



VERBATIM REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS OF 12 JUNE 2023

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Sittings of 12 to 15 June 2023

STRASBOURG

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VERBATIM REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS OF 12 JUNE 2023

PRESIDENZA: ROBERTA METSOLA

President

1. Resumption of the session

President. – I declare resumed the session of the European Parliament adjourned on Thursday, 1 June 2023.

2. Opening of the sitting

(The sitting opened at 17.03)

3. Statements by the President

President. – Good afternoon, dear colleagues. It is with great sadness that we learnt today of the death of former Member of this House and former Prime Minister of Italy, Silvio Berlusconi. On behalf of the European Parliament, I want to extend our condolences to his children, to his political colleagues and to his family and loved ones at this difficult time.

This week the Council also finally agreed on a general approach on important migration and asylum files. This a welcome step forward, if by no means the end. I think this is a breakthrough that we welcome and we are ready to begin negotiations immediately to reach a deal before the end of this mandate. We also expect a strong signal from Council on the crisis and *force majeure* regulation. I am convinced that we can find a way forward and that people around Europe expect a way forward that is fair and humane with those who are in need of protection, firm with those who are not eligible and strong with those traffickers exploiting the most vulnerable.

Also, dear colleagues, six days ago the world witnessed yet another barbaric, horrific attack against innocent Ukrainians by Russia. The destruction of the Kakhovka dam in Ukraine flooded dozens of villages and parts of a nearby city, leaving thousands of people in the most dire humanitarian and ecological situation. They need our practical help and support. And they need justice. It cannot stay unanswered.

In Annecy, France, the world witnessed a horrific attack against children and toddlers with a man wielding a knife, stabbing indiscriminately. In the midst of the panic and the horror, men and women, passers-by, stood up and prevented further bloodshed and tragedy. Strangers putting themselves in harm's way and showing the very best of France and of Europe.

Colleagues, this weekend we bid a heart-breaking farewell to another young woman violently stolen from us too soon. Giulia was a young woman who was seven months pregnant living near Milan in Italy. On 27 May she was beaten, stabbed, murdered and her body burned. This shocking case is not isolated in Europe. We have seen too many examples of women being killed. Just in the last weeks we have Ana Vanessa in Spain, Délia in Portugal, Fatiha in France – the list goes on.

We cannot become immune to the horror of domestic abuse, femicide and violence against women. We cannot allow the cycle to continue. So for every woman who has been killed let us say from here: Not. One. More.

(Applause)

Rosanna Conte (ID). – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, vorrei ricordare la ragazza che è deceduta a causa delle fiamme in un incendio l'altro giorno qui a Bruxelles. So che non si può chiedere un minuto di silenzio, ma volevo associarmi a tutti quei ragazzi che si trasferiscono qui in Europa per costruire questa Unione e danno un'importanza a quello che per noi è un grande significato. Quindi chiedo un minuto di silenzio, se possibile.

Presidente. – Grazie onorevole Conte.

4. Approval of the minutes of the previous sittings

President. – The minutes and the texts adopted of the sittings of 31 May and 1 June are available. Are there any comments?

I see that is not the case, so they are approved.

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

President. – In relation to the decisions by the LIBE Committee to enter into interinstitutional negotiations pursuant to Rule 71(1) announced at the opening of the session on Wednesday, 31 May, I have received no requests for a vote in Parliament by Members or political groups reaching at least the medium threshold. The committee may therefore start the negotiations.

Fulvio Martusciello (PPE). – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, io voglio ricordare oggi, in quest'Aula, Silvio Berlusconi. Silvio Berlusconi è stato un nostro collega. E voglio solo dire a tutti i nostri colleghi, a quelli che l'hanno incrociato nei corridoi, a quelli con cui ha parlato, a quelli con cui ha votato insieme, a quelli con cui qualche volta, magari, si è confrontato anche duramente, voglio dire a tutti questi colleghi: siate fieri di averlo conosciuto, perché un uomo così non sarà facile ritrovarlo nella storia dell'Europa e del nostro paese. Noi ne siamo fieri e onoreremo come membri del Parlamento sempre il suo ricordo.

Presidente. – Grazie onorevole Martusciello. Condoglianze a voi e a tutta l'Italia in questo giorno.

6. Composition of Parliament

President. – The competent authorities of France have notified me of the election of Christophe Clergeau to the European Parliament replacing Eric Andrieu with effect from 2 June 2023. I wish to welcome our new colleague and recall that he takes his seat in Parliament and on its bodies in full enjoyment of his rights pending the verification of his credentials.

7. Request for the defence of immunity

President. – Eva Kaili has submitted a request for defence of her parliamentary immunity in the context of legal proceedings in Belgium. This request is referred to the Committee on Legal Affairs.

8. Calendar of Parliament's part-sessions – 2024

President. – On Thursday 8 June 2023, the Conference of Presidents adopted the proposal for the calendar of part-sessions for the parliamentary year 2024. The dates are available on the Plenary webpage. The deadlines are as follows: amendments – today at 19.00; roll-call votes – today at 21.00.

The calendar will be adopted tomorrow, 13 June, at noon.

9. Composition of committees and delegations

President. – The EPP and S&D groups have notified me of decisions relating to changes to appointments within committees and delegations. These decisions will be set out in the minutes of today's sitting and take effect on the date of this announcement.

10. Signing of acts adopted in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure (Rule 79)

President. – I would like to inform you that, together with the President of the Council, I shall this week sign five acts adopted under the ordinary legislative procedure in accordance with Rule 79 of Parliament's Rules. The titles of the acts will be published in the minutes of this sitting.

11. Order of business

President. – The final draft agenda as adopted by the Conference of Presidents on 8 June pursuant to the Rule 157 has been distributed to all of you.

I have received a request for a point of order.

Eva Maria Poptcheva (Renew). – Señora presidenta, queremos llamar la atención sobre el debate tópico que está previsto para este miércoles y se titula «Gestación subrogada en la Unión Europea: riesgo de explotación y de comercialización».

Hemos recibido las quejas de muchísimos ciudadanos sobre el título tan tendencioso de este debate, que humilla a muchísimos niños nacidos por gestación subrogada. Por eso, queremos dejar muy claro que se trata de un debate y un título que han sido elegidos y definidos por un grupo parlamentario en concreto, el ECR, sin que un número suficiente de grupos parlamentarios se hubiera opuesto.

Queremos insistir en que todos los niños son niños, independientemente de cómo hayan sido concebidos, y que no se puede humillar de esta manera a los miles de niños europeos que han sido concebidos por gestación subrogada.

President. – For Tuesday, the Greens and The Left groups have requested that the debate on the Commission statement on 'The establishment of the EU Ethics Body' be wound up with a resolution to be voted at the July part-session.

I give the floor to Daniel Freund to move the request on behalf of his group.

Daniel Freund, on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group. – Madam President, indeed, the Commission has made a proposal for an independent EU ethics body, after the promise was made four years ago. The proposal that is now on the table from the Commission side is very different from what we have adopted in this House almost two years ago.

So, I think it's good that we have a debate tomorrow, but I think it would be good as well to react in writing and to have a resolution in July to reply to the Commission proposal so that we can have independent oversight of the existing rules, because that's the main point of what we need to change, not further debates on harmonising the rules but actually enforcing the ones we have.

President. – Does anybody want to speak against? I see that is not the case, so I put the request to the vote by roll call.

(The House agreed to the request)

Therefore there will be a resolution to be voted during the July part-session.

For Tuesday, The Left Group has requested that the debate on the Council and Commission statements on ‘the state of the EU-Cuba PDCA in the light of the recent visit of the High Representative to the island’ no longer be wound up with a resolution.

I give the floor to Manu Pineda to move the request.

Manu Pineda, en nombre del Grupo The Left. – Señora presidenta, este Pleno debatirá mañana sobre el Acuerdo de Diálogo Político y de Cooperación entre la Unión Europea y Cuba, tras la visita del Alto Representante de la Unión para Asuntos Exteriores y Política de Seguridad, Josep Borrell.

Es importante que el Parlamento debata sobre las líneas estratégicas de la política exterior europea y, desde luego, nosotros consideramos que el acuerdo político con Cuba lo es. Sin embargo, se propone que este debate sea acompañado de una resolución para el Pleno de julio.

Este Pleno se celebrará justo una semana antes de una cita fundamental: la Cumbre UE-CELAC. Esta cumbre no se celebra desde 2015 y, en el actual contexto, es fundamental que sea un éxito y refuerce nuestras relaciones con la región.

El impacto diplomático de una resolución de este tipo sobre la Cumbre puede ser muy grave y limitar la capacidad de la Unión Europea de trabajar por mejorar las relaciones y lograr acuerdos concretos, no solo con Cuba, sino con el conjunto de Latinoamérica y el Caribe.

Por ello, pedimos que, manteniendo el debate que celebraremos mañana, se elimine la resolución sobre el asunto que debe votarse en el mes de julio.

President. – Does anybody want to speak against? I see that is not the case. Then we put the request to the vote by roll call.

(The House rejected the request)

For Wednesday I have received several proposals for the change of the title of the Council and Commission statements on the preparation of the European Council of 29 and 30 June 2023. I will read all the requests out.

The EPP Group has requested that the title be changed to ‘Preparation of the European Council meeting of 29-30 June 2023, in particular in the light of recent progress on the Migration Pact’.

The Renew Group has requested that the title be changed to ‘Preparation of the European Council meeting of 29-30 June 2023, in particular the ways to put the European economy at the service of the middle class’.

The Left Group has requested that the title be changed to ‘Preparation of the European Council meeting of 29-30 June 2023, in particular in the light of the de facto abolition of the right to asylum following the JHA Council deal on the Migration Pact’.

The Greens Group has requested that the title be changed to ‘Preparation of the European Council meeting of 29-30 June 2023, in particular in the light of the agreement on the Migration Pact and the EU migration deal with Tunisia’.

And finally, the S&D Group has requested that the title be changed to ‘Preparation of the European Council meeting of 29-30 June 2023, in particular in the light of the general approach on the Migration Pact’.

Now I understand that there might be some proposals to bring these titles together, and then if there is an agreement we will put this to a joint vote, rather than vote on each of them individually. Let's have a look.

Jeroen Lenaers, *on behalf of the PPE Group*. – Madam President, I think indeed it is more important to have this debate than to have the exact wording of a certain group in the title.

So we have looked at a possible compromise and we have come up with 'Council and Commission statements, preparation of the European Council meeting of 29 and 30 June 2023, in particular in the light of recent steps towards concluding the migration pact', and I believe there should be a majority supporting this debate.

President. – Can I have a quick look – does this seem to have a majority?

Stéphane Séjourné, *au nom du groupe Renew*. – Madame la Présidente, mon groupe avait prévu de parler des classes moyennes et de remettre au centre de l'économie européenne les classes moyennes. Par ailleurs, l'ordre du jour du Conseil n'aborde pas les questions migratoires et nous voulions un débat séparé sur les questions migratoires, avec la possibilité d'avoir une expression de tous les groupes. Je comprends qu'il y a une majorité dans ce sens. Donc, évidemment, on ira voter la proposition de consensus. Je dis juste qu'il y aura un certain nombre d'aspects, notamment les questions tunisiennes, qu'il faudra aborder également dans ce débat avec la présidente de la Commission.

Tineke Strik, *on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group*. – Madam President, thank you. Of course, we agree that we should talk on the pact and the way forward, but we cannot miss out one essential element that is related to the pact. And we all witnessed yesterday how the announcement was being made by Ms von der Leyen of a migration deal between the EU and Tunisia, which is clearly linked to the Council agreement on the pact. And it means that the EU is outsourcing its responsibility to a regime that has cracked down on the rule of law, on human rights and on democracy. Migrants fleeing violence and persecution in Tunisia will be pulled back where their rights are violated, including the right of access to an asylum procedure. And as we have seen in the case of Libya, the deal will most probably also lead to a further loss of life.

So this deal with Tunisia will affect our external policies and the EU asylum pact. Therefore, we would really like to urge you to include in the title the deal with Tunisia. So make it 'preparation of the EU Council meeting, in particular in the light of the agreement on the Migration Pact and the EU migration deal with Tunisia'.

President. – So now I see there is a full round of speakers. Ms Gualmini, you also want the floor?

Elisabetta Gualmini, *on behalf of the S&D Group*. – Madam President, actually, we are in favour of the compromise suggested by the EPP because the title is sufficiently broad, and also because we think that we have to defend the role of the European Parliament in the negotiations that will start soon. So we think that there is a broad title, and this allows us to begin the negotiations and to try to find a good compromise also on our part.

President. – Thank you, Ms Gualmini. Before we proceed to vote on the compromise proposal I give the floor to Ms Ernst.

Cornelia Ernst, *im Namen der Fraktion The Left*. – Frau Präsidentin! Es ist eben nicht egal, was der Titel dieser Debatte ist, ganz und gar nicht. Und es geht auch nicht um Tunesien, sondern es geht um den gesamten schmutzigen Deal, der letzte Woche vom Rat beschlossen wurde und nun in die Verhandlungen mit dem Parlament kommen soll. Wir möchten schon, dass der „*deal on migration pact*“ hier tatsächlich im Licht steht.

Das heißt also: „*in the light of the fact of the abolition of the right to asylum following the council deal on migration pact*“ – weil es darum geht, dass das Recht auf Asyl, das individuelle Recht auf Asyl de facto abgeschafft wird, weil es darum geht, dass tatsächlich Familien und Kinder inhaftiert werden können, weil es darum geht, dass das kein historischer Erfolg ist, sondern eine riesengroße Sauerei. Und ich finde, das muss man auch aussprechen. Wir müssen die Möglichkeit haben, dies hier im Parlament so auszusprechen. Deswegen haben wir unseren Antrag eingebracht und möchten auch namentlich darüber abstimmen.

President. – OK, so we will vote on the compromise title, Council and Commission statements – Preparation of the European Council meeting of 29–30 June 2023, in particular in the light of recent steps towards concluding the Migration Pact. I put it to the vote by roll call.

(The House agreed to the compromise title)

For Wednesday, the ID Group has requested that Council and Commission statements on ‘Protecting citizens against an uncontrolled immigration policy’ be added as the second item in the afternoon after the topical debate. As a consequence, the sitting would be extended to 23.00.

I give the floor to Jordan Bardella to move the request, but also to ask whether now that we have changed the title of the discussion on the European Council, you would still ask to have a separate item – just to know?

Jordan Bardella, au nom du groupe ID. – Madame la Présidente, «Protection des citoyens face à une politique migratoire incontrôlée»: voici le titre du débat que nous souhaitons inscrire à l'ordre du jour de cette session parlementaire. Le drame d'Annecy, qui a ému l'Europe, est la conséquence directe du désordre migratoire qui règne partout sur notre sol. Vous ne pouvez plus esquiver le débat sur la faiblesse et le laxisme de l'Union européenne dans la protection de nos concitoyens devant une immigration devenue hors de contrôle. Les États européens ne sont pas des ONG, chargées de recueillir toute la misère du Sud, pas plus que l'asile n'est un droit inconditionnel à circuler au sein de l'espace Schengen et des États européens. Le droit dont vous devriez enfin vous soucier ici, mes chers collègues, c'est celui de nos concitoyens à vivre libres et en sécurité. Entre l'ouverture de nos frontières et la protection des peuples, il faut choisir.

President. – Is there anybody who would like to speak against, or do we go to the vote? Mr Séjourné, you had an alternative proposal.

Stéphane Séjourné (Renew). – Madame la Présidente, on avait une proposition de débat qui n'instrumentalisait pas, qui avait aussi une forme de responsabilité sur cette question-là. Ce Parlement européen a voté, il y a quelques semaines, les mandats de négociation sur le pacte asile et migration, et M. Bardella a voté contre. Il nous revient avec une instrumentalisation d'un fait divers en France, une horreur qui s'est passée à Annecy, pour instrumentaliser les choses. Bravo! Votre responsabilité, c'était de voter les mandats de négociation, c'était de voter le pacte asile et migration. Mais vous ne voulez pas régler le sujet, Monsieur Bardella: vous surfez sur cette question comme une espèce de carburant électoral.

Donc, évidemment, Madame la Présidente, je retire le titre, puisque nous allons en discuter au moment de la discussion avec la présidente de la Commission. Il y aura cette discussion, et j'encourage évidemment les collègues à faire tous leur possible pour que la question soit traitée au niveau européen, et pas instrumentalisée comme on vient de le voir.

President. – I put the ID Group's original request to the vote by roll call.

(The House rejected the request)

The Greens/EFA Group has requested that the Commission statement on ‘Mercosur – additional instrument on sustainability and legal architecture’ be added as the third item in the afternoon. As a consequence, the sitting would be extended to 23.00.

I give the floor to Yannick Jadot to move the request.

Yannick Jadot, au nom du groupe Verts/ALE. – Madame la Présidente, chers collègues, vous le savez, la présidente de la Commission est actuellement au Brésil. Sa visite fait suite à de précédentes visites de la Commission européenne et de chefs d'État ou de gouvernement européens. Nous avons eu le mois dernier deux délégations de ce Parlement: une de la commission du commerce international et l'autre de la délégation pour les relations avec la République fédérative du Brésil, et nous savons depuis des mois et des mois que la Commission accélère la négociation pour tenter de conclure.

Nous avons la Commission européenne qui a proposé ce qu'en anglais on appelle une *side letter*, ou «protocole additionnel», qui n'a jamais été discutée de manière transparente avec ce Parlement. Et cela fait très longtemps que ce Parlement n'a pas débattu d'un accord qui aura des conséquences manifestes et potentiellement dramatiques sur le climat, la biodiversité et les paysans, dans les pays du Mercosur comme en Europe.

Je réclame donc, effectivement, au nom du groupe des Verts, que nous ayons enfin un débat dans cette institution sur le Mercosur, avec ce nom que vous avez évoqué, Madame la Présidente, «Commission Statement on Mercosur: Additional Instrument on Sustainability and Legal Architecture», comme troisième point à l'ordre du jour mercredi après-midi.

President. – I have received an alternative proposal from The Left Group. I give the floor to Helmut Scholz to present it.

Helmut Scholz, im Namen der Fraktion The Left. – Frau Präsidentin! Ich kann mich nur meinem Vorredner anschließen. Das letzte Mal, dass wir hier zum EU-Mercosur-Abkommen gesprochen haben, war 2019, und viel ist seitdem passiert.

Und weil das Zusatzprotokoll schon angesprochen wurde: Es ist bis heute nicht bekannt. Wir wissen also nicht wirklich: Sind die Bedenken und die Fragen, die gerade auch von der brasilianischen und argentinischen Regierung eingebracht wurden, wirklich in diesem Zusatzprotokoll aufgehoben? Wie sind die Fragen der Nachhaltigkeit geregelt? Und das sind dringend Fragen, die in der Öffentlichkeit diskutiert werden müssen.

Deshalb glaube ich, es ist richtig, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen, dass wir dieses Abkommen hier diskutieren, und zwar noch vor dem EU-CELAC-Gipfel.

President. – So Mr Jadot, do you agree with the proposal from The Left Group, or would you like to keep your own?

Yannick Jadot, au nom du groupe Verts/ALE. – Madame la Présidente, je vais garder ma proposition. Mais, évidemment, je pense que nous avons de toute façon dans ce Parlement un intérêt commun à mieux encadrer le travail de la Commission qui, sur ce sujet, a manqué sérieusement de transparence vis-à-vis du Parlement européen.

President. – OK, thank you. Does anybody want to speak against these proposals? No? Then we vote on the Greens' request by roll call.

(The House rejected the request)

So then we vote on Mr Scholz's proposal. Mr Scholz, do you want to keep your proposal? You do. Then we vote on The Left Group proposal by roll call.

(The House rejected the request)

Therefore the agenda is not changed.

For Wednesday, The Left Group has requested that Council and Commission statements on 'The situation of Julian Assange and his possible extradition to the US' be added as the seventh item in the afternoon. The debate on the statements would be wound up with a resolution. I give the floor to João Pimenta Lopes to move the request.

João Pimenta Lopes, em nome do Grupo The Left. – Senhora Presidente, soubemos que no passado dia 6, um tribunal no Reino Unido rejeitou o apelo de Julian Assange contra a decisão de extradição para os Estados Unidos, na sequência da detenção arbitrária a que está sujeito desde 2019.

Trata-se de uma decisão preocupante, não apenas pelo risco real de graves violações dos seus direitos, incluindo o direito à sua integridade física, à liberdade de expressão ou a um julgamento justo, mas também porque a tentativa de extradição, criminalização e prisão de Julian Assange representa uma inaceitável pressão, visando condicionar a publicação de informação de interesse público.

Refere o Presidente da Federação Internacional de Jornalistas que, se Assange for extraditado e preso, nenhum jornalista no mundo estará seguro.

É tempo de esta Casa se pronunciar contra esta inaceitável detenção, pelo que propomos este debate e esta resolução com carácter de urgência.

President. – Does anybody want to speak against? I don't see that to be the case. I will put the request to the vote by roll call.

(The House rejected the request)

Therefore the agenda remains unchanged.

The agenda is adopted and the order of business is thus established. Have a nice afternoon.

(The sitting was suspended at 17.32)

IN THE CHAIR: MARC ANGEL

Vice-President

12. Resumption of the sitting

(The sitting resumed at 17.35)

13. Marking the World Day against Child Labour (debate)

President. – The next item is the Commission statement on marking the World Day against Child Labour (2023/2745(RSP)).

This is an important day, and we really must enable children to have a fulfilling childhood of education and play, and not work. And therefore I think we owe it to the thousands of children in the world who are still in forced labour.

Didier Reynders, Member of the Commission. – Mr President, dear Members, thank you for scheduling this debate today to mark the World Day against Child Labour.

There has been a significant decrease in the number of children engaged in child labour in the 21st century, going from 245 million in 2000 to 152 million in 2016. But this positive trend has stopped.

Between 2016 and 2020, the number of children in child labour globally, has risen to 160 million, nearly half of whom are engaged in hazardous work. We are deeply concerned about the recent increase in child labour, which is affecting children's rights and hindering their full development. We cannot accept this very worrying trend, which is also contrary to the commitment that we have taken with the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda to reduce inequalities and poverty in the world.

The European Union remains committed towards putting an end to child labour through a zero-tolerance approach to the issue. Within the Union, the EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child adopted in 2021 specifically makes the commitment towards a zero tolerance approach against child labour in line with Article 32 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. With the European Child Guarantee, we aim at fighting child poverty and ensuring that children in need have access to key services to thrive in their lives.

EU Member States have high minimum standards for the protection of children, particularly in relation to child labour, which are in line with – and generally provide a higher level of protection than – the European Labour Organisation conventions on minimum age and worse forms of child labour.

When it comes to tackling child labour abroad, the EU continues to act. Our 2022 Communication on Decent Work Worldwide, which outlines the EU's commitment to promoting the four elements of decent work – social protection, employment creation, standards and rights at work and social dialogue and tripartism includes a specific focus on the eradication of child labour and forced labour.

The European Union is involved in several projects and programmes aimed at eradicating child labour, such as the Sustainable Cocoa Initiative, which promotes the use of sustainable cocoa production methods and works to prevent child labour in cocoa farming, while the CLEAR Cotton project aims to combat child labour in the cotton supply chain.

The European Union also provides funding for development programmes aimed at reducing child labour, such as the International Labour Organization's Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour and has supported initiatives to combat child labour in specific sectors such as mining and fisheries. In addition to these projects and initiatives, the European Union promotes international standards on child labour in its free trade agreements and unilateral trade preference schemes. Moreover, the Commission's proposal for a new generalised scheme of preferences renders the export of goods made by internationally prohibited child labour, a ground for withdrawing unilateral trade preferences.

Another key component of the EU's approach to addressing child labour is the promotion of responsible business conduct and sustainable supply chains.

The Commission's proposal for a directive on corporate sustainability due diligence would require companies to identify and address negative human rights impacts in their supply chains, including child labour impacts.

The Commission has also proposed to prohibit products made using false labour from the EU market, including products made with forced child labour. We also work within international and multilateral fora to support the implementation of UN instruments on decent work, and the European Union is actively contributing to setting labour standards through the International Labour Organization.

Today, as every day, we should unite to say that all children should be protected from child labour.

Ελένη Σταύρου, *εξ ονόματος της ομάδας PPE*. – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, αγαπητοί συνάδελφοι, σήμερα 12 Ιουνίου είναι η Παγκόσμια Ημέρα εναντίον της Παιδικής Εργασίας. Παρόλο που η λήψη άμεσων και αποτελεσματικών μέτρων για τον τερματισμό της παιδικής εργασίας σε όλες τις μορφές της είναι σταθερή δέσμευση της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης και ένας από τους στόχους βιώσιμης ανάπτυξης, η πραγματικότητα είναι ότι παραμένουμε μακριά από αυτόν το στόχο. Συγκεκριμένα, σύμφωνα με τις πιο πρόσφατες εκτιμήσεις, ο αριθμός των παιδιών που εργάζονται έχει αυξηθεί σε 160 εκατομμύρια παγκοσμίως.

Οφείλουμε να ενθαρρύνουμε μορφές εργασίας που είναι ωφέλιμες για την προσωπική και κοινωνική ανάπτυξη των παιδιών και που δεν παρεμβαίνουν στην παιδική τους ηλικία και τη σχολική τους εκπαίδευση. Ωστόσο, επικίνδυνες μορφές εργασίας που θέτουν σε κίνδυνο την υγεία, την ασφάλεια και την ηθική ανάπτυξη των παιδιών θα πρέπει να εξαλειφθούν χωρίς εξαιρέσεις και χωρίς ενδοιασμούς. Εξίσου σημαντικό είναι το γεγονός ότι περισσότερα από τρεισήμισι εκατομμύρια παιδιά απασχολούνται με καταναγκαστική εργασία ανά το παγκόσμιο, αποτελώντας σχεδόν το 12% του συνόλου.

Ως σκιώδης εισηγήτρια σε γνωμοδότηση για την καταναγκαστική εργασία, τονίζω επανειλημμένα ότι τα παιδιά πλήττονται δυσανάλογα από την καταναγκαστική εργασία και πως αυτή είναι μια διάσταση που πρέπει να αντιμετωπιστεί συγκεκριμένα, αποτελεσματικά και άμεσα.

Heléne Fritzon, *för S&D-gruppen*. – Herr talman! Kommissionär! Vart tionde barn i världen arbetar. Det finns olika skäl till varför barn tvingas arbeta, men några av konsekvenserna är de samma.

Barn som arbetar berövas sina rättigheter och sina möjligheter. De förlorar rätten till sin barndom. Årets tema för *Världsdagen mot barnarbete* handlar om just detta: att stoppa barnarbete och säkerställa social rättvisa för alla barn. Varje barn har rätt till sin barndom, och barnarbete står i direkt strid med dessa principer – och det förhindrar en jämlik och rättvis samhällsutveckling.

EU:s nolltolerans mot barnarbete är mycket viktig, men mer kan göras för att ta itu med orsakerna till barnarbete. Det handlar om fattigdom, ojämlikhet och tillgång till utbildning. Tillsammans måste vi kämpa för att skapa en värld där barn kan växa upp i jämlika samhällen och där barns rättigheter alltid respekteras – i dag och alla andra dagar.

Hilde Vautmans, *namens de Renew-Fractie*. – Voorzitter, het is vandaag de Internationale Dag tegen Kinderarbeid en we moeten deze dag meer dan ooit aangrijpen.

Wereldwijd worden honderd zestig miljoen kinderen ingezet voor kinderarbeid. Ik heb het ooit met eigen ogen gezien: kinderen die op de hoek van de straat coca-cola moeten verkopen, kinderen die in donkere fabrieken schoenen in elkaar moeten zetten en, erger nog, kinderen die moeten aanschuiven om te zien of ze wel klein genoeg zijn om af te dalen in een schacht en ontginningswerkzaamheden te verrichten. Dit zijn afschuwelijke taferelen.

Laten we dan ook meer dan ooit werk maken van de nultolerantie op dit gebied en ervoor zorgen dat in Europa nooit meer producten binnenkomen die gemaakt zijn door kinderhanden.

We weten dat wetgeving alleen niet volstaat. We moeten de oorzaken van armoede aanpakken: we moeten ervoor zorgen dat kinderen naar school kunnen en niet verantwoordelijk zijn voor het inkomen van het hele gezin.

Kinderarbeid moet wereldwijd worden uitgebannen.

Anna Cavazzini, *on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group*. – Mr President, dear colleagues, annually, 50 billion worth of imported goods are made with child labour. And an estimated 160 million children are engaged in child labour.

Children such as Nina, a 13-year-old working in the mica mine in Madagascar for our cosmetics, paints and electronics. Or Sandy who picks potatoes, extracts onions and digs up lettuce on a hillside in the Dominican Republic. To improve the circumstances and to lift the families from Nina and Sandy out of poverty, we need support and development cooperation.

But child labour and especially forced child labour is also straightforward economic dumping. That is why we need to increase the economic costs of companies that exploit the most vulnerable. The answer is a strong and effective import ban on products made with forced labour. It is a shame that the EPP is teaming up with the right wing to block and postpone this very important proposal.

