



PEŁNE SPRAWOZDANIE Z OBRAD 21 PAŹDZIERNIKA 2021 R.

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VORSITZ: OTHMAR KARAS

Vizepräsident

1. Otwarcie posiedzenia

(Die Sitzung wird um 8.31 Uhr eröffnet.)

2. Ogłoszenie wyników głosowania

Der Präsident. – Ich gebe zunächst die Ergebnisse der zweiten Abstimmungsrunde von gestern bekannt.

(Der Präsident gibt die Abstimmungsergebnisse bekannt.)

Bevor wir mit den Aussprachen beginnen und vor der ersten Abstimmungsrunde von heute, in der wir über den Beschluss des LIBE-Ausschusses abstimmen werden, interinstitutionelle Verhandlungen aufzunehmen über

den Vorschlag für eine Verordnung zur Änderung der Verordnung (EU) 2016/794 in Bezug auf die Zusammenarbeit von Europol mit privaten Parteien, die Verarbeitung personenbezogener Daten durch Europol zur Unterstützung strafrechtlicher Ermittlungen und die Rolle von Europol in Forschung und Innovation

und

den Vorschlag für eine Verordnung zur Änderung der Verordnung (EU) 2018/1862 über die Einrichtung, den Betrieb und die Nutzung des Schengener Informationssystems (SIS) im Bereich der polizeilichen Zusammenarbeit und der justiziellen Zusammenarbeit in Strafsachen in Bezug auf die Eingabe von Ausschreibungen durch Europol,

kann jeweils nur ein Redner, der den Beschluss des Ausschusses, Verhandlungen aufzunehmen, unterstützt, und ein Redner dagegen sprechen.

Saskia Bricmont (Verts/ALE). – Monsieur le Président, je me vois contrainte de revenir sur les étapes de ce dossier tant il suscite peu de débats, alors qu'il contient un concentré des débats qui nous animent au sein de cette Assemblée: intelligence artificielle, surveillance de masse, collecte indiscriminée de données, y compris de non-suspects, échanges de ces données avec des pays tiers et des entreprises privées.

Le point de départ de la réforme, c'est la découverte par le comité européen de la protection des données de l'analyse massive de données personnelles par l'Agence en dehors de tout cadre légal. La Commission nous présente alors une réforme qui légalise des pratiques illégales et renforce considérablement les compétences de l'Agence à sa demande. Tout cela sans évaluation ni étude d'impact.

Chers collègues, c'est loin d'être un dossier technique. L'échange de données avec des parties privées et des États tiers a des conséquences en termes de droits fondamentaux et de protection des données. Le financement de projets d'Europol par des pays tiers peut entraîner des conséquences en termes d'ingérence étrangère. Donner la compétence exécutive à l'Agence d'insérer directement des alertes de sécurité dans le système d'information Schengen est une question éminemment politique. L'autoriser à développer des projets de recherche et d'innovation, d'intelligence artificielle à des fins expérimentales et policières, et à promouvoir des technologies de reconnaissance faciale alors que notre Parlement s'y est opposé il y a quinze jours, sont des questions éminemment politiques. Assurer la protection des droits fondamentaux est une question éminemment politique. Or, face à l'élargissement des missions et des pouvoirs confiés à l'Agence, on ne trouve pas les indispensables garde-fous et les mécanismes indépendants de contrôle démocratique.

Chers collègues, Europol doit assurer la sécurité de tous les citoyens et sans affaiblir leurs droits fondamentaux. Je vous exhorte donc à vous opposer à ce texte, à ces évolutions qui ne font pas de l'Europe un continent plus sûr pour tous.

Javier Zarzalejos, *rapporteur*. – Mr President, dear colleagues, I address the chamber today as rapporteur for the legislative package on Europol to ask you to confirm the decision adopted by the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) to enter into interinstitutional negotiations on the two draft legislative acts, namely the revision of the Europol regulation and the consequential amendment of the regulation on the Schengen Information System.

The reform of Europol's mandate is a long-standing request by this Parliament, and I was mainly motivated by the need to equip the agency with new tools and capabilities to face the digital transformation. Criminals have adapted their modus operandi to the new digital reality, and consequently it is necessary to enable Europol to better support Member States in the fight against these evolving security threats.

The two legislative reports, which were adopted by a large majority of 75% of the votes cast in LIBE last week, build on the main elements of the legislative proposals of the European Commission, while introducing additional safeguards to ensure the fundamental rights, in particular, the right to the protection of personal data, are respected.

The report, furthermore, includes provisions to enhance parliamentary oversight and the accountability of Europol, marking a substantial progress and striking the right balance between new capabilities and closer democratic scrutiny and oversight.

Consequently, I kindly request for your support for both decisions, which gather a broad support in the LIBE Committee, so allowing us to enter into negotiations so we can start the discussion with the Council and the Commission soon with a view to deliver new legislation that will allow Europol to better support the Member States to counter serious crimes and terrorism in full respect of fundamental rights.

3. Pandora Papers: konsekwencje dla działań na rzecz zwalczania prania pieniędzy, uchylania się od opodatkowania i unikania opodatkowania (złożone projekty rezolucji)

4. Wynik szczytu Bałkanów Zachodnich (debata)

Der Präsident. – Als nächster Punkt der Tagesordnung folgt die Aussprache über die Erklärungen des Rates und der Kommission zu den Ergebnissen des Westbalkan-Gipfels (2021/2930(RSP)).

Ich darf zu diesem Tagesordnungspunkt auch den Vertreter des Rates, Herrn Außenminister Anže Logar, und Frau Kommissarin McGuinness begrüßen – herzlich willkommen in unserer Aussprache.

Anže Logar, *President-in-Office of the Council*. – Mr President, Madam Commissioner, honourable Members, the Slovenian Presidency has devoted special attention to the Western Balkan partners and their future in the European Union. The region is of great strategic importance for the Union, and maintaining a constructive engagement is key for the region.

I am therefore particularly happy to discuss with you the outcome of the EU-Western Balkans Summit in Brdo, hosted by our Presidency and chaired by the President of the European Council, which was a cornerstone event. The summit served to strengthen our ties and stressed the importance of our relations. It allowed us to emphasise that the EU remains the predominant partner and investor in the region. The system and the close partnership during the COVID-19 pandemic were notably underlined.

The Union also reconfirmed its commitment to the enlargement process based upon credible reforms by partners, fair and rigorous conditionality and the principle of own merits. The Brdo Declaration, which was agreed at the summit, highlights these themes as well as the other important aspects.

Let me recall some key features that were discussed. In order to foster the region's socio-economic recovery, leaders discussed ways to intensify their engagement, building on concrete deliverables, notably the economic and investment plan and the green agenda for the Western Balkans. The summit also agreed a set of concrete deliverables, such as the agreement on a roadmap towards lowering roaming costs between the EU and the Western Balkans.

Let me also recall that fundamental values and principles, notably rule of law, independent justice and strong democratic institutions, remain key. The Union's assistance will continue to be linked to tangible progress in the area of rule of law and socio-economic reforms, as well as to the Western Balkans partners, adherence to EU values, rules and standards. Inclusive regional cooperation and the strengthening of good neighbourly relations, including with EU Member States, remain important.

So does the need to make further efforts to foster reconciliation and regional stability. In order to ensure the stability of the region and strengthen regional cooperation, ways to deepen our security and strategic engagement were also discussed by the leaders.

Finally, it was agreed to hold an EU-Western Balkans summit as a regular event in the future, a decision that reaffirms the Union's shared commitment to reinvigorating and enhancing our political dialogue with the region of the Western Balkans.

To conclude, the summit was successful and appreciated by both the EU and the countries of Western Balkans. It was a timely and important event showing our commitment to the shared objective of a strong, stable and united Europe.

I would like to take this opportunity to particularly thank the European Parliament for your role in promoting a sustained and constructive engagement with the Western Balkans and in the strengthening of your important ties. I guess future presidencies will need and will count on your support as well.

Mairead McGuinness, *Member of the Commission*. – Mr President, thank you very much for holding this debate to discuss the outcome of the EU Western Balkans summit on 6 October. Our thanks too to the Slovenian Presidency for hosting the event.

The summit was an important opportunity to reconfirm the European perspective of the Western Balkans and the deep links between the European Union and our Western Balkan partners. We are all Europe. We share the same values, geography, history and culture. But most of all, we share the responsibility to build a better common future. We owe it to our citizens.

The enlargement process is at the core of our relations. It has a transformative power, upholding European values and supporting reforms. It is a strategic objective we share, which unites the whole region and the European Union. It is important that it is clearly stated in the summit declaration.

The summit provided a clear analysis of the needs and reforms required, and a strong sense of prioritisation. Together, the European Union and the Western Balkans agreed on a number of tangible measures linked to the implementation of the Economic and Investment Plan. This plan remains the EU's blueprint for financial engagement in the region and aims to mobilise EUR 30 billion to spur the long-term recovery of the Western Balkans and foster their convergence with the EU.

We agreed on an agenda on innovation, research, education, culture, youth and sport. In practice, this means promoting scientific excellence, reforming the region's education systems, creating further opportunities for youth, and hopefully reversing the trend of brain drain from the region.

We have also prepared a detailed action plan for the implementation of the Green Agenda to support energy transition, a circular economy, the reduction of pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, the protection of biodiversity, and sustainable farming and food production. We also made progress on developing a roadmap and glide path for the voluntary reduction of roaming charges to roam like at home. We want to extend the way we use our mobile connections anywhere in the EU to the region, without crippling costs.

These are not only tangible measures for citizens in the region. It shows how closely EU policy priorities are mirrored in our work with the region. This is also reflected in the agreement to enhance cooperation between the EU and Western Balkan partners on core security issues such as cyber, hybrid, disinformation, space issues and military mobility, countering illicit firearms trafficking, and counterterrorism.

A clear message was also that reforms in the region are still needed. This includes reforms related to political and economic governance, rule of law and media freedom, and promoting a vibrant civil society. Further and decisive efforts by the Western Balkans are also crucial to deliver on their commitment to establish a common regional market. Of course, the EU will continue to support the region in those efforts, including through a recently adopted instrument on pre-accession assistance. In Brdo, we also agreed to hold regular summits with the region. This confirms the importance of this part of Europe to the European Union.

Over the past months, we have followed a series of public and civic initiatives and contributions by citizens from the region to the Conference on the Future of Europe. And indeed, we should listen to all Europeans, including those in the Western Balkans, on issues that matter for our common future.

David McAllister, *on behalf of the PPE Group*. – Mr President, the European perspective of our partners in the Western Balkans is in our mutual interest and remains our strategic choice. With the visit of Commission President Ursula von der Leyen last month and the EU Western Balkans Summit two weeks ago in Brdo, the European Union has once again demonstrated its strong political commitment to the Western Balkan countries and the entire accession process.

Having a closer look at the Brdo declaration, I would see five important positive messages to our partners.

Firstly, it is reconfirmed the European perspective of the region and our commitment to enlargement. Secondly, the EU has provided EUR 3.3 billion for emergency support and for supporting the recovery. In addition, the EU together with the Member States, has delivered almost three million doses of vaccines already.

Thirdly, the heads of state have called for a swift implementation of the economic and investment plan and the new IPA III regulation. Fourthly, other very practical measures were agreed to associate the region more closely to us in the European Union, such as to lower roaming charges. And fifthly, the European Union reaffirmed its support to strengthen regional cooperation.

Recent concerning events have shown how deep the divisions run and how much work is still needed to build good and sustainable neighbourly relations. Allow me to thank Commissioner Várhelyi for presenting the enlargement package yesterday at an extraordinary meeting of the Committee on Foreign Affairs. During our discussion, we welcomed the restated commitment of the Western Balkans partners to the primacy of democracy, fundamental rights and values.

EU support must continue to be linked to tangible progress on the rule of law and socio-economic reforms, as well as to the adherence of our European values, rules and standards.

A final point: as we enter a critical juncture for the future of the EU and its enlargement, the EU and the Member States must clear the hurdles precluding us from switching gears in the accession process for countries that show a strong commitment to reforms.

Tonino Picula, *on behalf of the S&D Group*. – Mr President, we welcome that the Slovenian Presidency organised this summit as one of their priorities, but we cannot hide our dissatisfaction with the overall outcome. When there are no decisions on the dates for concrete actions and when even using the word ‘enlargement’ becomes an issue, we must react.

It’s true that some significant steps were taken, such as adopting the IPA free pre-accession financial instrument and substantial financial commitment has been made throughout the region as well. Nevertheless, we need more political engagement and commitment.

As a group we particularly insist that all countries in the region uphold fundamental rights and the rule of law, defend freedom of media, fight corruption, and we will not compromise on these issues. What worries us is that we are witnessing unrest across the region. Typical patterns of foreign interference and public support for the EU is falling.

As a long-term solution and effective driver of reforms, we propose a credible and reachable European perspective for the Western Balkans countries. We must not shy away from calling out on all of the negative trends and backsliding. Still, we must deliver on our political commitments towards countries that did everything we asked for.

The Western Balkans is a real test of the credibility of the European Union’s declared geopolitical ambitions. Therefore, the accession talks with North Macedonia and Albania, but also regarding the visa-free regime for Kosovo should be approved immediately.

Ilhan Kyuchyuk, *on behalf of the Renew Group*. – Mr President, I welcome the past EU-Western Balkans Summit and its conclusions not only because the most important historical lesson for Europe is investing in integration of the continent, but because such public expressions of solidarity are more important than ever, as disinformation campaigns attempt to create divisions have recently been very strong in the Western Balkans.

It shows that any hurdle can be overcome in the commitment to the enlargement process and that fully-fledged EU membership is the ultimate goal. The EU’s commitment to provide nearly EUR 30 billion in grants and investments over seven years in order to aid development and propel Western Balkan countries towards membership is real proof that we stand side by side with our partners and reaffirm our unequivocal support for the region’s European perspective.

However, the enlargement process does not only depend on the level of economic growth, but also on many other achievements, among which are the rule of law, democracy and, last but not least, good neighbourly relations. We have the current examples for this: the provocation on the Kosovo-Serbia border shows us how fragile the peace in the region is, or the difficulties between Bulgaria and North Macedonia to find a compromise on the bilateral dispute demonstrate to us what the role of the past is in the region. I believe we should continue to support Western Balkans in carrying out all those necessary reforms because the European Union and alignment with its values and standards remain the greatest unifying factor for all the people of the Western Balkans.

Having said that, I urge both North Macedonia and Bulgaria to finally resume a constructive dialogue in order to achieve sustainable results. Reaching a compromise over an action plan of concrete measures could foster the whole EU integration, and I think the further delays will put at risk the credibility, objectivity and reliability of the accession process.

Viola Von Cramon-Taubadel, *on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group*. – Mr President, the European promise made to the Western Balkans in 2003 never seemed more distant. It relied on the premise that the EU was a club of best democracy standards, where the rule of law is upheld and fundamental rights are protected, and that such a club has a place for them once they meet the criteria. Neither we are that club anymore, nor does the Western Balkans have incentives to undergo painful reforms. On the contrary, the situation is gloomy, with almost no light at the end of the enlargement tunnel. What we witnessed before and during the last Western Balkans summit was a parade of hypocrisy, empty words, autocratic appeasement and, above all, pretence.

The EU pretends that it wants to enlarge to the Western Balkans, while those countries pretend that they are conducting reforms to join the club. The current approach not only undermines our efforts to democratise these countries, but also endangers peace – as we have recently seen in the north of Kosovo and in Bosnia with a succession threat.

It has to stop, and we need a fundamentally different Balkan policy. Albania and North Macedonia deserve to start accession negotiations immediately as the EU cannot afford to lose its overall credibility due to the Bulgarian veto. Kosovo met all the criteria for visa liberalisation years ago, and the Commission in return reiterates that. But young Kosovans are still prevented from travelling freely like their peers from Lisbon to the Tbilisi.

Furthermore, we will prove our credibility by being fair and strict to the countries that have democratic backsliding, like in Serbia. If we continue the appeasement approach towards autocratic and corrupted leaders such as Aleksandar Vučić and Milo Đukanović, we risk losing again a chance to democratise the region and bring it closer to the Union. The membership promise must become credible again. That is our task. Robust engagement and reinforcing IFOR (International Fellowship of Reconciliation) in Bosnia. Opening accession talks with Albania, North Macedonia, visa liberalisation for Kosovo and strict conditionality for Serbia and Montenegro is the way to become credible in the Western Balkans.

The Western Balkans is not our neighbourhood. It is in our yard. This region means so much for European security, migration and border management, but also for culture and education as we share so much together. If the EU cannot play a pivotal role there, then our dream of becoming a geopolitical Union is indeed just a dream.

Julie Lechanteux, *au nom du groupe ID*. – Monsieur le Président, Madame le Commissaire, comme d'habitude lors des sommets européens sur les Balkans occidentaux, la réunion qui s'est tenue en Slovénie le 6 octobre dernier n'a enregistré aucune avancée significative. L'Union européenne procède, comme à son habitude, de manière inconsidérée à un élargissement à des pays qui sont bien loin d'avoir intégré le b.a.-ba de l'acquis communautaire et pour qui la promotion de notre mode de vie européen reste une chimère.

En effet, comment est-il possible de proposer une adhésion à des contrées caractérisées par des situations politiques et géopolitiques d'une grande complexité comme l'Albanie et la Macédoine du Nord, ou encore comme le Kosovo qui, je le rappelle, est une entité non reconnue comme État souverain par cinq États membres de l'Union européenne? Ces pays sont plus connus pour des faits de corruption, des trafics en tous genres et l'actualité judiciaire de leurs dirigeants.

Dans toute cette région des Balkans occidentaux, un seul peuple nous est proche et partage nos valeurs. C'est le peuple serbe, un peuple qui, dans les moments difficiles de l'histoire, a toujours choisi le camp de la démocratie et de la liberté, et qui a fait de l'amitié franco-serbe un point d'honneur de son action politique sur le plan international, et ce, malgré l'horreur des bombardements de l'OTAN en 1999.

Ангел Джамбазки, *от името на групата ECR*. – Декларацията от Бърдо, приета в резултат на срещата на високо равнище, е поредният документ, избилстващ от клишетата, празни приказки и нишоказване. Там се говори много за европейски ценности, за върховенство на закона, за основни права и прочие, и прочие, и прочие.

Взмутен съм от лицемерието и двуличието на колегите, които се изказаха досега. Уважаеми колеги, уважаеми го казвам от благоприличие, говорите ми за компромис. За какъв компромис, бе, колеги? Ние ви повтаряме и ви показваме драстично нарушаване на човешките права в Република Северна Македония, отказ от правото на национално самоопределение, заличаване на българска историческа, военна и културна памет. Доказваме го със снимки, доказваме го с кадри, и вие ми говорите за компромис. С кое компромис, с паметта на нашите деди ли искате да направим? С кое да направим компромис, с това, че в Република Северна Македония управляват мъпети, управлявани от Белград и от Москва, и вие се правите, че не го виждате? И тези марионетни правителства там се опитват да попречат на българите да се самоопределят като такива. С това ли искате да правим компромис? Нали върховенството ви на закона, нали върховната ви ценност европейска беше правото на самоопределение и това всеки да се определя, какъвто се чувства? Защо отказвате това на българите в днешна Република Северна Македония? Не виждате ли тези процеси?

Преди една седмица ви показах снимки, снимки, на които се вижда как български военни гробища са превърнати във външна тоалетна. Уважаема Комисар Макгинес, не Ви виждам, но искрено се надявам в момента да не плетете терлички, да решавате sudoku или да редите пасианс, а да ме слушате и настоявам да ми отговорите. Какво ще направи Комисията, за да възстанови Република Северна Македония българския военен паметник над град Кавадарци, превърнат във външна тоалетна? Настоявам, показах Ви снимките, видяхте това нещо. Ако белгийски, ако френски, ако английски, ако италиански военни гробища бъдат третираны по същия начин, пак ли ще искате компромис и защо непрекъснато искате компромис, който да бъде само и единствено за сметка на нашата памет, на паметта на нашите деди? Защо не се обърнете, много по-лесно ще бъде за Вас? Искате да започнете веднага преговори с Република Северна Македония и с Република Албания. Чудесно, ами обърнете се към тези, които са под пряката команда на Белград и на Кремъл в Скопие, и им

кажете следното нещо: възстановете всички мемориали, български военни гробища, които сте разрушили в нарушение на Женевската конвенция, спрете политиката си на насилие и тормоз над хората с българско национално самосъзнание, след това променете учебниците си и извадете от тях приказките на омразата. Ето ви елементарните неща, които могат да се направят.

Вие, колеги, се правите, че не разбирате какво искаме ние от властта в Северна Македония. Искामе върховенство на закона за местните българи, искаме гарантиране на правото на самоопределение за местните българи, искаме запазване на нашето културно и историческо наследство. Това искаме, уважаеми колеги, нищо повече, нищо по-малко. Ако и сега не сте го разбрали, вашето място не е в Европейския парламент, а в друга институция, с по-ясно изразен профил, който да може да помогне на хора, които не разбират от това да им се казват прости изречения. Но аз съм сигурен, че разбирате, а просто искате от нас да направим компромиса, защото така сте си решили, и това е много глупаво. Тази политика отблъсква народите на Балканите от идеята за единен Европейски съюз. Вие сте най-големите врагове на идеята за Европейския съюз, защото се опитвате да унижите цял един народ и цяла една нация, и ние не можем да разберем защо го правите. Няма никаква логика да се опитвате да унижите цяла една нация.

Г-жо Макгинес, надявам се привлякох Вашето внимание и настоявам за ясен и точен отговор: кога и при какви обстоятелства Европейската комисия ще застави правителството на Северна Македония да възстанови унищожените български военни гробища? Ако не знаете, има Женевска конвенция. Тази Женевска конвенция, почитаема г-жо, третира и военните гробища и държи всяка една държава да пази военните гробища и да уважава паметта на загиналите войници.

И в последната една минута нека ви обърна внимание върху цялата ви политика на Западните Балкани. Тя е дълбоко погрешна. Вие се правите, че не разбирате голямото влияние на Белград и неговата роля в дестабилизацията на целия район, вие се правите, че не виждате голямата роля на Кремъл. Знаете ли къде е Кремъл, знаете ли кой живее в Кремъл и кой работи в Кремъл? Ако не знаете, мога да ви разкажа, но ако не знаете как са породени конфликтите на Балканите, прочетете малко история и вижте ролята на Кремъл на Балканите, която продължава и до ден-днешен. А вие адвокатствате на тази роля, нали сте много за свободата, нали сте много за демокрацията, нали сте много за върховенството на закона? Защо вървите срещу тези принципи? Защо не говорите и не заставите тези правителства всъщност да изпълнят това, което трябва да се направи? Пътят на унижението на една цяла нация, за да отворите вратата за марионетни правителства на Кремъл и на Белград, е дълбоко погрешен. По този начин насаждате тежко разочарование от идеята за Европейския съюз у българската нация. Така че, уважаеми, ако искате преговорите с Македония, заставете властта там да уважава българите в Македония.

Mick Wallace, on behalf of The Left Group. – Mr President, more than half the Western Balkans put in the EU membership applications over 13 years ago. Some have lost interest, others doubt it will ever happen.

The EU can't make clear statement on the matter. President Charles Michel said after the summit, 'there is a desire to work towards progress on enlargement'. After over 20 years of dangling the prospect of EU membership in front of the Western Balkans, vague and distant statements like this must make the people of the Balkan states wonder.

The Albanians who put down their weapons in 1999 did so surrounded by promises from the EU that never materialised. What did happen was a string of leaders vetted by the West allowed the market to rip through their most valuable assets. Privatisation and fire sale of said assets has resulted in the disposal of laws that protected workers' rights and strong education, health and social-security programmes. Prioritising foreign direct investment meant disaster for local industry.

The EU asked these accession states to address corruption, if they do then they have to reverse some of the predatory buying of state properties that went to US, EU Member States, Turkish and Israeli companies for peanuts.

For fear more of more eyes turning to Russia and China, our friends in the US now want to speed up things. But much of the trust is gone and, thankfully, a more independently minded leadership is growing in the region.

Kinga Gál (NI). – Tisztelt Elnök Úr! A nyugat-balkáni régió stabilitása – mi mind jól tudjuk – az EU biztonsági, geopolitikai és gazdasági érdeke. A Bizottság e héten megjelent országjelentései szerint is ezek az országok a nehézségek ellenére értek el előrehaladást számos területen az EU-tagság érdekében. Mégis elrelépés konkrét dátummal a bővítés területén, csak bővítési ígéretet vannak az Unió részéről. Ennek negatív hatása már érzékelhető a Nyugat-Balkánon. A térségben nagy a kiábrándultság és ezt a nyugat-balkáni csúcstalálkozó sem volt elég, hogy ellensúlyozza. Ha az Unió nem tesz mielőbb konkrét lépéseket, akkor elveszíthetjük ezen államok bizalmát a tagállamok felé és harmadik országok növelik tovább befolyásukat a térségben.

Mi magyarok aktívan részt veszünk a térség stabilitásának fenntartásában, Magyarország épp most vette át a KFOR parancsnokságát. Mi határozottan kiállunk Szerbia és Montenegró mielőbbi felvétele mellett, Albániával és Észak-Macedóniával való tárgyalások megkezdéséért és vízumliberalizációért. Nyugat-Balkán Európa szerves része, a régió országait minden oldalról az EU veszi körül, ezért szükség van a bővítésre mielőbb.

Андрей Ковачев (PPE). – Г-н министър, г-жо Комисар, аз и моите колеги от България, както и българската държава, винаги сме подкрепяли интеграцията на Западните Балкани. Това е в наш интерес, европейски интерес. Европейската интеграция обаче е двустранен процес, както ние трябва да сме готови, така и страните от Западните Балкани трябва да положат максимални усилия да преодолеят всичко това, което ги е разделяло и ни е разделяло в миналото. Г-н министър, в останалите няколко месеца от Вашето Председателство нека да положите максимални усилия за нещата, които казаха някои от колегите.

Визите за Косово, това трябва да бъде наистина преустановено, тази дискриминация срещу гражданите на Косово. Започването на преговори. Да, когато реално не можем да направим максималното, което искаме, поне с Албания да започнем преговори. Аз не мога да разбера защо щом 27 държави членки казват „да“ за започването на преговори, защо да не се започне поне с Албания, да се даде малко положителен сигнал към нещо добро да се случва на Балканите? И да положим максимални усилия за преодоляване на последните пречки по отношение на добросъседството, намирането на взаимно-приемлива пътна карта, която да влезе в преговорната рамка като гаранция за това, че ще се изпълняват и Договорът за добросъседство с България, и всички неща, свързани с основни човешки права на българите, които са дискриминирани изключително тежко, за съжаление го казвам това, в Република Северна Македония.

