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## PEŁNE SPRAWOZDANIE Z OBRAD 13 LIPCA 2023 R.

(C/2024/4150)

PARLAMENT EUROPEJSKI

SESJA 2023-2024

Posiedzenia od 10 do 13 lipca 2023 r.

STRASBURG

Spis treści	Strona
1. Otwarcie posiedzenia	3
2. Stanowisko Rady w pierwszym czytaniu (art. 63 Regulaminu)	3
3. Publiczny dostęp do dokumentów – sprawozdanie roczne za lata 2019–2021 (debata)	3
4. Globalna konwergencja generatywnej sztucznej inteligencji (debata)	15
5. Zalecenia Komisji w sprawie transpozycji dyrektywy w sprawie publicznej sprawozdawczości w podziale na kraje (debata)	29
6. Wznowienie posiedzenia	35
7. Głosowanie	36
7.1. Pozbawianie praw politycznych w Wenezueli (B9-0330/2023, RC-B9-0331/2023, B9-0331/2023, B9-0343/2023, B9-0350/2023, B9-0351/2023) (głosowanie)	36
7.2. Indie: Sytuacja w Manipurze (B9-0334/2023, RC-B9-0335/2023, B9-0335/2023, B9-0337/2023, B9-0341/2023, B9-0344/2023, B9-0345/2023) (głosowanie)	36
7.3. Ataki na media i wolność wypowiedzi w Kirgistanie (B9-0353/2023, B9-0332/2023, RC-B9-0333/2023, B9-0333/2023, B9-0336/2023, B9-0338/2023, B9-0352/2023) (głosowanie)	36
7.4. Akt o wspieraniu produkcji amunicji (C9-0161/2023) (głosowanie)	36
7.5. Zalecenia dotyczące reformy przepisów Parlamentu Europejskiego w zakresie przejrzystości, uczciwości, odpowiedzialności i walki z korupcją (A9-0215/2023 - Vladimír Bilčík, Nathalie Loiseau) (głosowanie)	37

Spis treści	Strona
7.6. Potrzeba podjęcia przez Unię działań w zakresie poszukiwania i ratownictwa na Morzu Śródziemnym (B9-0339/2023, B9-0340/2023, B9-0342/2023) (głosowanie) . . . . .	37
7.7. Stan unii MŚP (RC-B9-0346/2023, B9-0346/2023, B9-0347/2023, B9-0348/2023, B9-0349/2023) (głosowanie) . . . . .	37
7.8. Publiczny dostęp do dokumentów – sprawozdanie roczne za lata 2019–2021 (A9-0179/2023 - Evin Incir) (głosowanie) . . . . .	37
8. Wznowienie posiedzenia . . . . .	37
9. Przyjęcie protokołu poprzedniego posiedzenia . . . . .	37
10. 10. rocznica przyjęcia Wytycznych UE w sprawie propagowania i ochrony wolności religii lub przekonań (debata) . . . . .	38
11. Wyjaśnienia dotyczące sposobu głosowania . . . . .	43
11.1. Zalecenia dotyczące reformy przepisów Parlamentu Europejskiego w zakresie przejrzystości, uczciwości, odpowiedzialności i walki z korupcją (A9-0215/2023 - Vladimír Bilčík, Nathalie Loiseau) . . . . .	43
11.2. Potrzeba podjęcia przez Unię działań w zakresie poszukiwania i ratownictwa na Morzu Śródziemnym (B9-0339/2023, B9-0340/2023, B9-0342/2023) . . . . .	43
11.3. Stan unii MŚP (RC-B9-0346/2023, B9-0346/2023, B9-0347/2023, B9-0348/2023, B9-0349/2023) . . . . .	44
11.4. Publiczny dostęp do dokumentów – sprawozdanie roczne za lata 2019–2021 (A9-0179/2023 - Evin Incir) . . . . .	44
12. Zatwierdzenie protokołu bieżącego posiedzenia i przekazanie przyjętych tekstów . . . . .	45
13. Kalendarz następnych posiedzeń . . . . .	45
14. Zamknięcie posiedzenia . . . . .	45
15. Przerwa w obradach . . . . .	45

## PEŁNE SPRAWOZDANIE Z OBRAD 13 LIPCA 2023 R.

ΠΡΟΕΔΡΙΑ: ΔΗΜΗΤΡΙΟΣ ΠΑΠΑΔΗΜΟΥΛΗΣ

Αντιπρόεδρος

### 1. Otwarcie posiedzenia

(Η συνεδρίαση αρχίζει στις 9.00)

### 2. Stanowisko Rady w pierwszym czytaniu (art. 63 Regulaminu)

**Πρόεδρος.** – Πριν περάσουμε στα θέματα της ημερήσιας διάταξης έχω μια ανακοίνωση: Η Πρόεδρος έλαβε από το Συμβούλιο τη θέση του σε πρώτη ανάγνωση καθώς και τους λόγους που ώθησαν το Συμβούλιο να την υιοθετήσει και τις θέσεις και γνωμοδοτήσεις της Επιτροπής.

Ο πλήρης τίτλος θα καταχωριστεί στα Συνοπτικά Πρακτικά της παρούσας συνεδρίασης.

Επομένως, η τρίμηνη προθεσμία που έχει το Κοινοβούλιο για να αποφανθεί αρχίζει να τρέχει από αύριο, 14 Ιουλίου 2023.

### 3. Publiczny dostęp do dokumentów – sprawozdanie roczne za lata 2019–2021 (debata)

**Πρόεδρος.** – Το πρώτο σημείο στην ημερήσια διάταξη είναι η συζήτηση επί της εκθέσεως της κ. Evin Incir, εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής Πολιτικών Ελευθεριών, Δικαιοσύνης και Εσωτερικών Υποθέσεων, σχετικά με την πρόσβαση του κοινού στα έγγραφα – ετήσια έκθεση για τα έτη 2019-2021 (2022/2015(INI)) (A9-0179/2023).

**Evin Incir, rapporteur.** – Mr President, Commissioner, colleagues, transparency is a vital part of a democratic culture and an important tool to fight corruption. Our citizens have the right to maximum amount of transparency and, consequently, maximum amount of accessibility to public documents to ensure accountability. The last year's historical scandal, known as Qatargate, has shown that we have a long way to go before we can ensure our citizens have their fundamental right to know under whose influence some might be – consequently, to prevent this influence.

Because it is evident that we have a long way to go before a culture of transparency reaches every and each corner of the EU's DNA. All EU institutions – European Parliament, the Council, including Member States, the Commission and the agencies – have homework to do. And in the light of the Commission President's handling of the text messages with the Pfizer Chief Executive during COVID-19, we have a long way to go before transparency becomes the rule and by design – not the exception – and in the goodwill of decision-makers, institutions and agencies.

No, it's not the medium that matters; it is the content of the message that decides the nature of the document. I have said it before in other debates, and I want to underline it again. Regardless of if the communication is being done with text messages, emails, letter or even pigeons, it's not the medium that decides the nature of the document; it is the content.

Openness and transparency principles should govern not only the decision-making process, but also the way in which a text is drafted, and guaranteed in relation to how EU policies are implemented at all levels and how EU funds are used. It is shocking that even journalists need to conduct a big fight to access what is a fundamental right to access basic information to be able to do their job. Transparency by design is therefore the guarantee.

Furthermore, access delayed is effectively access denied. Delay and unfounded refusal to disclose documents – even partially – undermine citizens' right to scrutinise us. In a time of democratic backslide in our Union, improving our citizens' right to scrutiny would prevent further deterioration and ensure full implementation of our own Treaties.

Pulitzer said, 'There is not a crime, there is not a dodge, there is not a trick, there is not a swindle, there is not a vice which does not live by secrecy'. Colleagues, secrecy is the enemy of transparency, accountability, trust and democracy. Therefore, the Council's lack of will to progress on negotiations on Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 regarding public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents remains the main obstacle and stone in the machinery for progress and improvement.

The European Parliament adopted a first reading position on the Commission proposal in December 2011, and now is definitely the time for the Council and the Commission to also act on their side and to resume negotiations based on it with us to give our citizens wider and improved access to documents. Only words have never changed the world, but actions have.

I want to also conclude with thanking my co-rapporteurs for the very efficient and productive work done on this very important matter.

**Věra Jourová**, *Vice-President of the Commission*. – Mr President, honourable Members, thank you for the possibility of presenting to you the major elements of the Commission's management of public access requests based on Regulation number 1049 from 2001.

The Commission applies the highest standards of transparency. The Commission proactively publishes a wide variety of legal, policy, administrative and other documents on different websites and registers. They are available on the Register of Commission Documents, Register of Delegated Acts, other corporate registers or Eur-Lex.

The already mentioned regulation on public access to documents remains the legal instrument for the handling of applications for access to documents. It lays down the general principles and limits of the right to public access to documents and provides the means of redress available against the final decision of the institution, a complaint to the European Ombudsman or an action before the Court.

I would like to draw your attention to two legislative proposals, for the recast of this regulation has been pending for quite a long time. The Commission does not see for the moment the willingness from co-legislators to engage in a revision process, but it stands ready to support further legislative and political discussions, including to modernise the legislative framework on access to documents, adapting it to the reality of the 21st century, also considered a case law over the last 20 years and the Ombudsman recommendations.

We do not count with pigeons, but we count with the means of modern communication, electronic communication, which you mentioned. In September 2022, the Commission launched a new IT system for handling access requests through an electronic online portal, namely 'Electronic Access to Commission Documents'.

It consists of two parts: a new case management system, allowing Commission staff to handle the applications for access to documents, and a new online portal allowing citizens to manage their requests for access, receive guidance and search for documents disclosed to other applicants. This tool already proves to be extremely useful and recognised by the public as some three out of four of all requests are introduced through the public portal.

The statistical data for access to documents clearly demonstrate a high level of transparency as full or partial access is granted to a vast majority of requested documents, with the highest number of requests for access to documents – I can give you data for 2021 – 8 420 initial and 355 confirmatory applications received. Transparency is indeed part of the daily business of all the Commission's Directorates-General and services.

The 2021 statistics show that access to documents requested by citizens was fully or partially granted in 74% of initial cases. Wider or even full access was further granted in more than 38% of the cases reviewed at confirmatory stage under the regulation. This proves that the Commission is indeed a very transparent institution.

The preliminary data for 2022 that will be presented in the forthcoming Commission annual report on public access to documents confirm this positive trend, as well as the high interest of the general public to obtain access to documents held by the Commission. All in all, the data clearly demonstrate the openness of the European Commission and the commitment of the institution to the right of access to documents as part of its overall transparency policy in all circumstances, including in the unprecedented pandemic situation which characterised the past years.

I would like to take this opportunity to recall that the Commission proposed to withdraw the Regulation 1049 from 2001. Should the European Parliament agree to the withdrawal of the two relevant proposals, we stand ready to engage in legislative work. I said it several years ago and I am repeating it today.

**Miapetra Kumpula-Natri**, *rapporteur for the opinion of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs*. – Mr President, dear Commissioner, dear rapporteur and friends, the standards of visibility, transparency and accessibility in the European Union should be the best in the world. Accessible, transparent, reliable information about the decision-making of the European Union is the cornerstone to build the trust between citizens and decision-makers.

In the AFCO opinion, we also highlighted that Parliament's own relevant bodies and all EU bodies should ensure that the documents are easily accessible to the public. It gives certain examples of the disappointing cases in the Council, in Commission but also in Parliament and very-well based recommendations that how to make the webpage more easily readable to gather the information and then also for the citizens to understand what is happening here.

I want to underline that the data, once it is given to the journalist or people should be in the machine-readable format. We live in the digitalised age and it's quite horrible to listen that they only release the documents in the PDF format, and it's especially important when it's concerning numerical or financial data. So let us do this better and get digitalised and transparent institutions.

**Andrzej Halicki**, *w imieniu grupy PPE*. – Panie Przewodniczący! Szanowni Państwo! Szanowna Pani Komisarz! Dostęp do informacji publicznych, transparentność, otwartość na obywatela to podstawy naszej demokracji, podstawy funkcjonowania Unii Europejskiej. To są oczywiste prawa podstawowe. I na obywatelskiej demokracji powinniśmy budować zaufanie do instytucji europejskiej zwłaszcza dzisiaj, kiedy tak wiele dezinformacji, tak wiele informacji nieprawdziwych krąży w sieci i rzeczywiście buduje zamieszanie.

Obywatele mają nie tylko prawo, ale powinni mieć łatwy dostęp do informacji właśnie po to, by weryfikować te nieprawdziwe informacje pojawiające się w przestrzeni. I tu rzeczywiście nowe technologie nam służą. Dziękujemy i z nadzieją witamy nowe inicjatywy, nowe portale, nowe sposoby uzyskiwania dostępu do ważnych informacji, które budują wiedzę i świadomość.

Chcę podkreślić jedną rzecz: nasze statystyki pokazują, że w instytucjach europejskich ten dostęp jest dość dobry. W Parlamencie Europejskim najlepszy – na poziomie 91%, w instytucjach takich jak Komisja Europejska czy Rada Unii Europejskiej – 81% i 84%. Ale brak czy odmowa dostępu do informacji musi być wyjątkiem. Dostępność i obowiązek przekazywania informacji jest regułą. I to odstępstwo musi być naprawdę bardzo jasno wyjaśnione i zinterpretowane, gdy narusza bezpieczeństwo publiczne i interes publiczny.

Chciałbym jeszcze powiedzieć jedną rzecz, bo rozmawiamy bez udziału Rady Europejskiej. Właśnie ze strony Rady mamy blokadę przejścia do kolejnej fazy implementacji reguł i dobrej współpracy na przyszłość. Wzywam więc z tego miejsca Radę, by ten postęp nastąpił, by można było przejść do negocjacji, by rzeczywiście usprawnić dostęp obywateli do informacji publicznej.

**Cyrus Engerer**, *on behalf of the S&D Group*. – Mr President, and good morning, Madam Commissioner, I'm sorry to say, but I don't believe that the European Commission should be happy because there are more pages being given to the public and to us parliamentarians. Because when you look at the actual pages, you'll find that so much of it is just being blocked and redacted.

And my only experience of this was when, during the pandemic, we had the right to see the negotiations and contracts that the European Commission was doing with the different pharmaceutical companies, you would not even be able to read the page because all of it was totally redacted.

So, while we may be happy or say that the numbers are good, in reality, when you look down at what actually is being given, the Commission was totally not transparent on what happened. And I think that this report highlights the urgency with which Europe needs to act on its democratic legitimacy.

We do not give visibility to our work simply by posting posts on social media, very nice pictures. But people care about and should know about what is happening behind closed doors because that is where the decisions that affect their daily lives are being taken. And I think that the Qatar scandal should have been a big wake-up call for all of us. And, unless our response is real ambition, these kinds of scandal scandals will keep on emerging.

As is highlighted in this report, We have a very long way to go in this area. The changes needed to address the limits of the Public Access to Documents Regulations have been advocated by Parliament for many years now, and it seems like our pleas have so far fallen on deaf ears. We need to reopen negotiations and as soon as possible, because our citizens deserve the widest possible access to documents we use in our day at work.

**Sophia in 't Veld**, *on behalf of the Renew Group*. – Mr President, Madam Commissioner, colleagues, I am very grateful for the report of the rapporteur, but I would disagree with you, rapporteur, on one tiny detail: you said 'transparency, access to documents is a fundamental right'.

That's true in itself. But there is something much more important – it is a key element of democracy. Without transparency and access to documents, there is no scrutiny. Without scrutiny, there is no accountability. And if we say that we are a political Union, even a geopolitical Union, where the Commission and the Council and Parliament have taken great strides ahead in recent years in response to crisis, then the need for more transparency is more pressing than ever.

And I respectfully disagree with you, Madam Commissioner, that the European Commission is very transparent, and the same applies to the Council. I think we really need a dramatic improvement. And as has been highlighted by my colleague, the so-called SMS-gate or delete-gate urgently needs to be answered.

But there, colleagues, I would also like to raise a critical note to this House. How is it possible that a journalist went to court, *The New York Times* went to court? The European Ombudsman issued an opinion labelling it maladministration. And there has been a very critical remark by the European Court of Auditors that this House so far has spectacularly failed to hold the President of the European Commission to account.

Ms von der Leyen should appear here before the plenary and explain. And I think she has a duty; there cannot be any excuses. The law applies to Ms von der Leyen and to the Commission as well. She has to register the text messages so that they can be accessed if need be.

**Tineke Strik**, *on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group*. – Mr President, dear Commissioner, openness enables citizens to participate more closely in the decision-making process, and this makes authorities more legitimate and more accountable to the citizen in a democratic system.

This reasoning of the Court dates back to 2011, when it ruled that the Council violates EU law by refusing access to Council documents. The Court has repeatedly held that the Council must proactively disclose its negotiation documents to enable citizens' involvement and participation. But the Council continues to obstruct transparency, by requiring an application, by delaying the decision, excessively using rejection grounds, redacting texts and creating financial hurdles.

A council, disregarding judgments from its own court has seriously affected its own credibility, and it can a Commission President causing a scandalous 'text-gate' as well. It is telling that both actors are not present at the moment, and then why we still wonder why citizens don't seem interested or involved in EU policies? Citizens are key for public and democratic scrutiny. They must be able to form and share their opinion before legislation is adopted with us, with national parliaments, with their governments.

So, Council, start complying with the law, and Commission and Parliament, fundamentally change your practices as well. Active citizens, NGOs, journalists: we need them desperately to bring the EU closer to its citizens, so don't be scared of them, but embrace them. Get transparent.

**Joachim Stanisław Brudziński**, w imieniu grupy ECR. – Pani Komisarz! Panie Przewodniczący! Chciałbym podziękować Pani Sprawozdawczyni za przygotowanie tego sprawozdania i jednocześnie jako kontrsprawozdawca z ramienia grupy ECR chciałbym zadeklarować jego poparcie w dzisiejszym głosowaniu.

Chciałbym podkreślić, że obywatele i rezydenci Unii Europejskiej mają prawo dostępu do dokumentów instytucji, organów i jednostek organizacyjnych bez względu na formę dokumentów. Przejrzystość ma podstawowe znaczenie dla utrzymania zaufania obywateli Unii Europejskiej co do politycznych, legislacyjnych i administracyjnych procesów w Unii. Jednak konieczne jest uwzględnienie specyfiki każdej z instytucji.

I w tym kontekście niezwykle newralgiczne są dokumenty znajdujące się w posiadaniu Rady. Bardzo często te dokumenty zawierają przecież informacje pochodzące bezpośrednio z państw członkowskich. Ich zbyt łatwe ujawnienie mogłoby naruszyć nadrzędne interesy poszczególnych państw. Przypominam jednocześnie, że żadne rozporządzenie ani orzecznictwo sądów Unii Europejskiej nie nakłada na instytucje Unii Europejskiej obowiązku proaktywnego publikowania dokumentów legislacyjnych.

W tym kontekście kluczowe zaś jest wypracowanie spójnego podejścia do dostępu do dokumentów, w tym kwestii procedowania z wnioskami dotyczącymi rozmów trójstronnych. Uważam, że posłowie powinni przyjąć systematyczną praktykę spotykania się wyłącznie z tymi przedstawicielami grup interesu, którzy są zarejestrowani w rejestrze służącym przejrzystości.

I tutaj chciałbym odnieść się do obowiązującej w Polsce ustawy z dnia 7 lipca 2005 r. o działalności lobbingsowej w procesie stanowienia prawa. Ustawa ta ma bardzo pozytywny wpływ na procesy legislacyjne w Polsce i uważam, że należy wykorzystywać te wieloletnie, cenne doświadczenia również na forum instytucji europejskich.

**Anders Vistisen**, for ID-Gruppen. – Hr. formand! EU bryster sig gerne af sin såkaldte demokratiske legitimitet. At vi skulle være et fyrtårn for demokrati må siges at blive punkteret af debatten her i dag. For kan man tale om et ægte demokrati, hvis der ikke er adgang, offentlig adgang til at efterprøve vores beslutninger, til at efterprøve, hvordan vi bruger skatteborgernes penge? Det er jo fuldstændig vanvittigt at opleve, at nogen ønsker at reducere spørgsmålet om aktindsigt til et spørgsmål om procenter i et regneark. Hvis de dokumenter, der udleveres, er fyldt med sorte bokse, så man ikke kan læse dem, og hvis de mest centrale dokumenter, dem der mest kritisk kunne afdække skandaler og kriser i EU, de helt bliver afholdt fra at blive udleveret, så er det jo ligegyldigt, at man udleverer alt det harmløse, alt det der får unionen til at stå i et bedre lys. Det er ikke et vandmærke for en ægte demokratisk institution, og det bliver jo endnu værre, når vi ser på sms-gaten. I Danmark har vi haft en lignende situation, men der var statsministeren og statsministerens departementschef nødt til at slette sms'erne, fordi i et ægte demokrati, der ved man, at sms'er er en del af den aktindsigt, man kan få. Det er det ikke her i EU. Så vi er endt med en regning efter corona. Måned efter måned, år efter år betaler vi hundredvis af millioner i milliarder for vacciner, vi ikke har brug for. Men vi kan ikke få at vide, på hvad for en baggrund disse kontrakter er indgået, og hvor nær er en relation, der har været mellem kommissionsformanden og de private firmaer. Det er en skandale, og det er en skandale, at det her hus ikke har taget handling og har stillet et mistillid til Kommissionen på den baggrund.

