanti hafna speċjalment fiż-żminijiet illi qeghdin nghixu lllum il-gurnata fejn qeghdin naraw diversi prattiċi madwar id-dinja illi fl-ahhar mill-ahhar huma inkwetanti fejn tidhol il-libertà tal-espressjoni, anke fi hdan l-Unjoni Ewropea. Il-libertà tal-midja tiggarrantixxi lin-nies, liċ-ċittadini taghna, aċċess bla rażan għall-informazzjoni u fl-ahhar mill-ahhar hija wkoll prerekwizit biex huma jagħmlu għażliet hielsa; għażliet demokratiċi hielsa, infurmati, meta jiġu sabiex jeleggu daww illi għandhom jirrappreżentawna fil-poter. U għal din ir-raġuni nehtieġu dispożizzjonijiet b'saħħithom fuq livell Ewropew sabiex nissalvagwardjaw numru ta' punti. L-ewwel nett, niproteġu l-indipendenza tal-midja, nissalvagwardjaw il-helsien mill-indhil editorjali u s-sorveljanza illegali speċjalment fuq bażi online, niggarantixxu l-pluralizmu tal-midja, tiġi salvagwardjata wkoll l-indipendenza tal-midja tas-servizz pubbliku, u niżguraw ukoll illi jkun hemm ambjent ekonomiku li fih il-ġurnalizmu indipendenti jkun jista' jkompli jiffjorixxi. U għalhekk l-indipendenza editorjali u t-trasparenza fis-settur tal-midja huma kruċjali fiż-żminijiet ta' diżinformazzjoni, miżinformazzjoni, illi ġejjin ukoll minn pajjiżi terzi. Għandna bżonn trasparenza shiha biex inkunu nafu min verament qed jittellem minn wara l-mezzi tal-midja. Dawn huma l-prijoritajiet ewlenin illi rridu niddefendu fil-vot ta' għada. L-elezzjonijiet tal-Parlament Ewropew jinsabu wara l-bieb, u għalhekk nehtieġu regolamenti b'saħħithom sabiex niggarantixxu elezzjonijiet hielsa s-sena d-dieħla.

Laurence Farreng (Renew). – Madame la Présidente, Madame la Vice-présidente, chers collègues, ce règlement sur la liberté des médias est une avancée majeure pour affirmer nos valeurs européennes, pour la liberté d'informer et la protection des journalistes à l'échelle de l'Union européenne.

Madame la Vice-présidente, nous pouvons en être particulièrement fiers, car c'est la victoire de notre groupe politique Renew. C'est à notre initiative qu'entre aujourd'hui, dans la législation européenne, un droit pour tous les Européens à disposer d'une information libre, indépendante et pluraliste. C'est aussi par notre action que, désormais, nous allons pouvoir enquêter plus efficacement et remettre en question les concentrations médiatiques, quand il s'agit de la main-mise de pouvoirs illibéraux ou de groupes privés en quête d'influences douteuses.

Je suis également particulièrement satisfaite que mon amendement pour interdire les contenus générés par intelligence artificielle sans contrôle éditorial humain figure aujourd'hui dans ce texte. C'est crucial pour la lutte contre la désinformation et l'avenir d'un journalisme de qualité.

Daniel Freund (Verts/ALE). – Frau Präsidentin, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! So sieht Medienvielfalt heute im Ungarn von Viktor Orbán aus.

Presidente. – Onorevole, non possiamo mostrare, come Lei sa, immagini in Aula.

Daniel Freund (Verts/ALE). – Es gibt außerhalb von Budapest im Grunde keine Zeitung, kein Fernsehen, kein Radio mehr, was nicht von Orbán kontrolliert wird und nicht seine Propaganda verbreitet.

Nirgendwo in der EU ist die Situation so schlimm wie in Ungarn, aber es gibt immer mehr Nachahmer, auch in anderen Ländern. Es gibt in unserer Union leider zu viele, vor allem rechts außen, die in der Presse nur Loblieder und keine Kritik mehr lesen wollen. Da ist das Gesetz zum Schutz der Medienvielfalt und der Medienfreiheit in der EU jetzt genau das Richtige. Es kommt wahrscheinlich schon fast zu spät.

Ja, vieles, auf das wir uns hier geeinigt haben, bringt uns weiter: Es schützt Journalistinnen und Journalisten vor Abhörungen, es bringt mehr Transparenz über die Eigentumsverhältnisse und darüber, wie viel Geld Regierungen an die Medien geben, die ihnen gefallen, was die Berichterstattung angeht.

Aber in einer Sache müssen wir uns doch auch ehrlich machen: An der Situation in Ungarn kann dieses Gesetz so, wie es jetzt vorgeschlagen wird, nichts ändern. Hier ist es doch nötiger als sonst irgendwo, dass, wenn die nationale Kontrolle versagt, die EU eben auch eingreifen kann, dass wir wirklich etwas für Medienvielfalt tun, dass wir die totale Kontrolle, die Orbán über die Medien hat, beenden können.

Deshalb, Frau Verheyen, Frau Kammerevert: Besorgte Briefe aus Brüssel werden am Ende Orbán nicht stoppen, sondern wir müssen die Möglichkeit haben, diese Kontrolle auch zu zerschlagen. Viktor Orbán muss gestoppt werden, die KESMA muss zerschlagen werden, deshalb stimmen Sie für unseren Antrag! Denn sonst, befürchte ich, kann dieses Gesetz leider nicht das liefern, was im Namen steht, und für wirkliche Medienvielfalt sorgen.

Cristian Terheş (ECR). – Madam President, dear colleagues, the discussion here is not about the so-called Media Freedom Act, a label given by the European Commission to this regulation, but the 'Media Surveillance Control and Censorship Act', which accurately describes the nature of this regulation.

It is unacceptable that the European Commission claims to promote the media freedom, while in fact this regulation opens the doors for journalists, their employers and even their families to be subjected to surveillance and spying by the security agencies.

As the shadow rapporteur in the LIBE Committee for the ECR Group, I tabled amendments aimed to eliminate the provisions that permit such spying and surveillance of journalists, but they were rejected by EPP, S&D and Renew.

Joseph Stalin said, 'The press is our party's sharpest and most powerful weapon.' Clearly, under the leadership of Ursula von der Leyen, the European Commission does not desire a free press, but rather a propaganda machine which is tightly controlled and subjected to surveillance, like it was in the Soviet Union. The dangerous precedent established by the so-called Media Freedom Act Regulation will have unforeseeable and devastating consequences for democracy and freedom of speech throughout the European Union, which is why the Parliament has to heavily reject it.

Gianantonio Da Re (ID). – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, la proposta di regolamento per la libertà dei media mira a stabilire norme comuni per disciplinare il funzionamento del mercato interno dei servizi di informazione. Un progetto ambizioso per la tutela del pluralismo dei media nel mercato unico europeo, che prevede però l'istituzione di un ente europeo di controllo, a discapito degli enti nazionali.

È evidente e chiaro il tentativo di interferenza delle istituzioni europee nell'ambito della libera informazione nazionale, che andrebbe a imporre ulteriori vincoli alle politiche nazionali, prevedendo, in caso di non rispetto di Bruxelles, anche l'avvio di procedure di infrazione.

Non accetteremo nessuna interferenza, nessun bavaglio da parte dell'Unione europea, perché la libertà di stampa è il principio basilare della nostra democrazia.

Clare Daly (The Left). – Madam President, later today, we will vote on whether to ban the deployment of spyware against journalists in the EU. The Media Freedom Act is the very first time the EU is going to legislate on the issue of spyware, a technology described by Edward Snowden as being like a nuclear weapon. And it is. There are no circumstances where its deployment is in line with fundamental rights. It takes over your devices, spies on your every move, everyone you come into contact with. It can even send messages from those devices. It obliterates the very concept of privacy and undermines the right to a fair trial.

And as it currently stands, we are today proposing to empower governments, private entities and more, to use it against journalists. Now, for God's sake, we never stop talking in here about defending journalists, the danger of authoritarianism, freedom to the media. If you care about defending journalists, you must ban spyware. It's the least you can do. Support our amendments in this regard.

Ivan Vilibor Sinčić (NI). – Poštovana predsjedavajuća, Europski akt o slobodi medija dovoljno govori o tome kakav je to dokument, to što piše da će se provoditi u suradnji s organizacijama za provjeru činjenica tzv. *fact checking*.

U Hrvatskoj je sloboda medija na jako niskim razinama. Javna poduzeća koje kontrolira hrvatska vlada plaćaju obilato reklame prema brojnim medijima, tiskovinama i portalima kako bi se pisalo u korist vlade, izrazito korumpirane vlade.

Kao da to nije dovoljno, gospodin Plenković ovih dana gura Zakon o medijima kojim se nakladniku daje pravo da svojevoljno i bez, dakle, objašnjenja odbije objaviti novinarski prilog i kojim se nameće obaveza novinara da uredniku otkrije svoj izvor informacija. To je ništa drugo nego legalizacija cenzure.

Brojni hrvatski portali imaju problema s distribucijom sadržaja zato što se služe društvenim mrežama poput Facebooka. A tamo ih opet sačekaju ovi nesnosni *fact checker*i. Dakle, o čemu mi svjedočimo ovdje kad govorimo o slobodi medija? Govorimo o eroziji pluralizma, eroziji slobode izražavanja, govorimo o tome da se ne poštuje znanstvena rasprava, da se ne poštuje znanstvena metoda i demokracija. Vidjeli smo to i u koronakrizi kako su se ti *fact checker*i ponašali.

Tonemo, dakle, u jedno globalističko jednonumlje i cenzuru i to je stvarno sramota.

Romana Tomc (PPE). – Gospa predsjednica, podpredsjednica Komisije, gospa Jourová!

V novi medijski zakonodaji še posebej izpostavljate zaščitne ukrepe za neodvisno delovanje javnih medijev. Določate, da mora biti postopek imenovanja vodilnih pregleden, mandat uprave pa do rednega izteka nedotakljiv pred političnimi posegi.

V Sloveniji se je pred kratkim zgodilo nekaj, kar je povsem v nasprotju z zahtevami medijskega akta. Zgodil se je popoln politični prevzem javne radiotelevizije. Leva vladna koalicija je celo spremenila zakon, da bi lahko s položajev odstranila vodstvo, urednike in novinarje, za katere ocenjuje, da niso dovolj trdno na njihovi politični liniji.

Pravite, da ščitite neodvisne medije in novinarje, vendar vaša dejanja tega žal ne potrjujejo. Čeprav ste bili o vsem sproti obveščeni, niste storili ničesar, da bi to preprečili. Celo več, javno ste zagovarjali to, kar vaš zakon izrecno prepoveduje.

Kako je to mogoče? Ste bili tiho zato, ker vladajoča stranka pripada vaši politični opciji?

To meče res slabo luč na vas in na celotno Komisijo. Poslušate samo na eno uho. V primeru Slovenije ne ščitite javnih medijev niti neodvisne uredniške politike in novinarjev, ampak ščitite tiste, ki to rušijo.

Zato, prosim, razložite slovenskim državljanom, ki javni medij plačujejo, kaj boste naredili, da bi vam verjeli, da tokrat resnično mislite resno? Kaj boste naredili, da bi popravili škodo, ki je bila tudi z vašo pomočjo narejena javnemu mediju v Sloveniji? In ali boste sami spoštovali to, kar ste zapisali v tem medijskem zakonu?

Елена Йончева (S&D). – Уважаеми колеги, предлагаме действително медиен закон, който ще промени, надявам се, медиината среда. Овладени медиите, натиск срещу журналисти от управляващи и бизнес интереси, сливане между политическата власт и медиите – това е реалността в Европа днес, а спадът на доверие към обществените частни медиите логично достига своята критична точка.

Целта на Европейския акт за свободата на медиите не е да цензурира или да регулира медиите. Целта е да отслабим хватката на бизнеса и на властта, да създадем условия за независима журналистика. Днес Европейският парламент е на път да гарантира защитата на журналистите от натиск и от употреба на всякакви методи на подслушване и на слеждане. Ние предлагаме ясни мерки за осветяване на собствеността на медиите и техните финансови източници. Предприемаме мерки срещу свалянето на медийно съдържание от страна на платформи, слагаме край на тенденциозното разпределение на европейски средства.

Колеги, Европейският акт за свобода на медиите е резултат от усилена работа и години натиск, а тежките преговори с държавите членки тепърва предстоят. Надявам се, че днес с голямо мнозинство ще направим първа решителна стъпка към връщането на свободата на медиите и на независимата журналистика в Европа. Искам да благодаря на комисар Вера Юрова за положените усилия в тази посока.

Maite Pagazaurtundúa (Renew). – Señora presidenta, señora comisaria, sin verdad no hay democracia. Sin periodismo, entendido como información veraz y verificada, no hay democracia. Proteger a los periodistas y al periodismo es, por tanto, una de las dos o tres cosas más importantes del siglo XXI. Y hablo a título personal. A mí la Ley de Libertad de los Medios de Comunicación me sabe a poco.

¿Sirve la autocalificación para tener los efectos de un medio de comunicación? Claramente, no. ¿Es precisa una garantía extra para los medios en internet frente a las posibles arbitrariedades de las grandes plataformas? Sí.

El artículo 17 de la Comisión de Cultura y Educación es mejorable, pero es mejor que la propuesta de la Comisión Europea, porque la Comisión huye del derecho público a la hora de manejar la cuestión de los contenidos dañosos o ilícitos, les pasa la patata caliente a las grandes plataformas y genera un problema de garantías y de imprecisión jurídica en materia de libertad de expresión y derechos fundamentales.

El artículo 17 no está maduro y vamos a pasar la responsabilidad a una negociación mucho más opaca entre el Parlamento y el Consejo. Escapando del Derecho público, eliminamos la confianza y la seguridad jurídicas, que es lo mejor que el Derecho nos dio en el siglo XX.

Por los huecos que nosotros dejamos entran los populistas de izquierda, de derecha, nacionalistas, y, al subir al poder, las leyes se convierten en oportunismo, no lo olvidemos.

Marcel Kolaja (Verts/ALE). – Madam President, Vice-President, colleagues, we have been waiting for this legislation for years, and finally we got here today. The attempts to paralyse free media, to destroy critical voices, to attack journalists, have multiple names in Europe: Orbán, Babiš, Kaczyński, Janša. They hate free media. To silence, to take control, to make them starve: that is their recipe to destroy the voices that criticise them. That is why the European Media Freedom Act is one of the main successes of this Parliament in fighting against oligarchs and in preserving democracy and the rule of law in Europe.

At last there will be an instrument that will oblige media to be transparent about their ownership structures. There will be a database of media owners where every citizen will easily find out who stands behind the newspaper they read. For instance, do you find out that an owner of a news service also owns coal mines? Well, it easily explains why they constantly write in their news that our fight against climate change is counterproductive.

What I have personally fought for and consider my biggest success in this legislation is a ban on media ownership for top politicians: prime ministers, ministers, Commissioners. Coming from Czechia, I had experienced years of buyouts of free media by a media tycoon and a prime minister in one person: for once, Andrej Babiš has been an inspiration for my work – needless to say, a horrendous one.

Pirkko Ruohonen-Lerner (ECR). – Arvoisa puhemies, median itsenäisyys ja moniäänisyys ovat tärkeitä tavoitteita. Juhlapuheissa kaikki näyttääkin sujuvan mainiosti, ja demokratia kukoistaa useissa EU-maissa, joissa median sanotaan olevan riippumaton.

Todellisuus saattaa kuitenkin poiketa mielikuvista paljon enemmän kuin uskommekaan. Ja nyt puhun erityisesti kotimaastani, jonka mediamailman tunnen parhaiten.

Suomessa olen kohdannut tilanteita, joissa median riippumattomuuteen vaikutetaan suoraan omistajuuden kautta. Erityisesti ne median omistajat, jotka itse toimivat aktiivisesti politiikassa tai ovat poliitikkojen vaalitukijoita, pystyvät helposti vaikuttamaan siihen, että saavat itselleen ja omien liiketoimintojensa edistäjille positiivista julkisuutta ja samalla vaalimenestystä.

Näin myös bisnekset hoituvat paremmin. Riskinä tietysti on, että vastaan tulee ennemmin tai myöhemmin uskottavuusongelmia. Siksi pidänkin erittäin tärkeänä tavoitetta, jossa median omistajuuteen pyritään saamaan nykyistä enemmän läpinäkyvyyttä.

Gilles Lebreton (ID). – Madame la Présidente, chers collègues, la liberté des médias est un principe fondamental que toute personne sincèrement attachée à la démocratie libérale doit défendre. Pour autant, je désapprouve pour trois raisons le texte que nous propose la Commission pour la protéger.

D'abord, la liberté des médias relève de la compétence exclusive des États. La base juridique retenue pour justifier l'ingérence de l'Union européenne, l'article 114 du TFUE, est totalement artificielle, comme l'ont d'ailleurs relevé le Sénat français, le Bundesrat allemand et l'Assemblée nationale hongroise.

Ensuite, l'instrument choisi, le règlement plutôt qu'une simple directive, traduit l'autoritarisme de l'Union qui veut imposer son conformisme idéologique aux médias nationaux.

Enfin, les intentions du texte sont aussi claires qu'effrayantes. Il s'agit de mettre au pas les médias qui résistent à la doxa européiste en Hongrie, en Pologne et aussi en France, en ce qui concerne le groupe de Vincent Bolloré.

Vous dites que la liberté des médias est en danger. C'est vrai, mais en l'occurrence, c'est l'Union européenne qui la menace.

Sabrina Pignedoli (NI). – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, la sicurezza nazionale non può essere motivo sufficiente per sorvegliare, spiare e mettere a tacere i giornalisti. Nelle democrazie degli Stati che compongono l'Europa la sovranità appartiene al popolo, che ha il diritto di conoscere la verità, anche rispetto a strutture statali che rispondono a logiche e interessi differenti dal bene comune.

Lasciare in questo regolamento l'eccezione della sicurezza nazionale è molto grave e rischia di vanificare gli importanti passi avanti fatti su pluralismo, trasparenza e indipendenza dei media. Importante è anche l'obiettivo di proteggere la pluralità del giornalismo dalle concentrazioni delle proprietà e dalle grosse piattaforme online.

Condivisibile la volontà di evitare la disinformazione, ma qual è la sua definizione? Non c'è forse il rischio di permettere solamente la circolazione del pensiero *mainstream*, limitando con questa scusa le voci critiche? Ricordiamo che avere opinioni differenti non è disinformazione, è un diritto fondamentale.

Andrzej Halicki (PPE). – Szanowna Pani Przewodnicząca! Szanowna Pani Komisarz! *Media Freedom Act* – ten europejski akt o wolności mediów to chyba najważniejszy dokument tej kadencji, bo możemy uchwalać różne regulacje gospodarcze, budżet i bardzo ważne działania i projekty, ale bez wolności mediów, bez gwarantowanej ochrony praw dziennikarzy nie będziemy mieli wolnych wyborów, nie będziemy mieli demokracji i to oczywiście.

Ten dokument jest wynikiem prac – dobrej pracy dwóch komisji – ale także bardzo ważnej w tej kadencji pracy komisji śledczej dotyczącej Pegasusa, Predatora i innych systemów inwigilacyjnych. Dziennikarze muszą być chronieni i ich źródła wiedzy muszą być chronione. Musimy oddać hołd tym wszystkim dziennikarzom śledczym, którzy ponieśli śmierć.

Chciałbym z tego miejsca zaapelować o bardzo skuteczną i szybką pracę w procesie negocjacyjnym, bo tak jak Panią Komisarz, niepokoi mnie to puste miejsce.

Ja się nie dziwię, że Prawo i Sprawiedliwość dzisiaj negatywnie jest do tego dokumentu nastawione, bo boi się prawdy. Ale my prawdę musimy chronić instytucjonalnie. Dlatego apeluję z tego miejsca do Rady Unii Europejskiej o jak najszybsze przyjęcie tego dokumentu.

Christel Schaldemose (S&D). – Fru formand! Ytringsfriheden og de frie medier er grundstenen i vores demokratiske samfund. Sådan har det altid været fra undergrundspresen under verdenskrigen til særligt Charlie Hebdos ukuelige kamp for det frie ord. Men i dag ser vi en ny og stigende trussel mod vores medier. Tech-giganternes platform har i stigende grad udviklet sig til online forsamlingshuse, hvor vi logger på for at få nyheder og for at debattere. Det er for så vidt fint, men vi ser også, at platformene med ugenomsigtige regler fjerner helt lovlige nyhedsartikler fra frie medier. Det kan ikke være rigtigt. Frie medier skal ikke censureres af platformene, og derfor er jeg utrolig glad for at European Media Freedom Act fører det arbejde videre, som vi har lavet med den digitale tjenesteydelses Act. Vi styrker de frie medier, og vi sikrer dem en særlig beskyttelse mod tech-giganternes uigenomsigtige censurbehov. Det skal være medierne redaktører, som bestemmer, hvad der publiceres – ikke Mark Zuckerberg eller Elon Musk.

Γεώργιος Κύρτσος (Renew). – Κυρία Πρόεδρε, συγχαρητήρια στους συνάδελφους και την επίτροπο Jourová για την καλή δουλειά. Κάνουμε σημαντικό βήμα υπέρ της ελευθερίας της έκφρασης. Έχουμε όμως ένα βουνό να ανέβουμε — σας το λέω σαν ευρωβουλευτής που εκλέγεται στην Ελλάδα, τη χώρα που έχει τους μεγαλύτερους περιορισμούς στα ΜΜΕ στους 27 της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, σύμφωνα με τους Ρεπόρτερ Χωρίς Σύνορα. Σας το λέω σαν ευρωβουλευτής, πρώην δημοσιογράφος και εκδότης που, μόλις διαφώνησα με την ελληνική κυβέρνηση για τις διώξεις δημοσιογράφων και τον έλεγχο των ΜΜΕ, με έκοψε από την τηλεόραση και η Εθνική Υπηρεσία Πληροφοριών υπέκλεψε τις τηλεφωνικές επικοινωνίες μου για 18 μήνες. Αυτά που λέω δεν αντιμετωπίζονται κάνοντας τα στραβά μάτια για κομματικούς και κυβερνητικούς λόγους. Δεν έχει νόημα να δείχνουμε τον Α για να καλύπτουμε τον Β. Να προχωρήσουμε όλοι μαζί στο πνεύμα που μας ένωσε στο Media Freedom Act.

Alexandra Geese (Verts/ALE). – Frau Präsidentin! Wussten Sie, dass unsere Kollegin Hannah Neumann verleumdet wird? Auf einer italienischen Medienseite erschien ein Artikel, der Hannah Neumann als korrupt und am Katar-Geld beteiligt darstellte – eine dreiste Lüge, die die Integrität dieses Hauses beschädigen sollte. Und das kann jedem von uns passieren. Es ist dieser Kollegin in mühsamer Kleinarbeit gelungen, sich zu wehren und diesen Artikel löschen zu lassen. Aber bis dahin wurde er so weit verbreitet, dass er zeitweise bei den Suchergebnissen an erster Stelle stand.

Wir müssen endlich begreifen: Desinformation verbreitet sich im Internet immer schneller als Information. Kein gut recherchierter journalistischer Inhalt kann mit den Lügen mithalten, die von Algorithmen gepusht werden. Und wenn wir dem Europäischen Medienfreiheitsgesetz in seiner derzeitigen Form mit dem Artikel 17, der ein Freibrief für Desinformation ist, übrigens auch für die Inhalte des ungarischen Staatsfernsehens – doch, denn Sie brauchen jetzt die Zustimmung der nationalen Aufsichtsbehörde, um zu moderieren –, da würde ich gerne mal sehen, wo sie die in Ungarn oder in Italien bekommen.

Deswegen bitte ich Sie: Stimmen sie für die Änderungsanträge, die Artikel 17 streichen oder entschärfen! Medienfreiheit ist ein hohes Gut, aber sie bedeutet eben auch, dass Bürgerinnen und Bürger ein Recht darauf haben, nicht von Lügen überschwemmt zu werden.

Patricia Chagnon (ID). – Madame la Présidente, en politique, rien n'arrive par hasard. Je tiens à rappeler ces mots de l'ancien président américain Franklin Roosevelt à l'occasion de ce débat sur la liberté des médias.

Alors que cette législature touche presque à sa fin et que vous avez déjà employé pressions, menaces, voire sanctions financières à l'encontre des pays qui refusent votre diktat, vous profitez de cette dernière ligne droite pour tenter de vous arroger le contrôle des médias. Dans le dos des peuples, en imposant aux nations européennes vos règles, votre projet vise à surveiller les médias et à imposer un cadre juridique en contournant les parlements nationaux, les représentants élus légitimes pour vous assurer que les Européens soient informés, sans voix discordante et comme le voudrait la Commission, et qu'ils votent bien sûr sagement en conséquence le 9 juin prochain.

Chers collègues, la défense de la liberté de la presse passe par la défense et surtout le respect de la pluralité des opinions. L'instrumentalisation de ce sujet particulièrement sérieux qui est la liberté des médias comme vous le faites pour en réalité la brider et brider toutes opinions divergentes, aura eu au moins le mérite de souligner votre mépris pour les valeurs démocratiques historiques de notre continent.

Mislav Kolakušić (NI). – Poštovana predsjedavajuća, mediji i istina, za povratak normalnim ljudskim vrijednostima nužno je da se CNN, Reuters, Associated Press, Deutsche Welle i slični medijski fanatici i talibani proglašaju terorističkim organizacijama.

Tijekom takozvanih pandemija i forsiranih ratova oni proizvode enormne količine lažnih informacija i šire mržnju među ljudima i narodima koji za posljedicu imaju milijune žrtava diljem Europe i svijeta.

Ovo nije akt o slobodi medija, nego akt o slobodi širenja mržnje i lažnih vijesti koje vode svijet u mračno doba totalitarnih sustava.

Vladimír Bilčík (PPE). – Pani podpredsedníčka, európsky zákon o slobode médií je výbornou správou pre médiá i demokraciu.

Na Slovensku už dlhé roky, a zvlášť od začiatku ruskej agresie na Ukrajinu, čelíme zahraničnému zasahovaniu zo strany Ruskej federácie. Tá šíri svoj vplyv cez dezinformácie, falošné správy a rôzne pokútne weby. Pomáhajú jej v tom aj veľkí politickí hráči, a pred týmito si prosím nezatvárajme oči. Hovorím aj o Ficovom Smere, ktorý v sobotu vyhral parlamentné voľby na Slovensku.

Preto potrebujeme silné, zdravé, kvalitné mediálne prostredie. Potrebujeme neustále a vytrvalo chrániť nezávislosť médií a novinárov, aby mali väčšiu slobodu pri svojej práci a dokázali prinášať overené a kvalitné informácie.

Pre demokraciu nielen na Slovensku, ale všade v Európe a vo svete, je to nevyhnutná podmienka. Potrebujeme, aby sa novinári mohli sústrediť na svoju prácu a neriešili dôsledky svojej práce na seba a svojich blízkych.

Som rád, že tento zákon o slobode médií je moderným zákonom, ktorý reflektuje, ako neuveriteľne sa zmenilo mediálne prostredie za posledné desaťročia. Že hráčmi na mediálnom trhu sú aj veľké online platformy. Nemôžu sa tváriť, že s mediálnym prostredím nemajú nič spoločné. Majú, formujú ho a my musíme na túto realitu reagovať. S vplyvom prichádza zodpovednosť.

Novinári a zdravé informačné prostredie je naším bohatstvom. A jedným z nevyhnutných predpokladov životaschopnej demokracie, ako to povedali mnohí kolegovia. Vieme, k čomu vedú agresívne útoky na novinárov. Vieme, ako vyzerajú spoločnosti, kde je férové a objektívne informovanie ohrozené. Spomeňme si vždy na Jána Kuciaka a Daphne Caruana Galiziovú.

Verím, že nová európska legislatíva posilní slobodné a kvalitné médiá.

Sylvie Guillaume (S&D). – Madame la Présidente, Madame la Vice-présidente, chers collègues, nous avons débuté l'examen de ce règlement il y a longtemps. Il va déterminer la manière dont nous allons favoriser la liberté de la presse et le pluralisme des médias en Europe.

Il y a quelques années, quand nous réfléchissions aux menaces et aux dangers à contrer, quelques exemples de pays venaient tout naturellement à l'esprit, car la situation des médias nous y avait particulièrement alertés. Depuis, les mauvais exemples nous montrent que la liberté de la presse est susceptible d'être menacée partout en Europe, partout dans nos États membres.

La liberté de la presse est fragile. Ce règlement est loin d'être un luxe. Il nous permettra d'examiner des situations très concrètes et parfois délicates, quelquefois inquiétantes. Les questions de concentration des médias, les questions d'indépendance éditoriale, tout comme celles de la protection des sources, qui sont des questions sur lesquelles nous ne devons pas transiger.

Les mesures contenues dans cette position ambitieuse du Parlement seront des garde-fous pour protéger la liberté de la presse, les journalistes et le pluralisme des médias, ce dont nos démocraties dépendent.

Abir Al-Sahlani (Renew). – Madam President, Madam Commissioner, esteemed colleagues, this Union defends democracy. Let that be heard. When authoritarian leaders within our Union are silencing the voices of those who oppose them, we will push back. When disinformation sows its dark seeds online or offline, we will shut them down. When journalists are attacked, spied on or silenced or prosecuted, we will protect them. When politicians can't keep their hands off the free media, we will slap their fingers. When free speech is threatened or silenced, we will slam a big-ass law on the European table because this Union protects democracy. Let that be heard.

David Cormand (Verts/ALE). – Madame la Présidente, une journaliste, Anne Lavrilleux, arrêtée, son domicile perquisitionné. Un hebdomadaire national racheté par un milliardaire d'extrême droite. Des rédactions vidées de leurs journalistes. Un audiovisuel public privé de financement.

Toutes ces situations font de l'acte européen pour la liberté des médias une nécessité. Oui, ce règlement est nécessaire pour toute l'Europe, car les menaces que je viens de lister ne sont pas seulement le fait des gouvernements hongrois ou polonais. Elles ont aussi cours dans mon pays, la France.

Le Parlement européen doit renforcer ce nouveau règlement car nous savons que, face au Conseil, les négociations seront ardues. Certains États membres ne cachent plus leurs velléités liberticides, dont la France. L'exception de sécurité nationale demandée par le gouvernement de monsieur Macron sur ce texte est une menace pour les médias et c'est une honte pour l'Europe.

Je compte sur le Parlement européen et sur la Commission pour ne pas se laisser faire.

Harald Vilimsky (ID). – Frau Präsidentin, meine sehr geehrten Damen und Herren! Immer dann, wenn die Europäische Union sich des Themas Freiheit annimmt, hat man ein bisschen den Eindruck, als würde man seinen Hund bitten, auf die Wurst aufzupassen. Das funktioniert nämlich mit Sicherheit nicht.

Wir haben das gesehen, etwa beim Gesetz über digitale Dienste, wo wir heute in einer Situation stehen, dass Chatnachrichten bedroht sind von einer Schnüffelei durch politische Instanzen, wo wir in einer Situation stehen, dass hier zu schaffende Behörden kontrollieren sollen, was Fake News sind und was nicht Fake News sind, was Propaganda ist und was nicht Propaganda ist. Ich weiß nicht, wie man auf die Idee kommen kann, über politische Behörden Derartiges festzustellen. Ich bin ein radikaler Verfechter der Meinungsvielfalt, der Pluralität, der Demokratie. Das heißt aber, dass niemals Behörden darüber aburteilen können, was wahr ist und was nicht wahr ist. Dafür gibt es die Grenzen des Strafrechts.

Bei dem, was wir heute über die Freiheit im Bereich Medien debattieren, kann ich doch auch nicht auf die Idee kommen, eine europäische Behörde einzurichten, die darüber urteilen soll, ob Medien entsprechende Freiheit in der Darstellung haben oder nicht. Ich fürchte, dass man hier den alternativen Medien einen Maulkorb verpassen möchte, dass man diejenigen, die als Systemmedien gelten möchten, hier noch mehr an Terrain eröffnen möchte. Das halte ich für den falschen Weg. Wenn die EU etwas Gutes tun möchte, dann Frieden, Freiheit und Wohlstand für möglichst alle zu sichern und nicht Freiheit zu nehmen, wie in diesem Fall.

Tatjana Ždanoka (NI). – Madam President, Algirdas Paleckis, Lithuanian, suffering a six-year sentence in prison in Kaunas, and Vladimir Linderman, in Latvia, whose trial will start in one hour in Riga. Both are being prosecuted just for doing their job as journalists.

I pose the question of whether the new Media Freedom Act will help to avoid such situations and stop the prosecution of journalists. Will the new board be able to do it now? No. Not in such a proposal where this board will consist just of functionaries delegated by Member States.

There is another version: just hold pan-European elections. Elections to the board when very famous, well-known journalists stand for election, and to hold them alongside with European Parliament elections. It's not my idea. It's the idea of the famous Italian journalist Giulietto Chiesa.

The same approach can be applied to national elections of this supervisory board on media. Only in this case can we achieve the goals posed and formulated in the European Media Freedom Act.

Henna Virkkunen (PPE). – Madam President, Commissioner, free independent media is a cornerstone of our democracy and we as politicians have to protect media freedom also in the cases when maybe they are criticising us in the news. Freedom of expression and rule of law are core values of the European Union. It's a shame that we have Member States where journalists are oppressed or spied on or even murdered because of their work for sharing information. This Media Freedom Act is well needed. We have to protect media pluralism and freedom everywhere in the EU. Digitalisation poses also new challenges for journalism when citizens are often getting their news via social media, and then it's actually the online platform that decides which content is shown for the users.

We already have now the Digital Service Act, which brings more transparency to the very large online platforms. Now, this legislation on media freedom offers additional protection against the unjustified removal of professional media content. And this is well needed.

Katalin Cseh (Renew). – Madam President, dear colleagues, imagine beginning your day with a cup of coffee and your trusted local newspaper. You flip through the pages, catch up on the latest news on town, from education to traffic updates, cultural events. You finish up with the results of the local sports team and the weekend's fish-soup cooking contest. It's not such an unusual image, is it? And now imagine that you wake up one day and all of that is gone. And in the same newspaper now, you can read about the many achievements of your great leader, Viktor Orbán, or about totally absurd conspiracies on Brussels forcing sex-change operations on toddlers.

Well, colleagues, this is what has happened in Hungary. Four hundred local newspapers were merged into one single monstrous conglomerate called KESMA, which is stuffed with taxpayers' money. State advertising makes up 75% of its ad revenue. And Orbán's favourite oligarch, Lőrinc Mészáros, has control over all of it.

For too long we have waited for the EU to address this blatant attack on media freedom. Now the European Media Freedom Act is finally a step in the right direction because it directly confronts the critical problem of media market concentration. The 15% ceiling on state advertising could be an absolute game changer, and our democracies will be healthier if it's implemented.

(The speaker agreed to take a blue-card question)

Ангел Джамбазки (ECR), въпрос, зададен чрез вдигане на синя карта. – Уважаеми колега, критикувате много силно медиите, концентрирани

(ораторът продължава изказването си на английски език)

Dear colleague, you're very vocal against the media concentration in the hands of, let's say, Mr Orbán's friends. What about media owned by other figures? For example, a lot of media in Bulgaria are related, connected or owned by circles close to Mr Soros. What is your opinion? Because they are forming public opinion in Sofia. How will you comment this?

Katalin Cseh (Renew), blue-card answer. – Well, I suppose this is why we need a strong European-level regulation so that it can create a level and equal playing field for every media ownership. This is why I think it is very essential to have European-level regulation.

Sven Simon (PPE). – Frau Präsidentin, sehr geehrte Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Das Medienfreiheitsgesetz ist ein wichtiger Schritt, um Pluralismus und Meinungsvielfalt in der europäischen Presselandschaft zu schützen.

Wir führen neue Regeln gegen Marktkonzentration im Medienbereich ein, europaweite Standards für den öffentlich-rechtlichen Rundfunk, besseren Quellenschutz für Journalisten durch ein Verbot des Einsatzes von Spionagesoftware. Natürlich ist das eine europäische Kompetenz und ein europäisches Thema.

Aber wie immer, wenn die Europäische Union etwas harmonisiert, gibt es – möglicherweise auch berechtigt – Sorge, dass funktionierende nationale Systeme durch unpassende Regeln überformt werden. In diesem Fall bin ich dennoch der Überzeugung, dass Journalisten in allen Mitgliedstaaten von diesem Gesetz profitieren werden. Denn fehlender Pluralismus in der Medienlandschaft ist ein Problem in mehr Mitgliedstaaten, als wir klischeeweise annehmen.

Ich bin Frau Kollegin Sabine Verheyen ganz besonders dankbar, dass sie mit so großer Erfahrung und einem klaren Blick dieses Gesetz gestaltet hat. Denn wenn ich hier höre, was von der rechtsradikalen Seite kommt, dann ist Medienfreiheit wirklich bedroht in Europa, sobald Rechte und Rechtsradikale an die Regierung kommen. Aber auch bei den Grünen ist Medienfreiheit und Pluralismus offensichtlich nicht in guten Händen.

Heute ist ein guter Tag für Pressefreiheit und Pressevielfalt. Vielen Dank, Sabine Verheyen und allen Kolleginnen und Kollegen, die so konstruktiv daran mitgearbeitet haben.

(Der Redner ist damit einverstanden, auf eine Frage nach dem Verfahren der „blauen Karte“ zu antworten.)

Bogdan Rzońca (ECR), pytanie zadane przez podniesienie niebieskiej kartki. – Proszę pana, oskarża pan prawicę o to, że ma własne media. Czy nie uważa pan, że należałoby tutaj, w Parlamencie Europejskim, zrobić ranking wszystkich kapitałów i właścicieli mediów w Unii Europejskiej? Dlaczego pytam? Dlatego, że w Polsce ponad 50% prasy jest w rękach kapitału niemieckiego, a około 70% telewizji w Polsce to kapitał zagraniczny. Zatem moje pytanie jest takie: czy nie uważa pan, że powinniśmy dokładnie sprawdzić, jaki kapitał i gdzie ma media, w których krajach?

Sven Simon (PPE), Antwort auf eine Frage nach dem Verfahren der „blauen Karte“. – Ja, selbstverständlich, natürlich sollten wir uns das anschauen. Das wird sich ja auch angeschaut. Es ist ja alles transparent, es ist ja zugänglich, aber es gibt einen ganz großen Unterschied: Medienkonzentration.

Was die Frage anbelangt, welches Medium im Eigentum einer Person oder einer Gesellschaft steht, ist das eine. Die missbräuchliche Ausnutzung einer Monopolstellung und die Einschüchterung von Journalisten ist etwas anderes, und das findet bei Ihnen im Land in besonders schlimmer Weise statt.

Željana Zovko (PPE). – Poštovana predsjedavajuća, povjerenice, ovdje glasujemo o Europskom aktu o slobodi medija i željela bih zahvaliti izvjestiteljici Sabine Verheyen koja je uvrstila i moje amandmane u ovaj izuzetno bitan akt koji će konačno omogućiti uredničku neovisnost europskih medija, poboljšati pravila za veću transparentnost pružatelja medijskih usluga, koji će države članice morati poštovati, te također informacije o troškovima oglašavanja koje moraju biti dostupne, a javno oglašavanje nediskriminatorno i transparentno.

Mi moramo zapamtiti da neovisnost medija je pod ozbiljnom prijetnjom u nekim državama članicama. Ja ovdje na kraju samo želim odati počast jednom velikom čovjeku kojega smo zaboravili tijekom rata u Republici Hrvatskoj. J. P. Mackley me naučio svemu što znam o poštovanju slobode medija kada su jugoslavenski mediji vani širili neistine o ratu u Hrvatskoj i laži.

J. P. Mackley je s američkim Hrvatima napravio Foreign Press Bureau i dovodili su novinare na ratne linije i gdje smo stvarali, u biti i omogućavali istinu da dođe do ljudi. Danas to vidimo da je potpuno drukčije. Europa štiti medije, Europa štiti istinu. Nikada više nikakve države autoritativne neće moći kontrolirati medije.

Lukas Mandl (PPE). – Frau Präsidentin, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Wenn man von den großen Innovationen, Erfindungen der Menschheit spricht, dann spricht man über den Buchdruck beispielsweise oder über den elektrischen Strom, vielleicht über Penicillin. Aber auch die Pressefreiheit ist eine große Innovation der Menschheit, übrigens genauso wie der Parlamentarismus. Wir in Europa verteidigen die Pressefreiheit in besonders schwierigen Zeiten, weil das Internetzeitalter, weil Social Media nicht nur Positives hervorgebracht hat, sondern auch Negatives: Fake News, Hassrede, Desinformation in organisierter Weise, die Aufwiegelung von Menschen, die Spaltung unserer Gesellschaften droht.

Deshalb ist Pressefreiheit so wichtig, denn Pressefreiheit ermöglicht Information, die geprüft ist, die recherchiert ist, der man vertrauen kann, weil Journalistinnen und Journalisten dahinter stehen, die ihren Beruf können und gerne machen und nach ethischen Maßstäben machen. Das ist der große Unterschied. Genauso wie bei Lebensmitteln. Wir würden nicht giftige Lebensmittel zu uns nehmen, aber wir alle sind ständig mit giftiger Information konfrontiert. Damit es auch die gute, zuträgliche Information gibt, die wahrheitsgetreue, recherchierte, gibt es Pressefreiheit, und die halten wir in Europa hoch.

Procedura «catch the eye»

Sunčana Glavak (PPE). – Poštovana predsjedavajuća, povjerenice, prije svega želim zahvaliti kolegici Sabine na ovom sjajnom dokumentu. Kao bivša novinarka želim pozdraviti sve ovo na čemu radi Europski parlament.

Kollegice i kolege, digitalna transformacija je snažan i moćan pokretač promjena i zato smatram da je izazov zaštititi brand koji čine profesionalci, zapravo novinari. U eri kada svaka osoba s pristupom internetu može podijeliti vijesti izazov je razlikovati istinito izvješćivanje od lažnih vijesti. Neovisni novinari upravo su ti koji se svakodnevno suočavaju s tim izazovom.

Pozdravljam inicijativu koju predlaže Europski zakon o slobodi medija, jednako kao i osnivanje Europskog odbora za medijske usluge. To nije samo odgovor na izazove s kojima se suočavamo već je korak naprijed prema jačanju kulture raznolikosti slobode i neovisnosti medija u Europi.

Predlažemo jednako tako mjere koje će štititi medijski pluralizam, što je iznimno važno, neovisnost, pružajući dodatnu zaštitu novinarima od nedopuštenih intervencija i špijunskih softvera, kao i transparentnosti vlasničke strukture medijskih kuća.

Na kraju, zaštita na činjenicama temeljenog novinarstva nije samo obrana profesije, to je obrana same demokracije.

Juan Fernando López Aguilar (S&D). – Señora presidenta, sin libre acceso a la información ni pluralismo informativo no hay democracia que merezca ese nombre. Se sabe desde el debate constituyente en los Estados Unidos hace 250 años, y lo sabe la Unión Europea por el carácter vinculante de esta libertad de información y esta libertad de prensa por la que, por fin, este Parlamento Europeo está haciendo una apuesta legislativa.

Transparencia, independencia de los medios de comunicación públicos, protección y blindaje de los periodistas frente a litigaciones truculentas para intimidarlos o amordazarlos, y no digamos espiarlos o perseguirlos judicialmente. Este es un paso en la dirección correcta de la historia y un paso en la dirección correcta del cumplimiento completo del mandato vinculante de la Carta de Derechos Fundamentales de la Unión Europea.

Y, por tanto, hay que decir que ahora es el momento de que la libertad de información y el pluralismo informativo sean parte también del marco del Estado de Derecho, democracia y derechos fundamentales del que regularmente informa la Comisión ante la Comisión de Libertades Civiles, Justicia y Asuntos de Interior para que todos los Estados miembros sepan que este Parlamento habla absolutamente en serio.

Billy Kelleher (Renew). – *(start of speech off mike)* [...] the European Media Freedom Act. We have to ensure and protect the integrity of journalism and the media profession itself. Not every government is a benign one that will allow media to flourish, to be plural and to be diverse. We have seen that in Europe – the rolling back of civil rights, of fundamental rights in certain areas. That also means the rolling back of the freedom of the media. It includes intimidation and persecution. The use of AI and spyware and many others in observing and monitoring journalism is also something that we have to root out, so I do support any measures in that context.

The overconcentration of media ownership is a significant issue. Of course, the most important thing is that we do not have an overconcentration of editorial influence, and that clearly is a very significant challenge today, not only in terms of monopolies from an economic perspective, but ensuring that we have a plural, diverse editorial content across our media platforms and our media in general in the European Union.

The starting emphasis should be that press freedom is a cornerstone of democracy, and if we want to uphold democracy and the integrity of the media, then freedom, pluralism and diversity of content are critically important.

Saskia Bricmont (Verts/ALE). – Madame la Présidente, chère à nos valeurs européennes, la liberté de la presse est la clé de voûte de nos démocraties. Elle doit devenir un modèle pour pouvoir aussi défendre les droits des journalistes dans le monde entier.

Depuis des années, à cette tribune, nous dénonçons les menaces qui pèsent sur la liberté de la presse partout en Europe. Face aux assassinats et arrestations de journalistes, au contrôle et à la concentration des médias, à la surveillance et aux intimidations, à la violation du secret des sources, à l'absence de protection, l'absence du Conseil aujourd'hui est particulièrement interpellante.

La législation sur la liberté des médias établit des règles pour la liberté de la presse, le pluralisme des médias et la protection des journalistes en Europe. Mais le moment est aussi venu de rendre effective, chers collègues, une des recommandations de notre commission d'enquête Pegasus: l'interdiction d'espionner les journalistes. Ceci est aussi un message, et surtout un message à nos gouvernements.

La liberté de la presse est un prérequis à l'état de droit et à la démocratie européenne. Elle est plus que jamais nécessaire à l'heure de la désinformation massive. Protégeons-la. Rétablissons-la.

Ladislav Ilčić (ECR). – Poštovana predsjedavajuća, kolege, imamo ovako veliku regulativu klasičnih medija i imamo otprilike ovako malu regulativu *big tech* kompanija poput Applea, Googla, Facebooka ili Amazona.

Utjecaj ovih klasičnih medija otprilike ovako mali, a utjecaj *big tech* kompanija je ogroman. I upravo te kompanije su glavni promotori kulture otkazivanja i woke ideologije. Prikazuju se kao privlačan javni prostor dostupan za sve, a u povijesti nismo vidjeli veću cenzuru i manipulaciju od one koju rade upravo te kompanije. Tako da svi ovi pokušaji ovakva izvješća jednostavno nemaju smisla dok ne uspostavimo jednaka pravila za sve.

Dakle, ovim izvješćem je propuštena prilika da osiguramo slobodu medija u iznošenju istinitih informacija. Ključno pitanje je: je li ta prilika propuštena slučajno ili namjerno?

Mick Wallace (The Left). – Madam President, this act has been touted as a measure to protect media pluralism and independence in the EU. Yet every European civil liberties group worth its salt is up in arms about a number of measures in the text that put media pluralism and independent media in the firing line.

For example, Article 17, which will create a two-tier media system in the online world. Very large online platforms, such as Twitter and Facebook, will be entrusted with media content moderation powers based on a system of self-declaration of media outlets that both privileges legacy media groups and allows for those groups to publish false stories that may remain on the site for long enough that the disinformation has spread already and done its damage before it is taken down through a mediation process.

Article 17 is a dangerous provision that's tailor made for abuse, as is Article 4, which proposes to empower governments and others to use spyware against journalists. This is madness. Vote against Articles 4 and 17.

(Fine della procedura «catch the eye»)

Věra Jourová, Vice-President of the Commission. – Madam President, honourable Members, thank you very much for a very interesting and important debate.

Well, not everybody was happy and is happy about and with the European Media Freedom Act. That's democracy! I think that the overall result of this discussion is that we might be entering a very important phase of trilogue when we will try to find the best solution for better protection of journalistic sources, protection against spyware, and also to set the well-working good system to balance the powers of the online platforms and the media.

Several of you mentioned the role of the media in the fight against disinformation. Well, this is indispensable and this is something which also has to be protected as a role of the media, while, of course, always keeping the freedom of speech and pluralism in opinions. We do not want and we are not regulating opinions, but we want to prepare better conditions for those who have the power and who are professionals to get the facts right.

I want to react in the remaining 40 seconds on the criticism. Yes, we do have a legal competence to do that. It was confirmed by the legal service of the Council. And yes, we need the Media Freedom Act because we do not want to get to the situation which I experienced for 25 years of my life in a Communist regime: one state, one party, one doctrine and a state information monopoly. Forget it. This will not happen in the EU. I think that the Media Freedom Act is a very good solution and tool against that.

My last words go to Madam Diana Riba. You mentioned Maria Ressa. I will meet her in Japan in a few days. She told me last time we met how she loves the Media Freedom Act, and so I will deliver, I hope, the good news that we are going in the direction of having this adopted.

Sabine Verheyen, *Berichterstatterin*. – Frau Präsidentin! Vielen Dank, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen, für die intensive Debatte. Danke vor allem aber auch an die Teams der Sekretariate, die Teams meiner Schattenberichterstatter und der Berichterstatter, die auf technischer Ebene eine enorme Arbeit geleistet haben.

Wir haben mit dem Text des Ausschusses für Kultur und Bildung einen rechtssicheren Text vorliegen, und er greift nicht in die ausschließliche Kompetenz der Mitgliedstaaten ein, sehr geehrte Frau Kruk, sondern sichert Grundprinzipien unabhängiger und freier Medien in einer funktionierenden Demokratie. Dass das Gremium für Mediendienste als Nachfolger der ERGA unabhängig sein soll – auch von der Kommission –, ist der Arbeit des Parlaments, insbesondere des Ausschusses für Kultur und Bildung, zu verdanken.

Und, lieber Daniel Freund, die Kommission könnte auch heute schon stärker tätig werden, wenn sie das Nichteinhalten europäischer Gesetzgebung im Medienbereich konsequenter und beherzter verfolgen würde wie zum Beispiel bei der Nichtumsetzung der AVMD-Richtlinie oder auch anderer Bereiche.

Ich glaube, dass es wichtig ist, dass wir die Unabhängigkeit des Gremiums auch sicherstellen. Sie ist essenziell vor einer wie auch immer gearteten Kommission, ob rechts, ob links, ob grün geprägt – wie auch immer –, die Unabhängigkeit ist hier wesentlich und nicht, ob jetzt gerade eine Kommission viel Einfluss auf das Gremium bekommen soll oder nicht.

Beim Thema Spyware möchte ich nochmals betonen, dass der vorliegende Kompromiss des Ausschusses für bürgerliche Freiheiten, Justiz und Inneres genau das ausschließt, was Kollege Sinčić eben kritisiert hat: Die journalistische Arbeit und der Quellenschutz dürfen nicht ausspioniert werden, und jedwede Aktion untersteht einem richterlichen Vorbehalt. Wir haben also auch hier entsprechende Schutzmechanismen eingeführt.

Bei Artikel 17 möchte ich nochmals klarstellen, dass die Mediendienste nicht von der Zustimmung der nationalen Medienaufsicht abhängig sind, und im Zweifelsfalle, im Konfliktfall mit den Plattformen, können sie sich auch noch einmal direkt an das Europäische Gremium für Mediendienste wenden, das dann eine entsprechende Empfehlung ausstellen kann.

Es werden viele Schutz- und Sicherungsmechanismen eingebaut, die politische Willkür, Einfluss von Drittstaaten, aber eben auch Willkür nationaler Aufsichtsbehörden verhindern sollen, und es ist kein Schlupfloch für Desinformation, dafür sind einfach auch zu viele Schutzmechanismen eingezogen worden.

Ich bitte Sie deshalb, dem sehr wohl ausgewogenen, rechtssicheren und wichtigen Gesetzestext in seiner Form heute zuzustimmen, damit wir bei der Sicherung von Medienvielfalt, Freiheit und Demokratie einen großen Schritt weiterkommen.

Ich möchte mich auch bei der Kommission bedanken für die konstruktive Zusammenarbeit. Ich freue mich auf die Kooperation mit der spanischen Ratspräsidentschaft und hoffe, dass es uns gelingen wird, den Gesetzestext bis zum Ende dieses Jahres zu finalisieren.

Presidente. – La discussione è chiusa.

La votazione si svolgerà martedì 3 ottobre 2023.

Dichiarazioni scritte (articolo 171)

Andrus Ansip (Renew), kirjalikult. – Euroopa meediavabaduse määruse eesmärk on kehtestada ühised eeskirjad meediateenuste siseturule toimimiseks. Tasakaalu leidmine on samas keeruline ülesanne, kuna meedia olukord ja ajakirjandusvabadusele suunatud rünnakute tase on ELis erinev. Oleme olukorras, kus mõnes liikmesriigis pole meediaseadusi praktiliselt olemas, kuid on siiski maailma kõige vabama ajakirjandusega riigid. Teistes on seadused küll olemas, aga tegelik ajakirjandusvabadus puudub. Minu jaoks oli oluline, et siseturukomisjoni arvamusele lisatud klauslid, mis aitavad meil võidelda kolmandate riikide propaganda vastu. Hetkel on paraku võimalik olukord, kus Euroopa ettevõtte levitab vaenukõnet ja õhutab vägivalda kolmandates riikides. Lõime ka juriidilise vahendi, et liikmesriigid saaksid reageerida propagandale ilma sanktsioonide ootamata. Vene agressiooni kontekstis on olnud mitmeid juhtumeid, kus on olnud poliitiline tahe ja valmisolek mõne sõjapropagandat levitava kanali eemaldamiseks, kuid on puudunud õiguslik alus või protseduur, mis seda võimaldaks. Seetõttu oli oluline luua selline võimalus, et liikmesriikide regulaatorid saaksid desinformatsioonikanali eemaldamise otsuse teha õiguslikul alusel.

Vilija Blinkevičiūtė (S&D), raštu. – Šiandien balsuosime dėl žiniasklaidos laisvės stiprinimo Europoje. Žiniasklaidos laisvė ir pliuralizmas yra ypač svarbi demokratijos ir ES piliečių pagrindinių teisių dalis. Tikra demokratija neįmanoma be laisvos žiniasklaidos, prižiūrinčios esančiuosius valdžioje. Žurnalistai ir toliau dirba sunkiomis sąlygomis, patiria vis didesnę finansinę ir politinę spaudimą, yra sekami, dėl savo darbo baudžiami savavališkais laisvės atėmimo bausmėmis arba patiria smurtą. Tai yra visiškai nepriimtina. Žiniasklaidos laisvė yra esminė mūsų demokratijos dalis ir ji privalo būti ginama. Labai džiaugiuosi, jog bus įkurta Europos žiniasklaidos paslaugų valdyba, kuri padės užtikrinti, jog nacionalinio lygmens veiksmai negalėtų apriboti žurnalistų laisvės, kad nebūtų sudaromos sąlygos dezinformacijos sklaidai ir kad mūsų piliečiai gautų teisingą ir objektyvią informaciją.

Andrea Bocskor (NI), írásban. – Mi magyarok már 1848-ban is tudtuk mi a sajtószabadság. Hiszen már akkor is a magyar sajtó szabadságát és a cenzúra eltörlését kívánták a márciusi ifjak 12 pontos követelésükben. Ma sincs ez másként, ha a médiaszabadságról vagy szabad véleménynyilvánításról beszélünk. A magyar társadalom egyértelműen békét, európai és keresztény értékeken, hagyományos családmódelen alapuló Magyarországot akar, és nem kér a központosított brüsszeli bürokrácia gyámságából.

Abból, hogy civil álcába bújtatott politikai aktivistákat a jog fölé emeljenek és beavatkozzanak hazánk szuverenitásába, egy brüsszeli bürokratikából álló hatalmaskodó európai testület felügyelje a magyarországi médiapiacot, külső hatalmak és érdekcsoportok döntsék el helyettünk, hogy mit olvashatunk, mit nézhetünk! Az Európai Parlamentben ma elfogadott rendeletjavaslat arra irányul, hogy Brüsszel kézivezérlésűvé tegye a tagállami tömegközvetítést is, megtörje a véleményszabadságot, biztosítsa, hogy kizárólag a Brüsszel által helyesnek tartott tartalmakat sugározzák. Ez teljesen abszurd!

Mi kiállunk a véleményszabadság és média szabadsága és pluralitása mellett. Nem engedünk a szuverenitásunkból! Mi nem kérünk a külső beavatkozásból, a brüsszeli propagandából, hogy a háború jó dolog, hogy a migránsáradat fellendíti és szebbé teszi országunkat, hogy nincs is annál haladőbb, mint ha a gyermekeinket gender aktivisták érzékenyítik, hogy újságíróknak mutakozó Soros aktivistákat emeljenek a törvények fölé. Mi végsőkéig kiállunk az újságírók védelme és a szabad véleménynyilvánítás mellett!

Klára Dobrev (S&D), írásban. – Tisztelt Ház! Régóta hangoztatjuk, hogy a magyarországi demokráciát nem az Európai Unió intézményeinek, hanem nekünk, magyaroknak kell helyreállítanunk. Időről-időre az Európai Unió mégis a magyar demokrácia segítségére tud sietni akkor, amikor az intézmények működésének demokratikus alapjait lefekteti. Miután a magyarországi helyzet egyik legneuralgikusabb eleme a média helyzete, pontosabban a közszolgálati média pártirányítás alá helyezése, a független média bedarálása és egy más európai országban elképzelhetetlen médiakoncentráció.

Éppen ezért a magyar demokraták nevében is köszönöm ezt a javaslatot, amely méltó támogatásunkra. Ugyanakkor őszintén meg kell mondani azt is, hogy ennél többre van szükség. Szükséges a médiakonzentrációval szembeni erőteljesebb fellépés, szükség lenne az állami hirdetések korlátozására. Fontos lenne a kapcsolódó szolgáltatások, mint terjesztés és nyomtatás legyen figyelembevétele, hiszen ezek koncentrációja is lehet negatív hatással a médiapluralizmusra. Foglalkozni kell a közmédia finanszírozásának kritériumaival és a Board munkáját is át kellene alakítani.

Mindezeket a szempontokat módosító javaslataikba foglaltuk, és bízunk abban, hogy a parlament támogatja azokat. Így fogunk tudni nem csak egész Európában, hanem Magyarországon is a jelenleginél sokkal színesebb, plurálisabb, egy szóval demokratikusabb médiaviszonyokat elérni! Köszönöm szíves figyelmüket és támogatásukat!

Maria Grapini (S&D), *în scris*. – Legea europeană privind libertatea mass-mediei este o necesitate, și nu un moft politic. Legea răspunde la problemele reale din UE, privind informațiile false, obstrucționarea unor jurnaliști de a spune adevărul sau de manipularea dirijată de grupuri politice. Ce cred eu este că noi, cei care reglementăm, trebuie să fim atenți la termenii pe care îi folosim. Corect este să spunem că protejăm democrația, nu protejăm jurnaliștii! Nu obstrucționăm informațiile din mass-media, ci dorim să eliminăm știrile false. Personal, susțin legea europeană privind libertatea mass-mediei și doresc să mulțumesc asociațiilor mass-media din țara mea care m-au ținut la curent cu problemele reale din domeniu. Fără informații complete și corecte, nu putem lua decizii corecte în politici publice. Mass-media trebuie să rămână un stâlp al democrației care ajută la cunoașterea realității și pune presiune pe autoritățile naționale și europene să respecte drepturile cetățenilor.

(La seduta è sospesa per pochi istanti)

PRESIDENZA: ROBERTA METSOLA

President

6. Genoptagelse af mødet

(The sitting resumed at 12.03)

7. Mindehøjtidelighed for tragedien ved Lampedusa for 10 år siden (erklæring fra formanden)

President. – Dear colleagues, we have an important, solemn occasion to mark.

Today marks 10 years since the Lampedusa shipwreck: a terrible tragedy that claimed the lives of over 360 people.

And the sad truth is that the migrant shipwreck of 2013 has far from been an isolated tragedy. The cemetery of the Mediterranean has claimed the lives of thousands more women, children and men since then.

The recent emergencies on the island of Lampedusa, as well as on other neighbouring countries, serve as a reminder that migration is our generation's challenge. Now Europe must respond in a way that is fair and humane with those seeking protection, that is firm with those who are not eligible, and that is strong with criminal networks who are still exploiting the vulnerable.

With only half a year before the end of our mandate, we need an agreement between the European Parliament and the Council on the Asylum and Migration Pact before the end of the term. We will discuss the urgency of the package's adoption tomorrow in this Chamber.

The European Parliament's commitment to finding a way forward remains unwavering. For all those who lost their lives, for all the victims of exploitation, for all those families never to be reunited. The European Parliament remembers them.

Salvatore De Meo, a nome del gruppo PPE. – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, oggi è il giorno del ricordo, ma anche della riflessione. La tragedia umana di Lampedusa e gli oltre 28 000 migranti morti e dispersi nel Mediterraneo negli ultimi dieci anni rappresentano la sconfitta dell'Europa, e nessuno di noi lo può negare.

Nel frattempo abbiamo usato e abusato della parola «solidarietà», ma si tratta di una solidarietà millantata e mai applicata. E lo conferma il fatto che al momento opportuno ci si tira indietro e alcuni Stati vengono lasciati soli ad affrontare una crisi che non è più emergenziale ma strutturale, e per la quale l'Europa e le stesse Nazioni Unite devono fare di più, sviluppando una strategia in Africa per creare condizioni di vita migliori.

Abbiamo il dovere di favorire meccanismi di migrazione regolare, come quello dei corridoi umanitari, ma soprattutto e prioritariamente dobbiamo combattere senza indugi i trafficanti di esseri umani che vendono il rischio della vita mascherandolo da sogno europeo.

Non commettiamo oggi l'errore di sminuire l'importanza di questa giornata con forme di polemica e di strumentalizzazione, perché oggi non è l'occasione per puntarci il dito contro, oggi è il giorno del ricordo, è il giorno del dolore. E proprio questo dolore deve essere il punto di partenza che ci dia la forza per trovare soluzioni vere e condivise.

Pietro Bartolo, a nome del gruppo S&D. – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, dieci anni sono passati da quella terribile notte. Sento ancora le grida dei sopravvissuti e i pianti di chi aveva perso i propri cari durante la traversata e vedo ancora la lunga e interminabile fila di sacchi di cadaveri adagiati sul molo Favalaro: 368. Io ero lì, ho accolto quei corpi e li ho anche esaminati, uno per uno.

In tanti e anche io abbiamo creduto che di fronte a tanta disperazione si potesse voltare pagina e iniziare finalmente a considerare la migrazione come un fenomeno strutturale da gestire e non come un'emergenza da contrastare. Invece, da quel 3 ottobre ci separano dieci anni di indifferenza, dieci anni di assuefazione, dieci anni di rinvii e, soprattutto, dieci anni di stragi in mare.

Mentre continuiamo a parlare di frontiere da difendere, come se dovessimo fermare dei nemici o fossimo in guerra, donne, uomini e bambini continuano a morire. Ma attenzione, insieme a queste persone muoiono anche i valori fondanti dell'Unione europea, nata per difendere i diritti umani e lo Stato di diritto. Dobbiamo cambiare passo e scegliere da che parte stare. È una nostra responsabilità.