Jadwiga Wiśniewska, *w imieniu grupy ECR*. – Panie przewodniczący! Panie Komisarzu! Szanowni Państwo! Każde dziecko zasługuje na dzieciństwo bezpieczne i radosne, a nie na wyzysk i przymusową niewolniczą pracę. Dziś Światowy Dzień Sprzeciwu wobec pracy dzieci. Przywołujemy te przerażające dane. Z niepokojem odnotowuję, że pierwszy raz od dwóch dekad wzrosła liczba dzieci zmuszanych do pracy. 160 milionów dzieci zmuszanych jest do pracy, czyli co dziesiąte dziecko. Te dzieci są krzywdzone nie tylko fizycznie, ale i psychicznie. Bez prawa do edukacji odbiera im się prawo do lepszej przyszłości. Afryka, Azja, Pacyfik łącznie odpowiadają za 9 z 10 dzieci zmuszanych do pracy.

W świetle tych danych nasze działania muszą mieć wymiar zewnętrzny. Toteż zero tolerancji dla przymusowej pracy dzieci musi być egzekwowane przy zawieraniu umów handlowych i partnerskich. Zakaz wprowadzania do obrotu na rynek europejski produktów, które zostały wytworzone przy udziale pracy przymusowej dzieci, jest koniecznością, jest wyzwaniem i jest egzaminem naszej odpowiedzialności. Czy jesteśmy silni tylko w słowach, czy w czynach? Zachęcam Pana Komisarza do działania w tej sprawie.

Marc Botenga, *au nom du groupe The Left*. – Monsieur le Commissaire, Monsieur le Président, j'entends les Verts qui parlent de Madagascar, les libéraux qui parlent du Congo, mais c'est évidemment facile de parler d'autres pays. Il faudrait d'abord commencer par l'Europe.

Vous savez que, en Italie, aujourd'hui, 340 000 enfants entre 7 et 15 ans ont déjà une expérience sur le marché du travail? En Belgique, des enfants ont été retrouvés à travailler dans les hangars de PostNL et de ses sous-traitants pour l'envoi de colis. Aux Pays-Bas, l'enseigne de grande distribution Albert Heijn recrute activement des enfants à partir de 13 ans pour travailler dans ses supermarchés. Ça, c'est l'Europe aujourd'hui. Et pourquoi vous en parlez tellement peu? Parce que, évidemment, la promotion, l'utilisation du travail des enfants par ces entreprises est une conséquence des politiques libérales en matière de marché du travail (contrats précaires, manque de contrats fixes et de salaires décents...). Évidemment que cela mène à ce genre de pratiques, à la sous-traitance à gogo.

Alors si on veut vraiment – et on le doit – en terminer avec le travail des enfants dans l'Union européenne, il s'agit d'arrêter cette libéralisation du marché du travail et d'imposer des contrats décents et des salaires décents.

President. – The debate is closed.

Written statements (Rule 171)

Dominique Bilde (ID), par écrit. – Le travail des enfants est un enjeu primordial de développement humain auquel je suis particulièrement sensible. Je me suis, par exemple, insurgée contre la persistance de ces graves abus dans les mines de mica à Madagascar. Ce sujet est revenu récemment sur le devant de la scène, à travers une communication de l'ambassade des États-Unis. Il en résulte que près de 10 000 enfants seraient concernés dans la région malgache de l'Anôsy.

Or, enrayer cette pratique révoltante est d'autant plus urgent que la transition vers le «tout électrique», souhaitée par l'Union européenne, aiguïsera la demande pour certains matériaux critiques, à l'instar du cobalt. L'extraction de ce métal est notoire pour le recours au travail des enfants en République démocratique du Congo. Le renforcement des conditionnalités afférentes à l'octroi et au bénéfice des préférences commerciales – ou, le cas échéant, dans le cadre d'accords commerciaux – constitue, à mon sens, un levier efficace d'action pour peser enfin dans la lutte contre le travail forcé et le travail des enfants. Je note ainsi que cette question est incluse dans l'accord de partenariat économique signé avec le Kenya. Reste à mettre en œuvre cette condition, effectivement...

Katarína Roth Nevedálová (S&D), písomne. – Svetový deň boja proti detskej práci považujem za nesmierne dôležitý, lebo upriamuje pozornosť na jednu z najväčších hrozieb, ktorým sú vystavené deti po celom svete. Dnes, v 21. storočí, by sme mali spoločne zakročiť proti tomuto nespravodlivému a nehumánnemu javu. Deti sú našou budúcnosťou a je našou povinnosťou zabezpečiť im bezpečný a zdravý život plný príležitostí na vzdelanie a rozvoj. Detská práca je formou vykorisťovania a odopieraním deťom ich detstva. Namiesto toho, aby si užívali hru a vzdelávanie, často musia pracovať v nebezpečných podmienkach, zanedbávajú svoje vzdelanie a zdravie. Naša legislatíva musí byť nástrojom, ktorý chráni záujmy detí a zabezpečuje ich práva, a preto je dôležité, aby všetky členské štáty Európskej únie ratifikovali a uplatňovali dohody Medzinárodnej organizácie práce úplne a účinne. Je potrebné, aby sme pracovali s partnermi na celom svete na odstránení tohto nehumánneho javu. Naším cieľom musí byť to, aby boli deti chránené pred všetkými formami vykorisťovania, a zabezpečiť im primerané vzdelanie, zdravotnú starostlivosť a prístup k základným právam. Detská práca nesmie mať miesto v našej spoločnosti.

Stefania Zambelli (ID), per iscritto. – Oggi è un giorno importante, in quanto celebriamo la giornata mondiale contro il lavoro minorile.

A tal proposito vorrei porre alcune domande ai colleghi ecologisti europei: ma lo sapevate che solo in Congo, 40 mila bambini lavorano nelle miniere per estrarre il cobalto? Proprio il cobalto è l'elemento base delle batterie anche dei vostri cellulari e delle auto elettriche, che tanto volete imporre a tutti i cittadini europei entro il 2035.

Lo sapevate che, mentre noi siamo qui a discutere per raggiungere traguardi verdi, tanti altri paesi del mondo se ne fregano delle politiche green e fanno raccogliere il cotone dei vostri vestiti ai bambini, sapete perché? Perché grazie alle loro «piccole mani» riescono meglio nella raccolta.

È facile riempirsi la bocca di termini come ecologia, green, transizione verde, ma dobbiamo anche essere consapevoli delle conseguenze di questi termini. Invece di bloccare aziende, strade e autostrade in tutta Europa in nome di politiche folli, andate a protestare in quei Paesi dove per questi bambini non esistono giorni di riposo o ferie, e vengono trattati come schiavi.

Cari colleghi, mentre noi siamo qui a parlare, milioni di bambini continuano a lavorare per sostenere queste assurde politiche green.

14. Electronic evidence in criminal proceedings: legal representatives directive – Electronic evidence regulation: European production and preservation orders for electronic evidence in criminal matters (debate)

President. – The next item is the joint debate on:

— the report by Birgit Sippel, on behalf of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs, on the proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down harmonised rules on the appointment of legal representatives for the purpose of gathering evidence in criminal proceedings (COM(2018)0226 – C8-0154/2018 – 2018/0107(COD)) (A9-0257/2020);

— the report by Birgit Sippel, on behalf of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs, on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on European Production and Preservation Orders for electronic evidence in criminal matters (COM(2018)0225 – C8-0155/2018 – 2018/0108(COD)) (A9-0256/2020).

Birgit Sippel, Berichterstatterin. – Herr Präsident! Die Gesetze zu elektronischen Beweismitteln in Strafverfahren bedeuten eine massive Veränderung in der grenzüberschreitenden Zusammenarbeit von Polizei, Justiz und Diensteanbietern. Denn erstmals werden nationale Ermittlungsbehörden die Möglichkeit haben, Diensteanbieter in anderen Mitgliedstaaten direkt zur Herausgabe von Daten und zur Sicherung elektronischer Beweismittel aufzufordern – mit klaren Fristen und EU-weit einheitlichen Regeln.

Und nur aufgrund der unerbittlichen Hartnäckigkeit des Parlaments wird dabei gleichzeitig sichergestellt, dass Grundrechte geschützt bleiben. Für Außenstehende mag es nach sehr viel Zeit klingen, dass es von der Vorstellung der Vorschläge – März 2018 – bis zur Verabschiedung des Pakets – im Juni dieses Jahres – etwas mehr als fünf Jahre gedauert hat. Aber es war jeden einzelnen Tag wert.

Denn wir dürfen nicht vergessen: Auch jenseits aller Debatten um Rechtsstaatlichkeit und Unabhängigkeit der Justiz, sind die Justizsysteme in den Mitgliedstaaten bis hin zu Definitionen sehr unterschiedlich. Dennoch, wäre es nach der Kommission gegangen, wären die Behörden der Länder, in denen Diensteanbieter zur Herausgabe von Daten aufgefordert wurden, nicht über die Anordnung informiert gewesen – geschweige denn, dass sie ihr hätten widersprechen können.

Auch die Ratsposition räumte den Behörden des betreffenden Mitgliedstaats keine echten Eingriffsmöglichkeiten ein. Eigentlich selbstverständliche Rechte, wie das Recht auf Information der von Anordnungen betroffenen Personen, versuchten die Mitgliedstaaten zu verwässern. Und als Parlament haben wir gemeinsam – trotz heftigen Widerstands von Kommission und Rat – erfolgreich dringend notwendige Nachbesserungen durchsetzen können.

Nur unserem Druck ist es zu verdanken, dass die Behörden bei Herausgabeeanordnungen zu den sensibelsten Datenkategorien, den Verkehrs- und Inhaltsdaten, gleichzeitig zur Anordnung an den Diensteanbieter auch die Behörden dessen Landes über die Anordnung informieren müssen. Und nur aufgrund unseres Drucks wird der Diensteanbieter diese Daten nicht direkt herausgeben, sondern erst einmal speichern, sodass die Behörden zehn Tage Zeit haben, die Anordnung zu prüfen und – falls nötig – auf Basis einer klaren Liste von Ablehnungsgründen die Herausgabe von Daten zu verweigern, etwa wenn die Daten durch Immunitäten, Privilegien oder Regeln zur Presse- und Meinungsfreiheit geschützt sind, die Herausgabe der Daten eine Verletzung von Grundrechten bedeuten würde oder die Straftat, zu der ermittelt wird, im Mitgliedstaat des Diensteanbieters keine Straftat ist. Wir konnten auch durchsetzen, dass Diensteanbieter selbst auf kritische Anordnungen aufmerksam machen können. Zudem haben wir natürlich das Paket an geltendes EU-Datenschutzrecht angepasst, mit Blick auf Informationsrechte, aber auch auf verwendete Datenkategorien.

Und schließlich haben wir erfolgreich auf Einführung einer dezentralisierten IT-Plattform gepocht, denn nur so kann sichergestellt werden, dass Anordnungen tatsächlich echt sind, von den ordentlichen Behörden ausgehen und die teils hochsensiblen Daten anschließend auch sicher versandt werden können.

Persönlich hätte ich mir tatsächlich noch etwas mehr erhofft. Aber dies ist ein politischer Kompromiss, mit dem wir absolut zufrieden sein können. Ich danke ausdrücklich den Mitstreiterinnen der anderen Fraktionen und all ihren Teams dahinter.

Mit der heutigen Abstimmung und der Bestätigung der Texte im Rat Ende Juni ist es nun an Kommission und Mitgliedstaaten, die zügige und umfassende Umsetzung des Pakets sicherzustellen. Gerade mit Blick auf die IT-Plattform ist noch einiges zu tun, und ich appelliere an die Kommission und alle Beteiligten, sich hier richtig ins Zeug zu legen.

Aber auch damit ist das Kapitel „elektronische Beweismittel“ noch nicht abgeschlossen. Als Berichterstatterin für die EU-US-Verhandlungen über elektronische Beweismittel und Schattenberichterstatterin für eine UN-Konvention zu einer solchen Zusammenarbeit werde ich gemeinsam mit meinen Kolleginnen und Kollegen der anderen Fraktionen besonders kritisch auf diese Texte schauen. Denn die Frage von Grundrechten ist außerhalb der EU noch einmal eine ganz andere.

Deshalb: Mit schönen Worten und Absichtserklärungen werde ich mich auch dort nicht zufriedengeben.

Didier Reynders, *membre de la Commission*. – Monsieur le Président, Mesdames et Messieurs les députés, j'ai le plaisir d'être parmi vous aujourd'hui pour ce débat sur l'adoption du paquet législatif relatif aux preuves électroniques («e-Evidence»).

Je tiens tout d'abord à remercier M^{me} la rapporteure ainsi que les rapporteurs fictifs pour les échanges que nous avons eus depuis le début de ce mandat et qui nous ont permis d'arriver à l'accord sur lequel votre assemblée est maintenant amenée à voter.

Ces nouvelles règles européennes sur les preuves électroniques constituent une priorité pour la Commission. Les praticiens sont en effet confrontés à des problèmes croissants quand il s'agit d'accéder à des éléments de preuve nécessaires à leurs enquêtes et à leurs poursuites pénales. Déjà en 2018, à l'époque où la Commission avait formulé ses propositions, les autorités avaient besoin d'accéder à certaines formes de preuves électroniques dans le cadre d'environ 85 % des enquêtes pénales.

Aujourd'hui, ce besoin est encore plus criant étant donné que le recours aux appareils de communications électroniques et aux services numériques ne cesse de croître. L'accès aux données en tant que preuves diffère sensiblement des preuves physiques classiques. Premièrement, les données sont volatiles, et, dans la plupart des cas, les enquêteurs doivent agir rapidement pour les obtenir, avant que les preuves ne soient effacées. Deuxièmement, les fournisseurs de services numériques peuvent proposer leurs services dans l'Union sans y disposer d'aucune infrastructure de stockage de données, ni même d'un bureau. Par conséquent, les autorités judiciaires doivent souvent recourir à l'entraide judiciaire pour demander aux fournisseurs de services de produire les données pertinentes. Toutefois, cette procédure est très complexe et prend du temps. Dans le cadre de ce type de mécanisme d'entraide, plus d'un an peut être nécessaire pour obtenir des preuves criminelles électroniques stockées à l'étranger. Entre-temps, les données en question peuvent avoir disparu.

To address these problems in obtaining electronic evidence stored abroad, the new regulation will introduce two investigative measures of judicial cooperation. The European Protection Order will allow a judicial authority to directly request data from a service provider in another Member State, and the European Protection Order will make sure that data that could potentially be relevant to a case are not deleted.

The new rules will be applicable irrespective of the location of the data. It is solely required that the service provider offers its services in the Union. The new directive will ensure that relevant service providers are obliged to designate an establishment or a legal representative in the Union that will be the addressee of the request from judicial authorities to produce e-evidence.

As you know, during our lengthy interinstitutional negotiations, the issue of judicial safeguards was key. It was indeed essential to ensure the right balance between the effectiveness of criminal investigations and the protection of fundamental rights. This was also very important for the Commission, and we are confident that strong guarantees are provided for in the agreed text.

In particular, upon the request of Parliament, a notification regime has been introduced. Such notification aims to ensure that the Member State in which the service provider is located will be informed if traffic or content data are requested by judicial authorities from another Member State. When the person concerned is not residing in the issuing state, the notified authority will be able to invoke certain grounds for refusals.

To conclude, let me stress that this e-evidence package will constitute a substantial contribution to address the challenges faced by criminal investigations resulting from the developments of electronic communication and digital services. It is an important development for the European area of freedom, security and justice. I thank you for your attention and I am looking forward to your interventions, and of course we will work on the implementation after the adoption by Parliament of this proposal and then by the Council.

Nuno Melo, *em nome do Grupo PPE*. – Senhor Presidente, Senhor Comissário, a revolução digital está a redefinir todos os aspetos da vida em sociedade. A criminalidade não é exceção. Cada vez mais criminosos utilizam a tecnologia para planear e cometer crimes de muita natureza, nomeadamente transfronteiriça.

Casos de pedofilia, pornografia infantil, *bullying*, crimes financeiros ou terrorismo são apenas alguns exemplos de crimes em que as provas eletrónicas podem ser absolutamente determinantes para que criminosos possam ser localizados, investigados, julgados e condenados.

Esta iniciativa representa um passo significativo no combate ao crime e ao terrorismo na nossa vida quotidiana. Na era digital, em que a informação flui sem obstáculos através das fronteiras, os criminosos e os terroristas exploram os avanços tecnológicos. É essencial que adaptemos o nosso quadro jurídico à nova realidade.

O regulamento relativo às provas eletrónicas ajudará na cooperação, recolha, preservação e troca de provas eletrónicas entre os Estados-Membros, mas com segurança jurídica. A possibilidade de se apresentar diretamente a um prestador de serviços de outro Estado-Membro pedidos de divulgação ou de guarda de provas eletrónicas, com prazos e regras, é um passo gigante no combate aos crimes.

Imagine-se um ataque terrorista preparado *online*, envolvendo pessoas de diferentes países. Sem uma cooperação transfronteiriça eficaz e sem acesso a provas eletrónicas tornar-se-ia muito difícil dismantelar estas redes. Mas, com este regulamento em vigor, as autoridades disporão das ferramentas necessárias ou mais eficazes para localizar as pegadas digitais, recolher provas e levar os criminosos à justiça.

Como relator do PPE, não posso deixar de lamentar e sublinhar o longo caminho de negociação entre o Parlamento e o Conselho: foram cinco anos. Mesmo assim, acredito que hoje estamos a fazer história, que se traduz numa mudança de paradigma e numa muito maior eficácia no combate ao crime na União Europeia.

Miapetra Kumpula-Natri, *on behalf of the S&D Group*. – Mr President, dear colleagues, Commissioner, Rapporteur, the Commission proposal for the evidence is already from the last mandate, and after hard work of four years, the European Parliament has been very crucial doing the work to find a balance. I think the EU is now ready to speed up obtaining electronic evidence cross-border in the EU.

It is obvious that what happens online and with the digital tools is increasingly crucial for information for criminal investigations. Also, requirement to ask to store the data before deletion is needed. Cross-border coordination is somewhat difficult anyway because criminal law is only partially harmonised in the different Member States, so this regulation is improved and better now.

When the investigator issues in order to other country, so Member States where the service provider receives the notification has the duty to assess the order if there are concerns on the fundamental rights like privacy or media freedom. So if the offence might be not even a crime in the country of the service provider, so there is possibility to refuse. So doing this e-evidence right now paves also the way for negotiations with the USA on the UN convention.

We have many legislative possibilities to work to enhance use of digital tools and new technologies, but it doesn't need to mean that we forget the fundamental rights. We are able to do Europe safer with the help of digital tools and not to override fundamental rights.

Moritz Körner, *im Namen der Renew-Fraktion*. – Herr Präsident, Herr Kommissar, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Ich möchte mich zunächst einmal bei der Berichterstatterin und auch bei den Schattenberichterstattern für die wirklich jahrelangen zähen Verhandlungen in diesem Fall bedanken.

Mit diesem Gesetz setzen wir heute nämlich neue Maßstäbe bei der grenzüberschreitenden Kriminalitätsbekämpfung. Ich danke den Mitgliedstaaten im Rat und auch den anderen Fraktionen, dass sie auch meinen Forderungen nach mehr Grundrechtsschutz in diesen langen und zähen Verhandlungen nachgekommen sind.

E-evidence, das bedeutet jetzt ganz konkret bessere europäische Zusammenarbeit, schnellere Ermittlungen. Darum geht es, aber – und das ist der Unterschied – es geht bei *e-evidence* immer um einen ganz konkreten Verdacht. Es gibt immer eine Justizbehörde, die ermittelt und die jetzt in Europa schneller ermitteln kann. Aber es geht eben nicht um anlasslose Massenüberwachung, wie das in einem anderen Vorschlag der Europäischen Kommission geplant ist, nämlich bei der sogenannten Chatkontrolle.

Da geht es nämlich darum, unsere Kommunikation zu durchleuchten. Auch hier müssten wir uns endlich auf die Ziele konzentrieren. Es geht uns auch da darum, Kinder zu schützen, Grundrechte zu schützen und Kriminelle hinter Gitter zu bringen. Das alles schafft die Chatkontrolle nicht, und deswegen muss sie zurückgezogen und komplett überarbeitet werden. Es muss klar sein: Wie bei *e-evidence* darf nur Überwachung von wirklich Verdächtigen stattfinden, nicht allgemeine Massenüberwachung. Es muss Verschlüsselung geschützt werden, und anonyme Internetnutzung muss gewahrt bleiben. Netzsperrern und Client-Side-Scanning dürfen nicht verpflichtend werden.

Ganz, ganz wichtig ist: Europäische Zusammenarbeit, bessere Ausstattung der Behörden, das ist das, wie wir tatsächlich die Kriminellen hinter Gitter bringen, nicht mehr Massenüberwachung in Europa.

Sergey Lagodinsky, *im Namen der Verts/ALE-Fraktion*. – Herr Präsident, liebe Kolleginnen, liebe Kollegen! Ich frage mich, ehrlich gesagt, ob wir hier über das gleiche Gesetz oder denselben Text sprechen, denn ich kann mich dem Kollegen Körner überhaupt nicht anschließen.

Ein Rückblick: Als die Kommission 2018 das Paket über elektronische Beweismittel verabschiedet hat – dieses Paket –, hatte sie gerade auch das Rechtsstaatsverletzungsverfahren gegen Polen eingeführt. Und nun, just zu dem Zeitpunkt, wo wir sehen, wie Länder, Regierungen einer nach dem anderen ihre Justizsysteme demolieren und domestizieren, just zu dem Zeitpunkt, wo wir sehen, dass in einigen Ländern das Verhalten, das in anderen Demokratien selbstverständlich ist, kriminalisiert wird, just zu dem Zeitpunkt, wo wir sehen, wie sehr Journalistinnen und Journalisten, Politikerinnen und Politiker und Priester unter Druck geraten – zu diesem Zeitpunkt geben wir diesen Regierungen und ihren Ermittlern das Recht, auf Daten von diesen Menschen ungefiltert, uneingeschränkt zuzugreifen.

Nein, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen, das ist nicht ein Fortschritt, das ist ein Rückschritt. Und das muss man auch so benennen. Denn das Ergebnis, was ich jetzt gerade sehe, ist noch schlimmer als das, was dieses Parlament verabschiedet hat. Und schon da waren wir kritisch, als wir das gelesen haben. Dieser Datenzugriff ist Freiheitsangriff. Der Zeitpunkt ist falsch, die Vorgehensweise ist falsch, die Abwägung ist falsch. Wir Grünen werden diesem Beschluss nicht zustimmen.

PREDSEDÁ: MICHAL ŠIMEČKA*podpredseda*

Annalisa Tardino, *a nome del gruppo ID*. – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, signor Commissario, oggi finalmente discutiamo di un accordo importante per la sicurezza dei nostri cittadini, il cosiddetto pacchetto e-Evidence, che riguarda lo scambio delle prove elettroniche, e-mail, messaggi via app e qualsiasi dato digitale necessario per perseguire ogni tipo di reato.

Gli organi inquirenti ci dicono che l'85 % delle indagini penali utilizza dati digitali, spesso conservati in uno Stato diverso rispetto al luogo del delitto, con grande difficoltà di reperimento e lungaggini burocratiche. Da qui la necessità di dare seguito alla richiesta di dotare le autorità giudiziarie di strumenti utili per rintracciare rapidamente i criminali che ricorrono alla tecnologia per pianificare e commettere reati.

Una battaglia concreta che è rimasta imbrigliata come tante nelle ideologie della sinistra, che alla sicurezza dei cittadini europei ha cercato di anteporre il presunto diritto alla privacy di chi usa la rete per delinquere.

Un testo presentato dalla Commissione addirittura nel 2018, che giunge solo oggi in discussione e che, anche grazie alla nostra fermezza e determinazione di questi anni, diventerà legge, consentendo l'accesso rapido alle prove digitali prima della loro scomparsa, indipendentemente dal luogo in cui sono create e conservate, per punire chi commette ogni tipo di crimine, dal terrorismo allo *stalking*, reati che riempiono le pagine di cronaca nera dei nostri Stati.

Abbiamo partecipato attivamente ai negoziati e preteso che ci fossero anche solide garanzie e requisiti in materia di protezione dei dati personali, escludendo l'intercettazione in tempo reale delle telecomunicazioni, ma evitando di cedere a chi tentava di apportare inutili rallentamenti nelle procedure.

Domani daremo convintamente via libera a questo importante strumento di contrasto al crimine e lo faremo in nome delle tante vittime e dei loro cari. Nell'Europa che vogliamo e per la quale costantemente lavoriamo la lotta ai criminali è una priorità.

Cornelia Ernst, *im Namen der Fraktion The Left*. – Herr Präsident! Ja, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen, wir haben die Berichterstatterin unterstützt beim Beschluss des EP und es auch irgendwie bewundert, einen solchen Beschluss erst einmal auf eine Ebene zu bringen, die ja ganz vernünftig gewesen ist. Aber man muss dazu sagen: Nach dem jahrelangen, mühseligen, zerquälten Trilog mit dem Rat, der zuverlässig negativ ist, muss man feststellen, dass ein Rahmen geschaffen wurde, der ausreichende Schutzmaßnahmen eben nicht bietet und auch nicht missbrauchssicher ist. Und der Preis, den wir als Parlament für die wenigen Schutzmaßnahmen, die nun drin sind, zahlen müssen, der ist einfach zu hoch. Wenn man das abwägt – das ist einfach viel zu hoch.

Der Knackpunkt der Debatte ist doch die Einrichtung eines Notifizierungsmechanismus. Der ist extrem wichtig. Und dieser sollte sicherstellen, dass ausländische Datenzugriffsanordnungen rechtmäßig und verhältnismäßig sind. Und da sind wir schon in der Debatte. In den Verhandlungen ist dieser Mechanismus zerkaut worden, und man muss sagen, er ist zu einem zahnlosen Tiger geworden: mehr Ausnahme als Regel – und das, denke ich, geht nicht.

Deshalb sehen wir auch wirklich die Gefahr, dass das neue Instrument missbraucht werden könnte, um gegen Journalisten, Aktivistinnen und Aktivisten vorgehen zu können – gerade weil die Regierungen in Europa zunehmend autoritärer sind, und dafür gibt es zig Beispiele: Schamlos werden Aktivisten überwacht und kriminalisiert. Gerade deswegen können wir damit nicht zufrieden sein. Und in der Abstimmung sollte uns das wirklich zu denken geben.

Jiří Pospíšil (PPE). – Pane předsedající, dámy a pánové, chtěl bych podpořit tento návrh. Pamatuji si, když jsem ještě jako ministr spravedlnosti za Českou republiku jezdil na Rady ministrů před deseti lety, jak se o těchto věcech vedly akademické debaty.

Trvalo to mnoho let a máme tady právní úpravu, která si podle mého názoru zaslouží pozornost a zaslouží si podpořit, protože při boji proti organizovanému zločinu, při boji proti přeshraničním trestním kauzám je zřejmé, že v době digitalizace není možné vystačit jenom s klasickými instrumenty justiční spolupráce. Potřebujeme způsoby a formy, jak zajišťovat elektronické důkazy, jak zajistit, aby poskytovatelé služeb informace v těchto důkazech nesmazali, aby je uchovali a aby byly poskytnuty pro trestní řízení.

Na druhou stranu беру velmi vážně námitky, které zde padají z hlediska ochrany dat. Je třeba udělat maximum pro to, aby tyto informace nebyly zneužity, ať k účelovému trestnímu stíhání, tak případně k politickému boji. Jsem rád, že tam je alespoň limit v té rovině, že se tyto důkazy týkají závažné trestné činnosti, že to je limitováno, že se to netýká běžné trestné činnosti. Je to průlom do soukromí a takový institut by měl být využíván jen u těch nejzávažnějších trestných činů. A je opravdu důležité dbát na to, aby procesní práva těch, kterých se to týká, byla dodržena.

Vystúpenia podľa postupu prihlásenia o slovo zdvihnutím ruky

Beata Mazurek (ECR). – Panie Przewodniczący! Parlament niestety wymusił na Radzie wprowadzenie do pakietu dotyczącego dowodów elektronicznych odniesienia do procedury art. 7 Traktatu o Unii Europejskiej. To instrument polityczny, bo nie można go nazwać tylko i wyłącznie instrumentem prawnym. Wprowadza bowiem podwójne standardy wobec niektórych państw członkowskich i widać to wyraźnie na przykładzie takich państw jak Polska czy Węgry.

Prawo do odmowy współpracy z państwem członkowskim, wobec którego wszczęte jest postępowanie z art. 7, wprowadza politykę do przepisów prawnych. To w mojej ocenie jest niedopuszczalne. Pakiet dotyczący e-dowodów ma na celu ułatwienie transgranicznych dochodzeń w sprawach karnych. Tymczasem uregulowanie współpracy w czynnościach dowodowych zostało powiązane z polityczną procedurą. Pozostawia to pełną dyskrejonalność państwa członkowskiego, co jest w tym przypadku działaniem niebezpiecznym.

Tworzone przepisy prawne w żadnym wypadku nie mogą być wykorzystywane przez niektóre z państw członkowskich jako narzędzie manipulacji. W takiej formie, w jakiej jest to proponowane, niewątpliwie do tego może prowadzić, na co nie tylko ja, ale i moja formacja absolutnie się nie zgadza.

Mick Wallace (The Left). – Mr President, this proposal for an e-evidence regulation in criminal matters in European production and preservation orders does not provide adequate respect for fundamental rights. The existing system of judicial cooperation would be effectively bypassed through this proposal, undermining criminal procedure laws and the sovereignty of the targeted countries. Direct legal cooperation with the private telecommunications service provider companies would be a blatant undermining of media freedom and freedom of expression, effectively violating human rights law.

The European Data Protection Supervisor expressed fear that this system will lead to abuses through violation of personal data and the infringement of data protection laws in criminal procedures, in the electronic evidence related to text, emails or other in-app correspondence.

