

## THURSDAY, 2 FEBRUARY 2012

IN THE CHAIR: ALEXANDER ALVARO

*Vice-President*

### 1. Opening of the sitting

*(The sitting opened at 09.00)*

### 2. Documents received: see Minutes

### 3. Implementing measures (Rule 88): see Minutes

### 4. Delegated acts (Rule 87a): see Minutes

### 5. Application of waste management directive (debate)

**President.** – The next item is the debate on the report by Carlos José Iturgaiz Angulo, on behalf of the Committee on Petitions, on the issues raised by petitioners in relation to the application of the Waste Management Directive, and related directives, in the Member States of the European Union (2011/2038(INI)) (A7-0335/2011).

**Carlos José Iturgaiz Angulo**, *rapporteur*. – (ES) Mr President, allow me to begin by expressing my thanks to the Secretariat of the Committee on Petitions, particularly Ms Leffler and others who collaborated with me to make this report possible, including Ms Martín, Mr Kox and Ms Remacle.

Mr President, it is almost over a year since the Committee on Petitions decided to draw up a report on waste management in the EU. The decision was taken after it was established that large numbers of repeat petitions were being put forward, condemning the poor waste management carried out by the authorities, the location of certain rubbish dumps, the destruction of some natural areas, and so on.

The Committee on Petitions was sensitive to these claims, and sent several fact-finding missions to the areas concerned in order to verify *in situ* the truth of the complaints made by the petitioners. All of this has led us here today, to the plenary session of the European Parliament, in order to make it clear that the proper application of current legislation by Member States is an unresolved issue that requires particular attention and on which we should remain vigilant.

As I said at the beginning of my speech, most European citizens expect public authorities to provide efficient and effective public services in terms of health, education, transport and security. However, the issue that provokes a growing number of petitions is the apparent inability of public authorities in many countries to deal satisfactorily with the problem of waste management.

The European Union has adopted a broad raft of legislation, applicable in all Member States, in order to ensure that the legal framework exists to deal with the inevitable result of our modern lifestyle in terms of all the things we discard as waste from our household, from our place of work, from our hospitals, from our industries and so on. It is obvious to all that failure to manage such issues, and failure to prioritise efforts in this respect,

produces not only negative effects on human health and well-being, but also on the viability of the planet and its environment.

Judging by the petitions received, the concern of many local communities is growing, and this indicates that waste management is becoming a major political and social problem and people expect the European Union to deal with it somehow. An analysis of the waste management policies implemented in the Member States provides very contrasting information and serious breaches of EU legislation.

The Commission reported in January 2011 that 177 infringement cases concerning landfills had been launched since the deadline for implementing the Landfill Directive in 2001. They had furthermore calculated that there were at the very least 619 illegal landfills still being used in the EU. In its strategic report on the prevention and recycling of waste, the Commission clearly demonstrates that it is using its best efforts to address the issue of waste management, and it also outlines its medium-term proposals.

It should be recalled in this context, Mr President, that the large number of infringement cases mentioned aim at ensuring legal compliance, yet from the petitioners' perspective, more effort needs to be made to ensure proper follow-up actions in the actual implementation of the law.

Closely linked to the waste management process, although upstream of the process, are the EU directives dealing with environmental impact assessments and the access of citizens to information concerning the environment.

**Kristalina Georgieva,** *Member of the Commission.* – Mr President, on behalf of the Commission, I would like to thank Mr Iturgaiz for a very good report on the application of the Waste Framework Directive adopted in 2008. I also wish to thank the members of the committee for their views and contributions to this important debate.

The Commission very much welcomes the report, which presents important facts linked to the state of implementation of waste legislation in Member States. As we have already stressed on many occasions, full implementation of waste legislation is crucial for securing a safe and healthy environment, as well as a resource base for European industry. However, we face a persistent implementation gap in waste legislation and the resulting wide disparity between Member States in terms of performance in waste management not only puts our environment and health at risk, but also prevents the EU economy as a whole, and its recycling and waste management industry in particular, from reaping the benefits of proper implementation.

Let me quote some facts. First, we have missed opportunities due to poor implementation. Those missed opportunities are estimated to amount to a loss of EUR 72 billion per year. Secondly, if the material going for disposal today was treated in accordance with the existing legislation, we could have avoided between 146 and 244 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. That is the equivalent of taking 47 million cars off the road each year and corresponds to somewhere between 19 and 31 percent of the EU climate reduction targets. Last, but not least, full implementation of waste legislation could create over 400 000 jobs – jobs which we need very badly in the current economic environment.

These are important figures, and for this reason the Commission fully concurs with the conclusion of the report that effort needs to be stepped up to fully implement existing waste legislation. We also subscribe to Parliament's call on Member States to transpose the Waste Framework Directive without further delay and to ensure full compliance with all

its requirements, and, in particular, to establish and implement comprehensive waste management plans so that the goal of European waste laws is put into practice quickly.

The Commission will continue to monitor compliance with European waste legislation. We will continue to provide guidance to Member States on practical aspects of implementation, and we intend to streamline resources by identifying and focusing on the most problematic Member States and to address existing deficiencies together with those Member States. We are also looking into the possibility of strengthening cooperation with the European Environment Agency in this respect.

Let me conclude by saying that we have efforts under way to address Parliament's concerns raised in the report and, at the same time, we are grateful that Parliament is bringing much-needed added energy to those efforts.

**Peter Jahr,** *on behalf of the PPE Group.* – (DE) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, Mr Iturgaiz Angulo's report deals with the problem of shortcomings in waste disposal in some Member States, which is of concern to the people of Europe. I would like to express my considerable thanks to Mr Iturgaiz Angulo, who has made a very good job of putting this report back on an objective footing.

In some regions of Europe, there remain serious problems with waste management. In particular, there is a lack of realisable plans for the avoidance, reuse and processing of waste. This gives rise to mountains of waste that overflow into other countries.

The Committee on Petitions has been able to get a very accurate picture of the situation in the regions through its many visits to the locations concerned. In view of the potential environmental damage and harm to public health that could be caused by waste, we need to get to grips with this problem quickly and consistently. The important thing is for all the regions to implement the existing EU legislation in this area promptly and to draw up comprehensive waste management plans. These regulations do, after all, exist; and therefore they must be complied with by the various countries. The responsibility for this lies primarily with the Member States.

I also am looking to the Commission here. It should intervene at an early stage if it becomes clear that plans are not being properly produced in the regions or regulations are not being correctly implemented, or if the regions are unable or unwilling to draw up and implement such plans. As part of this, sanctions must be imposed quickly and consistently if regions do not comply. Naturally, consumers also have a crucial role to play. Without an awareness among the public of waste avoidance and separation, it will be difficult to establish a positive and functioning recycling system – in other words, a genuinely circular flow of materials.

After all, of all the current waste recycling options, the best waste is that which never arises in the first place and can be avoided at the outset. That is good for people, good for the environment and saves resources that can usefully be used elsewhere.

Allow me to sum up what I have said. Firstly, we need the regions to draw up a plan for waste recycling and avoidance. I emphatically agree with the Commission when it says that there can be no money from Brussels unless a clear plan is in place. That is only right. Secondly, and this issue is just as important, we must hold the Member States to account if those responsible in the regions are unable or unwilling to establish such a plan. The Member States must help them to develop such a plan. If there is still a delay – and this is my only criticism of the Commission – then the Commission must help the Member States

to produce such a plan quickly, so that our beautiful continent is not spoilt by mountains of waste.

**Judith A. Merkies**, *on behalf of the S&D Group*. – (NL) Mr President, I would like to thank the Commissioner for her positive words and for agreeing with us that it is absolutely essential to give consideration to an effective waste policy.

Over the last few years, we have come across many citizens from various Member States in the Committee on Petitions. Some countries, such as Italy, Bulgaria and Romania, still send a great deal of waste to landfill, although, if I am honest, the petitions did not come from those countries alone. It would seem that waste really is a problem that needs to be taken seriously, a problem that has an impact on a large number of citizens. We can see that there is a lack of transparency. Citizens want to know what is happening, how the authorities are dealing with something that is currently seen as a problem but is actually an opportunity. Waste must become an opportunity, rather than a problem, because an opportunity is what it actually is.

You told us that everything is under control and that more attention is going to be paid to this area. Quite honestly, though, we have already asked the Commission on various occasions in Plenary – this is therefore not the first time that we have asked – not just to tell us what needs to happen, but to actually do something.

We have rules, and they are good in the European Union. We make it very clear that there needs to be a plan, that there is a hierarchy and how waste must be handled. Obviously, it is also important for all the planning to be implemented, however – in other words, for there to actually be some action. That is why we are calling for real action, and my colleagues endorse this, for the introduction of a zero tolerance policy, and for subsidy streams to be turned off so that pressure is also brought to bear to take action. Ultimately, we are calling for a Member State to be called to account before the Court of Justice as soon as possible for why nothing has happened, for fines to be imposed whenever applicable.

I am thus asking very clearly for three things. These are also in the report, but I will just recap here in any case.

Firstly, I am calling for a zero tolerance policy.

My second request is for set-up assistance wherever a Member State cannot manage alone. In times of crisis, it is clearly difficult to constantly have to find the people, the resources and the ideas to ultimately handle waste well.

The third thing we need – and this is the most important of all – is real transparency, as that is what the citizens are demanding. Without it, the citizens feel excluded. We need transparency about how waste is handled; in other words, is it toxic, what happens to it, where does it go and is it dealt with lawfully? What do we need to do to ensure that this problem becomes an opportunity, since we need these materials? For goodness' sake, let us take precisely those regions of Europe that are still having difficulties at this point in time and make them the most modern regions and deal with waste in an entirely new and creative way since, in future, we really will need every bit of plastic.

**Sonia Alfano**, *on behalf of the ALDE Group*. – (IT) Mr President, I would like to offer you my best wishes on your new position.

Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I am very happy that today, we are debating in plenary a resolution that stems from the many petitions that reach the European Parliament, and

that refers specifically to the question of waste. These petitions demonstrate the concern of European citizens about the harm done to the environment, human health and the economy by waste management practices prevalent in various areas in Europe.

Even though I agree with the overall structure of the resolution, I am rather dissatisfied with how some of its passages address the issue of incinerators. At times, it seems that thanks to technology, any problem related to public health and the environment has been completely overcome. Until last year, right here, we were hearing the same words about nuclear power plants. Today, however, in this same Chamber, it is difficult to find anyone willing to defend the nuclear industry. Is it possible that politics is simply unable to take a long-term view? Do we really have to wait for more epidemiological studies confirming the increased cancer rates already found throughout populations living near incinerators?

This is not the NIMBY syndrome, but simply the citizens defending their right to health. There are alternatives that are virtuous and create employment. We must implement the spirit of the Waste Management Directive strictly, with a waste cycle based on the concepts of reduction, reuse and recycling. Landfill and incineration are residual, hierarchically inferior options, resorted to only after everything else possible has been done. If there was a political will to that effect, incinerators would be a nice memory.

I think that Parliament should take a more advanced stance and better protect its citizens in this area. I hope that the European Commission will propose stricter criteria and procedures for building incinerators and opening landfill sites, and encourage serious 'zero waste' policies in all Member States.

**Margrete Auken**, *on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group*. – (DA) Mr President, first of all, I would like to say that this report is suffering from a very serious shortcoming that it has had since its inception. Far too many members of our committee are uneasy, not to say unwilling, when it comes to criticising members of their own party in their own Member States and have therefore succeeded in ensuring that it is not as specific as it should have been in view of the many complaints. It has become far too general a report, which would probably not have been out of place in the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety. This is something that we ought to change quickly. Our committee cannot operate if we do not all rise above party politics.

Having got that out of the way, I would like to express my wholehearted praise for Mr Iturgaiz Angulo for his almost perfect cooperation on this report. We listened to one another. I believe that, despite the one-sided conditions, this report is a very good one, and I would like to express my thanks for that.

However, I have the same two points of criticism to make that have already been mentioned. Firstly, we have the deficient implementation – the fact that the problems are not taken seriously, there is a lack of adequate cooperation with the Commission and with other regions, town and cities that have solutions in place and citizens are not sufficiently involved. We cannot solve these problems unless we work much more closely with our citizens. In far too many places – in Italy in particular – we have seen that citizens are almost regarded as the enemy when it comes to solving these problems. This has been a horrible experience. We saw something similar but to a slightly less worrying extent in both Bulgaria and Spain, but Italy really is a dismal example in this regard.

My second point of criticism concerns the question of resources. We are currently facing not just one, but two crises. We are currently in the midst of a resource crisis, and clearly

the most stupid thing we can do in relation to our scarce resources is to discharge them into the water or place them in a remote landfill site. The second most stupid thing we can do, however, is to burn them. We now have to put a stop to the pyromania. Not even the best incineration plants should be permitted to incinerate our scant resources. We must work at meeting all the requirements of the Waste Management Directive, but also invest intelligently in plants that are able to recover resources so as to develop our waste strategy in a modern way. That is what we need, first and foremost.

**Julie Girling**, *on behalf of the ECR Group*. – Mr President, I would like to give a very strong welcome to this report on behalf of my group. I am involved in Parliament with waste management via my membership of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety, and I have to say how interesting and refreshing it was to read this report from a slightly different perspective, because it does take out a lot of what I might call the vested interests (and I mean that in the nicest possible way) – people who have their views and have had them for a long time and have worked very hard to get what they want through. Sometimes, it is difficult to lift your head up and look at the big picture, so a report such as this, I think, is really very useful.

Of course it is about a subject which very clearly and very closely concerns all of the people that we represent. There are very few subjects for me as a constituency MEP that I get quite so much passion from my voters about as waste management. I feel that it is an area in which we, the European Parliament, stand to be judged. If we do not get it right and if we do not make sure that we enforce, then all of the talking that we do here comes to nothing. All of that is encompassed in this very interesting and useful report.

There are huge differences in the way that Member States deal with the problem of rubbish, and I actually welcome the fact that we have those differences. I welcome the fact that this report recognises very strongly the issue of subsidiarity. It is about a Waste Framework Directive. Many of you will remember my predecessor, the lady that I replaced in this Parliament – Caroline Jackson – who was the rapporteur on the Waste Framework Directive. One of the principles that she was very keen on espousing was that Member States should be allowed as much subsidiarity as possible within the framework of tight and challenging targets. I know from recent conversations with her that she is extremely disappointed that, having been given that freedom, Member States are not delivering, because we are not making those targets.

Where we need to really tighten up – and this is in the report – is not on a whole raft of new regulations but on making those that we currently have work better and more effectively. A framework is just that. We need to get our Member States working towards that framework. I was really shocked here to see how many infringements there are in my own Member State – I thought we were doing OK. So in that sense, this is a great report for bringing that home.

Just on one point: I am happy to defend nuclear energy. But it has to be done with good technology, tightly controlled. The same is the case for incineration.

**Nikolaos Chountis**, *on behalf of the GUE/NGL Group*. – (EL) Mr President, both the report by Mr Angulo and the number and content of the petitions received by the Commission from citizens and operators prove two things: firstly, that the problem of waste is an urgent and burning issue and, secondly, that, despite the differences that obviously exist, the Member States are not performing satisfactorily in terms of waste management, thereby creating public health and environmental problems. One point on which I would like to

comment, which the report also underlines, is that, although landfill is the last resort under EU legislation, there are countries, mine included, which are lagging behind in recycling and prevention and are therefore under pressure to extend existing landfills or create new ones, in breach of Community legislation and common sense, thereby causing serious problems in local communities and resulting in conflicts and solutions that are dangerous to the environment and public health. The second comment on the report that I wish to address to the Commissioner has to do with various cases in which the Commission washes its hands and is indifferent to the fact that it needs to intervene, such as where there are obvious errors in the waste management plans and environmental impact studies being processed. In such cases, Commissioner, the Commission needs to intervene. I think that the report, generally speaking, concerns a useful directive that will assist us in waste management.

**Nikolaos Salavrakos**, *on behalf of the EFD Group*. – (EL) Mr President, firstly, I should like to congratulate Mr Iturgaiz Angulo on his exceptional report, which we discussed in committee and on which we congratulated him at first reading. European citizens expect government authorities to provide adequate and effective services, especially in the waste sector, because they have a massive impact and harmful repercussions on public health and the environment. According to the UN, mankind's problems up to 2030 will be as follows, in the following order: combating social exclusion, immigration and environmental issues. I do not know if they are in the right order, but this is an issue which deserves serious attention. The petitions received on the subject by the Committee on Petitions are now a regular occurrence. I therefore recommend, as the report emphasises, that the 2008 directive should apply to waste, as it lays down rules to protect the environment and human health, with the aim of preventing or reducing adverse repercussions from the production and management of waste. We need to pay attention to resources, to sites and to the public and, when I say the public, I mean that we need to educate the public. We need transparency in waste management procedures because waste management is a huge economic event. We need to pay particular attention to all this throughout Europe.

**Andreas Mölzer (NI)**. – (DE) Mr President, the EU generates 2 billion tonnes of waste, of which 40 million tonnes is classed as special waste, every year. On a *per capita* basis, it puts the role of India and China as waste producers into perspective. Although North America, Western Europe, Japan and Korea are known to lead the field when it comes to recycling, they still generate more waste than the rest of the world put together. The developments that go hand-in-hand with rising disposal costs should not be underestimated. In the US, electronics manufacturers save on disposal costs by shipping electronic waste to Africa or other areas of the developing world and calling it development aid, not to mention the innumerable tonnes of German PET bottles that are processed into stuffing for soft toys in China, where expensive environmental legislation and rules on worker protection do not apply, or which eventually end up in items of clothing destined for the West.

In addition, many materials can only undergo the recycling process a limited number of times. In other cases, only a small proportion can be recycled. Downcycling is just as much of a problem as transporting waste all the way across Europe and the black sheep that dump waste illegally. What might be helpful, therefore, is the combination of an increase in recycling rates together with strict controls on exports of electronic waste and a shifting of the cost burden onto those who cause the waste. Waste avoidance measures are even more important, however. In ordering everyone to use toxic energy-saving bulbs, the EU has hardly covered itself in glory in this respect. Moreover, we must not forget that the

issue of the storage of nuclear waste has still not been resolved. That is yet another reason to refrain from building more nuclear power stations.

**Erminia Mazzoni (PPE).** – (IT) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I would like to thank the rapporteur, Mr Iturgaiz Angulo, for the work he has done.

This own-initiative report from the Committee on Petitions stems from the strong need, felt by most, to respond more fully to the citizens who have submitted to the Committee on Petitions countless petitions, which are, in point of fact, complaints, regarding serious misapplication of EU law in the environmental sector, but particularly in the field of waste management.

One hundred and fourteen petitions, over a period of time that we can describe as short, from 16 different countries with the highest numbers from countries such as Spain, Ireland, Italy and Greece. The most common complaint relates to the improper activation of incineration and waste-treatment plants. This indicates that citizens are badly informed with regard to the effectiveness of the advanced technologies used for these types of plants.

I believe that this sector is extremely important, especially at such a sensitive time as this, with a global financial crisis that is also devastating the European Union. As the Commission has often repeated, following numerous detailed studies on the issue, a different use of waste resources would save the EU more than EUR 72 billion and would create more than 40 million jobs. I think these figures are important, in particular, when combined with the benefits for the environment and health, which are really the primary concern for us all.

**Chrysoula Paliadeli (S&D).** – (EL) Mr President, I, too, should like to take my turn in thanking Mr Iturgaiz Angulo for a truly careful, serious, objective and ultimately didactic approach to such an important problem which has plagued Europe over recent years. I consider that the suggestions made in this report, at certain points at least, may allow the Commission and the Member States to adapt their policies, in order to address a problem which, although not equally serious in all the EU Member States, is taking on ever increasing dimensions. I consider that the Member States have a basic obligation to inform their citizens, without confining themselves merely to comments, and to restore confidence in connection with a problem that concerns us all. I think that it goes without saying that we need more objective data to measure environmental infringements. Finally, I consider cross-border cooperation to be very important.

**Riikka Manner (ALDE).** – (FI) Mr President, first of all, I would like to congratulate the rapporteur, Mr Iturgaiz Angulo, for an excellent report. In the period 2004-2010, the Committee on Petitions actually received and declared admissible a total of 114 petitions, alleging breaches of European Union legislation on waste alone. This indicates all too clearly that the issue is a topical one, and one that is also rightly worrying the public.

There are enormous differences among the Member States of the European Union as regards their waste management policies, and this is something that we ought to be able to address more closely. The deadline for the implementation of the Waste Framework Directive expired in 2010, and only six Member States have managed to implement it. In other words, public concern regarding the matter needs to be taken very seriously.

It also needs to be remembered that waste is an opportunity. As has been said, waste is a resource, and improvements in waste management are also bound to create new jobs and improve resource efficiency in the European Union.

**Ana Miranda (Verts/ALE).** – (PT) Mr President, Mr Iturgaiz Angulo, congratulations on your report. Unfortunately, your party has not always taken this line, even when in power. One example is my region, Galicia, where waste management does not prioritise prevention, reuse and recycling, as set out in item 12 of your report. At present, Galicia incinerates 42% of its waste, and the Galician Government is planning a new incinerator in O Irixo, which will consolidate the predominance of investment in this system for its waste treatment. Furthermore, although the plan is to incinerate half of the waste produced by 3 million people, it does not comply with the environmental impact assessment referred to in items 18 to 25, but has opted for a shortened procedure.

The project also fails to comply with items 16 to 18 on the necessary dialogue and information for the people affected, who are against the incinerator. I would therefore urge compliance with European legislation on waste management, and would ask you to please send your report to the Galician Government.

**Charalampos Angourakis (GUE/NGL).** – (EL) Mr President, although the report describes the environmental crimes that pass for waste management and environmentally catastrophic practices, it adopts all the factors that cause them. Instead of proposing measures to combat the pollution caused with impunity by big business, the report openly advertises the catastrophic action by monopolies in the sector. It welcomes Directive 2000/98/EC, which promotes the incineration of waste for energy, which is destroying the environment and putting public health in danger, in order to increase capitalist profits. That same directive legalises pollution with impunity by industrial capital, because it allows hazardous waste to be mixed with non-hazardous waste. The report refers to the role of organised crime in creating environmental dangers, in order to conceal the real class-based crime against the environment being committed by the monopolies, the bodies of the European Union and the governments of the Member States. In Greece, in Argolida, Crete and numerous other areas, the health of the workers is at permanent risk from the landfills containing toxic sludge that are operating next door to their homes. The solution, as far as we in the Greek Communist Party are concerned, is to reverse the anti-environmental policy of the European Union, in order to safeguard the health of the workers and protect the environment.

**Mario Borghezio (EFD).** – (IT) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, this is an excellent and balanced report which also rightly refers to the principle of subsidiarity, and therefore recognises the important and pre-eminent role played by Member States.

The report, however, also paints a picture of a multi-speed Europe. As far as my country is concerned, there are two speeds. On the one hand, there are certain cities and regions – for example, Naples and Campania – that are a source of shame for those of us who, for the moment, have identity cards issued by the Italian State, a great source of shame that we continue to denounce. On the other hand, there are the virtuous towns of Padania where we have hundreds of mayors, for example, those of the Northern League, who may be ‘barbarian dreamers’, but who are also civilised people who teach citizens and ensure that they sort their rubbish and who organise the collection and incineration of waste. This civilised part of our country is an example for Europe.

So let us move forward in this direction. I welcome the petitions which also inform the European authorities of these situations which, as I have said before, in Campania also pose a threat to European tourists who risk setting foot in those areas.

*(The speaker agreed to take a blue-card question under Rule 149(8))*

**Sonia Alfano (ALDE),** *Blue-card question.* – (IT) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I believe this is the umpteenth time that Mr Borghezio has referred to Padania. I would like to know if this is an imaginary place like Duckburg or some other hypothetical town from a fairy tale. I ask because he referred to Naples and Campania, a region that I would remind you is controlled by a local centre-right government in Italy. So I wanted to understand where Padania is and if, by any chance, he is referring to Italy, the place where he was elected.

**Mario Borghezio (EFD),** *Blue-card answer.* – (IT) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, Ms Alfano can look at the European Parliament website where, modestly speaking, I am described as President of the provisional government of Padania. This is an official document of the European Parliament. Also, when she leaves her mafia homeland to come up north, she can see road signs saying 'Higher Padania' or 'Lower Padania'. It was not invented by Mr Bossi; it is the civilised land of us Padanians, barbarian dreamers.

**Philippe Boulland (PPE).** – (FR) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I should like to mention the rapporteur, Mr Iturgaiz Angulo, for the quality of his work, for the long negotiations that he has had to lead, and for the patience he has displayed.

We have finally arrived at the vote on this report, which is extremely important because it allows us to raise our fellow citizens' difficulties and fears in this Chamber before the Commission and the Council. Here is further proof of the effectiveness of the right of petition in Europe.

The majority of petitions are related to the environment and waste represents a major concern for our fellow citizens. This issue must reflect a problem in society. We are consuming left, right and centre. We are only now realising that what we do not consume we throw away. This awareness must absolutely be reinforced among the citizens; this much is clear.

Yet this report is also a timely reminder for the Member States. It is nevertheless worrying to see that the States do not seem to be in control of the situation. Only six Member States transposed the framework directive on waste on time. The number of complaints received regarding the issue sometimes shows the lack of transparency in the choice of location for landfill sites.

Finally, and this is the most worrying aspect, members of organised crime seem to do as they please. A EUR 75 billion market is very attractive to the greedy. The Member States must send out a strong signal. There must be greater penalties for companies that use public contracts to enhance their own wealth.

This report is a warning to the Member States, but the European Commission must also play its part and ensure that the directives on waste are properly implemented.

This dossier needs to be made visible but also credible. If no one plays the game, we will continue to waste time and money on verification and counter-verification procedures which could go on for years. Let us listen to the message from the petitioners and put a stop to this mess as soon as possible.

*(The speaker agreed to take a blue-card question under Rule 149(8))*

**Paul Rübzig (PPE),** *Blue-card question.* – (DE) Mr President, I would like to ask Mr Boulland how he thinks the increased separation of waste could be used to turn this waste chain –

which is, in reality, a chain made up of raw materials and added value – into what could be termed a value chain in the future.

Does he think that the Horizon 2020 research programme could establish a basis for how these resources could be usefully reused?

**Philippe Boulland (PPE),** *Blue-card answer.* – (FR) Things have been set out in Mr Iturgaiz Angulo's report. We have addressed the issue of pre-sorting waste. For the time being, I cannot respond any further to the question that was asked.

**Mario Pirillo (S&D).** – (IT) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, the hundreds of petitions to the European Parliament from various EU countries clarify the extent and severity of the waste management problem.

An interesting aspect of the report is the attention paid to the disposal of illegal waste that affects many regions. In my region, as a delegation from the European Parliament's Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety was able to ascertain, high levels of caesium-137 have been detected. This is typical nuclear waste even though there are no nuclear power plants in Italy.

It is clear that this is a Europe-wide problem. There is illegal trafficking of waste that must be monitored and curbed, but which has so far been ignored by the European Commission. It is therefore easy to state that only a few countries, including Italy, do not apply European standards. Instead, given that illegal trafficking of waste extends beyond national borders, we need to think about how to deal with this at a European level.

**Daciana Octavia Sârbu (S&D).** – (RO) Mr President, this resolution lists 115 cases involving claims from citizens of 14 Member States that the Waste Management Directive has been infringed. However, we all know that there are far more cases of this type, even if they have not all been brought to the attention of the Committee on Petitions. I personally know of at least one case in Romania which is being investigated at regional level. This situation is a serious indication of the failure by many national governments to enforce this vital legislation for protecting the environment and our citizens' health. However, the situation regarding waste from mining activities is also just as worrying. I have reiterated my concern on this matter, both within Parliament and directly to the European Commission. The Commission assures us that the Mining Waste Directive contains sufficient provisions to protect the environment, including in connection with mining using cyanide technologies. However, I call on the Commission to answer the following question: what will happen if the Mining Waste Directive is enforced to the same degree as the Waste Management Directive? It does not require too much imagination to realise that the consequences of such a situation would be really disastrous.

*Catch-the-eye procedure*

**President.** – We have more speakers than we have time for, so I am going to give precedence in the catch-the-eye procedure to those who have been here since the start of the debate. There has to be some basis for selection, after all.

**Mairead McGuinness (PPE).** – Mr President, I would like to thank the rapporteur for his work on this report.

For all the many citizens who petition Parliament, I am afraid to say that there are many other citizens who have no regard for waste management. We need to acknowledge that

public awareness needs to be increased in relation to how to manage waste, both within the home and at work. There is much to be done. If people were obliged to visit landfills that were not working properly, they might think twice about dumping waste and putting it into refuse sacks. I know that in County Louth, where I come from, there is an old landfill dump that now soaks up a great deal of money because of the environmental problems it poses, and it also causes difficulties for the people who live in the area.

I would ask the Commission to address the issue of recycling tyres – perhaps not today, Commissioner – as this certainly is an area where there is a lot of illegal activity. We are not getting the value from the recycling of tyres that we could.

**Silvia-Adriana Țicău (S&D).** – (RO) Mr President, the petitions submitted to the European Parliament indicate cases of non-compliance with EU legislation in terms of environmental impact assessment and public consultation, as well as concerns the public has about the pollution risk as part of the waste management process. In most Member States, major investment is required to introduce waste management strategies and suitable infrastructures and facilities.

I call on the Commission to support Member States in the process of implementing European legislation by providing suitable funding mechanisms and clear, precise guidelines and criteria regarding the location of landfills in relation to residential areas, schools, local health care centres and drinking waters sources, in order to provide stronger guarantees against possible risks to human health and the environment. Public dialogue is vital right from the planning stage. I should emphasise the importance of impact studies and having public debate about them. I urge Member States to give greater support to local and regional authorities so that the best waste management models are implemented.

**Alfreds Rubiks (GUE/NGL).** – (LV) Mr President, I support the ideas and thoughts expressed in the regulation and in the report. Personally, I believe that greater attention should be paid to processing organic waste, particularly in those regions where agriculture plays an active part. Organic waste is comparatively easy to use if it is incinerated, but in this way, we lose a lot of value. Products with new added value could very well be produced from this form of waste and, here, finance could also come from the second pillar planned for agriculture. Stricter standards need to be brought in for both waste management and the use of chemicals in agriculture and industry.

**Jaroslav Paška (EFD).** – (SK) Mr President, waste management is seen by the public as a very sensitive issue. The European Commission should therefore monitor compliance with the waste management directives in the individual countries. The conclusions of the Commission report from the beginning of the previous year showed that several EU countries are not paying proper attention to the protection of the environment and waste management. Dozens of proceedings for breaches of legal regulations and information on hundreds of illegal and thousands of non-compliant landfills are alarming findings and draw our attention to the fact that the Commission is also failing in this area in the enforcement of EU legislation.

Waste treatment, if it is well organised, can be a profitable sector of the economy, and waste recycling is a great help to us in environmental conservation. Therefore, as has been shown, we will need to make much greater efforts to implement better functioning mechanisms for the management and effective treatment of waste.

**Czesław Adam Siekierski (PPE).** – (PL) Mr President, illegal or non-compliant landfills and incinerators are indeed a disturbing problem. They are a threat to both health and environmental safety. They also mean the absence of the savings which can be realised by smart and effective waste management, and the absence of the potential to recover valuable raw materials which are in short supply. They also mean lost jobs.

Much remains to be done in the field of raising the citizens' awareness about responsible waste management and its resultant benefits. It is important to have greater coordination of waste management at regional and local level, as well as for residents to have easy access to transparent information, not just about how waste should be sorted, but also about what happens to it later.

In many countries, modernising the waste management system is going to require significant investment. Funding this work should also be one of the Union's priorities. Furthermore, it would be particularly useful to intensify action to identify best practices and facilitate their exchange at national level and throughout Europe.

*End of the catch-the-eye procedure*

**Kristalina Georgieva,** *Member of the Commission.* – Mr President, I would like to give my most sincere gratitude to the honourable Members for this substantive debate, which reflected the attitudes of our citizens. Let me make the following points.

First, for the Commission, the number one priority is to put in place the right sequencing of action, namely, first reuse, recycle, recover and, only if that is not possible, go for landfills based on stringent environmental impact assessments. During this process, we naturally look very seriously at the transportation of waste.

So how do we help the Member States? Through guidance and best practice, but also by scrutinising national management plans to make sure that they are adequate in helping with the problems. For the ten countries with more serious problems, we intend to carry out individual meetings to accelerate action. Obviously, when action falls short, we do not hesitate to start infringement procedures – out of 19 which have been started, nine are still ongoing – and also, as a last resort, to take Member States to the European Court of Justice for breaches of EU waste legislation. May I just stress that one third of the environmental cases concern failure to deal properly with waste management.

I completely agree that not only should we do the right thing at home, but we should also set the right example for developing countries, because a mountain of waste somewhere else would actually have implications for the status of our planet. I could not agree more with the point that has been made by Members that in these tough economic times, waste reuse, recycling and recovery is an economic opportunity and we should not miss out on a good crisis to grab it.

There was a specific question on mining waste. After the Baia Mare accident and an international Commission report, we have come up – to the best of my knowledge – with the most stringent directive in the world. We are working very closely with countries, including Romania, to make sure that the directive is respected and implemented.

Finally, a point on public awareness. We certainly need to work on that. May I just add that I spent most of my professional career working on the environment. I started because a member of my family got sick – irrevocable damage was caused to his health – because of

groundwater pollution. Therefore, I fully share the emotional attitude of our citizens and our Members of Parliament.

**Carlos José Iturgaiz Angulo**, *rapporteur*. – (ES) Mr President, I would particularly like to thank Commissioner Georgieva for her interesting opinions and also my fellow Members who have participated in this debate. To some of the latter, I would like to say that comments have been made about the appropriateness or otherwise of holding this debate in the Committee on Petitions, and of referring the matter on from that Committee to this House.

With your permission, Mr President, I would like to commend and defend the Committee on Petitions as an appropriate setting in which to debate these issues. I say this given that those who submitted petitions, the citizens of the European Union, have addressed the Committee on Petitions. Apart from the fact that citizens can address other committees, such as the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety, and bearing in mind that opinions may be developed and reports drawn up in other committees, I think that when citizens approach the Committee on Petitions, they want us to respond and provide a solution to their problems. Clearly, we cannot look the other way or divert attention. Were we to do so, there would be no point to the work and actions of the Committee on Petitions within the European Parliament or, indeed, to the very existence of that Committee.

In addition, I would like to say to certain colleagues that the petitions have referred systematically to the constant deficiencies that occur with waste management and to the real, habitual inability of the Member States to fulfil their legal obligations. This really is the way things are at present. These thoughts and problems have also been included in the report, however, hence the request for the Member States to transpose the Waste Management Directive without further delay, and to guarantee that all its provisions are fully complied with, especially through the establishment and application of comprehensive waste management plans.

Therefore, Mr President, I believe that through this report and Ms Georgieva's own words, a very direct course has been set to try to resolve all the problems that have been outlined by the groups, many problems that are related to this issue, but I also believe that it needs to be emphasised that delaying is not an option, nor can a blind eye be turned, when it comes to resolving the many, many issues and petitions that are being received from countries throughout the European Union.

**President.** – The debate is closed.

The vote will take place today at 12.00.

On a personal note – and this is the last time I will do this – please allow me to express my thanks to you all for having made my maiden sitting very straightforward; you have been very disciplined, which has made my job an easy one. I hardly need add that this would not have been possible without the assistance of the people sitting to the left and right of me.

#### **Written statements (Rule 149)**

**Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)**, *in writing*. – (RO) Bearing in mind that waste and pollution pose serious threats to human health and the integrity of the environment with direct consequences, I think that all Member States have a duty to speed up the introduction

of appropriate, advanced waste management strategies, in accordance with the applicable directive.

We are all aware that in most Member States, major investment is required to introduce waste management strategies and suitable infrastructures and facilities. This is why I believe that public authorities should also consider the possibility of earmarking an appropriate proportion of Cohesion Fund resources for this purpose or of applying directly for funding from the European Investment Bank.

**Vladimír Maňka (S&D), in writing.** – (SK) The concern of many local communities in relation to waste management is growing. The growing number of petitions bears witness to this. Waste management is becoming a major political and social problem. Failure to manage such issues, and failure to prioritise efforts in this respect, produces not only negative effects on human health and well-being, but also on the viability of the planet and its environment.

Many EU countries are far behind in their implementation of waste strategies and, in this context, the legacy of the past, and an excessive dependence on landfill options, linked to the need to change attitudes towards waste disposal, has caused serious breaches of EU legislation to occur.

All measures must be taken in order to prevent the generation of waste and to ensure preparation for re-use, recycling, other recovery, including energy recovery, and disposal by means of safe incineration, with landfill as the very last resort.

**Rovana Plumb (S&D), in writing.** – (RO) The waste industry in the European Union is a public responsibility, frequently managed by private interests and multinational companies, which handles 60% of household waste and 75% of waste from businesses, with an annual turnover of EUR 75 billion.

An analysis of the waste management policies implemented by EU Member States provides very contrasting information. Some Member States, including Romania, are lagging behind in their implementation of waste management strategies and, in this context, the legacy of the past and the excessive dependence on landfills, along with the attitude towards waste disposal, which should be changed, have caused numerous serious breaches of EU legislation to occur. Article 4 of the new Waste Framework Directive specifies a mandatory waste hierarchy: prevention, preparation for reuse, recycling or other forms of reuse, including energy recovery and disposal by means of safe incineration, with landfills as the very last resort.

I call on Member States which are faced with obvious waste crises to consider the fact that more efficient waste management strategies provide opportunities for job creation and revenue growth, while ensuring environmental sustainability through reuse, recycling and the recovery of energy from waste.

**Monika Smolková (S&D), in writing.** – (SK) We have just heard from the Commissioner how many benefits recycling, and recycling of electrical waste in particular, bring to the economy. The correct policy for dealing with waste is therefore essential, since electrical waste is one of the fastest growing areas of waste in the European Union.

The Slovak Republic has long since achieved the objective set out in Directive 2002/96/EC and, since 2010, we have been encountering the problem of an excess over the minimum limit of recycling four kilograms of electrical waste per capita per year, and this is going

to rise. During the transition period that Slovakia is in, we will therefore cover the deficiencies that remain among producers and importers or from anonymous electronic sales and, likewise, we will restrict the selection of those who still do not contribute to the funding of waste collection and subsequent treatment.

Therefore, I see no reason to grant exemptions elsewhere in the EU so that the exceptions can be abused to obtain certain benefits that would ultimately slow down the development of the recycling industry.

**Bogusław Sonik (PPE), in writing.** – (PL) The European Union has recognised the urgent need for responsible waste management and has created a whole system of secondary legislation, placing on the Member States a series of responsibilities related to the storage, segregation and recycling of waste. The Union is moving towards a situation in which waste will stop being a danger to the environment but will instead become an effectively used resource. I think the effort being made in this direction is clearly worthy of praise and support. However, it should be admitted that even the most sincere desire and the most determined action of the EU cannot produce results if the Member States do not express a desire for effective cooperation in this area. Despite the deadline of December 2010 set for transposition of the directive into national law, only six Member States have managed to do this. We in the European Parliament should pay particular attention to the opinion of the Union's citizens. An expression of this is the number of petitions submitted to the Committee on Petitions – 114 – which call attention to various aspects of waste management which do not comply with EU law. This shows that it is in the interest of the people who live in the EU for the Member States to bring about implementation of the contents of the directive into national legal systems as quickly as possible. Taking into account the interest of the European Union as a whole and of individual citizens, I call upon the Member States to adapt their national legal systems to the contents of the directive.

**Jarosław Leszek Wałęsa (PPE), in writing.** – (PL) Rapid and dynamic economic growth is inevitably associated with a threat to the natural environment. Therefore, the European Union and, in particular, the European Parliament, must also set standards for environment protection which will be appropriate in a changing economic reality. A definite step forward on this matter was the implementation by the Member States of the Waste Management Directive, the objective of which was to improve and raise the standard of the management, processing and storage of waste. This was imperative in view of the huge amount – over 2 million tonnes – of rubbish processed in the Union every year. However, as is evident from the numerous petitions which are received by the Committee on Petitions and from the fact-finding visits which have been made and which are discussed exhaustively by Mr Iturgaiz Angulo in his report, we can conclude beyond doubt that the objective of the directive has only been achieved in part. For this reason, it is essential that further effort be made by the entire Union to eliminate cases of non-compliance with, or incorrect performance of, the provisions of the directive. In addition, we cannot forget that the ultimate effect of this work in large measure needs the cooperation and commitment of society and requires that those who violate our common good bear responsibility for their actions.

## **6. Daphne programme (short presentation)**

**President.** – The next item is the report by Regina Bastos, on behalf of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality, on the Daphne programme: achievements and future prospects (2011/2273(INI)) (A7-0006/2012).

**Regina Bastos, rapporteur.** – (PT) Mr President, the Daphne programme is the only EU programme intended to contribute to protecting children, young people and women from all forms of violence.

This programme has been a genuine success since its launch in 1997, both in terms of its stakeholders and in terms of the effectiveness of the projects funded by the programme. The report that we are now discussing, on the progress made and the future prospects for the Daphne programme, was adopted almost unanimously in the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality, with only one abstention.

Work with the other political groups has been very fruitful, so I would like to thank all the shadow rapporteurs for the very positive contributions that they made to this report.

Combating violence against children, young people and women remains a priority and is, unfortunately, still necessary. This is clear from the new forms of violence that have emerged recently with the growing use of social media, violence at day nurseries, ill-treatment of the elderly and sexual assault among teenagers. Moreover, in the current situation of economic crisis and budgetary austerity, there is a need to avoid the direct financial impact which this type of crime has on the judiciary and on health and social services.

The costs of domestic violence in the EU have been estimated at EUR 16 billion per year, including all direct medical costs, court and police costs, social costs and economic costs.

Last November, the Commission announced that from 2014, the Daphne programme will be incorporated into the rights and citizenship programme. We must admit that we would have preferred this programme to remain independent and autonomous. As this is not an option, I would point out three concerns: firstly, safeguarding the aims of the programme for the 2014-2020 period; secondly, keeping its funding at the same level as that of previous programmes; and, thirdly, ensuring its visibility within the future rights and citizenship programme.

If this programme is to remain effective, it is vital to ensure that its beneficiaries, public authorities and non-governmental organisations continue to be kept properly informed about how it is funded and conditions for accessing it. Small organisations, which, by their nature, have more direct contact with phenomena of violence, often have administrative problems, and should be able to participate fully, as they play a vital role in detecting these problems and coming up with innovative ways of tackling them.

The balanced sharing out of projects between all the Member States should be taken into account. Moreover, the collection of comparable data on different types of violence in the EU is very useful in ascertaining the real level of the problem and finding appropriate solutions.

I shall conclude by stressing the importance of using the media to raise awareness of violence in the fields of education and health, and among the police and the judiciary.

*Catch-the-eye procedure*

**Norica Nicolai (ALDE).** – (RO) Mr President, I wish to congratulate the rapporteur, and I believe that Parliament must support this programme to become independent right from 2014. This is because this problem persists, is getting worse and is becoming increasingly sinister and subtle, and I believe that the scale and costs, especially in social terms, which have not been clearly assessed at the moment, may have an impact on civilised standards in Europe.

**Elena Băsescu (PPE).** – (RO) Mr President, I, too, would like to congratulate Ms Bastos for drafting this report. The Daphne programme must receive sufficient funding. This will provide the necessary means for combating violence in its wide variety of forms, both in the private and public setting.

I should emphasise the importance of paragraph G. The economic crisis is making women more vulnerable to abuse. In my country, the Open Doors programme is currently being run, cofinanced by the European Commission through the Daphne III programme. It is part of a partnership with Austria, the UK, the Czech Republic, Greece and Slovenia. It is aimed at immigrant women who have been victims of violence. This initiative offers them the chance to become integrated into Romanian society, while also being community leaders in this area.

**Sylvie Guillaume (S&D).** – (FR) Mr President, now it is my turn to congratulate Ms Bastos on her report, which, I believe, is very comprehensive and tackles all the questions raised in the Commission's interim evaluation report. Clearly, this report focuses on the involvement of NGOs and small entities, on improved management, and on anything which effectively allows the objectives of the programme to be maintained.

Obviously, I do have some regrets. Firstly, I regret that a debate has not really been organised today on this report, as that would have allowed us to bring the focus back to the violence which still affects young people, women and children everywhere. I particularly regret this because, if I have understood correctly, there is a certain desire to remove several references to prostitution and the violation of women's rights in terms of sexual and reproductive health. Clearly, there are therefore things which have still to be resolved, which are not totally clear from various people's remarks.

I have run out of time to talk about prevention and education about stereotypes.

I should like to finish with two issues we must be vigilant about: firstly, maintaining the amount allocated to the Daphne programme and, secondly, ensuring that the name of this programme, which is widely known, will be kept in the future.

**Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE).** – (ES) Mr President, the crisis should, indeed, not be an excuse for a lack of investment in a solution to one of the main problems faced by the European Union as a whole. Furthermore, it is increasingly clear that the crisis is also an excuse, in many respects, to reinforce certain aspects that lead to even more violence against women. For me, this is, in fact, one of the fundamental debates that we have to tackle in this House, and not simply from an economic standpoint.

It has been said, and it is true, that the violence also generates a significant economic cost. Beyond the economic cost generated by the violence and the obvious consequences, however, we are also going to debate this in depth, as has been proposed.

This debate cannot be used for issues of an ideological nature, which can even result in the generation of a dynamic for the stigmatisation of women, which, in turn, will also obviously place them in a vulnerable situation and therefore make them more susceptible to violent situations, if that were possible.