Nicola Danti, a nome del gruppo Renew. – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, ricordiamo oggi un evento luttuoso che non è stato altro che il primo di una lunga serie che è ancora in corso. Dieci anni dopo il tragico naufragio cosa è cambiato? Forse il lembo di mare o la spiaggia dove raccogliamo i cadaveri, come solo qualche mese fa a Cutro. Ma gli eventi non cambiano, e non è cambiata la politica europea sull'immigrazione, ancora cieca a questo dolore.

Eppure in questi anni abbiamo visto immagini che ci hanno fatto piangere, come quella del corpo del piccolo Alan Kurdi, con la sua maglietta rossa, disteso sulla spiaggia di Bodrum. Ma questo susseguirsi di morti in mare non ha reso le nostre coscienze più indignate o le nostre opinioni pubbliche più sensibili. Come dimostra la Storia, ci si può abituare al male, si può perdere l'indignazione, si può affievolire l'umanità. Ecco il rischio che stiamo correndo, cari colleghi.

Dovremmo sentire in quest'Aula il peso di 2 500 anni di civiltà, di storia, di umanità. Questa è la responsabilità che abbiamo oggi, e invece ci riduciamo a piccole polemiche politiche tra Stati europei sul ruolo delle ONG nel Mediterraneo. A dieci anni da Lampedusa, a otto dal canale di Sicilia, a pochi mesi da Cutro e dal naufragio del Peloponneso, stiamo continuando a tradire i nostri valori e la nostra civiltà.

Erik Marquardt, im Namen der Verts/ALE-Fraktion. – Frau Präsidentin! Das Unglück von Lampedusa jährt sich zum zehnten Mal. Binnen weniger Tage sind damals 600 Menschen ums Leben gekommen – Männer, Frauen und Kinder, bei denen dann später herauskam, dass sie zu großen Teilen in Libyen gefoltert und vergewaltigt wurden.

Die Frage ist, wo stehen wir jetzt, zehn Jahre nach diesem schrecklichen Unglück? Inzwischen sind seitdem 28 000 - Menschen ertrunken, und statt der Seenotrettung im Mittelmeer finanzieren wir Milizen in Libyen, die selbst in Schlepperei verwickelt sind. Wir finanzieren, dass möglichst viele derjenigen, die jetzt gefoltert, vergewaltigt und teilweise versklavt werden, nicht mehr aus diesen Situationen fliehen können. Und diejenigen, die dann angesichts dieses tausendfachen Todes helfen wollen, werden kriminalisiert und diffamiert. Dabei zeigen viele Studien, dass nicht sie der Grund dafür sind, dass Menschen sich auf den Weg machen, sondern sie sind der Grund dafür, dass weniger Menschen ertrinken.

Frau Präsidentin, als wir 2012 den Friedensnobelpreis erhielten, da hat das Nobelpreiskomitee gesagt: „Die Europäische Union hat aus einem Kontinent des Krieges einen Kontinent des Friedens gemacht.“ Ich glaube, wir müssen nun aufpassen, dass wir aus diesem Kontinent nicht einen Kontinent machen, der einen Krieg gegen Schutzsuchende führt. Ich glaube, im Umgang mit den Schwächsten zeigt sich, wie stark Europa wirklich ist.

Nicola Procaccini, *a nome del gruppo ECR*. – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, Pietro, non ti sarà sfuggito che questo dibattito si svolge grazie a noi che abbiamo votato a favore della tua richiesta, altrimenti non si sarebbe svolto. Non lo abbiamo fatto per evidenziare come il 3 ottobre 2013 alla guida del governo italiano e della Commissione europea vi fossero uomini del Partito Democratico e socialista. A differenza di quanto accaduto alcune settimane fa in occasione del naufragio di Cutro, noi non speculiamo sulla morte delle persone.

Ma ci tengo a ribadire oggi che l'unico modo per impedire il ripetersi costante di tragedie come quelle che stiamo ricordando è contenere le partenze dei migranti, spesso in balia dei trafficanti di esseri umani. Anche perché la gran parte di coloro che si mettono in viaggio non hanno diritto alla protezione internazionale e devono essere rimpatriati. Dunque rischiano la loro vita invano.

Onoriamo la memoria di chi è scomparso tra le acque di Lampedusa con la giusta commozione, ma anche con onestà, altrimenti sarà stata un'altra occasione sprecata.

Annalisa Tardino, *a nome del gruppo ID*. – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, qualcuno qui in quest'Aula ha il coraggio di strumentalizzare la strage di Lampedusa, in cui dieci anni fa annegarono 368 migranti, ed è un atto vile.

Quella tragedia è servita in questi dieci anni per costruire un castello mediatico di buonismo, di perbenismo e di belle parole dietro le quali si nascondono, nemmeno tanto velatamente, grandi business internazionali e affari criminali, con i quali l'Europa molto spesso è connivente.

Dopo dieci anni nulla si è fatto per evitare altre morti, ma anzi, con il concorso omissivo di molti di voi, avete reso il nostro mare il più grande cimitero d'Europa.

Aiutiamo veramente chi sogna una vita migliore a casa propria, mettiamoli nelle condizioni di non scappare da nessuna guerra, di venire in Europa legalmente. Bloccate i flussi irregolari e quelle ONG che agevolano il traffico di esseri umani.

Fermare le partenze significa fermare le morti in mare. Se avete a cuore le istituzioni europee, aiutiamo Lampedusa a essere parte dell'Europa a pieno titolo, e non solo il confine più lontano in cui relegare ciò che qui, nel vostro cuore europeo, non volete.

Cornelia Ernst, *im Namen der Fraktion The Left*. – Frau Präsidentin! Zehn Jahre nach dem furchtbaren Unglück von Lampedusa hat sich nichts geändert. Bis heute sind weitere 28 500 Menschen im Mittelmeer gestorben – gestorben an Achtlosigkeit, Rassismus, gestorben in den Fluten, an Dehydrierung, brutalen Pushbacks, ausgeführt von Mitgliedstaaten und geduldet von der Kommission.

Rat und Kommission haben in den letzten zehn Jahren wirklich alles getan, um Asyl und Migration zu kriminalisieren, und wollen jetzt per Gesetz gewissermaßen das individuelle Recht auf Asyl zum Teufel jagen. Damit liefern sie Geflüchtete an Faschisten und Rechtspopulisten aus und werden zu Helfershelfern bei der Zerstörung der Demokratie – hier mitten in Europa!

Wir als Linke werden niemals aufhören, gegen eine solche Politik anzukämpfen, und uns mit allen verbünden, die die Menschenrechte verteidigen. Wir müssen unser Europa vor der Rückkehr zu Menschenverachtung und blindem Nationalismus retten, um unserer selbst willen.

President. – That concludes the round of speakers.

8. Erklæring fra formanden

President. – Colleagues, today also marks 33 years since the Day of German Unity – *der Tag der Deutschen Einheit*.

Today marks the coming together of East and West Germany to reunify the people of Germany. It made Germany whole and erased a scar that blemished all of Europe. It sowed the seeds of the next step of European integration. It was a watershed moment in European history that symbolised freedom, transformation and hope. It showed the world that people are able to come together despite the obstacles.

This day stands as an annual reminder of our responsibility to our values, to our people and to our perseverance. So we remember and we honour the legacy that we have inherited.

(Applause)

I will now give the floor to Clare Daly, who has asked to make a point of order.

Clare Daly (The Left). – Madam President, I would like to make a point of order under Rule 10 of the Rules of Procedures.

During yesterday's opening session, a French ID Group MEP made false and defamatory statements about an event organised by myself and Mick Wallace and those who participated in it, thereby bringing the Parliament into disrepute.

Let me be very clear: the speakers at our event, who were former detainees at Guantanamo, were never charged – not to mind convicted – of any terrorist activity. They were the victims of brutal torture and a violation of their rights. And they remain an outstanding example of the resilience of the human spirit. It was an honour for us to share a platform with them and the other speakers whom the gentleman conveniently forgot to mention: current US military and civilian lawyers, a former US military chaplain, the UN Special Rapporteur for the protection of fundamental rights and the prosecution of terrorism, and most importantly, a representative of the families of the victims of 9/11. All united ...

(The President cut off the speaker)

President. – Thank you very much, Ms Daly. We will move to the vote now. Thank you very much, your point has been made.

9. Afstemningstid

President. – The next item is the vote.

(For the results and other details concerning the vote: see minutes)

9.1. Udnævnelse af formanden for Den Europæiske Centralbanks tilsynsråd (A9-0272/2023 - Irene Tinagli) (afstemning)

9.2. Beskyttelse af arbejdstagere mod asbest (A9-0160/2023 - Véronique Trillet-Lenoir) (afstemning)

– *After the vote:*

President. – Let's take a moment, dear colleagues, to pay homage to the rapporteur, Véronique Trillet-Lenoir, who sadly passed away. This legislation was presented following Parliament's legislative initiative report and will protect people at work from the dangerous exposure to asbestos. Protecting people from the risk of cancer is a fitting tribute to Véronique and we honour her with the adoption of this text today.

(Loud and sustained applause)

9.3. Tredjelandes økonomiske tvang (A9-0246/2022 - Bernd Lange) (afstemning)

9.4. Intelligente transportsystemer på vejtransportområdet (A9-0265/2022 - Rovana Plumb) (afstemning)

9.5. Interimsbetænkning om forslag til en midtvejsrevision af den flerårige finansielle ramme 2021-2027 (A9-0273/2023 - Jan Olbrycht, Margarida Marques) (afstemning)

– Before the vote on paragraph 15:

Moritz Körner (Renew). – Frau Präsidentin, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Heute Morgen haben uns Berichte erreicht, dass die Kommission darüber nachdenkt, Teile des Geldes, das gegenüber der Regierung von Ungarn eingefroren wurde, freizugeben im Austausch dafür, Unterstützung für ein stärkeres EU-Budget zu bekommen. Ich finde, wir müssen heute klarmachen: Gerade als proeuropäische Fraktion haben wir für diesen Rechtsstaatsmechanismus gekämpft. Er ist ein Erfolg dieses Europäischen Parlaments.

Wir machen eindeutig klar: Es darf keinen dreckigen Deal mit Orbán geben, Frau von der Leyen!

(Beifall)

Es darf kein Geld freigegeben werden, bis alle Kriterien erfüllt sind und wir wieder in Ungarn stärkere Rechtsstaatlichkeit haben! Deswegen lese ich den entsprechenden mündlichen Änderungsantrag vor:

Insists that changes to the MFF shall have no negative impact on the protection of the EU budget against breaches of the rule of law. Reiterates that funds that are currently withheld shall not be released to Member States as long as the conditions for freeing the funds have not fully been met. Please support this amendment.

(The oral amendment was not accepted)

9.6. Europæisk retsakt om mediefrihed (A9-0264/2023 - Sabine Verheyen) (afstemning)

– After the vote on the Commission proposal:

Sabine Verheyen (PPE). – Madam President, thank you very much, colleagues, for the great support. Today we took a milestone to safeguard media freedom in the EU. I would like to thank everybody who has worked on this important file and has supported us here today. Therefore, based on Rule 59(4), I request the matter to be referred back to the committee for interinstitutional negotiations so that we can close the file hopefully at the end of the year, but at the latest at the end of this legislative term.

(Parliament approved the request for referral back to committee)

9.7. Indsigelse, jf. forretningsordenens artikel 112, stk. 2 og 3: genetisk modificeret MON 89034 × 1507 × MIR162 × NK603 × DAS-40278-9-majs og ni underkombinationer (B9-0387/2023) (afstemning)

9.8. Indsigelse, jf. forretningsordenens artikel 112, stk. 2 og 3: genetisk modificeret MIR162-majs (B9-0388/2023) (afstemning)

9.9. Sikring af, at europæisk transport opfylder kvinders behov (A9-0239/2023 - Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska) (afstemning)

President. – That concludes the vote.

(The sitting was suspended at 12.42)

PRESIDÊNCIA: PEDRO SILVA PEREIRA

Vice-Presidente

10. Genoptagelse af mødet

Presidente. – (A sessão é reiniciada às 12h47.)

11. Korrupt omfattende salg af Schengenvisa (forhandling)

Presidente. – Segue-se o debate sobre a Declaração da Comissão sobre a corrupção associada à venda em larga escala de vistos Schengen (2023/2878(RSP))

Margaritis Schinas, Vice-President of the Commission. – Mr President, honourable Members, the Schengen Area is the largest area of borderless travel in the world. So far, it includes 27 European countries and benefits 425 million people. Together with our single market, the euro and Erasmus, Schengen is the jewel of our EU crown.

Schengen has brought Europe liberty, prosperity, movement, mobility. Last year, it was the most visited destination in the whole world, with 585 million tourists visiting, 65% of the world's total. The absence of border checks between our Member States is part of our way of life, is part of our European identity. Holders of visas, be it Schengen short-stay visas or national long-stay visas, can move freely within this huge borderless travel area.

The Schengen Area relies on the effective and efficient application by the participating states of the Schengen acquis. But let me be clear, crystal clear: Schengen relies above all on trust. To maintain mutual trust among participating states and a well-functioning area without internal border controls, it is crucial that each Schengen state shows a responsible attitude.

Transparency and accountability are equally important elements to maintain trust. Schengen states are the ones who decide which third-country nationals are entitled to obtain the right to enter to our common space. Obviously, what happens in the Schengen Area, what happens in the Schengen states, affects the functioning of all Schengen countries.

That is why the alleged cases of fraud and corruption in the Polish visa system are extremely worrying. If third-country nationals have been allowed the right of free movement within Schengen without respecting the appropriate conditions and procedures, this would amount to a violation of EU law, in particular the EU Visa Code.

The Commission is in close contact with the Polish authorities and expects them to investigate these allegations seriously and address any wrongdoing if and when established. To shed light on these allegations, we have asked for detailed answers to a series of 11 specific questions related to this matter in a letter addressed to the Polish Minister of Foreign affairs on 19 September.

We want to have clarity, for instance, on the numbers and types of visas and consular posts affected, as well as the whereabouts of the visa holders. We also want clarity on the structural measures that the Polish authorities are taking to ensure that the system is protected against any possible fraud and corrupt behaviour. The Polish Government sent us some initial elements of a reply on 21 September. The Commission replied to this letter five days later, asking still for detailed answers to the full set of questions asked.

In its capacity as guardian of the treaties. The Commission expects to receive all the information to be able to analyse it and assess the situation, and also evaluate in this framework the impact of the application of the EU law. Let me conclude as I started. We need full clarity to reinstate trust, because clarity and trust go hand in hand.

Jeroen Lenaers, *on behalf of the PPE Group*. – Mr President, free travel within the Schengen area is one of the most important freedoms that European citizens enjoy. It's a right and a privilege. It is not a product for sale to the highest bidder. And it's the Member States' responsibility to enforce our common rules and protect the integrity of the Schengen area so that our borders are secure and free movement is guaranteed.

It is indeed crystal clear that the Polish Government has spectacularly failed to fulfil this responsibility. Illegally issuing Schengen visas and allowing persons into the EU that would not be eligible for visas in normal circumstances has put serious pressure on the reputation and the security of the European Union. It's hypocrisy at its finest – publicly constantly criticising the EU for being too weak on illegal migration, but simultaneously, through the backdoor, allowing so many people to come to Europe while filling your own pockets.

How can we credibly intensify the fight against people smugglers when the Polish government turns out to be the biggest smuggler of them all? It is a scandal. The whole EU suffers because people, including from countries with high terrorist threat levels, obtained visas in exchange for bribes, bypassing necessary security checks. The Polish Government has put the safety of all Europeans at risk. As a result, people crossing the Polish-German border may now be subject to border checks because the Polish Government has jeopardised the functioning of the Schengen zone at the expense of its own citizens.

We must indeed get to the bottom of this. We expect the Polish Government to thoroughly and urgently investigate this scandal and share the results in full before the European Union. We call on the Commission to effectively scrutinise all actions of the Polish Government in this regard because, colleagues, this latest scandal is not a standalone issue. It is symptomatic of a wider dismantling of rule of law in Poland, where the system of checks and balances has been replaced by arbitrary rule of government loyalists with nothing but contempt for Polish and EU law and, clearly, the security of the Schengen zone and our common borders.

Robert Biedroń, *w imieniu grupy S&D*. – Panie Przewodniczący! Hipokryzja i cynizm rządu PiS sięgnęły zenitu. Z jednej strony, PiS szczerze na biednych ludzi, którzy utknęli na granicy białoruskiej, żerując politycznie na ich nieszczęściu. Z drugiej, sprzedaje na lewo i prawo wizy jak sałatę na straganie pod polskimi konsulatami.

Trzeba dzisiaj powiedzieć jasno: PiS stworzył mafię wizową, która naruszyła fundamenty bezpieczeństwa Polski i Unii Europejskiej. W każdym państwie jest mafia, ale Polska stała się pierwszym państwem rządzonym przez mafię. Politycy PiS okazali się cynicznymi handlarzami bezpieczeństwa Polaków i Europejczyków, ich stabilności pracy i bezpieczeństwa dzieci.

Przypomnę, każdego dnia prawie sto tysięcy Polaków dojeżdża do pracy w Niemczech. Polacy odszukajcie w szufladach wasze paszporty, bo zaraz przez głupotę PiS-u będziemy ich potrzebowali.

W 2007 r. prezydent Lech Kaczyński wprowadzał Polskę do strefy Schengen. Dzisiaj spaliłby się ze wstydu, gdyby zobaczył, jak jego brat demoluje interes Polski w Europie. Polacy chcą mieć poczucie, że rząd dba o ich bezpieczeństwo. Polacy chcą być w strefie Schengen. Polacy chcą być w Unii Europejskiej. Już za chwilę damy tego świadectwo.

President. – Dear colleagues, I must urge you to be silent during the speeches so that we can listen to the speaker.

Róża Thun und Hohenstein, w imieniu grupy Renew. – Wszyscy zostaliśmy oszukani przez rząd, który sam siebie nazwał „Prawem i Sprawiedliwością” i, o ironio, z tym hasłem na ustach handluje naszymi wizami na straganach różnych krajów. Tak, naszymi – to są wizy Schengen, a Schengen funkcjonuje dzięki zaufaniu, że wszyscy rządzący przestrzegają wspólnych zasad. To zaufanie zostało potężnie naruszone przez rząd, który, udając, że broni naszych granic, łamie prawo. Nie przyjmując wniosków o ochronę prawną od uchodźców na granicy, stosując brutalne *pushbacki*, doprowadza do śmierci ludzi poszukujących pomocy. Ci sami strażnicy naszego bezpieczeństwa wpuszczają jednak do naszej wspólnej przestrzeni Schengen bez żadnej kontroli tych, którzy zapłacili im sowite łapówki.

Tak, zdaję sobie sprawę, jak bardzo ten rząd, który beczelnie nazywa siebie „Prawem i Sprawiedliwością”, podważył wasze zaufanie. Nasze zaufanie, zaufanie polskich obywateli, podważył już dawno.

Głośno krzyczeliśmy to przedwcześniej milionem gardeł na ulicach Warszawy i tysiącami gardeł na tysiącach spotkań w mniejszych miejscowościach w całej Polsce. Kaczyński twierdzi, że nic się nie stało i że nie ma żadnej afery. Jak to nie ma, skoro kilka osób odpowiedzialnych za handel wizami wyładowało w areszcie, a wiceminister spraw zagranicznych został z dnia na dzień pozbawiony stanowiska?

Dziś, proszę państwa, 75% polskiego eksportu trafia do innych krajów Unii, z czego jedna trzecia do Niemiec. Wiemy, że grozi nam zamknięcie granic. Apeluję więc do was, aby wprowadzając kontrole, nie karać polskich obywateli i przedsiębiorców, bo to rząd wystawił nas na ryzyko gigantycznych kosztów i być może utraty wielu miejsc pracy.

Ta sprawa musi zostać dokładnie wyjaśniona. Dlatego apeluję do polskich władz o udzielenie wyczerpujących odpowiedzi na pytania Komisji Europejskiej i o wyciągnięcie konsekwencji w stosunku do wszystkich osób zamieszanych w ten makabryczny skandal. A wam, koleżanki i koledzy, obiecuję, że zmienimy ten rząd 15 października! To będzie bardzo trudne zadanie, bo kampania wyborcza nie jest ani równa, ani uczciwa. Ale zwyciężymy! Wrócimy, żeby znowu wspólnie budować Unię przestrzegającą praw, szanującą człowieka, Unię zieloną i solidarną, silną i bezpieczną.

President. – First of all, colleagues, I have to ask you to stick to the allocated time. Second, I would ask you once again to listen to the speakers, and to be silent so that we can listen to the speeches. You know the rules, so this is a warning and I hope you can respect that. You will all have time to express your views, but please don't do it during the interventions of other colleagues.

Erik Marquardt, im Namen der Verts/ALE-Fraktion. – Herr Präsident, Herr Kommissar Schinas! Sie haben es gesagt, das Schengen-System ist nicht nur eine der größten Errungenschaften, die wir uns als Europäische Union, als Europa geschaffen haben, sondern es ist eben auch etwas sehr Fragiles, wenn das Vertrauen in dieses Schengen-System erschüttert wird.

Was ich schon wichtig festzuhalten finde, ist, dass die polnische Regierung gerade nicht daran arbeitet, bei diesen Vorwürfen das Vertrauen zurückzugewinnen. Ich glaube, wir werden vor den polnischen Wahlen nichts darüber erfahren, wie es um diesen Skandal steht. Wir werden nur erleben, dass die polnische Regierung diesen Skandal kleinredet, weil ihr der eigene Vorteil wichtiger ist als das Schengen-System in Europa. Ich finde, das kann man auch einmal festhalten.

Ich glaube auch, dass wir einfach sehen, dass man, wenn man Rechtsstaatlichkeit in einem Land abbaut, dann weniger Rechtsstaatlichkeit hat. Die Regierungen wie die polnische mögen dann behaupten, sie würden das aus irgendwelchen hehren Zielen gegen irgendwelche bösen Mächte machen. Aber eigentlich – und das muss man, glaube ich, auch der polnischen Bevölkerung sagen – macht diese Regierung das zum eigenen Vorteil. Und so sieht es ja auch in diesem Skandal aus.

Es sieht so aus, als würde Rechtsstaatlichkeit abgebaut werden, damit Korruption leichter wird. Wir sehen das nicht nur im Visasystem, wir sehen ja auch – und das muss ich auch aus deutscher Perspektive einmal sagen –, dass das Vertrauen in das Schengen-System von der polnischen Regierung erschüttert wird – wenn man den Eindruck hat, Polen tut so, als würde es gerne die Außengrenzen schützen, als würde es Zäune bauen, aber was dann am Ende passiert, ist, dass sie auf der einen Seite Menschen nicht, wie es im EU-Recht vorgesehen ist, an den Außengrenzen registrieren, sondern sie verprügeln, sie immer wieder über die Grenze schicken und irgendwann dann einmal Menschen an der deutschen Grenze stehen, die nicht nur geschädigt sind von den Erfahrungen mit der polnischen Grenzpolizei, sondern die eben

auch unregistriert sind.

Ich finde, so kann man nicht mit dem Schengen-System umgehen. So kann man mit den Errungenschaften Europas, so, wie die polnische Regierung es gerade tut, kann man mit Europa nicht umgehen. Und wenn man dann immer das eine verspricht und das andere tut, dann, finde ich, kann man auch mit der Demokratie in der Politik so nicht umgehen, wie es die polnische Regierung gerade tut.

Patryk Jaki, *w imieniu grupy ECR*. – Panie Przewodniczący! Panie Komisarzu! Ten dzień przejdzie do historii Parlamentu Europejskiego jako szczyt obłudy i hipokryzji.

Są dwie metody radzenia sobie z nielegalną migracją. Jedna metoda to jest metoda polska obozu Zjednoczonej Prawicy. Mianowicie blokujemy wszystkie projekty przymusowej relokacji od lat. Zbudowaliśmy mur na granicy, aby zatrzymać nielegalną migrację i nawet uruchomiliśmy akcję służb specjalnych, aby wykryć i zatrzymać nielegalny proceder dotyczący 268 wiz – sztuk.

Za to jest druga metoda. To jest wasza metoda. Zaprosiliście tu miliony nielegalnych migrantów. Jak się okazało, niemiecki rząd finansuje łódzie z tymi nielegalnymi imigrantami, a zarabia na tym partner jednej z posłanek Bundestagu.

Jakie są efekty jednej i drugiej metody? Efekty naszej metody – proszę bardzo: według waszych statystyk Polska należy do najbezpieczniejszych państw Unii Europejskiej. A wasze efekty? Efekty waszej metody? Setki zabitych ludzi, wybuchające bomby, zamachy, wojny gangów, niespotykana liczba gwałtów, w tym na małych dziewczynkach, traumy dla kobiet na całe życie. I to jest wasza odpowiedzialność. Wojsko potrzebne na ulicach Francji i Szwecji, bo zwykle sposoby nie radzą sobie już z gangami imigracyjnymi.

I Wy śmiecie oskarżać Polskę. Was po prostu boli ten kontrast. Polska jest waszym wyrzutem sumienia, pomnikiem, dowodem na to, że może być bezpiecznie. I dowodem na to, jak zdradziliście własnych mieszkańców. I dlatego potrzebujecie Tuska. On ma ten kontrast zamazać. My jednak na to nie pozwolimy. Polska stanie na czele racjonalnej Europy i w referendum obali wasz system migracyjny, a za nami pójdą inne państwa.

Anders Vistisen, *for ID-Gruppen*. – Hr. Formand! Det grænseløse Europa har været en katastrofe. En katastrofe, der har ramt helt almindelige mennesker, danskere, europæere hårdt. Med et sandt slaraffenland. En gave for organiserede kriminelle, menneskesmuglere og ulovlige migranter. Den skandale, vi behandler i dag, hvor op imod 250.000 - en kvart million - visa'er er blevet udstedt ulovligt til hele Schengen-zonen, kommer i en perlerække af andre skandaler, hvor vi har set Malta og Cypern blive beskyldt for nøjagtigt det samme, nemlig at sælge ud af vores fælles sikkerhed for ussel mammon, lade ulovlige migranter komme til Europa, få adgang til hele vores kontinent fuldstændigt ukontrolleret, bare fordi man har modtaget lidt bestikkelse i Afrika eller Asien, ved en lavt rangerende diplomat. Og hvad gør Europa ved problemet? Ja, Kommissionen står og roser Schengensamarbejdet. Flertallet her i huset vil bekæmpe grænsekontrol med ethvert middel, mens enhver fornuftig regering, enhver fornuftig nationalstat vil sige: Lad os genindføre en pragmatisk permanent grænsekontrol, så vi ikke skal foranledige os på det svageste link i Europa, så vi ikke skal give nøglerne til vores hoveddør til folk, der lader sig bestikke for få tusinde euro, men så ethvert land hver for sig kan skabe sikkerhed, fremgang og fremskridt for vores borgere. Det er ægte europæisk solidaritet. Lad os få grænsekontrollen tilbage.

Clare Daly, *on behalf of The Left Group*. – Mr President, I have to admit that today's debate makes me deeply uncomfortable. We have an agreement in here not to try to influence the outcome of national elections by scheduling debates just before national electorates go to the polls. Yet, here we are just two weeks out from the Polish elections, having this debate. With another plenary in a fortnight just after those elections are over, could we not have waited until then? What's the urgency? Of course, there isn't any.

There's an investigation underway, and this could have waited until 16 October. Now, it should go without saying that I'm no fan of the Polish Government, or of any other one for that matter, but these days you seem to have to explain everything. I'm not a fan either of this Parliament being used to thumb the scales in a domestic election battle. To do that is an abuse of the Parliament's position, and if the right wing are the targets today, it will be the left tomorrow and the centre the day after that.

Does the Polish Government have questions to answer? Sure they do, on this and a hell of a lot of other things as well. To be honest, they should answer them. There should be an independent investigation and, as a parliament, we can debate the outcome of that. However, to everybody in here who has been clutching their pearls about all of this, I'd say Europe's border regime is massively and murderously unjust and wrong. Money and power make borders dissolve, and governments from every big political group in here presides over visa and immigration regimes where money, power and whiteness gives you privileged access to the EU.

By all means be critical of fraud and corruption in the sale of visas, but while you're at it, you might turn your attention to the really large-scale problems with Europe's borders, the ones that most of your governments support and enforce.

Kinga Gál (NI). – Mr President, today's debate is a serious and unacceptable attempt of external interference in the Polish electoral process, contrary to the principles of democracy and national sovereignty. If it had been the real matter – anyway an exaggerated and constructed case – this debate could have easily been postponed for the next plenary session in two weeks, after the Polish elections.

In this way, it rather seems that the aim is to try to bring to heel the sovereign conservative Polish Government for standing up strong against illegal migration, for refusing to accept a mandatory migrants quota, and for defending national sovereignty. This is what is not acceptable to Brussels and the pro-migration majority of this European Parliament, which supports with all means, therefore, Donald Tusk.

Such attempts from this room have repeatedly proved unsuccessful in the case of Hungary. Neither Hungarian nor Polish voters want the fate of their country to be decided in Strasbourg or in Brussels. On 15 October, the Poles will have a good opportunity to give a strong response to this unacceptable pressure.

Dalej, Polsko!

Bartosz Arłukowicz (PPE). – A co wy żeście, posłowie PiS-u tak do ostatnich ławek puciekali? Wstyd, co? Myślicie, że was tam Europa i Polska nie zobaczy? Wszyscy was tam widzą. Jak się straszycie pierwotniakami, jak się straszycie robakami, jak się straszycie gwałtami, mordami, a potem za kasę otwierało stragany z polskimi widzami, to musi być wstyd! I wszyscy was widzą.

Mam pytanie do Komisji: czy Komisja zna skalę tego procesu korupcyjno-mafijnego handlu polskimi widzami? W ilu krajach to się działo? Ilu migrantów, ile tysięcy migrantów do Polski, do Europy wjechało nielegalnie? I w końcu chcę zapytać Komisję o rzecz chyba najważniejszą: czy wiecie, czy pośród tych migrantów, którzy kupili polskie wizy na afrykańskich i azjatyckich straganach, były osoby, które stanowią zagrożenie dla Europy, dla Polski, dla Stanów Zjednoczonych? Czy Komisja posiada taką wiedzę? I ostatnie pytanie do Komisji: czy prawdą jest i czy macie wiedzę, że Stany Zjednoczone już w 2022 roku informowały o nielegalnym procesie handlu polskimi wizami?

President. – Colleagues, first of all let me say that as I am chairing the sitting I take note of the fact that our colleague Bartosz Arłukowicz has used an electoral banner during the intervention, which is against the rules. This will be considered by the Bureau.

I have to make a second call to order pursuant to Rule 175(2), so I do insist with colleagues to listen respectfully to those who have the floor.

Juan Fernando López Aguilar (S&D). – Señor presidente, señor vicepresidente Schinas, Schengen es el bien máspreciado, seguramente la mejor consecución de la experiencia europea y el derecho fundamental que los europeos disfrutan más. Por tanto, basándose en la confianza mutua, cualquier violación de las reglas de ese espacio sin fronteras interiores —que necesita una gobernanza— debe ser tomada muy en serio por la Comisión, que es guardiana de los Tratados y del Derecho europeo.

Y estamos hablando nada menos que de una venta corrupta a gran escala de visados para entrar en el espacio Schengen. Por tanto, la Comisión tiene todo el deber de llegar absolutamente hasta el fondo de esa investigación, cualquiera que sea el país al que afecte y cualquiera que sea el número de visados —y ¡vaya si es alarmante lo que publican algunos medios de comunicación!— que han estado expuestos a esta trama corrupta.

No estamos hablando solamente del derecho fundamental a la libre circulación y del acceso a una Europa sin fronteras y de la gobernanza correcta de Schengen de acuerdo con la confianza mutua; estamos hablando de la lucha contra la corrupción. Y, si este Parlamento Europeo ha puesto el acento pidiéndole a la Comisión que elimine los programas de ciudadanía y de residencia para inversores, ¿cómo no va a pedirle a la Comisión que se tome en serio esta trama corrupta de venta de visados de acceso al espacio Schengen, algo absolutamente inaceptable e incompatible con el derecho fundamental a la libre circulación, y exija todas las responsabilidades al respecto?

Jan-Christoph Oetjen (Renew). – Herr Präsident, Herr Kommissar, verehrte Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Die Freizügigkeit ist zweifelsohne die größte Errungenschaft des Schengen-Raums. Aber diese Freizügigkeit steht jetzt im Zweifel – leider – an der Grenze zwischen Deutschland und Polen.

Die deutsche Regierung hat sich aufgrund des Visaskandals in Polen dazu genötigt gesehen, wieder Grenzkontrollen einzuführen. Verehrte Kolleginnen und Kollegen, meinen Sie, eine deutsche Regierung macht das zum Spaß, um die polnische Bevölkerung zu ärgern? Ganz im Gegenteil: Wir würden uns freuen, wenn wir auf die polnische Regierung vertrauen könnten und wir die Freizügigkeit im Schengen-Raum weiter aufrechterhalten könnten.

Aber Ihre Regierung, die polnische Regierung, die so tut, als wenn sie sich um Migrationsfragen kümmern will, aber in Wirklichkeit in der Vergangenheit immer jeden Fortschritt auf der europäischen Ebene zum Thema Migration verschleppt hat – Ihre polnische Regierung hat Visa an andere Leute verkauft, die eigentlich nicht in den Schengen-Raum dürfen. Das ist der Grund, warum die polnische Bevölkerung heute unter Grenzkontrollen leiden muss.

Verehrte Kolleginnen und Kollegen, anstatt hier Nebelkerzen zu werfen, sollten Sie sich lieber an der Aufklärung dieses Skandals beteiligen. Das wäre Ihre Pflicht gegenüber der polnischen Bevölkerung und gegenüber allen Europäern, damit grenzenloses Reisen in Europa wieder möglich ist.

(Der Redner ist damit einverstanden, auf eine Frage nach dem Verfahren der „blauen Karte“ zu antworten.)

Bogdan Rzońca (ECR), pytanie zadane przez podniesienie niebieskiej kartki. – Słuchałem pilnie Pana wypowiedzi i chciałem zapytać, i oczekuję krótkiej odpowiedzi: tak lub nie, bo pierwsze śledztwo w sprawie wiz zostało wdrożone przez Centralne Biuro Antykorupcyjne w lipcu 2022 roku. W marcu tego roku siedem osób usłyszało zarzuty w tej sprawie, trzy osoby dzisiaj jeszcze są w areszcie w sprawie wiz. To jak Pan może mówić, że jest jakaś bezczynność w Polsce, jeśli chodzi o ten proceder uchylania w przypadku 270 wiz?

I moje pytanie jest takie: czy Pan o tym wszystkim słyszał? Czy Pan po prostu sobie przyszedł pogadać tutaj z mównicą i zaatakować Polskę?

Jan-Christoph Oetjen (Renew), blue-card answer. – Thank you, colleague. First of all, I trust the Commission. And I heard what Commissioner Schinas said at the beginning. He said that there are questions that have not been answered. And we, as European Parliamentarians, we request from the Polish Government that all the questions that the Commission has sent are answered correctly. This is the reason why in Germany there is no trust anymore in the situation in Poland – because the Polish Government has sold visas to foreigners and they have entered the Schengen Area without any allowance normally. So please make sure that this Polish Government is working on replying to all questions and then freedom of movement in the European Union will be reinstated.

President. – Again colleague, you put a question, you have got the answer, so please respect the speakers.

Marcel Kolaja (Verts/ALE). – Mr President, Vice-President, well, it's interesting to see how the extreme right and the extreme left unite here, because everybody else agrees that free movement of people across the Schengen space is one of the biggest benefits of the European Union for the citizens.

This visa scandal is putting under threat the trust into the whole area and the Polish Government as a whole. It makes it more difficult for us to fight the arguments that we need to reinstate border checks, and we have already heard some of them in this Chamber. But ask the citizens whether they really want it. You can ask maybe those that are in the gallery after this debate.

The bribing scandal of the Polish Government has consequences, of course, also outside Poland, for instance, for Czechia, where I come from. The border checks at the Germany-Czechia crossings to which the scandal contributed will make it more complicated for people to commute for work. And I am sure that Czech citizens will not thank the Polish Government for that. As a matter of fact, now everyone will suffer from a corrupt, large-scale sale that the Polish Government is responsible for.

Jadwiga Wiśniewska (ECR). – Panie Przewodniczący! Panie komisarzu! W maju tego roku Konferencja Przewodniczących podjęła decyzję o tym, by nie podejmować debat dotyczących państw członkowskich, jeśli do wyborów w tym państwie jest mniej niż sześć tygodni. Państwo tą debatą łamiecie tę decyzję. Dlaczego Parlament Europejski daje zaciągnąć się tej „totalnej opozycji”, jak sami siebie nazwali, do politycznej agitacji? To jest skandal. Skandalem jest również to, panie komisarzu, że pan się wypowiada o tej debacie w sposób absolutnie nie konkretny. Pan otrzymał z MSZ odpowiedź. Sprawa dotyczy 268 wiz, a tu gadacie o jakimś handlowaniu na bazarach.

Panie Przewodniczący, czy pan może uciszyć tę osobę, która krzyczy? Przeszkadza mi.

Szanowni państwo, mamy do czynienia z taką oto sytuacją, że do Unii Europejskiej na niemieckie zaproszenie weszły w ostatnich latach dziesiątki milionów nielegalnych migrantów. Setki milionów, ma pan rację, setki milionów. I czy w tej sprawie toczymy debatę? Nie, absolutnie nie. Dyskutujemy o pseudoaferze, o aferze, której nie było i nie ma. Sprawa 268 wiz jest wyjaśniana. Natomiast nie dyskutujemy o Qatargate, nie dyskutujemy o nielegalnej migracji, nie dyskutujemy o NGO-sach, które za niemieckie pieniądze przewożą nielegalnych migrantów do Unii...

(Przewodniczący odebrał mówczyni głos)

President. – Thank you very much, colleague. I take note of the fact that there were some blue-card requests, but as the speaker spoke longer than allocated, I will not grant the blue cards.

Gunnar Beck (ID). – Herr Präsident! Korrupte polnische Beamte und *politicos* haben laut polnischen Medien bis zu 250 000 Schengen-Visa an illegale Migranten verkauft, die sogleich nach Deutschland weiterreisen. Die polnische Regierung – vorgeblich ein Gegner der von Deutschland und der Kommission vorangetriebenen Ersatzmigration nach Europa – muss den Fall umgehend untersuchen und die Verantwortlichen hart bestrafen. Geschieht das nicht, hat die Kommission einzugreifen.

Fordern müsste dies eigentlich die deutsche Regierung, die stattdessen staatlich geförderte deutsche Fährdienste für illegale Migranten im Mittelmeer unterhält und zurzeit, so wissen wir von Giorgia Meloni und Elon Musk, mindestens acht Seenot-Schlepperboote finanziert, die 20 Meilen vor Libyens Küste täglich Tausende Migranten aufnehmen, um sie dann über 300 Meilen entfernt in Italien wieder an Land zu setzen. Gleiches treibt auch Italiens Küstenwache, damit der Bevölkerungsaustausch auch nicht einen Tag ruht.

Die Deutschen, so Außenministerin Baerbock, wollten diese umfassende Fährverbindung von Afrika nach Europa. Die Wahrheit ist: Niemand von Sinnen will das, und laut einer INSA-Meinungsumfrage von vor zwei Jahren wollen 80 % aller Europäer sichere – nicht offene – Außengrenzen. Denn jeder Afrikaner, den sie hierher holen, kostet einen modernen Sozialstaat im Schnitt 14 000 EUR jedes Jahr.

Gilbert Collard (NI). – Monsieur le Président, chers collègues, si plus tard les historiens doivent trouver une formule lapidaire pour définir l'Union européenne, ils diront «un enfer pavé de bonnes intentions». Schengen, c'était les bonnes intentions. La réalité de Schengen, c'est aujourd'hui un enfer migratoire. On voulait ouvrir les frontières de l'intérieur, à condition qu'on puisse fermer les frontières de l'extérieur. On n'a rien fait. Rien fait. Et sur fond de Schengen, derrière toutes ces ombres, il y a des trafics de visas, il y a des compromissions, il y a des passeurs, partout. L'Allemagne n'a pas de leçons à donner. C'est nous qui avons des leçons à recevoir parce que nous avons malheureusement échoué. Il faut en finir avec Schengen.

Paulo Rangel (PPE). – Mr President, dear Vice-President, the recent discovery of systemic and corrupt sale of visas is a sad irony to whoever listens to the rhetoric of the Polish Government.

Unfortunately, this scandal has serious implications for Europe, for Schengen and for the security of our citizens. We cannot ignore the fact that this government is openly criticising migration and asylum policies – a government that is actively blocking the files that aim for the EU to have means to tackle migratory pressure in the external borders while ensuring full respect for fundamental rights. You are blocking the pact on migration and asylum, but you are facilitating the entry of a lot of citizens from third states without any control.

Mr Saryusz-Wolski, I miss the time that you were a very pro-European member of this House. Unfortunately, you changed side and you chose the wrong side.

The paradox is even clearer when we consider that the Law and Justice Government is building a wall on the border with Belarus to stop Lukashenko hybrid attacks and now is giving to a lot of third-country nationals a hybrid visa policy. That is unacceptable, that must be investigated, and for the sake of migration and respect for fundamental rights, for the sake of our policies to protect our borders, please stop this corruption in your own public administration.

(The speaker agreed to take a blue-card question)

President. – Before the blue-card question, let me say that I have made several general warnings, and I have to make an individual one to our colleague Mr Saryusz-Wolski: you are not respecting the rules, so this is an individual warning so that the rules can be respected.

Patryk Jaki (ECR), blue-card question. – Thank you so much, Paulo. The important issue is to use data precisely. The official government data are talking about 268 illegal visas, and we stopped this procedure. You talked about hundreds of thousands. Could you be so kind and tell us what is the source of your data?

Paulo Rangel (PPE), blue-card answer. – Dear Mr Jaki, you are wrong because I didn't use any number in my intervention. But I have to tell you that there is very good reason to think that this number is in the sphere of hundreds of thousands. So, we should have a really impartial, independent investigation. That is what is at stake. If your number is 268, my dear colleague, this is not credible. And this shows that something is hidden now and this is not acceptable for Schengen area and for your partners.

Evin Incir (S&D). – Herr talman! Kollegor! Korruption är ett hot mot vårt demokratiska Europa och undergräver sammanhållningen i vår union och förtroendet som är helt avgörande för ett gott samarbete med fokus på lösningar på de många problem vår tid genomsyrras av.

Min spontana reaktion när jag blev varse om att polska myndigheter agerat korrupt genom att sälja visum som möjliggör tillträde till hela Schengenområdet var – galenskap. Men så enkelt är det inte. Dessa typer av handlingar sker oftast medvetet, systematiskt och med acceptans av de regeringsbärande partierna, i detta fall högerkonservativa partiet Lag och rättvisa. Det är skandal och oacceptabelt. Partiet Lag och rättvisa och ledamöterna här i Europaparlamentet skäms inte ens när de försöker förminska konsekvenserna.

Vi har alltså en EU-medlemsstat som enligt vittnen, åtminstone i ett land, ställt ut en bänk utanför sin ambassad dit folk kan gå, betala en summa på 5 000 dollar, skriva in sitt namn och få tillträde till hela Schengenområdet. Polska partiet Lag och rättvisa hör inte hemma i regeringsställning och det borde hållas så långt bort från makten som möjligt. Vår demokrati, säkerhet och sammanhållning står på spel genom dessa typer av agerande.

Nicola Danti (Renew). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, siamo rimasti colpiti, ma non stupiti, dall'inchiesta che avrebbe messo in evidenza la vendita di visti da parte delle autorità polacche. Si faccia al più presto chiarezza su questa vicenda. Se confermata, la retorica sovranista verrebbe spazzata via da un pugno di soldi che il governo moralizzatore e servitore dell'identità polacca si sarebbe intascato.

Per anni abbiamo ascoltato il governo polacco affermare la necessità dei respingimenti, dei muri, dei fili spinati e delle vedette nei mari per difendere la presunta invasione di terroristi, ma non ci avevano detto che bastavano 5 000 euro per superare tutte queste barriere. Addirittura si parla di 250 000 visti venduti: un'enormità se consideriamo che in Italia nel 2022 sono sbarcati 105 000 migranti, meno della metà.

Urgente è il bisogno di verità sul numero dei visti venduti e, soprattutto, sul tipo di acquirenti. Perché non è difficile pensare che, quando si tratta di pagare, sia più facile per chi rappresenta organizzazioni criminali piuttosto che per poveri disgraziati che muoiono di fame.

Daniel Freund (Verts/ALE). – Herr Präsident! Es gibt eine EU-Regierung, die hemmungslos gegen Migranten hetzt und gleichzeitig gegen Bestechungsgelder Schengen-Visa im industriellen Maßstab verkauft.

Ja, bei dem, was da in Polen passiert, kann man sich eigentlich nur an den Kopf fassen. Wieder einmal wird deutlich, dass es immer wieder Hassredner von rechts außen sind, die dann der Korruption verfallen. Auf der einen Seite wird das eigene Weltbild laut herausgebrüllt – wir haben es auch heute hier im Plenum gesehen –, und auf der anderen Seite bereichert man sich dann tausendfach, millionenfach auf Kosten der gesamten Europäischen Union.

Es ist kein Zufall, dass das in Polen passiert: Die PiS-Regierung hat in den vergangenen Jahren systematisch den Rechtsstaat demontiert. EU-Recht wird nicht mehr umgesetzt, und wer es in der Richterschaft noch versucht, wird bestraft. Unabhängige Justiz gibt es nicht mehr, die diese Verfehlungen jetzt untersuchen könnte. Sie sagen, knapp 200 Fälle, aber wenn es keine unabhängige Justiz mehr gibt, die Verfehlungen der Regierung zu überprüfen oder zu ermitteln, dann kann ja dabei gar nichts herauskommen.

Damit ist für die Kommission klar: Sie muss sich nicht nur diesen konkreten Fall anschauen, sondern auch noch entschiedener gegen die Attacken auf den Rechtsstaat vorgehen, sonst wird sich dieses Problem in Polen wohl nicht lösen lassen.

(Der Redner ist damit einverstanden, eine Frage nach dem Verfahren der „blauen Karte“ zu antworten.)

Jacek Saryusz-Wolski (ECR), blue-card question. – Mr Freund, massive illegal migrants come to Europe on the board of eight German ships in the Mediterranean, paid from the German budget. Would you better not comment on that instead of lying about massive Polish visas? There are 268 wrong visits, and there are massive hundreds of thousands, if not millions, brought back brought to Europe on German ships and with German money. Please respond.

Daniel Freund (Verts/ALE), blue-card answer. – It's a human duty, I think, that people that are shipwrecked, people that are drowning in the Mediterranean are taken out from the water and don't have to suffer the same fate as the 28 000 people that have drowned in the Mediterranean, fleeing from war, from persecution, from hunger and seeking shelter. It is proven time and again there are enough studies that say none of this encourages people to flee. What makes people flee is the slavery, the rape, the war that they are suffering at home. So dragging those people out of the sea I think is a human duty. You don't let anyone drown at sea and making that an attack now on these NGOs, really, I don't know what to say.

Zbigniew Kuźmiuk (ECR). – Panie Przewodniczący! Panie Komisarzu! Ta liczba już padała tu wielokrotnie: 268 wiz na dwa miliony wydanych w tym czasie. Jedna dziesiąta promila. Polskie państwo błyskawicznie zareagowało, służby złapały winnych. Polskie sądy zapewne ich skazą.

Szkoda, że nie reagowało tak niemieckie państwo w 2010 r., kiedy jego konsulaty w Afryce i w Ameryce Południowej masowo wydawały wizy za pieniądze. Podobnie francuskie państwo w 2022 roku, kiedy jego konsulat w Maroku wydawał mafii wizowej wizy za pieniądze. Nie organizowaliście Państwo wtedy tutaj debat w Parlamencie w tych sprawach. Organizujecie je dlatego, żeby wesprzeć Platformę w wyborach w Polsce, i organizujecie ją po to, żeby przykryć skutki fatalnej niemieckiej polityki otwierania granic.

Przecież to słynne niemieckie *Herzlich willkommen* otworzyło wszystkie granice. W wyniku tego ponad milion ludzi wdarło się do Europy, a konsekwencje tego ponosimy do tej pory. Państwo niemieckie nie zmieniło w swojej polityce nic. Teraz finansuje statki, które przywożą nielegalnych imigrantów do Ukrainy. I Państwo do Polski macie pretensje? Przecież to jest niewyobrażalny skandal. Podziękujecie Polsce za to, że pilnuje granicy wschodniej, bo gdyby tego nie robiła, to Niemcy zostałyby zaatakowane hordą ludzi organizowanych przez Putina i Łukaszenkę.

Filip De Man (ID). – Voorzitter, collega's, de immigratiekanalen naar Europa zijn bekend: ten eerste, de gezinshereniging – het voornaamste – die blijkbaar altijd op Europese bodem moet plaatsvinden. Ook als het uitsluitend gaat om Marokkanen of Turken, dan moet dat toch altijd hier in Europa gebeuren.

Ten tweede, de asielpprocedure. Die wordt, zoals bekend, massaal misbruikt. Honderdduizenden per jaar gebruiken dat asiel.

En dan de inreisvisa. Niet zelden worden deze te snel toegekend of zelfs voor veel geld verkocht door bepaalde lidstaten van de Europese Unie. Dat er zeer laks wordt omgesprongen met deze visa bewees ook de Belgische regering deze zomer. Zij gaf visa aan Iraanse fundamentalisten, geleid door ene Alireza Zakani, indertijd verantwoordelijk voor het bloedig neerslaan van Iraanse dissidenten.

Binnen acht maanden zal de kiezer u de rekening presenteren voor die visaschandalen en voor de massale immigratie in het algemeen.

Balázs Hidvéghi (NI). – Mr President, dear colleagues, it is obvious that the current conservative Polish Government is a thorn in the eye of the pro-migration leftist political forces in Brussels, and they are so desperate to remove this government that they are organising a debate here to attack them with pathetic lies just 12 days before election day in Poland.

Clearly, it is an attempt to interfere in the Polish elections from outside. They magnify a petty visa case that had been dealt with by the authorities well before this manipulation started. Now, this is wrong and it's not going to work. This is where the EPP, Donald Tusk and the PO are getting it so wrong. You really think that you're going to win elections with the help of this leftist neo-Marxist arena here? You're not going to do that. Similar attempts have been made against Hungary several times and they didn't work. In fact, they backfired.

The Polish nation is one of the oldest in Central Europe, with a statehood dating back to over 1000 years. They have fought for centuries for independence, for the right to decide about their own future. So I'm sure that the Polish people will reject this latest cynical attempt at interfering in their national sovereign decision. Long live Polish independence!

(The speaker agreed to take a blue-card question)

Jadwiga Wiśniewska (ECR), pytanie zadane przez podniesienie niebieskiej kartki. – Panie Przewodniczący! Panie Pośle, chciałabym zapytać, czy nie uważa Pan, że w związku z tym, że Angela Merkel wywołała głęboki kryzys migracyjny, a obecny niemiecki rząd finansuje organizacje pozarządowe w tym, by udzielały pomocy, zbierały nielegalnych migrantów z morza, to Niemcy powinny pójść o krok dalej, powinny tych gości, których zaprosiły, gościć u siebie, a nie przerzucać koszty przyjmowania nielegalnych migrantów na inne państwa członkowskie. Czy podziela Pan pogląd taki, że skoro Niemcy zapraszają, skoro mówią nasze drzwi dla was są otwarte, to powinni wszystkich tych migrantów, których zbierają z Morza Śródziemnego przywozić do siebie, a nie na Lampedusę?.

Balázs Hidvéghi (NI), *blue-card answer.* – I think that the real danger to the European Union and to the Schengen zone – which is, I agree with the Commissioner, the greatest achievement of this cooperation – is illegal migration. If we do not protect our external borders, then it's obvious that we cannot have anymore a Schengen zone where movement is free. This is the real danger. Illegal migration must be stopped. Borders must be controlled. And I think it's a scandal that the German Government is paying for ships that are basically cooperating with human smuggling networks – criminals. They are not saving anybody, they are transporting people into Europe illegally and they want everybody else to pay the price of that. We don't want to be confronted with a situation that is now in, for instance, Stockholm and other parts of western Europe, where they cannot deal with the situation caused by illegal migration. That's my opinion.

Lukas Mandl (PPE). – Herr Präsident, Herr Vizepräsident, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Die Menschen Polens sind richtiggelegen, als sie jahrelang, wenn nicht jahrzehntelang vor der Gefahr Putin-Russlands gewarnt haben. Die Menschen Polens haben in der Geschichte viel mitgemacht und haben eine sehr, sehr klare Positionierung. Die Kolleginnen und Kollegen hier im Europäischen Parlament sind da vielfach sehr, sehr hilfreich, und der Rest Europas sieht jetzt, wie die Menschen Polens auch Europa in erster Linie verteidigen, wenn es um den Angriff Putin-Russlands geht.

Aber die Regierung von Polen spielt mit diesen Gefühlen einerseits. Die Regierung von Polen tut so, als wüsste sie es besser als alle anderen. Die Regierung von Polen ist nicht bereit zur europaweiten Kooperation. Hier wird schon wieder davon gesprochen, was im Bereich Migration zu tun ist. Aber es ist ja die polnische Regierung, die ganz oft im Weg steht, wenn es darum geht, irreguläre Migration einzudämmen.

Und jetzt gibt es einen Riesenskandal: Ausgerechnet die Regierung von Polen ist es, die einen Visaskandal zulässt, wodurch Menschen, für die das nicht vorgesehen ist, durch Korruption in die Europäische Union, in die Schengen-Zone kommen – und das ist eine Regierung, die ich keinem Unionsbürger, keiner Unionsbürgerin wünsche, auch nicht denen von Polen, für die wir alle hier im Europäischen Parlament da sind.

Marek Belka (S&D). – Panie Przewodniczący! Panie komisarzu! Niekompetencja rządu PiS rujnuje reputację naszego kraju w Unii i działa przeciwko naszym interesom. Mówiono tutaj, że system Schengen opiera się na wzajemnym zaufaniu i współpracy. Przez brak właściwego nadzoru i działania, w których można podejrzewać korupcję, obecny rząd zawiódł to zaufanie i sprawił, że nasi sąsiedzi przeprowadzają kontrole graniczne.

Rząd PiS, zamiast organizować zakłamanie referendum, w którym oszukuje Polaków na temat planowanego mechanizmu relokacji, powinien skupić się na sprzątaniu stajni Augiasza w MSZ. Trzeba było dopiero informacji od zagranicznych służb, żeby polskie organy zajęły się sprawą nie po cichu, tylko dymisjonując wiceministra Wawrzyka. To potwierdza, że doszło do poważnych nieprawidłowości.

Jak należy zatem rozumieć działania PiS, który z jednej strony buduje mur na granicy z Białorusią, a z drugiej pozwala na napływ imigrantów płacących niekiedy krocie za wizy? Ja to nazywam chciwością podlaną hipokryzją.

Valérie Hayer (Renew). – Monsieur le Président, Monsieur le Commissaire, chers collègues, l'hypocrisie de l'extrême droite a atteint son paroxysme avec le scandale du parti Droit et justice. Pour des pots-de-vin, ils ont donné des centaines de milliers d'autorisations pour rentrer en Pologne et partout ailleurs en Europe.

Alors je mets en garde et je dénonce. Depuis des années, l'extrême droite érige sans honte les étrangers, les migrants en mal absolu, l'immigration comme cause de tous nos maux. Toute cette rhétorique populiste pour cacher leur incompetence, leur incapacité à traiter d'autres sujets et de surcroît la corruption de leur système.

Chers collègues, il y a les discours anti-migrants nauséabonds sur les plateaux TV. Et il y a la réalité. La réalité, c'est que les amis d'Eric Zemmour et de Jordan Bardella bâtissent de véritables filières d'immigration clandestine en Europe. C'est un véritable scandale! Un véritable scandale de corruption qui démontre la gestion lamentable des frontières et de l'immigration par l'extrême droite. Toute personne impliquée devra être tenue pour responsable.

Beata Kempa (ECR). – Panie Przewodniczący! W pierwszych słowach: jako konserwatystka nie życzę sobie, żeby Niemcy krzyczeli i wykrzykiwali (dlatego, że my, Polacy jesteśmy w sposób szczególnie przewrażliwieni, mamy złe doświadczenia w tym zakresie), że jesteśmy nienawistnymi prawicowcami. Mamy prawo do swoich poglądów opartych na wartościach i wara Niemcom od tego, szczególnie Niemcom. To jest pierwsza rzecz.

W minutę nie da się tu sprostować wszystkich kłamstw, które padły nie tylko ze strony kolegów z Niemiec, ale też i oczywiście polskiej Koalicji Obywatelskiej, która nieudolnie szuka drogi do swoich wyborców, współ w zespół z Niemcami. Afery nakręciliście, koledzy, na potrzeby kampanii. Takie są fakty.

Sprawa dotyczy 268 przypadków. Została wykryta przez polskie służby, które natychmiast zneutralizowały zagrożenie. Sprawę rozwiązano w ciągu 60 dni. A statystyki? Jakie są statystyki? Jeżeli nie można z kimś walczyć, trzeba go edukować. No to przypominam, że co do wiz Niemcy w 2021 roku wydały ich 300 tysięcy dla osób z Afryki i Azji. Dlaczego wtedy nie debatowaliśmy w Parlamencie Europejskim na temat wkładu Niemiec w kryzys migracyjny w Europie? Na to pewnie kolegom z Koalicji Obywatelskiej i Tuskowi nie zezwolił Olaf Scholz, nie zezwolił Weber, wcześniej nie zezwoliła Angela Merkel. I ostatnie zdanie, Panie Przewodniczący: panie pośle Arłukowicz, wstyd to poniewierać własny kraj, własny naród na forum Parlamentu Europejskiego! To jest wstyd.

Jean-Lin Lacapelle (ID). – Monsieur le Président, chers collègues, la corruption dans l'administration et la fraude aux titres de séjour sont des nuisances qu'il faut combattre avec la plus grande fermeté. Vous évoquez le cas de la Pologne, que vous avez systématiquement dans le viseur, quoi qu'elle fasse. Cette mise en cause, qui survient opportunément à deux semaines des élections polonaises, cible ouvertement le gouvernement polonais, qui a pourtant réagi avec fermeté pour réprimer un trafic dont les véritables auteurs étaient des responsables consulaires en cheville avec des sociétés privées.

C'est le groupe Renaissance qui est à l'origine de ce débat. Alors j'invite les élus macronistes à s'intéresser de plus près à la politique française d'octroi des visas. Dans certains pays, la France délègue l'instruction des visas à des organismes privés au risque d'un marché noir similaire à celui que nous voyons en Pologne. Cela s'est produit l'an dernier au Maroc, mais là, l'Union européenne n'a lancé aucune procédure ni aucun débat. Il est vrai que l'immigration pour vous n'est pas un problème, c'est un projet.

Que dire également de nombre d'élus et de militants associatifs qui facilitent la production d'attestations de complaisance? Tout cela démontre l'abus des visas Schengen utilisés pour traverser l'Europe à destination seulement d'une poignée de pays, toujours les mêmes. Nous réclamons quant à nous que les visas Schengen soient réservés aux seuls ressortissants européens et que soient rétablies, dans les autres cas, les frontières intérieures. C'est de cette façon que ce type de trafic sera évité.

Gheorghe Falcă (PPE). – Domnule președinte, domnule vicepreședinte, stimați colegi, dezvăluirile recente și scandalul vizelor pentru bani din mită acordate de unele consulate din Polonia ne arată două lucruri. Primul este acela că spațiul Schengen trebuie modernizat, susținut cu încredere de toate țările din Uniunea Europeană, iar încălcările trebuie sancționate. Guvernul polonez va trebui, desigur, să răspundă clar acestor dezvăluiri, iar Uniunea Europeană va trebui să inițieze acțiuni concrete pentru ca aceste politici să fie anihilate. Al doilea lucru care ne arată este cât de nedrept, de ilegal, de imoral și de inacceptabil este să ții în afara Schengen țări și guverne precum România și Bulgaria, care, fără să facă parte din Schengen, își fac datoria zi de zi, an de an. Cine le ține în afara Schengen? Un guvern populist precum cel austriac. Vi se pare normal? Aceasta este Uniunea Europeană pe care ne o dorim? Nu, evident. Noi ne dorim o Uniune Europeană pentru toți cetățenii cu drepturi egale.

Łukasz Kohut (S&D). – Panie Przewodniczący! Wy z PiS nie jesteście żadnymi patriotami, wy jesteście patriotami za pieniądze. Europa jeszcze nie widziała takiej bezczelnej bandy hipokrytów jak ta, co tutaj siedzi. Macie dziś czelność po tym wszystkim, po ujawnieniu afery wizowej, po wydawaniu lewych dokumentów za pół miliona, po straganach przed polskimi ambasadami, macie czelność dalej tutaj kłamać jak wasz premier Pinokio.

Szczujecie w mediach rządowych na uchodźców, imigrantów, ale jednocześnie wpuszczacie tych ludzi do Polski za łapówki. Tych samych, których wypychaliście na Białoruś. Tylko świny zarabiają na cudzym nieszczęściu. To jest obrzydliwe. I to na pewno nie jest chrześcijańskie. Ale ludzie w Polsce mają już was dość.

W niedzielę milion osób wyszło na ulice Warszawy i my się nie zatrzymamy. My się was nie boimy. My, zjednoczona w różnorodności opozycja demokratyczna w Polsce. 15 października skończy się w Polsce PiS.

Илхан Кючюк (Renew). – Господин Председател, г-н Комисар, колеги, когато говорим за Шенгенското пространство, няма как да не споменем факта, че две държави, които искат да бъдат част от него, все още не са. Говорим за България и за Румъния. Разбира се, че Шенген е въпрос на доверие. И данните за продажба на визи в Шенгенското пространство безспорно са обезпокоителни. От години повтаряме, че в територията на споделено доверие няма място за златни визи и златни паспорти, на неоснователно предоставяне на достъп до най-голямото постижение на Европейския съюз, в свободната му зона за придвижване само на основание на финансова възможност.

България осъзна тези факти и се преборихме. България миналата година прие законодателство и сложи край на инвестиционната схема за гражданство, гарантирайки прозрачност и ясни правила за достъп до страната. Така България доказа себе си като надежден партньор. Сега е време обаче двете държави – Австрия и Нидерландия, да покажат, че дебатът за бъдещето на политиката по миграция и убежище минава през това, България и Румъния да бъдат част от Шенгенското пространство.

Днес този Парламент още веднъж трябва с най-голяма сериозност да заяви, че двете страни заслужават да бъдат от Шенген. Не приемам факта да има едни граждани, които са привилегирани, и други, които чакат на опашката. Това няма да направи Европейския съюз по-силен. Време е за обединение.

Andrzej Halicki (PPE). – Panie Przewodniczący, zbliżamy się do końca tej debaty i trzeba jeszcze raz powiedzieć, o czym ona jest. To nie jest debata o Polsce, tylko o bezpieczeństwie Wspólnoty Europejskiej – największej zdobyczy, którą mamy dzięki Solidarności, Ojcu Świętemu Janowi Pawłowi II, Lechowi Wałęsie i wszystkim tym milionom Polaków, którzy również walczyli o tę wspólną Europę bez granic. Wy je naruszyliście, to bezpieczeństwo, i dzisiaj niszczyście tę wspólnotę.