Наследството на комунизма, колкото и да е странно за някои от колегите, но повтарям втори път, наследството на комунизма и диктатурата на Тито (въпреки че Тито е скъсал със Сталин, това не означава, че той е някакъв добър демократ) нямат място в Европейския съюз. Това е въпрос, не билатерален спор, а основен въпрос за човешките права, който трябва да бъде преодолян по пътя на европейската интеграция. Желая от сърце колкото се може по-бързо всички граждани на Западните Балкани да станат и европейски граждани. Това е в наш основен интерес, но по този път трябва да се преодолее миналото и комунизмът. Комунизмът не е добро нещо.

Pedro Marques (S&D). – Mr President, the Western Balkans Summit was an opportunity to reaffirm the region's European perspective. The timing was good: the relevance was enormous. However, the conclusions were, we have to say, disappointing. When it was time to give a clear signal to those countries that are on a positive path to entering the European Union, the Council failed on giving them that sign.

Albania and North Macedonia are ready to start accession talks with the EU. It would have been an incentive for them and for the whole region to proceed with the necessary reforms. At the same time, it would deter the growing influence of some democratic powers in the region. The EU must reward the merit of those who did what they were supposed to. For those who did not, there must be a different outcome.

The EU cannot bend the rules and, in particular, it must be strong on the rule of law criteria. The rule of law is not a formality; it's a pillar of democracy. There can be no compromise on it. There is a well-established accession road to the EU, and the EU must stick to it, for better and for worse. Only that way are we credible in the world.

Klemen Grošelj (Renew). – (začetek govora z izklopljenim mikrofonom) ... goreč podpornik širitve, pa moramo priznati, da pravzaprav enotne vizije širitve v Evropski uniji nimamo.

Na eni strani imamo del držav članic, ki ne podpira širitve oziroma ima do nje zadržke zaradi notranjepolitičnih razlogov, povzročenih tudi z nespoštovanjem vladavine prava dela držav članic kot tudi z zlorabo migracijskega vprašanja. Na drugi strani je del članic, ki ima težave z vladavino prava in uporablja širitev kot talca oziroma kot sredstvo pritiska in poglabljanja prepada oziroma delitve znotraj Evropske unije.

Potem so tu še voditelji Zahodnega Balkana, ki širitev po potrebi uporabljajo za notranjepolitične potrebe, bodisi da na eni strani zavlačujejo z reformami bodisi to izrabljajo za utrjevanje svoje politične moči, ko jim seveda to ugaja. Ko jim to ne ugaja, seveda, so potem zopet proti sami širitvi.

A tu so še ljudje – prebivalci EU in prebivalci Zahodnega Balkana. Na eni strani prebivalci EU zaradi debat okoli vladavine prava oziroma predvsem zaradi nespoštovanja načel vladavine prava v delu Evropske unije izgubljajo vero v samo EU. Na drugi strani so ljudje v regiji, ki zaradi vsega dogajanja oziroma predvsem nekritične države Evropske komisije do samega dogajanja v regiji počasi izgubljajo zaupanje v Evropsko unijo.

Zato je zdaj morda čas za deklaracijo in tudi politične odločitve, ne v tem domu, ampak predvsem v Svetu EU, ki bodo nam vsem, tistim v EU kot tistim na Zahodnem Balkanu, nalile vsaj drobec čistega vina in pojasnile, kakšna je pravzaprav prihodnost tako imenovanega širitvenega procesa.

Thomas Waitz (Verts/ALE). – Mr President, yes, we have been talking about Albania and North Macedonia. We, as the European Union, gave them clear conditions which they had to fulfil for us to start negotiation talks, and both countries have fulfilled all the requirements.

In terms of Albania, they made very brave justice reforms, and when it comes to North Macedonia, in all of these countries not everything is perfect yet. That's why we are not negotiating here or debating here about finally accepting them as partners within the European Union. But we're talking about starting negotiation talks. And what are negotiation talks? They're about talking about all the problems, all the reforms, all the progress that is still needed. They're exactly the platform to also talk about bilateral disputes, which several countries may have with several others.

I really call on Bulgaria to lift that deadlock for that region. To Mr Dzhambazki I say, as far as I know, your party has not been re-elected to the Bulgarian parliament twice, so Bulgarian citizens are not supporting your hatred speech, your deepening of the division. As far as I know, they have elected you out of the Bulgarian Parliament. It would be really important for Bulgaria to stand together with the European partners and to lift the deadlock and to start negotiations finally. We still have a majority in the regions that are pro-European, but the majorities are shrinking and we shouldn't wait all too long, and this is a huge responsibility for all of us, but especially for Bulgaria in that situation.

On Montenegro: Montenegro is still the frontrunner when it comes to the negotiations. They have opened the most chapters of all the countries in the region. Yes, we're having a very difficult situation and we need European influence, we need honest European brokers that help with the debate within the country between the former leading party of Mr Djukanovic, DPS, and the current coalition because they need two-thirds majorities for the juridical reforms that are urgently needed. We should help out there.

The last word, on Serbia: Serbia is an important partner in the region. Serbia is a great nation. But you know the European Union is about overcoming historical disputes. It's about overcoming historical claims on land and whatsoever. I'm an Austrian citizen, what shall I tell you? That's what the European Union is about, and it's about looking at the commonalities on what we share and whoever knows the Balkans region knows that the whole Balkans region is sharing a lot: much, much more than divides the different groups, ethnical or religious, from each other.

So I call on Serbia to use your influence to look at the shared heritage, the shared values, the shared cultural identity in the region, and use your influence for more peace, for better cooperation and for progress towards joining the European Union.

Nicolaus Fest (ID). – Herr Präsident, Herr Minister, Frau Kommissarin! Vor zwei Wochen sprach hier ein Spanier mit einem ähnlichen Slogan und jemand übrigens, der immer für die Unabhängigkeit Kataloniens eintritt. Ich dachte, das ist eine richtige Idee.

Natürlich, jedes Volk hat einen Anspruch auf Schutz seiner Traditionen, seiner Sprache, seiner Kultur und seiner Lebensgrundlagen. Und vor allem hat es eben auch einen Anspruch auf Schutz gegenüber dem deutlich rassistischen Projekt einer Massenmigration nach Europa.

Damit sind wir auch beim Westbalkan, denn die Völker haben nicht nur einen Anspruch auf Schutz vor Massenmigration, sondern sie haben auch einen Anspruch auf Schutz vor Kriminalität, vor Korruption. Und genau das sind die Hauptprobleme im Westbalkan, ganz abgesehen davon, dass wir überhaupt keine politische Lösung für die dort vorherrschenden Spannungen haben, die sich gerade zwischen Serbien und dem Kosovo wieder gezeigt haben.

Aber vor allem ist der Westbalkan eine Ländergruppe, die von der Korruption geradezu zerfressen ist. Kein einziges dieser Länder ist auf dem *Transparency Index* oberhalb von Kuba und Saudi-Arabien. Ich weiß gar nicht, wie das möglich ist. Man muss schon ziemlich viel tun, um deren Korruptionsstatus noch zu unterschreiten.

Vor allem aber ist in diesen Ländern auch die Mafia extrem aktiv. Albanien gilt inzwischen als eine der Drehscheiben des europäischen Drogenhandels, und nicht wenige bezeichnen Albanien bereits als Narco-Staat, also als einen Staat, in dem das Mafiageld alle staatlichen Strukturen beherrscht, auch die Presse, auch die Jurisdiktion.

Diese Staaten wollen Sie tatsächlich jetzt noch nach Europa hineinführen. Das ist übrigens auch ein Bruch des Versprechens, das wir nach dem Brexit hatten. Da hieß es vonseiten der Kommission: Ja, wir haben verstanden, keine weitere Erweiterung. Jetzt hat man das schon wieder vergessen.

Auch wirtschaftlich ist der Westbalkan im Übrigen völlig uninteressant. Insofern ist es ein Schwachsinnprojekt. Und wenn ich jetzt höre, noch einmal 3,3 Milliarden, lieber Herr McAllister, dann kann ich nur sagen: 3,3 Milliarden sind auch hier vergeudet. Und das sind meistens 3,3 Milliarden deutsche Steuergelder.

Der Präsident. – Meine Damen und Herren, ich darf Sie darüber in Kenntnis setzen – ich möchte das jetzt schon der Ordnung halber sagen –, dass unsere Geschäftsordnung eine sehr klare Regel beinhaltet.

Die klare Regel besagt, dass kein Mitglied dieses Hauses innerhalb dieses Hauses und des Plenums Transparente verwendet und ausstellt. Bis zur Stunde wurde diese Regel auch auf Kleidungsstücke angewendet. Nachdem es jetzt zum zweiten Mal zu einer derartigen Vorgangsweise kommt, werde ich dieses Thema, um hier für ein für alle Mal eine Klarstellung herbeizuführen, in der nächsten Sitzung des Präsidiums zur Sprache bringen, um diesen Geschäftsordnungspunkt detaillierter auszuführen.

Herzlichen Dank für Ihr Verständnis dafür.

Ryszard Czarnecki (ECR). – Panie Przewodniczący! Jestem zawiedziony wynikami szczytu na Słowenii, szczytu Unia-Balkany Zachodnie, ponieważ te kraje zasługują, aby dać im pewną mapę drogową ich przyszłego wejścia do Unii Europejskiej.

Pamiętam nasze wizyty, również pan David McAllister je pamięta. Parę lat temu myśmy mówili przedstawicielom tych krajów, że ich akces nastąpi pod koniec lat 20., w tej dekadzie – tak się nie stanie. Pamiętajmy o skutkach politycznych, mianowicie są to kraje, które były nieraz historycznie w orbicie wpływów Rosji i jeżeli będziemy je odpychać od Unii czy też przedłużać tę drogę do Unii, to na tym będzie grała i na tym będzie korzystała Rosja. To warto powiedzieć, choć oczywiście w pierwszym okresie trzeba przyjmować Serbię, Czarnogórę, Macedonię Północną i inne kraje. To jednak jest bardziej skomplikowane.

Δημήτριος Παπαδημούλης (The Left). – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, η ευρωπαϊκή προοπτική των Δυτικών Βαλκανίων είναι προς το κοινό μας συμφέρον, αλλά προχωρά πολύ αργά. Αποφασίστηκε το 2003 στη Σύνοδο Κορυφής της Θεσσαλονίκης και από τότε έχουν γίνει ελάχιστα βήματα. Όσο η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση βραδυπορεί να κάνει πράξη τις δεσμεύσεις της, το κενό θα το καλύπτουν άλλοι: η Ρωσία του Πούτιν· η Τουρκία του Ερντογάν και οι εθνικισμοί, όπως οι κραυγές που ακούσαμε από τον κύριο Dzhambazki πριν που, ευτυχώς, απορρίπτονται και από τον λαό της Βουλγαρίας.

Σας ζητώ ταχύτερα βήματα, και από εσάς στην Επιτροπή και από εσάς στο Συμβούλιο, κύριε Logar. Η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση πρέπει να καταρτίσει χρονοδιάγραμμα, να αναλάβει δεσμεύσεις, να δώσει κονδύλια και οι χώρες των Δυτικών Βαλκανίων πρέπει να προχωρήσουν ταχύτερα με τις δημοκρατικές μεταρρυθμίσεις και να εναρμονιστούν με τα κριτήρια της Κοπεγχάγης. Και εσείς πρέπει να κινησετε αμέσως την έναρξη των ενταξιακών διαπραγματεύσεων και για τη Βόρεια Μακεδονία και για την Αλβανία. Γιατί η Βόρεια Μακεδονία έκανε μαζί με τη χώρα μου, την Ελλάδα, ένα σημαντικό βήμα που το χαιρέτισαν εδώ όλες οι πτέρυγες, τη Συμφωνία των Πρεσπών. Δεν μπορείτε, λοιπόν, να λέτε σε αυτούς τους λαούς «τσάι και συμπάθεια», περιμένετε σε ένα αόριστο μέλλον, διότι τότε θα μειώνεται η εμπιστοσύνη τους και προς την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση και προς τη δημοκρατία.

Λευτέρης Νικολάου-Αλαβάνος (NI). – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, οι εξελίξεις στα Δυτικά Βαλκάνια είναι επικίνδυνες. Παρά τους ανταγωνισμούς στο εσωτερικό της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης κλιμακώνεται η διείσδυση στην περιοχή για τους εμπορικούς διαδρόμους και τους δρόμους μεταφοράς ενέργειας, ενισχύονται οι αμερικανονατοϊκές βάσεις και οξύνεται ο ανταγωνισμός με τη Ρωσία, που προωθεί συμφέροντα δικών της μονοπωλίων και έχει στρατιωτική παρουσία, αλλά και με την Κίνα, που διεισδύει με ισχυρούς οικονομικούς ομίλους στο πλαίσιο της ένταξης των Βαλκανίων στο δρόμο του μεταξίου.

Η αστική τάξη της Ελλάδας παίζει κεντρικό ρόλο σε αυτά τα σχέδια. Στα πλαίσια της γεωστρατηγικής της αναβάθμισης, μετά τη «νατοϊκής κοπής» συμφωνία των Πρεσπών, ανέλαβε την αεροπορική επιτήρηση στη Βόρεια Μακεδονία, την Αλβανία, το Μαυροβούνιο. Παρέχει υποδομές, όπως το λιμάνι της Αλεξανδρούπολης, για πρόβες πολέμου με τη Ρωσία, στοχοποιώντας το λαό μας. Συμμετέχει σε επικίνδυνους ιμπεριαλιστικούς σχεδιασμούς που προωθούν αλλαγές συνόρων και μπορούν να οδηγήσουν σε νέα πολεμική ανάφλεξη.

Η όξυνση των αντιπαράθεσεων ομίλων και ιμπεριαλιστικών κέντρων στα Δυτικά Βαλκάνια προμηνύει και άλλα βάσανα για τους λαούς, που χρειάζεται σήμερα να κλιμακώσουν την κοινή τους πάλη ενάντια στα ιμπεριαλιστικά σχέδια για να κλείσουν οι ξένες βάσεις και για την αποδέσμευση από το NATO και την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση.

Michael Gahler (PPE). – Mr President, instead of technocratically confirming already taken decisions and bureaucratically assessing any pre-accession progress, I wonder why the danger of a break-up of Bosnia Herzegovina has not been an issue in this summit. The recent concrete steps towards the secession of the Republika Srpska undertaken by the nationalist leadership under Milorad Dodik should ring all alarm bells.

The votes in the Republika Srpska (RS) Assembly foreseen for next week are without precedent and, being illegal and unconstitutional as well as violating the Dayton Agreement, have the potential to generate concrete grounds for the RS leadership to pursue their secessionist agenda and thereby endangering stability and even peace in the whole Western Balkans.

I therefore urge the Office of the High Representative (OHR) and the EU to issue a strong and possibly joint statement condemning the vote in strong terms, as well as declaring it illegal. Further, I trust that in the coming weeks, the EU and the OHR will use all possible diplomatic influence and, finally also, the OHR Bonn powers to bring the nationalist forces in the Republika Srpska leadership to reason.

I wonder what concrete measures, including sanctions, or the removal from office of those responsible are being considered in order to maintain the territorial integrity of Bosnia Herzegovina and the peace in the region.

You know what happens if we allow Dodik to declare independence? The next day he will be recognised by Putin, who takes revenge for Kosovo, and the green men are probably already on standby somewhere, perhaps in a niche in the Russian information centre.

We cannot allow that to happen. Let us react properly and in time.

Marek Belka (S&D). – Mr President, the future of the Western Balkans region will speak volumes about EU credibility as an economic and political power. We remain the region's main trading and investment partner, but still have to achieve a lot more in geopolitical terms. It is both our moral duty and our strategic imperative to proceed with the integration process of our partners, even if we stumble into problems along the way.

The EU is well prepared in terms of providing funds and good practices, as the declared economic investment plan and the Western Balkans Guarantee Facility prove. However, we have to be certain that it is not money for nothing that we are putting in place. Political commitments agreed during the summit have to be transformed into reality, in which respect for the rule of law, legal certainty, respect for human and social rights, fighting corruption, and independent public institutions are working standards, not recommendations, in our integration dialogue.

We have to demand extra effort from both the candidate countries and ourselves to guarantee that the integration roadmap is being implemented, the *acquis* adopted and democratic standards are being upheld. Only then may we expect the integration process to be the success which we all wish to see.

Valter Flego (Renew). – Poštovani predsjedavajući, poštovana povjerenice, poštovane kolegice i kolege, pa u stvari mi više od jednog desetljeća slušamo o tome da se Europska unija želi proširiti na zapadni Balkan. I samo slušamo i, u stvari, ništa više od toga. Na žalost, nismo se puno pomakli s početka.

Izgleda zbilja da se Europskoj uniji uopće ne žuri i uvijek dolaze neki novi prioriteti, i novi, i novi, ali bogami ni države u regiji nisu se oznojile od posla. I one znaju što trebaju učiniti, jasne su im reforme, ali, evo, nema žurbe. Dok se, dakle, s jedne strane Europska unija pretvara da je što skorije proširenje jedan od prioriteta Europske unije, zemlje pak iz regije za svoje kozmetičke promjene kažu i tvrde da su to temeljite reforme. Naravno da nisu, a nestabilnost, drage kolegice i kolege, raste, i raste, i vrlo vrlo opasno raste. Na žalost.

Zato shvatimo konačno da smo jedni drugima potrebni i neka čim prije završi ovaj nesretni *status quo* jer nema jake Unije bez proširenja na zapadni Balkan, ali ni stabilnog, ponavljam stabilnog i prosperitetnog zapadnog Balkana bez njegovog cjelovitog uključivanja u Europsku uniju.

Poštovani, vrijeme je za akciju, za konkretnu akciju i konkretna djela za uključivanje tih zemalja u Europsku uniju bez figa u džepu, bez kalkulacija, bez odugovlačenja. Krenimo, razgovarajmo, djelujemo, ali ne da prođe još jedno desetljeće u ovakvom *statusu quo* jer je to danas naše trenutno susjedstvo, naše dvorište za koje smo itekako zainteresirani kakvo će biti jer i mi ovisimo o tom susjedstvu i to mora postati sutra naša zajednička europska kuća.

Tineke Strik (Verts/ALE). – Mr President, it is awful to conclude, but we must admit that the EU Member States are not committed to the Western Balkan region. Their permissive conclusions of the summit last week made that again painfully clear. The refusal to keep their promise towards countries making progress towards the EU accession criteria has a devastating impact. It hurts their economy, young people leave, Russia, China and Turkey fill the gap that the EU leaves and tensions rise in the whole region.

And some tensions are related to resistance against reforms. And we see a big crisis now in Bosnia-Herzegovina with the potential to escalate into another civil war. A vote is scheduled in the Republika Srpska (RS) Assembly to withdraw from the federal infrastructure of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Yesterday, they already took the first step with the RS medical agency. These decisions directly threaten the stability and peace in the region. It will blow up the Dayton agreement and throw the country back in time, far from the path towards succession.

And I wonder, do the High Representative and the Commission realise the urgency of this threat? The joint declaration of Mr Borrell and Mr Blinken called upon all parties to respect and protect state institutions. Why not a clear call upon Mr Dodik, who is playing with fire at the moment? We urge you to do everything you can to prevent these votes and also to show the consequences of the adoption of the votes beforehand, because the members of the RS Assembly must realise the impact of their decision before they take it. And we need to be reassured that the EU has prepared an adequate response. So, bring this crisis to the highest level of the Commission and discuss it in the EU Council tomorrow.

At the same time, we must keep our promise, start the negotiations talk with North Macedonia and Albania, make unambiguously clear that both countries already meet the criteria. Bilateral disputes are no justified reason to obstruct the start. I hope that the High Representative will affirm this very clearly, and I urge the Bulgarian government to lift the veto as soon as possible. Opening negotiations and granting visa liberalisation to Kosovo is not only deserved but necessary to regain the trust of their citizens and to reassure the people in the whole region that we generally welcome their European aspirations.

Dominique Bilde (ID). – Monsieur le Président, le processus d'élargissement aux Balkans occidentaux est symptomatique du déficit démocratique de l'Union européenne. En effet, 59 % des Français sont opposés à ces nouvelles adhésions. Les chiffres d'autres États membres, comme l'Allemagne ou l'Autriche, sont à l'unisson. Ce rejet massif contraste avec l'apparent fait accompli émanant des instances européennes. Ainsi, la présidente de la Commission déclarait-elle, lors du sommet dont il est question aujourd'hui, que les Balkans faisaient d'ores et déjà partie de l'Union européenne.

Aberration démocratique, cet élargissement l'est également sur le plan social et économique. Tout d'abord parce qu'avec l'Albanie, le Kosovo et la Bosnie-Herzégovine, hors République serbe, l'Union intégrerait pour la première fois en son sein des États majoritairement musulmans et, surtout, gagnés par l'islam radical d'importation. De fait, la région s'est sinistrement démarquée par la plus forte concentration de djihadistes revenus de Syrie ou d'Irak en Europe. Des États comme la Bosnie-Herzégovine ou la Macédoine du Nord ont même publiquement et volontairement rapatrié certains d'entre eux.

Par ailleurs, alors que l'Union a perdu, avec le Brexit, un contributeur net important et l'une de ses locomotives économiques, ces pays accusent dans ce domaine un retard indéniable. Nos industries auront fatalement à souffrir d'une concurrence accrue au moins-disant salarial et social. L'Albanie se distingue à cet égard par le salaire minimal mensuel le plus bas d'Europe. Le secteur textile, qui amorce une timide renaissance dans ma région Grand Est, aura tôt fait d'être balayé par ce dumping massif.

Du reste, la Commission renie jusqu'à ses propres principes. Ainsi, Jean-Claude Juncker théorisait-il en 2018 que la résolution des litiges frontaliers serait une condition préalable à toute nouvelle adhésion. Or, le processus d'élargissement se poursuit aujourd'hui, alors même que les tensions sont à vif dans les Balkans pour ce qui est des Serbes du Kosovo, de l'Église orthodoxe du Monténégro ou encore des dissensions entre Nord Macédoniens et Bulgares. Bref, ce projet insensé confirme l'inéluctable déclin auquel est vouée l'Union européenne. Déclin d'autant plus flagrant au regard du dynamisme insolent du Royaume-Uni...

(Le Président retire la parole à l'oratrice)

Ladislav Ilčić (ECR). – Poštovani predsjedavajući, poštovani kolege, zemlje takozvanog zapadnog Balkana očekivale su konkretne datume, a dobile su samo tapšanje po ramenu. Mi si ne smijemo dozvoliti da europska perspektiva takozvanog zapadnog Balkana postane jeftina floskula koja se samo ponavlja na sastancima na vrhu. Mi moramo biti konkretni.

S druge pak strane, ne smijemo uvoditi Srbiju u Europsku uniju samo zato da bismo je odmaknuli od ruskog utjecaja, ili pak Bosnu i Hercegovinu da bismo je odmaknuli od turskog utjecaja. Naravno, Europska unija si ne smije dozvoliti jači ruski i kineski ili turski utjecaj u vlastitom dvorištu, ali sve zemlje zapadnog Balkana trebaju izvršiti potrebne reforme, a ne se nadati da će ući u Europsku uniju pomoću geopolitičkih ucjena.

Drago mi je da Deklaracija iz Brda naglašava rješavanje bilateralnih odnosa, uključujući i odnose s državama članicama Unije, jer znamo da postoji cijeli niz otvorenih pitanja koja Srbija i Bosna i Hercegovina izbjegavaju riješiti s Hrvatskom. Prvenstveno tu mislim na ravnopravnost Hrvata kao konstitutivnog naroda i promjenu izbornog zakona u Bosni i Hercegovini, kao i rješavanje ratnog nasljeđa i pitanje prava hrvatske nacionalne manjine u Republici Srbiji.

Hrvatska je svoj dio posla odradila, a sad očekujemo da u duhu reciprociteta to učine i drugi.

(Die Aussprache wird unterbrochen.)

5. Pierwsza część głosowania

Der Präsident. – Bevor wir die Aussprachen fortsetzen, muss ich die erste Abstimmungsrunde des heutigen Tages eröffnen.

Ihnen ist bekannt, dass die Dossiers, über die wir abstimmen, in der Tagesordnung aufscheinen.

Die Abstimmungsrunde hat jetzt, um 9.45 Uhr, begonnen und dauert bis 11.00 Uhr.

Es kommt dasselbe Abstimmungsverfahren zur Anwendung wie in den vorangegangenen Abstimmungsunden.

Alle Abstimmungen sind namentliche Abstimmungen.

Die Ergebnisse der ersten Abstimmungsrunde werden um 13.00 Uhr bekannt gegeben.

6. Wynik szczytu Bałkanów Zachodnich (ciąg dalszy debatu)

Der Präsident. – Wir setzen nun unsere Aussprache über die Erklärungen des Rates und der Kommission (2021/2930(RSP)) fort.

Ivan Vilibor Sinčić (NI). – Poštovani predsjedavajući, želim se obratiti narodima zemalja takozvanog zapadnog Balkana koji će na referendumu odlučivati o svom članstvu u Europskoj uniji.

Želim im poručiti da naprave dobru *cost benefit* analizu. Mnogo toga se može naučiti na primjeru Hrvatske. Mnogi su, nažalost, bili zavedeni da će Europa riješiti hrvatske probleme – neće. To možete riješiti samo vi sami.

U vašim zemljama, nažalost, razina korupcije je visoka, ali Bruxelles neće napraviti mnogo da vas riješi tog problema. Oni će jednostavno prihvatiti političku klasu takva kakva jest pa će je čak, nažalost, i subvencionirati. Tako imamo primjer u Hrvatskoj da je udio subvencioniranja javnog sektora u planu oporavka čak 70 %. Možete, također, očekivati da će još veći dio stanovništva napustiti vaše zemlje.

Nećete, nažalost, imati mnogo koristi od zajedničkog tržišta. Možete očekivati mnogo veći uvoz od izvoza. Zapadnoeuropske korporacije će, ako već nisu, preuzeti najvažnije gospodarske sektore vaših zemalja. Konkurentnost prema ostatku EU-a teško ćete postići, a proizvodne količine još i teže. Novac od fondova doista ćete i dobiti, ali značajan dio opet ide otkuda je došao, stranim dobavljačima, prije svega infrastruktura, opreme i usluga, jer, Bože moj, zadovoljavaju europske standarde, a vi ne.

Imate pravo na pošteno pravno-javnu raspravu i nemojte dozvoliti da vam itko to uzme.

Βαγγέλης Μεϊμαράκης (PPE). – Κύριε Πρόεδρε, κύριε Επίτροπε, κύριε υπουργέ, αγαπητοί συνάδελφοι, η πρόσφατη σύνοδος κορυφής της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης για τα Δυτικά Βαλκάνια αποτελεί έναν σαφές, ισχυρό, πολιτικό συμβολισμό, αλλά και δέσμευση της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης για την ευρωπαϊκή τους προοπτική. Η ανταλλαγή απόψεων που έγινε σε τόσο υψηλό επίπεδο ενισχύει τον ρόλο της ΕΕ στην περιοχή, η οποία, ως γνωστόν, ανέκαθεν χαρακτηριζόταν από αστάθεια και πολιτικές ανακατατάξεις.