I insist that this is a good opportunity to continue debating what currently needs to be discussed, but without forgetting the underlying issue, which is the fundamental discrimination that women suffer in many parts of our society.

**Andrea Češková (ECR).** – (CS) Mr President, I very much support this European Parliament own-initiative report, and I take the view that it is still necessary to continue this important and, at the same time, highly successful programme. Small non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are the driving force in combating violence against women and children, but they often have problems with financing projects aimed at combating violence.

The important thing is for the victims to be provided with professional care in such difficult situations. I therefore take the view that these NGOs should have access to small but clearly targeted grants. I also often encounter the view that small organisations lack the specialists who could draw up the sort of high-quality project plans that would succeed in a tender, and the expertise. I therefore agree with some of the important measures contained in this report. At this point, I would particularly like to mention the equal distribution of programmes throughout the Member States, a reduction in the administrative burden, and simplification of the submission of applications for financial support and funding of the national projects that these small non-profit organisations are involved in.

**Anna Záborská (PPE).** – (SK) Mr President, I would like to thank Ms Bastos for drafting this report. At a time when future priorities are being discussed, it is important to remember initiatives that have brought results. The Daphne programme is certainly one of them. The Daphne programme is extraordinary because it is able to reach those victims of violence that have been beyond the reach of other institutions.

I mean women and children and adolescents who are exposed to violence due to social exclusion. However, violence is not always a physical blow. It can also be threats, psychological pressure, harassment or the dissemination of images depicting the sexual abuse of children. In particular, these forms of violence threaten the mental integrity of a person. Daphne enables projects to be funded that address the use of Internet networks for new forms of violence. More attention should be paid to prevention and also the financing of small organisations that tackle this issue.

**Phil Prendergast (S&D).** – Mr President, I think it is important, as part of the Daphne programme's incorporation into the rights and citizenship programme, that future initiatives receive a level of focus and funding similar to that provided throughout the previous three Daphne programmes.

I particularly agree that renewed emphasis should be placed on small NGOs and non-profit organisations, whose participation is invaluable if we are to meet the programme's aims. In my own home country, a number of organisations have participated in Daphne projects and Daphne-funded initiatives that have contributed to the prevention of violence against women, children and young people. These projects range from the Dignity initiative – in which the Dublin Employment Pact and the Immigration Council of Ireland worked with European partners to attempt to raise the quality of services delivered to victims of sex trafficking – to helping establish and promote the pan-European 116000 Hotline for Missing Children. It is vital that the Union continues to support the good work carried out by these organisations and similar organisations all around Europe.

*End of the catch-the-eye procedure*

**Kristalina Georgieva, Member of the Commission.** – Mr President, I wish to thank the rapporteur, Ms Bastos, and the members of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality, for drafting a very sound report and for their ongoing support for the Daphne programme.

Under the new multiannual financial framework, the Commission proposed to cover all the activities currently being supported and carried out by the Daphne programme with the future rights and citizenship programme. Let me answer directly the question that has been posed: under the new programme, all the current Daphne objectives and activities will be supported, and the budget in this new programme is compatible with the budget that was available up to now.

The approach of the Commission under the multiannual financial framework focuses on simplification, flexibility and EU added value. Under the approach outlined, the Commission aims to develop the best possible synergies between three activities: combating violence, gender equality and the rights of the child. They are now brought under one programme, which will address emerging and innovative challenges, many of which are outlined in Ms Bastos' report.

I want to stress that the new programme remains open to all entities, all Member States and third countries, and all types of projects and activities that have been supported and are receiving funding under the Daphne III programme. The new structure of the programme will help the Commission to improve the programme's management and to address more efficiently deficiencies as identified in the mid-term evaluation of the Daphne III programme, which are also noted in the report. This includes, for example, the need to improve dissemination of results and the geographic spread of projects. Participants will benefit directly from improved management of the programme because procedures will be easier, faster, less bureaucratic, more uniform. Something which required two procedures would now need one.

Lastly, in 2012, the Commission will update the Daphne toolkit. This database of projects to combat violence will facilitate the wider dissemination of news of project outcomes by European and national stakeholders. The intention is to maintain this database under the new multiannual financial framework programme and to use it as a model for the dissemination of project results in all areas.

Let me finally stress, as the Commissioner for humanitarian aid, that we would have no foot to stand on morally if we assisted other countries to fight gender violence when we were not doing a good job at home. In this sense, I personally strongly support the report and the actions we take in this area. May I also say I am returning the two minutes that I took from our previous segment.

**President.** – The debate is closed.

The vote will take place today at 12.00.

#### **Written statements (Rule 149)**

**Liam Aylward (ALDE), in writing.** – (GA) The aim of the Daphne programme is to protect children, young people and women from violence and to encourage health protection, wellness and social inclusion. The Daphne programme has succeeded in informing the public of those issues and in drawing attention to violence against women and children. The programme supports relevant organisations in progressing and also in achieving definite aims with the aid of practical policies such as recognising and sharing good practices, training and running information campaigns. However, I would like to draw attention to the Commission's failure to implement across the Union the 11 6000 Hotline for Missing Children. Children are being put in danger as a result of that failure and the Daphne programme's work is being undermined in relation to protecting children in all

Member States. The hotline is a vitally important tool in protecting children. Currently, the service is not being implemented properly and I urge the Commission to address the operation of the hotline and its role in the Daphne programme.

**Robert Dušek (S&D),** *in writing.* – (CS) The aim of the Daphne programme is to combat violence towards women, children and young people. In 2000, the Daphne initiative was transformed into a multiannual programme covering the period 2000-2003, and was allocated funding of EUR 20 million. The Daphne II and Daphne III programmes were launched in 2004 and 2007 respectively, with an average annual budget of EUR 10 million for Daphne II and EUR 16.7 million for Daphne III. Over 500 projects have been implemented since 1997 in a variety of fields, such as sexual, psychological or physical violence in families, schools and other institutions. I have to say, unfortunately, that the new Member States have so far accounted for only a negligible percentage of applications for funding from the Daphne programme. This might, of course, be also due to a lack of awareness among professionals regarding this programme. I would like to urge non-profit organisations, research institutes, public offices, schools and media, as well as all other bodies whose cooperation could be useful in combating violence against women, children and young people, to find out about this EU programme and push for it to be spread, and, in particular, made use of, more widely.

**Filiz Hakaeva Hyusmenova (ALDE),** *in writing.* – (BG) The Daphne programme is an important instrument for preventing and combating all forms of violence, as well as for encouraging international action within this area. During the past year I implemented a massive campaign promoting European programmes in Bulgaria including Daphne. I noticed that the lack of information in accessible language and of experience in implementing partner projects influences how active stakeholders are.

Given that Daphne targets one of our society's serious problems – violence against women, children and young persons – I am of the opinion that the programme's results have to be made public and used more widely, also with respect to the new risks associated with Internet usage. Violence against children and young people can cause deep psychological and physical trauma impacting their overall development, and we cannot remain indifferent and inactive. The distribution and exchange of information, experience and good practices, the creation of activity networks, campaigns for promoting public awareness and the setting up of hotlines for victims of violence are key measures that have to continue to receive support at European level.

## **7. Women's situation in war (short presentation)**

**President.** – The next item is the short presentation of the report by Norica Nicolai, on behalf of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality, on women's situation in war (2011/2198(INI)) (A7-0429/2011).

**Norica Nicolai,** *rapporteur.* – (RO) Mr President, I do not believe that I will manage to cover every issue dealt with in the report in the next four minutes. However, I would like to highlight several matters which I regard as being vital.

This report is apt because, unfortunately, the use of rape as a weapon of war was invented by primitive societies, and here we also have it now as a weapon of war in modern, so-called 'civilised' societies. It is a topical issue with a significant impact, particularly in social terms, which can modify the pattern of behaviour and the way in which nations respond. Let us

merely take the conflict in Congo as an example, where around 16 rapes a day have been recorded, proving that this problem has been far from tackled and eradicated.

In the view of this report, there can be no peace without security and they can only be thought of as going hand in hand with each other. However, they can only be thought of in terms of equal opportunities and of a gender-based approach, jointly created by women and men as part of a partnership, which also concerns conflict prevention and the way in which conflict is conducted and, most of all, the activities involved in peacekeeping and resolving post-conflict situations. The European Union has endeavoured to take vital steps to prevent and tackle this problem. Unfortunately, national plans, as requested, are only available in 10 Member States, with five Member States in the process of devising these plans, proving that we have not made any progress yet and are behind in relation to the objectives we set ourselves. I believe that setting up the European External Action Service gives the European Union the chance to become much more involved in resolving this kind of problem. The report calls for the delegations which are negotiating peace and are involved in conflict to be selected using a gender-sensitive approach and for women to be included in these delegations because their perspective may be helpful in achieving much more quickly and more efficiently what is called peace and social calm.

Another key point in the report concerns impunity. As I said, you cannot have justice without peace. However, unfortunately, the reality is that we have the problem of impunity. Although we can have recourse to the International Criminal Court, I believe that we need to find much more effective legal instruments. In a post-conflict situation, investigations need to be carried out and the perpetrators of these reprehensible criminal acts need to be brought to account because, in any other circumstance, we will end up seriously victimising the people who have suffered such acts and, if you like, society itself. I believe that this partnership between the European Union and the UN must be established not only through implementing Resolution 1960, but through other measures as well. I believe that the European Union has a duty to be a strong partner of the UN in tackling this problem. This is why we are calling for the post of Special EU Representative on Women, Peace and Security to be created within the EEAS. This is not an idle request. On the contrary, it is aimed at showing the European Union's firm commitment to tackling this problem.

However, we believe that a series of rules also need to be applied to those involved in the process of war and peace. We believe that Member States' military structures must take into account a gender dimension, not only in terms of numbers, but particularly in terms of quality, because there are, fortunately, women in the European Union who are capable of coping with the highest positions in the military and in civilian life. To achieve this, Member States must consider the gender dimension in their military structures, which is a new issue.

Thank you for your attention. As I said, I did not manage to cover all the topics, but please allow me to make one last point: I must thank all the shadow rapporteurs and all the political groups because we all worked together on this report.

*Catch-the-eye procedure*

**Barbara Matera (PPE).** – (IT) Mr President, I congratulate you on your election as Vice-President and I congratulate Ms Nicolai on her excellent report.

It is essential to guarantee the safety of women who choose to take up the courageous career of working in war situations. In many war zones around the world, sexual violence

in the form of mass rapes and other forms of abuse such as human trafficking are often used as a war tactic, women being the main victims. These unacceptable acts have serious psychological and physical repercussions, especially with regard to women and their family members. We must condemn the perpetrators of criminal acts more severely. Impunity must not be negotiable and there should be no peace without justice. It is important to increase the participation of women in decision-making roles during peace processes and when it comes to defining security measures.

**Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D).** – (SK) Mr President, only limited progress has been made in the last few decades on the participation of women in public administration. In some cases, quotas have been adopted and the number of women in representative institutions has grown. Despite these efforts, however, the participation of women in peace talks, with some exceptions, remains below 10%. Women in the military nevertheless play an important role as role models and mediators of intercultural exchange, and are also an encouraging motivation for local women, breaking down the stereotypes of local men and communicating better with local women.

In most countries, unfortunately, little importance is attached to gender equality and women's rights because the gender issue is seen only as a minor issue, and cultural, religious and socio-economic customs are often taken as an excuse for hindering progress in this area. It is therefore necessary to emphasise the gender perspective early in the planning of civilian and security missions. The participation of women in the peace-building phase is extremely important.

**Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE).** – Mr President, I think this is a crucial issue, not only because the role of women in war is important as victims and as targeted objectives in that situation, but also because of the role that women can play in peace-building.

Rebuilding societies and changing some of the patterns that have brought some societies to war: this, to me, is one of the crucial issues that we have to underline – not only in the resolution, but also as the United Nations is doing in their Resolutions 1325 and 1820. That is also why it is so important that the European Union has a specific special representative for this issue. As has been said – and I fully support this – there is a huge opportunity for the European Union to put that issue at the forefront of the external dimension of these activities. This is, as has been said, not a minor issue, and it is a huge opportunity that we should not miss.

**Andrea Češková (ECR).** – (CS) Mr President, the appalling crimes committed under the cloak of military conflict against women and girls are a clear indication that their rights are not sufficiently protected, despite all efforts to date. Sexual violence in the form of mass rape, human trafficking and other forms of sexual abuse still form part of military tactics in conflict regions worldwide. We cannot tolerate such attacks on human dignity.

I therefore wholeheartedly agree with the rapporteur's proposals concerning the introduction of a code of behaviour for people serving in military and civilian missions, clearly stating that sexual abuse constitutes unjustifiable and criminal behaviour. It will introduce strict penalties and zero tolerance vis-à-vis sexual abuse of children, girls and women in armed conflicts and in refugee camps. I support the proposals to strengthen the participation of women in leading political dialogue roles. The representation of women in international teams and in civilian and security missions should be a basic precondition for the provision of support within a peace process framework.

**Mariya Nedelcheva (PPE).** – (FR) Mr President, during World Wars I and II, women lost their husbands and sons on the front. Today, women are the direct victims of conflicts. Removed from their homes, imprisoned and raped, women are particularly vulnerable in these situations.

I am pleased that Parliament has finally called for acts of sexual violence in times of war to be considered war crimes. For this, we must recognise the remarkable work of our rapporteur, Ms Nicolai.

There are two types of consequences for the victims: physical and psychological. However, these acts of violence also have a much wider impact: an impact on men, who have not been able to protect their wives, an impact on children, and an impact on the community. The effects of war therefore extend over time and across generations.

I welcome all of the solutions presented today in this report. Women have a role to play in conflict resolution and in political dialogues for peace. They have a role to play not only in civil conflict resolution missions, but also in military ones.

Finally, I believe that our Union will gain from having a Special Representative on Women, Peace and Security. My question, Commissioner, is the following: can you foresee the creation of such a position? If so, when?

**Petru Constantin Luhan (PPE).** – (RO) Mr President, the Subcommittee on Security and Defence is also very concerned about this matter. I agree with the rapporteur that war criminals who commit offences against women must be brought to trial more quickly, with impunity being non-negotiable in these cases. Unfortunately, in conflict situations currently going on around the world, violence is used against women as a war tactic and, regrettably, these cases most often remain unreported and unpunished. This is precisely why I believe that the European External Action Service must appoint a special observer with the job of protecting women in conflict zones and against any form of sexual or gender-based violence.

**Michèle Striffler (PPE).** – (FR) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, sexual violence and mass rape used as weapons of war are, unfortunately on the rise across the world.

Parliament has often been alarmed by the deteriorating situation, particularly in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, and by the widespread impunity.

I visited South Kivu, in particular, some time ago. I can testify to the gravity of the situation and the devastating physical and psychological consequences for women and young girls as a result of such acts. Let us not choose the wrong battle. In the face of such atrocities, reproductive and sexual health should be dealt with without taboo.

The Union must grant a central place in its actions to reproductive and sexual health and the protection of women's rights in terms of sexuality during times of war. We know that rape is a crime. During war, it is a war crime. Therefore, women – we must always remember – are not an instrument of war.

*End of the catch-the-eye procedure*

**Kristalina Georgieva, Member of the Commission.** – Mr President, let me start by thanking the rapporteur, Ms Nicolai, most sincerely. Thank you, too, for the scheduling of this item immediately after we talked about a similar issue here in Europe.

In the European Union, we take very seriously the issue of the role of women and, in particular, the role of women in peace and security through implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 and other related resolutions. Our approach is a comprehensive one: we bring this concern to all our external instruments and all related policies and programmes.

In 2008, the EU adopted a comprehensive approach on the implementation of two resolutions – 1325 and 1820 – covering the whole range of policy tools available to it during and after conflict. The approach is based on the ‘three Ps’ of Resolution 1325: women’s participation, protection and the prevention of violence against women.

Let me say a word here about funding. We have the EU Instrument for Stability, which is a key instrument that we can apply for stabilising measures and capacity-building measures. In this instrument we have fully mainstreamed the gender perspective; and protection of the most vulnerable – the most vulnerable in humanitarian catastrophes being children, women, the handicapped and the elderly – is often a key objective of what I do as Commissioner for humanitarian aid.

We support the protection of women, especially in conflict zones, through our humanitarian aid instrument, but we also support the empowerment of women through cash-for-work programmes that specifically target women in conflict zones. I will be in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in three weeks’ time and my main objective will indeed be this issue: the issue that is the topic of this report, the protection of women, and specifically stopping the rape of women as an instrument of war. Overall, the EU is active in more than 70 countries, and the EU institutions and Member States have reported allocating a total of approximately EUR 200 million in 2009 and early 2010.

Let me now turn to the EU common security and defence policy (CSDP). Most CSDP missions and operations include a human rights and gender exercise. We now have a package of three fully fledged training modules on human rights, gender and child protection in the context of CSDP, which are being finalised in 2012. We also work very closely with the EU military staff in order to have a good common understanding of all the humanitarian aspects in conflicts, but, in particular, of how conflicts affect the most vulnerable – among them, women.

While we do a lot on the external side, it is also important to perform well internally by appointing women negotiators or mediators. By appointing more women in key positions in the European External Action Service, our Member States are the most proactive in the UN context. Thirteen of the EU Member States have adopted national action plans. Others, like Germany, have come up with special initiatives on women, peace and security. The first EU report on the indicators that measured the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 was finalised in May 2011. It shows that the EU has taken concrete steps to enhance protection of the most vulnerable groups, including women.

We can be proud of our efforts but we still need to be vigilant and go on working in all forums and in all countries to tackle sexual violence in conflicts and to ensure women’s meaningful participation in peace processes and public representation.

To respond to the question on whether the EU is considering appointing a special representative, Vice-President/High Representative Ashton announced in December that she is looking into the creation of the post of EU special representative for human rights, and is considering the definition of this function.

Let me finish by saying thank you very much for this discussion today.

### IN THE CHAIR: RAINER WIELAND

*Vice-President*

The debate is closed.

The vote will take place today at 12.00.

#### **Written statements (Rule 149)**

**Anneli Jäätteenmäki (ALDE),** *in writing.* – (FI) I enthusiastically support the idea of creating the position of special representative on women, peace and security within the European External Action Service, as recommended in the report on women's situation in war voted on today. This would help the European External Action Service to mainstream the equality perspective as part of external policy, especially as wars and conflict are an issue. At present, fewer than 10% of peace negotiators are women, although peace is in the interests of everyone – men and women.

Wars and conflict affect women in many ways. One of the most brutal practices is sexual violence as a form of warfare. It affects everything: the victim's physical and mental health, family relations, and her entire future. In the majority of cases, the guilty go unpunished. The victim, on the other hand, lives with it all her life.

I would like to thank the rapporteur, Ms Nicolai, for what is an excellent and necessary report. I hope that it will also be read carefully by the European External Action Service.

**Iosif Matula (PPE),** *in writing.* – In order to encourage their participation in situations of war, women must be visible contributors to the prevention, mediation and resolution of conflicts. Beyond engaging in behind-the-scenes roles, assuming leadership roles is key to building upon the foundation of gender equality. As women account for half of the EU population, it is logical that their participation in these three phases mirrors this statistic. Aside from this simple democratic principle, what is perhaps the strongest argument for women's participation is the unique perspective they bring to the table and the message their empowerment sends to the world. Women need to be better represented in the military, for example, not just to fill a proportional requirement, but also because they interact and communicate more effectively with local women. On the other spectrum, local women's empowerment must be strengthened. Education is a crucial means through which local women can gain integrity and be better equipped to engineer preventive measures against war and violence in their communities. In addition to the active participation of a proportional representation of women at the negotiation table, women's knowledge is also critical in the peace-building process as women are more aware of the challenges faced by their communities.

#### **8. Cross-border transfer of company seats (short presentation)**

**President.** – The next item is a short presentation of the report by Evelyn Regner, on behalf of the Committee on Legal Affairs, with recommendations to the Commission under Rule 138 of the Rules of Procedure, on a 14th company law directive on the cross-border transfer of company seats (2011/2046(INI)) (A7-0008/2012).

**Evelyn Regner**, *rapporteur*. – (DE) Mr President, Commissioner, I would first like to thank the shadow rapporteurs for working together so constructively. I would particularly like to thank Mr Lehne and Ms Thein, but also Mr Boulland, the rapporteur for the opinion of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs, who contributed interesting, very useful aspects relating to the transfer plan and the participation of employees and their representatives.

The draft report was unanimously adopted by the Committee on Legal Affairs, and the opinion was adopted by the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs with an overwhelming majority. That should therefore serve as a wake-up call to the Commission to finally table legislation, because we are dealing with sensitive matters here: the issue of company seats and that of worker participation.

A limited company that wishes to move its seat from one EU Member State to another faces a challenge. In legal terms, it has to dismantle its organisation completely in order to build it up again in another Member State. It has to give up its legal personality – and that in 2012, when we are supposed to have an internal market. That costs time and money and no little irritation; there are also social costs associated with it. There is therefore a real gap in the legislation, and the European Parliament is aware of that. It has also repeatedly called on the Commission in the past to finally table legislation.

What are the consequences for enterprises? They simply take flight. Competition has arisen between the corporate forms that exist under national legislation – limited company versus *Gesellschaft mit beschränkter Haftung*, to name just one of many examples. They rush into mergers; in other words, there is a race to the bottom. I do not want that. We do not want a ‘Delaware effect’. That means we need a directive: a 14th company law directive on the transfer of company seats. However, company seats should be transferred properly, not cowboy fashion. I do not want companies to frantically decamp – with half of them getting lost along the way. Enterprises must not be allowed to more or less erase all traces of their existence and abandon their commitments in the Member State they are leaving when they transfer their company seat.

This brings us to the two main issues here. I will start with the matter of employees’ participation. Employees’ participation contributes to the enduring success of companies. Employee rights in line with the Community *acquis* – that is what my report calls for. That means respecting the right to information and consultation, as well as codetermination by employees and their representatives. *De facto* this means – and I call on the Commission to do this – that where appropriate, negotiations on rescue arrangements are required to protect existing codetermination rights. I already have a best practice example in mind here. We already have rules in connection with the European company.

Let us now move on to the second hot potato that we are dealing with here: the issue of registered offices and administrative seats. Within the European Union, there are countries that allow separation between the registered office and the administrative seat of a company, and there are those that do not. Allowing such separation encourages the avoidance of mandatory protective standards that apply in the country in which the company has its administrative seat – in other words, the centre of its operations.

The report sets out that we do not want companies to be tax exiles or to misuse post-box offices with a view to circumventing legal, social and fiscal conditions. What we want is a practical solution. In the report, we have found a Solomon-like solution. Commissioner, please ask Commissioner Barnier – who has responsibility for this – to at last act on this

and, in so doing, to concentrate on the key issue, on the intra-Community transfers of seats; in other words, on those political areas which, in the final event, all the Member States can agree on. It should be based on economic activity in the state to which the company is relocating.

The internal market has a contribution to make to economic growth – something we need now more than ever. Please do not delay, then, in finally tabling a proposal; and please do not repeat the mistakes made when the European company was set up.

*Catch-the-eye procedure*

**Silvia-Adriana Țicău (S&D).** – (RO) Mr President, cross-border company migration is one of the crucial elements in the completion of the internal market, and Articles 49 and 54 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union guarantee European companies the freedom to become established anywhere within the European Union. However, the lack of consistent legislation on transfers and on procedures for transferring a company's registered office and the associated risk in terms of employment, the administrative difficulties, the costs incurred, the social implications and the lack of legal certainty all hamper the transfer process.

We call on the Commission to table a proposal for a directive on the cross-border transfer of company seats, so that the transfer takes place only after a company's management or board of directors planning a transfer has drafted a transfer plan on which the relevant company's employees have also been consulted. I think that the e-government services and single points of contact created under the Services Directive can ease the administrative burden of company transfers.

**Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D).** – (SK) Mr President, I very much appreciate what Ms Regner has done and support her call. The legislative initiative on the issue of the transfer of company seats is very necessary. Freedom of entrepreneurship is important, but if a company seat is transferred without also moving the other activities of the company to the new location at the same time, unfair practices are usually at work. In most cases, this is an attempt to avoid tax obligations or to circumvent labour law in the home country.

The creation of so-called mailbox companies, with which we also have experience in the EU Member States, is certainly an undesirable phenomenon that needs to be addressed. Of course, legislation should be able to discern and should not prevent honest companies from changing location if necessary and provided there is a legitimate reason. A good control mechanism promoted by our grouping is to involve company employees in decision making on the cross-border transfer of company seats, for example, through their effective participation in the boards of companies.

*End of the catch-the-eye procedure*

**Kristalina Georgieva,** *Member of the Commission.* – Mr President, I would like to congratulate Ms Regner and the Committee on Legal Affairs for the report on the cross-border transfer of company seats. The timing of the report is very appropriate, as the Commission will launch, in February, a public consultation on the future of EU company law.

The process was initiated with a conference in May 2011, which brought together practitioners, scholars and experts from a variety of backgrounds, including from this

House, to discuss key company law issues. A group of experts established by the Commission provided a report for this conference.

Since then, the Commission has continued its reflections and decided to involve a larger circle of EU citizens in the work by launching a public consultation. The issue of companies' cross-border mobility, including, but not limited to, the question of a directive on the cross-border transfer of companies' registered offices, is an integral part of this. The public consultation will contain detailed questions on the need and conditions for a possible directive, as well as its likely effects. The view expressed in the report today will fit into this process in a valuable way. So many thanks again to the rapporteur.

This is not the first time Parliament has called on the Commission to come forward with a proposal for a directive on the cross-border transfer of company seats. The Commission has already openly engaged in a dialogue on the need for such a directive, which would have to bring real value for the companies and for the internal market. Clearly, this is not a topic that has disappeared from the Commission's radar.

There are two specific issues in this context that require careful consideration. I am referring here to the separation between a registered office of administration, on the one hand, and to employees' participation, on the other. The negotiations on the European private company statute have shown once again how difficult it is to find compromises on these issues between Member States. The Commission finds the report very balanced regarding these issues and we are grateful for this.

The Commission looks forward to continuing the constructive dialogue with Parliament on the important issue of corporate mobility in general, and the directive on the cross-border transfer of company seats in particular. I can assure you that Commissioner Barnier will take full ownership of the follow-up of the discussion we have had in this House today. The Commission plans to finalise its reflection on this issue in the course of this year.

**President.** – The debate is closed.

The vote will take place today at 12.00.

#### **Written statements (Rule 149)**

**Ildikó Gáll-Pelcz (PPE), in writing.** – (HU) I believe that in essence, the 14th company law directive on the cross-border transfer of company seats serves to strengthen the EU's competitiveness. A prerequisite of competitiveness is dynamic and flexible company law. As we could see, not even an extensive interpretation of the most important judgments is sufficient to dispel all doubts that have arisen in connection with the freedom of establishment and ensure full legal certainty. Yet this is exactly what business life needs. Unlike restrictions, however, a regulatory competition arising at the level of company and fiscal law as a result of the freedom to choose seats could promote the competitiveness of the EU as a whole. As enterprises are free to choose where to have their seats, Member States will have to adapt their regulations in line with one another in order to avoid an exodus of companies choosing more favourable legal conditions. This would lead to indirect harmonisation within the Community. The question that remains is where do we go from here. By now, it has become clear that any criticism questioning the future and *raison d'être* of this directive on a level of principles has proven to be unfounded. It is also apparent, however, that the regulatory framework established is not without faults. Its future fate will be determined by its usefulness and actual use.

**Jutta Steinruck (S&D),** *in writing.* – (DE) I hope that today's own-initiative report will be interpreted by the Commission in the way it was written by Parliament, because a directive on the transfer of company seats could have considerable negative effects on the rules on corporate codetermination. That applies not just to Germany, but throughout the European Union. The transfer of a company's registered office could result in the loss of codetermination at corporate level. Transferring the company's registered office to another country could allow the rules on corporate codetermination in Germany to be circumvented. At present, employees' codetermination in a company is based on the Member State in which the company has its registered office. We are not talking about a nominal registered office; rather, the company must be registered where it actually has a genuine presence, such as business premises, employees, etc. In other words, it must have a genuine link with the state in which it is registered. We cannot allow the directive on transfers of company seats to be used to circumvent the rights of employees and creditors through the establishment of post-box offices abroad. If separation between the registered office and the administrative seat of a company is allowed, then social rights could effectively be eroded – and that is something we have to prevent. This can only work if the registered office of a company is in the country where it is actually based. That is the way to safeguard effectively the rights of employees in the European Union.

I hope the Commission will safeguard social Europe, and the rights of its citizens, in its draft legislation.

#### **9. EU development cooperation in support of the objective of universal energy access by 2030 (short presentation)**

**President.** – The next item is a short presentation of the report by Norbert Neuser, on behalf of the Committee on Development, on EU development cooperation in support of the objective of universal energy access by 2030 (2011/2012(INI)) (A7-0442/2011).

**Norbert Neuser,** *rapporteur.* – (DE) Mr President, Commissioner, ladies and gentlemen, the beginning of 2012 is a timely occasion for the report on universal energy access, as the United Nations General Assembly has designated 2012 as the International Year of Sustainable Energy for All.

To me and to all my fellow Members who worked with me on this report in committee, two facts are particularly important. The first is that we want renewable energy. The second is that we want everyone to have access to these new sources of energy. Consequently, these sources of energy must be affordable by everyone.

In the Committee on Development, we worked together very constructively, including with NGOs. In this connection, particular mention must be made of the London-based organisation, Practical Action, and of Sweden's Stockholm Environment Institute. Our secretariat also provided us with vigorous support in finding ways in which we can forge ahead with universal access to renewable energy.

Allow me to clarify once more what we are talking about here. At present, 1.3 billion people live without electricity. A total of 2.7 billion people use biomass to cook, on improvised stoves. The vast majority of these live in rural areas, mainly in sub-Saharan Africa and India. To give just one example: 20% of the population of Kenya has access to the grid, but only 5% of the rural population.

Access to energy brings not only light and power, but also – and above all – cooking facilities and heating. Yet access to energy is still not a Millennium Development Goal. Without access to it, however, it will be difficult to achieve our Millennium Development Goals. That is why we call in the report for renewable energy to be included in the post-2015 MDGs.

It is hard to see how schools, training facilities, health centres and hospitals could exist or function without electricity. Cooking and heating with biomass causes millions of deaths each year in shacks, as a result of harmful smoke. Many of Africa's governments have therefore banned the use of coal for cooking and heating, for climate and health reasons. In practice, however, those responsible have to look the other way when coal is produced and sold.

We very much welcome the fact that, in its Agenda for Change, the Commission has included energy as a guiding priority. Allow me, therefore, to summarise our key demands in the report once more. We call on the EU and the Member States to support the UN goals of universal access to energy by 2030 and to align their policies accordingly. We call on the Commission to focus on small, local renewable energy projects, because only then will it be possible to reach the majority of the population. More money should be made available for this. The European Investment Bank and the other European development banks are not geared towards small, local energy projects. That has to change; universal energy access should be prominently represented in the Rio+20 process. Finally, universal energy access should be included as a Millennium Development Goal post-2015.

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

**Elena Băsescu (PPE).** – (RO) Mr President, improving access to energy services helps enhance people's quality of life. This is a necessity, in particular, for people who live in poverty. In this regard, energy access ought to become a priority as part of the debate on eradicating poverty. I should point out that difficulties in accessing modern energy services put women and children in particular at a disadvantage.

I support the inclusion of this problem on the Rio+20 summit agenda in June. I endorse the notion of devising a specific EU-level energy and development programme. At the same time, private investment must be encouraged, so as to make these services more accessible to the public. I should stress the importance of funding for projects involving renewable electricity sources. For example, in Romania, producers of green energy are due to receive EUR 300 million this year from green certificates.

**António Fernando Correia De Campos (S&D).** – (PT) Mr President, I would like to mention that access to renewable energy should really be a European objective, and an objective not only for Europe, but for the whole world.

We have undoubtedly made fantastic technological progress in renewable energy. Such progress was unthinkable 20 years ago, so making access to renewable energy one of our goals for 2015 is very appropriate.

We are all aware of the destruction of part of the forests of sub-Saharan Africa in order for its biomass to be used as the one and only fuel. New solutions need to be devised. However, in Europe, too, we have, in large measure, based renewable energy and its funding on being completely paid for by users. This is now under attack from everyone, in particular, because of the crisis that we are experiencing and the nuclear lobby. We therefore support the Commission in these measures.

**Miloslav Ransdorf (GUE/NGL).** – (CS) Mr President, I recently took part in a debate on EU and US energy policy. I can state that the Americans are much better at this than the EU, because they have a clear, well-advised plan progressing through to the level of tactical steps, which is what is lacking with us.

In my opinion, what the European Union most needs right now is diversification of sources. This involves targeting new forms of alternative energy, such as genetic manipulation of bacteria, where research is under way in the US, for example, into the direct production of diesel through this technique. It also involves strengthening interconnectivity and building up reserves. In my opinion, this is an option we have neglected so far.

**Jaroslav Paška (EFD).** – (SK) Mr President, the work of Mr Norbert Neuser, in which he proposes the establishment and building of small, decentralised projects to support the generation of electricity in developing countries, is of interest. It is a very ambitious and interesting project. I believe, however, that the EU does not have sufficient capacity to force through and promote this project more widely. Perhaps, however, the EU could be the initiator of such a project at a global level with the support of industrialised and developing countries, which could raise the funds to really get such a project helping developing countries off the ground on a much larger scale and scope, so that something can be done in this area.

**Alajos Mészáros (PPE).** – (HU) Mr President, among developing countries, energy poverty represents a serious issue. Nearly 1.3 billion people worldwide regularly go without electricity in their everyday lives.

I believe that so far, this issue has not been given sufficient weight among development priorities. Access to modern energy services is an essential requirement of eradicating poverty, yet there are few developing countries that can demonstrate any progress in improving access to energy. Households usually spend large proportions of their income on low-quality lighting and heating materials. The reason for this is that those without access to fuel and electricity do not receive subsidies.

Today, there is already a range of technologies available that could give poor communities access to clean and efficient energy. Technologies that make use of local energy sources in addition to fossil fuels could also offer a solution. The creation of a global financial fund that would allow us to support investments aimed at mitigating poverty should be facilitated. We must do everything in our power, both at a political level and in terms of financial support, to ensure universal access to energy by 2030.

**Silvia-Adriana Țicău (S&D).** – (RO) Mr President, about 1.3 billion people worldwide – 84% of whom live in rural areas – have no access to electricity, while 2.7 billion people are without any clean cooking facilities, a situation that creates indoor smoke which is responsible for more than 1.4 million premature deaths every year.

The task of improving energy access requires an estimated annual investment of USD 48 billion by 2030, which is equivalent to around 3% of the global investment in energy infrastructure projected over the period until then. I think that providing universal access to modern, sustainable energy services is a prerequisite for achieving the Millennium Development Goals. I also support the inclusion of universal energy access in these objectives from 2015. At the Rio+20 summit, the EU should propose concrete targets for eradicating energy poverty and a road map for achieving them.

**Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D).** – (SK) Mr President, access to modern energy services is a fundamental prerequisite for poverty reduction and stable, sustainable human development. Without access to energy, whole communities are constrained to a life of poverty under undignified conditions. Substantial efforts have been made to foster private investment for energy access in recent years. However, aside from the economies in transition, very few developing countries can demonstrate progress on scaling-up access to energy for the poor. Financial assistance to energy access for this group of the population has been modest, and it is therefore necessary to increase private sector involvement.

Regarding the future, globally, the Energy Facility provides the only fund specifically focused on supporting investments to challenge energy poverty. Yet currently, there is no commitment to the future EU Energy Facility. I therefore believe that, by enhancing political will and financial commitment in particular, the EU can take up a decisive position in achieving universal energy access by 2030.

*End of the catch-the-eye procedure*

**Kristalina Georgieva,** *Member of the Commission.* – Mr President, the Commission very much welcomes the report by Mr Neuser and we clearly see eye to eye. We are equally committed to ensuring that the target of universal energy access by 2030 is fulfilled and that renewable energy increases its contribution to meeting this target.

We are all aware of the fundamental role that energy plays as a driver for development and an underpinning factor in delivering health, education, food security and economic growth, as well as the fact that clean energy brings additional benefits by reducing air pollution and the associated risk to public health. The recommendations of the report are fully in line with the strategies adopted by the Commission, such as the Agenda for Change, which recognises the unique role energy can play with regard to development.

We participate strongly in the UN Sustainable Energy for All initiative. Commissioner Piebalgs is leading a working group under the high-level panel set up by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. This initiative aims to create the concrete conditions for success in the two most pressing and, may I add, increasingly interconnected challenges mankind is confronted with: reducing poverty and combating climate change. Sustainable Energy for All will decisively contribute to both.

The Commission has been playing a strong and active role in these very early discussions and we, the EU, are rightly seen as one of the leading players, if not the leading player, in making the initiative a success. This is because of our collective role as the world's leading donor – 60% of development cooperation funding comes from the European Union – and because of our voice in international financial institutions such as the World Bank. As a former World Bank staff member, I can confirm that it was Europe which pressured the World Bank to adopt its first ever renewable energy targets. We are also the only set of countries already committed to achieving the headline goals on energy efficiency and renewable energy. We have the Rio+20 summit coming up, with the unique opportunity it can give us to come up with new initiatives. I am sure Commissioner Piebalgs would look into ways of making that area one of the fields for funding commitments.

There is also strong recognition on our side of the role this House has played in adopting and implementing legislation to further the objectives presented in this report. We recognise the key role of renewable-base decentralised solutions in providing the poor with access to energy, and I see this when I travel to poor countries like Niger and Chad. We obviously

have to be very determined in pursuing renewable energy solutions. We must also recognise that these countries have needs in connection with access to water, hence the importance of having water storage capacity. In other words, we can achieve multiple objectives by pursuing decentralised solutions.

A specific communication on universal energy access is not envisaged in 2012, but I believe we should do better than a communication. Through the active role the Union will play in the Sustainable Energy for All initiative, we can turn this into a practical action that delivers access to energy services in a sustainable way by 2030.

As part of the initiative, we are working on a mechanism to enable developing countries to opt in to a scheme whereby they would receive the necessary technical and expert assistance to develop their own national energy access strategy. This would ensure real commitment from partner countries, thus allowing conditions that enable the delivery of private investment to materialise, and I can see that Mr Neuser shares this analysis.

The Commission believes we can deliver these results together. I am very grateful to this House for its support, and grateful too for the support that the Committee on Development has always shown during our work.

**President.** – The debate is closed.

The vote will take place today at 12.00.

#### **Written statements (Rule 149)**

**Rareș-Lucian Niculescu (PPE),** *in writing.* – (RO) The lack of access to electricity is not only a serious problem at a global level, affecting around 1.3 billion people, but even in some European Union Member States, too. In Romania, for example, many isolated rural areas are not connected to the electricity grid, which has resulted in an alarming level of depopulation in the localities in these parts of the country. In fact, the lack of roads or sewage systems also causes rural areas to be abandoned. In these circumstances, it is important to retain the second pillar as part of the future common agricultural policy, which is devoted to rural development and, in particular, to maintain, as part of it, the opportunity for funding investments in infrastructure, whether it be electricity, gas or road.

**Valdemar Tomaševski (ECR),** *in writing.* – (PL) Energy services influence every aspect of people's lives and the sources of people's support. Without unrestricted access to these services, societies are forced to live in want. Worldwide, about 1.3 billion people have no access to electricity. This is a huge problem for the countries of the developing world. However, apart from this, there is also another problem, which affects the people living in the European Union itself and, in particular, the Union's new Member States, and this concerns the restricted access to electricity caused by the high costs of this form of energy. This phenomenon occurs mainly in rural areas, and this is why it is of such great importance to strengthen the EU Energy Facility, which supports marginalised rural areas and people living in isolated communities.

Supporting renewable energy sources and investing in them should become the main work of the Union in this area. The objective is obvious: to ensure inexpensive energy services for the poor, and particularly for all people in non-urban areas. In Central and Eastern Europe, including in countries such as Lithuania, many hectares of land are not under cultivation. By supporting initiatives to derive energy from biofuels, we would gain a triple benefit: cheaper energy, restoration of agricultural production and a reduction in

unemployment through the creation of new jobs in the agriculture sector. The role of the Union should be to draw up clear guidelines on criteria for funding and supporting the production of biofuels and alternative energy sources.

### 10. Annual tax report (short presentation)

**President.** – The next item is a short presentation of the report by Olle Schmidt, on behalf of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs, on the annual tax report (2011/2271(INI)) (A7-0014/2012).

**Olle Schmidt, rapporteur.** – (SV) Mr President, Commissioner, it was with a high degree of humility that I took on the task as rapporteur for this report, the first annual tax report. I would like to thank the shadow rapporteurs from all groups for the constructive debate that we had on this difficult but important subject. I have tried to incorporate comments from all groups, and I think that we have been able to achieve a high level of agreement. I hope this report will receive broad support here in this Chamber today.

The subject of taxes and tax policy is one that affects people. Tax policy generates emotion – both positive and negative. There are conflicting aims within tax policy, and we always have to find a balance between them. We know that it is not the easiest thing to do. For decades, tax policy has been regarded as an exclusively national matter in which the EU has no part to play. That time is past, however. As a consequence of globalisation, tax issues also need to be discussed at EU level.

The report aims to examine the areas where further coordination of taxes – in certain areas perhaps even tax harmonisation – may be necessary, and where the EU can play an important role. Comprehensive and lasting budgetary consolidation is needed, because the ongoing debt crisis is also a tax crisis. The lack of coordination of tax policy is contributing to a deepening of the crisis. The necessary, but painful, reduction of debt requires expenditure restraints, increased cuts in public spending and also tax rises.

This report focuses on areas where the EU can do more to improve the functioning of the internal market and to make Europe more competitive. Unfortunately, companies and citizens within the EU are still encountering tax obstacles. We need to remove these obstacles in order to create economic growth and more jobs. In order to be able to do that, we need to reduce taxes on earnings and increase taxes on consumption, for example.

I also hope that the report will be able to put pressure on the Member States to adopt the tax proposals that the Commission has put forward, including the introduction of a common consolidated corporate tax base (CCCTB). We need to resolve the tax problems that people encounter in their day-to-day lives; for example, if they live in one country and work in another and are affected by double taxation. Tax treaties between Member States are, in themselves, not enough to eradicate double taxation. This is a consequence of the lack of a consistent interpretation of the treaties between the countries.

Several cases of double taxation are currently being examined in the Committee on Petitions. One example concerns an Italian lorry driver who works in Germany and was taxed in both Italy and Germany. He had to pay a total of 60% of his wages in tax, despite the fact that he should only have been taxed in Germany and should only have paid 25% in tax. This happened despite there being a tax treaty between Germany and Italy and despite the fact that the tax authorities have established that this is an error. As far as I know, this case is still not fully resolved, unfortunately. We need a common EU policy in this area and

joint legislation that is able to make a distinction. I therefore welcome the fact that the Commission has recently adopted a communication on double taxation, which also presents practical measures.

Tax evasion, fraud and lack of transparency cost the EU and its Member States many billions of euro in lost tax revenue every year. I am particularly concerned about the exploitation of loopholes in European legislation, whereby international companies operating within the EU attempt to avoid paying tax within the Union. The aim must be for every euro in tax that is intentionally withheld from the state through clever tax arrangements to be paid to the tax authority in future.

In closing, I would just like to say that paragraph 11, which concerns fiscal federalism, has caused a certain amount of confusion. Allow me to read the original proposal in English, which came from my Basque and Catalan colleagues, among others:

'Believes that fiscal federalism is the best tool in order to achieve self-responsibility in tax management at regional level and so entails higher economic efficiency'. That refers to paragraph 11.

*Catch-the-eye procedure*

**Ildikó Gáll-Pelcz (PPE).** – (HU) Mr President, it is definitely welcome that the European Parliament is providing its opinion on current European tax policy issues. The report correctly assesses the importance of the coordination of tax policies in terms of information exchange, as the absence of such coordination could, in the long term, indeed entail a lack of transparency in taxation and the risk of tax evasion. However, this, in itself, means far more than a deficit of millions of euro because, in time, the very single market and the unimpeded operation of cross-border companies could be at risk.

It must be noted, however, that while tax policy rightly continues to remain within national competence, Member States must cooperate in making their tax policies, which also represent major budgetary revenues to them, transparent and comparable, and must also cooperate in making both the tax collection system and the tax planning strategies applied measurable and comparable.

However, in order for Europe to be competitive in terms of its various tax policies in combating tax evasion and double taxation, it needs to involve not only the OECD but also the European Community itself more actively.

**Saïd El Khadraoui (S&D).** – (NL) Mr President, I would like to start by thanking Mr Schmidt for his excellent report and for the constructive cooperation that we enjoyed. He made reference to the euro crisis – the debt crisis – which compels us all to consider how we can better integrate our economy. It goes without saying that, when it comes to taxation, too, we need to better integrate with each other, especially within the euro area, but also within the European Union as a whole.

For my group, this implies fairer taxation. It means eliminating tax evasion and avoidance internally within the European Union, but, of course, it also means a joint strategy for the European Union vis-à-vis third countries. In that connection, we are also arguing for a joint European approach to solving this problem, in other words, agreements between the European Union and Switzerland and other third countries, rather than between the individual Member States of the Union and countries like Switzerland.

Of course, we also need measures such as a shifting of taxation from work to the environment and assets, Community taxation instruments such as a financial transaction tax and, finally, a harmonisation of tax scales, specifically with regard to corporation tax. I think that that is very important indeed.

**Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE).** – (ES) Mr President, I wish to express my satisfaction that Parliament, through this annual tax report, has supported the principle of fiscal federalism that forms part of the economic agreement between the Basque country and Navarre. Devolved income generating powers, as well as devolved spending powers, promote responsibility, prevent deficit, and encourage the development of effective policies to support a productive economy. Likewise, support for Member State legislation in this matter is essential for the regions that already have fiscal powers devolved and for those that are calling for them to be devolved.

Our support for the principle of fiscal federalism is enhanced by our agreement with the principles of financial stability, our support for the economic governance package and for tax harmonisation. We would, however, like the regional and state tax systems to be treated in the same manner, given that in the Basque country, we experience the paradox of facing sanctions from Europe for applying tax incentives identical to those employed during the same period by some Member States against whom penalty proceedings have not even been started. I am all for harmonisation, but it should be applied across the board.

**Jaroslav Paška (EFD).** – (SK) Mr President, I agree with Mr Schmidt that tax evasion is a serious problem for the European Union and that we must address the coordination of tax policies. I am not sure that we can proceed to tax harmonisation straight away. I think that those State competences are strong enough and that many countries are not interested in moving towards such a procedure.

I do believe, however, that we could start to work on a common account plan. I think that it is necessary to create common, multilingual accounting forms that would be accepted and assessed in different languages by different tax offices in the individual countries. Then, on the basis of harmonised accounting procedures and accounting forms, we could start to discuss how to define a common tax base, which it may be appropriate to define.

I think that taxes will remain in the competences and, I might add, interests of the individual countries for a long time to come, and I believe that this will also have to be respected.

**Petru Constantin Luhan (PPE).** – (RO) Mr President, we can only have a perfectly functioning single market if the 500 million inhabitants of the European Union enjoy all EU rights. Unfortunately, we have seen in reality that our citizens face many obstacles when it comes to cross-border activities, unacceptable obstacles which may compromise the very idea of a single market in the European Union. At a time highlighted by a high level of mobility among European citizens, I think that special rules need to be adopted immediately for cross-border and mobile workers, which take into account the interaction of tax and social security systems in different Member States. I think that better coordination and cooperation between tax administrations in Member States will help remove cross-border fiscal obstacles and harmonise national regulations, something which the European Union's citizens and companies very much need.

**Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D).** – (SK) Mr President, the current economic and financial crisis has led to a significant rise in public debt in Europe and, in this context, the automatic stabilisers of the welfare state become more relevant than ever. Effective taxation is of

fundamental importance for public authorities so that they can fulfil their tasks and obligations as well as citizens' expectations. Sound fiscal consolidation, together with fairer and more targeted distribution of the tax burden, is necessary to ensure fiscal credibility. The reduction of debt requires both expenditure restraint and tax increases, especially for high income groups. Growth-oriented tax changes must be given priority. Only in this way will the foundations for long-term growth be created.

It is therefore necessary to try to apply procedures that help prevent tax avoidance and tax abuse. Last but not least, we must also increase transparency.

**Diogo Feio (PPE).** – (PT) Mr President, as a shadow rapporteur for the Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats) on this subject, I would like to begin by congratulating Mr Schmidt on the extraordinary work that he has done. This area often features ideology and myriad choices, yet he has managed to achieve a broad consensus.

This report deals with these matters, but also raises the many new challenges that we are facing in terms of tax harmonisation, business taxation and the level of taxation which the Member States are imposing right now, at a time of financial crisis. The matter of tax competition within Europe and with third countries is absolutely crucial.

The European Union must have competitive tax systems as a way of attracting wealth and investment to the Union, which is in such need of it.

**Silvia-Adriana Țicău (S&D).** – (RO) Mr President, the core function of tax systems is to finance public services, such as education, health care, public transport and infrastructure, to protect public goods and reduce social inequalities by ensuring a more balanced distribution of income and wealth. Tax policies must aim to foster economic growth, job creation, increased EU competitiveness and lower costs for businesses, particularly SMEs. Effective taxation helps public authorities fulfil their obligations as well as citizens' expectations. The Commission and Member States must continue their cooperation against double taxation, tax fraud and tax evasion in order to increase transparency and reduce loopholes and uncertainties for businesses and citizens with regard to tax collection. I should stress the importance of the initiative on introducing e-invoices and the equal treatment from 2013 of VAT for e-invoices and paper invoices, as well as of e-government services with regard to the efficiency and transparency of tax collection.

**Elena Băsescu (PPE).** – (RO) Mr President, the lack of coordination of tax policies at EU level poses an obstacle to cross-border transactions and investments. It can also give rise to evasion, abuses and fraud. Europe needs a fiscal consolidation strategy, and tax obstacles that affect cross-border mobility must be removed. I support the Commission's initiative of setting up a working group on double taxation issues. I should emphasise that this mechanism adds to the global fiscal burden and has an adverse impact on capital investments. It jeopardises the competitiveness of European companies in the medium and long term. Double taxation conventions may help resolve these problems. According to a recent study, bilateral portfolio investments can increase by up to 50% after adopting such a convention. Romania has signed double taxation conventions with 90 countries.

*End of the catch-the-eye procedure*

**Kristalina Georgieva,** *Member of the Commission.* – Mr President, I would like to thank the European Parliament for putting tax policy high on its political agenda as demonstrated by this first annual tax report and, particularly to thank Mr Schmidt, not only for the constructive tone of the report, but for setting the standard high for others to follow. On

behalf of the Commission, I would also like to welcome the broad support for the Commission's initiatives and the valuable suggestions made for our future work. Let me address specific points in more detail.

First, in the current economic climate, clearly the European Union needs a more pro-growth, pro-jobs tax policy. In the 2012 Annual Growth Survey: Launching the European Semester, the Commission outlined ways towards growth-friendly tax reform and fiscal consolidation in Member States. In the short term, shifting taxation away from labour towards consumption and polluting activities, in addition to cutting unjustified tax expenditure, could contribute to much-needed growth. Furthermore, it will be important to improve the tax environment for businesses. In this respect, I would like to highlight our commitment to an EU VAT system with a single set of simple and clear rules providing businesses with more accessible and better information, and creating a new VAT forum: these are some of the actions we have planned in our recent communication for a new VAT regime.

I also very much welcome the support for our proposal on the common consolidated corporate tax base. This proposal will contribute to achieving many goals you seek, such as reducing administrative costs and red tape for companies, especially for small businesses operating across borders. It will help to remove discrimination and double taxation. In this respect, and as a complement to the CCCTB, the Commission is committed to further examining the potential for a binding dispute resolution mechanism covering double taxation, and many of you have spoken about it.

But the Commission is not only aiming to make life easier for businesses and provide advantages to them. In the current economic climate, tackling the causes for Member States' tax base erosion is of particular importance.

For this reason, I am very glad to see very strong support to our efforts to fight tax fraud and tax evasion, but also to tackle double non-taxation of large companies that artificially shift profits to minimise the effective tax rate. Very soon, the Commission intends to launch a public consultation on double non-taxation in order to establish the full scale of the problem, and to get information about existing schemes and possible solutions.

By the end of this year, the Commission will present a comprehensive initiative to further address issues highlighted in the report, such as tax havens, aggressive tax planning and double non-taxation. I also very much welcome the support for our communication on removing cross-border tax obstacles for EU citizens and for our efforts to strengthen cooperation and coordination between Member States in order to prevent such obstacles.

As you can see, the Commission's thinking reflected in our ongoing and planned initiatives is very much in line with the issues raised in the report and by Members today. I am really delighted to see that Parliament agrees on the importance of an EU-coordinated tax policy as an essential element in our strategy to move out of this crisis towards a better future for our citizens.

**President.** – The debate is closed.

The vote will take place today at 12.00.

## 11. Budgetary control of EU humanitarian aid (short presentation)

**President.** – The next item is the report by Martin Ehrenhauser, on behalf of the Committee on Budgetary Control, on the budgetary control of EU humanitarian aid managed by ECHO (2011/2073(INI)) (A7-0444/2011).

**Martin Ehrenhauser,** *rapporteur.* – (DE) Mr President, humanitarian aid is a very, very important matter. Together, the European Union and its Member States are the world's largest donor of humanitarian aid. The Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (DG ECHO) administers around 36% of these resources, which, in 2010, amounted to around EUR 1.1 billion. ECHO merely plays a coordinating role in this, while implementation on the ground is generally carried out by partners; this means that NGOs, UN agencies – in some cases – and international organisations are responsible for implementation.

The fact is that humanitarian aid is intended for the world's most needy people, and therefore any inefficiency and ineffectiveness costs human lives. That was the starting point for my own-initiative report. After seven years, it is high time that the European Parliament reinvestigated the effectiveness and efficiency of control mechanisms, monitoring mechanisms and, in the final event, the implementation of the aid concerned.

Where cooperation between DG ECHO and the NGOs is concerned, it can be stated that, overall, DG ECHO ensures a very high degree of accountability. Very good continuous dialogue takes place between the NGOs and DG ECHO. Moreover, the 2008 framework partnership agreement has brought definite progress. This is being revised this year, and naturally we should continue along this path. It is also important that we focus in future on reducing administrative expenses.

I am somewhat more critical of our cooperation with the UN. Here, serious shortcomings can be found in the joint budget implementation method as regards reliable control of the management of financial resources.

In my opinion, the 'single audit' principle is basically correct. Nonetheless, we have to emphasise transparency. That means, firstly, that the European Parliament should have access to all the UN audit reports. This is not the case at present. In my opinion, the European Parliament is unable to discharge its duties as a control body adequately as a result.

Secondly, the narrative reports sent to the Commission in respect of implementation are worded very vaguely, in my view, where results are concerned. They should contain more substance.

Thirdly, we come to the matter of UN reform. This reform was initiated following the scandal involving the government of North Korea. In respect of transparency and accountability, no progress has yet been made. The Member States surely have a duty to exert more pressure on the UN in this regard.

Where implementation by NGOs is concerned, there are a few weak areas – particularly as regards the contract award procedure of certain NGOs. These are not adequate and, in some cases, NGOs do not have a contract award procedure at all. Internal control mechanisms are also deficient. Although NGOs or partners may also delegate tasks here, they themselves bear the responsibility for how these funds are managed. It is therefore important that there are appropriate internal control mechanisms for this.

There is a strong variation in support costs for similar projects. Perhaps a uniform benchmark ought to be set for projects of a particular type, to rule out this being due to ineffectiveness or inefficiency.

It is undoubtedly important that we continue to focus in future on sustainability and prevention. In the case of disaster preparedness, for example, early warning systems should be built up. In addition, we need to improve the transition phase between humanitarian aid and development aid. Finally, it is also important that the resilience of the local population is strengthened by building up local structures.

The report was adopted with a large majority in committee, and naturally I would be very pleased to see a majority in favour of this report today in plenary.

*Catch-the-eye procedure*

**Paul Rübzig (PPE).** – (DE) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, here we have a report which shows that the European Union has shouldered a great responsibility in the world. The aid measures that we provide should indeed be sustainable and, in this respect, we should aim, above all, for our aid measures to actually provide the population with a return on the investment. That is why the new development strategy also involves looking at how we can make energy available to the poorest of the poor regions, because in the final event, access to energy is crucial for the training and education required by the population, and because communication is the basis of a successful strategy, and we therefore need to look at how we shape our world's resources sustainably. The report has a good approach to this: that we need better checks and balances in this area, and that actually, we should work on finding a model for this that enables us to provide aid as efficiently as possible in the long term.

**Silvia-Adriana Țicău (S&D).** – (RO) Mr President, in view of the increase in the number, frequency, scope and severity of humanitarian disasters, affecting several parts of the world, I welcome the Commission's initiative which provides for an increase in the humanitarian aid instrument budget as part of the 2014-2020 multiannual financial framework, at an annual average of around EUR 915 million. Another measure being proposed is to increase the Emergency Aid Reserve to EUR 2.5 billion for the same period, as well as the proposal for unspent funds in the reserve to be carried over to the following year. I think that the EU budget must support actions designed to anticipate disasters, avert them and react quickly to them, making it easier to initiate actions for emerging from crisis situations. We call for special care to be given to children, as well as to pregnant women and mothers of young children, with regard to the provision of food, clothing, evacuation and transportation, and the necessary health care services.

**Andrea Češková (ECR).** – (CS) Mr President, I would like to emphasise that one of the preconditions for ensuring the effective and useful administration of financial resources, and for ensuring the efficient provision of humanitarian and development aid, is an overall assessment of the needs created by a specific crisis in a given region.

There is still much room for improvement in this area, as can be seen from the situation in the Horn of Africa, where there has been no visible progress, despite the extensive humanitarian aid. Significant resources are nonetheless still being poured into this region, although there is uncertainty over who are the real beneficiaries. There are no processes or criteria available for identifying the final beneficiaries, on the basis of which it would be possible to define in a more concrete way the volume of resources that could be

effectively provided, whether within the framework of humanitarian or development aid. I therefore consider it important that the European Parliament report is devoted to an actual audit of the provision of this aid as a whole, as well as an audit of cooperation with other organisations providing aid, including the UN.

**Jaroslav Paška (EFD).** – (SK) Mr President, the EU humanitarian aid programmes for victims of various disasters or protracted conflicts are an integral part of EU policy. The Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection, which is responsible for carrying out this activity on behalf of the European Union, works with more than two hundred partner organisations with different structures. On the basis of framework agreements, considerable funds are thus provided to the partner organisations for helping the victims of various disasters. The control mechanisms for the meaningful and effective use of funds by these organisations must therefore be an important aspect of the work of our administration.

The Commission's proposal to improve the supervision processes of the effective management of European taxpayers' funds for humanitarian aid should therefore be seen as an effort to eliminate the deficiencies of the current model of control in order to achieve a more efficient use of these EU funds in the future.

**Elena Băsescu (PPE).** – (RO) Mr President, according to the statistics for recent decades, natural disasters are occurring more frequently across the globe. At the same time, the EU budget earmarked for humanitarian aid and civil protection is constantly growing. In this regard, good financial management is vital because the EU needs to have a more realistic humanitarian fund. I should emphasise the need to maintain the balance between financing actions designed to anticipate disasters and emergency aid. Europe must have formal mechanisms to prevent any abuses in this area. Transparent cooperation with international organisations is important. At the same time, the EU must ensure consistency between humanitarian aid and development aid; otherwise, it could have an adverse impact on local markets. For example, surplus food aid may discourage local food production.

**Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE).** – (IT) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I think that everything that has come out of this debate might merit the Commission's particular attention: the need to appraise the humanitarian fund, the need for the EU to strengthen this commitment and the need – as Ms Băsescu so opportunely mentioned just now – to separate the fund for financing measures to prevent humanitarian disasters from the emergency aid reserve.

However, I would like to emphasise the need, the cogent need, to ensure more transparent mechanisms for the management of funds. A few weeks ago, I submitted an oral question regarding a case which had arisen, and which appeared in all the newspapers in Italy, concerning an unemployed youth who was involved with an NGO in asking for money without a contract, without any form of coordination with this NGO. For some unemployed people, operating as go-betweens in procuring aid for non-governmental organisations becomes almost a recreational club activity. We need to ensure mechanisms for transparency in managing the fund and in the operation of these mechanisms and activities.

*End of the catch-the-eye procedure*

**Kristalina Georgieva, Member of the Commission.** – Mr President, let me start by expressing my gratitude and the gratitude of the Commission particularly to the humanitarian staff, here in Brussels and in more than 40 countries, striving to deal with the humanitarian

consequences of natural disasters and conflicts, often working in difficult and risky environments. We recognise that they do a good job in managing our taxpayers' money and this is something that we very much appreciate.

We live in a time when disasters are on the increase, conflicts are getting more complex and, while humanitarian needs are growing, resources are not. That puts additional pressure on how we use our taxpayers' money, on the effectiveness and efficiency of our work, and, in this context, I am very grateful to the rapporteur and to Parliament for the advice you are giving us. Let me stress four points.

First, the report comes at a very good time for us because we are working on the revision of our framework partnership agreements. In these revisions, we will continue to strive for strong control and monitoring systems for the effectiveness and speed of our operations, because for us, speed is not a luxury but translates into more lives saved at a lower cost for our taxpayers. Of course, in this context, we pay particular attention to the UN. It is right to say that we have to continue to work for the reform of the UN system and to negotiate for the internal audit reports of our UN partners to be made available to us. Let me emphasise that we have taken a very prudent approach to checking the performance of our partners and their projects. Every year, we review one third of our partners and one third of our projects to see whether they meet the high standards we have set for their performance.

Secondly, we strongly emphasise a results-oriented approach in our partnership agreements and we will continue to so. Yes, last year, we spent EUR 1.1 billion to help the victims of conflict and disasters around the world. With this money, we reached 146 million victims, providing them with food and water, medical care and shelter, and by doing so have reduced the risk of conflicts spreading further and creating more instability around the world. We want our partners to pay close attention to results and to value for money for our taxpayers.

Third, I could not embrace more warmly the recommendation made to emphasise disaster risk reduction and link relief to rehabilitation and development. This is the only way we can cut the humanitarian cost in the future. Already, we have spent 8% to 10% of humanitarian aid on disaster risk reduction. We have made linking relief to rehabilitation and development a priority for our cooperation with Commissioner Piebalgs because the best way to build resilience is through development.

Finally, we are committed to integrating into our work a systematic cost-benefit analysis so we can put forward projects and programmes that meet the requirement of achieving the highest possible result for European taxpayers' money, so you can be sure that you have a partner on our side who is very mindful of what Europeans are doing in this time of austerity to help others in need around the world.

**President.** – The debate is closed.

The vote will take place today at 12.00.

#### **Written statements (Rule 149)**

**Andreas Mölzer (NI), in writing.** – (DE) Since those perpetrating violence in war zones ignore fundamental humanitarian rules laid down in international law, humanitarian aid can all too easily become a pawn between the warring parties. The accusation that, if they become a regular source of income for warring parties, aid deliveries allow wars to be continued – in other words, that they feed the very suffering that causes humanitarian aid

to become necessary – has to be taken seriously. The payment of tolls to local warlords in order to be allowed access to the needy population, for example, is a rotten compromise. It can also be problematic if refugee camps indirectly advance ethnic cleansing or become a target for military attacks. Aid organisations become questionable if they scarcely coordinate with each other, merely so that each organisation can gain donors' funds for itself and have exclusive media coverage in its area of operations. Better coordination of humanitarian operations could have prevented a great deal of suffering in Haiti. Moreover, we need to find practical methods for the transition from humanitarian aid to development aid. When there are scandals such as funds trickling away, blatant abuses of power or 'jobs for the boys', we must stop blaming these on so-called black sheep or individual workers. Instead, we must nip them in the bud, for corruption spreads wherever there is little risk of discovery and punishment. It is time for the EU, as the largest humanitarian donor, to deal with these problems once and for all.

**Georgios Stavrakakis (S&D)** , *in writing*. – (EL) Our role and duty as the European Parliament is to maintain the principle of sound budgetary management of financial assistance granted by the EU, via the Community budget, from European taxpayers' money. The need to abide by this principle should apply equally to aid granted to the Member States of the Union and to third countries, especially those facing the whole spectrum of humanitarian crisis. This being so, I support the call on the European Commission to further improve the efficacy and effectiveness of the ECHO control, monitoring and supervision system. As far as efficacy and effectiveness during the implementation of humanitarian aid managed by ECHO are concerned, I endorse the recommendations formulated in the report that the Commission should continue in its efforts to create a better coordinated and more coherent needs assessment system. Finally, I agree that the European Parliament should have access to the final audit reports of ECHO partners on the implementation of humanitarian actions. It is only with transparency and accountability that we can ensure that the money from the Community budget is spent correctly and effectively.

*(The sitting was suspended at 11.45 and resumed at 12.00)*

## IN THE CHAIR: MARTIN SCHULZ

*President*

### 12. Voting time

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

**Nirj Deva (ECR).** – Mr President, first, in raising this point of order, I would like to congratulate you again on an excellent victory last month after a campaign in which I came to greatly respect you.

It is because of this respect that I wish to bring this point of order. In my candidacy for the office of President, I stood in part to protect Rule 20(3) of the Rules of Procedure and to ensure that the President of our Parliament would always be impartial. The Rule in question states that 'The President may speak in a debate only to sum up or to call speakers to order. Should he wish to take part in a debate, he shall vacate the chair and shall not reoccupy it until the debate is over'.

Regardless of what was said yesterday to Mr Farage, some of which I do not necessarily agree with, I would like your firm assurance that you will respect Rule 20(3) in the future and be the President for all of us, every single Member, regardless of group or nationality.

*(Applause)*

**12.1. EU foreign policy towards the BRICS and other emerging powers  
(A7-0010/2012 - Jacek Saryusz-Wolski)**

**12.2. Consistent policy towards regimes against which the EU applies restrictive measures (A7-0007/2012 - Graham Watson)**

**12.3. Cross-border transfer of company seats (A7-0008/2012 - Evelyn Regner)**

– *After the vote:*

**Francesco Enrico Speroni (EFD).** – *(IT)* Mr President, I wanted to ask for electronic verification of the vote on Ms Regner's report in view of the fact that a qualified majority is required.

**President.** – Mr Speroni, firstly, the vote has already been carried out, and secondly, you can be sure that there was significantly more than a qualified majority. I could see that very well from here.

**12.4. Budgetary control of EU humanitarian aid (A7-0444/2011 - Martin Ehrenhauser)**

**12.5. Towards a coherent European approach to collective redress (A7-0012/2012 - Klaus-Heiner Lehne)**

**12.6. Objection pursuant to Rule 88(2): 'List of nutrition claims' (B7-0045/2012)**

– *Before the vote:*

**Renate Sommer (PPE).** – *(DE)* Mr President, if I may, I would like to make a brief comment that there is some confusion surrounding this vote.

How should one vote if one is against consumers being misled? If you are against consumers being misled by advertising claims, then you should vote in favour of the recommendation by the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety; the recommendation by the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety is the resolution.

In other words, if you are against consumers being misled by advertising on food packaging, then you need to vote 'Yes'. I say that only as an explanation, because some very confusing lobbying information is doing the rounds.

**12.7. Conclusions of the informal European Council meeting of 30 January 2012  
(B7-0043/2012)**

**12.8. Iran and its nuclear programme (B7-0017/2012)**

– *Before the vote on paragraph 6(2):*

**Cristian Dan Preda (PPE).** – (RO) Mr President, we would like to replace ‘only’ by ‘mainly’ in the second part of paragraph 6. As I also mentioned yesterday, we need to have a strong EU position towards Iran. The Group of the European People’s Party (Christian Democrats) is not in favour of sanctions for sanctions’ sake. The decision to adopt sanctions is not made lightly and, unfortunately, in the case of Iran, we have serious grounds for concern. We must be very determined and not water down our message.

*(The oral amendment was adopted)*

## **12.9. European dimension in sport (A7-0385/2011 - Santiago Fisas Ayxela)**

– *Before the collective vote:*

**Emma McClarkin (ECR).** – Mr President, I would request that we stick with the roll-call vote for all of the remaining amendments.

**President.** – Under the Rules of Procedure, the President makes procedural decisions on the order of votes. I have made my decision. We will now vote collectively. Please vote on the remaining paragraphs.

*(Uproar in the Chamber)*

## **12.10. Application of Waste Management Directive (A7-0335/2011 - Carlos José Iturgaiz Angulo)**

– *Before the vote on paragraph 5:*

**Jacqueline Foster (ECR).** – Mr President, in this House, when roll-call votes are requested by all sides – all parties and all groups – we would tend to respect those. Notwithstanding that you are a new President to the Parliament, to arbitrarily decide to take those votes *en bloc*, quite frankly, is outrageous.

*(Applause from the ECR Group)*

Now it may be, President, that you are sitting there with an EPP or an S&D voting list. There are other groups in this House who will obviously want to vote in slightly different ways. Therefore, I would like to conclude by saying that if I have a voting list for my group and we have requested according to the normal procedures, correctly and within time, for roll-call votes which happen to be separate and if we do not agree that they should be taken *en bloc* then, as with our other colleagues in other groups, that is what the procedure should be. I think you have made a mistake and I hope this House will proceed in a proper, democratic order in future.

**President.** – Thank you very much. I understand. A roll-call vote was proposed, and a roll-call vote was carried out. The overwhelming majority of this House wishes to vote collectively and I allowed such a collective vote.

**Robert Atkins (ECR).** – Mr President, may I just seek your advice on procedure please. First of all, I congratulate you for starting on time and trying to get things moving. I am very grateful to you; you are listening.

But how do I explain either to the administration or indeed to my constituents that, when presented with a series of roll-call votes in which I wanted to vote for one or two of the options and against the others, they were taken *en bloc* and I was therefore not able to vote

for or against the given items where necessary? How do I explain that to my constituents and how do I explain that to the administration when it comes to telling them that I wanted to vote for or against or abstain?

*(Applause from the ECR Group)*

**President.** – Mr Atkins, when roll-call votes are called, the President has to put them to the vote individually. This is set down in Rule 161(5). The President can, but is not obliged to, ask plenary whether he can put amendments that complement one another to the vote collectively. This is clear. That is exactly what I have done. I asked the question. You will find this in Rule 161(6). Let me read it to you: ‘The President may put other amendments to the vote collectively where they are complementary. In such cases, he shall follow the procedure laid down in paragraph 5’. In other words, the President asks plenary. That is exactly what I have done. I have therefore satisfied the rules of procedure.

If it is your opinion that I should deal with such amendments individually rather than collectively, then please notify me accordingly in the Conference of Presidents. We shall then vote separately on each individual amendment in future. I had the impression that you were interested in working efficiently. If not, then we shall do things differently.

#### **12.11. Daphne programme (A7-0006/2012 - Regina Bastos)**

#### **12.12. Women’s situation in war (A7-0429/2011 - Norica Nicolai)**

– *Before the vote:*

**Gerard Batten (EFD).** – Mr President, in this next vote there are quite a few votes and, since it is far more tiring to put one’s hand up and down than press a button, I wonder if we could take them all as a block?

#### **12.13. EU development cooperation in support of the objective of universal energy access by 2030 (A7-0442/2011 - Norbert Neuser)**

#### **12.14. Annual tax report (A7-0014/2012 - Olle Schmidt)**

#### **12.15. EU competition policy (A7-0424/2011 - Andreas Schwab)**

**President.** – That concludes voting time.

**IN THE CHAIR: ANNI PODIMATA**

*Vice-President*

#### **13. Composition of Parliament: see Minutes**

#### **14. Composition of committees and delegations: see Minutes**

#### **15. Council position at first reading: see Minutes**

#### **16. Explanations of vote**

#### **Oral explanations of vote**

**Report: Jacek Saryusz-Wolski (A7-0010/2012)**

**Kay Swinburne (ECR).** – Madam President, the report on the EU's foreign policy towards Brazil, Russia, India and China (the BRICS), and other emerging powers including Turkey, Indonesia and Mexico, rightly acknowledges the increasing role these countries play in our foreign policy and the increasing contribution they are making to the global economy. We have also seen an increased participation in cooperation in the policies of the BRICS and the emerging powers on an international level, and this is to be encouraged at all times.

We can now see the development of a multipolar system where economic and political power is distributed between a number of blocs. It is for this reason that I support the report's proposal for the development of a coherent EU approach, to treat the BRICS as a single bloc, and to also seek to establish partnerships with each of the countries within the bloc, which will prove to be invaluable when responding to global challenges such as climate change, terrorism and, of course, the financial crisis.

**Daniel Hannan (ECR).** – Madam President, I took part in a debate in the United Kingdom last month against our former Europe Minister about these BRICs. He said: 'What you have to understand, Hannan, people like you, is that we sell more to the Netherlands than we sell to the whole of Brazil. We sell more to Belgium than we sell to the whole of China'. I replied, 'That is precisely the problem'. Which is the better long-term prospect?

When we joined the European Union in 1973, we had the impression that we were hitching our wagons to a powerful locomotive. Western Europe had indeed grown spectacularly in the years following 1945. It had far outperformed the United Kingdom, burdened as it was with the enormous debt-to-GDP ratio that it had at the end of the Second World War.

But we can now see in retrospect that our timing could hardly have been worse. In relative terms, Western Europe stopped growing in the oil crisis of 1974 and never really got going again. We foolishly stood aside from the parts of the world which are still developing, where the growth still is, not least the Anglosphere and Commonwealth markets to which we are tied by habit, blood and speech. We are cabined, cribbed, confined in a dwindling customs union. We should raise our eyes to the broader, brighter and more distant horizons that our fathers took for granted.

**Charles Tannock (ECR).** – Madam President, I was opposed to a report in the Committee on Foreign Affairs on BRICS on the basis that there was little politically in common between these rising powers other than their self-evident vast and growing economic and military strengths.

I support good relations with the countries individually but I am under no illusion that China remains a one-party dictatorship, Russia has an authoritarian government which openly tolerates high-level corruption, whereas India and Brazil are liberal democracies with the same fundamental values, legal checks and balances and freedoms as EU Member States. My group is particularly keen on advocating stronger trade links through deep and comprehensive free trade agreements with both India and Brazil – the latter ideally through Mercosur, as Latin America enjoys the same growth rate of about 8% as China, and has a collective economy roughly the same size as China's, but is totally different by sharing our common democratic values.

**Eduard Kukan (PPE).** – Madam President, by voting in favour, I wanted to express my support for the need to reformulate EU foreign policy towards BRICS. They should definitely have stronger relevance in our foreign policy.

There is a space for closer cooperation between the EU and the BRICS countries. This is especially relevant at a time when BRICS countries are showing their clear ambitions in foreign policy terms. From this point of view, it will be important to bring the emerging economic powers to take a different role in international development policy. In my opinion, this role should better reflect their share in the global GDP.

Changes in the world economic landscape and in the new role played by countries like China, India and Brazil give the opportunity for strengthening global development policies. The rising economic strength of these countries means taking up more responsibilities in opening up their markets to the least developed countries, for example, through preferential schemes, but also on a non-discriminatory basis towards the rest of the WTO membership.

**Zoltán Bagó (PPE).** – (HU) Madam President, I gave my vote to this report because I believe that in today's socially and economically accelerating world order, the strengthening of our positive relations with the BRIC countries is a fundamental interest of the European Union, and therefore also of Hungary.

The need to reinforce these relations is well supported by the fact that the growth potential of these countries is becoming more and more influential on a global scale and, as a result, they are claiming an increasingly great role in shaping world politics. This rapid development influences the economic and political interests of the European Union and its Member States in every respect. The situation, naturally, has a direct impact on the economic and foreign and security policy of the EU, and in this regard, I am thinking primarily of Chinese investments.

I therefore believe that the European Union should assume a proactive role in its contact with the BRIC countries, thereby strengthening its global position.

**Julie Girling (ECR).** – Madam President, of course we in Europe have a duty to ensure that we develop a coherent approach towards BRICS. However, I do want to stress the point that, in foreign policy terms, each BRICS country demands a different approach and a different treatment. Of course they have all kinds of things in common economically. Having lived in a BRICS country and worked in a situation where you can get things done quickly without the chains and encumbrances of red tape, I can only say that economically, they are going to go places quickly.

However, politically, we have not shown here in the European Union that we have the sophistication in foreign policy terms to develop and deal with these very varying political states in a sensible and sophisticated way. That is what we should be concentrating on and, if we cannot do that, we should leave it to Member States who can.

**Syed Kamall (ECR).** – Madam President, as previous speakers have said, I think it is very important that we recognise that the BRIC countries are different and that when looking at the global outlook, we do not treat them as one large monolith. As Pink Floyd might have said, we should not treat them as another BRIC in the wall.

What we should be looking at is the granularity, and the differences between individual countries. So, for example, Brazil offers great prospects for many companies across the EU. The same goes for Russia, but the problem is, as Kasparov said, when it comes to elections, you already know the result, but you do not know what the outcome might be. India is the world's largest democracy, with over a billion people and the rule of law, but not actually enough economic liberalisation. And when we look at China, there has been the economic liberalisation but not enough freedom and human rights.

All these things can only be enhanced with greater trade from the EU, but it is time that we started to try to match the growth of the BRICS countries rather than bring in policies such as the financial transaction tax, which would actually reduce growth in the EU in these difficult times.

**Report: Graham Watson (A7-0007/2012)**

**Kay Swinburne (ECR).** – Madam President, I welcome the report on a consistent policy towards regimes against which the EU applies restrictive measures. If the EU and not national governments are deemed best placed to lead on a particular issue, then consistency should be paramount.

This report puts forward what seem to be balanced recommendations to the Council for when the EU needs to place sanctions on these regimes. It is important, however, that the EU should develop clearer definitions of what sanctions criteria are, which should also be in line with the EU's strategy on human rights. It is equally necessary to gain support for the EU sanctions policy from all of our international partners when they have been applied to third countries, which would only strengthen the impact of the policy globally. Clearly, the use of sanctions needs to be coupled with diplomacy, which is often the preferred method of responding to authoritarian regimes by the majority of our Member States and should be respected as the preferred collective tool.

**Daniel Hannan (ECR).** – Madam President, people often do not realise the extent to which the European Union aggressively exports its ideology. Just as the US did after the Second World War, and just as the Soviet Union did during the revolutionary period, so the European Union attempts to encourage other parts of the world to form regional blocs in mimicry of its own structures. It does not just make its aid dependent on reproductive rights and so on, but it very often – and far more damagingly – requires countries to be part of whatever regional bloc is nearby. It makes clear that it will not sign trade or aid deals with individual sovereign states but will only deal bloc to bloc.

People often do not realise the extent to which organisations like Mercosur, the Central American Union and the African, Caribbean and Pacific Union, are not just bodies encouraged by the European Union, but were really creatures of the EU, sponsored by the Commission and largely dependent on it for their financing. This creates a beautifully circular argument for European federalists who say, 'We have to be part of this big bloc because that is what the rest of the world is doing', when, of course, they are obliging the rest of the world to do so. In reality, it is the little countries that are doing well. The wealthiest countries of the world are the Monacos and the UAEs. In the top ten, only one state has a population of 7 million. It is by being this large, elephantine presence that we have made ourselves poorer and less relevant.

**Charles Tannock (ECR).** – Madam President, targeted sanctions are an essential soft power economic mechanism against misbehaving states that the EU can deploy to enforce the combined political will of its Member States. Most recently, the measures agreed by the EU in denying Iran some of its oil revenues are making it harder for the leadership to move money around the world, as a result of its non-cooperation with mandates and orders from the IAEA and the UN to conform with its international obligations over its nuclear programme, and this will now put much more pressure on Tehran to come back to the negotiating table.

I therefore welcome the Watson report and especially its recommendations for developing a consistent and coherent sanctions policy in the Council of Ministers, and its emphasis on the importance of acquiring wider international support such as the UN for EU sanctions to give them even further punch and effect in future.

**Peter Jahr (PPE).** – (DE) Madam President, I, too, voted in favour of the Watson report. In his report, the rapporteur describes the general way in which the European Union behaves towards regimes. He states that all EU activities and economic and political relations are based on our values and standards and that human rights should be considered in every dialogue.

In addition, the European Union should speak with one voice in order to achieve even greater efficiency in restrictive measures, something I believe to be particularly important.

So far, so good – I might say. What constantly disturbs me, however, is the fact that when specific changes occur in such regimes, when revolution breaks out, when people try to take their human rights into their own hands, then it seems to me that the European Union is never sufficiently prepared. I would therefore simply ask that we should work together – together with the Commission – in a strategic way, so that we have a better idea what is going on in these countries, enabling us to apply sanctions exactly where they will have an effect.

#### **Report: Evelyn Regner (A7-0008/2012)**

**Kay Swinburne (ECR).** – Madam President, I welcome the report on cross-border transfer of company seats as this has clear economic benefits for businesses. As a consequence, businesses are able to relocate, or will be able to relocate, with much more ease, thus saving them much-needed time and, in many instances, money in determining where their company seat is located.

I strongly believe that cross-border company migration is a fundamental part of ensuring the completion of the internal market and will enable us to adapt to a more coherent EU-wide policy on these procedures. It is going to be welcomed by businesses across the EU and it is particularly pertinent when one of the main complaints I hear from businesses is that they are prevented from migrating to other parts of the EU, given the existence of high administrative burdens in some areas that they would prefer to avoid. It is for these reasons that I am happy to support this report.

**Zoltán Bagó (PPE).** – (HU) Madam President, as a lawyer, I voted in favour of the report on the directive on the cross-border transfer of company seats. I did so because the freedom of establishment set out in Articles 49 and 54 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union clearly serves the EU's efforts to abolish national barriers and implement a single market on all levels.

The reinforcement of the single market is in our common interest, as all Member States have a stake in the European Union's truly becoming a free area without restrictions. By extending the interpretation of the freedom of establishment to enterprises, the investments and economic establishments of the Hungarian economy will, as part of the internal market, also benefit from full protection and security. It is the so far very successful dismantling of barriers that is the source of the global competitiveness of the EU and its individual Member States. We must support this endeavour, which is also backed by the relevant practice of the European Court of Justice.

**Julie Girling (ECR).** – Madam President, I was the rapporteur for the opinion of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs on this report and I would like to make a couple of points to support my vote in that regard. In that opinion, we try to emphasise that Articles 49 and 54 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union guarantee freedom of establishment for all companies and firms, ensuring that there are no barriers. Cross-border company migration is one of the crucial elements in the completion of the internal market.

However, there is a real lack of consistency in legislation on transfers and on procedures for transferring registered offices, real head offices, existing companies or firms incorporated under national law from one Member State to another. We need to eliminate these problems. But in doing so, we must ensure that any legislation prevents abuses such as the setting up of mailbox companies and protects the interests and guarantees the existing rights of creditors and employees.

**Report: Martin Ehrenhauser (A7-0444/2011)**

**Kay Swinburne (ECR).** – Madam President, the report on the budgetary control of EU humanitarian aid takes on board the criticisms of the European Court of Auditors in that it recognises the instances in which accountability and transparency of the monitoring systems and internal audit procedures could be significantly improved. It also looks at how EU funds are used and managed by partner organisations such as the NGOs and UN agencies, and places greater emphasis on measuring results against initial indicators when the evaluations are taking place.

The report also proposes various improvements that could be made to the framework partnership agreements, notably with the process of selecting partners to try to ensure that we achieve best value for money in addition to gaining the experience and expertise that they can offer. For me, this is an important justification as my constituents back home in Wales are continuously questioning the value gained by UK contributions to the EU budget.

**Daniel Hannan (ECR).** – Madam President, in the European Parliament in Strasbourg recently, I met a very clever man from Nigeria called Thompson Ayodele. He talked me through a number of statistics on foreign aid, and the figures were pitilessly clear. He showed that international assistance was not useless; it was actively harmful. If you compared countries in receipt of it with countries not in receipt of it over the same periods, the countries not in receipt grew faster, were more democratic, developed more impressively, and for the obvious reason: foreign aid breaks the link between taxation, representation and expenditure. It allows governments to remain in office without the support of their populations.

There are lots of things we could be doing to help developing countries. We could open our markets; we could abolish the common agricultural policy; we could encourage their exporters to sell. But the one thing that is absolutely not going to help is giving this kind of assistance, especially when we do not have the money. This is the crazy thing! We are borrowing money we do not have in order to give it to countries whose situation would thereby be worsened, all in order to make ourselves feel virtuous.

**Charles Tannock (ECR).** – *(microphone off at start of speech)* ... ECR Group are in favour of the report on the budgetary control of EU humanitarian aid. As a group, we welcome the aims of the Working Group on Accountability for and Audit of Disaster-related Aid,

namely, to set out common standards of guidance and good practice and thus address the challenges of transparency and accountability in this area.

We are also keen to see more involvement of the beneficiaries of the aid in the process of aid planning and management, in an attempt to prevent the negative effects of humanitarian aid that can occur without careful monitoring by all the parties, for example, the discouragement of local food production by the supply of surplus food aid coming from an unreformed CAP of the European Union.

I believe that there must be more conditionality, as well as accountability, with regard to the results, and that more careful monitoring must be put in place to measure the output of humanitarian aid against pre-set indicators. For example, there should be no aid whatsoever for a BRIC country like India or China.

**Peter Jahr (PPE).** – (DE) Madam President, I am well aware that providing humanitarian aid can sometimes mean treading a very fine line and we cannot always pick and choose the regimes with which we work. I can understand this. It is the duty of the European Union to help people in need. Nonetheless, we must be equally clear on the other side: when assistance is given, we need to know what it is being given for and it must be easy to check whether the aid reaches its intended destination, rather than ending up in the coffers of some corrupt governments, never to be heard of again. Although this is self-evident, we nonetheless need to demand this on a daily basis. Naturally, this also means looking to ensure that the aid is genuinely efficient. We need to check that the aid really gets to where it is needed and that it is efficient. If we can manage these two things, then we shall make a lot more progress. Transparency is a minimum requirement in all of this. For this reason, I have voted in favour of this report.

**James Nicholson (ECR).** – Madam President, I have to ask the question whether this is really working, and working in a way in which it was supposed to be in the first instance. One of the greatest problems I have found in talking to people on the ground is the lack of continuity. By the time they get a programme into existence, the European Union changes its mind and goes on and creates another programme which they have to go through all the bureaucracy and red tape to qualify for again.

I think we have got to get it right. I think it has the chance and it can deliver and do good. But there is too much bureaucracy, there is too much red tape, there is too much control, and people are not allowed to get on with doing the work themselves on the ground. I personally had a recent experience in Uganda where I went out with a local faith-based organisation who are drilling one new well every week, bringing water to miles around and doing a fantastic job. Those are the type of things we should be doing, when you see the disease and the way in which disease is being reduced in children, allowing them to live and giving them life.

**Lucas Hartong (NI).** – (NL) Madam President, today we are debating a report concerning the budgetary control of humanitarian aid. It is a very disturbing report.

First of all, we have the role of the United Nations. The report contends that the control of EU funds awarded to the UN is absolutely terrible. Reports to the EU are vague and late. The Court of Auditors is obstructed when it comes to accessing information about projects carried out and there is a lack of transparency, efficiency and effectiveness when it comes to the management of resources. Reforms that had been required in the past have simply not been implemented.

Next, we have cost efficiency when it comes to aid in general. From my own investigations, I know that fraud does take place in EU development projects. Thanks to OLAF and the Court of Auditors, cases are brought to light. I am focused on the fact that much more needs to be done and I will fight hard, on behalf of the Dutch Party for Freedom (PVV), to ensure that that happens.

It is unconscionable that, despite all these serious cases, it is still being proposed that the development budget should be increased. We will therefore definitely be voting against this report.

**Zoltán Bagó (PPE).** – (HU) Madam President, I for one agree with the endeavour to improve the effectiveness, speed and coordination of instruments at the EU's disposal for responding to disasters. Being the world's largest donor, the EU has an immense responsibility as a global actor in humanitarian aid throughout the world.

Since the use of these funds is managed and directed by the Commission's Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (ECHO), I also welcome the rapporteur's proposals for the improvement of the efficiency of the ECHO control, monitoring and supervision system. I find rapid response to natural disasters to be indispensable, as was demonstrated in the case of the 2010 disasters in Haiti and Pakistan. Both the European Union and Hungary performed well in this respect, and I therefore gave my support to this submission.

**Hannu Takkula (ALDE).** – (FI) Madam President, it is very important that we should be having this debate on humanitarian aid. Obviously, as welfare societies, we Europeans want to support undeveloped countries, so that people there can lead a happy and full life. It is very important, however, to ensure that, when, as Europeans, we act, we implement projects which reflect European Union values and which are, in that way, ethically sustainable. Above all, we need to export democracy, human rights and freedom of expression, and make sure that Europe's heritage of values and intellectual input are strongly present. That is why it is good to be having this debate.

I voted in favour of this report, but we still have more to do in this area, because there are several examples of these ethical principles not having been implemented in all respects everywhere as far as our EU projects are concerned.

**Julie Girling (ECR).** – Madam President, I was interested to read this report and pleased to see that it did pick up, albeit in a rather desultory way in the end, the issue of whether humanitarian aid and assistance has negative effects. I think that is the discussion that we should have in much more depth here in the Parliament because we tend to think it is a good thing per se. I happen to agree with overseas aid. I think that properly targeted and carefully monitored, it can achieve great things.

However, I was particularly struck when listening to the rapporteur this morning talking about his misgivings about our working with the UN. This really was a disturbing part of the report and, if we cannot get that right, then we should seriously consider suspending some of those programmes until we are clear that they are acting in the best interest of the people that we are trying to help.

#### **Motions for resolutions: B7-0043/2012, B7-0044/2012**

**Daniel Hannan (ECR).** – (*microphone off at start of speech*) ...will no doubt be familiar with Descartes' famous thought experiment of the little malicious demon which could control

our reality by limiting our senses. Not for the first time, I felt that the European Union is that Cartesian thought experiment come to life.

At the recent summit, we had declaration after declaration about the need to create jobs, to reduce unemployment. And yet almost every measure that comes out of the European Union, on maternity and paternity leave, on limited working times, on the 48-hour week, on all the health and safety stuff, has precisely the opposite effect. There is this extraordinary gap between our proclaimed intention and everything that we are doing in reality.

The truth is we MEPs do not have the capacity to create jobs. We are, if you like, recipients of the largesse of the private sector which does create the jobs. But we do have the capacity to destroy jobs and we have been doing that by these intrusive regulations. The one thing we could do is to get out of the way so that entrepreneurs can make things, buy things, sell things and create employment for other people. In a variation of Hippocrates' wisdom, we should first do no harm.