Mówię o tym dlatego, że używacie terminu „my, Polska”. Nie, to nie jest atak na Polskę. To jest atak na skorumpowany rząd, na klub milionerów, bo miliony Polaków wyglądają inaczej. Wyglądają tak jak w Warszawie – uśmiechnięci, bez agresji – i oni rzeczywiście będą decydować o naszej przyszłości i o przyszłości Polski. Nie zakrzyczycie prawdy, bo ten skorumpowany proceder, który rzeczywiście naruszył bezpieczeństwo Europy, trzeba zlikwidować, zamknąć i rozliczyć. Mówię z tego miejsca raz jeszcze: Polska to nie wy. Polska jest inna. Natomiast bezpieczeństwo Europy leży właśnie w interesie Polaków. Jeżeli to niszczyście, to znaczy, że nie jesteście po stronie Polaków. Jesteście skorumpowani, jesteście partią, którą Polacy rozliczą.

Leszek Miller (S&D). – Panie Przewodniczący! Panie komisarzu! Padło tu wiele pięknych i trafnych słów, ale słowom powinny towarzyszyć skutki.

12 września razem z dwoma moimi kolegami, panami Cimoszewiczem i Belką, zwróciłem się do przewodniczącej Komisji Europejskiej Ursuli von der Leyen z kilkoma pytaniami, uznając, że ta sprawa jest – tak jak przed chwilą tu powiedziano – sprawą całej Unii Europejskiej. Pytaliśmy, czy Komisja Europejska i podległe jej służby dysponują informacjami na temat skandalu wizowego, w tym dotyczącymi pogłosek o korupcyjnym charakterze tego procesu, i czy mogą je ujawnić. Czy na rynku pracy innych państw członkowskich wzrosła liczba osób poszukujących pracy i legitymujących się wizami wydanymi przez polskich urzędników? Wreszcie, jeżeli Komisja Europejska może potwierdzić, że takie zjawisko miało miejsce, jakie w związku z tym działania są podejmowane lub planowane?

Z wielką uwagą, panie komisarzu, czekałem na to, że pan na ten temat coś powie. Dowiedziałem się, że cały ciężar wyjaśnienia tej sprawy Komisja Europejska składa na barki polskiego rządu. To są złudne oczekiwania, panie komisarzu. To są złudne oczekiwania dlatego, że same polskie władze twierdzą...

(Przewodniczący odebrał mówcy głos)

Vlad Gheorghe (Renew). – Domnule președinte, haideți să spunem niște lucruri despre Uniunea noastră, ca să priceapă inclusiv unii colegi de aici, din Parlament. O Uniune în care unii sunt mai egali decât alții încalcă valorile europene și o Uniune în care România și Bulgaria sunt lăsate în afara Schengen nu respectă tratatele. O uniune cu cetățeni de mână a doua este discriminare. O Uniune cu mai multe viteze dă cea mai mare viteză extremiștilor. O uniune cu granițe interne în 2023 este slabă și lipsită de credibilitate. O Uniune care acceptă șantajul și tolerează dictaturii e la mână dușmanilor.

Unii cer ziduri ca să câștige alegeri, alții cer bani ca să continue să îl plătească pe Putin. Alții cer suveranism, dar vând vize europene. Dacă nu pedepsim nici în al 12-lea ceas șpăgarii, corupția, anul viitor ne uităm cu toții la Parlamentul European de acasă. Cetățenii europeni nu sunt proști. Văd foarte bine că Uniunea Europeană vorbește foarte mult, dar face foarte puțin. Cetățenii simt discriminarea, ipocrizia, populismul și ne urăsc din ce în ce mai tare pentru toate chestiile astea. Așa că dacă nu plătesc corupții, vom plăti noi. Treziți-vă și fiți liderii de care are nevoie Europa!

Janina Ochojska (PPE). – Panie Przewodniczący! Jedną rzecz chciałam sprostować. Jeśli chodzi o kryzys migracyjny, to nie Angela Merkel wywołała kryzys migracyjny, tylko wojna w Syrii, a Angela Merkel otworzyła drzwi tym ludziom, żeby mogli znaleźć miejsce, w którym do dzisiaj żyją. To jest jedna rzecz.

Druga rzecz: nie wiem, skąd moi koledzy z ECR-u wzięli dane, ale ja chciałabym się posłużyć danymi z Eurostatu. Eurostat wykazuje jednoznacznie, że w 2020 roku Polska wydała ponad 50% wszystkich wiz pracowniczych w Unii Europejskiej. Był tutaj podany przykład Niemiec. W 2021 roku Niemcy wydały 18 322 takich wiz. Natomiast Polska w tym samym czasie – proszę mi nie przerywać – w 2021 roku wydała 790 tysięcy wiz. To są dane Eurostatu. To nie są dane, które ja wymyśliłam. Szanujmy granice Schengen i korzystajmy z wolności, a nie ograniczajmy ją!

Maria Grapini (S&D). – Domnule președinte, domnule comisar, stimați colegi, sincer, nu am înțeles mesajul dumneavoastră, domnule comisar, și am să vă explic de ce. Ați început prin a spune că spațiul Schengen este cea mai mare realizare a Uniunii Europene, după care spuneți că nu funcționează spațiul Schengen, după care spuneți: „A, ne lăudăm, am avut 485 000 de turiști”. Când spuneți adevărul? Vă place să fie un spațiu Schengen în care se circulă liber? Dacă vă place, fiți gardianul tratatelor.

Ce ați făcut cu România și Bulgaria? Cum vă lăsați umiliți de un om din Austria? Dacă până în decembrie România și Bulgaria nu intră în spațiul Schengen, fiți sigur că veți fi decretat de cetățenii europeni ca un gropar al proiectului european. Nu se poate, gardian al tratatelor, să acceptați ca un stat membru să încalce un regulament în funcțiune, să fie clar. Avem un regulament al migrației și avem un regulament Schengen. Regulamentul Schengen este încălcat fără un motiv juridic.

Ce ați făcut în calitate de gardian al tratatelor? Veniți să spuneți aici că vreți dintr-o dată să analizați corupția. Dar corupția din Comisia Europeană legată de procesul doamnei președinte cu achizițiile publice, ce faceți cu ele? Cum doriți să fiți credibil? Cum doriți să crească încrederea cetățenilor europeni în Uniunea Europeană? Dacă nu vă schimbați atitudinea, sigur, anul viitor va fi un dezastru în alegerile pentru Parlamentul European.

Eugen Tomac (PPE). – Domnule președinte, domnule comisar, eu regulat consult rapoartele Consiliului Uniunii Europene cu privire la nerespectarea de către statele membre a Regulamentului Schengen și putem observa că multe state care dau lecții de democrație, de stat de drept tratează cu foarte multă neglijență problematica Schengen și vă invit să consultați aceste rapoarte pe care le emite Consiliul Uniunii Europene. Vreau însă să cer Comisiei acțiuni concrete pentru respectarea tratatelor Uniunii Europene, pentru că este inadmisibil ca noi, cetățenii români și bulgari, de 12 ani, să fim ținuți la frontierele Uniunii Europene. Este de neînțeles și de neexplicat acest comportament și acest blocaj generat de unele state care ne dau lecții, dar sunt sancționate de Uniunea Europeană tocmai pentru că nu respectă legislația Schengen.

(End of catch-the-eye procedure)

Margaritis Schinas, Vice-President of the Commission. – Mr President, let me reiterate what I said at the beginning of this debate – *repetitio est mater studiorum* – Schengen is a success story. We will preserve it and we will expand it. Ms Grapini must have lost something because she addresses one of the most outspoken proponents of Schengen enlargement to Romania and Bulgaria. I don't know what you are so nervous about, but certainly you are preaching to the converted. Now, a well-functioning Schengen area requires an effective and efficient application by all participating states of the Schengen *acquis*. And this, in turn, translates into building mutual trust among participating states. Trust is difficult to build, but easy to destroy. And when it comes to the application of EU law, let me assure all wings of this Assembly that the Commission is colour-blind. We are colour-blind when we apply EU law. We take this issue very seriously and we expect full cooperation from the Polish authorities in order to address it.

Let me finish on a personal note. I came into politics as an 18 year old student. Inspired by *Solidarność*. It was the struggle of Gdańsk, the shipyard in Gdańsk that made a young Greek student get into politics. The only shouts I was listening to at the time were shouts for freedom, for democracy, and for help from Europe. And it saddens me to hear the shouts of hate against each other, denouncing fellow Member States and fellow Europe citizens. It saddens me. And I want to share with you this feeling of sadness.

ΠΡΟΕΔΡΙΑ: ΔΗΜΗΤΡΙΟΣ ΠΑΠΑΔΗΜΟΥΛΗΣ

Αντιπρόεδρος

Πρόεδρος. – Η συζήτηση έληξε.

12. Mangel på lægemidler og strategisk autonomi på sundhedsområdet i EU (forhandling)

Πρόεδρος. – Το επόμενο σημείο στην ημερήσια διάταξη είναι η συζήτηση επί της δήλωσης της Επιτροπής σχετικά με τις ελλείψεις φαρμάκων και στρατηγική αυτονομία στον τομέα της υγειονομική περίθαλψης στην ΕΕ ((2023/2877(RSP)).

Stella Kyriakides, Member of the Commission. – Mr President, honourable Members, first of all, I want to thank you for inviting me today and for the opportunity to discuss medicine shortages and the need for strategic autonomy in health.

The continued availability of safe and effective and affordable medicines for all European patients has been a top priority for many of us since the very beginning of this mandate. This is the foundation of a strong European Union in health that we have been building. Last winter was a strong reminder that we need to act to make Europe's medicine supply chains more resilient.

When EU action is necessary to manage critical shortages, the Commission steps in to support Member States, working closely with the European Medicines Agency. We use all tools available under the Agency's extended mandate regulation to manage and mitigate those shortages and engage with the industry so that medicines can reach all those that need them across the EU.

But we are also taking steps to prevent shortages. Our pharmaceutical reform aims to enhance security of supply and addresses shortages of medicines beyond crisis situations. Key elements include a new European alert system so that we have an earlier notification of shortages and withdrawals by companies, harmonised reporting criteria, shortage prevention plans and coordinated management of shortages by EMA.

These measures will equip us better to anticipate and mitigate shortages, avoid national export restrictions, and ultimately achieve what we are all trying to do, and that is ensure that medicines are available for all patients. But they are more structural in nature and more for in the long term.

This is why in the coming weeks, we will be putting forward a communication, including short- and mid-term actions, to enhance the security of supply and make the supply chains of medicines more resilient. This responds to calls from the public, from this House and from the Member States for more immediate actions on availability of medicines ahead of the winter seasons because we saw what we had to face last year.

This communication will complement our regulatory efforts by encouraging Member States to anticipate the many relevant steps under the pharmaceutical reform. We will also adopt a Union list of critical medicines for the first time. We will institutionalise the voluntary cooperation and establish the European Solidarity Mechanism to support Member States to tackle the shortages of medicines this winter in a coordinated but also in a timely way.

Finally, we are going to be building on the strategic relations with all our international partners to achieve supply chain diversity and global solidarity. In line with the Council recommendation, we are also stepping up the fight against AMR. One concrete example is the creation and implementation of a Union multi-country pool incentive scheme for anti-biotics.

Dear Members, I have stood here many times and we have discussed the issue of availability of medicines for all EU citizens, no matter where they live in the EU, and shared that this needs to be what we are working towards. This is our joint political responsibility. No matter where a citizen lives across the EU, whether it is in a big or small Member State, they need to have access to medicines.

I assure you that this Commission will continue to take very concrete and collaborative steps to achieve these goals. But the success ultimately depends on all our joint efforts with the stakeholders, with the public authorities, at European level, at national level. And I will count on your strong support to move forward with the pharmaceutical reform in a rapid way and with other initiatives which aim to deliver medicines to all citizens.

Tomislav Sokol, u ime kluba PPE. – Poštovani predsjedavajući, povjerenice, kolegice i kolege, nestašice lijekova predstavljaju sve veću prijetnju javnom zdravlju u EU-u, naročito u slabije razvijenim i manjim državama članicama.

Posljedice takvih nestašica uključuju smanjenu kvalitetu liječenja i stvaraju nejednakosti među pacijentima, ovisno o zemlji u kojoj žive. U razdoblju od 2017. do 2019. obavijesti o nestašici lijekova u Uniji su se povećale za čak 60 %, a pritom lijekovi za liječenje raka, infekcija i poremećaja živčanog sustava čine više od polovine lijekova kojih nema dovoljno, što je apsolutno nedopustivo.

Nadam se i vjerujem da će revizija EU zakonodavstva o lijekovima pomoći u rješavanju problema istinskih nestašica u svakom trenutku. Novim zakonodavstvom moramo poboljšati praćenje i ublažavanje nestašica lijekova, osobito onih kritičnih.

Odredbe prema kojima će farmaceutska poduzeća morati brže izvješćivati o nestašicama lijekova te biti obvezne uspostaviti planove za sprečavanje nestašica generalno predstavljaju korak u dobrom smjeru, mada svakako ima prostora za poboljšanje, posebno vezano uz rokove. Pri tome je ključno da svi građani Unije imaju jednak pristup lijekovima, a ne da imamo građane prvog i drugog reda kao što je sada slučaj, što je u svakom slučaju neprihvatljivo.

S druge strane, sve što se događalo u posljednje tri godine pokazalo je da EU mora ozbiljno poraditi na vlastitoj strateškoj autonomiji u području zdravstva ukoliko ne želimo da netko drugi u budućnosti odlučuje o našim životima i našem zdravlju.

Prije nekoliko desetljeća Europa imala vrlo jak položaj u istraživanju i inovacijama u zdravstvu, ali je u velikoj mjeri tu prednost izgubila. Danas, unatoč nekim iznimkama, većina inovacija i inovativnih tvrtki nalazi se negdje drugdje. EU sve više zaostaje u razvoju i proizvodnji inovativnih lijekova u usporedbi sa SAD-om.

Ako pored toga uzmemo u obzir eksplozivan rast Kine, vidimo da je situacija izuzetno zabrinjavajuća i dugoročno strašno opasna. Moramo stvoriti okruženje koje privlači, a ne stvara prepreke proizvođačima novih inovativnih lijekova, posebno zahtjevnim područjima poput rijetkih dječjih bolesti gdje smo najslabiji.

To uključuje poticaje, zaštitu intelektualnog vlasništva, ali i mjere industrijske politike koje idu puno šire od samog farmaceutskog paketa o kojem u posljednje vrijeme toliko raspravljamo.

Birokratizacija i regulatorni tereti koji su, nažalost, sve veći ne smiju postati toliki da naruše temelje naše zdravstvene zaštite, smanje dostupnost lijekova, na taj način ugroze ljudske živote.

Sve u svemu, mislim da je farmaceutska reforma koju je predložila Europska komisija korak u dobrom smjeru. Mislim da ona adresira one ključne probleme s kojima se moramo suočiti, ali, naravno, postoji prostora za napredak.

Međutim, ono što je posebno važno je da to nije jedino rješenje, da postoje druga područja europskog zakonodavstva o kojima se mora razmisliti, poput direktiva o transparentnosti, poput revizije propisa o prekograničnoj zdravstvenoj zaštiti, kako bismo stvorili ono što želimo, a to je jedinstveno tržište, doista jedinstveno tržište lijekova u Europskoj uniji i kako bi se omogućilo da doista svi građani Europske unije imaju dostupnost lijekova na isti način u istom trenutku.

Imamo još puno posla. Europska unija doista tu može pružiti dodanu vrijednost u odnosu na situaciju kakvu imamo sada kada je puno toga još uvijek fragmentirano, ali moramo svi skupa djelovati zajedno kako bismo doista omogućili da naši pacijenti dobiju one lijekove koje trebaju, da dobiju najkvalitetnije lijekove u najkraćem mogućem roku i da svi imaju pravo na jednaku zdravstvenu zaštitu.

Nicolás González Casares, *en nombre del Grupo S&D*. – Señor presidente, señora comisaria, gracias por responder a nuestra petición de debate y venir hoy al Parlamento.

Lo cierto es que en la Unión Europea faltan medicamentos. Se informa de desabastecimientos en todos los Estados miembros y la situación ha ido a más en los últimos años: ha habido un empeoramiento incluso desde 2022. Tenemos una gran dependencia de países externos, como China o la India, que producen hasta el 80 % de los principios activos y el 40 % de los medicamentos que consumimos en Europa. Y que no se nos olvide la situación crítica durante la pandemia.

Por otro lado, en la Unión Europea también estamos perdiendo la iniciativa en investigación e innovación y nos estamos quedando a la zaga de los Estados Unidos y de China. Nos faltan medicamentos esenciales y eso se traduce en miles y miles de pacientes que no pueden acceder a sus medicamentos, en niños que no pueden recibir exactamente los medicamentos y las fórmulas pediátricas que necesitan, en problemas para los pacientes con enfermedades raras, o en antibióticos que no son exactamente los prescritos por el médico y que pueden aumentar las resistencias a los antimicrobianos.

La Comisión ya señaló en su Estrategia Industrial de 2021 que los principios activos farmacéuticos eran uno de los seis elementos clave en cuanto a las dependencias de la Unión. Y, aunque hemos propuesto legislaciones o medidas de apoyo, por ejemplo, en relación con los semiconductores o las baterías, no lo hemos hecho en el ámbito farmacéutico. Necesitamos un esfuerzo inversor en este campo y estrategias dedicadas a aumentar nuestra producción y a reducir nuestra dependencia farmacéutica de otros países. Se notifican desabastecimientos y la nueva legislación farmacéutica contempla un seguimiento al respecto. Eso está muy bien: ya lo defendimos durante la reforma de la Agencia Europea de Medicamentos, en la que fui ponente.

Pero necesitamos algo más, y por eso, señora comisaria, le hemos hecho esta pregunta conjunta entre varios grupos: ¿cuáles son las iniciativas de la Comisión en este campo? ¿Cómo vamos a solventar de verdad, mediante nuestra producción industrial, los problemas de desabastecimientos? ¿Cómo vamos a aumentar la transparencia? ¿Cómo hemos visto estos días que ese elemento que es la Autoridad de Preparación y Respuesta ante Emergencias Sanitarias —que no podemos controlar desde este Parlamento— está renegociando por su cuenta y favoreciendo que solo haya una solución vacunal para los próximos años en lo que tiene que ver con la COVID-19? Queremos respuestas, señora comisaria.

Susana Solís Pérez, *en nombre del Grupo Renew*. – Señor presidente, señora comisaria, traemos un debate muy importante a este Pleno porque la escasez de medicamentos, como pueden ser antibióticos o medicamentos para niños, es un problema recurrente y crónico. Y la situación empeora cada vez más.

Pero, además, la Unión Europea depende ya de forma peligrosa de muy pocos fabricantes y regiones, especialmente de China y de la India, y sufrimos una pérdida constante de competitividad en un sector en el que hemos sido líderes. Vamos encaminados hacia una situación vulnerable. Y no podemos limitarnos solo a mitigar las carencias actuales: hay que prevenir. La Comisión ya ha reconocido que esta área es clave para nuestra autonomía estratégica. Lo que pedimos es actuar; lo que pedimos es una política clara para apoyar la innovación y la producción de medicamentos esenciales *made in Europe*.

Esto no solo es clave para nuestra resiliencia ante futuras crisis, sino que también acelerará el acceso a tratamientos para nuestros pacientes, garantizará la sostenibilidad de nuestros sistemas de salud, impulsará un sector biotecnológico en el que Europa era líder, y generará empleos y prosperidad para todos.

Tilly Metz, *au nom du groupe Verts/ALE*. – Madame la Présidente, Madame la Commissaire, comme mes collègues, je pense qu'il est crucial d'aborder la question de l'action européenne pour faire face aux pénuries de médicaments. Je me réjouis que la Commission prépare une communication sur le sujet et j'attends des actions fortes, notamment sur trois points.

Premièrement, demander la transparence des chaînes de production auprès des entreprises qui nous approvisionnent. Nous avons besoin de mieux comprendre où se situent les problèmes sur les chaînes de production. Bien sûr, la transparence signifie aussi être informés suffisamment tôt des pénuries et de leurs raisons. Si une entreprise interrompt la production d'un médicament pour des raisons commerciales, cela devrait être notifié pour permettre à d'autres producteurs intéressés de poursuivre la production.

Deuxièmement, relocaliser la production des médicaments. C'est une mesure cruciale pour permettre un meilleur contrôle des chaînes d'approvisionnement. C'est aussi une mesure naturelle au vu des avantages reçus par les entreprises pharmaceutiques en Europe pour soutenir l'innovation. Ce serait donc juste que cela soit conditionné à la production en Europe.

Enfin, troisièmement, la création d'une infrastructure publique européenne des médicaments, dotée de capacités de recherche et de développement, mais également de capacités de production de médicaments essentiels, et ce, pour assurer un filet de sécurité pour l'approvisionnement des Européens. Nous ne pouvons pas nous reposer uniquement sur l'industrie pharmaceutique. Nous l'avons vu pendant la pandémie et nous devons agir en conséquence. Le Parlement a demandé à la Commission d'évaluer la faisabilité de créer une telle agence dans son rapport sur le COVID. Quand la Commission prévoit-elle de publier cette étude? Et la Commission prévoit-elle d'intégrer cet aspect dans sa communication fin octobre?

Joanna Kopcińska, *w imieniu grupy ECR*. – Panie Przewodniczący! Szanowna Pani Komisarz! Problem braku leków nie jest nowym wyzwaniem, a obecna debata nie jest pierwszą próbą wymiany poglądów, aby przeciwdziałać tej ryzykownej dla pacjentów sytuacji.

Wszystkie kraje członkowskie doświadczają problemów związanych z brakami leków. Brakuje leków kardiologicznych, leków stosowanych w chorobach układu oddechowego, antybiotyków oraz zaawansowanych leków stosowanych w chemioterapii i monoterapii chorób onkologicznych. Dodatkowym problemem stają się również leki pediatryczne, o które pytałam Komisję już w sierpniu bieżącego roku, na długo zanim została zaplanowana obecnie trwająca debata.

Jestem przekonana, że Komisja, której przysługuje inicjatywa, musi aktywnie zająć się bieżącymi problemami, nie składając ich rozwiązań tylko na karb obecnie procedowanej reformy prawa farmaceutycznego. Potrzebne są doraźne i natychmiastowe działania, przygotowane w ścisłej konsultacji z państwami członkowskimi i ich ekspertami narodowymi, które realnie włączyłyby krajowe programy poszukiwań rozwiązań problemu braku leków w bardziej skoordynowane i ukierunkowane działania.

Sylvia Limmer, *im Namen der ID-Fraktion*. – Herr Präsident, Frau Kommissarin, verehrte Kollegen! Erstens: Laut Vertrag von Lissabon ist Gesundheit Sache der Mitgliedstaaten und hat nichts in den Händen einer EU-Kommission zu suchen, gegen die übrigens Ermittlungen laufen wegen erheblicher Unregelmäßigkeiten, womöglich sogar wegen Korruption, bei der Beschaffung der sogenannten Corona-Impfstoffe, und geschwätzte Verträge, zu teure, zu viele Impfstoffe und mehr Impftote als Corona-Tote sind das Resultat. Ich will keine Wiederholung!

Zweitens: Die rohstoff- und energieintensive Arzneimittelproduktion braucht eine starke chemische Industrie, aber deren Wettbewerbsfähigkeit zerstören Sie gerade mit Ihrem unsäglichem Grünen Deal. Bürokratie und Kostendruck – zum Beispiel durch Energiepreise – führt eben zur Abwanderung in Drittstaaten.

Also hören Sie auf zu jammern! Sie alle sind Mitverursacher, wenn es um Arzneimittelengpässe geht.

Kateřina Konečná, *za skupinu The Left*. – Pane předsedající, vážená paní komisařko, vážení kolegové, já se ptám: Co kromě diskuse se reálně udělalo pro to, aby naši občané měli dostupné být jen základní léky? To, jaký postoj k tomu má Komise, se ukázalo, když její předsedkyni léková krize nestála ani za to, aby ji zmínila ve svém projevu o stavu Unie. Dovolte mi vás tedy nahradit, paní předsedkyně.

Stav ohledně nedostatku léků prakticky již dnes ve všech lékových skupinách je naprosto tragický. Dnes aby se člověk vůbec bál v Evropě onemocnět. Co se udělalo pro návrat výrobců API a generik zpět do EU, který Komise vyhlásila slavně už před třemi lety? Před třemi lety! Našly se na to peníze na úrovni členských států nebo snad EU? No nenašly. Zůstalo to prostě jen u vzletných plánů. Sliby, sliby a lidé trpí. Koneckonců nemusím chodit daleko, stačí vzpomenout na komedii s představením farmaceutického balíčku. Prostě na zbraně peníze najdete vždycky, když to zbraňový sektor potřebuje, ale vážená paní komisařko, tohle vám občané sečtou ve volbách. Ale co je horší? Díky tomu občané prostě v Evropě trpí, díky vaší neschopnosti.

Viktor Uspaskich (NI). – Gerbiamas pirmininke, pirmininkaujantis, gerbiami kolegos. Aš šiek tiek kitokiu rakursu. Aš pateikiau rezoliuciją dėl platesnės alternatyvios medicinos taikymo. Su visa pagarba žiūriu į tradicinės medicinos specialistus ir tikiu, kad jie padaro tai, kas kartais neįmanoma. Bet žvelgdamas iš savo šalies perspektyvos, matau, kad vyriausybė daro viską, kad tradicinės medicinos gydymo įstaigas vis labiau izoliuotų nuo savo pacientų. O susirgusiam žmogui patekti pas gydytoją tampa ne pasveikimo ir ramybės procedūra, o tikras žygdarbis ir naujos gal net ligos įgijimu. Tad primenu, kad alternatyvi medicina pacientą ne atstumia, o priima. Šioje medicinoje naudojamos tik natūralios medžiagos ar priemonės gydymui. Jos taikymas motyvuoja žmones vis labiau ištraukti į savo sveikatos gerinimą, į sveiką gyvenimo būdą. Domėtis ir rūpintis savimi. Priimti didesnę atsakomybę už savo sveikatą. Visur, kur taikoma tokia metodika, pasiekta labai gerų rezultatų. Tad raginu Parlamentą ir Komisiją, kad ši idėja neužstrigtų (žodžiai, kurių nesigirdi) stalčiuose.

Cristian-Silviu Buşoi, on behalf of the PPE Group. – Mr President, issues related to availability, accessibility and affordability of medicines, as well as manufacturing dependency on third countries outside of the EU and disruptions or other situations along the whole supply chains, are routes for the shortages of medicines, and these circumstances are weakening our healthcare systems and hindering sustainable access to medicines for patients.

In this context, I would like to congratulate Commissioner Kyriakides and I welcome the European Commission proposal to review the pharmaceutical legislation and also to address in this revision a few of the main concerns as regards shortages.

But we need to do more than that. We need to be aware that we need to implement all the proposals in the pharma strategy. Therefore, we need financial instruments and to build on Europe's success of unlocking medicines for vulnerable patients. I think we need to strengthen global supply chains and keep them open, reduce import dependencies by diversifying sources of supply, creating incentives for R&D and production in the Union, and last but not least, bringing back the production in our Union. There are many Member States that could make a change in this regard, and I would like to mention my country, Romania, where there is great potential to deploy production and manufacturing for medicines. We have seats, we have regions that could benefit economically, and we have also the necessary human resource in order to do that.

So, dear Commissioner, it is very important to find also the appropriate financial instruments at EU level and national level in order to fight efficiently against shortages.

Sara Cerdas (S&D). – Senhor Presidente, Comissária, Colegas, na União Europeia, nove em cada dez mortes são atribuídas a doenças não transmissíveis. Milhões de cidadãos europeus dependem de medicamentos essenciais. E, se não queremos sobrecarregar os sistemas de saúde que já estão em stress, importa garantir uma estratégia europeia que garanta o acesso a estes medicamentos a curto, a médio e a longo prazo.

Com a pandemia, nós aprendemos que a compra conjunta é uma ferramenta poderosa e pode ser implementada imediatamente para os medicamentos essenciais que estejam em escassez. A médio prazo, temos de reduzir a nossa dependência externa para a produção destes medicamentos, dado que a União Europeia tem a capacidade tanto científica como tecnológica para os produzir.

E, por último, a importância de diversificarmos os locais de produção nos vários países da União Europeia e garantir cadeias de abastecimento mais fortes e mais resilientes a longo prazo.

Saúdo, assim, a proposta da Comissão de um mecanismo de identificação dos pontos de rutura e de estabelecer mecanismos de resposta à altura. A regulamentação farmacêutica é bem-vinda e as negociações devem acautelar estas propostas para uma verdadeira União Europeia para a Saúde.

Frédérique Ries (Renew). – Monsieur le Président, Madame la Commissaire, 3 000 médicaments au total ont manqué à l'appel en Belgique l'année dernière, des molécules les plus banales, le paracétamol, à celles qui sauvent des vies. On frôle ici l'urgence sanitaire. Les pénuries sont endémiques et la tendance est alarmante dans trois États membres sur quatre. La communication que vous venez d'annoncer, Madame la Commissaire, sur les mesures contre les pénuries va évidemment dans la bonne direction, notamment pour les achats groupés. L'HERA doit y prendre toute sa part, vous connaissez notre position, nous ne cessons de la répéter.

Mais on doit aller plus loin, bien évidemment aussi avec une véritable stratégie industrielle. L'Europe est largement dépendante des substances actives venant d'Asie et une sur deux affiche moins de cinq fabricants dans le monde. Une politique industrielle donc, qui est nécessaire, c'est ce que vous demandez en mai dernier et à l'initiative de la Belgique 21 États membres en appelant à un acte européen pour les médicaments critiques. Un véritable mécanisme aussi de solidarité entre les États membres.

Ce que je viens de dire ici en une minute, quasiment mot pour mot, nous sommes très nombreux ici à le répéter depuis cinq ans, depuis six ans. Alors, il est urgent, Madame la Commissaire, maintenant, de passer de l'incantation à l'action.

Michèle Rivasi (Verts/ALE). – Monsieur le Président, Madame la Commissaire, on se retrouve sur le problème de la pénurie des médicaments et l'autonomie stratégique en matière de soins de santé dans l'Union européenne. Alors, cela fait quand même plus de dix ans que le problème est devenu chronique. Tout à l'heure, ma collègue parlait de trois mille médicaments en pénurie en Belgique, il y en a plus de trois mille aussi en Italie.

Et que fait l'Europe? C'est vrai que, et là je suis d'accord avec vous, c'est de la compétence de l'Europe. Alors qu'est-ce qu'on a fait? On a augmenté les compétences de l'Agence européenne des médicaments en disant c'est à vous à faire un catalogue de médicaments essentiels. Eh bien, écoutez, j'ai regardé sur leur site, on a entre 20 et 40 médicaments essentiels. On a fait des groupes de travail, le SPOC, le MSSG, pour essayer de voir l'offre et la demande, mais on n'a pas fait grand-chose.

Alors il faut ouvrir la boîte à outils. Dans la boîte à outils, c'est vrai qu'il peut y avoir des incitations financières, vous avez raison. Mais quand je regarde les labos, qu'est-ce qu'ils demandent les labos? Ils disent qu'il faut augmenter le prix des médicaments. Et pour les médicaments qui ne sont plus couverts par rapport à un brevet, eh bien qu'est-ce qu'ils veulent? Qu'on augmente le prix. Et ça coûte très cher au niveau de la sécurité sociale.

On peut avoir aussi ce qu'on appelle des notifications obligatoires, c'est à dire, quand un labo décide de ne plus fabriquer un médicament, il faut qu'il en informe une entreprise et qu'il lui donne les autorisations de mise sur le marché.

Et dernière chose, il faut faire un établissement public. Ils ne veulent pas le fabriquer. Très bien. Eh bien on fait un établissement public, ça existe aux États-Unis, Madame la Commissaire, ça s'appelle Civica. Et je vous assure qu'il serait bien que vous y alliez parce que c'est très intéressant, ils fabriquent des médicaments.

Margarita de la Pisa Carrión (ECR). – Señor presidente, señora comisaria, señorías, la inquietud de los padres fundadores de la Unión Europea fue conciliar la paz a través de acuerdos que garantizaran el suministro de energía y materias primas. Pero hoy vemos como nuestro mercado único no está dando la respuesta necesaria por estrategias o legislaciones ideologizadas que han comprometido nuestra competitividad. Dependemos de bienes básicos como los principios activos y los componentes de medicamentos. Dependemos de terceros países como la India y China. Dependemos de tratamientos contra el cáncer, antibióticos para niños o para el diagnóstico, como el yodo. Se ponen en riesgo la salud y la vida de los pacientes si se nos limita o corta el suministro. No sé si se dan cuenta del daño que nos pueden provocar. Es un problema de seguridad.

Hoy la Agencia Española de Medicamentos informa de 954 medicamentos con problemas de suministro. Muchos, sin alternativa. No se resolverá este grave problema si no se corrigen las legislaciones que perjudican a nuestra industria. Y, la verdad, no vemos intención de hacerlo. La Comisión ha presentado una propuesta de legislación farmacéutica que desincentiva por completo la innovación en nuestro espacio. Corrijamos este rumbo y luchemos por la seguridad y la salud que todos merecemos.

Rosanna Conte (ID). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, non abbiamo abbastanza farmaci nell'Unione europea. Ormai da vent'anni a pagare le spese di queste carenze strutturali sono i cittadini, che solo in Italia hanno sofferto la totale assenza di quasi 900 farmaci lo scorso inverno. Sono numeri che devono farci riflettere non solo sulla carenza di farmaci, ma anche sulla dipendenza da Stati terzi.

È per questo che diversificare la produzione non basta. Bisogna soprattutto sostenere al più presto una nuova politica industriale che concentri in Europa la realizzazione dei principi attivi di cui abbiamo bisogno. La speranza è che queste soluzioni arrivino dalla prossima strategia farmaceutica, da cui tutti ci aspettiamo un deciso cambio di approccio.

Con la stagione invernale alle porte non possiamo più permetterci di ripetere gli stessi errori del passato e dipendere ancora da altri, specialmente quando si parla della salute dei nostri cittadini.

Marisa Matias (The Left). – Senhor Presidente, Senhora Comissária, o problema da escassez de medicamentos só deixará de ser um problema quando o acesso aos cuidados de saúde for colocado à frente do negócio, dos interesses e do lucro das farmacêuticas. Não bastam pensos rápidos na legislação europeia. Já sabemos o que acontece com esses: mais cedo ou mais tarde acabam por cair e expor as feridas do sistema.

Do que nós precisamos é de mudar de abordagem: precisamos de sistemas públicos e universais de saúde, precisamos de um controlo público sobre a produção de medicamentos, não só para prevenir a escassez, mas também para garantir que todas e todos os que deles necessitam têm acesso aos medicamentos, independentemente do seu rendimento ou de terem ou não terem doenças raras.

E tudo isto é ainda mais urgente no momento de crise económica que vivemos, em que as pessoas têm de escolher entre pagar a casa, comer ou comprar medicamentos. Quando enfrentamos um problema de escassez de medicamentos nesta região do mundo, na região mais rica do mundo, é porque claramente o negócio foi posto à frente da saúde pública.

Edina Tóth (NI). – Elnök Úr! Két nap, két magyar Nobel-díj. A beszédemet azzal szeretném kezdeni, hogy sok szerezettel gratulálok Karikó Katalinnak és Krausz Ferencnek a rangos elismeréshez.

Az elhúzódo gyógyszerhiány veszélybe sodorja a betegeket, és óriási kihívást jelent a nemzeti egészségügyi rendszerek számára. Mivel az egyik legsúlyosabb probléma az, hogy a gyógyszergyártáshoz használt hatóanyagok nagy része a Távol-Keleten, Kínában és Indiában készül, ezért úgy gondolom, hogy az EU gyártási és ellátási folyamatainak megerősítésére kiemelt figyelmet kell fordítanunk.

Ez azonban nem lehetséges az Európai Unió területén már meglévő gyógyszergyárak gyártási kapacitásának növelése és új gyártók bevonása nélkül, amely során elengedhetetlen az egyenlő földrajzi elosztás érvényesülése. A közép- és kelet-európai régió nem lehet az EU mostohagyereke, és fontos, hogy az itt található korszerű gyártókapacitásokat is bevonjuk a termelés növekedése és a minket sújtó gyógyszerhiány megfékezése érdekében.

Στέλιος Κυμπουρόπουλος (PPE). – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, αγαπητή κύρια επίτροπε Κυριακίδη, αγαπητοί κύριοι συνάδελφοι, τα τελευταία χρόνια έχουμε δει μια ανησυχητική αύξηση της συχνότητας των ελλείψεων φαρμάκων σε ολόκληρη την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση, την ίδια στιγμή που η εξάρτησή μας από μικρό αριθμό παρασκευαστών ευρισκόμενων εκτός της Ένωσης γίνεται, δυστυχώς ακόμα μεγαλύτερη. Είναι, λοιπόν, αδιαμφισβήτητα στρατηγικής σημασίας η αύξηση της στρατηγικής αυτονομίας της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης στον χώρο του φαρμάκου και η απεξάρτησή της για πρώτες ύλες από τρίτες χώρες.

Στην πρότασή της για την αναθεώρηση της φαρμακευτικής νομοθεσίας, η Επιτροπή, για την αντιμετώπιση των ελλείψεων, ζητά έναν κατάλογο κρίσιμων φαρμάκων της ΕΕ, ενισχυμένη λογοδοσία και αυξημένο ρόλο του ENL στην παρακολούθηση και τον συντονισμό των προμηθειών. Για να αντιμετωπιστούν, ωστόσο, αποτελεσματικά οι ελλείψεις και να εξασφαλιστεί η στρατηγική αυτονομία της ΕΕ, κλειδί αποτελεί η ενίσχυση της έρευνας και της εσωτερικής παραγωγής, ενώ ένα σύστημα παρακολούθησης, κοινής χρήσης περισσότερων συγκεντρωτικών δεδομένων και άμεσης ενημέρωσης των ελλείψεων ή της μειωμένης διαθεσιμότητας στα κράτη μέλη, μπορεί να αντιμετωπίσει το πρόβλημα στη ρίζα του.

Για τον σκοπό αυτό, πρότυπο πρέπει να αποτελεί η καινοτομία της ελληνικής κυβέρνησης με τη δημιουργία ενός online μηχανισμού, με τον οποίο δημόσιοι και ιδιωτικοί φορείς, πολίτες και επαγγελματίες στον τομέα της υγείας θα μπορούν να ενημερώνονται άμεσα, εύκολα και με διαφανή τρόπο για σκευάσματα που δεν είναι διαθέσιμα. Έτσι, θα επιταχυνθεί η πρόσβαση των ασθενών σε θεραπείες και θα καταστούν τελικά βιώσιμα τα συστήματα υγείας.

Monika Beňová (S&D). – Pani komisárka, neobmedzený prístup k cenovo dostupným liekom pre našich občanov pokladám za prioritu pre záver tohto legislatívneho obdobia. Je škoda, že sa tomu venujeme až v posledných mesiacoch. Pre občanov členských štátov Európskej únie je prístup k liekom existenčne dôležitá téma a ako spravodajkyňa pre revíziu všeobecných pravidiel o liekoch chcem spraviť všetko preto, aby sme raz a navždy zaviedli dlhodobé riešenia na predchádzanie nedostatku liekov.

Slovensko je bohužiaľ dlhodobo na chvoste Európskej únie v dĺžke uvádzania inovatívnych liekov na slovenský trh. Slovenskí občania musia čakať v priemere 2 roky na už schválený liek, ktorý je bezpečný a efektívny.

Európska únia môže, a musí, urobiť viac v spolupráci s národnými inštitúciami, aby zabezpečila, že členské štáty, ako je napríklad Slovensko, budú mať prístup k inovatívnym liekom pre deti, pre onkologických pacientov alebo pacientov so zriedkavými chorobami vrátane generických liekov.

Rovnako vyzývam farmaceutický priemysel a inštitúcie Únie a národné orgány, aby zasiahli pri nekontrolovanom reexporte liekov. Pretože nečinnosť vedie k zvyšovaniu cien, ale hlavne k rozšíreniu nedostatku, či už v členských štátoch Európskej únie, iných, alebo aj u nás na Slovensku.

Hovorím to aj ako mama. Chýbajú nám lieky pre deti, takže musíme s tým niečo urobiť. Lieky nemajú byť na kšeftovanie. Majú byť na to, aby slúžili ľuďom v Európskej únii.

Catherine Amalric (Renew). – Monsieur le Président, Madame la Commissaire, chers collègues, nous avons tous pris conscience, partout en Europe, que le modèle actuel ne nous garantit plus l'accès aux médicaments, mêmes essentiels, en toute situation. Dans l'objectif de l'autonomie stratégique que vous soutenez, Madame la Commissaire, une loi européenne sur les médicaments critiques servirait notre ambition de préserver, dans une égalité de droits, chaque Européenne, chaque Européen d'une perte de chances face à la maladie par manque de médicaments.

Cette loi est à élaborer en lien étroit avec l'importante révision de la législation pharmaceutique européenne que nous entamons aujourd'hui. Ainsi, avec un portail européen de traçabilité des flux de médicaments apte à permettre, en cas de pénurie, une répartition solidaire des stocks entre les États membres, par des achats conjoints négociés à l'échelle européenne, mais aussi par la relocalisation de principes actifs critiques en Europe, tout en allant vers une production décarbonée en cohérence avec le pacte vert, par l'harmonisation des procédures d'essais cliniques et de mise sur le marché, par la multiplication de «bio clusters», d'écosystèmes d'innovation en Europe et un soutien fort à l'innovation et à la recherche, ces textes devraient construire une nouvelle politique du médicament attractive pour une Europe souveraine, solidaire et durable.

Nicolae Ștefănuță (Verts/ALE). – Domnule președinte, doamna comisară, doresc mai întâi să transmit un mesaj Guvernului României din partea a 782 de farmacii independente care cer să le fie facturile restante plătite. Bruxelles, avem o mare problemă: nu toți pacienții sunt tratați la fel. Un doctor din România așteaptă în medie doi ani mai mult decât un medic din Germania pentru a putea prescrie cel mai nou și cel mai bun medicament de pe piață. Mă gândesc la prietenii mei, la Ion și la Carmen, care sunt pensionari în București, și nu vreau să știu că au nevoie de ceva și noi nu le dăm în timp util acel medicament. Salvarea unei vieți în Europa nu ar trebui să fie o loterie în funcție de unde te-ai născut în Europa.

Doamna Kyriakides, în aprilie ați spus că pacienții din statele occidentale au acces în măsură de 90 % la cele mai noi și cele mai bune medicamente, pe când în Est abia 10 %. Ei bine, aveți competențe, sunteți comisară pe sănătate, aveți competențe și în privința pieței unice. Ce ați făcut? Ce veți face așa încât toți să aibă acces la aceleași medicamente în același timp? Haideți să facem Europa egală din nou. Haideți să o facem sănătoasă din nou.

Kosma Złotowski (ECR). – Obecnie aktywne składniki farmaceutyczne stosowane w lekach produkowanych w Unii Europejskiej pochodzą głównie z Chin i Indii. Także znaczna część wszystkich leków sprzedawanych w Europie pochodzi z wyżej wymienionych krajów, co wydłuża łańcuchy dostaw i wywołuje nagłe niedobory oraz wzrosty cen w sytuacji problemów z transportem. Każdy taki kryzys to poważne zagrożenie dla zdrowia publicznego. Nadal nie doczekaliśmy się odpowiednich inicjatyw na szczeblu unijnym, które zachęcałyby producentów do inwestowania w produkcję API w Europie.

Potrzebujemy dedykowanych rozwiązań, takich jak w przypadku rynku mikroprocesorów. Mamy i silny sektor farmaceutyczny, także w Polsce, który byłby gotów podjąć temu zadaniu przy odpowiednim wsparciu. Czy Komisja planuje przyjęcie odrębnej strategii relokacji produkcji API do Unii Europejskiej uwzględniającej zmiany przepisów, uelastycznienie norm środowiskowych i środki finansowe dla firm farmaceutycznych pragnących produkować aktywne składniki farmaceutyczne w Europie?

João Pimenta Lopes (The Left). – Senhor Presidente, a dramática realidade de escassez de medicamentos, cada vez mais frequente, é um problema, em primeiro lugar, para o doente que vê comprometido o seu tratamento.

Trata-se de uma situação indissociável da crescente concentração do setor farmacêutico, indústria que atua não em prol da saúde pública, mas antes da acumulação de lucros cada vez maiores, mesmo que por via da especulação, de restrições à produção ou dos elevados custos dos medicamentos.

A COVID-19 espelhou bem esta realidade, como o conluio das instituições da União Europeia com as multinacionais farmacêuticas. É precisa outra política para o medicamento, garantindo a soberania e independência dos Estados e que as patentes não sejam uma barreira à produção e ao abastecimento.

Em Portugal, são necessários mais meios para o Laboratório Nacional do Medicamento para garantir a produção dos medicamentos de maior utilização em rutura ou com falhas de abastecimento, alargando a produção de medicamentos genéricos, contribuindo para o autoaprovisionamento, reservas e medicamentos mais baratos, gratuitos até, para maiores de 65 anos, para quem tenha carências económicas ou para os doentes crónicos.

Λευτέρης Νικολάου-Αλαβάνος (NI). – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, παρά τα εκατομμύρια των νεκρών από την πανδημία στην Ευρώπη, δεν ιδρώνει το αυτί της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης και των κυβερνήσεών της. Πυξίδα σας έχετε το φάρμακο-εμπόρευμα, τα νοσοκομεία που λειτουργούν με όρους πληρότητας —λες και είναι ξενοδοχεία—, ενώ σήμερα μπορεί να υπάρξει ενιαίο, αποκλειστικά κρατικό σύστημα υγείας με κριτήριο τη δωρεάν πρόληψη, περίθαλψη και αποκατάσταση της υγείας του λαού, όπως και κάλυψη των αναγκών για φάρμακα όταν τα χρειάζεται ο λαός, τόσο σε συνθήκες αυξημένης ζήτησης όσο και σε έκτακτες συνθήκες.

Αυτές οι υπαρκτές δυνατότητες προσκρούουν στην ευρωενωσιακή στρατηγική εμπορευματοποίησης του δημόσιου συστήματος υγείας, στην κερδοφορία των ιδιωτικών μαγαζιών υγείας και των φαρμακευτικών κολοσσών που κατέχουν τις πατέντες, ανταγωνίζονται σκληρά μεταξύ τους, κερδοσκοπώντας σε βάρος της υγείας του λαού. Οι εργαζόμενοι δεν πρέπει να επιτρέψουν να γίνεται η ζωή τους θυσία στο καπιταλιστικό κέρδος. Να παλέψουν για κατάργηση των πατεντών, παράλληλων εξαγωγών φαρμάκων, για δωρεάν φάρμακα τη στιγμή που τα χρειάζονται, για σύγχρονο, εξοπλισμένο, στελεχωμένο δημόσιο σύστημα υγείας, χωρίς επιχειρηματική δράση, για προσωπικό με μόνιμη σταθερή δουλειά και μισθούς με βάση τις σύγχρονες ανάγκες.

Alexander Bernhuber (PPE). – Herr Präsident, sehr geehrte Frau Kommissarin! Über 50 % - ja, Sie haben richtig gehört: mehr als die Hälfte – der Medikamente, die wir dringend benötigen, sind einfach nicht verfügbar. Medikamente zur Krebstherapie, Impfstoffe und Arzneimittel zur Behandlung von schweren Nervenkrankheiten wie Epilepsie, Parkinson sind Mangelware.

Das ist einfach inakzeptabel, und es geht so nicht weiter. Wir müssen wirklich unbedingt, wenn es darum geht, die Abhängigkeit speziell von Drittländern – China, Indien sind hier hervorzuheben – zu verringern, stark eingreifen und handeln. Es braucht endlich wieder ein klares Bekenntnis zur Produktion von Arzneimitteln in Europa.

Nur ein kleines Beispiel: In meinem Heimatland Österreich sind derzeit 577 Medikamente nicht oder nur schwer verfügbar und eingeschränkt erhältlich, speziell Arzneimittel für Kinder. Hier brauchen wir unbedingt einen gemeinsamen Ansatz.

Frau Kommissarin, hier sind wir jetzt wirklich gemeinsam am Zug: Schaffen wir endlich Bedingungen, unter denen wir die Produktion von Arzneimitteln wieder zurück nach Europa holen können, damit diesen Lieferengpässen, die wir derzeit über Europa hinweg haben, endlich entgegengewirkt wird.

Milan Brglez (S&D). – Gospod predsednik, spoštovana komisarka, kolegice in kolegi!

Motnje v preskrbi z zdravili so zaskrbljujoče, postajajo kar običajne v Evropski uniji. Z administrativnimi ovirami in težavami v proizvodnji in pri uvozu se srečujemo predvsem na manjših trgih, kot je recimo slovenski, kjer primanjkuje 300 zdravil.

Posebej problematično je pomanjkanje osnovnih antibiotikov in zdravil za zdravljenje redkih bolezni in bolezni najmlajših. Ker je nedopustno, da tržni mehanizem nadvlada nad dostopom do osnovnih zdravstvenih storitev, se sam zavzemam za podporo proizvodnji zdravil v Evropski uniji ter skupna javna naročila za zdravila za otroke, starejše in kronično bolne.

Menim, da imamo na ravni Evropske unije primerne mehanizme. Za ta namen smo recimo dali dodatna pooblastila Evropski agenciji za zdravila in ustanovili Evropski organ za pripravljenost in odzivanje na izredne zdravstvene razmere.

Zato jih pozivam, da v okviru svojih pristojnosti storijo vse, kar je treba, ter s tem prispevajo k družbeni odpornosti in strateški avtonomiji zdravstvene oskrbe v Evropski uniji.

Dolors Montserrat (PPE). – Señor presidente, el desabastecimiento de fármacos es un grave problema en toda Europa, que está repercutiendo directamente en la salud de los europeos. Por ejemplo, en España hay escasez de más de 900 fármacos. Por eso, denunciamos que la Unión Europea no haya puesto en marcha ya una política de apoyo para la producción de principios activos y de medicamentos, un ámbito que quiero recordar que ya está incluido en la Estrategia Industrial como ámbito clave de dependencia.

Dentro de esta Estrategia Industrial, la Comisión está apoyando, por ejemplo, la producción de materias primas, baterías, hidrógeno limpio y semiconductores, así como la digitalización. Todos ellos son ámbitos estratégicos, pero también lo es la producción de activos farmacéuticos y de medicamentos.

Así pues, seguimos dependiendo de terceros países para adquirir los principios activos. Esto significa que tenemos escasez, que tenemos desabastecimiento y, por tanto, que somos más vulnerables. Y, sobre todo, los más vulnerables son los más pequeños en Europa, nuestros hijos.

Sabemos que la demanda de medicamentos seguirá aumentando. ¿Por qué? Por el envejecimiento de nuestra población, y también debido al aumento de las enfermedades crónicas. Y por ello no podemos perder más tiempo. Exigimos medidas inmediatas y también que las incluyamos en el paquete legislativo farmacéutico. Porque necesitamos un sector farmacéutico europeo fuerte, competitivo y, sobre todo, que sea considerado estratégico.

Por eso, desde el Parlamento y todos sus grupos políticos, hemos pedido a la Comisión que presente con urgencia medidas para garantizar la producción de medicamentos. Aplaudo la próxima Comunicación que presentará la Comisión, pero es muy importante incluir esas medidas en el paquete legislativo.

Tudor Ciuhodaru (S&D). – Domnule președinte, vreau ca toți pacienții din România să beneficieze de medicamente ieftine și suntem pe un teren minat. Peste 3 000 de medicamente esențiale au dispărut din farmacii și multe dintre ele sunt esențiale, care salvează vieți, iar este pentru prima dată când la nivel european, amoxicilina și paracetamolul nu au fost disponibile.

Accesibilitate înseamnă disponibilitate și preț. Demersul meu de astăzi este legat de o Uniune Europeană a sănătății și în acest domeniu, iar cele cinci obiective prioritare pentru mine, pe care le-am depus deja ca prim-vicepreședinte al Comisiei de Sănătate, înseamnă o veritabilă revoluție în ceea ce înseamnă politica farmaceutică și fiecare cetățean vulnerabil din această Europă să beneficieze de medicamente ieftine atunci când are nevoie.

Ele sunt practic crearea unei liste de medicamente esențiale, standarde europene de calitate în sănătate, o strategie unitară de producție bazată inclusiv pe resuscitarea capacităților de producție existente. Vă invit, doamna comisară, să susțineți Institutul „Cantacuzino” din România. Poate deveni oricând o soluție la problemele strategice ale Europei.

Pe de altă parte, vorbesc despre reducerea sau chiar eliminarea taxelor pentru medicamente generice. Deja le-am susținut în fața doamnei comisare, iar pe de altă parte, o farmacie de urgență, pe modelul „rescEU”, în care producătorii să fie obligați să aibă 10 % din vânzările anuale pe stoc, ca să poată răspunde atunci când vorbim despre solicitări crescute sau lanțuri dificile de aprovizionare. Sănătatea se tratează cu soluții concrete și sper să mă susțineți și în acest demers. Vă invit, doamna comisară, să vedeți și Institutul „Cantacuzino” din România.

Beatrice Covassi (S&D). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, signora Commissaria, questo dibattito lo dice chiaramente: l'allarme carenza farmaci è sempre più acuto in Europa; solo in Italia mancano all'appello più di 3 000 medicinali. Un fenomeno ormai strutturale, con carenze aumentate del 60 % negli ultimi anni, e che richiede risposte urgenti, a partire dalla riduzione della dipendenza da pochi produttori extra europei per i principi attivi necessari a fabbricare i medicinali.

Ma attenuare le carenze non basta. Dobbiamo puntare alla prevenzione con un coordinamento europeo tra i diversi anelli della catena distributiva e azioni per garantire ai nostri cittadini e alle nostre cittadine sempre le migliori cure.

Per questo chiedo a gran voce alla Commissione europea di attuare iniziative e strumenti, anche finanziari, che favoriscano la produzione europea di medicinali essenziali, principi attivi e trattamenti innovativi.

Collegli, la risposta comune alla pandemia ci ha insegnato l'importanza dei sistemi sanitari, ma in troppi, a partire dal governo del mio paese, sembrano aver dimenticato, ancora una volta sacrificando la spesa sanitaria. Allora, che il diritto alla salute resti la nostra priorità e lavoriamo insieme da oggi per avere un'Unione europea della salute.

Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D). – Voorzitter, mevrouw de commissaris, twintig jaar geleden produceerde de EU de helft van haar eigen geneesmiddelen en vandaag de dag is dat nog maar een kwart. Voor verschillende medicijnen die we heel erg nodig hebben, zijn we voor 100 % afhankelijk geworden van China en India. We hebben vandaag de dag op Europese bodem nog maar één fabriek die antibiotica produceert en die waren we bijna kwijt.

Stelt u zich voor dat er morgen een superbacterie opduikt en dat Europa zelf niet in staat is om antibiotica te produceren, zodat we dus in volle pandemie moeten wachten op een levering van – jawel – China. Dat doet wel een belletje rinkelen, want in de pandemie hebben we moeten wachten op de mondkmaskers. En als we één ding geleerd hebben uit die covidpandemie, dan is het dat de Europese Unie zich beter moet leren wapenen tegen gezondheidsrisico's en pandemieën. Dat doen we dus níet als we geen afdoende antwoord hebben op een medicijntekort.

Ik heb een voorstel, mevrouw de commissaris. U hebt een mededeling aangekondigd. Wel, België heeft de "Critical Medicines Act" gelanceerd, gesteund in de Raad en gesteund in het Parlement en zal dat met het Belgische voorzitterschap ook extra onderstrepen. Ik hoop dat u dat opneemt in uw mededeling.

IN THE CHAIR: ROBERTS ZÎLE

Vice-President

Catch-the-eye procedure

Maria Grapini (S&D). – Domnule președinte, doamna comisară, stimați colegi, sigur, discutăm o situație care ține de viața oamenilor. Hrana, apa, medicamentele asigură viața oamenilor până la urmă.

Nu pot să nu spun că sunt de acord cu ce ați prezentat, doamna comisară, dar întrebarea mea firească este: eu sunt în Parlament din 2014, de ce o listă a medicamentelor critice pe care spuneți că vreți să o faceți, o facem pentru prima dată? Acum am aflat că sănătatea este prioritate? E bine că o facem. Problema e: când ajungem să avem acele stocuri de medicamente esențiale pentru toți cetățenii? Tot dumneavoastră ați spus că indiferent unde trăiește un cetățean, și așa este, trebuie să aibă acces la medicamente.

În țara mea, să știți că primesc petiții săptămânal, nu lunar. Lipsesc medicamentele pentru epilepsie, medicamentele pentru tiroidă, medicamentele pentru cancer. Medicii din România trebuie să aleagă cui dau un tratament și pe cine abandonează. Este cumplit ca un medic să decidă soarta, din motiv de penurie de medicamente.

Spuneți că avem măsuri, dar iată, 60 % a crescut penuria. Ce facem concret? Pentru că lucrurile trebuie rezolvate acum și nu în viitor, pentru că viața oamenilor nu așteaptă să rezolvăm noi problemele. Sănătatea este prioritate.

Susanna Ceccardi (ID). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, si parla spesso di sovranità energetica e di sovranità alimentare, ma dovremmo parlare di più di sovranità farmaceutica, un settore trainante per le economie nazionali ed europee.

La maggior parte dei principi attivi, come è stato detto, è prodotta in Cina e in India. Questo dato è allarmante per la nostra sicurezza farmaceutica. Se avessimo una crisi mondiale, per esempio, molti dei farmaci salvavita che conosciamo, per esempio quelli antidiabetici, non potrebbero salvare la vita a milioni di persone in Europa.

E purtroppo negli ultimi vent'anni l'Unione europea ha perso il 25 % dei finanziamenti, perché altri paesi hanno investito di più: l'Arabia Saudita, la Cina e gli USA.

La proposta della Commissione europea svantaggia gli Stati comunitari perché rischia di aumentare le delocalizzazioni. Quindi no alle delocalizzazioni. Proteggiamo la proprietà intellettuale e gli investimenti.

Marc Botenga (The Left). – Monsieur le Président, Madame la Commissaire, des milliers de médicaments manquent dans l'Union européenne, pays par pays, des médicaments qui peuvent sauver des vies, et les médicaments disponibles sont souvent trop chers. Les États paient des prix absolument dingues. Mais il faut aussi oser dire pourquoi c'est le cas. L'explication, la raison est claire: vous avez décidé de laisser tout le pouvoir aux grandes multinationales pharmaceutiques. Ce sont elles qui décident quoi produire, quand produire, combien produire et à quel prix vendre. Certaines d'entre elles ont même le numéro personnel de M^{me} von der Leyen.

Alors, si vous êtes sérieuse par rapport au besoin d'avoir des médicaments accessibles, abordables, il faut faire deux choses. Tout d'abord, arrêtez de donner de l'argent gratuit sans condition à ces multinationales. Mettons des conditions claires. Demandons que le médicament soit effectivement accessible, effectivement abordable. Deuxièmement, développons une infrastructure, une entreprise publique pour la recherche et le développement et pour la production de médicaments. Vous savez, cela existe au Canada, aux États-Unis et même à Cuba, petit pays sous blocus qui a réussi à développer des vaccins.

(End of catch-the-eye procedure)

Stella Kyriakides, Member of the Commission. – Mr President, honourable Members, this has indeed been a very interesting debate on many points that have been raised here. I believe that we find ourselves on the same page, but I also believe that this is an opportunity for myself, standing in front of you, to put forward again some of the points that we have frequently debated upon and why we are all discussing this today.

It was in fact, I think MEP Socal, who started off today saying that there should be no first and second class citizens in access to medicines. One of your other colleagues – and in many ways you have all said this – said that we all need to work together to address shortages, but also to make sure that not only do we address shortages, but patients have access to affordable medicines and have access to innovation.

So in order to do this, I have said from the beginning we need to have all players on board. We need to have industry on board. We need to have supply chain holders or stakeholders on board. We need to have Member States and their health systems on board. And, of course, we need to have all the EU and the institutions on board.

Now in the pharmaceutical reform that we have put forward – and this needs to be absolutely clear – we are looking at strengthening our pharmaceutical sector in Europe and to keep it as a global frontrunner and keep it as a frontrunner in innovation. So I will not agree with the statement that I have heard saying that our reform will be discouraging innovation. I believe that we can collectively feel proud of what we have achieved in the last three or four years, in putting together a strong European health Union.

Let's just remind ourselves what we have done together and with your support. And I think that this always needs to be said. We have extended the mandate of the European Medicines Agency, which allows them really to be able to be proactive. Now in the area also of shortages, we've created a new agency or authority HERA, which comes to support the efforts that we are doing. And we have put forward a new proposal on a pharma reform.

Now, I mentioned in my opening remarks that we are coming forward with a communication. I wanted to just say in two seconds what this will be, because it is important that you're aware of this. This is going to be a toolbox of actions which will be enhancing the availability and security of supply of medicines at all times. It will have short-term measures to present, prevent and respond to critical shortages, with the solidarity Member States, for which the Member States have been calling for a long while.

We're going to have an earlier adoption of the list of critical medicines. Many of you have asked, What are we doing with that? I just wanted to say that this will be prepared and we will be putting this forward by the end of this year. It will also be looking at guidance on procurement of medicines, but it will also be looking at what we're going to be doing in the long term with additional measures that we need to do to have structural change, building the right environment for investment and the right structures through, for example, EU FAB, so that we have solidarity.

We will be looking at the possibility of stockpiling in our communication and also a revision of the joint procurement. So I'm looking forward to this communication coming forward and being able to present it to you and discussing it with you.

In terms of the re-shore of production of all critical medicines to the EU, I want to just say two words. Open strategic autonomy is a major political objective of the Commission, and I think it is also a major lesson learned from the COVID crisis, and we want to de-risk, but we do not want to decouple from the global economy. The vulnerabilities analysis of the Union list of critical medicines will be informing us, because you need to see this as a toolbox on which medicines we need to diversify in terms of supply or reshoring. There is no one size-fits-all-approach, so we really need to base ourselves on medicines. We are going to have, and this is already in the reform that I hope that you will be debating as quickly as possible, we have proposed a new European alert system. We need to have earlier notification of shortages and of withdrawals so that we can have prevention plans of shortages and stronger EU coordination and mechanisms.

In terms of APIs, many of you have said this and I will not repeat myself, but in order to ensure this, we need to have a healthy environment for the pharmaceutical and the biopharmaceutical industries in the EU. We need to look at manufacturing flexibility and skilled labour, and this can help us build up the situation that we are working towards to have more secure supply chains and local EU production in order to enable a healthy environment.

On funding, a lot of financial instruments can already support strong medicines production, for instance, from the Recovery and Resilience Facility at the EU level and the recently proposed STEP mechanism supports innovative biotechnology, and also national funds can be made available.