**Cornelia Ernst**, im Namen der Fraktion *The Left*. – Herr Präsident! Ich schließe mich begeistert den Ausführungen von Sophia in 't Veld an und wiederhole noch einmal: Demokratie braucht Transparenz, und ohne Transparenz gibt es keine Demokratie.

Was meine ich damit? Nehmen wir die Grenzschutzagentur Frontex. Frontex hat ja nicht nur ein Menschenrechtsproblem, Frontex hat auch ein Transparenzproblem. Frontex agiert dadurch im Dunkeln, entzieht sich systematisch parlamentarischer und öffentlicher Kontrolle. Zwar gibt es nach jahrelanger Kritik, nach Hin und Her jetzt ein Dokumentenregister. Schaut man da aber hinein, dann findet man nur einen winzigen Bruchteil von Dokumenten. Im Jahre 2020 haben weniger als 5 % der Antragstellerinnen und Antragsteller zu Dokumenten von Frontex uneingeschränkter Zugang bekommen.

Auch mit Blick auf das Transparenzregister hat Frontex gelogen. Sie haben nämlich verschwiegen, mit wem sie sich zwischen 2017 und 2019 alles so an Lobbyorganisationen getroffen haben. Investigative Journalistinnen und Journalisten haben das herausgefunden.

Das gleiche auch beim OLAF-Bericht, den praktisch niemand in der Öffentlichkeit hätte lesen sollen. Ohne investigativen Journalismus wäre er nicht öffentlich geworden.

Frontex muss die Praxis ändern, mit der Zivilgesellschaft kommunizieren, die Zugang zu Dokumenten beantragt, muss per E-Mail kommunizieren, wie sich das gehört, so, wie es auch die Bürgerbeauftragte in ihrer Entscheidung vom 15. Dezember letzten Jahres empfohlen hat. Noch einmal: Ohne Transparenz gibt es wirklich keine Demokratie.

**Balázs Hidvéghi (NI)**. – Elnök Úr! Nagyon ritkán van szó itt, ebben a házban arról, hogy vajon az európai intézmények, a Parlament és a Bizottság, milyen módon tartja be a saját szabályait. Vajon a jogállamiság hogy áll ezekben az intézményekben? Ez a riport, ez a jelentés egy üdítő kivétel ebből a szempontból. Annak ellenére ritkán beszélünk erről, hogy minden idők legnagyobb korrupciós botrányának voltunk tanúi az elmúlt hónapokban. Ennek a parlamentnek az egyik alelnökét és több képviselőjét bilincsben vitték el, majd nem sokkal később kiderült, hogy az Európai Bizottság vezető tisztviselői is messzemenően visszaéltek a helyzetükkel, a hatalmukkal, és elfogadhatatlan, védhetetlen módon fogadtak el ajándékokat és egyéb pénzügyi juttatásokat saját maguknak.

De a legnagyobb botrány természetesen az a vakcina beszerzés, amit állítólag sms-ben intézett Ursula von der Leyen. És milyen érdekes, később ezek az sms-ek – csak ezek az sms-ek -, eltűntek a telefonjáról. Mindegyik más megvan, csak ezek az sms-ek nincsenek meg. Ez botrányos! Semmiféle jogalapja és hitelessége nincs az európai intézményeknek kioktatni másokat jogállamiságból, a korrupció elleni fellépésről addig, amíg a saját házuk táján nem tesznek rendet. Számoljanak el a pénzekkel és tartsák be a szabályokat.

**Jiří Pospíšil (PPE)**. – Pane předsedající, já si považuji za čest, že v této diskusi mohu vystoupit, protože to považuji za mimořádně důležitý téma. Princip veřejnosti je základní princip fungování jakéhokoliv demokratického orgánu, který vykonává veřejnou moc, a my bychom v tomto případě měli opravdu jít příkladem.

Občané kontrolují činnost veřejných orgánů, tedy i naši, právě skrze dostupné informace o naší činnosti a skrze přístup k dokumentům, které jsou podkladem pro naše rozhodování. To je podle mě mimořádně důležité. Je to esence vůbec fungování demokracie jako takové. Ve všech mocích i v moci soudní máme veřejná soudní, jednání a platí to tedy o to více pro moc politickou a mělo by to platit pro nás a měli bychom jít v tom příkladem.

Nejsem příznivec nějakých velkých revolučních změn, ale děkuji zpravodajce a zpravodajům za tuto zprávu. Je podle mého názoru dobře napsaná, vyvážená. Děkuji také Komisi, paní komisařce, za její vystoupení. Myslím si, že bychom měli mravenčí práci postupně vylepšovat dostupnost všech našich dokumentů, a tou dostupností není myšleno to, že ty dokumenty jsou veřejné, ale jak jsou uchopitelné, jak jednoduše je občan a volič najde na internetu, jak s nimi jednoduše může pracovat, v jakých jazycích jsou a tak dále.

Toto všechno je fakticky skryto pod principem veřejnosti a veřejného přístupu k dokumentům a tam máme co zlepšovat. To je jednoznačné a evoluční, postupnou cestou doufám, že občan bude více a více s dokumenty a naší prací spokojen.



**Juan Fernando López Aguilar (S&D).** – Señor presidente, señora vicepresidenta Jourová, en 2009 entró en vigor el Tratado de Lisboa con la Carta de Derechos Fundamentales de la Unión Europea, cuyos artículos 40 y 41 consagran derechos fundamentales de última generación: el derecho a la transparencia, al acceso a los documentos y al buen gobierno.

Hay todo un historial de resoluciones de este Parlamento Europeo que ordenan que por fin se actualice la Directiva actualmente en vigor —que es nada menos que de 2001, la 1049/2001— manifiestamente obsoleta. Hay jurisprudencia del Tribunal de Justicia de la Unión Europea: las sentencias De Capitani 1 y De Capitani 2 garantizan el derecho de acceso incluso a la información que se maneja en los trílogos, en la fase definitiva del procedimiento legislativo entre el Parlamento Europeo y el Consejo. Y la Defensora del Pueblo, Emily O'Reilly, señala siempre que existe un retraso inconcebible, intolerable, en el acceso a los documentos, incluso por parte de los ciudadanos que lo solicitan.

Por tanto, no se trata solo de plataformas y portales, ni solamente de utilizar las herramientas tecnológicas disponibles. Se trata de asegurar una actualización —como propone el informe de nuestra compañera Evin Incir— de la legislación europea, que garantice la realización efectiva del derecho a la información, al acceso a los documentos y a la transparencia como componente esencial de la democracia.

Y añadido más. Este Parlamento se ha preocupado mucho de combatir la desinformación, la intoxicación, las *fake news* y los bulos. Es un componente esencial para combatir la desinformación el que los ciudadanos tengan derecho a un acceso a la información correcta del modo en que operan las instituciones europeas, lo que afecta incluso a la cúspide de las instituciones europeas y de la Comisión Europea, como aquí se ha recordado.

Hay un asunto político que concierne a las comunicaciones de la presidenta de la Comisión con grandes farmacéuticas. Este Parlamento tiene derecho a conocer. Es una cuestión de democracia, señora vicepresidenta.

**Daniel Freund (Verts/ALE).** – Herr Präsident, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Ich habe bisher in dieser Plenarsitzung 437 Kurznachrichten verschickt: SMS, WhatsApp, Signal, Slack. Natürlich koordiniert man heute so die Politik. Man spricht sich ab über die Abstimmung, man hält Kontakt mit den Mitgliedern in der Bundesregierung in Berlin. So wird Politik gemacht. Ich habe vielleicht auch ein paar E-Mails geschrieben, und vielleicht ist auch diese Woche ein Brief dabei gewesen. Aber ich glaube, dass hier alle mittlerweile so Politik machen, hauptsächlich über Kurznachrichten.

Die einzige Ausnahme von dieser Regel scheint Ursula von der Leyen zu sein. Denn da sagt die Kommission: Die Kurznachrichten der Kommissionspräsidentin, da wird keine Politik gemacht. Die haben überhaupt keinen Informationsgehalt und sollen deshalb auch nicht öffentlich gemacht werden, wenn danach gefragt wird. Das ist doch Unfug! Es kann doch nicht sein, dass man eine Art von Kommunikation komplett von den Transparenzregeln ausnimmt und dass es jetzt an der *New York Times* liegen muss, vor Gericht durchzusetzen, dass sich das endlich ändert. Ich würde Ihnen sehr empfehlen, Frau Kommissarin, dass Sie da proaktiv für Transparenz sorgen und nicht erst warten, dass der EuGH Sie dazu zwingt.

**Cristian Terheș (ECR).** – Mr President, Madam Commissioner, the key difference between democracy and tyranny is transparency. In other words, when the people know everything about the government, that is democracy, when the government knows everything about the people, that is tyranny. In the past four years, since Ursula von der Leyen took office, we have seen an unprecedented decrease in transparency at the top level of the European Union, which is undermining the democracy and the proper functioning of the European Union. If your boss Ursula von der Leyen does not have anything to hide, why isn't she here to answer questions for all of us right now?

As you can see, the issue of transparency is not an issue of right or left. It's an issue of right or wrong. And everybody is on the right side of this issue because all of us are asking exactly the same thing: for the European Commission to be more transparent and more accountable to all of us. The refusal of Ursula von der Leyen's office to disclose to the media the personal messages exchanged between her and Pfizer CEO Albert Bourla used to negotiate contracts was maladministration, the European Ombudsman's office concluded after an investigation. When there is a lack of transparency, corruption flourishes, and the current European Commission is living proof of it. The only solution for the European Commission to regain credibility is for it to be transparent. And that starts by publishing all the messages exchanged between Ursula von der Leyen and Albert Bourla.

**Patricia Chagnon (ID).** – Monsieur le Président, chers collègues, la transparence, c'est le chien de garde, le vérificateur actif et démocratique de l'action publique. Par conséquent, l'accès aux documents doit être le principe et non pas l'exception. Effectivement, le public réclame l'accès aux contrats pharmaceutiques de milliards d'euros qui restent inaccessibles. Les citoyens sont choqués qu'il y ait des négociations secrètes ou encore se demandent comment vous pouvez refuser de répondre aux questions, ici, dans ce Parlement européen, posées par vos propres parlementaires.

Que penser du pschitt qu'a fait le Qatargate et de toutes les questions dont les réponses restent enfouies dans les tiroirs? Et encore plus récent, à Malte, le 20 juin dernier, lors de ma mission officielle, j'apprends que la nouvelle Agence européenne pour l'asile va collecter des données et se prépare à contrôler et à évaluer les États membres, mais uniquement pour la Commission, sans rendre ces données publiques. Qui sont ces chevaliers blancs qui ont pondu ces textes en faveur de la transparence, alors que cette maison ne la pratique pas à l'égard de ses propres députés?

Alors, si nous soutenons toute initiative en faveur de l'accès, nous continuerons à réclamer partout et en tout lieu que les nobles intentions se traduisent surtout en actes. Car oui, la transparence est le vérificateur actif de l'action publique et le seul garant contre la dictature. Et je dirais: à bon entendeur.

**Anne-Sophie Pelletier (The Left).** – Monsieur le Président, Madame la Commissaire, Qatargate, SMS Gate, affaire Dentsu-Hoffman, Frontex... La liste est longue et plutôt que de regarder ces scandales en face, chacun détourne le regard. Non, ça ne se passe pas chez nous. Si, ça se passe chez nous.

Nos institutions ne doivent pas se contenter de slogans, mais d'un vrai plan d'action. L'accès public aux documents est une liberté fondamentale et notre rôle est de la garantir, en commençant par une chose très simple: rendre accessibles à tous et toutes les sites internet de nos institutions. C'est vraiment anodin, mais c'est la première liaison avec les citoyens européens.

Alors, quand il s'agit de défendre nos valeurs, nous sommes très forts. Mais d'autres sont très impliqués dans l'intérêt des multinationales ou les leurs. Et je vous le dis, la politique qui vise à garder la confiance des marchés perd la confiance du peuple. Et dans ces temps sombres, l'inconnu et l'ombre sèment le doute. Ce sont la clarté et la transparence qui rallumeront peut-être les étoiles européennes.

Nous devons être à la hauteur des enjeux. C'est ce que souhaitent les citoyens européens. Nous n'en sommes plus au simple temps de la nécessité, mais bien au temps des priorités. Pas au temps de la publicité. Parce qu'il suffit d'un rien pour que nos démocraties soient vraiment en danger.

**Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D).** – Mr President, Commissioner, yesterday we voted in this Parliament the report on the lessons learned from the pandemic. And as the Chair of the COVI Committee I have to say I'm very proud of the work that we have conducted. But there is a very important downside on that work. We – but the Commission particularly – failed to deliver on the transparency regarding the EU contracts on vaccines and the preliminary negotiations. We did a lot of effort to request these documents. They came very late. They came not as they should, and they were either redacted or not everybody had access to them.

Many colleagues already referred to the Textgate issues. We as a committee requested the presence of Ursula von der Leyen. Commissioner, do you know any parliament in the world where a minister or a prime minister would refuse to come to a relevant committee to answer questions? I don't. And I have to say, dear colleagues, it is also our responsibility and problem because the Conference of Presidents in this Parliament did not act upon the request of the COVI Committee, and a lot of our leaders were responsible for that. So let's be honest: we need to change that, because in a democracy we need full transparency and accountability. It will not only create problems between our institutions if we do not deliver on that, but it will also risk losing the trust of European citizens. So we need to change that approach.

**Dorien Rookmaker (ECR).** – Mr President, dear Commissioner, the EU is the birthplace of democracy, and democracy only functions well if there is trust. Transparency is the cornerstone of trust. That is why I would like to thank the rapporteur, Ms Incir, because her report is very important.

Why is it so difficult to operate in a transparent way? The key factor is organisation. If you organise your work, there is less need to hide, but you need a safe working environment as well. And so it starts with the tone at the top, especially in a bureaucratic hierarchy. It's the top that sets the example. Is the EU's top management up to the challenge? Unfortunately not, according to this report.

If we want to show the world how good we are, we sure as hell need to get our act together. We need less complexity and more simplicity. We need a state-of-the-art document management system. That is the first step. But I repeat: it all starts with the tone at the top.

**Virginie Joron (ID).** – Monsieur le Président, chers collègues, hier, nous avons voté le rapport Pfizer et aujourd'hui je suis agréablement surprise. Est-ce que la nuit porte conseil? Parce qu'hier vous aviez l'occasion de sanctionner, dans le cadre du rapport Pfizer, le travail de la Commission qui était, nous l'avons bien vu, le reflet d'un travail de lobbyistes. En effet, ce rapport sur la COVID-19 ne mentionnait ni Pfizer ni l'affaire des SMS, encore moins les problèmes soulevés par la Cour des comptes sur le manque de transparence. Et vous connaissez le scandale de ces contrats juteux, ces contrats auxquels nous n'avons pas eu accès en entier pour protéger les intérêts financiers de Pfizer. Des contrats d'achats de centaines de millions de doses pour encore quatre ans.

C'est pourquoi votre rapport est primordial. Oui, nous devons avoir accès à tous ces documents. Oui, nous devons savoir quels lobbyistes rencontrent les commissaires et les députés au Parlement. Pfizer a des badges d'accès. Ces lobbyistes rencontrent donc qui ils veulent ici. Je propose que ces données d'accès des lobbyistes soient publiques. Les Français et les Européens doivent savoir qui vient faire du lobbying et aussi pourquoi. Idem quand certains commissaires vont à ces réunions cachées organisées au Bilderberg.

Ensuite, les documents de l'Agence européenne du médicament, qui analysent les effets secondaires des médicaments et vaccins, doivent être accessibles dans toutes les langues. Et surtout, cette agence doit répondre à nos demandes, par exemple en nous fournissant les rapports mensuels de suivi des effets secondaires de Pfizer, comme elle s'y était engagée lors des auditions de la commission COVI.

Enfin, concernant le secret imposé sur certains documents, nous devrions plutôt imposer à l'administration européenne la transparence totale ou, au minimum, une date d'expiration sur les documents à diffusion restreinte. Même la CIA ouvre ses archives. Donc la Commission doit arrêter avec cette opacité coupable et complice.

**Leszek Miller (S&D).** – Panie Przewodniczący! Pani Komisarz! Koleżanki i Koledzy! Sądzę, że wszyscy na tej sali podzielamy pogląd, że publiczny dostęp do dokumentów powinien być szeroki i łatwy. Wyjątki, opóźnienia, odmowy powinny być wyjątkiem, a nie regułą. Dlatego niepokoi mnie usuwanie niektórych dokumentów przez Komisję i utrudnianie Parlamentowi uzyskania dostępu do pełnych i szczegółowych informacji na temat wdrażania i egzekwowania prawa unijnego.

Zasady odtajniania dokumentów powinny być jasne, jednolite. Należy powołać niezależny organ, który nadzorowałby egzekwowanie tych zasad. Przejrzystość sprzyja odpowiedzialności i zaufaniu. Gdy obywatele mają dostęp do dokumentów i informacji leżących u podstaw polityk unijnych, mogą rozliczać swoich wybranych przedstawicieli i urzędników publicznych. Umożliwia to również organizacjom społeczeństwa obywatelskiego, dziennikarzom i badaczom prowadzenie dochodzeń i ujawnianie potencjalnych nadużyć i korupcji.

Jako członkowie tej izby powinniśmy promować przejrzystość, odpowiedzialność i demokrację w Unii Europejskiej, promować zaufanie i wzmacniać legitymację instytucji unijnych, dbając o to, żeby dokumenty, które kształtują naszą przyszłość, pozostały dostępne dla wszystkich.

**Annika Bruna (ID).** – Monsieur le Président, le manque de transparence de la part des institutions européennes a atteint son sommet en 2021, quand la Commission a refusé de rechercher correctement les textos échangés entre la présidente de la Commission et le PDG de la société Pfizer.

Nous apprenons en outre, dans cette affaire, en plus des plaintes administratives qui sont pendantes auprès du Médiateur européen et de la CJUE, que M. Baldan, un lobbyiste belge accrédité, a déposé une plainte auprès de la justice belge visant directement la présidente de la Commission européenne. La conséquence serait inédite, car cette dernière pourrait voir son immunité levée et les SMS échangés avec le président de Pfizer pourraient être consultés par le juge d'instruction en charge du dossier.

La justice devra déterminer si M<sup>me</sup> von der Leyen a agi en dehors des traités européens et de son mandat, et si ces échanges de SMS relèvent d'une relation privilégiée entre les deux protagonistes, ce qui constituerait un conflit d'intérêts manifeste. Cette affaire est emblématique du chemin qui reste à parcourir par l'exécutif européen dans le niveau de transparence des contrats et du processus de décision, car l'opacité en la matière entame nécessairement la confiance des citoyens.

**Gunnar Beck (ID).** – Herr Präsident! 2020 kaufte die EU-Kommission Millionen defekte COVID-Masken. Ermittlungen verweigerte die Kommission mit Verweis auf die wirtschaftlichen Interessen der beteiligten Unternehmen. 2021 dann handelte Kommissionschefin von der Leyen Impfstoffverträge mit Pfizer für 4,6 Milliarden Impfdosen für mindestens 71 Milliarden Euro aus. Erneut per SMS, so wie sie es als Verteidigungsministerin auch mit US-Beratungsfirmen wie McKinsey hielt.

Da sich mittlerweile mehr Menschen vor den Impfschäden als vor COVID fürchten und der Impfschutz der Impfstoffe begrenzt ist, bleiben hunderte Millionen Impfdosen ungenutzt und sollen vernichtet werden. Doch Pfizer kassiert seine 71 Milliarden. Bei der Bundeswehr war die Geldverschwendung noch zehnstellig. Die SMS allerdings, so die Kommission, mit denen von der Leyen die Verträge mit Pfizer auskungelte, seien leider allesamt gelöscht, genauso wie zuvor im Verteidigungsministerium.

Dann stehen noch Vorwürfe des Interessenkonflikts im Raum, denn von der Leyens Ehegatte ist Eigentümer einer Biotechfirma, die mRNA-Impfstoffe entwickelt und dafür Millionensubventionen bekommt. Auch hier wird Aufklärung blockiert. Misswirtschaft und Verwaltungsversagen und Korruption – nicht meine Worte, sondern die der EU-Bürgerbeauftragten Emily O'Reilly.

(Εναρξη της διαδικασίας «Catch-the-Eye»)

**Milan Zver (PPE).** – Gospod predsednik! Poročilo se mi zdi dobro, saj je kritično predvsem do Evropske komisije, ki prevečkrat zavrne objavo dokumentov ali razkritju le deloma ugotovi, kot se je to sprva zgodilo meni, ko sem od komisarke Jourove zahteval interne dokumente z njenega spornega obiska v Sloveniji.

Podpredsednica Evropske komisije, ki naj bi bila zadolžena za preglednost, se že debele štiri mesece izogiba objavi podrobnosti o njenem obisku v Sloveniji, za katerega dobršni del javnosti meni, da je šlo za nedopustni intervencionizem v procesu sprejemanja zakona o javni RTV. Torej obstaja utemeljen dvom v zakonitost delovanja Evropske komisije v tem primeru, gospa Jourova pa zavrača razkritje zahtevanih dokumentov.