**James Nicholson (ECR).** – Madam President, I forget now how many Council meetings we have had since the crisis began, but there have been an awful lot of them, that is the one thing for sure. The other thing for certain is that we are still waiting on some real results actually coming from any of these Council meetings. All the time these results are not coming forward, the uncertainty continues to grow in countries within the eurozone, and that is affecting everybody else, both within and without the eurozone.

To be very honest, I can see no clear certainty how they are going to be able in any way to amend or bring things around as far as the constitution is concerned. It is by no means certain, even if they agree on a constitution, that it will ever be approved. I think this is a great weakness.

So what we need in the future is real decisions and we must not go back to the nationalistic tendencies that we witnessed in this Chamber yesterday. I hope I never see that again because that is the one thing that should not happen. We should be acting in a positive way to resolve the problem, not in a negative way.

**Anneli Jäätteenmäki (ALDE).** – (FI) Madam President, Parliament stated that the economic agreement endorsed at the summit meeting was virtually pointless and that it would not help us to cope in the crisis. In my view, Parliament could have also said that, in fact, the entire summit was pointless, in the same way as many other recent summits. These meetings should be prepared for adequately and should not be a sideshow put on by some of the big Member States and their leaders. Instead, they should be prepared for so that they produce results that countries commit to and press ahead with. Now France has said that they will only attend to this after the elections. This cannot be acceptable.

I would also like there to have been greater focus on growth and employment in Parliament's statement, and especially at the summit. Furthermore, it should have contained a quite definite proposal to ban tax havens. I hope that the EU would be more active in this area and that the matter of Eurobonds would be set to one side.

**Diane Dodds (NI).** – Madam President, last December, my party in the British House of Commons put forward a motion which commended David Cameron, our Prime Minister, on his veto and his strength in opposition at the December summit. Therefore, we viewed this latest summit as a test of that resolve. We were sadly disappointed. The question now being asked across the United Kingdom is what happened to the veto, what happened to the stand of principle to not allow EU institutions to police the fiscal compact?

This agreement represents a new precedent within the EU. One where, if 10, 15, 20 or 25 Member States cannot find agreement across all Member States, they simply go ahead and are allowed to use the mechanisms of the EU. This was what was vetoed in December, yet this was accepted in January. The people of the UK deserve an explanation, but most of all they deserve a say in our relationship with the EU, which is like a juggernaut which rolls on, while a UK Prime Minister refuses to man the roadblock.

**Syed Kamall (ECR).** – Madam President, we have European Council after European Council and each time we are told it is decision time, we have to get serious about solving the eurozone crisis. But actually, we never look at the two potential results. There are two potential outcomes, yet we remain in the impasse.

The first is that some of the weaker countries leave the eurozone and you have a stronger eurozone left behind, a sort of tougher euro which the markets recognise is too tough for them to break.

The alternative is that you accept that you have to have a fiscal union – the FU – with transfers from the richer countries to the poorer countries, led by Germany and those who want to see the eurozone not as an economic project but as a building block towards a political project, as a building block towards a United States of Europe or a federal Europe. If that is what they want, they have to be prepared to pay. It is time for Germany to put up or shut up. Do they want to keep the eurozone together with 17 countries or do they want to leave it to the markets?

**Motions for resolutions: B7-0017/2012, B7-0018/2012, B7-0019/2012, B7-0020/2012, B7-0041/2012, B7-0042/2012**

**Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR).** – (PL) Madam President, Iran's nuclear programme is a real threat not just to Iran's neighbours, but also to the whole world. Iran is a country in which no democratic standards of any kind are upheld, a country where all the values in which we in the European Union believe are persecuted or where such values are simply not found. It is a regime which is very oppressive towards its own people. We all remember the events of not long ago on the streets of Tehran. In the hands of such people, a nuclear weapon, and the Iranian nuclear programme, which will, without doubt, lead to the construction of a nuclear weapon, are extremely dangerous things.

I think the European Union has done the right thing in imposing sanctions on Iran. These sanctions are justified and we are acting here in a good cause. I am very pleased that the European Union has taken such action. I also want to appeal yet again in this Chamber for the European Union to show solidarity with our greatest ally in the Middle East, and to do so, too, as part of this discussion about the Iranian nuclear programme. By this I mean Israel, a country which holds the same values in which we also believe.

**Kay Swinburne (ECR).** – Madam President, I support the motion for a resolution concerning Iran and its nuclear programme since Iran has failed to prove that its nuclear programme is a peaceful development. With a lack of cooperation with international bodies, I have a number of concerns about this nuclear programme and its possible intentions. It is therefore, sadly, a necessary step to prohibit the importation of crude oil from Iran, twinned with imposing a number of other financial measures against the Central Bank of Iran. The sanctions proposed are therefore, in my opinion, a proportionate and reasonable response by the EU at the request of its Member States.

**Daniel Hannan (ECR).** – Madam President, I was unusual among British Conservatives in opposing the Iraq war and indeed in opposing the prolongation and permanence of the mission in Afghanistan, although I had supported limited action against the Taliban regime.

One of the reasons I was worried about the Western mission was that it seemed to me strategically erroneous to remove from both of Iran's flanks what had, up until then, been powers which had been anti-Tehran and anti-Ayatollah and had contained a regime which has given ample evidence of its readiness to strike anywhere in the world. It sponsors militias and terrorist organisations in Central Asia, in the Balkans; it struck even as far afield as London and Buenos Aires.

There is an argument that we got the whole thing wrong, that we should have had nothing to do with Iran, that we should have just stayed out of the way. But we are now in a situation where we have embarked on action and, as Polonius says, 'Beware of entrance to a quarrel, but being in, bear't that the opposed may beware of thee'. This is, I think, the most important foreign policy issue of our age and it will take extraordinary resolve to see it through safely.

**Elena Băsescu (PPE).** – (RO) Madam President, I voted for this resolution because I share the concerns about Iran's nuclear programme. Its military aspect may have significant security implications, with not just a regional, but also a global impact. This is why efforts must be stepped up to find a solution which combines tough measures with proposals for dialogue. At the same time, the impact of the sanctions must be constantly assessed to ascertain their effectiveness. In light of this, I should mention how important it is to coordinate our actions with those of the other global actors in order to achieve tangible results. Turkey can play a positive role in the efforts to resolve the Iran dossier. I hope that cooperation will be enhanced in this area with Ankara. I appeal to the authorities in Tehran to respond to the calls for negotiations and to avoid escalating the situation by blocking the Strait of Hormuz.

**Anneli Jäätteenmäki (ALDE).** – (FI) Madam President, in its resolution, Parliament has expressed its concern over Iran's nuclear weapons programme, and we have given our support for sanctions. My group, including myself, views these sanctions with caution, because we fear that they will strengthen Iran's administration and therefore defeat their own purpose. After all, Iran's leaders need some sort of enemy to be, and to look, strong, and I am afraid that now, as a consequence, we have fallen into this trap. However, now we still have to negotiate and discuss matters, although we know that Iran is not an easy negotiating partner, nor can it be trusted.

Sometimes, it is also worth putting yourself in the position of the opposite party. Iran is the former Persia, a country proud of its history, and one that regards itself as a civilised nation, which, in the light of history, it is. My fear is that sanctions will make the Iranians feel that their pride has been injured and that things will go against what we are all hoping for: negotiations, peace and the renunciation of nuclear weapons.

**Hannu Takkula (ALDE).** – (FI) Madam President, I voted in favour of this resolution. It is perfectly obvious that both the European Union and the international community must send a clearer message to Iran that we will not accept their nuclear weapons programme.

It is the case that the speeches that Ahmadinejad has made both at the UN and to the world at large are so provocative that we need to respond to them. We Europeans have to stand up to this and be frank and clear. We also have to support the sole democracy in the Middle

East, Israel, which is especially under threat from Iran now, as we know from what Ahmadinejad has said about threatening to wipe Israel off the map of the world.

However, it is not just Israel, as a bastion of democracy in the Middle East, that is under threat: it is also all of Europe and the Western world, the free world, the democratic world. That is why we have to act robustly and firmly to ensure that Iran is prepared to abandon its programme. Unfortunately, sanctions seem to be the way we have to go, though, of course, discussions should also be continued.

**Seán Kelly (PPE).** – Madam President, firstly, we must say that these new sanctions are not aimed at the Iranian people who have been suffering long and hard under an authoritarian regime. Secondly, it is not our remit to prohibit any country from developing nuclear energy if it so wishes.

But, of course, in Iran, all the evidence suggests that the intent goes far beyond nuclear energy and has a military dimension. This has been borne out by six resolutions of the Security Council of the United Nations, of which Iran is a member; all have been ignored. So, like Mr Kamall said a minute ago in relation to another topic, it is time for us to put up or shut up, and putting-up means imposing sanctions with the hope that Iran will desist from its present course and return to the negotiating table.

**Report: Santiago Fisas Ayxela (A7-0385/2011)**

**Csaba Sógor (PPE).** – (HU) Madam President, I welcome my fellow Member's report on the European dimension in sport. I would specifically like to highlight the role of sport in fostering European unity and an atmosphere free from intolerance.

Let me bring to your attention a curious incident in connection with this report: recently, the national ice hockey teams of Romania and Hungary played each other in Miercurea Ciuc, a Romanian city with a Hungarian majority. Since all but two players on the Romanian national ice hockey team belong to the Hungarian minority community of Romania, these players, too, sang the Hungarian national anthem at the customary singing of anthems before the game. The incident received special attention from the Romanian central press, and many accused the ice hockey players of Hungarian nationality who make up almost the entire Romanian national team of treason.

It would be high time for mutual respect and tolerance to permeate not only the atmosphere of sports events but also public statements, as in this case it was not the gestures of the fans but the malicious and manipulative activities of Romanian politicians and the Romanian press that incited intolerance. Romania won the game

4-1, by the way.

**Kay Swinburne (ECR).** – Madam President, Parliament now has codecision on sporting matters and I am disappointed with the recommendations made in this first report.

This weekend sees the start of the Six Nations Championship, where Wales will proudly play their national sport. As an avid rugby supporter, I cannot help but see this as a missed opportunity for the Parliament. The report should have focused on the positive contribution that sports can have on both participants and supporters in terms of instilling values of respect, fair play and social inclusion, and should have focused on how the EU could help the development of grassroots sports. It instead concentrates on how the EU can take advantage of the increasing popularity of professional sport, including how to develop a

database to share information on hooligans, which effectively duplicates the work already being conducted by Europol. The report proposes that all agents representing European sportsmen have their fiscal residence in the EU. This clearly does not serve to promote sport across the EU and certainly not globally.

Today's vote was undemocratic, however, when smaller groups requested roll-call votes. It is because they need to register disappointment on certain parts of reports. Today, sadly, that was denied by the President.

**Daniel Hannan (ECR).** – Madam President, we had some procedural problems with this vote today, as you will have seen, and I hope that they were nothing more than a mistake. I can understand that sitting where you do is a complicated and difficult job; there is an awful lot going on in the Chamber and the Rules of Procedure are not easy to follow.

But there was an issue of a lot of sensitivity for people in my party to do with the displaying of EU colours on sports vests. In what looked like a flagrant disregard for what the Rules of Procedure specify, our request for separate votes was set to one side. What alarmed me was that the President used the argument that, as long as the Chamber had decided by majority, this was all right. It was OK to set aside what the Rules say.

That is, of course, arbitrary government. We are all bound by our rule book, including the person who sits where you sit. As I say, I hope this was simply an error but I would urge all the people who occupy the President's chair, please to pay strict regard to the Rules of Procedure, which are there and which are designed to protect individual Members in smaller groups in this Chamber.

**Charles Tannock (ECR).** – Madam President, I voted along with the rest of the ECR Group – where we were allowed to, that is – against the report on the European dimension in sport. In my opinion, the report focuses far too much on the commercial side of sport. Instead, the development of grassroots in sport is overlooked in favour of developing means to take further advantage of the popularity of professional sport.

Instead of, for instance, creating a new EU database of football hooligans, which is already a Europol competence, we should focus on national authorities developing sports facilities at the more local level, with the aim that hooliganism can be diminished thanks to greater Community involvement and the ability to get along with others or work as part of team. We should focus on skills; participation in sport has been proven to be a way of teaching these skills. We should be giving more people the chance to learn a sense of discipline and self-worth rather than focusing exclusively on introducing new EU legal rules on fiscal residence for sports agents, as the report seems to suggest.

**Claudio Morganti (EFD).** – (IT) Madam President, sport is probably the greatest vehicle that Europe has for bringing people together, and accessibility to participation in sport must be guaranteed for everyone, especially people with learning difficulties or physical disabilities.

Similarly, it is unacceptable that young girls are prohibited, for example, from being able to take up some disciplines, as we know, due to religious strictures imposed by their parents. The rapporteur has done well to highlight this point, since sport must be free to affirm universal values and Europe cannot tolerate these practices out of false religious do-goodism.

Moreover, I believe it is right to preserve and rediscover local, traditional and indigenous sports. In Tuscany, we in *Lega Nord* are fighting in this regard to protect a historic form of

football played in Florentine costume and to rediscover the ancient game of football (*palla grossa*) in Prato. These also represent genuine manifestations of history and culture which we should develop and encourage, especially among the young.

**Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE).** – (ES) Madam President, I wish to express my support for the values embodied in the report that was approved today. After the recent events in Egypt, it is particularly fitting to set the principle of fair play, both on and off the sporting field, as the cornerstone of European philosophy on sport.

I also agree with a more open model for image right management for large sporting events. It is for that reason that I think the situation regarding radio stations and professional football in Spain is terrible.

I regret the lost opportunity to play down the debate about national teams in Europe with this report. I come from a stateless nation, like Scotland or Wales. These constituent nations of the United Kingdom compete in international competitions with their own teams. We Basques would like to have our own Basque teams too, and we would have no issue with placing our *ikurriña*, our national colours, alongside the European flag on our shirts. This is not currently possible. An opportunity was lost today.

**James Nicholson (ECR).** – Madam President, I have several reservations relating to the proposals in this report. One such proposal sought to politicise sport by having the EU flag flown at all major sports events in the EU. Another proposal sought to politicise our sporting athletes by making them have an EU logo on their clothing. I cannot support those proposals, because I do not believe you should politicise sport.

I certainly do believe we should encourage sports participation in schools, increase the awareness of social responsibilities in sports stadiums, highlight the importance of volunteers in sport, increase the attention to the needs of disabled sports people. I call for sport to benefit from EU Structural Funds.

But in my 22 and a half years here, I have never witnessed such a spectacle as I did today, when the President of this Parliament shamefully took his actions. I do not agree with Mr Hannan, because the President of this Parliament is well advised by the people to his left and to his right. He made that decision and he made the wrong decision and that needs to be retracted in the interest of the minority groups in this Parliament.

**Hannu Takkula (ALDE).** – (FI) Madam President, I would like to say that I voted in favour of this report by Mr Fisas Ayxela. We must remember that it is the first more extensive report on sport, and sport, of course, is the biggest popular movement in the whole of the European Union.

This is a first step, and I am therefore slightly disappointed that the friends of the European Conservatives and Reformists Group there on the right see only a threat and not opportunities. Perhaps you might reconsider this for a moment: this will provide great opportunities for taking sport forward, improving public health, increasing well-being at European Union level, and more.

Trivial matters like the flag, whether or not it is on the inside or outside of the team shirt (which is completely optional), or whether the EU flag should or should not be raised at a particular sporting event, are neither here nor there. Moreover, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland can play under their own flags, and no one will say anything about it. On the contrary, the aim is for civic commitment on the part of Europeans at grassroots level: for

people for whom sport is important. We are also trying get people involved in building their own nation, as a priority, but it is also seen as a common benefit in the European internal market if we have healthy employees.

**Syed Kamall (ECR).** – Madam President, as the Chairman of the European Parliament's Friends of Sport group, I took a particular interest in this report, as did many other members of that group and the relevant committees. It is interesting that we wanted in our group to vote against the display of the EU flag on national sports jerseys. Surely it is important that we allow supporters to decide that they can support their own country?

But I think what is more important than anything else is actually what sport teaches us. Sport is all about fair play. Sport is all about adhering to the rules. As my old school song used to say, it is all about tasting the sweet of victory and the salt of defeat. At the European level, there have been moves towards more fair play. UEFA, the football organisation, has a UEFA fair play award.

But when it came to democracy in this Chamber today, the rules were thrown out. The spirit of fair play was completely ignored by the President of the Parliament. Had there been a fair-play award for democracy, Schulz would not have got it.

**Seán Kelly (PPE).** – (GA) Madam President, I voted in favour of this report and, like other speakers, I also had a hand in its creation. I was delighted that the report was accepted by a large majority: In favour, 550; against, 73; abstentions, 7. That is, without doubt, a large majority.

I also agree with the speakers about the importance of sport at a local level, the local voluntary clubs, or so-called grassroots sports. But the most important thing now is that the next MFF (multiannual financial framework) has a good budget, because without money, we cannot implement the recommendations and the programmes mentioned in this report. Therefore, I hope that that will happen for the sake of sport throughout Europe.

#### **Report: Carlos José Iturgaiz Angulo (A7-0335/2012)**

**Andrea Zanoni (ALDE).** – (IT) Madam President, ladies and gentlemen, one thing is clear from the numerous waste-related petitions received by Parliament from citizens: EU management of waste in Europe is not going well.

There are too many citizens who even now, in 2012, are paying for the consequences of poor waste management in terms of their daily lives and their health, incinerators and landfills being cases in point. All the same, virtuous examples of ecologically sustainable waste management in the EU do exist. We must therefore do all we can to reach a point of total recycling, where waste actually becomes a genuine resource.

This is already a reality today. There are treatment plants that recycle nearly 100% of urban waste, as in the case of the Vedelago waste centre in the province of Treviso, whose technology is exported throughout Europe. Nevertheless, we need more controls, prevention and, above all, responsible choices. We should recycle, recover and reduce waste and say 'no' to huge incinerators and landfills that are often the cause of air and aquifer pollution.

**Adina-Ioana Vălean (ALDE).** – Madam President, I welcomed the positive vote on the Iturgaiz report. Through it, the Parliament is adding its voice to the numerous petitions sent by citizens from all over Europe to call on Member States to properly transpose the Waste Framework Directive.

It has become clear that the management of waste disposal is posing a political and social problem in many Member States and the European Commission has a fundamental role in controlling and guiding them to ensure the proper enforcement of the EU waste *acquis* at national level and raise greater environmental awareness among citizens. This is the right time to stop saying waste is an issue and turn it into an opportunity for job and business creation, because efficient waste management strategies can provide enormous opportunities for both employment creation and revenue enhancement while ensuring environmental sustainability.

**Kay Swinburne (ECR).** – Madam President, it is a report that highlights the fact that, despite the directive being adopted, many times we have actually seen huge numbers of breaches across different Member States. It is certainly true that it has not been uniformly implemented across the 27 Member States.

This is reinforced by the sheer number of petitions and letters received by the Parliament, where EU citizens, including a number of my Welsh constituents, have also directly expressed their concern about potential breaches of a number of such EU directives. It is time that we use all technology available to us and see this as a huge way of being able to embrace technology and deal with our waste effectively.

I voted in favour of this report today in order that we can move things on. Implementation of existing rules is all well and good, but we also need to embrace that technology to move things forward.

**Charles Tannock (ECR).** – Madam President, I voted with the ECR Group in favour of the report on the application of the Waste Management Directive. The European Parliament receives many petitions, including from the United Kingdom, concerning issues of waste management and the infringement of the EU directives that govern it. It is evident from this fact that in many Member States, directives are not being transposed or enforced in a satisfactory way.

We agree with the conclusions of the report that all illegal landfills should be closed, secured and rehabilitated. We also agree that guidance should be given as to the location of the landfill sites with relation to local housing, schools and health facilities and that there should be better inspections and more consultation when waste facilities are in their planning stages.

Furthermore, I agree, particularly now that there is clean, high-temperature incineration technology available, that it is preferable to burn waste rather than placing it in landfill sites, especially given the increasing proportion of our waste that is now being recycled and, as I said, the technological improvements which are now being developed in this area.

**Elena Băsescu (PPE).** – (RO) Madam President, I voted in favour of the report drafted by Mr Iturgaiz Angulo in the context of stepping up the discussions on waste recycling. As a member of the Committee on Petitions, I have often participated in debates on this topic. I should point out that the new Member States are at the bottom of the league when it comes to recycling, even though the volume of waste they produce is below the European average. Romania is among the countries targeted by petitions about waste management. In order to meet EU standards, my country is currently implementing the integrated waste management system. It will result in the closure of landfills that are not environmentally friendly and in the development of sorting stations for recyclable waste by 2015. Current

landfills pose an increased risk both to the environment and to the communities living in their vicinity.

**James Nicholson (ECR).** – Madam President, as others have said, this is an extremely important subject and has got to be dealt with in a way that everyone can be happy with. It is a very difficult subject as well. Illegal landfill sites cannot be tolerated anywhere and I think we have had some experience of that. I will not get involved in the detail, but there are very few people who have not had some experience of it.

We should also make it clear that we cannot allow local and public authorities to get away with not stipulating standards and not bringing sites to the same standards as others. I have seen some of these sites where a lot of leaching was taking place and I believe better solutions can, should and must be found where necessary. This must end. By dragging our feet, we are allowing it to continue. We certainly do not need any more EU agencies for waste management; I think it is time to move forward.

**Seán Kelly (PPE).** – Madam President, I think this is a lost opportunity. The Commissioner here at the debate this morning pointed out that there could be EUR 72 billion made available to the economy, 242 million fewer tonnes of emissions and lots of jobs created if waste was properly managed across the European Union. Instead, we have had too many countries that would not even apply the directive leading, as Kay Swinburne said, to many petitions coming here.

I led one myself and I am pleased to say that, as a result of the decision here and the direction given by the Committee on Petitions, EUR 40 million has now been committed to closing a toxic site in my constituency, Haulbowline, which was leading to an increase in cancer 37% higher than the national average. That is the kind of action that is needed. Every Member State should take this on board: to eliminate waste firstly – restaurants and households could have far less waste – and then to utilise it properly.

#### **Report: Regina Bastos (A7-0006/2012)**

**Kay Swinburne (ECR).** – Madam President, I supported the report today on the Daphne programme, which it is hoped will make a contribution to assisting women who have been victims of domestic violence. It is only right that the Commission focuses on strengthening programmes in Member States which have so far limited participation in this programme, to ensure that victims are not being overlooked wherever they may be in residence.

I agree that more support is needed in developing programmes to eradicate honour killings, particularly as there have been a number of high-profile cases in the UK, which indicates that more work needs to be done urgently on this emotive matter. Whilst I have reservations about some of the recommendations made in this report, such as the proposal to allocate funding to candidate countries, I believe that on balance, it was something that I could support.

**Charles Tannock (ECR).** – Madam President, I too voted with my group, the ECR Group, in favour of the report on the Daphne programme. The work that the Daphne programme seeks to carry out is extremely valuable and the making available of some funding to NGOs in all EU Member States who require it in order to help combat violence against women and children – the most vulnerable members of our society, which is a truly shocking phenomenon – is one we should strongly support. The call on the Commission to work with those Member States whose participation in the programme so far has been weak, in

the hope that all Member States will be at a similarly reasonably high level in terms of their involvement, is also one we support.

We should also support the move for the programme to focus more of its attention on the eradication of so-called – and rather shocking – honour killings and female genital mutilation, which sadly still goes on in some Member States and should have absolutely no place whatsoever in a European society.

**Diane Dodds (NI).** – Madam President, I welcome this report into the Daphne programme, which can be a key tool in combating violence against women, children and young people across the EU. In my own constituency of Northern Ireland, figures show that domestic violence accounts for approximately one third of all crime, with the police service attending an average of 60 domestic-related incidents per day, with a large amount still going unreported. The Daphne programme and others like it can play a pivotal role in the fight against domestic violence and abuse.

In Northern Ireland, there are many excellent programmes carried out at local level with outstanding work being done by local community groups across my constituency. I believe that such organisations are the key to combating issues of violence and abuse, as they are best placed to cater for the individual needs of citizens in their region. Simpler and easier access to funding is essential and should be a feature of any new provision.

**Zoltán Bagó (PPE).** – (HU) Madam President, I voted in favour of the report because I disapprove of all forms of violence, especially if directed against children, young people and women. I agree that the increasingly widespread use of online social networking sites has led to the emergence of new forms of violence.

As a member of the Committee on Culture and Education, I believe that the report is correct in stating that children should already be informed about the dangers of online content while at school. On the other hand, education could also facilitate the reduction of gender inequality at a young age.

The attention of young people should be drawn to the prevention of deviant behaviour through anti-violence campaigns, and I would therefore like to stress the issue highlighted by the report, namely, that the Commission's rights and citizenship programme for 2014-2020 does not mention combating violence against children, young people and women among its specific objectives. This needs to be changed.

#### **Report: Norica Nicolai (A7-0429/2011)**

**Charles Tannock (ECR).** – Madam President, I voted with the ECR Group in favour of the report on women's situation in war. War crimes against women in conflict zones are atrocious and truly shocking and often subject to almost total impunity, as they are seen themselves as a means of warfare. As a result, women are not only the victims of regular military action but also the victims of sexual violence, mainly taking the form of rapes and even gang rapes in some cases.

We agree that there is a need for more support for women's organisations that operate locally in Member States in order to raise awareness of women's rights at a grassroots level, particularly in areas of conflict. We should also welcome the setting up of a special EU representative on women, peace and security within the European External Action Service, again to help to deal with this very serious problem on the ground.

**Diane Dodds (NI).** – Madam President, although this report was about women in war, I want to put on record in this House my gratitude to those women in Northern Ireland who have shown remarkable courage during a vicious terrorist campaign.

For many years, I have represented parts of Belfast which have suffered the murderous effects of terrorist violence, sectarian division and economic and social deprivation. In the midst of this, women's groups like Shankill Women's Centre and many others have shown tremendous leadership and done hugely important work in areas of education, training and employment, and community reconciliation. In rural Northern Ireland as well, women's groups have been to the fore. Although, in rural areas, isolation and distance are natural barriers, the same social, economic, sectarian barriers remain. We owe these groups a huge amount of our gratitude; I would like this House to have that on the record.

**Report: Norbert Neuser (A7-0442/2011)**

**Marek Józef Gróbarczyk (ECR).** – (PL) Madam President, I voted in favour of the report due to the enormous need for diversification of energy sources in Europe. Until recently, the construction of the Northern Gas Pipeline – from Russia to Germany – was intended to be the panacea for all energy shortages. The pipeline was supposed to secure a steady delivery of natural gas to the European Union. As recently as yesterday, the Russian company, Gazprom, reduced gas delivery to a number of European Union states. According to the company, the decision resulted from the increase in demand for natural gas in Russia, which occurred as a consequence of the freezing conditions. A few years ago, political point scoring in Russia led to other countries suffering from a shortage of natural gas. This illustrates the importance of the pursuit of new energy sources within the European Union, both in the context of the European Union's security as well as in terms of the protection of all types of EU activity. It is, of course, not possible for the EU to attain self-sufficiency in this area, but it is necessary to use all possible means to achieve security. Thank you very much.

**Alfredo Antoniozzi (PPE).** – (IT) Madam President, ladies and gentlemen, the International Energy Agency (IEA) has estimated that currently, 1.5 billion people in the world are unable to access energy sources.

Globally, forecasts indicate that over the next two decades, the funds allocated to energy will amount to USD 26 trillion – just 3% of that sum would ensure universal access to energy by 2030.

The proposal put forward by Mr Neuser concerning the possibility of developing and extending access to modern energy services should be a starting point for the EU to begin to address the problem of poverty and sustainable development through targeted, effective action. I agree with Mr Neuser's proposals: we Europeans must also make our contribution towards improving energy access for the poor in developing countries.

**Charles Tannock (ECR).** – Madam President, the Millennium Development Goals set out a laudable collection of aims that the international community has pledged itself to achieve by 2015. For these to be realised, however, an essential prerequisite has to be fulfilled first, and that is universal access to modern and sustainable domestic power sources for the developing world's population. Such access would have obvious benefits in the fields of health, the environment and economic development. Nevertheless, on this occasion, I did not participate in the final vote of the Neuser report.

**Julie Girling (ECR).** – Madam President, I did vote for this report but only after very careful consideration, not because I do not believe that the poorest people in developing countries should have access to affordable energy – I very firmly do believe that – but because I do not believe that it is appropriate for the EU to seek to control how this comes about. The Millennium Development Goals, which I largely support, are very clear. They have been agreed; we have road maps established towards their achievement by 2015. Let us get on with that, rather than confusing the picture by what is effectively an attempt to add another. Let us not set out prescribed routes to energy development.

The report mentions a number of market intervention measures and, although just short of recommending that we carry those through, I do believe we need to put a line down to say that market intervention should be avoided. Energy is a market and the best way to supply and develop it is through market forces.

#### **Report: Olle Schmidt (A7-0014/2012)**

**Alfredo Antoniozzi (PPE).** – (IT) Madam President, ladies and gentlemen, the report presented by Mr Schmidt, which is the Commission's first initiative in the area of tax, makes a positive contribution to outlining future legislative initiatives on this issue.

Nevertheless, I believe that targeted interventions on national taxation policies are needed. In this regard, the Commission's intention to strengthen the legal framework on savings taxation and the review of taxation on energy products is a positive step. Although Member States have expressed diverging opinions on the validity and efficacy of this initiative, overall, I welcome Mr Schmidt's report and this is why I decided to support it.

**Charles Tannock (ECR).** – Madam President, I voted against the report on the annual tax report. In my group, the ECR, we fully supported the report in its initial aims – preventing double taxation, tax fraud and policing tax havens, etc., as these are clearly of concern.

However, we could not agree with the report's conclusions. We are, as a group, strongly in favour of the protection of national fiscal sovereignty in order to promote a low tax competitive business environment throughout the European Union. We do not believe that fiscal federalism will do anything to promote responsibility in tax management at a regional level, nor do we believe that greater economic efficiency will be achieved as a result.

We agree with the sections of the report that address issues of transparency and believe that the number of loopholes in the system and the many uncertainties in the way it functions must be significantly reduced or reformed. We believe that better access to information on tax rules within the European Union Member States would go some way to address this matter.

**Claudio Morganti (EFD).** – (IT) Madam President, ladies and gentlemen, I am firmly opposed to giving the European Union greater powers of intervention and control, including on tax matters.

Already, having a common policy on currency matters has not brought any great benefits but, instead, has thrown up many widespread problems. I therefore fail to see what advantages might be gained from a more integrated tax policy, especially during a period as difficult as the one we are currently going through.

I would not like the Commission, or worse still, a Member State, to impose a tax policy on another country; that would be truly unacceptable. Some of the statements made in recent days—look at Germany with Greece—could lead precisely in this direction.

That said, measures that avoid problems such as double taxation and tax fraud are to be welcomed. In this area, the EU can and must play an important role in facilitating and ensuring this as far as we can for our citizens.

**Report: Andreas Schwab (A7-0424/2011)**

**Alfredo Antoniozzi (PPE).** – (IT) Madam President, ladies and gentlemen, Mr Schwab's report shows how EU competition policy has brought numerous benefits for consumers.

The use of flexible, dynamic procedures has enabled competition policy to act as a driver and not as an obstacle to the European financial and economic system. I voted in favour of the report as I fully agree with the objectives contained in it. In particular, I support the aim of improving price transparency in order to stimulate competition in the market and protect consumer rights. At a time of recession, we absolutely have to try and incentivise consumers.

Finally, I would like to add that the information exchange between the Commission and consumer associations should continue and be stepped up and extended to stakeholders.

**Andreas Schwab (PPE).** – (DE) Madam President, ladies and gentlemen, firstly, let me say that I am, of course, very pleased at Mr Antoniozzi's positive summary of the report, which is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year, and in which we identified three points of focus. Firstly, the State aid policy following the banking crisis, secondly the reform of the Fining Guidelines in anti-trust law, and, thirdly, competition in the energy sector.

I would like mainly to deal with the second issue, namely, the reform of the Fining Guidelines. It is crucial that we should accept that the European Commission's anti-trust policy is an important instrument for introducing deterrents and for implementing anti-trust law in the European Union as a whole.

Nonetheless, we, the European Parliament, believe that there is an urgent need to clarify the 1/2003 Guidelines so that it will be easier to predict in future the penalties a business can expect if it does not adequately comply with these legal regulations.

Secondly, we wish urgently to call on the Commission finally to introduce a special regime for small and medium-sized enterprises, so-called mono-product undertakings, as otherwise, difficulties will arise here and comparisons with other undertakings will not be possible.

This is a very positive report overall and I am very pleased that it has been approved.

**Charles Tannock (ECR).** – Madam President, I voted with the ECR Group in favour of the annual report on EU competition policy. It is clear on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of this important report that the EU's policy on competition has indeed brought many benefits for the welfare of European consumers. It has aided the free movement of goods and services, as well as capital, and has become a vital part of ensuring the prosperity of the single market. We support what the report has to say on the main areas it addresses, particularly State aid, collective redress, fines and settlement procedures, and strongly believe that with the suggested measures in place, it will continue to be a very useful tool in preserving the economic level playing field within the single market.

Can I also pay a special tribute to Italian Prime Minister, Mario Monti, who, as Competition Commissioner 10 years ago when I knew him in this Parliament, really put this essential EU competence on the political map as far as the countries like the United States were concerned. So well done, Prime Minister Monti, and now you have to do the same in Italy.

**Julie Girling (ECR).** – Madam President, I have often been asked by my constituents what the European Union has ever done for them. Sometimes, it is a bit of a struggle to give any coherent answer, depending on what the news of the day happens to be. It is particularly difficult in the context of representing a Member State which is high up on the list of net contributors to the European budget.

So I was delighted to be able to support this report, which really deals with a subject where I am always consistently able to point at something that the European Union has done for us. EU competition policy is one area where I can be truly enthusiastic. It has provided that essential tool, eliminating the obstacles that Mr Tannock spoke about. I am particularly keen to see that the rapporteur has recognised the need to update rules. Constant update to processes is vitally important to maintain consumer confidence in what we are doing.

**President.** – That concludes the oral explanations of vote.

### **Written explanations of vote**

#### **Report: Jacek Saryusz-Wolski (A7-0010/2012)**

**Luís Paulo Alves (S&D),** *in writing.* – (PT) I am voting for this report. It is in the EU's interest to promote coordination with the BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) and other emerging powers, owing to the growing global importance of these countries in various areas. Just as there is already continuous coordination between them, the EU should, for example, promote harmonious positions for meetings such as the United Nations General Assembly or strategic partnerships in other areas, provided that this does not jeopardise the interests of the EU Member States and their citizens. As such, it is appropriate to build these diplomatic efforts through an institutional mechanism, perhaps through the European External Action Service, which can deal with these countries in a consistent and even way.

**Laima Liucija Andrikiienė (PPE),** *in writing.* – I voted in favour of the resolution on the EU foreign policy towards BRICS which makes recommendations, identifying key areas of reform, where the EU could seek to streamline its action and institutional architecture and thereby increase its potential and effectiveness as a global actor. I agree with the rapporteur that the overall coordination of EU foreign policy towards the BRICS and other emerging powers should be ensured by the Commission, that better linking of foreign and security policy with EU sectoral policies should be implemented by the following actions: increasing the participation of the EP in bilateral summits between the EU and its strategic partners, increasing the role of the BRICS in international development policy that better reflects their share in global GDP, strengthening the strategic dialogue between EU and USA on global governance and reform of international organisations. We, Members of European Parliament, conclude that the EU should take into account the new weight in political and economic terms of the BRICS and other emerging powers and use its political leverage to continue promoting universal values in the looming new multipolar system of global governance and be at the forefront of the process of reform of the international governance system.

**Elena Oana Antonescu (PPE),** *in writing.* – (RO) At a time when the European Union is one of the main actors interested in strengthening international institutions and in creating new international structures for tackling areas such as climate change or trade, it is important that the EU takes the first step towards building a new global system of governance by adopting a constructive and pragmatic approach to relations with the emerging powers. Strategic partnerships established by the European Union with these states must be the starting point for this new foreign policy.

**Pino Arlacchi (S&D),** *in writing.* – I voted for this resolution because I believe it is of fundamental importance for the EU to consider, in foreign policy terms, the growing political and economic relevance of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. In this renewed world asset, the EU must be at the forefront of the reform of the international system and must use its political leverage to continue to promote universal values. To lead this process, the EU needs to act as a single and robust political and economic entity. Without an inclusive new global governance system, based on full participation by the BRICS and other emerging economies, there will be limited international cooperation on major global issues. In addition to that, there will be also the potential risk of political and economic fragmentation, and of competing world agendas. With this report indeed, we ask for a strategic partnership with each BRICS country as a means of advancing peace and global security, the promotion of human rights, democracy, sustainable development and global financial regulation.

**Sophie Auconie (PPE),** *in writing.* – (FR) The BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) and other emerging economies are gaining increasing and, now, undeniable importance in international relations. I voted in favour of this text because it will allow us to go beyond cooperation in purely economic terms and to strive for the creation of a common foreign policy platform. These countries want us, the western powers, to include them more with a view to strengthening global governance and multilateral diplomacy. Let us not forget that the BRICS countries are already showing clear ambitions in foreign policy terms, as they have held regular meetings since 2009 and are seeking to establish common positions. For the time being, they are doing this without us. It is therefore imperative that we take into account the new economic and political weight of the BRICS countries. As the rapporteur emphasises, 'this proves all the more necessary, considering that transnational challenges – such as climate change, global regulatory issues, access to raw materials and rare earths, terrorism, sustainable development,' etc. – will require an inclusive approach based on common values. Thanks to this report, the European Union is taking the initiative and declaring that it wants to play a key role.

**Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D),** *in writing.* – (LT) I voted in favour of this report. Ever increasing demographic imbalances between Western countries and the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) and other emerging powers in the near future threaten to change the hitherto established relationship of influence in the international arena and the system of global governance itself. In 2050, seven emerging economies (Brazil, Russia, India, China, Indonesia, Mexico and Turkey) are projected to have larger economies than all the Group of Seven (G7) countries (USA, Japan, Canada, United Kingdom, Germany, France and Italy) put together. China is projected to become the world's largest economy by 2020, while India could become the fastest growing economy in the world by 2050. These countries will become increasingly important internationally, particularly for tackling global issues such as combating climate change, international terrorism, the distribution of resources and rare minerals, political stability worldwide, etc. Therefore, the EU must

enhance cooperation with the BRICS and other emerging powers in the system of global governance and in international organisations. I agree that we need to consider at EU level how to maximise the role, voice and voting power of the EU in international fora and achieve more streamlined coordination and a more cohesive stance among EU Member States in such fora.

**Adam Bielan (ECR),** *in writing.* – (PL) The ever increasing role of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (the BRICS countries) in the field of foreign relations and in international cooperation is having an effect on the situation within the European Union. Faced, for example, with the prediction that China will soon become the world's largest economy, Brussels must increase its efforts to influence the emerging multipolar system of global governance effectively. One of the objectives of the Union's foreign policy is the adoption of a coherent approach towards these countries when viewed as a potential bloc, and the widening of cooperation and strategic partnerships with each of these countries individually, especially with those that are democratic, for such a partnership will constitute an ideal tool with real potential for introducing change. In an increasingly coherent manner, the BRICS countries are also deciding the political direction of prominent international organisations, such as the United Nations. Moreover, taking into account the economic as well as the demographic potential of these countries, only a coordinated European policy can contribute to the increased role and effectiveness of the Union on the international arena. I support the resolution.

**Vilija Blinkevičiūtė (S&D),** *in writing.* – (LT) I voted in favour of this report because I agree that the European Union must outline the objectives and strategy of its common foreign policy as regards regions that are developing rapidly in economic terms, such as the so-called BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, Indonesia, Mexico and Turkey). According to current data, it is projected that the economic growth of the BRICS will only increase in future, and that by 2050, their economic growth will exceed that of all the G7 countries (USA, Japan, Canada, United Kingdom, Germany, France and Italy) put together. In future, through its foreign policy, the European Union must therefore carefully take into account the new economic and political power of these emerging economies and act as a single and robust political and economic entity. This is particularly important if, as a global region, we wish to remain at the forefront of the reform of the international governance system and play a major role in seeking global remedies to issues such as climate change, access to raw materials and rare earths, terrorism, and political stability and security worldwide.

**Vito Bonsignore (PPE),** *in writing.* – (IT) I voted in favour of Mr Saryusz-Wolski's report. In a global economic perspective, in terms of gross domestic product, China is projected to become the world's largest economy before 2020 and India could become the country with the fastest growing economy before 2050, whereas the so-called BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India and China), together with Indonesia, Mexico and Turkey, will have larger economies than, collectively, the G7 countries. Should the economic growth of the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) and the emerging economies be further consolidated, these countries will acquire strong relevance in foreign policy terms on the global scene. However, considering the interdependence between the world's economies, the consolidation of the economic leadership of the emerging economies will be conditional on the welfare of the emerged economies. All this provides a big opportunity for the EU: taking into account the new weight, in political terms, of the BRICS, it will be able to use its political leverage to continue to promote universal values in the looming

new multipolar system of global governance and be at the forefront of the process of reform of the international governance system. The EU will therefore need to act as a single and robust political and economic entity, treating the emerging countries as valuable partners of the West.

**Philippe Boulland (PPE),** *in writing.* – (FR) Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS) have become undeniable global actors with which the EU must establish a constructive partnership, based on common values, in order to be able to face up to transnational challenges such as climate change, access to raw materials and rare earths, terrorism and sustainable development. Considering that seven emerging countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, Indonesia, Mexico and Turkey) are projected to have larger economies than the G7 countries, collectively, by 2050, Parliament insists that regular political dialogue be established in order to improve the observance of human rights and social and environmental standards within these emerging powers. The BRICS countries, in terms of their percentage of global GDP, have a role to play within international development policy, particularly with a view to improving the observance of core labour standards and to raising the skill levels of the workforce in accordance with ILO regulations. The Millennium Development Goals can only be achieved through strict and constructive cooperation between the EU and the BRICS countries.

**Jan Březina (PPE),** *in writing.* – (CS) In view of the increasing relevance of the BRICS countries and other emerging powers and the multipolar system of global governance that is taking shape, we should pay more attention to cooperation based on the G20. In the interests of reconciling positions with Russia, the existence of the G8 should also be harnessed, so that common challenges can be addressed in a coordinated and effective manner. I support the G20 parliamentary dimension and I believe that it should be further consolidated and involved in decision-making processes, in order to ensure reinforced democratic dialogue and greater scrutiny. I firmly believe that the current sovereign debt crisis will be an important test for the G20 as an effective forum for strategic political dialogue, creating foundations for the elimination of systemic unbalances which can be particularly damaging both for developed economies and, in a longer-term perspective, emerging ones, and promoting solidarity in international financial fora such as the International Monetary Fund. The EU must enhance political dialogue and cooperation with the BRIC countries in order to push further forward the reform of global financial and economic governance institutions, that is to say, the Bretton Woods institutions, with the aim of ensuring the broader representation of all member countries while reflecting changes in economic weight.

**Corina Crețu (S&D),** *in writing.* – (RO) The BRICS countries have enjoyed significant economic growth in recent years, which, against the backdrop of the crisis, has brought about changes in terms of the global balance of influence. However, these countries, apart from Russia, are still developing countries which have the biggest concentration of poverty in the world.

There is the risk that this accelerated economic growth will deepen the inequalities in spite of the considerable progress made, particularly in the case of Brazil. According to estimates, China will become the biggest economy in the world before 2020, while the economies of the main seven emerging countries will be more powerful than those of the G7 countries in 2050.

With their political role increasing commensurately with their economic clout, the main BRICS countries are also assuming ever growing responsibility for driving global social progress and for international development policy. I hope that common concerns about complementing 'aid effectiveness' with 'development effectiveness' will provide a common platform for increasing the involvement of the emerging countries in development policies.

**Mário David (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) First of all, I would like to congratulate my group colleague, the rapporteur Mr Saryusz-Wolski, on the conciliation work that he has done in the Committee on Foreign Affairs, resulting in an own-initiative report that is quite wide-ranging in terms of the topics covered, and quite inclusive in relation to the participation of the various groups in Parliament. I prefer the distinction between the CIVETS countries (Colombia, Indonesia, Vietnam, Turkey and South Africa) and the BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India and China) to designate the main emerging global economies because I believe that this 'separation' between the two emerging economic groups brings greater precision to the strategic analysis of their relations with the EU. However, I believe that this report proposes a set of rather important measures for the future of our relations with the BRICS, to use the name that includes South Africa, which should obviously be considered by the EU. Multilateralism should be given the greatest importance in international relations, but the BRICS should also be more involved in economic development policy at global level, and the role of Parliament should be strengthened in relations with these countries. I believe this to be vital in establishing lasting ties at international level.

**Christine De Veyrac (PPE),** *in writing.* – (FR) I voted in favour of this text, which reorganises the partnership between the European Union and emerging countries. It is essential that the EU takes its rightful place in the negotiations which will change the international balances of power if it wants to be able to defend its values and maintain its influence in the new global governance system.

**José Manuel Fernandes (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) This report, drafted by Mr Saryusz-Wolski, concerns EU foreign policy, namely, its aims and strategies, in relation to the so-called BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) and to other powers with emerging economies. The BRICS do not constitute a homogeneous bloc since they are situated in different geographic areas, have different histories and have not adopted EU values to the same extent. However, they make up 40% of the world's population, represent 17% of the global gross domestic product and often take positions that are harmonised with one another. Without giving up its principles and values, the EU cannot distance itself from the increasingly important role of these emerging economies, and should work together with them towards addressing the issues affecting our planet, including climate change, terrorism, sustainable development, access to raw materials, political stability and global security. I voted for this report and I support the proposal by my colleague, Mr Rangel, that a dedicated European Parliament delegation to Brazil be created, as has already been done for other BRIC countries, since Brazil is the only one that speaks an official EU language.