This new system is a very slippery slope to an eroding of fundamental rights, data protection and judicial trust, as Europe already faces a rule of law crisis.

(Ukončenie vystúpení podľa postupu prihlásenia o slovo zdvihnutím ruky)

Didier Reynders, membre de la Commission. – Monsieur le Président, Mesdames et Messieurs les députés, permettez-moi tout d'abord de vous remercier pour ce débat, qui vient à l'issue d'un long moment de négociations. Le paquet «e-Evidence» sera essentiel pour relever les défis posés par l'évolution de la technologie dans le contexte des enquêtes pénales, en particulier dans le domaine des communications électroniques.

La Commission va maintenant s'atteler à la mise en œuvre de ce paquet, en particulier par la création de la plateforme informatique décentralisée et grâce à la détermination d'une position européenne sur «e-Evidence», les négociations entre l'Union et les États-Unis ont pu reprendre. Le prochain tour de négociation aura lieu les 13 et 14 de ce mois à Washington.

Je vous remercie d'avoir fait en sorte que l'on aboutisse à ce vote, après ces années de discussions et de négociations. J'espère qu'après la publication, probablement au mois d'août, nous pourrons rapidement, comme je le disais, entamer la mise en œuvre des équipements qui nous permettront de faire fonctionner correctement ce paquet «e-Evidence».

Birgit Sippel, *Berichterstatterin*. – Herr Präsident! Ich habe der Debatte sehr aufmerksam zugehört, sowohl den sehr positiven Rückmeldungen als auch den sehr kritischen Wortmeldungen. Und in gewisser Weise haben beide recht. Denn dieses System – wenn wir es verabschieden, wenn wir es umsetzen – kann nur funktionieren, wenn überall in Europa Rechtsstaatlichkeit und unabhängige Justiz bestehen. Es kann nur bestehen, wenn sich die Mitgliedstaaten ganz konkret gegen antidemokratische Tendenzen stellen, wenn die Kommission ihrer Rolle als Hüterin der Verträge gerecht wird und wir tatsächlich gemeinsam daran arbeiten, dass Rechtsstaatlichkeit und unabhängige Justiz in Europa gesichert sind.

Unser Europa – und das ist die Herausforderung – ist ein Europa, das vor Straftaten schützt, das Grundrechte schützt und unsere gemeinsamen Werte verteidigt. Darum geht es auch hier, und deshalb sind alle gefordert, genau das bei der Umsetzung sicherzustellen.

Noch einmal an dieser Stelle mein Dank an alle, die an diesem Vertragswerk, an diesem Gesetzeswerk mitgearbeitet haben. Und ich hoffe, dass alle genauso intensiv bei der Umsetzung mitarbeiten.

Predseda júci. – Ukončenie rozpravy. Hlasovanie sa uskutoční zajtra.

15. EU Day for the victims of the global climate crisis (debate)

Predseda júci. – Ďalším bodom programu je vyhlásenie Komisie Deň EÚ na pamiatku obetí globálnej klimateckej krízy (2023/2740(RSP)).

Margrethe Vestager, *Executive Vice-President of the Commission*. – Mr President, honourable Members, thank you for your patience. Unfortunately, climate change has no patience. It is here already, and we see the effects every day. One thing is the effects that you have to change what you are growing. You have to change your infrastructure. You have to change your energy systems. You have to prepare.

What you cannot change is that people are dying. Droughts are affecting Europe. They affected every part of Europe last summer. There were storms. There were floods. And it is already here – the wildfires.

We talk about it as if it was another season. Now it starts earlier and it is more violent than it used to be. Even cutting our greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050 will not solve this problem. This is probably the best weather we can have – and it is bad news.

In the future, we should expect more severe impacts on physical and mental health, greater damage to infrastructure, growing threats to our livelihoods. You know this just as well as I do. We know the numbers. We know what we committed to in Paris. We know our discussion about the percentages. But what we're discussing today is the people.

As always, the most vulnerable people are the most affected. If you are poor, if you have few resources, you're most affected, and you're also most affected in that respect that you may not have the resources to prepare, to protect yourself, to adjust. Preparing is not admitting defeat. It is doing what is necessary to cushion the unavoidable impacts that climate change already has. So, of course, there is a strategy for that – the EU adaptation strategy.

We know what we have to do better, protecting our citizens, protecting the environment, protecting the economy. We already have so many of the tools to do so, and where we don't have them, well, we act decisively to develop it. But no matter what we do, there will still be an impact. The extreme weather events, they will continue to take a toll on human life.

That is why the Commission believes that the European Union can and should do more to bring this into focus. One of the ways of doing so is in the pure, obvious respect of those who have lost their lives.

Because it is not just about the commitment in Paris, the number of percentages we will reduce our emissions, the degrees warmer that we see the sea and the air and the earth. It is about the sister and the brother, the siblings, the partner, the friend, the children that we all are. It is about people and the respect of the fact that we cannot protect everyone.

We propose that we establish an annual EU day for the victims of the climate crisis on 15 July. This day was one of the worst days of the catastrophic flooding in Germany and in Belgium in 2021. Over 200 people lost their lives. These floods came just weeks after a deadly tornado in Czechia, and they were followed by deadly forest fires across southern Europe. You know the examples as well as I do. You also know that the list could continue.

Especially in summer, we are confronted with extreme weather and its consequences. The day will commemorate the victims of all such natural disasters as we experience them across Europe, and it will serve as a stark reminder and a warning of the risks posed by the climate crisis. And of course, also a reminder not to let it happen, to be better prepared, to know what we are doing when this is the best weather that we can have.

Sometimes it is difficult to commemorate and respect and honour lives being lost when it could have been prevented, because we are all part of it. But we didn't prevent it, and the least we can do is to honour and respect those who lost their lives. They did nothing, nothing to deserve that.

I hope to count on your strong support to promote the establishment of an EU day for the victims of the climate crisis. This is about people, the daughters, the sons, the sisters, the brothers, the partners, the friends, the people that we are. We need to remind ourselves that a climate crisis is something for the human in us.

Mohammed Chahim, *on behalf of the S&D Group*. – Mr President, let me start by saying to Commissioner Vestager, you can count on our support. We will support what I think is a very important commemoration of all the victims of climate change. So you can count on the S&D Group for that. I'm going to switch to Dutch.

Wanneer we het over klimaatverandering hebben, gaat het vaak over de hoeveelheid CO₂ in de lucht, het aantal hectare afgebrand bos, het aantal meters stijging van de zeespiegel of het aantal graden opwarming van de aarde.

Laten we echter niet vergeten dat klimaatverandering ook steeds meer menselijke slachtoffers maakt. Wetenschappers schatten dat er jaarlijks zeven miljoen mensen sterven als rechtstreeks gevolg van de opwarming van de aarde. Dat zijn zeven miljoen levens die vroegtijdig eindigen omdat een echte klimaataanpak te lang vooruit is geschoven.

Als Europese Unie dragen we niet alleen een verantwoordelijkheid ten aanzien van ons werelddeel, maar ook ten aanzien van de rest van de wereld, waar eilanden in de oceaan verdwijnen en hitte en droogten het leven op steeds meer plekken onmogelijk maken.

Een herdenkingsdag is een goede zaak. Laten we echter elke dag denken aan de klimaatslachtoffers in de wereld en met hen in onze gedachten de moed verzamelen om sneller en ambitieuzer te werk te gaan bij het aanpakken van de wereldwijde klimaatcrisis.

Karin Karlsbro, *för Renew-gruppen*. – Herr talman! Kommissionen, kollegor och åhörare! Sedan 1970, det år jag föddes, har jordens temperatur ökat snabbare än någonsin tidigare under de senaste två tusen åren.

I dag fyller min dotter 20 år. Under de två decennierna hon har funnits har vi vetat att världen befinner sig i en klimatkris, men ändå har vi inte lyckats vända kurvorna åt rätt håll. Skyfall, översvämningar, torka och bränder – extremväder drabbar inte bara länder på andra sidan jordklotet, utan också här i Europa med enorma förluster av liv, av hälsa och kostnader för enskilda, för samhällen och för ekosystemen. De allra mest sårbara får betala det högsta priset.

Fortfarande finns det de som förnekar och inte tror på klimatförändringarna, men det är dags för en ny upplysningstid. I kontrast mot de enkla sanningarnas och enkla lösningarnas profeter behöver vi slå ett slag för kunskap, vetenskap och teknikutveckling.

EU har just sjösat världens första lagstiftningspaket av det gigantiska måttet för att nå klimatneutralitet 2050. Men vi behöver göra mer. Vi behöver vara modigare. Och det är inte bara de nästa 20 åren utan i all framtid för att rädda klimatet.

Bas Eickhout, *on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group*. – Mr President, thank you first of all, Madam Commissioner, for the words that, unfortunately, we have to speak out, because indeed, I think we are getting used to almost on a yearly basis now listening to new climate disasters causing climate victims. And that is all over the world. And that's also what you said it is most of the time, the most vulnerable people that are suffering the most. I mean, I come from the Netherlands and maybe we can build a dike a bit higher, we're used to that. But not everyone has that luxury and we can't do that eternally either. No one is safe from the climate disasters and that we have seen indeed on 15 July 2021, when also Germany and Belgium were hit by this flooding with more than 200 casualties. But a year later, we saw the flooding in Pakistan with more than 1700 victims and millions of people affected. And we see now forest fires already early in the year. We see drought in the south of Spain. We see all these effects that are causing victims that, unfortunately, we have to pay tribute to on a monthly basis. And maybe the last thing that I would like to say to my colleagues who are now all, of course, rightfully so, asking for all the attention for the victims, please be aware that the fight to preserve our nature goes hand in hand with the fight against climate change, because a resilient nature will help in also making sure that the climate damage is less and lower. And that is also something to take into account when you are voting on a nature restoration law.

Silvia Sardone, *a nome del gruppo ID*. – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, siamo qua a parlare della Giornata europea per le vittime dei cambiamenti climatici. Io già me li vedo, le grandi menti europee, a pensare: ma c'è una giornata commemorativa, di che cosa dobbiamo parlare? Ma sì dai, facciamola sulle vittime dei cambiamenti climatici.

È l'ennesima trovata ideologica di una Commissione che oramai vive solo di vuoti slogan ecologisti ed è totalmente sconnessa dalla realtà. Continuate a portare avanti un modello totalmente masochista, che penalizza fortemente le imprese, i consumatori e le famiglie europee. Non capite che, mentre l'Europa in qualche modo si autopenalizza, c'è chi invece continua ad inquinare sempre di più, nel totale silenzio delle istituzioni europee.

Vi do un po' di dati. Allora, le stime Eurostat dicono quanto segue, cioè che, per esempio, sulle emissioni di anidride carbonica dei paesi dell'Unione europea nel 2022 c'è un calo in Europa del 2,8 % rispetto al 2021. Però insomma, a fronte del comportamento virtuoso dei paesi europei, vediamo che la Cina ha invece aumentato le emissioni del 4,2 % e che anche nei primi mesi del 2023 le emissioni cinesi sono cresciute del 4 %. Sempre in Cina il consumo di petrolio è salito del 5,5 %, quello del carbone è salito del 3,6 % e quello del gas è salito dell'1,4 %. È impressionante il dato del carbone nel 2022. Pechino ha concesso permessi per 106 gigawatt di capacità in 82 siti, il quadruplo della capacità approvata nel 2021, ed è pari all'apertura di due centrali a carbone ogni settimana.

Insomma, l'Europa produce solamente l'8 % delle emissioni globali. Veramente siete così presuntuosi da pensare che siano le nostre ad essere quelle che in qualche modo sono determinanti? Se anche nei prossimi anni riuscissimo a dimezzarle, cambierebbe davvero qualcosa? Invece che cosa facciamo? Regaliamo settori commerciali per andare a comprare i beni proprio da quei paesi che li realizzano senza alcun rispetto ambientale! È una roba da matti. Sull'altare della transizione ecologica stiamo distruggendo l'industria automobilistica senza capire che così diventeremo una succursale della Cina, da cui già oggi dipendiamo per le batterie e le terre rare.

Viaggiamo a grandi passi verso la desertificazione industriale e voi ne siete felici. È talmente un capolavoro di follia che a me sinceramente viene da pensare che, prima o dopo, in qualche modo successivamente al Qatargate ci troveremo di fronte al Chinagate.

Petros Kokkalis, *on behalf of The Left Group*. – Mr President, Madam Commissioner, the global climate crises take and shorten millions of lives, cause immeasurable damage to private property and public infrastructure, deliver enormous economic losses, devastate communities, obliterate ecosystems, and bring untold misery to millions of people.

We do well to honour the victims, but we cannot escape the fact that the climate crisis is the result of our own actions and omissions. It is not a meteorological phenomenon, much less an act of God: victims are the result of our inadequate mitigation and adaptation policy.

Therefore, the European Day for the victims of the climate change crisis must not be a green Pool of Siloam, but an annual appraisal of our own policies, of our tools to deliver a just, science-based, Paris-aligned transition across mitigation, adaptation and loss and damage.

We should not add insult to the injuries of the victims, but resolve to brave and bold climate action. Right now, to fully support the loss and damage fund to which we agreed at COP28 and provide adequate know-how and finance to those victims in the Global South who are least responsible, most affected and least able to adapt to the climate crisis. Right now, to plan ahead to the next mandate for a European loss and damage mechanism to provide for our own citizens in similar predicaments.

We are the last generation that has this capability and thus the duty to make sure that in the future there will be people around to celebrate this day and pay tribute to today's victims.

Maria Angela Danzi (NI). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, signora Commissaria, i cambiamenti climatici profondi e a lungo termine sono sotto gli occhi di tutti e sono in corso e hanno un percorso irreversibile. Dal 1970 al 2021 hanno provocato nel mondo 2 milioni di morti e 4,3 trilioni di dollari di danni.

Un mese fa in Emilia Romagna ancora 16 morti, centinaia di paesi isolati, aziende in ginocchio. Eppure c'è qualcuno in questo Parlamento, di cui mi vergogno, che nega che questi fenomeni siano responsabilità di comportamenti umani irresponsabili. In nome delle tante vittime, dei bambini e delle bambine che sono morti a Genova, tornando da scuola, chiedo a questo Parlamento di non arretrare, di approvare gli obiettivi ambiziosi che ci siamo dati.

È troppo facile votare le strategie e poi votare contro il regolamento per il ripristino della natura e chiedo che dal Patto di stabilità siano espunte le spese relative alla manutenzione e al personale che si occupa dell'emergenza.

Timo Wölken (S&D). – Herr Präsident, sehr geehrte Frau Vizepräsidentin – schön, dass Sie heute da sind –, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Der Klimawandel ist real. Er passiert jeden Tag, und er wird von Tag zu Tag schlimmer. Gerade zeigen aktuellste Untersuchungen, dass das Oberflächenwasser im Atlantik Rekordtemperaturen erreicht hat. Das bedeutet mehr Energietransfer, noch mehr Stürme, noch mehr Unwetter, noch mehr Überflutungen, noch mehr Tote.

Viele Tote der Klimakrise sehen wir gar nicht. Wir sehen nicht, wie viele Menschen in New York an schlechter Luft sterben, weil dort gerade der Staub der Waldbrände aus Kanada ankommt. Deswegen ist es so wichtig, dass wir diesen unsichtbaren Opfern ein Gesicht geben und in der Europäischen Union einen Tag für die Opfer der globalen Klimakrise haben und dieser Opfer gedenken.

Man kann die Klimakrise leugnen, wie das die rechte Seite des Hauses tut, aber es ist ein Unding, dass heute niemand da ist, um an diesem Tag der Opfer zu gedenken. Und dass die EVP heute ihre Sprecher zurückgezogen hat, zeigt, dass die EVP nicht an einer Lösung der Klimakrise interessiert ist, und das ist ehrlicherweise den Opfern gegenüber ein Skandal, und es zeigt, dass der Rest des Hauses gemeinsam umso mehr machen muss, um a) der Opfer zu gedenken und b) – und das ist viel, viel wichtiger – sie zu verhindern.

Dafür brauchen wir eine ambitionierte Klimapolitik der Europäischen Union. Das Ziel für 2040, das die Kommission ja auch adressieren wird, zu dem der Rat, der Wissenschaftliche Beirat Ende dieser Woche im Umweltausschuss seinen Vorschlag machen muss, muss dafür da sein, noch mehr Opfer zu verhindern. Und ja, man kann den Kopf in den Sand stecken, wie das die rechte Seite des Hauses tut, aber das rettet kein Leben. Deswegen ist dieser Tag, deswegen ist Klimapolitik so wichtig, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen. Vielen Dank an alle, die heute hier sind und sich diesem Thema stellen.

Emma Wiesner (Renew). – Herr ordförande! Kära kollegor och kommissionär Vestager. Jag hade innerligt önskat att vi slapp ha den här debatten – debatten om klimatflyktingarna. Jag hade önskat att vi slapp klimatförändringar, att vi tog tag i problemen nu när vi kan göra någonting åt dem.

Men vi ser att ju värre klimatförändringarna blir, desto fler människor är på flykt. Och ju fler människor som flyr, ju större blir det mänskliga lidandet – och situationen i flyktinglägren runt om i världen allt värre.

Det bästa och mest effektiva – och det medmänskligaste – som vi kan göra är att hjälpa människor på flykt, men samtidigt sluta stoppa huvudet i sanden och ta tag i problemen: att göra vår andel av det viktiga Parisavtalet för att höja ribban i klimatarbetet.

För att göra det måste vi blicka framåt. Vi kan inte luta oss tillbaka och vara nöjda med det vi har gjort. Vi måste höja ribban ytterligare i klimatarbetet. Vi måste ha ett nytt klimatmål till 2040 som minskar Europas utsläpp med 85 procent. För det är vad som krävs av oss i klimatarbetet. Och vi behöver ett totalförbud för fossila bränslen i energiproduktion till år 2040.

Skulle vi göra det, skulle vi våga sikta och ta ledarskapet i klimatfrågan – då kan vi se till att människor slipper fly, så att vi kan minimera klimatförändringarna och verkligen bygga ett grönare Europa.

Pierrette Herzberger-Fofana (Verts/ALE). – Herr Präsident! Vanessa Nakate ist eine ugandische Klimaaktivistin. Sie beschreibt in ihrem Buch „Afrikas Stimme in der Klimakrise“ die Folgen des Klimawandels. Auf der Buchrückseite findet sich ein Zitat von Greta Thunberg. Es lautet: „Vanessa erinnert uns daran, dass wir zwar alle in denselben Sturm geraten sein mögen, aber eben nicht alle im selben Boot sitzen“. Die Klimakrise ist real, die Folgen sind jetzt bereits spürbar. Jedoch: Die Krise erlebt der Globale Süden, der am wenigsten dafür kann, weitaus schlimmer als der Globale Norden.

10 % der Weltbevölkerung verursachen ein Viertel der gesamten CO₂-Emissionen. Wir wissen, dass durch den Klimawandel bedingte Wetterextreme diejenigen besonders hart treffen, die zu den Ärmsten dieser Welt gehören. Dürren, Hungersnot, Überflutungen auf der Südhalbkugel unseres Planeten haben den Teil der Weltbevölkerung, der die größte Verantwortung für den Klimawandel trägt, wenig beeindruckt. Beispielhaft: Letztes Jahr 2 500 Tote in Uganda durch extreme Dürre, 1 700 Tote in Bangladesch durch Überschwemmungen. Der gleiche Sturm: verschiedene Rettungsboote, oft gar keine.

Wir müssen in unserem Verhalten sicherstellen, dass wir heute und in Zukunft an alle Opfer denken. Der EU-Tag für die Opfer der globalen Klimakrise sollte uns zum Anlass dienen, eine ehrliche Debatte über Klimagerechtigkeit zu beginnen.

Fabio Massimo Castaldo (NI). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, signora Commissaria, tanti affrontavano e ancora oggi affrontano il problema del cambiamento climatico con un atteggiamento troppo spesso passivo, e in alcuni casi addirittura vigliacco, specialmente chi si va a trincerare dietro l'illusione che gli eventi estremi a esso correlati siano casi isolati o comunque ineluttabili. Nei nostri occhi ci sono ancora le devastanti immagini delle inondazioni in Belgio e in Germania e, più di recente, quelle avvenute nel mio paese, in Italia, colpito al cuore per due volte in rapida successione, prima nelle Marche e poi in Emilia-Romagna.

Una politica miope e interessata solo al tornaconto elettorale immediato continua a giocare con la vita delle persone. I nostri governi, a partire da quelli dei paesi più a rischio, tra cui il mio, dove i fondi dedicati al contrasto al dissesto e alla transizione energetica scontano i maggiori ritardi, devono porre al centro della propria agenda la messa in sicurezza del nostro territorio, senza scuse assurde e scellerate per negare la realtà.

Per onorare davvero tutte le vittime, per onorare davvero tutti i bambini morti in queste emergenze, noi non possiamo accontentarci di appelli accorati e di strategie generali. Servono azioni coraggiose. Dobbiamo approvare il regolamento per il ripristino della natura. Dobbiamo escludere dal Patto di stabilità tutte le spese per il personale impegnato nelle emergenze. Se non ora, quando?

Javi López (S&D). – Señor presidente, señora vicepresidenta Vestager, hoy debatimos sobre la creación del Día por las víctimas de la crisis climática mundial con un objetivo prioritario: visibilizar a las víctimas, con nombres y apellidos, que hoy existen en Europa y en todo el mundo.

¿Por qué? Porque grandes capas de la Tierra van a convertirse en territorio inhóspito, donde la vida no va a ser posible, lo que provocará grandes desplazamientos forzados. Porque los fenómenos meteorológicos extremos se multiplican año tras año, también en Europa —las inundaciones son un ejemplo—, lo que provoca víctimas en Bélgica, Alemania e Italia. Porque las altas temperaturas —especialmente, las olas de calor— cada vez provocan más víctimas en nuestros países, sobre todo en el sur de Europa, y afectan especialmente a los grupos vulnerables y a las personas mayores.

Además, todo esto provoca víctimas de forma desigual. Los países en vías de desarrollo y los grupos más vulnerables, que son menos responsables del cambio climático, son quienes más lo sufren.

Debemos visibilizar y recordar la desigualdad, hacer un llamamiento en favor de la acción, la descarbonización de nuestra economía y una transición ecológica justa, y, sobre todo, luchar por que la Unión Europea, que se forjó sobre la base de la Comunidad Europea del Carbón y del Acero, sea hoy campeona mundial en energías limpias y renovables.

Thomas Waitz (Verts/ALE). – Herr Präsident, Frau Kommissarin! Die Klimakrise schreitet voran, gefährdet die Lebensmittelversorgung, gefährdet die Trinkwasserversorgung. Die Weltgesundheitsorganisation schätzt, dass zwischen 2030 und 2050 zusätzlich 250 000 Menschen pro Jahr an Hitze, an Hunger, an Malaria, an Durchfall sterben. Extreme Wetterereignisse nehmen zu: Dürre, Überschwemmungen, Stürme. Und 90 % der Opfer leben in Regionen mit schlechter Infrastruktur.

Auch in der EU sehen wir Tausende von Hitzetoten jedes Jahr, ökonomische Schäden in Milliardenhöhe. Wann begreifen sogenannte patriotische Parteien, dass Klimaschutz auch Menschenschutz ist? Und wann begreifen sogenannte Wirtschaftsparteien, dass Klimaschutz auch dem Schutz unserer Wirtschaft dient? Beenden Sie die Blockade des Grünen Deals! Kehren Sie um, retten Sie mit uns Menschenleben, kommen Sie zurück und arbeiten Sie mit uns an einer zukunfts- und klimafitten Politik.

Mercedes Bresso (S&D). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, ci stiamo purtroppo progressivamente abituando a vedere i nostri territori devastati da eventi naturali di proporzioni eccezionali: alluvioni, siccità, scioglimento di ghiacciai, fenomeni che sconvolgono la vita delle popolazioni ma devastano anche le attività produttive, producono vittime e lutti.

L'elenco di questi episodi è lungo, è stato ricordato: le inondazioni del luglio 2021 in Germania e Belgio fino alla tragedia recente e drammatica dell'alluvione in Emilia-Romagna, nelle Marche e in Toscana. È quindi da salutare positivamente l'istituzione di una Giornata europea per le vittime della crisi climatica, a patto però di non nascondere sotto celebrazioni rituali il dovere collettivo dell'azione politica e della cura dei nostri territori. Quella consapevolezza che mette oggi l'Unione europea in prima fila nella lotta al cambiamento climatico, che non può essere solo declamata, ma che va scandita da obiettivi concreti e realizzabili.

Signora Commissaria, credo che sarebbe utile la predisposizione di *guidelines* sulla difesa idrogeologica e sulla lotta alla siccità per aiutare i governi e gli enti locali a operare in modo coordinato ed efficace, come è indispensabile in questo caso. E su questa strada non mancherà l'impegno di tutti noi.

Milan Brglez (S&D). – Gospod predsedujoči, spoštovana komisarka, kolegice, kolegi! Podpiram razglasitev dneva Evropske unije za žrtve svetovne podnebne krize.

Spominjanje tistih posameznikov in skupnosti, ki so podlegli uničujočim poplavam, obsežnim požarom, obilnim padavinam, dolgotrajni suši in dvigu morske gladine, izraža našo podporo njihovi vztrajnosti, odpornosti in žrtvovanju.

Spomniti se velja tudi številnih ljudi, ki so zaradi tega prisiljeni v begunstvo ali pa so podvrženi razmeram brezdržavl-janskosti.

Sočasno se velja zahvaliti vsem, ki nesebično pomagajo – civilni zaščiti, gasilcem, vojakom, policistom in drugim drobnim ljudem. Njihovo plemenito delo presega službene okvirje, njihova človečnost odgovarja na stiske najbolj ranljivih ljudi.

Več moramo storiti za dvig evropske zavesti, kako visok človeški davek plačujemo zaradi naše politične neodločnosti in neambicioznosti.

Obstoj tega zavedanja je nujen, da slišimo pozive k odločnejšim podnebnim ukrepom ter ustreznejši skrbi za okolje. Ti niso več izbira, ampak so naša dolžnost.

Beatrice Covassi (S&D). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, signora Vicepresidente Vestager, la crisi climatica globale è una realtà, non dobbiamo mai stancarci di ribadirlo. Cinquecento eventi estremi nel 2023 in Italia, e siamo solo a giugno, tra grandinate, bombe d'acqua e tempeste alternate a siccità con effetti devastanti su campagne e città.

La dimensione della crisi e gli effetti in termini di vite umane sono ben raffigurati dalle immagini che abbiamo ancora tutti negli occhi, arrivate poche settimane fa dall'Emilia-Romagna. Alzando lo sguardo vediamo uno scenario europeo altrettanto preoccupante. Ricordo le oltre 20 000 persone vittime delle ondate di calore, per esempio la scorsa estate.

Dobbiamo quindi dare centralità alla salute e alla difesa della vita all'interno del dibattito sul clima, per ribadire che il contrasto e l'adattamento al cambiamento climatico non sono un mero capriccio ideologico, come alcuni anche in quest'Aula purtroppo ritengono.

L'istituzione di una Giornata europea per le vittime della crisi climatica globale rappresenterebbe un segnale efficace in questo senso. Fermarci ogni anno, non per una semplice commemorazione, ma per fare un bilancio dei costi dell'inazione in termini di vite umane.

Cari colleghi, non è più accettabile, ogni volta, piangere le vittime e sentirsi ripetere che cambierà. Dobbiamo tutti insieme incarnare l'urgenza di agire.

Vystúpenia podľa postupu prihlásenia o slovo zdvihnutím ruky

Mónica Silvana González (S&D). – Señor presidente, está muy bien celebrar el Día de la Unión Europea por las víctimas de la crisis climática mundial, pero, si realmente queremos proteger a las víctimas, debemos reconocer cuanto antes en este Parlamento el vínculo directo entre el cambio climático y las migraciones climáticas.

Debemos definir la figura del refugiado climático. Son más de 243 millones de personas las que ya se están desplazando, atravesando fronteras, y este Parlamento sigue sin tener una definición clara.

Si queremos proteger a sus víctimas, tenemos que incluir el clima como una de las causas de elegibilidad en la protección internacional de estas personas, en los instrumentos jurídicos que tenemos para protegerlas. Definamos cuanto antes la figura del refugiado climático.

Clare Daly (The Left). – Mr President, I have to say, the brass neck in this place really beats all sometimes. We're in here to mark EU day to commemorate the victims of the global climate crisis – and, well, we should.

It is absolutely right to remember that last year 33 million people in Pakistan, one out of seven of the population, were forced to abandon their homes. They experienced record monsoons, now followed this April by record-breaking heat of over 40°C, a terrifying horror inflicted on people who contribute less than 1% of global greenhouse gas emissions. These are the victims of the activities of the Global North.

But while we shed crocodile tears for them in here, the same people often are going to come in here and are organising to vote down the Nature Restoration Law – essential measures, which we need, to tackle and help and deal with the climate emergency in order to protect nature and protect the very victims that we are now talking about.

If there was a world day to commemorate hypocrisy, we'd certainly be starring in it.

Mick Wallace (The Left). – Mr President, the people who have lost their lives due to extreme weather events are the victims of climate inaction – decades of climate inaction by the richer nations of the Global North.

Too many people in Europe have died, and we should remember them, but any memorial day must also remember those in the Global South who have died as a result of Europe's climate colonialism.

The EU has consistently opposed a loss and damage fund at the COP for the poorest nations who have done the least to contribute to the climate crisis and who are the most affected by it. The EU's broad donor-based proposal at COP27 was an attempt to shift the blame for its own historic responsibility.