Τώρα, όμως, φαίνεται ότι έχουν ωριμάσει οι συνθήκες για να αναληφθούν ξεκάθαρες δεσμεύσεις όσον αφορά την ενταξιακή τους πορεία και είναι υποχρέωση πλέον και καθήκον της ΕΕ να βρίσκεται σε συνεχή, στενή συνεργασία μαζί τους και να προχωρήσει με πολύ πιο γρήγορα βήματα. Είναι προς το συμφέρον της ΕΕ να διασφαλίσει ότι τρίτες χώρες, όπως η Κίνα, η Ρωσία και η Τουρκία, δεν θα εντάξουν την περιοχή αυτή στη σφαίρα επιρροής τους, όπως προσπαθούν να κάνουν τόσον καιρό, και, δυστυχώς, αφήνουμε ένα κενό το οποίο πολλές φορές έρχονται να καλύψουν. Ταυτόχρονα, με τις υπαναχωρήσεις που φαίνεται να έχουμε, αφήνουμε χώρο σε λαϊκίστικες και ακραίες φωνές, οι οποίες βρίσκουν έδαφος, είναι αντιευρωπαϊκές και μπορεί να οδηγήσουν σε καταστάσεις μη αρεστές στην περιοχή.

Στόχος μας, λοιπόν, είναι να διασφαλίσουμε ότι θα πραγματοποιηθούν όλες οι απαραίτητες διαρθρωτικές αλλαγές και θα πληρούνται όλες οι κατάλληλες προϋποθέσεις, ώστε τελικά τα Δυτικά Βαλκάνια να μπορέσουν να ανταποκριθούν σε όλες τις απαιτήσεις που έχει και πρέπει να έχει η συμμετοχή μιας χώρας στην ΕΕ. Για αυτό ακριβώς κατανοώ και όλες εκείνες τις φωνές εδώ μέσα που με σοβαρότητα αναπτύσσουν την άποψη ότι δεν πρέπει να ξεχνάμε πως απαραίτητη προϋπόθεση πρέπει να είναι πάντα ο σεβασμός των κανόνων που διέπουν το ευρωπαϊκό οικοδόμημα, η αρχή της καλής γειτονίας και η πιστή και αυστηρή τήρηση των διεθνών συμφωνιών.

Tanja Fajon (S&D). – Gospod predsednik. Spoštovani. Pozdravljam, da Evropska unija podpira evropsko perspektivo držav Zahodnega Balkana, a žal zagotovi, s kakšno hitrostjo se bo širitev nadaljevala, ni. Znatne investicije v razvoj regije ne morejo nadomestiti neizpolnjenih obljub evropskih vlad. Do konca leta, še v času slovenskega predsedovanja, potrebujemo rezultate.

Unija mora začeti pristopna pogajanja s Severno Makedonijo in Albanijo čim prej, še letos. Izgovora ni. Verodostojnost širitvenega procesa je na kocki. Kosovo že leta čaka na odpravo vizumov za državljane, država je izpolnila pogoje, mladi izgublajo upanje, v regiji se dogaja beg možganov.

Problemi korupcije, organiziranega kriminala, političnih posegov v sodstvo in medije so prisotni povsod. Trdo delo se mora nadaljevati, a brez obnove zaupanja v širitveni proces bo napredek še naprej omejen.

Nedavna dogajanja v Črni gori, na meji med Kosovom in Srbijo ter v najvišjih institucijah Bosne in Hercegovine so alarmantna. V Srbiji, kjer posredujem v medstrankarskem dialogu, vlado pozivam, da izpolni dogovor iz septembra in stori vse, da zagotovi uravnoteženo medijsko poročanje in pogoje za demokratične in poštene volitve prihodnje leto. V državi je treba nujno izboljšati politično ozračje in nadaljevati reforme, če želi pristopna pogajanja nadaljevati čim prej.

Spoštovani, nujno je, da obnovimo zaupanje. Vlade Unije, zato pozivam, da premaknejo širitveni proces v višjo pres-tavo.

Nicolae Ștefănuță (Renew). – Mr President, I know that external affairs is not the Commissioner's topic but then the Western Balkans is not a matter of strictly external affairs. I think it concerns us almost internally.

We have stated numerous times that the future of the Western Balkan countries lies in the European Union, but stating it, including at the EU-Western Balkans Summit is not enough. Words are not enough. We need to take action. We need to put action into those words. And I believe that a prosperous and peaceful Western Balkans requires all six countries join hands, that they use the EUR 30 billion in the economic and investment plan and they build back better and speed up crucial reforms and strengthen the rule of law and fight corruption and organised crime.

On the other hand, we, as the European Union, have homework to do as well and we need to work for reconciliation and regional cooperation. As we know, a deal between Kosovo and Serbia to end border tensions seemed almost impossible a while ago, but then we took important steps and the European Union contributed a lot to those important steps.

Yes, the situation might still be unstable. Yes, tensions might not have stopped to rise and the progress might be slow. But even with these baby steps, we have proved that, if there is political will and if there is leadership, solutions will follow.

So let's keep up using all our tools to unblock bilateral disputes, to reach a comprehensive deal between Belgrade and Pristina, to speed up the accession of Albania and North Macedonia. The sooner we start the better for the security of Europe in general. I remind everyone that failure to do so will only open the room wider for Russia and China to destabilise the region. There is no such thing as a vacuum possible in politics. We know that. And that vacuum that is perceived right now is filling up fast and it is not with us.

Colleagues, if our neighbourhood is not stable, we, in the European Union, are not stable. We act in our interests if we act in the interests of the Balkan people.

Gwendoline Delbos-Corfield (Verts/ALE). – Mr President, we are disappointed with the outcome of the Western Balkans Summit, but we also continue to be disappointed by the repeated lack of action on rule of law failings in the region. In Serbia, for example, the Commission is not just turning a blind eye, but pushing their candidacy forward and upgrading to a country-specific assessment in spite of the clear lack of progress in that state and in spite of the authoritarian actions of its government.

Just a few weeks ago, *Politico* called Hungarian Commissioner Olivér Várhelyi 'the Voldemort of enlargement', describing his actions as having a long-term damaging impact on the EU-Western Balkans relationship.

In the mean time, media freedom in Serbia continues to nosedive. The authorities attempted to discreetly push through a draft law permitting the use of biometric mass surveillance, and there is still a dangerously high level of air pollution caused by coal plants in the region, and when people protest, they are repressed.

Serbia's leadership does not want to respect EU values and fundamental rights for citizens. They have made this very clear in their candidacy process. So, once they become a Member State, they will just follow the path of the Hungarian and Polish governments. We do not want the Serbian citizens to be second-rung European citizens; we want them to be full European citizens and we can do that if we make our conditions stronger when we talk to the Serbian Government.

With new elections next year in Serbia, there is a chance for change. Now is also the time for us to engage in dialogue with citizens, civil society and independent media in the region. While this summit may not have provided the hope needed for citizens in these neighbourhood countries, we are now at a crossroads in the EU-Western Balkans relationship. If EU leaders are really committed to the European perspective in the region, when can we expect the Commission to do something about the rule of law and democratic backsliding in these countries?

Bernhard Zimniok (ID). – Herr Präsident! Dass wir hier überhaupt über eine mögliche EU-Erweiterung auf dem Balkan diskutieren, ist schlicht absurd. Die Balkanländer sind und bleiben ein Hort der Korruption, und die Wirtschaftslage dort ist katastrophal. Seit 2007 hat die EU rund acht Milliarden Euro dort investiert, auch um die Wirtschaft anzukurbeln. Laut Studien gab es keinerlei Fortschritte. Die EU hat – wie immer – nur Geld verbrannt und kläglich versagt.

Aber die EU wäre nicht die EU, wenn sie nicht das bekannte Zitat von Einstein immer wieder und immer wieder bestätigen würde: „Die Definition von Wahnsinn ist, immer wieder das Gleiche zu tun und andere Ergebnisse zu erwarten.“ Genau deswegen werden jetzt in den nächsten sieben Jahren weitere 30 Milliarden investiert. Der Steuerzahler hat es offensichtlich. Wie viele dieser Milliarden werden wieder in dunklen Kanälen versickern? Aber das ist Ihnen, wertere Kollegen, scheinbar völlig egal. Es ist ja nur das Geld des Steuerzahlers.

Machen wir uns nichts vor: Die Balkanländer wären bei einer Aufnahme auf Jahrzehnte hinaus Nettoempfänger. Wer soll das bezahlen? Hauptsächlich der deutsche Steuerzahler. Der wird irgendwann auch mal kapieren, dass er nur die Melkkuh der EU ist. Er selbst verarmt weiterhin. Der Deutsche – bekanntlich ist er sehr reich – hat mittlerweile durch die Umverteilung jetzt schon eines der geringsten Medianvermögen in der EU.

Fast schon amüsan mutet der digitale Wandel an, den die EU auf dem Balkan fördern möchte. Deutschland ist auf dem Sektor weltweit abgeschlagen, mittlerweile ein digitales Entwicklungsland. In weiten Teilen ist kaum eine Internet- oder Telefonverbindung möglich. Die EU wäre gut beraten, erst mal die eigenen Probleme im Lande zu lösen, statt sich noch weitere aufzuhalsen.

Weiter wurde beschlossen, die Impfquote auf dem Balkan zu erhöhen. Das ist übergriffig und eine Frechheit. Wollen Sie jetzt Ihre faschistischen Methoden, die letztlich in der Ausgrenzung von Millionen gesunder Menschen münden, noch anderen Ländern als Wertemodell verkaufen?

Die eingeführten Regeln sind schlicht ein Verbrechen an unserer Bevölkerung, und das wollen wir auch noch am Balkan einführen! Das darf so nicht weitergehen und das muss aufhören, und zwar jetzt.

Adam Bielan (ECR). – Mr President, I welcome the EU decision to reiterate its commitment to the Western Balkans getting closer to our Union during the recent summit in Slovenia.

However, I deplore that the summit did not bring any breakthrough or concrete next steps in that sense. I believe we should accelerate the enlargement process. This is crucial as a loss of credibility of the EU in the Western Balkans threatens to increase foreign influence in Europe, notably given Russia's and China's interests in the region.

I fear the lack of a decision to open negotiations with North Macedonia and Albania can accelerate this process of growing external influence. In a world of fragile and changing alliances, this enlargement could be a further guarantee of proper development, stability and peace on our continent.

Andor Deli (NI). – Tisztelt Elnök Úr! A nyugat-balkáni bővítés témáját az elmúlt évek során már számos uniós elnökség a zászlajára tűzte. Sajnos a bővítés iránt szkeptikus tagállamok megakadályozták a szlovén elnökséget abban, hogy egy konkrét dátumot is beépítsenek a brdói csúcs zárónyilatkozatába. Pedig a csatlakozási dátum rendkívül fontos üzenet lenne a régió országai számára. Konkrét célkitűzések nélkül nagyon jól tudjuk, hogy nagyon nehéz politizálni. Pláne úgy, hogy egyes tagjelöltek, mint például Szerbia hamarosan tíz éve van ebben a szerepben. A folyamat végét pedig még nem láthatjuk.

A bővítési dátum nemcsak a tagjelölteknek lenne kapaszkodó, a bővítés tematikájának tervezhető, belátható lezárása a bővítés szkeptikusai számára is hasznos lehetne. Ebben a helyzetben, amikor nem mindig és nem mindenki számára népszerű a bővítés kérdése, külön köszönet Várhelyi biztos úrnak, amiért az Európai Bizottság megteremtette a mintegy 30 milliárd eurós befektetési programot a térség számára. Ha már nincsenek pozitív politikai üzenetek egyes tagállamok húzódozásai miatt, akkor legalább befektetésekkel segítse az EU a térség polgárainak életét.

Željana Zovko (PPE). – Poštovani predsjedavajući, poštovana povjerenice, deklaracijom sa sastanka na vrhu Europske unije i zapadnog Balkana održanog u Brdu kod Kranja države članice Europske unije naglasile su svoju obavezanost na daljnje povećanje zajedničkog angažmana sa zemljama zapadnog Balkana, kao i na unaprjeđenje njihove političke, ekonomske i socijalne transformacije.

Ja čestitam Vladi gospodina Janše i vama ovdje na tome što držite vatru koju je započela Republika Hrvatska kako bi ove zemlje približile Europskoj uniji. Također, čestitam povjereniku gospodinu Várhelyiju koji je prije nekoliko dana izložio svoju viziju i paket proširenja. Isto tako, ponosna sam na IPA III paket koji smo usvojili, kao suizvjestiteljica, od 14 milijardi eura koji je predviđen za ovaj prostor.

Ovdje želim da naglasim kao netko tko dolazi iz Bosne i Hercegovine, iz Mostara, grada koji je jedini napravio u ovom izvješću o proširenju neku transformaciju i po prvi put ima gradonačelnika i Gradsko vijeće – Bosna i Hercegovina ima problem, a taj problem je izborni zakon. Taj problem je jednak pristup svim trima stranama u Bosni i Hercegovini međunarodne zajednice, Europske komisije i svih onih koji su uključeni do 26 godina poslije Daytonu.

Ne svjedočimo ovde pozivima na neko novo financiranje međunarodne administracije. Dok sam ja ovdje u ovom Parlamentu, niti jedan cent više neće biti potrošen iz IPA fondova za nekoga tko nije iz Bosne i Hercegovine, Srbije, Crne Gore, Sjeverne Makedonije jer taj narod gubi ono što je osnovno. Gubi svoje sjeme, gubi mlade ljude koji grade Europu umjesto da grade zapadni Balkan.

Zahvaljujem, čestitam i želim da se svi fokusirate na ljude Bosne i Hercegovine, a ne na Srbe.

Andreas Schieder (S&D). – Herr Präsident, sehr geehrte Damen und Herren! Ich glaube, das Beste am Westbalkan-Gipfel war, dass er stattgefunden hat. Ich muss aber ehrlicherweise sagen: Die Ergebnisse des Westbalkan-Gipfels sind enttäuschend, nicht sehr viel, wie generell die Westbalkanpolitik der Europäischen Union und insbesondere der Europäischen Kommission in den letzten Jahren wirklich enttäuschend ist. Und ich möchte sagen: Wir müssen als EU – und es muss auch die Europäische Kommission – in dieser Region viel, viel präsenter sein.

Wenn wir die Länder vielleicht einzeln durchgehen: Serbien und Montenegro – dort gibt es die große Sorge, dass die Entwicklung – gerade in der Medienfreiheit, in den Fragen der zivilen Rechte – in der letzten Zeit nicht in die richtige Richtung läuft. Nordmazedonien und Albanien – zwei Länder, die große Reformen unternommen haben, aber trotzdem nicht die versprochene Antwort der Beitrittsverhandlungen bekommen, einfach deshalb, weil ein Mitgliedstaat aus innenpolitischen Gründen dieses Thema blockiert.

Das Kosovo, die Visaliberalisierung, aber auch zum Beispiel die doppelte Krise in Bosnien, die wir erfahren, und gerade die jüngsten Schritte von Dodik, die dazu führen, dass das Land vielleicht vor einem Zerreißen steht – ich verstehe das Schweigen und die Inaktivität der Kommission und auch des Kommissars Várhelyi in dieser Frage überhaupt nicht. Wir müssen doch hier endlich in die Gänge kommen und verhindern, dass durch diesen Nationalismus, der dort angestachelt wird, wieder ein Flächenbrand am Balkan passiert. Da kann man nicht wegschauen, da muss man endlich handeln!

Charles Goerens (Renew). – Monsieur le Président, les Balkans occidentaux ont-ils une perspective européenne? La réponse est oui. Pourront-ils adhérer au marché intérieur de l'Union européenne? Oui, dès qu'ils seront prêts. Et à l'espace Schengen? Même réponse: dès qu'ils seront prêts. Existe-t-il un quelconque obstacle de principe pour refuser la coopération avec les Balkans occidentaux dans tout ce qui a trait au commerce, à la coopération monétaire et à la coopération politique? Bien sûr que non, tant que les conditions sont remplies de part et d'autre.

Mais un grand obstacle reste à franchir: comment garantir le respect des valeurs fondamentales de l'Union européenne, une fois ces pays devenus membres de l'Union? La réponse est claire. Il suffit que les pays des Balkans observent ce qui se passe aujourd'hui dans l'un des leurs, déjà membre de l'Union européenne, en Pologne ou en Hongrie, ou dans d'autres États en voie de devenir des démocraties.

Il y a deux jours, nous avons subi ici un foutage de gueule du représentant d'un pays accusé de s'être écarté des valeurs fondamentales de l'Union européenne. En attendant, notre union fait preuve d'impuissance dès qu'il s'agit d'imposer le retour au respect de l'état de droit. Disons-le clairement: aussi longtemps que l'Union européenne restera incapable d'imposer à un État membre défaillant le respect des valeurs inscrites dans l'article 2, nous ferons piètre figure face aux fossoyeurs de l'état de droit.

Retour aux Balkans, où il ne faut pas aller très loin pour découvrir des fosses communes. La première des aspirations des citoyens des Balkans est, me semble-t-il, le respect de la dignité et la capacité de la garantir. Pour nous, Parlement européen, le constat est dur. Nous sommes incapables à l'heure actuelle de tenir la promesse de liberté et de garantir le retour au respect des valeurs une fois bafouées par un État membre. Autrement dit, restons ouverts à des coopérations. Nous pouvons tout offrir aux pays des Balkans occidentaux, à l'exception des institutions.

Ciarán Cuffe (Verts/ALE). – Mr President, despite much fanfare, the Western Balkans Summit earlier this month turned out to be a disappointment. It failed in one of its most crucial tasks, that of offering a tangible and credible path to EU membership for those in the Balkans who continue to dream of a future within the European Union. Despite numerous enacting demands and targets, those countries continue to be offered only false promises.

The EU, of course, is the most successful peace project in history. Yet in a country so recently ravaged by war, we continue to undermine accession to this peace project. And I remember half a century ago the excitement in Ireland when we joined the European Economic Community. It brought economic, social and environmental progress to our island. And the longer we continue to dash Balkan people's hopes of joining the EU, the more disillusionment will grow with the European project.

So we need to be clear in our demands regarding requirements for accession, but we cannot endlessly break promises. We can no longer play with people's hopes and dreams because of domestic politics. Of course, internal reforms are needed and institutions need strengthening, but this is a separate and internal matter.

And I strongly regret the continuous undermining of the long stalled start to accession talks for North Macedonia and Albania by Bulgaria on very questionable grounds. And it's wrong that some member states refuse to even consider setting 2030 as a target date for membership at the summit.

So I call on EU Member States to approve accession talks with these two countries as a matter of urgency and to set clear commitments to other Balkan states. We were given that option half a century ago, the least we can do is offer it to our colleagues in southern and Eastern Europe.

Dorien Rookmaker (NI). – Mr President, the last EU-Western Balkans Summit was a missed opportunity for the EU to show that it is really committed to enlargement. Albania and North Macedonia do not have a date for the opening of negotiations, while Kosovo has still not been granted a visa-free regime.

While EU Member States continue to quarrel, countries like China, Russia and Turkey are getting more influence over key countries in the Western Balkans. There is a crisis in the making in the Western Balkans, and the EU is doing nothing. The EU needs to offer an integration roadmap with clear expectations and benchmarks.

Enlargement is an opportunity that will contribute to prosperity and will protect peace and democracy in the continent.

Sunčana Glavak (PPE). – Poštovani predsjedavajući, poštovana povjerenice, usvojena deklaracija ističe kako Europska unija jednoglasno podržava europsku perspektivu zapadnog Balkana. Obuhvaća i čitav niz konkretnih mjera o zapadnom Balkanu uključujući investicijski plan od 30 milijardi eura. Europska budućnost, kolegice i kolege, zapadnog Balkana ključna je za dugoročnu geopolitičku stabilnost u regiji i stoga podržavam svaku pomoć zemljama zapadnog Balkana na njihovu europskom putu. Vrlo je važno da i s druge strane bude konkretizirano europsko opredjeljenje što na zakonodavnom planu mogu pokazati reformskim naporima koji su u skladu s europskim načelima jer svjesni smo demokratskih deficita i zato je bitno da svoju privrženost Europi pokažu i po pitanju ljudskih prava i u demokratskoj praksi.

Hrvatska je uvijek poticala širenje europskih vrijednosti na područje zapadnog Balkana i prijateljski će nastaviti poticati europska stremljenja država na tom području o čemu svjedoči i Zagrebački summit o zapadnom Balkanu, koji je na agendu ponovo stavio te teme, održan, podsjećam, u svibnju prošle godine. Kontinuirani dijalog na najvišoj razini mora se nastaviti. On ne smije biti samo prigodan no moramo biti svjesni da bi se i proces trebao malo ubrzati. Politička i sigurnosna suradnja mora biti u našem fokusu jer bez obzira što neki od vas ovdje govore to su naši susjedi, to su zemlje čiji je prirodan put onaj europski put. Oni očekuju od nas pomoć, a naravno, mi ćemo im tu pomoć pružiti kako u financijskom, tako i političkom smislu, očekujući s druge strane od njih konkretiziranje zahtjeva, prije svega u napretku u onim demokratskim procesima. Hvala vam lijepa.

Isabel Santos (S&D). – Senhor Presidente, Senhora Comissária, Senhor Ministro, não posso de todo partilhar das palavras que aqui proferiram em relação à Cimeira dos Balcãs Ocidentais. Gostaria muito de partilhar da vossa perspectiva, mas não posso.

Desta cimeira saíram mais envelopes financeiros, mais palavras bonitas em relação aos Balcãs ocidentais, mas não saíram expectativas reais, não saiu um plano real quanto à integração destes países na União Europeia. E isto leva a um cansaço tremendo junto das populações.

As populações começam a ficar cansadas de promessas, as populações querem ser membros efetivos da União Europeia. E isto não pode permanecer neste limbo em relação a países aos quais foram pedidas todas as mudanças e mais algumas, todas as reformas e mais algumas, em circunstâncias muito difíceis, e depois, chegamos ao fim, todos reconhecemos que a Macedónia e a Albânia cumpriram as metas estabelecidas para que fosse calendarizada a primeira conferência intergovernamental, e a primeira conferência intergovernamental vai sendo adiada, adiada, adiada.

Bem sei que há problemas, que há problemas criados pela relação entre a Macedónia e a Bulgária, mas é preciso encontrar uma solução para esses problemas. É preciso estabelecer metas para essa solução e é preciso também não adiar muito todo este processo, porque este processo não se pode adiar eternamente.

E o que eu peço ao Senhor Ministro, com todo o bom senso, porque sei que o seu papel também não é fácil, que a concertação é uma concertação a 27, o que eu lhe peço, Senhor Ministro, é muito claramente isto: é uma data para a primeira conferência intergovernamental, ponto! E uma data clara, rigorosa, precisa. É só isso que eu lhe peço, Senhor Ministro, e peço que faça o esforço que é necessário porque corremos sérios riscos. Temos uma população francamente pró-europeia, corremos o risco de perder essa vontade, de perder essa identidade e de termos outros atores geoestratégicos, como a Rússia, a China e a Turquia, a ocupar o espaço político que nós não estamos a ser capazes de ocupar.

Claudia Gamon (Renew). – Herr Präsident, werte Kolleginnen und Kollegen, Frau Kommissarin! In Ihrer Haltung gegenüber den Westbalkanstaaten offenbart sich die Schwäche europäischer Politikerinnen und damit auch die Schwäche der Europäischen Union selbst.

Man sagt dann: Wir bedauern die Abhängigkeit von chinesischen Infrastrukturprojekten, wir ärgern uns über den Einfluss russischer Sicherheitsstrategie, und wir zeigen uns besorgt über die drohende Desintegration Bosnien und Herzegovinas. Doch wenn es darum geht, diesen Entwicklungen auch etwas entgegenzusetzen, kneifen die Regierungschefs oft: Die einen flüchten sich in Worthülsen, liefern vage Versprechungen, ohne einen konkreten Zeithorizont zu nennen; die anderen stellen schamlos innenpolitisches Kalkül über die gesamteuropäische Verantwortung.

Das Bild, das produziert wird, ist für alle Beobachter nördlich und südlich des Rennwegs klar: Die EU ist der Erweiterung müde. Solch eine Beitrittsperspektive ist nur dann eine Perspektive, wenn sie auch noch sichtbar ist. Je weiter weg sie rückt, umso unschärfer wird sie auch. Wir klagen ja über schwindenden Einfluss in der Region. Dabei hätten wir die Hebel, um das zu ändern, selbst in der Hand.

Die angekündigten Infrastrukturinvestitionen sind wichtig. Auch eine Reform des Beitrittsprozesses wäre es. Doch beides kann eine Geisteshaltung, die notwendig wäre, nicht ersetzen. Es braucht europäische Politikerinnen, die den Geist der Gründungsverträge noch in sich tragen. In Rom wurde 1957 eine klare Vision formuliert: eine Aufforderung an die anderen Völker Europas, sich diesen Bestrebungen anzuschließen. Damit sind alle Völker Europas gemeint. Die Europäische Union ist ein Versprechen an alle Europäerinnen und Europäer.

Karlo Ressler (PPE). – Poštovani predsjedniče, povjerenice, kolegice i kolege, jugoistok Europe je bez ikakve dvojbe regija od strateške važnosti ne samo za susjedne države članice nego i za cijelu Europsku uniju. Europska unija je za zapadni Balkan uvjerljivo vodeći gospodarski partner i najveći strani investitor. Ali, možda još važnije, bilo kakva nestabilnost u regiji, jasno je, značila bi i krizu i nestabilnost za cijelu Europsku uniju. U području sigurnosti važno je inzistirati također, s državama jugoistoka Europe, da pojačaju svoje napore u suzbijanju ilegalnih migracija, u jačanju nepropusnosti vlastitih granica i zajedničke europske borbe protiv nezakonitih prelazaka. To je važan dio i njihove i naše sigurnosti, ali to je i važan dio na kojima i oni testiraju svoju mogućnost i državne kapacitete u tome da se približavaju i ispunjavaju standarde Europske unije.

Europska komisija i Europa imaju ambiciju biti globalni geopolitički akter. Raspravljamo satima i ovdje, u Europskom parlamentu o situaciji u Južnom kineskom moru, u Afganistanu, u Etiopiji. Ali mislim da je svima jasno da ne možemo niti u kojem slučaju biti stvarno globalno relevantni ako gubimo utjecaj čak i u našem najbližem susjedstvu. Jasno je da kod takvog, hladnog europskog stava drugi globalni akteri ne stoje po strani i da su također vrlo aktivni na zapadnom Balkanu. Zato je stvarno minimum minimuma nekakve geopolitičke ambicije Europske unije da budemo stvarno prisutni, da dokažemo naš stvarni utjecaj, ali i stvarnu vjerodostojnost upravo na jugoistoku Europe, a tek onda možemo pokušati pokazati i naše druge globalne ambicije.

Jytte Guteland (S&D). – Herr talman! Västra Balkan hör hemma inom den Europeiska unionen. Vi behöver fastställa en tydligare tidsplan för anslutning till unionen för enskilda länder i regionen.