Skratka, bolj ko boste prikrivali dejstva, bolj bodo državljani dvomili v vašo demokratičnost in transparentnost, gospa komisarka Jourova, komisarka za transparentnost. Danes ste nam slikali Potemkinovo vas, a so vam moji kolegi tako z leve kot desne predstavili pravo sliko in ta ni bila dobra za vas.

**Heidi Hautala (Verts/ALE).** – Mr President, there's a grey area in our institutions which doesn't get much attention, and that is the systematic refusal on access to administrative documents. And I'm talking about our own institution, the European Parliament. I believe that far too often the administration refuses access to documents using the grounds on protection of privacy and the integrity of the individual, or protection of the decision-making process.

I think it is impossible for the citizens to accept that from time again, the institution uses these arguments and says that if the documents would be released, then confidentiality would not be respected. I believe this goes very much against our trend on more accountability and transparency. And I very much request that when the taskforce is now looking into the internal rules of the European Parliament – or rather the lack of them – one thing that would be revised are the rules governing public access to EP documents, the Bureau decision on 28 November 2001, Article 15(2).

**Stanislav Polčák (PPE).** – Pane předsedající, informovanost představuje klíčový prvek demokratické společnosti a samozřejmě transparentnosti veřejné správy. Občané mají právo být informováni o fungování našich institucí. Je to opravdu základní esence demokracie a je důležité se zaměřit na několik aspektů přístupu k transparentnosti.

Zprvce proces získávání dokumentů samozřejmě musí být jednoduchý a přehledný. Dále je důležité usilovat o digitalizaci. Připojuji se ke všem mým řečníkům, kteří o tom hovořili. Samozřejmě mít uživatelsky přívětivé nastavení stromové struktury dostupnosti těchto dokumentů a samozřejmě toho procesu získávání těchto dokumentů.

Musím souhlasit s tím, že máme i v minulosti určité tíživé body, kdy nebyla zcela respektována zásada transparentnosti. Jako právník ovšem musím souhlasit, že někdy je důležité i chránit práva jiných osob, protože například z důvodu veřejného pořádku, bezpečnosti není vždy možné zajistit plnou transparentnost. Někdy zkrátka i veřejná moc tzv. příslovečně tahá za kratší konec. Je ale důležité najít vyváženost a tu si myslím, že v této zprávě máme obsaženou.

(Λήξη της διαδικασίας «Catch-the-Eye»)

**Věra Jourová, Vice-President of the Commission.** – Mr President, I only have two minutes, but I have to react on many things, so I apologise ahead for maybe being a little bit longer. Honourable Members, thank you very much for your interventions. I will react on three things, but Madame Hautala just mentioned, indeed, I agree, we have to upgrade update our rules because the relevant regulation is dated from 2001, then we have two from 2008 and 2011 – it is medieval time. We are in a new era of communication.

Also, in light of what you criticise that the text messages are not taken as the relevant documents to be disclosed, I think that we have to look into that and we have to set the rules which will make clear what should be disclosed and what should be recognised as a short-term, ephemeral kind of communication. So I agree.

I asked several times to be allowed to withdraw these two pieces of legislation and to update that. I think I... maybe I agree with Sophie in 't Veld, who said that we have to... How did you say it? We need dramatic improvement. Yes, let's do that. But we can only do it through the rules which will apply to all of us.

The second thing, I was accused by Mr Zver for doing something wrong in Slovenia, so I want to make clear what happened there. I met the President of the Constitutional Court, that very court which had on the table the law on the public service television.

Mr Zver, it is my professional honesty which tells me not to speak about the pending cases. I never do that. I never do it when I meet the President of the European Court of Justice. I never do it when I visit the Presidents of Constitutional Courts in the Member States.

It is a holy principle that I do not interfere in the independence of the court and discuss the pending files or decisions to be taken. I made this clear immediately that very day after the hysterical accusations against me, still in Ljubljana, I made it clear, I replied very clearly there were no documents. That was just my very quick answer, so please stop this.

Now, on COVID, I mentioned that indeed we need to upgrade the rules, which will also cover the electronic communications. But on COVID, I fully recognise the holy right of this House to criticise, to ask questions, request questions, and I believe that this discussion is not the last one on the topic of Ursula von der Leyen's text messages. But I would like us also to give it a little bit of a perspective.

Madame Van Brempt said that we can be proud of the EU and of our action, how we managed the COVID pandemic. It was thanks to Ursula von der Leyen's courage because you never heard her say we don't have any competence whatsoever for the health sector, never. She took the challenge.

She came with solutions and she undertook incredible risks. Early support of research, investing in research, development and production of vaccines – it was a very risky endeavour, and she did it. Common purchase, I remember the moment of breathless expectations when AstraZeneca failed to deliver. Of course, she had to act to guarantee the delivery of the vaccines to all the Member States without seeing the queue where the small and poorer countries will be helplessly queuing behind the richer and bigger countries.

Now, there was fair distribution, and it was also decisive action which was decided by Ursula von der Leyen and, of course, the College of Commissioners. So I am fully recognising your right to criticise the way of communication, but I would also like to hear from time to time some thank you to Ursula von der Leyen for the courage she had and what she did for Europe and for the third countries, because we also distributed a lot of vaccines to the third countries.

What Mr Beck said here – that a lot of vaccines had to be destroyed – well, after the battle, everybody is a general. There was no possibility to predict. As we all know, the pandemic was an unprecedented situation.

Last very short comment: for very strong reasons, we discuss how to improve access to document systems, because many of you said here that is absolutely key to be transparent and to deliver the information to the outside world. But my last comment is maybe simple, maybe even banal. It is important also that the people understand the documents because we are not producing the documents to be understood by experts and lawyers only.

But it is another story; it is about our communication, about the slogan 'Europe closer to the citizens'. People should understand us, but I could not help it. I had to mention that as well.

**Evin Incir**, *rappporteur*. – Mr President, Madam Commissioner, colleagues, I actually want to start by saying that I think it's a pity that we don't have the Council here also because it would have been important and interesting to hear their view and their plan on the way forward on this matter. With their absence, a big – and maybe even the most important – component is actually missing in the discussion to find a joint way forward.

And I know that the Commissioner mentioned that there is no interest from the co-legislators, but I wouldn't say that there is no interest from the co-legislator. There is, as we have heard here today, a big interest by the European Parliament. However, there is not sufficient trust in the Council that, if we withdraw the current proposal from 2011, there will be progress instead of deterioration, that the Council would agree on a more progressive and more transparent proposal, rather than less transparent.

Of course, there was very essential work that that the Commissioner did when having the courage to take leadership in combating the horrific pandemic that hit every and each of us in here and also globally, of course. But the same courage is also needed to ensure democracy and transparency. And I agree, of course, I never contradicted my colleague In 't Veld that democracy is the cornerstone, or transparency and access to documents is the cornerstone, in democracy. I maybe just formulated myself in another way, but it is the cornerstone stone of democracy.

I would never have imagined, for example, in Sweden, where I come from, that a minister or the Prime Minister would refuse to give away or make public political, especially political, sensitive and even less sensitive information that the public, that our citizens have a right to. And imagined even less that the Prime Minister would let it go to court to decide. That shouldn't be needed. There should be a will to show that accommodating transparency and really standing up for a fully-fledged democratic European Union is not just words but also seen in the actions.

Therefore, I need to say, colleagues, I actually sent a letter to the Commission President and invited her to this debate today. But unfortunately, the Commission President is not with us, even though, of course, we are happy, Commissioner, that you are with us. But I, as rapporteur, did my best in trying to also get the Commission President so we could have an open and honest discussion, not least on the text messages she was exchanging with the chief of Pfizer.

With this said, I see – and I'm happy – that there is big support for the report that myself and the co-rapporteurs have done. And I hope to see a big majority also voting in favour of it later today.

**Πρόεδρος.** – Η συζήτηση έληξε.

Η ψηφοφορία θα διεξαχθεί σήμερα Πέμπτη 13 Ιουλίου 2023.

#### 4. Globalna konwergencja generatywnej sztucznej inteligencji (debata)

**Πρόεδρος.** – Το επόμενο σημείο στην ημερήσια διάταξη αφορά τη δήλωση της Επιτροπής σχετικά με την παγκόσμια σύγκλιση όσον αφορά την παραγωγική ΤΝ (2023/2789(RSP)).

**Věra Jourová, Vice-President of the Commission.** – Mr President, honourable Members of the European Parliament, let me start by thanking the European Parliament for putting the important and very timely topic of global convergence on generative AI on the agenda today. I would like to extend my gratitude also to the rapporteurs and the shadows who have worked tirelessly on the proposal of the AI Act and who are now committed to close trilogues as soon as possible.

Now, first let me say a few words on the impact of generative AI which we expect. Generative AI is a concept that is very much on top of the public discourse at the moment. This term usually refers to AI systems that are based on large foundation models and that can generate new original content in different modalities, for example, text, image, video or sound.

The global rate of adoption of generative AI systems has been massive and fast. For instance, last January there were already 100 million users of ChatGPT just two months after its launch. It is, however, also already clear, as just highlighted in a recent report from OECD, that generative AI amplifies pre-existing risks and even creates new risks, in particular regarding related bias, discrimination, mis- and disinformation.

The proposal for the AI Act is Europe's response to address the risks of AI and to enhance trust, including for what concerns generative AI. Indeed, AI systems which are usually referred to as generative AI, do already fall in the scope of AI Act. Under the transparency provisions, people have to be informed whether they are interacting with a chatbot or when they receive deepfakes.

In its own mandate, the European Parliament has added additional requirements on foundation models and generative AI to take account of recent developments. We also recognise the importance of discussing how AI-generated content can be easily detected, for instance, to tackle disinformation.

These will be important parts of the trilogue negotiations. In the meantime, it is important to note that our regulatory approach is already inspired many countries, to mention Brazil, for instance.

In this context, we cannot sit back and wait until the AI Act becomes applicable in two or three years. This is why the Commission has called for an AI pact which will seek voluntary commitments of companies to start implementing the AI Act ahead of its legal deadline. Respect for the legislative process is key. The pact will not pre-empt the work of the co-legislators after adoption. The voluntary commitments in the AI Pact will be fully aligned with the final text of the Act.

Let me also remind you that while the discussions on the AI Act and other legislative proposals, notably the product liability and AI liability directives, are ongoing. The deployment of generative AI does not take place in a legal vacuum. EU data protection and EU consumer law is already in place. National data protection authorities already launched enforcement actions and cooperate closely on this matter.

Now a few words about the international efforts on generative AI, where the EU, and I am proud to say it, is a global frontrunner. No other region is as advanced in developing a comprehensive, binding regulatory framework which is essential to address the risks and opportunities of AI effectively.

This is why we carry a responsibility to engage internationally, and we do so at different levels, including OECD, G7, United Nations, Council of Europe and bilaterally. This brings me to the second part of my intervention: the role and priorities of the European Commission in the global efforts on AI and in particular generative AI.

In the context of G7, the G7 leaders established the Hiroshima AI process with a focus on the development of guardrails for generative AI. The Commission contributes its expertise and promotes the principles of the AI Act without preempting the legislative process.

The Hiroshima process could result in a global approach to seeking industrial commitments, for instance, through an international code of conduct or another form of guidance complementing national or regional regulatory or non-regulatory initiatives.

Furthermore, the EU cooperates with the United Nations on the Global Digital Compact and, more specifically, with Unesco on the recommendations on ethics of artificial intelligence.

On the regional level, the EU is actively engaged in the ongoing Council of Europe process to develop a convention on AI. The work at the Council of Europe could also prove instrumental in achieving a global approach to binding common rules, allowing to address risks posed to human rights, democracy and rule of law.

Bilaterally, AI is high on the agenda in our digital partnerships, for instance with Japan and Korea. In the EU-US Trade and Technology Council, we have developed a roadmap on evaluation and measurement tools for trustworthy AI and risk management, in line with our risk-based approach. Further work will also cover generative AI. In addition, we are promoting joint EU-US research on use cases of AI with a broad societal benefit.

Hence, what we see through our work at global level is that, in spite of the differences, there is growing convergence, convergence on the need to take action, convergence on the underlying common principles underpinning democratic values for development and use of AI.

The EU has a unique opportunity through the AI Act to make a very concrete contribution to the global efforts on trustworthy AI. This means we should finalise trilogues on AI Act as soon as possible and take every measure in the EU and globally to promote the early uptake of AI Act principles.

**Axel Voss, im Namen der PPE-Fraktion.** – Herr Präsident, Frau Vizepräsidentin, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Generative KI ist eine neue Qualität, mit der wir uns auseinandersetzen müssen, auch innerhalb der künstlichen Intelligenz selber. Deshalb ist es auch wichtig, hier einen guten Rahmen dafür zu setzen, den zu erreichen – und das auch eher global als regional. Das wäre natürlich gut. Wir haben bei den Verkehrszeichen überall globale Anerkennung. Eigentlich müssten wir das bei Daten haben, wir müssten das jetzt bei KI setzen, aber da gehen noch die globalen Interessen zu weit auseinander.

Insofern ist es aber eine gute Idee, über das, was aus der Kommission kommt, über einen Verhaltenskodex oder *AI Pact* oder ein *labelling scheme* auch nachzudenken, bloß nicht so darüber nachzudenken, dass wir am Ende alle verwirrt haben, sondern dass wir hier auch klare Zeichen setzen. Das hat sicherlich aus meiner Sicht durchaus einen Mehrwert für die ganze Entwicklung und auch insbesondere für den noch abzuschließenden *AI Act*. Aber wir werden eben nur dann wahrgenommen werden, wenn wir auch digital stark sind. Wenn wir nur irgendwo mitlaufen, dann werden wir eben nicht führend sein.

Deshalb sollte das Ganze, wie Sie auch schon sagten, Hand in Hand gehen mit den derzeitigen Verhandlungen. Es sollte eben die Verhandlungen auch nicht zu stark beeinflussen, sondern einmal das Ergebnis widerspiegeln. Nach meiner Überzeugung brauchen wir als Europäisches Parlament dann auch die Möglichkeit, hier zu partizipieren. Es muss auch sichergestellt werden, dass wir nicht wie bei der Datenschutz-Grundverordnung eine unterschiedliche Behandlung und Anwendung dieses Gesetzes haben, denn das bringt uns dann auch mit diesen Ideen nicht weiter. Es muss daneben auch an einer Strategie gearbeitet werden, die unser digitales Überleben in Europa sichert, auch in diesen KI-Fragen. Das schaffen wir aber nicht hauptsächlich durch angstgetriebene Regulierung, sondern wir brauchen hier mehr Ausbildung. Wir haben die Leute, die das schaffen können. Aber die arbeiten in der Regel eben nicht für europäische Unternehmen.

Wir sollten dann auch führend sein und führend werden in der Entwicklung von Standards – das halte ich für sehr wichtig – und deren Verankerung auch in den internationalen Standardisierungsorganisationen. Nur so werden wir das, was hier als Idee vorliegt, auch als Wertestandard entwickeln können. Wir sollten den TTC viel mehr nutzen, intensivieren auf einer Art entweder westlichen Ebene oder einem globalen Level. China ist und bleibt eine Herausforderung, und wir werden eben nicht deshalb gut sein, weil wir lauter Regulierungsideen entwickeln, sondern wir werden eben nur dann gut sein, wenn wir auch sehr praktisch und auch in den Anwendungen einfach führend sind oder eben mitspielen können.



**Brando Benifei**, *on behalf of the S&D Group*. – Mr President, Commissioner, we are happy to have you today for this very timely debate that was proposed together with some other colleagues. Generative AI is the hot topic of the moment, and for the last few months we have all witnessed the amazing things it can do, to the point that human creations are now often totally indistinguishable from AI ones. This opens up countless opportunities for innovation, but also raises a lot of concerns on privacy, IP rights, disinformation, environment, jobs, etc. This is why Parliament has put forward an ambitious proposal, a light but targeted legislative intervention in the AI Act regarding the generative AI. That was approved – the old text of the AI Act – just one month ago, and we are happy now to see signs of openness by the Commission and also by some Member States to consider these ideas, in particular our call for these systems to label their content so as to indicate that these are generated by an AI. We have also dealt with the specific issue of deepfakes, of the production of illegal content and of the copyright protection.

Back when the first letter on the request for a moratorium on these systems was published, we replied by making concrete proposals for global initiatives, as we are convinced that stopping the development of these technologies is not realistic. Instead, it needs to be governed. This is why we welcome the initiatives taken by several Commissioners to take immediate action at the international level. But let me be very clear: voluntary pacts or codes of conduct must not be a way to undermine the legislative process that is going on in parallel and which we hope to finalise in the upcoming months with a great sense of urgency, as this Parliament has been at the forefront of AI regulation and governance since our very first resolution in 2016, and we are now instrumental on the first ever regulation on AI.

This is one of the many reasons why we need to reiterate our long-standing call for a parliamentary dimension to the Trade and Technology Council. Global cooperation on AI, in particular with trusted partners, is crucial, but it cannot happen behind closed doors, as it has been the case so far. We know our American colleagues in Congress share the same view. We talk with them. So we strongly call on you to finally deliver on this without further ado.

**Dragoş Tudorache**, *on behalf of the Renew Group*. – Mr President, good morning, colleagues, dear Vice-President Jourová, it is quite befitting that you are participating actually in today's debate, because I think that today's debate is more about values than it is about technology.

Over the past 15 000 years, we went from making stone tools to splitting the atom, walking on the moon and building artificial intelligence. And yet, with all that behind us, scholars argue that we are only at the very beginning of our history. In other words, we are still the elders of humankind, those whose actions will shape the existence of thousands of generations to come.

From a historical perspective, we are at the dawn of setting up governance systems. We are barely testing the social contract between citizens and the state, which means the long-term impact in our current decisions is significant in that most of history is not yet written.

We now witness the meteoric development of generative AI. We know it will have a massive impact on the world as we know it, and we also know it is only the beginning of this technology. It will keep on leaping many times over.

Powerful generative AI will be very soon fully integrated into millions of downstream companies and impact billions of people on a global scale. It is no doubt the most disruptive and consequential technology in our history to date. When we look at our values, which we often take for granted, it is the way we etch them in history now that will determine if the billions of people coming after us will go on living by them.

That is why global convergence on generative AI needs to be driven by us and by those who share our values. As the first ones to work on legislation for AI worldwide, we are well positioned to lead, but we need to be smart and humble about it, because the impact of generative AI on history will be global.

We need to work with our partners, that is clear. But we cannot stop there, we must also call on those who are still on the fence, those who contemplate democracy, but also feel tempted by an authoritarian use of technology. We must strive to bring them all to the table, so that the history we write for the humans is yet to be born remains that of a world based on human dignity, on freedom, on democracy, on equality, on rule of law and human rights.

**Kim Van Sparrentak**, *on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group*. – Mr President, Commissioner, Europe wants to be a leader when it comes to ethical AI, and that's why I'm really happy we are taking the lead in the international context. But Commissioner, I'm also worried: international efforts on voluntary agreements are crucial, but they are also inherently untransparent and they should not be used as an excuse to hollow out regulation.

Commissioner, can you promise us here today that during the AI Act negotiations on binding rules for foundational models, we will not hear, 'Oh, we already have international voluntary agreements' or 'we already have to converge with the international voluntary agreements on generative AI, so let's not regulate them'. Because experts have long warned us of the dangers and risks of generative models such as Chat GPT and Bloom. And our citizens too really want us to take the lead and regulate these large models as soon as possible.

So let's make sure that any international agreements follow Europe's strong lead, not the other way around. Because there's only one group of actors in the world that does not want strong EU rules for large AI systems, and those are the companies that want to make obscene profits by building large AI systems in the most cheap and reckless way, using private data and infringing copyrights. And they believe that if they dump the whole internet into their systems, it magically won't discriminate or produce disinformation. And on top of that they emit hundreds of tons of CO<sub>2</sub> just to train their systems.

The European Parliament chose to put people and a planet ahead of profit. And that means we don't make the same mistakes as we did in the past. We make strong rules and we can hold companies accountable and we don't trust them on their beautiful words of ethical AI, because Europe can both be a leader in generative AI and protect our society, democracy and the planet, but only if we strongly regulate it.

**Kosma Złotowski**, *w imieniu grupy ECR*. – Panie Przewodniczący! Sztuczna inteligencja to temat, który stał się przedmiotem rozmów i debat już nie tylko w kręgu specjalistów czy naukowców, ale w zasadzie na każdym możliwym forum i w każdym sektorze gospodarki. Wszyscy rozumiemy, że mamy do czynienia z przełomowym momentem w procesie transformacji cyfrowej, którego konsekwencje będą bardzo poważne i globalne.

Projektując reguły i standardy w obszarze AI musimy pamiętać, że Europa jest ważną, ale jednak tylko częścią ogromnego rynku, na którym dominują przedsiębiorstwa z państw trzecich. Wypracowanie wspólnego stanowiska państw demokratycznych z całego świata w zakresie tworzenia godnej zaufania generatywnej sztucznej inteligencji jest więc niezbędne, aby skutecznie chronić europejskich konsumentów, ich prywatność czy dane.