Because there was a very clear question on the issue of the Critical Medicines Act – and I don't want to not answer that, I'm sorry I have gone over time, but so much has been said – we are open to explore a new approach for the Critical Medicines Act. I've said this before, but this legislative initiative requires very thorough preparation. We need to assess the industrial, the trade and the commercial dimensions and the immediate legislative priority for us – and I think for all of us now – is this pharmaceutical reform, which proposes a toolbox to address shortages and boost our security of supply in a structured way.

This is what we need in a European Health Union. We have achieved over the past 20 years – and the last time there was a reform I think was 19 years ago – is to have safe and effective medicines in the EU. But what we have not achieved is to have a single market for medicines and that's what we are putting forward in our pharmaceutical reform.

I'm counting on your support for a swift discussion and adoption of this legislation, because ultimately it is the best way forward to mitigate shortages and to ensure that all medicines reach all patients whenever they need them. That's what we're all committed to do here.

President. – The debate is closed.

Written statements (Rule 171)

Josianne Cutajar (S&D), in writing. – Between 2017 and 2019 there has been a 60% increase in shortage notifications for essential medicines and active pharmaceutical ingredients in our Union, with the situation only having gotten worse in 2022. What is clear for all to see is that medicines shortages are a real threat to the wellbeing of our citizens, with a disproportionate impact on the most vulnerable among us.

For this reason, the status quo is simply intolerable.

We need to foster effective strategic healthcare autonomy. For this reason we must not only focus on mitigating drug shortages, but also on implementing a preventive strategy and increasing production and innovation with the EU.

I urge the Commission to work towards a coherent and robust support policy, which aims to bolster our resilience in the face of possible health crises, boost the European pharmaceutical industrial ecosystem, make healthcare systems sustainable and increase access to treatments for patients.

One does not choose to get sick, but it is indeed our common political choice and responsibility to address medicines shortages, and ultimately ensure accessible and affordable cures for all Europeans.

Romana Jerković (S&D), napisan. – Lijekovi za ublažavanje simptoma prehlade i gripe, sirupi protiv kašlja, lijekovi za regulaciju visokog krvnog tlaka su samo neki u nizu od lijekova koji nedostaju.

Uzroci nestašice su različiti, a ishod je isti – naši sugrađani nemaju pristup prijeko potrebnim lijekovima i antibioticima. Zajednički proeuropski odgovor je ključni faktor kojim možemo poduzeti adekvatne mjere.

Europska zdravstvena unija predstavlja temelj naše budućnosti. Proračunom od 5,3 milijarde eura EU jasno prioritizira zdravlje. Ako nas je pandemija COVID-a 19 naučila išemu, onda je to sigurno međusobna suradnja.

Pokretanjem proizvodnih pogona istovremeno bismo djelovali na dvije razine. S jedne strane smanjili bismo ili onemogućili nestašicu lijekova, a s druge strane otvorili bismo brojna nova radna mjesta. Shodno tomu, reducirali bismo uvoz lijekova iz Kine.

Zajednička nabava cjepiva protiv koronavirusa uvelike je doprinijela njegovom suzbijanju. Jučer je to bila korona, a sutra tko zna što. Ne možemo i ne smijemo si dopustiti ponavljanje istog scenarija. Moramo prioritizirati jačanje zdravstvenih sustava na razini EU-a.

Dužni smo omogućiti našim pacijentima pristup lijekovima koji su im potrebni po pristupačnim cijenama. Trebamo utvrditi koji lijekovi nedostaju. Moramo imati europsku farmaceutsku strategiju kako bi Europa bila autonomna.

Pristup lijekovima ne može se ograničavati u slučajevima nestašice, rata ili inflacije.

César Luena (S&D), por escrito. – La Delegación Socialista Española impulsó un debate exigiendo a la Comisión una legislación de apoyo dirigida a desarrollar una autonomía estratégica europea en materia de principios activos farmacéuticos (APIs) y medicamentos.

La escasez de medicamentos es un problema crónico y sistémico en Europa, que se ha agravado en los últimos años. Este año, sin ir más lejos, todos los Estados miembros reportaron desabastecimientos, especialmente de analgésicos y formas farmacéuticas pediátricas, que pusieron en riesgo a los pacientes europeos. Asimismo, la UE ha perdido competitividad en investigación e innovación en las últimas décadas, pasando de ser un líder global a quedarse a la zaga frente a países como China o Estados Unidos.

Necesitamos medidas legislativas, más allá de lo considerado en la revisión de la legislación farmacéutica general, en línea con lo publicado para las otras 5 áreas de dependencia definidas por la Comisión (materias primas, baterías, hidrógeno limpio, semiconductores y tecnologías Edge and Cloud).

Nuestro objetivo debe ser aumentar la cuota de mercado europeo en la producción de medicamentos esenciales, APIs y medicamentos innovadores, para fortalecer la resiliencia y la sostenibilidad de los sistemas sanitarios, impulsar la industria europea y mejorar el acceso a los tratamientos para los pacientes.

Alin Mituța (Renew), *in writing*. – European citizens want more competences at the EU level to deal with health problems and future crises, as they expressed during the Conference on the Future of Europe. Despite the fact that we have a single market, there remains significant disparities among member states when it comes to access to healthcare services and medicine. Introducing minimum quality standards for healthcare could be the first step in ensuring equal access to adequate medical treatment for all European citizens, regardless of where they live, work, or travel in Europe and need medical help. This could entail the introduction of a unified set of criteria established by EU legislation. An important step in ensuring access to life-saving medicines for all European citizens should be the adoption of an EU list of essential medicines. Furthermore, we should address medicine shortages by establishing strategic stocks, but also by encouraging member states to collectively negotiate prices when purchasing equipment and medicine. Moreover, the European Union's industrial strategy should give special attention to building strategic autonomy and resilience in this sector.

Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE), *kirjallinen*. – Olemme Euroopassa isojen kysymysten äärellä. Mikä on paikkamme maailmassa? Kenestä olemme riippuvaisia? Kenen hyväntahtoisuudesta ja yhteistyöstä riippuu yritystemme, teollisuutemme ja yhteiskuntiemme toiminta, jopa kansalaistemme terveys? Venäjän hyökkäyssota Ukrainassa, globaali kahtiajako ja geopoliittiset jännitteet ovat syystäkin avanneet silmämme strategisen autonomian vahvistamisen tarpeelle.

Yhteistyö ja keskinäisriippuvuudet voivat olla paitsi mahdollisuus myös uhka. Keskinäisriippuvuudet alkavat näkyä nyt negatiivisesti myös terveyden saralla ja lääkkeissä. On haitallista, että EU on lääkkeiden valmistuksessa ja toimituksessa vakavasti riippuvainen kahdesta jättiläisestä: Kiinasta ja Intiasta. Jos lääkeyhtiöiden toiminta näissä maissa vaarantuu tai toimitusvirrat tyrehtyvät, lääkkeitä riippuvaisten eurooppalaisten terveys on vaarassa. Monen kohdalla kyseessä voi todella olla elämän ja kuoleman kysymys.

Nyt, kun EU:n lääkelainsäädäntöä uudistetaan, on oikea hetki varmistaa, että teemme lainsäädäntöä, joka rohkaisee lääkealan innovaatioita ja tutkimusta Euroopassa sekä tuo myös tuotantoa EU:n ulkopuolelta takaisin Eurooppaan. EU:n täytyy olla nykyistä isompi tekijä lääkepuolan taltuttamisessa ja parantaa myös terveydenhuollon strategista autonomiaa ja turvallisuutta. On aika siirtää katseemme lääkeomavaraisuuteen sekä innovaatioissa, tutkimuksessa että tuotannossa. Meidän täytyy vahvistaa Euroopan lääkeomavaraisuutta, jotta turvaamme potilaidemme hyvän hoidon jatkossakin.

13. Godkendelse af protokollen fra foregående møde

Sēdes vadītājs. – Ir pieejams vakardienas sēdes protokols un pieņemtie teksti.

Vai ir kādas piezīmes?

Protokols ir apstiprināts.

14. Spørgetid til kommissærerne – handelsforbindelserne mellem EU og Kina

Sēdes vadītājs. – Nākamais darba kārtības punkts ir jautājumu laiks (Komisija) (Reglamenta 137. pants).

Šajā jautājumu laikā laipni lūdzu piedalīties priekšsēdētājas izpildvietnieku Valdi Dombrovski.

Jautājumu laika temats: "ES un Ķīnas tirdzniecības attiecības".

Šis jautājumu laiks ilgs aptuveni 90 minūtes.

Kā ierasts, jautājuma uzdošanai būs viena minūte, savukārt atbildes sniegšanai – divas minūtes.

Runātājiem pirmajā kārtā būs iespēja uzdot 30 sekunžu garu papildjautājumu ar divām minūtēm atbildes sniegšanai.

Atgādinu, ka iespējamo papildjautājumu var uzdot tikai tad, ja tas ir cieši saistīts ar galveno jautājumu un nav jauns jautājums.

Ja vēlaties uzdot jautājumu, aicinu jūs to reģistrēt jau tagad, izmantojot brīvā mikroфона funkciju jūsu balsošanas iekārtā pēc tam, kad būsiet tajā ievietojuši savu balsošanas karti.

Jautājumu laikā uzstāšanās notiks no vietas, un aicinu visus runātājus ievērot piešķirto uzstāšanās laiku.

Kolēģiem, iespējams, vajadzēs dažus brīžus, lai reģistrētu savu pieprasījumu uzdot jautājumu, izmantojot balsošanas iekārtu. Tāpēc vēlreiz aicinu jūs savu pieprasījumu iesniegt tagad, un mēs sāksim ar pirmo jautājumu.

Francisco José Millán Mon (PPE). – Señor presidente, señor Dombrovskis, la cooperación con China para afrontar retos globales es imprescindible. Además, este país es un importantísimo socio comercial. No podemos ignorar a China, pero también tenemos que ser conscientes de que China se comporta cada vez más como un competidor y un rival.

Yo coincido con el enfoque de la presidenta Von der Leyen, que también ha hecho suyo el G7: tenemos que reducir los riesgos en nuestras relaciones con China. No se trata de desacoplarnos, lo que resultaría imposible. Nuestros objetivos tienen que ser corregir el gravísimo y creciente desequilibrio en nuestras relaciones comerciales, proteger la exportación de tecnologías avanzadas, y reducir nuestras dependencias excesivas en cuanto a cadenas de suministro y materias primas fundamentales. Y China tiene también que jugar limpio para que nuestras empresas no sigan sufriendo una falta de reciprocidad, de transparencia o de igualdad en las condiciones de juego.

Señor Dombrovskis, usted estuvo en China hace pocos días. ¿Cómo cree que han recibido en China las tesis occidentales —ya del G-7 y de la Unión Europea— de reducción de riesgos? ¿Qué reacciones ha visto en sus contactos con las autoridades chinas?

Valdis Dombrovskis, Executive Vice-President of the Commission. – Honourable Members, indeed, as regards EU relations with China, those are very complex relations. As described in our policy documents, we see China at the same time as a cooperation partner in a number of areas, but also as an economic competitor and, in some areas, as a systemic rival. So, we need to navigate this complexity of our relations with China.

It's worth noting that China is our second-biggest trading partner so, as President von der Leyen has underlined, we are not seeking decoupling from China. We are working on de-risking and de-risking, exactly as you mentioned, to address our strategic dependencies, notably on critical mineral supplies, where on a number of critical minerals, we see that China is a dominant supplier. So, we need to work indeed to address those dependencies.

Similarly, obviously we need to work on market access barriers, seeking more reciprocity in our trade relations. Last week I was in China for a high-level economic and trade dialogue and also for bilateral engagements, where I was raising those topics very prominently with Chinese counterparts. We also secured some openings from the Chinese side. Of course, it's now important that those are properly followed through and that we enjoy more balance and reciprocity in our trade relations.

Francisco José Millán Mon (PPE). – Señor presidente, me gustaría saber esto: ¿qué reacción tuvieron ellos en estos contactos que usted tuvo la semana pasada sobre esa idea de la reducción del riesgo? ¿Podría ser un poco más preciso?

Y, aquí, la presidenta Von der Leyen, hace unos días, en el debate sobre el estado de la Unión, nos anunció la apertura de una investigación contra los subsidios chinos a los vehículos eléctricos chinos. Me gustaría saber si ha habido alguna reacción por parte de sus interlocutores chinos contra esa investigación sobre el posible *dumping*.

Valdis Dombrovskis, *Executive Vice-President of the Commission*. – Indeed, so as I was mentioning, I was raising this question of de-risking obviously with Chinese counterparts, and they were also coming back on this topic. Clearly, they see this with a degree of concern, so they want to understand what exactly we mean by de-risking. In a sense, we have to be clear that de-risking is not another word for decoupling, but that we are having our economic security strategy. Globally speaking, in this more conflictual global geopolitical context, it's clear that we need to assess and address our risks – something we are doing, something the US is doing, something China itself is doing. So it's about finding this new balance as we are addressing this topic of de-risking. But in the case, clearly, the Chinese side was raising certain concerns.

And on your second question, as regards the announcement of anti-subsidy investigation on battery electrical vehicles, indeed, this topic was featuring quite prominently from the Chinese side. Also, when I was raising market access barriers, which we have for EU towards China, one of the reactions often was exactly on battery electrical vehicles. So I was explaining that this is going to be facts-based and a fact-based process and in line with applicable EU and WTO rules.

Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D). – Mr Commissioner, when we look at China and our relations, I think it is extremely important that we also have a close eye on the legislative issues within China and that we can see that they have a very broad understanding of the concept of national security. It is not confined, as we do, to conventional concerns such as terrorism and extremism, and it deals with a very large topic such as culture, technology, data and cyber security.

There is now a new proposal under the counter-espionage law that gives the Chinese Government large powers to override economic activity in the interest of national security. They can freeze assets, seize data, and they can conduct arrests within that framework. And this makes it, of course, increasingly difficult and dangerous for the EU business to be active in China. But equally important, it will lead to a huge implementation problem for our autonomous measures such as due diligence, deforestation and the ban on forced labour.

Did you have a talk on that when you were in China? How do you address these issues? And specifically when it comes to our autonomous trade measures, what is your assessment, Mr Commissioner?

Valdis Dombrovskis, *Executive Vice-President of the Commission*. – Thank you for those questions. Maybe first, also during my visit to China I was engaging extensively with EU businesses in China, with the EU Chamber of Commerce in China, which exactly in that week published its annual report, where two thirds of EU companies are reporting that business environment is getting more complicated in China and many of them cite exactly the topics you raised – laws and regulations regarding cybersecurity, regarding cross-border data flows, regarding anti-espionage law.

So indeed, those were topics we were raising intensively in various meetings and in the High-Level Economic Dialogue itself, because those are topics of systemic importance. Indeed, it makes it much more difficult for European businesses to conduct cross-border business, forces them either to diversify to other jurisdictions or to localise data and other elements in China.

Many of the concepts are very vague in the legislation. For example, there is a notion of 'important data' without clarification of what exactly important data is. So therefore, indeed we were making the point that we need clarifications on how exactly those laws are going to apply so that businesses can understand what is exactly expected from them.

There we were building on some openings we saw in the EU-China digital dialogue where there was an opening to set a dedicated mechanism between the EU and China to deal specifically with those data flows and related issues to provide clarity for European businesses as to what is expected according to those new legislations.

Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D). – Thank you very much for that answer. You approached very much how difficult it becomes for business to do business in China. But I think we also have to assess, and maybe you cannot answer today, but we have to assess what will be the implication of that counter-espionage law in China on our own autonomous measures, because if we ask our businesses to implement, for instance, due diligence or if it's the forced labour regulation, they will have to choose: will we implement EU law when we do business in China or do we just neglect it and try to do business in China if they face, for instance, an arrest?

Valdis Dombrovskis, *Executive Vice-President of the Commission*. – Yes, indeed, this was also one of the concerns actually raised by European businesses.

Indeed, we have important pieces of legislation in the pipeline, like due diligence, like forced labour, and this will require European businesses to make sure that their value chains are not sourcing goods or products which are made with environmental or labour rights violations, so this interplay will be very important. So when we're going to address those topics now with Chinese authorities, obviously this is one of the topics which we will need to discuss and have clarity for the businesses.

Also, I would say the generally, the relatively uncertain formulations and strict sanctions for the businesses, for board members and so in this regard is certainly a difficulty. It is it is already acting as a deterrent as already a number of businesses are looking at their options: what and how to do, to which extent they are localising in China, to which extent they are maybe moving outside of China.

We are already seeing actually that it has an impact on FDI inflows into China, and this was a point I was also making with Chinese counterparts that it is also in China's interest to provide information to investors. What are the rules? What is expected? Because otherwise it has also a negative effect on inward investment, especially for SMEs, which are finding it is increasingly impossible to navigate this landscape.

Marie-Pierre Vedrenne (Renew). – Monsieur le Président, Monsieur le Vice-président exécutif, vous revenez donc de Chine. J'aurai plusieurs questions. Tout d'abord, sur les matières premières critiques. Nous avons voté ici même notre ambition: sortir de la dépendance. Et en Chine, vous avez annoncé vouloir poursuivre les discussions sur un éventuel mécanisme de transparence pour des chaînes d'approvisionnement entre l'Union européenne et la Chine. Que pouvez-vous nous dire sur ce futur mécanisme?

Par ailleurs, dans un discours en Chine, vous avez évoqué et qualifié notre stratégie pour notre sécurité économique de «country agnostic». Que voulez-vous dire par là? Et comment voulez-vous «dérisquer» notre économie sans regarder les pays qui nous font face, notamment la Chine?

Je viens de voir à l'instant sur les réseaux sociaux la publication de la liste des technologies critiques. Y figurent notamment l'informatique quantique, l'intelligence artificielle, c'est une bonne chose. Mais là aussi, comment comptez-vous avancer dans la présentation des nouveaux instruments? Et je pense notamment au contrôle des investissements sortants.

Valdis Dombrovskis, *Executive Vice-President of the Commission*. – Well, yes. So, on the first question, on supplies of critical minerals, raw materials from China, as I was mentioning already before, China is actually a major supplier of a number of critical minerals, and in a number of positions, China is actually a dominant supplier, with some 80-90% of share of supplies. So that's why on one hand, we need clarity in terms of, well, on one hand, we need obviously to work on the de-risking, which we are already discussing and diversifying our supply chains and making sure that we are not having strategic dependencies from one dominant supplier. But on the other hand, indeed, we need to work with China also in ensuring the security of supply. And that's where this mechanism to discuss supplies of critical raw materials is coming in.

However, it was not decided at the current high-level economic dialogue. Some more work is needed regarding the exact scope of this mechanism. So this is something we agreed to follow up on China, but given its importance as a supplier, of course, it's important that we are engaging and to the extent possible, also ensuring predictability of supplies and early warning should there be some disruptions of supplies for whatever reason.

On economic security, well, indeed, generally speaking, like all our legislation that we are saying, quite often, it's country agnostic. We are not writing laws against this or that country. We are writing laws based on our principles and values, and they are applying them in a case of concrete countries as and when necessary.

Marie-Pierre Vedrenne (Renew). – Monsieur le Président, très rapidement, je reviens justement sur la sécurité économique et les nouveaux instruments pour que M. le vice-président exécutif puisse un peu plus détailler. Effectivement, ce n'est pas une volonté seulement de cibler la Chine, c'est plus large, c'est pour l'Union européenne, ce n'est pas contre qui que ce soit, mais c'est pour nous. Là encore, que ce soit vraiment sur les investissements sortants, comment comptez-vous avancer et comment comptez-vous porter aussi l'unité au sein des États membres?

Valdis Dombrovskis, Executive Vice-President of the Commission. – On economic security strategy, we have several elements which are of relevance. One is that on economic security strategy we need to be focused, precise and risk-based. So first we need to do the risk assessment, so what are the risks we are going to address, what are the issues which need to be dealt with? Then on the basis of that assessment we need to see how we use our existing toolbox, which is another important element, and also how we are developing our toolbox. In this sense, work is ongoing. For example, we are working on the review of the FDI screening mechanism, which is now in application for a few years. We have announced that by the end of the year we would come with an initiative on outbound investment.

Obviously on all those topics we also need to work closely with Member States because here we are working on intersection between economy and national security, and national security is a competence of Member States, and in a sense Member States are guarding this competence, so we need to find the right balance and to do so with engagement from Member States, but in any case we see value in greater cooperation and coordination of those efforts at the EU level.

Heidi Hautala (Verts/ALE). – Dear Executive Vice-President, we have seen that there are massive Chinese investments in Indonesia in steel production, precisely on the first stages of steel production based on the Indonesian massive nickel resources. At the same time, Indonesia has enforced an export ban for nickel and this is now at stake when the EU, the Commission, is introducing the Enforcement Regulation to counteract this.

So what I would like to know is this: could the Global Gateway be an answer to counteract these kinds of investments by China in other countries using its belt and road framework? Could our Global Gateway be a more fair way to bring added value to countries like Indonesia?

Valdis Dombrovskis, Executive Vice-President of the Commission. – Thank you for this question. Indeed, this is something we are following closely. Also the question on China's investments and subsidies in other countries and whether it also creates difficulties for the EU market.

In this case, the question is about, on one hand, when we are confronted with dumping or subsidies, we can launch our anti-dumping or anti-subsidy investigations, but we can also do so in case of cross-border situations, where there are, for example, as you mentioned, China's subsidies in Indonesia still creating distortions to the level playing field. We still can use our TDI toolbox.

You mentioned the restrictions which Indonesia had put on nickel exports. This is something which we had been challenging at the WTO, and we have a WTO panel on this case with Indonesia. But, more broadly, indeed we need to see how we contract this kind of measures. Indeed, as you mentioned, Global Gateway is our main policy tool for doing so, and we are using it actively. We are using also this approach of Team Europe, meaning that we try and to focus and create a coherent policy of EU and EU Member States and EU development and financial institutions so that we are having maximum impact and indeed engaging with countries based on the principles of multilateralism and fair competition.

Heidi Hautala (Verts/ALE). – Thank you for the answer. Well, let's look at what's going on with Chinese investments on European soil, literally on soil. How much are you observing and watching, for instance, Chinese investments in, say, battery factories in Hungary or now we have one in Finland? There is Chinese investment in battery production on the south coast of the Gulf of Finland in our country, which raises a lot of questions, not least because we are not sure that the investment is done in a socially and environmentally sound manner and it might add to the dependencies that we want to reduce. So, what is your take on this type of investments in Europe?

Valdis Dombrovskis, *Executive Vice-President of the Commission*. – On this question of China's investment in the EU, well, generally speaking, we are open to foreign investment, but this openness is not without limits. So that's why we have the FDI screening regulations, where we can do the screening of the possible transactions irrespective of the country of origin of the investor, to protect the security, improving economic security and public order in the EU.

Well, as regards respect to labour and human rights and environmental standards, this is something which each investor in the EU – regardless of country of origin, and regardless of whether it's an EU or foreign investor – has to follow. And it's the duty of competent national authorities to enforce that EU rules and regulations are being followed on the European soil.

Geert Bourgeois (ECR). – Voorzitter, mijnheer de commissaris, de aanpak van de Commissie lijkt mij de juiste. Niet ontkoppelen van China, wel de risico's afbouwen. Geen protectionisme, wel open strategische autonomie en vooral faire handel gebaseerd op gelijke spelregels.

En daar knelt het schoentje. Ik ken bloeiende Vlaamse bedrijven met honderden werknemers die ten onder dreigen te gaan door dumpingpraktijken van China. Massale invoer van producten tegen dumpingprijzen. De Commissie moet daar kordaat tegen optreden en vooral sneller. De gewone procedure duurt een tot anderhalf jaar. Welnu, in deze periode gaan die bedrijven kapot en komen honderden mensen op straat te staan.

Mijn vraag is dus wat u gaat doen om dergelijke drama's te vermijden en om kordaat, maar vooral veel sneller op te treden tegen die dumpingpraktijken.

Valdis Dombrovskis, *Executive Vice-President of the Commission*. – That's a very valid question. Well, first of all, I would say what's important in cases like this is for companies themselves to come forward as quickly as possible to the European Commission so that we can start reacting in a timely manner. Of course, from the Commission side, we are not running any delays and we're willing to move fast in cases like this. But of course, it is also true that the procedural timelines are set in the legislation and we need to respect those procedural timelines and, so to say, need to give due consideration to the rights of all stakeholders in this investigation.

So it is something also when we are looking at the legislative process, when we are legislating on different instruments, I think timelines is one of the elements which we need to look at and to streamline as much as possible, because I fully agree, the faster we react, the better we can protect our companies. But still, in this procedure, we need to gather necessary evidence to build the case properly so that we can also, depending on specific procedure, is under the EU court or under the WTO panels, under the WTO rules.

Geert Bourgeois (ECR). – Mijnheer de commissaris, u moet inderdaad de termijnen respecteren, maar er is ook een snelle procedure.

Ik vraag meer toepassing te geven aan die snelle procedure om drama's te vermijden en ik vraag u ook om op de EU-China-top heel klare, duidelijke taal te spreken ter zake. Faire handel? – Ja. Dumping? – Neen.

Valdis Dombrovskis, *Executive Vice-President of the Commission*. – On this question, I didn't quite understand from the translation which procedure exactly you meant with a quicker procedure, but probably we can follow it up bilaterally if there is procedures under which we can move forward quicker. We are certainly open to discuss and, if this procedure is applicable in the given case, to use the quicker procedures.

And as regards this question of rebalancing of fair trade, of effects on industrial subsidies, indeed those were topics I was raising with my Chinese counterparts. Also, at the beginning, I was raising the fact that our trade relations are very imbalanced. Last year we were running almost EUR 400 billion trade deficit. So, therefore, we put a lot of emphasis in our engagement with Chinese counterparts on specific market access barriers, seeking better access for our businesses, for our investment, so that we can address this imbalance.

Silvia Sardone (ID). – Signor Vicepresidente, Pechino ha in mano il 60 % della produzione globale di auto elettriche e più del 60 % delle batterie in circolazione è «Made in China». Per produrre le auto elettriche la Cina usa l'energia data da centrali a carbone.

Le stime dell'Eurostat sulle emissioni di anidride carbonica nei paesi dell'Unione europea nel 2022 registrano un calo del 2,8 % rispetto al 2021, però la Cina, invece, registra un aumento del 4,2 % e nei primi mesi del 2023 un altro aumento del 4 %. In Cina il consumo di petrolio è salito del 5,5 %, di carbone 3,6% e di gas dell'1,4 %.

Quindi, le mie domande. La prima è: la linea dell'Unione europea è davvero, con la scusa dell'ambiente, quella di impoverire l'Europa a favore dell'economia cinese? Perché questo è quello che sembra risultare. E poi vorrei sapere: l'Unione europea sta valutando nuovi incentivi per l'acquisto di automobili che tengano conto delle emissioni di anidride carbonica sprigionate nel loro processo di produzione e distribuzione?

Valdis Dombrovskis, *Executive Vice-President of the Commission*. – Thank you for this question. Indeed, we are well aware of the massive production capacities in China of battery electrical vehicles and also on China's energy mix. So certainly something which we need to address. And that's why in her State of the Union speech President von der Leyen announced the launch of anti-subsidy investigation on battery electric vehicles from China. So we are now moving forward with this investigation.

So it's clear we are open for competition in the EU, including in electrical vehicles sector, but this competition must be fair and not distorted by production-side subsidies and also, if we note that in the last two, three years, market share of Chinese brand battery electric vehicles has increased from less than 1% to 8%. It has been exponential growth. It clearly also presents a risk of injury for European industry. So that's why we are currently conducting this investigation and making sure that we are addressing the market distortions which may be there as a result of the production-side subsidies in China.

Silvia Sardone (ID). – Il tema è che qui la concorrenza non è tanto quella dell'Unione europea. Noi ci stiamo facendo concorrenza da soli favorendo paesi, come la Cina, extra Unione europea. Io quindi vorrei capire, proprio operativamente negli accordi commerciali con la Cina, se e come avete intenzione di agire.

Valdis Dombrovskis, *Executive Vice-President of the Commission*. – Well, to come back to your last question on trade agreement with China, it must be noted that the EU does not have a trade agreement with China. Correspondingly, we are conducting trade according to the WTO rules and on Most Favoured Nations basis. That's the basis of our trade engagement with China. Obviously, we then expect China to also respect the WTO rules.

I already mentioned how we are specifically reacting in the battery electric vehicle sector with the launch of an anti-subsidy investigation. However, this is also a topic that we are raising more broadly in the context of a well-functioning WTO, which is able to address 21st-century challenges, and a WTO, which needs to be able to address issues like industrial subsidies, the role of state-owned enterprises and their competitive neutrality, as well as the traditional topic of intellectual property rights. So we are raising all those topics in the context of WTO reform.

This obviously also requires China's engagement, but it's clear that China has benefited massively from its more than 20 years of WTO membership, and it's also in China's interest to preserve the functioning WTO, so expect China's engagement in this matter.

Mick Wallace (The Left). – Commissioner, we have a lot of reports and legislation designed to disrupt EU-China relations. We have the 'economic coercion by third countries' instrument, which will ensure the EU engages in reckless tit-for-tat restrictive measures with China and other rivals to US hegemony.

We have the report on China's influence on critical infrastructure in the EU, full of overblown rhetoric about the Chinese military's aims to take over the world.

The EU-China relations text is currently going through AFET. It throws all kinds of unfounded accusations and threats of China, while simultaneously maintaining that we need to work closely on global challenges like climate change.

Is this not the crux of the matter? The EU, under pressure from the US, is cooking up reasons to disengage from China precisely at a time when we need increased cooperation to fight runaway climate disaster.

Do we want to sacrifice the sustainable future of life on earth for the hegemony of US imperialism? Or do we choose international cooperation and the survival of humanity? Commissioner, which is in the best interest of the EU?

Valdis Dombrovskis, *Executive Vice-President of the Commission*. – (start of speech off mic) ... to start with a more broad question. Well, from the EU side, from the Commission's side, we had been very consistent in our response that we remain committed to multilateralism, that we remain committed to a rules-based international system and not the system where might is right, because we believe that the rules-based international system, at the end of the day, serves better for everyone. And that's why we are engaged on multilateral activities in the WTO reforms. That's why we actively engage in global fight against climate change. And we see indeed, as you mentioned, China as a cooperation partner in those areas.

We also remain committed to open and free and fair trade. But the word 'fair' is also important in this regard. So we need to be able to react if other countries are not playing by the rules. That's why we have our TDI toolbox. If there are subsidies, if there is dumping, if there are other issues which are threatening EU injury, we need to be able to react. That's why we have anti-coercion instrument. And actually, I welcome the fact that earlier today the European Parliament approved this anti-coercion instrument with a large majority. So thank you for this. But also, the anti-coercion instrument is first and foremost there to engage with other countries to be able to address the problems if economic coercion is taking place before taking further steps on possible rebalancing measures. So we also believe that anti-coercion instrument will help us as kind of as a deterrent type of instrument.

So yes, we are committed to multilateralism. We are going to be multilateral as much as we can, but we stand ready to act unilaterally if we must.

Mick Wallace (The Left). – In your response, Commissioner, you say that you are committed to the international rules-based system. And I suppose my question to you is that given that the international rules-based order is something that Western powers have come to invent over the last while, rather than referring to the UN charter, which is really the international system, and that the rules-based international order is a system that's actually designed to protect US hegemony. And do you not think, I mean, China insists that it adheres by the UN Charter, it respects the sovereignty of other nations and hasn't bombed a country in 40 years. The Americans who we call our partner haven't gone a year since 45 without bombing anybody. What are we committed to, Commissioner?

Valdis Dombrovskis, *Executive Vice-President of the Commission*. – First of all, I would say many of those questions go beyond my area of competence in the European Commission, but clearly a rules-based international order will also mean respect for the UN Charter.

For example, I was raising this prominently with the Chinese authorities, seeking their more active engagement in a situation where Russia is blatantly violating the UN Charter through its aggression against Ukraine and its violation of the UN rights enshrined in the UN Charter. War crimes are being committed and China, having its geopolitical clout, can play a more active role, for example, in restoring the Black Sea Grain Initiative, which is there to provide food security and food affordability for developing countries, something which China itself emphasises as an important issue to be addressed, and in dealing with questions on the circumvention of sanctions on high-priority battlefield items not reaching Ukrainian battlefields. Clearly, geopolitical clout also comes with certain responsibilities.

Fabio Massimo Castaldo (NI). – Commissioner, thank you for being here today with us for discussing a matter of pivotal importance such as the future of our trade relationship with China, a country that we see as a partner in the fight against global challenges, an economic competitor and also a systemic rival.

Last week you spoke at Tsinghua University and you rightfully insisted on the concept of reciprocity. Also, in light of the fact that our trade relations with China are becoming more and more unbalanced, how can we reverse this trend? Is there any action plan for reducing this trade gap? What about critical technologies and rare earths? These are two fields in which China has a remarkable advantage at the global level.

Furthermore, as stated by the President Ursula von der Leyen during the State of the Union, the Commission will launch an investigation over Chinese state subsidies in the production of electric vehicles. I believe that the result of the investigation will be pretty clear and straightforward. Therefore, I would like to ask you whether you are already working on a plan to counter these distortions of the market.

Valdis Dombrovskis, *Executive Vice-President of the Commission*. – On the first question, indeed, I was raising the topic of reciprocity in a Tsinghua University speech, but also in my bilateral contacts and in high-level economic dialogue.

The question is how to address this huge trade deficit we are facing with China, which last year was almost EUR 400 billion. First of all, of course, we are not, so to say, seeking trade balance with every country in the world. That's not practical. That's not how international trade functions. But having this huge trade deficit is certainly raising concerns and raising headlines so we need to look at the underlying factors.

As regards underlying factors, we see lots of market access barriers for EU companies to do business and enter China. Therefore, in our high-level economic dialogue, we were focusing on addressing these market access barriers. If we look at the EU Chamber of Commerce in China, it lists more than 1 000 market access barriers. Obviously, I was not able to raise all of them in my contacts, so we chose to focus on maybe on some five or six most relevant of highest economic value. We secured some commitments on some of those market access barriers from the Chinese side. Of course, it will be important now to follow up that the Chinese side is actually properly implementing those commitments.

On the battery electrical vehicles investigation, well, indeed, we have sufficient *prima facie* evidence of presence of the subsidies and that was a reason of launching this investigation. Of course, at this stage, I cannot prejudge the outcome of the investigation because it has to be facts-based and we also need to give opportunity for Chinese authorities and Chinese companies to provide evidence. It's actually in their interest to provide this evidence also from their side, because otherwise we act on based on information which we have, and only then we arrive at the outcomes of the investigation.

Fabio Massimo Castaldo (NI). – Thank you, dear Commissioner, for your answers. I would like to go a bit further in detail into some considerations on the recent Chinese ban on the export of gallium and germanium metals and all final products that contain these elements. Two months after this ban, what is your evaluation on the effects it had on the market? Also, do you believe that it has negatively impacted our capacity to acquire products that contain these minerals?

Looking at the future, what is the way ahead for coping with these limitations, considering the fact that China has a stronghold over the global production of gallium and germanium? Do we have credible alternatives?

Valdis Dombrovskis, *Executive Vice-President of the Commission*. – Well, that is exactly the example why we need diversification, why we need diversified and resilient supply chains and why we need to pursue this policy of de-risking.

So far, we do not have some definite response from EU companies or the Chinese authorities. There are some EU companies which were requesting import licences for gallium and germanium. They have not been, at this stage, either confirmed or denied, so they are being processed.

In my contacts with the Chinese authorities, they were making reassuring noises that those licences are going to be granted, but this is something we need to monitor very closely and we will be monitoring very closely. So whether China actually restricts exports by failing to approve those licensing applications. So that's something we will need to see in the coming weeks and months.

But that's why we took initiatives more broadly on the Critical Raw Materials Act to alleviate the EU's dependency on single suppliers. That's why we are coming forward with this initiative of a critical raw materials club bringing together consuming and resource-rich countries around the world for win-win partnerships, because clearly access to raw materials in a context of green and digital transition is something which we need to ensure.

David Lega (PPE). – Trade is one of our strongest EU tools for influence and partnership, and the EU has tried to cooperate with the People's Republic of China, now we need to confront. On trade the Chinese Communist Party does not play fair and at the same time, both at home and abroad, it increasingly undermines democratic values and represses human rights. And I love free trade. But the Chinese regime has not earned the windfall profits which finalisation of the Comprehensive Agreement on Investment would bring. In June 2022, on my initiative, this Parliament recognised crimes against humanity and serious risk of genocide being perpetrated in Xinjiang by the Chinese Communist Party. I then asked High Representative Borrell what steps were being taken to either prevent or punish such atrocity. So now the question to you: how does the European Parliament's assessment of genocide against Uyghurs affect the Commission's mix of carrots and sticks in EU relations with China?

Valdis Dombrovskis, Executive Vice-President of the Commission. – Thank you for this question. Indeed, this is a question which is prominently on the EU agenda. There are dedicated formats for discussing human rights with China – notably the Human Rights Dialogue, which was most recently held on 17 February 2023 – at which we are raising a number of issues at the highest level with Chinese counterparts, including the situation in Xinjiang, but not limited to that.

Clearly, this is something that is on the EU's agenda. As regards trade, as you know, we are currently developing our autonomous tools in this regard. For example, questions or initiatives related to due diligence, which is there to ensure that European companies are not sourcing goods and services derived from labour rights or environmental violations. This also concerns specific legislative proposal on forced labour, which foresees a market ban on products made with forced labour in the EU single market.

Generally, in cases where we are engaging with countries in bilateral trade agreements – this is not the case with China – we are always insisting on ambitious trade and sustainable development chapters, addressing once again labour rights and environmental issues.

Inma Rodríguez-Piñero (S&D). – Señor presidente, nuestras relaciones económicas y comerciales con China se basan en una competencia desleal provocada por la falta de reciprocidad existente. Hay que reconocer que esta situación se ha producido porque se lo hemos permitido y se lo hemos puesto demasiado fácil durante mucho tiempo. China ha expandido sobremanera su influencia en el contexto económico mundial a costa, en parte, de la economía europea, cuyas excesivas dependencias deben corregirse. Por tanto, sin duda alguna, el gran objetivo respecto a nuestras relaciones económicas y comerciales con China debe ser conseguir una relativa equivalencia de las condiciones.

Por eso creo que es muy positivo que haya usted viajado a China, porque creo que a través del diálogo se puede avanzar. Pero es necesario actuar y me gustaría tener algunos detalles más precisos del resultado de su viaje. ¿Qué considera lo más positivo y lo más preocupante después de haberse reunido con nuestras empresas que están allí y con las autoridades chinas? ¿Cree usted que China, después de esto, va a acercar posiciones hacia unas reglas del juego más equitativas o que, al menos, se puede abrir una vía de acercamiento en ese sentido? ¿Qué resultados espera usted obtener del grupo de trabajo creado sobre cooperación tecnológica y regulación financiera?

Valdis Dombrovskis, Executive Vice-President of the Commission. – Thank you very much for those questions. So maybe on the outcomes of High-Level Economic Dialogue, I will be quite telegraphic because it covers a broad range of areas. So as I was saying, from our point of view, we were raising issues which are related with market access barriers. And one of the systemic issues, which is a relatively new issue, concerns Chinese data laws, especially regarding cross-border data flows. So we agreed to work on the mechanism to ease cross-border data flows, building on a commitment which was reached already in a high-level digital dialogue, which was held earlier in September and providing more clarity for European companies on how to apply those new data laws. And those are indeed systemic issues. We had some specific deliverables on specific sectors, like, for example, on cosmetics commitments from China to create so-called white lists that would exempt European companies setting a working group on cosmetics, on infant formula, addressing the backlog of pending registrations of infant formula by Member States. Chinese authorities committed to start this work already as of mid-October, restarting the discussions and restarting the work on the wines and spirits working group, setting up a working group on the financial sector, focusing on a number of priorities, including also specifically on data flows in the financial sector, restarting our macroeconomic dialogues. So there were a number of concrete deliverables. I

would say they probably do not amount to breakthroughs, but those are useful steps forward and we need to build on this and we need to make sure that while we are addressing some market barriers, new market barriers are not emerging.

Daniel Caspary (PPE). – Herr Präsident! Wenn wir heute über die Handelsbeziehungen zwischen der Europäischen Union und China sprechen, dann sollte es darum gehen, wie wir diese Beziehungen angesichts der politischen Lage in China im Interesse der europäischen Bürgerinnen und Bürger neu gestalten können. Aber offenbar vertreten nicht alle Mitglieder dieses Hauses auch die Interessen der Europäer. Wie dieser Tage in deutschen Medien zu lesen war, etablierte der Spitzenkandidat der AfD, Herr Maximilian Krah, hier ein chinesisches Lobbynetzwerk. Nach den Medienrecherchen sollen finanzielle Zuwendungen aus Peking an Herrn Krah und an sein Umfeld geflossen sein. Dass Herr Krah beispielsweise gegen die China-Entschließung stimmte und „die angebliche Ausbeutung und Internierung von Uiguren“ in China anzweifelte, erscheint vor diesem Hintergrund in neuem Licht.

Offenbar fungiert der Kollege als Außenstelle der kommunistischen Führung Chinas hier im Europäischen Parlament. Während sich die AfD in Deutschland also nationalpatriotisch zeigt, verkauft sich ihr Abgeordneter hier für kleines Geld an China. Meine Frage an die Kommission ist: Sind Ihnen diese Berichte bekannt? Sehen Sie die Einflussnahme Chinas auch hier im Europäischen Parlament? Und wie stehen Sie zu diesen Vorwürfen?

Valdis Dombrovskis, Executive Vice-President of the Commission. – I am aware of press reports regarding this specific situation and this specific Member. Well, clearly it's something which we need to monitor very closely: what is a foreign influence in European politics and how it's being used. And we know examples from China, we know examples from Russia. So it's something which we need to follow very closely in the EU.

Well, on the specific questions you raised, I think those are questions for the German authorities to look into and to follow up.

Γεώργιος Κύρτσος (Renew). – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, έχουμε μείνει πίσω στον ανταγωνισμό με την Κίνα. Είναι δικαιολογημένη η κριτική που κάνουμε στους Κινέζους, αλλά βέβαια έχουμε κι εμείς ευθύνες γιατί χάσαμε χρόνο. Έχω δύο ερωτήματα, αν μπορούμε να καλύψουμε αυτό τον χρόνο με διάφορες συμμαχίες, και καταρχάς στα microchips τα οποία είναι στρατηγικής σημασίας. Οι παγκόσμιοι πρωταθλητές δεν είναι οι Κινέζοι, αλλά οι Ταϊβανέζοι.

Το ερώτημα, λοιπόν, προς τον Αντιπρόεδρο της Επιτροπής είναι: υπάρχει ένα σχέδιο συνεργασίας Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης-Ταϊβάν σε έρευνα, επενδύσεις και κοινές προσπάθειες που έχουν σχέση με τα microchips, τα οποία παίζουν τεράστιο ρόλο, και ιδιαίτερα τα εξαιρετικά αναπτυγμένα; Και το δεύτερο: καθώς το Global Gateway έχει μείνει πίσω από το Belt and Road αλλά οι Ιάπωνες έχουν το δικό τους πρόγραμμα, το οποίο είναι πιο εξελιγμένο από το δικό μας· υπάρχει η δυνατότητα συνεργασίας σε αυτά τα ζητήματα, δηλαδή στο Global Gateway, με τους Ιάπωνες;

Valdis Dombrovskis, Executive Vice-President of the Commission. – Thank you for those questions. So first you raise the important question of microchips, indeed, and semiconductors, it's obviously now drawing lots of attention at the EU level. So we have our own Chips Act to also boost the production of microchips in the EU and once again ensuring the resilience and diversification of supply chains. And indeed there are various work strands related to supply chains with Taiwan across the Commission, including with DG Trade, DG Connect, DG Grow, DG RTD. And also specifically, to come back to your question, at last year's trade and investment dialogue, we launched a dedicated workstream on semiconductors. So this is something which is featuring quite prominently in our relations with Taiwan.

As regards our cooperation with Japan, obviously we are engaging closely in many areas across different sectors. Actually, later this month I will be travelling to Japan for a G7 meeting, but also use this occasion for bilateral engagement with my Japanese counterparts and obviously as like-minded partners we are working closely across a range of policy areas.

Lucia Vuolo (PPE). – Signor Vicepresidente, durante l'ultimo discorso sullo stato dell'Unione europea la Presidente Ursula von der Leyen ci ha informato di un'indagine sulle auto elettriche cinesi.

Egregi colleghi, la verità è che dovremmo prendere decisioni su quanto la Cina sistematicamente compie ai nostri danni, o meglio ai danni dei nostri imprenditori. Sappiamo o no che esistono aiuti di Stato che gli imprenditori cinesi ricevono e che sono finalizzati a un'esportazione a prezzi assolutamente non competitivi? È nel rispondere a questa domanda che l'Unione europea deve fare la differenza.

Vorrei soffermarmi sull'articolo 5 del regolamento (UE) 2016/1036. Secondo questo articolo, se un imprenditore volesse promuovere un'inchiesta antidumping, dovrebbe rappresentare il 25 % della produzione totale del prodotto realizzato dall'industria europea. Una percentuale troppo alta, quasi impossibile da raggiungere per le piccole e medie imprese. Capisco che il 25 % sia un numero ponderato con l'Organizzazione mondiale del commercio, ma questo numero esclude proprio le fasce più esposte: le piccole e medie imprese.

La domanda è questa: è possibile considerare nuovi strumenti antidumping specifici per le piccole e medie imprese o considerare una revisione dell'articolo 5?

Valdis Dombrovskis, *Executive Vice-President of the Commission*. – Thank you for this question. Indeed, as you mentioned, President von der Leyen announced this anti-subsidies investigation on battery electrical vehicles. And it must be said that the Commission is launching this investigation ex-officio, meaning on its own initiative. So we are not waiting for a complaint from industry, but are acting based on the data and information which we are having. And that possibility of ex-officio investigations exists also in other TDI instruments and can be used more frequently. Sometimes, indeed, it also may be useful in cases, as you described, that if there is No 25% of European industry which is filing as a specific complaint – because indeed it's true, it's a problem for SMEs, it's a problem for smaller Member States, if it's a regional problem, if it's not a problem across the whole EU. So we must look indeed how to make those possibilities more effective to be able to launch those investigations. But also I'm just drawing attention to the ex-officio option we have.

José Manuel Fernandes (PPE). – Senhor Presidente, um cumprimento ao Senhor Comissário pela sua disponibilidade permanente para aqui estar. Nós temos um défice em termos de balança comercial que se tem agravado. São já mais de 400 mil milhões de euros.

A União Europeia reage lentamente quando deveria ser proativa e os governantes têm muita responsabilidade. A pergunta é: não considera que deveríamos ter investimentos em projetos estruturantes comuns para reforçar a autonomia estratégica da União Europeia?

Acha que o STEP vai ser aprovado e tem a garantia de que os Estados-Membros que tanto defendem a autonomia estratégica da União Europeia a vão reforçar? É que isto também ajuda a diminuir este défice da balança comercial.

Por fim, o acordo Mercosul não seria extremamente importante para reduzirmos as nossas dependências face à China? E os acordos, por exemplo, com África? Não nos estamos a esquecer destes dois continentes, a África e a América Latina?

Valdis Dombrovskis, *Executive Vice-President of the Commission*. – Well, first of all, indeed, as I have been repeating quite a few times, and as you already know, this imbalance in our trade relations is a cause of concern. This figure of almost EUR 400 billion is certainly speaking for itself.

So we need to seek more reciprocity by addressing market barriers, which we do in a targeted way, as I was describing, but indeed also by developing strategically our own industry, our own production capacities, and indeed the STEP initiative will help us in this regard. So we need to work, I would say, on both strands seeking more reciprocity from China, but also strengthening our own industrial and production base.

I will not now go into the specifics of our trade relations with Mercosur and Africa as indeed it's outside of today's topic of discussion, but it's true that we need to seek diversification of our trade and investment relations around the world, strengthening our trade relations with Africa and the EU's neighbourhood countries. It's something which is outlined also as a priority in our trade policy strategy.

Our stronger engagement with Latin America, including Mercosur, is also of major importance in this regard, both economically and geopolitically. Because it's true that if we will be absent from those regions, China will be there to fill the void – so it's better we act proactively and engage productively with those regions.

Bart Groothuis (Renew). – I was glad that you raised the issue of espionage and also cyber security in China and Beijing. Well, last week an EU institution, ETSI, which sets technological standards here in Europe, here in France, said very quietly, very silently, it was hacked. It didn't say anything about criminal intent, ransomware intent. It was very quiet on that. Together with the cyber security agency of France, ANSEE, it made public that it was hacked.

Of all states, of all adversarial states, only China has a clear strategy to influence sector tech standards, to influence it, and to become less free and to introduce censorship in our technology.

What I would like to hear from you and my question to you, therefore, is do you have any technical artefacts from that hack, that point towards China? Is there any indication that China was involved in this cyber operation? Because if it was, it is unfair, like you said. It is unfair trade and competition. It is espionage, and it is another example on how the European Union and Commission should act towards China to reverse the low cost, low risk, high reward for China and actually do something about it.

Valdis Dombrovskis, Executive Vice-President of the Commission. – Well, thank you for this question, but I must say I am not aware of this specific case and, well, this broader question of cybersecurity. Cyber resilience is not part of my portfolio on European Commission, so I will not be able to provide more detailed comments on a specific case. But I am sure that the colleagues who are working with the specific files will be in a position to comment.

But in any case, the angle of engagement with China on this was through their data-flow laws, which are intertwined with cybersecurity laws, with their anti-espionage laws, which present systemic barriers for making business for European businesses in China and which creates substantial difficulties in cross-border data flow. So that was the angle through which I was addressing this issue with China. But as you know, those broader cyber-resilience, cybersecurity issues feature prominently in the EU agenda.

And clearly it's something where we need to be on alert, where we need to strengthen our cyber resilience, our cybersecurity, because it is true that in a more digitalised world, in a more digitalised economy, this will become more and more important, both from security and from economical point of view. And we know that there are malign actors of different character in the world which are willing to undermine our cybersecurity, cyber resilience, and therefore we need to be ready and protected.

Susanna Ceccardi (ID). – Signor Commissario, l'Unione europea è un grande partner commerciale della Cina: il terzo per le esportazioni e il primo per le importazioni. Quindi capiamo, è evidente, che la Cina ha intenzione di vendere, ma meno di comprare, chiede le frontiere aperte ma tiene chiuse le proprie frontiere. È una globalizzazione a senso unico e questo deve cambiare.

Per esempio, l'Italia, con il governo del Movimento 5 Stelle, firmò il memorandum della *Belt and Road Initiative* e, da allora, abbiamo aumentato le esportazioni di 3 miliardi, ma la Cina le aumentate di 26.

Quindi, il dumping commerciale che tutta l'Unione europea ha subito in questi anni, a danno delle imprese e a danno dei lavoratori, con la nuova strategia per la transizione *green* non potrà che aumentare, perché la Cina non ha alcuna intenzione di cambiare la propria politica commerciale o anche sulla transizione ecologica. Quindi, che cosa avete intenzione di fare per evitare che il dumping aumenti?

Poi, ha già parlato, giustamente, dell'indagine che ha annunciato anche Ursula von der Leyen, ma non ce ne potevamo accorgere prima? Perché così tardi?... *(il Presidente toglie la parola all'oratrice)*

Valdis Dombrovskis, *Executive Vice-President of the Commission*. – Thank you for those questions. Well, indeed, the issue of trade imbalance with China is there, and as I have been outlining before, that was one of the key topics we were addressing, both in the high-level economic dialogue with China, but also in bilateral engagements with our Chinese counterparts. We are making some progress in addressing some of the trade barriers, but clearly more work will be needed in this regard.

Indeed, I would say in a generally more conflictual geopolitical situation, we need to be able to defend ourselves, defend our companies, when other countries are not playing by the rules. That's why we have been developing in recent years our autonomous toolbox to deal with situations like this. That's also why, when you look at the European trade strategy, it has three key words open, sustainable and assertive. So in this case, I would emphasise this word 'assertive' – that will be pursuing a more assertive trade policy in defending our interests and rights.

On the anti-subsidy investigation on battery electric vehicles, there are two elements which are important for launching the investigation. One element is the presence of trade-distorting production-side subsidies, and the second element which is important is threat of injury for EU industry. Maybe a few years ago, as I was mentioning before, the market share of Chinese brand electrical battery electric vehicles in the EU was below 1%. So it was not a threat of injury for EU industry. But now it has raised rapidly already to 8%. So the threat of injury for the EU industry is there and we are immediately reacting.

Puhetta johti HEIDI HAUTALA

varapuhemies

Miriam Lexmann (PPE). – Thank you, Commissioner, for being with us. I have two questions. The first question is, after our ban of combustion engines by 2035, Chinese electric vehicles have flooded our markets and you have already answered to a couple of colleagues what measures the EU is taking in order to protect our interests. But my question is, is the Commission ready to review this ban? Should this be the only way how to protect our economic interests?

Second, Beijing has quashed Hong Kong's freedoms and autonomy, which also has a major impact on its standing as a financial and trade hub. There is even strong evidence that Hong Kong is being used by Russia to circumvent our sanctions. Isn't it time to finally review Hong Kong's autonomy, as was requested by this House on multiple occasions, including the agreement on customs matters, the status of Hong Kong's office in Brussels or its membership in the World Trade Organisation.

Valdis Dombrovskis, *Executive Vice-President of the Commission*. – Thank you for those questions. On the first question on battery electric vehicles: as I was mentioning, in a matter of a few years, Chinese-brand battery electric vehicles' share in the EU market has increased to 8%. If you do not act, this poses a threat of injury for EU industry. That's why we launched this anti-subsidy investigation, which we are now going to pursue, and we will take decisions in line with the findings of this investigation. It is clear, *prima facie*, that there is evidence that we need to act on this situation.

As regards the 2035 deadline for combustion engine vehicles, it's something which has been decided by co-legislators. So at this stage, I would not focus on reopening those discussions and reopening those deadlines, but rather focus on ensuring fair competition in the EU market, in which European companies are not at the risk of injury due to unfair practices by other countries. That would be my focus in this specific regard.

On the question of sanctions circumvention, indeed, that is something that we were also raising with our Chinese counterparts during my recent visit. In the 11th sanctions package, we had three companies based in China and Hong Kong, owned by Russian nationals, which will be identified as special vehicles for the circumvention of our sanctions. Those companies are now subject to more stringent export restrictions on dual-use and advanced technologies.

We are also working with Member States' customs authorities to identify other entities that have been circumventing our sanctions through China or Hong Kong.

Seán Kelly (PPE). – Valdis, míle buíochas as ucht teacht chun ár gceisteanna a fhreagairt.

It was said during the recession that some banks were too big to fail. I suppose paraphrasing that we could say some countries are too big to ignore, and China is obviously number one. For that reason, I welcome the EU-China High-Level Economic Dialogue.

Now for my country, the Irish dairy industry is hugely important and it has been exporting infant formula to China for some time. But I think that is somewhat under threat now. So in your discussions with the Chinese, how did the discussions on the infant formula market go and what is the likely direction of travel in the near future? Because I saw an interview yesterday with the Ambassador to Ireland from China, Mr He, saying we should concentrate more on an ageing population rather than infants.

Valdis Dombrovskis, Executive Vice-President of the Commission. – Thank you for this question. So indeed, when I was mentioning that we are focusing on specific market access barriers in our meetings, infant formula was one of those issues we had been raising. It may sound relatively niche, but actually the EU is covering around 75% of China's market in infant formula, and it constitutes around 18% of our total agricultural exports to China. So actually it is a major issue, and that's one area where Chinese authorities committed to work on dealing with a backlog of applications from EU companies in this sector and to start this work already as of mid-October and do also the necessary on-the-ground inspection.

So hopefully in a matter of few months this backlog of applications can be clarified. I think there we have a good commitments from the Chinese side. Now it is important that those commitments are properly implemented and properly followed through.

Mauri Pekkarinen (Renew). – Arvoisa puhemies, komissaari Dombrovskis oli hyvä, että kävitte Kiinassa. Teidän asenteenne matkallanne oli mielestäni oikea. Täystörmäys Euroopan unionin ja Kiinan kesken ei ole hyvästä. Olen samaa mieltä kuin Yhdysvaltain valtiovarainministeri Janet Yellen, hän sanoi tämän saman. Täystörmäys Kiinan kanssa ei ole hyväksi Amerikalle, ei liioin Euroopan unionille.

Kun von der Leyen käytti puheen täällä EU:n tilasta, hän samalla kertoi, että ryhdytään toimiin, joissa katsotaan, miten Kiina tukee omia yrityksiään. Kiina oli jo reagoinut vähän aikaisemmin siinä, että germaniumin tuonti Eurooppaan, siihen Kiina pani esteitä. Kiina suunnittelee myös kestopagneetteja, jotka ovat muun muassa tuulivoiman ja sähkömoottoreiden kannalta ihan avainasemassa olevia raaka-aineita ja tuotteita, myöskin niiden rajoitteita. Saitteko minkälaisen vaikutelman? Onko odotettavissa, että Kiina käyttää uusia tällaisia rajoitteita? Ja kun puhuitte yritystuista, niin muistittekö sitä, että Euroopan komissio on myöntänyt 4 tuhannen miljardin edestä jo poikkeuksia valtion tukiin Euroopassa?

Valdis Dombrovskis, Executive Vice-President of the Commission. – Well, first of all, indeed, as you mentioned, given China's role in the global economy as the second biggest economy in the world, given China's role as the EU's second biggest trading partner, it is important that we stay engaged with China, that we have a dialogue and that we are seeking solutions also to difficult questions we need to deal with.

You mentioned the US administration. It must be said that also from the US side, maybe some time ago there was lots of talk about decoupling, but actually following the EU statements that we are not seeking decoupling, we are seeking de-risking, we see that the US is also now talking about de-risking their relations with China and there has been also some high-level US-China engagement in recent weeks and months.

On the specific question on germanium and gallium, as I already was mentioning before, we have indications that EU companies have requested licenses to export germanium and gallium. Those licenses are currently being processed and we are monitoring this development closely to see whether it actually ends up as an export restriction from the Chinese side.

When I was raising this topic with Chinese counterparts, all in all, they were making reassuring noises that companies need to apply and that companies will be getting those export licenses. So now we need to see whether this is indeed the case. But also it is important that we look at the broader diversification of our supply chains.

Barry Andrews (Renew). – Commissioner, I have a question that relates to the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive. As you know, European companies are preparing for this directive, especially companies with supply chains in China.

Many of these European companies rely on ethical trading audits. These audits are carried out by third-party companies, and many of these companies hire Chinese nationals to carry out on-site visits at factories that are within their supply chains. As you can imagine, it is very difficult for Chinese nationals to call out human rights abuses that they may identify in these on-site visits. It therefore underlines the deficits associated with these ethical trading audits.

As we transition from the soft guidelines in this area to the statutory obligations in the Directive, I wonder if the Commission is aware of these deficits in ethical trading audits and what supports you can give, and reassurance, to European companies that rely on these audits.

Valdis Dombrovskis, Executive Vice-President of the Commission. – Thank you for this question. Well, indeed, the due diligence legislation is currently with the co-legislators, so we are working on this. Of course, we need to see what the exact outcome of the legislative work is going to be in this regard. But it's clear that we also need to engage with EU industry to see how to ensure meaningful compliance for EU industry, to have a possibility to comply, to make sure that it does not end up as an excessive administrative burden for EU companies. So we are clearly ready to engage also with European companies on all those aspects to make sure that we have a smooth application of this due diligence regulation.

Puhemies. – Kyselytunti on päättynyt.

15. Situationen i Nagorno-Karabakh efter Aserbajdsjans angreb (forhandling)

Puhemies. – Esityslistalla on seuraavana neuvoston ja komission julkilausumat tilanteesta Vuoristo-Karabahissa Azerbaidžanin hyökkäyksen jälkeen ja Armeniaan kohdistuvasta jatkuvasta uhasta (2023/2879(RSP)). Hetken odottellemme, neuvosto on tulossa. Aivan lyhyt tauko.

Pascual Navarro Ríos, presidente en ejercicio del Consejo. – Señora presidenta, señorías, señora comisaria, hace dos semanas Azerbaiyán lanzó una operación militar en Nagorno Karabaj. La Unión Europea ha condenado la operación militar de Azerbaiyán y lamenta las víctimas y la pérdida de vidas ocasionadas por la escalada del conflicto. Hemos tomado nota el 21 de septiembre de los anuncios de un alto el fuego con la esperanza de que se mantenga.

Nuestra principal preocupación desde el inicio de la crisis es la situación de la población civil en Nagorno Karabaj y la asistencia que puede prestarles la comunidad internacional. Como bien saben, más de 100 000 personas han llegado a Armenia desde Nagorno Karabaj a lo largo de los últimos días. Tanto estas personas como otros grupos vulnerables que permanecen en Nagorno Karabaj necesitan ayuda urgente, así como una garantía de que se respetarán sus derechos y su seguridad. Por eso, la Unión Europea ha pedido a Azerbaiyán que permita el pleno acceso de la ayuda humanitaria a la población civil necesitada y que reabra plenamente el corredor de Lachín. La Unión Europea ha incrementado su ayuda humanitaria en cinco millones de euros en respuesta a la situación actual.

La Unión Europea también ha pedido a Azerbaiyán que entable un diálogo amplio y transparente con la población armenia del Karabaj. Ya se han celebrado reuniones y esperamos que estas culminen pronto en resultados concretos y compromisos por ambas partes. Aunque la prioridad es resolver la actual situación humanitaria y de seguridad, también hemos pedido que se reanuden las negociaciones entre Armenia y Azerbaiyán en relación con todas las cuestiones pendientes, con el objeto de celebrar un tratado de paz. El respeto de la soberanía y la integridad territoriales, tanto de Azerbaiyán como de Armenia, es una cuestión fundamental para alcanzar una solución duradera, y la Unión Europea espera de todas las partes implicadas que respeten estos principios.

La Unión Europea considera que tanto Ereván como Bakú deben aprovechar la posible reunión en Granada, en el marco de la cumbre de la Comunidad Política Europea, para reiterar públicamente su compromiso mutuo con la integridad territorial y la soberanía de la otra parte, en consonancia con los acuerdos alcanzados anteriormente en Praga y Bruselas. Seguimos decididos a facilitar el diálogo entre todas las partes con el fin de garantizar una paz global y duradera que redunde en beneficio del conjunto de la población de la región.

Stella Kyriakides, *Member of the Commission*. – Madam President, honourable Members, thank you for raising this crucial topic at the European Parliament plenary today.

The European Union is closely following the worrying developments in Karabakh and remains engaged at the highest level to help alleviate the humanitarian impact on civilians. The EU has condemned Azerbaijan's use of force in Nagorno-Karabakh against its earlier assurances and commitment to seek a diplomatic solution. The use of force over diplomacy is never justified. As of this weekend, more than 100 000 Karabakh Armenians have left their homes and sought refuge in Armenia. It remains unclear how many will remain in Nagorno-Karabakh.

The EU expects Azerbaijan to address the needs of Karabakh Armenians that remain on the territory of Azerbaijan and provide them with the necessary humanitarian assistance and security. Those who fled to Armenia need to be able to return to their homes in safety. The cultural heritage and property rights also need to be insured and protected by Azerbaijan.