**João Ferreira (GUE/NGL),** *in writing.* – (PT) Recognising the growing importance of the BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India and China) in the global economy, this report states that the EU needs to strengthen relations with each of these countries. The concern being expressed is, however, that they should be considered separately. There are a number of reasons for this. The growth and diversification of the BRIC countries' economic activity jeopardises the traditional division of global labour, which is unfavourable to these

countries. Their role is not limited to producing items low in value added and exporting raw materials and agricultural produce for countries at the heart of the capitalist system. Today, they are increasingly becoming world powers to rival the triad: the US, Japan and the EU. Some of them are even pursuing the opposite path to the EU in the fight against hunger and poverty. We should not forget that in a few years, millions of people have been pulled out of extreme poverty in China, India and Brazil, in a process that has not been without major contradictions. It is a fact that, internationally, the BRIC countries have been coming together on a number of important issues. The positions taken up by the BRIC countries in the international arena and their working together are increasingly being seen as a threat to the influence and dominance of the aforementioned triad, especially in the institutions of international capitalism: the World Bank, the IMF and the G20.

**Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)**, *in writing*. – (SK) The growing political and economic importance of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (the BRICS group) increases the importance of these countries in terms of foreign policy. In terms of the global economy, it is also expected that the economies of seven rapidly developing countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, Indonesia, Mexico and Turkey) will be bigger in 2050 than the economies of the G7 countries (USA, Japan, Canada, UK, Germany, France and Italy) put together. With regard to gross domestic product, it is assumed that China will become the largest economy in the world before 2020 and that India could become the fastest growing economy in the world before 2050.

I firmly believe that it would be appropriate to try to achieve something more than mutual trust, recognition and cooperation, and to make efforts to create a common platform on foreign policy issues based on the assumption that a new system of global governance is being established that will be sufficiently accessible to the BRICS group and other emerging powers and founded on common values. The current trade agreements between the EU and the BRICS group of countries are not only mutually beneficial in economic terms, but are also politically beneficial for both parties. It is important to build relations with the BRICS group on the basis of bilateral dialogues aimed at promoting further democratisation and strengthening of relations with the EU.

**Ashley Fox (ECR)**, *in writing*. – This week, the Parliament has been discussing the EU's relations towards the BRICS and other emerging powers. Good relations with countries like Brazil are vital, especially in terms of encouraging trade. One key area of interest to me is the trade of agricultural products. We import large amounts of meat from Brazil; meat that comes from animals that do not have to comply with the same rigorous standards and regulation that our farmers are subjected to. One example is the introduction of yet another pointless and costly regulation to electronically identify all sheep within the EU. These new rules to monitor the movement of sheep are flawed. They require a 100% accuracy rate of recording to be achieved by farmers, a task which is impossible because the available technology is not 100% reliable. If our farmers fail to achieve a 100% accuracy rate, they face heavy financial penalties. This is completely unacceptable. I therefore urge the Commission to review this regulation to allow some discretion to reflect the reality of the unreliable EID technology.

**Bruno Gollnisch (NI)**, *in writing*. – (FR) The rapporteur's proposals on our relations with emerging powers are symptomatic of the spirit of renunciation and submission that reigns over this Parliament. According to the report, the ultimate aim of these relations should be to organise, and I quote, 'an inclusive system of global governance'; to try to play a role in this multipolar world – still in perfect harmony (submission?) with the United States –

the aim of this cooperation being to preserve and support a global political, economic and financial system which has largely shown itself to be harmful and doomed to failure. With this in mind, we are proposing to give a few more powers to these emerging countries in the UN and the IMF, since we are begging them for a bail-out in the euro crisis. It would also mean exclusively entrusting relations with the BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) to the European Union, so, for the moment, to Baroness Ashton, while national diplomacies would be mere relays with no autonomy from the decisions taken in Brussels. This is all unacceptable. I am taking this opportunity to condemn the fate of white farmers in South Africa, who are being brutally murdered with the complicity of the authorities while Parliament remains completely silent on the matter.

**Juozas Imbrasas (EFD), in writing. – (LT)** In 2050, seven emerging economies (Brazil, Russia, India, China, Indonesia, Mexico and Turkey) will have larger economies than all the Group of Seven (G7) countries (USA, Japan, Canada, United Kingdom, Germany, France and Italy) put together. China is projected to become the world's largest economy by 2020, while India could become the fastest growing economy in the world by 2050. I welcomed this document because addressing international issues, such as climate change, global governance issues, access to raw materials and rare earths, terrorism, combating non-state radical movements, sustainable development, global political stability and security, will require a rules-based, inclusive approach based on partnership, common values, consensus, full consultation and cooperation with the new emerging powers, and effective solutions to international problems will have to be found through joint efforts. I also agree with the provision that the EU can, and should, take the initiative in this area.

**Philippe Juvin (PPE), in writing. – (FR)** This is a good report, aimed at discussing the foundations of a new inclusive global governance system and making recommendations, whilst identifying key areas for reform. I voted in favour of this report.

**Jarosław Kalinowski (PPE), in writing. – (PL)** The crisis that is raging in Europe does not instil optimism. Instead of abating, the recession is deepening, unemployment is growing, and the lack of innovation and new investment in Europe do not suggest that the situation will improve. As it falls into a state of apathy, Europe is no longer a model to emulate, in contrast to the accelerating economies of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (the BRICS group of countries), which are relatively unaffected by the global recession. According to economic forecasts, the economies of these countries are predicted to accelerate even further. In addition, these countries are strengthening politically and developing common positions – which are often controversial for Europe – in relation to global conflicts and problems.

Therefore, I agree with the rapporteur that the Union should cooperate closely with these countries, but that this cooperation should not come at any price. We should bear in mind the unquestionable potential of these countries, but we should not undervalue our own economy and its capabilities. This is a difficult challenge, since taking into account the unequal conditions of competition, manifested by cheap labour achieved at the cost of human rights, as well as lower production standards, or quite simply, superior natural conditions and access to natural resources, Europe will face a difficult task. We cannot, however, succumb entirely to economic pressures and forget about fundamental European values.

**David Martin (S&D), in writing. –** I supported this report, in which Parliament states that it 'Believes that the EU should formulate its position regarding a closer relationship

with the BRICS, even taking into account the fact that the EU's vision and the BRICS countries' vision with regard to binding commitments and institutionalised regimes may not necessarily always be the same; believes also that support from the BRICS countries for effective multilateralism might be gained in exchange for stronger representation in relevant international institutions; insists that the challenges posed by the rise of the BRICS should be seen as an opportunity rather than a problem;’.

**Clemente Mastella (PPE), in writing. – (IT)** As the current economic crisis demonstrates, there is a strong degree of interdependence between emerged powers and emerging powers. We support this report, since its aim is to discuss the foundations of a new, inclusive system of global governance and since it attempts to make recommendations, whilst identifying key areas of reform, where the EU could seek to streamline its action and institutional architecture and thereby increase its potential and effectiveness as a global actor.

What is really needed is to go beyond cooperation in economic terms, and strive rather for the creation of a common platform in foreign policy terms, provided a new system of global governance, inclusive enough and based on shared values, is devised. The EU will have to duly take into account the new weight, in political and economic terms, of these countries and other emerging powers and use its political leverage to continue to promote universal values in the looming new multipolar system of global governance and be at the forefront of the process of reform of the international governance system.

**Mario Mauro (PPE), in writing. – (IT)** I agree with the rapporteur on the need to build the foundations of a new, inclusive system of global governance. The EU must not ignore the growing weight, in political and economic terms, of the BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) and other emerging powers. We must use our political leverage to promote those universal values that have enabled us to grow in peace for 60 years. I voted in favour.

**Mairead McGuinness (PPE), in writing. –** EU policy towards the BRICS and other emerging powers is important, but it is also important to understand the implications of furthering trading relationships and the consequences of same. In paragraph 12, the report supports a balanced and fair conclusion of the EU-Mercosur agreement. However, the Commission has indicated that such an agreement will damage the interests of EU agriculture. Indeed, the Commission is prepared to accept that damage will be done by attempting to extend the scope of the EU Globalisation Adjustment Fund to farmers. I am totally opposed to such a proposal, which threatens the future of EU family farming at a time when we are concerned about food security and are reforming the common agriculture policy. For this reason, I cannot support this report and abstained in the final vote.

**Jean-Luc Mélenchon (GUE/NGL), in writing. – (FR)** This report is symptomatic of transatlantic imperialism. It refuses to respect the sovereign will of the states to establish cooperation that does not conform to its interests. It ignores the cooperation established by the so-called BRICS, gives priority to the relations with those BRICS that aspire to a social market economy and discourages the formation of new regional blocs. It also proposes global economic governance organised by the G20 and prepared under the auspices of the G7 and the transatlantic partnership. I denounce all of these illegal bodies. The only legitimate framework for dealing with global issues is the UN. This text merely seeks to encourage it to cooperate with the G7 and the G20. I voted against.

**Nuno Melo (PPE), in writing. – (PT)** The BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) and other emerging economies have been assuming major foreign policy

importance on the world stage as their growth has strengthened. Looking to the future of the global economy, seven emerging countries – Brazil, Russia, India, China, Indonesia, Mexico and Turkey – are projected to have larger economies than, collectively, the G7 countries (the United States, Japan, Canada, the United Kingdom, Germany, France and Italy) by 2050. There is, therefore, a need to create a common foreign policy platform that benefits from a new system of global governance, is inclusive enough to incorporate the BRICS and other emerging powers, and is based on shared values. The foundations of a new, inclusive system of global governance therefore need to be discussed and recommendations made as a matter of urgency, identifying key areas of reform where the EU could make its action and institutional architecture more efficient, and thereby increase its potential and effectiveness as a global player.

**Louis Michel (ALDE),** *in writing.* – (FR) We are living in a time of globalisation. The challenges we face are no longer continental, but global. Huge ethical, intelligence and organisational progress is essential in all areas, including the environment, development cooperation, etc. Tomorrow's global universalism will be based on a dialogue developed among all civilisations. We need to be open to the changes in the world. There are many challenges: demographic growth is accelerating, while the environment and the climate are deteriorating. We urgently need to build more solid global governance based on greater solidarity. We urgently need to build a 'global state', as Jacques Attali says. We need to learn from China, from Brazil, from South Africa, from India, from Turkey, and from others. We need to give them, and others too, their rightful place in the reform of the international institutions. Tackling the major global challenges will require multipolar, global cooperation. Europe will not be able to convince the rest of the world unless it has a project that is supported across the political spectrum, from left to right. Europe can set the tone if it leaves behind its sovereignists, if it speaks with one voice.

**Alexander Mirsky (S&D),** *in writing.* – It is known that there is the increasing and quasi-permanent coordination among the BRICS countries in various policy areas in the international arena, including at the United Nations, with special regard to the recent cases of the UNSC resolution on Libya, the UN positions on the Côte d'Ivoire or Sudan, as well as concerning the EU's status at the UNGA. I am confident in significant political, economic and social divergences among the BRICS countries and believe that the EU had no interest in dealing with the BRICS countries as a bloc by overestimating the significance of their foreign policy coordination.

**Andreas Mölzer (NI),** *in writing.* – (DE) it is important to point out that the BRIC countries, in other words, China, India, Russia and Brazil, as well as other developing countries, such as Mexico, Turkey and Indonesia, are already playing an important role in world trade. The EU States are not isolated in economic terms. The recent economic crisis illustrated just how much countries depend on one another. It is therefore very important that we should improve and develop economic relations with the aforementioned countries in particular. Nonetheless, the EU should not be influenced too much by the ideas and initiatives of the United States. I fear that this proposal will strengthen the dominant position of the US, which could, in turn, lead to stagnation in the development of trade with the BRIC countries. The EU must develop its own initiatives and must not allow itself to be intimidated too much by its big neighbour on the other side of the Atlantic. I am in favour of improving trade relations with the BRIC countries. However, this must primarily be in the interests of the EU. This is not sufficiently covered in the report, and I therefore chose to abstain.

**Vital Moreira (S&D)**, *in writing*. – (PT) Although I voted for the report on ‘The EU foreign policy towards the BRICS and other emerging powers: objectives and strategies’, as it is broadly positive, I cannot support the passage that proposes allocating the coordination of foreign and security policy with other EU sectoral policies, such as foreign trade policy or security policy, to the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of Commission. I believe that this proposal does not make sense in light of the Treaty of Lisbon. Firstly, it concerns two quite different policies, subject to very different systems under the EU Treaties. Secondly, under the Treaty, the High Representative only has the jurisdiction to steer foreign and security policy, and not to ‘coordinate’ the various EU external action policies, in particular, foreign trade policy. Thirdly, where there is a need for such ‘coordination’, this falls to the High Representative and the Commissioner for External Trade together, without this meaning that one has any authority over the other, or that there is any hierarchy. This proposal will therefore mean an unacceptable change to the balance and distribution of powers between the institutions and bodies of the EU.

**Radvilė Morkūnaitė-Mikulėnienė (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (LT) Universal values such as human rights and freedoms must be, and must remain, a major dimension of international relations and global structures. In the context of changing global economic and political realities, the European Union must take the lead and promote the strengthening of universal values in the newly emerging multipolar system of international relations, developing bilateral and multilateral relations with the BRICS countries based on democracy, mutual respect and shared values. Growing economic power is allowing additional power poles to be established in the global system, but increasing political and economic weight at the same time also means increasing global responsibility. It is important for these countries to choose the road of cooperation, not confrontation, to address the issues of global security, stability and wealth creation. The EU can and must contribute to the creation of a world of tomorrow in which there would be no doubt about who to support – a tyrant or people being killed.

**Cristiana Muscardini (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (IT) I am in favour of a comprehensive approach by the EU towards the BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa), but it must be stressed that these are more emerged than emerging countries and that Europe must consider them increasingly as competitive partners in its trade, as well as in strategic and political, relations.

These days, international trade has become an instrument of foreign policy and if we want to create a new system of global governance, we will need to very much keep in mind the economic issues and the current position of these countries that, like China, implement an expansionist, and not always transparent, policy from the financial, commercial and economic perspective vis-à-vis industrialised and developing countries.

Europe must not let slip the opportunity to take on the major transnational challenges, from climate change to food security, by cooperating with powers projected to have larger economies than, collectively, the G7 countries. At the same time, however, it must be vigilant that market rules, free competition and mutual political recognition do not remain simply on the paper of international agreements but are also respected in those countries, such as the BRICS, where the system of values and freedoms sometimes assumes forms different from our own. The market must not fail to observe the most basic of human rights.

**Rolandas Paksas (EFD),** *in writing.* – (LT) I welcome this resolution setting out the objectives and future strategies of EU foreign policy as regards the BRICS and other rapidly developing countries. Addressing current and particularly sensitive global problems calls for a rules-based inclusive approach and constant and permanent cooperation with the new emerging economies. It should be noted that through its foreign policy, the EU must take into account and assess the interests and role of each individual BRICS state, and not just the interests of the states taken as a whole group. Furthermore, in order to reform global financial and economic governance institutions and contribute to the consolidation of a multipolar order, the EU must enhance political dialogue with the BRICS countries and increase the coordination of its policies with the USA.

**Alfredo Pallone (PPE),** *in writing.* – (IT) The BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) are proving increasingly strong on the international political scene. Due to their potential for economic development, these countries will be the main competitors and/or partners of the West, both with reference to foreign policies and with regard to trade agreements. The report in question puts forward the possibility of the EU opening its foreign policy to the positions of the BRICS countries which, aware of the growing weight of their GDP and of their economies, are creating a common platform in foreign policy terms. The aim is to seek a new system of global governance, inclusive enough for the BRICS.

**Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE),** *in writing.* – (EL) The economic surge in the BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) and other emerging economies is expected to shift the balance in foreign policy. The economic crisis, moreover, proves that the EU needs to take account of the new specific weight of these countries, both for economic reasons (to facilitate trade, investment and so forth) and for humanitarian reasons (to pass on European values, experience and democracy). This own-initiative report, which I voted in favour of, aims to identify the areas in which the EU can act and to put certain thoughts into words in terms of the institutional influence that Europe can have on the new global political and economic scene. Greece can, and must, be pro-actively involved in this process, despite the difficulties it faces. It has comparative advantages, such as its civilisation, geographical position and culture, which it must exploit in its efforts to draw closer to emerging economies. It is important to state at every opportunity that the crisis must not detach and isolate the country from what is happening at global level.

**Maria do Céu Patrão Neves (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) I voted for this report as I agree with its main aim, which is to discuss the foundations of a new, inclusive system of global governance and make recommendations, whilst identifying key areas of reform where the EU could seek to streamline its action and institutional architecture, thereby increasing its potential and effectiveness as a global player in the face of the so-called emerging economies, which include the BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa).

**Fiorello Provera (EFD),** *in writing.* – (IT) I am in favour of many of the ideas proposed by Mr Saryusz-Wolski on the issue of relations with the BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa): the idea that the EU should have its own global, comprehensive approach on the issue; the idea that the growing role of emerging countries, in particular, the BRICS, should be fully acknowledged within the framework of rules and values, above all, those enshrined in the United Nations Charter; the idea that parliamentary diplomacy can contribute decisively to the development of amicable relations, especially in those countries in which parliamentarianism is becoming established; lastly, the idea that developing full political relations with the emerging world must not disregard crucial

issues such as the environment, human rights and labour conditions. By contrast, I have great doubts about the request for visa liberalisation with Brazil. Migratory dynamics are too complicated to be addressed by immediately opening up our borders, particularly at a time of economic crisis such as we are currently experiencing. It is for this reason that I decided to abstain from the vote on this report.

**Paulo Rangel (PPE), in writing. – (PT)** The BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) and other emerging economies could become very important in terms of foreign policy on the world stage. Indeed, these countries, as well as Indonesia, Mexico and Turkey, are projected to have larger economies than, collectively, the G7 countries by 2050. The new political and economic importance of the BRICS and other emerging powers should be given due consideration by the EU when drafting its foreign policy, as the economic rise of these countries will necessarily lead to a redefinition of the global model of economic and political governance. It is therefore imperative to start devising an EU strategy for the coming period, seeking to incorporate these countries into the scope of EU foreign policy and preserve the position of the EU as an engaged and influential player in the multipolar system of global governance that is taking shape. I therefore voted for this report, and I am particularly pleased that it opens the door to the creation of a European Parliament delegation for relations with Brazil. We have long championed this objective, and I hope that now it can finally be realised.

**Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE), in writing. – Abstention.** The BRICS and current emerging economies do not constitute or comprise a formal grouping of countries designed to play a specific role in international affairs, and the EU should therefore develop a relationship with each one of those countries, taking note of their singularity and specific foreign policy objectives and aims. The EU should invest in strategic partnerships with each BRICS country and other emerging economies, as they increasingly play a role in the international arena, particularly in international organisations, such as the UN, as a means of advancing common goals, namely peace and global security, the rule of law domestically or internationally, the promotion of human rights, democracy, sustainable development and global financial regulation. However, the resolution was a bit unclear on how to proceed in that regard.

**Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD), in writing. – (EL)** I voted in favour of Parliament's motion for a resolution because it will serve the long-term interests of EU foreign policy. These interests dictate that the BRICS countries need to be integrated into the current multipolar system of global governance so that they do not compete with the EU. These countries and other emerging economies, which are expected by 2050 to have bigger economies than all the G7 countries together, will acquire massive potential to influence foreign policy at global level. Any such development will have direct and unfortunate repercussions on the corresponding influence of the EU, which will then face huge difficulties in its efforts to support and promote the ecumenical values which it espouses.

**Czesław Adam Siekierski (PPE), in writing. – (PL)** The high rate of economic growth in Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (the BRICS), as well as in other emerging world powers, is altering the balance of global forces before our very eyes. As pointed out by the rapporteur, it is estimated that in 2050, the combined relevance of the seven largest emerging economies (Brazil, Russia, India, China, Indonesia, Turkey and Mexico) will be greater than the economic relevance of the G7 countries. The aforementioned growing economic powers have already proven that they foster high ambitions in terms of foreign policy, and it is likely that they will gradually take over leadership in the shaping of global

governance and strategies of global significance. This shows how important it is to increase internal cohesion within the EU and to strengthen our common foreign policy. Only by acting as a single robust entity will we be able to compete with the growing economic and political powers and maintain relevance in the new, multipolar system of global governance and leadership. The emerging new global balance of forces creates an opportunity for the European Union to take initiative and assume leadership in the process of changing and reforming the system of global governance, which will include the new powers. We have an opportunity to create a new platform for international foreign policy based on mutual trust and common values, which will support cooperation in trade and economic terms, as well as cooperation to find more effective solutions to global issues such as climate change, global peace and security and sustainable development.

**Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (IT) European companies are looking for new outlets in the BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) as a way of overcoming the economic crisis in their national markets. Among other things, this is shown by business travel to Brazil, which is up by 30% compared with last year. It is a similar matter as far as the East is concerned: there is considerable growth with regard to China (up by 27%), including to lesser destinations as well as the traditional ones of Beijing, Hong Kong and Shanghai. All this confirms that investments by European companies are being increasingly directed at the new emerging economies. The strong degree of interdependence between emerged powers and emerging powers requires that the EU's respective bilateral policies with the BRIC countries should also be reviewed. Latest statistics on movements to India and South Africa also show an increase of 19% and 18% respectively in this case.

**Nuno Teixeira (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (PT) The international relations that we are witnessing today reflect a loss of dominance by Europe and the US, which are supposedly supreme in economic, cultural, political and humanitarian terms. The dynamic that has been created and developed in terms of multilateralism, in particular, the composition of the United Nations, the UN Security Council and other international organisations, has been implemented for and adapted to the current international system. Today, there are a number of countries that have developed an area of common ground on foreign policy: namely, the so-called BRICS – Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa – and other emerging economies such as Indonesia, Mexico and Turkey, which are seeking a multipolar system of global governance. In terms of international action, the BRICS are already taking up common positions on several topical issues. There is certain to be reform of the international institutional framework. The current problems are of a cross-border nature, so they require global, not national, solutions. The BRICS are emerging as essential partners in ensuring global stability and security, so it is imperative that there be close cooperation, consultation, dialogue and consensus.

**Silvia-Adriana Țicău (S&D)**, *in writing*. – (RO) I voted in favour of the EU foreign policy resolution regarding the BRICS and other emerging powers because the EU needs to make efforts to establish a better link between foreign and security policy and the EU's sectoral policies for areas such as development, energy security, trade, access to raw materials and rare earths, climate change and migration.

The resolution highlights the following: the importance of Brazil as a leading power in the Mercosur regional integration process and of the EU-Brazil strategic partnership; the vital role of the EU-Russia strategic partnership in maintaining peace and security in Europe, enhancing trade and economic development and preserving energy security; the importance

of the EU-India strategic partnership; the importance of China as a major economic power and its vital role in global economic recovery.

Relations with the BRICS countries should be built upon bilateral dialogues focusing on and fostering democratisation and the consolidation of the rule of law, good governance, regulatory convergence, coordination of common positions within international forums and enhanced relations with the EU. Overall coordination of EU foreign policy in relation to the BRICS and other emerging powers should be handled by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.

**Dominique Vlasto (PPE), in writing.** – (FR) I supported this report, which highlights the fact that our world has well and truly changed: the emerging powers have confirmed their predominant economic strength, which is now accompanied by growing diplomatic strength. In this rapidly changing context, Europe cannot remain silent. It must propose strong initiatives to reorganise the system of global governance in order to ensure that it is more inclusive and based on relevant instruments and representative bodies. In my view, we must not look at the BRICS countries with trepidation, but with realism: the economic, social, financial and confidence crisis has demonstrated the extent to which our economies are interdependent, if any such demonstration were necessary. We can no longer allow ourselves to adopt unilateral approaches when the challenges we face (energy, sustainable development, food, security, etc.) affect all of humanity. The EU must, however, take care not to lose its influence or neglect its historical allies, especially the Arab world. I firmly believe that any pulling back or weakening on our part would result in the BRICS countries consolidating their ties with our strategic partners. Cooperation between the EU and the BRICS countries is, in my opinion, the key to safeguarding our leadership.

**Angelika Werthmann (NI), in writing.** – (DE) Relations with the BRICS countries need to be expanded from a purely economic level to a political dimension. This is particularly important in the face of transnational challenges such as climate change, terrorism, commodity shortages and the guarantee of international stability. It is important that the EU should act as a coherent economic and political force in its relations with the BRICS countries.

**Inês Zuber (GUE/NGL), in writing.** – (PT) The report recognises the growing importance of the BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) in the global economy and the need for the EU to strengthen relations with them. The fact that the crisis of capitalism is not even more severe is solely due to the contribution that these countries are making to world output. In the power-rebalancing process under way at global level, the majority in this House now supports closer ties with these countries on an individual basis, as they fear their unity and that it could mean a weakening of the influence and dominance of the capitalist triad – the USA, Japan and the EU – in the institutions of international capitalism. They want to restrain their growth and the diversification of their economic activity, which jeopardise the international distribution of labour and the role these countries were supposed to play; namely, that of producers of products low in value added. Today, the BRICS countries are increasingly becoming world powers, rivalling the triad, and some of them are even taking the opposite course to that of the EU in terms of combating hunger and poverty, which will increase for us as a result of the course and the misguided policies of the EU and the Member States. We advocate the establishment of relations with all countries, refusing to pigeonhole them and safeguarding mutual interests, regardless of differences and of political, economic, social and cultural perceptions.

**Report: Graham Watson (A7-0007/2012)**

**Luís Paulo Alves (S&D),** *in writing.* – (PT) I am voting for this report since it is balanced. Consistency in the application of restrictive measures to certain countries, and thus their leaders, is fundamental to the credibility of EU foreign policy. We must continue to set an example to the world in this area, applying non-violent coercive measures to those who do not respect human rights and undermine democratic values.

**Laima Liucija Andrikiienė (PPE),** *in writing.* – I voted in favour of this resolution where the EP recommends to the Council a consistent policy towards regimes against whom the EU applies restrictive measures when their leaders exercise their personal and commercial interests for their personal wealth within EU borders. I agree with the rapporteur on the proposed clearer criteria for EU sanctions in order to enhance the consistency, transparency and credibility of their application. I also agree that an annual report should be made on the implementation of sanctions, the European Parliament should be fully and regularly associated in the review process and the evaluation of sanctions should be done in dialogue with the people and civil society organisations of the targeted countries, with the aim of developing and strengthening the respect for democracy and human rights. The EU Member States would have to declare when persons on sanctions lists have physical or financial assets within their borders, to apply financial sanctions or restrictive measures in case of any financial intervention. We, Members of European Parliament, believe that measures clearly targeted to the accountable regimes and EU coordinated action will strive to minimise the adverse impact on the civil population, in particular, the most vulnerable.

**Pino Arlacchi (S&D),** *in writing.* – I voted for this resolution because the European Parliament must reiterate once again that sanctions are not an end in themselves and that decisions on sanctions by the EU should be taken only after thorough evaluation of the most efficient way to support democratic change. The EU has often applied its sanctions policy inconsistently by treating third countries with similar human rights and democratic records differently. Such behaviour has often encouraged criticism for applying double standards. With this resolution, we want to stress that sanctions should be applied regardless of political, economic and security interests. All restrictive measures must comply with international humanitarian law and with the principle of proportionality and must not penalise the most vulnerable population groups in countries affected by these measures. For these reasons, I consider the ‘targeted sanctions’ overall a better instrument. Sanctioned leaders will be affected only if they are personally subject to pressure in the form of restrictions on their ability to move money, invest and access their financial assets, restrictions for travel or for diplomatic representation.

**Sophie Auconie (PPE),** *in writing.* – (FR) The recent trouble in the Middle East has shown that it is absolutely essential for the European Union to draw up a common strategy for dealing with authoritarian regimes against which the EU already applies restrictive measures. If we speak with one voice, we will undoubtedly be more convincing. I supported this recommendation because it recommends depriving authoritarian leaders of their trade with members of the European Union, targeting their personal wealth, preventing them from travelling in our countries, and sending back members of their families.

**Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D),** *in writing.* – (LT) I voted in favour of the report. It is estimated that within the last two decades, USD 150 billion has left the countries in North Africa (Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia). Sanctions or restrictive measures, such as arms embargoes, trade sanctions, financial and economic sanctions, the freezing of assets, flight bans,

restrictions on admission, diplomatic sanctions, boycotts of sporting and cultural events and the suspension of cooperation with third countries, can only be effective if imposed by the whole of the EU. Disagreement among Member States often leads to inconsistent application of restrictive measures, which damages the EU's credibility and has a detrimental impact on the effectiveness of those measures. I welcome the European Parliament's recommendations that an effective sanctions policy needs to be established throughout the EU, developing clear criteria for when sanctions are to be applied, determining clear objectives, the form of sanctions to be applied and guidelines for their evaluation, which would help improve collaboration and synergy among Member States and ensure that there are no double standards when deciding on restrictive measures or sanctions.

**Adam Bielan (ECR),** *in writing.* – (PL) Promoting democracy and combating the world's authoritarian and totalitarian regimes are important objectives for which we should all take responsibility. Against this backdrop, financial transactions and investment by non-democratic leaders within EU Member States are becoming particularly significant. Quite often, these leaders are benefiting from the advantages of Western civilisation. Taking note of the fact that these leaders use their assets, which are quite often illegal, to bolster their power and oppress their own citizens, I support the recommendations included in the resolution. Strengthening the array of restrictive measures, through denying sanctioned leaders the right to perform monetary transactions within the Member States, to travel and obtain education, to provide funding to research centres and operate businesses, are just some of the instruments that we can employ. I expect intensified collaboration and synergy amongst all EU Member States, so that we can present a coherent stance on the matter of condemning authoritarian regimes based on uniform and integrated action.

**Mara Bizzotto (EFD),** *in writing.* – (IT) EU policy towards regimes that violate the principles of democracy and freedom and the human rights of their peoples has often been strongly criticised. Indeed, there has often been, and culpably continues to be, a basic ambiguity by which the EU, while acknowledging the anti-democratic nature of many governments, has preferred to keep silent on the matter and continue to enter into political and economic ties with these countries, confining itself to inserting into various cooperation agreements clauses on the respect of human rights which many regimes clearly fail to observe. With this own-initiative report, Parliament calls on the EU to adopt stricter measures and policies towards politicians and key figures in non-democratic regimes of third countries when they exercise their personal or commercial interests within the borders of the 27 Member States. We also call attention to the need to make violations of religious freedom and freedom of expression in third countries sufficient reason for Member States and the EU as a whole to implement more than political sanctions and responses. It is further proposed that forms, means and procedures for enforcing sanctions be codified more precisely than thus far. I voted in favour of the report.

**Vito Bonsignore (PPE),** *in writing.* – (IT) I voted in favour of this report as I agree with the need expressed in it to make the EU directives providing for restrictive measures against authoritarian leaders more binding and applicable. In other words, people who, by getting round the measures imposed by Europe, manage to exercise, influence and exploit personal, economic and political interests on EU territory. Better coordination is therefore desirable among Member States in applying those measures imposed at EU level; in addition, EU Member States should actively investigate and prosecute persons or legal entities in Europe that have assisted sanctioned leaders and persons associated with them in evading or avoiding the sanctions imposed against them. Lastly, clear criteria must be developed for

when restrictive measures are to be applied and, at the same time, the objectives for such measures must be identified: by establishing precise rules, it is possible to enhance the consistency and credibility of EU sanctions.

**Christine De Veyrac (PPE),** *in writing.* – (FR) I voted in favour of this report, which rationalises the EU's policy of sanctions against authoritarian states. Incoherent or inconsistent application by the Member States of the restrictive measures adopted by Brussels actually damages Europe's credibility on the international stage and weakens the impact of these sanctions.

**Edite Estrela (S&D),** *in writing.* – (PT) I voted for the report on a 'consistent policy towards regimes against which the EU applies restrictive measures', as I believe that a more coherent and effective strategy is needed in relation to authoritarian regimes; in particular, making provision for measures to prevent authoritarian leaders from benefiting from the rewards of corruption and the possibility of transferring funds.

**Diogo Feio (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) It is well known that many authoritarian leaders in other regions of the world, as well as their families and associates, have embezzled funds from their own countries and made investments in Europe. This is often seen as a potential refuge and safe place to invest and locate savings. In the face of this disturbing situation, there have been various measures aimed at punishing such practices and restricting the movement of the people and assets involved, which are clearly not consistent and have not had the desired effect, in particular, with regard to the hoped-for political change in their countries of origin. Parliament's stance, which I welcome, may not have the desired success if the Member States do not grasp the importance of joining up their responses to this type of problem in an effective way, and if they do not involve the peoples and civil society organisations of the countries subject to sanctions, so that they can contribute to raising public awareness of these problems and achieving the long-desired paradigm shift in governance and in the management of public assets.

**José Manuel Fernandes (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) The European Union and its banking institutions are often chosen by leaders of developing countries, where democracy is taking a long time to gain a foothold, for depositing large sums of money. For instance, Hosni Mubarak of Egypt has between USD 50 million and USD 70 million invested in the EU and the US, the Gaddafi regime of Libya holds billions of US dollars in assets in the EU, and Omar al-Bashir of Sudan has USD 4 billion invested in the EU. The report drafted by Mr Watson concerns the proposal for a European Parliament recommendation to the Council on how to implement a consistent policy on regimes against which the EU applies restrictive measures when their leaders exercise their personal and commercial interests within EU borders. I voted for this report, as those who lead authoritarian regimes and enrich themselves through corruption and by exploiting the people and resources of their countries must be forced to respect human dignity. They cannot act with complete freedom and impunity in the face of the impotence and, often, the complacency of international institutions. The EU should set an example by confiscating these assets and returning them to the democratically elected governments.

**João Ferreira (GUE/NGL),** *in writing.* – (PT) Implementing the principles contained in this report conflicts with international law and the UN Charter of Human Rights. The latter advocates, *inter alia*, the development of 'friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples' and 'international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural or

humanitarian character'. These are the principles which should govern international relations. This report sets out an approach based on intervention in the internal affairs of countries. Sanctions are one of the instruments of this approach. Moreover, the explicit encouragement of support for parties that are in conflict, with a view to regime change or to shifts in political power in certain countries, constitutes unacceptable interference, which invariably includes undisguised ambitions to satisfy economic and/or political interests. As we have already stated on several occasions, changes in the political power of a country should result from its people exercising their sovereign will, not from foreign impositions.

**Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D),** *in writing.* – (SK) Sanctions or restrictive measures are regarded as coercive measures short of force, such as arms embargoes, trade sanctions, financial and economic sanctions, freezing of assets, flight bans, restrictions on admission, diplomatic sanctions, boycotts of sports and cultural events and suspension of cooperation with a third country. The application of sanctions and restrictive measures is effective only if it forms part of a cohesive overarching EU and Member State strategy on human rights.

However, the EU has often applied its sanctions policy inconsistently by treating third countries with similar human rights and democratic records differently, and such actions have prompted criticism for applying double standards. I therefore firmly believe that it is necessary to develop clear criteria for when restrictive measures are to be applied, the objectives for such measures, the form of sanctions to be applied, guidelines for their periodic evaluation and the review procedure to be followed in consultation with the European Parliament. We should establish the criteria in a way that enhances the consistency and credibility of EU sanctions, but leaves sufficient flexibility at the operational level, enabling the Union to leverage the instrument as an effective tool in its external action.

**Nathalie Griesbeck (ALDE),** *in writing.* – (FR) I voted in favour of this proposal for a recommendation on a consistent policy towards authoritarian regimes against which the EU applies restrictive measures, when their leaders exercise their personal and commercial interests within EU borders. Following the Arab revolutions and the revelations concerning a series of investments by Europe in these totalitarian regimes and investments by these regimes in Europe, it is now essential for the EU to condemn these practices, in accordance with its fundamental principles of democracy and the rule of law. That is the aim of this proposal for a recommendation, which underlines the importance of an effective, coherent, unanimous and unequivocal sanctions policy against totalitarian regimes. Another key element of this proposal is that it underlines the importance of ensuring that foreign aid for development does not end up being an incentive for the enrichment of authoritarian leaders and their inner circles.

**Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE),** *in writing.* – I voted in favour of Mr Watson's report. The EU sets high standards amongst its own membership in terms of justice and human rights. It is only right that we are consistent in our approach when dealing with third countries and this report addresses many of the key issues.

**Juozas Imbrasas (EFD),** *in writing.* – (LT) For many authoritarian leaders, and persons associated with them, the European Union represents an attractive source of investment, property, banking and health care services, as well as an area in which they enjoy the freedom to travel and to spend their often dubiously acquired wealth. I welcomed this document because decisions on sanctions by the EU should only be taken following a thorough evaluation of the most effective way of achieving democratic change in the

country concerned, and each decision should be duly substantiated. Sanctions themselves should only be deployed to influence the accountable elites of repressive or criminal regimes and the responsible non-state actors of failed states, and should ensure that restrictive measures and sanctions are targeted and proportionate to the objective pursued, limiting as far as possible any adverse impact on civil populations, especially the most vulnerable. Collaboration and synergy amongst the 27 EU Member States therefore needs to be improved in this area, and we must speak with a single and coherent voice.

**Philippe Juvin (PPE),** *in writing.* – (FR) The European Union is used by several authoritarian leaders as a source of property and banking services, a safe haven for their personal wealth. It is important to note that the EU does not apply any consistent restrictive measures in this area. This draft report underlines the need to establish transparent European sanctions.

**Jarosław Kalinowski (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PL) Democracy, the rule of law, freedom and human rights are just some of the fundamental values of the European Union. Therefore, it must be one of our core obligations to respect and promote these values both within as well as outside EU borders. This, however, is not an easy task, especially when dealing with countries that marginalise or violate these values which are so precious to us.

The EU cannot remain a passive observer when these basic rights are being breached by authoritarian regimes. Therefore, we have to develop a strong common foreign policy that is capable of providing rational political analysis, engaging in skilled negotiation and, when needed, using coercive measures short of force. The EU must not remain indifferent when human rights are being violated brutally, when human life or peace is put at risk. If our values are to be properly safeguarded and if we are to be active defendants of victimised nations and national minorities, then, in some cases, it is necessary to apply restrictive measures. These measures, however, will only be effective as part of a coherent EU policy, in which all the Member States participate unflinchingly.

**Tunne Kelam (PPE),** *in writing.* – I voted in favour of this report. It has been long due to bring out the main weakness of the EU's foreign policy and especially the human rights policy. It is absolutely regrettable that the EU is giving in on main values and principles, such as democracy, human rights and the rule of law with excuses of being interdependent with certain authoritarian countries. Consistent sanctioning of authoritarian regimes and their main actors is one of the most efficient ways to provoke a change. I very much welcome this report, which calls for clear indicators and measures in defining the situation and dealing with authoritarian regimes. I call upon the Council and the Commission to implement and mainstream these suggestions without delay to the EU's foreign policy, especially to trade policy with third countries. How can the EU be interdependent with a country like Russia which is delivering weapons to Syria that will be used to kill civilians and which is supplying materials to Iran for its nuclear plans that the EU is now sanctioning? We need consistency and clear rules and we need them now!

**Petru Constantin Luhan (PPE),** *in writing.* – (RO) We read articles in the press about fabulous amounts of assets belonging to certain political leaders. For example, the personal assets belonging to Hosni Mubarak and his family are estimated to vary between USD 50 and 70 billion, with the majority of these sums being invested in the EU and US. Similarly, Kim Jong-il has roughly USD 4 billion in European banks. The last example is Omar al-Bashir, President of Sudan, who is suspected of siphoning off USD 9 billion from the oil boom his country has enjoyed and depositing much of it in British banks. This is

precisely why EU Member States need to strictly enforce the travel bans imposed on sanctioned persons, preventing them from travelling within the EU for any purpose other than humanitarian. It is equally important that EU Member States investigate and, where appropriate, prosecute persons or legal entities in Europe that have assisted sanctioned leaders and persons associated with them to evade or avoid the sanctions legally imposed on them.

**David Martin (S&D),** *in writing.* – It is estimated that within the last two decades, USD 1 50 billion has left the countries of North Africa (Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia) and that, in Egypt, Hosni Mubarak and his family were estimated to have a personal fortune of between USD 50 billion and USD 70 billion, predominantly invested in the EU and US. This report (which I welcome) calls for the EU to deepen and strengthen its array of restrictive measures against recognised authoritarian regimes by targeting their personal and commercial actions within the EU in order to deny authoritarian leaders and their prime associates the right to own property or hold money in EU countries, to prevent authoritarian leaders and their prime associates from educating their families in EU countries, to prevent authoritarian leaders and their prime associates from travelling within the EU, and to prohibit authoritarian leaders and their prime associates from operating business interests within the EU.

**Alexander Mirsky (S&D),** *in writing.* – I am confident that the EU should restrict totalitarian regimes not only with sanctions, but limit also the application and use of the financial means of these regimes! It is known that in Egypt, Hosni Mubarak and his family were estimated to have a personal fortune of between USD 50 billion and USD 70 billion, predominantly invested in the EU and US; the Director of the London School of Economics resigned over revelations that the LSE has been involved in a deal worth GBP 2.2 million to train Libyan civil servants; that a further GBP 20 000 was paid to the LSE for tuition for the Prime Minister of Libya, Mr Al-Mahmudi, who was named in the UNSC Resolution 1970 for, amongst other things, the gross and systematic violation of human rights, including the repression of peaceful demonstrators; it is estimated that the Gaddafi regime holds billions in assets across the EU, especially in the UK (private property); Kim Jong-il keeps approximately USD 4 billion in European banks; Omar al-Bashir, the Sudanese President, is suspected of siphoning off USD 9 billion from his country's oil boom and depositing much of it in British banks. I voted in favour.

**Mario Mauro (PPE),** *in writing.* – (IT) As rightly recalled in the report, 'the Union's actions shall be guided by 'democracy, the rule of law, the universality and indivisibility of human rights and fundamental freedoms, respect for human dignity, the principles of equality and solidarity and respect for the principles of the United Nations Charter and international law'. The EU institutions have an obligation to be consistent with our Treaty and we must not close our eyes any longer to the violations perpetrated by the world's authoritarian regimes; this is why the sanctions policy must be a tool capable of tangibly influencing the governments of these countries. I voted in favour.

**Jean-Luc Mélenchon (GUE/NGL),** *in writing.* – (FR) This report asks for the assets of tyrants and their accomplices to be frozen and distributed among the populations. It calls for a clear definition of the sanctions and the conditions under which they can be lifted. It reminds the Member States of their duty to apply the principle of universal jurisdiction. I support all of these proposals.

I am sorry, however, that it does not mention anywhere that sanctions that could affect the populations must be avoided at all costs. Above all, I denounce the hypocrisy of this report. It states that it wants to combat 'double standards' in European sanctions. However, no sanctions have ever been announced against the Porfirio Lobo regime in Honduras. As highlighted in the report, most of the people in this House are more worried about ensuring that the sanctions do not harm the commercial interests of European businesses. This is hypocritical. I cannot put my name to such a text.

**Nuno Melo (PPE), in writing. – (PT)** The new Article 21 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU), as introduced by Article 1(24) of the Treaty of Lisbon, recognises that the Union's actions are guided by 'democracy, the rule of law, the universality and indivisibility of human rights and fundamental freedoms, respect for human dignity, the principles of equality and solidarity and respect for the principles of the United Nations Charter and international law'. Sanctions are applied pursuant to the Common Foreign and Security Policy objectives, as set out in Article 21 of the TEU, which include promoting international peace and security, fostering respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and the rule of law, and consolidating democracy and good governance. However, the application of sanctions or restrictive measures is only effective if it forms part of a consistent and comprehensive human rights strategy for the EU and its Member States. It is therefore necessary that the interests of individual Member States have no bearing on the imposition of sanctions on countries not promoting peace and security, fostering respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and the rule of law, or consolidating democracy and good governance.

**Radvilė Morkūnaitė-Mikulėnienė (PPE), in writing. – (LT)** The EU must strengthen the effectiveness and consistency of restrictive measures and sanctions towards authoritarian regimes, while maintaining flexibility. We must ensure that the impact of such measures on ordinary citizens is minimised. To that end, we need to have common criteria and standards for the introduction and abolition of sanctions. A full contribution by both the countries of the European Economic Area and those countries seeking EU membership will increase the effectiveness of restrictive measures. The imposition of sanctions should also be mandatory for all, both third-country persons and entities operating in the EU market, and citizens and economic entities of EU Member States operating outside the EU. I believe that the immediate publication of all these cases would have a massive preventative effect, deterring the representatives of authoritarian and criminal regimes from accessing the European Union market, financial institutions and structures.

**Rolandas Paksas (EFD), in writing. – (LT)** I voted in favour of this resolution because the EU must pursue a consistent policy towards regimes against which it imposes restrictive measures. Above all, it is very important to ensure that every decision taken by the EU is duly substantiated. We also need to set out clear and precise criteria for the application of restrictive measures and establish an effective sanctions policy. Each restrictive measure and sanction must be imposed in a targeted and proportionate manner, following a thorough analysis of the structural, social and economic situation of the country concerned. It should be noted that a consistent policy towards authoritarian regimes must be pursued not just outside the EU, but also on the territory of the EU itself. The Member States have a special role to play in this respect and must ensure that restrictive measures are implemented effectively against the leaders of authoritarian regimes when they exercise their personal and commercial interests within the EU.