Nordmakedonien fick byta sitt nuvarande namn efter dispyten med Grekland för några år sedan. Det var ett avtal som var svårt att svälja för många, men som ändå accepterades. Däremot har Bulgarien nu lagt in ett veto för att Nordmakedonien ens ska få påbörja anslutningsförhandlingarna.

Kommissionen har å sin sida åter tydliggjort att Nordmakedonien och Albanien har uppfyllt kraven för att inleda förhandlingar. Då är vi skyldiga att hålla vår del av avtalet. Det är givetvis helt avgörande att länderna på västra Balkan får bukt med den systematiska korruptionen och fullt ut lever upp till EU:s grundläggande värden om rättsstatliga principer, innan det kan bli tal om ett medlemskap.

Varje land på västra Balkan måste nu utvärderas var för sig på sina egna meriter, samtidigt behövs en tydlig tidsplan för enskilda länder för att människor i regionen ska känna hoppet om ett EU-medlemskap.

Franc Bogovič (PPE). – Gospod predsednik. Spoštovana komisarka Mairead McGuinness, cenjeni minister Anže Logar. Veseli me, da danes razpravljamo o zaključkih vrha o Zahodnem Balkanu, ki se je odvil na Brdu.

Imamo vrstni red Solun 2003, v zadnjem času Sofija 2018, Zagreb 2020, Brdo 2021. Se pravi, skoraj 20 let se že o tem pogovarjamo in kot vidimo, imajo največjo iniciativo, pobudo v tem procesu tiste države, ki so blizu Zahodnega Balkana. Najbrž zato, ker se mi najbolj zavedamo, kako je to nemirno območje, kako smo povezani z njim, kako na nas vpliva, bodisi če opazujemo migrantsko krizo ali pa, če hočete, opazujemo, kako Rusija, Turčija, Kitajska krepijo svoj vpliv v tem delu Evrope.

Nobena skrivnost ni, da ima proces določene težave, ki so na eni strani tako znotraj EU-ja. Imamo po mojem prepričanju nepotrebno blokado Makedonije v tem trenutku. Vsekakor mislim, da bi morali odpreti proces za Makedonijo in Albanijo. Po drugi strani imamo tudi težave v sami regiji. Še vedno imamo nerešene spore na meji Srbija–Kosovo, potem težave znotraj Bosne.

Vendar je delovanje pravne države nekaj, kar bi bilo treba okrepiti. Ko pa vse skupaj opazujemo, pa vidimo, da se pravzaprav proces prehajanja mladih ljudi v Evropsko unijo dogaja. In ti ljudje prihajajo v Evropsko unijo, kar je mogoče za katero od držav članic v redu, prava katastrofa pa za to območje.

Zato upam, da uspe naši vladi okrepiti ta prizadevanja in da se ti procesi širitve čim prej zgodijo in da tudi, predvsem pa čim prej, ljudje na Zahodnem Balkanu dobijo nazaj zaupanje v Evropsko unijo in vero v prihodnost Evropske unije, ki v zadnjem času slabi na tem področju.

Thijs Reuten (S&D). – Mr President, the declaration after the Western Balkans Summit started with a promise of unequivocal support. It left me a bit confused. What does this actually mean?

The commitment to a substantial investment package of EUR 30 billion is very welcome. Is that it? Or is it the merit-based approach, but with new demands and surprise vetoes after meeting the criteria? Words matter.

Instead of unequivocal support, we can also say: 'yes, we will fight with you for your future in the EU. No promises on dates. No false hope. But if you deliver to the highest standards, we want you to be part of it.' Countries perfectly understand we will remain fair and strict. It is in their own interests and in ours. Strict on all our values and equally strict for Member States watering down on them.

So No Orbán-Vučić-friendly approach advancing the Serbian candidacy while there are great concerns and no instrumentalising tensions and endangering the Dayton Agreement. But yes, to your leadership in pushing the Council to now deliver for North Macedonia and Albania and to grant visa liberalisation for Kosovo.

Tomislav Sokol (PPE). – Poštovani potpredsjedniče, povjerenice, ministre Logar, kolegice i kolege, prostor jugoistočne Europe od strateške je važnosti za Europsku uniju. Povijest je pokazala da krize u ovom području mogu destabilizirati cijelu Europu. To smo vidjeli 1914. kada je lanac događaja započet u Sarajevu uzrokovao globalnu kataklizmu koja je dovela do urušavanja svjetskog poretka koji je do tada postojao. Zato je sudbina ovog područja od golemog značaja za sve nas, mada mnogi toga u Europi, nažalost, nisu svjesni.

Prvo bih spomenuo Bosnu i Hercegovinu. Tamo su Hrvati konstitutivan narod, ogromnom većinom građani Europske unije, diskriminirani jer im je onemogućeno da sami biraju svoje političke predstavnike. Zato je potrebna što hitnija reforma izbornog sustava, sukladno odluci Ustavnog suda, kako bi se zaustavila diskriminacija jednog od konstitutivnih naroda i spriječila daljnja destabilizacija zemlje. Europa tome svakako mora doprinijeti.

Dalje, Crna Gora je daleko odmaknula na putu prema EU-u, ali nažalost antieuropske snage koje negiraju samo postojanje crnogorske nacije imaju snažan utjecaj u trenutnoj vladajućoj većini, što nikako nije dobro, te predstavlja nazadovanje u odnosu na prijašnje stanje. Strateški imperativ za Crnu Goru jednostavno mora biti njezin europski put, a Unija joj u tome mora aktivno pomoći, a ne nijemo promatrati sa strane što se tamo događa.

Srbija, s druge strane, ne može ući u Europsku uniju dok ne riješi temeljna pitanja vezana uz vladavinu prava, poput prava manjina, procesuiranja ratnih zločina te rasvjetljavanja sudbine nestalih osoba iz agresije na Hrvatsku. Konstruktivan pristup temeljen na činjenicama i odlučno suočavanje s vlastitim zabludama i porazima nužni su za ovu zemlju u kojoj se dan danas u školskim udžbenicima negira hrvatski jezik. Njezino vodstvo se jednostavno mora suočiti s prošlošću, a potom i usvojiti europske vrijednosti iskreno i raditi na ulasku u Europsku uniju, a ne glumiti Tita i nesvrstane.

Danas smo ponovno u vrlo složenim vremenima u kojima su brojne sile poput Rusije, Kine i Turske sve prisutnije u ovoj regiji, što svi mi u Uniji trebamo shvatiti vrlo ozbiljno. Ukoliko Europa ne preuzme vodeću ulogu u jugoistočnoj Europi, drugi će popuniti tu prazninu.

Evin Incir (S&D). – Mr President, regional cooperation and European integration is very important, especially during a time when we see a backlash of our core values. I welcome that the Western Balkans Summit reaffirms the mutual interest and goals of the European Union and its Western Balkan partners.

But the actions are absent. Yes, some of the countries, such as Serbia with its authoritarian President Aleksandar Vučić, have a long way to go before the common values are respected. But other countries are making serious efforts towards our common values.

Some of the successful examples are Albania, North Macedonia and Kosovo. Two of the countries showing that they not only by words but also by deed, want to be a part of the European family had elections last weekend; one is North Macedonia and the other is Kosovo. It is impressive to see the democratisation process of, especially, Kosovo, where I was last weekend during the elections, as well as it's important for them to continue the reform processes that must continue.

But when genuine steps are taken and achieved, processing the cooperation must be made, also from the side of the European Union. The next step in the case of Kosovo must be celebration and for North Macedonia and Albania it must be accession process, to not lose credibility.

Vladimír Bilčík (PPE). – Mr President, the EU Western Balkans summit took place in arguably a very difficult period for both the European Union and our partners in the Western Balkans. The COVID-19 pandemic is not over. It continues to limit the lives of people and put a strain on the healthcare systems in the region. I would like to welcome the unprecedented assistance that the EU has provided and continues to provide to the region during these challenging times. In this respect, I would like to praise also Serbia for becoming a regional vaccination hub.

However, it is now time to deliver the vaccines to the people in the region. Our European commitment is all the more important as we are witnessing inflammatory rhetoric in a number of countries across the Western Balkans. It is crucial that we categorically stop any further de-escalation and support a European spirit in reconciliation and bilateral issues.

In this respect, I do welcome this week's joint statement by State Secretary Antony Blinken and High Representative Josep Borrell on EU-US joint engagement in the region.

We across the European Union must show genuine interest in the European perspective for the countries in the Western Balkans. This means, at the very least, opening the negotiations with North Macedonia and Albania, and including our partners actively in the Conference on the Future of Europe as soon as possible.

This week, we also discussed the 2021 enlargement package. Allow me a couple of quick remarks on two countries. One, Serbia, is entering a super election year. It will therefore be very important for the country to assure the upcoming months are dedicated to opening up the political landscape for free, competitive and fair elections. This means, on the one hand, that implementation of the European Parliament-led inter-party dialogue agreement is crucial. On the other hand, that all political forces compete in the elections. Also, the situation on the ground demonstrates that we need serious and continuing engagement from both Belgrade, and especially Pristina, towards work on a comprehensive and legally-binding agreement.

Montenegro has been the frontrunner in the accession process for many years but has been standing still during the past year. We need to see clear pro-European action by politicians in Montenegro, not only declaratory words about Europe.

Last sentence, if we demand deeds from our partners in the Western Balkans, we have to be serious about our own delivery.

Seán Kelly (PPE). – Mr President, Ireland joined the EU in 1973, forever changing our country for the better, economically and socially. We have graduated from being a benefactor to a contributor and we are proud to do so, as the rising tide lifts all boats.

Having benefited hugely from being a part of this Union, we embraced enlargement of the EU – provided, of course, that candidate countries share our values and meet the necessary conditions of membership.

The EU was founded on respect for democracy, the rule of law and fundamental rights. Earlier this week, we debated the rule of law crisis with the Polish Prime Minister. It should be clear to all that EU membership comes with not only far-reaching benefits, but also responsibilities.

Discussions with our close neighbours in the Western Balkans have been ongoing for some time now. I warmly welcome the Slovenian Presidency's efforts to ensure these discussions progress in a meaningful way. Progress is both in the interests of the citizens of the Western Balkans and in the strategic interest of the EU, and offers the perfect antidote to Brexit.

It is positive to see the Western Balkan countries renew their commitments at the Western Balkans Summit, to carry out necessary reforms to closer align to EU standards. Each is at a different stage of the journey, and it's important that EU support and dialogue continues while tangible progress is being made.

It was good to see the cooperation between the EU and the Western Balkans in the face of the COVID-19 crisis. Three million doses have been provided to the Western Balkans, with more to come. The EU is the region's closest partner and principal donor, and I look forward to the strengthening of relations and, most importantly, the setting of a projected accession date for these countries of great potential.

Петър Витанов (S&D). – *(началото на изказването не се чува)* ... да бъдат решавани. Но преди да говорим за проблемите, ще ви кажа къде няма проблеми. Няма проблеми нито в езика, нито в идентичността на Северна Македония, този въпрос е регулиран в Договора за добросъседство от 2018 г. Проблеми има в общата ни история, в дискриминацията, в правата на човека, в използването на речта на омразата.

За да ме разберете, ще ви кажа просто: от двете страни на острието на спора са две политически партии с еднакво име, които се борят за разделяне на общото ни наследство. Единственото решение е конструктивен, съдържателен и интензивен диалог между двете страни, без натиск от Европейския съюз, защото той създава антиевропейски настроения. Ние достатъчно ясно осъзнаваме, че този спор вреди както на Северна Македония, на региона, на Европейския съюз, но така също и на България.

Mairead McGuinness, Member of the Commission. – Mr President, honourable members, this morning's debate really confirms the European Parliament's continued interest, commitment, concern for and engagement in the Western Balkans, and I want to thank you for that.

Here the European Union is rapidly transforming to address global challenges, including climate change, digitalisation and security. As potential future EU Member States already closely linked to relevant EU policy areas by trade, transport or energy, our partners in the region are an important part of our vision for a stronger, greener and more resilient Europe.

Only as partners can we successfully address these global challenges. Several of you rightly mentioned the enlargement process and the need to preserve its credibility. It is also our strong conviction that a credible enlargement process based on merits and with clear conditionality is the best instrument to advance our partnership with the region. The European perspective remains a unique tool to foster stability and prosperity, which only the European Union can offer.

We welcome that ministerial representatives of the Western Balkans have been invited to participate in the upcoming plenary meeting of the Conference on the Future of Europe this Saturday. On good neighbourly relations, existing bilateral agreements, including the Treaty of Friendship, Good Neighbourliness and Cooperation, need to be implemented in good faith by all parties.

Pending bilateral issues between Bulgaria and North Macedonia need to be resolved as a matter of priority. The Commission has just published the enlargement package and progress reports, which take a comprehensive stock of our relations with the region and its progress on the EU path, and we look forward to the European Parliament's resolutions on these reports.

PŘESEDNICTVÍ: DITA CHARANZOVÁ*místopředsedkyně*

Anže Logar, *predsedujoči Svetu*. – Spoštovana predsedujoča, spoštovana komisarka, cenjene poslanke in poslanci. Najprej zahvala za pohvale ob zaključku vrha EU-Zahodni Balkan v času slovenskega predsedstva. Hkrati pa tudi zahvala za kritike v zvezi z rezultati tega vrha, kajti kritike ne letijo na predsedstvo. Predsedstvo je naredilo vse, kar je v njegovi moči. Te kritike letijo na tiste, ki imajo morda še vedno zadržke glede širitvene perspektive Zahodnega Balkana.

Izraženo je bilo nekaj nezadovoljstva glede evropske perspektive držav Zahodnega Balkana. Mislim, da je to pomembno sporočilo vsem odločevalcem v Evropski uniji, hkrati pa tudi dokaz in razlog, da je treba na tem področju še veliko narediti, tako s strani institucij kot s strani držav Zahodnega Balkana.

Omenjeno je bilo tudi, da ni bilo doseženega večjega napredka na vrhu EU-Zahodni Balkan, pa naj vam samo osvetlim z okoliščinami, s katerimi se Evropska unija, države članice, pa tudi predsedstvo ob tej tematiki srečuje.

Kot veste in je bilo danes tudi že omenjeno, ena država Zahodnega Balkana še vedno ni priznana s strani petih držav članic Evropske unije. V eni državi ni opozicije v parlamentu. V eni državi federalna vlada že kar nekaj mesecev ni zasedala in je kup nesprejetih zakonodajnih aktov, šteje približno že dvesto štirideset zakonodajnih predlogov.

Ena država Zahodnega Balkana nima zelene luči ene od držav članic Evropske unije zaradi bilateralnih vprašanj. Ena država ne dobi soglasja nekaterih držav članic za vizumsko liberalizacijo, čeprav je izpolnila vse pogoje. Nekateri države imajo usklajenost zunanje politike s skupno zunanjo in varnostno politiko Evropske unije pod 50 odstotkov. V eni od držav govorijo celo o odcepitvi dela države.

Skratka, to je regija Zahodnega Balkana, ki zahteva zelo natančen in zelo usklajen pristop držav članic. In napredek na področju širitve na Zahodnem Balkanu ni neka ravna avtocesta, ampak je precej vijugana gorska steza z vsemi nevarnostmi, ki so ob poti.

In ravno zato je bil to tudi eden od razlogov, da se je slovensko predsedstvo odločilo velik del svojih sil in naporov posvetiti evropski perspektivi te regije. In tovrstni napor, kot veste, niso avtomatično obsojeni na uspeh, ampak predvsem zahtevajo velike napore za doseganje omejenega uspeha.

S tem smo se srečevali praktično celotno pripravo vrha EU-Zahodnega Balkana. Najbolj je to prišlo do izraza pri usklajevanju nasprotujočih si stališč za deklaracijo, ki jo je sprejel vrh EU-Zahodni Balkan. Samo omenim, da je bilo v začetni fazi nemogoče v deklaracijo spraviti besedo širitev, pa jo imate v deklaraciji.

Nekateri ste omenjali, da v deklaraciji manjka datum širitve. Ta očitek ne more biti naslovljen na predsedstvo. Predsedstvo se je zavzemalo za to, pa kot veste v kasnejšem usklajevanju te deklaracije tega ni bilo mogoče spraviti v deklaracijo.

Nekateri opozarjate na zastoj reform v posameznih državah Zahodnega Balkana. No, temu je namenjena nova širitvena strategija, ki je bila sprejeta marca 2020, ko se pogaja oziroma izvaja napredek po *clusterjih*, kjer je možen delni napredek, a hkrati tudi korak nazaj, v kolikor se zahtevani napredek ne doseže.

Nekateri ste omenjali tako imenovani *decoupling*. V času slovenskega predsedstva se to ne bo zgodilo in osebno mislim, da je to tudi napaka, če bi se zgodilo.

Treba se je zavedati, da je Republika Severna Makedonija izpolnila vse pogoje za začetek medvladne konference. In kot veste, potrebujemo soglasje vseh 27 držav članic. Lahko vam zagotavljam, da predsedstvo to soglasje daje.

Na poti Zahodnega Balkana preko ... evropskim integracijam je še veliko čeri in tudi to ni kratkotrajen postopek. Mislim pa, da z osrediščenjem naporov in tudi razprav na to temo vračamo to vprašanje in to našo skupno zavezo visoko na agendo institucij Evropske unije. In v tem pogledu je veliko odvisno tudi od Evropskega parlamenta.

Danes sem poslušal izvajanje petih od šestih predstavnikov Evropskega parlamenta, ki pokrivajo posamezne države Zahodnega Balkana. Mislim, da so bila to pomembna sporočila, tako za predsedstvo kot tudi za države članice, ki odločajo in ki morajo s soglasjem odločiti o vsakem naslednjem koraku.

Vseeno lahko rečem, da je uspeh vrha EU-Zahodni Balkan merljiv s tem, ko je v deklaraciji jasno zapisano, da bodo tovrstni vrhi sedaj redni, kar pomeni, da bodo predsedniki držav in članic redno letno pregledovali napredek po posameznih državah, hkrati pa bodo imeli predsedniki držav oziroma vlad iz regije možnost v neposrednem dialogu z njimi predstaviti ta svoj reformni napredek.

In naslednjič bo tovrstni vrh v času češkega predsedovanja, s čimer bomo lahko v enem letu ocenili, kaj smo na tej regiji dosegli. Imamo tudi črno na belem, da je širitev z Zahodnim Balkanom ali raje popolnitev zemljevida Evropske unije strateška komponenta, za katero si vsi skupaj prizadevamo. To je naša obljuba in hkrati naša zaveza.

Potrdili smo tudi investicijski načrt in se zavezali za pomoč s cepivi zoper covid-19. In mislim, da tudi vse ostale zaveze, ki so navedene v deklaraciji, državam Zahodnega Balkana ponujajo zadostne razloge, da aktivno pristopijo k reformnim procesom, in omogočijo, da umaknejo morda še tiste argumente, ki jih imajo posamezne skeptične države članice, da dajo na koncu zeleno luč.

Veselim se sodelovanja z Evropskim parlamentom na tem dosjeju in v tem pogledu lahko Evropski parlament vedno računa na sodelovanje slovenskega predsedstva.

President. – The debate is closed.

Written statements (Rule 171)

Ramona Strugariu (Renew), in writing. – During the last EU-Western Balkans summit in Brdo, EU leaders failed, once again, to make any further tangible commitment to enlargement. We offer our partners in the region vague words about their rightful place in Europe. Yet we fail to set any concrete objectives and a clear path to EU accession. It is very good that, on this occasion, the EU's commitment to the enlargement process in general was reaffirmed. It is very good that we are ready to show our solidarity in the recovery of the region through the Economic and Investment Plan. But for our partners in the region, it is not enough. Our hesitancy to commit clearly and within a clear time-frame for accession will fuel instability in the Western Balkans and act as a deterrent for conducting serious reforms. In a larger geopolitical context, it sends a negative and discouraging message to our neighbours in the East, such as the Republic of Moldova, who aspire to join our Union. We urgently need clarity for the Western Balkans and our Eastern partners. Our (by now) chronic indecision on enlargement risks to seriously undermine our role and influence in these regions.

7. Absolutorium za rok 2019: Europejska Agencja Straży Granicznej i Przybrzeżnej (debata)

President. – The next item is the debate on the report by Ryszard Czarnecki, on behalf of the Committee on Budgetary Control, on discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency for the financial year 2019 (COM(2020)0288 – C9-0247/2020 – 2020/2167(DEC)) (A9-0270/2021).

Joachim Stanisław Brudziński, zastępca sprawozdawcy. – Pani Przewodnicząca! Szanowni Państwo! Z pełnym przekonaniem chciałbym powiedzieć, że powinniśmy przyjąć drugie sprawozdanie w sprawie absolutorium z wykonania budżetu Europejskiej Agencji Straży Granicznej i Przybrzeżnej za rok budżetowy 2019, które zawiera udzielenie absolutorium agencji.

Należy wskazać, że Trybunał wydał w całości pozytywną opinię, zaś Agencja do tej pory przyjęła lub częściowo przyjęła wszystkie zalecenia Trybunału. Ponadto Frontex prowadzi inicjatywę tworzenia wspólnych biur łącznikowych w Brukseli dla agencji działających w dziedzinie wymiaru sprawiedliwości i spraw wewnętrznych w celu efektywnego wykorzystania zasobów, wspólnego korzystania z obiektów i usług oraz wspierania tworzenia sieci kontaktów.

Agencja uczestniczy również w sieci urzędników ds. zamówień publicznych agencji Unii Europejskiej, oceniając międzyinstytucjonalne przetargi pod kątem potrzeb i zasobów finansowych. Frontex już zakończył i obecnie realizuje działania mające na celu zapewnienie przejrzystości, zapobieganie konfliktom interesów i zarządzanie nimi oraz ochronę osób zgłaszających nieprawidłowości.

W lutym 2021 r. Agencja przyjęła zaktualizowaną strategię w zakresie praw podstawowych, a w dniu 5 maja 2021 r. została podjęta decyzja o wdrożeniu przejrzystości Agencji. Agencja przygotowała już wstępny plan działania, a w momencie udzielenia odpowiedzi przez Agencję polityka ta była ostatecznie dopracowana w celu jej przyjęcia do końca drugiego kwartału 2021 r.

Z zadowoleniem przyjąć należy bieżące wysiłki Agencji zmierzające do utworzenia rejestru wszystkich dokumentów sporządzonych przez Agencję, równoległe do jej transformacji i cyfryzacji. Agencja aktywnie publikowała kluczowe dokumenty na swojej stronie internetowej i udostępniała je za pośrednictwem rejestru publicznego dostępu do dokumentów. Nadal wzywamy Agencję, aby kontynuowała swoje starania mające na celu doskonalenie dostępu do dokumentów.

Należy podkreślić, że na posiedzeniu Komisji Kontroli Budżetowej 1 września 2021 r. zastępca dyrektora generalnego dyrektoriatu ds. migracji i spraw wewnętrznych stwierdził, że wszystkie dochodzenia, przedmiotem których była Agencja, dobiegły końca i w żadnym z nich nie stwierdzono śladów niewłaściwego zarządzania budżetem lub finansami czy naruszenia praw podstawowych lub że Agencja odmówiła wypełniania obowiązków wynikających z dotyczącego jej rozporządzenia.

Ponadto w dniu 14 lipca 2021 r. grupa robocza ds. kontroli Fronteksu w Komisji Wolności Obywatelskich, Sprawiedliwości i Spraw Wewnętrznych Parlamentu opublikowała sprawozdanie z dochodzenia wyjaśniającego w sprawie Fronteksu dotyczące domniemanych naruszeń praw podstawowych, którego celem było zgromadzenie wszystkich istotnych informacji i dowodów na temat domniemanych naruszeń praw podstawowych, w których Agencja rzekomo uczestniczyła lub o których podobno wiedziała i nie podjęła działań, a także na temat zarządzania wewnętrznego oraz procedur zgłaszania i rozpatrywania skarg.

Niniejsza grupa robocza nie znalazła rozstrzygających dowodów na bezpośrednie przeprowadzenie przez Frontex zawracania lub wydaleń zbiorowych w przypadku poważnych incydentów, które mogłyby zostać przeanalizowane przez tę grupę. Należy dodać, że Europejski Rzecznik Praw Obywatelskich, po otrzymaniu wniosków z dochodzenia strategicznego prowadzonego w sprawie mechanizmu wnoszenia skarg do Agencji w celu zgłaszania domniemanych naruszeń praw podstawowych, uznał, że nie ma żadnych podstaw do dalszego badania tej kwestii i podjął decyzję o jej dalszym nierozpatrywaniu.

Na koniec chciałbym podkreślić, że zaledwie dwa lata po wejściu w życie rozporządzenia 2016/1624 Komisja przedstawiła wniosek dotyczący nowego rozporządzenia w sprawie Agencji, przy czym nie ma oceny skutków takiego nowego prawodawstwa.

Apeluję zatem do Komisji i Agencji o szybkie znalezienie odpowiedniego rozwiązania, aby zapewnić właściwe i terminowe wdrożenie mandatu Agencji na podstawie rozporządzenia Unii Europejskiej 2018/1986.

Niech mi wolno będzie również, jako byłemu ministrowi spraw wewnętrznych i administracji, na co dzień współpracującemu z szefostwem Fronteksu w Warszawie, wyrazić uznanie dla funkcjonariuszy i pracowników Fronteksu oraz podziękować im za codzienną pracę. We współpracy z funkcjonariuszami policji, straży granicznej czy wojska tych państw członkowskich Unii, które dzisiaj są państwami zewnętrznymi, wspólnie dbają oni o bezpieczeństwo naszych granic, a co za tym idzie – o bezpieczeństwo naszych obywateli.

Często w tej Izbie padają bardzo niesprawiedliwe słowa pod adresem tych, którzy niejednokrotnie z narażeniem życia dbają o to, aby nasz wspólny europejski dom był bezpieczny. Chciałbym wyrazić swoją wdzięczność panu Fabrice'owi Leggeriemu, dyrektorowi wykonawczemu Fronteksu, za jego ostatnią wizytę na granicy polsko-białoruskiej i słowa uznania skierowane pod adresem polskiej Straży Granicznej, która dzisiaj wspólnie ze służbami Litwy i Łotwy zabezpiecza wschodnią granicę Unii przed hybrydową wojną prowadzoną przez reżim Łukaszenki. Reżim ten, wykorzystując niejednokrotnie naiwnych ludzi, sprowadza ich za ich ciężkie pieniądze i legalnie – podkreślam: legalnie – na Białoruś liniami rejsowymi. Ludzie ci opłacają tę podróż, posiadają wizy, a następnie są oszukiwani i wypychani przez funkcjonariuszy białoruskich służb przez granicę polsko-białoruską.

Chcę podkreślić, że mówimy tutaj o nielegalnych migrantach, nie uchodźcach. Jeżeli chodzi o uchodźców, polskie prawodawstwo stanowi jasno – w zgodzie z konwencjami, z konwencją genewską – że każda osoba ma prawo złożyć wniosek o ochronę międzynarodową.