Dzięki temu także europejscy twórcy będą mieli prawo do sprawiedliwego wynagrodzenia w sytuacji, w której efekty ich pracy objęte będą prawami autorskimi i są wykorzystywane do trenowania modeli fundamentalnych. Znaczna część pracy w budowaniu takiego międzynarodowego porozumienia w obszarze AI została już wykonana przez OECD, która jest doskonałym forum debaty na ten temat między ekspertami, rządami i przedsiębiorstwami z państw najlepiej rozwiniętych. Właśnie dlatego, przygotowując akt o sztucznej inteligencji w Parlamencie Europejskim, chętnie korzystaliśmy z dorobku tej organizacji.

Szczególnie istotne jest budowanie strategicznego partnerstwa i wzajemnego zaufania w obszarze AI między Unią Europejską a Stanami Zjednoczonymi. Chcąc zachęcić naszych partnerów zza oceanu do podążania naszym śladem w regulowaniu sztucznej inteligencji, powinniśmy otwarcie mówić także o naszych obawach o dominację kilku firm z Doliny Krzemowej na tym bardzo młodym rynku.

Jednocześnie Europa musi być otwarta na inwestycje i transfer wiedzy z państw trzecich, których nie mogą ograniczać bariery administracyjne czy prawne. Mam nadzieję, że Komisja będzie kontynuować dialog regulacyjny i konsultacje z rządami i firmami spoza Europy, które mają doprowadzić do stworzenia jasnych wytycznych w sprawie stosowania unijnych regulacji w zakresie sztucznej inteligencji.

**Philippe Olivier**, *au nom du groupe ID*. – Monsieur le Président, Mesdames, Messieurs, l'intelligence artificielle, l'IA, est un formidable révélateur. Un révélateur du mouvement du monde et, par comparaison, un révélateur de votre inertie. Vous n'avez pas vu venir la révolution numérique et maintenant, avec l'intelligence artificielle, la révolution cognitive.

Alors que la Chine et les États-Unis augmentent chaque jour par la maîtrise de l'intelligence-machine, leurs capacités de recherche, vous vous évertuez à normaliser, comme un voyageur qui court après un train sans jamais pouvoir y monter. Notre ministre des finances, Bruno Le Maire, a brillé cette semaine en annonçant fièrement un Chat GPT pour 2028. Un Chat GPT lorsque Chat GPT sera rangé au rang des antiquités numériques.

Vous vous targuez d'être des progressistes, mais vous avez toujours un progrès de retard. Pire, au moment où la société de la connaissance réclame des cerveaux, vous laissez partir les nôtres et vous organisez avec le pacte d'immigration la venue massive d'une main-d'œuvre sous-qualifiée. On mesure le décalage dramatique entre vos petits palabres souvent moralisateurs et inutiles et la vitesse d'un monde qui ne vous attend plus.

**Emmanuel Maurel**, *au nom du groupe The Left*. – Monsieur le Président, quand on est confronté à une technologie aussi révolutionnaire que l'intelligence artificielle générative, il y a deux écueils à éviter. D'abord, le catastrophisme inspiré par des films de science-fiction, disons anxiogènes, mais aussi la naïveté technophile qui consiste à adorer par principe tout ce qui est nouveau.

Nous essayons ici, dans ce Parlement, d'avoir une position plutôt moyenne, une position rationnelle qui consiste à dire que l'intelligence artificielle générative peut nous apporter des progrès, à condition d'être utilisée à bon escient. Notamment de pouvoir être débranchée mécaniquement, ce qui n'a pas été dit depuis le début, mais je le dis, s'il lui venait l'idée un jour de prendre le contrôle. Autrement dit, il faut réglementer l'IA avant que ce soit elle qui nous réglemente.

Alors notre ambition, c'est évidemment une intelligence artificielle «made in Europe». Et pour cela, nous avons de nombreux atouts. Avec la régulation et le soutien de la puissance publique, nos chercheurs, développeurs, entrepreneurs sont parfaitement capables d'édifier un modèle d'IA générative centré sur l'humain. Mais quand je dis «made in Europe», je pense que nous devons nous distinguer du modèle chinois, évidemment, mais aussi américain, parce que nos conceptions sont différentes, notamment sur la protection des données, la transparence et le droit d'auteur.

Et je vous le dis, l'ersatz de bouclier de protection des données entre les États-Unis et l'Europe, qui a été négocié par M<sup>me</sup> von der Leyen, me semble largement insatisfaisant. Il y a encore des choses à faire pour parer aux risques relatifs à l'exploration des données et au pillage des données, pour protéger nos créateurs et pour mieux informer le public qui aujourd'hui doit pouvoir distinguer les fausses images des vraies.

J'espère de tout cœur que le Conseil, qui n'est pas là, prendra en compte les aspirations des parlementaires pour arriver à une sorte d'IA européenne ouverte qui soit ambitieuse et digne de notre continent.

**Andreas Schwab (PPE)**. – Herr Präsident, Frau Kommissarin, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen! Systeme künstlicher Intelligenz können einen wichtigen Beitrag für die Bewältigung der gesellschaftlichen und wirtschaftlichen Herausforderungen der Zukunft leisten. Mein Vorredner hat darauf hingewiesen. Diese Systeme sind von jedem Handy oder von jedem PC in der ganzen Welt abrufbar, und daran zeigt sich – und es ist ja auch vom Berichterstatter vorher schon angesprochen worden –, dass wir als Parlament ein großes Interesse daran haben müssen, dass es weltweite Grundregeln für künstliche Intelligenz gibt. Und, Frau Kommissarin, aus meiner Sicht ist deshalb zuallererst wichtig, dass wir als Europäer wissen, was unsere Vorstellung von einer gerechteren, von einer gerechten, digitalen Welt ist.

Das Gesetz über künstliche Intelligenz soll nach dem Ende der Trilogverhandlungen unser Leuchtturm werden, der zeigt, welche Risiken hoch, ja, und welche Risiken auch zu hoch sein können für künstliche Intelligenz, um die Frage ihr allein zu überlassen. Insofern ist die Idee Ihres Kollegen, Kommissar Breton, schon vor Inkrafttreten einen *AI Pack* zu schaffen, durchaus schlüssig.

Zweitens, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen, gelten für die wirtschaftliche Nutzung von Systemen der künstlichen Intelligenz natürlich auch wettbewerbsrechtliche Regeln, die des Gesetzes über digitale Märkte. Denn künstliche Intelligenz in diesem Sinne ist nichts anderes als eine Plattform, deren Algorithmus sich eines bestimmten Datensatzes bedient. Wir müssen für Chancengleichheit auch bei KI kämpfen, denn hier sind immense Investitionen schon getätigt worden oder noch notwendig, die natürlich eine wirtschaftliche Nutzung dieser Systeme erzwingen. Das kann aber nur unter der Geltung der Regeln des fairen Wettbewerbs zulässig sein.

Drittens: Deshalb brauchen wir eine globale Vereinbarung, am besten über die G7 hinaus, über die Nutzung von künstlicher Intelligenz, basierend auf einem freiwilligen internationalen Verhaltenskodex, der auch internationale Standards beinhaltet. Dabei ist klar – und daran arbeitet ja auch Ihre Kollegin, Frau Vestager –, dass unser KI-Gesetz – und das ist vorher auch noch einmal deutlich geworden – das Potenzial als Vorreiter für zukünftige internationale Vereinbarungen hat. Dieses Potenzial sollten wir gemeinsam nutzen.

**Petar Vitanov (S&D).** – Mr President, Madam Commissioner, glad to see so many familiar faces again.

Well, generative AI systems amaze us with their ability to create art, music, even entire stories. They also pose significant risks and challenges that demand our attention. And one of the foremost challenges lies in the domain of ethics. Generative AI perpetuates biases, present in the training data, leading to the creation of content that reinforces discrimination and unfairness.

Another challenge is the issue of transparency. Generative AI often blurs the lines between human and machine-generated content. This can deceive and mislead individuals who may not be aware that they are engaging with AI-generated material.

Privacy and security are also pressing concerns. Generative AI systems require large amounts of data, which raises questions about the handling and protection of personal information. Additionally, generative AI raises intellectual property and copyright challenges. With the ability to mimic existing work, questions of ownership and attribution arise. Lastly, the rapid advancement of generative AI necessitates ongoing research and monitoring.

Well, everything that I've read so far was generated, fortunately or not, by ChatGPT. So I'm glad that among the major improvements we introduced in the AI Act were the rules of foundation models and generative AI.

Providers of these technologies must identify foreseeable risks to fundamental rights, health, safety and the environment, democracy and rule of law, and develop appropriate mitigation measures. In addition, they must adopt data-governance measures, ensure the performance of cybersecurity, have a quality management system to register public database. They must also make sure to prevent the generation of contacts in breach of union law.

So just a final sentence: we live in an unprecedented times with technologies that we've seen only in the movies, and we have to tackle them to lead the way in setting our new global rules.

## SĒDI VADA: ROBERTS ZĪLE

*Priekšsēdētājas vietnieks*

**Svenja Hahn (Renew).** – Herr Präsident, liebe Kollegen! Das Potenzial von künstlicher Intelligenz ist so groß, das können wir uns heute noch gar nicht vorstellen. Mit dem KI-Gesetz wollen wir deshalb vor allen Dingen einen Rahmen setzen: Welche Art von Anwendungen wollen wir in einer liberalen Demokratie haben? Wenn wir damit ein Gesetz schaffen, das für alle Zeit alle möglichen Herausforderungen abdecken wird – nein. Müssen wir das machen? Nein! Ich glaube, wir müssen eher gucken: Wie sieht die technologische Entwicklung aus? Gibt es tatsächliche Gesetzeslücken? Und dann müssen wir die schließen.

Aber genau das Gegenteil habe ich erlebt, als ChatGPT immer größer wurde. Da wurde sehr schnell der Ruf sehr laut, dass wir generative KI möglichst streng regulieren müssen, am besten vielleicht sogar noch verbieten, denn man wüsste ja nicht genau, was man damit machen kann, und das wäre ja hochgefährlich.

Liebe Kollegen, aus Angst nach Verboten zu rufen, das sollten wir nicht tun. Wir sollten doch lieber gucken: Wie können wir zum Fortschrittskontinent werden? Wie können wir Offenheit für Technologie und Freude an Innovation so nutzen, dass es uns als Gesellschaft ausmacht, dass es uns kennzeichnet, dass wir durch Fortschritt auch unseren Wohlstand sichern?

Aber wir dürfen natürlich auch nicht naiv sein. Wir dürfen nicht unsere Augen verschließen davor, dass Chance auch immer mit einem Risiko daherkommt. Denn in dem Konflikt unserer Zeit – Autokratie versus Demokratie – wird der Umgang mit Technologie ganz entscheidend sein. Wird KI ein Mittel, das unser Leben erleichtert? Hilft generative KI mir in meinem Job, macht sie mir Kochvorschläge oder hilft sie mir bei der Urlaubsplanung? Oder wird künstliche Intelligenz ein Mittel zur Unterdrückung der Bevölkerung, wie wir das in China sehen? Wird generative KI zum Brandbeschleuniger für Desinformation und für einen Angriff auf Demokratie?

Ich glaube, unser Ziel muss es sein, dass es die Demokratien sind, die den Maßstab setzen, wie wir als Gesellschaft das Potenzial künstlicher Intelligenz nutzen wollen. Dafür ist es meiner Meinung nach absolut essenziell, dass wir mit unseren internationalen Partnern vorangehen. Die Zusammenarbeit wie beim *Hiroshima AI Process* oder der Verhaltenskodex von Kommissarin Vestager oder der Vorstoß von Kommissarin Jourová sind dafür wichtige Initiativen. Ich bin überzeugt, ein gemeinsamer globaler Rahmen zu generativer KI wäre ein echter Meilenstein für eine demokratisch geprägte technologische Zukunft.

**Sergey Lagodinsky (Verts/ALE).** – Herr Präsident! Die KI-Verordnung war noch nicht einmal beschlossen, da hat die Europäische Kommission schon Initiativen auf den Weg gebracht, die sie überholen. Jedenfalls konnte man so die überfrügte Öffentlichkeitsarbeit der Kommission zum *AI Pact* missverstehen.

Wir müssen uns, liebe Freundinnen und Freunde, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen, auf eine gemeinsame Sache einigen. Ich hoffe, das ist hier unumstritten. Das KI-Gesetz, das wir gerade beschlossen haben, ist die Grundlage unserer KI-Strategie. Als Ko-Gesetzgeberinnen und Gesetzgeber schulden wir doch den Bürgerinnen und Bürgern, schulden wir den Unternehmen das, wofür wir gewählt worden sind: Politik und Gesellschaft Gewissheit durch Innovation, aber auch Orientierung durch Regulierung zu geben. Das ist unsere Aufgabe. Das muss doch klar sein.

Wir dürfen das Momentum nicht verschenken, nicht zerreden durch egomane Initiativen, die sich gegenseitig überbieten. Wir müssen eine effektive und gerechte Regelung für KI weltweit einsetzen, basierend auf unserem Gesetz. Darauf haben wir uns als Antwort auf Forderungen nach Moratorien und Verboten geeinigt. Wir sind nicht Elon Musk, wir sind nicht italienische Regierung, wir sind aber auch nicht China oder Russland, wo scheinbar alles geht, was Despoten nützt. Der Einsatz für gemeinsame Regeln im Rahmen der KI kann helfen – kann helfen, muss aber auf der Basis der europäischen Regelungen stattfinden und darf diese nicht aushöhlen. Das ist die gemeinsame Botschaft, die aus dieser heutigen Diskussion ausgeht, und das ist auch gut so!

**Adam Bielan (ECR).** – Mr President, late last year, generative AI have taken us by surprise. And while the technologies, capabilities and applications will soon become difficult to overestimate, prevention is key to frame the future developments in a way that is both satisfactory in terms of safety and reliability, while allowing the quickening of economic applications for European-based solutions.

Generative AI comes in a diverse set of flowers. On the negative side, our biggest worries are disinformation that can be produced and on a bigger scale than ever before, but that also can be countered and filtered against by using AI assistant tools, and the lack of accountability and possible abuses of intellectual property that are omnipresent in the context of AI.

On the positive one, generative AI have the potential to bridge gaps between public administrations and the wider public by means of specialised chatbots, as well as all the trade and capability applications that derive from such a technology.

As such, we would be in favour of developing and applying shared standards in accord with our global partners at the highest possible level and wherever possible, in order to create a level playing field for businesses and to prevent the establishment of unfair advantages between companies or countries. We are in favour of defining standards along the lines of those established previously within the framework of the OECD for practical applications and to further comparability between regions and business sectors.

Finally, I would like to remind that you that shared standards are the best possible guarantee for consumers and producers alike.

**Έλενα Κουντουρά (The Left).** – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, κύριοι συνάδελφοι, η τεχνητή νοημοσύνη εξελίσσεται με πολύ γρήγορους ρυθμούς και η δυναμική ανάπτυξής της καθιστά εξαιρετικά δύσκολη τη ρύθμισή της από την ευρωπαϊκή νομοθεσία. Η περίπτωση των παραγωγικών συστημάτων τεχνητής νοημοσύνης είναι χαρακτηριστική. Η ανάδειξή τους, αφότου είχαν ξεκινήσει οι διαπραγματεύσεις για την πράξη της τεχνητής νοημοσύνης, είχε ως αποτέλεσμα την υιοθέτηση περιορισμένων υποχρεώσεων που αφορούν κυρίως τη διαφάνεια και τον μετριασμό των κινδύνων διάκρισης και της δημιουργίας παράνομου περιεχομένου.

Δεν υπάρχει αμφιβολία ότι οι προσπάθειες για παγκόσμια σύγκλιση, όπως στην περίπτωση της ανάπτυξης του κώδικα δεοντολογίας, είναι προς τη σωστή κατεύθυνση, ωστόσο δεν είναι αρκετές. Θα πρέπει η ανάπτυξη αυτών των συστημάτων να πραγματοποιείται υποχρεωτικά μέσα από τα ethics by design (αρχές, εργαλεία και διαδικασίες), να εξασφαλιστεί η προστασία των πνευματικών δικαιωμάτων του υλικού που χρησιμοποιήθηκε για την εκπαίδευση αυτών των συστημάτων και να διασφαλιστεί ότι τα συστήματα αυτά δεν θα εξαπατούν, δεν θα χειραγωγούν και δεν θα βλάπτουν τους καταναλωτές και τους χρήστες.

**Seán Kelly (PPE).** – *A Uachtaráin*, it has been an incredible year for generative AI. AI will soon impact every industry – from customer care to transforming data centres and logistics, to medicine, to manufacturing, to energy, to the automotive industry and to aerospace. A recent paper predicted that around 20% of the US workforce could have at least 50% of their tasks affected by AI in the coming years.

We are witnessing a fundamental shift in AI, driven by self-supervision. Generative AI is behind the wave of new online tools used by millions around the world –from answering queries on a range of topics to generating realistic photographs. Whether we like it or not, generative AI, like ChatGPT, are about to change not only how we work, but how the content we consume is produced.

We do not know fully what implications of this wave of transformative artificial intelligence will be. The way that we make information and the basis of communication across society will be rewired. AI has broken into the mainstream and it is time to ask questions about what the business impacts of this technology are.

I was pleased that the landmark AI proposal to regulate artificial intelligence based on its potential to cause harm passed in Parliament with an overwhelming majority. It is now time to ensure that leading tech companies' artificial intelligence models comply with its requirements. There is an urgent need for enhanced collaboration between policy-makers and model providers to effectively address the gaps and challenges on a global level, and to find a common ground to ensure the appropriate implementation and effectiveness of the AI Act. AI in business needs to be held to a higher standard – built to be trusted, secured and adaptable.

**Ibán García Del Blanco (S&D).** – Señor presidente, la inteligencia artificial generativa supone una gran oportunidad: tiene una gran capacidad de impulsar la creatividad humana, de crear contenidos nuevos, pero sobre todo desde el sentido de la complementariedad, de no sustituir la creatividad humana, sino de impulsarla.

En ese sentido también comporta retos como, por ejemplo, cómo trabajamos con los contenidos que pueden resultar engañosos. Y en ese sentido también, la Ley de Inteligencia Artificial que ha aprobado este Parlamento y que va ahora a negociar con el Consejo plantea ya algunas soluciones importantes desde el punto de vista, por ejemplo, de la transparencia y de los contenidos que han sido utilizados en el entrenamiento de los algoritmos o desde el punto de vista también de obligaciones de transparencia para saber si estamos interactuando con inteligencia artificial o no.

En ese sentido, es importante que la Comisión se fije en estos parámetros, en estos estándares, que plantea el Parlamento Europeo para ampliarlos a nivel internacional. Es importante que haya unas leyes mínimas.

Pero hay algunos retos que tiene que acometer ya como, por ejemplo, la actualización de algunas leyes sectoriales. Desde el punto de vista, por ejemplo, de la propiedad intelectual, algunas se han quedado obsoletas y los artistas, los creadores cuyos contenidos han sido utilizados para entrenar estos modelos, necesitan que sea garantizada una compensación, porque no podemos permitirnos quedarnos sin artistas y creadores si son sustituidos por máquinas.

**Dita Charanzová (Renew).** – Mr President, the hype over Chat GPT during the last few months is extremely interesting and amazing, but what is more interesting is that this algorithm, based on its massive data, is creating false answers with false footnotes to match and doing so well that people are believing it is true, simply because the computer says so. The false answers are not the problem. It is that we don't double-check them.

They used to say, 'don't believe everything you read in books'. Then they said, 'don't believe everything you see on television'. I am here to add to that list: 'don't believe everything Chat GPT tells you'. But does this mean we should ban Chat GPT? No. If we don't try things, we can never make them better. We can never fix the bugs in the system. If we don't take a risk-based approach to technology, we will never advance because no product is without risk. Electricity is inherently dangerous. But what would life be like if we banned it before we learned how to tame it?

The AI Act can help build trust in AI, encourage its adoption by users and support innovation. However, it is crucial that we base our actions on facts and not emotions.

**Damian Boeselager (Verts/ALE).** – Mr President, it is true that, when we started using ChatGPT, I think we all realised it is a bit like this book *On Bullshit*, by Harry Frankfurt, the great philosopher, who showed us that, you know, the bullshitter doesn't really know what the difference between truth and lie is, and he's much more dangerous actually, than the liar because of that. But to be honest, the more I used it, the more I understood its potential.

It helped me actually write a code to, you know, write my own chatbot in Python, commit it to GitHub and then like upload it to Heroku to somehow make it work. I couldn't do this without the help of, basically, ChatGPT writing that code for me. So what do we learn from this?

I think we need a couple of principles out there to help us really work with it. The first one is that we should make sure that large models are safe to use and not biased. We should educate our kids, but also our politicians to be able to understand what this technology is. We need authenticity labels to understand what kind of content is AI created. We need to make sure that those who own the data benefit from it or have the right to safeguard it.

We need to tax locally to stop concentration of wealth. We need to make sure that public data is used for public good. We need to make sure that we have a start-up friendly ecosystem to be able to have good AI models here, and we need smart enforcement in global coordination.