The EU has stressed that there is a pressing need for transparency and access for international humanitarian and human rights actors. We support the work of the International Committee of the Red Cross, and we are awaiting the findings of a UN mission visiting Karabakh. It is urgent to ensure continuous, unimpeded humanitarian support both to those who are still in Karabakh and to those who have left for Armenia. The European Commission has announced additional funding of EUR 5 million to those in need. We are working closely with the government agencies of both Azerbaijan and Armenia, as well as with our local partners, so that the basic needs of Karabakh Armenians in both countries are covered, including food, hygiene items and shorter-term shelter. Thereafter, the financial assistance, housing and socio economic assistance has to be provided.

We welcome that Armenia has activated the Union civil protection mechanism. The EU and its Member States stand ready to provide humanitarian assistance in line with identified needs. Honourable Members, as expressed by the Council rotating presidency, it remains crucial that Armenia and Azerbaijan return to dialogue and show positive steps towards border delimitation, security, connectivity, humanitarian issues and the broader peace treaty. Concrete action and decisive compromise solutions are needed on all tracks of this normalisation process, coupled with genuine efforts from all those involved. The EU stands ready to support this process.

Željana Zovko, *on behalf of the PPE Group*. – Madam President, Madam Commissioner, as the European Parliament's standing rapporteur on Azerbaijan, I strongly condemn the pre-planned and unjustified military attack of Azerbaijan against Nagorno-Karabakh's people. I call on the EU and Member States to immediately offer all necessary assistance to refugees and to deal with the influx of refugees and to help Armenia in the subsequent humanitarian crisis.

Azerbaijan remains fully responsible for ensuring the rights and security of the remaining Karabakh Armenians, including the fundamental right for those displaced to return to their homes. We need tangible international presence in Nagorno-Karabakh to monitor the situation on the ground and the independent investigation into alleged crimes committed against the ethnic Armenian community.

Furthermore, I strongly urge Azeri authorities to grant an unrestricted access to the UNESCO mission to the heritage site to establish the current state of the heritage that we have of ethnic Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh.

We remain committed to supporting the ongoing peace negotiations between Armenia and Azerbaijan and welcome the next high-level meeting scheduled for 5 October in Granada within the framework of the European Political Community. However, any attempts by Azerbaijan to exploit this situation to destabilise Armenia or engage in military actions on its territory will be deemed unacceptable. In the event of such actions, we will conduct a true re-evaluation of our relationship with Azerbaijan, and I call then to impose restrictive measures.

Marina Kaljurand, *on behalf of the S&D Group*. – Madam President, Commissioner, Council, dear colleagues, once again we are discussing the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh. We will vote on a resolution and I would like to make a couple of points.

First, the EU should reconsider its relations with Azerbaijan and make them conditional. We have to stop with appeasement. There must be immediate consequences for the Aliyev regime. A year ago, Commission President von der Leyen was in Baku, standing next to President Aliyev and praising Azerbaijan for being EU's reliable economic partner. Today, the Commission must make it crystal clear that Azerbaijan's actions – starting from military actions and concluding with forced displacement of the population of Nagorno-Karabakh that de facto constitutes ethnic cleansing – are not acceptable.

The EU should stand behind its core values, international law, and rules-based international order. The High Representative promised a strong response. And colleagues, we have leverage. The response should include sanctioning of responsible Azerbaijani authorities, halting negotiations on a new EU-Azerbaijan agreement, halting the Visa Facilitation Agreement, and termination of the gas deal.

Second, Armenia needs today the EU's substantial political and financial support more than ever before. The EEAS should increase the capacity of the EU monitoring mission in Armenia and convince Azerbaijan to expand it to Azerbaijan's territory. This can be crucial for preventing a new escalation on the Armenia-Azerbaijan border.

It is time to upgrade SEPA and start discussing a visa facilitation regime with Armenia. And yes, Armenia should be given a clear European perspective in a longer run. I know it's not easy, and Armenia has to face some challenging questions from Customs Union to the Collective Security Treaty Organisation.

And finally, I hope that the human suffering we all have witnessed will have an impact on the coming meetings in Granada and in particular on the political will of President Aliyev to conclude a peace agreement that will bring peace and stability to the region, as well as protect the human rights of Armenians residing in Nagorno-Karabakh.

Nathalie Loiseau, *au nom du groupe Renew*. – Madame la Présidente, Madame la Commissaire, les absents ont toujours tort. Que le haut représentant soit absent pour ce débat est regrettable. Cela reflète malheureusement une autre absence, bien plus grave, celle de l'Europe pendant tous ces mois où les Arméniens du Haut-Karabakh ont été encerclés, affamés et finalement attaqués par l'Azerbaïdjan.

Bien sûr, Bakou est le premier responsable du nettoyage ethnique qui vient d'être commis. Il devra en être comptable et nous demanderons que le régime d'Ilham Aliyev soit sanctionné. Bien sûr aussi, la médiation européenne a échoué parce qu'elle a voulu, de manière obsessionnelle, rester neutre. Desmond Tutu nous avait pourtant prévenus: si vous êtes neutres dans les situations d'injustice, vous avez choisi le camp de l'agresseur.

Notre Parlement avait aussi alerté à plusieurs reprises sur la tragédie qui couvait, sans être entendu. Alors je vous ai écoutés, Madame la Commissaire, et vous aussi, Monsieur le Secrétaire d'État. Vous observez, vous espérez, vous vous réjouissez, vous restez prêts. Mais enfin, dans quel monde vivez-vous? Aujourd'hui, je vous demande de nous écouter, Madame la Commissaire. Une autre catastrophe menace. L'Azerbaïdjan et la Turquie n'ont pas renoncé à rogner la souveraineté de l'Arménie. Vladimir Poutine n'a pas renoncé à abattre le gouvernement démocratique de Nikol Pachinian.

Jusqu'à aujourd'hui, l'Europe est restée passive pour le plus mauvais des calculs. Tarder à défendre une démocratie attaquée au prétexte que nous avons besoin de gaz, cela vous rappelle quelque chose? Vous avez raison, cela ressemble à l'Ukraine. Ne reproduisons pas nos erreurs. Sauvons notre honneur! Sauvons l'Arménie!

Markéta Gregorová, *za skupinu Verts/ALE*. – Paní předsedající, o Náhorním Karabachu a konfliktu mezi Arménií a Ázerbájdžánem jsme na této půdě hovořili už mnohokrát. Nyní situace dramaticky eskalovala kvůli útoku a drzosti Ázerbájdžánu. Důsledek je přes sto tisíc prchajících etnických Arménů z Náhorního Karabachu a vynucená kapitulace lokální obrany. Všichni víme, že mírová jednání šla ázerbájdžánským směrem jen za jedné podmínky, aby mohli etničtí Arméni zůstat. Jak si tedy máme vykládat tenhle útok a porušení všech dohod? Je jen jedno vysvětlení. Alijev se snaží o etnickou čistku Arménů v Náhorním Karabachu. Ázerbájdžán se osmělil. Přesně jako jsme někteří varovali. Evropská unie začala od diktátora Alijeva dovážet ropu a plyn, protože: Co by se mohlo pokazit, když nahradíte závislost na jednom diktátorovi jiným? Tím si EU svázala ruce. Ale ne všichni tomu jenom hodláme přihlížet.

Dnes jsem šla podpořit před Parlamentem rodilé Arménky a Armény, kteří žijí ve Francii a přišli orodovat za své blízké. Nechápu, jak můžeme dále provozovat tuhle pokryteckou zahraniční politiku. Jak můžeme jednu zemi bránit před útoky a druhou nechávat napospas. Já zde tedy za ty protestující venku i všechny prchající obyvatele Náhorního Karabachu oroduji. Komise, Rado, členské země, už ne další tragédii jako na Ukrajině, už ne další ustupování diktátorům!

Anna Fotyga, *on behalf of the ECR Group*. – Madame President, even applied on internationally recognised territory, use of force raises our legitimate high concern. In the case of the Azerbaijani offensive of 19 September, the exodus of Armenians living in Nagorno-Karabakh reached over 100 000 people, leading to effective depopulation of the territory. We look forward to talks on 5 October. Yet I think that engagement of the international community in this case should be much higher, including engagement of the European Union. The presence of Vladanka Andreeva, the UN representative in Azerbaijan and her team was too late, probably, and not sufficient. We need much broader and actually constant presence in order to ensure rights of people and security of both historic heritage and private and public property.

Jordan Bardella, *au nom du groupe ID*. – Madame la Présidente, mais où sont passées les valeurs de l'Europe? Des images déchirantes nous parviennent du Haut-Karabakh où, jour après jour, la région se vide de ses habitants, jetés sur les routes de l'exode par la force militaire, celle d'un État azéri qui a décidé de rendre toute vie arménienne impossible sur son sol.

Ce dénouement tragique n'avait rien d'inéluctable. Il n'est que le produit du renoncement à soutenir le droit d'un peuple à vivre sur la terre de ses ancêtres, quand bien même le hasard de l'histoire en aurait confié la souveraineté à d'autres.

Le Haut-Karabakh, attribué de manière arbitraire à l'Azerbaïdjan par Staline, est incontestablement un foyer de la civilisation arménienne. Sur les hauts plateaux de l'Artsakh, des cités arméniennes ont été fondées il y a plus de deux millénaires et le christianisme y a très vite trouvé une terre d'élection.

À l'heure où nous nous parlons, l'offensive de l'Azerbaïdjan, avec la bénédiction de la Turquie, menace de tout effacer. Un peuple qui s'en va, c'est une identité qui s'éteint. Demain, c'est peut-être l'intégrité territoriale de l'Arménie qui sera contestée, son territoire ayant déjà été violé par les troupes azéries en 2022.

Très tôt, nous vous avons alerté sur ce péril. Force est de constater que l'Union européenne préfère le gaz azerbaïdjanais au sang des Arméniens. L'Arménie est seule, prise en étau entre les prétentions turques et un voisin russe qui n'entend plus assurer sa protection. L'honneur de l'Europe est mis à l'épreuve. Oserions-nous continuer à être les spectateurs de la disparition d'un peuple, frère et ami? Comme beaucoup ici, je m'y refuse.

Idoia Villanueva Ruiz, *en nombre del Grupo The Left*. – Señora presidenta, durante treinta años los intentos de traer estabilidad y paz al Cáucaso han fracasado. Han sido tres décadas en las que la Unión Europea no solo ha mirado hacia otro lado, sino que ha alentado la agresividad de Azerbaiyán.

Un ejemplo muy claro es lo sucedido el año pasado: tras aumentar la cantidad de gas y petróleo azeríes que importa Europa, Von der Leyen definió a Azerbaiyán como un socio fiable y creíble. Este socio fiable y creíble sobornó a personal europeo para salir bien parado ante denuncias sobre la situación de sus presos políticos. Este socio fiable y creíble firmó un acuerdo de cooperación diplomática y militar con Rusia cuarenta y ocho horas antes de la invasión de Ucrania. Este socio fiable y creíble vulnera sistemáticamente los derechos humanos y el Derecho internacional. Y, desde que atacó Nagorno Karabaj, más de 100 000 personas han huido ante el riesgo de una limpieza étnica.

Sin embargo, ahora, Europa no ha desplegado ni la solidaridad ni la ayuda que otros países sí han recibido. Y hoy quiero preguntarle a la Comisión: ¿sigue siendo Azerbaiyán un socio fiable y seguro, un socio fiable y creíble? Díganlo. Esta Cámara, la ciudadanía europea y también la ciudadanía armenia merecen saberlo.

Martin Sonneborn (NI). – Frau Präsidentin! Herzlichen Glückwunsch! Der EU-Führung ist zur Abwechslung mal etwas gelungen. Sie hat unserem Wertepartner, dem Irren aus Baku, dabei assistiert, die Demokratische Republik Arzach vollständig auszulöschen. Ratspräsident Michel und Frau von der Leyen haben Aserbajdschans Diktator Aliyev so lange den Rücken gestärkt, bis dieser vollendete Tatsachen schaffen konnte: 120 000 Menschen bombardiert und vertrieben – das dürften mehr sein, als noch an die EU und ihre Werte glauben.

Mit Billigung der Borrells und Baerbocks wurde das Völkerrecht missbraucht, um eine kleine Demokratie unter die Herrschaft einer primitiven Diktatur zu zwingen, deren Soldaten jetzt vor laufender Kamera mit Messern in der Hand Jagd auf Armenier machen. Was die wohlfeilen Worte und Krokodilstränen angeht, die sie alle auf einmal vergießen, so wird sich zeigen, was sie wert sind, wenn Aliyev sich, wie angekündigt, den Rest Armeniens einverleibt. Werte, Werte, Werte, Poperte.

Rasa Juknevičienė (PPE). – Madam President, dear colleagues, Armenians are facing a humanitarian crisis. The EU must help Armenia to take care of its people. The EU must also be prepared to impose sanctions on Azerbaijan if its military moves into Armenia's territory. The EU can help set up the Nakhchivan transit scheme, building on the good practice of the Kaliningrad transit. But Armenians also must learn to live in a new reality.

Many in Armenia already realise that relying on imperial Russia was a strategic and painful mistake. I therefore call on all responsible political forces in Armenia to find the strength and instead of fighting among themselves to start a debate on the future of Armenia. I would very much like to hear Prime Minister Pashinyan speaking from this podium. The EU must be ready to support a European future for Armenia if Armenians wish for it.

Isabel Santos (S&D). – Senhora Presidente, não podemos dizer que os ataques militares continuados perpetrados pelo Azerbaijão contra o Nagorno-Karabakh nos últimos dias são uma surpresa. Depois da guerra de 2020, a retórica inflamada de Aliyev, as constantes provocações na fronteira com a Arménia e o bloqueio do corredor de Lachin em dezembro de 2022 faziam antever o que está a acontecer.

Apesar disso, o cheiro do gás e do petróleo fizeram a presidente Von der Leyen nomear o Azerbaijão um parceiro confiável. Não há autocratas nem ditadores confiáveis. E os valores da União Europeia e os valores da democracia e dos direitos humanos não são passíveis de venda.

Os acordos com o Azerbaijão para fornecimento de gás têm de ser imediatamente suspensos. É necessário apoiar os refugiados e deslocados arménios, abrir o corredor de Lachin e reforçar a missão de monitorização da UE e enviar esforços para o estabelecimento de um acordo de paz sustentável.

Em 1915, não tínhamos os meios de comunicação que temos hoje nem Internet. Agora todos vemos, ouvimos e lemos. A União Europeia não pode ficar em silêncio nem cruzar os braços.

Hilde Vautmans (Renew). – Voorzitter, collega's, commissaris, een etnische zuivering is bezig op ons continent en ik heb echt het gevoel dat Europa erbij staat en dat we ernaar kijken.

Is dit werkelijk de geopolitieke Unie die we nastreven? En is Azerbeidzjan werkelijk zo'n betrouwbare partner waarvan we gas kunnen kopen? Die afschuwelijke beelden snijden door ons hart. Bijna de hele Armeense bevolking heeft het gebied verlaten, waaronder 20 000 onschuldige kinderen.

We hebben onze mond vol van een Unie met waarden en normen. Laten we dan nu optreden. Europa moet dringend met noodhulp komen. We moeten in Armenië helpen om de vluchtelingen op te vangen en we moeten met sancties voorkomen dat Azerbeidzjan voortdoet. We moeten erop aandringen dat de blokkade van de Laçın-corridor wordt opgeheven, onderzoek voeren naar de oorlogsmisdaden, steun verlenen aan Armenië via de Europese Vredesfaciliteit. Als Azerbeidzjan blijft doorgaan met geweld, moeten we onze gas- en olieaankopen bevriezen. Dit moeten we doen voor onze waarden, maar vooral voor de onschuldige slachtoffers.

Sergey Lagodinsky (Verts/ALE). – Frau Präsidentin! Wir glauben nicht, wenn Aserbaidzjan sagt, dass Bergkarabach in ein multinationales Aserbaidzjan integriert wird. Wir können dem nicht glauben, wenn eine kulturelle Entfaltung und Bürgerrechtsschutz verbal versprochen wird. Nein, was wir sehen, ist eine kulturelle Auslöschung und eine ethnische Säuberung, wenn nicht durch nachgewiesene Gewaltanwendung – manche bezweifeln das –, dann doch sicherlich durch nachgewiesene Androhung der Gewalt und der physischen Auslöschung. Wenn das Anliegen von Bergkarabach als Terrorismus dargestellt wird, wird die gesamte Bevölkerung, jedenfalls die männliche Bevölkerung, zu Verbrechen degradiert und damit auch mit Tod bedroht.

Unsere Forderungen müssen sein, dass wir doch auch der armenischen Minderheit aus Bergkarabach eine Perspektive bieten, bis hin zu einer Möglichkeit, unter einer internationalen Garantie zurückzukehren. Jedenfalls muss die Zahlung der Entschädigung klar und deutlich gefordert werden. Und wir müssen die kleine Demokratie in Armenien unterstützen und den Armenen eine westliche, eine demokratische Perspektive anbieten.

Assita Kanko (ECR). – Voorzitter, wordt de EU de knecht van elke dictator op deze aardbol?

We hebben ons vastgereden in de regio. We zijn de dupe van president Aliyev geworden, die met zijn gas staat te zwaaien in ruil voor onze principes.

De EU heeft de signalen genegeerd dat Azerbeidzjan gebruik wilde maken van de verzwakte positie van Rusland in de regio om Nagorno-Karabach volledig onder zijn controle te brengen. We hebben geen rekening gehouden met mogelijke vergelding na de toenadering tussen Armenië en het Westen.

Het gevolg is dat de humanitaire noodsituatie die ontstond door de maandenlange blokkade van de Laçın-corridor, verergerd werd door de 200 doden en honderden slachtoffers van de militaire aanval door Azerbeidzjan op Nagorno-Karabach op 19 september en de uittocht, en dus ontheemding, van de overgrote meerderheid van Armeniërs uit Nagorno-Karabach.

Nu komt het einde van het zelfbestuur van Nagorno-Karabach in zicht. Per 1 januari 2024 heeft deze etnische minderheid geen thuis meer.

Nagorno-Karabach heeft veel meer dan humanitaire hulp nodig. De etnische zuivering moet stoppen. De rechten van de overgebleven Armeniërs in Nagorno-Karabach mogen niet verder geschonden worden. Het Armeens-christelijke erfgoed in Nagorno-Karabach moet beschermd worden.

De EU mag vooral geen tweede keer tekortschieten en territoriale aanspraken van Azerbeidzjan op delen van de Armeense republiek zelf niet negeren.

Wij moeten de soevereiniteit van Armenië steunen.

Anna Bonfrisco (ID). – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, signora Commissaria, nel 2019 la Presidente della Commissione europea annunciava che sarebbe stata un'Unione europea più geopolitica. Ad esempio, abbandonare al loro destino più di 130 000 armeni è un'azione europea geopolitica, oppure, come la definirebbe l'Alto commissario Borrell, è la vittoria della legge della giungla sul diritto internazionale basato sulle regole? E come ha potuto la Commissione, solo un anno fa, concludere con l'Azerbaigian il memorandum d'intesa sul partenariato strategico nel settore dell'energia e non porre delle condizioni per proteggere le comunità armenie del Nagorno-Karabakh?

Dovevate scegliere la logica delle radici culturali, storiche e cristiane che legano noi e il popolo armeno, ma non lo avete fatto, accettando ancora la logica dei confini decisi da Stalin. Dovevate difendere il patrimonio politico di questo secolo, ovvero i diritti umani, la democrazia, lo Stato di diritto, avete invece scelto l'esercito azero, che con l'uso della forza e con i crimini di guerra smantella il millenario capitale artistico culturale armeno e le effigi religiose del Nagorno Karabakh, che sono parte delle radici dell'Europa. E anche per questo la storia vi giudicherà.

Γιώργος Γεωργίου (The Left). – Κυρία Πρόεδρε, κυρία επίτροπε, αυτές τις ημέρες γινόμαστε μάρτυρες ενός συνεχιζόμενου ιστορικού εγκλήματος σε βάρος ενός πολύπαθου λαού, των Αρμενίων. Πέφτουν ξανά θύματα μιας εθνοκάθαρσης από τον κ. Aliyev, στενό συνεργάτη του κυρίου Erdoğan-δυστυχώς, όμως, και στενό συνεργάτη της ίδιας της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης.

Η κ. von der Leyen μόλις πρόσφατα αντάλλαξε χειραψίες με τον κ. Aliyev. Το αζέρικο φυσικό αέριο, διερρωτώμαι, μπαίνει πάνω από τις ζωές των ανθρώπων και τις υποκριτικές διακηρύξεις για δημοκρατία και ανθρώπινα δικαιώματα;

Μέσα από τις έντονες γεωπολιτικές αντιπαραθέσεις για έλεγχο των πηγών ενέργειας και των μεταφορών του, παραδοσιακοί φίλοι —ξέρουμε ποιοι είναι— αλλά και όψιμοι σύμμαχοι των Αρμενίων —Ηνωμένες Πολιτείες, NATO, Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση— έχουν εγκαταλείψει τους Αρμένιους στο έλεος του Aliyev. Κάπως έτσι αναδεικνύεται και η υποκρισία όσων μιλούν σήμερα για διεθνή έννομη τάξη, και εκείνο που μένει τελικά είναι τα δύο μέτρα και δύο σταθμά και οι τραγωδίες των λαών. Αυτές οι μέρες είναι μέρες θλίψης και πόνου.

Fabio Massimo Castaldo (NI). – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, signora Commissaria, questa è la cronaca di una tragedia annunciata, di una nuova puntata del genocidio armeno, del *Medz Yeghern*, della quale siamo stati spettatori passivi.

Nonostante i numerosissimi passi intrapresi dall'Armenia per avvicinarsi sempre di più all'Europa – non da ultima l'odierna ratifica dello Statuto di Roma –, l'Unione si è voltata dall'altra parte mentre Baku teneva criminalmente bloccato il corridoio di Lachin. Non è bastata neanche la conclamata e solida alleanza tra Aliyev e Putin a farci aprire gli occhi. Semplicemente si è adottato un silenzio assenso, sacrificando la popolazione armena sull'altare della *Realpolitik*.

Sono raccapriccianti le scene di persecuzione che arrivano dal Nagorno-Karabakh. Chiedo ancora una volta, con forza, l'imposizione immediata di durissime sanzioni contro le autorità azere, autorità che si sono macchiate di questo atto barbaro e spregevole, dando seguito alla lettera che ho già inviato prima dell'ultima offensiva e che ha visto la co-firma di 51 di voi, colleghi.

E deve esserci anche un divieto totale di export di armi verso Baku. Lo chiedo chiaramente a tutti i governi, anche al governo Meloni, che, a quanto pare, sta negoziando, nonostante tutto, con la capitale azera.

Troppe volte abbiamo detto «Mai più», salvo poi limitarci a osservare, mentre le pagine più buie della storia si ripetevano sotto i nostri occhi. Non siamo riusciti a evitare che oltre 100 000 armeni fossero costretti a lasciare le loro terre ancestrali, mentre già Baku pianifica l'invasione dello Zangezur.

Sospendiamo subito ogni accordo con Baku, perché l'odore del gas e del petrolio non deve coprire il profumo della libertà. Viva l'Armenia libera, democratica ed europea!

Michael Gahler (PPE). – Madam President, colleagues, we are where we are: Azerbaijan's unilateral violent action has been widely condemned and rightly so.

Let us now take a people-centred approach: helping Armenia to address the humanitarian challenges resulting from more than 100 000 refugees, demanding the establishment of an international presence of observers to reassure the remaining population of their safety – the framework could be the UN, the OSCE, the Council of Europe or the Red Cross, all renowned organisations where Azerbaijan is a full member – and engaging President Aliyev by his own promises that those citizens can live safely in their homeland.

An international presence would be a prerequisite for that, and this guarantee must not apply only to those few who remained. We must demand that those who fled in panic are encouraged and reassured that it is safe to return home. Ethnic cleansing must not be the lasting and final result of this violent action.

Let us also signal to the democratically elected government of Prime Minister Pashinyan that if Russia abandons them, we will not. I think we should start negotiations on a visa-free regime. That could be a sign of hope that they are not alone.

Robert Hajšel (S&D). – Madam President, dear Commissioner, I am very concerned about the current worrying humanitarian situation after the attack of Azerbaijan on Nagorno-Karabakh. We have to recognise that EU has failed and was not able to prevent this to happen. It is another significant setback in the effort to build sustainable peace in the region.

Maintaining ceasefire is our key priority. Both sides should refrain from any further violence and engage in a comprehensive and transparent dialogue. We have to call on the Commission to reassess the relations with Azerbaijan, including EU partnership on the gas supplies, to increase humanitarian assistance and to help Yerevan face the challenge of nearly 90 000 refugees that are escaping or were evicted, and also to offer Armenia a European perspective.

Meanwhile, I welcome the arrival of UN mission on the ground and I believe that the UN Security Council should consider deploying a peacekeeping mission to protect civilians at risk of ethnic cleansing. I understand the situation is rapidly evolving. However, the EU must be firm and express strong commitment in favour of international commitments, long-term sustainable peace and the protection of civilians, in particular the minorities.

Karen Melchior (Renew). – Fru formand! Tak fru formand, tak til statssekretær for europæiske anliggender, kommissær. I 1902 rejste den danske lærer, Karen Jeppe, til Armenien for at hjælpe de fordrevne armenere. Det var i optakten til det armenske folkemord i 1915. Dengang svigtede det internationale samfund Armenien. Aserbajdsjan har igennem de seneste år overskredet, hvad der burde være Europas røde linjer i Nagorno-Karabakh, men vi har ikke set nogen handling fra EU. De seneste angreb har indtil videre fordrevet mere end 100.000 mennesker over grænsen til Armenien. Det vi ser, er en fordrivelse af det sidste armenske mindretal i området. Den geopolitiske situation med Ruslands aggressionskrig i Ukraine virker til at have lammet EU. Det er tragikomisk, når von der Leyen og Borrell taler om EU som global aktør. Vi bliver nødt til at kunne reagere på mere end én ting ad gangen. Ellers bliver det alt for nemt at sætte EU på sidelinjen. Men samtidig skal Armenien også hjælpe os med at hjælpe dem. Vi har brug for, at Armenien engagerer sig fuldt ud i tæt partnerskab med EU. Vi kan tage det første skridt i denne retning allerede i dag. Statssekretæren for europæiske anliggender, Charles Michel, og Josep Borrell, bør invitere Armeniens premierminister, Pashinyan, og præsident, Khachaturyan, til mødet i Granada i overmorgen, hvor EU's statsledere er samlet. På den måde står EU sammen med Armenien i ønsket om en fredelig fremtid for Syd-Kaukasus med respekt for alle mindretal.

Jordi Solé (Verts/ALE). – Madame President, the mass exodus of Armenians from Artsakh, fleeing their homeland and leaving everything behind for fear of their lives is truly shameful and represents a massive failure. We did warn that the months long blockade of the Lachin corridor was only the prelude to a de facto ethnic cleansing. Azerbaijan, with all its anti-Armenian rhetoric, was never genuinely committed to diplomacy. Aliyev, who made assurances that he wouldn't once again use weapons to impose a solution, has mocked us, the international community and the agreement signed in 2020. Now he has what he has been dreaming of. A Nagorno-Karabakh without Armenians, another territorial conflict that ends with the use of force and not through negotiation and once again violating the right to self-determination.

We have to make it clear that behaving like Azerbaijan did with such unilateral actions must have consequences. Otherwise, autocrats feel emboldened. The EU must now provide all the necessary help to Armenia to face the refugee crisis, but also to consolidate its democracy with a European perspective.

Ангел Джамбазки (ECR). – Г-жо Председател, преди 110 години великият Яворов написа за арменците:

»Изгнаници клети, отломка нищожна

от всякога храбър народ мъченик,

дечица на майка, робиня тревожна

и жертви на подвиг чутовно велик ...«

Тези стихове бяха посветени на геноцида над арменския народ, извършен от младотурците в рамките на Османската империя. Сто и десет години по-късно тези събития се повтарят, този път извършени от техните първи братовчеди – азерите, пред очите на всички вас. И за това се знаеше, и за това се предупреждаваше, и беше ясно какво ще свърши диктаторският режим на Алиев.

Само че тук някой си правеше сметчици, че може да си прави геополитически игри, да си пазарува, да си търгува, да си купува газ, да си купува нефт, залагайки живота на арменците. Тук чувахме, че било жалко насилието над арменците, обаче, уви, те били на грешната страна на историята. Не може да има грешна страна на историята, когато става дума за геноциди. Не може да има грешна страна на историята, когато става дума за етническо прочистване. Или си на правилната страна, или си на грешната страна.

Този Парламент и тази Комисия, която ни слуша в момента и нещо си говори някакви техни работи, както обикновено, избраха отново да са на грешната страна и да си играят геополитически игрички. Жертвата арменците за пореден път. Никакви преговори и разговори няма да помогнат. Единственото нещо, което може да помогне и да изтрие срама и позора, оттук се оправдават, че някой не знаел, друг мислел, че Алиев го излъгал, трети не знам какво си Ами като ви е излъгал Алиев, оттук засрамвате се, гледате в земята и напускате.

Момент, г-жо Председател. Такива неща могат да се изкупят само и единствено със санкции. Санкции срещу Алиев и санкции срещу този позорен диктаторски режим. Иначе са хуморески историите, че щели да се върнат арменците. Глупости на хора, които нищо не разбират.

Jean-Lin Lacapelle (ID). – Madame la Présidente, chers collègues, une véritable épuration ethnique se déroule à nos portes. L'éradication programmée sur une partie de son territoire historique d'une civilisation trois fois millénaire, celle du peuple arménien, première nation chrétienne de l'histoire. Cette qualification glorieuse ne pouvait qu'attirer le mépris de certains eurocrates qui, par leur insensibilité face au drame de la population du Haut-Karabakh, démontrent une fois de plus leur mépris de tout ce qui est chrétien et qui constitue les vraies racines communes de tous les peuples européens. Les Arméniens, peuple victime du premier des grands génocides du XX^e siècle, toujours nié de façon ignoble par la Turquie et qui vit disparaître dans des conditions atroces près d'un million et demi d'Arméniens.

Je tiens en ces moments douloureux à saluer nos compatriotes français d'origine arménienne qui, toujours attachés à leurs très anciennes racines, se sont pleinement assimilés à la France et à la République. Qu'ils sachent que leurs combats d'aujourd'hui de toujours sont ceux que nous portons dans notre groupe. Mais si l'Azerbaïdjan peut aujourd'hui mettre en œuvre de telles exactions, c'est parce que le régime de Bakou, appuyé par celui d'Erdogan, bénéficie de la complicité des instances dirigeantes de l'Union européenne.

Oui, la présidente de la Commission européenne doit rendre des comptes. Par le contrat de gaz passé avec l'Azerbaïdjan, Ursula von der Leyen a donné à l'autocrate Aliyev un permis de tuer et d'épurer dans le Haut-Karabakh. Elle s'est également engagée à verser au régime de Bakou 60 millions d'euros de fonds européens et jusqu'à 2 milliards d'euros en projets d'investissement. Cet argent, versé malgré eux par les contribuables européens, c'est celui du sang des Arméniens, sang que la présidente de la Commission européenne a désormais de manière indélébile sur les mains.

Emmanuel Maurel (The Left). – Madame la Présidente, depuis un an et demi, nous soutenons sans relâche et sans ambiguïté le peuple ukrainien agressé par le régime de M. Poutine. Nous ne laissons pas tomber les Ukrainiens.

Alors, je m'adresse à la Commission, pourquoi laissez-vous tomber le peuple arménien? La vérité, c'est que vous faites pire que les laisser tomber puisque vous avez signé en juillet 2022 un accord gazier avec l'Azerbaïdjan en vous félicitant en grande pompe, je cite M^{me} von der Leyen, de ce partenariat fiable, alors même que les nettoyages ethniques avaient déjà commencé au Haut-Karabakh.

Et aujourd'hui, la situation est catastrophique. On l'a dit, plus de 100 000 réfugiés, sur une population totale de 120 000, qui ont été jetés sur les routes de l'exode par M. Aliyev. Et on ne peut pas se contenter simplement de promesses d'aide humanitaire. C'est d'ailleurs ne pas connaître la situation puisque aujourd'hui, il y a un blocus qui fait qu'aujourd'hui la nourriture et les médicaments ne peuvent pas passer.

Il faut aller évidemment plus loin, et entendez, Madame la Commissaire, entendez les parlementaires européens qui vous disent non seulement d'arrêter cet accord gazier, mais de prendre des sanctions envers un régime qui aujourd'hui ne respecte aucun principe et que nous devons condamner sans aucune ambiguïté.

Nicolas Bay (NI). – Madame la Présidente, il y a quelques jours, l'Azerbaïdjan a envahi l'Arménie, annexant le Haut-Karabakh et contraignant à l'exode 100 000 réfugiés arméniens qui fuient aujourd'hui les vols, les viols, les pillages et la mort. L'Azerbaïdjan qui, comme toujours, se comporte en bras armé de la Turquie. La Turquie qui, après le génocide de 1915, poursuit inlassablement sa volonté de construire un grand empire ottoman musulman avec à la clé l'éradication pure et simple de la nation et du peuple arménien.

Mais quelle honte! Quelle honte de voir M^{me} von der Leyen se précipiter à Bakou, pactiser avec le dictateur Aliyev et affirmer qu'il s'agit d'un partenaire fiable. Et quelle hypocrisie à prétendre vouloir se défaire de la dépendance au gaz russe parce que la Russie a envahi l'Ukraine, bien sûr, et dans le même temps, acheter du gaz à l'Azerbaïdjan qui vient juste d'envahir l'Arménie.

Il est temps d'en finir avec les collusions et les connivences avec Erdogan et avec Aliyev et de mettre un terme aux relations commerciales avec l'Azerbaïdjan. Nous avons un devoir de solidarité à l'égard de l'Arménie, première nation chrétienne de l'histoire. Nous avons un lien historique qui nous unit. Les Arméniens, le peuple arménien a besoin de notre amitié, de notre soutien et de notre solidarité européenne.

Andrey Kovatchev (PPE). – Madam President, Commissioner, Minister, dear colleagues, I cannot hide I am very sad. We are witnessing a huge failure of the international community in the last decades. There were three basic principles, apparently agreed by Azerbaijan and Armenia, namely: non-use of force, the right of self-determination and territorial integrity.

Azerbaijan violated two of them by using force on multiple occasions and by continued refusal to let the population of Nagorno-Karabakh exercise their right to self-determination.

Currently, we are observing ethnic cleansing through the creation of dramatic conditions for the Nagorno-Karabakh Armenians. First, the blockade of the Lachin corridor led to lack of basic commodities and services and second, the hateful rhetoric and actions by all levels of the Azerbaijan Government created a poisonous atmosphere of fear and led to a mass exodus of the Nagorno-Karabakh Armenians.

The suffering of those people is the result of bigger geopolitical calculations, where Russia disregarded its obligations under the November 2020 trilateral statement and took the side of Azerbaijan to punish the Armenian Government for their steps in the way of deepening the EU-Armenian relations.

The EU must immediately and consistently support humanitarian aid for those suffering, and Azerbaijan has to guarantee the Nagorno-Karabakh Armenians' safe return and a safe life in Nagorno-Karabakh. These conditions need to be met by monitoring of the international community agreed by Azerbaijan and Armenia.

Sylvie Guillaume (S&D). – Madame la Présidente, en deux jours, les Arméniens d'Artsakh ont connu un rebondissement tragique du conflit qui les oppose à l'Azerbaïdjan. Dans l'indifférence des soldats russes censés assurer la paix sur place, ils ont dû fuir leur terre, leur maison, toute leur vie. Ils sont plus de 100 000 à avoir tout laissé derrière eux. On a délogé un peuple de son histoire. L'Union a été impuissante à éviter un nettoyage ethnique. Il est en cours.

Beaucoup d'autres choses m'indignent dans cette histoire. Comment, par exemple, la Commission européenne peut-elle promouvoir et assumer un partenariat énergétique avec un gouvernement dont les exactions sont répétées? 15,6 milliards d'euros ont été distribués à Bakou l'année dernière, rien que pour son gaz. Alors, soyons clairs: il faut fermer le marché gazier et prendre des sanctions économiques contre le régime d'Aliyev.

Je soutiendrai cette résolution et j'appelle également à une aide humanitaire renforcée à l'égard des réfugiés d'Artsakh. L'Union doit réagir avant qu'il ne soit trop tard et que l'Arménie ne fasse elle-même les frais du cynisme politique.

Klemen Grošelj (Renew). – Madam President, dear colleagues, in the tragic events unfolding in Nagorno-Karabakh, once again people are forced to leave their homes and traces of their culture are being slowly but persistently erased. At the same time, what is more shocking and devastating is that the foundation of the modern rule-based international order is undermined again.

The ethnic cleansing of Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh cannot be justified either by the events of the past or by the claims of sovereignty of Azerbaijan. The fate of Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh is another stark reminder of how the world would look like if the rules-based international system, with all its deficiencies, were to be replaced by the brutal law of the jungle where the bigger, stronger and more powerful prevail.

For small nations, this would present an existential threat to their existence because the appetite of those who would like to play this game is endless. Today it's Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh. Who knows who will be next? This is why we, as the European Union, must react; we must support the Armenian people and their legitimate expectations and hopes.

Marie Toussaint (Verts/ALE). – Madame la Présidente, j'ai une minute, une petite minute pour parler d'une douleur qui dure depuis des siècles, celle du peuple arménien martyrisé, humilié et si peu défendu. Parler de l'exode en cours au Haut-Karabakh, c'est parler de notre responsabilité, de notre complicité, c'est parler du gaz que nous préférons importer plutôt que de nous opposer à une épuration ethnique en cours.

Détourner le regard n'est pas seulement une faute morale, c'est également une tragique erreur géopolitique. Car, quand il y a un agresseur et un agressé, on ne peut prétendre être neutre sans cautionner l'agression. N'avons-nous rien appris de l'histoire? Avons-nous oublié le génocide de 1915? J'ai honte de cette Europe qui sait mais ne fait rien.

Et nous le savons, le risque est aujourd'hui celui de l'atteinte à l'intégrité territoriale de l'Arménie. Alors oui, nous avons besoin de forces de paix, oui, nous avons besoin de sanctions commerciales et économiques. Oui, nous devons dénoncer immédiatement l'accord gazier honteux signé avec Aliyev. Il faut imposer un rapport de force si nous voulons protéger la paix et le peuple arménien. Nous ne pouvons pas faillir, sinon l'Europe aura du sang sur les mains.

Bert-Jan Ruissen (ECR). – Voorzitter, geachte commissaris, de Armeense bevolking van Nagorno-Karabach is vorige week historisch zwaar leed aangedaan door Azerbeidzjan. 120 000 Armeniërs die halsoverkop alles moesten achterlaten. Een misdaad, vlak voor de deur van de Europese Unie. En wat deden de lidstaten, wat deed de Raad, wat deed de Europese Commissie? Ze lieten het allemaal gebeuren.

De Europese Dienst voor extern optreden spreekt nog steeds over Azerbeidzjan als een betrouwbare partner. Onbegrijpelijk. Sterker nog, de Europese Unie faciliteert zelfs Azerbeidzjan door heel veel gas te kopen. Dit moet stoppen. Wie nu geen actie onderneemt, geeft Azerbeidzjan een vrijbrief om door te gaan met vijandelijke acties, ook op Armeens grondgebied. Ik heb daar grote zorgen over.

Ik vraag u daarom dringend om:

- 1) het opschorten van de gasdeal met Azerbeidzjan;
- 2) het instellen van sancties tegen de verantwoordelijken van de blokkade en de aanvallen;
- 3) een Unesco-missie om het culturele en christelijke erfgoed te waarborgen;
- 4) uitbreiding van de Europese missie in Armenië met toegang tot de Azerbeidzjaanse kant van de grens.

De heer Borrell beloofde vorige week een krachtig antwoord bij een gedwongen vertrek van de Armeniërs. Welnu, de regio is leeg. Maar waar blijft de Europese Unie? Dit is zorgelijk, temeer daar de inval niet als een verrassing komt.

Afgelopen zomer stond ik bij de grens tussen Armenië en Azerbeidzjan. Ik sprak er met mensen uit Nagorno-Karabach die vanwege de blokkade van de Laçın-corridor niet konden terugkeren naar hun familie en hun werk. Hun emotionele verhalen over de humanitaire situatie raakten me diep. Ik heb de wanhoop in hun ogen gezien.

Armenië heeft de Europese steun en daadkracht nu hard nodig. Ik reken op uw medewerking.

Gerolf Annemans (ID). – Voorzitter, collega's, als ik denk aan wat nu met Artsach gebeurt ... Met militaire macht en de bedreiging van – en de herinnering aan – eeuwen van genocide en etnische zuivering de volledige Armeense bevolking in dat deel van de Kaukasus laten weggagen, en dat omwille van gasleveringen zonder veel meer dan wat holle woorden laten gebeuren. De totale machteloosheid en de totale vernedering opleggen en laten opleggen aan de christelijke natie die Armenië in dat deel van de wereld is. Wetens en willens de andere kant opkijken, hoewel we vrezen dat de beide Ottomaanse autocraten Erdoğan en Aliyev in de verdere arrogante vertrappeling van Zuid-Armenië een eenheid zullen zoeken om hun imperium uit te breiden.

Als ik daar allemaal aan denk, dan schaam ik mij, want het Turkse lidmaatschap van de NAVO verblindt ons volledig. En iedere keer als ik Von der Leyen en de EU-elite nog hoor spreken over Europese waarden en mensenrechten, dan zal ik aan deze foto denken, aan Von der Leyen met een gascontract. Ik zal mij diep schamen in naam van Europa voor zoveel hypocrisie.

Puhemies. – Minun on todettava, että työjärjestyksen mukaan täällä ei voi esittää puhujapöntöstä kuvia eikä karttoja.

Antoni Comín i Oliveres (NI). – Madame la Présidente, Madame la Commissaire, nous ne pouvons rester impassibles face à ce drame humain que constituent l'agression et le nettoyage ethnique menés par l'Azerbaïdjan au Haut-Karabakh. Nous savons pourquoi cela s'est produit. D'une part, la Turquie, protectrice de l'Azerbaïdjan, lui a fourni l'armement nécessaire, mais aussi la Russie a puni l'Arménie pour son orientation pro-européenne et sa condamnation de l'invasion de l'Ukraine, retirant ainsi son soutien historique à ce pays.

La réponse de l'Union européenne n'est pas acceptable. La répression et le nettoyage ethnique au Haut-Karabakh ont commencé, vous l'avez dit, dès 2020 et malgré cela, l'Union a conclu le mémorandum énergétique avec l'Azerbaïdjan pour le gaz et cherche encore à conclure un accord de coopération plus complet. L'Azerbaïdjan s'arrêtera-t-il au Haut-Karabakh? Ou la prochaine cible sera-t-elle l'Arménie?

L'Union doit garantir la sécurité de l'Arménie en contribuant avec le nécessaire à son autodéfense. C'est conforme aux valeurs de l'Union mais aussi à ses objectifs géostratégiques. En effet, cela réduirait l'influence russe dans le Caucase du Sud en facilitant la sortie de l'Arménie de l'alliance militaire dirigée par la Russie. L'Arménie veut clairement s'orienter vers l'Europe. Aujourd'hui, elle a ratifié les statuts de la Cour pénale internationale. Agissons en conséquence, en commençant par sanctionner sévèrement les responsables de cet affreux nettoyage ethnique.

Andrius Kubilius (PPE). – Madam President, I will not repeat what others have said, but I would like to stress that the future of democracy in Armenia is at stake and is deliberately targeted by the Kremlin with assistance of Azerbaijan and partly by Turkey. That is why the EU needs to show its unwavering support to the democratically elected Pashinyan government, which clearly is making steps to distance Armenia from Russia. What is important now?

First, by the real perspective of very harsh EU sanctions Azerbaijan needs to be stopped from any attempts to build an extraterritorial transit corridor from Nakhichevan to Azerbaijan. There is a possibility to have a civilized transit arrangement, based on the example of the EU rules established for transit of Russian goods to Kaliningrad through Lithuania.

Second, the EU needs to be ready to be open for much stronger security and economic cooperation with Armenia. It is absolutely clear that Russia will go for painful economic sanctions against Armenia. The EU needs to be ready to assist Armenia and to upgrade the CEPA agreement into an Association and Free Trade Agreement. Also, Prime Minister Pashinyan should be invited by the Commission President to visit Brussels and to make a statement at our plenary session.

Brando Benifei (S&D). – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, condanniamo con forza l'aggressione militare dell'Azerbaigian nei confronti della regione a maggioranza armena del Nagorno-Karabakh.

Sono più di 100 000 i profughi già arrivati in Armenia da una regione che era abitata da oltre 120 000 persone. Qualsiasi trasferimento forzato di persone e ogni possibile azione contro di loro per motivi etnici è e sarà da considerarsi un crimine contro l'umanità.

Preoccupa poi il fragilissimo quadro politico. L'autoproclamata repubblica che ha governato il Nagorno-Karabakh per oltre trent'anni ha infatti già annunciato che dal prossimo gennaio scioglierà le sue istituzioni. Il rischio è che questo vuoto venga colmato da attori esterni come Russia e Turchia.

La decisione dell'ONU di inviare per la prima volta una missione è una buona notizia, ma non basta. L'Unione europea non deve restare un attore defilato, ma deve agire attivando tutti i suoi strumenti diplomatici per far tornare il dialogo, per far convergere in un dialogo gli attori protagonisti di questa vicenda e garantire sempre la protezione della popolazione locale.

Petras Auštrevičius (Renew). – Madam President, Madam Commissioner, Council representative, dear colleagues, everyone would agree that for too long Nagorno-Karabakh has been associated with military conflict, deportations, human suffering and non-compliance with numerous ceasefire agreements.

The Soviet dictatorship's tradition of red pencil borders and Russia's policy of regional domination have fundamentally disturbed and crossed nations and peoples. Peace and stability in the region can only be achieved through genuine dialogue between Armenia, Azerbaijan and the people of Nagorno-Karabakh.

I call on the European Union to learn from past mistakes and take an active role in preventing the ethnic cleansing of Karabakh Armenians and their cultural heritage, and a new military escalation against Armenia.

Silvia Sardone (ID). – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, dov'è l'Europa di fronte al dramma degli armeni che scappano dal Nagorno-Karabakh? Quasi 100 000 persone in fuga, spaventate dalle minacce dell'Azerbaigian.

Come mai l'Unione europea non s'indigna? Abbiamo visto bambini e anziani piangere andandosene dalle loro case, civili ridotti alla fame, chiese cristiane distrutte, un popolo abbandonare le proprie terre e la propria identità, che poi è anche la nostra, quella cristiana, il tutto nell'indifferenza delle istituzioni. Anzi, in questi anni abbiamo visto la Presidente von der Leyen definire l'Azerbaigian un partner affidabile.

Gli armeni sono stati abbandonati. L'Unione europea ha forse preferito i rifornimenti di gas alla vita di persone innocenti? L'Europa che cosa ha fatto in questi anni e negli ultimi mesi? Niente, non ha fatto niente. Ha lasciato intere famiglie nelle mani di un regime che mirava proprio a mandarli via.

Ora l'ONU promette fondi e aiuti economici per questa zona. A che cosa servono se sono quasi tutti scappati via e perché non ha fatto nulla prima?

David Lega (PPE). – Madam President, Armenian genocide, Holodomor in Ukraine, Holocaust, deportation and gulag, Srebrenica, Bucha: never again.

Right now in Nagorno-Karabakh, against ethnic Armenians, hunger is again being used as a weapon of ethnic cleansing. Attacked and outlawed, tens of thousands are being forced to discard their identity or else desert their homeland. Words have not worked. Our Union must act.

Hold Azerbaijan's fascist leaders accountable for their attacks against Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh. Sanction all those responsible for blocking the Lachin corridor. Use all the leverage we have. Step in and step up as an EU agent of peace. Save Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh from being wiped out before we witness another genocide in Europe. Never again.

Alessandra Moretti (S&D). – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, immaginate di essere costretti a lasciare le vostre case, gli amici, i luoghi dove siete cresciuti. È quello che in poche ore è successo a circa 100 000 abitanti del Nagorno-Karabakh, una popolazione di cultura e tradizione armena che si trova però nei confini azeri. Non si tratta di migranti o profughi in fuga, ma di pulizia etnica, che costituisce un crimine contro l'umanità.

La comunità internazionale si è dimostrata impotente anche durante i nove mesi in cui gli azeri hanno bloccato il corridoio che collega il Nagorno-Karabakh con l'Armenia, unico possibile ingresso per cibo, medicinali e assistenza in questa sfortunata regione.

Per anni la Russia ha esercitato la sua influenza su questi paesi, fallendo nella missione di mantenere la stabilità. Non possiamo lasciare che attori come la Russia o la Turchia prendano il sopravvento. L'Unione europea deve dimostrarsi un attore credibile e determinante per la pace e la sicurezza.

Condanno l'aggressione militare ingiustificata da parte dell'Azerbaigian e i soprusi che da anni tormentano la minoranza. Serve ora passare ai fatti, offrendo assistenza umanitaria finanziaria, considerando sanzioni mirate e ripensando gli accordi per la fornitura di energia che vede molti paesi europei beneficiarne.

Miriam Lexmann (PPE). – Pani predsedajúca, čo dnes vidíme, sú etnické čistky kresťanského arménskeho obyvateľstva v Náhornom Karabachu zo strany azerbajdžanského režimu.

Takmer celé obyvateľstvo už utieklo. Zanechali za sebou domov a všetok svoj majetok. Je to obrovská humanitárna katastrofa a EÚ musí pomôcť.

Je však neakceptovateľné, aby EÚ vzhľadom na súčasnú bezprecedentnú situáciu stále považovala Azerbajdžan za strategického partnera. Preto opakovane vyzývam na revíziu našich vzťahov s diktátorským režimom v Azerbajdžane a na podporu arménskej demokracie a celkového úsilia Arménska o dosiahnutie mieru a bezpečnosti.

Zastávam názor, že ak by EÚ bola skutočným lídrom a naplno využila svoju strategickú pozíciu v regióne, tomuto veľkému ľudskému nešťastiu a utrpeniu sme mohli predísť.

Tonino Picula (S&D). – Madam President, nine months of blockade of the Lachin corridor were a clear warning of what, unfortunately, followed last month. We should denounce in strongest terms Azerbaijan's use of military escalation, preceded by deprivation of essential goods as a means to force the exodus of the local population.

This unfortunate course of events also uncovers the Russian peacekeeping forces' real political agenda in the region. We need a credible peacekeeping mission, and more humanitarian assistance and political support to Armenia as soon as possible.

We also support urgent sanctions against all wrongdoers and their facilitators. Furthermore, a thorough assessment of our policy towards Azerbaijan is a must. If we are so keen on making human rights a fundamental pillar of foreign affairs and trade policy, then we should reconsider our 'special partnership' and suspend all the ongoing negotiations. Otherwise, we once again continue falling into the trap of selling our values for gas and oil.

VORSITZ: OTHMAR KARAS

Vizepräsident

Massimiliano Salini (PPE). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, le dichiarazioni di Consiglio e Commissione preoccupano. Ahinoi manifestano una grave inadeguatezza rispetto a un dramma che non può essere gestito con l'artificio di questa finta diplomazia. Ci sono morti sul campo e un popolo che abitava la regione del Nagorno-Karabakh da millenni è stato stritolato e cacciato. Quindi, non è giustificato questo atteggiamento. O non sapete o fingete di non sapere.

Il silenzio delle istituzioni europee non può coprire la voce di questo Parlamento, che sta esprimendo con chiarezza quanto sia inaccettabile quel che è accaduto al popolo armeno. Ed è probabilmente solo l'inizio, perché l'atteggiamento di Russia e Turchia dimostra che probabilmente l'inizio del Nagorno-Karabakh si concluderà con un'aggressione dell'Armenia intera. Come si può pensare che un popolo come quello poi guardi all'Europa con interesse e predicare la possibilità di un allargamento?

Abbiamo il dovere di interrompere, anche ponendo sanzioni commerciali, le nostre relazioni con l'Azerbaijan fino a che non sarà chiarita la sorte del popolo armeno, cioè del popolo che rappresenta oggi anche la cultura europea, un popolo cristiano perseguitato.

François-Xavier Bellamy (PPE). – Monsieur le Président, est-ce que la Commission européenne comprend enfin maintenant pourquoi nous ne cessons d'alerter sur la gravité de la menace dans le Haut-Karabakh? Est-ce que les dirigeants de nos pays mesurent que l'inaction, les mots creux, le «nous appelons chaque partie», les prétextes toujours nouveaux pour toujours fermer les yeux, que tout cela a laissé un dictateur renverser le droit international aux portes de l'Europe, imposer un fait accompli qui nous menacera demain et détruire des vies.

Que répondra la Commission européenne aux parents de Nver et Mikaël, dix et huit ans, abattus par l'Azerbaïdjan, aux familles des centaines d'Arméniens tués en quelques jours dans cette opération antiterroriste? Est-ce que vous croyez vous aussi que c'est être terroriste ou séparatiste que de vouloir simplement demeurer en paix chez soi? Est-ce que vous savez que le peuple arménien n'est pas une minorité en Artsakh, où il vit depuis plus de 2 000 ans? Est-ce que vous laisserez ainsi se rétablir partout les frontières dictées par Staline?

Pourquoi? Pourquoi le moindre début de sanctions n'a-t-il pas encore été appliqué aujourd'hui, après des mois de siège inhumain au milieu de cette épuration ethnique assumée par Aliyev? Est-ce qu'acheter du gaz à Bakou est moins coupable que d'en acheter à Moscou? Et d'ailleurs, est-ce que ce n'est pas le même gaz? Que pensez-vous du fait que la première mesure des vainqueurs a été de donner à la rue principale de Stepanakert le nom d'Enver Pacha, organisateur du génocide des Arméniens en 1915?

Est-ce que ce camp-là est toujours le partenaire fiable de l'Europe? Est-ce que cette Europe-là se souvient encore qu'elle est née pour que plus jamais ne se répète un génocide? Ces questions appellent des réponses.

Anja Haga (PPE). – Voorzitter, Nagorno-Karabach is het thuisland van een van de oudste christelijke gemeenschappen ter wereld en de Armenen die daar dus al eeuwen wonen, zijn nu gewoon genadeloos weggestuurd uit hun land. En het ergste is dat Aliyev en ook Turkije dreigen verder te gaan met hun acties en dat moet echt voorkomen worden.

De EU heeft daarin een belangrijke taak en heeft tot nu toe gewoon te weinig gedaan. Het moet voorkomen worden dat die agressie verder gaat en daarom wil ik de Europese Commissie echt met klem vragen om vier dingen te doen:

- 1) stop met de gasdeal, want daarmee legitimeer je de agressie van Azerbeidzjan;
- 2) zorg voor een sterke internationale aanwezigheid in Armenië en breid de EU-monitoringmissie uit;
- 3) zorg voor het cultureel erfgoed. Zorg ervoor dat er een Unesco-missie komt;
- 4) heel belangrijk: zorg voor de Armenen die zijn moeten vluchten en help hen hun leven weer op te bouwen. Maak daar voldoende geld voor vrij. 5 miljoen is mooi. Is er meer nodig? Dan meer.

Ik verzoek met klem aan de Europese Commissie om dit uit te voeren.

Catch-the-eye procedure

Александър Александров Йорданов (PPE). – Г-н Председател, вече 30 години в основата на конфликта и етническото прочистване на Нагорни Карабах е непреодолимото съветско наследство и национализмът. Погрешна бе арменската политика на обвързване с Русия на Путин. Погрешна е и политиката на Азербайджан на обвързване с Турция, а и на Ердоган – с Русия. Нагорни Карабах е международно призната територия на Азербайджан, но на неговото арменско население трябва да се гарантира сигурност и нормален живот. Арменците трябва да се върнат по родните си места. Трябва да се насърчи правителството на Армения да води проевропейска, а не проруска политика. Трябва да се наложат санкции на Азербайджан.

Juan Fernando López Aguilar (S&D). – Señor presidente, representante de la Presidencia española del Consejo, no muy lejos de donde hablamos se encuentra la sede del Consejo de Europa, cuyo producto más granado es el Convenio Europeo de Derechos Humanos, garantizado por el Tribunal Europeo de Derechos Humanos, también con sede en Estrasburgo.

El enorme prestigio que disfrutó durante un tiempo el Consejo de Europa fue promover el Estado de Derecho, los derechos humanos y la paz en el continente europeo. Todo se torció cuando ingresaron simultáneamente Ucrania, Georgia... y Rusia, que libró una guerra contra Georgia primero, y luego contra Ucrania, hasta ser expulsada el año pasado. Y ahora vemos esa guerra intermitente entre Armenia y Azerbaiyán, ambos también miembros del Consejo de Europa.

La Unión Europea tiene no solamente el desafío de emplearse a fondo en la ayuda humanitaria para las personas que huyen de la opresión en uno de los enclaves en juego, Nagorno Karabaj, sino también el desafío de restablecer la seguridad en Europa a través de la diplomacia para que Europa sea no solamente un continente libre de la pena de muerte, sino también garante de la paz.

Viola von Cramon-Taubadel (Verts/ALE). – Herr Präsident! Mehr als 100 000 Armenierinnen und Armenier, erschöpft und ausgehungert, haben inzwischen ihre Heimat verlassen. Das ist fast die gesamte Bevölkerung Nagorny-Karabachs. Wie oft soll die Welt noch sagen: „Nie wieder!“, und dann die Augen verschließen vor ethnischen Säuberungen in unserer Nachbarschaft am Rande Europas?

Zu sagen, wir könnten nichts tun, weil es sich um aserbajdschanisches Territorium handelt, bedeutet, das Leiden Unschuldiger zu ignorieren. Zu sagen, dass die Armenier es zuerst getan haben, bedeutet, dass zweimal falsch einmal richtig ergibt. Die Armenier fliehen, weil sie dem Aliyev-Regime misstrauen und es fürchten – das Regime, das jahrzehntelang Hass und Drohung verbreitete, das einen Axtmörder feierte, das in Baku einen hasserfüllten Trophäenpark errichtete.

Wie lange wollen wir da noch tatenlos zusehen? Bis Aliyev wieder die armenische Grenze bombardiert? Bis er armenisches Land annektiert, um nach Nachitschewan zu gelangen? Appeasement funktioniert nie, genauso wenig wie die Kapitulation vor der Erpressung mit Gas. Diese Lektion haben wir gelernt.

Es ist Zeit, jetzt zu handeln, Armenien zu schützen und die Gewalt zu beenden.

Liudas Mažylis (PPE). – Gerbiamas Pirmininke. Kalnų Karabacho problema – vienas iš vadinamųjų posovietinių užšaldytų konfliktų. Panašiai kaip ir Abchazija, Pietų Osetija, Padniestrė, dabar jau ir Luganskas, Doneckas ir kitos. Karabachas ne tik uždelsto SSRS irimo posovietinė, o Stalino daug seniau vykusiai užprogramuota geopolitinė bomba. Kai prieš kelias dienas tūkstančiai įbaugintų etninių armėnų paliko gimtuosius namus, ten pagaliau po trisdešimt metų rusenančio ir kraujuojančio konflikto įžengė Jungtinių Tautų misija. Teigčiau, kad tai net ne tarptautinės tvarkos ribotumas, bet ir visiškas tos tvarkos neegzistavimas. Juk tyliai ir bejėgiškai pripažinome teisę Rusijai de facto manipuliuoti taja teritorija, vykdyti agresiją Ukrainoje ir vaidinti taikdary Pietų Kaukaze. Štai ir turime rezultatą. Privalome bent jau dabar imtis aktyviai užkardyti tolesnį situacijos blogėjimą.

Κώστας Μαυρίδης (S&D). – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, ακούσαμε τους ευρωπαϊκούς θεσμούς να περιγράφουν ένα έγκλημα κατά της ανθρωπότητας· το έγκλημα της εθνοκάθαρσης του αρμενικού πληθυσμού από το Αρτσάχ. Σύντομα θα ακολουθήσει η πολιτισμική γενοκτονία από κάθε τι αρμενικό και χριστιανικό.

Για να υπάρχει όμως έγκλημα, υπάρχουν και εγκληματίες. Είναι τα καθεστώτα Aliyev και Erdoğan, με την παθητική συνέργεια, φυσικά, του Putin. Το μήθημα είναι απλό: οι καταδίκες και οι εκκλήσεις δεν συνετίζουν τέτοια εγκληματικά καθεστώτα.

Στο ψήφισμα ζητάμε ακύρωση της εισαγωγής φυσικού αερίου από το Αζερμπαϊτζάν, για το οποίο κόμπαζε η κυρία von der Leyen. Το ζητούμενο, όμως, για εμάς ως Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση είναι κάτι πολύ πιο μεγάλο, κύριε Πρόεδρε, και πολύ πιο δίκαιο: γεωπολιτικό ρόλο για την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση και μια πιο δίκαιη και ηθική Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση και θεσμούς.

Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE). – Monsieur le Président, au Parlement européen aujourd'hui, nous avons été beaucoup de députés de différents groupes politiques à exprimer notre solidarité avec le peuple arménien. C'est une catastrophe, c'est un génocide, un nettoyage ethnique et l'Europe était absente. Nous sommes devant une guerre silencieuse, et silencieux devant le monde.

L'Azerbaïdjan est responsable du destin de la population arménienne. Pendant que les forces d'Arménie demandaient notre aide, pendant que les forces d'Azerbaïdjan bloquaient le corridor pour l'aide humanitaire, l'Union européenne a conclu «un accord fiable». Un accord fiable: la fourniture de gaz contre les droits humains et contre le peuple de l'Artsakh. Ce partenaire fiable de l'Union européenne et de M^{me} von der Leyen a provoqué l'exode, le contrôle militaire et la violation des droits humains.

Nous, à l'Alliance libre européenne, nous sommes avec le peuple de l'Artsakh, avec la solidarité internationale et nous demandons des sanctions contre l'Azerbaïdjan.

Tomáš Zdechovský (PPE). – Pane předsedající, vážení kolegové, mockrát děkuji za tuto debatu. Myslím si, že všichni se tady dnes shodneme na tom, že je potřeba tu situaci začít řešit a je potřeba aktivně vstoupit do jednání. Je potřeba opravdu připomenout našim spojencům v NATO, což je Turecko, že není možné podporovat Ázerbájdžán v agresi vůči arménskému lidu. A že není možné podporovat čistky, které se v Náhorním Karabachu v současné době činí. Je potřeba opravdu být velmi intenzivní a pomoci tu věc řešit. Není možné to nechat na Rusku. Není možné říkat donekonečna, že to je sféra vlivu Ruska a že Rusko je garantem míru. Je potřeba začít být aktivní a je potřeba najít dlouhodobě udržitelné mírové řešení.

Ελένη Σταύρου (PPE). – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, κυρία επίτροπε, αγαπητοί συνάδελφοι, 100.000 Αρμένιοι εξαναγκάζονται από τους Τουρκοαζέρες να εγκαταλείψουν τα πατρογονικά τους εδάφη. Το αρμενικό έθνος ανέκαθεν ταλανίζεται από εχθροπραξίες και παραβιάσεις του δικαιώματός του για αυτοδιάθεση, ενώ τα χιλιάδες χρόνια αρμενικού πολιτισμού στην Ανατολία και στο Αρτσάχ σβήνονται από τον χάρτη της ιστορίας. Αυτό είναι το αποτέλεσμα της επιλεκτικής επιβολής κυρώσεων σε χώρες που προβαίνουν σε κατακερματισμό των ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων και σε συστηματικές παραβιάσεις της εθνικής κυριαρχίας άλλων χωρών.