Warto z tego miejsca powiedzieć, Szanowni Państwo, że ci ludzie nielegalnie przekraczający granicę nie występują o tę ochronę międzynarodową, ponieważ chcą się dostać do Francji, Danii, Holandii, Szwecji i Niemiec. Zapytajcie swoich sąsiadów, zapytajcie swoich wyborców, czy chcą, aby nielegalni migranci znaleźli się w waszych ojczyznach.

Ylva Johansson, *Member of the Commission*. – Madam President, Mr Brudziński, honourable Members, this is a very important debate. Today you will vote on the Frontex 2019 discharge. Frontex fulfils a critical important task. Its mission is to help Member States protect the common European Union external borders and to uphold fundamental rights in doing so.

Unfortunately, we have seen increased threats over the past months at parts of the European external borders. I welcome the swift response by Frontex following Lukashenko's aggression, the deployment at the EU external border with Belarus in Lithuania, but also partly in Latvia. This is Frontex's task: to offer technical and operational assistance, taking the unfolding communitarian emergency into account.

But integrated external-border management is much more than managing irregular migration. It's also about fighting human trafficking, trafficking of drugs, firearms and cross-border organised crime. To achieve this, Frontex must be a robust and well-functioning agency with the right governance and control systems in place, and it must have the right processes and staff at its disposal to uphold fundamental rights.

So I welcome the work of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) Frontex scrutiny group. Its report gives important recommendations. As I told the executive director, these need to be implemented, monitored and followed up. Reports from the Court of Auditors, the EU Ombudsman and the Frontex management board's own working group on fundamental rights also identify significant shortcomings in the agency's governance. And the European Anti-Fraud Office, OLAF, is conducting an investigation, and we are awaiting its report.

Frontex must take action. This has been the position of the Commission from day one. You, from Parliament, also asked the Commission to step up, and this is what we have done. We closely follow up and monitor the implementation of your recommendations, also by using our two seats on the Frontex management board alongside all the Member States.

The Commission initiated several extraordinary management board meetings dedicated to governance issues and allegations of fundamental rights violations, and we had regular high-level meetings between the Commission and Frontex on strategic matters.

We provide continuous support and guidance to the agency, and now we can see the agency is taking action. The agency is implementing your recommendations on transparency, fundamental rights, budget and recruitment.

In May, Frontex established a transparency register concerning procurements and tenders. All meetings and contacts of the executive director and senior management must be registered.

In your first report, you demanded an action plan to implement Frontex's new fundamental rights strategy. The action plan will be adopted in the coming days. The action plan is a fundamental rights framework for all the border guards. It will help border guards to respect and defend fundamental rights in their daily work, ensuring European integrated border management.

It's good news that today, Frontex will appoint three deputy executive directors, as both Commission and Parliament have insisted. They have clear areas of responsibilities: returns, standing course and information management. They must be able to fully perform their tasks and duties based on clear internal reporting lines.

The new fundamental rights officer took up his duties in June this year. The first 20 fundamental rights monitors have been trained and are ready for duty. The management board adopted rules guaranteeing their independence. Important parts of the fundamental rights monitoring systems are now set up, but we need all parts in place for the machine to function.

Frontex must also appoint the remaining 20 fundamental rights monitors quickly. Frontex published a vacancy notice last week for recruitment at AD level, as Parliament requested. We will support the agency to complete hiring by the beginning of next year.

It has also to be clear in detail how and when Frontex suspends or terminates its operations. No EU body should ever find itself in a situation where it is involved in operations in violation of fundamental rights or international obligations. That's why this House demanded clear procedures for Article 46 of the EBCG regulation. This is still a work in progress. Important discussions are still taking place in the management board.

The agency still has enormous tasks and challenges ahead. Belarus, Afghanistan, unexpected geopolitical developments we are witnessing. To meet these challenges, the agency must function smoothly as a whole. All the pieces of the puzzle need to fit closely together. That's why Frontex needs a strong and robust governance framework, based on transparency and accountability.

So Frontex can do best what all of us want: to have a strong and operational European presence at Europe's border; to support and advise; to be our eyes and ears; to help Member States to protect the European Union borders and the European Union's fundamental rights. Your reports have made clear what needs to be done, and they have had a strong impact. They have been followed up by action.

It's clear Frontex has made progress on implementing your recommendations. It's also clear more needs to be done. The Commission will continue to support the agencies to carry out your recommendations. You can count on that.

Juan Fernando López Aguilar, *rapporteur for the opinion of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs*. – Madam President, yes, I am stating here the case of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE). As you are well aware, LIBE recommended in its first opinion for the 2019 discharge, to postpone the discharge for the agency.

But then, in September 2021, the LIBE Committee called on the Budgetary Control Committee (CONT) not to grant discharge for 2019 to Frontex due to allegations of mismanagement, non-compliance with its commitments, non-adherence to the Frontex Regulation.

Above all, all of the investigation on Frontex is still pending – not yet available. But it is a fact and an assumption that the increased competent staff and budget for the agency needs to be accompanied by a corresponding increase in accountability and transparency.

That is why, the LIBE Frontex Scrutiny Group, in its report endorsed on 15 July 2021, found issues related to reporting on fundamental rights, most concerning incidents, lack of recruitment of fundamental rights officers, and I quote: 'lack of cooperation of the executive director to ensure full compliance with some of the provisions of the European Border and Coast Guard Regulation, notably on fundamental rights.'

Therefore, I conclude, I am sorry to announce that we cannot grant discharge to the agency for 2019. Also, if we want, we can insist on our own approach to the 2022 budget with a reserve agreed for the agency due to the issues thereby.

Birgit Sippel, *im Namen der S&D-Fraktion*. – Frau Präsidentin! Lassen Sie mich mit einer kurzen Geschichte beginnen, die exemplarisch steht für die Arbeitsweise und für das Verhältnis zur Öffentlichkeit, das Frontex unter seiner derzeitigen Führung an den Tag legt.

2019 hatte die Transparenzorganisation FragDenStaat Frontex auf die Herausgabe von Dokumenten im Zusammenhang mit der Mittelmeeroperation Triton verklagt. Diese Klage wurde vom Gericht abgelehnt, und das ist zu akzeptieren. Frontex hatte daraufhin der Nichtregierungsorganisation Anwalts- und Gerichtskosten in Höhe von 23 000 Euro in Rechnung gestellt, darunter auch Kosten für einen externen Anwalt, obwohl Frontex natürlich eine eigene Rechtsabteilung hat.

Diese Kostenerstattung wollte Frontex vor Gericht einklagen. Das Gericht hat die Kosten dann aber für unangemessen hoch erklärt und den Betrag um mehr als die Hälfte auf 10 000 Euro reduziert. Gestrichen wurden unter anderem Reisekosten, für die es laut Urteil überhaupt keine Notwendigkeit gab.

Im April 2021, bei der ersten Abstimmung zu eben dem Bericht, über den wir heute diskutieren und abstimmen, hat dieses Haus Frontex aufgefordert, diesen Antrag auf Kostenerstattung zurückzuziehen. Diese Forderung wurde im Juli von unserer Frontex-Arbeitsgruppe noch einmal wiederholt. Doch was dieses Haus, die Vertretung der europäischen Bürgerinnen und Bürger fordert, ist Frontex unter Exekutivdirektor Fabrice Leggeri offenbar völlig egal. Bis zum 4. Oktober hätte FragDenStaat bezahlen sollen; ansonsten wurde mit Zwangsvollstreckung gedroht. Die Pointe: Als FragDenStaat das Geld in Brüssel an Frontex übergeben wollte, konnte man niemanden antreffen.

Dennoch ist dieser Vorgang nicht zum Lachen, denn er zeigt beispielhaft, wie Frontex versucht, sich der öffentlichen Kontrolle zu entziehen, Kritiker einzuschüchtern und ganz nebenbei Entscheidungen dieses Hauses zu ignorieren.

Erst kürzlich hat der Europäische Rechnungshof festgestellt, dass Frontex das Mandat von 2016 nicht ausreichend umgesetzt hat und auch Schwierigkeiten haben wird, das Mandat von 2019 zu erfüllen.

Auch hier nur ein Beispiel: Bis zum 5. Dezember 2020 war Frontex per Verordnung verpflichtet, 40 - Grundrechtebeauftragte einzustellen. Bis heute ist nur knapp die Hälfte eingestellt und davon gleich 15 auf der falschen administrativen Ebene.

Unsere Frontex-Arbeitsgruppe hat außerdem festgestellt, dass Frontex auf ihr durchaus bekannte Menschenrechtsverletzungen an der Außengrenze nicht wirksam reagiert hat. Verstöße wurden nicht abgestellt, Beweise ignoriert. Von einem Abendessen für fast 100 000 Euro aus Steuergeldern, verschwiegenen Treffen mit der Waffenlobby oder andauernden OLAF-Untersuchungen habe ich dabei noch gar nicht gesprochen.

Frontex soll für sichere und funktionierende Grenzkontrollen sorgen, im Einklang mit hohen ethischen Standards und stets im Streben nach Exzellenz. So steht es auf der Webseite der Agentur. Die Realität stellt sich jedoch ganz anders dar.

Deshalb, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen, frage ich Sie: Was muss eigentlich noch passieren, damit wir Frontex endlich klare Grenzen aufzeigen? Ich denke, wir haben mehr als genug. Schließen Sie sich mir deshalb heute an und lehnen Sie diese Entlastung ab! Das wäre ein guter Schritt hin zu einer europäischen Grenzschutzagentur, die diesen Namen verdient und die auch unsere volle Unterstützung verdient.

Ramona Strugariu, *on behalf of the Renew Group*. – Madam President, Frontex is by far the largest decentralised agency of the Union and has an extremely sensitive mandate: keeping our borders safe. It is therefore vital that the agency implements its mandate with the utmost responsibility.

Since April, when we decided to postpone the discharge decision for the agency, Frontex has started to implement the recommendations issued by the discharge authority and the dedicated LIBE (Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs) Frontex Scrutiny Working Group.

I believe we should grant the discharge now, and this should be seen as an encouragement for the executive management to continue the steps set out in the different action plans and roadmaps. Nevertheless, the agency's leadership needs to fully implement this roadmap and fully comply with the Frontex regulation. By the next discharge cycle, we want to see, among others, all 40 Fundamental Rights Monitors, an updated Serious Incident Report (SIR) mechanism, and a fully-functional Fundamental Rights monitoring mechanism.

Part of the agency's budget will be placed in a reserve and released only once these conditions are fully met. We are committed to keeping a very close eye on the progress achieved by the agency, and we shall do that through dedicated missions and visits on the ground. We would also like to see the results of the OLAF investigation.

Finally, I would like to draw attention to the fact that cooperation with national authorities is extremely important for the functioning of the agency and its operations. Frontex cannot do this by itself only. The role of the Member States is crucial there. Member States' authorities must also abide by the highest standards of respect for fundamental rights and sound financial management, especially when conducting joint operations. Mr Leggeri, responsibility, respect for fundamental rights and transparency are at the core of a strong and trusted agency. This is what we expect of your management.

Bas Eickhout, *on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group*. – Madam President, thank you Commissioner. It's a pity that the rapporteur already left, after his speech, because sometimes I'm not quite sure he has read his own report entirely, to be very honest. And the point here is, here we stand again discussing Frontex, and this is not a political issue. This is about the proper functioning of an important European agency. And there are reports indeed by the Frontex scrutiny group, but also the Ombudsman, the Court of Auditors, and we're still waiting on an OLAF investigation on an ongoing investigation into the functioning of Frontex. And every time the conclusion is that there are significant shortcomings in the governance, there are problems with the implementation of the new mandate. And these are serious conclusions that have not been resolved yet.

We can go into all the reports, but sometimes it's also good just to go to Frontex's website. And sometimes it's very telling. Because if you read the mandate, the official mandate in the regulation of Frontex, it states that Frontex should be managing borders efficiently, in full compliance with fundamental rights. If you then go to the website of Frontex itself, where it states our mission, it states that we will take care to ensure safe and well-functioning external borders. Full stop.

They forget to mention full compliance with fundamental rights, even on their own website. And that is telling, and that is something that should be a concern for everyone. Maybe not on the fringes, but for everyone that should be a concern and certainly also for Renew, which is unfortunately changing its position on granting discharge now. I, like my colleague Sippel, also want to make a very clear point on what is another telling example of the problems with Frontex, namely access to documents in cases where Frontex continues to claim recovery of legal costs from associations that are striving for access to public documents.

In addition, it's the only European agency that is frustrating the fight for transparency in this way. And again, there is a telling example which has also been condemned by several committees, like the Meijers committee.

So therefore, we cannot grant discharge. We do support the resolution, but we are putting a couple of issues in reserve with conditions. However, looking at all these reports, all these conclusions, for the Greens it's still a very clear conclusion. We cannot grant discharge this time because of these serious concerns of non-compliance with fundamental rights, especially since this is an essential part of Frontex's mandate. And therefore we will stick to what the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) has also advised us. We will not grant discharge to Frontex, and I want to thank our colleagues from the LIBE Committee for pushing that line. And I just want to express my regret that the Renew colleagues did that in LIBE, but unfortunately not in the Budgetary Control Committee (CONT) anymore.

Joachim Kuhs, *im Namen der ID-Fraktion*. – Frau Präsidentin, Frau Kommissarin, werte Kollegen! Ich habe den Eindruck, das Entlastungsverfahren, das einen haushalterischen Schwerpunkt hat, wird missbraucht für die Durchsetzung von politischen Zielen, und damit ist die Sache nicht korrekt behandelt.

Wenn wir uns hier mit der Agentur Frontex beschäftigen, da geht es erstens mal um das Jahr 2019, und wir bringen hier aktuelle Dinge auf den Tisch. Und das Zweite ist: Es geht letztendlich darum, dass wir Frontex ertüchtigen müssen, seine Arbeit zu machen. Die müssen ertüchtigt werden, dort wirklich ihr Mandat durchzusetzen.

Wenn wir das nicht wollen, dass sie eben die Grenzen, die Außengrenzen schützen – ja klar, dann haben wir ein Problem. Dann wollen wir eben Frontex nicht ertüchtigen. Wir wollen es nicht stärken. Dann werden wir sie im Regen stehen lassen und wir schmeißen ihnen noch Prügel zwischen die Beine. Und das kann doch wohl nicht sein.

Wir im Haushaltskontrollausschuss sind der Auffassung – und ich danke der Vorsitzenden, Frau Hohlmeier, ausdrücklich dafür –, dass wir uns in den Entlastungsverfahren immer auf die retrospektive Betrachtung der haushalterischen Fragen, auf die Haushaltskontrolle im eigentlichen Sinne, beschränken und die politischen Fragen außen vor lassen.

Das nützt nichts, wenn wir hier politisch aufgeladene Diskussionen mit hineinbringen. Das muss an anderer Stelle erfolgen, da gebe ich Ihnen ja recht. Aber letztendlich müssen wir hier einfach aufhören, ständig auf Frontex einzuschlagen. Und wir müssen Frontex wieder zu ihrer ureigenen Aufgabe zurückführen.

Dann möchte ich noch auf etwas hinweisen, was aus meiner Sicht wirklich ein Riesenproblem ist, das mit Frontex nichts direkt zu tun hat: Wir müssen auch die Dublin-Regeln wieder in Kraft setzen. Es kann doch wohl nicht sein, dass jetzt im Augenblick in Deutschland von 4 000 Rückführungsanträgen lediglich 128 Personen zurückgeführt werden. In Griechenland ist es noch schlimmer: Da wird nur einer von 7 000 Anträgen zurückgeführt. Wie kann das sein? Da sind Dinge im Argen, und wir schlagen lieber auf Polen oder Ungarn oder andere ein, als dass wir uns um die eigentlichen Erledigungen der Einhaltung der Regeln kümmern.

Elżbieta Rafalska, w imieniu grupy ECR. – Pani Przewodnicząca! Grupa EKR z zadowoleniem przyjmuje wysiłki Europejskiej Agencji Straży Granicznej i Przybrzeżnej w roku budżetowym 2019 mające na celu poprawę efektywności realizacji zadań wynikających z mandatu Agencji ze wskazaniem, że potrzebna jest dalsza poprawa działań Agencji na rzecz wspierania państw członkowskich, szczególnie poprzez monitorowanie sytuacji czy analizę ryzyka. Nie widzimy przeciwwskazań do udzielenia dyrektorowi wykonawczemu Europejskiej Agencji Straży Granicznej i Przybrzeżnej absolutorium z wykonania budżetu Agencji za rok budżetowy 2019.

Pragnę podkreślić, że pewne niedociągnięcia, które wskazano w pierwszym sprawozdaniu, dotyczące absolutorium dla Frontexu zostały w sposób wyraźny poprawione. Z zadowoleniem przyjmujemy na przykład rekrutację urzędnika do spraw podstawowych, który objął urząd 1 czerwca 2021 r. oraz mianowanie dwudziestu obserwatorów praw podstawowych. Wiemy, że do dalszego zatrudnienia pozostało jeszcze dwudziestu.

Należy również dodać, że postanowiono nie kontynuować dochodzenia Europejskiego Rzecznika Praw Obywatelskich w sprawie funkcjonowania mechanizmu rozpatrywania skarg przez agencję w odniesieniu do domniemyanych naruszeń praw podstawowych oraz roli urzędnika do spraw podstawowych. Dochodzenie zostało zamknięte. W związku z powyższym EKR będzie głosował za udzieleniem absolutorium.

Clare Daly, on behalf of The Left Group. – Madam President, there might be some people in here who choose to bury their heads in the sand, but the truth is that the evidence of human rights violations linked to Frontex activities is profound and extensive.

So this isn't a discussion about Lukashenko's appalling actions in Belarus. It isn't a discussion about a fake division between migrants and asylum seekers. For us, this is about the fact that there are consistent and constant reports of Frontex's collusion in violent pushbacks on the EU's external borders – collusion with the Libyan Coast Guard returning thousands to be held arbitrarily in deadly camps, to be raped and tortured, collusion and pushbacks in the Aegean Sea with people being left to drown, and complicity with the denial of access to asylum in Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Hungary and Malta.

We are here discussing signing off on its budget. Let us be clear about this. Frontex is now the Commission's militarisation of the EU's borders made flesh and given an obscene budget of a half a billion. Rather than carrying out its mandate to guarantee a safe, secure and well-functioning border, it has become a weapon in Fortress Europe. The EU Ombudsman and our own scrutiny group have both acknowledged that there are insufficient safeguards in fundamental rights, and this will not change unless they're held to account.

It would be ludicrous for us to approve the budget in these circumstances. This is actually our moment to support the hundreds of journalists and activists who have painstakingly investigated and documented the extreme abuses of this EU agency. It will be a slap in the face to them if we were to turn a blind eye to what's going on, a slap in the face to the men and women and children who've been abused by Frontex and a slap in the face for international law. Look, we have very little power, but when we do have it, let's use it for good. That obviously means refusing this discharge – but I think you got that bit!

ΠΡΟΕΔΡΙΑ: ΔΗΜΗΤΡΙΟΣ ΠΑΠΑΔΗΜΟΥΛΗΣ*Αντιπρόεδρος*

Geoffroy Didier (PPE). – Monsieur le Président, j'entends les cris d'orfraie de ceux qui parlent au nom de l'Europe, comme si elle leur appartenait, pour mieux fustiger les comportements des uns et des autres. Alors, soyons clairs: oui, tous les États membres de l'Union européenne, y compris la Pologne, doivent respecter les engagements et ne pas s'écarter des principes fondamentaux de l'état de droit. Quand on signe un contrat, on le respecte. Quand on a la chance d'appartenir à l'Europe, on a le devoir d'en préserver les valeurs.

Mais je le dis avec la même force: être membre de l'Union européenne, cela ne signifie pas abandonner son libre arbitre. Il existe dans nos pays une identité constitutionnelle qui nous autorise juridiquement, certes, mais aussi politiquement, à agir selon l'intérêt de nos peuples. Surtout lorsqu'il s'agit, par exemple, de pallier les carences de l'Union européenne, qui s'avère manifestement incapable de protéger efficacement nos frontières.

Tenter de faire croire que la défense des intérêts nationaux serait contradictoire avec le projet européen, franchement, c'est se moquer du monde, c'est se moquer des peuples et c'est instrumentaliser l'Europe à des fins politiciennes. N'oublions jamais cette vérité: la souveraineté, avant d'appartenir aux nations, avant d'appartenir peut-être uniquement à l'Europe pour les fédéralistes, elle appartient au peuple. Que ceux qui aiment tant donner des leçons de morale ne l'oublient jamais. Sinon, demain, leur réveil, et peut-être même le nôtre, risque d'être brutal.

Evin Incir (S&D). – Herr talman! Kollegor! Fru kommissionär! I april i år beslutade detta parlament att Frontex inte gjorde vad som kan förväntas av vad som är EU:s största och bäst finansierade myndighet, men också en av de viktigaste myndigheterna vi har.

Ett stort antal och mycket oroande brister som påtalades och därför sköts beslutet om ansvarsfrihet upp. Myndigheten med direktören Fabrice Leggeri i spetsen, fick ytterligare sex månader på sig att rätta till dessa brister, men tyvärr med för dåliga resultat. Sedan dess har Revisionsrätten bekräftat den bild vi har haft här i parlamentet. Sedan dess har alltför lite hänt i positiv riktning. Därför kom utskottet för medborgerliga fri- och rättigheter samt rättsliga och inrikes frågor fram till att det inte heller nu borde ges ansvarsfrihet till varken Frontex eller Leggeri.

Frontex är en viktig myndighet. Utan fungerande yttre gränskontroll kan vi inte ha fri inre rörlighet så som det fungerar idag. Just därför är det så viktigt att Frontex lever upp till de stora förväntningar vi faktiskt har. Det handlar om att man ska behandla skattebetalares pengar med respekt. Det handlar om att respektera människor och deras rättigheter och om att man ska orka och våga ta tag i de problem som *de facto* finns.

Direktör Leggeri har fått lång tid, stora resurser och otaliga chanser på sig att göra om och att göra rätt. Under ett par år har Frontex tyngts av anklagelser om att man deltagit i operationer där mänskliga rättigheter kränkts, med *pushbacks* och våld mot migranter. I stället för att fokusera på att fullt ut ta fram fungerande klagomålsmekanismer, har man lagt ner tid och framför allt mycket pengar på att jaga medborgare för att betala rättegångskostnader rörande mål om begäran att få ut handlingar från myndigheten. Vi saknar dessutom fortfarande 20 övervakare för mänskliga rättigheter. De skulle vara 40 och 20 är färdiga, men ytterligare 20 saknas alltså.

Var är ansvarstagandet från direktör Leggeri? För att få ansvarsfrihet krävs att man faktiskt tagit ansvar. Jag har högre krav än så här på EU, våra myndigheter och deras högsta tjänstemän.

Kollegor! Jag önskar, precis som många av er här inne, att Frontex borde kunna få ansvarsfrihet, men inte heller denna gång och vid detta tillfälle är det ett rimligt svar.

Abir Al-Sahlani (Renew). – Herr talman! Fru kommissionär! Ärade kollegor! I dag handlar inte debatten om EU:s yttre gränsmyndighet Frontex vara eller icke vara. Vi alla inser vikten av att denna myndighet, denna EU-myndighet som finansieras av EU-skattebetalarnas pengar, ska finnas. Detta är inte en attack mot myndigheten. Detta är ett förnuftigt sätt att utkräva ansvar från dess ledning.

I dag handlar debatten om hur EU:s ansikte utåt mot vårt närmaste grannskap fungerar, eller snarare inte fungerar. När jag blev invald i detta hus 2019 så frågade jag om det här med ansvarsfrihet. Vad är det, hur funkar det? Jag fick då svaret att det här är någonting som vi bara gör vid sidan av det vi gör annars. Jag accepterade det svaret då, men inte idag. Jag tänker inte acceptera det svaret i dag.

Idag känns detta som ett tungt ansvar: att vi som är direkt folkvalda ska visa att vi använder ett av våra demokratiska verktyg för att kräva ansvar, såsom medborgarna utkräver ansvar från oss varje dag. Frontex är en myndighet som har haft många interna problem. Jag vet inte var jag ska börja. Först hade vi de mycket allvarliga anklagelserna riktade mot myndigheten om att man varit involverad i *pushbacks* av asylsökanden. De utredningar som gjordes om vad som hänt landar i en ord-mot-ord-situation. Man kunde inte bevisa att *pushbacks* hade hänt, men inte heller att de inte hade hänt. Efter det här har man bara släppt frågan.

Sedan har vi hela situationen med att de skulle anställa tjänstemän för att bevaka att man respekterar EU:s grundläggande rättigheter i sitt myndighetsutövande. Man skulle anställa 40 stycken till i våras, men misslyckades även där. För ett par månader sedan hade man knappt anställt hälften och man skyllde på diverse orsaker såsom man alltid gör.

Nu nämner jag bara en handfull bekymmer och en handfull av de saker som myndigheten har haft problem med under Leggeris tid. Av den anledningen kan jag inte stå bakom att ge Frontex ansvarsfrihet denna gång, och avsaknaden av ambition och vilja att faktiskt visa att man är genuint bekymrad över det man är anklagad för, gör det väldigt svårt ...
(Talmannen tog ifrån talaren ordet)

Saskia Bricmont (Verts/ALE). – Monsieur le Président, chers collègues, Frontex est l'agence européenne la plus financée – de 6 millions d'euros en 2005, son budget est passé à 543 millions d'euros en 2021, soit nonante fois plus de moyens. Et le budget de Frontex a gonflé en même temps que les critiques à son égard. Ces critiques se sont transformées en enquête du Parlement européen, en rapport de la Cour des comptes, en rapports que l'on ne compte même plus des organisations de la société civile, qui font tous état de dysfonctionnements internes, de manquements manifestes dans les missions de l'Agence, mais aussi de duplicité de la direction dans des faits graves de violations des droits fondamentaux aux frontières européennes. Une enquête de l'Office européen de lutte antifraude est toujours ouverte.

Notre rôle à nous est d'assurer le contrôle budgétaire et, manifestement, la direction de Frontex n'en a cure, puisque cela fait des années que nos recommandations restent lettre morte. Malgré cette situation qu'on peut à minima qualifier de mauvaise gouvernance, la proposition, celle de la droite particulièrement, est de voter pour la décharge budgétaire de l'Agence Frontex et donc de lui envoyer le message qu'elle peut continuer en toute impunité.

En janvier 2022, nous reprendrons nos travaux sur la décharge 2020. Et que ferons-nous alors? Nous lui adresserons les mêmes recommandations, peut-être amendées de celles de l'OLAF. Mais quelle blague pour tout observateur et quel irrespect profond pour notre propre institution et notre rôle de contrôle budgétaire! Quel irrespect aussi pour les citoyens européens qui ont le droit à la transparence et quel irrespect pour les personnes migrantes dont les droits fondamentaux sont systématiquement violés à nos frontières.

Aujourd'hui, nous devons voter contre la décharge budgétaire à l'Agence Frontex et nous verrons bien dans trois mois, à la reprise de nos travaux, si l'Agence Frontex considère encore nos recommandations comme optionnelles.