**Sunčana Glavak (PPE).** – Poštovani predsjedavajući, povjerenice, kolegice i kolege, tehnologija očigledno napreduje eksponencijalnom brzinom, što rezultira najavama revolucionarnih rješenja gotovo svaki tjedan.

Zanimljivo je da generativna umjetna inteligencija na razini chat GPT-a dosad ima više od 100 milijuna korisnika. Time se mijenjaju, naravno, informacije koje primamo, o tome ste govorili i vi, izbori koje donosimo i načini na koje funkcionira naše društvo.

Ima mnogo prednosti, s time se slažem, primjerice na polju zdravstva može nam ubrzati razvoj lijekova korištenjem naprednih algoritama za stvaranje novih molekula koje bi mogle biti potencijalni lijekovi.

Jednako tako, smatram, s druge strane, da je važno da se uspostavi pravni i onaj etički okvir kako bi se izbjegli potencijalno štetni učinci korištenja takvih tehnologija.

U godinama koje su pred nama umjetna inteligencija igrat će još veću ulogu u načinu na koji rade vlade i javne institucije te u načinu na koji građani međusobno komuniciraju i sudjeluju u demokratskom procesu. Pitanje je vremena kada će i vlade početi koristiti generativnu umjetnu inteligenciju za predviđanje primjerice prometnih obrazaca i optimizaciju protoka prometa u stvarnom vremenu. To je samo jedan mali dio.

Na nama je da osiguramo da umjetna inteligencija bude za promicanje i zaštitu naših standarda. Prema procjenama, veličina tržišta umjetne inteligencije do 2030. godine bit će 110,8 milijardi američkih dolara.

Govorimo o golemoj industriji koja ima svoje interese. Može biti jednako tako i alat za društvenu korist, ali i ova kreativna revolucija mora biti implementirana na najbolji mogući način.

Stoga podsjećam da je Europa ta koja uvodi nove standarde koji potom postaju globalna mjerila, ali na kraju moga obraćanja želim apelirati, posebno na Komisiju, da ne smijemo zanemariti obrazovanje građana jer digitalno obrazovanje građana bit će preduvjet da ne upadnu u zamku koju nam ovog trenutka pruža umjetna inteligencija koju ne poznajemo dovoljno.

*(Govornica je pristala odgovoriti na pitanje postavljeno podizanjem plave kartice)*

**Tomislav Sokol (PPE)**, pitanje koje je podizanjem plave kartice postavio. – Kolegice Glavak govorili ste, i sve se slažem, o utjecaju umjetne inteligencije na gospodarstvo i razne segmente života, ali isto tako je činjenica da postoje veliki strahovi o tome da bi umjetna inteligencija mogla dovesti i do, i općenito automatizacija i razvoj tehnologija mogu dovesti i do gubitka mnogih radnih mjesta jer će mnogi poslovi postati bespotrebni.

Bojite li se takvog scenarija? Što mislite da mi možemo učiniti, da javna vlast može učiniti kako bi se spriječilo, odnosno kako bi se olakšala ta tranzicija na nove tehnologije i spriječilo da mnogi ljudi ostanu bez posla i da njihova egzistencija bude ugrožena?

**Sunčana Glavak (PPE)**, odgovor na pitanje postavljeno podizanjem plave kartice. – Hvala vam lijepa, kolega Sokol. U pravu ste. Zapravo, razvoj tehnologije kroz stoljeća je na neki način mijenjao društvo i mijenjao radna mjesta i tako smo se obrazovali za neka nova radna mjesta.

Umjetna inteligencija već je ušla u brojne sektora našeg gospodarstva, zdravstva. Nemojmo se zavaravati da ona već nije ovdje prisutna. Možda mi nismo na vrijeme zapravo počeli o njoj razgovarati.

Radna mjesta se mijenjaju kako se mijenja i naše okruženje. Stoga mi moramo biti ti koji ćemo obrazovati naše generacije za takozvana zvanja budućnosti. Vi dolazite iz tog sektora. Bili ste i državni tajnik u Vladi Republike Hrvatske upravo u Ministarstvu znanosti i obrazovanja i znate koliko je potrebno zapravo biti predvidljiv i mislim da u tom segmentu moramo posvetiti puno veću pozornost. Ne bojati se napretka tehnologije, već pronaći nova radna mjesta, mjesta budućnosti.

**Alex Agius Saliba (S&D)** – Sur President, iċ-ChatGPT malajr kiseb popolarità u laħaq illum aktar minn mitt miljun user fi ftiit tax-xhur. Is-sistemi tal-Intelliġenza Artifiċjali ġenerattiva u l-konverżjoni taċ-ChatGPT urew riżultati impresjonanti u potenzjal għall-innovazzjoni u t-trasformazzjoni diġitali. Hadd m'għandu dubju dwar dan. Iżda fil-proċess, ChatGPT qajjem ukoll mistoqsijiet importanti dwar id-drittijiet fundamentali taċ-ċittadini tagħna, il-protezzjoni tal-konsumaturi, l-ġhajxien tal-artisti. Is-sistema tal-Intelliġenza Artifiċjali ġenerattivi qed jitjiebu dejjem b'mod kostanti u jsiru aktar intelliġenti, u dejjem qed jiġġeneraw aktar kitba, vidjo, awdjo u kontenut li jidher reali iżda fil-fatt mhuxwix.

L-industrija tal-Intelliġenza Artifiċjali ġenerattiva tista' tkun perikoluża, u jekk din it-teknoloġija tmur hażin, tista' thalli effetti devastanti fuq hafna setturi. Allura l-hype madwar l-Intelliġenza Artifiċjali ġenerattiva taċ-ChatGPT, m'għandux jaljenana mill-perikli reali.

L-Unjoni Ewropea kienet forza ewlenija wara l-Att dwar l-Intelliġenza Artifiċjali, u bil-vot tagħna bghatna messaġġ globali lill-gvernijiet u lill-izviluppaturi tal-Intelliġenza Artifiċjali li xi użu dwar din l-Intelliġenza huma perikolużi u jeħtieġ li jiġu rregolati. U dan huwa l-każ ukoll għal ChatGPT u sistemi ġenerattivi simili.



**Karen Melchior (Renew).** – Mr President, I thank the Commissioner for being here. I think we could have had more Commissioners, as regulating AI encompasses many areas and lots of the portfolios of your colleagues.

Last year, the use of generative AI spread like wildfire. When we started the work on the AI Act, we couldn't have imagined such an exponential rise in the use of generative AI. By the commendable efforts of my colleagues negotiating the AI Act, we managed to go a long way to address these issues.

We also managed to stop the fearmongering, but we still have gaps that remain. In particular on copyright, where existing rules and the Copyright in the Single Market Directive were not built with AI in mind. But also on other harms, such as disinformation and non-consensual generated nude images.

It is vital that we keep in mind that the AI Act will only come into force at the earliest in 2026, and then even when it's in force most of the challenges, including the ones I mentioned, are cross-border issues. Regulating them here does not shelter us from the impact of their use abroad.

The only way to achieve this is an international agreement on AI, whether it will be in the OECD, G7 or G20. The EU is well placed to pioneer such an agreement. However, we do face an uphill battle. Third countries, both rivals and allies, have very different opinions on what to do and what to regulate.

To succeed, the EU needs to work as one on the international stage. And that's why I was kind of concerned when two seemingly competing proposals from Vestager and Breton were proposed: the AI Pact and the AI Code of Conduct, both targeting the G7, seek to achieve many of the same goals.

But why are they not being negotiated together? We have one year together, this Parliament and the Commission, to achieve this, to shape AI globally for the better. So let's work on this together.

**Deirdre Clune (PPE).** – Mr President, Commissioner, it is clear that generative AI is coming at a speed like no other technology has: 100 million users in the first two months. Everybody with a smartphone or a phone can have access to ChatGPT. It has the potential to influence political discourse, shape public opinion and affect societal dynamics.

While it can be a force for good through helpful automation, it also presents certain risks and can contribute to the spread of disinformation that could put our elections at risk, can pose new questions about our education systems, which will need to adapt, and prompt serious questions about employment and workforce adaptation. Globally, generative AI will have an impact on people's lives, whether they choose to use it or not, and this requires a global approach, in turn.

This Parliament recently adopted its position on the AI Act, seeking to ensure transparency, protect fundamental rights and support innovation at the same time. ChatGPT was in its infancy when the Act was first proposed and not really in the public consciousness. This has changed in the past months and now everybody is using it. In Parliament, here we were the first to try and truly tackle this fast moving and evolving technology with a concrete legislative proposal on how to address powerful foundation models to build trust, provide transparency and oversight on these powerful systems.

The AI Act will likely enter into force at a later date, whereas a global convergence on how to approach generative AI in a safe, responsible manner can take place already, and it can use Parliament's approach as a blueprint on how to do so. This means transparency, risks, audits and other technical details for companies developing this technology.

So there's also procedures of tension between innovation and regulation when it comes to the EU and some of our partners, especially when it comes to new technologies, but diverging approaches between like-minded partners can create barriers to innovation. Therefore, I welcome the approach at international level under the Trade and Technology Council to develop guardrails, code of conduct, framework, whatever, but we need common standards that we can all work to.

**Ivars Ijabs (Renew).** – Mr President, dear European Commission, I find it deeply symbolic that the discussion process about the generative AI initiated by G7 leaders a few weeks ago is named a Hiroshima process.

This name invokes analogies with nuclear energy, which can be both immensely destructive and also a highly constructive force. Generative AI, with its immense power, necessitates efficient governance to ensure it empowers our society rather than causes harm.

In the meantime, it is crucial that Europe does not fall far behind the US and China in deployment of those reactors of AI energy. This will entail also the public investment in the provision of high-quality data for researchers to train large language models. It is predicted that high quality text for training those models will run out in a few years' time.

This, and now I come to my main point, this could present a unique challenge for smaller languages. The quality data in smaller languages must receive a special attention from the European Union. This goes very much hand-in-hand with the need to adjust our copyright laws to provide appropriate compensation for content creators.

**Tomislav Sokol (PPE).** – Poštovani predsjedavajući, povjerenice, kolegice i kolege, puni potencijal primjene umjetne inteligencije, naročito one generativne, još uvijek nije ostvaren.

Dok smo svjesni očitih koristi koje uporaba umjetne inteligencije donosi, kao što je bolja regulacija prometa, preciznije dijagnosticanje zloćudnih bolesti ili pak racionalnije korištenje energetskim resursima, ne smijemo zaboraviti na opasnosti i njezine zloporabe.

Da bismo spriječili mogućnost manipulacije umjetnom inteligencijom, moramo je kvalitetno regulirati. Zato pozdravljam činjenicu da dovršavamo rad na prvom europskom zakonu o umjetnoj inteligenciji koji će urediti djelovanje generativne umjetne inteligencije kao što je chatGPT i to na način da se spriječi generiranje nezakonitog sadržaja kršenjem intelektualnog vlasništva te informira korisnika o tome da je sadržaj nastao posredstvom umjetne inteligencije.

Opravdano je očekivati da će se u budućnosti generativna umjetna inteligencija sve više koristiti u medicini, kreativnim industrijama ili čak javnoj upravi i toga se ne trebamo bojati.

Međutim, moramo inzistirati da u takvim okolnostima građani Europske unije budu zaštićeni od svih rizika koje korištenje umjetne inteligencije sa sobom donosi. Također, moramo osigurati da naši poduzetnici mogu iskoristiti prednosti umjetne inteligencije za stvaranje inovacija i njihovo sigurno testiranje u kontroliranim uvjetima.

Istraživanja su pokazala da generativna umjetna inteligencija u idućih 10 godina može podići BDP na svjetskoj razini za čak sedam posto i to moramo maksimalno iskoristiti.

Umjetne inteligencije ne trebamo se bojati, ali je trebamo kvalitetno regulirati. Pri tome moramo učiniti sve da europski standardi koje sada uspostavljamo postanu globalni standardi i podržavam sve napore koje Komisija poduzima u tom smislu.

**Laurence Farreng (Renew).** – Monsieur le Président, Madame la Vice-présidente, chers collègues, oui, il faut prôner une convergence mondiale en matière d'intelligence artificielle générative, et je me félicite que l'Union européenne soit à la manœuvre.

L'acte pour l'IA que nous avons initié il y a quelques semaines servira sans aucun doute de base pour une norme mondiale. Néanmoins, les IA génératives posent des défis sectoriels, comme dans le monde de la culture et de la création. Comment distinguer une œuvre produite par l'intelligence artificielle d'une véritable œuvre créée par un artiste avec l'aide de l'IA? Quel statut juridique donner à ces œuvres? Comment s'assurer que nos créateurs européens soient justement compensés pour les œuvres qui sont aspirées dans les bases d'entraînement de ces modèles?

À nous, Européens, de peser dans le débat mondial pour concilier propriété intellectuelle, innovation et démocratisation. À nous, Européens, de faire de la culture un facteur de premier plan dans la régulation mondiale de l'IA.

*(L'oratrice accepte de répondre à une question «carton bleu»)*

**Karen Melchior (Renew)**, *question «carton bleu»*. – Je vous remercie d'accepter ce carton bleu. L'intelligence artificielle s'est déjà entraînée sur des œuvres d'art. Comment pensez-vous pouvoir compenser les artistes dont les œuvres ont servi à l'entraînement de l'intelligence artificielle, avant même que celle-ci ne soit mise sur le marché?

**Laurence Farreng (Renew)**, *réponse «carton bleu»*. – C'est un grand sujet que cette phase amont pendant laquelle tout notre patrimoine culturel est accessible. On peut s'interroger sur ce qui nourrit les bases. Et puis peut-être, parce que je ne suis pas pour une réouverture des copyrights, si c'est une question implicite, mais peut-être pour une compensation, pourquoi pas sous forme de taxe, qui pourrait nourrir la création et financer à l'avenir les vrais artistes pour leurs œuvres?

**Jiří Pospíšil (PPE)**. – Pane předsedající, já sám osobně považuji regulaci umělé inteligence za jeden z klíčových, možná dokonce jeden z hlavních úkolů, který orgány Evropské unie na úrovni legislativy v tuto chvíli mají. A proto jsem velmi rád, že ta debata dneska zde probíhá. Rekapituluji se zde jednotlivé iniciativy, které v této oblasti Komise vyvíjí. Debátujeme zde o nařízení, které je teď v legislativním procesu a které schvalujeme zde na úrovni Evropského parlamentu.

Myslím si, že je důležité zopakovat ty základní principy, které alespoň já vnímám, že právě nařízení o umělé inteligenci, které je schvalováno v legislativním procesu, má být tím základem evropské regulace a má být tím základem, od kterého se další iniciativy budou odvozovat.

Iniciativy, které Komise provádí a které já považuji za záslužné i na globální úrovni, a jsou nutné z hlediska rychlosti vývoje umělé inteligence, by měly být derivátem nebo by měly být odvozeny od nařízení, které zde schvalujeme. Měly by ho realizovat a naplňovat, být v souladu s ním, nikoliv jej vyprazdňovat. To zde několikrát zaznělo. Myslím si, že je strašně důležité, aby Evropská komise cítila tuto naši pozici, pozici Evropského parlamentu, že základem je evropská úprava, legislativa, od které se odvíjí ostatní globální iniciativy pro regulaci a úpravu umělé inteligence.

**Susana Solís Pérez (Renew)**. – Señor presidente, la irrupción de la inteligencia artificial generativa nos ha mostrado solo la punta del iceberg de esta tecnología. El potencial y las oportunidades de negocio que se abren no tienen precedentes. Los casos de uso son tan amplios que ninguna industria se va a quedar al margen de esta revolución.

Pero también son evidentes las amenazas. Si no se regula de forma correcta, estamos poniendo en peligro la propiedad intelectual, los derechos fundamentales o incluso la democracia y el Estado de Derecho.

Aquí en la Unión Europea hemos sido valientes y nos hemos anticipado a los riesgos con la Ley de Inteligencia Artificial que hemos aprobado en este Parlamento. Pero no es suficiente. El impacto es global y la cooperación internacional es fundamental. Europa tiene que liderar para desarrollar normas y códigos de conducta internacionales a los que se unan aquellos socios que compartan nuestros valores y nuestros principios fundamentales. La velocidad exponencial de esta tecnología así lo está exigiendo.

#### *Catch-the-eye procedure*

**Stanislav Polčák (PPE)**. – Pane předsedající, já souhlasím se svými kolegy, že umělá inteligence představuje jednu z největších výzev naší budoucnosti. Žijeme totiž v době, kdy technologie umožňuje vytvářet systémy, které se učí a kreativně generují nové poznatky, nová data. A tato konvergence samozřejmě spojuje odborníky a výzkumníky po celém světě, aby sdíleli znalosti a samozřejmě urychlili inovace. Tento druh spolupráce ale také přináší samozřejmě nové výzvy pro praktické sdílení zkušeností – to má velký potenciál –, ale také výzvy k nalezení etických pravidel nebo podmínek na fungování, na činnost umělé inteligence.

Generativní umělá inteligence také otevírá dveře do oblasti umění, medicíny, vědy, samozřejmě i průmyslové výroby, ale mnozí jsou také nejistí, například autoři, nositelé autorských práv nebo jiných práv duševního vlastnictví jsou velmi nejistí. To znamená, my bychom měli všechny dotčené a ohrožené aktéry tzv. vzít na palubu a dokázat, že ani jejich budoucnost není ohrožena tímto systémem.

**Francisco Guerreiro (Verts/ALE).** – Senhor Presidente, queria colocar aqui uma questão que é mais filosófica e ética. Nós temos sido levados a debater e a regulamentar, e muito bem, no panorama da União Europeia, a inteligência artificial e o desenvolvimento destas tecnologias nos vários fenómenos e segmentos da sociedade, nomeadamente na economia, no trabalho, na educação, na propriedade intelectual, na cultura.

Mas para onde é que nós caminhamos? Neste debate, para onde é que nós temos de ir? Para onde é que nós caminhamos como Humanidade tem sido feito pelas grandes indústrias tecnológicas, não pelos políticos. Eu acho que o caminho devia ser inverso. Efetivamente, virarmos a conversa e centrá-la num nível ético e civilizacional feito por políticos.

Porque é que digo isto? Porque há um grande desenvolvimento em outras áreas, nomeadamente após a inteligência artificial. Falo claramente do transumanismo. Portanto, já existem indústrias tecnológicas a trabalharem e a experimentarem em *chips* em animais e há uma grande evolução nesta tecnologia. E até onde é que nós vamos?

Creio que este caminho e esta conversa têm de ser feitos aqui neste Parlamento e não nos deixarmos apenas pela regulamentação da inteligência artificial.

*(End of catch-the-eye procedure)*

**Věra Jourová, Vice-President of the Commission.** – Mr President, honourable Members, two days ago Milan Kundera died. A genial observer of the world as we know the world. And I understand this also very sad moment for me as a Czech person, as the end of one era – of the era the world as we know it, and the start of the era we discussed here today, the era where technologies like artificial intelligence will more and more influence the way we do everything.

I'm really glad that I can be in this discussion here. Of course, I am replacing Thierry Breton and Margrethe Vestager. I love them, but this is a great moment for me because, as Mr Tudorache said, this is about values. I have to say that whenever we discuss technologies we have in mind people, and this is also the principle which we try to spread all over the world, the democratic world. And this is also my answer to what Ms Van Sparrentak said, that she hopes that we are presenting and offering a European way of regulating and thinking about the things to the rest of the world. And this is exactly what we are doing through all those international fora which I described before. I think that the European Union is the best place to do it, because I think that we have the right instinct. The technologies are not driven by big money and an unscrupulous hunt for profit as we saw it and see it in the United States from the side of the innovative industry, and not at all being like China, which uses the technologies for the better control of the people. No: the European way is a human-centric way, and this is exactly what we are promoting and trying to push wherever we speak about these things, be it the United Nations, the OECD, bilaterals and so on.

We try to enhance global cooperation, not global competition. It also applies for the Commission. Mr Breton and Ms Vestager are cooperating very well, and we are fine-tuning all the activities and events we do. Believe me, there is a very strong coordination and a high level of common understanding of what the right thing to do is.

The right thing to do, in my view, is to do things early enough. And here I come to the code, which you were partly criticising, because the function of the code which we work on is to be quicker than the risks. And indeed the AI Act is and will remain the key piece of legislation which we will want to see, in good shape, soon in force. But before having that, and there is nothing else in it, we simply want the businesses and those who influence the development of AI to accept the principles which are already in the AI Act. So this is not confusing, this is not undermining, as I heard here, this is rather about doing something quicker. And by the way, the quick development of generative AI is an incredible experience or example of how quick innovations are, how much quicker than the legislation. I think this is a good thing that still we can capture this new development in the AI Act in the negotiations. I think that this has come at a good time. But again, we need something quicker.

You know I am also responsible for the fight against disinformation. Well my big fear is that disinformation will be used in political campaigns before elections. And deepfakes are a really big danger. That's why I am pushing the companies developing the technologies to yes, continue developing, but also make sure that you also develop immediately the antibodies, the medicine, not to unscramble the scrambled eggs, but to minimise the risks. And that's why I am pushing them to label the production of AI so that the people can see that this is something which has not been produced by the people, because I still believe that electoral campaigns must be a competition of real people and not a competition of dirty methods and robots. So that's why we push them to label.