**Alfredo Pallone (PPE),** *in writing.* – (IT) It is crucial for the protection of the human rights for which we speak up, to have a consistent European policy towards representatives of non-European totalitarian regimes. Equally, it must cover the assets and interests held by those political leaders within the EU. From the freezing of the assets of the former Libyan leader, Muammar Gaddafi, to those of the former presidents of Tunisia and Egypt, the EU must adopt proportional and equivalent restrictive measures in respect of every dictatorial regime. This is why I believe it is important to urge the Council to apply such restrictive measures whenever the need arises.

**Maria do Céu Patrão Neves (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) On the basis of an own-initiative report, on 2 February 2012, Parliament voted for a proposal for a European Parliament recommendation to the Council on a consistent policy towards regimes against which the EU applies restrictive measures when their leaders exercise their personal and commercial interests within EU borders. The purpose of these measures is to prevent capital flight from such countries. It is estimated that in the last two decades, approximately USD 1 50 billion has left certain countries in North Africa, namely Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia, as a result of the actions of authoritarian leaders and their circles of associates, while restrictive measures were already in place on the part of the European institutions. In order to achieve the desired consistency, financial sanctions or restrictive measures need to be rigorously applied to these countries by all of the Member States.

**Fiorello Provera (EFD),** *in writing.* – (IT) I agree with and support the conclusions in Mr Watson's report. The EU is now the world's biggest market and the largest donor of development aid. It represents a unique opportunity for promoting human rights and respect for the rules of peaceful coexistence of the community of Member States. Unfortunately, thus far, the cumbersome red tape surrounding the EU's restrictive measures against regimes that do not respect international law, and the failure of such measures to feed into one another, have meant that they have not always had the desired effect as deterrents and sanctions. It is unjust that sometimes, peoples that are already oppressed or European companies and citizens should have suffered the consequences of sanctions, while the corrupt, violent local elites have managed to evade them. In the same way, it is equally unjust that third countries take and have taken advantage of European respect for the rule of law and fundamental rights. I therefore join Mr Watson in calling for the Council to adopt, as soon as possible, clear rules – to be applied uniformly and subject to periodic review – that will enable the restrictive measures to be more effective.

**Paulo Rangel (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) The European Union is founded on the principle of human dignity, and its action includes support for political regimes based on citizen representation and respect for fundamental human rights. A natural corollary of this is the need to reject authoritarian regimes which, instead of pursuing the common good of the people that they represent, are predisposed to satisfy the personal interests of the holders of posts in public bodies. In this context, it is appropriate that any measures adopted by the EU clearly identify which individuals are subject to sanctions, on the one hand, and when sanctions should be applied, on the other, so that measures adopted will be targeted at the subjects to be sanctioned, in order to prevent the people of the country from being affected, wherever possible. Any guidelines established should also be adopted by all of the Member States, in order to ensure an effective foreign policy. Moreover, and this is a key point in the report, they should take advantage of the possibility that a large proportion of the personal assets of leaders subjected to the sanctions will be within EU borders,

opening the door to more effective action by the EU. Since that is the argument of this recommendation, I voted in favour.

**Crescenzo Rivellini (PPE),** *in writing.* – (IT) I congratulate Mr Watson on his work. Having regard to the United Nations human rights conventions and Article 21 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU), the text we have approved is intended to be an explicit request by Parliament to the Council to abide by a consistent line of conduct towards all regimes to which the EU applies restrictive measures. The requests to develop clearer criteria for when restrictive measures are to be applied and to build a unified and consistent sanctions policy are absolute priorities, especially during this tricky international period. It will also be essential to strengthen restrictive measures against recognised authoritarian regimes by seeking to minimise their relations with the European Union.

**Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE),** *in writing.* – In favour. Some examples of authoritarian leaders, and their circles, with assets within the EU: (1) it is estimated that within the last 2 decades, USD 150 billion has left the countries in North Africa (Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia); (2) in Egypt, Hosni Mubarak and his family were estimated to have a personal fortune of between USD 50 billion and USD 70 billion, invested mainly in the EU and the US; (3) the Director of the London School of Economics resigned over revelations that the LSE had been involved in a deal worth GBP 2.2 million to train Libyan civil servants; (4) and that a further GBP 20 000 was paid to the LSE for tuition for the Prime Minister of Libya, Mr Al-Mahmudi, who was named in UNSC Resolution 1970 for, amongst other things, gross and systematic violation of human rights, including the repression of peaceful demonstrators; (5) the Gaddafi regime is estimated to hold billions in assets across the EU, especially in the UK (private property); (6) Kim Jong-il keeps approximately USD 4 billion in European banks; (7) Omar al-Bashir, the Sudanese President, is suspected of siphoning off USD 9 billion from his country's oil boom and depositing much of it in British banks.

**Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD),** *in writing.* – (EL) I voted in favour of Parliament's motion for a resolution because I believe that the EU should apply a strict policy towards demonstrably autocratic regimes and should not allow their leaders to make use of the facility which they have to put the wealth of their country in their own name. This will not only protect democracy and human rights in countries with autocratic leaders; it will also serve the interests of the EU, in the sense that autocratic leaders and their relatives and associates will not be permitted to develop business activities within the EU and thus be able to affect its policy.

**Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE),** *in writing.* – (IT) By means of this vote, we will help to develop clearer definitions in terms of the policies towards regimes against which the EU has applied restrictive measures. In the first place, we need to acknowledge that sanctions are not an end in themselves and when they are applied, they must be accompanied by clear and achievable benchmarks for the lifting of sanctions. Then it takes unity as regards decisions: we need to commit to maximising collaboration and synergy amongst the 27 EU Member States, urging them to speak with a unified and consistent voice on the matter of condemning authoritarian regimes through a single integrated approach. Sanctions which are not internationally coordinated can prove ineffective and counterproductive to their stated aims, can undermine the transparency, credibility and coherence of the European sanctions policy, and can reinforce the targeted regime or reduce the relative negotiation leeway and credibility of the EU and its Member States with the state in question.

**Nuno Teixeira (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) EU external action should be based on its fundamental principles, as set out in Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union, and on a consistent, comprehensive and transparent political strategy when any form of sanctions are imposed, avoiding the duplication of criteria. The imposition of general or selective sanctions should be aimed at those responsible and should safeguard the vulnerable as far as possible. I therefore support the contents of this report, as it states that economic and financial sanctions applied to those in power and/or the natural and legal persons and/or entities concerned should also include all financial assets and property within EU borders. To this end, there is a need to set out clear criteria for applying sanctions and coordinating them among the Member States, in order to evaluate the assets of individuals who appear on the sanctions list, so that these assets may be confiscated. Moreover, I believe that it is vital that Parliament be kept informed from the beginning and throughout the process of imposing sanctions.

**Silvia-Adriana Țicău (S&D),** *in writing.* – (RO) I voted for the recommendation to the Council on a consistent policy towards regimes against which the EU applies restrictive measures, when their leaders exercise their personal and commercial interests within EU borders.

According to Article 21 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU), ‘The Union’s action on the international scene shall be guided by the principles which have inspired its own creation, development and enlargement, and which it seeks to advance in the wider world: democracy, the rule of law, the universality and indivisibility of human rights and fundamental freedoms, respect for human dignity, the principles of equality and solidarity, and respect for the principles of the United Nations Charter and international law’. The regimes against which the EU applies restrictive measures, when their leaders exercise their personal and commercial interests within EU borders, are regimes that violate human rights, fundamental freedoms, the rule of law and principles of good governance. The purpose of these restrictive measures is to promote peace and security globally and the principles of Article 21 of the TEU. Furthermore, the measures implemented must not have an adverse impact on the general public, especially on the most vulnerable groups among them. I think that it is important that the EU acts in a united, coherent manner in order to make these measures more effective and enhance the EU’s credibility globally.

**Viktor Uspaskich (ALDE),** *in writing.* – (LT) The EU must learn from its mistakes. There have been many examples – some of which are mentioned in this report – where the leaders of ruthless dictatorships have increased their wealth with the help of other EU Member States. Even more shocking is the fact that all of this went on very openly and for a long time. Gaddafi’s regime, for instance, was estimated to have assets worth billions throughout the EU, particularly private property in the United Kingdom. The fortune of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and his family amounted to almost USD 70 million, mostly invested in the EU and USA. As a minimum, we urgently need to tighten restrictive measures against recognised authoritarian regimes, directing such measures against their personal and commercial activities within the EU. I welcome the basic idea behind the report that we need to have a consistent policy towards authoritarian regimes. However, we must seek more. We also need a consistent policy towards those Member States that violate the rules. Last week, Human Rights Watch published a report which condemned the EU and its Member States for demonstrating an unwillingness to combat human rights violations within the EU, despite the fact that the EU itself spoke of the importance of human rights and freedoms during the Arab Spring.

**Geoffrey Van Orden (ECR),** *in writing.* – I have long been at the forefront of ensuring that the EU maintains restrictive measures in place against key members of the Mugabe regime in Zimbabwe and am happy that the Parliament has recognised the important role that restrictive measures can play in bringing about democratic change in repressive regimes.

It is important that the EU and its Member States work together with the other democracies in order to ensure maximum effectiveness of these measures. Equally, the EU must become better at explaining that restrictive measures are not sanctions against the population of countries with autocratic rulers, but specific measures which only target those individuals and businesses that have directly benefited from their association with these autocratic regimes. I voted in favour of this report.

**Dominique Vlasto (PPE),** *in writing.* – (FR) I voted in favour of this report as it clarifies the EU's position on the sanctions applied against authoritarian regimes. Europe defends the universal values that it promotes and for which it must ensure respect. In that regard, it must set an example and impose sanctions on those who violate human rights and fundamental freedoms. Any EU sanctions regime must respect the principles of legality and proportionality and avoid penalising the populations of the countries concerned. Otherwise, the cure would be worse than the disease. We must not lose sight of the fact that the aim of these sanctions is to force authoritarian leaders to initiate democratic change, stop oppressing their people and restore the rule of law. I am also in favour of strengthening coordination on an international level. Indeed, the high number of parties involved requires exemplary cooperation in order to implement the relevant instruments. An absence of coordinated multilateral action would result in less effective sanctions. Finally, I believe that it is essential, for the credibility of our foreign policy, to find a balance between coercive diplomacy and permanent dialogue with the regimes in question.

**Angelika Werthmann (NI),** *in writing.* – (DE) The EU's policy of sanctions against authoritarian regimes is only credible if the Member States speak with one voice and if clear criteria exist, indicating when restrictive measures, such as the freezing of assets, are necessary. Authoritarian leaders and their partners should not be allowed to own property within the EU, to invest money or to receive training from European educational establishments. For this reason, I voted in favour.

**Inês Zuber (GUE/NGL),** *in writing.* – (PT) The imposition of sanctions is a unilateral decision, and thus contravenes the principle of resolving conflict through dialogue. Imposing sanctions means getting rid of a space that could and should be used for dialogue, negotiation and diplomatic mediation. We do not accept acts of direct intervention and intrusion in the internal affairs of countries by supporting one of the sides in a conflict, which often goes hand-in-hand with sanctions. Recently, there have been several unfortunate cases in which foreign powers have directly interfered in political change in a country through various forms of support for one of the sides in a conflict, and it is obvious that this was not done in a 'disinterested' way. It is sovereign peoples that should decide their own destinies and futures, without being subjected to pressure and interference from foreign powers. The unilateral decision to apply sanctions takes this approach by failing to respect the sovereignty of peoples. Instead, what is needed is total compliance with international law, the United Nations Charter and the principles contained therein.

**Report: Evelyn Regner (A7-0008/2012)**

**Luís Paulo Alves (S&D),** *in writing.* – (PT) I am voting in favour. There is obviously a key issue for consideration in these processes of transferring head offices of companies

from one Member State to another: the need to involve employees in decisions on this matter and, to that end, to seek to improve their participation in the governing bodies of the companies. Consideration also needs to be given to the use of fiscal dumping as a way of attracting companies to other Member States. We would argue that this is one of the crucial aspects which must be changed, as it is distorting the workings of the single market. As such, firm action is required and expected of the Commission, as soon as possible.

**Laima Liucija Andrikienė (PPE),** *in writing.* – I voted in favour of this resolution requesting the Commission to submit swiftly a proposal for a directive on the cross-border transfer of company seats. Currently, there is a lack of consistency in legislation on procedures for transferring the registered office or real head office of an existing company from one Member State to another within the single market. The transfer of company seats is often accompanied by administrative difficulties, high costs, social implications and the lack of legal certainty. We, Members of the European Parliament, agree that the process within the EU should be harmonised, the directive should apply to limited liability companies and allow companies to exercise their right of establishment by migrating to a host Member State without losing their legal personality. The transfer should not circumvent legal, social and fiscal conditions. Any company against which proceedings for winding-up, liquidation, insolvency or suspension of payments or other similar proceedings have been brought should not be allowed to undertake a cross-border transfer of seat. This legal harmonisation will strengthen competitiveness at EU level.

**Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D),** *in writing.* – (LT) Articles 49 and 54 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union guarantee freedom of establishment for all companies and firms. Cross-border company migration and the opportunity to transfer company seats to other Member States is one of the crucial elements in the completion of a properly functioning internal market. Transferring companies to other Member States has hitherto involved administrative difficulties and a lack of legal certainty because legislation on the transfer of firms or companies is implemented inconsistently in the Member States. The majority of the participants in the public consultation published back in 2004 believed that the adoption of a company law directive on the cross-border transfer of company seats would be useful and would guarantee a harmonised regime throughout the Member States. I therefore welcome the European Parliament recommendation that the Commission should submit a proposal for a directive on the cross-border transfer of company seats.

**Elena Băsescu (PPE),** *in writing.* – (RO) I voted for this report because the European Union needs a harmonised regime governing the cross-border transfer of companies. A company's freedom to transfer its seat is one of the key elements in achieving the internal market. It is important that the transfer does not affect the rights enjoyed by the parties involved in the process prior to the transfer. Respect for workers' rights and protection against them being made redundant are vital. At the same time, appropriate protection should be given to minority shareholders who oppose the transfer. The transfer procedure must be transparent and take place in tax-neutral conditions. It is important to maintain the continuity of the company's legal personality.

However, I should point out that the transfer should not circumvent the company's legal, social and fiscal conditions.

**Vilija Blinkevičiūtė (S&D),** *in writing.* – (LT) I voted in favour of this report because with it, the European Parliament, exercising its newly acquired right of legislative initiative, which previously only belonged to the European Commission, requests that the latter

submit a proposal for a directive on the cross-border transfer of company seats. The European Parliament has exercised this right because, in its opinion, the Commission's inaction on this issue is a mistake as it is failing to remedy obstacles preventing companies from exercising one of the fundamental rights granted to them by the EU – freedom of establishment throughout the European Union. This opinion of the European Parliament is based on the results of several public consultations, as well as the conclusions of the European Court of Justice, that too many disparities still remain in the national legislation of the Member States applicable to company establishment, preventing the exercising of the freedom of establishment, and a harmonised regime should therefore be established throughout the EU. The harmonisation of such a legal regime applicable to company establishment throughout the EU would facilitate the removal of many administrative obstacles and a reduction in the social and tax costs of establishing a company in another Member State.

**Sebastian Valentin Bodu (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (RO) At the moment, companies can only transfer their registered office either by winding up and creating a new legal entity in the host Member State, or by creating a new legal entity in the host Member State and subsequently merging both companies. The administrative difficulties must not be forgotten either, which incur costs and have a social impact by failing to offer legal certainty. For these reasons, I think that the recommendations included in this report are relevant, and I support them.

With regard to the interdependence between the registered office and place of business, this is not justified as the place of business cannot be transferred by transferring the registered office. Ultimately, companies are free to establish a separate place of business and registered office, depending on the level of taxation, labour-related costs, legislative predictability, the amount of red tape, the labour force's qualifications and so on.

**Philippe Boulland (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (FR) Parliament has set out its specific recommendations to the Commission in relation to a 14th company law directive on the cross-border transfer of company seats. On the one hand, we want to prevent the transfer of company seats from resulting in the liquidation of a company in its home country and, on the other, we want to ensure that the employees are not the victims of this transfer and do not lose any of their social rights. As rapporteur for the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs, my aim was to ensure that the transfer does not affect the rights of creditors, employees or shareholders. In my opinion, the social aspects of the transfer are crucial. We must ensure that the employees are involved in the company seat transfer process: they must be consulted, informed and, if necessary, have access to legal remedies, with suspensive effect. Employees should no longer be the victims of company seat transfers but should instead be able to benefit from them, regardless of whether the companies involved are large or small. That is the only way in which we will be able to encourage our companies to be more mobile, in order to respond to competition, while combating social dumping.

**Diogo Feio (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (PT) The legislative proposal tabled by the Commission on this issue is crucial. European legislation on transfers and procedures for transferring registered or real head offices from one Member State to another should be harmonised. Within the single market, it is important to ensure the mobility of firms, and reduce high administrative, social and fiscal costs, always seeking to apply tax neutrality to cross-border transfers of a head office. In view of this, and given that it is based on full respect for the principle of subsidiarity, I am voting for the rapporteur's conclusions.

**José Manuel Fernandes (PPE), in writing. – (PT)** Despite the rights enshrined in the EU Treaties and regulations, the full functioning of the single market – one of the main purposes of the EU – still has many obstacles to overcome. This report, drafted by Ms Regner, concerns Parliament's recommendations to the Commission to proceed with the 14th Company Law Directive, which has already been enshrined in EU regulations, regarding companies transferring their registered office from one Member State to another. Provided that workers' rights are safeguarded, it is vital that companies be able to transfer their registered office, as this will save time and money. However, legal uncertainties and bureaucracy, which differs from one Member State to the next, have been preventing its implementation. Moreover, legislation should prevent situations of abuse and opportunism, such as the establishment of companies reduced to a mere e-mail inbox. This is not the first time that Parliament has pressured the Commission to table a proposal in this area. I voted for this report because I consider this a measure which will benefit the European economy, in particular, small and medium-sized enterprises, making them more globally competitive.

**João Ferreira (GUE/NGL), in writing. – (PT)** This report states that 'cross-border company migration is one of the crucial elements in the completion of the internal market' and that, at the level of jobs, transfers of registered offices should be guided by the principle of flexicurity, with a view to a more flexible market. This is further proof that the majority in this House are seeking to deepen the neoliberalism that has led to the current financial, economic and social crisis in the EU. The majority in this House are keen to leave the free movement of capital and tax and offshore havens untouched, although they have directly caused the exacerbation of the grave situation that we are experiencing at present. Those from Portugal will easily recall the case of Jerónimo Martins SGPS, SA, which relocated its personal and family holdings to the Netherlands in order to pay less tax. The solutions put forward by the majority in this House will only bring about more unemployment, injustice and social disaster for workers and citizens. We therefore voted against.

**Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D), in writing. – (SK)** Articles 49 and 54 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union guarantee freedom of establishment for all companies and firms. Cross-border company migration is one of the crucial elements in the completion of the internal market. The lack of consistency in legislation concerning transfers and procedures for transferring the registered office or actual seat of an existing company or firm incorporated under national law from one Member State to another, within the single market, and the associated risks in terms of employment, as well as the administrative difficulties, the costs generated, the social implications and the lack of legal certainty, should be noted.

Company mobility still encounters high administrative burdens as well as social and tax costs. Transfers of seats should maintain the continuity of the legal personality of the company or firm concerned, in order to ensure its proper functioning. The transfer should not affect the rights of stakeholders. The transfer procedure should be governed by strict rules as regards transparency and the provision of information to stakeholders prior to the transfer being carried out. I also believe that when the seat of a company is being transferred, it is important to ensure the coherence of the employee involvement procedures between the different legislative provisions contained in the company law directives.

**Juozas Imbrasas (EFD), in writing. – (LT)** On 2 February 2012, I welcomed this document because company mobility still encounters high administrative burdens as well as social and tax costs. There is therefore a need to establish relevant measures to implement the freedom of a company to transfer its seat. The Commission must submit a proposal for a

directive on the cross-border transfer of company seats, bearing in mind that all companies and firms must be guaranteed freedom of establishment. Transfers of seat should maintain the continuity of the legal personality of the company or firm concerned and thus ensure its proper functioning. The transfer should not affect the rights of stakeholders (minority shareholders, employees and creditors) originating before the transfer. There is a need for legal certainty and compliance with all legal, social and fiscal conditions. It should also be noted that cross-border company migration is one of the crucial elements in the creation of the internal market.

**Philippe Juvin (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (FR) I voted in favour of this own-initiative report concerning company law on the cross-border transfer of company seats because there is a real lack of legislative coherence in this area at present. A number of obstacles remain, including administrative difficulties, high financial costs and a lack of legal certainty. This report draws the European Commission's attention to this issue and asks it to present a legislative proposal aimed at solving the problems highlighted.

**David Martin (S&D)**, *in writing*. – The management or board of a company planning a transfer should be required to draw up a report and a transfer plan. Before the management decides on the report and the transfer plan, the representatives of the employees or, if there are no representatives, the employees themselves, should be informed and consulted on the proposed transfer within the meaning of Article 4 of Directive 2002/14/EC(2). The report should be submitted to the shareholders and to the representatives of the employees or, if there are no representatives, to the employees themselves. The report should describe and justify the economic, legal and social aspects of the transfer and explain its consequences for the shareholders, creditors and employees, who may examine the report during a specified period which may be not less than one month or more than three months prior to the date of the meeting of shareholders approving the transfer.

**Iosif Matula (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (RO) The cross-border transfer of company seats to states outside the European Union poses a problem which has an impact on the labour market, especially as the EU's concern during this period is to increase the workforce's level of employment. There are 23 million unemployed at the moment across the European Union, including 5 139 000 young people under the age of 24, which is a cause for concern for all European states. To counter the impact of this problem on the labour market, I think that the public and private sectors need to be administered efficiently, with a dynamic partnership between both sectors, thereby providing an environment that is conducive to investment and ensures better use of the Structural and Cohesion Funds.

The freedom of cross-border company migration enshrined in the EU Treaty is a basic feature of the functioning of the internal market. In light of this, I think that the free movement of workers within the EU has a key role to play, making a significant contribution to narrowing the current disparities between regions.

The ambitious objectives for reducing youth unemployment and supporting economic growth, presented by the Commission as part of the informal Council meeting at the start of the month, may be achieved by increasing company and worker mobility within the EU.

**Mario Mauro (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (IT) I voted in favour of Ms Regner's report. I find the request appropriate to submit, on the basis of Article 50(1) and (2)(g) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, a proposal for a directive on the cross-border transfer

of company seats. First and foremost, the directive needs to clarify the question of separation between the registered office and the administrative seat of a company.

**Jean-Luc Mélenchon (GUE/NGL)**, *in writing*. – (FR) This report aims primarily to promote fiscal competition among the Member States. It even seeks to prevent the Member States from taxing companies that relocate. What is worse, it does not spare a thought for the employees left high and dry by these relocations. I voted against.

**Nuno Melo (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (PT) Articles 49 and 54 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union guarantee freedom of establishment for all companies and firms. We are all aware that cross-border company migration is one of the crucial elements of completing the internal market. In the same way, the lack of consistency in legislation on transfers and on procedures for transferring the registered or real head office of an existing company or firm incorporated under national law from one Member State to another, within the single market, and the associated risks in terms of employment, as well as the administrative difficulties, the costs generated, the social implications and the lack of legal certainty, set back the complete realisation of an internal market that can become increasingly effective. It is therefore very important that the Member States harmonise their legislation on this matter.

**Alexander Mirsky (S&D)**, *in writing*. – It is not clear why it is necessary to make it easy for companies to change their seats, to include workers in decision making. I abstained.

**Andreas Mölzer (NI)**, *in writing*. – (DE) Transferring a company's seat from one Member State to another involves bureaucratic red tape, a lack of clarity on legal issues and considerable costs. Naturally, there are also social implications for the employees. Although the European Court of Justice has concluded that the regulations need better coordination, this is still a matter for the legislator. The prime aim here is to prevent the misuse of post-box offices and shell companies in bypassing legal, social and tax-related conditions. The Court of Justice itself has not always come down on the side of the employees in the past, most recently in its judgment on successive employment contracts. With this in mind, I was not able to vote in favour of the proposed amendments.

**Rolandas Paksas (EFD)**, *in writing*. – (LT) I welcome this resolution because it will create more favourable conditions for limited liability companies to exercise their right to establishment and to migrate to a host Member State without losing their legal personality. Companies will therefore be able to be converted according to the law of the host Member State without being wound up, and proper conditions for their functioning will also be guaranteed. Furthermore, when transferring companies from one Member State to another, due regard will be given to the interests of workers, the rights of workers will be respected and workers themselves will be protected against dismissal. Given the benefits of this directive, I believe that it is appropriate to require the Commission to submit a proposal for a directive on the cross-border transfer of company seats as a matter of urgency, because cross-border company migration is one of the crucial elements in the completion of an effectively functioning internal market.

**Maria do Céu Patrão Neves (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (PT) This report tables proposals for the Commission on the 14th Company Law Directive, on the cross-border transfer of head offices. Parliament has made seven recommendations, of which I would highlight the one relating to the employees' rights, which states, in particular, that employees' participation rights should be preserved through the transfer and that their participation should be

governed by the legislation of the host Member State. In our view, it is positive that this will prevent transfers motivated by reducing labour costs.

**Miguel Portas (GUE/NGL),** *in writing.* – (PT) The purpose of this own-initiative report is to lay the foundations for greater harmonisation of tax laws within the EU in future, as this is a way of combating the attempted tax fraud that we have seen in recent times. This document is intended to ensure that the cross-border transfer of registered offices will not affect the rights of stakeholders, such as minority shareholders, employees and creditors, dating from before the transfer. This means that companies cannot escape their obligations in cases of insolvency or similar processes. That is why I voted in favour.

**Paulo Rangel (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) Economic activity, all the way from the producer to the final consumer, is based on a system of exchanges between trading companies. As the EU area is based on recognition of the freedom to establish companies, company law must constitute a priority subject for regulation, since a number of barriers to the smooth workings of the internal market could be raised in this area. In view of this, Parliament is recommending that the Commission table a 14th Company Law Directive, on the cross-border transfer of registered offices. Within this framework, it will have to consider the interests of shareholders, who should not see their pre-transfer rights set back by the relocation of the registered office, the interests of the company itself, and finally the interests of the employees and all those involved with the company. Moreover, the need for this step was confirmed by the Court of Justice in the Cartesio case. I therefore voted in favour.

**Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE),** *in writing.* – In favour. This calls on the Commission to submit, on the basis of Article 50(1) and (2)(g) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, a proposal for a directive on the cross-border transfer of company seats, following the recommendation set out in the Annex.

**Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE),** *in writing.* – (IT) The transfer abroad of a company seat, from the viewpoint of professional practice, is something that has recently been attracting more and more interest including, but not only, because it coincides with the growing phenomenon of the relocation of firms as a strategic lever for managing the current economic crisis. Locating production in markets that offer very competitive supplies, in terms of raw materials but, above all, of labour, or that have less onerous tax systems, is nowadays one of the main solutions implemented by firms to deal with globalised markets where competition with emerging economies is increasingly strong. The continuity of the legal personality of the transferred company, its recognition in the destination Member State and in the home Member State, as well as the legislation applicable to the company undergoing transfer, are, however, all issues that come under the legal systems of the countries involved in the transfer and, in particular, the type of connection with and recognition of the companies that Member States choose to adopt. My vote in favour of the text this morning is therefore aimed at seeking a measure capable of bringing the different laws of our Member States closer together.

**József Szájer (PPE),** *in writing.* – (HU) The pressing need within the EU for a harmonised system applicable to the cross-border transfer of company seats is also confirmed by a 2008 judgment of the European Court of Justice, which was, in fact, delivered in a case concerning Hungary. By adopting the report, we are sending a clear message to the Commission, calling on it to set to work and submit a legislative proposal on the subject.

**Nuno Teixeira (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) In this document, Parliament calls on the Commission to promptly table a draft directive on the cross-border transfer of the registered

offices of companies, taking its recommendations into account, on the basis of Article 50(1) and (2)(g) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. Cross-border company migration is one of the crucial elements of completing the internal market. Moreover, the lack of consistency in legislation on transfers and on procedures for transferring the registered or real head office of an existing company or firm incorporated under national law from one Member State within the single market to another brings with it risks in terms of employment, as well as administrative difficulties, costs, social implications and a lack of legal certainty.

**Silvia-Adriana Țicău (S&D)**, *in writing*. – (RO) I voted for the European Parliament resolution with recommendations to the Commission on a new company law directive on the cross-border transfer of company seats because I think that it is important to remove the barriers encountered by companies when they would like to transfer their seats to another Member State.

The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) guarantees freedom of establishment for all European companies. Parliament calls on the Commission to table, as a matter of urgency, based on Article 50(1) and (2)(g) of the TFEU, a proposal for a directive on the cross-border transfer of company seats. The directive should allow companies to exercise their right of establishment by migrating to a host Member State without losing their legal personality, but by being converted into a company governed by the host Member State's legislation, without having to be wound up. The transfer should take effect on the date of registration in the host Member State. In order to protect third parties, registration in the host Member State and removal from the register in the home Member State should be publicised in an appropriate manner. Any company against which proceedings for winding-up, liquidation, insolvency, suspension of payments or other similar proceedings have been brought should not be allowed to undertake a cross-border transfer of seat.

**Angelika Werthmann (NI)**, *in writing*. – (DE) A directive on the cross-border transfer of company seats is vital if freedom of establishment, one of the key principles of the internal market, is to have full effect. European businesses should be able to transfer their registered offices to another Member State without first needing to liquidate their assets. At the same time, we need guarantees that the standards and principles of employee participation enshrined in labour law will be upheld when a company transfers its seat.

**Inês Zuber (GUE/NGL)**, *in writing*. – (PT) The much vaunted free movement of capital and tax and offshore havens – which remain untouchable – have contributed heavily to the financial, economic and social crisis that the world is experiencing. This report is further proof that the majority in this House wants these policies to remain untouchable, maintaining and seeking to strengthen the neoliberal line that has brought this situation upon us. This report is a further demonstration of this choice, and concerns a topic that is of particular relevance to the Portuguese people, who recently saw a major company, Jerónimo Martins SGPS, SA, relocate its personal and family holdings to the Netherlands, in order to avoid paying tax. It is unacceptable for Parliament to continue pointing to paths that will only bring about more unemployment, injustice and social disaster for workers and citizens. We therefore voted against the report.

**Report: Martin Ehrenhauser (A7-0444/2011)**

**Luís Paulo Alves (S&D)**, *in writing*. – (PT) I am voting for this report because it mentions relevant areas where the implementation of EU funds for supporting humanitarian aid

should be controlled more closely. Like in other areas of expenditure, perhaps even more so in the current situation, the EU needs to be rigorous and to promote transparency, provided that this will not jeopardise the humanitarian objectives, under the umbrella of which the funds in question are being allocated. This is, I would stress, a point that is important and independent of the issues tackled in this report: the EU should press ahead with this fight for equality and seek to sustainably improve the living conditions of the poorest people, supporting them when their difficulties result from circumstantial or structural conditions.

**Laima Liucija Andrikiienė (PPE)**, *in writing*. – I voted in favour of this resolution, which outlines the efficiency and effectiveness of the ECHO control, monitoring and supervision system, in particular, when it comes to framework partnership agreement (FPA) partners or to international organisations (such as the UN). The EU (the Commission together with the Member States) is the world's largest donor of humanitarian aid. The EU's total contribution of aid, including the Member States, in 2010, was EUR 2 957 million. The average budget managed by DG ECHO for its humanitarian aid activities between 2006 and 2010 is EUR 889 million annually. In 2010, the budget was reinforced to EUR 1 115 million to respond to crisis and disasters (Haiti, Pakistan). We, Members of the European Parliament, agree that there is additional need for sustainability, coherence and complementarity of humanitarian actions.

**Roberta Angelilli (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (IT) I voted in favour of Mr Ehrenhauser's report, which stresses the need to ensure a high level of accountability and transparency in the framework partnership agreement (FPA) with NGOs, in respect of which I believe that the administrative burden for partners should be drastically reduced. Similarly, I am delighted to support the decision to increase the humanitarian aid budget for the period 2014-2020, as long as, given the crisis period, this aid is efficiently allocated and conscientiously managed. Lastly, I am deeply concerned that the Commission did not allow the Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (DG ECHO) access to the partners' final reports on the implementation of humanitarian actions in Haiti and Pakistan in 2010 and I would like to receive an explanation.

**Pino Arlacchi (S&D)**, *in writing*. – I voted for this resolution because it points out the need for strengthening the efficiency and effectiveness of budgetary control over the EU humanitarian aid managed by DG ECHO. The text underlines the areas of weakness in control over the funds and proposes improvements to be made. We stress the importance of establishing a clear regulation with the scope to have a single integrated reporting model, which would simplify the complexity of the administrative procedures. In this regard, I also support the fact that ECHO is currently working on the development of a comparative cost information system in order to analyse the cost-effectiveness of project proposals. The awareness of project efficiency would finally allow ECHO to avoid investing in unfruitful projects.

**Sophie Auconie (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (FR) We question the European Union's management of the budget for humanitarian aid and the channelling of European aid by the United Nations. It is important today for us to be more effective in order to tackle the growing number of major natural disasters. Martin Ehrenhauser's report received broad support because it responded to all of these issues. We need both to restore the balance of the parts of the budget allocated to preventing humanitarian disasters and to retain adequate financial leeway to enable us to intervene rapidly if a crisis arises. The new financial framework provides for an increase in the budget for the humanitarian aid instrument, which will help

us to anticipate disasters. In addition, the new financing arrangements will allow unspent funds in the reserve to be carried over to the following year for urgent humanitarian needs. Finally, we call for particular care for children, as well as expectant mothers and mothers of young children, with regard to the provision of food, clothing, evacuation and transportation, and medical facilities with a view to preventing unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases, as priority areas under the existing financial mechanisms.

**Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D),** *in writing.* – (LT) Recently, the number, frequency, scope and severity of humanitarian disasters have increased dramatically across the globe, affecting more and more countries. In 2010 alone, there were two huge catastrophes in Haiti and Pakistan, which demonstrated that a certain lack of effectiveness and coordination is hindering efficient disaster response. Furthermore, there is a need to ensure appropriate control and transparency as regards the use of EU funds, and to increase the accountability of beneficiaries, stopping the misuse of allocated funds. I believe that it is important to take account of the recommendation made by the European Court of Auditors that we need to improve distribution and post-distribution monitoring and reach an agreement with the United Nations agencies that manage the distribution of humanitarian assistance together with the EU on reinforcing the audit work carried out and increasing the reliability of checks.

**Regina Bastos (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) The European Union is the world's largest donor of humanitarian aid. The Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department of the European Commission is responsible for the implementation of EU humanitarian aid and its mandate encompasses humanitarian assistance and civil protection, the two main instruments at the EU's disposal to ensure delivery of humanitarian assistance to the victims of disasters and prolonged conflicts. The current budgetary constraints resulting from the current economic, financial and social crisis highlight the significance of sound financial management based on the principles of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. This report, for which I voted, welcomes the enhanced flexibility and efficiency afforded by the framework partnership agreement (FPA), including a more result-oriented approach. It also calls on the Commission to improve the methods for, and practice of, assessing whether a potential partner qualifies for the FPA or not. It also urges the Commission to put greater emphasis on disaster risk reduction and disaster preparedness, to strengthen the resilience of the population at risk through capacity building, training and public awareness measures, and to establish efficient early warning systems.

**Mara Bizzotto (EFD),** *in writing.* – (IT) One of the advantages of this report is that it focuses Parliament's attention on the management of the Commission's humanitarian policy. Through the Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection, the Commission grants a level of humanitarian aid that makes the EU the world's largest donor. The management of humanitarian funds has, for some time, involved a number of critical issues that Parliament and the European Court of Auditors have recognised and often brought to light. With this report, Parliament therefore calls on the Commission to act on a number of important measures to improve the management of humanitarian aid. As stressed by the rapporteur, it is essential to ensure that partners effectively follow up on the findings of audit procedures, and it is important to guarantee that UN reports, drawn up case by case, clearly contain information on the results of individual projects in the area covered by the financial intervention. It is also important to improve the methods for, and practice of, assessing potential partners in the context of framework partnership agreements and, lastly, to pay careful attention, from a strategic perspective, to the possibility that in

some cases, humanitarian aid policy may have a negative effect, such as, for example, the chance that food aid might drive down the capacity for local production. I therefore voted in favour.

**Vilija Blinkevičiūtė (S&D),** *in writing.* – (LT) I voted in favour of this report because I agree that the delivery of European Union humanitarian assistance must be made more transparent and more efficient. Checks on the use of funds also have to be tightened where the EU delivers humanitarian assistance through joint management together with other partners – the United Nations and other international organisations. In cases of joint management of humanitarian projects, budget implementation and control are delegated to international organisations, and the European Commission only conducts field monitoring and verification missions. In the context of the discharge procedure, the European Court of Auditors and Parliament have frequently criticised the joint management method of international organisations. The criticism is due to the lack of coherence and rigidity, as well as the various sources of confusion stemming from the many added layers of legislation, which are a major cause of errors. Weaknesses in terms of control and follow-up of the use of EU funds have also been the subject of much criticism. This report therefore proposes replacing the joint management method with indirect management, and this would strengthen the responsibility in relation to the Commission of the parties managing the budget.

**Sebastian Valentin Bodu (PPE),** *in writing.* – (RO) It is well known that the European Union is the main donor of humanitarian aid in the world. This humanitarian aid is granted in the form of financial aid, goods, services and technical assistance. The purpose of this European policy is to intervene in emergencies when countries outside the EU are affected, regardless of whether they are affected by natural disasters or by other kinds of crises.

The EU's total humanitarian aid contribution, including from Member States, was EUR 2.957 billion in 2010, with EU Member States providing 64% and the funds channelled through the Commission amounting to 36%. The Commission must ensure that the weaknesses identified during regular audits of the partners' systems are promptly remedied by them. External auditors have to continue their efforts to improve the quality of their recommendations to partners, taking into account their specific structures so as to ensure that these recommendations are accepted and feasible.

To make the use of resources and measures more effective, I think that the EU budget must also support actions designed to anticipate, prepare for and avert disasters.

**Jan Březina (PPE),** *in writing.* – (CS) The European Union must strengthen its emergency response capacity, given the growing number of major natural disasters. In this context, I recall that Parliament has, for many years, been calling for a more realistic humanitarian aid budget in the interests of remedying the chronic underfunding of the relevant budget lines, making it possible to provide some financial leeway throughout the financial year, and maintaining a coherent balance between the financing of measures to prevent humanitarian disasters and of measures to ensure rapid responses to natural and man-made disasters. In this respect, I welcome the Commission communication on the 2014-2020 multiannual financial framework, which provides for an increase in the humanitarian aid instrument budget to EUR 6.4 billion over this period. That would amount to an annual average of EUR 915 million, as against EUR 813 million in 2007-2013. I also note with satisfaction the increase in the Emergency Aid Reserve for the same period, bringing it up to EUR 2.5 billion, as well as the proposal for unspent funds in the reserve to be carried

over to the following year. The EU budget should support actions designed to anticipate disasters, prepare for them, avert them and react more quickly to them, as well as measures ensuring greater flexibility in launching development measures as a means of overcoming crisis situations.

**Andrea Cozzolino (S&D), in writing. – (IT)** The directive is certainly progressing towards better management of humanitarian funds, starting with improved transparency and more vigorous checks to prevent fraud and corruption. Above all, it is essential to take action to remedy the general character of the reports submitted, from which it is particularly difficult to obtain sufficient information on the results, output and outcome of projects.

Furthermore, I welcome the report's strong emphasis on the need to create continuity between emergency interventions and development programmes. In particular, it might be worthwhile considering a period of cooperation between emergency bodies and development bodies by implementing some form of transfer of deliveries. It is only with difficulty that those who effectively manage emergencies then also prove ready to deal with the problems associated with development projects. It is vital to go beyond the current system which risks creating discontinuity, cancelling out or undermining the potential long-term results.

Lastly, the call for greater visibility for actions, not for 'publicity' purposes, but to enable better streamlining of interventions, is valuable and should be supported. This is why I voted in favour, and we must hope that account is taken of the recommendations contained in the report during the process of reform of the framework partnership agreement (FPA).

**Corina Crețu (S&D), in writing. – (RO)** The frequency and scale of humanitarian disasters have grown to an alarmingly high level recently. The earthquakes in Haiti and Japan, Cyclone Thane in India, flooding in Pakistan or drought in Somalia would be just some of the most serious examples of disasters, not to mention the humanitarian impact of the civil revolutions which have engulfed the whole world. An ever growing number of refugees need food, shelter and medical assistance. Millions of children are undernourished and, unfortunately, many of them, after receiving treatment, end up in the same situation due to a lack of food. Furthermore, the problems caused by natural disasters are exacerbated by the acts of violence which prevent humanitarian organisations from reaching those in need of help. In these circumstances, I join my colleagues in sounding an alarm bell with regard to making these programmes more efficient. I call on the Commission not only to improve the controls over and monitoring of the funds earmarked for humanitarian aid, but also to impose a bilateral audit and measurable impact indicators, in cooperation with its partners, as part of funding humanitarian programmes.

**Mário David (PPE), in writing. – (PT)** This own-initiative report on the budgetary control of EU humanitarian aid managed by the Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department of the European Commission (ECHO) proposes a series of measures widely supported in this House. The importance of this control is even more relevant when we take account of the fact that the EU – Commission and Member States – is the world's largest donor of humanitarian aid: EUR 2.957 billion in 2010, with 64% from the Member States and 36% in funds channelled through the Commission, and that ECHO has 40 offices across the globe that award aid to around 200 organisations.

More efficiency and effectiveness, sustainability, consistency and complementarity of humanitarian aid actions: these are the major issues with which this report is concerned. Examples include the proposals that 'cost observed for results' methods be used when

choosing partners, that EU responses to natural disasters be faster, and that evaluations and audits – involving the European Parliament more in their analysis – be continuous and systematic, so that it can be properly understood what has happened to aid sent to third countries, such as the Horn of Africa, Haiti or Pakistan.

**Christine De Veyrac (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (FR) I voted in favour of this text, which assesses the budgetary management of the service entrusted with implementing the European Union's humanitarian aid in Southern countries. In these times of crisis, it is doubly important to control spending and ensure that the allocated funds go to those who are most in need of them.

**Martin Ehrenhauser (NI)**, *in writing*. – (HU) Year after year, the community formed by the European Commission and the Member States of the European Union has been providing the largest amounts of humanitarian aid worldwide. In 2010, this amount was EUR 2.957 billion, approximately one-third of which was used as European Commission aid.

The implementation of EU aid policy is the responsibility of the European Commission's Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (ECHO), which supplies aid to those in need through 200 partner organisations and specialised UN agencies, and with the help of NGOs.

Appropriate control by the competent bodies of the EU over the use of Community funds spent on aid is extremely important, and in this regard, the European Parliament has a special role. The report adopted unanimously by the Committee on Budgetary Control, in which the rapporteur provides a summary of the operation and efficiency of Community aid policy and, specifically, the accomplishments made in the crisis situations in Pakistan and Haiti, has my utmost support.

**Edite Estrela (S&D)**, *in writing*. – (PT) I voted for the report on 'budgetary control of EU humanitarian aid' because it includes measures to make EU humanitarian aid more efficient and effective.

**Diogo Feio (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (PT) While it is gratifying to know that the European Union is the world's largest donor, this same circumstance does not necessarily result in a desire for the aid provided to be put to proper use and reach those who really need it. There are, unfortunately, frequent reports of the improper use of funds by the authorities in recipient countries and even of their embezzlement, to the detriment of populations in need, which are often in a state of health and food emergency. One of the mechanisms undoubtedly available to the Union in evaluating how humanitarian aid is provided is budgetary control. The purpose of the measures proposed by the Commission is to make the humanitarian aid budget more transparent and make those who manage it more accountable. I hope they will bear fruit. I regret that, under the guise of this issue, the rapporteur has included the issue of abortion on demand in a way that is not only untimely, but which also disrespects the different positions of the Member States in this regard.

**José Manuel Fernandes (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (PT) One of the principles that best characterises the EU is solidarity. Europeans are immediately ready to help communities in crisis situations, whether in Europe or on another continent. The own-initiative report under consideration, drafted by Mr Ehrenhauser, concerns the implementation of EU financial resources in humanitarian aid, taking into account the recommendations included in the report by the European Court of Auditors, specifically regarding control of funds

transferred to NGOs. At times, there is so much bureaucracy involved in implementing many humanitarian aid programmes that the cost/benefit relationship in interventions is far from satisfactory. Moreover, there are major cost differences between comparable projects, which is unacceptable. As such, and without jeopardising the continuity of these programmes, there is a need to adopt measures that will contribute to making them more effective. I voted for this report, since the proposals it contains, in addition to being a clear investment in preventing new disasters, represent a move towards greater transparency in the allocation of funds and better evaluation of the results obtained.

**João Ferreira (GUE/NGL), in writing.** – (PT) The Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department of the European Commission (ECHO) is responsible for implementing EU humanitarian aid. Its mandate covers humanitarian aid and civil protection. In order to carry out its mandate, it awards funding to around 200 partners. The report makes criticisms that we deem to be fair of the current management of ECHO's budget. It emphasises weaknesses in terms of control and follow-up of the use of EU funds. In order to change existing weaknesses in the control and management of ECHO's budget, the rapporteur proposes a series of measures that will improve the humanitarian assistance situation in the EU. The most important of these measures is the need for increased control and accountability in the indirect management of EU funds, and for the EU to increase its capacity to respond to natural disasters; that is, a 'more realistic' approach to the budget, and 'maintaining a coherent balance between the financing of measures to prevent humanitarian disasters and measures to ensure rapid responses to [...] disasters'.

**Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D), in writing.** – (SK) The number, frequency, scope and severity of humanitarian disasters have dramatically increased, affecting more parts of the world. The EU is the world's largest donor of humanitarian aid. The EU's total humanitarian aid contribution, including from the Member States, in 2010 was EUR 2.957 billion, with the EU Member States accounting for 64% and the funds channelled through the Commission amounting to 36%. ECHO is the Directorate General (DG) of the European Commission responsible for the implementation of EU humanitarian aid. DG ECHO's mandate encompasses humanitarian assistance and civil protection, the two main instruments at the EU's disposal to ensure delivery of humanitarian assistance to the victims of disasters and protracted conflicts. ECHO implements its mandate by funding about 200 partner organisations: NGOs, UN agencies, international organisations and specialised agencies of Member States.

I believe that it is important that the EU strengthens its reaction capacity, given the growing number of major natural disasters. Parliament has, for many years, been calling for a more realistic humanitarian budget in the interests of remedying the chronic underfunding of the relevant budget lines, and in order to provide some financial leeway throughout the financial year and maintain a coherent balance between the financing of measures to prevent humanitarian disasters and of measures to ensure rapid responses to natural and man-made disasters.

**Lidia Joanna Geringer de Oedenberg (S&D), in writing.** – The EU is the leading donor of humanitarian assistance. Of the total EUR 9.8 billion of humanitarian aid provided worldwide in 2010, 41% was delivered by the EU (accumulated by funds from the 27 Member States in addition to the Commission through DG ECHO). These funds allow the EU to show solidarity and provide immediate relief to regions hurt by natural and man-made disasters. The EU's growing involvement and importance as a humanitarian aid provider is on the rise, and so are the requirements to ensure proper use of taxpayers' money; thus,

I welcome the current report, which reviews the budgetary control of EU humanitarian aid management by DG ECHO. Identifying areas of weakness in control over the funds and proposing points where improvements could be made is important for enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of humanitarian aid money. However, I also believe that the evaluation process should take account of the fact that most recipient countries do not have the proper means to provide a full account of how money was spent, especially in a time of emergency. Therefore, we must also show flexibility and adjust our budgetary control requirements to the existing capacities of the recipient countries, in order to ensure our money is properly spent.

**Nathalie Griesbeck (ALDE)**, *in writing*. – (FR) I voted strongly in favour of this resolution, which criticises the management of the European Union's humanitarian aid, in particular, the way in which EU funds are managed by the UN, and seeks to ensure that our humanitarian aid is entirely effective and controlled. The European Union is, in fact, the world's largest donor of humanitarian aid, contributing EUR 2.957 billion in 2010. It plays a central role in helping the most disadvantaged people around the world. The way in which these funds are managed must be further improved. It is vital to monitor better the reliability of partner NGOs but also, and above all, the management of EU funds by the UN, whose reports contain insufficient information on the effectiveness of the programmes put in place. When it comes to humanitarian aid, transparency is a necessity on which we must not compromise. At stake is the very credibility of the European Union's action to help those most in need.

**Juozas Imbrasas (EFD)**, *in writing*. – (LT) I welcomed this document because the number, frequency, scope and severity of humanitarian disasters have increased dramatically, affecting more countries across the world. The EU's leading role as a humanitarian actor worldwide and the increase in the number and frequency of interventions inside and outside the EU, as well as current budgetary constraints, highlight the significance of sound financial management based on the principles of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. The huge disasters in Haiti and Pakistan have demonstrated once again that the instruments at the EU's disposal for responding to disasters need to be improved in terms of effectiveness, speed and coordination. It is crucial that the most vulnerable groups receive assistance in a timely manner and that it is effective.

**Philippe Juvin (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (FR) I supported this report on the budgetary control of EU humanitarian aid managed by ECHO as it underlines the need to guarantee the efficiency and effectiveness of the ECHO control, monitoring and supervision system, and it stresses the importance of ensuring the sustainability and complementarity of humanitarian actions, learning from the experiences of the Haiti and Pakistan disasters in particular.

**David Martin (S&D)**, *in writing*. – I welcome this report, which recognises the benefits of seeking new arrangements for the provision of funding by DG ECHO, together with its partners; calls, at the same time, for the diversity of the actors involved in financing and implementing the European humanitarian programmes – the United Nations, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, NGOs – to be borne in mind, given that disasters often transcend national borders and require multilateral, coordinated responses; and encourages the work being done to strengthen the capacities of local stakeholders and increase assessment and rapid response capabilities on the ground through DG ECHO's offices as well as field experts.

**Clemente Mastella (PPE),** *in writing.* – (IT) The European Union must strengthen its reaction capacity, given the growing number of major natural disasters. We have, for years, been calling for a more realistic humanitarian budget in the interests of remedying the chronic underfunding of the relevant budget lines and providing a coherent balance between the financing of measures to prevent humanitarian disasters and measures to ensure rapid responses to natural and man-made disasters. We therefore recognise the benefits of seeking new arrangements for financing by the Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (DG ECHO) together with its partners, but stress also that effective monitoring of the use of funds in the form of audits of the partners carried out by private audit firms is essential and helps to legitimise the humanitarian sector. We therefore commend DG ECHO's efforts to promote the use of innovative approaches such as the cash-based approach and, in particular, unconditional transfers, which are directed at the most vulnerable groups. Indeed, these approaches can be more efficient than assistance in kind, and do not necessarily carry a greater fiduciary risk.

**Véronique Mathieu (PPE),** *in writing.* – (FR) I voted in favour of the report on the budgetary control of EU humanitarian aid managed by ECHO. The European Union is the world's largest donor of humanitarian aid. In 2010, the EU's contribution totalled EUR 2.957 billion, of which 36% came from the European Commission and the remainder from the Member States. The Commission thus provides funding to almost 200 partners such as NGOs and United Nations agencies. Nevertheless, control of the use of these funds is relatively limited. The reports provided by the United Nations are very general and do not contain precise information about the results. The Commission must therefore remedy the shortcomings with regard to transparency in order to prevent misuse of United Nations funds for humanitarian and development activities.

**Mario Mauro (PPE),** *in writing.* – (IT) As the rapporteur also rightly remarks, I find it unacceptable that the Commission has not provided Parliament with the final narrative and financial reports of the European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO) partners on the implementation of humanitarian actions in the aftermath of the catastrophes in Haiti and Pakistan in 2010. Parliament must have access to such reports, in order to be able to pass judgement regarding the financial management. This practice must be changed in order also to promote an improvement in the interaction between European institutions, as well as with international humanitarian bodies.

**Jean-Luc Mélenchon (GUE/NGL),** *in writing.* – (FR) This report highlights real problems, particularly as regards transparency in the organisation of humanitarian aid. It also calls for an increase in the European Union's humanitarian budget. I support those aspects of it. However, I regret that when referring to transparency, it denounces almost exclusively the United Nations agencies. I regret, too, that it calls for the use of funds to be monitored by private firms, as if this were a way to guarantee independence.

**Nuno Melo (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) There should be regular evaluation of partners and of *ex ante* controls to assess whether they are appropriate. The Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department of the European Commission (ECHO), ECHO services and field experts should closely monitor the implementation of each project through day-to-day monitoring of its progress. The Commission should also monitor projects through a network of field experts and regular visits by geographical desks, auditors and management. Partners should also submit reports after the end of the operation to substantiate their expenses. Approximately 10 evaluations should be undertaken on average each year, focusing on major country operations, defined as operations that receive funding totalling

about EUR 50 million and which have not been evaluated in the last three years, on partners, and on thematic issues. It is only with this control that it will be possible to evaluate whether the aid provided by the European Union is really implemented properly.

**Alexander Mirsky (S&D)**, *in writing*. – The report basically points out areas of weakness in control over the funds and proposes points where improvements could be made. I totally agree with the rapporteur.

**Andreas Mölzer (NI)**, *in writing*. – (DE) In order to clarify the significance of humanitarian aid in the context of the EU budget, it should be pointed out that EUR 1.115 billion was set aside for this purpose in 2010. The European Commission's Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (ECHO) manages this aid and is responsible for administering the funds. One of the important instruments in the provision of aid is the conclusion of contracts with NGOs. Unfortunately, serious inadequacies were found in the control mechanisms in the past because tasks in this area were delegated to international organisations that were only subject to their own audit systems. The changes contained in this report make the control system more transparent, more comprehensive and more general, which is why I voted in favour of the report.

**Franz Obermayr (NI)**, *in writing*. – (DE) With an expenditure of EUR 2.957 billion (2010), the EU is the world's biggest donor of development aid. This total amount is made up of contributions from the Member States (64%) and the Commission (36%). The Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (ECHO) is the responsible Directorate General within the EU for the implementation of humanitarian aid and disaster prevention. ECHO operates on an international basis, supporting about 200 partners throughout the world – NGOs, UN agencies and international organisations. The measures are managed from the Commission's headquarters in Brussels through a network of over 40 offices in all the relevant regions. It is a problem that the budgetary plan and budgetary controls in these areas are not managed centrally by the Commission, but that this task is entrusted to various international organisations, which carry out internal controls according to their own accounting and auditing procedures. Since the principle of exclusive or single auditing is pursued, the Commission does not perform any audits of its own. It limits its activities to field monitoring and verification missions. The European Court of Auditors has criticised this delegation of administration on numerous occasions because it leads to a lack of coherence, a complicated network of legal regulations, and inadequate control and follow-up of the use of EU funds. I would therefore welcome moves by the Commission to address this problem when revising the Financial Regulation.

**Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (EL) The total contribution made by the EU to humanitarian aid is close to EUR 3 billion (64% from the Member States and 36% from the Commission), making the EU the world leader. ECHO, the European Commission Directorate General responsible for implementing EU humanitarian aid, is charged with distributing a large portion of these resources via NGOs, UN agencies, international organisations and specialist services of the Member States, and managed EUR 889 million in 2010. This specific initiative sets out the organisation's economic data in detail and the exact breakdown of expenditure and also sets out in detail the results of periodic assessments by the Directorate and the procedure for monitoring and implementing humanitarian programmes to which European resources have been contributed. The accountability, therefore, of the Directorate General and the transparency of the procedures is clearly satisfactory, which is why I voted in favour of the report.

**Rolandas Paksas (EFD), in writing. – (LT)** I welcome this resolution because due to the dramatic increase in the number of humanitarian disasters, it is particularly important to ensure sound financial management based on the principles of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. The EU is the world's largest donor of humanitarian aid. Therefore, the European Commission's Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (DG ECHO) must have sufficient financial and human resources to enable it to properly exercise its powers. Carrying out accurate and coherent needs assessment is a prerequisite for the effective and efficient delivery of humanitarian aid. When delivering assistance, we must use innovative approaches and promote the continuous involvement of beneficiaries in the planning and management of aid. Given the constant increase in various major natural disasters, the EU must strengthen its response capacity. Attention is drawn to the fact that in order to achieve these objectives, it is very important to finally draw up a realistic humanitarian budget.

**Alfredo Pallone (PPE), in writing. – (IT)** The EU is one of the world's largest donors of humanitarian aid. In order to organise the humanitarian aid work, it has been provided with a Commission DG (Directorate General) – the European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO) – capable of dealing with the complicated system of managing the budget, and aid allocations and applications. The huge importance of this Directorate General often leads to areas of conflict relating to powers over control of financial resources, for which reason it was considered necessary to revise the Financial Regulation (FR) in order to strengthen the responsibility and expertise of the parties managing the humanitarian aid budget. This is why I voted in favour of the report.

**Maria do Céu Patrão Neves (PPE), in writing. – (PT)** The fact that the European Union is the world's largest provider of humanitarian aid does not exempt it from heightened responsibilities. The purpose of this report is, *inter alia*, to promote the selection and assessment by the Commission of humanitarian organisations' compliance with the conditions laid down in the Humanitarian Aid Regulation and the Financial Regulation. The European Union has been fighting for the inclusion in humanitarian aid agreements of rules on the proper implementation of funds, on following up how projects are carried out, on respect for human rights and on the auditing of funded projects. I voted for this report for these reasons.

**Paulo Rangel (PPE), in writing. – (PT)** The Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department of the European Commission (ECHO) plays a role of the greatest importance in humanitarian aid, since the EU is the world's largest donor in aggregated terms, taking the Commission and Member States together. However, as with any public funds, the process of allocating aid should be guided by simplicity, particularly in a context of global crisis, so as to reduce any costs considered unnecessary, on the one hand, and to facilitate beneficiaries' access to the funds made available, on the other. Sound financial management is, therefore, a condition without which any policy of this nature will be doomed to fail. This motion for a resolution sets out a budgetary analysis of the EU humanitarian aid policy managed by ECHO, with a view to making better use of the available resources. I therefore voted in favour.

**Jean Roatta (PPE), in writing. – (FR)** The European Union is the world's largest donor of humanitarian aid. In 2010, the European Union's contribution totalled EUR 2.957 billion, and 36% of that aid came from the Commission. The Commission manages its humanitarian activities from its headquarters in Brussels and with the help of a network of local offices all around the world. The average annual budget managed by DG ECHO for its humanitarian

aid activities between 2006 and 2010 was EUR 889 million. The report focuses on the following key issues: efficiency and effectiveness of the ECHO control, monitoring and supervision system, especially when framework partnership agreement (FPA) partners or international organisation partners (such as the United Nations) are involved. The report also underlines the need to ensure the sustainability, coherence and complementarity of humanitarian actions, which are key objectives of the EU's development policy. I therefore voted in favour of this report.

**Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE),** *in writing.* – In favour. The EU (the Commission together with the Member States) is the world's largest donor of humanitarian aid. The EU's total contribution of humanitarian aid, including the Member States, in 2010 was EUR 2 957 million, whereas the share of the EU Member States was 64% and the funds channelled through the Commission amounted to 36%. ECHO is the Directorate General (DG) of the European Commission responsible for the implementation of EU humanitarian aid (Regulation (EC) 1257/96). DG ECHO's mandate encompasses humanitarian assistance and civil protection, the two main instruments at the EU's disposal to ensure delivery of humanitarian assistance to the victims of disasters and protracted conflicts. ECHO implements its mandate by funding about 200 partners: NGOs, UN agencies, international organisations and specialised agencies of the Member States. The Commission manages its humanitarian activities from its headquarters in Brussels via a network of more than 40 field offices all over the world.

**Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE),** *in writing.* – (IT) This vote will guarantee greater efficiency and effectiveness in the control, monitoring and supervision system of the European Commission's Directorate General responsible for the implementation of EU humanitarian aid (ECHO). The EU is the world's largest donor of humanitarian aid. In fact, its total humanitarian aid contribution, including from the Member States, in 2010 was EUR 2.957 billion. ECHO carries out its mandate by funding about 200 partners: NGOs, UN agencies, international organisations and specialised agencies of Member States. However, the mega catastrophes in Haiti and Pakistan have demonstrated once again that the instruments at the EU's disposal for responding to disasters have to be improved in terms of effectiveness, speed and coordination. These episodes, even through their tragic nature, revealed that there is still much work to be done to improve and to reinforce ownership and accountability.

**Michèle Striffler (PPE),** *in writing.* – (FR) Given the growing number of natural disasters, it is essential for the European Union to strengthen its capacity to react and respond to crises. In that regard, I feel that it is crucial to maintain a coherent balance between the financing of measures to prevent humanitarian disasters and the financing of measures to ensure rapid responses to disasters. I drafted the opinion on this report adopted unanimously in the Committee on Development and I commend the high-quality work carried out by DG ECHO's partners, achieved by means of an effective selection method – such as the framework partnership agreement – and the development of standards and practices applicable in the humanitarian field. For these reasons, I voted in favour of this report.

**Nuno Teixeira (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) The EU, along with the Member States, is the world's largest donor of humanitarian aid, with a total of EUR 2.957 billion in 2010. Retaining this policy is essential if the EU and its Member States are to have a role in achieving the Millennium Development Goals. The majority of humanitarian aid funds go to the African continent: 42%, according to 2010 data. The EU uses this sum and

accumulated reserves to fund around 200 partners, from NGOs to international organisations, such as the specialised agencies of the UN. These funds are channelled into humanitarian aid and civil protection for the victims of disasters and prolonged conflicts. It is crucial to establish levels of control so as to know for certain how funds are spent, as well as to hold both parties – donor and recipient – accountable. There should also be more coordination between the EU and the Member States on a global strategy for planning, financing and implementing available humanitarian aid.

**Silvia-Adriana Țicău (S&D),** *in writing.* – (RO) I voted for the European Parliament resolution on the budgetary control of EU humanitarian aid managed by the Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (DG ECHO).

According to the Court of Auditors of the European Union, the overall *ex ante* controls, monitoring and supervision systems, *ex post* audit activity and the internal audit functions of DG ECHO are generally effective, but there is room for improvement. The resolution calls on the Commission to continue refining the measures which will improve the efficiency of cooperation with framework partnership agreement (FPA) partners after 2012 and will reduce the excessive administrative burden for FPA partners, while ensuring a high level of accountability and transparency.

The European Union must also strengthen its reaction capacity, given the growing number of major natural disasters, and provide an adequate humanitarian budget in order to avoid, therefore, the chronic underfunding of the budget lines for humanitarian aid.

At the same time, some financial leeway must be provided throughout the budget year, which will also maintain a coherent balance between funding measures to prevent humanitarian disasters and measures to ensure a rapid response to emergencies, no matter whether they are man-made or natural disasters.

**Angelika Werthmann (NI),** *in writing.* – (DE) In order to ensure the efficient and economically effective use of funds from the EU budget, it is vital that the allocation of funds under the ECHO programme should be improved and made more transparent. This is particularly necessary in order to avoid double funding. When selecting NGO partners at local level, we must consider their expertise and past successes as criteria, not just their cost efficiency. Humanitarian aid must be made more sustainable by focusing more closely on disaster prevention.

**Inês Zuber (GUE/NGL),** *in writing.* – (PT) The Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department of the European Commission (ECHO), which is responsible for implementing EU humanitarian aid, covers humanitarian assistance and civil protection, funding around 200 partners to implement it. The report criticises the current management of ECHO's budget, highlighting weaknesses in terms of control and follow-up of the use of EU funds. In order to change existing weaknesses in the control and management of ECHO's budget, the rapporteur proposes a series of measures, the most important of which is the need for increased control and accountability in the indirect management of EU funds, and for the EU to increase its capacity to respond to natural disasters; that is a 'more realistic' approach to the budget, and to 'maintaining a coherent balance between the financing of measures to prevent humanitarian disasters and measures to ensure rapid responses to [...] disasters'.

**Report: Klaus-Heiner Lehne (A7-0012/2012)**

**Luís Paulo Alves (S&D),** *in writing.* – (PT) I voted for this report because it argues that justice should be accessible to all European citizens and because it calls on the Commission to table complementary measures guaranteeing full exercising of this right, specifically in the area of collective redress. In the European area of justice, citizens and companies must be able to enforce the rights guaranteed by EU legislation effectively and efficiently. It is therefore important to provide robust guarantees against abusive litigation, as envisaged in the Commission's horizontal consultation, and to protect consumers and small and medium-sized enterprises with safeguard procedures, particularly as regards competition or consumers.

**Laima Liucija Andrikiienė (PPE),** *in writing.* – I voted in favour of this resolution which addresses the exchange of views on the Commission's public consultation examining possibilities for introducing a system of collective judicial recourse ('collective redress') at European level. The report highlights the principle that anyone who has suffered damage must have the right to receive compensation, but that those bringing collective actions must not be in a better position than individual claimants. The EU legal tradition is directed towards solving disputes between individuals rather than through a collective entity. Some Member States' legal systems have developed differing approaches to the issue of collective redress. It is in this context that the Commission must put forward evidence that, pursuant to the principle of subsidiarity, an action at EU level is opportune. We, Members of the European Parliament, agree on the need for this new legal initiative and on initially proposed horizontal procedural actions and safeguards which should be further analysed, tested and developed.

**Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D),** *in writing.* – (LT) The consumer policy strategy drawn up by the Commission has the objective of establishing an effectively functioning retail internal market by 2013, making consumers and retailers as confident shopping across borders as in their home countries. Cross-border trade is very slow to develop in the EU because consumers have no guarantee that their rights will be protected in the event of a problem and they will receive adequate redress. The integration of European markets and the consequent increase in cross-border activities highlight the need for a common European approach to collective redress. The Commission has made a significant effort to address this issue, which hitherto was regulated at Member State level. I believe that we need to provide a clear impact assessment and outline possible measures at EU level to improve the EU's current regulatory framework, so as to allow victims of infringements of EU law to be compensated for the damage they sustain and thus contribute to consumer confidence and smoother functioning of the internal market.

**Elena Băsescu (PPE),** *in writing.* – (RO) I voted for the report drafted by Mr Lehne because I think that European citizens must be encouraged to exercise their rights in cross-border situations. As it is a recent legal instrument in Europe, consumers are not familiar with collective redress. The benefits of exercising this right are unarguable. This means that when individual financial claims do not provide them with access to legal proceedings, consumers can initiate a collective action to bring legal proceedings. This also allows the costs incurred by such action to be shared. Collective action provides consumers with an effective means of expression. At the same time, it ensures the most efficient functioning of the single market within which citizens can communicate directly with commercial agencies. I should point out that this mechanism eliminates discrimination among citizens with regard to the value of the legal actions and their admissibility.

**Jean-Luc Bennahmias (ALDE), in writing. – (FR)** Scandals over the PIP breast implants, the Costa Concordia disaster: there are numerous pertinent examples of the citizens' desire to seek redress collectively when the abuse or damage they have suffered is widely denounced. In adopting the Lehne report on Thursday, 2 February, the European Parliament aims to further the debate on this approach and move towards establishing collective redress within the EU, and I fully support this. This new possibility of collective redress allows claimants in the Member States to group their cases together to denounce mass damage. However, the new system will also have to take into account the lessons learned from the excesses of the US system, which is fighting against class actions that are at times abusive or unmeritorious. To this end, the report calls on the Commission to take into consideration a number of key aspects when drawing up its legislative proposal: limiting the admissibility of actions to clearly defined groups by giving a judge discretionary powers to carry out a preliminary admissibility check of any potential collective action and prohibiting punitive damages. The European Parliament has set the ball rolling; it is now essential for the Commission to fill this legal vacuum by ensuring the fundamental right of victims to be compensated.

**Vilija Blinkevičiūtė (S&D), in writing. – (LT)** I voted in favour of this European Parliament report because in the European area of justice, citizens and companies must not only enjoy rights but must also be able to enforce those rights effectively and efficiently. Furthermore, fair access to justice should remain available to all EU citizens. Attention should be drawn to the fact that a system based on collective legal actions can usefully supplement, but is no substitute for, individual legal protection. The European Parliament welcomes the Commission's work towards a common European approach to collective redress. It is asking the Commission to demonstrate in its impact assessment that, pursuant to the principle of subsidiarity, action is needed at EU level in order to improve the current EU regulatory framework so as to allow victims of infringements of EU law to be compensated for the damage they sustain and thus contribute to consumer confidence and the smoother functioning of the internal market. The European Parliament also welcomes the efforts of Member States to strengthen the rights of victims of unlawful behaviour by introducing or planning to introduce legislation aimed at facilitating redress while avoiding an abusive litigation culture, but also recognises that national collective redress mechanisms are widely divergent, in particular, in terms of scope and procedural characteristics, which may undermine the enjoyment of rights by citizens.

**Andrea Cozzolino (S&D), in writing. – (IT)** A regulation defining collective redress is not only desirable but it is also urgent and cannot be delayed, especially when we consider that, in the majority of cases, the 'collective' victims come from the weakest sections of the population, both in terms of education and from an economic perspective. This implies that, in the majority of cases, the infringements perpetrated against these groups go unpunished due to economic barriers (the cost of an individual case being disproportionate to the possible compensation) and psychological ones (fears about the length of procedures) and difficulties in accessing the necessary information.

Vice versa, bundling the claims would not only strengthen their legal position but would also make it possible to simplify the processes and reduce their costs. On the other hand, there remain quite a few problems, both with regard to the different jurisdictions in individual Member States and to the need to curb misuse of the instrument. In any event, it is advisable for the EU to have a common horizontal approach to the issue, without following the US class action model and without amending national laws, and to establish

a horizontal reference framework instrument that enables citizens and companies to enforce their rights under EU legislation.

**Francesco De Angelis (S&D)**, *in writing*. – (IT) I voted for the report on collective redress because I believe that completion of the European single market also, and above all, involves harmonisation of consumer protection measures. However, it is crucial that Europe should not repeat the errors already committed in the US, where the practice of class action has become a primary source of profit mainly for a handful of powerful legal firms, only in very rare cases acting as an effective consumer protection tool. In this field, the European Union can do better than the US, first of all by encouraging the parties to reach alternative agreements not requiring formal recourse to legal means, thus simplifying and speeding up the process; and subsequently, by establishing a legislative framework that does not leave room for abuse, hence, with specific timeframes for proceedings, and rights to protection in line with European legal traditions. Only in this way will it be possible to prevent a useful tool for protecting citizens becoming a means of unfair competition between private entities. The report on which we voted today is a move in this direction, and is therefore a good starting point to build on in the future.

**Diogo Feio (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (PT) The right to compensation for damages suffered is essential to any legal system. The various national jurisdictions already safeguard this. However, I think we need to be cautious regarding collective redress. On the one hand, we do not wish to open the door to a system like that in the United States, in which abuse of the law is commonplace, jeopardising the activity of thousands of companies. On the other, in relation to the area of competition, the existence of collective action will mean consumers harmed by an anti-competitive practice that has been penalised pursuant to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union will be able to claim damages. This will lead to the associated application of fines and to the compensation of consumers harmed by such practices. Once again, that could have serious effects for businesses. I therefore believe we should proceed with caution in this area, and I prefer alternative dispute-resolution mechanisms that are cheaper, faster and, in many cases, more effective. As such, I consider it crucial that Parliament continues to play an active role in this area.

**José Manuel Fernandes (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (PT) This report, drafted by Mr Lehne, concerns opening the European Union up to a coherent approach to collective redress, as well as the need to provide for consistent guarantees, so as to prevent abusive litigation. Improved access to justice by the European public has been one of the concerns of the EU, which has adopted a number of regulations and directives on this issue in recent years. It is not legal tradition in Europe to settle disputes between individuals through recourse to a collective entity. In view of the complexity of this subject and the *modus operandi* of several Member States, it is crucial to harmonise the majority of the branches of national law. In the absence of this harmonisation, it would be preferable for defendants to be tried in the area where they live and to have the right to refuse to participate in a collective redress procedure. I voted for this report because I believe that, as justice is an issue with a huge impact on the lives of all members of the public, Parliament should participate actively throughout the ordinary legislative procedure until a solution covering the entire territory of the European Union is found.

**João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)**, *in writing*. – (PT) This report states that ‘the enforcement of national law must not prevent the uniform application of European law’, making very clear its purpose of creating a horizontal system and uniform application of EU legislation to be superimposed over national legislation. We are not opposed to a European approach

to collective redress, providing robust guarantees against abusive litigation. However, we do not agree with the promotion of transferring more elements of national sovereignty to the EU being tacked on to an objective need that crosses borders. For our part, we believe there is another way, specifically by establishing agreements between countries, to enable this problem to be tackled without a loss of sovereignty, but retaining the elements that this proposal is intended to transfer.

**Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D),** *in writing.* – (SK) In the European area of justice, citizens and companies must not only enjoy rights but must also be able to enforce those rights effectively and efficiently. EU legislation is designed to enable parties in cross-border situations either to enforce their rights effectively or to seek out-of-court settlement by way of mediation. The benefits of the alternative dispute resolution method are undisputed and fair access to justice should remain available to all EU citizens.

Consumers affected by a legal infringement who seek redress often face significant barriers in terms of accessibility, effectiveness and affordability owing to sometimes high litigation costs, potential psychological costs, complex and lengthy procedures, and lack of information on the available means of redress. In some Member States, the overall performance of the existing consumer redress and enforcement tools designed at EU level is not deemed satisfactory, or such mechanisms are not sufficiently well known, which results in their limited use.

I believe that it is necessary to take due account of the legal traditions and legal orders of the individual Member States and enhance the coordination of good practices between Member States. Safeguards must be put in place within the horizontal instrument in order to avoid unmeritorious claims and misuse of collective redress, so as to guarantee fair court proceedings.

**Lidia Joanna Geringer de Oedenberg (S&D),** *in writing.* – (PL) I am pleased that the European Parliament has undertaken the initiative to introduce legal regulations within the Member States which will allow for and simplify the procedures of consumer collective redress. According to the research and surveys conducted by the European Commission, one out of five European consumers will not go to court for disputes amounting to less than EUR 1 000, and nearly half of them claim that they would not go to court to obtain redress of less than EUR 200. The main obstacles facing consumers include high costs, the risk of court proceedings as well as lengthy and complicated procedures relating to redress. However, in the case of collective action, as many as 79% of respondents declared their willingness to defend their rights in court. We should take steps to empower European consumers, who represent the weaker party in relation to the entity infringing their rights. A mechanism for collective redress already exists in Poland, and its principles could prove useful when working on the future European instrument. As it is a relatively new instrument, introduced by the Act of 17 December 2009, its application still requires thorough testing. However, it is unquestionably a step in the right direction. A common mechanism for collective redress at EU level is necessary in order to make it possible and easier for citizens and businesses to access and exercise the rights to which they are entitled. I would like to congratulate the rapporteur on his initiative and I eagerly await the Commission's proposals.

**Louis Grech (S&D),** *in writing.* – I voted in favour of this report. I believe that the lack of a collective redress system for the EU undermines the enforcement of EU legislation on consumer protection already in place, and consequently has a knock-on effect on consumer empowerment and confidence within the single market. In order to achieve a competitive

and socially sustainable single market framework, the Union cannot afford to keep putting off the creation of a Europe-wide collective redress mechanism for consumers and citizens. Sufficient amounts of reports, consultations, workshops and seminars have been drawn up and taken place at EU level. It is now time for the Commission to adopt a unified position and take clearly defined legislative action. The formula for completing the EU Alternative Dispute Resolution system, for which the Commission has recently brought forward a legislative proposal, necessitates the putting into place of this collective redress structure. To this end, I feel that for any final ADR package to be endorsed by the European citizen, the Commission must factor in the existence and availability of Europe-wide collective redress.

**Nathalie Griesbeck (ALDE),** *in writing.* – (FR) I voted in favour of this report, which proposes the possibility of collective redress at European level and invites the Commission to examine the appropriate legal basis for any measures in the field of collective redress. In my opinion, this type of redress would enable the victims of illegal actions, especially the victims of minor damage, to bundle their claims for compensation, thereby reducing excessive litigation costs and increasing legal certainty and respect for the rule of law in Europe. I also welcome the fact that the report stresses that Europe does not, however, wish to establish a system identical to that of the United States, and that European collective redress should seek to protect European citizens without weakening in any way the integrity of the single market and the rule of law.

**Juozas Imbrasas (EFD),** *in writing.* – (LT) I welcomed this document because in the European area of justice, citizens and companies must be able to enforce their rights under EU legislation effectively and efficiently. In a case of mass or dispersed damages, victims of unlawful behaviour might indeed abstain from claiming compensation, as the costs of seeking individual redress might be disproportionate to the damage sustained. In this regard, a European approach to collective redress may be useful because it might, on the one hand, be in the interest of victims of unlawful behaviour to bundle their claims which they would not otherwise pursue individually and, on the other, it might be in the interest of companies to obtain one single settlement or court action bringing legal certainty to the matter.

**Philippe Juvin (PPE),** *in writing.* – (FR) I voted in favour of this own-initiative report on the introduction of a coherent European approach to collective redress because I believe that action at European Union level in this area would undoubtedly have added value. We need to take a realistic, pragmatic approach and move beyond the ideological approach that seeks merely to reject the 'US nightmare'. The people of Europe must be able to exercise their rights effectively. To this end, a rigid procedural framework must be guaranteed in order to prevent abusive claims.

**Edvard Kožušník (ECR),** *in writing.* – (CS) I would like first to state my reticence in relation to exporting the American practice of actions targeting collective redress into EU law. I am particularly concerned about the abuse of these class actions. It is also not entirely clear what impacts the creation of such arrangements would have on the law of individual Member States. On the other hand, introduction of this practice might increase consumer protection and have a preventative effect against some unfair practices on the internal market. Despite my reticence, I voted in favour of the report, as I am expecting an assessment of the impact of the legal measure to be drawn up on the basis of the report. Only on the basis of a high-quality assessment of the impact and the benefits and risks of the practice

of collective redress will it be possible to decide whether there is any sense in incorporating this practice into EU law or definitively rejecting it.

**Constance Le Grip (PPE)**, *in writing.* – (FR) I voted in favour of the report by Mr Lehne on a coherent European approach to collective redress. It seems to me that we should examine in detail the added value we might gain from introducing a system of collective redress at European level. Without going as far as the US model, however, it is important to put an end to the legal patchwork in the EU and allow European citizens to exercise their rights effectively and with certainty, especially since bringing an individual action is often difficult and costly. Naturally, this system must have a rigid framework and ensure a fair balance to prevent abuse and a shift towards a more litigious society, while respecting the principle of subsidiarity.

**David Martin (S&D)**, *in writing.* – I voted for this report, which acknowledges the importance of injunctive relief. In many cases, such as misleading advertising, lack of transparency of contracts, etc., damages might not occur and priority should be given to stopping any further unlawful behaviour. The Commission itself has indicated how Regulation (EC) No 2006/2004 on consumer protection cooperation, as well as Directive 2009/22/EC on injunctions for the protection of consumer interests (the Injunctions Directive), can be improved in order to strengthen cooperation and injunctive relief.

**Marisa Matias (GUE/NGL)**, *in writing.* – (PT) This report concerns a European approach to collective redress and the commitment to providing robust guarantees against abusive litigation. The report provides for proposals that are steps in the right direction on some legal items that are crucial in view of the structure of this legal instrument. With the aim of preventing excessive and abusive practices, the document is against the idea of copying the US system, and takes into account the systems of the 27 Member States. Many of the Member States have recently created collective instruments enabling collective access to justice, up to a point. This report also stresses the benefits of collective legal actions as regards lower costs. I voted in favour for these reasons.

**Mario Mauro (PPE)**, *in writing.* – (IT) When a group of citizens suffers the same injustice, individual lawsuits may not constitute an effective means of stopping unlawful practices or obtaining compensation. I agree with the need for a collective European approach, and I also agree with the possible benefits of collective judicial actions in terms of lower costs and greater legal certainty for claimants, defendants and the judicial system alike by avoiding parallel litigation in claims of the same kind. I voted in favour.

**Nuno Melo (PPE)**, *in writing.* – (PT) I believe that, in the European area of justice, citizens and companies must be able to enforce their rights under EU legislation effectively and efficiently. Therefore, in the event of massive or widespread damage, victims of unlawful behaviour might indeed abstain from claiming compensation, as the costs of seeking individual redress might be disproportionate to the damage sustained. However, enforcement of EU law by European and national authorities must remain in the foreground, since these authorities have public-law investigative instruments at their disposal, which cannot be made available to private parties; to this extent, private enforcement continues to be complementary.

**Alajos Mészáros (PPE)**, *in writing.* – (HU) As with the preparation of all new EU-level laws, when examining the possibility of collective redress, it is the interests of EU citizens, which, in this case, largely means the injured parties, that must take priority.

Before creating a proposal on the subject, the Commission and all other legislators must provide appropriate justification for this form of legal remedy, which is not entirely known in continental legal culture. While the actual effects of this new type of rules of procedure are surrounded by uncertainty, if we give priority to the interests of individuals, we can highlight some positive results that can be achieved through the common rules of procedure by means of an option of collective redress.

Cases of abuse where the individual assertion of rights can seem hopeless are a frequent occurrence, especially when corporations with extensive capital and infrastructure are involved. Sometimes, the consumer or the client is unable to individually bear all the burdens necessary to enforce his rights provided by the law, and eventually decides not to exercise them. In such cases, joint action by the injured parties, in accordance with the rules of a collective form of redress and strictly based on individual decisions as regards participation, can be justified.

I believe that any future legal instrument, including in the field of collective redress, must focus on the objective of enabling EU citizens and corporations to exercise the rights guaranteed to them by the Community. The report reflects these ideas.

**Louis Michel (ALDE),** *in writing.* – (FR) It is essential in the single market to prepare a harmonious approach to collective redress in order to assure 500 million European consumers of their rights. The integration of the European markets in addition to the increase in cross-border activities mean that this approach is absolutely essential. The national procedures do not offer any real solutions at cross-border level. Collective judicial redress, currently available at national level in 14 EU Member States, does not allow for optimum compensation when it comes to mass damage, such as flight cancellations, defective products, etc. Extending this redress to all EU Member States would ensure an effective approach that protects European consumers. It would also provide greater legal certainty for the parties involved and for the judicial system.

**Alexander Mirsky (S&D),** *in writing.* – Fair access to justice should be available to European citizens, including, but not only, via compensatory relief. To this purpose, the Commission should put forward complementary methods that guarantee the full enjoyment of rights: amicable settlements, online dispute resolution mechanisms, public enforcement and common procedures for redress. I voted in favour.

**Andreas Mölzer (NI),** *in writing.* – (DE) It is important that possible abuses of the legal system should be minimised and prevented wherever possible. European legal traditions are to be upheld in this context. This is particularly important in relation to class actions if we are to avoid a flood of abuses through unfounded excessive claims. In this context, it is worth considering developing opportunities for out-of-court settlement, such as mediation in disputes. In the final analysis, we must ensure that businesses and members of the public are able to exercise their rights effectively and efficiently under Union law. This will receive my approval.

**Tiziano Motti (PPE),** *in writing.* – (IT) I have always maintained that alternative dispute resolution (ADR) methods are the most effective type of mediation in consumer-related disputes. The single market and the Internet have created a virtual trading space which consumers want to be able to trust. Despite this, consumers are often completely on their own against manufacturers. It is a battle between David and Goliath that does not leave room for recognition of the rights enshrined by the directives which we work to protect on a daily basis. Class action is an experience consumers have embarked upon in order to

ensure that their voices are heard, as otherwise they would be isolated and therefore weak. Personally, I believe that there should be more incentives for ADR mechanisms, even if they often depend on the trader's willingness to cooperate. The availability of an effective judicial redress system would act as a strong incentive for parties to agree an out-of-court settlement, which is likely to avoid a considerable amount of litigation. The setting up of ADR schemes at European level should be encouraged, so as to allow effective settlement of disputes as a more attractive option than court proceedings, and have the power to order the parties involved to first seek a collective consensual resolution of the claim before launching collective court proceedings.

**Rolandas Paksas (EFD), in writing.** – (LT) I welcome this resolution setting out a coherent European approach to collective redress. Such an approach will make it possible to resolve cross-border disputes and will ensure the effective application of consumer redress and enforcement tools. It should be noted that the institute of collective redress is of clear importance in the area of the protection of consumers' rights. Mandatory collective redress mechanisms at EU level will ensure a high level of protection of consumer rights and a more competitive internal market. I believe that the role of consumer organisations in the area of collective redress should be promoted and strengthened in order to achieve the objectives set. A European instrument for collective redress must also be accessible to consumers at both national and EU level.

**Alfredo Pallone (PPE), in writing.** – (IT) The report by Mr Lehne, for which I voted, aims to improve European legislation governing collective redress. The EU needs to protect citizens and companies, which need to be able to enforce their rights under current legislation effectively and efficiently. The improvements in the regulation on consumer protection cooperation, on injunctions for the protection of consumers' interests, and on injunctive relief, have to protect the victims of unlawful behaviour. In fact, citizens often abstain from claiming compensation because the costs of seeking individual redress are too high, thus indirectly preventing the laws in force from being effectively applied.

**Maria do Céu Patrão Neves (PPE), in writing.** – (PT) This report raises concerns about abusive collective actions. This legal instrument is common in the Anglo-Saxon countries. In fact, the European Union's legal tradition is more oriented towards resolution of disputes between individuals than resolution through a collective entity. With this own-initiative report, the European Parliament is contributing to the horizontal consultation launched by the Commission. This consultation demonstrates the Commission's openness to a European approach to collective redress and its commitment to providing robust guarantees against abusive litigation. I voted for this report for these reasons.

**Paulo Rangel (PPE), in writing.** – (PT) Regulation of legal and procedural issues constitutes one of the most sensitive areas of EU law. As such, it is understood that Union regulation began by standardising the commonly set criteria for the international jurisdiction of courts, by determining the commonly set criteria for substantive law applicable to disputes of a certain kind, by supporting alternative means of dispute resolution, or even by introducing procedural models for low-value actions. Therefore, EU-level regulation of collective redress represents progress in this area: in this framework, there will now be a 'type' of litigation relationship – mass litigation – that is regulated uniformly throughout the Union. This is an intervention that could meet with resistance, since the regulation to be introduced could clash with certain aspects of national procedural law. In any case, I believe this reflection should take place and become an opportunity to rethink the law on the organisation of the legal system in the various Member States.

**Crescenzo Rivellini (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (IT) I would like to congratulate Mr Lehne. The text that has been approved, having regard to the Commission's Green Paper on consumer collective redress, is a clear request on the part of Parliament to further improve access to justice. Collective redress must not be treated as a special case compared to individual redress, but simply as a practical way to obtain the same result for everyone through a single legal action. A clear and precise standardisation of the issue of collective redress is necessary in order to streamline the legal process and allow a consistent approach.

**Robert Rochefort (ALDE)**, *in writing*. – (FR) I voted in favour of this report: I have advocated collective redress for many years. However, the Commission has great difficulty in putting any serious proposals to us: we have had 'Green Papers', 'working documents', 'draft guidance papers' and 'consultation papers' but, at the end of the day, nothing tangible has yet been done at European level. Nevertheless, we need to establish collective redress in Europe: it is clear that when a group of citizens falls victim to the same infringement, individual actions are not always the solution, whether the goal is to put an end to an illegal practice or obtain redress, especially when the individual damage is minor in comparison to the cost of legal action. Of course, as I have already said, these actions must be clearly defined (legal standing, opt-in, no third-party pre-financing, etc.) in order to avoid the excesses of the US system. However, the debate must not cripple legislative action. That is why I supported this report, which sets out a framework within which these actions could be envisaged, even if I do not agree with all of its guidelines.

**Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)**, *in writing*. – I am in favour of calls for any proposal in the field of collective redress to take the form of a binding horizontal framework while a limited number of rules relevant to consumer protection or competition law could be laid down in separate articles or chapters of the horizontal instrument itself, or in separate legal instruments.

**Tokia Saïfi (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (FR) The citizens of Europe must be able to ensure that EU laws are enforced in their national courts without difficulty. The gaps in the field of collective redress weaken that right, particularly in cases of compensatory redress. Although respect for the judicial traditions of the different Member States is a fundamental principle, we need to go further than the EU compensation scheme and adopt a binding legal framework that regulates collective redress throughout the EU. I voted in favour of rationalising and simplifying judicial action for European citizens. Collective redress is a means of dealing simultaneously with the grievances of several complainants who feel that they have suffered the same damage. As an MEP, I felt that it was important to support a procedure that makes litigation in the EU less costly and less uncertain.

**Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)**, *in writing*. – (EL) I voted in favour of the rapporteur's proposal because I believe that it is in Europe's interest to have a coherent approach to collective redress. The spirit of EU law requires victims of illegal practices, be they private individuals or companies, to have the facility to effectively exercise the rights vested in them under EU legislation and to be able to claim compensation for losses which they incur if EU legislation is infringed. It is vital for the EU system of collective redress to be based on respect for European civilisation. If that – but not only that – is achieved, it will increase consumer confidence and help the internal market to operate smoothly.

**Peter Skinner (S&D)**, *in writing*. – I want to thank my fellow shadows and the rapporteur working on the report on moving to collective redress. Key areas of our work involved how to balance the needs of consumers and society to have recourse to a procedure for a

common and related complaint and the implications for such an approach. In particular, I am concerned that an overwhelming effect might be to bring in a similar system to that of the United States. This is to be resisted at all levels. Similarly, the issue of competition and economic concentration lie at the heart of economic and industrial policy and are not simply procedural juridical matters.

**József Szájer (PPE),** *in writing.* – (HU) The collective enforcement of rights enhances legal certainty and may have a preventive effect on companies that typically cause small amounts of damage but to a wide spectrum of individuals. In such cases, the injured parties can be dissuaded by the risk of having to bear legal expenses, as the costs of the individual enforcement of rights more often than not exceeds the expected gains.

I must stress that I do not support the European proliferation of abusive and unsubstantiated class action suits that are common in the US. However, I do believe that uniform European regulation of the collective enforcement of rights could serve to significantly reduce consumer distrust and could serve as an appropriate instrument to establish a practically minded and more efficient means of legal remedy that serves the interests of both the injured parties and the companies.

**Nuno Teixeira (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) Consumers are having serious problems concerning effectiveness and accessibility when they attempt to take legal action as individuals, which is all the more important because of the increasing integration of European markets and the resulting increase in cross-border activities. I am voting for this report because I believe the European Union should adopt an integrated and consistent approach to tackling cases in which consumers are unprotected, with particular emphasis on joint action driven by a number of members of the public. I also consider it crucial that the measures tabled aim to reduce the cost of cases and increase legal certainty for claimants, defendants and the judicial system. However, it will be necessary to bear in mind the traditions and statute law of each Member State, and the dissemination of good practice at EU level should be promoted.

**Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR),** *in writing.* – I voted against this report because I believe that a sectoral approach would be more appropriate than the introduction of a horizontal instrument. Sectoral instruments, i.e. in competition law, have clear economic benefits, whereas horizontal instruments may be applied in all areas of EU law and thus extend collective actions which I am firmly opposed to.