It is 2023, and global greenhouse gases have never been as high. There will be countless more victims of the climate crisis. We are not doing enough to address the climate crisis.

(Ukončenie vystúpení podľa postupu prihlásenia o slovo zdvihnutím ruky)

Margrethe Vestager, *Executive Vice-President of the Commission*. – Mr President, honourable Members, thank you for this debate. I admire the passion and the energy in this global question – how do we fight the climate crisis? How do we adapt to what is happening already? But thank you even more for the warmth and the compassion, not only for those who have lost their lives, but also for those who have lost their loved ones; for those who survive the floodings and the droughts and the wildfires and the smoke and the particles and what have you, because they are many.

And they are out there looking at us, saying, ‘respect our loss’. Those who are victims of the climate in action, they should be remembered with their respects and the mourning that they all deserve. And their survivors, their siblings, their parents, their friends, their partners – they should see that we have learned from what we haven’t done yet so that we do more both to prepare for the worst, but also to do what we can to prevent.

Citizens are a powerful actor of change. The more aware we are, the more we enable people to be part of fighting climate change, the better. A day in commemoration of the victims of the climate crisis, well, that is such a day. And it could indeed also become an international occasion, since it is a day of commemorating the victims of the global climate crisis – not the European victims, but the victims, and I think that is absolutely crucial. This is not about being us – this is about being we.

We will keep discussing the legislation, the implementation of the legislation, the investment, the innovation, but I do hope that in this House representing people, that a day to mourn the victims, to care for their loved ones, that such a day we can agree on, because that shows what this is all about. It is about humans. When we live and when we die, that there is someone to remember us.

Predseda júci. – Ukončenie rozpravy.

Písomné vyhlásenia (článok 171)

Isabel Carvalhais (S&D), *por escrito*. – As alterações climáticas estão a ter grandes impactos nas sociedades e na economia da União Europeia, levando a fenómenos climáticos mais imprevisíveis, incluindo ondas de calor mais frequentes e intensas, incêndios florestais e inundações, ameaças à segurança alimentar e à qualidade das águas, criando emergências e uma maior propagação de doenças infecciosas. A realidade é que estes fenómenos se estão a intensificar e a assumir um papel cada vez maior destrutivo, e lamentavelmente com mais vítimas humanas, tanto na Europa como a nível mundial.

É de facto apropriado homenagear as vítimas destas crises climáticas de forma a aumentar a consciencialização, principalmente para aqueles que ainda não acreditam que existem alterações climáticas, sobre os impactos que estas causam, tanto na economia como nas vidas humanas perdidas e nas crises humanitárias derivadas destes desafios climáticos.

Para isso temos de alterar os nossos padrões de consumo, tanto alimentar como energético, reduzindo a produção intensiva, de forma a limitar com urgência a nossa pegada carbónica. Não basta apenas criar um dia para homenagear as vítimas. Em sua honra, temos de tomar medidas para que, no futuro, consigamos reduzir e prever com maior capacidade os impactos das alterações climáticas. É um imperativo ético para com as pessoas que perderam a sua vida e para com as suas famílias.

16. Composition of committees and delegations

President. – The S&D Group has notified the President of Parliament of a decision relating to changes to appointments within a committee. The decision will be set out in the minutes of today’s sitting and takes effect on the date of this announcement.

17. Competition policy – annual report 2022 (debate)

Predseda júci. – Ďalším bodom programu je správa, ktorú predkladá pán René Repasi: Politika hospodárskej súťaže – výročná správa za rok 2022 (2022/2060(INI)) (A9-0183/2023).

René Repasi, rapporteur. – Mr President, dear Madam Executive Vice-President of the Commission, dear colleagues, we are currently experiencing tectonic shifts in US economic policy under the acronyms of NZIA, CRA, SMEI, ASAI, or the Chips Act acronym. Competition policy is affected by these shifts and must take a position. It must be underlined, the competition policy is an autonomous policy field and not subject or a tool of any other EU policy. Yet, your competition policy must adapt. In my eyes, it has to give up on much cherished concepts, but also hold briefly and firmly onto others.

Briefly, we must move away from a narrow understanding of consumer welfare as the basis of competition law. You must understand that competition policy cannot be pursued in isolation, but is embedded in an economic and social context and is committed to all Union goals. And most importantly, we must protect the integrity of the internal market by all means. We should never forget what is the beating heart of European integration that is securing our peace and welfare. It is the internal market being a place in which large and small economies can compete with each other on the basis of merits and not of fiscal capacity.

We have enough of national public money injected into national economies that disturb the balance within the internal market. Yet, we definitely need more public investments, but not at the expense of our internal market. Any relaxation of State aid rules must be accompanied by an equally strong European fund that is accessible for fiscally weak Member States, otherwise, we risk losing our internal market over it.

The functioning of some markets is cursed by the bigness of the main players on it. Without committing abuses of their dominant position, these players have distorted the structure of the markets to such an extent that innovation is suffocated and competition by merit is suspended. It is competition policy's most noble task to address this curse of bigness in order to achieve innovation and competition based on merits. We need healthy market structures that allow smaller competitors to enter a market, to survive the entry and to grow. That is the formula that underlies the success of the internal market and should not be dumped by policy initiatives that intend to govern by setting reference values which are then to be achieved by all means.

A competition policy that protects market structures, needs tools to act against the dominant market player distorting markets without its behaviour meeting the threshold of abusive behaviour. It requires the use of structural remedies and to split up dominant undertakings. We need to be bold and create a legal basis for unbundling measures already in situations where such unbundling would improve conditions for competition significantly. It requires a merger control that protects innovative undertakings from being killed by a merger with large companies. Let us be clear, when the Court of Justice does not confirm the Commission's current way of dealing with killer acquisitions, we need to revise the merger regulation.

Finally, I believe that competition policy has a role to play in tackling inflation. In the recent monetary dialogue with the European Parliament, the ECB president, Christine Lagarde, confirmed our view that there is sellers' inflation, and that is, I quote, 'perfectly called for (for) competition authorities to look into excessive prices, driving inflation'.

Dear colleagues, competition policy has to evolve from a policy that is mainly concerned by consumer welfare to a policy that untangles the curse of bigness, ensures the level playing field of our internal market and shapes competitive market structures.

Margrethe Vestager, Executive Vice-President of the Commission. – Honourable Members, this Parliament is a strong advocate for consumers in Europe, for European businesses, with a special focus and care for the small and medium-sized businesses. A strong competitive market is at heart a single market that works.

This is a Parliament for cohesion, for resilience and, of course, for a successful green and digital transition. And competition policy is one of the tools to reach these goals.

Reading this year's reports give me comfort. I see that the rapporteur and the shadows share the Commission's view that we need a robust EU competition policy to stay competitive. The report is mindful of protecting the level playing field, recognises our efforts to tackle anti-competitive behaviours to prevent mergers that impede on competition. And the report welcomes the new and the revised rules that we have put in place, calls, of course, for competition policy to develop.

Of course, coming from an ambitious and forward-looking Parliament, the report called for even more effective actions and enforcement, for increased speeds and for further revision of our rules. I welcome this positive, this ambitious message.

The Commission is committed to ensuring that the rule book remains fit for purpose. In antitrust, we are currently evaluating our procedural regulation. In this context, we are also looking at our remedies policy, our interim measures, and we will present, of course, the results of this evaluation before the end of this mandate.

We plan to adopt the revised market definition notice before the end of the year. It takes account of the fact that markets are increasingly digital and that an interconnected world is the one we live in. And, of course, sets out more explicitly the Commission practice as it has developed since the last market definition notice.

We recently adopted a merger simplification package. The new rules, they will come into effect by September. But simplification doesn't mean relaxation. It doesn't mean that we will see through concentrations that will mean higher prices, less competition, less innovation for consumers. But what it means is a reduction in the administrative burden. It frees resources to investigate the much more complex and problematic cases that we also see.

And mergers in the digital sector, they raise specific competition risks, adding products or services to a digital platform or ecosystem that can create competition concerns in different ways. There are so many different issues, be that the cloud gaming market, be that the variables in the digital health space, be that the customer relationship management software – there is enough to look at. And these are important things to tell market power that you can just not consolidate into more.

Our assessment framework has so far proven its flexibility in remaining effective but, of course, must be followed. Instead, they control the debate as, of course, centred on the response to the crisis, to decarbonisation of industrial processes and boosting the emergence of a competitive green tech industry.

In March, we put in place the temporary crisis and transition framework. It gives flexibility to Member States. It gives speed to Member States. It is temporary. It is targeted to what we want to achieve. And this is important. Exceptional crisis rules. They should end with the exceptional times.

And, last but not least, we are approving more and more of the important projects of common European interest – now, in total, six. This is a rollout of cutting-edge innovation, truly strategic projects. We now see smaller businesses participating. We now see many more Member States participating. Last week, we approved around 8 billion of public funding, unlocking another 12 billion of private investment when it comes to microelectronics and communication technologies, the biggest IPCEI so far and now, in total, a public and private investment of EUR 75 billion. And in doing so, saving taxpayers EUR 8 billion to make sure that businesses get what they need for the processes to move ahead but not more, not what is necessary.

Last but not least, on chips manufacturing, because this is absolutely strategic for Europe. In February 2022, we launched the Chips Act communication. And the Commission have now applied the existing state aid rules to enable Member States to provide the necessary support to attract semiconductor manufacturing in Europe. This is approach based on the treaty, based on the existing state framework. And now we have already two proven cases. Last October, we approved aid to first-of-a-kind wafer production in Catania in Italy. And in April this year we approved aid for the construction and operation of a new chips factory in France. This is important. This is progress. And this is done within competition policy.

I want to thank the rapporteur, René Repasi, for his work. I want to thank the shadows, and I'm looking very much forward to our debate.

Dita Charanzová, *rapporteur for the opinion of the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection*. – Mr President, thank you very much Madam Commissioner, for the IMCO Committee the vital point is to make sure that competition policy continues to serve and protect consumers and the Single Market. A strong and robust competition policy is a fundamental part of the Single Market and is crucial for the development of a fair and level playing field for all market players, especially SMEs.

Due to Covid and the Russian war against Ukraine, we have loosened State aid rules and you mention it. But we must ensure that this is truly limited – limited, as this can distort the Single Market, as not all Member States have the same abilities.

We continue to call on the Commission to use competition policy to break up national markets within the Single Market. Companies and citizens should be freely able to buy products from anyone and anywhere in Europe. For IMCO, we want to see full competition in the digital single market as well. So it is now the task of the Commission to ensure that the DSA and the DMA are fully implemented. Digital or physical, competition policy must apply to all companies.

Lastly, Mr President, we also believe that net neutrality must be maintained and protected and that competition policy must support it. This does not include any new streaming taxes or sharing levies, but does mean the extension of the geo-blocking regulation to more digital goods and services online. We count on you, Madam Commissioner.

Markus Ferber, *im Namen der PPE-Fraktion*. – Herr Präsident, Frau Kommissarin, liebe Kolleginnen, liebe Kollegen! Die Europäische Kommission als oberste Hüterin des Wettbewerbsrechts hat in den vergangenen Monaten eine erstaunliche Kehrtwende hingelegt. War die Arbeit der Kommission im Sinne fairer Wettbewerbsbedingungen im Binnenmarkt bislang von einer gesunden Skepsis gegen exzessive Subventionen und Beihilfen geprägt, scheinen das nun die Mittel der Wahl zur Erreichung jeglicher politischer Ziele geworden zu sein. Nach dem COVID-Beihilferahmen und dem Beihilferahmen zur Überwindung der Energiekrise gibt es nun einen Beihilferahmen als Antwort auf den US-amerikanischen *Inflation Reduction Act*. Hinzu kommen weitere Rechtsakte wie der *Net Zero Industry Act*, die unter wettbewerbsrechtlichen Regeln nicht unproblematisch sind.

Was einst die absolute Ausnahme sein sollte, wird nun zum Regelfall. Was die wettbewerbsrechtliche Antwort auf den *Inflation Reduction Act* angeht, sitzt die Kommission leider dem Trugschluss auf, dass wir einen Subventionswettlauf mit den Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika gewinnen könnten und dass deswegen nur die Schleusentore auch in den Mitgliedstaaten für zusätzliche Subventionen geöffnet werden müssten.

Diese verfehlte Wettbewerbspolitik geht zurück auf eine falsche Problemdiagnose, nämlich den Glauben, dass der zentrale Baustein für unsere Wettbewerbsfähigkeit in Europa darin bestehen würde, das Subventionsgefälle zu den USA auszugleichen. Ein einmaliges Subventionsprogramm, und mag es noch so großzügig sein, löst die Probleme aber nicht. Die Probleme gehen tiefer und müssen grundsätzlicher angegangen werden. Es gibt nämlich viele andere Mittel und Wege, auch unsere Wettbewerbsfähigkeit zu verbessern – Bürokratieabbau, Bildung, um mal nur zwei Stichworte zu benennen. Unser Problem sind heute zu wenig Auslandsinvestitionen in der Europäischen Union und nicht zu wenige Subventionen. Daran sollten Sie sich stärker orientieren.

Jonás Fernández, *en nombre del Grupo S&D*. – Señor presidente, señora vicepresidenta, en primer lugar, permítanme agradecer el trabajo del ponente de este informe, mi colega René Repasi, que ha conseguido sacar adelante un informe necesario, oportuno y en el que, de alguna manera, se reflejan también las inconsistencias institucionales de nuestro marco regulatorio, lo que exige una reflexión sobre la revisión de las políticas de competencia.

En los últimos años, hemos tenido, primero, el *shock* derivado de la pandemia de la COVID-19 y, después, la guerra de Putin en Ucrania. Ambos sucesos nos han recordado la necesidad de fortalecer la autonomía estratégica de la Unión. Pero la Unión Europea apenas tiene el presupuesto de los Estados para poder apoyar a nuestra industria y poder garantizar esa autonomía estratégica. Y, aun cuando desde la Comisión se ha intentado poner un poco de orden a las ayudas de los Estados, ciertamente el estrecho margen que tenemos entre apoyar a nuestra economía y garantizar la solidez de nuestro mercado único es muy reducido. Y estamos siempre jugando entre en qué medida podemos abrir la mano a las ayudas de Estado —porque las necesidades son evidentes— y en qué medida esa flexibilidad erosiona o puede erosionar el mercado único.

Decía al principio que tenemos un problema institucional, porque, ciertamente, solo resolveremos estas inconsistencias con un presupuesto de la Unión Europea y con programas europeos que ayuden a dar respuesta, protegiendo también al mismo tiempo el mercado único.

Stéphanie Yon-Courtin, *au nom du groupe Renew*. – Monsieur le Président, Madame la Vice-Présidente, Monsieur le rapporteur, chers collègues, l'exercice annuel du rapport sur la politique de concurrence nous permet de saluer tout le travail de la Commission européenne, et encore davantage ces derniers mois, au cours desquels la concurrence a été au cœur de la réponse à la pandémie, à la crise énergétique.

C'est aussi l'occasion de rappeler le rôle de nos règles de concurrence dans la double transition, verte et numérique, et la résilience de notre marché unique, car, oui, la politique de concurrence – vous l'avez rappelé, Madame la Vice-Présidente – est un des moyens pour atteindre les objectifs ambitieux que nous nous sommes démocratiquement fixés. Mais nous ne parviendrons à atteindre notre autonomie stratégique qu'en articulant toutes nos politiques européennes et notre boîte à outils. Avec le règlement sur les subventions étrangères, nous avons enfin dit stop à la concurrence déloyale des États tiers et nous devons désormais délivrer des résultats concrets sur ces priorités pour nos citoyens et nos entreprises – la fin des voitures à moteur thermique sera un vrai test. Nos nouvelles règles doivent nous protéger de la concurrence déloyale des voitures électriques chinoises à bas coût, largement subventionnées par la Chine, qui viendraient inonder le marché européen.

Au sein même de notre marché unique, comment garantir une concurrence loyale entre nos entreprises européennes si nous n'accélérons pas sur le fonds de souveraineté, qui viendrait compenser d'éventuelles disparités en matière d'aides d'État? Notre réponse européenne à la loi américaine sur la réduction de l'inflation doit s'accompagner de ce volet financier.

En matière de souveraineté numérique, la réglementation sur le marché numérique pallie les limites de notre droit de la concurrence pour l'adapter aux défis actuels. L'heure est maintenant à la mise en œuvre concrète de cet acte. Nous devons aussi repenser la juste rémunération des réseaux. Il faut veiller à ce qu'une poignée d'entreprises ne puisse pas monopoliser le trafic exponentiel de données sans contribuer effectivement aux infrastructures qu'elles utilisent.

Claude Gruffat, *au nom du groupe Verts/ALE*. – Monsieur le Président, Madame la Commissaire, Monsieur le rapporteur, chers collègues, dans cette période de crise et d'inflation que nous traversons, nous demandons une fois de plus que les entreprises qui se livrent à l'évasion fiscale en se tournant vers des paradis fiscaux dans les pays tiers soient exclues des procédures de passation des marchés publics et ne puissent plus bénéficier d'aides d'État. Les caisses sont vides. Nous ne pouvons pas laisser certaines entreprises s'asseoir sur la redistribution, qui est nécessaire au bon fonctionnement de notre société.

Cette discussion, nous l'avons déjà eue lors de la pandémie, alors que les aides d'État pleuvaient. Nous l'avons aujourd'hui à nouveau, alors que nous avons besoin plus que jamais de redistribution pour faire face à la hausse des prix, alors que la question est de savoir qui va payer la facture de l'inflation: l'État à coups de chèques, les entreprises en participant de manière plus juste à notre société ou les consommateurs? L'histoire nous a montré que les consommateurs ont souvent payé le prix des comportements des acteurs financiers, comme durant la crise des subprimes. Les conséquences sociales perdurent sur un long terme et on ne peut plus se permettre de tels drames.

Eugen Jurzyca, *za skupinu ECR*. – Vážený pán predsedajúci, teší ma, že správa konštatuje, že ochrana hospodárskej súťaže zvyšuje blahobyt spotrebiteľov. Dnes sa o tom málo hovorí. A teší ma tiež, že uprednostňuje zahraničný obchod pred protekcionizmom. A to treba stále opakovať. Tiež ma teší, že do návrhu prešiel pozmeňujúci návrh, podľa ktorého sa problémy s nedostatočnou súťažou dajú efektívne odstraňovať aj dereguláciou. Podľa nových štúdií práve regulácia spôsobuje až tretinu koncentrácie trhovej sily a môže tak zhoršiť kvalitu konkurenčného prostredia. Obávam sa však, že tak ako banky či burzy na finančných trhoch, tak aj úrady na ochranu hospodárskej súťaže budú len s ťažkosťami rozlišovať firmy podľa súladu s plánmi na ochranu životného prostredia a nadväz na to ich budú aj primerane

zvyšňodňovať. Celkovo som mal zo správy pocit, že autori súhlasia s tým, že hospodárska súťaž je predpokladom, nie prekážkou ochrany životného prostredia a dosahovania ďalších dôležitých cieľov Európskej únie.

France Jamet, *au nom du groupe ID.* – Monsieur le Président, mes chers collègues, si la mondialisation est une réalité dans laquelle se multiplient les crises économiques, énergétiques et industrielles, l'idéologie mondialiste, elle, est un dogme, avec lequel ce rapport annuel sur la politique de concurrence refuse de rompre. En rejetant explicitement ne serait-ce qu'une part de protectionnisme, l'Union européenne nous condamne structurellement, économiquement, socialement et même écologiquement. Sans protectionnisme, aucune politique de réindustrialisation ne se révélera efficace. Et, surtout, nous sommes et serons dans l'incapacité de défendre notre souveraineté économique, énergétique et stratégique.

Je prendrai pour seul exemple la réponse faite à la loi américaine pour la réduction de l'inflation: alors même que les États-Unis ont parfaitement intégré dans leur plan le nucléaire comme une technologie décarbonée, afin de doter leur industrie d'avantages fiscaux, compétitifs et considérables, l'Union européenne, elle, nous plombe avec l'exclusion du nucléaire des énergies décarbonées, à travers REPowerEU et «zéro net».

Les contradictions et tragiques obsessions imposées par Bruxelles à travers cette vision erronée de la concurrence nous engagent à plier devant l'hyperpuissance américaine, Pékin sans doute déjà, et peut être même New Delhi demain.

Alors, bien sûr, les victimes, ce sont les plus précaires, mais c'est aussi et surtout cette classe moyenne, qui est toujours victime de cette politique du renoncement permanent, qui travaille dur, qui paie tout le temps, pour tout et pour tout le monde, sans perspective d'un avenir juste et décent, déclassée économiquement, matraquée fiscalement et ignorée politiquement. Toute crise en soi doit être le commencement d'autre chose, d'autres méthodes, appuyées sur la raison, la lucidité et la logique, comme le protectionnisme raisonné ou le localisme.

Vous avez un devoir d'intelligence qui doit vous engager à sortir de cette dystopie ultralibérale et à défendre nos champions économiques et industriels au lieu de les saborder méthodiquement, comme vous le faites. Franchement, votre rêve est le cauchemar des nations et des peuples. Mais ils se réveillent.

José Gusmão, *em nome do Grupo The Left.* – Senhor Presidente, a crise da inflação e as suas causas mostraram bem as limitações da política e do discurso sobre concorrência nas instituições europeias.

Sabemos, hoje, que é ao nível dos lucros e ao nível da cartelização em setores estratégicos que está o fator mais dinâmico por detrás da inflação. E, no entanto, a Comissão tem registado, monitorizado, assinalado, mostrado preocupação e não tem feito absolutamente nada. Na realidade, isto não é um facto novo.

O discurso da concorrência e a política de concorrência na União Europeia só serve para limitar políticas públicas de desenvolvimento, inclusive nas áreas que são eleitas como prioritárias, reduzir a política industrial a incentivos fiscais a quem já paga impostos a menos e privatizar as empresas públicas, limitando a ação daquelas que ainda não tiverem sido privatizadas. Privatizações essas que, aliás, estiveram na origem dos mesmos setores, altamente concentrados e cartelizados, que dão origem à inflação a que estamos a assistir.

E este debate, aliás, um debate sobre concorrência em que só se fala de ajudas de Estado é bem a expressão deste enviesamento ideológico.

Enikő Győri (NI). – Elnök Úr! Európának a versenyképességet segítő, tisztességes versenypolitikára, könnyen hozzáférhető finanszírozásra lenne szüksége, átlátható szabályokkal és gyors döntésekkel. Ehhez képest a Bizottság rendkívül lassan reagál a változásokra. Lazította ugyan az állami támogatási szabályokat, de abból eddig csak a nagyok húztak hasznot, ami a belső piac torzulásával fenyeget. A Bizottság négy évet is képes volt várni, például Magyarország esetében egy támogatás jóváhagyásával, hogy saját forrásból segíthessünk egy beruházást. Ez megengedhetetlen!

A helyreállítási pénzek 30 %-a ért csak célba, Magyarország és Lengyelország ellen pedig politikai játszma folyik. A kereskedelempolitika mindeközben ideológiai alapú lett, így nem csoda, hogy 2010-ben az EU 22 %-kal vette ki részét a világ GDP-jéből, addig ma már csak 17 %-kal. Kína megduplázta részesedését, megelőzött minket, és az USA is növelte az előnyét. A világ tíz legnagyobb cége közül csak egy európai, az európai székhelyű vállalatok pedig az inflációcsökkentési törvényt kihasználódó, készülnek áttelepülni a tengeren túlra. A Bizottság hagyjon fel a reagáló politikával! Ismerje fel végre Európa érdekeit, és tegyen tudatosan a versenyképesség növelése érdekében!

Isabel Benjumea Benjumea (PPE). – Señor presidente, señora comisaria, como ya se ha analizado en este informe, la coherencia normativa entre los Estados de la Unión, la simplificación burocrática, la eliminación de barreras al libre mercado y las inversiones transfronterizas son pilares sobre los que se debe seguir construyendo una Europa más competitiva.

En este sentido, creo que merece especial mención el programa de los fondos NextGenerationEU. Estos fondos no solo fueron una respuesta rápida y acertada a la crisis económica derivada de la pandemia de COVID-19, sino que también una herramienta única y nunca antes aplicada en la Unión, puesta al servicio de los Estados para que estos sean más competitivos en una economía global de mercado, más resistentes a los períodos de crisis y contracción económica, y capaces de generar oportunidades de empleo y crecimiento.

Cabe destacar que los principios fundacionales de los fondos de recuperación son coherentes con las líneas generales de este informe en materia de competencia. No olvidemos que las reformas incluidas en los planes nacionales de recuperación han de buscar la simplificación normativa y administrativa y la reducción de la burocracia en aras del buen funcionamiento del mercado interior.

Por eso, debemos preguntarnos: ¿las reformas pactadas y aplicadas en los Estados, bajo el paraguas de estos fondos, están permitiendo lograr estos objetivos? ¿Las inversiones que se están realizando están logrando la transformación económica pretendida o, por el contrario, están aumentando el gasto público y estructural a medio y largo plazo que dificultará la competitividad de nuestra economía e implicará futuros problemas en las economías nacionales de la Unión?

No es el momento de la autocomplacencia; es el momento de la exigencia.

Paul Tang (S&D). – Voorzitter, Fitbit-horloges, Instagram-story's en Giphy-gifjes zijn stuk voor stuk niet bedacht, maar wel overgenomen door bigtech. Londen heeft de overname van Giphy door Facebook teruggedraaid, maar Brussel heeft bigtech geen strobreed in de weg gelegd. Waar was u, commissaris Vestager?

Techreuzen zoals Google en Facebook vergroten hun macht niet door te innoveren, maar door agressief potentiële concurrenten op te kopen. Het Parlement verzoekt in dit verslag dan ook om optreden tegen de agressieve opkooppraktijken van techreuzen, zeker wanneer er gegevens in het geding zijn. We moeten als uitgangspunt nemen dat dit niet door de beugel kan en optreden tegen de concentratie van gegevens, en met name persoonsgegevens. Het is moeilijk te bevatten dat de Commissie dit anno 2023 nog altijd als irrelevant beschouwt bij fusies en overnamen.

Alleen zo kunnen we nieuwe gevallen zoals Giphy en Fitbit voorkomen en ervoor zorgen dat bigtech minder machtig en concurrerender wordt.

And now I switch to English, because one last remark, Commissioner. There has been a study commissioned by the Commission on the digital advertising market. It shows all the problems that we have seen in other reports: huge concentration of market power by big tech leading to high margins on digital advertising, roughly 50 cents in every euro, much to the detriment of SMEs, much to the detriment of traditional media.

So my question to you is this – we're nearing the end of the mandate. Will be your legacy to introduce a digital advertising bill? I hope you will confirm.

Johan Van Overtveldt (ECR). – Voorzitter, een van de grootste verwezenlijkingen van de EU is de interne markt, die stoelt op het beginsel van vrije mededinging. De interne markt heeft voor groei en welvaart gezorgd. Sommigen lijken deze succesformule echter de rug toe te keren. Overheden zouden meer vrijheid moeten krijgen om bedrijven staatssteun te geven. Dit werkt niet alleen in het voordeel van grote lidstaten met diepe zakken, maar verergert tevens de hardnekkig hoge inflatie. Bovendien vallen de uiteindelijke resultaten van een dergelijk dirigisme vaak nogal tegen.

De sluipende veranderingen ten opzichte van oorspronkelijke, duidelijke doelstellingen – de zogenaamde “mission creep” – zijn een bijzonder kwalijke ontwikkeling in het economisch beleid.

Monetair beleid is bedoeld om de prijsstabiliteit te bewaken, niet om klimaatbeleid te voeren of de biodiversiteit te bevorderen. Hetzelfde geldt voor mededingingsbeleid, dat moet zorgen voor een eerlijke marktwerking ten voordele van consumenten. Om efficiënt beleid te kunnen voeren, moeten we een eind maken aan de voortdurende “mission creep”.

Andreas Schwab (PPE). – Herr Präsident, Frau Vizepräsidentin, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Der Jahresbericht zur Wettbewerbspolitik der Europäischen Union ist immer ein guter Gradmesser dafür, welche Themen im Parlament für die Aufstellung in diesem Bereich von Bedeutung sind. Und wir können, glaube ich, durchaus richtig feststellen, dass mit dem Gesetz über digitale Märkte für die diesjährige Arbeit der Kommission eine ganze Reihe von Entscheidungen vor uns liegt, die sicherstellen muss, dass das, was der Gesetzgeber beschlossen hat, auch so in die Umsetzung des Gesetzes eingebracht wird und dass die Umsetzung so gelingt, wie wir sie uns gemeinsam vorgestellt haben.

Aber wir haben im kommenden Jahr auch weitere Gesetzgebungsvorhaben vor uns, die ebenfalls erhebliche Veränderungen mit sich bringen. Das ist einmal die Verordnung über die Fusionen – die Fusionskontrollverordnung –, und hier haben wir in diesem Falle eine Überschneidung mit dem Bericht, wo es um die Frage der Telekommunikationsmärkte geht. Und wir haben uns – und ich glaube, dass das auch eine Mehrheit finden wird – dazu entschieden, dafür zu sorgen, dass wir künftig in Europa einen voll integrierten Telekom-Binnenmarkt bekommen, bei dem nationale Grenzen viel geringere Rollen spielen – mit dem Ziel, ein noch attraktiveres Angebot sowohl für die Nutzerinnen und Nutzer, als auch für die betroffenen Unternehmer zu schaffen.