I think that we should make a big decision now, as Mr Polčák said, we should make very clear that fundamental rights are here for real people. I speak here about the freedom of speech. Let's protect the freedom of speech – almost absolute in the EU, but let us protect it as the fundamental right of the real people. Robots should not have this right. It's the same when it comes to copyright. Well, copyright is here to protect the creativity of the real people. So I think let's also be principled on these things. This is the moment to clarify these basic principles.

For the users, it's important to see the label that this is the production of AI. And here comes also what Ms Glavak said here about digital education. The people are living a big part of their lives and their time in the digital sphere. So let's also advise, let's educate how to understand what's happening to them there. And that's why I believe that the request for the label, which will make clear to the people that this is the production of AI, has to be well understood.

Speed is of the essence and responsibility is of the essence, and it applies to the legislators as well as to innovators. And when I discuss with the innovators, with the technological companies, I sense that there is some kind of Oppenheimer's syndrome, I would call it. It was the Hiroshima process, a little bit connected with that. I think it's stupid to make jokes about that, but I think that the innovators are aware, at least the main ones, that they have to take their full responsibility for the future.

The difference between Kundera's time and the new era will be huge, but I would not like us to draw apocalyptic pictures, not to legislate out of hysteria, but rather to use good evidence, solid analysis and continue what we are doing with a risk-based approach and making a distinction between the rights of robots and people.

**Sēdes vadītājs.** – Debates ir slēgtas.

## **5. Zalecenia Komisji w sprawie transpozycji dyrektywy w sprawie publicznej sprawozdawczości w podziale na kraje (debata)**

**Sēdes vadītājs.** – Nākamais darba kārtības punkts ir debates par Komisijas paziņojumu par Komisijas ieteikumiem par transponēšanu saistībā ar publisku pārskatu sniegšanu par katru valsti (2023/2784(RSP)).

**Mairead McGuinness, Member of the Commission.** – Mr President, a very good morning, colleagues and thanks for the opportunity to discuss the ongoing transposition of the Public Country-by-Country Reporting Directive by our Member States and the work of the Commission in this area.

And maybe to recall that when I was a Member of this House, I voted in favour of this directive, and as Commissioner I oversaw the finalisation of negotiations. The Commission stands fully and firmly behind this directive. It is an important transparency measure that will enable everyone to see where big multinational corporations that are active in the European Union pay tax.

So it's important to make sure that it is implemented correctly. And this is the context for the Commission paper you have expressed concerns about. The Commission is the guardian of the Treaties. It is the Commission's duty to ensure that EU law is correctly transposed in national law and correctly applied in practice. As part of this, the Commission works with Member States to help them implement directives correctly and on time. And this is in line with the text, of course, as agreed by the co-legislators.

The Commission's services follow the better regulation guidelines when helping Member States to transpose directives. These guidelines were developed in line with the Interinstitutional Agreement between the European Parliament, the Council and the European Commission on Better Law-Making.

The Commission aims to prevent Member States from imposing unjustified obligations that go beyond the legislation or that could disrupt the level playing field. And this is what is known as 'gold-plating'. The better regulation guidelines state that when transposing directives, Member States should refrain from unjustified gold-plating – in other words, adopting transposition measures that go beyond the requirements of the directive – and ensure a level playing field.

Gold-plating has a negative impact on the single market. The level playing field is a fundamental principle of the single market. The level playing field helps make sure that all businesses in the single market compete on fair and open terms. And this is true for this directive, just as it is for any other directive.

The Commission helps Member States to keep national transposition as close as possible to what the co-legislators agreed. Working in partnership with Member States on implementing EU law is one of the main features of the Commission's enforcement policy, and this is to ensure that EU laws are applied correctly and on time. Technical work includes organising transposition, workshops and providing guidance documents.

Most of the topics discussed during the pre-transposition phase are based on issues or questions raised by Member States, but also on the Commission services' analysis. It is in this context that the Commission services drafted the information paper. This paper mainly addresses technical issues and was discussed with Member States during two workshops before being finalised. These meetings were held to help Member States to implement EU law correctly and consistently.

The paper is addressed to Member States as it is Member States that are responsible for transposing directives into national measures. In particular, the paper draws Member States' attention to difficulties that third-country multinational companies may experience when making their reports due to different national rules. These differences arise when European rules are transposed differently.

The paper identified only a limited number of areas of concern, and there were three: the scope of application, the content of a company's report and the audit requirement for subsidiaries. Gold-plating will make it harder for these companies to comply with different national rules, possibly to a point where legal certainty is at stake.

These differences could also lead to regulatory arbitrage, where companies take advantage of differences in law to circumvent requirements, but is also bad for the single market. Indeed, you may ask why this paper now on this particular directive?

This directive is one of the first of its kind and, as something new, it was to be expected that the Member States would ask the Commission for guidance. The directive, as the co-legislators agreed, strives to ensure that through their subsidiaries and branches in the EU, third-country multinational companies doing business in the EU provide the same information as EU-based multinational companies.

These subsidiaries or branches may be located in several Member States. This feature is the main reason behind the information paper: should Member States adopt different rules?

But I also want to emphasise that informing Member States of the drawbacks of gold-plating does not mean prohibiting anything. Ultimately, Member States can add reporting obligations as they see fit.

The Commission's decision to propose this legislation dates back to 2016. Colleagues, you know that the European Union is a front runner globally in tax transparency. I look forward to seeing the first reports published by multinational companies under this directive.

We welcome public scrutiny on where companies earn their profits and where they pay their corresponding corporate tax. Transparency by tax payments to understand how large multinationals operate is vital for public trust and confidence in the fairness of our tax system.

I look forward to hearing your concerns now and hope that I have clarified the Commission's work in ensuring implementation in full and on time.

**Markus Ferber**, *im Namen der PPE-Fraktion*. – Herr Präsident, Frau Kommissarin, liebe Kolleginnen, liebe Kollegen! Ich bin schon etwas überrascht über die Debatte, die wir haben, denn eigentlich sollten wir gemeinsam der Kommission Dankeschön sagen, dass sie sich darum Gedanken macht, dass europäisches Recht in den Mitgliedstaaten einheitlich umgesetzt wird. Ich lobe die Kommission nicht oft, aber heute muss ich es mal tun. Jawohl, genau darum geht es. Sie haben das sehr sauber herausgearbeitet, warum es sinnvoll ist, dass wir hier nicht in 27 Mitgliedstaaten unterschiedliche Umsetzungen haben, weil die Firmen, die wir adressieren wollen, sich dadurch auszeichnen, dass sie in mehr als einem Mitgliedstaat multinational, also in mehr als einem Mitgliedstaat zu Hause sind und deswegen nicht mit 27 Regelungen konfrontiert werden wollen.

Ich sage Ihnen auch mal eines ganz deutlich: Es ist eine naive Vorstellung zu meinen, nur weil man Steuerdaten öffentlich macht, dass man auch nur einen Cent mehr Steuern einnimmt. Wir haben die öffentliche länderspezifische Berichterstattung seit vielen Jahren im Bankensektor. Hat sich da etwas geändert? Nein. Wir wissen nur, dass die, die immer schon richtig ihre Steuern bezahlt haben, weiterhin richtig ihre Steuern zahlen werden. Wichtig ist doch nicht, dass die Öffentlichkeit die Steuerdaten hat, wichtig ist, dass die Steuerbehörden die Daten haben. Das haben wir längst beschlossen, das ist längst in Kraft. Wir werden uns dann jetzt auch damit beschäftigen, wie wir die Zusammenarbeit der Steuerbehörden noch intensivieren können. Das ist entscheidend. Die setzen die Steuerlast am Ende fest. Die sorgen dafür, dass jedes Unternehmen seinen fairen Beitrag für das Gemeinwesen erbringt. Darauf sollten wir uns konzentrieren.

Deswegen kann ich nur sagen: Liebe Kommission, ich würde mich freuen, wenn Sie auch in anderen Bereichen dafür sorgen würden, dass *gold-plating* nicht stattfindet, dass Unternehmen nicht zusätzlich durch falsche oder zu weit gehende nationale Umsetzung belastet werden, sondern dass wir uns darauf konzentrieren, dass das, was auf europäischer Ebene festgelegt worden ist, dazu beiträgt, dass wir unsere Unternehmen nicht über Gebühr belasten.

**Evelyn Regner**, *on behalf of the S&D Group*. – Mr President, Commissioner, Panama Papers, Pandora Papers, Paradise Papers, CumEx, LuxLeaks, Swiss leaks, leak after leak. And what is the common denominator there? There are tax schemes, schemes for avoiding tax payments, and the frequency of occurrence of these leaks shows one thing: the system is not working properly. There is a lack of transparency.

Nineteen months ago, we adopted a groundbreaking directive, namely the Directive on Public Country-by-Country Reporting. This very directive will finally bring us more transparency in the corporate world, and this very directive will bring light into the corporate jungle of tax evasion and tax avoidance. We, as the European Union, are pioneers here. We are leading with a good example.

On 22 June this year, the deadline for transposing the Directive into national law expired, and almost exactly two weeks ago a letter was leaked to us. It was a letter from the European Commission under the title 'Gold Plating Information Letter on Public Country-by-Country Reporting'. In this letter, the Commission provides what appears to be guidance on how Member States should implement the Country-by-Country Reporting Directive, and in fact, this letter advises Member States to limit transparency, to limit tax transparency.

These guidelines provided in the letter aren't technical guidance. These guidelines have political influence, and this constitutes a transgression. These so-called guidelines are clearly overshooting the mandate of the European Commission and behind the back of us, the co-legislators. The travesty here is that the Directive on Public Country-by-Country Reporting is a transparency directive, and the Commission appears to try to limit transparency. So the question inevitably arises as to what other directives the Commission has done this with, which is why we want to have clear answers.

**Heidi Hautala**, *on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group*. – Mr President, Commissioner, my group has always had the position that the principle of better regulation should not prevent Member States from maintaining or taking more ambitious measures, and adopting higher social, environmental and consumer protection standards in cases where only minimum standards are set out in Union law. Now it seems that the Commission's intervention in the transposition of directives at national level risks becoming undue interference in the freedom of Member States to go beyond established minimum standards.

What is needed now is more transparency and communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, as deciding whether additional elements ultimately constrain Member States to lower standards and, ultimately, shuts down all efforts to impose at national level higher safeguards for tax transparency of companies. This is very important because this Directive is a first step forward in Europe. For the first time, we will have an idea of how much multinationals earn and pay in taxes in the countries where they operate, and we will know if they are using tax-shifting practices.

I would be happy if the Commissioner could also clarify a little bit the role of the OECD, because we know that the OECD has put pressure on Australia, on legislation that they wanted to put in place, by putting restrictions on the transposition of that law.

**Manon Aubry**, au nom du groupe *The Left*. – Monsieur le Président, chers collègues, savez-vous combien Total ou Amazon paient d'impôts en Europe? Non. Eh bien, moi non plus. Comme les vampires, les multinationales détestent la lumière. On les comprend. Quand on apprendra que Starbucks paie moins d'impôts en Europe que le café du coin, les Frappuccino auront soudainement un arrière-goût un peu amer.

Pour combattre l'évasion fiscale, nous avons besoin de transparence. Cela fait dix ans que je me bats pour la directive «déclaration pays par pays publique», qui a enfin été adoptée en 2021, mais dans une version minimaliste. À cause du lobbying des multinationales relayé par le gouvernement de Macron, la transparence n'est effective que dans un pays sur cinq. Impossible par exemple de connaître les bénéfices des multinationales aux îles Caïmans, à Jersey, Guernesey ou encore en Suisse.

Et maintenant, les lobbies ont trouvé un nouvel allié pour continuer les montages fiscaux dans l'ombre. Madame McGuinness, vous nous dites que vous êtes en faveur de la transparence, mais dans le plus grand secret, la Commission a envoyé une note aux États membres, les enjoignant à n'adopter qu'une transparence a minima. Mais, qui vous a donné ce mandat? C'est le comble! Des technocrates non élus qui agissent en coulisses sans même informer des élus du peuple, dans un dossier sur la transparence.

Madame la Commissaire McGuinness, nous vous avons envoyé hier une lettre transpartisane pour vous réclamer des comptes sur ce scandale. Enfin, transpartisane... pas tout à fait. Je regrette que le rapporteur et président du groupe Renew, Stéphane Séjourné, ait refusé de la signer. Mais je vous le demande ici clairement, pour qui travaillez-vous? Les citoyens européens ou les lobbies?

**Jiří Pospíšil (PPE)**. – Pane předsedající, já bych se chtěl ve svém vystoupení zastat Komise. Případá mi to, že ta kauza, která je tady vyvolaná, je trošku v rozporu s tím principem, o kterém hovoříme.

Za prvé je třeba říci, že dopis, který byl odeslán, má doporučující charakter. Přece každá země se suverénně může rozhodnout, jakým způsobem transpozici udělá a zda případně přijme tvrdší regulaci než tu, která je ve směrnici. Takže pokud někdo někomu něco doporučuje, tak tím nijak neomezuje práva národních zákonodárců, aby země udělaly transpozici širším způsobem, než je úprava ve směrnici.

Za druhé, já jsem v České republice jako ministr byl dlouhá léta odpovědný za transpozici evropského práva a považuji gold-plating za negativní jev. To tak je. Pokud tedy my říkáme, a já to nezpochybňuji, že chceme větší transparentnost v oblasti daňového práva, že chceme větší, tvrdší úpravu, tak to má být obsaženo v té samotné směrnici. Má to být součástí evropského práva. To je přece ta základní podstata. A členské státy mají co nejlépe a nejpřesněji transponovat to, co je obsaženo ve směrnici, v právním předpisu, na kterém zde byla shoda, domluva mezi Evropským parlamentem, Komisí a Evropskou radou. Jakákoliv odlišná úprava zkrátka a dobře rozbíjí jednotný trh. To je zkrátka princip. Je-li úprava odlišná, když každá země přijme odlišnou právní úpravu, nějakým způsobem překročí regulaci obsaženou ve směrnici, tak zde budeme mít 27 různých právních úprav. A to je přece principiálně špatně.

A pomímám ten politický aspekt. Pokud se přijímá nějaká právní regulace, která je nad míru evropské úpravě, tak to i občané vnímají negativně. Ptají se potom svých národních politiků: Za tu regulaci může Evropská unie nebo je to rozhodnutí národní vlády a národního parlamentu?

Takže i politické aspekty přílišné regulace vzhledem k občanům je třeba brát podle mého názoru v potaz. Takže pokud budeme transponovat směrnice v přesné míře, je to podle mě správný postup.

**Ibán García Del Blanco (S&D)**. – Señor presidente, primero haré una breve reposición histórica acerca de dónde venimos. Hace aproximadamente dos años —algo menos de dos años— por fin este Parlamento, por su propia insistencia y por el buen hacer de la Presidencia de turno portuguesa, tuvo la capacidad de desbloquear un informe que devenía del escándalo público que se generó por los Papeles de Panamá y por la constatación de que se estaban utilizando mecanismos de ingeniería financiera, de elusión fiscal, por parte de muchas multinationales que trabajaban dentro de la Unión Europea. Es más, se estaban produciendo cuadros incluso de *dumping* fiscal entre países de la propia Unión Europea y, sobre todo, todo esto enmarcado en un elemento absoluto de falta de transparencia, de oscuridad, alrededor de qué es lo que estaba sucediendo, cómo estaban funcionando estas empresas y, sobre todo, sin ninguna información para los propios ciudadanos.



Como decía, conseguimos desbloquearlo. Conseguimos un texto que ya en sí es suficientemente moderado, suficientemente responsable, fruto de la voluntad general también de este Parlamento, de algunas de las personas que hoy están interviniendo aquí, en un sentido contrario a lo que yo voy a decir o lo que los grupos progresistas estamos diciendo, en este debate. Es decir, la norma ya es suficientemente contenida y poco ambiciosa, diría yo —mucho menos ambiciosa de lo que a nosotros nos hubiera gustado en aquel momento—, como para no cumplirla al menos en su espíritu.

Hace poco hemos conocido un asunto de extraordinaria gravedad, señora comisaria, por lo menos desde nuestra perspectiva, que es que ustedes están no solo impulsando la trasposición de esta Directiva —porque hay todavía diecisiete países, y ya ha cumplido el plazo, que todavía no la han traspuesto—, sino que, en virtud de un mandato que no sabemos de dónde viene, les están pidiendo que incluso incumplan el propio espíritu de la propia norma, reduciendo los efectos, reduciendo la efectividad y reduciendo la transparencia y, por lo tanto, los derechos de los ciudadanos.

La pregunta es: ¿de dónde viene su mandato? Si, cuando estamos hablando de esto, el mandato democrático, el ejercicio de soberanía, es de este Parlamento. Y este Parlamento es quien ha planteado el espíritu de la norma y cómo se tiene que aplicar esa norma. Por lo tanto, yo le digo, señora comisaria, que dejen de hacer cosas a las espaldas de los ciudadanos, a las espaldas de este Parlamento, y cumplan con el mandato soberano de quien tiene radicada esa soberanía, que es el Parlamento Europeo, que somos los representantes de los ciudadanos y las ciudadanas. Si ustedes hacen algo, que sea para implementar este acuerdo y, sobre todo, para incrementar los derechos de los ciudadanos, nunca para reducir la efectividad del mismo.

**Rasmus Andresen (Verts/ALE).** – Herr Präsident! Es muss endlich Schluss sein mit Steuertricks und Gewinnverschiebungen durch große Konzerne. Der EU gehen dadurch Milliarden verloren. Wir brauchen Mindeststeuersätze für multinationale Konzerne und mehr Transparenz. Durch die OECD-Mindeststeuer für multinationale Konzerne wird jetzt ein wichtiger Schritt getan.

Aber ohne Transparenz ist alles nichts. Wir müssen wissen, wie viel Steuern Unternehmen in unterschiedlichen Staaten zahlen, und dafür ist länderbezogene Berichterstattung ein entscheidendes Instrument. Deshalb ist die Einführung von länderbezogener Berichterstattung über Steuerdaten so wichtig.

Wir brauchen mehr Transparenz, nicht weniger. Es ist, ehrlich gesagt, ein ziemlich großes Problem und vielleicht sogar auch ein kleiner Skandal, dass Sie als EU-Kommission die ambitionierten Mitgliedstaaten ausbremsen wollen. Wir sollten froh sein, wenn Mitgliedstaaten vorangehen wollen, um Steuertransparenz herzustellen. Sie sind in dieser Frage, Frau Kommissarin, falsch abgebogen, und deshalb ist es gut, dass Sie sich heute hier im Parlament auf Druck der Grünen und vieler anderer Fraktionen der Debatte stellen müssen. Noch besser wäre allerdings, wenn Sie sich für mehr Austausch, auch unter Einbeziehung des Parlaments, einsetzen würden. Das muss das Ziel sein.

**Paul Tang (S&D).** – Mr President, dear Commissioner, transparency is key in the fight against tax avoidance and evasion. Transparency is key in restoring and maintaining public trust in the fairness of tax contribution. And regrettably, not all Member States share the need for transparency and trust. Then again, some Member States do, and do more, and have the ambition to raise the bar. And why not? Even more and more corporates are voluntarily embracing the ambitious GRI template as a way to engage with their stakeholders and as part of their corporate responsibility.

But resistance comes from an unexpected corner, and now I turn to my right: Commissioner, why discourage ambition? Indeed, you are going against the trends. Why? After a long fight, public country-by-country reporting came to pass. That is a major step forward. Let us not take a step back from it. We should not burden the front runners with the mediocrity of others. Let's applaud the Member States that go the extra mile.

#### *Catch-the-eye procedure*

**Maria Grapini (S&D).** – Domnule președinte, doamna comisar, v-am apreciat, ați fost eurodeputată, ați fost în bancă cu noi și erați extrem de practică în luările de cuvânt. Sunt de acord cu multe lucruri pe care le-ați spus, egalitatea de șanse, faptul că trebuie să implementăm această directivă în toate statele membre, dar pe mine m-a surprins că în discursul dumneavoastră nu ați vorbit de IMM-uri.

Ați plâns de mila multinaționalelor, nu cumva să fie prea multă transparență, nu cumva să fie un obstacol într-o investiție a unei multinaționale într-un stat membru. Eu nu cred că puteți vorbi în același discurs de egalitatea de șanse și în același timp să nu vorbiți de IMM-uri. Transparența este absolut necesară. Știm bine că cele mai mari evaziuni în Uniunea Europeană nu au fost făcute de IMM-uri, au fost făcute de multinaționale.

Dacă am reușit acum doi ani, cu sprijinul tuturor grupurilor parlamentare, să avem o asemenea directivă, nu înțeleg de ce trebuie să faceți recomandări de diminuare a transparenței. Nu cred că este un drum corect, doamna comisar, și sper să ne dați și o explicație pentru acest lucru.

*(End of catch-the-eye procedure)*

**Mairead McGuinness**, *Member of the Commission*. – Mr President, I think this was a really important debate because this is your work and we need to make sure, as a Commission, that we implement fully and effectively, as I emphasised in my opening remarks. And I want to re-emphasise that that is our job, our duty, and we do it sincerely and – we hope – effectively.