Susanna Ceccardi (ID). – Signor Presidente, onorevoli colleghi, l'offensiva politica e mediatica contro la difesa delle frontiere europee è sempre più forte.

Nella crisi migratoria in corso, potenti lobby sono al lavoro per influenzare i governi e far accettare alle popolazioni europee la massiccia immigrazione illegale che sta arrivando in Europa. Le numerose iniziative sovvenzionate dalla Open Society di George Soros dimostrano che queste lobby hanno un preciso piano d'azione per raggiungere i loro scopi.

Dagli anni duemila diversi milioni di non europei, a stragrande maggioranza musulmani, sono emigrati in Europa, in aereo o prendendo il Mar Mediterraneo o la cosiddetta rotta balcanica. Dopo una pausa durante la crisi sanitaria, l'immigrazione clandestina è aumentata bruscamente dall'inizio del 2021, come recentemente evidenziato dai dati dell'agenzia Frontex, mentre in Italia, da quando Matteo Salvini non è più ministro dell'Interno, gli ingressi illegali sono aumentati del 673 per cento. È evidente, quindi, che un controllo delle frontiere sempre più incisivo è quanto mai necessario.

La discussione sull'agenzia Frontex è senz'altro condizionata dalla campagna aggressiva della politica e dei media nell'ultimo anno. L'altro fronte della polemica viene naturalmente dalle ONG, che accusano l'agenzia Frontex di non rispettare i diritti umani. Con zelo quantomeno sospetto, realtà come la Sea-Watch, Mediterranea e altre hanno lanciato una campagna per lo smantellamento di Frontex, ovviamente senza proporre nessuna alternativa. In altri termini, queste organizzazioni immaginano un'Europa priva di qualunque realtà transnazionale che si ponga l'obiettivo di combattere l'immigrazione clandestina di massa.

Fermo restando che ribadiamo la necessità che ci sia piena trasparenza nei bilanci delle agenzie finanziate dall'Unione e che, se alcune risorse destinate al controllo delle nostre frontiere sono state distratte per operazioni che non rientrano nelle finalità dell'agenzia, i responsabili devono pagare, ma questo non significa che i compiti e le finalità dell'agenzia stessa debbano essere messi in discussione.

Il monitoraggio del territorio e del mare e il respingimento delle persone che illegalmente tentano di raggiungere l'Unione europea rimane una priorità assoluta che non potremmo perseguire senza un'agenzia come Frontex. Anzi, dobbiamo puntare sul rafforzamento che passa all'entrata in vigore del corpo permanente europeo, da schierare lungo i confini e dotato di armi.

L'Europa non può lasciare da soli gli Stati membri nelle attività di controllo e respingimento, ma è giusto che impieghi tutte le risorse necessarie per assistere i cittadini europei e garantire loro sicurezza e difesa.

Sira Rego (The Left). – Señor presidente, señora comisaria, solo en 2021, 55 denuncias y 7 casos abiertos ante el Defensor del Pueblo.

Y ayer supimos por los medios de comunicación que Frontex vuelve a ser denunciada. En este caso, ante el Tribunal de Justicia de la UE. Se trata de una familia de refugiados sirios víctima de expulsión ilegal por cortesía del señor Leggeri. El problema de esta noticia, que es muy grave, es que ya no sorprende a nadie, porque a Frontex se le acumulan las vulneraciones de derechos humanos.

Luego está el asunto de sus fiestas millonarias, los casos de acoso, los *whatsapp*s con los guardacostas libios, que primero no existían, pero luego parece que sí, las devoluciones en caliente, el «no tenemos dinero para contratar monitores de derechos humanos», lo que es obligatorio, pero sí para aumentar el gabinete personal del Leggeri, lo que es accesorio, y, por supuesto, está la investigación que aún sigue abierta en la Oficina de Lucha contra el Fraude.

En todo este tiempo hemos podido concluir que Frontex está fuera de control, que Frontex no es transparente, que Frontex vulnera los derechos humanos, que el señor Leggeri ha mentido en sede parlamentaria y que la Comisión Europea no ha hecho los deberes. Un historial completo que indica que igual las cosas no están yendo bien. Es más, que todo esto es un auténtico escándalo y que quizá el debate no sea el de aprobar las cuentas sino qué debemos hacer para desmantelar esta Agencia.

Maria Arena (S&D). – Monsieur le Président, Madame la Commissaire, c'est vrai, Frontex est une des agences les plus importantes de l'Union européenne. Son budget l'indique, et M^{me} Bricmont l'a dit, un passage de 6 millions en 2006 à 343 millions en 2021, cela montre effectivement l'importance que l'Union européenne met dans une agence telle que celle-là, mais témoigne aussi d'une extension de ses missions, aujourd'hui, en matière de politique migratoire.

Alors, tout simplement, nous exerçons ici notre rôle parlementaire de contrôle budgétaire, en lien avec les obligations juridiques d'une agence aussi importante. Pourquoi serions-nous cléments à l'égard de cette Agence? N'importe quelle agence serait touchée d'une telle malgouvernance et tous, ici, au sein de cette assemblée, nous voterions contre la décharge. Non... parce qu'il s'agit de Frontex et parce qu'il s'agit ici de politiser le débat budgétaire que nous avons. Et ce n'est pas la gauche qui politise ce débat, c'est la droite et l'extrême droite qui politisent ce débat. Frontex est une agence aujourd'hui, comme on l'a dit, qui est hors de contrôle et, en tant que parlementaires, nous ne pouvons l'accepter.

Ces dysfonctionnements ont été démontrés par la commission LIBE dans son rapport publié en juillet. Ces dysfonctionnements ont été confirmés par la Cour des comptes. Ces dysfonctionnements font l'objet d'une enquête de l'OLAF. Que faut-il de plus à la droite pour remettre en question ce qui se passe aujourd'hui à Frontex?

Développer un catalogue de bonnes intentions, Madame la Commissaire, ce n'est pas suffisant. Aujourd'hui, nous voulons de véritables garanties en matière de droits humains et des mécanismes de contrôle efficaces et transparents dans cette Agence. Nous n'en sommes pas là. Ces garanties n'existent pas et nous voterons donc contre cette décharge.

Jean-Lin Lacapelle (ID). – Monsieur le Président, depuis 2014, 3 250 000 clandestins ont traversé illégalement les frontières extérieures de l'Union européenne, sans compter les migrants légaux. Rien qu'en 2019 et 2020, 887 000 étrangers ont reçu des injonctions à quitter le territoire européen, mais 675 000 d'entre elles n'ont jamais été exécutées et de nouvelles routes migratoires s'ouvrent, notamment aux îles Canaries ou depuis la Biélorussie. Alors que, face à ce déferlement migratoire, le seul rempart qui existe au niveau européen devrait être l'agence Frontex, tous vos efforts consistent à la dénigrer.

Pour justifier votre idéologie immigrationniste, vous évoquez un prétendu manque de transparence ou des atteintes aux droits fondamentaux. Mais le plus hypocrite, c'est que vous ayez le culot de dire que l'action de Frontex est inefficace alors que vous ne cessez de lui poser des contraintes. C'est vous qui refusez de financer les clôtures anti-migrants que 12 pays européens vous réclament. C'est vous qui soutenez, financez, invitez, honorez les ONG de passeurs qui vont chercher les clandestins jusqu'aux côtes libyennes. C'est vous qui diffusez, à la moindre occasion, une idéologie sans-frontiériste et c'est vous qui poursuivez en justice tous ceux qui s'opposent à votre pensée, en les qualifiant de racistes.

Face à votre obstruction hypocrite, nos propositions sont simples et pragmatiques. Les expulsions des étrangers doivent être exécutées systématiquement. Les demandes d'asile ou de séjour doivent être traitées en dehors de l'Union européenne, dans les consulats ou ambassades des pays d'origine. Enfin, il faut apporter un soutien financier, juridique et moral à Frontex en développant massivement la surveillance maritime semi autonome et en acceptant le financement de la construction des barrières et donc des frontières que vous réclament les États. Les États dont je rappelle qu'ils doivent avoir la liberté de choisir qui rentre ou qui ne rentre pas sur leur propre territoire.

Ylva Johansson, Member of the Commission. – Mr President, I would like to thank you all for this debate and thank you for your interventions. I think this debate shows how important the debate about Frontex is, but also shows the very important role of the European Parliament.

This debate has also shown that we have the same goal of a fully functioning and robust agency with a strong governance and fundamental rights framework. I'm very grateful for the extremely active role which the European Parliament has played and is playing.

There has been progress on the transparency register, on the fundamental right strategy, on the process for the appointment of the deputy directors – the Management Board is meeting today – and on the Fundamental Rights Officers. But there are also clear gaps.

The discharge decision is the responsibility of this House, and I look forward to your vote. We need a robust agency with strong governance that can help Member States to protect the European Union's external borders and the European Union's fundamental rights.

Πρόεδρος. – Η συζήτηση έληξε.

Η ψηφοφορία θα διεξαχθεί σήμερα.

8. Ubezpieczenie pojazdów mechanicznych (debata)

Πρόεδρος. – Το επόμενο σημείο στην ημερήσια διάταξη είναι η συζήτηση επί της εκθέσεως της Dita Charanzová, εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής Εσωτερικής Αγοράς και Προστασίας των Καταναλωτών, επί της προτάσεως οδηγίας του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου για την τροποποίηση της οδηγίας 2009/103/EK του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου, της 16ης Σεπτεμβρίου 2009, σχετικά με την ασφάλιση της αστικής ευθύνης που προκύπτει από την κυκλοφορία αυτοκινήτων οχημάτων και τον έλεγχο της υποχρεώσεως προς ασφάλιση της ευθύνης αυτής (COM(2018)0336 - C8-0211/2018 - 2018/0168(COD)) (A8-0035/2019).

Dita Charanzová, rapporteur. – Mr President, today we will take an important step, an important step towards making our roads safer, a better insurance system that protects victims of accidents, including when an insurance company goes bankrupt.

Today, we start the process to end discrimination – discrimination of EU car owners who move from one Member State to another, so experienced drivers are no longer treated like they just turned 18 years again. Today we end the uncertainty around our motorsports in Europe, who will be able to keep racing. Today, we prevent over-regulation that would have harmed the uptake of e-bikes and could have made even wheelchairs subject to a law designed for cars and trucks.

Overall, this is a good day for all vehicle users in Europe and for anyone who unfortunately finds themselves injured in an accident. These are concrete examples of Europe taking concrete actions for our citizens. On average, there is one car for two Europeans. Vehicles are a huge part of our lives and will continue to be. While our hope that our citizens never have to use their motor insurance, they should know that it will work if they need it. I'm proud to have been part of this effort.

Concretely, if you have an accident and your insurance company or the insurance company of the other person goes bankrupt, you are protected. Every Member State must have a compensation fund that will ensure compensation for injured parties as if your insurer was still active. The European Parliament also made sure that you should receive your compensation as soon as possible, within weeks instead of years.

Soon, you will see also a harmonised claim history statement across Europe. There will no longer be any excuse to discriminate against a driver coming from another Member State. So if a Czech driver moves to France, even if his or her statement is in Czech, a harmonised form will ensure it is understandable. The boxes will be the same throughout Europe. In addition, Parliament also ensured that if an insurer offers a discount for good drivers that you are also entitled to the same discount – no matter your nationality. Your clean driving record will be universally understood and valued across Europe.

We have also ended the dark cloud over our motor sports in Europe. For years, it has been unclear what the insurance requirements for racing vehicles were. For many motor sports, especially amateur competitions, to require a full motor insurance would have been their demise as either no one would sell them the insurance or the price of that insurance would be beyond all reason. After today, it will be clear – while a competition must have insurance to cover spectators and other third parties, there is No European requirement to have full motor insurance on each racing vehicle. This means the viewing public can keep going to the race track on Fridays in our cities and towns across Europe and have a good time. They will be protected and motorsports will stay legal in Europe.

Lastly, citizens can feel free to go out and buy e-bikes. There is No European requirement for motor insurance on e-bikes. While many should take out voluntary insurance, others can continue to be covered by other types of house or family insurance. But you can feel safe that buying an e-bike will be easier than buying a car or truck.

These and many other items within the Directive are examples of the European Parliament applying common sense, common sense to our motor insurance rules. We listened to our citizens and what they wanted and we delivered. However, citizens should know that a European directive can only do so much. How these reforms are now implemented is in the hands of the Member States. So, I can only hope that Member States will use the tools we have given them in the law to make sure that the common sense Parliament has shown is mirrored also, at national level. Just because you can require insurance on anything with an engine or wheels, doesn't mean you should.

Let me end by thanking everyone who had a hand in this process and in this success from the European Commission, especially Commissioner McGuinness, to the Croatian, German and especially Portuguese Presidencies who worked with us over some very technical details of this file and found this good and very successful compromise. Let me also thank all my shadows, their assistants, but also the IMCO secretariat who kept this file alive and a special thanks to my assistant, Andrew Hillman, who was vital at every stage of this negotiation and who lived this file with me during the last more than two years.

Mairead McGuinness, *Member of the Commission*. – Mr President, honourable members, firstly, my deep appreciation for the work of Vice-President Charanzová and all of her shadows. And can I say I really appreciate your common sense approach. And indeed, if you look back on the history of the Motor Insurance Directive, the first one was adopted in 1972, and for nearly 50 years it has enabled vehicles and motorists to travel freely across the European Union using the same compulsory insurance. But above all, the directive protects the victims of accidents.

We have made a number of improvements to the directive over the past five years, and the text we agreed at the end of June is another important step towards improving the rules. The negotiations were long, in part because of the pandemic, but I believe we have reached a good compromise, which will have significant benefits for the people you represent in this house. It means that citizens will be protected if their insurer becomes insolvent. Policyholders that move to another Member State will have their claims history assessed in the same way as residents of that Member State. In other words, people can take their no-claims track record with them if they move to another EU country. And most importantly, European citizens who are victims of an accident will receive timely compensation for injuries or damages.

Finally, clarifying the scope will improve legal certainty for victims and policyholders. Colleagues, I wish you all the best for the vote today, and I hope for the adoption of this revision of the Motor Insurance Directive.

Jiří Pospíšil, *za skupinu PPE*. – Pane předsedající, dámy a pánové, dovoluji mi, abych několika slovy také okomentoval dosažený kompromis týkající se revize směrnice o pojištění motorových vozidel. Jsou to čtyři roky, kdy Komise předložila tuto iniciativu do Parlamentu, a já musím konstatovat jako stínový zpravodaj, jak jsem sledoval celý proces a účastnil jsem se ho, že to byl mimořádně obtížný proces. A chci tady – a zdůrazňuji, že v žádném případě formálně, ale velmi výrazně – poděkovat zpravodajce Charanzové. Ta situace nebyla jednoduchá. Opravdu mnohokrát jsme se vraceli k různým bodům. Ona to zvládla s obrovskou noblesou a bravurou a patří jí tedy velký dík, a to ne pouze společenský, formální, ale opravdový. Nebýt její práce, obávám se, že by kompromisy, které byly obsaženy, tak by nebyly tak kvalitní.

Tím předjímám i naši pozici za naši politickou frakci, za Evropskou lidovou stranu. My jsme velmi spokojeni s kompromisy, které byly dosaženy po takovémto náročném mnohaletém vyjednávání. Jsme přesvědčeni, jak už bylo popsáno i paní zpravodajkou, že ta nově navržená podoba směrnice výrazně usnadní život evropským občanům a majitelům motorových vozidel, kteří zkrátka využívají své vozidlo přeshraničně nebo se přestěhují do jiné evropské země. To znamená, že jsou zde jednoznačné přínosy.

Na druhou stranu, na konci toho vyjednávání je kompromis, který není příliš byrokratický a zbytečně nezatěžuje a nešíkanuje evropské občany. Bylo to řečeno, že je zde – nebo byla zde – skupina malých motorových vozidel, která nakonec byla vyloučena z povinného pojištění. Myslím si, že to je právě odraz onoho zdravého rozumu, o kterém hovořila paní zpravodajka. Stejně tak se jasně upřesnila pravidla u sportu, motosportu, při insolvenční pojistce. To vše bylo popsáno a já velmi vítám konečnou podobu a doporučuji její schválení.

Tsvetelina Penkova, *on behalf of the S&D Group*. – Mr President, dear Commissioner, dear Ms Charanzová, first of all, I would like to thank you for the hard work and also to thank all the fellow shadow rapporteurs who've been working hard on this file and our respective teams.

In May 2018, the European Commission proposed to amend the Motor Insurance Directive in five main areas. The first one was the insolvency of the issuer, where it was proposed to create a mechanism ensuring compensation of injured parties in case of insolvency. The second area was the right of the policyholder to obtain the statement of their claims issued in the past five years. The third was to introduce checks against insured drivers. The fourth was to set up an obligatory minimum amount of the cover provided by the insurance policies, where the Member States could add up and require a higher amount on a national level. And the final area was the clarification of the scope of the directive in line with the recent Court of Justice of the European Union rulings.

The negotiations on the file were marked by the COVID-19 pandemic and lasted almost two years. However, I believe that together with my colleagues, we did manage to achieve several important changes in the interests of all the EU citizens. We, as S&D, did manage to deliver on several key priorities.

The first one I would like to mention is that compensation to road accident victims is guaranteed even in case of the insolvency of the insurance company. This will ensure that we would not allow legal chaos to happen, even in the case of bankruptcy of any given insurance company. Each Member State is required to set up a body to compensate the insured injured parties for damage caused by vehicles when there is insolvency of the insurer.

A second S&D priority that we fought very hard for was to exclude the new forms of sustainable transportation solutions like e-bikes and scooters from the scope of the directive. We believe that only by using such innovative solutions can we reduce the greenhouse gas emissions and reduce the carbon footprint. Therefore, we need to encourage by all means necessary, the usage of such alternative transportation solutions, and they shouldn't be in the scope of that directive.

Finally, another important aspect for us was the claim history statement. Insurers should not treat their policy-holders in any discriminatory manner based on their nationality or based on their previous Member States' residency. We don't believe that this should be tolerated or find any place in the directive, and we managed to achieve that.

In that matter, I would like to urge you to vote in favour of the outcome of the trilogue because the EU consumers deserve a well-functioning single market that does not discriminate them but provides fair compensation for all.

Vlad-Marius Botoș, în numele grupului *Renew*. – Domnule președinte, doamna comisară McGuinness, în primul rând țin să o felicit pe colega noastră, Dita Charanzová, pentru acest raport. Libera circulație este unul dintre marile avantaje pe care le-a adus Uniunea Europeană cetățenilor noștri, cetățenilor din statele membre. Chiar dacă încă nu suntem toți parte din spațiul Schengen, avem nevoie de o abordare comună și de o colaborare mult mai ușoară și în ce privește asigurările de răspundere civilă obligatorie pentru vehicule.

Avantajele de a fi membri ai unei construcții economice și politice care poate aduce prosperitate și un confort sporit, trebuie să fie resimțite de toți cetățenii Uniunii Europene, inclusiv în ceea ce privește asigurările obligatorii, mai ales în condițiile unei campanii tot mai asidue de dezinformare și de minimizare a acestor avantaje.

Este adevărat că responsabilitatea revine statelor membre, însă trebuie să utilizăm tehnologiile digitale în întreaga Uniune Europeană, pentru a garanta că mașinile care circulă pe drumurile europene au asigurările necesare pentru a-i proteja și sprijini pe cei implicați în accidente rutiere, fără a impune însă asigurările obligatorii, acolo unde ele nu sunt necesare. De exemplu, vehiculelor care nu circulă pe drumurile publice.

Mijloacele de transport alternative ecologice care reduc semnificativ poluarea sunt întâlnite din ce în ce mai des pe drumurile noastre publice. Avem la ora actuală o infrastructură de drumuri pentru mijloace alternative de transport care leagă multe state din Uniunea Europeană, dar la care din păcate țara mea, România, nu este încă conectată așa cum mi-aș fi dorit.

Dar, pe lângă dezvoltarea acestei infrastructuri, trebuie să abordăm într-un mod unitar și armonizat și problema asigurărilor. Impunându-le doar unde și când, acestea sunt necesare pentru a veni în întâmpinarea nevoii tuturor participanților la trafic. Ținând cont de mobilitatea cetățenilor europeni, este nevoie, în același timp, să ne asigurăm că istoricul daunelor este recunoscut și ușor de atestat printr-o procedură unitară la nivel de Uniunea Europeană, cu cât mai puțin efort din partea persoanelor asigurate.

Virginie Joron, au nom du groupe *ID*. – Monsieur le Président, chers collègues, Madame le rapporteur, cette proposition législative que nous votons aujourd'hui permet la correction de certains défauts observés dans la mise en application de la directive de 2009 sur l'assurance des véhicules automoteurs. Les défauts d'indemnisation des victimes d'accidents en cas d'insolvabilité d'un assureur étaient devenus trop problématiques pour être laissés en l'état.

La création d'organismes nationaux chargés d'indemniser les victimes en cas de faillite de l'assureur est une avancée importante, tout comme la clarification de plusieurs cas spéciaux apparus avec l'évolution des sociétés. L'encouragement du contrôle des assurances par les États membres des véhicules présents sur leur territoire, sans pour autant cibler spécifiquement les voitures étrangères, ainsi que la publication du mode de calcul des bonus des assureurs semblent être de bonnes mesures. Je note également que la Fédération française de l'assurance soutient ce projet.

Néanmoins, si je juge toujours positif d'améliorer les conditions d'assurance, il importe également d'accélérer l'indemnisation des assurés. Par ailleurs, si je peux me féliciter du relèvement du minimum obligatoire de la couverture, il ne faudrait pas que la hausse du coût des assurances vienne impacter le niveau de vie des automobilistes.

En France, depuis 2018 et l'apparition du mouvement des gilets jaunes, les classes moyennes, souvent rurales, qui dépendent de l'utilisation de leurs véhicules sont à bout. Que ce soit du fait de l'augmentation inédite du prix de l'essence, de l'abaissement des vitesses autorisées, du développement des contrôles radars ou, comme ici à Strasbourg, de la future interdiction des véhicules diesel, l'automobiliste voit de plus en plus l'utilisation de son véhicule comme un moyen de se faire taper par l'État.

Faciliter la vie des citoyens français et européens, c'est notre seul objectif.

Eugen Jurzyca, za skupinu ECR. – Pán predsedajúci, chcem poďakovať a zablahoželať pani spravodajkyni, pani Charanzovej, za kvalitnú prácu, ktorú odvieďla. Tomu zodpovedá aj výsledok, ktorý jednoznačne podporujem.

Nové pravidlá povinného zmluvného poistenia prinesú viacero zmien, ale aj dôležitú úlohu pre členské štáty. Keď si občan žijúci napríklad na Slovensku alebo v inom členskom štáte kúpil vozidlo napríklad v Nemecku, musel si ho tam aj poistiť na prevoz. Po novom mu bude stačiť si ho poistiť na Slovensku. Keď jazdíte bez nehody a prídete do členského štátu, kde tí, čo jazdia bez nehody, majú lacnejšiu poistku, budete mať právo dostať ju aj vy, napríklad ako Slovák, Čech, Maďar, Poliak. Zmení sa aj to, ktoré vozidlá musia mať poistenie. Elektrický bicykel ani záhradný traktor naďalej poistenie potrebovať nebudú. Rýchla elektrická kolobežka s rýchlosťou nad 25 kilometrov za hodinu už po novom áno.

Členské štáty dostali ale aj možnosť výnimiek. Napríklad nevyžadovať poistenie na vozidlá, ktoré jazdia len na súkromnom pozemku, keďže riziko, že takto niekomu spôsobia škodu, môže byť nízke.

Úlohou členských štátov bude dobre si zväziť, ako výnimky nastaviť tak, aby sme sa v garančnom fonde skladali iba na také škody, na ktoré sa oplatí skladať sa.

Kateřina Konečná, za skupinu *The Left*. – Pane předsedající, paní zpravodajko, kolegyně kolegové, jsem velmi ráda, že se nám dnes podaří uzavřít práci na směrnici o pojištění občanskoprávní odpovědnosti z provozu motorových vozidel, a děkuji velmi paní zpravodajce Dítě Charanzové za její práci, jelikož se podařilo odstranit z návrhu Komise kontroverzní požadavek na povinné ručení na elektrická kola, koloběžky nebo záhradní traktúrky. To by byl opravdu krok špatným směrem, který by rozhodně nepomohl pověsti Evropské unie. Některá motorová vozidla, jako jsou elektrická kola a segway, jsou menší velikosti a je u nich tedy méně pravděpodobné než u jiných vozidel, že způsobí značnou újmu na zdraví nebo na majetku. Navíc by tento krok dopadl do značné míry i na starší občany, kteří nemají peněz nazbyt.

Z působnosti směrnice jsou rovněž vyňata vozidla, která jsou určena výlučně pro motoristické sporty, jelikož tato vozidla jsou obvykle kryta jinými druhy pojištění odpovědnosti a nevztahuje se na ně povinné pojištění motorových vozidel, pokud jsou používána jen pro soutěžní účely. Za dva roky dojde také k výraznému zjednodušení sjednávání povinného ručení u přihlašovaných aut v jiném členském státě. Pojištění motorových vozidel má totiž rovněž podstatný vliv na volný pohyb osob, zboží a vozidel, a tedy i na vnitřní trh a schengenský prostor.

Věřím, že díky této směrnici dojde k vytvoření právní jistoty a dojde ke sladění toho, co všechno by mělo být v rámci pojištění zahrnuto. Motoristé se tedy již nemusí bát rozdílných pravidel mezi členskými státy. Dojde k odstranění negativních dopadů na celou řadu zúčastněných stran, včetně stran poškozených při nehodě, pojistitelů, garančních fondů a pojistníků motorových vozidel, vyplývajících z právní rozdílnosti. Myslím, že jsme odvedli všichni dobrou práci, a ještě jednou za ni moc děkuji, protože bude přínosem především pro občany Evropské unie.

Róza Thun und Hohenstein (PPE). – Panie Przewodniczący! Cieszę się bardzo, że w końcu udało się dojść do porozumienia w sprawie tej dyrektywy, bo ubezpieczenie od odpowiedzialności cywilnej za szkody powstałe w związku z ruchem pojazdów mechanicznych jest tematem, który rozgrzewa dyskusję od bardzo wielu lat.

I specjalne gratulacje dla Dity i dla wszystkich kontrsprawozdawców, dla Komisji, że udało się doprowadzić do porozumienia, które wiem, jak było trudne. Pamiętam dyskusję w tej sprawie mniej więcej 13 lat temu, kiedy zaczęłam pracę w Parlamencie Europejskim. Potem niestety Rada zablokowała te prace na dobrych kilka lat.

Dzisiaj dokonujemy pewnego postępu, ale to że harmonizujemy niektóre przepisy i regulujemy kwestie niektórych jednośladowych pojazdów elektrycznych, to naprawdę jeszcze nie wystarczy. Bo bądźmy uczciwi, trzeba uczciwie powiedzieć, że nie rozwiązujemy problemu zasadniczego, który dotyczy tego, na co bardzo wielu konsumentów się skarży: wciąż nie będzie możliwe zawarcie umowy ubezpieczeniowej dla samochodu w jednym kraju członkowskim Unii i korzystanie z tego samochodu w sposób nieskrępowany w innych krajach.