Dafür brauchen wir Anpassungen bei der Fusionskontrollverordnung, auch in der Anwendung – und Frau Vizepräsidentin, da hoffe ich auf Ihre Unterstützung, weil wir damit, was den Wettbewerb im globalen Umfeld angeht, als Europäische Union einen großen Schritt nach vorne kommen. Wir werden uns dann natürlich auch die Marktdefinition anschauen, die im globalen Kontext eine große Rolle spielt.

In diesem Sinne dem Berichterstatter herzlichen Dank.

Margarida Marques (S&D). – Senhor Presidente, Senhor Vice-Presidente, na resposta a grandes crises estruturais a política de concorrência precisa de uma coordenação abrangente e coerente, de forma a assegurar regras iguais para todos, mas, também, a proteger as famílias e as empresas mais vulneráveis e expostas.

A recente crise inflacionista revelou que muitas empresas se aproveitam da subida dos custos energéticos para aumentarem de forma abusiva as suas margens de lucro, e em bens essenciais, como produtos alimentares e energia.

O BCE descreveu esta atitude como a inflação da ganância – *greedflation*. Esta atitude afeta de forma desigual e é insuportável para as famílias mais pobres. E reduz os esforços das instituições europeias no combate à inflação ao bloquear uma descida mais rápida dos preços.

Para proteger o mercado interno, a política de concorrência deve assegurar um *level playing field* e evitar respostas unilaterais ou descoordenadas. Mas deve ser capaz, também, de dar respostas sólidas e eficazes aos seus impactos sociais.

Denis Nesci (ECR). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, permettetemi innanzitutto di rivolgere, in questa importante Aula, un pensiero commosso per la scomparsa di Silvio Berlusconi, Presidente e fondatore di Forza Italia.

La sua personalità ha segnato la storia del nostro paese. Un visionario che ha saputo interpretare i valori della libertà come pietra angolare del suo impegno professionale e politico. Il centrodestra italiano ed europeo gli devono molto. La mia sincera vicinanza alla sua famiglia, ai colleghi di Forza Italia e ai colleghi del PPE.

Signora Commissaria, per quanto riguarda la politica di concorrenza, questa deve essere in grado di salvaguardare la competitività globale delle nostre aziende europee e, al tempo stesso, contribuire fortemente a difendere e tutelare il benessere dei consumatori, della comunità e delle persone più vulnerabili. Per conseguire questi obiettivi è evidente che le norme europee debbono essere concrete e realistiche, ponendo al centro sempre la difesa del consumatore.

Inoltre, è indispensabile che le normative europee garantiscano agli Stati membri la giusta flessibilità per incentivare la crescita ed evitare invece di adottare provvedimenti che violano il mercato interno. Pertanto, dobbiamo lavorare alla costruzione di un'Europa del consumatore sempre più vigorosa, più prossimale e soprattutto in grado di essere all'altezza del loro aspettative e delle loro esigenze.

Angelika Winzig (PPE). – Herr Präsident, Frau Vizepräsidentin, Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Die Wettbewerbspolitik der EU muss sicherstellen, dass Europa weiterhin im Konzert der Weltmächte wie USA und China eine wichtige Rolle spielt.

China hat mit einem Anteil von 18,5 % am weltweiten BIP bereits die USA mit 15,6 % und die EU mit einem Anteil von 14,9 % auf die Plätze verwiesen. Das ist insofern besorgniserregend, als sich diese Entwicklung negativ auf unsere Arbeitsplätze, aber auch unsere Sozialsysteme und unsere Lebensqualität in Europa auswirkt. Der *Inflation Reduction Act* der USA hat uns aus dem Dornröschenschlaf geweckt und aufgezeigt, dass *America First* noch immer Gültigkeit hat. Daher war der *Net Zero Industry Act* für strategische Projekte in Bezug auf Verfahrensbeschleunigung die richtige Antwort.

Die Schaffung eines Souveränitätsfonds auf europäischer Ebene halte ich dennoch für gefährlich. Denn er birgt das Risiko, in eine Schuldenunion abzugleiten, was unsere Wettbewerbsfähigkeit weiter schwächen würde. Europa hat gute Voraussetzungen, um China und USA wirtschaftlich die Stirn zu bieten. Wir müssen jedoch die Wettbewerbsfähigkeit unserer Wirtschaft endlich wieder in den Mittelpunkt stellen, wobei die Aufweichung des Beihilfenrechts nicht die Lösung sein kann. Kurze Genehmigungsverfahren und endlich Bürokratieabbau – das ist jetzt das Gebot der Stunde.

Zbigniew Kuźmiuk (ECR). – Panie Przewodniczący! Pani Komisarz! Ja chcę zwrócić tylko uwagę na jeden aspekt zawarty w tym sprawozdaniu. Mówił zresztą o tym pan sprawozdawca. Chodzi o szeroki strumień pomocy publicznej i głębokie zróżnicowanie tej pomocy, jeżeli chodzi o poszczególne kraje członkowskie. Oczywiście zdaję sobie sprawę, że dodatkowa pomoc publiczna była konieczna ze względu na skutki Covidu, teraz ze względu na agresję Rosji na Ukrainę i skutki tego dla gospodarek krajów unijnych, ale to zróżnicowanie jest naprawdę głębokie.

Tu zaprezentuję takie krótkie dane z tamtego roku. Przez siedem miesięcy – od lutego do października – Pani Komisarz zaakceptowała ponad 100 projektów na astronomiczną sumę chyba 435 miliardów euro. Z tego 90% przypadało na dwa kraje – Niemcy i Francję. Co więcej, te dwa kraje ogłosiły, że uruchomią kolejne transze pomocy publicznej rzędu odpowiednio 200 i 100 miliardów euro. A więc ta przeważająca pomoc publiczna w tych dwóch krajach będzie niestety kontynuowana. Oczywiście zdaję sobie sprawę, że są to dwie największe gospodarki odpowiadające za 40 proc. PKB. Ale Pani Komisarz, to rujnuje zasady równej konkurencji. I prosiłbym, żeby Pani się do tego odniosła.

Eugen Tomac (PPE). – Domnule președinte, doamna vicepreședintă, stimată colegi, consider că acest raport, de altfel foarte cuprinzător, în care se dezbate o chestiune esențială ce ține de prezentul și viitorul tuturor cetățenilor europeni, precum competitivitatea, mi se pare o temă extrem de importantă.

Cu alte cuvinte, întreprinderile din toate statele membre trebuie să aibă șansa de a concura pe picior de egalitate, doamna vicepreședintă.

Însă, vă întreb dacă piața unică europeană, care definește libertatea de circulație a cetățenilor, libertatea de circulație a bunurilor, a serviciilor, a capitalului, poate funcționa și poate fructifica în deplina ei valoare toate aceste oportunități, atât timp cât nu toate statele membre pot avea parte de aceste libertăți?

Și aici mă refer la țara mea, România, care nu poate beneficia de competitivitate și de concurență loială pe piața unică europeană, atât timp cât de 12 ani suntem ținută în afara frontierelor Uniunii Europene și nu ne putem bucura de libertatea de circulație a bunurilor. România pierde anual peste 10 miliarde de euro și este obligația Comisiei ca, împreună cu Consiliul, să deblocheze această nedreptate, pentru că și noi ne dorim să fim parte a proiectului european și companiile noastre să se bucure de același tratament ca și restul companiilor europene.

Vystúpenia podľa postupu prihlásenia o slovo zdvihnutím ruky

Mick Wallace (The Left). – Mr President, this year's report focuses on market competition and the fostering of competitiveness, competitiveness in the European industry and consumer welfare. However, it leaves many concerns about workers and the challenges faced under existing competition policy. With the cost of living crisis rampant across Europe, the statements within the text on market concentrations and market interventions to address the abuse of market power and price hikes are not ambitious enough.

The monopoly of corporate power enables companies to hike prices to maximise profits, yet keep down working conditions and wages. The impacts of 'greedflation' have been felt by most ordinary citizens right across Europe.

A report by the European Trade Union Confederation identifies how EU competition policy neglects workers through enforcement issues, anti-trust guidelines and market dominance. Ultimately, the report lacks a vision of the fundamental issues in EU competition policy, especially in regards to the cost of living crisis.

There is a clear need for a more proactive approach centred on workers' rights and we certainly need a much more positive approach to trying to develop dialogue and diplomacy with a view to bringing the war to an end, which is having a massive impact on the less well-off all across Europe.

Clare Daly (The Left). – Mr President, reading this report is really a little bit like hearing dinosaurs roar – competitiveness, productivity inputs, outputs, throughputs, profit, and above all, growth, all the sacred cows of the old and destructive economic model that everybody knows is utterly unsustainable. But we're still banging the drum for it, and the occasional nod towards sustainability just doesn't cut it, because unfettered growth is fundamentally unsustainable. It's burning our planet. You can't window dress your way out of that. You can't window dress your way out of the savage exploitation of people in the Global South to fuel our growth mania. You can't window dress your way out of the misery caused to workers all over the world, forced to be more competitive, more productive, work harder, work longer, work faster for less.

If we look around at the economic paradigm that we've got to, the misery of workers everywhere, a devastated planet, and it promises imminent mass extinction. It has to stop. If there ever was a time to be radical, it's now. But we're very much blowing our opportunity.

(Ukončenie vystúpení podľa postupu prihlásenia o slovo zdvihnutím ruky)

Margrethe Vestager, Executive Vice-President of the Commission. – Mr President, thank you very much. I think it has been a very interesting and far-reaching debate. And on the inspiration of the last entry on the unfettered growth burning our planet. This is one of the kind of things that, for me as a competition law enforcer, makes me very humble. Because competition is not a Swiss knife, it cannot do everything. And this is, of course, why a number of the things that we've been discussing today are for you as a legislator. To set the boundaries. To set the targets: on the environment, on working conditions, on climate protection. And within those boundaries to use competition as an effective driver. For innovation. For effective use of resources. That is what competition can do for us all. And if you have a competitive market, the risk of high inflation is so much smaller than when you have a very concentrated market where big powers can take advantage of when inflation starts to rise.

I very much agree with the fact that we should have a European single market for telecommunications. It would have been much better for decades to have such a thing. It is not easy to achieve because one of the things that obviously is needed is spectrum management. But it should be more than a dream. It should be something that we actively perceive in order to have better services, affordable prices and also companies which are well consolidated in order to invest. The next time someone criticises me for insufficient relaxation of State aid rules to enable the green transition or the answer to the Inflation Reduction Act, I will remember the words of Markus Ferber. Because that is the extreme opposite of what we are being accused of: that we are still too prudent; that we are too targeted; that we see this as a temporary measure. One of the reasons why it's important that the temporary crisis and transition framework is indeed temporary

is because what we need is acceleration. Because this is what the market will not deliver us and this is what we need in order to have a sufficient number of clean and green industries in Europe. Because the paradox is that there's enough green industries for everyone. For the US, for Europe, for China, for India, for the African continent. Because otherwise we will not fight climate change. So what we need right now is for governments to take decisions to accelerate the private investment that is needed to make this happen. And that is the point of the temporary crisis and transition framework. And what we have done over the years enables more than 90 % of the State aid that is being paid out to be paid out by Member States without the touch of the commission, without notification. Because there is a recipe, there is a block exemption. This is how we can do it. Which of course means that when we do have a case, very often they are quite complicated. That is not an excuse for sometimes being consumed, but it is an explanation.

Last but not least, I also appreciate what was being said about the acquisitions when big companies try to swallow up the smaller ones, we will stay focused on getting that right. We have the tools to do that. We have done a number of investigations. We have found solutions. And of course, we will continue to do this because we also need businesses which come with the ambition to scale in Europe, to build their business in Europe. For that, we don't need just competition. We also need an active capital market. But part of it is also that you cannot just be bought. One thing is a given, this parliament cannot just be bought. This has been a very wise, very wide debate. It's a pleasure and an inspiration. And I want again to commemorate the rapporteur, René Repas, for his leadership and for the debate that it fosters in this parliament.

René Repasi, rapporteur. – Mr President, Madam Vice-President, dear colleagues, I think this was a good debate on the annual competition policy report – a debate that is hopefully having its implications and impact on the European Commission's course of action in conducting competition policy. As it is the exclusive competence of the Commission to do so, parliamentary involvement is, from my perspective at least, lacking.

I think you made the right reference just in your remarks that there's enough of green industry, but we need to accelerate. I do believe if there's one thing about all these words about State and competition policy that we have heard today, that it is to learn that we need to use the power of the public money that we have, to force it into the right direction. And it makes it that we must make more use of conditionality for social and environmental goals so that State aid is directed into the right direction in order to precisely accelerate the green industry.

I also believe the internal market doesn't have to be totally afraid of the United States when we look at the Inflation Reduction Act, since we do have knowledge, since we do have experience in our internal market – it is not simply fiscal capacity that defines our strength, it is many more that defines our strengths.

I believe you also rightly mentioned here now, it is also for the regulator to heal markets. But as you know, we as legislator, we are very much dependent on the Commission to initiate a legislative procedure so that we get proposals that we can work with. I therefore would like to reiterate the claim made by my colleague, Paul Tang, that when we look at digital markets and the main incentivising the digital tech giants, namely digital advertising, we need a proposal to work on this element that is distorting the digital markets without having an abusive practice. That is the problem that we see in competition law.

Let me conclude, and I think you also experienced this here in this debate, that this Parliament has a lot of knowledge and understanding of EU's competition policy, at times better than the Council and Member States' governments. So I therefore think it is time to give the European Parliament its proper involvement by means of ordinary legislative procedure and make use of the passerelle clause in Article 48, paragraph seven, and simply transform all decision-making procedures that we have into an ordinary legislative procedure.

Predseda júci. – Ukončenie rozpravy. Hlasovanie sa uskutoční zajtra.

Písomné vyhlásenia (článok 171)

Анджелика Анна Мождановска (ECR), на писме. – Унијна господарка никогда не стане сè бардziej конкурентна на пазару световном, јeсли на пазару внeшнeм бeдeиeмy закључуe конкурeнцeу и штучнeмy јeу рeгулуваe. Јeжели уважамy, жe дла добра „зeлeнeј трансформацијe” трeба успierae „зeлeнe” тeхнологe – то рeбмy то попрeз успарe бeдaњ, улaтвиeњ и зачeт дла выназачу – ораз попрeз фискалнe зачeтy дла консумeнту. Тылкo в тeн способ мoжeмy зачeваe рoвнoвaгeу и уникнae закључeњ на јeднoлитом пазару. Помoч публична, под прeтeкстeм успарe дла „зeлeнeј гoспoдapкe” кieroвaнa бeзпoсрeднo дo пoсчeгoљнyх пoдмeиоу, завысe oсaтeчнe тpaфия јeдинe дo тyх нaјвыксызых и нaјсилнeйсызых – co нe тылкo забурзa конкурeнцeу, aлe стaнoви прeсчкoдeу дла пpaвдзвых иннoвaци, пpaвoдзe дo фaвopызoвaнa јeднyх тeхнологeй кoсчeм иннyх. Јeст тeж дoдaткoвы, бaрдзo вaжнy – a прeмeлчзaнy нa co дзeњ – aспeкт пoлитыкe конкурeнцынoсчe: Aспeкт нaрoдoвы. Пoсчeгoљнe пaњствa мaжy oкpeслoнy прoфeл свoцх гoспoдapeк. Длaтeгo успieraнe oкpeслoнyх гaљeзи – нaвeт в нaјвыксызeј згoдзe з унeјнyмy прeиopитeтaмy – завысe бeдe кoрзыстнe дла нeкoртых (звыклe – нaјсилнeйсызых) пaњств – a нeкoрзыстнe дла иннyх. Oбсepвyeмy дзeсaј вpaжнy звpoт в кieroвкy прoтeкцeиoнизмy. Усылујaч знaлeжe oтвeдзeч на aмepыкaњскaу устaвeу o рeдyкци инфлaци, пoвиннeмy јeднaк пaмeтaч, жe вe вeлoнaрoдoвeј и зрoжнeиoвaнeј гoспoдapчo Eypoпe пoдoбнe рoзвeжзaнa завысe бeдaу нeспpaвeдлeвe: кoрзыстнe дла јeднyх, a крзывдзaчe дла иннyх пaњств члoкoвскых.

18. Large transport infrastructure projects in the EU (debate)

Председajú. – Дaлшeм бoдoм пpoгpaмy јe спрaвa, кoрy прeдклaдa пaњ Aндрeй Novakov Вeлкe пpoјeкты дoпpaвнeј инфpaстpaкчyры в EÚ (2022/2021(INI)) (A9-0181/2023).

Андрeй Нoвaкoв, дoклaдчeк. – Г-н Пpeдceдaтeл, гoлeмeтe инфpaстpaкчyрнe пpoјeкты сa нeшo, с кoгo Eypoпa oбeчa дa сe гopдee. Гopдeeм сe с мoстa Йopесyнд, мeждy Швeция и Дaния, гopдeeм сe с тyнeлa Aлбepг в Aвстpия, гopдeeм сe с мнoгo дpyгe гoлeмe инфpaстpaкчyрнe пpoјeкты, кaтo кaнaлитe пo кopидopитe Рeйн-Дyнaв. И с пpaвo, тe пpoмeнaт нe пpoстo гeoгpaфиятa нa eдин кoнтинeнт и жeвoтa нa хoрaтa, нo пpoмeнaт и изцялo oблeкa нa Eypoпa.

За сжaлeниe oбaчe, в нaшe днe тeмпoтo, с кoгo стpoим пoдoбнe eмблeмaтичнe пpoјeкты, сe зaбaви изкљyчитeлнo. Aкo мoжeм дa вярвaмe нa Eypoпeјскaтa смeтнa пaлaтa, a аз ѝ вярвaм дoстa, спopед нeин дoклaд сpeднитe зaбaвaннa нa тaкeвa гoлeмe инфpaстpaкчyрнe пpoјeкты в Eypoпa e мeждy 11 и 15 гoдинe. Aз пyтyвaм дoстa. И в мoятa Бeлгapия, и в цялa Eypoпa, и тpaбвa дa вe кaжa, жe имa хoрa, кoитo нe вярвaт, жe шe дoживeят дa видят пpoкoпaн нoв тyнeл пoд Aлпитe или вeкoскopocтнa жп линия, или нoвa мaгистpaлa, зapaди нoвитe тeжкe aдминистpaтивнe изисквaннa, кoитo чeстo пyти Eypoпa нaлaгa.

Ha вcичкoтo oтгope имa и eднo нoвo oбстoятeлствo. Смeнaт сe пpoгpaмнe пepиoдe, смeнaт сe oпepaтивнe пpoгpaмe, идвaт нoвe пpиopитeтнe oси, нoвe пpaвeтeлствa, нoвe министpи и нoвe кмeтoвe, нoвe идeи, нoвe пpиopитeти. И нaкpaя oт тoвa стpaдaт хoрaтa, зaщoтo гoлeмeтe пpoјeкты нe сe дoвършвaт и сe зaбaвaт изкљyчитeлнo. И тoвa тpaбвa дa спpe, зaщoтo зa тeзи 11 или 15 гoдинe, в кoитo нe сe бaвим дa дoвършeм нeшo, в Китaй вepoятнo пoстpoявaт мнoгo пoвeчe oт тoвa, кoгo пpaвим нe, в пyти. Знaм, жe сpeдaтa e дpyгa, знaм, жe изисквaннaтa сa дpyгe. Вce пaк Eypoпa тpaбвa дa e кoнкypeнтнa и дa нe пoзвoлявa дa изoстaвa oщe пoвeчe зapaди пoлитeчeски или aдминистpaтивнe пpeчкe.

Кдe e рeшeниeтo? Първo, Eypoпa тpaбвa дa имa ясна дeфиниция зa тoвa кaквo e гoлям инфpaстpaкчyрeн пpoјeкт. Дeфинициитe шe дaдeм вcичкe нe тyк, шe oпpeдeлим кaквo e гoлям инфpaстpaкчyрeн пpoјeкт, a слeд тoвa шe нaпpaвим тaкa, жe дa имa yскopeнa пpoцeдypa, спeциaлeн мoнитopинг oт Eypoпeјскaтa кoмисия и бързa пистa зa тeзи пpoјeкты. Тoвa имa зa цeл дa нaпpaви Eypoпeјскaтa кoмисия oщe пo-aнгaжирaнa в пpoцeсa пo изгpaждaнeтo нa тeзи пpoјeкты и смaнaтa нa eднo пpaвeтeлствo с дpyгo дa нe пoпpeчи нa извършвaнeтo нa тoзи пpoјeкт и нa нeгoвия стpoеж. Нe бивa вaжeн пpoјeкт, кoйтo вeчe e зaпoчнaл, дa бeдe спpян, сaмo зaщoтo eдин министър сe e смeнил с дpyг. Aз вярвaм, жe тoвa нeшo e кљyчeт зa пoбързa стpoеж в Eypoпa, oсoбeнo нa oнeзи пpoјeкты, кoитo пpoмeнaт изцялo нeјнaя oблeк.

Не трябва да допускаме това, което се случи с плановите за възстановяване и устойчивост. Те се превърнаха в конкуренция на оперативните програми и започнаха да си пречат. Така в някои държави или изостават новия програмен период и оперативните програми, или не се работи по плана за възстановяване и устойчивост. Нещо много важно. Трябва да променим и начина си на мислене, Ковид е зад нас, уроците са научени, но на една крачка от Европа се води война. Има инструмент, от който не се възползваме достатъчно и той е този за военна мобилност. Трябва да инвестираме повече в онази инфраструктура, която в мирно време може да бъде използвана от все повече хора, от бизнеса, от туристи, но ако не дай Боже се наложи да може да бъде използвана и по друго направление.

Аз вярвам, че довършването на TEN-T мрежата е от изключителна важност и затова в нашия стремеж да я довършим, трябва да имаме предвид Източното партньорство и Украйна като наши съюзници и държави, с които ще работим във все по-тесна връзка.

Накрая има един проект, който следя изключително отблизо за високоскоростна жп линия между София и Бургас, особено в отсечката между Елин Пелин и Костенец. Половин милиард лева променят облика на цял един регион, на цяла една държава и за пръв път от 100 години насам се строи нещо такова. Това променя и мисленето на хората. Те започват да вярват в Европа, защото Европа е повярвала в тях и им е помогнала с такава инвестиция.

Colm Markey, *rapporteur for the opinion of the Committee on Transport and Tourism*. – Mr President, Commissioner, fellow MEPs, I would like to begin by thanking the rapporteur, Andrey Novakov, my colleague, for the good work he has done on this report. And also I am delighted to have the chance to input as the rapporteur on the transport opinion.

There are a number of key issues that have been identified through this report and indeed they have also been identified by a Court of Auditors report. The main issue is that we saw were cost overruns, for instance, which were exacerbated by the Ukrainian war, by material shortages and by the enhanced environmental, legitimate enhanced environmental ambition.

Regulatory delays are another key area that are of concern and the administrative burden that is associated with many of the projects and an excessive administrative burden along with these delays caused by planning objections. I know in my own country we have a significant issue with serial objections to planning that are delaying many of the projects. In many ways, this is sometimes due to a lack of early engagement that allows people to understand the nature of a project and allay fears at an early stage. This, in turn, has led to significant delays in many large-scale infrastructure projects. The Court of Auditors identified in many cases up to 11 years of a delay, which just quite simply is not good enough.

There is also a need to align EU and Member States strategies. In many cases, Member States prioritise particularly their transport networks around their capitals. But we need this to spread across the various countries. We need to tackle many of these issues around cost overruns, around regulatory delays and around the need to address, if you like, the effect of engagement with the ordinary public because if we don't have large infrastructure projects will overrun and will run over time, and that that quite simply is not good enough.

VORSITZ: EVELYN REGNER

Vizepräsidentin

Margrethe Vestager, *Executive Vice-president of the Commission*. – Madam President, let me start, on behalf of Commissioner Vălean, by thanking the rapporteur, Mr Novakov, and the members of the Committee on Budgetary Control for this own-initiative report regarding the implementation of large infrastructure projects.

I really appreciate the fact that, taking into account the Court of Auditors' recommendations, Parliament's report put those into a larger context. The competence of implementing projects lies with Member States, and, when it comes to the TEN-T network policy, it's a shared responsibility that we jointly exercise.

The report also acknowledges that while there are indeed delays in implementation, the number of successful projects co-financed by the EU should also be highlighted. It proposes constructive recommendations to be taken forward on our work on complementing the TEN-T network. Let me highlight just a few of the main issues mentioned in the report and suggest potential solutions or avenues to address them. As the Court of Auditors and the report rightly point out, large projects can benefit from long-term financial certainty. There are international examples for this, and this can be positive. It gives certainty, it gives stability, and it gives legal certainty.

However, as everyone here knows, the European budget is organised around seven-year multiannual financial frameworks (MFFs). On the other hand, the construction of large projects will inevitably be done over several financial frameworks, as they normally take more than seven years to build. But we can't ring-fence funds for the next MFF to our own budgetary rules, including because it would undermine Parliament, say, over the next financial period.

The Union's support for large projects with high EU added value are high in demand. The budget of the current Connecting Europe Facility, covering 2021 to 2027, is EUR 25 billion. The overall requested budget of the first calls for proposal largely exceeded the available budget – about three times. It allows us to finance very highly matured quality projects and use the EU funds to select only the best applications. But it also is a showcase of the large needs of this sector.

I would also like to mention the new priorities following Russia's war of aggression in Ukraine. Namely, to support the solidarity lanes, the military mobility, and that they are currently addressed within the existing financial means, which, as just mentioned, are limited. The EU therefore needs to be mindful of the financial availabilities at present for the big projects and, of course, make the most of the resources that we do have available.

Your report points to the limited capacity of the Commission to oversee the planning of TEN-T projects and their implementation of the corridors. Well, they are often determined by the national context. Indeed, there is a risk of misalignment between the EU and the Member States' strategic priorities, and we should work on this. The Commission is working on it to address the issue through the proposal for the revision of the TEN-T Regulation from 2021. So we try to push forward and we welcome Parliament's call for more investment when it comes to funding the early stages also of these projects. Often, bad preparation is an important factor of delays, besides shortages of budgets. And this is one of the reasons why it's crucial to have solid assessments. Those that are being planned and conducted and the overall project have been consulted with the public.

I will take no more of the time so far since I have already exceeded it, but I'm looking very much forward to this debate.

Angelika Winzig, *im Namen der PPE-Fraktion*. – Frau Präsidentin, Frau Vizepräsidentin, Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Ja, ich glaube, es ist unser aller Wunsch, dass große Transportinfrastrukturprojekte schneller in die Umsetzung kommen, aber die Hürden wurden ja schon von den Kolleginnen und Kollegen angesprochen.

Ich bedanke mich bei Andrey Novakov dafür, dass er mit diesem Bericht wichtige Prioritäten und Empfehlungen für Verbesserungen bei solchen Projekten aufzeigt. Als Mitglied des Haushaltskontrollausschusses möchte ich insbesondere die Notwendigkeit eines einheitlichen, integrierten und interoperablen Informations- und Überwachungssystems hervorheben. Daten, die daraus gewonnen werden, können Kontroll- und Prüfverfahren, insbesondere bei Betrug und Interessenskonflikten, stärken und tragen zu einem effektiven Strafverfolgungsmechanismus bei. Weiter zeigen die Resultate des Berichts leider die Anfälligkeit von Infrastrukturvorhaben für Unregelmäßigkeiten bis hin zu Korruption schonungslos auf. Die enge und effektive Zusammenarbeit zwischen der EUSTa und dem OLAF ist daher unerlässlich.

Die Überwachungs- und Kontrollsysteme bei geteilter Mittelverwaltung müssen verbessert werden, und der Möglichkeit zur missbräuchlichen Inanspruchnahme von Finanzmitteln muss ein Riegel vorgeschoben werden. Ich erwarte mir, dass sich die Kommission diese Berichtsergebnisse zunutze macht und bei der Umsetzung der Empfehlungen keine wertvolle Zeit verstreichen lässt.

Isabel García Muñoz, *en nombre del Grupo S&D*. – Señora presidenta, señora comisaria, una buena gestión financiera debe garantizar que los recursos se usan de manera efectiva y se maximiza el rendimiento del dinero en beneficio de la ciudadanía.

En los grandes proyectos de infraestructura de transporte, la buena gestión financiera debe tener como resultados la mejora de la competitividad de las empresas, la mejora de la movilidad de los ciudadanos, el refuerzo de la cadena de suministro europea e, incluso, la mejora de la sostenibilidad. Como deja claro este informe, para conseguir estos objetivos y, por tanto, maximizar el rendimiento del dinero europeo, lo primordial es finalizar a tiempo y cuanto antes la Red Transeuropea de Transporte. Y esto pasa por completar los tramos transfronterizos, que son los que dan ese apellido, esa característica de «europea» a la red de transporte y, por tanto, deberían ser considerados prioritarios en las políticas nacionales de transporte de todos los Estados miembros, como ya lo son a nivel europeo.

Pero esto no está ocurriendo en todos los países de la Unión. A pesar del europeísmo del que hace gala el señor Macron, ese europeísmo no se refleja en la política de transporte francesa. Y me refiero a que, en un informe del Gobierno francés del pasado febrero, se retrasaba a 2042 los proyectos transfronterizos con España en ambos corredores, el atlántico y el mediterráneo. Un retraso de 12 años que va en contra del Reglamento europeo sobre la Red Transeuropea de Transporte, que es de obligado cumplimiento.