We are working hard to promote effective transposition that maintains the level playing field and avoids the risk of regulatory arbitrage. But I would stress again, colleagues: those who want Member States to have more ambition, they remain free, of course, to go beyond this Directive.

I also would take note of the remark that was made by a colleague who said undue interference on Member States. And perhaps from my experience of being a parliamentarian and now a Commissioner, I would say that Member States don't welcome undue interference, but they do welcome guidelines and clarity, and it is our job as a Commission to do that when it is required.

I think in this particular case, when we talk about the implications of gold-plating in the information note we sent to Member States, it is important we do that where it applies to third-country multinationals who are operating in the European Union through branches and subsidiaries, because they can be located in several Member States. Patchy implementation of the country-by-country reporting due to gold-plating could lead to an unlevel playing field and potentially to forum shopping by third country multinationals.

As a briefing requested by the JURI Committee of the European Parliament in 2018 rightly indicated, gold-plating of EU measures may significantly hinder the implementation of EU law, and national parliaments should strive to avoid this practice. Again, as the guardians of the Treaty, the Commission should recall the risks associated with the practice, and indeed that's what we have done in the information note.

One of the colleagues mentioned that 17 Member States have not yet transposed; 10 have. We will do our duty to make sure that the 17 get more active on this important piece of legislation, and implement fully and effectively.

I want to go through some of the questions and reply to them, if I may. First of all, I thank my former colleague, Markus Ferber, for his appreciation of my work. As he said himself, he doesn't often praise me so it's welcome.

However, I also respect the work of our rapporteur, Ms Regner. And I would say, with all due respect, about the word 'appears' to limit transparency. I voted for this as a Member of this Parliament. I would not stand over anything that gives the appearance or, indeed, the possibility of limiting transparency. You and I both know that this is important for public trust and for the European Union to lead in this regard.

I also would say that, again, I think the comment was made that we would lower the ambition of some Member States. We cannot and would not insist on lowering the ambition of Member States. They are free to go further. We just point out the level playing field implications. And again, if the word used is it 'seems' that this is undue interference, this is indeed not the case. We would have had discussions with Member States and stakeholders about implementation. We were answering questions that they had raised with us.

Ms Aubry, thank you for your intervention. I absolutely agree with you that we need to shine a light on this, and your work in this Parliament – and mine when I was here – did just that around transparency. I would thank you for the new letter of yesterday, which I have read and, indeed, will be replying to.

But you asked me a very important question and I need to answer this, because we know we have worked together over time. You asked me, ‘who are you working for?’ In this House, as an elected member of this House, I worked for the people that I represented in my Member State. My role now as a Commissioner is to make sure that we as a Commission do our duty: guardians of the Treaty, respect the work of the co-legislators, make proposals and then, when they’re amended, see that they are fully implemented.

I have no other authority or individual to report to, and I absolutely – because of my work here in this Parliament, and I hope that the public gallery will appreciate this – those in this House who work very hard on legislation are committed to the public good, as I am. So I hope that gives you some comfort in relation to your particular questions.

So, to finalise my comments, I think this is very useful. I think the Commission should be kept on our toes, and I appreciate and fully respect your role in that regard. But I hope that today’s comments by me and my further replies to your letter will convince you – if that is still necessary – that we are fully focused on effective implementation of this transparency Directive on tax.

I was going to say timely but, as you know, 17 Member States have not yet done the work. We will now focus on them and make sure that they do. We will also be checking that the transposition work of the 10 Member States who have complied is effective. So thank you for this opportunity. And if I don’t get the chance again, could I wish you all a relaxing summer break. I think we all need it.

**Sēdes vadītājs.** – Debates ir slēgtas.

*(Sēde tika pārtraukta plkst. 11.47)*

## PŘEDSEDNICTVÍ: DITA CHARANZOVÁ

*místopředsedkyně*

## 6. Wznowienie posiedzenia

*(The sitting resumed at 12.03)*

**Raphaël Glucksmann (S&D).** – Madame la Présidente, hier soir, dans cette enceinte, les limites de la décence ont été franchies. Hier soir, les petits télégraphistes du Kremlin ont colporté au cœur même de nos institutions les «fake news» venues de Russie. Hier soir, lors du débat en plénière portant sur le rapport sur des recommandations pour la réforme des règles du Parlement européen en matière de transparence, d’intégrité, de responsabilité et de lutte contre la corruption, M. Rougé, membre du Rassemblement national et du groupe Identité et démocratie, a tenu à mon encounter et à l’encontre de mon ex-épouse Ekaterine Zgouladze, des propos offensants et diffamatoires. Il a colporté une fausse information née en Russie, l’accusant d’avoir été arrêtée avec des millions de dollars, sans aucune forme de fondement. Nous avons retracé cette désinformation. Elle remonte à l’un des piliers du régime de Poutine, M. Zakhartchenko qui est sous sanctions, et aux médias du Kremlin qui ensuite ont été relayés par les sites complotistes de l’extrême droite française.

Ainsi, eu égard aux dispositions prévues à l’article 10, paragraphe 4, du règlement intérieur, je demande que le Bureau du Parlement se saisisse de l’examen des faits et prenne les sanctions nécessaires. Cette enceinte ne peut se faire l’écho des «fake news» du Kremlin. Nous ne pouvons pas tolérer de telles méthodes, des attaques mensongères sur les familles des membres. Où allons-nous si nous tolérons cela?

Vous avez fait cela pour m'impressionner, pour me faire baisser la tête. Je ne la baisserai pas et je combattrai vos méthodes et votre idéologie jusqu'au bout. Nous ne lâcherons rien et la démocratie l'emportera contre les pantins et les chevaux de Troie du régime tyrannique de Vladimir Poutine.

**President.** – Thank you very much. There was an exchange already yesterday. We take note. I will inform the President of Parliament and she will then decide on the next steps.

**Yannick Jadot (Verts/ALE).** – Madame la Présidente, comme beaucoup de députés ici, j'ai été scandalisé par la nomination de M<sup>me</sup> Scott Morton au poste d'économiste en chef à la DG Concurrence. M<sup>me</sup> Scott Morton est non seulement une citoyenne américaine, alors que nous devons embaucher des citoyens européens, mais M<sup>me</sup> Scott Morton est une lobbyiste pour Apple, pour Amazon et pour Microsoft. Et qu'on mette dans les institutions de la Commission européenne une lobbyiste pour combattre les GAFAM et les encadrer, c'est totalement scandaleux.

Je demande à M<sup>me</sup> Vestager et à M<sup>me</sup> von der Leyen d'annuler cette nomination qui va à l'encontre des demandes du Parlement européen pour notre souveraineté numérique.

**President.** – That was not a real point of order, but we take note.

**Jordan Bardella (ID).** – Madame la Présidente, je voudrais faire un rappel au règlement intérieur, sur la base de l'article 133, pour vous demander expressément d'inviter la présidente de la Commission européenne à venir justifier la nomination de Fiona Scott Morton à la Direction générale de la concurrence européenne. Cela a été rappelé, M<sup>me</sup> Morton est une Américaine qui a été, durant sa vie professionnelle, consultante pour les GAFAM et soupçonnée dans ce cadre de pratiques douteuses.

Cette décision inquiète puisque les tentaculaires GAFAM semblent désormais avoir l'une des leurs au cœur de la réglementation européenne. Cette question pose a minima la question du conflit d'intérêts. La Commission est-elle libre de toute ingérence et de toute influence de la part des États-Unis d'Amérique et de leurs sociétés? C'est désormais une question vitale pour notre souveraineté.

## 7. Głosowanie

**President.** – The next item is the vote.

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

**7.1. Pozbawianie praw politycznych w Wenezueli (B9-0330/2023, RC-B9-0331/2023, B9-0331/2023, B9-0343/2023, B9-0350/2023, B9-0351/2023) (głosowanie)**

**7.2. Indie: Sytuacja w Manipurze (B9-0334/2023, RC-B9-0335/2023, B9-0335/2023, B9-0337/2023, B9-0341/2023, B9-0344/2023, B9-0345/2023) (głosowanie)**

**7.3. Ataki na media i wolność wypowiedzi w Kirgistanie (B9-0353/2023, B9-0332/2023, RC-B9-0333/2023, B9-0333/2023, B9-0336/2023, B9-0338/2023, B9-0352/2023) (głosowanie)**

**7.4. Akt o wspieraniu produkcji amunicji (C9-0161/2023) (głosowanie)**

*– Before the vote:*

**Cristian-Silviu Buşoi**, *Chair of the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy*. – Madam President, very briefly, I would like to thank the negotiating team. In less than one month after receiving the mandate from you, from the plenary, we finalised last week the negotiations with the Council with very good support from the European Commission, delivering for the Ukrainian people and the European defence industry. We secured a EUR 500 million budget. We eliminated the reference to the Cohesion Fund. We introduced a bonus for SMEs. We deleted the reference to the possibility of making use of flexibilities in the Working Time Directive.

In the context of the Vilnius Summit, today's vote – I hope positive – marks another step forward for Europe's security and defence and another very concrete brick from our continuous support of Ukraine in the face of ongoing Russian aggression. Thank you so much.

**7.5. Zalecenia dotyczące reformy przepisów Parlamentu Europejskiego w zakresie przejrzystości, uczciwości, odpowiedzialności i walki z korupcją (A9-0215/2023 - Vladimír Bilčík, Nathalie Loiseau) (głosowanie)**

**7.6. Potrzeba podjęcia przez Unię działań w zakresie poszukiwania i ratownictwa na Morzu Śródziemnym (B9-0339/2023, B9-0340/2023, B9-0342/2023) (głosowanie)**

**7.7. Stan unii MŚP (RC-B9-0346/2023, B9-0346/2023, B9-0347/2023, B9-0348/2023, B9-0349/2023) (głosowanie)**

**7.8. Publiczny dostęp do dokumentów – sprawozdanie roczne za lata 2019–2021 (A9-0179/2023 - Evin Incir) (głosowanie)**

**President.** – That concludes the vote.

*(The sitting was suspended at 12.38)*

**VORSITZ: RAINER WIELAND**

*Vizepräsident*

## **8. Wznowienie posiedzenia**

*(Die Sitzung wird um 15.01 Uhr wieder aufgenommen)*

## **9. Przyjęcie protokołu poprzedniego posiedzenia**

**Der Präsident.** – Das Protokoll der gestrigen Sitzung und die angenommenen Texte sind verfügbar.

Ich sehe keine Einwände.

Das Protokoll der gestrigen Sitzung ist damit genehmigt.

## 10. 10. rocznica przyjęcia Wytycznych UE w sprawie propagowania i ochrony wolności religii lub przekonań (debata)

**Der Präsident.** – Als nächster Punkt der Tagesordnung folgt die Aussprache über die Erklärung der Kommission zum 10-jährigen Bestehen der Leitlinien der EU zur Förderung und zum Schutz der Religions- und Weltanschauungsfreiheit (2023/2783(RSP)).

**Věra Jourová, Vice-President of the Commission.** – Mr President, honourable Members, in the face of rising tensions and polarisation, more than ever, the European Union must reaffirm its commitment to protecting fundamental rights, the rule of law and democracy, both within and outside its borders. In this context, respect for freedom of thought, conscience and religion is among the core values we must defend.

The European Commission is committed to ensuring the protection of these rights, which are expressed in Article 10 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. The Commission is committed to protecting members of all religious groups from intimidation, discrimination, violence or attack, as well as from persecution. The Commission is also committed to promote intercultural and inter-religious dialogue as a way to promote tolerance and equal rights for all.

Freedom of religion or belief is an essential feature within our Union, but of our external human rights policy as well. And the EU guidelines on the promotion and protection of freedom of religion or belief reflects our commitment to this freedom abroad. The implementation of these guidelines on freedom of religion and beliefs remains a priority of the EU's external action.

The appointment of Mr Frans van Daele as Special Envoy for the promotion of freedom of religion or belief outside the EU is the expression of our commitment to protect the victims of acts of violence based on religion or belief worldwide. This appointment also reflects our commitment to promote engagement with all stakeholders, public authorities, civil society, and religious or non-confessional organisations to address the rights of believers and non-believers.

The line with all our partners across the world is clear. We consistently condemn discrimination, intolerance, violence and persecution against or by any person based on grounds of religion or belief. We call on all countries to protect the right for everyone to have or not have a religion or belief, to manifest or to change their religion or belief, while condemning the criminalisation of apostasy and abuse of the blasphemy laws.

We condemn attacks against places of worship and persecution and discrimination against people of all faiths as well as non-believers. We also strongly condemn discrimination or violence perpetrated in the name of religion, in particular violence against women or against LGBTI persons. The instrumentalisation of religion must be rejected, and many religious leaders around the world are standing against such instrumentalisation.

This is also why intercultural or inter-religious dialogue must be further promoted. Religious tolerance is essential to establish civil peace. This dialogue must also be pursued with a human rights perspective, ensuring respect of freedom of religion or belief, freedom of expression and other human rights and fundamental freedoms.

In promoting freedom of religion or belief, the EU will continue to cooperate with the United Nations, which is setting universal standards applicable to all countries. We continue to draw attention as appropriate to freedom of religion or belief in the Universal Periodic Review of the UN Human Rights Council. We support the mandate of the United Nations Special Rapporteur and yearly resolutions in relevant United Nations human rights fora. We have raised our concerns in 20 human rights dialogues that we hold with partner countries.

The EU has also taken several initiatives to foster freedom of religion and beliefs at local level, including involving civil society actors, faith-based organisations, humanists, atheists and religious actors. We are also providing concrete support to freedom of religion or belief through the EU's human rights and civil society programmes.

Honourable Members, our objective is clear: there is no place for intolerance, intimidation, discrimination, attack, persecution or violence in the name of religion or belief inside or outside the European Union. We remain fully committed to the protection and promotion of freedom of religion or belief for all.

**György Hölvényi**, *on behalf of the PPE Group*. – Mr President, Madam Commissioner, dear colleagues, the general experience of the scientific reports show that we live in a time of unprecedented religious intolerance globally. Unfortunately, in 2021, as many as 40 countries of the world people have been killed, abducted for their faith. At the same time, since 2019, the Commission unfortunately hesitated for three years with the appointment of the EU Special Envoy for the promotion of the freedom of religion outside the EU. This undermined, clearly – this is my own experience – the EU's international credibility.

Dear colleagues, around 84% of the global population identifies with a different kind of religious group, according to the Pew Research Center. The basic human right of the freedom of religion is still not fully integrated into EU diplomacy. We'll still need to set milestones in dialogue with the churches, religious communities and their organisations active in this field in the EU and the third countries.

According to Article 17 of the EU Treaty, the EU institution conducts substantial and transparent dialogue with the religious communities, either. In reality – we know it very well, however – it is not structured dialogue as such prior to any substantive EU decision-making. It is not a legal framework that is missing. Rather, the EU leadership refuses knowledge of the decisive impact of religion in individual society. Without this, decision-makers are unable to understand the importance of religious freedom.

A visible result, today, is that we hold this debate in the very end of the plenary session, on Thursday afternoon. We need the presence of the colleagues, of course. Thanks for everybody who is present. I think it is really a simple shame. Let me recall the free expression of religion is not a matter of religion, but it is a human right. In fact, it is even deeper – it is one of the anthropological question.

**Łukasz Kohut**, *w imieniu grupy S&D*. – Panie Przewodniczący! Każdy człowiek ma prawo do wolności myśli, sumienia i wyznania. I także w związku z tym państwo powinno być świeckie. Dlatego nie do zaakceptowania jest sojusz tronu z ołtarzem. Osoby wierzące i niewierzące mają dość tego, co dzieje się obecnie w Polsce PiS. Mamy dość napychania kabzy Rydzykowi, szarlatanowi z Torunia. Mamy dość prezesa partii na ambonie. Mamy dość zenujących tańców polityków partii rządzących na mszach. Mamy dość ingerowania przez kler w życie i w zdrowie kobiet. Mamy dość robienia duchowieństwu prezentów z naszych publicznych pieniędzy. Mamy dość tuszowania pedofilii i państwa, które akurat w tej sprawie niczego nie może zrobić. I łączy nas wspólny cel – świeckie państwo, w którym każda religia jest jednocześnie szanowana, państwo, w którym są uczciwe zasady na linii państwo-kościół. Czas na świeckie państwo!

I na koniec słowa księdza profesora Józefa Tischnera: w tej chwili terroryzm lewicowy [...] odszedł w przeszłość, natomiast podnosi głowę, daje o sobie znać terroryzm prawicowy. I uważam, że to jest [...] niebezpieczeństwo, bo ten prawicowy terroryzm ma bardzo często pełną gębę religii. On się legitymizuje szlachetnymi, pięknymi wartościami chrześcijańskimi. Warte rozważenia.

**Ilana Cicurel**, *au nom du groupe Renew*. – Monsieur le Président, chers collègues, je voudrais commencer par citer un brillant politologue qui nous a quittés de manière prématurée il y a un peu plus d'un an, Laurent Bouvet. En matière religieuse, écrivait-il, la neutralité de l'État sert à nous protéger en tant que citoyens de l'État lui-même, bien évidemment, mais elle sert aussi et indissociablement à protéger chacun d'entre nous de nos coreligionnaires, le cas échéant, ou plus largement, de toute croyance ou pratique que l'on voudrait nous imposer dans la société.

Les orientations que nous avons à commenter aujourd'hui et qui ont été écrites il y a dix ans nous invitent à cette double vigilance et à nous méfier de la remise en cause de la liberté religieuse par l'État. L'exemple dramatique de l'Iran illustre bien sûr cette manière que peut avoir l'État de remettre en cause cette liberté de conscience, celle de croire ou de ne pas croire, de ne plus croire, de changer de religion. Et cet exemple sous nos yeux, si dramatique, a éveillé, je crois, dans cette maison, le Parlement européen, la conscience que nous devons être vigilants aussi à l'intérieur de nos frontières européennes.

Je suis fière, en septembre 2022, d'avoir porté avec certains de mes collègues du groupe Renew un amendement qui appelait précisément à ce que cessent les financements d'organisations intégristes, et notamment celles proches des Frères musulmans. Nous appelions la Commission à faire en sorte que les fonds de l'Union ne financent que des associations, je cite, qui respectent scrupuleusement l'ensemble des valeurs européennes, dont la liberté de penser, la liberté de parole et l'égalité entre les hommes et les femmes. Il y a un début d'exécution et je salue la suspension des fonds à destination de l'association turque Yavuz Sultan Selim, qui avait félicité les terroristes du Bataclan. Elle a été condamnée au remboursement des sommes versées. Il faut que cette vigilance continue, que ce soit une nouvelle culture au sein de nos institutions européennes.

Et je voudrais terminer par une requête. Il y a des fonds européens qui viennent nourrir la recherche. Il est fondamental que la recherche sur l'islamisme soit davantage nourrie. Pourquoi? Parce que, ne pas permettre à des universitaires sérieux de faire des recherches sérieuses sur l'islamisme, c'est-à-dire d'établir ce qu'est l'islamisme mais aussi ce qu'il n'est pas, c'est nourrir deux extrémismes: l'islamisme qui ne veut pas qu'on documente ce qu'il est, et surtout l'extrême droite qui veut qu'un amalgame soit fait entre l'islamisme et l'islam. J'en appelle à la Commission, à sa responsabilité. Nous devons financer une recherche sérieuse et honnête intellectuellement sur l'islamisme.

**Bert-Jan Ruissen**, *namens de ECR-Fractie*. – Voorzitter, mevrouw de commissaris, tien jaar geleden stelde de Raad de richtsnoeren vast over godsdienstvrijheid. Dat die richtsnoeren er zijn is natuurlijk een goede zaak. Maar hoe staat het met de uitvoering ervan? Ik heb daar serieuze twijfels over en dat is ook de reden waarom ik dit debat vandaag heb aangevraagd.

Zo schrijft artikel 70 een driejaarlijkse evaluatie voor, maar in tien jaar tijd is er nooit een uitvoerings- of evaluatieverslag verschenen. Ook zou er een regulier overleg komen met het Parlement over geloofsvervolgung, maar in tien jaar tijd is dat nooit van de grond gekomen. De post van EU-gezant bleef drie jaar vacant en nu is hij eindelijk benoemd, maar in tien jaar tijd is de menskracht waarop hij kan terugvallen altijd heel minimaal gebleven.

Voorzitter, er moet echt meer gebeuren, want geloofsvervolgung neemt wereldwijd alleen maar toe. Kijk naar een land als Nigeria, waar de afgelopen 20 jaar 50 000 christenen vanwege hun geloof zijn gedood. Of kijk naar de situatie in Manipur, waar we gisteren over spraken. Ik heb daarom aan de Commissie drie concrete verzoeken:

- 1) kom op korte termijn met een gedegen uitvoeringsverslag van de richtsnoeren;
- 2) geef de EU-gezant een permanent mandaat en zorg voor extra personeel zodat hij zijn werk goed kan doen;
- 3) kom met voorstellen om 24 juni, de datum waarop de richtsnoeren werden vastgesteld, aan te wijzen als Europese Dag voor de strijd tegen geloofsvervolgung.

Graag een reactie van de Commissie hierop. We mogen de verdrukte kerk met miljoenen gelovigen niet in de kou laten staan. Ik hoop en bid dat het niet nog eens tien jaar aansleept.