Wiem, że to ze względu na opór Rady obywatele wciąż nie będą mogli w pełni korzystać z naszego wspólnego europejskiego rynku. Do tej sprawy trzeba będzie wrócić i mam nadzieję, wierzę, że zrobimy to w niedługiej przyszłości.

Evelyne Gebhardt (S&D). – Herr Präsident, liebe Kollegen, liebe Kolleginnen und auch liebe Bürger und Bürgerinnen! Immer mehr von Ihnen leben dieses Europa: Sie gehen in Urlaub, Sie reisen, Sie besuchen Freunde und Freundinnen, Sie ziehen um und benutzen dazu natürlich das Auto.

Da ist es natürlich ganz wichtig, dass wir den neuen Gegebenheiten des Lebens der Bürger und Bürgerinnen Rechnung tragen, indem wir die Richtlinie, die bereits existierte, novellieren und auch noch besser machen, als sie schon gewesen ist. Deswegen freue ich mich, dass wir heute diese Abstimmung haben und dafür sorgen können, dass, sollte einmal ein Versicherungsunternehmen in Konkurs gehen, die Bürger und Bürgerinnen dennoch von ihrem Versicherungsschutz profitieren können – und das ohne sehr große Schwierigkeiten – und dass sie so ihre Rechte auch wahrnehmen können.

Ich freue mich auch sehr, dass wir dafür sorgen können, dass die Bürger und Bürgerinnen, wenn sie in ein anderes Land umziehen, ihre Bonuspunkte mitnehmen können, wenn sie bis dahin unfallfrei gefahren sind, und nicht wieder eine ganz teure Versicherung abschließen müssen. Auch das ist etwas, was wir sehr begrüßen müssen, denn das ist wirklich ein Dienst an den Menschen, an den Bürgern und Bürgerinnen.

Nicht zuletzt ist es ganz wichtig, dass wir auch für mehr Transparenz sorgen, indem wir Instrumente geschaffen haben, mit denen die Bürger und Bürgerinnen Vergleichsmöglichkeiten erhalten über die Versicherungen, und das angepasst an ihre Lebensumstände. Das ist das, was Europa bedeutet. Das ist das Gute daran.

Ich denke, wenn wir solche Gesetzgebung machen können, dann dürfen wir auf die Arbeit, die wir gemacht haben, stolz sein.

Vlad Gheorghe (Renew). – Domnule președinte, avem multe obiective îndrăznețe până în 2050. Printre acestea sunt: zero emisii de carbon și zero victime ale accidentelor rutiere. Siguranța de pe șoselele europene și scăderea poluării depind de un set de măsuri care ne apropie treptat de aceste ținte. Ele privesc direct mijloacele de transport motorizate și pe cei care le folosesc. Prea des uităm că până și măsurile luate cu cele mai bune intenții afectează în mod diferit cetățenii europeni și tocmai cei mai vulnerabili plătesc cel mai mare preț.

În 2021 mașina nu este un lux, ci o necesitate. Să poți ajunge la muncă, să îți poți duce copiii la școală, să poți să mergi la spital. Nu sunt necesități, ci drepturi europene. Chiar dacă infrastructura transportului în comun este mai bună sau mai rea, în niciun stat membru ea nu deservește chiar toți cetățenii. Deci, europenii au încă nevoie de mașini, de motociclete, de vehicule cu care să se deplaseze. Scopul este să o facă în siguranță și cu mai puțină poluare, respectând regulile naționale și europene.

Este datoria noastră și a guvernelor să dăm toate instrumentele necesare pentru asta. Nu doar prețurile la gaze și curent au crescut în toată Europa, ci și prețul benzinei și motorinei, au crescut și vor mai crește, primele de asigurare obligatorie. Ce trebuie să facem noi, este să intervenim în sprijinul cetățenilor, să ne asigurăm că sunt protejați pe drumurile europene, indiferent de țară, să-i sprijinim pe cei mai săraci să aibă acces rapid și ușor la locul de muncă, la educație, la asistență socială.

Să ne asigurăm că transportatorii pot livra alimente și medicamente, fără să-i încărcăm cu poveri suplimentare. Să fim siguri că victimele accidentelor sunt despăgubite rapid și adecvat, iar companiile asigurătoare chiar respectă legile. Este datoria noastră să vedem că aceste companii își fac treaba, la un preț corect. Nu creează oligopoluri, nu folosesc artificii fiscale ca să scape de responsabilitate, ca să păstreze profitul. Toți cetățenii europeni au dreptul să fie protejați pe șosele și să respire aer mai curat. Este datoria noastră să ne asigurăm că în niciun stat membru aceste drepturi nu le sunt încălcate cetățenilor.

Alessandro Panza (ID). – Signor Presidente, signora Commissaria, onorevoli colleghi, volevo ringraziare la relatrice per il lavoro svolto. Noi del nostro gruppo spesso siamo critici e caustici anche nelle critiche, ma riconosciamo quando un lavoro viene fatto bene, e soprattutto viene fatto per il bene dei cittadini europei, che traggono un vantaggio da questi accordi.

Noi appunto possiamo dirci sostanzialmente soddisfatti del risultato, perché è stato chiarito per esempio il campo di applicazione della normativa, quindi si vanno a normare anche i veicoli elettrici e gli scooter elettrici, anche se su questo si potrebbe ampliare un po'. In Italia c'è un dibattito sul normare anche dal punto di vista assicurativo per esempio i monopattini o tutto ciò che non ha una trazione cosiddetta muscolare. Tutto ciò che ha una trazione assistita elettricamente andrebbe in qualche modo regolamentato anche dal punto di vista assicurativo.

Importante risulta essere anche l'aumento della protezione per le persone lese, anche in caso di incidenti con veicoli di un altro paese, con veicoli stranieri. Per chi viene da territori di confine come me, sono cose che purtroppo succedono abbastanza frequentemente, quindi è un altro punto importante.

Diciamo che la cosa più importante di questo provvedimento, comunque, rimane la tutela dei cittadini, soprattutto per quanto riguarda l'armonizzazione degli importi minimi, così come la tutela delle garanzie per le compagnie che falliscono, che comunque consentono ai cittadini europei di trovare il risarcimento, di trovare soddisfazione nel momento in cui sono vittime di un incidente. Chi subisce un danno deve essere comunque risarcito, deve essere comunque soddisfatto.

Per quanto riguarda invece il lavoro sulla riduzione delle vittime degli incidenti stradali, qui c'è ancora tanto lavoro da fare, ma su questo sono sicuro che ci adopereremo in maniera attiva tutti quanti.

Adam Bielan (ECR). – Panie Przewodniczący! Dyrektywa w sprawie ubezpieczeń komunikacyjnych z 2009 r. jest skutecznym instrumentem ochrony użytkowników dróg, a harmonizacja minimalnych norm ochrony ofiar w ruchu transgranicznym umożliwia Europejczykom podróżowanie w obrębie Unii bez konieczności posiadania dodatkowego ubezpieczenia. Popieram rewizję i doprecyzowanie tej dyrektywy, ponieważ rozwiązuje ona istotne kwestie związane z ochroną konsumentów, które pojawiały się od 2009 roku, oraz włącza w swój zakres m.in. segwaye, hulajnogi oraz rowery elektryczne.

Przede wszystkim z zadowoleniem przyjmuję większą przejrzystość, wzmocnienie praw naszych obywateli w razie wypadku niezależnie od państwa członkowskiego oraz usprawnienie procedur w celu terminowego wypłacania odszkodowań dla poszkodowanych stron. Jest to kluczowy krok naprzód, ponieważ dzięki nowemu zharmonizowanemu oświadczeniu o przebiegu ubezpieczenia nowa dyrektywa ułatwi zmianę ubezpieczyciela zarówno w kraju, jak i w całej Unii Europejskiej. Pozwoli to również zwiększyć konkurencję w Europie, a także poszerzy możliwość wyboru dla konsumentów, przeciwdziałając dyskryminacji w traktowaniu ze względu na narodowość lub poprzednie miejsce zamieszkania.

Chris MacManus (The Left). – Mr President, I want to welcome this directive. This directive protects drivers when travelling in the EU. It also adds new rights in terms of claim history, even if your previous insurer was in a different EU country. I know this was something that frustrated many people in Ireland.

It also provides greater clarity for when an insurer goes out of business. When this happened to Maltese-registered insurer, Setanta Insurance, a number of years ago, thousands of Irish consumers were left out of pocket amid years of legal wrangling about who was liable to compensate them. This new directive will clarify the law, so that it will hopefully be obvious straightaway who will compensate drivers when left high and dry.

Moreover, the debate gives us an opportunity to assert the right of Irish drivers to see reductions in their premiums now that pay-outs have dropped by 40%. In June of this year, the Commission made a preliminary finding of anti-competitive practice amongst Irish insurers, something blindingly obvious to many of us for a long time.

So, I want to conclude by saying to the Commission here today, don't take your eyes off the Irish insurers. If we don't see reductions in premiums proportionate with the reduction in pay-outs, I will be knocking on the Commission's door again on behalf of Irish drivers.

Deirdre Clune (PPE). – Mr President, my thanks to the rapporteur and our team for bringing us to this point today, which is a revision of the Motor Insurance Directive last revised in 2019, and that was a major advancement allowing EU residents to travel anywhere in the EU without the need for further insurance.

So it's a very important measure today for the single market, for provision of services, for those offering business across the European Union and for our constituents, for consumers and for citizens across Europe. The most important is the protection of victims in the case of an accident and today is an important day for those victims. This revision will be welcomed by consumers that are protected in the event of the insurer becoming insolvent. Member States now have to make sure that a body is in place to deal with such cases. A very important consumer protection measure and that compensation will now come from the Member States and those Member states will pursue the insurer.

A previous speaker mentioned Setanta Insurance Company and the situation that occurred in Ireland. Those who were insured at the time with that company were asked to go to their solicitors to pursue their claims. That no longer will be the case now.

Also, for uninsured victims, or uninsured vehicles or untraceable vehicles will now not be a burden for victims, as Member States would have to create the funds to compensate those victims. And when moving around, across borders, citizens can bring their no claims bonus with them, and that's very much to be welcomed.

E-scooters, Segways, E-bikes are outside the scope of this Motor Insurance Directive now, and I welcome that. I think it's a practical, common sense measure. There's No EU requirement now to have motor insurance for these items, but it is a matter for the Member States, and I would urge them to take it up. There are concerns from citizens, but that can best be done locally in the Member States and I would encourage them to do so.

Maria Grapini (S&D). – Domnule președinte, doamna comisară, dezbateră de astăzi are o importanță deosebită pentru cetățenii din spațiul Uniunii Europene, pentru că, până la urmă, are mare legătură cu viața cetățenilor. Sigur, a fost un drum lung, s-a spus aici, parcurs pentru dezbateră modificării Directivei 2009/103 privind eficiența și coerența acesteia.

Chiar Comisia Europeană a identificat patru puncte pe care, iată, noi, în munca făcută și în rezultatul de la dialog, le-am cuprins. Este vorba de sumele minime asigurate, de despăgubirile părților vătămate în urma unui accident în caz de insolvență. Sunt cazuri foarte multe, am chiar recent un caz, în țara mea, de societate de asigurări în insolvență și cetățenii nu își pot recupera banii. Până la urmă ține și de protecția consumatorului.

Evident, utilizarea atestărilor privind istoricul daunelor – este foarte important ca atunci când o societate intră în insolvență, cu ajutorul acestui istoric al datelor, să poată să fie preluată de o altă societate și să nu sufere, până la urmă, partea vătămată sau cetățeanul care a fost implicat într-un accident. Sigur că eu doresc ca, pe lângă aceste patru domenii, să se introducă în viitoarea directivă prin modificare și răspunderea în cazul unui accident care implică o remorcă tractată de un vehicul. Foarte multe accidente există în asemenea cazuri.

Evident că pentru funcționarea sistemului de asigurări este necesar să existe o transmitere de date, un sistem integrat în Uniunea Europeană, pentru ca statele membre să poată să își transmită informațiile. La toate vehiculele ar trebui făcute aceleași verificări, fără discriminare, pentru că, până la urmă, trebuie să aibă aceleași condiții de circulație. Sigur că este important să asigurăm rambursarea rapidă a banilor pentru persoanele implicate, vătămate sau implicate într-un accident. Întreprinderile de asigurări ar trebui să trateze o atestare dintr-un alt stat membru în același mod cum tratează o atestare internă, să nu fie tratați diferit străinii.

De aceea, doamna comisară, îmi pun speranța că, totuși, directiva va fructifica munca făcută aici, în Parlament, și rezultatul dialogului și vom avea o directivă care să servească ... *(Președintele a retras cuvântul vorbitoarei)*

Kosma Złotowski (ECR). – Panie Przewodniczący! Bezpieczeństwo na drogach zależy nie tylko od nowoczesnej infrastruktury czy umiejętności kierowców, ale także od efektywności systemu ubezpieczeń komunikacyjnych. Harmonizacja przepisów w tym zakresie jest konieczna ze względu na częste podróże i wysoką mobilność między państwami członkowskimi, zarówno w celach zawodowych, jak i w celach turystycznych.

Możliwość łatwego dostępu do całej historii naszych roszczeń ułatwi ubezpieczenie pojazdu w innym kraju i pozwoli uniknąć dyskryminacji właścicieli pojazdu ze względu na narodowość lub poprzednie miejsce zamieszkania.

W ostatnich latach pojawiło się także wiele nowych kategorii pojazdów, które nie były objęte obowiązkowym ubezpieczeniem. Ich użytkownicy także powodują wypadki, więc rozszerzenie tej listy było konieczne.

Jednocześnie cieszy fakt, że państwa członkowskie będą mogły w uzasadnionych przypadkach ustanawiać w tym zakresie wyjątki i przyjmować przepisy korzystniejsze dla poszkodowanych niż minimum określone w tej dyrektywie.

Antonius Manders (PPE). – Voorzitter, commissaris, alle lof, vooral ook aan Dita Charanzová, dat dit bereikt is na zo veel jaren. Het is een prima compromis en het is goed dat dit ook door de lidstaten wordt gesteund. Het vrije verkeer van personen in de Europese Unie is een heel groot goed en dat kan met deze richtlijn fors worden verbeterd. Het is goed dat verzekerden worden beschermd in geval van faillissement van de verzekeraar. Het is goed dat er minimale dekkingsbedragen zijn, dat die actueel zijn gemaakt, en het is goed dat het duidelijk is wat er gebeurt met ongelukken op een werkterrein. Nogmaals iedereen die eraan meegewerkt heeft, gefeliciteerd!

Echter, regeren is vooruitzien, commissaris, dus ik wil graag wat zaken meegeven waar bij een volgende herziening rekening mee kan worden gehouden. Dat zal bijvoorbeeld zijn, vind ik, dat we af moeten van een richtlijn en moeten streven naar een verordening. De rapporteur zei: “Wij hopen op het gezond verstand van de lidstaten.” Maar als het een verordening is, dan is het volledig geharmoniseerde wetgeving. En met name bij grensoverschrijdend verkeer, denk ik, is dat heel belangrijk.

In sommige gevallen zijn nu een aantal voertuigen niet meegenomen in de verzekering, bijvoorbeeld de elektrische fiets, maar je zult als voetganger worden overreden door een elektrische fiets en die man of die vrouw is niet verzekerd. Hoe gaan we daarmee om in de toekomst? Nu begrijp ik dat, het zijn kleine zaken, maar aangezien wij meer en meer elektrische voertuigen, ook kleine, gaan gebruiken, is dat reden voor onderzoek.

Een belangrijke zaak is als er schade is op autowegen. Dan zie je dat bestuurders in paniek raken. Wie is aansprakelijk? En daardoor ontstaan enorme files. Het zou goed zijn – en wellicht dat u dat kunt laten onderzoeken, commissaris – als verzekeraars het verminderen van de no-claim bij schade op autowegen laten vervallen en ook het eigen risico, waardoor voertuigen sneller van de weg af kunnen, want de mensen die daardoor in de file staan, zijn ook consumenten. Dat zijn ook burgers van Europa. En die schade is vele malen hoger. Ik denk dat verzekeraars daar een oplossing voor kunnen vinden.

Dan last but not least, in Nederland kennen wij een digitale app voor mobiel schade verhalen. Het zou goed zijn om die Europees in te voeren, waardoor de afwikkeling sneller kan dan nu gebeurt. Want afwikkeling op papier, die tijd is voorbij.

Leszek Miller (S&D). – Panie Przewodniczący! Wdrożenie omawianej dyrektywy ma na celu ujednoczenie przepisów krajowych dotyczących odpowiedzialności cywilnej kierowców i zasad jej egzekwowania. Dzięki niej obywatele będą mogli podróżować po całej Unii bez konieczności kupowania dodatkowych ubezpieczeń w oparciu o jedną składkę. Dyrektywa ułatwia funkcjonowanie jednolitego rynku, ale także przyczyni się w istotny sposób do wzmocnienia ochrony ofiar wypadków drogowych, gdyż państwa członkowskie będą zobowiązane do utworzenia funduszy gwarancyjnych wypłacających odszkodowania ofiarom w razie niewypłacalności ubezpieczyciela, wypadków spowodowanych przez pojazdy nieubezpieczone albo nieustalone.

Dzisiejsza debata wieńczy długi, ponad dwuletni okres negocjacji z Radą. Uważam, że Parlamentowi udało się wypracować dobry kompromis uwzględniający większość naszych poprawek zgłoszonych do wniosku Komisji. Na szczególną uwagę zasługuje wyłączenie spod dyrektywy lekkich pojazdów elektrycznych, wprowadzenie odstępstw dla pojazdów czasowo wycofanych z eksploatacji oraz uzupełnienie przepisów o kryteria, które muszą spełniać internetowe porównywarki cen ubezpieczeń komunikacyjnych, aby mogły one być certyfikowane przez państwa członkowskie. Uważam, że dyrektywa w ustalonym kształcie będzie odpowiednio realizowała swoje cele, zapewni wysoki poziom ochrony poszkodowanych w wypadkach drogowych i ułatwi swobodę przepływu osób i pojazdów w obrębie Unii. Mając to na uwadze, Parlament powinien opowiedzieć się za przyjęciem wynegocjowanego tekstu dyrektywy.

Dziękuję wszystkim, którzy osiągnęli negocjacyjny sukces.

Mairead McGuinness, Member of the Commission. – Mr President, I can be brief. I think to the rapporteur, Vice-President Charanzová, and your team of shadow rapporteurs, you have got praise from all sides of this house for your work, and I think that is a good compliment to your success this morning. It's been a long process, because this dates back to the previous parliamentary mandate. So for your commitment to this file, certainly from our side, deep appreciation. And of course, we would also thank the Council for their work.

I think the debate this morning underlines the European Parliament's commitment to better protection for citizens, and I hope that today's vote will confirm that we can deliver better EU rules for motor insurance that brings significant benefits for victims and policyholders. And to those Members of Parliament who raised issues, perhaps for a future time, I have taken good note.

Πρόεδρος. – Η συζήτηση έληξε.

Η ψηφοφορία θα διεξαχθεί σήμερα.

(Η συνεδρίαση διακόπτεται στις 12.32)

VORSITZ: RAINER WIELAND*Vizepräsident***9. Wznowienie posiedzenia***(Die Sitzung wird um 13.02 Uhr wieder aufgenommen.)***10. Ogłoszenie wyników głosowania: patrz protokół***(Die Sitzung wird um 13.09 Uhr unterbrochen.)***PŘESEDNICTVÍ: DITA CHARANZOVÁ***místopředsedkyně***11. Wznowienie posiedzenia***(The sitting resumed at 13.45)***12. Druga część głosowania**

President. – I will now move to the second voting session of today. We will vote on the files as indicated on the agenda. The voting session will be open from 13.45 until 15.00. The same voting method will be used as during the previous voting sessions. All votes will be held by roll call.

I declare the second voting session open. You have until 15.00 to vote. The results of the second voting session will be announced at 16.30 and the debates will resume at 15.00 with the Commission statement: the proposal to build a 'single market for philanthropy'.

*(The sitting was suspended at 13.46)***VORSITZ: RAINER WIELAND***Vizepräsident***13. Wznowienie posiedzenia***(Die Sitzung wird um 15.02 Uhr wieder aufgenommen.)*

14. Propozycja utworzenia „jednolitego rynku filantropii” (debata)

Der Präsident. – Wir fahren mit den Aussprachen fort.

Als nächster Punkt der Tagesordnung folgt die Erklärung der Kommission zu dem Vorschlag zur Schaffung eines „Binnenmarkts der Philanthropie“ (2021/2937(RSP)).

Mairead McGuinness, Member of the Commission. – Mr President, I'm here on behalf of Commissioner Gabriel. But of course, we all have an interest in this topic. And by way of background, in Europe, we have more than 147 000 philanthropic organisations with an accumulated annual expenditure of nearly EUR 60 billion. Just last year, global philanthropic giving, in all its forms, topped EUR 660 billion, the highest amount ever.

The field of arts and culture is at the core of philanthropy, and it is amongst the most important areas of funding for philanthropic organisations in Europe. Data shows that nearly half of the European Foundation Centre's members have a main focus on arts and culture, and this is welcome. The cultural and creative sectors and industries have been hard hit by the fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic. Even at a time when the sector is gradually reopening again all across Europe, many challenges remain as the financial impact on the sector has been huge.

On top of this, natural disasters and the extreme weather we've seen this summer has added strain on venues and cultural heritage sites. Artists have seen venues closed and not always re-opening. Even with steady public funding, the sector remains vulnerable. Eurostat data shows that in 2018, cultural services represented, on average, 1% of governments' expenditure. The amount remains unchanged since 2013.

But the story these figures do not tell is that amounts vary greatly from State to State. Some Member States increase their expenditure, often responding to challenges from the 2008 economic crisis, but others have reduced it, putting greater pressure on a sector that is so important to our economy, to people's livelihoods and to our sense of community.

Most countries put in place extraordinary measures just to support their cultural and creative industries during the recent pandemic and confinement. Indeed, so did the European Union, with the unprecedented NextGenerationEU package and a new MFF, which allows a higher number of EU funding sources for the cultural and creative sectors than before. But we know that this support cannot meet all needs.

A few examples: a recent survey shows that during the second wave of the pandemic, almost 7 in 10 museums expected budget cuts in the coming years, and they expect that it will be a long time until visits will be back to pre-COVID levels. In addition, half of the surveyed museums stated that they had not considered looking into alternative funding sources. So, on the one hand, we have pressure on the horizon. On the other hand, we have no clear, widely implemented way of relieving this pressure, and this brings me directly to the topic of our debate of philanthropy.

This philanthropy can help us catalyse a more holistic response to the vast challenges that lie ahead, from climate change to vaccination and social innovation. There is a great disparity amongst legal frameworks relating to philanthropy with regard to arts and artists across Europe. Corporate giving or donations as tools for corporate philanthropy are considered to be one-sided business transactions where donors contribute with money, time, information, goods and services to another organisation. Reasons to donate are therefore largely moral, expected to contribute to social welfare and understood as a pre-social spending or pro-social spending. For instance, in Romania, some of the largest private companies have included cultural heritage in their corporate social responsibility support programmes. Donations in general are covered by the Treaty, and these rules on free movement of capital apply, which create rights both for the donor and the recipient of a donation. This means that donors can donate cross-border and beneficiaries can accept foreign funding. Any restrictions by Member States need to pursue a legitimate public interest. The Commission will ensure that national measures, which restrict capital movements are risk and evidence based and proportionate.

Two forms of donations can be distinguished. Pure donations in which donors stay anonymous and public donations where donors are publicly announced and receive indirect benefits from the promotion of their name in public. Donations are generally considered as a deductible expense for corporate income tax purposes. In some environments, the subcategory of patronage is employed as a mechanism to provide support to good causes with some degree of expected return.

In public donations and patronage, there is an element of societal recognition and reputation. However, these forms of contribution display a deeper, altruistic dimension than sponsorship actions and do not imply the generation of an immediate and tangible output.

In these cases, the boundary amongst public corporate donations and sponsorships may be difficult to draw. The regulatory and strategic frameworks of corporate-giving and patronage are key factors to promote and encourage these practices. In many European countries, donations are encouraged through a variety of different income tax deductions. Special fiscal schemes and tax benefits vary widely from state to state. Considerations upon legal entities, eligibility and general interest of the activities are important aspects to achieve social and institutional convergence.

For instance, Spain established a set of deductions applicable to the donations supporting the historical Spanish heritage assets. In this framework, the potential impact of non-monetary donations of professional services should also be recognised and encouraged. An additional model to consider is the one based on connecting business with individuals and the arts. A typical scheme is a business to arts found in Ireland, where businesses are matched with arts organizations and artists to develop solutions in areas such as sponsorship, commissioning, brand development, training, leadership development, internal and external communications and events. In this setup, business works with artists and arts organisations, providing a range of training opportunities and coaching to help diversify income streams, to grow audiences and improve efficiencies. Their corporate membership base and network ranges across the business sectors from local family-run companies, SMEs, semi-state companies to corporate foundations.

Another good example can be found in Belgium, where the foundation *Prométhéa* aims to develop corporate philanthropy and patronage for cultural and heritage. It facilitates exchanges between different sponsorship actors from political, economic and cultural spheres, and supports to businesses in that patronage strategy. Its objective is to increase the number of contributors to, and resources for, patronage, mainly in Belgium.

The idea to have a single market for philanthropy should embrace all topologies of sources of financing I've just mentioned. Learning from best practices without prejudice to the possible application of state aid rules.

When it comes to supporting arts and culture specifically, DG EAC hosted in January a complementary funding workshop for cultural heritage with over 100 good practices from our Member States and this included donations and therefore philanthropy, but also many more schemes such as public and private partnerships, lotteries and so forth.

In addition, the Commission is currently preparing two studies to identify barriers for cross-border activities of social economy actors and map the legal regimes of associations in the European Union, including for philanthropy.

The upcoming Action Plan for the Social Economy will look at these issues with a view to facilitating the implementation of the principle of non-discrimination regarding cross-border donations to public benefit organisations.

In this context, the Commission follows closely the ongoing work related to the Parliament's own-initiative legislative report on a statute for European cross-border associations and non-profit organisations. Thank you, and I look forward to the debate.

Seán Kelly, on behalf of the PPE Group. – Mr President, philanthropy is an important vehicles for supporting and advancing many of the core values of the European Union institutions. Indeed, philanthropy plays a key role in helping to support and uphold community cohesion and our shared values across the European Union.

Many individuals alongside charitable and philanthropic organisations support endeavours from which we all benefit, including improving educational attainment, raising health care standards, advancing scientific development and tackling climate change.

However, while goods and services can travel freely across the EU, philanthropic support does not have such an easy passage to our continent, whether studying, travelling or running a business in Europe, national borders have become a thing of the past. Yet philanthropy does not yet benefit from the full opportunities that a single market creates.