Retrasar la finalización de los grandes proyectos de infraestructura es, además de poner trabas al mercado único y a la movilidad, cuestionar el proyecto europeo. Debemos conseguir que haya un compromiso de todos los países de la Unión con los grandes proyectos de infraestructura. Francia ha anunciado la publicación de su hoja de ruta de inversión en infraestructura para antes del verano. Aprovecho para preguntarle, señora comisaria, si sabe si su compañera, la comisaria Vălean, ha iniciado contactos con Francia para que incluya las prioridades de transporte europeas en esa propuesta.

Sirva este debate para reivindicar el europeísmo tan necesario también en la política de transportes.

Izaskun Bilbao Barandica, en nombre del Grupo Renew. – Señora presidenta, señora comisaria, este informe es muy oportuno porque las libertades básicas, la competitividad y los objetivos climáticos de la Unión avanzan terminando en plazo las redes transeuropeas de transporte.

Los trazados, inversiones y plazos que las definen no los impone Bruselas; los establecemos juntos en las instituciones, de común acuerdo. Cuando algunos Estados incumplen sus compromisos se producen retrasos que, en algunos casos — como señala el Tribunal de Cuentas Europeo — superan el decenio. Se generan sobrecostes de hasta un 40 %, y se retrasan los retornos de importantísimas inversiones ya realizadas y la puesta en marcha de servicios reclamados por la ciudadanía. Amplias zonas de la Unión se ven condenadas al aislamiento y, así, es inviable la cooperación leal, productiva e inteligente entre las instituciones que a todos los niveles representan a la ciudadanía, lo que llamamos «valor añadido europeo».

En este contexto — y cuando Francia anuncia, por ejemplo, que se acumulan otros doce años de demora para un tramo prioritario transfronterizo que debe estar en servicio para el año 2030, lo que quiebra el eje atlántico en su conexión transfronteriza entre la península ibérica y el resto del continente —, es urgente reaccionar.

Por eso, estoy plenamente de acuerdo con la retirada de las aportaciones europeas a cualquier inversión que no sea prioritaria y el empoderamiento de los coordinadores del corredor en su condición de interlocutores con los Estados miembros. También con la propuesta de elaborar informes anuales sobre el progreso de estos proyectos junto al Tribunal de Cuentas Europeo, para detectar y evitar a tiempo retrasos que no nos podemos permitir y rendir cuentas sobre ello aquí y en cada uno de los Estados.

No estamos perdiendo solo dinero. La libre circulación de personas y bienes es la base de nuestra Unión; sus cimientos materiales son las redes transeuropeas de transporte.

Mikuláš Peksa, za skupinu Verts/ALE. – Paní předsedající, vážené kolegyně, vážení kolegové, velké dopravní stavby bezesporu potřebujeme pro rozvoj a dopravní dostupnost evropských regionů stejně jako pro zajištění lepšího propojení mezi východem a západem a severem a jihem Evropy.

Rozvoj našich železnic nás také pomůže přiblížit klimatickým cílům a jejich naplnění. Proto jsem rád, že tato zpráva obsahuje mimo jiné doporučení zvýšit dostupnost mezinárodních nočních vlaků, které představují udržitelnější dopravní alternativu, například k létání. Měli bychom ale také mluvit o tom, jak zajistit financování. Kriticky potřebujeme urychlit výstavbu ve strategicky důležitých směrech, např. přes Českou republiku do Polska a dále na Ukrajinu. Problém ovšem je, že v zemích, které systematicky podkopávají právní stát, dochází ke zdražování výstavby a prodražování některých dopravních projektů jen proto, aby se naplnily kapsy místních zkorumpovaných politiků a oligarchů. Pro občany ale ve výsledku takové projekty ztrácejí přidanou hodnotu a je to jenom zbytečné mrhání evropských peněz.

Evropský účetní dvůr potvrzuje, že kontrola nákladů a výnosů při výběru projektů není dostatečná a Komise neprovádí žádné zpětné hodnocení projektů ani jejich skutečných výsledků. Takže to, co potřebujeme, je nejenom financování, ale i transparentnější způsob kontrolování peněz, které už vydáváme.

Beata Mazurek, w imieniu grupy ECR. – Pani Przewodnicząca! Unia Europejska potrzebuje dużych inwestycji transportowych. Dlatego należy podjąć wszelkie wysiłki na rzecz wyrównania różnic pomiędzy infrastrukturą starych i nowych krajów członkowskich. Tylko w ten sposób unikniemy realizacji koncepcji budowy Europy dwóch prędkości, której kategorycznie się sprzeciwiam.

Naszym wspólnym celem powinny być harmonijny rozwój i sprawny, funkcjonujący, jednolity rynek. Nie da się tego osiągnąć bez efektywnej sieci komunikacyjnej i myślę, że nie trzeba dużych argumentów, by Państwa do tego przekonać.

Musimy uważnie również patrzeć na ręce organizacjom, które z błahych powodów i pod płaszczykiem hasel ekologicznych blokują strategiczne inwestycje infrastrukturalne. Jako przykład takich utrudnianych przez pseudoekologów, a bardzo potrzebnych, inwestycji mogę podać przekop Mierzei Wiślanej w moim kraju, w Polsce. Budowa kanału pozwoliła Polsce na uniezależnienie się od Rosji w kwestii dostępu do wód Zalewu Wiślanego.

Wojna uświadomiła nam, jak bardzo potrzebna jest dobra infrastruktura transportowa łącząca Zachód ze Wschodem, a także jak potrzebne jest włączenie do niej krajów posiadających status kandydata, takich jak Ukraina. Zadbajmy o to, by infrastruktura transportowa naprawdę łączyła Europę jak najszybciej, jak najlepiej i jak najbezpieczniej.

João Pimenta Lopes, em nome do Grupo The Left. – Senhora Presidente, não questionamos o fomento das possibilidades de mobilidade e conectividade entre países e regiões. Aliás, daqui, aproveitamos para lembrar que Portugal deixou de ter importantes ligações internacionais ferroviárias a Madrid e Hendaia, nos históricos *Sud Express* e *Lusitânia Comboio Hotel* que deixaram de operar em 2021, e que não podemos deixar o de associar aos objetivos do processo de liberalização da ferrovia de que a rede transeuropeia de transportes faz parte.

Esta visa o aprofundamento dessa política em nome do mercado interno e da dita concorrência, favorecendo a concentração do setor e o centro geográfico e financeiro da União Europeia, em detrimento das regiões periféricas.

Daqui rejeitamos a opção de crítica e de subordinação dos planos nacionais de transportes aos objetivos da União Europeia, imiscuindo-se na soberania dos Estados.

O que urge é o reforço do investimento da ferrovia no plano nacional, garantindo em Portugal a reversão do processo de liberalização num operador único e público, a CP. Desenvolver e repor a infraestrutura, valorizar os trabalhadores, reforçar e melhorar a oferta ao serviço das populações.

José Manuel Fernandes (PPE). – Senhora Presidente, Senhora Vice-Presidente da Comissão, Caras e Caros colegas, os projetos grandes de infraestruturas, nomeadamente os ferroviários, são essenciais para a competitividade da União Europeia, para a coesão territorial e também para a sustentabilidade.

Nós sabemos que a competência é nacional, mas é necessário que a Comissão Europeia seja vigilante e que diga aos Estados-Membros que têm de executar rapidamente os fundos neste domínio que têm à sua disposição.

No caso de Portugal, a Ferrovia 2020 tem 2 mil milhões de euros que tinham de ser executados até 2023 — este ano—, e há 450 milhões para projetos que ainda nem sequer começaram.

Além disso, Senhora Vice-Presidente, é necessário que haja coordenação, que haja complementaridade, e as interconexões e a interoperabilidade são essenciais.

No caso do meu país, Portugal, ainda se anda a discutir a bitola europeia e a bitola ibérica. É evidente que a bitola na Europa para a ferrovia devia ser única. Se a Espanha não avançar com a bitola europeia e se Portugal, por exemplo, fizer a bitola europeia, nós ficaremos uma ilha em termos de transportes ferroviários.

E o mesmo se passa em projetos essenciais como a energia. Desse ponto de vista, é, por exemplo, inaceitável que, em França, o Senhor Macron, que diz que defende a autonomia estratégica da União Europeia, procure impedir as interconexões elétricas que são essenciais.

Estamos todos ligados. Deveríamos estar todos verdadeiramente interligados e conectados e, por isso, estas palavras e este apelo.

Ciarán Cuffe (Verts/ALE). – Madam President, Executive Vice President Vestager, thank you. ‘Too big to fail’, is often the message on large transport projects. However, cost overruns, delays, poor coordination, environmental costs and, at times, corruption bedevil these the implementation of these projects. If we think of a large transport infrastructure project will almost certainly encounter some or all of these problems. Cross-border projects are particularly impacted. The good news is that we can fund and deliver transport infrastructure, but we need a systematic risk based monitoring system. We need better controls and order to tackle fraud and conflicts of interest. We need to focus on outcomes and improve environmental impact assessments. We cannot have billions of euros of taxpayers’ money spent on projects where emissions during production outweigh the benefits.

We also need to give citizens a stronger voice. Bottom-up advice can save billions and prevent the waste of public money. They benefit from the connectivity that these projects can deliver and where citizens have been consulted properly, the outcomes are clear and positive. So when we revise the TEN-T regulation, we can make this happen.

Eugen Jurzyca (ECR). – Vážený pán predsedajúci, veľké dopravné projekty celounijného významu patria medzi najväčšie investície spolufinancované z rozpočtu Európskej únie. Je teda mimoriadne dôležité, aby bolo ich financovanie efektívne. Oceňujem preto najnovšiu nelegislatívnu správu zaoberajúcu sa týmito projektmi, a to z troch dôvodov. Po prvé, presne upozorňuje na ich doterajšie problémy, kvôli ktorým sa mohli financovať aj neefektívne projekty. Po druhé, pri ich výbere v budúcnosti kladie kľúčový dôraz na hodnotu za peniaze. Teda aby sme za jedno euro investované dosiahli pre občanov čo najväčší úžitok. A po tretie, sústreďuje sa na financovanie samotných verejných statkov a nie hocičoho, čo je momentálne populárne.

Franc Bogovič (PPE). – Dober večer, spoštovana podpredsednica Evropske komisije, gospa predsedujoča, spoštovani kolegi! Kolega Novakov je pripravil odlično poročilo, v katerem govorimo o zelo pomembnih temah, se pravi o povezanosti, povezljivosti Evropske unije.

Govorimo o prometnih koridorjih, ki potekajo od Portugalske do vzhoda, od baltskih držav, tudi preko moje Slovenije, do juga. In kot vidimo, imamo pri izvedbi teh projektov kar veliko problemov. Najprej so to ta tako imenovana upravna bremena, kjer se postopki dolgo časa vlečejo, problemi s financiranjem, po drugi strani tudi znotraj držav: Najprej slaba pripravljenost projektov, kasneje pa, tudi zaradi raznih političnih menjav, tudi zamenjave različnih prioritet. Zato je prav, da opozorimo in da s temi velikimi projekti pospešeno nadaljujemo, kajti promet se povečuje.

Tudi sam prihajam, kot sem že dejal, iz Slovenije, ki je v bistvu v centralni Evropi povezana z zahodom, vzhodom, jugom. Zadnja leta promet zelo raste. Zahvaljujoč tudi TEN-T projektom smo naredili določene posodobitve na železnicah, prav tako tudi izgradili cestni, avtocestni koridor, ki pa je iz dneva v dan ob 6 % rasti prometa vedno bolj problematičen.

Velik, velik izziv za nas bo tudi vstop držav Zahodnega Balkana v Evropsko unijo. Najprej moramo njim pomagati, da bodo povezani, vsekakor pa tudi bodo dodatni prometni tokovi obremenili tudi že obstoječe prometne tokove, tudi skozi moje državo, zato je potrebno o tem tudi misliti za bodoče.

Dorien Rookmaker (ECR). – Madam President, I thank Ms Vestager. And thank you, Mr Novakov, for bringing to our attention the challenges of large transport infrastructure projects in the EU.

Mr Novakov asked the Commission to focus on results like cross-border projects for connectivity and economic growth in Europe. He asked the Commission to avoid risks like double funding due to lack of coordination between the EU instruments. And he asked for targeting tangible outcomes.

I am deeply worried. The lack of ability for absorbing huge funds within extreme short periods makes me, well, panic a little bit. The impact of inflation — do we take it into account with project management? I hope so. I tried to get a connection to the standard risk-management sites from the European Commission, but they didn't appear.

We have to be realistic. We need sound risk management in the design, building and construction phases of projects. This report reads as a big red flag. As a risk manager, it scares the hell out of me.

I repeat, transparency is key in project control and countering risk ... *(the President cut off the speaker)*

Spontane Wortmeldungen

Juozas Olekas (S&D). – Gerbiama Pirmininke, gerbiama Komisijos nare. Pirmiausia noriu padėkoti pranešėjui ponui Novikui už tikrai labai svarbų pateiktą pranešimą. Taip pat sutinku su Jumis, gerbiama Komisijos nare, kaip svarbu sukoordinuoti ir paskatinti valstybes nares, kad tie projektai būtų įgyvendinti ir kaip jie svarbūs šiandieną dėl aplinkosaugos problemų, nes daugelis tų stambiųjų projektų, ypatingai transporto, geležinkelio, jie žymiai pagerina aplinkosaugą. Kitas dalykas iš tikrųjų laiku įgyvendinti projektai sutaupo lėšas. Sutaupo lėšas dėl projektų finansavimo ir padeda susigrąžinti tas lėšas, kai šie projektai yra įgyvendinti. Bet aš noriu atkreipti Jūsų dėmesį ir į tas naujas problemas. Jūs paminėjote Ukrainą, pagalbą Ukrainai ir Ukrainos įjungimą į europinį tinklą. Man atrodo, būtų labai svarbu tiek teikiant pagalbą gynybos prasme, tiek iš Ukrainos gabenant maisto produktus, ten pagamintus. Todėl aš kviesčiau Jus imtis tam tikros lyderystės, šių projektų įgyvendinimo ir koordinavimo, kad mes galėtume pasiekti užsibrėžtus tikslus. Labai noriu paminėti dešimtąjį TEN-T projektą, kuris sujungia Baltijos, Šiaurės jūrą, taip pat būtų galima jungti Ukrainos geležinkelių tinklą.

Γεώργιος Κύρτσος (Renew). – Κυρία Πρόεδρε, είναι άμεση η ανάγκη να προωθηθεί η ανάπτυξη του Ευρωπαϊκού Συστήματος Διαχείρισης Σιδηροδρομικής Κυκλοφορίας (ERTMS). Πρόκειται για το σύστημα αυτόματης προστασίας του τρένου, διαχείρισης και ελέγχου. Η διαδικασία προσαρμογής στα ευρωπαϊκά πρότυπα σέρνεται σε ορισμένα κράτη μέλη για περισσότερο από 20 χρόνια. Τα κράτη μέλη με διασυνδεδεμένα σιδηροδρομικά συστήματα θα πρέπει να εξηγήσουν τις καθυστερήσεις και να υποβάλουν σχέδια για την κάλυψη του επικίνδυνου κενού το συντομότερο δυνατόν. Το τραγικό σιδηροδρομικό δυστύχημα στα Τέμπη, στην Ελλάδα, με 57 νεκρούς και πολλούς τραυματίες, δείχνει πού μπορούν να οδηγήσουν η προχειρότητα και η απαράδεκτη καθυστέρηση στην ευρωπαϊκή προσαρμογή.

Clare Daly (The Left). – Madam President. I'm really glad that we are discussing the large-scale transport infrastructure projects and the problems associated with them because, God knows, there are quite a few. And I think the one that we really do need to urgently unlock is the issue of rail transport, which is key against the backdrop of the challenges of climate change.

Now we've just recently come back from China, where the development of high-speed rail, trains, metro stations everywhere – cities built in 30 years with 30 million people living in them with good transport links. Yet during the same time frame in Ireland, we weren't even able to develop one metro, not one. For almost 30 years we've been talking about it: the plan to develop a metro from Swords, where I live, past the airport to the city centre is still a plan. But the State has spent EUR 300 million on the project so far, without any construction having started, without it even being designed. This is utter lunacy. These are the issues that we urgently need to address.

Mick Wallace (The Left). – Madam President, the report touches on the issue of the fund implementation and the EU control on large infrastructure projects. As good infrastructure is critical to regional development and transport networks, the funding of projects is critical to this development. But the text provides little detail as to whether there is adequate control over fund implementation and there is also a lack of detail about regulating private sector involvement in large infrastructure projects.

As these types of projects are not defined as a separate category in the EU legal framework, budgetary rules are less fixed, with a wider scope for private sector exploitation. In our own country, Ireland, we have experienced a pattern of overspending in large infrastructure projects at the expense of the public's pocket. Too often, the private sector is given a *carte blanche*, leading to a total absence of value for money.

(Ende der spontanen Wortmeldungen)

Margrethe Vestager, *Executive Vice-President of the Commission*. – Madam President, honourable Members, I would like to thank you once again for this constructive report. I have taken good note of your comments and they will of course be passed on to my colleague, Commissioner Vălean.

The Commission is already putting forward a lot of efforts to increase the efficiency and the effectiveness of the planning, coordination and of course, as mentioned several times, the monitoring of the implementation of the transport infrastructure projects. There are relevant provisions in the revision of the TEN-T Regulation. We also continue to ensure that the limited funds that we have keep being used in the best possible way. And of course, we will seek further improvements.

We need the Parliament's support. We need Member States' support along the way. But, with coordinated efforts on our side, we can do a lot more to speed up the implementation of large infrastructure projects and make both more effective and cost-efficient. As said several times, it is absolutely essential for Europe's future.

Andrey Novakov, *rapporteur*. – Madam Present, Madam Vice-President, dear colleagues, I am glad that we have that debate here. It was very rich and thoughtful, I would say.

As I mentioned at the very beginning, you are on some bridge between Denmark and Sweden or the Arlberg Tunnel in Austria. Not just because there are good achievements from engineering point of view, but because they are capturing the mind of the people and make them feel proud of their engineers, their country and, of course, the Union which their country belongs to.

And I think we should achieve something like this for the next generations to make them feel proud and not to find any excuse for delaying them. For instance, the Karawanks Tunnel is a tunnel under the Alps between Slovenia and Austria and has been built in four years, and it's long: eight kilometres.

In order to build eight kilometres of tunnel today I think we would need way more than four years, probably eight. Machines get better, engineers get better, technologies get better and the time gets longer. It's because of us — let's face it — and because of our procedures.

And I'm happy that we have the support of our colleagues coming from Greece. But we have to think about procedures there as well, because I believe some of the delays are caused by these procedures, who knows? What I know for sure is that we have to stop this.

And I think that we should have both things simultaneously: protecting the environment and having big infrastructure projects done. Because they are serving not only our societies in peace, but they are going to protect our Union in times which are way more difficult, in times of conflict, which unfortunately happens quite close to our Union.

Die Präsidentin. – Die Aussprache ist geschlossen.

Die Abstimmung findet am Dienstag, 13. Juni 2023, statt.

19. European Union Drugs Agency (short presentation)

Die Präsidentin. – Als nächster Punkt der Tagesordnung folgt die kurze Darstellung des Berichts von Isabel Santos über den Vorschlag für eine Verordnung des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates über die Drogenagentur der Europäischen Union (2022/0009(COD)) (A9-0289/2022).

Isabel Santos, *relatora*. – Senhora Presidente, Cara Comissária, Caras e Caros colegas, passados 30 anos sobre a criação do Observatório Europeu da Droga e da Toxicodependência e 28 anos sobre a sua entrada em funcionamento, aqui estamos a assinalar um percurso de reconhecido sucesso e a dar um último passo rumo à instituição da Agência da União Europeia sobre Drogas. Um passo à altura dos desafios que nos são colocados por dinâmicas de mercado e de consumo cada vez mais complexas, que nos exigem uma nova capacidade de intervenção e de desenho das políticas.

Mas permitam que, antes de mais, sublinhe – porque é justo que o faça – a atitude cooperante e construtiva dos relatores-sombra, bem como o esforço de convergência feito pelas três instituições – Parlamento, Comissão e Conselho – que nos permitiu chegar a este acordo provisório, definidor do mandato da nova Agência da União Europeia sobre Drogas. Um mandato reforçado, centrado numa abordagem integrada e multidisciplinar deste fenómeno, do ponto de vista da complexidade das dinâmicas dos mercados e dos consumos, da saúde, do tratamento, da reinserção social e da segurança.

Num momento em que o aumento das drogas disponíveis, a variedade crescente de meios de circulação e comercialização e a alteração, até, das geografias de produção nos colocam diante da exigência de respostas mais eficazes e de competências reforçadas na antecipação de cenários, cá estamos a instituir uma nova Agência onde as questões relacionadas com a saúde, a prevenção, o tratamento e a reinserção social caminham lado a lado, como foi exigência do Parlamento Europeu.

Uma Agência, sublinhe-se, dotada de uma reforçada capacidade de envolvimento da sociedade civil, o que constitui uma inequívoca mais-valia no cumprimento da sua missão. A nova Agência contará com um orçamento mais robusto como há muito se mostrava necessário, uma maior dotação de recursos humanos, mais autonomia e capacidade de ação.

O reforço da rede de pontos focais permitirá uma mais ampla recolha e análise de dados, produção de informação, bem como de deteção de novas dinâmicas de mercado e de consumo, além da emissão de alertas rápidos. Avançamos, assim, de forma decidida, no aprofundamento de uma abordagem pragmática, equilibrada e cientificamente fundada, que sedimentámos ao longo de 28 anos.

O Observatório foi um instrumento essencial para a construção de respostas integradas e sustentadas ao nível da União e dos Estados-Membros, como bem atesta a sua reputação dentro e fora da União Europeia. E a Agência continuará a sê-lo de um modo reforçado, sendo agora criadas condições para uma maior cooperação internacional, com a qual todos temos muito a ganhar.

Estou convicta de que a Agência, aumentando a capacidade de colocar informação baseada em evidências científicas ao dispor das instituições europeias e dos Estados-Membros, contribuirá para um progresso significativo das políticas públicas, dotando-as de maior eficácia e eficiência na resposta às necessidades presentes e futuras.

O momento de aprovação deste acordo provisional é, sem dúvida, de enorme satisfação, no entanto, o nosso trabalho não acaba aqui. Uma agência preparada para o futuro e que cumpra integralmente o mandato que agora lhe outorgamos exigirá a implementação efetiva do seu regulamento. Uma missão que nos caberá a todos, tanto no escrutínio da Agência aqui no Parlamento, como através dos representantes por nós designados no seu Conselho de Administração. Vamos a isto!

Spontane Wortmeldungen

Stanislav Polčák (PPE). – Madam President, the issue of drug abuse represents one of the most pressing challenges faced by our society. It is absolutely essential that we focus on international cooperation, increasing the protection of young and vulnerable individuals and drug prevention efforts. Only through collective efforts can we discover more effective ways to limit the drug supply. Drugs know no borders and their impacts affect people worldwide. I consider it is crucial that we have to collaborate at the international level. Only through this approach we can share information, proven methods and innovation in the fight against drugs. Youth and people living in social disadvantaged conditions are most vulnerable to the dangers associated with drugs. Therefore, we should emphasise the provision of information, education and support to these drugs. The most effective approach to addressing this issue is prevention, which should be based on scientific knowledge and proven methods.

Juozas Olekas (S&D). – Gerbiama Pirmininke. Pirmiausia aš noriu padėkoti savo kolegei Izabelai Santos už tokį puikų siūlymą ir pranešimą. Iš tikrųjų, narkotikų banga yra gal net baisesnė negu mūsų neseniai pergyventas kovidas, ypatingai, kad narkotikai skverbiasi į jauno mūsų europiečio pasaulį, mokyklas ir kitur. Todėl, iš tikrųjų, pasiūlymas, kad būtų tokia agentūra ir būtų surenkama visa informacija, duomenys ir mes galėtume Europoje turėti bendrą politiką. Aš manau, kad tai yra labai vertinga. Kaip gydytojas galiu pasakyti, kad šiuo atveju man profilaktikos, užkardymas labiausiai pasiteisintų, nes kitos priemonės – jau gydymas, vėliau – reabilitacija, žymiai brangiau kainuoja ir ne tokį pasiekia rezultatą. Todėl bendras europinis požiūris, kuris leistų mums pasidalinti ta informacija, kas yra geriausia pasiekta pasaulyje ir siūloma mokslo, tikrai padėtų prisidėti prie pažangos ir jaunų europiečių išsaugojimo.

Mick Wallace (The Left). – Madam President, the amendments are much stronger than the Commission's proposals for a wider mandate on creating an EU drugs agency by extending the powers of the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction. The 2022 European Drug Report highlights alarming trends in illicit drug use, which demands the need for better harm-reduction mechanisms. The development of this would be a step towards providing an evidence-based approach centred on human rights in the area of drug policy, which sadly we don't have, especially in terms of coordinating with national authorities to collect data, establishing a network of toxicology laboratories and promoting best practice in the area of prevention, risk and harm reduction, treatment, care and rehabilitation.

The question is, will there be an adequate budget with the new broadened mandate in the capacity for analysis, monitoring, developing awareness campaigns, and will there be proper resources to be able to complete this ambitious proposal?

(Ende der spontanen Wormeldungen)

Margrethe Vestager, Executive Vice-President of the Commission. – Honourable Members, the drug situation within the European Union and at the global level is serious and worrying.

The threats posed by organised criminal groups trafficking in drugs is increasing in all EU countries. According to the serious and organised crime threat assessment prepared by Europol, 40 % of criminal networks engage in drugs trafficking. The increased criminal activities of organised groups have led to a wave also of extreme violence. Criminal groups threaten democratic values by using corruption to undermine our institutions and, of course, also the rule of law.

The production and trafficking of illegal drugs is also a threat, obviously, to the health of EU citizens. We see an unprecedented increase in the availability in illicit drugs, while those are often more affordable and have a high potency and purity. This means that more people may have access to drugs and that those drugs may be at greater risk, and those who use those drugs may be at greater risk of adverse health outcomes, including poisoning and death.

We have a good basis for action in the EU drugs strategy 2021–2025 and the EU strategy to tackle organised crime, also 2021–2025. And the Commission considers that the European Union's drugs agency needs additional competences, tools and resources to better address the health and security dimension of the drugs phenomenon.

And we want the agency's work to be forward looking, as also mentioned by several today. The Commission's proposal sought to expand the agency's mandate to cover product supplies, as well as poly drug use and to better equip it to forecast and analyse how these is increasing. All the changes to the agency's mandate are important and necessary in order to ensure that it can play a greater role at the EU and, of course, internationally.

The Commission thanks, wholeheartedly, the rapporteur, Ms Santos, and the shadow rapporteurs for an excellent cooperation and a great work on this important file.

Our aim is to ensure a quick and full application of the new mandates by mid-24. For that, the Commission, of course, encourages Parliament to adopt the new mandate for the agency on Thursday. Thank you very much and thank you for the cooperation.

Die Präsidentin. – Damit ist dieser Tagesordnungspunkt geschlossen.

Die Abstimmung findet am Dienstag, 13. Juni 2023, statt.

Schriftliche Erklärungen (Artikel 171)

Caterina Chinnici (PPE), *per iscritto*. – Le droghe e le tossicodipendenze causano enormi danni alla salute delle persone, principalmente ai giovani, e alla società nel suo insieme. Il traffico di stupefacenti rappresenta, inoltre, una delle principali fonti di reddito della criminalità organizzata.

L'Unione europea deve necessariamente dotarsi di strumenti più incisivi per combattere tale flagello, così da affrontare con più efficacia tale sfida a livello UE. Bene quindi l'accordo raggiunto a seguito dei negoziati interistituzionali che trasformerà l'attuale Osservatorio europeo delle droghe e delle tossicodipendenze di Lisbona in un'agenzia a pieno titolo.

La raccolta e l'analisi dei dati continuerà ad essere il compito principale dell'Agenzia europea per la droga, che tuttavia, in base al nuovo regolamento, sarà in grado di rispondere più efficacemente alle gravi sfide per la salute e la sicurezza poste dal consumo di droghe.

Avrà, infatti, un ruolo rafforzato nel settore della cooperazione internazionale, in modo da interagire pienamente con i Paesi terzi; potrà approfondire le dinamiche del mercato della droga per meglio comprenderne l'impatto sulla salute pubblica, come il crescente consumo di poli-sostanze (sostanze lecite e droghe), purtroppo, sempre più comune fra i giovani, e lavorare per ridurre la disponibilità di droga nell'UE al fine, si spera, di frenarne la domanda.

20. Assessment of the new Commission communication on outermost regions (short presentation)

Die Präsidentin. – Als nächster Punkt der Tagesordnung folgt die kurze Darstellung des Berichts von Álvaro Amaro über die Bewertung der neuen Mitteilung der Kommission zu den Gebieten in äußerster Randlage (2022/2147(INI)) (A9-0156/2023).

Álvaro Amaro, relator. – Senhora Presidente, Senhora Comissária, Caras e Caros colegas, a União faz-se de ações concretas que criarão, antes de tudo o resto, uma solidariedade de facto entre os diferentes Estados-Membros, como bem nos ensinou Robert Schuman há pouco mais de 73 anos.

Foi exatamente este mote que guiou toda a nossa ação durante a discussão com os diferentes grupos políticos e a análise dos quatro pareceres das Comissões dos Orçamentos, do Emprego e Assuntos Sociais, da Agricultura e Desenvolvimento Rural e dos Transportes e Turismo, cujo trabalho agradecemos e que culminou na apresentação deste relatório. Permitam-me agradecer a postura positiva e construtiva de todos os relatores-sombra, e às suas equipas, aos assessores dos nossos grupos políticos e, obviamente, ao nosso Secretariado. Uma palavra de agradecimento também para o Comité das Regiões e para a Conferência dos Presidentes das Regiões Ultraperiféricas que acompanharam todo este processo muito de perto.