Αν στην Τουρκία είχαν επιβληθεί ανάλογες κυρώσεις για την παραβίαση της εθνικής κυριαρχίας της Κυπριακής Δημοκρατίας — μιας χώρας πλήρους κράτους μέλους της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, τώρα το Αζερμπαϊτζάν δεν θα τολμούσε να επιχειρήσει την δεύτερη γενοκτονία των Αρμενίων με την κάλυψη του καθεστώτος Erdoğan. Αυτή είναι η ώρα να σταθούμε για τις αρχές και τις αξίες μας και να αποτείνουμε χέρι ουσιαστικής βοήθειας στον αρμενικό λαό.

(Ende der spontanen Wortmeldungen)

Stella Kyriakides, Member of the Commission. – Mr President, first of all, honourable Members, hearing this whole debate, a number of very important aspects have been raised about this extremely complex conflict. And let me just in ending say a few words, starting by reiterating again that the EU has condemned Azerbaijan's use of military force against the Armenian population in Nagorno-Karabakh. As I have mentioned, as many of you have mentioned, a mass exodus of the Karabakh Armenians has taken place. And this is as a result of Azerbaijan's recent attacks and of the previous months-long blockage of the Lachin corridor. The EU remains actively engaged both in addressing immediate humanitarian needs and, of course, in making every effort to take this peace effort forward.

The EU has stressed that there is a pressing need for transparency and access for humanitarian aid needs and human rights actions. With regards to the possibility of resorting to sanctions, as raised by some Members of this Parliament, allow me to recall that restrictive measures are only one of the tools at the EU's disposal, and it remains for the Council to decide by unanimity. In the meantime, we will continue supporting all efforts on the normalisation process.

Pascual Navarro Ríos, presidente en ejercicio del Consejo. – Señor presidente, señorías, señora comisaria, en primer lugar quiero recordar a esta Cámara que, como acaba de señalar la comisaria, la Unión Europea ha condenado la operación militar de Azerbaiyán dirigida contra la población armenia de Nagorno Karabaj y lamenta las víctimas y pérdidas de vidas ocasionadas por la escalada del conflicto.

La Unión Europea ha subrayado que es necesaria una mayor transparencia y que se garantice el acceso de las organizaciones internacionales de ayuda humanitaria y derechos humanos, así como información más detallada sobre los planes de Bakú para el futuro de la población armenia de Nagorno Karabaj dentro de Azerbaiyán.

La Unión Europea espera de Azerbaiyán que asuma su responsabilidad y que garantice los derechos y la seguridad de la población armenia de Nagorno Karabaj, incluido su derecho a permanecer en sus hogares sin intimidación ni discriminación.

La Unión Europea también ha instado a Azerbaiyán a que reafirme su compromiso inequívoco con la integridad territorial de Armenia, de conformidad con la Declaración de Almaty de 1991.

Mantenemos el compromiso de seguir facilitando el diálogo entre todas las partes, con el objetivo de que se alcance una paz global y duradera que redunde en beneficio del conjunto de la población. La Unión Europea sigue la situación muy de cerca y ha manifestado su disposición a adoptar las medidas oportunas si la situación se siguiera deteriorando.

Y, por último, como señalé en mi introducción, la Unión Europea sigue considerando muy pertinente la posible reunión de los dirigentes de los dos países en el marco de la tercera cumbre de la Comunidad Política Europea prevista para esta misma semana en Granada.

Der Präsident. – Gemäß Artikel 132 Absatz 2 wurden sieben Entschließungsanträge eingereicht¹.

Die Aussprache ist geschlossen.

Die Abstimmung findet am Donnerstag, 5. Oktober 2023, statt.

1 Siehe Protokoll.

Schriftliche Erklärungen (Artikel 171)

Λουκάς Φουρλάς (PPE), γραπτώς. – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, δεκάδες χιλιάδες Αρμένιοι αφήνουν τη γη τους και τρέχουν να σωθούν κυνηγημένοι από τους Αζέρους και τους Τούρκους συμμάχους τους. Η εθνοκάθαρση συνεχίζεται, το έγκλημα ολοκληρώνεται και η διεθνής κοινότητα παρακολουθεί, καταδικάζει αλλά δεν πράττει τίποτα. Η ΕΕ δεν μπορεί να άγεται και να φέρεται από τις εξελίξεις χωρίς ξεκάθαρη θέση, όταν την ίδια ώρα ο Erdoğan επιχαιρεί μια σχέση εξάρτησης μεταξύ Ευρώπης και Αζερμπαϊτζάν. Είναι φανερό ότι το αζερικό φυσικό αέριο μπαίνει ως «αγία» πάνω από ανθρώπινες ζωές και ευρωπαϊκές αρχές και αξίες, και καθορίζει την πολιτική ατζέντα της ΕΕ.

Αγαπητοί συνάδελφοι, τα όσα συμβαίνουν αυτή τη στιγμή στο Ναγκόρνο Καραμπάχ και την Αρμενία προκαλούν οργή, θλίψη, αλλά και ντροπή για την απάθεια μας. Οφείλουμε ένα μεγάλο συγγνώμη στον αρμενικό λαό για τη στάση μας. Τέρμα, λοιπόν, τα λόγια· είναι ώρα για πράξεις. Ζήτω η Αρμενία!

Loránt Vincze (PPE), *írásban*. – Tisztelt Elnök Asszony, Biztos Asszony és a Tanács képviselője! A főként örmények által lakott Hegyi-Karabahot ért azeri támadás egyértelműen elítélendő. Az EU-nak mindent meg kell tennie annak érdekében, hogy elősegítse az Örményországba menekült, illetve Hegyi-Karabahban maradt civilek biztonságát és a humanitárius segítségnyújtást. Az Azerbajdzsán által szeptemberben indított, előre megtervezett, indokolatlan és szükségtelen katonai offenzíva tömeges kivándorláshoz vezetett. Aggódva követem a politikai, etnikai és vallási konfliktust, amelynek következtében több mint százezren menekültek Örményországba.

Szolidaritásomat fejezem ki az örmény néppel, amelynek kulturális öröksége, és az ősi keresztény emlékhelyek épsége is veszélybe került. Azerbajdzsán teljes mértékben felelős mindazon örmények jogainak és biztonságának tiszteletben tartásáért, akik úgy döntenek, hogy Hegyi-Karabahban maradnak. Meg kell őriznie kulturális, vallási és történelmi örökségüket, valamint meg kell védenie a távozás mellett döntöttek tulajdonát. Az Európai Néppártban határozott üzenetet fogalmaztunk meg: sürgetjük az események független nemzetközi kivizsgálását és a nemzetközi jelenlét megerősítését a térségben. Kilátásba kell helyezni az EU Azerbajdzsánnal kötött egyezményének felfüggesztését is.

Az azerbajdzsáni offenzíva aláássa az EU által támogatott béketárgyalási folyamatokat Örményországgal, ezért is mielőbb megoldást kell találni a kialakult helyzetre, megfelelő nemzetközi jelenléttel. Az EU-nak hathatósan hozzá kell járulnia ahhoz, hogy a két ország között mielőbb jószomszédi kapcsolat és a térségben tartós béke legyen.

16. Status over Moldovas vej mod EU (forhandling)

Der Präsident. – Als nächster Punkt der Tagesordnung folgt die Aussprache über die Erklärungen des Rates und der Kommission zu einer Bestandsaufnahme des Wegs Moldaus in die EU (2023/2838(RSP)).

Pascual Navarro Ríos, *Presidente en ejercicio del Consejo*. – Señor presidente, señorías, señor comisario, quisiera comenzar recordando la decisión que tomó el Consejo Europeo, el pasado 23 de junio, de reconocer la perspectiva europea de Moldavia y, en consecuencia, concederle el estatuto de país candidato.

El contexto de Moldavia es complejo. La guerra de agresión de Rusia contra Ucrania ha agravado una situación difícil, especialmente en los ámbitos de la energía, la economía y la seguridad. Nos anima ver el firme respaldo, tanto del gobierno de Moldavia como de su ciudadanía, a la ejecución de las reformas y el avance hacia su futuro europeo. Ese respaldo se hace patente, por ejemplo, en los sectores energético y económico.

A pesar de los muchos desafíos a los que se enfrenta, Moldavia ha demostrado una extraordinaria solidaridad con Ucrania. Ha dado cobijo a los ucranianos que huyen de los horrores de la guerra de Rusia y ha brindado su apoyo a los corredores de solidaridad.

El refuerzo de la cooperación en materia de seguridad y defensa por parte de Moldavia y la contribución del país a las misiones de la Unión Europea, en el marco de la política común de seguridad y defensa, también se valoran muy positivamente. La Unión Europea seguirá apoyando a Moldavia a la hora de abordar los desafíos con los que se enfrenta, como consecuencia de la agresión de Rusia contra Ucrania.

Por lo que respecta a la ampliación, el pasado mes de junio —como he señalado—, el Consejo Europeo reconoció la determinación de Moldavia de cumplir las nueve condiciones exigidas en su proceso de adhesión a la Unión Europea y los enormes esfuerzos que estaba realizando para ello.

Permítanme recordar que el Consejo destacó la importancia de una mayor profundización en la cooperación sectorial de la Unión Europea con Moldavia y su integración en el mercado interior de la Unión Europea, sobre la base de una aplicación reforzada de la zona de libre comercio de alcance amplio y profundo entre Moldavia y la Unión Europea.

En junio, la Comisión hizo una presentación oral sobre el avance de las reformas que seguramente el comisario nos va a explicar con más detalle. Solo mencionaré que los avances registrados, en relación con algunas de las medidas de reforma, son muy positivos y el Consejo anima a Moldavia a acelerar el proceso de reforma, en particular en los ámbitos de la lucha contra la corrupción, la lucha contra la delincuencia organizada y la reforma de la administración pública, especialmente en vista del próximo paquete de ampliación que presentará la Comisión próximamente.

El proceso de adhesión es, y seguirá siendo, un proceso supeditado al cumplimiento de las condiciones y basado en el mérito de cada candidato. Así pues, la Presidencia espera el próximo paquete de ampliación de la Comisión y su informe exhaustivo sobre los avances realizados por Moldavia en su proceso de reforma para continuar con los procedimientos establecidos.

Janez Lenarčič, *Member of the Commission*. – Mr President, honourable Members of the European Parliament, State Secretary Navarro Ríos, the future of Moldova is in our Union. The President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, said these words during her State of the Union address here in this House just two weeks ago. Last Friday, 29 September, I went to Chişinău to welcome Moldova as a participating state to the EU Civil Protection Mechanism. This will reinforce our collective civil protection and our mutual solidarity in times of disasters.

During the past year, Moldova has made good progress on its European path. Moldova also took important steps to increase its energy resilience and become independent from Russian gas. The country is now an important corridor for Ukrainian grains, an essential part of the solidarity lanes.

Moldova achieved this progress while dealing with substantial refugee flows from Ukraine, soaring inflation, uncertain energy supplies and the loss of key export markets. Moldova is facing hybrid threats and attacks on its democracy, disinformation is rife and Russia's proxies are using illegal funds to influence political life.

In June, Commissioner Várhelyi gave to the Council an oral update on progress made by Moldova on the nine steps outlined in the Commission opinion on Moldova's application for EU membership. We concluded that Moldova had completed three of the nine steps.

We commend the Government's continued commitment to Moldova's EU path. This has by now translated into further progress in key areas such as judicial reform, fighting corruption, organised crime and money laundering, and pursuing important reforms.

Let me give you some examples of recent progress. Moldova has changed the legislation governing the justice sector in cooperation with the Venice Commission. Moldova is pursuing its vetting process to make the justice system more accountable and independent. The Supreme Council of Magistrates was renewed and the Supreme Court of Justice is being reformed. Moldova has reformed its anti-corruption institution and is reforming its approach to de-oligarchisation. It has adopted legislation which facilitated asset freezing of oligarchs. It is pursuing corrupt high officials and convicted in absentia its most known oligarch, Ilan Shor.

Later in the autumn, the Commission will present the annual enlargement package. For the first time, it will comprise an assessment of Moldova's overall progress as a candidate country, including the implementation of the nine reform steps. On that basis, EU Member States will be able to take informed decisions on further steps on Moldova's EU path.

Let me now elaborate on how the EU assists Moldova, both on its EU track, as well as in addressing the various challenges. A lot of support has been offered to Moldova through the EU Civil Protection Mechanism since the start of Russia's aggression against Ukraine, including, for instance, over 160 generators to support the energy sector.

On 31 May, President von der Leyen announced a new package to support Moldova with concrete initiatives. The reduction of roaming prices, one element of the five priorities of the support package, was already delivered on 1 June. Telecom operators signed a political agreement to lower data and voice roaming charges starting from next year. This is the first step of improving connectivity that will benefit people and businesses.

Another priority pillar of the package is support for the energy sector. In the short term, we are providing EUR 105 million to help vulnerable people and households and, of course, to prepare for next winter.

On energy and all other areas of engagement, the Economic and Investment Plan is a vital tool. We are also working to leverage funds of up to EUR 1.6 billion with the Economic and Investment Plan in public and private investments for the benefit of Moldova's economy and people. As a result of EU commitments, a total of already EUR 920 million worth of expected investments have been identified and are being rolled out. These will have major benefits for Moldova and its citizens in key sectors such as supporting SMEs, energy efficiency in public buildings and residential housing, as well as investments in solidarity lanes.

In the long term, we need to increase Moldova's energy resilience. We need to invest in renewable energy, which is crucial to reduce its dependence on fossil fuels. We also need to develop Moldova's capacity to generate electricity. The support package also prioritises Moldova's security and resilience. Support through the European Peace Facility is doubling Moldova's defence budget. Regarding internal security, the country cooperates with international partners and EU agencies through the EU support hub. By increasing its own security, Moldova also contributes to the security of the EU.

Moreover, the Commission will shortly disburse the second instalment of the macro-financial assistance for Moldova. EUR 145 million in loans and grants will support Moldova's macroeconomic and financial stabilisation. We are also stepping up our assistance to increase Moldova's resilience against Russia's hybrid threats and disinformation.

Honourable Members, to further support the implementation of the support package, the Commission has proposed redeployments within NDICI to increase support to Moldova in the revision to the multiannual financial framework. The Commission counts on Parliament's support for this proposal.

Last but not least, the next meeting of the Moldova Support Platform will take place on 17 October in Chişinău. The platform brings together a wide range of partners from the EU and outside, with the aim to mobilise further assistance for Moldova's economic development.

Andrzej Halicki, *on behalf of the PPE Group*. – Mr President, dear colleagues, I would like to start with the conclusion because I would like to call in the name of the European People's Party, the European Council, to open the accession process at talks during the planned in December meeting until the end of the year. It's really expected. It's high time to give the clear message to the citizens of Moldova.

We all are impressed of implementation of the reforms and working also together in this House over the political splits on this goal, which is expected. Moldova is in Europe. Moldova's inhabitants are Europeans. This is obvious for us. And in this excellent team working also on this resolution, I would like to thank Dragoş Tudorache, Siegfried Mureşan, Viola von Cramon-Taubadel, Thijs Reuten and Anna Fotyga because we have this common opinion, one and very strong, and I think it is still a very good time to say it openly to Moldovans: yes, you will be in Europe together with us.

The young people expect the access to universities, to the working places. The roaming free procedure is implemented, we will have limited tariffs starting on 1 January. This is a subject very close to my heart. But there are many challenges, like energy, which was mentioned, like the financing of the projects. We have to start this process as fast as we can. Of course, it's not a highway, it's a road. And step by step we have to go to the goal. But the direction is one: Moldova will be in Europe. Thank you very much, *mulțumesc*.

Thijs Reuten, *on behalf of the S&D Group*. – Mr President, Commissioner, Council, dear colleagues: imagine for a moment Russia breathing down your neck in all thinkable ways – from a hybrid disinformation war to the continuous threat of illegitimate military presence on your territory. In that light, choosing the EU was and is incredibly courageous. The resolution we are debating here today, and this was already mentioned, speaks for itself.

What I admire most in Moldova is that, unlike any other candidate countries, it is very open about the outstanding issues, the things still requiring a lot of work. No overly rosy picture, but an honest account of what will require more time, but with the firm political will to get the job done.

Let us shore up technical support, increase security cooperation and make sure that, through accelerating judicial reform and closer alignment with our internal market, the Moldovan people will experience concrete improvements way ahead of the EU membership they deserve. Moldova is Europe.

Dragoș Tudorache, *on behalf of the Renew Group*. – Mr President, the Republic of Moldova must be given the green light for opening EU accession talks. This is the message that this House has passed consistently over the last year, and this is the message that we shall pass again in the resolution that we vote this week. And I want to thank also all of my colleagues in all political groups for being consistent, for being fully aligned on this objective. Of course, there are tough reforms that Moldova must go through in its economy, in its judiciary, in all branches of its administration, and the Moldovan authorities have demonstrated against impossible odds, and under continuous pressure and hybrid warfare from Putin's Russia that they have the political will and executive stamina to deliver on these reforms. They have taken concrete steps in bringing oligarchs their empires down. They started clearing up the judiciary of corruption and incompetence. That is what the Commission must recognise in the upcoming report and what heads of state must take into account. The important decision regarding accession will be made later this year and then we all EU institutions must be prepared to do our part of heavy lifting to accompany the Moldovans in their reforms with our own political commitment, with technical expertise and know-how and the financial assistance to match. That is what we must do, that is what being geopolitical is all about. This is how we best tell Putin that his disturbed vision of imperialism will not win in Europe.

Viola von Cramon-Taubadel, *im Namen der Verts/ALE-Fraktion*. – Herr Präsident, Herr Kommissar, Vertreter des Rates, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Vorab eine überfällige Erinnerung: Putin hat seinen ursprünglichen Plan, die Ukraine komplett einzunehmen und dann in Moldau einzumarschieren, nicht aufgegeben. Das erzählen seine Propagandisten und Verbündeten in Belarus, und das zeigen seine Taten. Deshalb müssen wir wachsam bleiben.

Das Drehbuch des Kremls ist so makaber wie vorhersehbar: Wenn du die Herzen und die Köpfe der Menschen nicht gewinnen kannst, drohe ihnen mit Krieg. Wenn auch diese Erpressung fehlschlägt: Destabilisiere das Land von innen.

Denn es gibt nichts, was Putin mehr fürchtet als freie Bürgerinnen und Bürger, die ihre Regierung selbst wählen. Somit schickt er Schlägertrupps, droht mit einem Energie-Lieferstopp, verbreitet üble Desinformation, startet Cyberattacken, initiiert Wirtschaftsblockaden, lässt raffgierige Oligarchen von der Leine und hetzt Separatisten gegen die Regierung auf.

Russland hat alles versucht, und die Republik Moldau hat alles abgewehrt. Seine demokratische, proeuropäische Regierung ist unverändert stark und schützt die Zukunft des Landes. Auf jeden russischen Versuch, das Land zu destabilisieren, muss unsere Antwort „mehr Europa für Moldau“ lauten: mehr Unterstützung, um die Inflation und die Lebenshaltungskosten zu senken, mehr Rückhalt für demokratische Prozesse, mehr Anreiz für die Wirtschaft.

Wir bieten den Unternehmern einen europäischen Markt und den moldauischen Bürgerinnen und Bürgern Roaming an. Die Fortschritte der Republik Moldau bei den neuen Empfehlungen müssen anerkannt werden. Die Aufnahme von Beitrittsgesprächen ist der einzig logische nächste Schritt. Denn Moldau hat es sich verdient, indem es unvorstellbarem Druck standgehalten hat und hunderttausende ukrainische Flüchtlinge beherbergt hat. Republik Moldau: Willkommen zurück, zuhause in Europa!

Anna Fotyga, *on behalf of the ECR Group*. – Mr President, Minister, Commissioner, I wholeheartedly congratulate all Moldovans led by their courageous president, Maia Sandu, on their progress to the European Union, and I declare my unwavering support for their European path, hoping for very soon possibility decisions to open negotiations with Moldova. They proceed on their reforms on their way to the European Union, despite enormous – I repeat, enormous – difficulties. And that proves their will to join us as soon as possible. Our will should be similar.

Emmanuel Maurel, *au nom du groupe The Left*. – Monsieur le Président, la situation de la Moldavie, qui est quand même le pays le plus pauvre d'Europe, voisin de l'Ukraine, reste extrêmement précaire. Elle n'est pas encore parvenue à surmonter la crise qui l'a frappée en 2020 et qui, évidemment, a redoublé d'intensité à cause de la guerre de Vladimir Poutine. On a un taux d'inflation qui est très préoccupant, mais c'est le cas aussi de la dette publique, du déficit public, qui ne sont pas soutenables à long terme.

Et cela n'a pas empêché la Moldavie pour autant, d'autres collègues l'ont dit, de prendre plus que sa part dans l'accueil des réfugiés ukrainiens, 100 000 au premier semestre. Et c'est donc un pays courageux qui mérite qu'on l'aide. Et c'est ce que nous faisons en mobilisant un certain nombre de dispositifs comme l'assistance macrofinancière ou le mécanisme de protection civile à hauteur de plus de 1 milliard d'euros depuis deux ans.

Après, il y a la question de l'adhésion et, je vous le dis, je reste très prudent, parce que je ne suis pas sûr que la Moldavie soit prête aujourd'hui à démarrer des négociations d'adhésion. Je pense d'ailleurs que toute décision dans ce sens serait précipitée, voire même contreproductive, tant les structures politiques, administratives et judiciaires de la Moldavie, où sévit d'ailleurs une corruption endémique, ne peuvent pas s'adapter aussi vite que nous le souhaitons.

Ce dont les Moldaves ont avant tout besoin, c'est de l'aide. Et ça, je pense qu'on peut le comprendre et le faire ensemble, notamment dans le domaine de l'énergie. Mais pour le reste, sur la question de l'élargissement, je vous en conjure, chers collègues, il ne faut pas qu'on donne l'impression d'une fuite en avant. On a l'impression que l'Europe, ne sachant pas où elle va, a pour principe de s'élargir toujours plus, sans que jamais nous posions la question principale de la raison de cet élargissement. J'ajoute qu'il y a beaucoup de concurrence intraeuropéenne, beaucoup de dumping social, et il ne faudrait pas que la conséquence de tout ça, ce soit le rejet de l'Europe par les peuples.

Siegfried Mureșan (PPE). – Domnule președinte, domnule comisar, stimați colegi, Republica Moldova este stat candidat pentru aderarea la Uniunea Europeană. Cetățenii Republicii Moldova își doresc să trăiască, la fel ca noi, în libertate, în democrație și cu Republica Moldova, acum stat candidat, noi, membrii Parlamentului European, trebuie să spunem foarte clar: într-o zi Republica Moldova va fi membru al Uniunii Europene și cetățenii Republicii Moldova vor avea exact aceleași drepturi ca toți cetățenii din celelalte state membre ale Uniunii Europene.

Vedem cum reforme, care în Republica Moldova au întârziat ani de zile, sunt, în sfârșit, acum, implementate cu viteză. Vedem cum corupția este combătută, justiția este întărită, statul de drept este întărit în Republica Moldova. Vedem cum reforme economice sunt, de asemenea, implementate, astfel încât Moldova să câștige încrederea investitorilor, să creeze locuri de muncă stabile, bine plătite, investitorii să poată merge în Republica Moldova.

Apreciem aceste eforturi, susținem Republica Moldova cu tot ce putem și, în ultima perioadă, mai ales de la începutul invaziei ilegale, ilegite a forțelor armate ruse în Ucraina, Uniunea Europeană a susținut Republica Moldova financiar mai mult decât oricând – peste un miliard de euro. Comisarul Lenarčič ne-a prezentat în detaliu măsurile implementate de Comisie: sprijin financiar, sprijin tehnic.

Oferim Republicii Moldova tot ceea ce avem: resurse, acces la gaz, la fel ca oricărui stat membru al Uniunii Europene. Tocmai fiindcă facem atât de multe lucruri împreună, trebuie să trecem la etapa următoare. De aceea, prin această rezoluție, noi, Parlamentul European, vom spune foarte clar: cerem începerea negocierilor de aderare a Republicii Moldova la Uniunea Europeană până la finalul acestui an. Astfel, Republica Moldova se va moderniza și reforma și mai mult, cât mai repede – lucru bun pentru cetățenii Republicii Moldova și bun pentru oamenii din Uniunea Europeană.

Juozas Olekas (S&D). – Gerbiamas Komisijos nary, gerbiami kolegos. Šiandien svarstoma Europos Parlamento rezolucija teisingai įvertina Moldovos pažangą vykdant reformas ir parodant tvirtus išsipareigojimus prisijungti prie Europos šalių bendrijos. Džiaugiuosi Moldovos žmonių pasirinkimu ir suteiktu mandatu proeuropietiskai Moldovos vyriausybei vykdyti būtinas reformas. Žinau, reformų kelias nėra nei lengvas, ne greitas, ypač kai šalis prigludžia vieną iš didžiausių Ukrainos karo pabėgėlių kiekį pagal savo gyventojų skaičių. Mes turime padėti finansiškai bei apginti Moldovą nuo Putino kėslių. Neabejoju, jog po kelių savaičių Europos Komisija teigiamai įvertins Moldovos įvykdytą pažangą ir gruodžio mėnesį Taryba priims teigiamą sprendimą dėl stojimo į Europos Sąjungą derybų pradžios. Moldova yra Europa.

Petras Auštrevičius (Renew). – Mr President, Mr Commissioner, Council Representative, dear colleagues, the Republic of Moldova's future is closely linked to full membership of the European Union. At this point in time, it is essential, on the one hand, to continue and complete the reform of state institutions and to strengthen them, and, on the other hand, to increase Moldova's resilience to threats from Russia.

In particular I would like to stress that it would be a mistake to underestimate the activities of corrupt and Russian-influenced and controlled political parties acting against the state and its citizens. The development of loyalty in Gagauzia and the dominance of the country's constitution in Transnistria are of great importance for the essential stability of the country and its prospects.

We must continue to give our full support and assistance to the democratic government and people of Moldova in meeting these challenges. More importantly, we must open EU accession negotiations with Moldova by the end of this year. *Mulțumesc.*

Markéta Gregorová (Verts/ALE). – Mr President, dear colleagues, I am very pleased to see that the relationship between the EU and Moldova is strengthening and that the EU provides support through means such as the Council's support package, direct budget support and the temporary trade liberalisation for Moldovan agricultural products, which we helped to negotiate.

Additionally, I welcome Moldova's efforts towards judicial reform, civil society engagement and gender equality and overall positive signals from the Commission regarding the nine recommendations' implementation.

However, there is still much more work to be done as implementing deep structural reforms is essential for alignment with the EU standards. Moldova must step up, notably in fighting corruption, organised crime and public administration reforms. Overall, I appreciate the new EU enlargement momentum in this political term. Nevertheless, it is crucial that the Member States deliver on their promises in the accession processes for those who wish to join our European family. And I hope that one day it will also be Moldova.

Cristian Terheș (ECR). – Domnule președinte, stimați colegi, prin pactul samavolnic Ribbentrop-Molotov, semnat de către omul lui Hitler și Stalin, o bună bucată din teritoriul de est al României a fost anexată în 1940 de Uniunea Sovietică, devenind Republica Socialistă Sovietică Moldova. Odată cu spargerea Uniunii Sovietice, această republică și-a proclamat independența. Însă Rusia nu a lăsat-o din gheare pentru a-și urma propriul destin spre libertate. În Republica Moldova, Rusia și-a brevetat anexările hibride, ce au devenit ulterior cunoscute sub numele de conflicte înghețate, prin folosirea Transnistriei ca model.

Înainte ca Vestul să conștientizeze recent cum se realizează aspirațiile imperialiste ale Rusiei, cetățenii Republicii Moldova au simțit acest lucru din 1940, fiind victime sistematice ale infometării, deportării și crimelor în masă făcute de ocupanții sovietici. Deși granița legală a UE în Est se oprește în prezent, ca urmare a perpetuării efectului Pactului Ribbentrop-Molotov, la frontiera dintre România și Republica Moldova, locul natural al acestora este în UE, alături de România.

Cetățenii Republicii Moldova au demonstrat afinitate față de valorile lumii libere, refuzând să cedeze șantajului Rusiei, pe care l-a exercitat prin mijloace economice, hibride sau militare. Solicit, prin urmare, Comisiei Europene să sprijine în continuare integrarea Republicii Moldova și începerea negocierilor de aderare.

Helmut Scholz (The Left). – Herr Präsident, Herr Kommissar, Ratspräsidentschaft! Seit fast 16 Monaten ist Moldau nun bereits ein Beitrittsland zur Europäischen Union, und es ist wichtig, dass wir heute über den Weg reden, der noch zu bewältigen ist. Die Herausforderungen, vor denen das Land und seine Bürgerinnen und Bürger stehen, sind riesig, sind gewaltig. Familien kämpfen darum, ihr tägliches Leben zu bestreiten, und dennoch hat das Land, haben zahllose Familien über 100 000 Kriegsflüchtlinge aus der Ukraine aufgenommen.

Trotzdem müssen wir ehrlich bleiben. Die Hürden, die das Land noch zu nehmen hat, sind groß. Von einer tragfähigen Lösung für Transnistrien, der Eindämmung der endemischen Korruption, Justizreform und Wahrung einer inklusiven, pluralen Demokratie, gerade angesichts des eingefrorenen Transnistrienkonflikts und der russischen Aggression in der Ukraine mit ihren regionalen und internationalen Folgen, gelebter Medienfreiheit bis zu einem diskriminierungsfreien Leben für Roma, LGBTQ und andere – so bleibt noch sehr viel zu tun. Und alle Moldauerinnen und Moldauer müssen Mitsprache haben, müssen sich in diesem Beitrittsprozess demokratisch einbringen können.

Ja, gehen wir den Beitritt entschieden an und bauen wir gemeinsam an einem Projekt, das Bestand hat, das Hoffnungen erfüllt – bis 2030 und darüber hinaus –, für dessen Zustandekommen alle Menschen in Moldau, auch in Transnistrien und Gagausien einbezogen werden müssen.

David McAllister (PPE). – Mr President, as we have heard tonight, President Maia Sandu and her pro-European government are operating in constant crisis mode. And yet, they have succeeded in introducing key legislative initiatives tailored to the nine conditions set by the European Commission. These are tremendous efforts. Soon, the Commission's upcoming enlargement package will testify to these reforms. It is now up to us in the European Union to live up to our own commitments at a political level. We need to introduce further permanent means of diplomatic engagement, sectoral cooperation and financial assistance. And we need to strengthen the new European Union partnership mission in Moldova. Moldova's entry into the European Single Market would boost exports, attract investments and foster integration with the European Union. And colleagues, both parties would benefit from starting EU accession negotiations. The citizens of Moldova deserve the perspective of joining our European Union. *Mulțumesc.*

Margarida Marques (S&D). – Senhor Presidente, Ministro, Comissário, tive oportunidade, recentemente, de estar na Moldávia em missão do Parlamento Europeu e de observar o empenhamento e a vontade política na realização de reformas e em integrar o acervo comunitário. Aliás, devo dizer que, hoje mesmo, o presidente da Moldávia se encontra no meu país, em Lisboa.

Aguardamos o relatório da Comissão Europeia sobre o pacote de alargamento para 2023. É muito importante que a Moldávia cumpra os nove passos identificados pela Comissão Europeia como necessários para a abertura de negociações.

Que prossiga resolutamente a sua agenda de reformas em matéria de democracia, Estado de direito, respeito dos direitos humanos, respeito e proteção das minorias, combate ao crime organizado e à corrupção e no esforço para aumentar a segurança energética do país. Que prossiga resolutamente com a sua agenda. Que avance na plena implementação do Acordo de Associação e da Zona de Comércio Livre.

Vlad-Marius Botoș (Renew). – Domnule președinte, domnule secretar de stat Navarro Ríos, domnule comisar Lenarčič, stimati colegi, Republica Moldova a obținut statutul de țară candidată la Uniunea Europeană în urma unei intense campanii de democratizare, de reforme, dar și în urma efortului susținut al președintei Maia Sandu. Determinarea vecinilor noștri de a adopta calea europeană este vizibilă, chiar prin preluarea modelului organizatoric al instituțiilor și programelor naționale, iar aici țin să amintesc Grupurile de acțiune locală pe care Republica Moldova le-a implementat după modelul Uniunii Europene. Este foarte important ca aceste eforturi să continue, iar țara să îndeplinească acquis-ul european cât mai curând posibil.

Însă trebuie ca angajamentul european să fie și el la înălțime și, odată acesta îndeplinit, Moldova să fie acceptată ca membru deplin al Uniunii Europene, pentru că ar fi inacceptabil să fie ținută la porțile Uniunii de unul sau de două voturi în Consiliu, așa cum se întâmplă în cazul României și Bulgariei referitor la spațiul Schengen. Republica Moldova, cetățenii Moldovei vor fi pregătiți și trebuie să ne asigurăm că Uniunea Europeană va fi și ea pregătită.

Adam Bielan (ECR). – Mr President, Mr Commissioner, the authorities and institutions of Moldova have recently been conducting a highly ambitious reform programme, driving the country towards greater transparency, democracy and political stability. We must applaud the resilience and efforts of the people of Moldova, especially in the shadow of Russia's war against Ukraine.

We also emphasised today the importance of Moldova's integration within the EU. We must continue supporting its people and grant the country access to vital EU programmes and instruments. In this spirit, and as a member of the Internal Market Committee, I am calling for the abolition of roaming charges, bringing our citizens even closer.

The story of Moldova is one of resilience in turbulent times. Let us truly acknowledge this and continue the work to welcome Moldova in the EU, where it belongs.

Andrius Kubilius (PPE). – Mr President, dear colleagues, Moldova is not only the country which is showing great strength in reforming itself, in building a successful democratic country, but also is a litmus test for us, for the EU itself.

It's obvious that Moldova and Ukraine deserve to be invited at the end of this year to start negotiations for the membership in EU. That would be the major step forward and that is needed not only for Moldova or Ukraine, but for the EU itself.

Those countries cannot be left anymore in the 'grey geopolitical' zone, because such an EU approach to Moldova and Ukraine during the last decades created temptation for Putin to start a military invasion into Ukraine.

That is why it is important not only to start negotiations, it is very important to have an ambitious agenda to conclude negotiations within the next three or four years, like it was done with Central Europe and the Baltic States.

For that to happen, first of all we need to bring back the trust among the candidate countries and among ourselves that enlargement really can happen. We allowed such a trust to be lost in the Western Balkans. Moldova can be a good possibility for us to bring back this trust in enlargement, with Moldova becoming an EU member by 2030, without any temptations of gradual integration on our side.

Victor Negrescu (S&D). – Domnule președinte, domnule comisar, dragi colegi, Republica Moldova este pregătită să facă pasul înainte spre Uniunea Europeană, iar acest lucru trebuie confirmat printr-un raport pozitiv în această toamnă al Comisiei Europene, care să dea startul rapid negocierilor de aderare la Uniunea Europeană.

Cetățenii din Republica Moldova așteaptă acest mesaj de sprijin din partea Uniunii Europene, în contextul dificil pe care îl trăiesc, întrucât implementarea următorului pachet de reforme necesare va fi dificilă și costisitoare.

Totodată, este nevoie de suplimentarea fondurilor europene pentru Republica Moldova, inclusiv prin alocarea fondurilor de preaderare. Aceste noi resurse europene trebuie să ajungă la cetățeni în vederea creșterii nivelului de trai și dezvoltării comunităților lor.

Nu în ultimul rând, trebuie susținute financiar toate proiectele de interconectare dintre Republica Moldova, Uniunea Europeană și România. Aceasta înseamnă că toate demersurile prin care se creează noi legături economice, în domeniul energiei sau al culturii și educației, prin care se limitează influența Federației Ruse, reprezintă soluții reale pentru susținerea parcursului european al Republicii Moldova.

După zeci de ani de propagandă, bătălia pentru mintea și valorile moldovenilor încă se poartă. Haideți să o câștigăm definitiv!

Dacian Cioloș (Renew). – Domnule președinte, în primul rând aș vrea să mă adresez cetățenilor Republicii Moldova. Știu că mulți dintre ei se uită la ce se întâmplă azi în Parlament.

Dincolo de discuțiile pe care le avem aici despre proceduri administrative, poziționări politice pentru a aduce Republica Moldova în Uniunea Europeană, important este ca procesul de aderare la UE să fie resimțit pozitiv de către cetățenii Republicii Moldova.

Iată că, chiar înainte de a începe negocierile de aderare pe care le cerem astăzi aici, se întâmplă deja câteva lucruri: pompierii moldoveni participă la acțiuni comune în Uniunea Europeană și beneficiază de mecanismul european de protecție civilă; în curând, cetățenii Republicii Moldova vor putea vorbi la telefon cu ceilalți din Uniunea Europeană fără taxe de roaming; liberalizarea comerțului european cu produse agricole moldovenești funcționează și trebuie să devină permanent; luptați deja acasă împotriva corupției cu toate armele și pedepsiți oligarhii, inclusiv cu ajutorul Uniunii Europene.

Dragi prieteni, aceasta este și va fi și casa voastră. Până la momentul semnăturilor de pe Tratatul de aderare, cel mai important este că Republica Moldova începe să fie deja în câteva sectoare, parte a familiei europene.

Ryszard Czarnecki (ECR). – Panie Przewodniczący! Panie Komisarzu! Măm zaszczyt być członkiem przez kilka lat delegacji Unia Europejska–Mołdawia. Szereg razy byłem w Mołdawii, w kraju, który z Polską wiąm historyczne więzy szereg wieków temu.

Myślę, że to, co się tam dzieje, to jest tak naprawdę bardzo ważny geopolityczny mecz między Zachodem a Rosją. Mołdawia zasługuje na nasze pełne wsparcie, poważne wsparcie, a nie tak, jak to było kilka miesięcy temu, gdzie Mołdawii Unia Europejska zaoferowała 150 mln euro, z czego 110 mln Mołdawia musiała zwracać, bo to była forma pożyczki. Myślę, że to wsparcie dla kraju, który zresztą przyjął bardzo dużo ukraińskich uchodźców, powinno być znacznie większe.

A do Pani Prezydent Sandu mam taką dobrą radę, żeby skupiła się na akcesie jej kraju do Unii Europejskiej, a nie krytykowała innych krajów, które o ten akces również zabiegają, bo to – myślę – nie jest poważna strategia ani taktyka.

Александър Александров Йорданов (PPE). – Г-н Председател, необходима е активна подкрепа за евроинтеграцията на Република Молдова. Голямото препятствие пред нея е Русия. Ето защо трябва категорично да подкрепим решенията на правителството и на президента Мая Санду за отказ от сътрудничество с Русия във всички сфери.

Необходимо е да наложим нови санкции на лица и организации, които обслужват руските интереси. Гражданите на Молдова трябва да чувстват предимствата на своя европейски избор през целия евроинтеграционен процес. Всеки ден, месец и година от живота им трябва да стане наистина европейски. И обратно, проруските сепаратисти и манипулираните от тях граждани в Приднестровието трябва да изпитат всички негативи на решението си да бъдат заедно с Путинова Русия.

Corina Crețu (S&D). – Domnule președinte, domnule comisar, Republica Moldova și-a manifestat puternic dorința de apartenență la familia europeană, fiind fermă în fața atacurilor hibride venite din partea Rusiei, făcând față multiplelor crize și primind cu brațele deschise cel mai mare număr de refugiați ucraineni raportat la numărul locuitorilor, așa cum și bunicii mei, când mama mea avea doi ani, au fost primiți cu brațele deschise de către România, împreună cu alți 400 000 de cetățeni care au părăsit Basarabia între 1940 și 1944.

Am fost săptămâna trecută la Chișinău și vreau să vă asigur că Republica Moldova este pregătită să înceapă negocierile de aderare imediat, la începutul anului viitor. Consider că este necesar ca Republica Moldova să poată beneficia de instrumentele financiare de preaderare. Cred că este foarte important raportul pozitiv al Comisiei, ca și dezbaterile din Consiliu pentru inițierea negocierilor până la sfârșitul acestui an.

Eu cred că este momentul să ne ridicăm la momentul istoriei, să nu ratăm dreptul acestor cetățeni de a trăi acolo unde își doresc și unde le este locul: în Uniunea Europeană.

Rasa Juknevičienė (PPE). – Mr President, dear colleagues, Moldova always was Europe and Moldova belongs in Europe. I trust that the Commission will propose to start accession negotiations. Thanks to the leadership of President Maia Sandu and the current Government, Moldova has proved that it is a resilient democracy.

Despite Russian interference and attempts at destabilisation, Moldova is making significant progress on the European path. This country is most exposed to Russia's war in Ukraine, but it nevertheless was very brave to show true solidarity with Ukraine.

Moldova is making difficult choices to free itself from Russian dependence, including in the energy sector. The EU must stand by Moldova and continue assisting its energy independence, modernisation and integration into EU. And, most important, with Moldova in the EU, Europe – all of us – will be stronger and more secure.

Spontane Wortmeldungen

Maria Grapini (S&D). – Domnule președinte, domnule comisar, stimați colegi, nu prea des se întâmplă să avem așa o poziție comună în Parlament și vreau să mulțumesc colegilor, indiferent de grupul politic, care au susținut astăzi că da, Republica Moldova trebuie să meargă pe drumul european și, dacă trebuie, atunci trebuie să o și sprijinim. Și nu numai fondurile sunt necesare. Eu sunt membră în Delegația pentru Republica Moldova, cunosc foarte bine Republica Moldova, merg frecvent acolo. Au nevoie și de sprijin tehnic, pentru că reformarea în administrație trebuie să aibă pentru acest lucru în primul rând resursa umană.

Când am discutat cu guvernul din Republica Moldova, se plâneau de acest lucru, că nu au suficienți funcționari publici și, de aceea, cer Comisiei, așa cum am mai cerut-o și altă dată, pe lângă sprijinul financiar, să acordăm această asistență tehnică, pentru ca reformele să poată să fie făcute și, da, să înceapă drumul de aderare la Uniunea Europeană. Nu există altă cale pentru Republica Moldova.

Jiří Pospíšil (PPE). – Pane předsedající, já jsem velmi pozorně poslouchal celou debatu a mám velkou radost, že napříč všemi frakcemi v zásadě všichni řečníci podporovali urychlený vstup Moldavska do Evropské unie. Já to velmi vítám. Myslím si, že to je mimořádně důležité, že není možné tuto zemi nechat na holičkách, a tím pádem vytvářet prostor, aby tam Rusko posilovalo svůj vliv. A pokud bude možno již v příštím roce zahájit další fázi rozhovorů s touto zemí, je to podle mého názoru mimořádně důležité. Je to nejen v zájmu této země, která se stará o uprchlíky, ale je to v našem zájmu, aby zde nebylo nárazníkové pásmo států mezi Putinovým Ruskem a Evropskou unií, které budou demoralizovány, protože se jejich vstup do EU bude oddalovat. Děkuji všem a prosím Komisi a Radu, aby v této věci učinily další potřebné kroky.

(Ende der spontanen Wortmeldungen)

Janez Lenarčič, Member of the Commission. – Mr President, honourable Members, thank you for this debate and especially for the strong support voiced by so many of you for Moldova's European path. As I said in the introduction, in this year's enlargement package, the Commission will take stock of Moldova's progress on essential reforms. But I can already say that Moldova is showing its commitment to the European course and the Commission is supporting the country in its efforts to implement the necessary reforms.

We will continue to help Moldova in tackling the numerous challenges. And this includes, for instance, building the country's energy resilience, increasing its energy production, and so on. I wish to assure you all that the European Union stands and will continue to stand by Moldova. We will support them at every step on their path to the EU, because the future of Moldova is in our Union.

Pascual Navarro Ríos, presidente en ejercicio del Consejo. – Señor presidente, señorías, he escuchado atentamente sus posiciones y el apoyo mayoritario, el amplio apoyo de esta Cámara al proceso de integración de Moldavia en la Unión Europea.

Como ya se ha dicho y como ha mencionado el comisario Lenarčič, la Presidencia espera el próximo paquete de ampliación de la Comisión, así como su informe sobre los avances y las medidas de reforma de Moldavia. Conforme a ello, la Presidencia propondrá al Consejo y al Consejo Europeo las decisiones oportunas.

Ustedes lo han mencionado hoy: el futuro de Moldavia y de su ciudadanía está dentro de la Unión Europea y, al igual que el comisario, reitero que la Unión Europea seguirá apoyando todos los esfuerzos y todas las reformas de Moldavia para alcanzar este objetivo.

Der Präsident. – Gemäß Artikel 132 Absatz 2 der Geschäftsordnung wurden sechs Entschließungsanträge eingereicht1.

Die Aussprache ist geschlossen.

Die Abstimmung findet am Donnerstag, 5. Oktober 2023, statt.

Schriftliche Erklärungen (Artikel 171)

1 Siehe Protokoll.

Dan-Ștefan Motreanu (PPE), *în scris*. – Locul Moldovei este în Uniunea Europeană și doresc pe această cale să reiterez apelul adresat de Parlamentul European Comisiei și Consiliului de a începe negocierile de aderare la UE cu Republica Moldova până la sfârșitul anului 2023. Subliniez importanța continuării procesului de reforme al guvernului de la Chișinău, nu numai pentru a atinge obiectivul politic al aderării la UE, ci în primul rând pentru a îmbunătăți situația economică și socială a țării pentru a oferi generațiilor mai tinere perspective atractive de trai și de muncă pe teritoriul țării. Nu în ultimul rând, țin să invit Comisia Europeană și statele sale membre să consolideze asistența financiară și tehnică acordată Republicii Moldova, pentru a facilita integrarea rapidă și efectivă a acestei țări în Uniunea Europeană.

Mihai Tudose (S&D), *în scris*. – Susțin rezoluția care cere Comisiei și Consiliului European să deschidă negocierile cu Republica Moldova pentru aderarea la Uniunea Europeană, până la sfârșitul acestui an. Este un termen pe care președinta Parlamentului European, Roberta Metsola, l-a propus și consider că este un obiectiv deopotrivă ambițios și realist.

Raportul remarcă, de altfel, faptul că Republica Moldova depune eforturi și realizează progrese semnificative pe calea reformelor.

Este nevoie, însă, de un sprijin european mai mare pentru creșterea conectivității Republicii Moldova în plan energetic, iar în acest sens este esențială interconexiunea Bălți-Suceava, pentru a asigura accesul la rețeaua de energie electrică a UE.

De asemenea, susțin solicitarea din raport pentru stabilirea legăturii feroviare cu ecartament european de la Chișinău la Iași, care ar avea un rol important și în asigurarea culoarelor de solidaritate UE-Ucraina. E nevoie, în acest caz, de ajutor masiv și urgent pentru modernizarea infrastructurii de transport a Republicii Moldova.

Nu în ultimul rând, pledez pentru eliminarea tuturor contingentelor tarifare în comerțul UE-Republica Moldova, nu doar suspendarea lor.

17. Den seneste udvikling i dialogen mellem Serbien og Kosovo, herunder situationen i de nordlige kommuner i Kosovo (forhandling)

Der Präsident. – Als nächster Punkt der Tagesordnung folgt die Aussprache über die Erklärungen des Rates und der Kommission zu den jüngsten Entwicklungen im Dialog zwischen Serbien und dem Kosovo sowie der Lage in den Gemeinden im Norden des Kosovo (2023/2880(RSP)).

Pascual Navarro Ríos, *presidente en ejercicio del Consejo*. – Señor presidente, señorías, señor comisario, desde los violentos incidentes que tuvieron lugar en mayo, que la Unión Europea ha condenado, la Unión Europea ha instado reiteradamente a ambas partes a rebajar las tensiones y a volver cuanto antes al diálogo Belgrado-Pristina facilitado por la Unión Europea.

Permítanme expresar nuestra rotunda condena al deplorable ataque perpetrado recientemente contra agentes de la policía de Kosovo en el pueblo de Banjska. Deben aclararse todos los hechos relativos al ataque para que los responsables respondan ante la justicia.

En consonancia con declaraciones previas del alto representante en nombre de la Unión Europea, reiteramos enérgicamente la necesidad urgente de que todos los agentes rebajen las tensiones, vuelvan al diálogo facilitado por la Unión Europea y trabajen de forma constructiva para normalizar las relaciones. La incapacidad de rebajar las tensiones acarreará consecuencias negativas.

La posición de la Unión Europea al respecto sigue siendo firme y el camino propuesto por el que avanzar está claro. La responsabilidad de adoptar medidas positivas sigue recayendo en ambas partes. Al Consejo le sigue preocupando la falta de avances de ambas partes para reducir las tensiones en el norte de Kosovo. Hace tan solo dos semanas, manifestamos que la Unión Europea estaba lista para levantar medidas en relación con Kosovo si se daban avances para responder a las peticiones existentes, que incluyen celebrar elecciones municipales anticipadas en el norte de Kosovo. Me parece importante destacar que la respuesta de ambas partes a dichas peticiones es crucial en su camino europeo. Continuaremos siguiendo de cerca los acontecimientos.

Janez Lenarčič, *Member of the Commission*. – Mr President, honourable Members, State Secretary, on 24 September Kosovo police were attacked by heavily armed individuals in the midst of a major weapons smuggling operation, leaving one policeman dead and three wounded. The armed perpetrators barricaded themselves in Banjska Monastery. In the exchange of fire with the Kosovo police three assailants were killed, some wounded and the rest fled. Some of those were treated in the hospital in Novi Pazar in Serbia.

The scale of the operation is unprecedented. The quantity of confiscated weapons is massive. And this raises serious concerns. This is a strong alarm bell that the situation in the north of Kosovo is extremely serious. Immediately on that Sunday, High Representative Vice-President Borell called Prime Minister Kurti and President Vucic and issued a statement and a press release where he condemned in the strongest terms the terrorist attack. He also calls for restoring calm and stability. For the assailants to surrender immediately and for the 49 pilgrims at the Banjska Monastery to be able to leave safely. The EU's rule of law mission in Kosovo, EULEX, arrived at the scene rapidly and in line with its mandate, monitored the police operation and escorted the pilgrims safely out of Kosovo. The EU is closely following the ongoing investigations and expects that the perpetrators be brought to justice and Serbia to fully cooperate, including in preventing smuggling through the administrative boundary line. In parallel to the investigations, it is important that both Kosovo and Serbia refrain from any action that could further escalate the situation.

In this context, the rhetoric from Belgrade in relation to 24 September is very concerning, as well as the manner in which the day of mourning was observed. What is already clear at this stage is that this operation indicates a serious military build-up and constitutes a major escalation which goes against the EU's repeated calls for de-escalation in the north of Kosovo. In its statement of 3 June, the EU called on both parties to take concrete measures to de-escalate. This was reiterated in the EU's statement of 19 September. Swift de-escalation is more urgent than ever. And the perpetrators need to be brought to justice. The attack should not serve as an excuse to divert attention from the dialogue on the normalisation.

We are also concerned about the Serbian military build-up in the south of Serbia. Swiftly holding early local elections in the north of Kosovo remains crucial to help defuse the tensions. The EU calls on all political actors at all levels of governance, in both Kosovo and Serbia, to engage constructively in the process leading to early local elections in the north of Kosovo, to avoid further escalatory steps and support progress in the EU facilitated dialogue. We are at a crucial junction in the EU facilitated dialogue. Earlier this year, Kosovo and Serbia reached an agreement on the path to normalisation, which offers a clear platform for normalising their relations. The obligations stemming from this agreement remain valid and binding. The negotiations phase ended in March. The focus now must be on implementation and on taking the process of normalisation forward. At the last high-level dialogue on 14 September, neither party demonstrated a genuine commitment to advance the normalisation process, despite continued intense efforts by the European Union. Therefore, both are in violation of their dialogue obligations. They must act with restraint and return to the implementation of their respective dialogue commitments and seriously commit to the normalisation process. And let me remind the parties that their European paths go through the dialogue and normalisation. Further escalation will have a very adverse impact on their European paths, as well as for the stability and security of the Western Balkans region.

Vladimír Bilčík, *on behalf of the PPE Group*. – Mr President, Commissioner, colleagues, in Banjska, people were killed and the situation on the ground is escalating alarmingly. We had not seen this kind of violence on the ground over the past decade. We do need a proper investigation. We need a delivery of justice. And this is why also both sides have an enormous responsibility that we all get back to dialogue as soon as possible.

If I look at the broader picture in the dialogue, let me say very clearly that with the arrival of Albin Kurti to power, the dialogue has been stalling, unfortunately, and not moving in the direction of finding a solution for practical issues such as the Association of Serbian Municipalities or new credible elections in northern Kosovo. And I'm saying this as someone who is very openly and repeatedly critical of the Serbian side on many issues, including the most recent escalation.

Yes, we need the uncovering of what really happened on 24 September, and the ball here is very much in the hands of Belgrade. We need facts, hard facts, full facts, not heightened emotional pronouncements by the media and political leaders. When it comes to proper and credible investigation we need this for the sake of a meaningful future dialogue. We do not need a heightened race of who is to blame, nor a superficial game of earning immediate sympathies from abroad. Destabilising the Western Balkans only benefits Putin's Russia. And as enlargement is back on our agenda, we expect the same commitment from our partners in the region.

So, dear colleagues, no compromises can be reached with violence and no results can be achieved by force. The only solution to a peaceful dialogue is a commitment to return to the negotiating table.

Tonino Picula, *on behalf of the S&D Group*. – Mr President, Commissioner, the latest events of 24 September are evidence of pertinent tension always on the verge of escalation. So far, we have witnessed severe incidents with the attack on KFOR forces, the abduction of Kosovo police officers and the latest terrorist attack. With great concern, we monitor news on the location of the Serbian army along the border.

Formally, on paper, things look better than they are in practice. There is a political appetite for enlargement, the Ohrid Agreement was reached. But in reality, there is no real movement forward.

We have seen restrictive measures on Kosovo. At least the same, or even more extensive ones, should be applied to Serbia after the latest events. For real success, our policy needs to be coherent. We cannot have such divergent policies towards Serbia and Kosovo among our Member States. Finally, we can stop funding infrastructure projects if there is no improvement in fundamentals and dialogue provisions.

Ilhan Kyuchyuk, *on behalf of the Renew Group*. – Mr President, dear Commissioner, dear colleagues, well, EULEX and KFOR are on the ground working closely with authorities to manage the situation. We cannot turn a blind eye to the troublesome military movements by Serbia along the Kosovo border. Stability in the region is hanging by a thread and the rhetoric and actions emerging from Serbia's leadership, particularly in the context of the broader European security situation, are indeed a cause for concern.

It is unbelievable that we have to hear through our staunch allies, the Americans, about the military build-up by the Serbians. We must question why, despite our collective experiences, our historical scars of war and the conflict, do we find ourselves on the brink once more? It is untenable to think that Europe might once again be plunged into the darkness of even more conflicts.

The EU, its Member States and global partners must stand firmly against any actions that destabilise the region. We must not pander to those who would seek to undermine peace and security in the region. Our message must be clear to President Vučić and his administration: military posturing and escalating tensions are not the path forward. So it's time to unite our forces against those dictatorial regimes in the region.

Viola von Cramon-Taubadel, *on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group*. – Mr President, Commissioner, Council, dear colleagues, the brutal attack on Kosovo police in Banjska is a stark reminder that we cannot take peace for granted in the Western Balkans. The shot at the police officer on duty, Afrim Bunjaku, was a shot at peace, a shot at security, a shot at the normal life in the north of Kosovo. We must clearly condemn such act of violence and call for the perpetrators to be brought to justice. The ties of Milan Radoičić, former Vice-President of Srpska Lista, with officials at Belgrade, are more than obvious.

Serbia must unconditionally cooperate in the investigation and hold each and every one who is responsible accountable along with Radoičić. Serbia must immediately remove all its troops from the border with Kosovo and commit to the peace process. Yet, we must act too. The EU, along with NATO, must come up with a containment plan for the north of Kosovo. Reinforcement of NATO-led KFOR troops is crucial. Nothing will deter better than NATO's presence on the ground. I call on Germany and other EU Member States to follow the UK's example of sending additional combat troops to KFOR and EUFOR immediately. This will be the key for our relevance and our success to preserve peace, not just in Kosovo, but on the entire Western Balkans.

Ангел Джамбазки, *от илнето на групата ECR*. – Г-н Председател, събитията в Косово много ясно потвърждават старите наши опасения, на тези, които разбират от темата. Отново сръбски провокации, отново напрежение, породено от сръбската политика, от Александър, уважаеми колега, от Александър Вучич. Александър Вучич – това е сръбският президент, той провежда политиката на Владимир Путин, ама е Александър.

Та да, това е сръбска провокация отново. Това, което вече е тревожно, г-н Комисар и колеги, е, че отново европейската политика започва да се колебае и да не взема категорична и принципна позиция. Започват старите игри: може ли да бъде полезна Сърбия? Не може ли? Сърбия е провокатор. Сръбската политика винаги е била провокаторска на Балканите и тя продължава да бъде такава, каквато беше срещу хърватите, каквато е в Босна и Херцеговина отново. И в Косово тя е същата и няма да се промени. Това е модел на поведение на сръбската политика, водена от техните президенти, какъвто е Александър Вучич. И всички такива заигравки с тях няма да помогнат никому.

В случая трябва да бъде подкрепено Косово. Трябва да бъдат подкрепени косовските власти и да бъде гарантирана териториалната им цялост срещу поредните сръбски провокации, близки, разбира се, до политиката на Кремъл. Обаче трябва да се вземе страна. Не си играйте, както обикновено, на добри и лоши милиционери, полицаи и други такива. Трябва да се вземе страна.

Jean-Lin Lacapelle, *au nom du groupe ID*. – Monsieur le Président, s'il y a des responsabilités particulières dans le conflit entre la Serbie et le Kosovo, ce sont bien celles à la fois de l'Union européenne et du soi-disant gouvernement du Kosovo-et-Métochie, objet de toutes vos bienveillances. En effet, au printemps dernier, le gouvernement albanais, dirigé par votre protégé Albin Kurti, a décidé par une de ces provocations dont il est coutumier, de nommer des maires albanais à la tête de plusieurs mairies serbes du Kosovo. Cette décision n'avait qu'un but, marginaliser la population serbe du Kosovo, pourtant la plus légitime sur ce territoire qui est, je le rappelle, son berceau historique.

Face à cette atteinte inadmissible à leurs droits qui s'est accompagnée d'une exécution brutale par la police kosovare, les Serbes du Kosovo ont été contraints de se défendre. Je tiens plus que jamais à apporter tout mon soutien à la population serbe du Kosovo et à assurer le peuple serbe de mon amitié indéfectible.

C'est le soi-disant gouvernement du Kosovo et son premier ministre qui doivent être clairement condamnés et sanctionnés. Mais ce dernier ayant déclaré récemment qu'il n'y a pas d'alternative à l'Union européenne peut se permettre en retour les pires turpitudes. C'est ainsi que plus de 300 agressions, dont certaines particulièrement graves, comme lors du Noël orthodoxe, ont été recensées depuis 2021 à l'encontre de la population serbe. Aucune n'a fait l'objet d'une enquête internationale. Et l'incident du 24 septembre, même si nous le déplorons, ne les efface pas.

L'Union européenne, qui commençait à ouvrir les yeux sur les agissements des autorités kosovares, s'empresse de saisir ce prétexte pour les refermer. Y aurait-il au Kosovo des citoyens de seconde zone? Et c'est ce même Kosovo que vous voulez intégrer dans l'Union européenne... Pour nous, il n'est pas question d'intégrer ce prétendu État qui n'est pas une nation et que plusieurs pays au sein de notre Union ne reconnaissent même pas.

Andor Deli (NI). – Mr President, Commissioner, the situation is extremely tense and complex. The recent tragic events clearly demonstrate that a solution must be found as quickly as possible. We should discuss the situation and there has to be an impartial and thorough investigation.

But all these events are just manifestations, symptoms of a much deeper problem, which is the decade-long unresolved problem of the Serbian community in Kosovo. The layout for a possible solution with the creation of the Community of Serbian Municipalities is already there. Actually, it has been there for a decade, since the Brussels Agreement of 2013.

In addition, there are numerous international conventions and charters providing a wider framework to tackle the situation of special communities, which in addition are also obligatory elements of the Copenhagen Criteria needed in the process of European integration.

In other words, all the legal elements are there. The political willingness of the European and American mediators is there, and after a decade, the government in Pristina has to make the necessary move.

Andrey Kovatchev (PPE). – Mr President, Commissioner, Council, colleagues, first of all, all those responsible for the attack by the Serb armed group need to be brought to justice. To achieve this, there needs to be an in-depth investigation. Who was behind the attack, who gave the orders, and where did the weapons and other equipment come from? Putin's Russia is strongly interested in destabilising the Balkans. Therefore we have to be very careful to prevent further provocation attempts.

Secondly, KFOR must be strengthened and preventive measures have to be put in place in order to ensure such a terrorist attack cannot happen again.

Finally, most importantly for the stability of the region, peace negotiations are essential to reduce tensions and reach an acceptable solution, with the final goal of full recognition of Kosovo by Serbia.

I will repeat again our call to the Serbian leadership to choose a side, either with the EU and the democratic countries, or with Putin's Russia. Compliance with EU foreign policy, including the sanctions against Russia and Belarus, and standing with Ukraine, is essential. Unfortunately, the Serbian influence is still malicious in neighbouring countries supporting an anti-EU agenda, not only in Kosovo but also in North Macedonia, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

I hope and will be very happy to see a democratic Serbia overcoming the legacy of Yugoslav totalitarian dictatorship and the Milošević doctrine.

SĒDI VADA: ROBERTS ZĪLE

Priekšsēdētājas vietnieks

Alessandra Moretti (S&D). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, ciò che è accaduto lo scorso 24 settembre nel nord del Kosovo è terribile. Una spaventosa esplosione di violenza che ha causato la morte di diverse persone serbe e kosovare. Una violenza che purtroppo non è una novità, dal momento che negli ultimi anni abbiamo assistito a una escalation spaventosa, animata da una narrazione aggressiva, spesso annacquata da propagande e false ricostruzioni.

Tutto questo, però, non può farci perdere la bussola che da tempo punta verso la normalizzazione dei rapporti tra Belgrado e Pristina. Non possiamo nasconderci dietro la sofferenza provocata da queste azioni per scappare da un percorso che da anni chiede di essere compiuto.

Serve certamente un'indagine accurata e imparziale per appurare le responsabilità e accertare che i responsabili affrontino le conseguenze. Ma serve anche lavorare per sconfiggere l'odio che alimenta queste azioni e curare ciò che lascia nella carne viva delle persone.

Non c'è alternativa al dialogo, non solo per poter finalmente spianare il percorso di adesione all'Unione europea, ma anche perché non vogliamo altri morti e non vogliamo tornare alla paura vissuta negli anni '90 e ripetere gli stessi errori di allora.