There are a 147 000 public benefit organisations across Europe, with an annual giving of over 60 billion. However, only a small percentage of these funds make it across internal European borders. Establishing a single market philanthropy would enable greater levels of citizens action, while at the same time complementing EU funds, expertise and activities.

In saying this, we are seeing steps being taken in the right direction. The decision of the European Commission to include a partnership with philanthropy in its proposal for the InvestEU fund, of which I was honoured to be a rapporteur, is most welcome.

In 2019, we held a debate in this chamber where a strong, cross-party alliance emerged for the need to support the untapped potential of philanthropic foundations and civil society organisations across the EU. Since then, the need to establish a single market for philanthropy has only strengthened.

Philanthropy can help solve problems that are now more interconnected than ever before, but it could also be more effective if it enjoyed a better operating environment and better protection mechanisms. I want to see philanthropy continue to support European values and collaborate with key stakeholders across society and across borders to tackle rising inequality and help connect with citizens and their needs.

A single market for philanthropy has the potential to build upon the existing ambitions of the InvestEU fund and to deliver on the economy that works for people. To do this, there is need for an EU study on philanthropy. Currently, only two countries in the world, the Netherlands and the US, are engaged in regular macroeconomic research to estimate the overall philanthropic contributions of households, legacies, foundations, companies and charities.

As it is such a valuable figure representing European solidarity, we should engage in generating qualitative data on this phenomena for the whole European Union. Let's take the opportunity to mobilise our resources and deliver change.

Milan Brglez, v imenu skupine S&D. – Gospod predsednik. Spoštovane kolegice, spoštovani kolegi, komisarka. Pozdravljam današnje razpravo, ker nam omogoča prepoznati, da je civilna družba in da so nevladne organizacije nepogrešljiv del demokratične družbe. V središče namreč postavljajo človeka in družbeno korist v širšem smislu besede in to ne glede na narodno ali kakršnokoli drugo pripadnost, in torej so ključ za družbeno solidarnost in seveda družbeno kohezijo.

Moje izkušnje tako z delom znotraj slovenskega Rdečega križa kot s stikom z drugimi nevladnimi in humanitarnimi organizacijami mi govorijo o tem, da imajo te organizacije izjemen prispevek k družbeni blaginji, ki pa je podcenjen. Breme, ki so ga prevzele od vseh teh kriz, s katerimi se sooča Evropska unija, je izjemno. Začeni s finančno krizo leta 2008, ko so bila pričakovanja ljudi po tem, da se deli hrana, takšna, da je bilo treba te delavce, ki so prostovoljno delali, zavarovati pred tem, ker država in Evropska unija nista uspeli na ustrezen način se odzvati na te izzive.

Enako velja v begunski in migrantski krizi oziroma takrat, ko se je bilo treba soočiti z begunci in migranti, od leta 2015 naprej, ko v bistvu ta sektor prevzame nase velik del skrbi za oskrbo in integracijo migrantov. Torej te človekoljubne organizacije že zaradi tega, ker so bliže lokalnim skupnostim, ker so predstavljene v vseh lokalnih skupnostih, se znajo odzvati tudi na takšne zadeve, kot je sedanja pandemija covid-19. Namreč občutljive so za potrebe in stiske ljudi, ki bi jih drugače država ali pa ki bi jih institucije spregledale, in znajo prepoznati te potrebe in te stiske in se nanje na ustrezen način odzvati.

Zaradi tega bi jim želel tako v lastnem imenu kot v imenu poslanske skupine, kateri pripadam, torej socialistov in demokratov, se najiskrenejše zahvaliti za vse delo, ki so ga do sedaj opravile in tudi za vse delo, ki ga bodo opravile v prihodnje. Namreč to delo utemeljuje tisti vidik solidarnosti, ki je del evropskih vrednot, in v bistvu tudi zaradi tega, ker bo ta kriza in prihodnje krize, ki nas še čakajo, imele tako ekonomske, socialne kot okoljske posledice. In te organizacije se na to znajo odzvati.

Seveda je treba upoštevati tudi čezmejni in globalni vidik tega, teh izzivov. Čakata nas dva prehoda: zeleni in digitalni. In tako v kratkoročni viziji, ki je bolj ali manj utemeljena na gospodarski rasti, kot v dolgoročni viziji, ki skuša iti preko tega razumevanja, pomagajo ohraniti evropski razvojni model. Brez kooperacije s temi organizacijami ni možnosti, torej brez sodelovanja s temi organizacijami ni možnosti ustreznega razvoja evropskega razvojnega in gospodarskega modela, ki bo seveda prišel do ljudi, tako znotraj same Evropske unije kot tudi po svetu.

Civilna družba, še zlasti njen humanitarni del, pa mora pri tem, in to je zelo pomembna zadeva, kar moramo pri tem upoštevati, je, da ne sme postati nadomestek socialne države ali pa bodoče socialno-ekološke države. Nikakor ne sme ta del postati nadomestek te države. To je nekaj, za kar morajo poskrbeti tako država kot evropske institucije. Prav tako ne sme postati nadomestek socialnih politik – bom rekel, tisti del, ki je sestavni del tega sektorja, in to je neplačano delo v obliki prostovoljstva ali pa neplačano skrbstveno delo v okviru gospodinjstev oziroma družin. To dvoje nikakor ne sme se zgoditi.

Tisto, kar pa lahko in kako je treba razumeti ta sektor, torej civilno družbo, je pa, da je komplementaren oziroma dopolnilen temu, kar Evropa skuša narediti pri sebi in kar skuša narediti tudi po svetu. Kar pa dokazuje na eni strani tudi študija Organizacije za gospodarsko sodelovanje in razvoj, ki pravi, da so države z nizkim in srednjim dohodkom pravzaprav odvisne od evropskih donacij in prispevka evropskih humanitarnih organizacij in civilnodružbenih organizacij, zato da lahko sploh funkcionalno deluje njihovo javno zdravstvo, izobraževanje, enakost spolov, in sploh realizacija agende 2030 je s tem v marsičem pogojena.

Ta trenutek vsekakor nimamo močne evropske civilne družbe in tudi ne izkoriščamo vseh potencialov, ki jih ta civilna družba ima. Tako neprofitne organizacije in združenja kot nevladne organizacije so sicer zelo različne, ampak v delovanju so si podobne. Nimajo pa pravil skupnih, nimajo v bistvu oziroma drugače povedano, v vsaki državi se srečajo z drugimi pravnimi pravili, z drugimi finančnimi zahtevami in z drugimi upravnimi postopki, in če skušajo delovati kjerkoli drugje, morajo dobesedno znova ponoviti postopke.

To v marsičem onemogoča čezmejno delovanje, ta fragmentacija pravil onemogoča čezmejno delovanje, tudi seveda nepriznavanje statusa onemogoča isto. In zaradi tega se ne morejo ustrezno povezovati, da bi se lahko soočale tudi z evropskimi izzivi.

Torej odsotnost evropskih pravil za neprofitne organizacije glede davkov, glede ustanavljanja je vsekakor v nasprotju s štirimi svoboščinami, ki jih poznamo v Evropski uniji. Onemogoča transparentnost poslovanja in pravzaprav onemogoča izkoristek vsega prispevka, ki bi ga lahko imele k tako trajnostnemu razvoju kot k družbeni blaginji. In to dokazuje tudi študija raziskovalne službe Evropskega parlamenta, ki ugotavlja številna področja, kjer tega ni, tako na izobraževanju, kulturi, zdravstvu, socialnem varstvu, raziskavah, razvojnem sodelovanju humanitarni pomoči, socialni koheziji, torej številna področja, kjer ni izkoriščenega potenciala.

Zato vsekakor pozdravljam iniciativo Evropskega parlamenta in tudi zakonodajno poročilo, ki ga pripravlja Odbor za pravne zadeve, pri čemer utemeljuje svoje delo na preteklih 30-letnih izkušnjah neuspešnega urejanja tega področja na eni strani in na drugi strani to izvaja v dialogu s civilno družbo, ki je bistvena. Ne moremo urejati sektorja, brez da upoštevamo samo civilno družbo.

Zdaj ta razprava in ta politična podpora temu poročilu, temu pravnemu urejanju naj bo spodbuda tudi za Evropsko komisijo, da izgradi močno evropsko civilno družbo, ki bo branik demokracije in evropskih vrednot vseh držav, tudi tam, kjer imamo probleme, in zato je to zelo pomembno.

Ilhan Kyuchyuk, *on behalf of the Renew Group*. – Mr President, speaking about Europe means speaking about solidarity and about potential. Potential we constantly need to free up, to watch, to maintain. This can mean, for example, making private resources available for the public good, informal financial means.

But the nations are unaware of what the term 'philanthropy' refers to: it is about time resources, expertise and network. Europe's success is made of people dedicated, their skills and competences, to the European dream. They do this in diverse forms of expertise and civil engagement in foundations and associations, as corporate and individual donors in small-scale work or actions. They all form the backbone of our society.

But just as a backbone stays under the surface of the skin, philanthropic organisations are mostly working behind the scenes, operating a little bit under the radar. They are often acting in the space where neither government nor commercial sector wants to act.

Moreover, they are ready to take risks when experimenting with innovative solutions, and this played back during the COVID-19 crisis. Foundations and civil society organisations had been quick to respond. They mitigated the crisis in pooling emergency funds, helped bridge the gap in public provision by supporting the most affected communities with medical and food aid, social assistance, as well as research to fight the virus.

Lately, we learned from the COVID-19 pandemic that issues do not stop at borders, so that's also not philanthropy. Stakeholders, donors and organisations work more and more across borders with partners from all over Europe.

Institutional philanthropy in Europe includes more than 147 000 philanthropic organisations, with a combined annual expenditure of nearly EUR 60 billion. They support a wide range of projects in the field of research and innovation, environmental protection, social care, culture and youth democracy, to name just a few.

Imagine this huge potential, a potential that cannot take full effect even within the European Union; complex rules hinder cross-border philanthropy in the form of multiple legal, administrative and fiscal barriers. These concern larger and old foundations investing their assets across borders by, for example, supporting start-ups or social enterprises with social impact investment.

It concerns the giving of funds by public benefit organisations, but it also hits hard on the donors giving cross-border. Further restrictions to foreign funding still makes it difficult for philanthropic organisations to find formal banking channels to transport philanthropic money across borders.

Ladies and gentlemen, I'm grateful that Commissioner Vestager, Commissioners Reynders and Breton, all showed their interest for this truly European topic. And that Commissioner McGuinness, who has been a true ally in this topic since the beginning. I also would like to thank in particular my dear colleague and Vice-President of the European Parliament Nicola Beer for her tireless work. The Parliament, Commission and Council – I think it's time to act. There is a lot of potential.

Sergey Lagodinsky, *on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group*. – Mr President, dear colleagues, it's a great pleasure to talk to you on this topic. I am, as some of you know, rapporteur of the Committee on Legal Affairs on European associations and non-profits, and it's of special urgency and special importance for me to address this topic.

Why? – and I think that the chairing President also shares this view and shares this concern and perspective – because if we talk about European civil society, we have to talk about European associations but, yes, we also have to talk about European cross-border philanthropic organisations. They are participants and they are enablers of European cross-border civil societies. Some of them are themselves civil society actors and NGOs, there are many small and large foundations that dedicate their work to combating hate, supporting people in need or fighting climate change, as NGOs being foundations themselves.

In fact, this sector has been growing – and the preceding speakers mentioned this – it's been especially growing in the post-COVID world where we need sources of finance to support civil society after the crisis. Yet a legal, fiscal and administrative environment for cross-border philanthropy is not there yet, at least not in the form that would enable us to support this sector. Instead, cross-border philanthropy capital is used by some governments of Member States to discriminate against NGOs, which is unacceptable, and therefore we should talk about what needs to be done.

I am grateful to the representative of the Commission, but also to the colleagues from the Parliament that they talked about specific things that then they and we can do. For example, we should emphasise and strengthen the non-discrimination principle based on the free flow of capital principle in our European Union, as the European Court of Justice has strengthened and proposed. We need to lower or to mitigate financial burdens for cross-border finances. Only by doing so will we be able to strengthen cooperation across borders in the European Union.

And, yes, we should also create special, supranational legal forms and regulatory regimes. It is of utmost importance not just to have a European company as a special status and regulatory regime, but also a regime which would help civil society, not just the economy, to be a real European and, yes, real European market player.

So, dear colleagues, let's start the work. I'm looking forward to continuing our conversation and cooperation.

Joachim Kuhs, *im Namen der ID-Fraktion*. – Herr Präsident, Frau Kommissarin McGuinness, liebe Kollegen! Ich muss leider etwas Wasser in den Wein gießen. Und ich möchte Ihnen auch kurz erklären, warum. Ich habe große Bedenken aus mehreren Gründen. Das Erste ist: Wir schaffen ein neues Bürokratiemonster, wenn wir die Philanthropie auch noch regulieren wollen.

Nur eine kurze Erzählung: Vor einigen Wochen hat ein Parteikollege von mir einen Brandanschlag auf sein Familienauto erlitten. Sein ganzes Auto ist komplett ausgebrannt. Wie das so üblich ist: Er ist ein junger Familienvater hat drei Kinder. Er hat keine Versicherung für das Auto. Die Täter werden vermutlich nicht erwischt. Man weiß, wo es herkommt, aber man wird sie nicht erwischen.

Was ist zu tun? Wir haben sofort eine Spendenaktion gestartet, und innerhalb von wenigen Tagen kamen über 10 000 - Euro zusammen. Er kann sich ein neues Auto kaufen, und das ist gut. Stellen Sie sich vor: Wäre das möglich gewesen mit solchen Regeln, wo dann alles Spenden auch noch reguliert ist? Wenn ich erst noch ein fünfseitiges Formular ausfüllen müsste, meinen Sie, ich hätte etwas gespendet? Ich habe mich an dem Abend auch hingesetzt und habe natürlich eine Überweisung gemacht.

Und wie ist das mit den anderen Dingen? Als jetzt im Ahrtal und an vielen Stellen hier in Mitteleuropa im Juli das große Hochwasser war – was ist passiert? Innerhalb von wenigen Tagen kamen eine Milliarde, über eine Milliarde Euro Spenden zusammen, und sie können verwendet werden für den Wiederaufbau. Als vor über anderthalb Jahren die Kathedrale Notre-Dame brannte, kamen innerhalb kurzer Zeit auch Spendenzusagen von Großen über 200 Millionen, die anderen noch einmal 250 Millionen. Dann gab es insgesamt, glaube ich, über zwei Milliarden Euro Zusagen. Wäre das möglich gewesen, wenn wir das alles regulieren?

Es wurde gesagt: grenzüberschreitend – alles gut. Aber was ist dann mit der Geldwäsche, die wir bekämpfen wollen? Wie soll das funktionieren? Da werden dann große Spenden vielleicht protegert. Sie bekommen Spendenbescheinigungen, sie können steuerbefreit arbeiten, und dann am Schluss? Geld wird irgendwo gewaschen bei dieser ganzen Arbeit.

Mein Hauptgrund gegen diesen neuen Vorschlag, den Sie gemacht haben, ist aber etwas ganz anderes. Es ist ein Verstoß gegen unser jüdisch-christliches Erbe. Wir wissen alle: Jesus spricht sehr viel über Geld. Sie kennen die Geschichte vom Kamel und dem Nadelöhr. Eher kann ein Kamel durch ein Nadelöhr gehen, als dass ein Reicher in das Himmelreich kommt. Vielleicht ist das der Grund, warum so viele Reiche so viel spenden? Ich weiß es nicht; kann ja sein.

Aber Geben gehört zur DNA des Christentums. Selbst Gott gibt, an Weihnachten feiern wir das. Gott schenkt seinen Sohn uns Menschen, damit wir erlöst werden. Dieses Geben aber ist nicht zwangsweise. Es ist nicht reguliert, es ist freiwillig, und es macht auch glücklich. Es gibt einen schönen Vers im Korintherbrief, den Paulus schreibt, dort sagt er: „Den fröhlichen Geber hat Gott lieb.“ Also Gott liebt den fröhlichen Geber.

Glauben Sie wirklich, wenn wir das alles regulieren, dass dann noch jemand gerne gibt? Nein, denn am Schluss müssen wir zwangsweise etwas abgeben. Ich habe, was das angeht, kein Vertrauen in die Kommission. Es tut mir leid, Frau McGuinness, aber wenn Sie so etwas regulieren, dann wird daraus ein überbordendes Monster. Und dann wird am Schluss alles auf der Strecke bleiben. Und das, was heute der Mörtel ist, das, was uns zusammenhält, nämlich dieser Christ, dieses Geben, ja, diese Bereitschaft, zu geben – es ist wunderbar, dass es das gibt. Das wird kaputt gemacht, das wird am Ende zerstört, und am Schluss bleibt nichts mehr zurück.

Geben macht auch glücklich. Ich erinnere mich gerne daran, Herr Wieland, vielleicht erinnern Sie sich auch daran: Früher haben wir solche Poesiealben gehabt, und da durften wir auch bei den Mädchen in der Schule etwas eintragen. Und da gab es einen Vers, der ist mir hängen geblieben, der heißt: „Willst du glücklich sein im Leben, trage bei zu anderer Glück, denn die Freude, die wir geben, kehrt ins eigene Herz zurück.“

Geben macht auch glücklich. Wollen wir das kaputt machen? Wollen wir das zerstören? Vertrauen wir doch den Menschen, dass sie beim Geben wissen, was sie zu tun haben, und begraben wir unsere Gelüste nach einer Regulierung der Dinge, die wir letztendlich zerstören, wenn wir sie regulieren.

Michiel Hoogeveen, *namens de ECR-Fractie*. – Voorzitter, aan het eind van de jaren 1950 en 1960 schreef de Duits-Amerikaanse politicoloog Ernst Bernard Haas over Europese integratie. Hij schreef dat de gevestigde natiestaat zich volledig zou terugtrekken. Hij voorspelde dat geleidelijk, beetje bij beetje, functionarissen, belangengroepen en grote commerciële bedrijven binnen staten het in hun belang zouden zien om politieke en economische integratie op een hoger, supranationaal niveau na te streven. Door middel van een overloopeffect zou een beperkte samenwerking op enkele economische terreinen uiteindelijk uitlopen op steeds verdere integratie, niet alleen op economisch niveau, maar ook in de politiek, het sociale leven en onze culturen.

En dat is wat wij vandaag de dag met de Europese Unie zien gebeuren, waar een vrijwillige samenwerking met democratische legitimiteit plaats heeft gemaakt voor een bureaucratische managementlaag in Brussel die steeds meer aspecten van ons leven gaat beheersen. Een top-downstructuur die steeds verdere harmonisering, fusering en centralisering nastreeft. Een wetgevende macht die wetten maakt op basis van werkgroepen bestaande uit technocraten, lobbyisten, multinationals en ngo's. De Unielevers en de Shells, maar dus ook de filantropen van deze wereld, kijken voor hun belangen niet meer naar de nationale politiek, maar naar de Europese Commissie, waardoor de nationale democratie verder buitenspel komt te staan, het midden- en kleinbedrijf de prijs betaalt en de bevolking haar bedrijvigheid en gemeenschapsgevoel verliest.

Wat wij vandaag zien, is weer een stap in die richting – het voorstel om een interne markt op te zetten voor filantropie. Wat is er mis met de gewone gemeenschappelijke markt? En is er niemand hier die zich afvraagt wie hierom heeft gevraagd? Waar komt dit idee vandaan? En wiens belangen worden hier gediend? Die van ons, de gewone mensen, in ieder geval niet.

Wij zijn niet tegen de Europese Unie en als handelsland heeft mijn land, Nederland, veel baat bij een sterke gemeenschappelijke markt. Die voordelen komen alle landen ten goede en landen kunnen daarbij heel veel van hun soevereiniteit behouden. Maar de mensen in het Berlaymont zijn overmoedig en negeren stelselmatig de wensen van de bevolking. Ze weten wel wat er speelt onder de mensen, maar echt begrijpen doen ze het niet. Wij moeten daarom een tegenwicht bieden. Wij willen niet naar een EU die door allerlei managers wordt bestuurd. Wij willen een afgeslankte en flexibele samenwerking met een focus op vrijhandel, en daar is geen bureaucratische filantropiemarkt voor nodig. Alleen zo voorkomen wij dat onze landen afglijden naar alleen maar ja en amen zeggen, waarbij de burgers in hun eigen leven buitenspel worden gezet.

Clare Daly, *on behalf of The Left Group*. – Mr President, there's no doubt about it, our world has many problems. But the one thing that's definitely not going to fix them is billionaire-funded social change, when it's the very existence of billionaires like Bill Gates or Jeff Bezos or Denis O'Brien that's responsible for a lot of the problems that we have in the first place.

So, no, we shouldn't have a free market in philanthropy. We shouldn't allow philanthropic capital to flow across borders unimpeded. The point is, there shouldn't be any billionaires, and we certainly shouldn't be making it easier for them to hide their fortunes in so-called charitable foundations.

Obscene wealth doesn't come from working hard earning a wage like a normal person, it only comes from exploiting people on a vast scale or by inheriting it from somebody else who did.

And yet, here we are arguing for them to be able to keep their wealth, use it however they like without oversight and pretending that this is going to make things different. This is nonsense. Of course, what we should be saying is 'tax them'. Tax wealth and not just income. Close tax loopholes, eliminate tax havens, redistribute wealth, develop public services so people don't have to fund-raise. But also we should be looking at casting down the system that made them so wealthy in the first place.

But I think there's a sickening irony that we're here on a Thursday, discussing how to make the EU a playground for these donors, when we've had nothing to say for over a decade about the blank blockade on the donations of ordinary people who wanted to use their money to fund WikiLeaks, an organisation that genuinely challenged society and argued for transformation to change.

Their founder, Julian Assange – hounded, imprisoned, spied on, plots to kidnap and kill him – next Wednesday will go into a London court to fight his extradition to the US where he faces a life sentence for telling the truth.

Why aren't we talking about that? I'll be at that court case, where will you be?

Mick Wallace (The Left). – Mr President, the structure of philanthropy around the world is increasingly a manifestation of plutocracy. It is government by the wealthy, at a time when actual government is shrinking and when, in many cases, philanthropic funds replace public spending and government functions. It is increasingly an exercise of private power, which often exacerbates rather than redresses inequality.

We need global tax justice, not charitable scraps dictated by the whims of the élite. Non-profit organisations can provide an important function in terms of civic engagement and participation. But many NGOs and non-profits are also deeply politicised. There is a booming human rights industry that instrumentalises human rights for the purpose of Western imperialism, to destabilise governments of sovereign states and to facilitate regime change.

These non-profits are part of the problem, not part of the solution. We need to change tax policy to benefit small donors and those in need. And we should stop allowing the rich avoid paying their taxes by giving money to their pet projects, which usually serve to increase inequality.

Lastly, I'd like to thank the wonderful staff of Santry Sports Clinic, where I had a shoulder operation last Saturday, and the staff were absolutely wonderful. They came from all over the world and they were so good, and I have also a special thanks as well to the magnificent surgeon, Hannan Mullett. Thank you very much and I also will be at the trial for Julian Assange next week in pursuit of justice.

Mairead McGuinness, Member of the Commission. – Mr President, colleagues, for a Thursday afternoon, this has been a lively debate, and I welcome this, and many different views, but all strongly explored and developed. So I'm glad that I'm here to participate.

I do want to take a slight issue with Mr Hoogeveen, who said that people in the Berlaymont are power-hungry. I'm not. I was of this House, so I understand people and I am still connected, so perhaps not to judge too harshly.

On the point of more bureaucracy, this Parliament wants us to do something with philanthropy, and I think we don't want to tie it up in red tape and make charity stop because people do give. And I support your point that in giving you receive. But, generally speaking, there are a lot of organisations and institutions who are looking at other ways of funding their work. They need complementary funding tools because they do have financial pressures. And in order for many of them to thrive in the long term, including in the arts and culture that I referenced and the protection of the environment and social innovation, they do need to look at ways in this non-commercial sector of long-term financial strategies that makes them sustainable.

The European non-profit sectors are at a turning point, and this pandemic, the COVID-19 pandemic, revealed both their vulnerabilities, but, as was referenced, also highlighted their importance. So in this new reality, I believe that all sources of funding must be explored and philanthropy will have to play, in my view, a key role. So thank you for the debate.

Mr President, if I can be indulged with the microphone for 30 seconds and I hope I have your support in what I'm about to say. As a former Vice-President of Parliament, I want to thank Julia Glinski for her excellent service to this Parliament. She's finishing in plenary services after seven years, moving on and I hope with your support you feel it appropriate that I thank her for her service, and I mean that from the very bottom of my heart, Julia, because you are and hopefully will remain a wonderful colleague and a great servant of this Parliament. Thank you and thank you for giving her a well-deserved round of applause.

Der Präsident. – Vielen Dank, Frau Kommissarin McGuinness. Ich glaube, sowohl der Kollege Wallace als auch Sie haben gerade ein schönes Beispiel dafür gegeben, dass – bei aller Umstrittenheit eines Binnenmarktes für Philanthropie – Philanthropie nicht immer etwas mit Geld zu tun hat, sondern Ihr Dank an die Leute, die Sie behandelt haben, aber auch der Dank von Frau McGuinness sind ein sehr gutes Beispiel dafür, wo Philanthropie eigentlich anfängt, und wir wünschen uns alle sicherlich mehr davon.

Die Aussprache ist geschlossen.

Die Sitzung ist unterbrochen. Sie wird um 16.30 Uhr mit der Bekanntgabe der Ergebnisse der zweiten Abstimmungsrunde des heutigen Tages wieder aufgenommen.

(Die Sitzung wird um 15.47 Uhr unterbrochen.)

15. Wznowienie posiedzenia

(Die Sitzung wird um 16.32 Uhr wieder aufgenommen.)

16. Ogłoszenie wyników głosowania: patrz protokół

17. Wyjaśnienia dotyczące stanowiska zajętego w głosowaniu: patrz protokół

18. Korekty i zamiary głosowania: patrz protokół

19. Petycje: patrz protokół

20. Składanie dokumentów: patrz protokół

21. Zmiany w przekazaniu spraw komisjom (art. 56 Regulaminu): patrz protokół

22. Zatwierdzenie protokołów posiedzeń bieżącej sesji i przekazanie przyjętych tekstów

Der Präsident. – Die Protokolle der Sitzungen vom 18. bis 21. Oktober werden dem Parlament zu Beginn der nächsten Sitzung zur Genehmigung vorgelegt.

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

23. Kalendarz następnych posiedzeń: patrz protokół

24. Zamknięcie posiedzenia

(Die Sitzung wird um 16.34 Uhr geschlossen.)

25. 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

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
ID	Grupa Tożsamość i Demokracja
Verts/ALE	Grupa Zielonych/Wolne Przymierze Europejskie
ECR	Grupa Europejskich Konserwatystów i Reformatorów
The Left	Grupa Lewicy w Parlamencie Europejskim - GUE/NGL
NI	Niezrzeszeni