Tivemos sempre as Regiões Ultraperiféricas e as suas populações no pensamento, o que facilitou a obtenção de compromissos pertinentes, positivos e adequados para o desenvolvimento sustentável e para o crescimento destas regiões. E daí o apoio unânime da esquerda à direita, em sede da Comissão do Desenvolvimento Regional.

O nosso primeiro objetivo foi complementar o trabalho da Comissão Europeia com objetividade, elencando medidas concretas para problemas concretos, pelo que pedimos, desde logo, um plano de ação que deverá dispor de dotações financeiras específicas e adequadas e ter em conta as características, as forças e os desafios de cada região ultraperiférica, definindo um plano de ação individual, se estas assim o solicitarem. Julgo que só assim poderemos garantir que esta estratégia não seja mais um papel, mais uma admirável manifestação de intenções, sem qualquer tipo de impacto nestas regiões e na sua população.

Caras e Caros colegas, chegados aqui, estou em condições de afirmar que a parceria entre a União Europeia e a ultra-periferia é uma parceria que acrescenta valor. Reforçá-la significa, por um lado, criar políticas direcionadas para atenuar o impacto dos seus constrangimentos naturais e permanentes no estrito cumprimento do artigo 349.º do Tratado que lhes confere um estatuto próprio e, por outro, criar políticas que concretizem todo o seu potencial, todo o contributo que podem dar para engrandecer o projeto europeu.

E aqui o leque é extenso, desde logo pela dimensão marítima estratégica que conferem à União, por albergarem cerca de 80% da sua biodiversidade, pelo potencial de desenvolvimento de projetos-piloto nos domínios da investigação marinha, da proteção dos oceanos, das energias renováveis, do turismo sustentável. Por manterem um setor piscatório responsável, respeitador do meio marinho e um setor agrícola que privilegia o bem-estar animal, as práticas sustentáveis, produzindo produtos da excelência com selo de segurança e qualidade. Por disporem de relações históricas com diversas outras regiões e países terceiros, o que permite à União alargar e reforçar a sua esfera de influência, e pela capacidade instalada para o desenvolvimento de atividades espaciais.

E poderia continuar. A União Europeia deve garantir que superam os efeitos das recentes crises e que são devidamente apoiadas na urgente e tripla transição que têm de implementar: digital, energética e ambiental. É importante reforçar e continuar a apoiar a capacitação dos seus recursos humanos, bem como apoiar políticas e estratégias de combate à fuga de cérebros e de fixação de profissionais nestas regiões.

Quanto aos seus constrangimentos permanentes, a conjugação das especificidades destas regiões resulta numa enorme dependência dos transportes aéreo e marítimo que se querem seguros, regulares e a preços acessíveis, a fim de garantir a livre e justa circulação de pessoas, serviços e bens, respeitando o princípio da coesão territorial. Este é o maior desafio das Regiões Ultraperiféricas, uma boa política de transportes e, por isso, defendemos um programa europeu específico para os transportes, o POSEI.

Senhora Presidente, Caras e Caros colegas, para terminar, e enquanto português e representante das duas RUP – os Açores e a Madeira –, estou enormemente satisfeito com o trabalho alcançado que, espero, possam validar com a vossa aprovação amanhã e que a Comissão o possa acolher e converter em políticas concretas para as nossas Regiões Ultraperiféricas. E, finalmente, que os Estados-Membros com as Regiões Ultraperiféricas o utilizem de forma positiva para concretizar mais eficazmente as suas responsabilidades para com estas regiões.

Spontane Wortmeldungen

Gabriel Mato (PPE). – Señora presidenta, en primer lugar, quisiera agradecer el excelente trabajo que ha llevado a cabo Álvaro Amaro en este informe tan importante para las regiones ultraperiféricas.

Existen dos mensajes muy claros. El primero, las regiones ultraperiféricas son muy importantes y, además, son una oportunidad para Europa. El segundo, el POSEI juega y jugará un papel indisoluble al mantenimiento y desarrollo de las producciones agrícolas y de la industria de transformación. Es absolutamente necesario, por tanto, mantener el POSEI y aumentar su presupuesto a partir de 2027.

Dicho esto, estrategias como las de Biodiversidad y «De la Granja a la Mesa» conllevan el riesgo de agravar la situación de las regiones ultraperiféricas si no se diseñan adecuadamente para ellas. Insisto: cualquier estrategia de la Unión Europea en materia de biodiversidad debe ser equilibrada y debe abarcar no solo aspectos medioambientales, sino también sociales y económicos. Ojo también a los acuerdos de libre comercio. Estos tienen que proteger y tener en cuenta la producción europea.

Al igual que el sector agrícola, el pesquero, en las circunstancias actuales de crisis, necesita garantizar la seguridad; hay que destinar fondos públicos para ello y para la renovación de una flota absolutamente obsoleta. Por tanto ¿a qué estamos esperando para crear un instrumento específico para el sector pesquero como el POSEI... *(la presidenta retira la palabra al orador)*.

Juan Fernando López Aguilar (S&D). – Señora presidenta, este informe, que responde a la iniciativa de la Comisión de 2022, cambia el tono con respecto a las estrategias anteriores para las regiones ultraperiféricas y acierta porque, aun reconociendo las especificidades y la singularidad de la base jurídica (artículo 349), llama la atención sobre problemas que se han puesto de manifiesto en los últimos tiempos —como la vulnerabilidad frente al volcán y al fenómeno migratorio, y las dificultades para incorporar energías renovables— y sobre las fortalezas relacionadas con la aptitud de las regiones ultraperiféricas para incorporar la economía azul, la biodiversidad, la innovación y la importancia de la formación y la investigación para que, por fin, las regiones ultraperiféricas puedan generar un empleo que aporte valor

añadido al conjunto de la Unión.

Y, por eso, señalo con esperanza que esta Conferencia de Presidentes de las Regiones Ultraperiféricas de la Unión Europea—que ahora preside Canarias y en la que su presidente, Ángel Víctor Torres, intervino con acierto— marca un cambio de tono, de futuro, de esperanza y de optimismo que las regiones ultraperiféricas pueden aportar al conjunto de la Unión Europea.

Isabel Carvalhais (S&D). – Senhora Presidente, gostaria também de agradecer o excelente trabalho do relator e de todos os colegas relatores por esta colaboração e por este espírito de compromisso que ultrapassou em muito as questões políticas, porque procurámos sobretudo a defesa intransigente do desenvolvimento sustentável das nossas regiões ultraperiféricas. E digo nossas, não apenas por referência a Portugal, Espanha e França, mas ao conjunto dos 27 Estados-Membros da União Europeia. E é muito importante que eles tomem consciência da relevância do valor geoestratégico destes territórios, a sua enorme riqueza ambiental, o grande contributo que podem trazer para a economia azul sustentável, para a ciência, entre tantas outras dimensões.

Mas estes territórios são frágeis, enfrentam desafios únicos e, por isso, todo o seu potencial para a União Europeia tem de ser devidamente apoiado, desde logo, através de um claro reforço das dotações financeiras que permitam a estas regiões responder a investimentos importantes em setores-chave, como a agricultura sustentável, as pescas sustentáveis, o turismo, as energias renováveis, sempre em harmonia com as suas comunidades.

E termino, Senhora Presidente, dizendo que o que importa efetivamente são ações concretas que contribuam para a promoção do desenvolvimento equilibrado e sustentável das RUP e que as tragam verdadeiramente para o coração da Europa e não apenas para o discurso político.

Stéphane Bijoux (Renew). – Madame la Présidente, Madame la Vice-Présidente, quelques mots d’abord pour remercier et féliciter le collègue Amaro et pour vous dire également que le rapport que nous allons voter demain réaffirme l’importance d’un engagement fort de l’Europe pour nos régions d’outre-mer.

Chez moi, à l’île de la Réunion, qui est un territoire européen de l’océan Indien, nos éleveurs, nos agriculteurs, nos pêcheurs, nos petites entreprises, nos jeunes savent que l’Europe est un partenaire fondamental de notre développement. Mais chacun sait aussi que l’efficacité de l’action publique passe par le respect de nos spécificités. Cette adaptation est importante dans tous les combats communs que nous avons à mener. Pour l’emploi, pour le climat, il faut miser sur l’innovation, sur l’audace. Comme il existe une Europe des solutions, il existe aussi des outre-mer des solutions, et l’Europe doit miser sur nous. C’est aujourd’hui non seulement une exigence, mais aussi une urgence.

Caroline Roose (Verts/ALE). – Madame la Présidente, les régions ultrapériphériques font partie intégrante de l’Union européenne; c’est un fait que nous oublions souvent. Ces régions sont confrontées à de graves problèmes, notamment la vie chère, avec des prix bien plus élevés pour l’alimentation et pour l’énergie. Plusieurs d’entre elles souffrent d’un sous-investissement chronique dans l’éducation, dans l’accès à la santé, dans des infrastructures pour l’accès à l’eau potable ou à l’assainissement. Beaucoup sont aussi marquées par un fort taux de chômage et de très fortes inégalités, souvent héritées de l’histoire coloniale.

Mais ces régions disposent aussi d’un potentiel incroyable: une biodiversité très riche, une population jeune, un potentiel important dans le développement des énergies renouvelables, dans l’économie bleue, dans la pêche ou l’agriculture durables.

Ces régions attendent un soutien fort de l’Union européenne, adapté aux spécificités de chaque région, pour soutenir le développement économique, lutter contre la vie chère, garantir à chacun un logement décent, l’accès à l’eau, à l’éducation, à la formation et aux soins de santé.

Dans ce rapport, nous proposons des mesures concrètes pour répondre à ces enjeux complexes. Il faut davantage mobiliser les fonds européens pour soutenir l’innovation et la transition écologique dans les outre-mer.

(Ende der spontanen Wortmeldungen)

Margrethe Vestager, *Executive Vice-President of the Commission*. – Madam President, honourable Members, the Commission really welcomes the objectives of this report, strengthening Europe's support for its outermost regions. So our thanks go to rapporteur Álvaro Amaro and to the shadow rapporteurs for the excellent work, for the dedication.

It has been just over a year since the Commission adopted a new strategy, not just for the outermost regions, but also with the outermost regions. This year we have delivered on our commitments and today, of course, provides an excellent opportunity to take stock of what has been achieved. First, we welcome the call in the REGI report to reflect on the specificities of the outermost regions in legislative proposals, interinstitutional negotiations and other initiatives. And this is precisely what we have been doing, from proposals on nature restoration to the single market emergency instruments, from the EU's space strategy to the communication on harnessing talent, and just last week in the agenda on relations between EU and Latin America and the Caribbean. In each case, our initiative reflects not only the concerns and the challenges of these regions, but also their assets.

Second, we take good note of the call for new actions and programmes dedicated to the outermost regions. The Commission has recently created many dedicated opportunities, for example, under Erasmus and the inter-regional innovation in investment instrument. And we also launched projects exclusively for these regions, like support for young people to sustainable tourism. In fact, almost all EU funds and programmes now provide special conditions or attention to the outermost regions. For example, higher co-financing rates in the common agricultural policy, the Connecting Europe facility, and the Life programme. And we have created a specific additional allocation under the European Social Fund Plus, in addition to the ring-fenced funding under the European Regional Development Fund. Moreover, we have stepped up our efforts to these regions to seize all these funding opportunities. We are providing training and a new advisory tool.

In conclusion, we do hope that you see that we in the Commission are doing our utmost for the outermost. We are creating opportunities. And we count on you. I see the dedication in this report to raise awareness of the opportunities that exist already, and to, of course, increase their uptake. Because opportunities that exist on paper, that don't have a life among people, they are not real opportunities. It is important for the context of considering new initiatives, new opportunities that we get going what we have already.

The Commission will consider your proposals really carefully and take them into account. Thank you very much and congratulations on this important work.

Die Präsidentin. – Damit ist dieser Tagesordnungspunkt geschlossen.

Die Abstimmung findet am Dienstag, 13. Juni 2023, statt.

Schriftliche Erklärungen (Artikel 171 GO)

Sara Cerdas (S&D), *por escrito*. – Em maio de 2022, a Comissão Europeia lançou a Comunicação intitulada «Dar prioridade às pessoas, garantir o crescimento sustentável e inclusivo, realizar o potencial das regiões ultraperiféricas da UE». Em reação, o Parlamento Europeu elaborou um relatório de iniciativa com a sua posição, que visa tirar proveito das potencialidades das Regiões Ultraperiféricas (RUP) da UE, através de investimentos e reformas adequadas às suas necessidades.

É nesse sentido que, perante a dependência destas regiões dos transportes aéreos e marítimos, instamos a Comissão Europeia a reproduzir o modelo «POSEI» noutros setores económicos, nomeadamente nos transportes, com uma linha de financiamento própria, como instrumento para compensar as desvantagens das regiões ultraperiféricas face aos condicionalismos permanentes relacionados com o afastamento da placa continental, a baixa conectividade e mobilidade, à luz do artigo 349.º do Tratado sobre o Funcionamento da União Europeia (TFUE).

As RUP sofrem desvantagens estruturais e permanentes, pelo que é necessário assegurar uma transição justa que, em especial, não onere as populações na transição ambiental e não deixe ninguém para trás. As rubricas orçamentais ligadas à coesão devem também ser reforçadas para contribuir para o investimento público em opções de mobilidade sustentável e infraestruturas de transporte.

21. Implementation of the Regulations on the European citizens' initiative (short presentation)

Die Präsidentin. – Als nächster Punkt der Tagesordnung folgt die kurze Darstellung des Berichts von Loránt Vincze über die Durchführung der Verordnungen über die Europäische Bürgerinitiative (2022/2206(INI) (A9-0182/2023).

Loránt Vincze, rapporteur. – Madam President, Madam Commissioner, the European Citizens Initiative is an agenda setting, instrument generating debate. But more importantly, it is the only participatory instrument at EU level which can lead to a proposal of a legal act of the Union. And this is the aspect that remains at the forefront of the European Parliament's efforts. We must make sure that the voice of over 1 million Europeans, a very big democratic base, expressed during the signature of an initiative, is not in vain.

My report contains appreciation towards the Commission in organising the process, but it also points out shortcomings and presents recommendations. The revised ECI Regulation has undoubtedly lowered the procedural hurdles for organisers and supporters. Following several cases lost before the Court of Justice of the European Union, the Commission has ultimately made it easier for ECIs to meet the necessary legal requirements and to benefit from partial registration. The central online collection system has also been improved over the years. The Commission unit responsible for ECIs has also run a number of communication campaigns, as did the European Economic and Social Committee, in order to make this instrument more known among citizens. Response during the Covid period was fast and useful. The temporary ECI Regulation that we swiftly approved in Parliament extended time limits for the different stages of the ECI process in response to the pandemic.

The revised ECI Regulation also strengthened the political dimension by introducing a mandatory plenary debate in Parliament and extended and introduced the mandatory plenary debate in Parliament with the possibility of adopting a resolution before the Commission presents its assessment.

However, we have to acknowledge that the ECI instrument still falls short of its democratic potential. It has not only limited visibility, but more importantly, low effectiveness in terms of proposals by the Commission for Legal Acts of the Union. This risks weakening the participatory mechanism. The report proposes several ways to improve the ECIs. First of all, a proper dialogue should be established with all organisers. No discrimination should be allowed based on their goals and the best ways to achieve them. This could already be initiated during the collection period. The Commission needs to carry out a thorough assessment of each valid ECI in a well argued, clear, comprehensible and detailed manner. More importantly, this assessment should be on the subject of the valid ECIs. Besides the central online collection system, allowing the collection on third-party systems again should also be assessed.

Running an ECI is an extremely difficult and costly process. There should be a strong consideration of financial support for successful ECIs to reward their efforts. After all, their democratic involvement arguably has more impact than many civil society actions generously supported by the EU budget.

Parliament also aims to increase its engagement in the ECI process. It commits to vote a parliamentary resolution after every valid ECI and after every Commission communication, setting out its legal and political conclusions and to change its rules of procedure to allow for this. One last idea about the ECI in the framework of other EU consultative instruments: I agree with all my esteemed shadow rapporteur colleagues, whom I warmly thank for their contribution and cooperation, when they say more in-depth discussion is needed on the concerns expressed in valid ECIs. I would, however, be extremely cautious about mixing this very special tool with clear rules and obligations with other more ad hoc consultation methods like the Commission-led citizens panels and thus diluting its effects.

Spontane Wortmeldungen

Juan Fernando López Aguilar (S&D). – Señora presidenta, este debate en el Pleno acerca de la implantación de la iniciativa ciudadana europea —lo que conocemos en el Derecho de los Estados miembros como «iniciativa legislativa popular»— está conectado con la preocupación que mostró la Conferencia sobre el Futuro de Europa acerca la calidad de la democracia en la Unión Europea, entendida como una unión de Estados y de ciudadanos en la que hay cabida para la reforma del sistema electoral. Sobre esta reforma se debate también en este Pleno, precisamente para crear una lista transnacional y una circunscripción paneuropea en las elecciones europeas o para recuperar el principio de *Spitzenkandidat*, que implica que la persona que aspira a presidir la Comisión debe haber competido por ello en las urnas.

Pero, con respecto al Reglamento sobre la iniciativa ciudadana europea, lo que queda patente es que, hasta ahora, su rendimiento ha sido manifiestamente mejorable y que no han sido pocas las ocasiones en que se han recabado firmas — en siete Estados miembros de la Unión se recabó un millón de firmas— con un propósito antieuropeo, es decir, manifiestamente reaccionario, contrario a los valores europeos.

Por tanto, si queremos marcar el mensaje, tenemos que ir en la dirección correcta: el refuerzo de la ciudadanía y la correcta utilización de la iniciativa ciudadana en la Unión Europea.

Stanislav Polčák (PPE). – Madam Present, ladies and gentlemen, the European Citizens' Initiative is an exceptionally unique tool for citizens that enables them to directly influence political decisions. Unfortunately, the majority of society lacks sufficient awareness of this initiative and its potential.

Improving awareness of the European Citizens' Initiative is crucial for engaging as many citizens as possible in European decision-making. It is imperative that the communication strategies are effective and utilise available channels for disseminating information.

Cooperation with non-governmental organisations and educational institutions is also necessary for enhancing awareness. We should support the development of educational programmes and materials that focus on the European Citizens' Initiative and participatory democracy.

Mick Wallace (The Left). – Madam President, the European Citizens' Initiative, in theory, is a democratic, participatory instrument at EU level that has faced many hurdles in addressing the democratic deficits of the EU. Revisions of the initiative remove some of the bureaucratic obstacles which had been previously riddled with legal and practical issues.

But the discretionary powers of the Commission are certainly a major challenge still. The Commission retains discretion as to the actions it intends to take, if any, according to the regulation. An unelected body with absolute authority over implementing initiatives isn't too compatible with the idea of direct democracy, as promoted by the citizens' initiatives.

So how can European citizens initiatives address democratic deficit in the EU?

Clare Daly (The Left). – Madam President, I think there's some very good ideas in the report, and they are the absolute minimum really to improve on what could be a good way to make citizens feel much more empowered. And I'd like to pay tribute to all of the people and all of the groups who've got involved in this process to date.

One of the initiatives which made us, and we all know how much work it takes and how much dedication, was the measure to ban the shark fin trade, which we celebrated last week on World Ocean Day, and reminded ourselves of the importance on how we need our sharks.

But there's no point in citizens taking this effort if the outcome is not going to be delivered upon. Now, this vehicle is trumpeted as a way in which citizens can play a direct role in policymaking.

If that's to be the case, then the outcome has to result in an action at the end of it. And I think the measure has to be extended to go beyond just initiating legislation, but also stopping measures that are already in place. It's a good step in the right direction.

(Ende der spontanen Wortmeldungen)

Margrethe Vestager, Executive Vice-President of the Commission. – Madam President, honourable Members, first of all I would like to thank Rapporteur Vincze for leading the preparation of this report, with a timely and useful contribution of our review of the European citizens' initiative Regulations. You know better than anyone that still this year the Commission will present the first report on the functioning of the reformed citizens' initiative since 2020. Preparing this, we are collecting views of stakeholders and citizens as to how they see these rules. The report of the European Parliament, because of that, comes at the very right moment as we are analysing our results and drawing conclusions.

Let me start by providing you with a few key figures covering the reporting period. Under the new Regulation on the citizens' initiative, the Commission has registered 31 initiatives, and only one request for registration had to be refused because it did not meet the criteria set out in the Regulation. This is a very positive result, which is a strong indication that the new rules are working well.

More initiatives are also collecting the required 1 million signatures. Out of the 44 initiatives that have been collecting signatures during this period of time, five were successful. And finally, as you are aware, the Commission has received a record number of five successful initiatives for examination and has replied to three of them, with two more replies to follow next month. On that basis, we see that the rules are in general fit for purpose.

Moreover, we have also successfully managed the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic in the first year of application. And thanks to the cooperation with this House and with the Council, temporary measures allowing to mitigate the impact of the pandemic on initiatives could be swiftly adopted. As a result, all the initiatives that were collecting support at the time could benefit from extensions of up to 12 months. And I am glad to report that three of those initiatives managed to reach the required threshold of 1 million statements of support.

The review also reveals the particularly positive contribution of the good functioning of the initiative of some of the novelties introduced. I think the report highlights a few of them and, based on the input that we have collected, I can add some other positive new elements. Organisers particularly appreciate the six-month time after registration to prepare their collection campaign. They also appreciate the shift of most of the responsibility for the protection of personal data to the Commission when using the central online collection system.

Citizens using the central online collection system also report high levels of satisfaction with the system. And I think it is quite reassuring that the organisers have a strong and reliable tool for the online collection of signatures and that it also meets high security standards. I think one would expect that when handling large amounts of personal data.

And we continue to improve the system to meet the needs of the organisers even better. We've also had positive feedback on the usefulness of a European citizens' initiative forum, which assists organisers during all the steps of their efforts. The review also allows us to identify concrete areas to make further improvements based on the feedback of citizens, organisers and other stakeholders.

We share your view that the communication efforts to raise general awareness about the European citizens' initiative should continue. And we welcome, of course, that Parliament takes upon itself to be part of this. The Commission's renewed effort on citizen participation following the Conference on the Future of Europe and, in particular, the new online one-stop shop for citizen engagement, to which the European citizens' initiative will belong, will, I think, be a good opportunity to raise the visibility for people to be aware.

We note your call to provide financial support to organisers of initiatives. Just one point to say is that initiatives can already now apply for funding under existing EU programmes, with, of course, the criteria that comes with each call. For instance, the Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values programme funds projects in the area of citizens' engagement and at this moment a call is actually ongoing.

Finally, I would like to underline the excellent cooperation with Parliament during the examination phase of the five valid initiatives we received in the reporting period. The public hearing, the plenary debates in your House, give visibility to the initiatives and provide a forum for debating citizens' proposals. We thus welcome Parliament's commitment to further strengthening the involvement during this phase of the process.

Let me close my intervention by stressing once again that the Commission remains fully committed to ensuring that the revised European citizens' initiative achieves its full potential as a tool to foster debate and citizens' participation at European level. We will carefully examine the recommendations included in the report presented today and take them into account in our review report, which we intend to adopt in the second half of this year.

Die Präsidentin. – Damit ist dieser Tagesordnungspunkt geschlossen.

Die Abstimmung findet am Dienstag, 13. Juni 2023, statt.

Schriftliche Erklärungen (Artikel 171)

Alin Mituța (Renew), *în scris*. – Raportul final al Conferinței privind Viitorul Europei arată o preocupare reală a cetățenilor pentru modalitățile în care se pot implica în procesul decizional la nivelul UE.

Inițiativa cetățenească europeană este, fără îndoială, un instrument bun pentru democrația europeană, însă are o vizibilitate redusă, semnăturile sunt greu de strâns și eficiența este scăzută.

Nu putem să avem un instrument eficient fără sprijin financiar adecvat, fără campanii de conștientizare și fără utilizarea noilor tehnologii.

De aceea, Comisia ar trebui să ofere sprijin financiar progresiv pentru inițiativele care ating anumite praguri în colectarea semnăturilor, încurajând astfel un proces bazat pe performanță. O promovare eficientă se poate realiza prin mai multe campanii de comunicare și programe de educație civică. Este nevoie, de asemenea, de utilizarea noilor tehnologii în colectarea semnăturilor, cum ar fi sistemele eID. Crearea unui hub al tuturor instrumentelor de participare cetățenească utilizate în Uniunea Europeană ar ușura accesul la acestea.

Inițiativa Cetățenească Europeană va deveni în viitor un instrument mai ușor de utilizat și eficient. Îi îndemn pe cetățeni să-l folosească, să-și facă auzite vocile și să aducă schimbări în Uniunea Europeană.

22. One-minute speeches on matters of political importance

Die Präsidentin. – Als nächster Punkt der Tagesordnung folgen die Ausführungen von einer Minute zu wichtigen politischen Fragen (Artikel 172 GO).

Ich möchte Sie darauf hinweisen, dass Sie für die Ausführungen von einer Minute von Ihrem Platz aus das Wort ergreifen können.

I just simply would like to remind you not to speak longer than one minute, because these speeches are called one-minute speeches, so please try to be as disciplined as possible.

Dennis Radtke (PPE). – Frau Präsidentin, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Ich beteilige mich gerne an der Verabredung zwischen einigen Kollegen hier, das Thema Elternzeit für Abgeordnete endlich hier ins Rollen zu bringen. Ich bin selber Vater von zwei Kindern, und ich habe wie alle anderen, die hier während der Parlamentswahl Vater geworden sind, keine Gelegenheit gehabt, Elternzeit zu nutzen. Ich habe, um bei der Geburt meiner Kinder dabei sein zu können, blaumachen müssen und meine Pflichten als Abgeordneter hier schwänzen müssen, weil es mir natürlich auch einfach wichtig war, bei der Geburt meiner Kinder dabei zu sein.

Und die COVID-Zeit, finde ich, hat uns gezeigt, was über das Online-Tool möglich ist. Und ich finde, es ist jetzt höchste Zeit, dass wir darüber reden, wie wir die Möglichkeiten, die wir in der COVID-Pandemie erfolgreich erprobt haben, jetzt auch so zum Einsatz bringen können, dass Elternsein und Abgeordnetersein kein Widerspruch ist, sondern dass Männer und Frauen hier im Parlament auch die Chance haben, ihrer Verantwortung als Elternteil über Elternzeit nachzukommen.

Lara Wolters (S&D). – Voorzitter, twee jaar geleden stond ik hier en ik zei: “Ik denk dat het niet bij onze Europese voorvaders is opgekomen dat een volksvertegenwoordiger ook weleens een jonge vrouw zou kunnen zijn, of een jonge man die bij een pasgeboren kind wil zijn.”

Het is nu twee jaar later. Ik ben in verwachting van mijn tweede kind en het Europees Parlement heeft nog steeds geen ouderschapsverlof. We zijn minstens tien brieven, resoluties en speeches verder. Alle leden lijken het eens te zijn, maar er gebeurt niks. Inmiddels zijn er vier leden tegelijk zwanger. Ze zitten hier allemaal in de zaal en nu ben ik er klaar mee.

Geen zwangerschapsverlof is een probleem om twee redenen. Als Parlements lid kun je je stemrecht niet overdragen. Mensen die een stem gaven aan iemand die er tijdelijk uit is, zijn dus niet vertegenwoordigd. Ten tweede is dit een heel erg slecht signaal. De Europese verkiezingen komen eraan en nog steeds straalt dit Parlement uit dat het geen plek is voor jonge vrouwen. En laat ik dan ook maar even uitspreken dat wij met zijn allen een week per maand naar Straatsburg afreizen. Dat is iets wat alleen een man had kunnen bedenken. Het is tijd voor verandering. Het is tijd dat we het Europees Parlement de 21e eeuw in slepen.

Claudia Gamon (Renew). – Madam President, colleagues, I am seven months pregnant now and I will have to miss a couple of plenary sessions in the fall because I simply will not be able to travel, and I do want to spend a little bit of time with a new-born baby at home. But I am the leader of my own one-woman delegation, and the consequences of missing a session are clear – I will not be able to vote because there is no remote voting anymore.

And the misogynists might say, ‘Well, maybe don’t get pregnant’, but is this really the place that we want to have here? Is that the kind of parliament that we want to work in?

The European Parliament is the house of the people. It should be as diverse as the people of Europe are: old and young; men and women; child-free, older children, young kids. But the simple fact that there are no rules for parental leave, that there is no remote voting system, makes this House less diverse and it infringes upon our rights as elected parliamentarians to represent our constituencies and to fulfil our mandate. It is undemocratic and it is sexist.

Dear Madam President of this House, dear colleagues, it is true, as with everything else in gender equality politics, there are many things in the life of women that we cannot change, but we can change policy.

Daniel Freund (Verts/ALE). – Frau Präsidentin, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen, liebe junge Eltern! Ich stand im April vor einer schwierigen Entscheidung. Wir haben hier im Parlament über die Ausweitung des Emissionshandels abgestimmt, eines der wichtigsten Klimagesetze, die dieses Haus je verabschiedet hat.

Ich musste mich entscheiden: Komme ich entweder hier nach Straßburg, oder bleibe ich zu Hause bei meiner Frau, den drei Kindern und vor allen Dingen meiner neugeborenen Tochter, die da erst wenige Tage alt war?