Klemen Grošelj (Renew). – Mr President, events in northern Kosovo are still raising more questions than providing concrete answers. Regardless of the background, we need to condemn in the strongest possible way the use of force by illegal paramilitary forces. We need to have a thorough, impartial investigation for EULEX on what actually happened and who is responsible. Despite the harsh words and accusations coming from different sides, there is still no clarity about what happened more than a week ago. We know lives were lost and we know no one is talking anymore about a holistic and permanent solution to the Serbian-Kosovo dispute as the starting point of the long-term stabilisation of the Western Balkans. There are politicians in the Western Balkans and there are people of the Western Balkans. What we need to achieve with reconciliation among the people of the Western Balkans, within the state borders as they are. I believe this can be achieved through an open and frank dialogue without any malicious foreign interference. But above all, there needs to be a dialogue among the countries of Western Balkans, which are committed to the democratic principles in internal politics to a rules-based international system in foreign relations and truly and fully committed to future EU membership through the implementation of reforms for the benefit of their own people.

Thomas Waitz (Verts/ALE). – Herr Präsident! Herr Kommissar! Mit diesen Ereignissen des 24. September wird eines klar: Mit nationalistischer und hetzerischer Rhetorik begünstigt Präsident Vučić gewalttätige Auseinandersetzungen und verursacht sie mit. Eine direkte Beteiligung an diesem Terrorakt von serbischen Sicherheitskräften scheint vorzuliegen. Wir sind damit knapp an einem neu entflammten Balkankrieg vorbeigeschrammt. Es ist an der Zeit, mit dieser Appeasement-Politik mit Vučić endlich aufzuhören! Und es ist an der Zeit, eine internationale Untersuchung einzuleiten und bis zum Ergebnis dieser Untersuchung die IPA-III-Gelder für Serbien einzufrieren.

Ich fordere unseren Verhandler Miroslav Lajčák angesichts fehlender positiver Ergebnisse im Dialog mit Serbien und Kosovo dazu auf, seine eigene Rolle zu reflektieren und möglicherweise sein Amt zu übergeben. Auf jeden Fall aber müssen wir hier vonseiten der Europäischen Union alles unternehmen, um ein Wiederaufflammen der gewalttätigen Auseinandersetzungen in der Balkanregion zu verhindern. Das muss die oberste Priorität haben.

Ladislav Ilčić (ECR). – Poštovani predsjedavajući, kolege, dramatični događaji potvrdili su ono što sam ovdje rekao u svibnju. Srbija je glavni uzrok nestabilnosti na Kosovu. Napad srpskih militantata na kosovsku policiju je klasičan teroristički čin i gospodin Borrell učinio je veliku grešku što to nije jasno rekao.

Na isti način prije 30 godina napadom srpskih militantata na hrvatsku policiju započela je srpska agresija na Hrvatsku i zato nipošto ne smijemo omalovažiti ove događaje na Kosovu.

Zajednica srpskih općina i srpska lista su očito na daljinskom upravljaču Vučiću i on svaku srpsku autonomiju koristi kako bi unosio nestabilnost. Zato sada nikakva srpska politička autonomija nije moguća.

Vučića nije briga za dobre odnose albanskog i srpskog naroda na Kosovu. On samo želi Kosovo držati slabim i nestabilnim i tako održati nadu da će ga jednog dana vojno vratiti Srbi.

Nažalost, u tome mu pomaže i Srpska pravoslavna crkva koja dopušta da se u njezinim sakralnim objektima skladišti oružja. Zato Europska unija treba jasno i čvrsto reći ne takvoj srpskoj politici.

Fabio Massimo Castaldo (NI). – Mr President, dear colleagues, reconciliation between Serbia and Kosovo is far from being just a regional issue. It is a strategic imperative for the whole of Europe. The recent failure in advancing this process is yet another obstacle on our way. But we must remain firm in saying that the future of Western Balkans lies in our Union. This, of course, cannot remain just a slogan. We must insist on the 11-point plan presented last February. But it will be pivotal to give more concreteness to the provisions included therein. Only by setting a clear roadmap for the implementation and setting concrete incentives can we make sure that both parties stick to the promises they made. Then it will come to the parties to leave aside the long-lasting issues and focus on a common future.

Therefore, I appeal once more to the leadership in Belgrade and Pristina to de-escalate immediately the tensions in northern Kosovo. We are here supporting you. Let us work together with a proactive and constructive approach towards a shared goal to meet your peoples' aspiration for a peaceful, stable and prosperous future within our common European family. Violence is not the answer. It is just the past.

Michael Gahler (PPE). – Herr Präsident, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Es wird Zeit, dass wir uns ehrlich machen bei unseren Bemühungen um eine Regelung des Verhältnisses zwischen Serbien und dem Kosovo: Das, was am 24. September durch serbische Paramilitärs unter Führung von Milan Radoičić mit schweren Waffen angerichtet wurde, das kann nicht ohne Wissen und zumindest Duldung der serbischen Führung stattgefunden haben. Dazu sitzt Radoičić zu häufig auf Vučićs Schoß. Zum Glück hat die kosovarische Polizei Schlimmeres verhindert.

Das war nicht die erste Provokation: Im Mai gab es aus Serbien verstärkte gewalttätige Demonstrationen mit Dutzenden Verletzten, italienischen und ungarischen Soldaten – kaum Reaktionen von der EU. Da mussten sich doch Vučić und Radoičić ermuntert fühlen!

Wann ziehen wir die Lehren aus unserem Scheitern in den Neunzigern? Es zählt nicht, was Politiker auf Englisch in Brüssel erzählen, sondern was sie zur eigenen Bevölkerung reden, welche Kampagnen sie in den kontrollierten Medien fahren und vor allem wie sie handeln. Vučić hat von seinen Ziehvätern Šešelj und Milošević gelernt: Irgendwelche grünen Männchen etwas machen lassen, nur nicht direkt als Anstifter auftreten.

Es kann nach dem 24. September keine Rückkehr zum *business as usual* geben, wo wir ein Grundsatzabkommen vom 27. Februar haben, das Vučić nicht unterzeichnet. Er hat keine Verpflichtung gegenüber dem Kosovo, aber wir pushen Kosovo ausschließlich auf Erfüllung des Artikels 7 mit dieser Assoziation serbischer Städte. Wenn es nach den serbischen Wünschen geht, dann haben wir da bald eine Republika Srpska 2.0. So kann es nicht gehen. Wenn jetzt die EU und die USA Belgrad deutlich machen, dass die Truppen dort abzuziehen sind und ansonsten auch Vorbeitrittshilfen gestoppt werden, dann gibt es eine Chance für eine Rückkehr zu einem echten Dialog.

Andreas Schieder (S&D). – Herr Präsident, sehr geehrte Damen und Herren, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Die Lage im Grenzgebiet zwischen Serbien und Kosovo ist mehr als brandgefährlich. Ja, es haben alle recht, die sagen, die Repräsentantinnen und Repräsentanten auf beiden Seiten müssen zur Deeskalation beitragen – natürlich. Es ist auch die verdamnte Pflicht jedes Politikers vor Ort, endlich für Stabilität und eine Europa-Perspektive für die eigene Bevölkerung zu sorgen.

Was wir aber zurzeit erleben, ist, dass Vučić immer mehr Öl ins Feuer gießt. Daher muss auch die Europäische Union endlich diese Naivität ablegen, und es braucht starke EU-Reaktionen, sonst droht uns ein Flächenbrand am ganzen Balkan. Es muss Schluss sein mit Nationalismus, mit antidemokratischem und antieuropäischem Kurs, der zurzeit in Serbien von der Regierung gelebt wird. Leider nicht nur in Serbien, aber auch da.

Wer das nicht versteht, der muss auch mit Konsequenzen rechnen, nämlich Konsequenzen heißen das Einfrieren von EU-Fördermitteln und letztlich auch die Konsequenz, wenn man nicht zu einem europäischen Menschenrechtsverständnis, einem antinationalistischen Kurs zurückkehrt, des Endes und des Abbruchs der EU-Beitrittsverhandlungen für ein Serbien unter Vučić.

Tineke Strik (Verts/ALE). – Mr President, Council, Commissioner, we were all shocked on 24 September when a heavily armed Serbian gang with seemingly strong links to the government invaded Kosovo and brutally killed a police officer – shocked but not surprised, because this is what the EU appeasement strategy leads to.

For years we have silently allowed Vučić to undermine stability in the region, to remain supportive of the Kremlin and to demolish minority rights in his own country. Yet EPA funds flow in his direction and we treat him as a friend, incentivising him to go further. And this is what autocrats do when they face impunity. We should have learned our lesson with Putin.

After the recent events it is high time that EU leaders wake up. The security situation in the Balkans is really under high threat. We need to act now to protect the citizens of the Western Balkans and to protect their prospect of becoming part of the EU.

Dorien Rookmaker (ECR). – Voorzitter, dames en heren, ik sta hier om aandacht te vragen voor een langdurig conflict dat nog altijd verre van opgelost is: het conflict tussen Kosovo en Servië. Een conflict dat al te lang duurt en dat ons confronteert met de noodzaak van dialoog, begrip en respect voor soevereiniteit. In het hart van Europa, twee decennia na het einde van het gewelddadige conflict, zijn de wonden nog steeds niet geheeld. De tijd is gekomen om vooruit te kijken en niet meer naar het verleden.

Ik geloof in de kracht van dialoog, waarin beide partijen elkaar erkennen en respecteren. Dit moet worden gefaciliteerd door de EU, met onpartijdige bemiddelaars die het belang van beide partijen erkennen en respecteren. We moeten niet vergeten dat achter politieke conflicten mensen staan. Mensen die het verdienen om in vrede te leven, vrij van angst en onzekerheid.

Laten we ons inzetten voor een toekomst waarin Kosovo en Servië naast elkaar kunnen bestaan, in vrede en met wederzijds respect binnen een EU-verband. Een toekomst waarin de inwoners van beide landen niet langer worden gedefinieerd door conflicten uit het verleden, maar door hun hoop en ambities voor de toekomst.

Željana Zovko (PPE). – Mr President, Commissioner, dear colleagues, I strongly condemn the attack by an armed terrorist group against Kosovo police officers near Banjska Monastery, which left one police officer and three attackers dead. My deepest condolences to the family of the Kosovo police sergeant killed on the line of duty.

In order to deescalate the current situation in northern Kosovo, Serbia must take immediate and decisive steps to reduce both political and ethnic tensions. That includes the immediate withdrawal of its remaining forces from the border region of Kosovo. In that regard, I welcome the decision by NATO to strengthen KFOR to address the situation in Kosovo and to deter Serbia from further escalation. These actions by Serbia cannot remain unanswered and require our clear and strong response.

Matjaž Nemec (S&D). – Gospod predsednik, spoštovani visoki izbor, spoštovani komisar Lenarčič.

Dejstvo je, da so odnosi med Srbijo in Kosovom že leta izrazito napeti. V preteklosti je sicer bilo nekaj manjših premikov v smeri dialoga, še vedno precej daleč od celovitega, pravno zavezujočega sporazuma o normalizaciji odnosov med dvema državama. Danes pa mogoče najdlje kot kadar koli prej.

Dogodki izpred slabih deset dni v Banjski so dodobra pretresli že tako krhke vezi med državama. Vsakršno nasilje ostro obsojam in pozivamo vse pristojne, da opravijo temeljito, verodostojno in objektivno preiskavo. Vsi vpleteni morajo biti ustrezno obsojeni in prevzeti vso odgovornost za nedopustni incident. Vsi napor vladajočih morajo iti v smeri, da se ta nikoli več ne ponovi.

Predsednika Vučića in premierja Kurtija pozivam, da se vrneta za EU pogajalsko mizo, začeni s ponovnimi neodvisnimi in svobodnimi volitvami v štirih občinah na severu Kosova.

Odmiki od nje prinašajo enostavno prevelika tveganja in tega EU ne smemo dopustiti in tega tudi ne bomo dopustili.

Lukas Mandl (PPE). – Herr Präsident, sehr geehrter Herr Kommissar, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Kommissar Lenarčič sitzt hier und muss die Europäische Kommission vertreten, in der ganz andere Mitglieder zu verantworten haben, dass die Europäische Kommission mit ihrer Westbalkanpolitik in diesem Mandat vollends gescheitert ist. Josep Borrell ist nicht da, Herr Várhelyi ist nicht da, oder auch Herr Lajčák als Sonderbeauftragter für den Kosovo-Serbien-Dialog ist nicht da, nimmt nicht an dieser Debatte teil. Ich frage mich: Wo ist es für diese Vertreter der Europäischen Kommission jetzt wichtiger zu sein als hier?

Ich würde diese drei Herren gerne fragen, ob sie einmal das kosovarische Tal Krusha e Madhe besucht haben. Das ist ein Tal, in dem in Kriegszeiten alle Buben und Männer ermordet oder verschleppt worden sind, in dem Frauen eine landwirtschaftliche Kooperative gegründet haben, um über die Runden zu kommen. Ich habe Krusha e Madhe besucht und habe einen Eindruck davon, warum was ist. Kosovarinnen und Kosovaren haben Angst in diesen Tagen, wenn solche Dinge geschehen wie in den vergangenen Wochen.

Die Europäische Kommission darf jetzt nicht wieder zur Tagesordnung übergehen, nicht wieder Appeasement machen, sondern muss klare Kante zeigen in Richtung des Vučić-Regimes. Und die kosovarische Seite kann ich nur auffordern, sich nicht provozieren zu lassen – wie schlimm es auch wird –, sich nicht provozieren zu lassen und zur Deeskalation beizutragen.

Δημήτρης Παπαδάκης (S&D). – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, ψυχραιμία, αυτοσυγκράτηση και άμεση επιστροφή των δύο πλευρών, Σερβίας και Κοσόβου, στο τραπέζι του διαλόγου. Η ένταση που υπάρχει στην περιοχή δεν μπορεί να εκτονωθεί με άλλο τρόπο παρά μόνο με τον δρόμο της ειρήνης. Ας μην επιστρέψουν στο 1998. Κανένας δεν θα βγει κερδισμένος ακολουθώντας τον δρόμο του αίματος. Η τελευταία τρομοκρατική επίθεση στο χωριό Μπάνισκο, στο βόρειο Κόσοβο, πρέπει να αποτελέσει την απαρχή νέου ουσιαστικού γύρου εφαρμογής των ήδη συμφωνηθέντων και από τις δύο πλευρές.

Από αυτό το βήμα, πολλές φορές ήμουν επικριτικός για την κατάσταση στη Σερβία και για τη μη ύπαρξη προόδου σε κάποια ζητήματα στον δρόμο για την ένταξη της στην Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση. Η καταδίκη από τον κύριο Βυčić των τρομοκρατικών επιθέσεων, καθώς και η σημερινή σύλληψη του αρχηγού των τρομοκρατών, δεν επιτρέπουν την περαιτέρω συζήτηση για επιβολή κυρώσεων κατά της Σερβίας, που στο τέλος της ημέρας, θα τις πληρώσει ο σερβικός λαός. Την ίδια στιγμή, η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση θα πρέπει να εμμένει, υποδεικνύοντας και προς τις δύο πλευρές ότι θα πρέπει άμεσα να εφαρμόσουν αυτά τα οποία συμφώνησαν.

Sunčana Glavak (PPE). – Poštovani predsjedavajući, kolegice i kolege, kompleksnost stanja na Kosovu zahtijeva i našu konkretnu reakciju.

Dijalog oružjem nije dijalog već provokacija na daljnju eskalaciju. Ovaj događaj nije bio slučajan i osuđujem ubojstvo pripadnika kosovske policije.

Kolegice i kolege, na europskom tlu djeluje srpska paravojna skupina. Za trojicu tih članova Vučić u Srbiji proglašava dan žalosti. Pa da li ima neke poveznice? Mislim da možete zaključiti sami.

I da, treba nam temeljita istraga. Slažem se s vama. Međutim, trebaju nam i konkretne mjere. Mi imamo i mehanizme za to. Upotrijebili smo ih za mnoge druge države. Pa prema tome, budimo hrabri, učinimo to i sada. Ne želimo ratnu huškačku retoriku koja se odvija ovdje pred našim vratima. Blokade, tenzije i prijetnje, to je trenutno stanje.

Europska unija temelji se, to stalno ponavljamo, na miru, suradnji i uzajamnom poštovanju. Ako Srbija želi postati dio naše obitelji, onda neka prihvati te principe.

Thijs Reuten (S&D). – Mr President, Commission, Council, colleagues, President Vučić did it again. He pushed the escalation button, deliberately jeopardising peace and security, even of the people he says to care about but holds hostage. This time he pushed harder than ever before. Therefore, the usual de-escalation is not so easy.

This pattern should have ended a long time ago, but autocrats like Vučić see how far they can go and then go a little further next time. President Vučić is playing with fire. And, as European Union, we can only extinguish it by showing decisiveness and stop the untenable appeasement of the destabilisers.

Despite months of widespread criticism from this House, all the EU has managed to do was imposing sanctions on Kosovo. What is stopping us from punitive measures on Serbia? The reckless actions of the Serbian Government need to have consequences. Commission, Council, take action.

Gheorghe Falcă (PPE). – Domnule președinte, domnule comisar, stimați colegi, Europa nu-și permite și nici nu își dorește ca în Balcani, și nicăieri în alt loc, să avem conflicte la fel ca în Pakistan, cum vedem în Nagorno-Karabakh sau în Kirgîzstan. Realitatea, așa cum o văd eu, este că, fără o acțiune concretă și decisivă a Uniunii Europene, violența din regiunea respectivă va dăinui ani întregi. Acest conflict din zonă îl avantajează pe Putin. El vrea să existe instabilitate în Balcani, iar Serbia trebuie să înțeleagă acest lucru. De aceea, Uniunea Europeană trebuie să se implice mult mai hotărât, mai decisiv și să ofere celor două părți o cale concretă și clară de dezvoltare și colaborare cu Uniunea Europeană. Depinde de cele două părți. Depinde și de noi, să-i sprijinim să fie mai democrați.

Catch-the-eye procedure

Tomislav Sokol (PPE). – Poštovani predsjedavajući, četvorica mrtvih, to je epilog pohoda srpske terorističke skupine koja je na Kosovu napala pripadnike policijskih snaga.

Srpske metode napada koje uključuju blokade i oružane napade na policiju neodoljivo podsjećaju na krvave pohode koje su četničke skupine izvodile na početku srpske agresije na Hrvatsku. Nažalost, puno indicija upućuje na to da je ovaj teroristički napad izveden uz pokroviteljstvo Beograda, a da su srpski napadači na teritoriju Srbije ciljano i sustavno obučavani za izvršenje terorističkog čina.

Govoreći nedavno o izvješću o Kosovu, rekao sam da se nadam da je Europska unija nešto naučila iz promašenih politika prošlosti i da će zaustaviti srpski hegemonizam prije nego što se potpuno otme kontroli, što nažalost nije slučaj.

Nažalost, Unija je previše puta bila popustljiva prema Srbiji i sada ponovo svjedočimo tome da politika srpskog hegemonizma destabilizira ne samo Kosovo nego i susjedne zemlje poput Crne Gore.

Stoga, ako se utvrdi da je srpska vlast stajala iza ovog napada, Europska unija mora Srbiju najstrože sankcionirati i na taj način spriječiti destabilizaciju jugoistočne Europe. Za to je odgovoran Aleksandar Vučić.

Katarína Roth Neveďalová (S&D). – Pán predsedajúci, Slovensko, či krajina z ktorej pochádzam, patrí medzi krajiny, ktoré neuznávajú existenciu samostatného a nezávislého Kosova.

Napriek tomu si však prajem, aby tieto dve etniká na území, etnickí Srbi a kosovskí Albánci, vedeli vedľa seba žiť v pokoji a mieri.

Kosovsko-srbské vzťahy si v uplynulých dňoch prešli ďalším otrasom a napätie v severnej časti Kosova je veľmi vysoké, a k prestrelkám môže dôjsť kedykoľvek v budúcnosti.

Musím poznamenať, že za neriešiteľnosť tohto problému nie sú zodpovední iba Srbi. A mali by sme zobrať do úvahy aj časté provokácie, ktorým čelí práve srbská menšina žijúca v Kosove.

Keď zlyhá diplomacia, následne sa na vyriešenie konfliktu použijú zbrane. Vojna a ozbrojené konflikty nikdy nič nevyriešili a priniesli len straty na životoch, biedu a utrpenie.

Preto považujem za dôležité v tejto súvislosti, aby sa obe etniká žijúce na tomto území vrátili k dialógu a vážne zapracovali na riešení, keďže vyhlasujú, že ich budúcnosť vidia v Európskej únii. Ale cenou za to, aby sa súčasťou Európskej únie mohli stať, je to, že musia naozaj spolupracovať, aby nedošlo k ďalším stratám na životoch.

(End of catch-the-eye procedure)

Janez Lenarčič, *Member of the Commission*. – Mr President, honourable Members, I will be very brief and very clear: the debate today testifies of the need for the European Union to stay united and use all its leverage on both Kosovo and Serbia to de-escalate tensions and return to the implementation of their dialogue obligations and normalisation process. Their respective European paths are dependent on this. In other words, their future in the EU – nothing less – is at stake.

Pascual Navarro Ríos, *presidente en ejercicio del Consejo*. – Señor presidente, permítame reiterar nuestra condena al ataque. Es evidente que deben aclararse todos los hechos relativos a este ataque y que sus responsables deben responder ante la justicia.

Al mismo tiempo, la distensión sigue siendo una prioridad absoluta y ambas partes deben desempeñar su papel y tomar todas las medidas necesarias para tal fin.

Como ya he indicado, y en línea con lo que acaba de comentar el comisario Lenarčič, la posición de la Unión Europea al respecto es firme. La vía hacia el progreso sugerida se ha indicado con claridad. Son esenciales la distensión y un regreso al diálogo Belgrado-Pristina facilitado por la Unión Europea.

Sēdes vadītājs. – Debates ir slēgtas.

Balsošana notiks nākamajā sesijā.

Rakstiski paziņojumi (171. pants)

Dominique Bilde (ID), *par écrit*. – La montée des tensions entre la Serbie et le Kosovo découle en grande partie d'engagements non tenus.

Au premier chef, l'association des municipalités à majorité serbe, dont la création était déjà prévue aux termes de l'accord de Bruxelles de 2013, tarde à se concrétiser, sur fond de querelles constitutionnelles.

C'est sans compter les avanies, petites et grandes. J'avais dénoncé, par exemple, les polémiques relatives à certains monastères orthodoxes classés par l'Unesco.

Quant à l'imbroglie relatif aux maires du nord du Kosovo, n'a-t-il pas constitué la provocation de trop ?

Il est heureux qu'un changement de ton, de la part des Américains en particulier, nuance enfin un tant soit peu une approche internationale longtemps empreinte d'un certain parti pris vis-à-vis de Belgrade.

Il est, en effet, urgent de tenir les promesses faites aux Serbes du Kosovo, si l'on espère résorber l'abîme de défiance qui les sépare de la communauté albanaise.

18. Forbindelserne mellem EU og Schweiz (forhandling)

Sēdes vadītājs. – Nākamais darba kārtības punkts ir debates par Lukas Mandl ziņojumu Ārlietu komitejas vārdā par ES un Šveices attiecībām (2023/2042(INI)) (A9-0248/2023).

Lukas Mandl, Berichterstatter. – Herr Präsident, sehr geehrter Herr Kommissar, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Die Schweiz ist ein wichtiger Staat in der europäischen Staatenfamilie, und die Schweiz leistet geopolitisch viel in der Friedensarbeit, in der Vermittlung und repräsentiert so, was Europa ausmacht, was Europa für die Welt will und was die europäische Zivilisation jetzt und in Zukunft sein soll.

Das ist eine Dimension der Schweiz, die möglicherweise in der Vergangenheit in der Europäischen Kommission bei den Verhandlungen nicht ausreichend beachtet worden ist. Insgesamt scheint mir in der Vergangenheit in den Verhandlungen Transparenz zu wenig ausgeprägt gewesen zu sein – in beide Richtungen.

Wenn ich als Österreicher sagen kann, dass wir in der Vergangenheit Sorge hatten – zum Thema Preisdumping, zum Thema Lohndumping, zum Thema Sozialdumping – innerhalb der Europäischen Union, mit der Ostöffnung, mit der Erweiterung, mit der Stärkung der Europäischen Union durch die Erweiterung – aber selbst innerhalb der Europäischen Union konnten wir diese offenen Fragen lösen und müssen diese Sorgen nicht mehr haben.

Es ist also möglich, am Binnenmarkt teilzunehmen, auch als Hochlohn- und Hochpreisland, wie auch die Schweiz und besonders die Schweiz eines ist. Es ist möglich, vom Binnenmarkt zu profitieren, wie die Schweiz das in ganz großem Ausmaß tut, ohne diese Sorgen zu haben. Diese Botschaft vermittelt auch der Bericht des Europäischen Parlaments.

Ein gemeinsamer Markt braucht einen gemeinsamen Gerichtsstand. Das weiß jede und jeder, die oder der eine Handelsschule besucht, schon in der ersten Klasse. Ein gemeinsamer Gerichtsstand ist wichtig, um Fairness, um klare Regeln und die Einhaltung dieser Regeln zu ermöglichen. Das ist für Europa, für den europäischen Binnenmarkt, der Europäische Gerichtshof. Nein, es sind nicht fremde Richter. Ich halte das für einen absichtlich falschen Begriff. Es sind faire Richter und Richterinnen, die dort entscheiden, und damit der Binnenmarkt funktioniert – für die Schweiz und für alle anderen –, braucht es den Europäischen Gerichtshof. Auch darüber spricht der Bericht eine klare Sprache.

Der Bericht deckt aber auch zwei andere wichtige Bereiche ab. Neben der Geopolitik, die ich schon erwähnt habe, sind das die Wissenschaft und die Sicherheit. Wir wollen die Schweiz zurück in Horizont Europa. Die Schweiz ist ein wichtiges Forschungsland, ein wichtiges Innovationsland, ein Wissenschaftshotspot nicht nur für Europa, sondern weltweit. Wir brauchen daher die Schweiz zurück in Horizont Europa. Alle Seiten werden davon profitieren.

Dasselbe gilt für den Bereich Sicherheit. Es freut mich, und auch das kommt in dem Bericht des Europäischen Parlaments zum Ausdruck, dass die Schweiz ernsthaft überlegt, an PESCO, der Ständigen Strukturierten Zusammenarbeit der Streitkräfte nicht nur der EU-Mitgliedstaaten, sondern vieler weiterer Staaten, mitzuwirken. Das Vereinigte Königreich, Kanada, die USA, Norwegen sind als Nicht-EU-Mitgliedstaaten beispielsweise schon dabei. Diese engere Zusammenarbeit im Bereich Sicherheit ist angezeigt, besonders angesichts der aktuellen geopolitischen Entwicklungen.

Der Bericht bringt auch klar zum Ausdruck, dass die Schweiz die unblutige Verteidigung gegen den blutigen Angriffskrieg durch Putin-Russland in Form der Sanktionen mit vollzieht. Ehrlich gesagt: Für mich war das ein entscheidender Moment für diesen Bericht. Ich hätte die Berichterstattung, die Rolle als Chefverhandler hier zurückgelegt, hätte die Schweiz nicht, sofort zu Kriegsbeginn übrigens, diese Entscheidung getroffen. Das wird positiv zum Ausdruck gebracht, und jetzt gibt es viele Ebenen der Zusammenarbeit, auch „Sky Shield“ zur Luftabwehr, wo neben meinem Heimatland Österreich eben auch die Schweiz und andere inkludiert sind.

Das sind Linien, die man aufgreifen kann in zukünftigen Verhandlungen, Herr Kommissar, Herr Vizepräsident, mit dem Schweizer Bundesrat. Wir müssen diese offenen institutionellen Fragen im genannten Sinn lösen. Aber wir dürfen breiter denken, auch an Geopolitik, an Wissenschaft und an Sicherheit. Das bringt der Bericht des Europäischen Parlaments über die Beziehungen EU-Schweiz zum Ausdruck.

Jörgen Warborn, *föredragande av yttrande från utskottet för internationell handel*. – Herr talman! Kommissionär Šefčovič! Jag välkomnar Lukas Mandls betänkande om EU:s relationer med Schweiz, som ju betonar vikten av att upprätthålla starka, stabila och långvariga handelsförbindelser med EU:s fjärde största handelspartner.

Tack vare vårt frihandelsavtal kan svenska och europeiska företag dra nytta av nästan 100 procent tullfri handel. Ändå finns det hinder för friktionsfria affärer. Och därför beklagar jag att det schweiziska förbundsrådet avslutade förhandlingarna om det institutionella ramavtalet, en överenskommelse som hade gett mer stabilitet, mer förutsägbarhet och fler affärsmöjligheter.

Jag uppmanar därför kommissionen och det schweiziska förbundsrådet att modernisera vårt frihandelsavtal, att hitta en pragmatisk lösning på de rådande problem som hindrar oss från att binda närmare handelsrelationer. I dessa tider av ekonomisk osäkerhet, där svensk och europeisk konkurrenskraft står på spel, är det avgörande att vi tar varje tillfälle i akt att fördjupa våra handelsförbindelser, främja affärsmöjligheter och säkra jobbtillväxt.

Hannes Heide, *Berichterstatler des CULT-Ausschusses*. – Herr Präsident! Es kann uns nichts Besseres passieren, als dass wir im Europäischen Parlament über ein Europa der Menschen, über Bildung und Möglichkeiten für Jugendliche nicht nur reden, sondern auch handeln –, und das tun wir, wenn wir die Beziehungen der Schweiz und der EU thematisieren. Seit 2014 ist die Schweiz nicht mehr in Erasmus+ assoziiert, und nach dem Scheitern der Verhandlungen über ein Rahmenabkommen wurde das Land auch in Horizont Europa auf den Status eines nicht assoziierten Drittstaates herabgestuft, obwohl die Zusammenarbeit hervorragend funktioniert hat, obwohl alle organisatorischen Strukturen vorhanden sind.

Schweizer Hochschulen suchen seitdem nach Partnern. Zuletzt suchte sich die Universität Bern einen Partner und hat sich der Europäischen Hochschulallianz angeschlossen. Und es sind auch Studierende aus der Europäischen Union, die mindestens im gleichen Ausmaß unter einem Ausschluss der Schweiz aus Erasmus+ leiden. Der Bildungsbereich als wichtiger Faktor für die nachhaltige Entwicklung Europas rechtfertigt daher eine Sonderstellung. Mit Rosinenpicken hat das nichts zu tun.

Selbst wenn sich Verhandlungen schwierig gestalten oder gar scheitern, dürfen junge Menschen dabei niemals zu einem Faustpfand werden. Eine Schweizer Teilnahme auch am Solidaritätskorps und an den Kulturhauptstädten Europas stärkt europäische Werte und lässt Menschen in der Schweiz und der EU gleichermaßen näher aneinanderrücken.

Maroš Šefčovič, *Executive Vice-President of the Commission*. – Mr President, honourable Members, first and foremost, I would like to thank you for your work on this report and especially our rapporteur, Mr Lukas Mandl, and your report is indeed very timely.

As you know, in May 2021, Switzerland unilaterally terminated the negotiations for the Institutional Framework Agreement (IFA). The Commission strongly regretted this decision as the IFA would have provided a very good and necessary basis for a modern EU-Switzerland relationship. I took over this file during that time and I met the Foreign Minister in November 2021, making the EU's position quite clear. In February last year, Switzerland presented its new approach to our bilateral relationship. Based on that, over the past 18 months, the two sides have engaged in exploratory talks on the future EU-Switzerland relations.

The Commission welcomes this new and renewed engagement from our Swiss neighbours. Our aim has always been to finalise the exploratory talks early enough to engage and conclude the formal negotiations before the end of the current term or ideally before the next European elections.

The Commission's objective is to confirm that our views on the key issues, notably on institutional matters and on free movement of persons, are convergent enough to engage in new negotiations and to avoid a second failure.

I am confident that the European Parliament's report will provide an additional stimulus to the process. I therefore welcome your call to identify a systemic solution to structural problems that currently hamper our relationship. This is indeed at the core of the Commission's negotiations with Switzerland, because it would create a legal certainty for citizens and businesses, as well as a level playing field in areas where our companies compete. Principles such as dynamic alignment, dispute settlement with a clear role for the Court of Justice of the European Union are among the key elements that need to be part of the institutional solution. So is the fair and permanent contribution to the Union's cohesion policy. And this goes hand in hand with Swiss access to our internal market, a privilege that Switzerland enjoys already. So is the level playing field with a clear and effective State aid provisions.

Honourable Members, it is no secret that the most difficult elements of our discussions with Switzerland are related to the free movement of persons. This directly affects the rights and essentially the daily lives of many EU citizens working and living in Switzerland, as well as businesses based in the EU providing their services across the border. As the report points out, we consider that Switzerland currently does not fully implement its obligations under the existing Free Movement of Persons Agreement.

Our aim in this area is to identify solutions for all the issues that EU citizens and businesses currently face. These discussions are very difficult, but it is clear that the success of our work and our relationship in general will depend on our ability to deal with this very important area and find mutually agreeable solutions to it.

Honourable Members, Mr President, our work with Switzerland covers a broad package of measures, which reflect both sides' interests in their relationship. In addition to the key institutional issues that I already outlined, we are also discussing ways to engage in a closer cooperation across a range of areas. In line with that, we have agreed that the broad package that we intend to negotiate would also include Switzerland's association to Union programmes such as Horizon Europe or Erasmus+. We also aim to revive the previously suspended negotiations on electricity, health and food safety. I am confident this package, once agreed, will greatly improve our bilateral relations for the benefit of citizens and businesses on both sides of the border.

If you allow me now to move to EU-Switzerland cooperation on foreign and security policy, the EU – together with partners such as Switzerland – has been acting on, upholding, and supporting the shared political values and security of the continent in promoting and preserving peace and stability across the world, including through common action in multilateral fora.

This strong partnership is evident in the context of the ongoing Russian war of aggression against Ukraine, where we work together with Switzerland as non-permanent member of the UN Security Council as well as on sanctions. On the latter, with some exceptions, Switzerland replicated almost all related EU measures thus far.

Where appropriate, the EU has invited Switzerland to participate in the EU Freeze and Seize Task Force meetings. We have, therefore, a good basis for deepening our joint endeavours on sanctions implementation. Looking at the wider security discussions and policy, we appreciate Switzerland's valued partnership and its contribution to common security and defence policy missions.

Honourable Members, the Commission is willing to finalise the exploratory process and move to a formal negotiation on the broad package, including both the EU and Swiss priorities as soon as possible. And we hope that Switzerland will be in a position to close the discussions on the remaining open issues as quickly as possible.

Andreas Schwab, *im Namen der PPE-Fraktion*. – Herr Präsident, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Zunächst einmal gilt natürlich auch mein Dank Lukas Mandl, der exzellente Arbeit geleistet hat und der uns wieder in Erinnerung ruft – es ist ja schon viel gesagt worden –, dass 2021 sich der Schweizer Bundesrat unerfreulicherweise dazu entschlossen hatte, einseitig die Verhandlungen über ein umfassendes Abkommen, ein horizontales Abkommen mit der Europäischen Union, zu beenden. Bedauernswert deshalb, weil damit die Fragen einer vertieften Kooperation zwischen der Europäischen Union einerseits und der Schweizerischen Eidgenossenschaft andererseits nicht gelöst, sondern nur in die Zukunft verschoben wurden.

Wir wollen enger mit den Schweizern zusammenarbeiten, auf Augenhöhe, im Respekt der gegenseitigen Souveränität, aber eben auch auf einer fairen und gesetzlich, vertraglich geregelten Basis. Das gilt zunächst einmal für den Strom, Herr Kommissar, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Ich glaube, wir müssen sicherstellen, dass im Bereich der Elektrizität kein neuer Röstigraben zwischen der Europäischen Union und der Schweizerischen Eidgenossenschaft entstehen kann, denn ein einheitlicher Binnenmarkt für Elektrizität und Netze schafft Resilienz und Sicherheit für beide Partner.

Dabei wäre das Zeitfenster für ein EU-Schweiz-Abkommen derzeit so günstig wie nie zuvor. In Europa tobt – es ist schon erwähnt worden – der russische Angriffskrieg gegen die Ukraine. Die Europäische Union hat daher ein großes Interesse an noch engeren Beziehungen mit ihren demokratischen Nachbarstaaten. Auch der Schweizer Nationalrat, das Parlament, und der Ständerat, die Regionenkammer, haben das gleiche Vorhaben.

Zweitens gilt es natürlich auch für den Schweizer Beitrag zur Kohäsion, der noch nicht angesprochen wurde. Im Vergleich zu den EWR-Staaten ist der Schweizer Beitrag nach wie vor einfach zu gering, zumal die Schweiz wirtschaftlich und politisch stark von der Stabilität im Umfeld der Europäischen Union profitiert. Man ist versucht, als Europäer zu rufen: Hopp, Schwyz!

Deswegen, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen, glaube ich, dass wir den Bericht annehmen sollten und weiterverhandeln, bis wir am Ziel sind: einer engeren Zusammenarbeit.

Andreas Schieder, *im Namen der S&D-Fraktion*. – Herr Präsident, sehr geehrte Damen und Herren, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Mein Dank gilt auch dem Berichterstatter und meinem Kollegen aus Österreich, Lukas Mandl, und auch dem Vizepräsidenten Maroš Šefčovič, der immer auch sehr unterstützend, auch sachlich, sehr intensiv und offen mit dem Europäischen Parlament zusammenarbeitet.

Liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen, die Schweiz liegt in der Mitte Europas und es sind nicht nur die Liebe zu den Bergen, der Skisport oder die Schokolade, die uns verbinden, sondern es sind auch eineinhalb Millionen EU-Bürgerinnen und -Bürger, die in der Schweiz leben und dort arbeiten. Daher freut es mich auch, dass zwischen der Schweiz und der Europäischen Union wieder ein Klima herrscht, wo man an den Verhandlungstisch für die Erneuerung von Verträgen zurückgekehrt ist.

Mir persönlich sind da zwei Punkte ganz besonders wichtig. Das eine ist: Dieses Personenfreizügigkeitsabkommen mit all seinen Verpflichtungen muss von der Schweiz ausnahmslos umgesetzt werden. Andererseits: Die sogenannten Flankierungsmaßnahmen müssen auch den Schutz der hohen Sozialstandards sowie auch den effizienten und diskriminierungsfreien Schutz der Rechte der Arbeitnehmerinnen und Arbeitnehmer gewährleisten, und das auch uns in Europa so wichtige Prinzip „Gleicher Lohn für gleiche Arbeit am gleichen Ort“ für mobile Entsandte und örtliche Arbeitnehmerinnen und Arbeitnehmer ist anzuwenden und umzusetzen.

Auf der anderen Seite ist es auch wichtig, den Kampf gegen Lohn- und Sozialdumping ganz oben auf die Prioritätenliste zu stellen und eine bessere und engere Zusammenarbeit im Kampf gegen Steuerbetrug, Geldwäsche und Steuerhinterziehung zu gewährleisten. Nutzen wir das Momentum und verhandeln wir ein ausgewogenes und umfassendes Abkommen mit der Schweiz.

Christophe Grudler, *au nom du groupe Renew*. – Monsieur le Président, Monsieur le Commissaire, chers collègues, la Suisse est au cœur de l'Europe et il est grand temps que nos relations le reflètent pleinement. Nos concitoyens de Bourgogne-Franche-Comté, du Bade-Wurtemberg, du Sud-Tyrol, du Milanais, tous méritent une meilleure coopération transfrontalière, moins d'obstacles et plus d'opportunités.

Alors oui, la Suisse ne fait pas partie de l'Union européenne. Je le regrette car cela permettrait de faciliter plus encore la vie de tous les citoyens. Mais cela ne semble pas être la volonté du peuple suisse pour le moment et je le respecte parfaitement. Mais cela ne doit pas nous empêcher de collaborer plus étroitement. Imaginons davantage de synergies en matière d'énergie, d'électricité, de stockage, en matière de santé, où la Suisse excelle, et en tant d'autres domaines encore. Tout cela, nous l'appelons de nos vœux. Mais pour y parvenir, nous avons besoin de règles communes qui respectent l'intégrité du marché unique que nous partageons. Un respect, y compris par la Suisse, évidemment.

Chers collègues, chers amis suisses, nous avons une opportunité à saisir entre les élections fédérales suisses et les élections européennes. Passons à l'action. Il est grand temps de lancer des négociations rapides pour un nouveau pacte de coopération entre l'Union européenne et la Suisse. Nos concitoyens nous remercieront pour cela. Ils n'attendent que cela.

Anna Deparnay-Grunenberg, *im Namen der Verts/ALE-Fraktion*. – Herr Präsident, verehrte Kolleginnen und Kollegen! EU-Schweiz-Beziehungsstatus: *It's complicated*. Das haben wir gehört. Schon länger war die Schweiz hier im EU-Plenum kein Thema mehr. Endlich sprechen wir heute wieder darüber, dass wir als EU mit der Schweiz endlich wieder enger zusammenarbeiten wollen und müssen.

Einige grundlegende Anliegen von uns als Europäisches Parlament haben wir mit diesem EU-Schweiz-Bericht erarbeitet und damit klargestellt: Die Schweiz ist und bleibt ein wichtiger Partner der EU. Sie gehört in Horizont Europa, Erasmus +, in die verschiedenen Klimaschutz- und andere Programme, damit grenzüberschreitendes Leben und Arbeiten, auch bei uns in Baden-Württemberg, zwischen EU und Schweiz einfach und unbürokratisch wird und bleibt.

Darauf basierend müssen wir die Beziehungen zwischen der EU und der Schweiz wieder in Schwung bringen. Wir können es uns nicht leisten, politisch noch weiter auseinanderzudriften, wie es in den letzten Jahren passiert ist. Einige bilaterale Abkommen stehen jetzt vor dem Aus. Dabei sind es die Menschen, die im Alltag doch unglaublich vernetzt sind: Über 320 000 Menschen pendeln jeden Tag über die Grenze. Wir brauchen ein Europa, das eine unsichtbare und offene Grenze an dieser Stelle hat. Unsere Wirtschaften sind unendlich vernetzt, Unternehmen gedeihen in der Grenzregion und operieren in beiden Ländern. Sie brauchen Sicherheit, wie es weitergeht.

Und unsere Ökosysteme sind vernetzt: Klimawandel betrifft uns ja alle. Waldbrände machen nicht vor Grenzen halt. Wir werden immer zusammenarbeiten. Es geht nicht darum, Souveränität abzugeben, sondern gemeinsam für unsere Werte, für Frieden, Freiheit, Wohlstand und Klimaschutz, einzustehen.

Alessandro Panza, a nome del gruppo ID. – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, signor Commissario, grazie per aver portato a termine un lavoro decisamente più equilibrato rispetto ad altre posizioni più ideologizzate, nonostante alcune imperdonabili lacune geografiche.

Non vengono citate, infatti, regioni importanti che hanno rapporti storici, culturali, economici e linguistici con la Svizzera, come la Lombardia, la Valle d'Aosta e soprattutto il Piemonte. Ricordo, collega, che da queste regioni proviene quasi un terzo dei lavoratori frontalieri che ogni giorno varcano il confine elvetico.

Vorrei, pur condividendo nel suo insieme il testo, rimarcare tuttavia che la Svizzera rimane uno Stato sovrano, indipendente, seriamente democratico, con il quale l'Unione europea deve impegnarsi a collaborare senza paternalismi e senza pretese che vadano oltre il proprio mandato.

Il 22 ottobre prossimo i cittadini elvetici saranno chiamati al voto per le elezioni federali. Auspico che Parlamento e Commissione abbiano l'intelligenza di rispettare l'esito delle urne, impegnandosi a proseguire un dialogo costruttivo e concreto con il governo svizzero al fine di tutelare lavoratori, imprese e cittadini da ambo le parti.

La Svizzera è un partner strategico per l'Europa e soprattutto per i paesi confinanti, non dimentichiamolo mai.

Francisco José Millán Mon (PPE). – Señor presidente, señor Mandl, estamos en una situación extraordinaria en Europa debido a la invasión rusa de Ucrania. Tenemos que seguir apoyando a Ucrania. Y yo celebro que Suiza haya condenado el comportamiento de Rusia en las Naciones Unidas y se haya sumado a los paquetes de sanciones que hemos adoptado. Ucrania necesita de forma urgente más armas y más material de guerra. Suiza debería levantar sus limitaciones a la reexportación a Ucrania de material de guerra fabricado allí.

Quiero referirme también a la necesidad de actualizar los instrumentos jurídico- institucionales de nuestra relación con Suiza, basada hoy en numerosísimos acuerdos –más de cien– muy antiguos. Necesitamos un acuerdo marco, como ya se ha dicho, que permita una gestión más estructurada y ágil de la relación, y que incluya un mecanismo de solución de controversias. Suiza no debería oponerse a esta modernización institucional que facilitaría la relación con la Unión Europea. La Unión Europea es su primer socio comercial y recibe más del 50 % de las exportaciones de Suiza. Es necesario que su legislación se adapte más ágilmente a la legislación de la Unión y se deben evitar obstáculos en las relaciones económicas y comerciales.

Todos saldremos beneficiados si el marco institucional se moderniza y si la relación se actualiza. Espero que el Gobierno suizo, tras las elecciones de octubre, se dé cuenta de ello.

Marek Belka (S&D). – Mr President, in mid-2021 we were highly disappointed by the decision of the Swiss Federal Government to terminate negotiations with the Commission on an institutional framework agreement. Already then I have expressed hope that the EU and Switzerland will return to the negotiating table as we remain key trade and investment partners. We cannot rely on a number of outdated bilateral agreements which govern our economic relations. In order to safeguard frictionless trade, we have to modernise legislation on reciprocal market access for industrial goods, customs facilitation, free movement of persons, technical barriers to trade and public procurement. Even if we assume that sufficient time has passed to resume negotiations, one thing should remain clear: we cannot allow for cherry picking and tackling bilateral agreements one by one. A comprehensive framework agreement is the only proper way to tackle our deep political, economic and social ties and properly respond to our common challenges in the areas of climate change, digitalisation, workers' rights and social cohesion.

Catch-the-eye procedure

Katarína Roth Neveďalová (S&D). – Pán predsedajúci, pri obchodovaní a uzatváraní dohody je veľmi dôležitý správny výber partnerov.

Európska únia neustále hľadá rovnako zmýšľajúcich partnerov, ktorým záleží napríklad na dodržiavaní práv pracovníkov, ochrany spotrebiteľov a životného prostredia, alebo aj spravodlivosti na trhu práce.

Európska únia má so Švajčiarskom veľa spoločného, čo sa týka hospodárstva, sociálnych vecí alebo aj kultúry. Pri Švajčiarsku máme istotu dodržiavania spomenutých podmienok, a navyše dlhodobo dobré vzťahy krajiny so svojimi susedmi naznačujú stabilitu a dôveryhodnosť.

Momentálne vzťahy Európskej únie so Švajčiarskom považujem za nevyvážené. Vzjomne sa potrebujeme viac ako nikdy predtým. A možno je ten najvyšší čas, aby sme vzťahy s touto krajinou upevnili. O čo by som chcela požiadať v tejto snemovni? Napríklad ako bolo spomenuté pri boji proti praniu špinavých peňazí alebo sociálnemu dumpingu. V minulosti sme už prepásli niekoľko takýchto príležitostí, najmä v oblasti bezpečnosti a výskumu, a podcenili, či dokonca premárnili. A toto by sme nemali zopakovať.

Myslím si, že podpora k takejto správe bude v tejto snemovni viac menej jednotná.

(End of catch-the-eye procedure)

Maroš Šefčovič, Executive Vice-President of the Commission. – Mr President, honourable Members, first and foremost, thank you very much for all your interventions, which clearly demonstrate that you lead with this file, you know the details. And we all wish for the same: to improve and upgrade our overall relationship with Switzerland.

It was underlined by our colleague, my compatriot Ms Roth Neveďalová and by the honourable Member Mr Millán Món, who was also asking how much time and what needs to be done so we can launch this broad package of negotiations. And here of course, we would respect the political cycle of Switzerland, the pace of their work, and our pace of work would very much depend on the progress on the Swiss side.

So hopefully we can finalise and cover the remaining gaps which are there on discussing the common understanding document, which would pave the way for launching this broad package of negotiations. And I hope once the preparatory work is done properly, then the negotiations can proceed rather swiftly.

While we are talking about the broad package and broad negotiations, on top of the things we have been negotiating before we also would be ready to include in our negotiations Switzerland's association to the Union's programmes, such as Horizon Europe and Erasmus+ – and several honourable Members, Mr Mandl, Mr Heide and Mr Schwab made reference to this point – but also to work together on previously suspended negotiations on electricity, health and food safety.

Of course, what is key there – and I know that you understand it very well – is clear agreement on the dynamic alignment, because if you trade with such a highly regulated commodity like electricity, we have to have the same rules, we have to have the same obligation and we have to have clear dynamic alignment in place.

On our side, we'll do our utmost to be well prepared, to be ready. We are in contact – I would say intense and permanent – with our Swiss partners. And we hope that after the elections we can finalise our work on common understanding and proceed to the broad package intense negotiations. And that, I believe, would lead us to what Mr Belka was advocating for, together with all other MEPs: a new, modern upgraded relationship with Switzerland.

Lukas Mandl, *Berichterstatter*. – Herr Präsident, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Herr Vizepräsident, danke, dass Sie auf fast jede Wortmeldung in dieser parlamentarischen Debatte, in dieser Reflexion eingegangen sind. Das zeigt, wie sachlich wir hier im Europäischen Parlament den Schweiz-Bericht debattieren und wie hilfreich – hoffentlich nicht nur für die Europäische Kommission, sondern auch für den Schweizer Bundesrat – dieser Bericht des Europäischen Parlaments sein kann.

Ich habe mich darum beworben, diesen Bericht zu übernehmen, nachdem Jean-Claude Juncker, der ehemalige Kommissionspräsident, zum Wechsel der Perioden gesagt hat: Unter den wenigen Dingen, die er bereue, sei, dass mit der Schweiz kein Rahmenvertrag zustande gekommen sei. Besonders als Österreicher habe ich mir damals gedacht: Vielleicht kann ich einen parlamentarischen Beitrag dazu leisten, aber nicht alleine, sondern wie alles, was in einem Parlament geschieht, gemeinsam mit den Kolleginnen und Kollegen.

Deshalb möchte ich Danke sagen zum Abschluss dieser zweieinhalb Jahre und dieser Monate des intensiven Verhandels – vor allem an die Mitverhandlerinnen und Mitverhandler hier im Europäischen Parlament, allen voran für die zweitgrößte Fraktion hier im Haus, die Sozialdemokraten, meinen österreichischen Landsmann Andreas Schieder.

Ich möchte aber auch Danke sagen an die Europäische Kommission und den Herrn Vizepräsidenten und sein Team für die gute Zusammenarbeit und auch an die Schweizer Seite, vor allem an die Kantone, die sich sehr, sehr konstruktiv eingebracht haben, und an die Kolleginnen und Kollegen im Schweizer Parlament. Das ist ja kein Schlusspunkt, sondern es ist ein Beschluss, der darauf hindeutet, was alles in der Zusammenarbeit zwischen der Schweiz und der Europäischen Union möglich ist.

Ich möchte auch Danke sagen an mein Beratungsteam Caroline Parsché jetzt, Kevin Kaiser in den vergangenen Jahren und auch Blagoy Klimov seitens der parlamentarischen Fraktion, die diesen Prozess entsprechend unterstützt haben.

Der Ball liegt jetzt in den Händen der Europäischen Kommission und des Bundesrates. Wir werden das, wie wir es immer tun, parlamentarisch aufmerksam, kritisch, aber konstruktiv kritisch begleiten. Einen Gedanken möchte ich hier noch anführen und mitgeben: Wir müssen uns von der Überlegung verabschieden, dass, wenn einer in Verhandlungen gewinnt, der andere unbedingt verlieren muss. Das wird nicht so sein zwischen EU-Kommission und Bundesrat, zwischen EU und Schweiz. Beide werden gewinnen, wenn wir es richtig machen, und es gibt sehr viel zu gewinnen – für die Schweiz, das wissen wir hier besonders gut, aber auch für die EU gibt es viel zu gewinnen.

President. – The debate is closed. The vote will take place tomorrow, Wednesday 4 October.

19. Usbekistan (forhandling)

Sēdes vadītājs. – Nākamais darba kārtības punkts ir debates par Ilhan Kyuchyuk ziņojumu Ārlietu komitejas vārdā par Uzbekistānu (2022/2195(INI)) (A9-0227/2023).

Ilhan Kyuchyuk, *rapporteur*. – Mr President, dear Commissioner, dear colleagues, this report tells us a lot about it. Firstly, the EU-Uzbekistan relationship as of 2023 and the important transformation which Uzbekistan has gone through. Secondly, the new geostrategic importance of the EU's Central Asian relations, with Uzbekistan playing a central role. Thirdly, the very positive regional integration initiatives, which have been taken by all Central Asian republics. And finally, the many hurdles, which still exist in terms of human rights and environmental protection, but which stand ready to be tackled and improved.

I am proud to say that our House, the European Parliament, often manages to find a constructive consensus on difficult policies. Today's report on Uzbekistan is no exception. Our report received broad and solid backing from across political parties as well as European institutions and Member States during the AFET Committee vote.

One might start asking oneself: 'Why is this report so relevant for the EU today, both here in Parliament as well as across other EU institutions and in Member State capitals?' And I tell you the answer: it is because our relationship with Central Asia has changed dramatically since the war in Ukraine and because the relationship represents an important strategic milestone in EU foreign policy. And the number of visits to the region is unprecedented and speaks for itself.

Times are changing fast and the EU of our early careers is becoming a mature union of principles, strategically sovereign choices and inevitable power projection, which comes with new responsibilities. The war in Ukraine told us that we must be able to defend our values and interests and seek out like-minded, new and independent partnerships for regional integration, water security, digital safety, supply chains, connectivity, critical raw materials and the environment, all of which are key in Uzbekistan and across other parts of Central Asia.

This is because Uzbekistan and Central Asia are rich in minerals needed for our renewable transition. And because this is a highly skilled and educated region with existing supply chain infrastructure and with relatively low levels of conflict compared to elsewhere. It is also because it's part of the post-Soviet group of countries that are keenly seeking to break away from Russia and form a new and equal relationship with the EU and their own regional neighbours.

Another very important reason why this report is relevant is because it both highlights the important geoeconomic and geopolitical priorities, while showing important developments made by Uzbekistan over the past decade – as well as the remaining issues and pitfalls, namely surrounding human rights. It is important to stay realistic and fact based on this sensitive subject.

Firstly, Uzbekistan continues to encounter serious human rights breaches. This is clear when taking into account EU delegation as well as international and local civil society assessments and reports. The most urgent point to raise is that civil society registration remains biased and difficult, while better legal protection and civil society registration should be diligently pursued by the Uzbek Government and carefully monitored.

This is not only because it is a key component of the relationship with the EU, but equally because labour, environmental and human rights are prerequisites for future EU private sector investments and supply chains across the region as part of the EU diligence legislation.

Despite these challenges, it should, however, be noted that Uzbekistan has – in relative terms – progressed more than most countries in the same time span.

Margaritis Schinas, *Vice-President of the Commission*. – Mr President, honourable Members of the European Parliament. Uzbekistan is an important partner for the European Union in a region of high strategic value. Uzbekistan is a young country that is rapidly growing. Its recent evolution since the death of post-independence President Karimov has been remarkable.

I had the chance personally to appreciate Uzbekistan's stance during the crisis we faced a couple of years ago with instrumentalisation of migration by the Belarus regime, and I had the chance to appreciate the commitment of the President of the Government of Uzbekistan in helping Europe in a moment of need.

The report, presented by Rapporteur Kyuchyuk strikes a good balance, highlighting the progress that the country has achieved and pointing to persistent challenges and weaknesses that require further attention. The European Union is actively engaged in building a stronger partnership with Uzbekistan. Last year in July, we initialled the new Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with Uzbekistan that will extend our cooperation into new areas, deepening it across the board.

Shortly before that, in April last year, we admitted Uzbekistan to the GSP+, the Generalised System of Preferences Plus scheme, cutting tariffs on imports to reward and further incentivise progress in ratifying and implementing international agreements on human rights, good governance and the environment.

The EU is an important cooperation partner for Uzbekistan. The Multiannual Indicative Programme allocation for the period 2021-2024 is around EUR 76 million, and it focuses on three priority areas effective governance and digital transformation, inclusive and green growth and the development of a smart, eco-friendly agrifood sector.

A key feature of the new programme is a Team Europe Initiative that aims at facilitating the development of the country's agrifood sector, a key driver of employment and economic growth in an inclusive, green, sustainable, gender-responsive and climate-smart manner. The EU contribution to this overall Team Europe Initiative is a budget support programme of around EUR 27 million last year.

The country is an active advocate and driver of closer regional cooperation and works hard to be a constructive partner in multilateral fora. The EU supports Uzbekistan's application to join the World Trade Organisation, including through a EUR 5 million project. We also note that the country has taken what it calls a 'balanced, neutral position' on Russia's invasion of Ukraine in view of its traditionally close ties with Russia. In the current geopolitical context, Uzbekistan aims to diversify away from its dependencies and seize its relationship with the EU in that context of diversifying away from the factors that make its economy dependent.

The European Commission has worked closely with Uzbekistan to address the sensitive and very important for us issue of circumventing international sanctions on Russia. The country still has some way to go in that respect to be able to live up to its international obligations and to implement the word of its President, namely on delivering political reform and guaranteeing freedom of expression and freedom of assembly.

We do, as the European Union, raise these issues with Uzbekistan at every opportunity and at all levels. Human rights and democracy are core elements of our new agreement, and, of course, they are the foundation that underpin GSP+. As we build closer to relations with Uzbekistan, we will strengthen our dialogue to hold our partners to deliver on their promises and to pursue a broad path of reforms.

Liudas Mažylis, PPE frakcijos vardu. – Dėkoju, Pirmininke, Komisare, kolegos. Šių dienų geopolitinis kontekstas verčia apgalvoti strateginių partnerių pasirinkimą. Rusijai eskaluojant agresyvų, neteisėtą, karą Ukrainoje, Centrinės Azijos regionas įgyja papildomos svarbos. Uzbekistanas yra raktinė regiono valstybė, siekianti įvairinti savo ekonominę ir prekybinę priklausomybę nuo Rusijos. Tad tvirtesnio partnerystės ir bendradarbiavimo susitarimo sudarymą, GSP Plus suteikimą laikau sveikintinu. Galima konstatuoti teigiamus Uzbekistano vyriausybės veiksmus, pavyzdžiui, regioninė diplomatija vandens srityje, kova su neteisėta imigracija, organizuotu nusikalstamumu ir terorizmu. Europa gali padėti ir padeda Uzbekistanui žengti reformų keliu, teikti techninę pagalbą, taip pat ir vykdant žaliąją pertvarką. Kartu negalima pamiršti, kad ten klesti korupcija, varžoma žiniasklaidos laisvė, trūksta politinio pliuralizmo, esama rimtų žmogaus teisių pažeidimų. Ypatingą nerimą kelia pagrįstos spėlionės, ar tikrai sankcijos Rusijai nėra apeidinėjamos būtent per Centrinės Azijos regiono valstybes. Išlaikydamas atsargumą išreiškiu pritarimą pranešimui, pabrėždamas, kad situacija Centrinėje Azijoje yra kintanti ir raidos dinamika turi būti ypatingai dėmesingai stebima.

Karsten Lucke, im Namen der S&D-Fraktion. – Herr Präsident, Herr Kommissar, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Wir schauen uns derzeit im Auswärtigen Ausschuss Zentralasien aus geostrategischer Perspektive an. Mein Bericht zur EU-Zentralasien-Strategie befindet sich gerade im parlamentarischen Prozess. Daher ist dieser sehr gute, umfassende und ausgewogene Bericht heute zu Usbekistan ein idealer Moment, um die europäisch-zentralasiatischen Beziehungen energisch und auch nachhaltig voranzutreiben.

Ich bin überzeugt und werbe sehr stark dafür, dass wir unsere Kooperation mit Usbekistan deutlich ausbauen. Wir haben in diesem Bericht auch deutlich gemacht, wo die vielfältigen Chancen und Potenziale liegen: Sicherheit, Konnektivität, Energiediversifizierung, Konfliktlösung, die multilaterale regelbasierte Ordnung, und das sind nur die großen Säulen der Kooperation, die hier zu nennen sind.

Gleichzeitig haben wir deutlich gemacht, dass Usbekistan aus unserer Perspektive auch innenpolitisch noch Hausaufgaben zu erledigen hat, wenn es um Schutz und Wahrung der Menschenrechte geht, um Ausbau der Demokratie, Meinungs- und Medienfreiheit und Rechtsstaatlichkeit.

Wir können festhalten, dass wir diverse Bereiche der Zusammenarbeit und vielfältige Kooperationen haben. Das neue Partnerschafts- und Kooperationsabkommen ist ein ideales Tool, das wir nutzen sollten, denn der Ausbau der usbekisch-europäischen Partnerschaft ist eine Win-win-Situation und wir brauchen jetzt den politischen Willen und auch die Dynamik, wirklich diesen Weg zu gehen.

Viola von Cramon-Taubadel, *on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group*. – Mr President, Commissioner, dear colleagues, with its young, hard-working population, natural resources and rich history, Uzbekistan has everything it needs to become Central Asia's success story.

However, its people are struggling, its resources and land are eroding, and China and Russia – its autocratic neighbours – have turned it into their personal playground. The EU cannot decide to engage in more trade while turning a blind eye to the human rights abuses in Uzbekistan. Sure, working conditions in the cotton fields are improving, child labour is largely outlawed, but there is still a long way to go. Water resources are being mismanaged, cities are covered in toxic dust and the country is partly being turned into a desert. An ecological disaster looms over the 35 million people in Uzbekistan if these processes are not reversed.

The next EU enlargement will bring Uzbekistan much closer to the EU. Its people deserve a democratic alternative to China and Russia. The EU must be more present in Central Asia so it can do more for improving the lives of people and protecting its unique ecosystem.

Thierry Mariani, *au nom du groupe ID*. – Monsieur le Président, l'Union européenne a enfin compris que les pays d'Asie centrale méritent toute notre attention. L'Ouzbékistan, il est vrai, est un pays essentiel pour l'Europe. Son dynamisme économique, sa lutte déterminée contre les radicalismes et ses contacts constructifs avec l'Afghanistan en font un pays déterminant dans la région.

Comme le note le rapport, il est donc urgent de continuer à approfondir et à intensifier nos relations avec Tachkent. Il convient cependant d'y agir en acteur raisonnable. Ceux qui prônent un investissement dans la région pour défier la Chine ou la Russie agissent avec arrogance et aveuglement. L'Asie centrale est la zone exemplaire de l'émergence d'un monde multipolaire où il convient d'agir en respectant parfaitement la souveraineté et l'intégrité des institutions ouzbèkes. À cet égard, je le regrette encore une fois, un tiers des articles environ de la résolution consiste à donner des leçons de démocratie à un pays dont l'indépendance remonte à 1991.

Nous nous abstiendrons donc sur ce rapport qui sonne un peu comme une occasion manquée. Les progrès de l'Ouzbékistan sont reconnus par tous les observateurs sérieux dans la région et ils méritent d'être mieux encouragés.