**Marie Dauchy**, *au nom du groupe ID*. – Monsieur le Président, chers collègues, le droit à la liberté de religion et de conviction est l'un de nos héritages politiques les plus précieux que nous ont légués les penseurs des Lumières, tels que Voltaire, Rousseau ou Montesquieu. Ces hommes se sont battus contre tous les absolutismes, qu'ils soient religieux ou politiques. Nous leur devons notre liberté.

Mais qu'en reste-t-il aujourd'hui? À vrai dire, pas grand-chose, et nous le devons à la gauche et aux mondialistes qui ont complètement ruiné ces principes et trahi ce que nos aïeux ont acquis au prix de leur vie. À l'origine, la liberté religieuse, c'est la garantie pour toute personne de croire ou de ne pas croire en Dieu et de pouvoir l'exprimer sans subir de menaces. C'est donc permettre à l'homme d'être libre de ses convictions.

Mais aujourd'hui, la liberté religieuse représente l'exact contraire de ces principes. Sous couvert d'une injonction à la bienveillance et au vivre ensemble, la liberté religieuse est devenue la liberté absolue de professer n'importe quel dogme jusqu'au plus dangereux. Au nom de la liberté religieuse. Il est devenu insultant de critiquer l'islamisme qui soumet les hommes et les femmes. L'exemple du voile islamique, qui n'est qu'une insulte à l'indépendance des femmes, est criant. Je suis atterrée de voir que la gauche de ce Parlement ose à peine défendre les femmes iraniennes dans leur combat, quand plusieurs d'entre elles meurent pour se débarrasser de cette prison. Honte à vous!



Cette parodie de liberté religieuse est même devenue le laissez-passer par lequel les institutions européennes déroulent le tapis rouge aux associations islamistes et l'alibi qu'utilisent les islamistes pour répandre leur idéologie nauséabonde partout en Europe et nous imposer leurs dogmes rétrogrades. Les pays islamistes comme le Qatar l'ont parfaitement compris et arrosent leurs amis de la gauche de billets pour défendre leurs valeurs arriérées. Votre soi-disant liberté religieuse vous rend donc complices des extrémismes dont les Lumières nous avaient pourtant débarrassés. L'idéologie multiculturaliste de l'Union européenne nous ramène des siècles en arrière...

*(Le Président retire la parole à l'oratrice)*

**Ryszard Czarnecki (ECR).** – Panie Przewodniczący! Pani Komisarz! Myślę, że trzeba mówić szczerze i otwarcie. W tym Parlamencie – pamiętam – kilka lat wstecz, gdy słusznie podejmowaliśmy debatę, a potem rezolucję w kontekście Ujgurów, mniejszości muzułmańskiej, moja grupa polityczna konserwatystów zgłosiła wniosek, żeby także zająć się w tym samym kraju chrześcijanami, którzy byli prześladowani. Większość parlamentarzystów europejskich odrzuciła tę poprawkę. Muszę powiedzieć, że było to dla mnie czymś zupełnie niesamowitym, że owa wolność i wspieranie tolerancji jest dla jednych równe, a dla drugich równiejsze.

Także dzisiaj przecież szereg grup politycznych zagłosował przeciwko kobietom, organizacjom, w których działają kobiety i które usiłują walczyć z teokracją w Iranie. Powinniśmy uderzyć się w piersi w tej sprawie.

**Joachim Kuhs (ID).** – Herr Präsident, Frau Kommissarin, werde Kollegen! Heute vor zehn Jahren wurden die Leitlinien für Glaubens- und Bekenntnisfreiheit verabschiedet. Das ist ein Grund zum Feiern. Aber wenn ich das richtig sehe, gab es noch keine öffentliche Bewertung dieser Leitlinien. Wie wurden sie eigentlich umgesetzt? Das scheint, auch wenn ich die Rednerliste heute ansehe, niemanden zu interessieren.

Oder ist das Ganze nur ein Papiertiger? Denn wir hatten zahlreiche Berichte und Bewertungen zu Transgenderismus oder zum angeblichen Recht auf Abtreibung und zu tausend anderen Themen. Aber wir hatten kaum Zeit für dieses zentrale Thema der Religions- und Bekenntnisfreiheit.

Ist es uns egal, dass allein in Nigeria seit Beginn dieses Jahres täglich mehr als 20 Christen ermordet wurden? Oder ist es uns egal, dass weltweit Hunderte von Millionen Menschen, vor allem Christen, verfolgt werden? Werte Kollegen, es ist heute wichtiger denn je, unsere christliche Kultur, unseren Glauben und unser Erbe zu schützen. Lassen Sie uns diese Richtlinien zum Leben erwecken!

#### *Spontane Wortmeldungen*

**Ангел Джамбазки (ECR).** – Г-н Председател, десет години, след като са приети тези насоки за свободата на религията, едно нещо трябва да признаете и то е, че ако има подтиснато, репресирано общество, което има своите религиозни виждания, това са християните, и в частност православните християни. Навсякъде около Европа, в Африка, в Сирия, в Египет, в Турция, навсякъде, дори в Средна Азия, навсякъде насилието срещу християните продължава да нараства и няма никаква реакция от страна нито на Европейския парламент, нито на Комисията, от която Вие сте част.

Това какво показва? Че има двоен стандарт. Вие преди малко говорихте дори за ЛГБТИ. Това не е вярване, това не е религия. Религията е вярата в Господ, вярата в Бог. Ако искате да защитавате правата на всеки един човек да има своите убеждения, защитавайте и християните. Ние не сме нещо по-малко от останалите, ние не сме по-малко нещо от атеистите като г-н Кохут, който там отгоре беше много пламенен защитник на атеизма. Никой не му пречи да си вярва в това. Но това, което трябва да знаем, е, че трябва да има защита и на християните, и на православните. Дори календарът на Парламента е направен така, че да уважава празниците на православните.

**Mick Wallace (The Left).** – Mr President, it's been 10 years since these guidelines on freedom of religion or belief were implemented, and the progress is nothing to boast about. There's been a lack of public implementation reports to monitor the implementation of guidelines. And, since 2019, Parliament has been calling for greater transparency. A report by the European Parliament's Intergroup on Freedom of Religion highlighted a lack of education on these guidelines to the EEAS staff and the highly ambiguous implementation of guidelines by various EU delegations abroad.

Now, if we look, a real sign of concern is how we have treated Muslim refugees in Europe. We have rightly welcomed refugees from Ukraine fleeing a war situation – and it is good that we have. But it's an awful pity that we don't have the same welcome for the refugees from Afghanistan, from Syria, from Iraq, from Yemen. There are 400 000 people dead in Yemen; there are 16 million hungry. But it's a Western-promoted war so we don't give a damn about them! They're Muslim and they're the wrong colour.

**Beata Kempa (ECR).** – Panie Przewodniczący! Nikogo nie wolno dyskryminować ze względu na wyznawaną religię, to jest oczywiste. Ale chcę się ująć w sposób szczególny za chrześcijanami. W 50 krajach ponad trzysta milionów chrześcijan pada dzisiaj ofiarami prześladowań. Co 5 minut na świecie za wiarę ginie wyznawca Jezusa Chrystusa. I dlatego te wytyczne – choć potrzebne – w sprawie ochrony wolności religijnej to jednak zbyt mało. Potrzebujemy nowej, ambitnej agendy pozwalającej reagować na każdy przypadek prześladowań religijnych wobec chrześcijan. Nie możemy pozwolić na to, żeby prawo krajowe w niektórych państwach legitymizowało prześladowanie. Takie sytuacje mamy chociażby w Pakistanie czy w Nigerii.

Czas najwyższy otworzyć oczy i przestać milczeć. Unia Europejska obok wytycznych musi powiązać traktaty handlowe z klauzulami o wolności religijnej. Powinna wykorzystać wszystkie instrumenty, aby zakończyć prześladowania za wiarę.

**Clare Daly (The Left).** – Mr President, I'm an Irish person so I'm a Catholic by birth, but I'm an atheist by choice. That said, I am a strong believer in support for religious freedoms – whatever that religion may be – and the right for anybody to practise and worship as they see fit, while at the same time supporting and backing the need to separate church from state.

And I accept that Christians are persecuted. I have seen it in the likes of Syria where – because of Western interference to try and overthrow the Assad government, supporting ISIS and so on – Christians and, indeed, Shia Muslims have been undermined and attacked.

I support the position of the European Union in its strong antisemitism statements, but I share the deep concerns of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe last year about the dangerous rise in Islamophobia. We see Islamophobic rhetoric in public, in political discourse, and we see a growing stigmatisation of Muslims in Europe, which has contributed to legislation targeting them. It is not good enough. We need to address this.

*(Ende der spontanen Wortmeldungen)*

**Věra Jourová, Vice-President of the Commission.** – Mr President, honourable Members, I want to thank you for this useful debate on a very sensitive and important topic. I think that we all agree that the situation of freedom of religion or belief is alarming in many parts of the world and often related to conflict situations and unacceptable instances of religious persecution.

In this respect, I want to repeat that we already appointed a Special Envoy for the matters related to religious freedoms, and I call on all EU institutions to support the role of the Special Envoy for the promotion of freedom of religion or belief.

Let me maybe now repeat what I said before, because I think I was not rightly understood, because here were comments that the Commission is not defending Christians abroad. So I will repeat what I said. We condemn attacks against places of worship and persecution and discrimination against people of all faiths as well as non-believers, including Christians.

Also for you, I will repeat what I said on LGBTI – indeed, this is not a religion. So what I exactly said was that we also strongly condemn discrimination or violence perpetrated in the name of religion, in particular violence against women or against LGBTI persons. So this is just to clarify the statement of the Commission by repeating it.

And a last comment on the contribution of Ms Cicurel, who is not here anymore. But in the case of funding, indeed in the previous mandate we had a case of wrong funding, a wrongly funded project. It was the project led by Leeds University and was one of the partners which was supporting Islamist ideas and Islamists. We stopped the funding and I was very tough in requesting the money to be paid back. And I also tasked the Commission services to make clear, make sure that the system will not allow such funding anymore.

I am unhappy to say that there is another case now, but the system discovered this case soon. Also in this case, we were very resolute, very quick. The money had to be paid back. And I want to also guarantee to you that we will undertake as tough control as possible so as not to fund the projects or the entities which are not promoting EU values, including freedom of religion and freedom of speech, and so on.

**Der Präsident.** – Die Aussprache ist geschlossen.

## 11. Wyjaśnienia dotyczące sposobu głosowania

**Der Präsident.** – Als nächster Punkt der Tagesordnung folgen einige Erklärungen zur Abstimmung.

### 11.1. Zalecenia dotyczące reformy przepisów Parlamentu Europejskiego w zakresie przejrzystości, uczciwości, odpowiedzialności i walki z korupcją (A9-0215/2023 - Vladimír Bilčík, Nathalie Loiseau)

#### Mündliche Stimmerklärungen

**Ангел Джамбазки (ECR).** – Г-н Председател, гласувах в подкрепа на доклада относно препоръките за повишаване на прозрачността, почтеността и борбата с корупцията, защото нагледно в последната година видях какво се случва в Европейския парламент, единствената европейска институция, която се избира пряко от гражданите.

Станахме свидетели на скандално вмешателство в работата на нашият Парламент, когато властите в Северна Македония, държава, която иска да бъде кандидат за член на Европейския съюз, и нейните институции решиха да упражняват натиск и лобизъм, като използват своите връзки с колеги и искаха да променят вече договорени текстове и компромиси. В национален ефир външният министър на държавата Северна Македония Буяр Османи заяви, че е информиран как върви работата по доклада и предава поправки на приятелите на Македония в Европейския парламент. Това е недопустимо и се надявам, че в тази зала наистина ще има прозрачност и истинска борба с корупцията на всяко ниво, а не само показна такава, свързана с т. нар. „Катаргейт“.

Една стара поговорка гласи „Комуто интереса, нему и цената му“. Така ще си обясним позицията на част от колегите по определени въпроси и това трябва да бъде много прозрачно.

### 11.2. Potrzeba podjęcia przez Unię działań w zakresie poszukiwania i ratownictwa na Morzu Śródziemnym (B9-0339/2023, B9-0340/2023, B9-0342/2023)

#### Mündliche Stimmerklärungen

**Ангел Джамбазки (ECR).** – Г-н Председател, гласувах убедено против резолюцията относно необходимостта от действие на Европейския съюз по отношение на операциите по издирване и спасяване в Средиземно море.

Този текст насърчава мигрантите и каналджиите да продължават да приемат животозастрашаващи пътувания през Средиземно море. Именно тази политика на отворени граници и на покана е причина за трагични случаи. Затова тя трябва да бъде променена радикално. Трябва да въведем политика на нулева нелегална миграция, активна работа с трети страни, за да не се допускат подобни опити за пресичане на границите и репатриране след установяване на самоличността на нелегалните имигранти и съд за тези, които организират тази нелегална дейност. Тук става дума за каналджиите, трафикантите и хората, които злоупотребяват с нещастieto на пътуващите и с нещастieto на тези, които се опитват да стигнат до Европа. На това нещо трябва да бъде сложен край и трябва да има строги наказания. И Комисията трябва да вземе отношение по тази тема.

**Mick Wallace (The Left).** – Mr President, I voted in favour of this. On 14 June, over 500 people trying to get to Europe were declared missing, presumed dead, when their boat sank off the coast of Greece. This is just one of the string of such disasters, and there have been further deaths since.

At the beginning of this mandate, this Parliament voted not to conduct search and rescue operations in the Mediterranean. We decided to let people die at sea. And we've done dodgy deals with countries across North Africa, paying them to police our borders. A UN report in March raised concerns about the abuse of migrants arrested and detained in Libya.

Instead of funding rescue, we're channelling money to bodies like the Libyan coastguard, who only last week were found to be shooting at migrants. People are dying to get to Europe. They're coming from countries that have been subjected to European colonialism, that have been ransacked with wars in which Europe played no good part. And we build higher walls to keep them out. Welcome to our European values.

**Clare Daly (The Left).** – Mr President, I also voted for this resolution. We hear an awful lot these days about the rules-based international order. Now, how European Member States deal with migration is a great example of this, because what it means is international law is flagrantly violated, UNCLOS disregarded. The Geneva Convention, maritime law, the Charter of Fundamental Rights: they're all just bits of paper that can be discarded. And European Member States are allowed to get away with it.

We've had no proactive state-operated search and rescue in the Mediterranean since 2014. Almost 28 000 people have died at sea in that time. That's three times as many civilians as have lost their lives in Ukraine. But, of course, the people who've drowned in the Mediterranean don't count – the men, the women, the children, the babies, who've struggled and gasped for breath, terrified as they die and lose their fight for life. They don't matter, do they? We kill them with impunity. We deny we are at war with them through sanctions or migration. Until we acknowledge that, we'll never get anywhere.

### **11.3. Stan unii MŚP (RC-B9-0346/2023, B9-0346/2023, B9-0347/2023, B9-0348/2023, B9-0349/2023)**

#### **Mündliche Stimmerklärungen**

**Clare Daly (The Left).** – Mr President, I am glad we were discussing this SME resolution, but I abstained on it because we are not doing enough. The level playing field is not level enough. We have big business favoured every time – companies like Iceland, where presently, in Ireland, 400 Irish workers have been left with unpaid wages, holiday pay, redundancy pay, everything. Some of them are down thousands of euros against the backdrop of the biggest cost of living crisis in decades – no idea how they're going to pay their bills or keep a roof over their head.

And yet Iceland, as their employer, has conducted a tactical insolvency, yet another one. We've been told that this wouldn't happen again, but it's happening again and again. Our government says, 'go to the industrial relations machinery of the state'. That's an insult when they've have to wait two and three years. The moneylenders, the landlords, the bankers don't wait for two and three years. They need action; they need it now. We need good employers and a level playing field.

### **11.4. Publiczny dostęp do dokumentów – sprawozdanie roczne za lata 2019–2021 (A9-0179/2023 - Evin Incir)**

#### **Mündliche Stimmerklärungen**

**Ангел Джамбазки (ECR).** – Г-н Председател, публичният достъп до документи е право на гражданите на Европейския съюз, гарантиран от Договорите.

Съгласно чл. 15 от Договора за функционирането на Европейския съюз, за да се насърчи доброто управление и да се гарантира участието на гражданското общество, институциите, органите, службите и агенциите на Съюза трябва да извършват своята работа възможно най-открито за всички граждани на Съюза. И всяко физическо или юридическо лице, което пребивава или има седалище в държава членка, трябва да има право на достъп до документи на институциите, органите, службите, агенциите на Съюза.

Европейският съюз безспорно има нужда да работи в посока на осигуряване на по-голяма прозрачност за своята дейност. Добър пример за това са, например, договорите за производство и доставка на медикаменти, които бяха сключвани с големите фармацевтични компании по време на пандемията. Парите на европейските данъкоплатци бяха изразходвани очевидно безотговорно и безпардонно по един недопустим начин и Европейската комисия трябва да понесе своята отговорност. Ето защо подкрепих този доклад.

**Der Präsident.** – Die Erklärungen zur Abstimmung sind geschlossen.

## 12. Zatwierdzenie protokołu bieżącego posiedzenia i przekazanie przyjętych tekstów

**Der Präsident.** – Das Protokoll dieser Sitzung wird dem Parlament zu Beginn der nächsten Sitzung zur Genehmigung vorgelegt.

Wenn es keine Einwände gibt, werde ich die in der heutigen Sitzung angenommenen Entschlüsse den in diesen Entschlüssen genannten Personen und Gremien übermitteln.

## 13. Kalendarz następnych posiedzeń

**Der Präsident.** – Die nächste Tagung findet vom 11. bis zum 14. September 2023 statt.

Wir haben heute noch ziemlich genau ein Jahr – in einem Jahr und drei Tagen wird das neue Europäische Parlament zusammentreten, wenn wir aus der Sommerpause zurückkommen. Wir merken schon, dass nicht nur draußen, sondern auch drinnen im Haus die Temperaturen etwas steigen, was die Hitzigkeiten und Aufgeregtheiten angeht. Wenn wir aus der Sommerpause zurückkommen, dann werden sich die meisten von uns aufmachen, in den Wahlkampf zu ziehen, und werden schon die Vorwahlkampfzeit sehen.

Ich wünsche allen bis dahin eine gute Erholung. Ich bedanke mich insbesondere bei den Diensten, für die das alles natürlich genauso gilt.

Frau Kommissarin, Ihre Mitarbeiterin, die ganze Kommission, haben Sie einen guten Sommer, kommen Sie jetzt dieses Wochenende gut nach Hause.

## 14. Zamknięcie posiedzenia

*(Die Sitzung wird um 15.40 Uhr geschlossen)*

## 15. Przerwa w obradach

**Der Präsident.** – Ich erkläre die Sitzungsperiode des Europäischen Parlaments für unterbrochen.

*Skróty i symbole*

*	Procedura konsultacji
***	Procedura zgody
***I	Zwykła procedura ustawodawcza, pierwsze czytanie
***II	Zwykła procedura ustawodawcza, drugie czytanie
***III	Zwykła procedura ustawodawcza, trzecie czytanie

(Typ procedury zależy od podstawy prawnej zaproponowanej w danym projekcie aktu.)

*Rozwinięcia skrótów nazw komisji parlamentarnych*

AFET	Komisja Spraw Zagranicznych
DEVE	Komisja Rozwoju
INTA	Komisja Handlu Międzynarodowego
BUDG	Komisja Budżetowa
CONT	Komisja Kontroli Budżetowej
ECON	Komisja Gospodarcza i Monetarna
EMPL	Komisja Zatrudnienia i Spraw Socjalnych
ENVI	Komisja Środowiska Naturalnego, Zdrowia Publicznego i Bezpieczeństwa Żywności
ITRE	Komisja Przemysłu, Badań Naukowych i Energii
IMCO	Komisja Rynku Wewnętrznego i Ochrony Konsumentów
TRAN	Komisja Transportu i Turystyki
REGI	Komisja Rozwoju Regionalnego
AGRI	Komisja Rolnictwa i Obszarów Wiejskich
PECH	Komisja Rybołówstwa
CULT	Komisja Kultury i Edukacji
JURI	Komisja Prawna
LIBE	Komisja Wolności Obywatelskich, Sprawiedliwości i Spraw Wewnętrznych
AFCO	Komisja Spraw Konstytucyjnych
FEMM	Komisja Praw Kobiet i Równych Szans
PETI	Komisja Petycji
DROI	Podkomisja Praw Człowieka
SEDE	Podkomisja Bezpieczeństwa i Obrony
FISC	Podkomisja do Spraw Podatkowych
SANT	Podkomisja Zdrowia Publicznego

*Rozwinięcia skrótów nazw grup politycznych*

PPE	Grupa Europejskiej Partii Ludowej (Chrześcijańscy Demokraci)
S&D	Grupa Postępowego Sojuszu Socjalistów i Demokratów w Parlamencie Europejskim
Renew	Grupa Renew Europe
Verts/ALE	Grupa Zielonych/Wolne Przymierze Europejskie
ID	Grupa Tożsamość i Demokracja
ECR	Grupa Europejskich Konserwatystów i Reformatorów
The Left	Grupa Lewicy w Parlamencie Europejskim - GUE/NGL
NI	Niezrzeszeni