Und wir haben es gerade gehört: Viele Kolleginnen und Kollegen haben in den letzten Jahren diese Erfahrung gemacht, und es ist ganz ehrlich absurd, dass wir diese Entscheidung treffen müssen, dass wir hier nach Straßburg fahren müssen, um hier auf einen Knopf zu drücken, um elektronisch an einer Abstimmung teilzunehmen, anstatt dass wir dieses elektronische Signal von unserem Heimatort oder da, wo unsere Familien sind, machen können.

Wir haben das zwei Jahre getan, während Corona, das hat wunderbar funktioniert. Und warum das jungen Eltern zumindest in diesen 14 Wochen nach der Geburt nicht möglich gemacht werden soll – wirklich, ich kann es einfach nicht verstehen.

Genauso, wie wir es allen Europäerinnen und Europäern erlauben, diesen Mutterschutz/Vaterschutz wahrzunehmen, sollten wir das auch uns Abgeordneten möglich machen, elektronisch an wichtigen Abstimmungen teilzunehmen.

Bert-Jan Ruissen (ECR). – Voorzitter, wat zijn we dankbaar dat we de COVID-pandemie achter ons hebben gelaten en dat we onze QR-codes niet meer steeds hoeven te tonen.

Wie denkt dat hiermee het tijdperk van digitale gezondheidscertificaten is afgesloten, vergist zich. Want als het aan de Europese Commissie ligt, gaat het COVID-certificaat gewoon op in een breder digitaal gezondheidscertificaat van de WHO. Ik vind dat zeer onverstandig, temeer omdat deze stap geruisloos wordt gezet, zonder een gedegen bezinning op de mogelijke consequenties.

Hebben we dan echt niks geleerd van de COVID-crisis? Hebben we dan echt niet gezien hoe het coronacertificaat leidde tot een tweedeling in de samenleving? Dat het gewetensbezwaarden ernstig in de problemen bracht en dat het vooral schijnzekerheid creëerde? Want ook met certificaten en inentingingen gingen de besmettingen gewoon door. Laten we leren van de fouten uit het verleden en in ieder geval een goed debat hierover voeren. Dat is wel het minste wat we zouden kunnen doen en moeten doen.

Patricia Chagnon (ID). – Madame la Présidente, pour faciliter l'arrivée de 70 millions de migrants en Europe, la Commission européenne a fait adopter la semaine dernière, dans des bureaux feutrés à Luxembourg, les principes de son funeste pacte d'immigration. Depuis la crise migratoire de 2015, la Commission cherche à se substituer aux États souverains, prétextant la nécessité d'une gestion migratoire à l'échelle européenne, mais en réalité pour leur imposer son projet idéologique, qui comprend la facilitation et l'accélération de l'immigration vers notre continent.

La réaction des États membres diverge. Certains, comme la France de Macron ou l'Allemagne de Scholz, soutiennent ouvertement le pacte d'immigration ou pensent même qu'il ne va pas encore assez loin, et d'autres, comme la Pologne et la Hongrie, s'y opposent avec force. Mais de très nombreux autres courbent l'échine car le chantage budgétaire, à peine voilé, qui concerne des milliards d'euros d'aides européennes, fonctionne.

Alors que 70 % des Français souhaitent moins d'immigration, l'Union, avec le soutien de la France de Macron, prépare plus d'immigration, car, pour eux, l'immigration n'est pas un problème, c'est leur projet.

Manon Aubry (The Left). – Madame la Présidente, je voulais évidemment m'associer à l'initiative de tous mes collègues en faveur d'un congé paternité et maternité. Et puisqu'il est question de démocratie, chers collègues, je souhaitais ici, depuis le Parlement européen, lancer une alerte solennelle sur l'état de la démocratie en France. La semaine dernière, le gouvernement a empêché purement et simplement l'Assemblée nationale de voter sur l'abrogation de la réforme des retraites, qui est pourtant rejetée par trois quarts des Français. Après avoir fait preuve d'une brutalité policière sans précédent contre le mouvement social, Emmanuel Macron vient de planter un véritable et grave coup de poignard contre le Parlement.

Dans quelle démocratie, chers collègues, est-il imaginable que les députés ne puissent pas voter, qui plus est sur un texte aussi important que celui repoussant l'âge de départ à la retraite? Dans quelle démocratie est-il imaginable qu'on interdise aux députés de proposer et même d'amender la loi? C'est pourtant ce qu'il se passe aujourd'hui en France. La séparation des pouvoirs est le fondement même de l'état de droit. Emmanuel Macron vient de l'enterrer.

Alors ici, depuis le Parlement européen, en observant la Pologne ou la Hongrie, nous savons trop bien où ce type de dérive autoritaire et illibérale peut conduire. C'est pourquoi, chers collègues, l'Union européenne doit réagir.

Martin Sonneborn (NI). – Frau Präsidentin! Gerade hat ein Richter namens Jonathan Swift, Numero 18 auf der Liste der korruptesten Richter Großbritanniens, lapidar alle zwölf von Julian Assange eingebrachten Berufungsgründe abgelehnt. Die Rechtsmittel sind nahezu erschöpft, seine Auslieferung an die USA steht kurz bevor. Dort erwarten ihn weitere 175 Jahre Haft, weil er die Wahrheit über Kriege veröffentlicht hat, die auf nichts als Lügen beruhen.

In 13 Jahren hat die EU kein einziges Wort zu diesem Fall zustande gebracht, von dem immerhin verfassungsrechtlich geschützte Grundrechte abhängen. Was sind das für Werte, von denen wir hier immer sprechen? Die Werte von Zensur, Informationskontrolle und Massenüberwachung, von Intransparenz und geheimen SMS-Milliardenverträgen, von offener Aushöhlung des Rechtsstaats und Kriminalisierung von Journalismus?

Wir fordern Joe Biden auf – oder das, was von ihm noch übrig ist –, diesen erbärmlichen Angriff auf Assange, die Informations- und Pressefreiheit und damit auf uns alle unverzüglich zu beenden, um zumindest den Anschein einer liberalen Demokratie wiederherzustellen – oder das, was von ihm noch übrig ist.

Michaela Šojdrová (PPE). – Madam President, dear colleagues, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe published on 4 May a report on a mission to address the Deportation of Children amidst Human Rights Violations and Humanitarian Impacts of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. Thanks to the three participating experts, including Czech professor Veronika Bílková. The findings confirm the regime's atrocities. Many Ukrainian children have been deported from Ukraine even before 24 February 2022. The exact number is uncertain, but there is no doubt about the large scale displacement. The mission's conclusions are clear: the Russian Federation obstructs the return of Ukrainian children, creating obstacles for families. One of the recommendations is to provide urgently all

necessary assistance to Ukraine to support its efforts to return the children who have been forcibly deported from Ukraine and implement their right to family reunification. This applies above all for the International Committee of the Red Cross. We should hear out one more voice, it is the voice of Ukraine mayors for organising summer camps for internally displaced or unaccompanied children in or outside Ukraine. The summer camps will help them recover from war trauma and also support their caregivers.

Adriana Maldonado López (S&D). – Señora presidenta, no hay nada más valioso que nuestro derecho al voto como diputados y diputadas, y esto se está viendo infringido por el Parlamento Europeo, la propia Mesa y la propia presidenta Metsola. Por eso, pedimos desde el Grupo S&D que se nos permita ejercer nuestro derecho al voto durante nuestra baja de maternidad o de paternidad.

Para mí, este será mi último Pleno, ya que estoy de treinta y seis semanas, y me gustaría poder votar, en el próximo Pleno del mes de julio, todos aquellos informes en los que tanto tiempo hemos trabajado.

No solamente lo hacemos por nosotras y por nosotros, sino también por todos aquellos jóvenes que en el futuro vengan a esta casa, la casa de los europeos, a representar a todos los ciudadanos europeos, porque el mensaje que estamos mandando a la ciudadanía es muy peligroso. Es tan claro como decir que no se puede ser joven, que no se puede ser madre o padre y querer venir a trabajar a las instituciones europeas, y eso que no hay una actividad más valiosa en nuestra sociedad que la de la representación pública.

Así que pido a la presidenta Metsola y a la Mesa del Parlamento que nos permitan votar de forma telemática en nuestros permisos de baja de maternidad y paternidad.

Karen Melchior (Renew). – Fru formand og næstformand. Om et år beder vi de europæiske borgere om at stemme til Europa-Parlamentsvalget. Din stemme gør en forskel, siger vi. Men hvis du stemmer på nogen, der stifter familie, så har din stemme mindre værdi, fordi den forælder, som vil tilbringe tid med deres barn i de første dage af deres liv, deres stemme bliver ikke talt. De kan ikke blive erstattet af en politisk kollega. De kan ikke stemme elektronisk. Andre parlamenter har fundet praktiske løsninger. Det kan vi også. Når vi ikke kan give mulighed for at stifte familie og få vores politiske stemme hørt, så forhindrer vi unge – og særligt kvinder – i at sidde i dette parlament og få deres stemme hørt. Alt at vinde, stem på en kvinde! Det var sloganet i 2019 for at få flere til at stemme på kvinder. Lad os gøre det til virkelighed ved at sikre, at alle stemmer tæller. Også dem, der stifter familie, mens de sidder i Europa-Parlamentet.

João Albuquerque (S&D). – Madam President, over the years, we have been consistently fighting for more and more powers in the European Parliament. The reason why we do this is because we firmly believe that this is the House of European democracy and that this is the House that truly represents the European citizens and we have to be their voice, but most importantly, this House needs to stand by the high standards it tries to set all Europeans. We need to abide by what we preach.

Now, let me tell you this: I have a child coming at the exact same time as another colleague, a female Member of this Parliament. During the time of the parental leave, we will both be deprived from participating in the activities of Parliament. However, despite our situations being the same, we are affected differently. The time for parental leave for fathers and mothers is different and she will be even more harmed than me.

Just last week, President Metsola, at the Women Political Leaders Summit, said it was women parliamentarians in this House who ensured that these tough negotiations for equality came through so that, little by little, this world can become a little bit more equal and a little bit more fair. Now it is our time to ask that we implement true equality in this House. President Metsola, we need to have the instruments in place for us to benefit from our parental leave. We should not have to choose between our families or our right to vote. If we want to stand tall in defending equality in society, then we do need to do it also in this House. And we need it now.

Hannah Neumann (Verts/ALE). – Madam President, dear colleagues, more than 300 people were executed in Iran this year, and these are only the official numbers. This regime is harassing, beating, torturing, raping, killing its own citizens, and, so far, it gets away with it.

It gets away with it because a culture of impunity persists in Iran and a culture of silence is developing again in the international community. I mean, how can Ebrahim Raisi, who was instrumental in killing thousands of protesters in 1988, get away with it and now be, 30 years later, the president of Iran? How can we, as the international community, allow a regime that brutally terrorises its own citizens to chair the UN Human Rights Council Social Forum, when it would actually be our job to watch carefully what is happening in Iran, to condemn every single killing, to sanction the perpetrators, and to do our part to break the cycle of impunity?

Because if we don't, 300 executions may soon turn into 3000. This regime kills when it thinks it can get away with it, and we have to make sure it no longer does. Silence will only lead to more violence.

Dorien Rookmaker (ECR). – Voorzitter, graag vraag ik uw aandacht voor het volgende: afgelopen woensdag 31 mei hebben slachtoffers van de Nederlandse overheid in Brussel voor het Parlement gedemonstreerd. Ze wilden een onderzoek naar de toeslagenaffaire. Meer dan 30 000 ouders die in een ingewikkeld systeem op een fout bij de aanvraag voor subsidie werden betrappt, werden ten onrechte als fraudeur weggezet. Er is in het Parlement al eerder aandacht voor gevraagd.

De Nederlandse overheid eiste de verstrekte subsidie terug en bracht daarmee duizenden ouders in moeilijkheden. Ze verloren hun baan, hun huis, soms hun bedrijf. Duizenden kinderen zijn uit huis geplaatst. Sommige ouders zijn zelfs vanwege deze zaak met de kinderen naar het buitenland gevlucht. Er zijn zelfs gevallen van zelfmoord bekend. Alle getroffen hebben in een nachtmerrie geleefd waarbij ontwaken onmogelijk leek. De Nederlandse regering heeft schuld bekend, maar pas nadat dit schandaal jaren onder de pet is gehouden. De regering wist dat ze fout zat, maar liet de slachtoffers in onwetendheid.

In Europa zijn weinigen van dit drama op de hoogte. Het handelen van de Nederlandse regering is in strijd met alle Europese verdragen en afspraken die de bescherming van de mensenrechten bepalen. Het komt niet vaak voor dat de Nederlandse regering in de EU voor een mensenrechtenkwestie op het matje wordt geroepen, maar in deze kwestie is het volledig op zijn plaats.

Isabella Tovaglieri (ID). – Signora Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, le auto storiche sono una ricchezza che contribuisce a promuovere il turismo e l'identità dei nostri territori attraverso raduni ed iniziative benefiche che muovono un grande indotto e soprattutto danno lustro al design industriale europeo.

Lo stop ai motori endotermici rischia di disperdere questo patrimonio, tramandato di generazione in generazione, con dedizione e sacrifici economici, da milioni di appassionati. Combustibili e pezzi di ricambio, infatti, saranno sempre più introvabili e, senza il via libera europeo ai biocarburanti, le auto d'epoca sono destinate a scomparire nonostante il loro impatto ambientale del tutto irrisorio.

L'Europa miope riesce a vedere nell'auto storica solo il suo motore a scoppio, il nemico giurato della svolta verde. Noi, invece, ci vediamo anche la bellezza, la cultura, le nostre radici e un passato illustre che non deve essere cancellato ma al contrario difeso e valorizzato.

Concludo semplicemente esprimendo un pensiero per la figura di Silvio Berlusconi, che è venuto a mancare oggi e che ha rappresentato il centro, il protagonismo per decenni della vita politica europea, in attesa che quest'Aula gli dedichi il giusto tributo.

Leila Chaïbi (The Left). – Madame la Présidente, je crois que ça commence vraiment à se voir: je suis enceinte et dans deux mois je vais donner naissance à une petite fille.

(Applaudissements)

Merci! C'est une bonne nouvelle, c'est vrai. Mais ce n'est pas forcément une bonne nouvelle pour celles et ceux qui m'ont élue. Parce que forcément, je me suis renseignée pour savoir si j'avais le droit à une absence pour congé maternité. Eh bien, là, j'ai découvert que non: au Parlement européen, rien n'est prévu, comme si, quand on était députée européenne, il fallait forcément renoncer à avoir des enfants. Comme si, finalement, pour être député européen, il fallait être un homme député européen.

Le problème, il n'est pas tant pour nous. Le problème, comme je le disais, est pour celles et ceux qui nous ont élus. Il y a un problème démocratique de représentativité. Alors, Madame la Présidente, s'il vous plaît, entendez cet appel, et rendez possibles les congés de maternité et de paternité pour les élus. On ne devrait pas devoir choisir entre exercer son mandat correctement et donner naissance à un enfant.

Jiří Pospíšil (PPE). – Paní předsedající, velmi podporuji tedy kolegy v jejich boji za mateřskou pro poslance a poslankyně, ale rád bych to vrátil k jinému tématu. Hájím zde práva zvířat a chtěl jsem tedy využít šanci oslovit přímo Komisi a požádat paní komisařku, aby Komise začala toto téma konečně brát vážně, protože zvláště mladí Evropané považují téma ochrany zvířat, *animal welfare*, za důležité téma. V České republice jsme teď rozjeli kampaň na zákaz chovu psů na řetězech a ještě další národní úpravy. Má to obrovskou odezvu u mladých lidí, u lidí, kteří jsou si vědomi toho, že bojovat se nemá pouze za lidská práva, práva menšin, ale také za práva zvířat jako živých bytostí, které vnímají, trpí. A na půdě Parlamentu mám leckdy pocit, že zde převládá zemědělské lobby, že si málokdy uvědomujeme, že debata o transportu zvířat na dálku atd. není jenom o byznysu, ale právě i o problému etickém. Tak vás prosím, paní komisařko, pojďme ještě do konce volebního období něco pro práva zvířat udělat.

Carmen Avram (S&D). – Doamna președintă, pandemia și războiul din Ucraina păreau să fi repus solidaritatea pe agenda europeană și mondială.

Însă constat că în cazul Uniunii Europene a fost doar o fază, pentru că, deși pe plan extern prezintă solidaritate față de parteneri, în interior continuă să fie măcinată de atitudini care demonstrează contrariul, cum ar fi: incapacitatea Comisiei de a debloca banii cuveniți fermierilor est-europeni loviți puternic de importurile de cereale ucrainene sau incapacitatea de a convinge guvernul de la Viena să respecte legea europeană după ce a anulat dreptul milioanelor de români și bulgari de a adera la spațiul Schengen, alimentând și euroscepticismul toxic, ori indiferența cu care îi tratează pe fermierii României, care cer zadarnic egalizarea subvențiilor în Uniune.

Solidaritate nu e doar un cuvânt fără acoperire. Ea trebuie să fie atuul suprem într-o lume tot mai turbulentă, agitată de inamici externi, ostili și agresivi.

De aceea, sper ca toți colegii mei să dea dovadă de solidaritate în această sesiune plenară și să susțină amendamentul pe care l-am depus pentru mărirea plăților fermierilor români, care, ca în cazul Schengen, este un drept garantat, dar încă nerespectat.

Yana Toom (Renew). – Madam President, I feel a bit uncomfortable for, as a mother of five, I would like to full-heartedly support colleagues' call for maternity leave, but I had an absolutely different topic to address. Sorry, but I wish you good luck.

Statelessness affects over half million people living in Europe and more than half of them come from Estonia and Latvia. Our governments say that these people are protected in the same way as citizens, which is not true. And now we see how Estonia learns to deport stateless people to Russia, not only violating human rights and international legal norms but also the EU long-term residency directive.

Five days ago, Zoya Palyamar, a 63-year-old stateless person, was deprived of her residence permit and received an entry ban to the Schengen zone for ten years. Now, while I am speaking to you, she sits somewhere in Petersburg with no money, no clothes, no documents and nowhere to go. Tens of thousands of stateless people of Baltic states are learning the lesson: nobody cares.

I blame the Estonian Government but I also blame the European Commission, who knows perfectly well what was going on in my home country, Estonia, and who is doing nothing. The Commission did not even show up at the huge international conference in Madrid, organised by the European Network of Statelessness, last week, while the United Nations and Council of Europe did send representatives. If this was a political signal, the signal is clear: we accept leaving people behind if these people are stateless.

Nicolae Ștefănuță (Verts/ALE). – Doamna președintă, vreau să se consemneze că sunt complet alături de colegile și de protestul lor inedit. Cred că este nevoie de concediu de maternitate și de paternitate în această instituție.

Însă în seara asta am vrut să vă vorbesc despre situația profesorilor din România, care este gravă, iar Ciucă și Ciolacu îi consideră pe profesorii din România ca pe pilele acelea pe care le bagă ei în aparatul de stat.

Noi, oamenii, simțim un stat greoi, care ne consideră niște supuși și ne spune ironic cum îndrăznim. Au vrut să ne divizeze, dar elevii au fost alături de profii lor. Părinții au fost alături de profesori, doar Guvernul a fost împotriva.

Promisiunile politice nu țin de foame și adevărul este că foarte mulți români o duc acum foarte greu, o duc greu părinții cu cheltuielile, o duc rău tinerii care nu au salarii și se mută de acasă abia după vârsta de 30 de ani, iar profesorii sunt la coada societății, așa au ajuns, ca și când a educa e cam totuna cu a curăța pantofi.

Avem greve peste tot în Europa, doamna președintă, și asta mă face să-mi amintesc de un lucru: democrația e importantă, însă e important să ai apă, mâncare, energie, să ai cu ce să le plătești. Îmi aduc aminte, în 1989 se striga: „Vrem lapte la copii!” și apoi s-a strigat „Libertate!”.

Iar Europa trebuie să ne dea acel vis european înapoi. Europa trebuie să ajute tinerii și profesorii din România.

Charlie Weimers (ECR). – Fru talman! Medlemsstaterna har nu enats om ett motbud i förhandlingarna om EU:s migrationspakt, och det tar avstånd från den tvingande omfördelning av migranter som både parlamentets Tomas Tobé och kommissionens Ylva Johansson har föreslagit.

Parlamentets majoritet, som vi minns, strök hela portalparagrafen om kampen mot illegal invandring. Parlamentet kräver mer tvingande omfördelning av migranter och ökad anhöriginvandring. De ska nu komma överens med medlemsstaterna i rådet som vill prioritera kampen mot illegal invandring med snabbare och lättare utvisningar, stoppad skytteltrafik på Medelhavet och avtal med tredjeländer för att husera migranter i Afrika.

Nu stundar förhandlingar mellan parlamentet och rådet. Om parlamentet lyckas dra pakten i sin migrationsliberala riktning kommer den att bli ohållbar. Om ett antal månader kommer vi i EU-parlamentet att ta ställning till det färdigförhandlade förslaget. Om detta förslag leder till ökad migration till vårt land och till Europa kommer vi Sverigedemokrater att rösta nej.

Philippe Olivier (ID). – Madame la Présidente, mesdames et messieurs, chers collègues, la France s'apprête à mettre en fonction une super usine de batteries électriques à Douvrin, en France, dans le Pas-de-Calais. On ne peut que s'en réjouir. Cette installation, sortie au forceps, est en quelque sorte une action de rattrapage, puisque l'Union européenne s'est lancée dans le «tout électrique» sans avoir réfléchi à la filière et, surtout, sans avoir intégré les dépendances – à l'égard de la Chine, en l'occurrence – que ce choix pouvait engendrer. Il était plus que temps d'y remédier.

Mais la politique ne peut pas se réduire à une communication sur une usine: elle doit englober toute une réflexion sur l'intégralité de la filière, de bout en bout. À cette occasion, je voudrais rappeler à l'Union européenne qu'il existe sur une terre française lointaine, la Nouvelle-Calédonie, une production de nickel parmi les meilleures au monde. Et puisque l'on parle de dépendance dans la filière électrique, notamment vis-à-vis de la Chine, je voudrais l'exhorter à prévoir d'y approvisionner notre continent. Ce serait un acte de solidarité européenne, mais surtout un choix industriel, économique et politique intelligent.

Eugen Tomac (PPE). – Doamna președintă, doamna vicepreședintă, stimați colegi, în urmă cu mai bine de un an de zile, Rusia ne-a trezit pe toți la realitate prin agresiunea pe care a exercitat-o asupra unui stat care nu l-a provocat cu nimic, cum este Ucraina.

Reacția noastră a fost corectă și este bine să fim solidari, să empatizăm și să susținem poporul ucrainean care luptă împotriva Kremlinului și acestei încercări de a anexa un stat care nu l-a provocat cu nimic.

Vreau însă să aduc în actualitate și în discuție un subiect extrem de important care ține de Ucraina. În acest stat locuiesc peste un milion de cetățeni ucraineni vorbitori de limbă română. România a ajutat enorm Ucraina în acest conflict militar, însă este de neînțeles de ce Kievul continuă politica de divizare a acestei minorități între români și moldoveni.

Cerem Comisiei implicarea în această chestiune, care este extrem de importantă, pentru că cetățenii ucraineni de origine română mor astăzi pe front pentru libertatea Ucrainei.

Juan Fernando López Aguilar (S&D). – Señora presidenta, señora vicepresidenta Vestager, nada menos que hace cinco años, en 2018, la Comisión Europea adoptó una iniciativa novedosa que fue saludada por la Comisión de Libertades Civiles, Justicia y Asuntos de Interior. Se trataba de poner en marcha nada menos que una orden judicial directamente ejecutable de obtención de pruebas electrónicas en la investigación y el enjuiciamiento de la delincuencia transnacional, particularmente de la ciberdelincuencia, la pornografía infantil y la falsificación de métodos de pago, que son delitos que se han disparado durante la pandemia, sobre todo la ciberdelincuencia.

Cinco años después, este procedimiento por fin ha llegado a su término al ser debatido hoy en este Pleno del Parlamento Europeo. Lo celebro porque significa un paso adelante para que las autoridades judiciales puedan ordenar directamente a los servidores y proveedores en la red que retiren y obtengan pruebas electrónicas relevantes para las investigaciones penales. Y, además, lo hagan en tiempo perentorio: diez días, y, en casos de emergencia, hasta en ocho horas. Si no lo hacen, deberán pagar una multa que puede suponer hasta el 2 % de su volumen de negocio. Además, deben designar a una autoridad o una persona encargada de mantener contacto con las autoridades judiciales europeas en el territorio europeo. Es un paso adelante. Por fin contamos con un procedimiento de obtención de pruebas electrónicas de alcance paneuropeo.

Vlad-Marius Botoș (Renew). – Doamna președintă, stimați colegi, evenimentele din ultimii ani ne-au arătat foarte clar că doar uniți suntem mai puternici, uniți putem trece peste provocări la care nu ne-am gândit, pentru care nu ne-am pregătit de multe ori.

Dacă vrem acest deziderat, uniți, noi, cei din instituțiile europene, trebuie să găsim cele mai rapide și mai bune soluții pentru a face pași concreți înspre această unitate. Nu mai putem aștepta mai bine de 15 ani pentru a lua decizii importante, cum sunt aderarea României la spațiul Schengen sau aderarea țărilor din Balcanii de Vest la Uniunea Europeană, atunci când aceste state au îndeplinit condițiile.

Dacă vrem ca Uniunea Europeană să fie privită ca o forță care acționează la nivel mondial, trebuie să găsim modalitățile prin care un stat membru, oricare ar fi el, să nu mai poată ține în loc întreaga Uniune. Trebuie să facem pași înainte. Trebuie să fim mai uniți în găsirea și implementarea soluțiilor pentru cetățenii noștri, pentru că nu este normal ca unii să aibă drepturi mai multe decât alții.

Gunnar Beck (ID). – Frau Präsidentin! Der Euro ist die teuerste Währung aller Zeiten. Massenmigration bringt uns Millionen Kostgänger, aber keine Fachkräfte. Und die Klimarettung führt zu Deindustrialisierung und Massenarmut. Das sagt die AfD seit zehn Jahren. Die OECD gibt uns nun Recht und laut Umfragen auch immer mehr Deutsche.

Der gesunde Menschenverstand kehrt nach Deutschland zurück, so scheint es. Und genau deshalb fordert das regierungsnahe Institut für Menschenrechte dort jetzt ein Verbot meiner Partei. Spricht man in Deutschland offenkundige Wahrheiten aus, werden Bürger unter fadenscheinigen Vorwänden strafverfolgt, und Parteien werden verboten. Die Entscheidung darüber liegt beim Bundesverfassungsgericht, dessen Richter von den Altparteien aufgrund politischer Gesinnung ernannt werden.

Das ist das angeblich vorbildliche neudeutsche Modell von Demokratie und Rechtsstaatlichkeit, das Sie hier in Ungarn, Polen – und mit Waffen auch in der Ukraine – durchsetzen wollen. Auch dieses neudeutsche Modell wird scheitern.

Stanislav Polčák (PPE). – Paní předsedající, dostupné služby pro občany a kvalitní infrastruktura jsou důležité prvky regionálního rozvoje a my zde máme bohužel v tomto tématu zaostávající regiony v Evropě. Přitom Evropská unie zřizuje svou kvalitní, poměrně i finančně nabitou, naditou politiku soudržnosti pro přibližování regionů, pro vyrovnávání těchto rozdílů. Jak se ukazuje, nemůžeme podporovat touto politikou pouze excelentní projekty, ale také zaměřit náš ohled na právě dostupné veřejné služby, jako jsou školy, školky, zdravotnictví, sociální služby, pošty, ale také samozřejmě ty privátní služby, ať jsou to gastronomická zařízení a další tyto soukromé služby. Protože pokud na ně nezaměříme svůj ohled, tak se budou regiony vyliďňovat a lidé se budou přesouvat především do těch velkých aglomeračních center, což určitě nechceme. Proto musíme mít dostupná data o jednotlivých regionech, o přeshraničních souvislostech. Musíme podporovat touto naší politikou kvalitu života na venkově a v regionech. Mnohonásobně se to Evropské unii vrátí.

Georgios Kyrtos (Renew). – Madam President, European sanctions against Russia must be made stricter and more effective. In 2022, Ukraine lost 29 % of its GDP due to Russia's aggression. Russia's GDP fell only by 2.1 % in 2022. There has been, of course, a qualitative degradation of the Russian economy, but the effects of the sanctions that are applied are mostly medium and long-term. Our immediate objective must be to thwart the ability of Russia to continue conducting an aggressive war. It is obvious that we have to change the mix and the scope of sanctions in order to attain this objective. No time to lose since the war intensifies and is prolonged. We have to find a way to multiply the immediate economic cost of the war for the aggressor.

Die Präsidentin. – Damit ist dieser Tagesordnungspunkt geschlossen.

23. Agenda of the next sitting

Die Präsidentin. – Die nächste Sitzung findet morgen, Dienstag, 13. Juni 2023, um 9.00 Uhr statt.

Die Tagesordnung wurde veröffentlicht und ist auf der Website des Europäischen Parlaments verfügbar.

24. Approval of the minutes of the sitting

Die Präsidentin. – Das Protokoll dieser Sitzung wird dem Parlament morgen zu Beginn der Nachmittagssitzung zur Genehmigung vorgelegt.

25. Closure of the sitting

(Die Sitzung wird um 22.06 Uhr geschlossen)

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Key to symbols used

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

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

Abbreviations used for Parliamentary Committees

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

Abbreviations used for Political Groups

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