Katarína Roth Nevedálová (S&D). – Pán predsedajúci, Uzbekistan je najľudnatejšou krajinou Strednej Ázie a takisto krajinou s najmladším obyvateľstvom v tomto regióne. Považujem za veľmi dôležité za posledné obdobie, že nastal pokrok v zlepšení pracovných podmienok. Eliminovaná sa detská práca v tejto krajine a takisto aj práca, ktorú považujeme za nútenú.

Myslím si ale, že je dôležité zdôrazniť, že síce aj keď Uzbekistan už pristúpil k niektorým dohovorom medzinárodnej organizácie práce, tak stále sú niektoré medzinárodné štandardy, ktoré ešte stále nemá prijaté do svojej národnej legislatívy. A v tomto by sme mali podporiť. Napríklad férové odmeňovanie ľudí pracujúcich na bojovníkoch poliach, alebo bezpečnosť pri práci.

Považujem Uzbekistan za dôležitého regionálneho partnera, ktorý dokáže zabezpečiť stabilitu a bezpečnosť v tomto regióne, a preto by sme mali s ním oveľa viacej pracovať aj na diplomatickej úrovni, a mali by byť naše kontakty oveľa viac pravidelné.

Myslím si, že tieto vzťahy by sme mali zlepšovať na bilaterálnej úrovni. Takisto by sme mali zlepšovať svoj vzájomný obchod s touto krajinou a spoločne bojovať proti organizovanému zločinu, terorizmu a takisto podporovať zelenú transformáciu v tejto krajine a viac využívanie zelenej energie.

Margaritis Schinas, *Vice-President of the Commission*. – Mr President, honourable Members, thank you for your continued interest in Uzbekistan. Your political engagement, and that of our rapporteur, will be seen not only in Tashkent, but I am sure will also be felt across Central Asia and beyond.

On a more personal note, as a Greek from Macedonia, I feel particularly sensitive around Uzbekistan, as my compatriot Alexander the Great many centuries ago reached that country, performed lots of productive and cultural investments there, and is still revered and admired as a force of good by the people of Uzbekistan. They still think that 'Iskandar' is a force of good.

The EU will continue to be a force of good, of modern times, for Uzbekistan, recognising the country's growing importance as a regional and international partner. In doing so, we will not hesitate to hold Uzbekistan to a high standard and to speak in frankness, as friends normally do, where shortcomings exist.

Above all, we will offer our partnership and support Uzbekistan as it pursues its important programme of reforms and addresses the many challenges identified in the report presented by the House today.

Ilhan Kyuchyuk, *rapporteur*. – Mr President, I wish to thank the Commissioner again for his concluding remarks and to thank colleagues for their input. I fully agree with those saying that we need more diplomacy and cooperation with Uzbekistan, not less.

Let me conclude by saying what is the most important part of the discussion and what is the way forward, actually. First, I think we should continue to carefully monitor the NGOs and civil society registration process in Uzbekistan. This will be important both for human, environmental and labour rights under due diligence, and therefore also affecting the business and investment climate.

Secondly, increase the EU-Uzbekistan security and digital engagement dialogues. This is a key prerequisite for EU and private sector risk assessment for existing, future and new supply chain hubs in the region, especially ahead of the new year's investors' forum.

Thirdly, continuous support for international and EU-funded organisations like the European Neighbourhood Council, Human Rights Watch, and the ILO in order to conduct evidence-based research, data collection and surveying in Uzbekistan. This helps guide our choices and policies and should not be infringed under any circumstances.

Fourthly, continue cooperation and exchanging with the European External Action Service, Member States, DGs and across political parties on the important new relationship with the EU, and develop the new Central Asia Asian Strategy together with Uzbekistan, both ahead of the Global Gateway Conference at the end of October, as well as in tandem with a potential summit visit next year.

Thank you so much for having this discussion today. I think it is important to strengthen the relationship with Uzbekistan, and certainly I have many takeaways from you, colleagues.

IN THE CHAIR: MARC ANGEL

Vice-President

President. – The debate is closed. The vote will be held tomorrow, Wednesday 4 October.

20. Klassificering, mærkning og emballering af stoffer og blandinger (forhandling)

President. – The next item is the debate on the report by Maria Spyraiki, on behalf of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety on Classification, labelling and packaging of substances and mixtures (COM(2022)0748 – C9-0433/2022 – 2022/0432(COD)) (A9-0271/2023).

Maria Spyraiki, rapporteur. – Mr President, honourable Vice-President, dear colleagues, the EU is the second largest producer of chemicals in the world, with a sales turnover of EUR 594 billion and 15% of the global sales, according to the official data of 2021. The EU chemical industry numbers 29 000 enterprises – big, and also small and medium enterprises. Chemicals are everywhere, improving our living standards, but also many of them have hazardous properties that can harm our health and the environment.

Today we debate the revision of one of the two cornerstones of the EU chemical legislation. The revised framework of the Regulation on Classification, Labelling and Packaging will be applied to all industrial sectors, manufacturers, importers and downstream users in order to classify the substance and mixtures of their products packets and label them accordingly before placing them on the market.

After six months of fruitful and thorough negotiation – and I would like to thank all the shadow rapporteurs – we achieved to reach an agreement in six compromise amendments that we have adopted by the majority of the political groups in the ENVI Committee. Achieving that, we managed to improve the Commission's proposal by aligning it with the needs of the European citizens in the industry, providing classification where needed, making it more efficient and implementable and increasing the safety of the European way of life, dear Vice-President.

In my capacity as the rapporteur, it is of utmost importance to have a revised CLP Regulation with a focus to ensure the safety of consumers, increase the level of the environmental protection, ensure a smooth transition period for the market and do not distract the market of the essential oil sector – which includes agriculture, SMEs and big industries in various Member States, including France, Spain, Italy, Poland, Bulgaria and my home country, Greece.

In this regard, and based on the very good collaboration with the so-called 'von der Leyen alliance' political groups, the Commission and the ECA as well, we managed to conclude the report that brings the appropriate consideration to the following issues.

First, we focus to increase the level of information to the consumers and facilitate the use of the digital label. We also focus to enhance consumer awareness on the distance sales by adopting the provision that for the sale to the general public of a substance classified as hazardous shall request the user to always read and follow product label information. We reached an agreement on the essential oils: that the Article 5(3) related to MOCs, which are the mixtures, shall not apply to substances containing more than one constituent of renewable botanical origin and are not chemically nor genetically modified. By this exclusion, we reinforce the sector – based mainly on agriculture, as I have already said – and SMEs ensuring safety and sustainability as the main pillars of the production.

We proposed a provision of six months for updating the labels to the SMEs. We also agreed to secure the necessary support to ECHA. We included in the scope a reference for the animal testing, in order to promote alternative methods, and with this revision of the CLP and hopefully the revision of REACH when it comes, it will maintain the pioneering role of Europe to make safe and sustainable chemical by design.

Dear colleagues, concluding, I would like to highlight that by supporting this proposal with a vast majority tomorrow, we make a significant step forward for the protection of the consumers and the environment. It is critical to increase the level of information provided for all products containing chemicals and also to address risks arising from online sales. It is also important to facilitate our industry and SMEs to adapt and maintain their competitiveness and to provide to ECHA the proper resources.

Μαργαρίτης Σχοινάς, Αντιπρόεδρος της Επιτροπής. – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, κυρίες και κύριοι μέλη του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου, επιτρέψτε μου, πριν από όλα, να ευχαριστήσω και να συγχαρώ τη συνάδελφο, συμπατριώτισσα και φίλη εισηγήτρια, Μαρία Σπυράκη, για τον πολύ αποτελεσματικό τρόπο με τον οποίο διαχειρίστηκε αυτόν τον σύνθετο φάκελο.

Αυτός ο κανονισμός αποτελεί, ίσως, τον βασικό πυλώνα της νομοθεσίας μας για τις χημικές ουσίες και για να εξασφαλίσουμε την ασφαλή χρήση των χημικών από τους καταναλωτές αλλά και τους εργαζόμενους στον τομέα, χρειάζεται να βεβαιωθούμε ότι υπάρχει επαρκής πληροφόρηση γύρω από τους κινδύνους για την ανθρώπινη υγεία και το περιβάλλον που συνδέονται με αυτές τις ουσίες. Μόνο όταν καταφέρουμε να επισημάνουμε, να αναγνωρίσουμε και να πληροφορήσουμε για αυτούς τους κινδύνους, τότε, με αυτόν τον κανονισμό, θα βοηθηθούμε στο να μπορέσουμε να περάσουμε στο ευρύ κοινό και τους χρήστες την απαραίτητη πληροφόρηση μέσω των ετικετών και άλλων τέτοιων μέσων δημοσιότητας.

Εξάλλου, η κατηγοριοποίηση των χημικών ουσιών κάτω από τον κανονισμό αυτόν που συζητάμε σήμερα είναι κάτι που θα έχει άμεσο αντίκτυπο σε άλλες κοινοτικές νομοθετικές πρωτοβουλίες, σε άλλα νομοθετικά ευρωπαϊκά κείμενα για τα παιχνίδια, τα καλλυντικά, τα λιπάσματα και τα εντομοκτόνα —ειδικά για κινδύνους που έχουν να κάνουν και με την έκθεση σε αυτές τις επικίνδυνες ουσίες και βιομηχανικές εκπομπές. Επίσης, εξίσου σημαντικό είναι ότι αυτό που λέμε πράσινη ταξινόμια επίσης έχει πολλά να κερδίσει από αυτή την κατηγοριοποίηση που φέρνει ο εν λόγω κανονισμός.

Honourable Members, the fruitful discussions on this proposal at committee stage have paved the way to today's discussion.

We, the Commission, see the plenary adopting Parliament's mandate on Wednesday that would allow us to trigger swiftly the inter-institutional negotiations still this year.

The main elements of this revision are, firstly, a delegated act that introduced crosscutting criteria to identify endocrine disruptors, persistent substances contaminating food webs and the pristine environment.

This entered into force this April, and I thank this House for your support throughout this process. This is the first element of the chemicals strategy we announced and impacts on the changes to the regulation we are discussing today.

The second element of the package is, of course, the revised regulation, the one that is on the table and is the subject of our discussions today. This proposal revises some existing provisions on classification and labelling to make them more efficient and to provide clear information, especially on hazards to consumers, workers and users.

At the same time, the proposal simplifies the regulatory processes and labelling rules, which will reduce burden on industry, especially for small and medium enterprises, whilst at the same time providing clear information to users.

This is done by introducing additional digitalisation of some label elements and by adjusting our labelling and packaging requirements to the new sales form that is refill packaging instead of single-use bottles.

Companies, in particular small enterprises, will enjoy easier access to more robust information on the hazards, and this, *in fine*, will translate into tangible benefits for consumers and users.

The new proposal will bring also more flexibility for multilingual labels, allowing enterprises to place their products across the single market more easily.

At the same time, the proposal ensures that online sales are handled in a way so that consumers are properly informed about the chemical risks of products that are offered via the internet.

Finally, enforcement is key to achieve the level of protection we are aiming at. That is why the proposal strengthens the legal basis for the application of EU rules, also tackling issues for online sales of chemicals.

Let me conclude with a few words on certain things that we would still need to discuss. First of all, the ENVI Committee's report on the tabled amendments shows that Parliament understands the stakes and the importance of this regulation.

But at the same time, some amendments touch upon key elements of the proposal. Let me cite some of these issues that would require further discussions at interinstitutional level.

First, we take good note of your concerns on the proposed rules for the classification of complex substances, and in particular the potential impact on the sector of essential oils.

Second, we agree on the importance of ensuring consumers' safety regardless of the form in which they buy chemicals, including through refill sales. The Commission is of the view that substances and mixtures can be safely sold via refill stations. Selling products via refill stations is one of the promising levers to reduce packaging waste, which this House is currently discussing.

Third, labels should be easily legible, a necessity to ensure well-informed consumers and users of chemicals, especially for an ever-ageing European population.

Finally, we note the concerns regarding green claims, which we share. As you know, we have proposed a directive setting up robust common criteria to prevent misleading claims and greenwashing. Hence, we would not consider it necessary to provide these same criteria in this regulation.

But overall, to conclude, it is very encouraging to see the strong engagement and the broad agreement across the political groups in the ENVI Committee. I look forward to the debate today and to the vote tomorrow.

Dennis Radtke, *im Namen der PPE-Fraktion*. – Herr Präsident, Herr Kommissar, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Ich möchte zunächst einmal der Kollegin Maria Spyraiki ganz herzlich zu ihrer herausragenden Arbeit gratulieren und mich dafür auch bedanken. Gerade bei diesem technischen Dossier, die unterschiedlichen Enden zusammenzubinden, um einen realistischen Entwurf hinzubekommen, ist eine schwierige Aufgabe.

Die EVP-Änderungsanträge 101, 102, 103 bieten, glaube ich, die Chance, die guten erreichten Kompromisse noch ein Stück weit besser zu machen. Mir ist auch wichtig, noch mal darauf hinzuweisen, dass die Frage der Schriftgröße und auch die Frage der Umsetzungsfristen für die Unternehmen – das wird ja morgen noch einmal ein Thema sein, hoffentlich auch in den Trilogverhandlungen noch einmal ein Thema sein.

Denn insgesamt dürfen wir eins nicht vergessen: Ja, Chemie muss sicher sein. Deswegen haben wir auch weltweit das schärfste Chemikalienrecht. Deswegen ist unser Chemikalienrecht international der Goldstandard. Aber wir müssen auch dafür Sorge tragen, gerade in der jetzigen Situation, in der jetzigen Krise, dass es für die chemische Industrie am Ende auch leistbar bleibt.

Ich habe ein Leben vor der Politik. Ich habe in Deutschland bei der Chemiegewerkschaft gearbeitet, und deswegen weiß ich aus eigener Erfahrung: Chemie steht für hohe Löhne, für hohe Tarifbindung, für mitbestimmte Arbeitsplätze, für hochinnovative Arbeitsplätze. Und ich erwarte auch von der EU-Kommission – Kommissar Schinas hat darauf hingewiesen: Chemiestrategie –, dass wir auch alles dafür tun, dass diese Industrie als wichtiges Rückgrat für wirtschaftliches Wachstum in Europa auch weiterhin ein Zuhause hat und eine gute Zukunft hat.

João Albuquerque, *em nome do Grupo S&D*. – Senhor Presidente, Senhor Comissário, permita-me começar por dizer que aprovámos o primeiro pilar, ou estamos em vias de aprovar o primeiro pilar com a CLP, faltará agora a REACH, para concluirmos também a estratégia dos químicos.

Classificação, rotulagem e embalagem de químicos às 9h30 da noite de uma terça-feira. Não é um daqueles temas que nos faça apaixonar pela União Europeia, mas, contra as expectativas iniciais, talvez possa ser um daqueles temas que nos ajuda a entender melhor esta União e de que forma é que o trabalho aqui desenvolvido pode contribuir para melhorar a vida de cada uma e de cada um dos cidadãos europeus.

Desde o início deste processo legislativo, que foi longo, intenso e muito trabalhoso, houve apenas uma questão a que procurámos dar resposta: como podemos aproveitar esta oportunidade de revisão técnica de uma legislação tão complexa que regula substâncias químicas para melhorar os índices de proteção e informação do consumidor?

É preciso deixar claro, e reforçar as vezes que forem necessárias, que ao longo de todo este processo, este foi o nosso objetivo primordial e conseguimos fazer isso ao mesmo tempo que soubemos ouvir os diferentes setores abrangidos por esta legislação – do setor dos detergentes aos produtos cosméticos, passando pelo setor dos óleos essenciais, soubemos entender as especificidades de cada um.

Procurámos encontrar soluções que não comprometam as pequenas e médias empresas europeias, sobrecarregando-as com adaptações burocráticas desnecessárias. Tivemos atenção às práticas existentes dos pequenos produtores europeus no impacto que têm nas diferentes regiões, acomodando várias das suas preocupações e entendendo as especificidades dos óleos essenciais.

Garantimos o compromisso abrangente em diferentes dimensões fundamentais, como é a necessidade de utilização rápida dos consumidores cada vez que há alterações substanciais no conhecimento científico e no seu impacto nos produtos e na saúde dos consumidores.

Caros colegas, amanhã, quando estivermos a votar o relatório final e as últimas emendas apresentadas, não podemos perder de vista o objetivo inicial a que nos propusemos. Os compromissos alcançados, melhorados pontualmente por algumas das emendas propostas, não podem ser colocados em risco pela ambição de agradar a interesses comerciais.

Para melhorarmos este regulamento em benefício dos europeus, temos de respeitar o trabalho desenvolvido na Comissão do Ambiente e aprovar os compromissos negociados anteriormente. É por isso que considero que o acordo que alcançamos, depois de muita negociação e trabalho e que compromete os maiores grupos políticos desta Câmara, precisa de ser aprovado.

Por último, não podia terminar sem referir que alcançar este equilíbrio sem colocar em causa o objetivo inicial a que nos propusemos só foi possível graças ao trabalho desenvolvido pela relatora Maria Spyraكي e pela equipa de relatores, bem como por toda a equipa do S&D.

Só assim, com este objetivo em mente, é que foi possível fazer Europa também nas coisas mais técnicas.

Атидже Алиева-Вели, *от името на групата Renew*. – Г-н Председател, г-н Заместник-председател на Комисията, колеги, този дебат за мен, като български евродепутат, е с дъх на българска роза. Розовото масло е емблема на страната ни, поминък и живот за хиляди трудолюбиви производители. Преразгледаният регламент ще обозначава продуктите с растителен произход като смеси и етикетирането им ще зависи от включено в тях химическо вещество, независимо от въздействието на целия продукт.

Подкрепяйки промени в законодателството в защита на здравето и по-добрата информираност на потребителите, остават и въпроси: има ли достатъчно безспорни научни доказателства, че тези вещества крият риск? Ще позволим ли с промените да застрашим производители на етерични култури и масла? Емблематичното българско розово масло и други етерични масла ще бъдат ли обозначени като „опасни“?

Това не само застрашава богатото ни наследство, но и икономическата стабилност в тези региони. Този регламент може да наруши конкурентното ни предимство, да ни измести от важни пазари, да възпрепятства икономическия растеж и да ограничи перспективите пред малките и средните предприятия.

Нашите производители заслужават политики, които насърчават растежа им. Затова утре делегацията на ДПС ще подкрепи розопроизводителите и останалите производители. Призовавам ви, колеги, да го направите и вие!

Jutta Paulus, *im Namen der Verts/ALE-Fraktion*. – Herr Präsident, Herr Kommissar, meine Damen und Herren! Ich freue mich! Ich freue mich wirklich, dass wir in diesen Verhandlungen zur Verordnung über die Einstufung, Kennzeichnung und Verpackung von Stoffen und Gemischen zu guten Kompromissen gekommen sind. Ich möchte mich bei Maria Spyraكي bedanken für die fairen und konstruktiven Verhandlungen, denn das ist wirklich ein wichtiger Schritt für den Verbraucherschutz.

Die Kennzeichnung gefährlicher Chemikalien ist wirklich wichtig für die Gesundheit der Beschäftigten in den jeweiligen Branchen, aber auch für die von Bürgerinnen und Bürgern. Ich bin sehr froh, dass wir erstmals eine Kennzeichnung bekommen werden für hormonähnlich wirkende Chemikalien. Das gab es bisher noch nicht, das ist wirklich ein Novum, und ich baue darauf, dass das auch global akzeptiert und aufgenommen werden wird.

Auch Chemikalien mit Langzeitrisiken werden gekennzeichnet, und wir konnten erreichen, dass es eine sinnvolle und konsistente Kennzeichnung von Mischungen gibt. Denn da gab es bisher eine Regulierungslücke.

Es ist auch gelungen – die Kollegen haben es schon gesagt –, die Bedenken von insbesondere kleinen Produzenten von ätherischen Ölen angemessen zu berücksichtigen, ohne dabei Abstriche am Gesundheitsschutz zu machen. Wir schließen die Schlupflöcher der bisherigen Verordnung bei Onlineverkäufen, bei Nachfüllstationen.

Und rundherum muss ich sagen, meine Damen und Herren, mit dieser Verordnung zeigen wir: Europa nimmt die Gesundheit seiner Bürgerinnen und Bürger und die Gefahren, die von Chemikalien ausgehen können, ernst. Ich vertraue darauf, dass auch die anderen Bestandteile der Chemikalienstrategie für Nachhaltigkeit noch in dieser Legislaturperiode vorgelegt werden.

Liebe Maria, ich glaube, wir werden in den Verhandlungen mit dem Rat der Mitgliedstaaten ebenfalls zu einem guten Ergebnis kommen. Deshalb an dieser Stelle schon mal ganz herzlichen Dank!

Pietro Fiocchi, *a nome del gruppo ECR*. – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, siamo tutti d'accordo sulla necessità della revisione del regolamento CLP, però ci sono alcuni punti, e mi rivolgo al Commissario.

Uno: l'obbligo di mettere tutti i *warning* nella lingua del paese di destinazione. Perché, invece di prevedere gli atti delegati della Commissione per usare il QR code, non lo facciamo subito nel regolamento usando il QR code, in modo che possiamo passare tutte le informazioni in tutte le lingue che vogliamo, di qualsiasi densità e volume?

Poi, c'è un problema sulle sostanze composte, nel senso che in alcuni casi non ci sono i metodi scientifici di determinazione della pericolosità per la salute umana.

Infine, i caratteri grandi. I caratteri grandi: bellissimo, così sono più leggibili, ma ricordiamoci che vanno in contrasto con la legge sul *packaging*, perché andare dal *font size* 10 al *font size* 12 vuol dire il 20 % in più di uso di carta e di plastica, in contrasto con la direttiva sul *packaging*. Pertanto, chi ha scritto alcune di queste regole non ha mai lavorato un giorno in fabbrica e non ha mai parlato con gli utenti finali, che, tra l'altro, dubito leggeranno tutti questi *warning*.

Danilo Oscar Lancini, *a nome del gruppo ID*. – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, riconosciamo l'importanza della revisione del regolamento CLP, ma riteniamo alcune disposizioni del testo molto problematiche per le nostre industrie. Per questo motivo, con i colleghi parlamentari dei partiti che costituiscono il governo italiano, abbiamo presentato emendamenti che correggono le parti più critiche.

Al contempo, non posso tacere davanti ai comportamenti di associazioni che dovrebbero rappresentare gli interessi del settore produttivo e invece fanno politica. Invero, CEFIC ha fatto retromarcia sulle priorità proposte per il voto in plenaria a causa del supporto del gruppo ID a tali istanze. Comportamenti simili sono stati attuati anche da AISE, che improvvisamente ha deciso di abbandonarne alcune.

È questo che le imprese si meritano da voi? Lasciate la politica a chi è democraticamente eletto. Questo atteggiamento tradisce il mandato conferitovi dal mondo produttivo, composto anche dalle piccole e medie imprese, a cui nulla importa che parte di questi parlamentari italiani siano anche del gruppo ID. Sono questi comportamenti che tutelano imprese e lavoratori? Ribadisco: noi siamo aperti al dialogo e lo riteniamo uno dei punti fondamentali del nostro lavoro.

Anja Hazekamp, *namens de Fractie The Left*. – Voorzitter, al jaren vechten heel veel mensen tegen chemische fabrieken als Chemours en 3M. Fabrieken die zeer schadelijke gifstoffen produceren die nooit meer uit het milieu zullen verdwijnen en die een heel grote bedreiging vormen voor onze gezondheid. Maar er is hoop: we zien kleine stappen om het gevaar van deze fabrieken in te dammen. Vorige week besloot de rechter dat Chemours aansprakelijk is voor de milieuschade die vier gemeenten rondom de fabriek hebben geleden door gevaarlijke PFAS.

Ook met deze wetswijziging, waaraan we het afgelopen half jaar hard hebben gewerkt, zetten we concrete stappen om mens, dier en milieu te beschermen. Voortaan moeten hormoonverstoorders en PFAS op het etiket vermeld worden en duidelijk leesbaar zijn voor de gebruikers. Ik ben dan ook verbaasd dat de lobby van de chemische industrie weer parlementariërs bereid heeft gevonden om te voorkomen dat gebruikers goed worden geïnformeerd. Ik hoop dat morgen iedereen met gezond verstand stemt.

En dan nog een ander punt. Ontzettend veel dieren worden toegetakeld en gedood door de chemische industrie voor zinloze dierproeven. Ik ben blij dat we ook op dit belangrijke onderwerp vooruitgang boeken. We verplichten dat er alternatieve testmethoden gebruikt en gepromoot moeten worden en chemicaliën die waar dan ook ter wereld op primaten getest worden, mogen in Europa niet meer worden toegelaten.

Daarnaast is het belangrijk dat we milieueclaims in advertenties voor gevaarlijke stoffen en mengsels daarvan verbieden. Zo maken we een eind aan greenwashing door Shell, Bayer en hun giftige vrienden.

Ik eindig met een vraag aan de Commissie: u heeft nog andere wetsvoorstellen beloofd om gevaarlijk gif aan banden te leggen, zoals Reach, een exportverbod voor gevaarlijk landbouwgif en een verbod op alle PFAS. Wanneer gaat u mens, dier en milieu echt beschermen en komt u met deze voorstellen? Een datum alstublieft.

Радан Кънев (PPE). – Г-н Председател, г-н Комисар, на първо място искам да благодаря сърдечно на докладчика Мария Спираки за работата, за разбирането, за конструктивния и консенсусен подход по този доклад. На второ място, да благодаря на всички тези колеги от България, Гърция, Испания, Италия, Франция, от всички парламентарни групи в тази зала, благодарение на които етеричните масла бяха временно изключени от обхвата на регламента. Специални поздравии за колегата Андрей Новаков от България, който по много уважителни причини отсъства от настоящия дебат.

Искам обаче също така да призова в утрешния ден да подкрепите измененията, по силата на които етеричните масла да бъдат категорично и окончателно изключени от списъка на опасните вещества и от предупрежденията за опасни вещества при етикетирането на продукти. Не защото това е интересът на производителите на етерични масла. Не защото в моята държава България производството на етерични масла е доходоносен поминък за хиляди семейства и традиционен поминък за хиляди семейства от повече от столетие. А защото просто те не са опасни вещества. Етеричните масла, извлечени по екологичен начин, по естествен път от растителни продукти, са тъкмо обратното. Това са полезни вещества, които присъстват в нашата грижа за здравето на гражданите, а не в рисковете за това здраве.

Irène Tolleret (Renew). – Monsieur le Président, Monsieur le Commissaire, chers collègues, tout d'abord, nous pouvons tous nous réjouir de cette nouvelle législation qui a pour but de protéger la santé humaine et l'environnement. Il faut cependant garder à l'esprit le principe de proportionnalité. Les produits d'origine botanique comme les huiles essentielles méritent un traitement à part pour les distinguer des produits issus de la pétrochimie.

En voulant régler le problème des substances pétrochimiques, il ne faudrait pas que cette révision de la législation cause un préjudice inutile aux cultivateurs de plantes aromatiques et aux autres acteurs de la chaîne. Il s'agit d'un secteur majoritairement artisanal, basé sur une filière composée de petits agriculteurs, de petits producteurs qui jouent un rôle extrêmement important dans le maintien de la biodiversité. J'aimerais souligner que, rien qu'en France, la filière de la lavande et du lavandin génère à elle seule plus de 9 000 emplois directs et 17 000 emplois indirects. À côté de cette filière se développent d'autres secteurs qui font vivre les zones rurales avec le miel, le tourisme.

Je vous demande donc de soutenir une dérogation pour les substances d'origine botanique afin de permettre de garder leur système actuel de classification. Il ne s'agit pas de les exempter, mais de tenir compte de leur spécificité et, ce faisant, de garder nos magnifiques paysages de Provence avec ces champs de lavande, avec cette vallée de la rose, avec ces odeurs, ça sent bon, ce sont des beaux produits. C'est notre patrimoine immatériel, agricole, commun, européen.

Цветелина Пенкова (S&D). – Г-н Председател, г-жо Комисар, розовото масло е едно от съкровищата на България. То се използва в козметиката, медицината и парфюмерията. Неговата структура и уникален аромат го отличават. Днес, благодарение на розовото масло, България е световен лидер в производството на етерични масла. Важно е да отбележим, че не всички етерични масла са еднакви. Българското розово масло е единствено и неповторимо. То не само не е опасно, а напротив – изключително полезно е за здравето. Това е доказано със стотици проучвания на независими организации и е признато от Световната здравна организация и от ЮНЕСКО World Intangible Cultural Heritage.

От изключително значение е изменението на Регламента за класифициране, етиктиране и опаковане на вещества и смеси да гарантира правната стабилност и регулаторната предвидимост. Ние не бива да допускаме ненужни тежести от свръхрегулация или неправилно регулиране на отрасли, уникални за някои региони в Европейския съюз. Затова ви призовавам да защитите един от символите на Съюза, да защитите символа на България.

(End of catch-the-eye procedure)

Μαργαρίτης Σχοινάς, Αντιπρόεδρος της Επιτροπής. – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, ευχαριστώ τις κυρίες και κυρίους βουλευτές για την πολύ ενδιαφέρουσα και πλούσια συζήτηση για όλα τα σημεία ουσίας που αφορούν την καινούργια πρόταση κανονισμού. Και πάλι συγχαρητήρια στην εισηγήτρια, Μαρία Σπυράκη.

Κάλυψα πάρα πολλά θέματα στην εισαγωγική μου ομιλία. Δεν θα ήθελα να τα επαναλάβω εδώ. Αλλά θα ήθελα να διαβεβαιώσω και να καθησυχάσω τους ευρωβουλευτές ότι η Επιτροπή αποδίδει ιδιαίτερη σημασία στις ανησυχίες τους για τα περίφημα essential oils.

Μαρία Σπυράκη, Εισηγήτρια. – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, αγαπητέ Μαργαρίτη, ευχαριστώ πάρα πολύ για την υποστήριξη από την πλευρά της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής.

Allow me to switch in English because I owe a clarification concerning the issue of essential oil and please note it because it is important. According to the text we have already voted on in the ENVI Committee, we reached an agreement on the essential oils that the Article 5(3) related to MOCs, which means mixtures, shall not apply – I repeat, shall not apply – to substances containing more than one constituent of renewable botanical origin that are not chemically or genetically modified. By this exclusion – and I repeat the wording, it is an exclusion of the essential oils – we reinforce the sector based mainly on agriculture and SMEs, ensuring safety and sustainability as the main pillars of the production.

As already the Vice-President has said, I have visited Kazanlak, which is in Bulgaria, I have also visited Guadalajara, which is in Spain, and I explained to the producers that we are here to protect their jobs and not to destroy their lives.

While going on to the next question, which is the articles that we will vote for tomorrow in the amendments, I will currently ask you to support three amendments which are now gathering the support from various groups consisting the so-called «von der Leyen alliance». The first, number 101, is referred to Article 37(2) regarding the grouping of substances, we propose an alignment with the REACH Regulation, specifying clear certificate criteria which are needed. The second is number 102. The second amendment is related to the reference to the use of the environmental claims in Article 48(2a). This amendment that had been adopted by the ENVI Committee prohibited the use of environmental claims for all CLP-classified substances and mixtures. Now, to mitigate the concerns raised by various stakeholders, we propose to limit this prohibition to the most severe hazard classes, which is needed. And the third one we support is another important amendment regarding the child-resistant fastening. This aims to extend the requirement for a child-resistant fastening to such substances or mixtures which have extreme pH and are classified as serious eye damage category.

Concluding, as the rapporteur of this report, I invite you all to vote in favour of these amendments and thus give me a strong mandate to negotiate in the trilogue with the Council and the Commission.

President. – The debate is closed. The vote will be held tomorrow, Wednesday 4 October.

21. Den tiende forhøjelse af referencerenten i træk, der er fastsat af ECB, og konsekvenserne heraf (forhandling)

President. – The next item is the debate on the statements by the Council and the Commission on the 10th consecutive increase in reference interest rates decided by the ECB and its consequences (2023/2891(RSP)).

Margaritis Schinas, Vice-President of the Commission. – Mr President, honourable Members, discussing the impact of high inflation and rising interest rates on households and workers is highly relevant, especially in the context of the continuing challenges that we face as a union. Europe has been confronted with a series of major shocks, first linked to the pandemic and then to Russia's war against Ukraine. Overall, our societies and economies have shown remarkable resilience, and our coordinated policy response has helped to avoid a recession. Nevertheless, high inflation has taken its toll. Starting from the second half of 2021, inflation has been rising strongly to reach its highest level in more than two decades. Today, inflation has already fallen by almost half compared to its peak in October 2022. The peak was 11.5 %. And although in August it was 5.9 %, it is still high. Growth has suffered as high inflation has reduced consumers' purchasing power. The impact is particularly large for poorer households because they spend a higher share of their income on food and energy. High inflation, let's face it, means poverty and more inequality.

Fortunately, we see more promising signs for next year, when the economy should stage a mild rebound, underpinned by lower inflation, a strong labour market and record low unemployment. Nonetheless, we need to work further to bring inflation back to its 2 % target as the economic, as the social consequences of higher and more persistent inflation would be dramatic for Europe. And this is exactly the mandate of the European Central Bank. The ECB's main tool is, of course, setting the level of the interest rate. The ECB is independent in the conduct of its monetary policy. This is the golden rule of our European economic governance under Eurozone role. So as you can imagine, I will specifically refrain from commenting on ECB rule. I would nevertheless say that the fight against inflation entails important consequences for households, workers, businesses and requires a well-calibrated policy strategy beyond monetary rules.

Let me tonight focus on four elements that are key for this calibrated policy response. First energy prices. Second, the macroeconomic policy mix. Third, the need to protect the vulnerable. And four, the role of reforms and investment. The initial inflation spike was the result of skyrocketing energy prices as a direct consequence of Putin's energy blackmail and instrumentalisation of energy against us. The price for gas in Europe was over EUR 300 per megawatt hour one year ago. We implemented, together, a joint collective approach to reduce energy prices. We pooled our demand and bought energy together. We used our critical mass as Europe to lower prices and secure our supply, and we managed to significantly reduce our dependence from Russia. And now gas prices are around EUR 35. From EUR 300 to EUR 35. Lower and more stable energy prices are essential for underpinning a steady reduction in inflation to safeguard consumers purchasing power and to support the competitiveness of our companies. We need to continue working on this track, for instance, regarding the electricity market reform.

Now, as it comes to the macroeconomic policy mix, the second area that I would like to concentrate on. Fiscal policy should not add to inflationary pressures. This means that fiscal policy should be prudent. A wrong balance would only lead to higher, more persistent inflation and even higher interest rates. The third consideration is the need to alleviate the impact of high inflation on the most vulnerable. EU funding, for instance, through the European Social Fund Plus and the Just Transition Fund can certainly help. And the European Directive on Minimum Wages will also improve people's working and living conditions. Fiscal support measures should be targeted to those in need. This will make them more effective and at the same time keep them affordable. Now that energy prices are coming down, it is time to wind down emergency measures, but with another potentially difficult winter ahead of us, we need to remain collectively vigilant. Finally, the timely and full implementation of reforms and investments will be vital for boosting our social and economic resilience and to drive forward the twin transitions.

Ladies and gentlemen, honourable Members, safeguarding our long term competitiveness is the best guarantee to secure many and high quality jobs. We have one successful, clear strategy for that that is already paying dividends. It is built around the Recovery and Resilience Facility. And with REPowerEU, we are taking significant steps to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels into the direction of renewables. This will reduce certainly our exposure to external surprise supply or price shocks and support our future competitiveness.

It is also important to work on faster permitting tackling labour shortages, boosting future-oriented skills, and establishing an investment-friendly business environment without undue bureaucracy and red tape. And in building this future economy, we should pay particular attention to its fairness and inclusiveness dimension. Our social systems in Europe are there to offer adequate protection. Member states must continue and in some cases accelerate the implementation of the reforms and investments included in their plans. These are reforms that we have agreed upon and we know that there are difficulties, there are challenges, but these are perfectly feasible. And the Commission is working closely with all Member States to make sure that their implementation is carried out in a timely and rapid way.

Finally, we need to continue deepening our single market, the biggest and best regulated internal market in the world. We need to do this by enforcing the existing rules, lifting investment barriers, in particular in services. And if we want to make Europe an attractive investment destination. We certainly need more progress in deepening our Capital Markets Union. I look forward to discussing these issues with you tonight and to continue working on them in the interest of our economy and of our people.

Lídia Pereira, *em nome do Grupo PPE*. – Senhor presidente, a discussão de hoje é importante, mas apenas se olharmos para os números, porque, caso contrário, é oportunista se olharmos para quem propôs o debate.

Começamos hoje a assistir à descida, ainda que tímida, da inflação, mas ainda estamos longe do objetivo. Continuamos acima dos 4 % e se olharmos para a alimentação mais do que duplicamos esse valor. A prazo, são números insustentáveis e, no imediato, são situações inaceitáveis.

Portugal, por exemplo, viu o preço dos produtos agrícolas aumentar 22 % só no segundo semestre. Na semana passada, o preço do quilo da laranja duplicou. Repito: numa semana, o dobro do preço.

O aumento das taxas de juro é a resposta do Banco Central, mas, depois de dez subidas consecutivas e do valor recorde, está na hora de parar. A prestação mensal média do crédito à habitação em Portugal é hoje 111 euros mais cara do que há um ano.

As taxas de juro são um remédio que está a resultar na dose inicial; não podemos nem devemos arriscar uma *overdose* que pode ser economicamente insensata e socialmente problemática.

Mas é preciso sermos claros. O tema deste debate esconde uma agenda da esquerda. Uma esquerda que não quer discutir o problema, que é a inflação, mas prefere atacar parte da solução. Com que objetivo? Esconder a incapacidade dos governos nacionais, como o português.

Senão, vamos a factos: o excedente histórico da receita fiscal motivado pela inflação não conduziu a uma baixa de impostos. Porquê? O preço das casas desce na Europa, sobe em Portugal, impulsionado pela carga fiscal. Porquê?

Muitas urgências dos hospitais portugueses continuam a fechar, médicos a sair do setor privado sem qualquer compromisso sério do ministro da pasta e ex-deputado desta casa. Porquê?

São estas as questões que o oportunismo da esquerda quer esconder com estes debates, mas são estas as questões que a nossa responsabilidade nos traz a recordar.

Jonás Fernández, *en nombre del Grupo S&D*. – Señor presidente, señor vicepresidente de la Comisión, se trata sin duda de un debate necesario en estos días y quiero agradecer al Grupo The Left que haya propuesto esta discusión en esta semana de sesiones plenarias después de la última subida de tipos de interés por parte del Banco Central Europeo. Apenas expondré dos ideas para alimentar esta discusión.

El mismo día en que se reunía el Consejo de Gobierno del BCE se publicaban sus nuevas previsiones de inflación que situaban ese dato para 2024 en el 3,2 % de promedio en el año. Eso quiere decir que, durante la segunda parte del próximo año, la inflación estará en torno al 2,5 % en virtud de las propias previsiones del Banco Central y se reducirá aún más en 2025 hasta el 2,1 %.

En este sentido, me pregunto cuál es la necesidad de acelerar la convergencia de la inflación hacia el 2 %, teniendo en cuenta que la revisión del mandato interpreta su objetivo en el medio plazo y teniendo en cuenta el riesgo de recesión cierta que tenemos en la zona del euro, y de recesión en algunas economías muy importantes de dicha zona.

Siempre hay un compromiso entre crecimiento e inflación y creo que, cuando las previsiones apuntan a que en doce o quince meses la inflación estará solo muy ligeramente por encima del 2 %, los riesgos para la actividad económica son más importantes que acercar ese 2 % un mes arriba o un mes abajo.

En cualquier caso, este debate nos conduce también a otra discusión que estamos teniendo estas semanas, que no es otra que la revisión de la gobernanza económica de la Unión. Porque en estos momentos solo la política monetaria es capaz de ayudar a gestionar los ciclos. Seguimos sin internalizar la necesidad de tener una posición fiscal consolidada en la zona del euro, y esto es muy importante porque, con un pilar fiscal europeo, podríamos gestionar sustancialmente mejor los ciclos y evitar escenarios como el que estamos sufriendo con estos niveles de tipos de interés. Ese debate tenemos que tenerlo.

Billy Kelleher, *on behalf of the Renew Group*. – Mr President, after ten consecutive rate rises, bringing us to a 4% ECB interest rate, we have seen inflation drop to 4.3%. Of course, the ECB will claim that that is supportive of its policies of raising interest rates.

Commissioner, you also said that inflation is the enemy of the poor and those on low incomes, but equally high interest rates cause recessions and recessions bring about unemployment. So I do believe it is time that we actually had a real debate regarding the European Union and how it sets interest rates and how the ECB's mandate is interpreted as just price stability of 2% inflation. That is the mandate they operate under.

But equally, they also have a secondary mandate: support the general economic policies of the Union with a view to contributing to the achievement of the objectives of the Union. And the objectives of the Union are more than just 2% price stability, Commissioner. There are many other things than this. They are about supporting citizens, investing in services and ensuring that we have functioning communities and societies. And a 4% interest rate is causing significant challenges out there.

This House has consistently said, and we adopted in February of this year, stressing the very point, that we do need to broaden the interpretation of the secondary mandate. And we do need to allow the ECB to be able to adjudicate on its secondary mandate, not just be completely straightjacketed into the primary mandate, which is interpreting price stability and keeping inflation at 2%. So I do believe we should have that discussion. And if it requires Treaty change, well then, let us not to be afraid to do so.

Rasmus Andresen, *im Namen der Verts/ALE-Fraktion*. – Herr Präsident! Warum ist alles so teuer geworden? Ich kann mir keinen Döner mehr leisten. Wir sind am Ende des Monats, wie soll ich denn noch meine Energiekosten und Lebensmittel bezahlen? Ich habe vor wenigen Tagen gemeinsam mit unserer Grünen-Jugendorganisation in Wiesbaden mit jungen Menschen über ihre Zukunftssorgen gesprochen. Ja, ich muss sagen, die jungen Menschen haben recht: Während alles immer teurer wird, leiden Millionen Menschen real unter Einkommensverlusten.

Konservative behaupten jetzt, dass die Europäische Zentralbank mit hohen Zinsen dafür sorgen kann, dass die Preise fallen. Wir allerdings sagen und wissen, dass das aktuell allerdings falsch ist. Die Europäische Zentralbank hat dafür nicht die richtigen Instrumente. Sie kann gar nicht dafür sorgen, dass der Döner wieder günstiger wird oder die Energiepreise wieder stabiler werden. Es ist ein Skandal, dass große Lebensmittelkonzerne ihre Marktmacht ausnutzen und ihre Gewinne in den letzten Jahren verdoppeln konnten. Ihre Übergewinne und höhere Energiepreise machen Lebensmittel teurer.

Der Schaden, den die EZB mit ihrer Zinspolitik anrichtet, ist größer als deren Effekt auf das Preisniveau. Wir haben keine zu hohe Nachfrage, deshalb bringt es nichts, auf Krampf die Nachfrage zu drosseln. Stattdessen müssen wir erneuerbare Energien massiv ausbauen und unsere Abhängigkeit von fossiler Energie aus Staaten wie Katar oder Russland deutlich senken. Die Kosten für den Ausbau von erneuerbaren Energien werden aber durch die aktuelle Zinspolitik der EZB massiv verteuert. Frau Lagarde, Sie sind mit Ihrer Zinspolitik falsch abgebogen, jetzt ist es Zeit für einen Kurswechsel.

Johan Van Overtveldt, *namens de ECR-Fractie*. – Voorzitter, commissaris, collega's, inflatie is een sluipend maar dodelijk gif. Wanneer zij niet doortastend en consistent wordt bestreden, ondermijnt inflatie banencreatie, investeringen en groei. Finaal volgt – zo leert de geschiedenis – ernstige sociale en politieke destabilisatie, niet in het minst omdat het net de minst goeiden zijn die het meest te lijden hebben onder prijsstijgingen.

Drie punten rond de recente evolutie:

1) De ECB schoot te laat in actie. Eind 2021 was het duidelijk dat de inflatie niet van voorbijgaande aard zou zijn. En toch wachtte men tot in juli 2022 om tot actie over te gaan.

2) De ECB voerde vervolgens consequent renteverhogingen door om te voorkomen dat de olievlek van de inflatie zou blijven uitdijen.

3) Nu dat beleid effect ressorteert en de inflatie inderdaad weer daalt, mag er niet direct victorie gekraaid worden. Het gevoerde beleid nu al terugschroeven zou totaal onverantwoord zijn.

Tot slot nog dit: de onafhankelijkheid van de centrale bank moet in steen gebeiteld staan en blijven staan.

Gunnar Beck, *im Namen der ID-Fraktion*. – Herr Präsident! Seit Anfang 2022 hat die EZB ihre Zinsen zehnmal minimal erhöht. Dennoch bleibt das Euro-Zinsniveau deutlich unter der deutschen Inflationsrate von 6,4 %. Andererseits liegt es klar über der spanischen Inflation von 2,4 %. Europa steht gewissermaßen auf dem Kopf.

Im traditionell hochinflationären Süden sinkt die Inflation, im vordem gesunden Deutschland explodieren Energie- und Lebensmittelpreise. Der Grund ist klar: Deutschland hat die dümmste Energie-, Klimarettungs- und Migrationspolitik weltweit. Die Bundesbank mahnt deshalb weitere Zinserhöhungen an, um die Inflation zu senken, die Südstaaten wollen das Gegenteil.

Ein Dilemma für die EZB, denn in der Zwangsjacke der Währungsunion muss sie eine Wahl treffen. Entweder sie schützt die Ersparnisse der deutschen Steuerzahler, die bereits den Löwenanteil des EU-Haushalts und des 800-Milliarden-Euro-NextGenerationEU-Geschenkkorbes für den Mittelmeerraum finanzieren, oder sie hält die Zinsen niedrig, um bankrotte Banken und hochverschuldete Länder in Südeuropa notzubeatmen.

Doch machen wir uns nichts vor. Die EZB wird die Zinsen nicht mehr nennenswert erhöhen, nicht nur um Südeuropa zu retten, sondern auch zur Finanzierung der EU-Weltklimarettungs- und -Massenmigrationsprojekte, die durch die Enteignung der deutschen Sparer und Steuerzahler über die EZB größtenteils mitfinanziert werden. Während sich die EU die Welt schönredet, reagieren die Finanzmärkte bereits. Der Euro-Anteil an den weltweiten SWIFT-Zahlungen fiel allein dieses Jahr von 38 % auf 23 %, während US-Dollar und Chinas Währung weiter an Gewicht gewinnen.

Europas Niedergang ist nicht nur tragisch, er ist vor allem selbstverschuldet. Dabei wäre die Rettung so einfach: Machen Sie einfach das Gegenteil dessen, was hier fast täglich beschlossen wird.

João Pimenta Lopes, *em nome do Grupo The Left*. – Senhor Presidente, Senhor Comissário, este oportuno e necessário debate evidencia a fria indiferença do BCE, da Comissão Europeia e do Conselho, aqui ausentes do debate, perante as graves consequências das vossas políticas para milhões de famílias e de pequenas e médias empresas.

Face à inflação, aumentos insanos das taxas de juro; face ao sufoco das famílias, conter salários, cortar apoios, conter o investimento público. As vossas falsas respostas são como álcool derramado sobre feridas abertas.

Basta de políticas servis aos interesses e lucros colossais da banca e dos grupos económicos. Basta de empobrecimento e desigualdades. Este não é um caminho inevitável.

Há soluções e políticas alternativas que respondem aos problemas, que servem os interesses dos trabalhadores e das populações, que promovem o desenvolvimento de cada país.

Há que reverter o aumento das taxas de juro, pôr os colossais lucros da banca a pagar os aumentos das prestações de crédito, combater a especulação e os aproveitamentos, tributar significativamente os lucros dos grandes grupos económicos, defender o direito à habitação e mobilizar recursos para criar habitação pública, aumentar salários e pensões, fixar preços máximos de bens e serviços essenciais, promover a produção nacional.

Medidas absolutamente necessárias que faltam às instituições europeias e que são rejeitadas pelo Governo e pelos partidos de direita em Portugal.

Ralf Seekatz (PPE). – Herr Präsident, Herr Kommissar, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Erst im Juli 2022 hat die EZB die Leitzinsen zum ersten Mal angehoben und damit sicherlich eine längst überfällige Zinswende eingeleitet. Unter dem Druck einer Rekordinflation von 10 % folgten zehn weitere Zinsschritte. Bei uns in Deutschland sagt man: besser spät als nie. Nun sind wir endlich an einem Punkt angekommen, an dem die Geldpolitik Wirkung zeigt. Es ist aber noch lange kein Grund zum Aufatmen. Noch ist die Inflationsrate viel zu hoch. Deshalb muss die EZB den aktuellen Kurs halten, auch wenn das nicht allen gefallen wird.

Wichtiges Ziel ist und bleibt die Preisstabilität. Von einer Inflationsrate von 2 % sind wir leider noch weit entfernt. Solange die Inflation nicht in die Nähe dieses Preisziels rückt, sind geldpolitische Lockerungen sicherlich der falsche Weg. Die hohen Inflationsraten dürfen nicht zur neuen Normalität werden. Die EZB muss vor allem die Inflationserwartungen der Wirtschaftsteilnehmer senken. Es geht dabei auch um die eigene Glaubwürdigkeit. Wir brauchen stabile Preise, mit denen Wirtschaft und Verbraucher planen können. Unsere Bürger müssen auch wieder Zinsen mit ihren Spareinlagen erreichen können. Ansonsten geraten wir in einen Teufelskreislauf, aus dem wir nicht mehr herauskommen, vor allen Dingen sicherlich nicht mit grüner Ideologienpolitik.

Margarida Marques (S&D). – Senhor Presidente, Senhor Comissário, a décima subida consecutiva dos juros do BCE colocou a taxa de referência no valor mais alto desde que o Euro foi criado, há 20 anos. E a Presidente Lagarde não nos deixa descansados relativamente à possibilidade de novas subidas, apesar de a economia europeia estar já em risco de recessão.

Esta guerra cega à inflação do BCE é errada. O BCE está apenas a cumprir o seu mandato primário, não está a cumprir o seu mandato secundário e obrigatório, que é apoiar as políticas da União Europeia. E está a ter resultados duvidosos. As consequências económicas e sociais estão à vista. Está a tornar insustentável o orçamento das famílias, seja com a casa ou com a alimentação. E não pode dizer aos governos que fechem os olhos e não intervenham para ajudar as famílias e as empresas a enfrentar as consequências das políticas do BCE.

Felizmente, o Governo português mantém esses apoios essenciais, embora não estejamos aqui a debater a situação em Portugal, mas sim a situação na Europa. Uma coordenação séria e equilibrada entre a política monetária e orçamental é necessária.

Γεώργιος Κύρτσος (Renew). – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, επίτροπε, συνάδελφοι, οι συνεχείς αυξήσεις των βασικών επιτοκίων είναι σε μεγάλο βαθμό το κόστος που πληρώνουμε για την υποτίμηση του πληθωριστικού κινδύνου και την αργή αντίδραση των αρμοδίων. Η Ευρωπαϊκή Κεντρική Τράπεζα ακολουθεί τώρα την αναγκαία αντιπληθωριστική πολιτική σε δύσκολες συνθήκες. Δεν πρέπει, όμως, μια αναγκαία πολιτική να γίνεται άδικη και προκλητική. Αυτό συμβαίνει εξαιτίας της τεράστιας διαφοράς μεταξύ των υψηλών επιτοκίων χορηγήσεων και των χαμηλών επιτοκίων καταθέσεων των τραπεζών. Η διαφορά αυτή μεγαλώνει τις οικονομικές δυσκολίες και γιγαντώνει τα κέρδη των τραπεζών.

Όπως η νομισματική πολιτική χρειάζεται την κατάλληλη συμπληρωματική δημοσιονομική πολιτική για να αποδώσει, έτσι η αύξηση των βασικών επιτοκίων πρέπει να συμπληρώνεται από παρεμβάσεις, πρώτον, για το κλείσιμο της ψαλίδας των επιτοκίων, και δεύτερον, για την φορολογία αυτών που η Επιτροπή αποκαλεί ουρανοκατέβητα κέρδη. Και, φυσικά, με τα έσοδα να χρηματοδοτηθούν πολιτικές υπέρ των μικρομεσαίων και της στέγασης των νέων.

René Repasi (S&D). – Herr Präsident, sehr geehrter Herr Vizepräsident, Kommission, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Wir debattieren heute die zehnte konsekutive Erhöhung der Zinssätze durch die EZB. Das heißt, wir diskutieren hier die Verteuerung von Krediten für notwendige Investitionen, die Verteuerung von Hypotheken, und ja, sehr richtig, Herr Kommissar, es sind die Armen, die deutlich härter davon betroffen sind, wenn wir Maßnahmen der Geldpolitik haben.

Es ist auch richtig, was Sie sagen: Die EZB ist unabhängig. Aber richtig ist auch, dass Geldpolitik eben nicht alles ist, schon gar nicht, wenn der Grund für die Preissteigerung Profite sind. Hier, Herr Kommissar, ist die Kommission sehr wohl zur Verantwortung zu ziehen. Denn wenn Preise nicht mehr marktgerecht sind, dann liegt ein Wettbewerbsverstoß vor. Warum hat die Generaldirektion Wettbewerb nicht schon längst die Verfahren eingeleitet und zum Abschluss gebracht, um Preise nach unten zu bringen, sodass wir gar nicht dazu gezwungen sind, über Zinssatzerhöhungen zu diskutieren und dementsprechend die Ärmsten auch nicht am meisten treffen müssen?

Herr Kommissar, die Kommission ist hier gefordert, um die EZB in ihrem Kampf gegen die Inflation zu unterstützen.

Catch-the-eye procedure

Francesca Peppucci (PPE). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, l'aumento dei tassi di interesse da parte della Banca centrale europea ha l'obiettivo di dare un contributo sostanziale al tempestivo rientro dell'inflazione. Ma serve prudenza.

Come delegazione italiana di Forza Italia abbiamo da subito considerato questa scelta non condivisibile, le cui conseguenze sono state pagate e sono pagate dalle famiglie e dalle imprese. Tutto questo, inevitabilmente, porta a un blocco delle iniziative e degli investimenti programmati delle imprese per non chiedere soldi alle banche. Mutui a tasso variabile che rappresentano un peso insostenibile per le famiglie. Per di più, una situazione che porta al rischio che i mutui non pagati si trasformino in crediti deteriorati, con conseguenti nuovi problemi.

L'inflazione nel territorio europeo è provocata soprattutto da fattori esterni all'economia europea, come l'aumento del prezzo dell'energia o delle materie prime. Non aiuta, quindi, un aumento continuo dei tassi, che rischia di portarci in recessione. Bisogna bilanciare lotta all'inflazione e rischio di recessione. Speriamo quindi che la cura prevista dalla Banca centrale europea non vada a uccidere il malato.

Цветелина Пенкова (S&D). – Г-н Председател, г-н Комисар, колеги, чухме много изказвания, които вървят в посоката на обещаващи знаци за следващата година. Да, инфлацията в Европа върви надолу, инфлацията в Еврозоната върви надолу. Европейската централна банка определено има инструментите да понижи инфлацията и данните сочат, че тя осезаемо ще намалее още във второто тримесечие на 2024 г., а в началото на 2025 г. ще достигнем и заветната цел от 2% инфлация.

Само че това важи само за Еврозоната. Това не важи за всички държави, които са членки на Европейския съюз, и това е огромно разграничение. Затова държави като България имат един-единствен път, а именно присъединяването си към Еврозоната. Защото Еврозоната и активната парична политика са единственият начин, по който ние можем да защитим доходите на хората.

Sandra Pereira (The Left). – Senhor Presidente, seria fácil antever as consequências sociais do aumento das taxas de juro: o empobrecimento de amplas camadas da população, em especial os trabalhadores, ao mesmo tempo que se garante uma enorme transferência de riqueza para o setor financeiro, para os bancos, o abrandamento económico, o risco de recessão e o aumento do desemprego.

A realidade está a demonstrar que a vossa política visa atingir premeditadamente as condições de vida dos trabalhadores, das mulheres, dos jovens. Aí estamos perante a falácia da independência do BCE, que afinal está ao serviço dos interesses da banca e do capital financeiro.

Aí está a ser demonstrado como a aplicação de uma mesma política monetária impacta de forma diferenciada países com situações económicas e estruturais distintas. Portugal e os portugueses são dos que mais sofrem, como até já reconheceu a própria Comissão Europeia. Basta que sejam sempre os mesmos a pagar.

Para além de medidas imediatas, urgentes e necessárias, a situação demonstra a necessidade da recuperação da soberania monetária e de assegurar o controlo político democrático de decisões que afetam profundamente a vida das pessoas. Lamento que esteja a dar sono.

(End of catch-the-eye procedure)

Margaritis Schinas, *Vice-President of the Commission*. – Mr President, thank you all honourable Members for your interventions and contributions. This is a complex, yes, yet very useful debate, one that takes place within the framework of important legal and institutional rules that underpin our economic governance and are enshrined in the Treaties. High inflation presents a clear challenge for EU households, workers and companies. We need to fight inflation, cushion its impact on the vulnerable and enhance our resilience against any future shocks. And we need a strong and coordinated policy response to deal with the current situation. Monetary measures are important, but not enough. I am grateful that we can count on the European Parliament to further our ambitious agenda of how to ensure Europe's sustainable competitiveness.

President. – The debate is closed.

22. Stemmeforklaringer

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

22.1. Beskyttelse af arbejdstagere mod asbest (A9-0160/2023 - Véronique Trillet-Lenoir)

Oral explanations of vote

Luke Ming Flanagan (The Left). – Mr President, people where I live often ask what relevance does the European Parliament have to their lives? And unfortunately, this has a bit too much of relevance to my life because a week ago, a year ago and a week ago, my father died from asbestosis. So, next time someone asked me what relevance does the European Parliament have, I'll be able to tell them that we've got some good news. We now will have protection from workers from cancer-causing asbestos fibres, which will be significantly improved with this directive. And the agreement is a clear victory for workers and goes beyond what the European Commission and the construction employers had called for. And finally, the removal of all asbestos remains the ultimate goal, and The Left calls on the Commission to put forward the next piece of legislation they have promised a mandatory screening and registration of asbestos in buildings, because while it is good news, unfortunately, we've known this for a long, long time and nothing was done. So whatever we can do to maximise this and do it as quickly as possible, the better. Because maybe some people who aren't with us today might be with us today if we acted quick enough and we act quick enough in the future.

22.2. Tredjelandes økonomiske tvang (A9-0246/2022 - Bernd Lange)

Oral explanations of vote

Miriam Lexmann (PPE). – Pán predsedajúci, osobitne vítam dnešné hlasovanie za prijatie jednotných pravidiel obchodnej a ekonomickej obrany, ktoré som dlhodobo presadzovala aj ako tieňová spravodajkyňa.

Sú naším ďalším dôležitým nástrojom proti politicko-obchodnému nátlaku, ktorý Čína neustále vyvíja nielen voči svojim susedom, ale aj tretím krajinám a taktiež voči Európskej únii, ako sa to ukázalo aj v prípade Litvy.

Som presvedčená, že len náš jednotný a vytrvalý postup môže zabrániť bezprecedentnému pokračovaniu čínskej politiky v štýle rozdeľuj a panuj.

Toto je nesmierne dôležité aj pre Slovensko vzhľadom na našu sekundárnu závislosť od Číny, napríklad prostredníctvom nášho automobilového priemyslu, čo vytvára riziko pre ekonomickú bezpečnosť.

22.3. Europæisk retsakt om mediefrihed (A9-0264/2023 - Sabine Verheyen)

Oral explanations of vote

Miriam Lexmann (PPE). – Pán predsedajúci, vítam, že kolegovia dnes tak veľkou väčšinou prijali správu o Európskom akte o slobode médií.

Tento akt prináša mnohé ustanovenia, ktoré pomôžu novinárom a celkovo pluralite a nezávislosti médií. Ak zároveň zabezpečí aj transparentnosť z vlastníctva a dostatok informácií pre užívateľov.

Toto je mimoriadne dôležité najmä v situácii, kedy sa množia útoky na nezávislé médiá, šíria sa rôzne dezinformácie a mnohí novinári, ktorí si riadne vykonávajú svoju investigatívnu prácu, sa ocitajú v nebezpečenstve.

Na Slovensku to vyústilo až do vraždy novinára Jána Kuciaka a jeho snúbenice Martiny Kušnírovej.

Médiá sú pilierom demokracie. Našou povinnosťou je preto vytvoriť novinárom prostredie, v ktorom budú môcť prinášať vyvážené a objektívne informácie, kde budú chránení ako novinárske zdroje. Aj absolútnou samozrejmosťou musí byť bezpečie nielen pre nich, ale aj pre ich rodiny.

President. – That concludes the explanations of vote.

23. Dagsorden for næste møde

President. – The next sitting is tomorrow, Wednesday 4 October, at 9.00. The agenda has been published and is available on the European Parliament website.

24. Godkendelse af protokollen fra dette møde

President. – The minutes of this sitting will be submitted to Parliament tomorrow, after the votes.

25. Hævelse af mødet

(The sitting closed at 22.15)

Tegnforklaring

*	Høringsprocedure
***	Godkendelsesprocedure
***I	Almindelig lovgivningsprocedure (førstebehandling)
***II	Almindelig lovgivningsprocedure (andenbehandling)
***III	Almindelig lovgivningsprocedure (tredjebehandling)

(Proceduren afhænger af det retsgrundlag, der er valgt i udkastet til retsakt)

Forkortelser af udvalgenes navne

AFET	Udenrigsudvalget
DEVE	Udviklingsudvalget
INTA	Udvalget om International Handel
BUDG	Budgetudvalget
CONT	Budgetkontroludvalget
ECON	Økonomi- og Valutaudvalget
EMPL	Udvalget om Beskæftigelse og Sociale Anliggender
ENVI	Udvalget om Miljø, Folkesundhed og Fødevarer sikkerhed
ITRE	Udvalget om Industri, Forskning og Energi
IMCO	Udvalget om det Indre Marked og Forbrugerbeskyttelse
TRAN	Transport- og Turismeudvalget
REGI	Regionaludviklingsudvalget
AGRI	Udvalget om Landbrug og Udvikling af Landdistrikter
PECH	Fiskeriudvalget
CULT	Kultur- og Uddannelsesudvalget
JURI	Retsudvalget
LIBE	Udvalget om Borgernes Rettigheder og Retlige og Indre Anliggender
AFCO	Udvalget om Konstitutionelle Anliggender
FEMM	Udvalget om Kvinders Rettigheder og Ligestilling
PETI	Udvalget for Andragender
DROI	Underudvalget for Menneskerettigheder
SEDE	Underudvalget for Sikkerhed og Forsvar
FISC	Underudvalget om Skatteanliggender
SANT	Underudvalget om Folkesundhed

Forkortelser for de politiske grupper

PPE	Det Europæiske Folkepartis Gruppe (Kristelige demokrater)
S&D	Gruppen for det Progressive Forbund af Socialdemokrater i Europa-Parlamentet
Renew	Gruppen Renew Europe
Verts/ALE	Gruppen De Grønne/Den Europæiske Fri Alliance
ECR	Gruppen De Europæiske Konservative og Reformister
ID	Gruppen Identitet og Demokrati
The Left	Venstrefløjsgruppen i Europa-Parlamentet — GUE/NGL
NI	Løsgængere