**Inês Zuber (GUE/NGL),** *in writing.* – (PT) This initiative is explicit about its purpose of creating a horizontal system and uniform application of EU legislation to be superimposed over national legislation. We are not opposed to a European approach to collective redress, providing robust guarantees against abusive litigation. However, we do not agree with the promotion of transferring more elements of national sovereignty to the EU being tacked on to an objective need that could cross borders. For our part, we believe there is another way, specifically, by establishing agreements between countries, to enable this problem to be tackled without a loss of sovereignty, but retaining the elements that this proposal is intended to transfer.

#### **Motion for a resolution: B7-0045/2012**

**Luís Paulo Alves (S&D),** *in writing.* – (PT) I am voting in favour because nutrition and health claims must not be false, ambiguous or misleading. The opposition to this list of nutrition claims results from the fact that the draft Commission regulation runs counter

to the purpose and content of the basic instrument. The Commission should now table an amended draft.

**Sophie Auconie (PPE), in writing.** – (FR) I am sorry that the House voted in favour of the resolution opposing the adoption of the draft Commission regulation on nutrition claims. I regret the result of this vote, which was quite confusing at the time, with a very small majority of just 15 votes and after comments that distorted reality. Far from protecting consumers, some of my colleagues unfortunately tend to treat them like children instead. Three points would protect the consumer, however. Firstly, this claim was entirely clear: ‘now contains X% less of [nutrient]’. Secondly, it could be used only if the nutrient content was reduced by at least 15%. Finally, the claim was only allowed to be used for a maximum of one year. Despite the fact that the European Parliament never stops pointing out how crucial it is to combat obesity, reduce the sugar content, salt content, fat content, etc. of our food, it is today adopting an incomprehensible position by rejecting a claim that could, in fact, have given the food industry an incentive to move in that direction, thereby benefiting the health of consumers. Therefore, in the quest for ‘the best’, we no longer even have ‘the good’, and we are destroying any incentive for manufacturers to reformulate their products.

**Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D), in writing.** – (LT) Product labelling and nutrition claims on food packaging are aimed at increasing consumer awareness of the composition and nutritional value of foodstuffs. The objective of EU legislation on labelling foodstuffs and indicating their nutritional value is to give consumers information in a clear and simple manner, and to ensure that such information is not false, ambiguous or misleading. Currently, information shown on food packaging describing a product as light or dietary may mislead consumers and influence their choice of a certain foodstuff, although the information often does not bear any relation to the product’s true nutritional value. I voted in favour of the European Parliament’s position of opposing nutrition claims proposed by the Commission such as ‘now contains 10% less [nutrient]’ because such claims may be confusing and incomprehensible to the average consumer, and I welcome the call for the submission of a new draft proposal with new and clearer wording.

**Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL), in writing.** – (EL) The nutrition and health claims listed on food should not be misleading in terms of the properties, nature and identity of the food. The new nutrition claim proposed by the European Commission, which it claims will benefit consumers, is unclear and gives rise to reasonable doubts. This is a misleading claim which does not guarantee a high level of protection for consumers. It is an unacceptable self-serving proposal by the Commission, which will create confusion among consumers and a dangerous precedent. As for the benefit, there certainly is one, but it is the food industry, not the consumer, that stands to gain. Moreover, this is not the first time that we have seen the European Commission in the role of food company promoter. I voted in favour of the motion for a resolution by the European Parliament opposing the European Commission’s proposal because I consider that it is a scandalous proposal that paves the way for unsafe food to end up on our plates, because it puts profit before consumer health and safety, and because I consider it unacceptable for the European Commission to turn itself into a mercenary for the food industry lobby and self-serving solutions.

**José Manuel Fernandes (PPE), in writing.** – (PT) Pursuant to Article 3 of Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006, ‘nutrition and health claims must not be false, ambiguous or misleading’. The aforementioned regulation states that such claims must be set out in such a way that

the average consumer understands them and, when comparative, the point of comparison must include a range of foodstuffs of the same type and of a variety of brands. The motion for a resolution under consideration, pursuant to Rule 88(2) of the Rules of Procedure, contains Parliament's opposition to the draft Commission regulation amending Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006 with regard to the list of nutrition claims, because it is considered to suffer from a number of faults, such as running counter to 'the purpose and content of the basic instrument by being ambiguous, misleading and confusing to the average consumer'. As such, I voted for this motion for a resolution, which calls on the Commission to submit a new draft to the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety.

**João Ferreira (GUE/NGL), in writing. – (PT)** We voted for this resolution opposed to the adoption of the draft Commission regulation, which would amend another regulation on the list of nutrition claims. The proposal of introducing the claim 'now contains X% less of [nutrient]' violates the principle of comparative claims, enabling, *inter alia*, the nutritional values of a product to be compared with a previous version of the same product, regardless of the starting level of the nutrient in question. There is also the problem that this type of claim discourages producers from reformulating their products more substantially, as it is easier to reduce a nutrient by 15% than by the amount needed to make a product meet the requirements for the 'light' or 'reduced [nutrient]' claims. In the end, it was consumers who lost out from this proposal – which Parliament has fortunately rejected – in terms of the clarity, relevance and objectivity of the information provided. The European Commission is now called on to table an amended draft of these measures.

**Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D), in writing. – (SK)** In view of the basic principles governing the selection of permitted nutrition claims on foodstuffs, the Commission has proposed the new nutrition claim 'now contains X% less of [nutrient]', to be included in the Annex to Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006. This claim runs counter to the purpose and content of the basic instrument by being confusing, ambiguous and misleading to the average consumer.

The newly introduced claim 'now contains X% less of [nutrient]' violates the principle of comparative claims, as laid down in Article 9(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006. It makes allowance for the nutritional values of a product to be compared with a previous version of that product, regardless of the starting level of the nutrient in question, which could be excessively high by comparison with other products on the market. Products that have not been reformulated, but are nevertheless lower in a certain nutrient than the reformulated product of a different brand, will not be allowed to bear a nutrition claim.

This will inevitably mislead consumers. I believe that the draft Commission regulation is inconsistent with the purpose and content of the basic instrument, and I therefore consider it necessary that the Commission presents an amended proposal.

**Elisabetta Gardini (PPE), in writing. – (IT)** This vote was a significant missed opportunity to allow our small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to communicate the improvements they have made to products in terms of reduced salt, sugar and fat content. I would like to point out that under current legislation, companies wishing to improve nutrition characteristics have to make drastic changes to their recipes, a difficult operation for SMEs in terms of both technology and economics. Using comparative nutrition claims is, in fact, currently only permitted on condition that the product contains at least 30% less of the substance indicated than the average in the product category. Use of the proposed claim

would only have been allowed for one year, in order to encourage the gradual reformulation of products. This would have allowed consumers to get used to the gradual reduction in fat, sugar and salt content, with the resulting health benefits. There are already successful examples of this approach, such as in the UK where people are becoming used to less salty flavours through a gradual reduction in salt content. Therefore, I hope that the Commission will formulate a new proposal as soon as possible with which Parliament will be able to agree.

**Mathieu Grosch (PPE), in writing.** – (DE) I welcome the motion for a resolution from the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety with regard to the list of permissible nutrition claims, as it will mean that consumers will not be confused by the nutritional advertising claim ‘now contains X% less sugar (or other nutrient)’ when buying foodstuffs.

Although I support the efforts of the food industry to make the content of food ‘healthier’, this new advertising claim will lead to a lack of transparency for consumers rather than encouraging the industry to invest in ‘improving’ its products. The food industry continues to have the option of promoting the products with the label ‘reduced sugar’ or ‘reduced salt’, but these advertising claims are only permitted if the content of the nutrient is reduced by at least 30% compared with other products in the same food category. However, the new advertising claim ‘now contains X% less of [nutrient]’ that is now to be permitted does not have any such restriction, and may consequently confuse consumers.

Furthermore, with the claim ‘15% less sugar’, consumers also expect a corresponding reduction in energy content. According to the Commission’s proposal, however, this advertising claim can also be used if the energy content remains the same on account of other additives. As a result, consumers will have the impression that this product contains fewer calories on account of the reduction in sugar content, although the energy content will remain the same.

Particularly where food is concerned, it is extremely important to provide clear, easy-to-understand and transparent information in order to enable consumers to quickly and easily choose between the many different products on offer.

**Brice Hortefeux (PPE), in writing.** – (FR) During the vote in plenary on 1 February, the European Parliament decided, by a narrow majority, to reject a draft regulation aimed at providing consumers with extra nutritional information. Parliament’s concern that there would be a desire to take things further, or even too far, led it to adopt a position which was inconsistent with the principles it seeks to defend. Obesity has become a major health problem and we must tackle the phenomenon in a firm and practical manner. This requires progressive and broad-minded measures to ensure that private sector operators are also involved in meeting public health objectives and improving the nutritional quality of food. The initial proposal, which Parliament chose to reject, called for the statement ‘now contains X% less of [nutrient]’ to be added to compulsory nutritional labelling. To employ this claim, a minimum reduction of 15% of the nutrient was required, and its use was limited to one year only, which would have encouraged the food industry to continue strengthening its efforts with regard to consumer transparency.

**Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE), in writing.** – I welcome the Parliament’s rejection of the Commission’s proposals. Consumers must be provided with full and truthful information about their food and the Commission must now go back and draft a decent proposal.

Claims on food labels about the health or nutritional benefits to consumers must be accurate and verifiable.

**Philippe Juvin (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (FR) This resolution was submitted under the objection procedure against delegated acts adopted by the European Commission. I preferred to abstain from voting on this particularly sensitive issue. It is true that nutritional claims on food products have a genuine role to play in terms of public health. However, some of the claims that the Commission was calling for seem to undermine consumer protection.

**Marian-Jean Marinescu (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (RO) I voted for the European Parliament resolution as it opposes the adoption of the draft Commission regulation amending Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006 with regard to the list of nutrition claims.

The purpose of the resolution tabled by Parliament is to force the Commission to come up with a better legislative proposal. The main problem with the current proposal is the possibility of displaying a reduction as 'X% less sugar' on food product packaging. In any case, this wording is clearly misleading. The reduction in sugar does not have any effect on the product's energy content because the sugar will be substituted by other carbohydrates, which means that the total number of calories will remain the same. In addition, the wording 'contains X% less' would distort competition on the food industry market for products which already have a low sugar content, as such wording compares the product with itself and not with the whole group of similar food products.

**David Martin (S&D)**, *in writing*. – I voted for this motion for a resolution, which states 'whereas in the light of the underlying principles governing the selection of permitted nutrition claims on foodstuffs, as outlined above, the new nutrition claim proposed by the Commission 'now contains X% less of [nutrient]', to be included in the Annex to Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006, runs counter to the purpose and content of the basic instrument by being ambiguous, misleading and confusing to the average consumer';.

**Véronique Mathieu (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (FR) All recent studies show that excessive consumption of sugar is extremely harmful for the health. Links have even been established between sugar consumption and diseases such as cancer, or cardiovascular diseases. Diabetes and obesity also remain substantial health challenges. In this regard, it is crucial to inform consumers of what is in the food they eat, and encourage the production of foods that contain less fat and sugars. Therefore, the Commission proposal allowing product labels to state decreases in fat or sugar content compared with the previous version of the product was wise. It enabled consumers to be better informed and promoted the reduction of sugars and fats in food products.

**Nuno Melo (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (PT) Nutrition and health claims must not be false, ambiguous or misleading, and the use of nutrition and health claims can only be permitted if the average consumer can be expected to understand the beneficial effects as expressed in the claim. Therefore, comparative nutrition claims must compare the composition of the food in question with a range of foods of the same category, including foods of other brands. This means food information must not mislead the consumer as to the nature, properties and characteristics of a foodstuff.

**Judith A. Merkies (S&D)**, *in writing*. – (NL) I am voting in favour of this resolution. It is important that consumers are well informed about the products that they buy so that they are in a position to make a balanced and responsible choice. They must be able to compare the content of products. The Commission proposal [B7-0000/2011] to allow claims such

as ‘This product now contains X% less salt/fat, etc.’ provides consumers with insufficient information. In such claims, the product, after all, is only compared with itself, rather than with other similar products that might well actually have much lower contents of salt/fat, etc. Better regulation is required that both informs consumers properly and provides an impetus for manufacturers to develop better food. Giving manufacturers the opportunity to state on their packaging that their products have been improved can act as a stimulus for them to make positive changes.

**Alexander Mirsky (S&D),** *in writing.* – In the resolution, the European Parliament opposes the adoption of the draft Commission regulation amending Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006 with regard to the list of nutrition claims and considers that the draft Commission regulation is not compatible with the purpose and content of the basic instrument. I voted in favour.

**Radvilė Morkūnaitė-Mikulėnienė (PPE),** *in writing.* – (LT) I believe that consumer safety is the most important objective that we need to strive for when adopting legislation on food labelling, which is impossible unless we ensure proper consumer awareness. Allowing one and the same characteristic (in this case, a reduction in the amount of nutrients) to be described in several claims is therefore a flawed practice. Such claims can be used even if other conditions that consumers expect are not satisfied (such as a reduction in the amount of calories in the case of reduced sugar). As this concerns the regulation on the provision of food information to consumers, this could probably even be treated as misleading consumers.

**Tiziano Motti (PPE),** *in writing.* – (IT) This Parliament does not doubt the European Commission’s good faith, but cannot hide its concerns about a proposal such as the one discussed in plenary today. Consumers want clear labelling and simple nutritional information, not marketing operations disguised as the protection of information rights. Claiming that a foodstuff ‘now contains X% less of [nutrient]’ might lead to unfair competition with regard to existing claims, such as ‘reduced [nutrient]’ and ‘light/lite’. Furthermore, in the latter case, a reduction of at least 10% (for micronutrients), 25% (for sodium) or 30% (for sugars/fats) by comparison with other similar products is required. Effectively, a consumer might assume that the quantified statement in the ‘now contains X% less of [nutrient]’ claim signifies a greater reduction than that implied by the ‘reduced [nutrient]’ or ‘light’ claims, despite the requirements being much stricter for the latter than for the ‘now contains X% less of [nutrient]’ claim, for which a minimum reduction of just 15% is specified. Therefore, I am pleased that Parliament has decided to send the proposal back to the Commission for amendments that will restore the balance of its primary objective.

**Rareș-Lucian Niculescu (PPE),** *in writing.* – (RO) I voted for the motion for a resolution because the wording ‘now contains X% less of [nutrient]’ is likely to mislead consumers who do not have the chance to compare with the product’s previous relevant composition. In these circumstances, the new wording proposed by the European Commission would be a retrograde step in relation to the regulations currently in force.

**Rolandas Paksas (EFD),** *in writing.* – (LT) I believe that it is appropriate to oppose the Commission’s new regulation, which aims to amend the list of nutrition claims. Above all, nutrition and health claims made on food products must not be ambiguous or misleading. Consumers must receive accurate and specific information about foodstuffs, their origin, properties and characteristics. It should be noted that comprehensive and correct

information on a product enables consumers to compare it to other foodstuffs and choose the most suitable product that does not endanger their health. The amendments to the list of nutrition claims currently in force will not only have a negative impact on consumers, but will also distort competitive conditions considering products with claims that are used at present.

**Maria do Céu Patrão Neves (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) I voted for this resolution of the European Parliament, of 2 February 2012, stating Parliament's opposition to the draft Commission regulation amending Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006 with regard to the list of nutrition claims. The European Parliament believes comparative nutrition claims must compare the composition of the food in question with a range of foods of the same category, including foods of other brands. Moreover, food information must not mislead the consumer as to the nature, properties and characteristics of a foodstuff. As such, the new nutrition claim proposed by the Commission 'now contains X% less of [nutrient]', to be included in the Annex to Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006, runs counter to the purpose and content of the basic instrument by being ambiguous, misleading and confusing to the average consumer. Parliament therefore calls on the Commission to submit an amended draft of the measure to the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety.

**Paulo Rangel (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) The Commission has tabled a draft regulation intended to amend Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006 with regard to the list of nutrition claims. Following analysis of the draft amendments set out in this draft regulation, the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety has identified a series of provisions that, if accepted, could mislead consumers about the characteristics of products on the market, which is why it is against adopting the regulation. In light of the evidence that these provisions violate the basic principles of consumer protection presented by the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety, I voted in favour.

**Mitro Repo (S&D),** *in writing.* – (FI) I voted in favour of this report as a matter of principle because I cannot accept the nutrition claim 'now contains X% less of [nutrient]'. The labelling of products should not be misleading or ambiguous. This is especially important with food. The nutrition claim 'now contains X% less of [nutrient]' is questionable, since it allows for the nutritional values of a product to be compared only with a previous version of that product. It therefore does not take account of how high the nutrient's starting level was. The risk is that what is, in fact, a very unhealthy product, can be made to sound healthy.

The claim 'now contains X% less of [nutrient]' is more a way to promote marketing than bring added value to consumer information. There are already claims regarding nutrient content on the market, such as 'light/lite' and 'reduced [nutrient]'. The proposed nutrition claim would only cause additional confusion among consumers. For them, it is vitally important that labels on products are truthful and clearly comprehensible.

**Robert Rochefort (ALDE),** *in writing.* – (FR) Nutrition and health claims should only be allowed if they are true, unambiguous and not misleading. However, the new nutrition claim which was submitted to us ('now contains X% less of [nutrient]'), could have been misleading for consumers. This claim involved reformulated products being compared with a previous version of the product, without the consumer necessarily knowing the starting level of the nutrient in question – this nutritional value could well be excessively high in comparison with other products on the market, which, not having been reformulated, would therefore not be allowed to bear a nutrition claim. A further problem is that we know that when sugars are reduced, consumers expect a reduction in energy.

Yet the text would have allowed the 'reduced fats/sugars' claim to be made even when the product's energy content was still equal to the energy contained in a similar product. Finally, the new claims might have led to confusion with existing claims, such as 'reduced [nutrient]' and 'light/lite', for which the requirements are, in fact, stricter. For these reasons, in this vote, I rejected the draft amendment of the regulation on nutrition claims.

**Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)**, *in writing*. – In favour. Whereas, as stated in Article 3 of Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006, the use of nutrition and health claims must not be false, ambiguous or misleading, the European Parliament 1. opposes adoption of the draft Commission regulation amending Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006 with regard to the list of nutrition claims; 2. considers that the draft Commission regulation is not compatible with the purpose and content of the basic instrument; 3. calls on the Commission to submit an amended draft of the measure to the committee.

**Kārlis Šadurskis (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (LV) I voted for this motion for a resolution because I believe that the amendments proposed by the European Commission to the regulation on the list of nutrition claims are, in principle, misleading to the public and are mainly in the interests of large food producers. The amendments proposed by the European Commission, which would provide an opportunity to indicate on the packaging of food products the fact that they contain 15% less sugar, fats or salt, for example, would mislead purchasers about the real energy value and healthiness of products. With particular reference to sugar, it can be replaced with sweeteners, as a result of which the product's energy value remains the same. It is important to protect the public from inappropriate product marketing and to ensure, as far as possible, that there are equal opportunities for competition between large and small enterprises. The amendments proposed by the European Commission would establish a more advantageous situation for large enterprises, since they can adjust to new regulations much more nimbly and flexibly than Europe's small and medium-sized enterprises, such as those in Latvia.

**Daciana Octavia Sârbu (S&D)**, *in writing*. – I voted in favour of this resolution and against the Commission's proposed 'x percent less' claim. It is, of course, true that the food industry should be encouraged to reformulate foods to make them healthier, and that allowing the industry to demonstrate and 'claim' reformulation to their customers will drive this process. I do not think anybody really disputes that. The issue is precisely how the industry is allowed to communicate this information to consumers, or, in other words, the methodology behind the health claim. And the fact remains that, with this proposed health claim, a product claiming to have 'x percent less' fat could still have a very high fat content compared to similar products on the market. This is why a significant majority of us in this House believe that this claim is essentially misleading. I fully support the reformulation of foods as part of the EU's strategy on nutrition, but the Commission, in cooperation with EFSA, must find a better way to drive reformulation through health claims.

**Nuno Teixeira (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (PT) Article 3 of Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006 states that nutrition and health claims must not be false, ambiguous or misleading, and it is important to enhance consumer awareness of the nature, properties and characteristics of foodstuffs. However, the aim of the new nutritional claim proposed by the Commission is to adopt a comparative measure such as 'now contains X% less of [nutrient]', which runs counter to the purpose and content of the basic instrument by being ambiguous, misleading and confusing to the average consumer. I would also highlight that comparing the nutritional values of a product to a previous version of the same product could lead to

unfair competition with other products on the market, since a product that has not been reformulated, but is lower in a certain nutrient than the reformulated product of a different brand, will not be allowed to bear a nutrition claim. As such, I am voting for this report, which opposes adoption of the draft Commission regulation amending Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006. The Commission should submit a draft containing new measures to the European Parliament's Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety.

**Silvia-Adriana Țicău (S&D),** *in writing.* – (RO) I voted for the European Parliament resolution on amending Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006 with regard to the list of nutrition claims, which opposes the proposal for amending the regulation.

Food product information must not mislead the customer as to the nature, properties and characteristics of these products. The use of nutrition and health claims must be easy for the average consumer to understand. Unfortunately, in the proposal amending Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006 the Commission is suggesting a new nutrition claim to appear on food products as follows: 'now contains X% less of [nutrient: sugars/fats, salt, etc.]. At the moment, there are already claims such as 'reduced [nutrient]' and 'light/lite'. The 'light/lite' claim means a reduction of at least 10% (for micronutrients), 25% (for sodium) or 30% (for sugars/fats) in comparison with other similar products. The new wording being proposed is ambiguous, misleading and confusing for consumers and might act as a disincentive to producers to meet the requirements for the 'reduced [nutrient]' and 'light/lite' claims, as it is easier to reduce a nutrient by 15% than by 30%.

We call on the Commission to table a new proposal for amending the regulation which contains clear provisions on nutritional value and which will not be confusing for consumers.

**Derek Vaughan (S&D),** *in writing.* – This resolution had my support as I felt it unfair to mislead customers with wrong nutritional information. The proposed changes would have allowed 'of X% less...' on sugar, salt and fat content. This could have made food appear healthier than it actually is and make it harder to compare products. Our intention is to maintain a healthier population through encouraging companies to reduce the sugar, salt and fat content in food. The proposed changes would have instead provided a disincentive to improve the nutritional benefits. Labels should be kept as clear as possible, allowing consumers to choose food according to their true nutritional value.

**Glenis Willmott (S&D),** *in writing.* – I want food labels to be simple and honest about what is inside them. So today was a victory for consumers, as the European Parliament supported me and my colleagues from across Parliament who objected to a new 'X% less' nutrition claim on food labels. The proposed claim had the potential to be very misleading. Given the number of nutrition claims already allowed, it is already hard for consumers to know which product is the best for themselves and their family. In particular, the new claim could have caused confusion with the existing 'reduced' claim, which actually requires a larger reduction of 30%, and this must be in comparison with a range of similar products on the market rather than previous versions of the same product. Now that Parliament has said no to this claim, the Commission will have to rethink their approach. Nutrition claims should be used to allow consumers to make healthier choices, if they want to, and not as a marketing ploy. We want to encourage manufacturers to reformulate their products to make them healthier, but it has to be meaningful, and not misleading.

**Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR),** *in writing.* – I, like millions of other consumers, am confused every time I visit the supermarket. Labelling on food which tells me that an item

contains 10% less salt or 20% fewer colourings is meant to be informative, yet, as often as not, such labels lead to mix-ups and misunderstandings. 10% less than what, I ask myself? That is also a question that this report has asked. I think that it has come up with the wrong answer. When I buy a packet of crisps telling me that it now contains 10% less fat, I assume that means that it contains 10% less fat than the previous recipe for the same product, rather than 10% less fat than a similar product. It is important that we all eat well and have the right information to be able to make the correct health choices, but this report makes things 100% more confusing rather than 100% clear.

**Motion for a resolution: B7-0043/2012**

**Derek Roland Clark (EFD)**, *in writing*. – With my fellow UKIP MEPs, I abstained on this resolution because, although we agree with some elements, we strongly disagree with others, in particular, the imposition of a financial transaction tax. Since the only option was a single vote on the report in its entirety, we could not support the GUE/NGL proposal.

**William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)**, *in writing*. – UKIP MEPs abstained on this resolution because, although we agree with some elements, we strongly disagree with others, in particular, the imposition of a financial transaction tax. Since the only option was a single vote on the report in its entirety, we could not support the GUE/NGL proposal.

**Nigel Farage (EFD)**, *in writing*. – UKIP MEPs abstained on this resolution because, although we agree with some elements, we strongly disagree with others, in particular, the imposition of a financial transaction tax. Since the only option was a single vote on the report in its entirety, we could not support the GUE/NGL proposal.

**David Martin (S&D)**, *in writing*. – I voted for this resolution, in which Parliament rejects the International Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union and the recent changes in the EMU architecture (Economic Governance, European Semester, Pact for the Euro plus) and states that it believes that these changes form the most reactionary, undemocratic and extreme neoliberal response to the current crisis.

**Alexander Mirsky (S&D)**, *in writing*. – In the resolution, the European Parliament reaffirms its resolution of 18 January 2012. It is very good. In the final text of the Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union, it would have been better to reach agreement under EU law. I am in favour.

**Rolandas Paksas (EFD)**, *in writing*. – (LT) I welcome this resolution because not only is fiscal stability one of the main elements of overcoming the crisis, but it also strengthens solidarity and ensures sustainable growth and employment. Consequently, as well as applying existing measures, we need to establish new measures that would boost economic recovery. At European level it is therefore appropriate to establish a redemption fund, project bonds, a road map for stability bonds and the introduction of a financial transaction tax. I believe that Member States whose currency is not the euro should be given the right to fully participate in all euro summit meetings, not just those dealing with competitiveness, the global architecture of the euro area and fundamental rules. An international agreement on a Fiscal Stability Union is welcome in that it will take this into account and will aim for the objectives of sustainable growth, employment, competitiveness and social cohesion. The stipulation that the content of the agreement should be incorporated into the EU legal framework within five years is also very important.

**Nuno Teixeira (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (PT) The Confederal Group of the European United Left – Nordic Green Left has tabled a resolution that I do not support. This has happened because they consider it crucial that the Member States quickly adopt measures intended to stimulate economic growth and create job, which should pay particular attention to young people. Moreover, I support the International Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union, since it focuses on instruments different from those that contributed to exacerbating the current economic and financial crisis, ascribing particular attention to social cohesion, specifically generating wealth, creating jobs and combating poverty.

#### **Motion for a resolution: B7-0044/2012**

**Luís Paulo Alves (S&D)**, *in writing*. – (PT) I am voting for this report. It would have been preferable if the Council had produced an agreement within the current EU legal framework, and I also regret that the United Kingdom prefers to remain outside this resolution. Despite the need to consolidate public accounts using deficit controls, I would reaffirm the urgent need to adopt measures encouraging growth and employment. As such, I eagerly await the Commission's follow-up to the intentions that it expressed at this European Council.

**Laima Liucija Andrikienė (PPE)**, *in writing*. – I voted in favour of this resolution concerning the conclusions of the informal European Council meeting of 30 January 2012. I support the criticising opinion of the European Parliament and I agree upon the proposed improvements to the final text of the conclusions. I agree with the common concerns that the UK maintains its objection on the final text of the Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union. The economic recovery requires measures to strengthen solidarity and boost sustainable growth and employment and insist that the European Council decides on concrete and far-reaching measures. I support the EP request for a further series of measures to ensure fiscal stability, and calls now for the establishment of a redemption fund, project bonds, a road map for stability bonds and the introduction of an FTT at European level, for which the Commission has already made a proposal. We Members of European Parliament point out that some further important elements are missing from the new agreement, such as the avoidance of double standards between the norms in the agreement and those in the Lisbon Treaty and contained in the *acquis communautaire*. We also insist and reiterate that EP participation in these negotiations is further extended.

**Sophie Auconie (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (FR) I voted in favour of the motion for a resolution on the conclusions of the European Council meeting of 30 January 2012. As the rapporteur pointed out 'all the elements contained in the new Treaty can be achieved, and to a large extent have already been achieved' through European Parliament. It should indeed be stressed that several of the measures contained in the Treaty resulted from European Parliament debates. We are thus convinced that the European Parliament must play a decisive role in the economic governance that is currently being developed and therefore, we must be consulted on measures regarding stability, policy coordination and economic governance. Furthermore, there are two things I regret: firstly, that the final text does not take account of Parliament's call for its President to be involved in euro area summits, and secondly, that the United Kingdom and the Czech Republic were unwilling to ally with us on this issue. As Joseph Daul, the Chair of my political group, the Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats), pointed out, the Treaty must now be signed, ratified and integrated into the EU Treaties 'as quickly as possible'.

**Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D),** *in writing.* – (LT) I welcomed this resolution. The fiscal stability of the EU and its Member States is an important element of resolving the current crisis, and the new Fiscal Treaty will provide a framework for the new principles of coordinating and monitoring the economies of the EU Member States. The European Parliament has managed to ensure the inclusion of very important provisions in the final text of the Treaty, particularly as regards the participation of non-euro area Member States in euro area summits. So far, we have managed to negotiate the right to take part in those meetings dealing with competitiveness, the global architecture of the euro area and the fundamental rules that will apply to these Member States in future, but I believe that there should no longer be restrictions on the participation of non-euro area Member States in other meetings. Apart from this Treaty, other urgent measures still need to be taken, a financial transaction tax must be introduced at European level, and the European Union needs to establish its own credit rating agency.

**Elena Băsescu (PPE),** *in writing.* – (RO) I voted for this resolution because I welcome the improvements made to the draft Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union during the European Council meeting on 30 January 2012. I think that the commitments made on budgetary discipline will bring about the fiscal stability required for a sustainable economic recovery. The restriction on the public debt and budget deficit of the States party to the Treaty will create the conditions for genuine prosperity based on economic development and not on loans. I also welcome the commitments made by the Heads of State or Government to boost economic growth by creating new jobs and reducing unemployment, especially among young people. I think that it is very appropriate to use EU funds to support the creation of SMEs. I also welcome the initiative to use unspent EU funds as security for young entrepreneurs to obtain bank loans. In the case of Romania, which is lacking in its absorption of EU funds, these measures are particularly useful because it will make it possible for the unspent funds that are allocated to be used to create SMEs and generate new jobs. I hope that the European Council meeting in March will adopt a consistent plan for implementing these decisions, including specific programmes for stimulating employment.

**Regina Bastos (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) While the European Parliament was not initially very receptive to adopting this agreement, we have managed to improve the latest version of the text and secure the inclusion in the Treaty of the objectives of economic growth and job creation in the European Union. The Member States need to stabilise their public finances. Austerity measures and budgetary stability are only part of the solution to the crisis. Europe is facing an ageing population while, on the other hand, the youth unemployment rate has never been so high, meaning the Member States are facing enormous challenges. The Member States need to implement structural reforms in order to overcome these obstacles. Europe should also focus on measures leading to economic growth and on promoting competitiveness. I therefore voted for this resolution. However, there is also a need to establish a bailout fund quickly, to create Eurobonds and to introduce an EU-level financial transaction tax.

**Jean-Luc Bennahmias (ALDE),** *in writing.* – (FR) Who could ignore the fact that the EU is currently in the throes of a deep crisis, which is not only an economic and social one, but a global one and even one in which the EU has lost its direction? Yet, our Heads of State or Government persist along the path which has widened the gap between the people of the EU and the EU itself. After having ignored EU citizens' referendum votes on the Constitutional Treaty, they signed a new Treaty amongst themselves, which was negotiated

practically behind closed doors and focused on austerity and budgetary discipline. There has been no real inclusion of the European Parliament, no public debate and no cooperation with national parliaments. Moreover, in terms of content, there is nothing on growth or future investment. As I said during the vote on our previous resolution, I am more than doubtful about this new Treaty. I therefore voted against today's resolution as I feel that it is not critical enough of this Treaty that is being presented to us as the only possible route. As well as being quite useless in content (since many of the measures can be achieved through EU law) and incomplete (for it lacks balance between austerity and growth), it is highly questionable in form: if we want to regain the faith of EU citizens, this is surely not the way to go about it.

**Mara Bizzotto (EFD)**, *in writing*. – (IT) As at the plenary session in January, the resolution proposes expansion of the Community method, which will result in a further reduction in the sovereignty of Member States. There is criticism of the stance adopted by the UK in opposing the latest centralist development in the European legislative and institutional architecture. However, I agree that an alternative route needs to be found to that taken thus far. The crisis is also a result of EU centralisation, unwieldy European bureaucracy and machinery, and the authoritarian centralism that reigns supreme in Brussels. We will be able to recover from the crisis if Europe chooses the path of freedom, not centralism. I voted against the resolution.

**Vilija Blinkevičiūtė (S&D)**, *in writing*. – (LT) I voted in favour of this European Parliament resolution because the kind of message that we send the half a billion people living in the European Union on the situation in the EU, the economic situation and improved governance is very important. The European Parliament (EP) recognises that fiscal stability is an important element of resolving the current crisis, but stresses that economic recovery requires measures to strengthen solidarity and boost sustainable growth and employment. The EP welcomes the fact that the European Council now recognises this but insists that concrete and far-reaching measures are needed. We need to understand that simply making savings is not enough to overcome the crisis in the European Union. In order to ensure fiscal stability, the European Parliament proposes not just making use of the series of measures provided for, but establishing project bonds, a road map for stability bonds and introducing a financial transaction tax at European level, for which the Commission has already made a proposal. Furthermore, the EP insists that the contracting parties fully respect their commitment to integrate, within a maximum period of five years, the Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance into the EU Treaties and asks for the remaining weaknesses of the Treaty of Lisbon to be tackled on this occasion.

**Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)**, *in writing*. – (EL) In today's vote, I voted against the joint motion for a resolution tabled by the political groups (Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats), Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament, Group of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe, Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance). The measures contained in the international agreement fail to address the main causes of the economic crisis. On the contrary, they institutionalise the austerity policies currently being applied which put Europe in recession and its citizens in economic and social poverty. Furthermore, based on the international agreement, the facility to exercise an alternative fiscal policy is denied to democratically elected governments. This is a scandal. The joint motion not only fails to reject the international agreement; it supports the recent changes to the architecture of EMU (economic governance, European Semester, Euro Plus Pact). The changes in question are

the most reactionary, anti-democratic and extreme neoliberal response to the current crisis. The GUE/NGL Group tabled an alternative motion rejecting the measures in the international agreement and highlighting the need for Europe to move towards real solidarity, predicated on full employment, socio-economic growth, social cohesion and environmental protection.

**Anna Maria Corazza Bildt (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (SV) At the European Parliament's sitting in Brussels on 2 February, we Swedish Conservatives and Christian Democrats voted in favour of the resolution on the conclusions of the European Council meeting of 30 January. We support the resolution, with the exception of the proposals concerning joint debt issuance and the introduction of a financial transaction tax. What we need now instead is budgetary discipline and structural reforms for increased growth, both in the Member States and in the EU as a whole.

**Andrea Cozzolino (S&D)**, *in writing*. – (IT) First of all, I must point out that I intend to vote in favour of the resolution, even if only in order to maintain the unity of Parliament and to strengthen the position of its President within the European institutions. In this sense, I appreciate the reference to the failure to involve the President of Parliament in the informal meetings held as part of the European summits, an infringement of rights that should be quite rightly condemned and deplored.

The problem is also one of defending and reinforcing the positions of political groups fighting for a united Europe, which are confident that the crisis can only be satisfactorily resolved if tackled in a unified manner and if the risk of nationalistic, egotistical breakaway tendencies is prevented. Every day, these groups, particularly in some areas of continental Europe, have to deal with demagogical and populist propaganda that denigrates the EU and its institutions. Our vote is also one of support for these forces.

However, it is also important to emphasise that Europe cannot be bound up and represented only by the austerity measures in the 'six-pack', a measure we opposed because we felt it was wrong, and which we still believe to be both incomplete and inadequate. We are therefore voting for a strong and united Europe that will once more combine growth and social equity.

**Rachida Dati (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (FR) I was pleased that the European Parliament was given the opportunity to be involved in the discussion on the Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union. However, I did not want to vote in favour of a resolution which expresses reservations on a process whose importance and urgency to me seem clear. That is why I chose to abstain from this vote, just as I abstained during the vote on the resolution of 18 January 2012.

**Christine De Veyrac (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (FR) This resolution wrongly upholds a number of criticisms from the European Parliament against the Council, whose efforts to rapidly improve budgetary discipline should be supported. I could therefore not support this text. However, neither could I support those who refuse and reject all form of budgetary discipline: the current crisis is one of public spending and will be overcome by greater collective discipline. I therefore decided to abstain from voting on this resolution.

**Edite Estrela (S&D)**, *in writing*. – (PT) I voted for the resolution on 'conclusions of the informal European Council meeting of 30 January 2012', since I believe the final text of the agreement improves some aspects of the initial text: some amendments proposed by Parliament have been incorporated, particularly as regards application of the Community

method and the commitment to incorporate the content of the agreement into the EU legal framework within five years. However, I believe it would have been desirable to reach an agreement within EU law that included measures for the relaunch of the economy, and for the promotion of sustainable growth and employment.

**Göran Färm, Anna Hedh, Olle Ludvigsson, Jens Nilsson, Marita Ulvskog and Åsa Westlund (S&D),** *in writing.* – (SV) We Swedish Social Democrats have serious doubts about paragraph 9 concerning the integration of the new Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union into EU legislation.

Firstly, the wording in this paragraph gives an erroneous picture of the commitments that have actually been made within the framework of the pact. The Treaty (Article 16) does not state that it is to be integrated into the EU Treaties, but rather that its substance is to be incorporated into the legal framework of the EU.

Secondly, we cannot support the general call in paragraph 9 for a review of the Treaty of Lisbon with a view to tackling its weaknesses. Such a review is neither desirable nor necessary.

We would also question whether the rapid procedure in relation to the redemption fund that is advocated in paragraph 5 is really realistic.

**Diogo Feio (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) The European Parliament rightly disagreed with the choice of the Heads of State or Government to move towards a treaty to strengthen the Union's economic governance that is under international law and outside EU law. However, important gains have been made as regards greater integration with the 'six-pack' and the commitment to apply the Community method in the latest version of the International Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union, adopted by the Council on 30 January 2012. We are awaiting rapid and concrete action towards establishing the European Stability Mechanism as a permanent bailout fund with increased financial strength, so as to safeguard the euro's stability. It is crucial that the commitment to growth and employment succeed, since austerity and budgetary consolidation without economic growth risks being a remedy that will not resolve the ills that we are suffering.

**José Manuel Fernandes (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) The informal European Council was held on 30 January, and was attended by the Heads of State or Government of the European Union. In addition to the adoption of the International Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union, measures were approved relating to economic growth and job creation. The current economic and financial crisis is dragging on, obliging the Member States to adopt drastic measures to combat the deficit, with significant reductions in sums for investment, the consequences of which are reflected in increased unemployment rates, particularly amongst young people, and a lack of economic growth. The number of young adults under 25 years of age has already passed the 5.5 million mark, which is 22% of the total number of unemployed. I therefore welcome the increased rate of contribution to European programmes, and the series of measures intended to promote youth employment and support small and medium-sized enterprises. I voted for the proposal under consideration, since this was a very important summit, which was crucial to the future of the EU and was governed by a consensual approach to policies geared towards growth and employment. The foundations for emerging from the crisis have, therefore, been laid.

**João Ferreira (GUE/NGL), in writing. – (PT)** It is significant that the majority in Parliament is concerned, not with the fiscal compact or the perpetuation of aggression against workers and peoples and against national sovereignty that it represents, but only with the method and, in particular, with their own participation in the process. With the necessary cosmetic changes made, which guarantee the European Parliament its customary role of decorative element throughout the process, they are now ready to accept the inevitable.

For anyone who was unsure about the role of the political groups that signed up to this resolution: the Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats), the Group of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe, the Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance and the Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament; this is another real example of how the almost perfect, albeit at times contradictory, harmony regarding the EU's course remains unchanged. Not even all the play acting, manipulation and propaganda manoeuvres can erase their role in a process that, if not stopped, will only lead the people and the EU itself into the abyss. However, we face the future with unshakeable faith in the struggle and its escalation in many EU countries, certain that, sooner rather than later, this policy and this course will be defeated.

**Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D), in writing. – (SK)** Monday's meeting of European leaders was not only informal; I might even call it essentially pointless. The so-called fiscal compact that was discussed will certainly not lead the European Union out of crisis. Austerity and cuts will take us into recession. Ultimately, due to this economic decline, it will then be even harder to pay back debts and they will become an increasing burden.

Although the meeting finally began to discuss the need to restart growth and employment, it was still inadequate and weak. Whereas cost-cutting measures almost look like law, the initiative for growth and employment has remained in the form of a general challenge. From a European perspective, such behaviour is extremely unfortunate. The growth initiative is weak. The role of Parliament in negotiating and deciding these key matters is minimised. However, Europe must remain united and stick to democratic principles and existing legal frameworks.

It is essential that we look for resources that can be sensibly invested in economic recovery. Unused resources from the EU's Structural Funds, the tax on financial transactions, a stronger EIB, and European bonds.

These are the issues that the summits should be addressing. They will be worthless if this does not happen, and the Union does not have much time left.

**Lidia Joanna Geringer de Oedenberg (S&D), in writing. –** The outcomes of the EU summit of 30 January, 2012 were received with mixed reactions by colleagues. From my perspective, I welcome the announcement on the new fiscal treaty and hope it will be implemented without further delays. The Council's decision to focus on growth as a complementary means to austerity is essential, since strict budgetary rules alone cannot solve the deepening of the crisis. Supporting SMEs, entrepreneurship and self-employment initiatives are the only way to encourage economic expansion, job creation and improving the EU's long-term competitiveness. On the other hand, I deplore the fact only 25 Members rather than the whole EU decided to join the treaty. Because the agreed treaty does not really guarantee fiscal stability, coordinated action between all 27 EU Members is needed to restore investment and growth to Europe. Another point of contrast to EU shared solidarity is the exclusion of the European Parliament from participating in future meetings on EU governance. As a directly elected body, the European Parliament must be involved

on a basis of equality with other EU institutions. Trying to address remaining challenges – the question of Greece for example – what we really need is leadership, flexibility and, above all, unity.

**Catherine Grèze (Verts/ALE),** *in writing.* – (FR) Just as I expressed my reservations concerning the European Parliament's joint resolution on the conclusions of the European Council meeting of 8-9 December 2011, this time I voted against the joint resolution on the conclusions of the European Council meeting of 30 January 2012. Indeed, even though the proposed resolution, once again, stresses the fact that the Community method is the only way that a genuine economic and budgetary Union can be implemented and that budgetary discipline alone cannot solve Europe's economic and financial crisis, the text does not call for a reassessment of the international agreement on a Fiscal Stability Union which Heads of State or Government approved this Monday. We need to tackle the underlying causes of the crisis by reassessing neoliberal policies and denounce the restrictive austerity mechanism with which current and future governments of Member States will have to comply. We also need to underline the extreme technocracy that is being applied in the agreement, which will, in fact, widen the gap between European institutions and European citizens, and finally, we need to point out that the draft agreement will institutionalise a two-speed Europe, with Member States who are party to the agreement, on the one hand, and those who are not, on the other.

**Françoise Grossetête (PPE),** *in writing.* – (FR) The Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union enhances budgetary discipline and I welcome that. As such, the Treaty gives greater legal strength to the golden rule on a return to balanced public finances. French socialists and Mr Hollande have been warned: none of the 25 Member States party to the Treaty will be able to escape the objective of balanced budgets and failing to meet it will lead to sanctions being imposed by the European Court of Justice.

I regret, however, the fact that, in forgetting to commend the political will shown by Nicolas Sarkozy and Angela Merkel, this resolution adopted by Parliament does not acknowledge the significant progress that has been made to enable this new Treaty to be implemented.

**Gunnar Hökmark (PPE),** *in writing.* – (SV) At the European Parliament's sitting in Brussels on 2 February, we Swedish Conservatives and Christian Democrats voted in favour of the resolution on the conclusions of the European Council meeting of 30 January 2012. We support the resolution with the exception of the proposals concerning joint debt issuance and the introduction of a financial transaction tax. What we need now instead is budgetary discipline and structural reforms for increased growth, both in the Member States and in the EU as a whole.

**Brice Hortefeux (PPE),** *in writing.* – (FR) The Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance, approved by 25 Heads of State or Government, marks a huge step towards stabilising our economies and constitutes an effective tool for tackling the financial crisis and restoring confidence. France, along with its partners, is committed to balanced budgets, convergence and the coordination of European economic policies, as the vitality of the French economy also depends on that of the euro area as a whole. Of course, much work still remains to be done. We in the European Parliament, alongside national parliaments, should be able to be involved in and have our say in debates that have budgetary implications for us. Some of the Treaty's provisions allow for this, and it is through such an approach that a European Parliament delegation was invited to participate in the

negotiations of 30 January 2012. However, this resolution does not give sufficient recognition to the progress that this new text has enabled. In reiterating its support for the resolution of 18 January 2012, against which I spoke out, it makes criticisms which are, in my view, excessive. That is why I chose to abstain.

**Juozas Imbrasas (EFD)**, *in writing*. – (LT) Fiscal stability is an important element of resolving the current crisis, but economic recovery requires measures to strengthen solidarity and boost sustainable growth and employment. I welcome the fact that the European Council recognises this, but it is not taking concrete and far-reaching action. I therefore abstained from voting. I also did this because several important elements are still missing from the new agreement: firstly, the avoidance of double standards between the norms in the agreement and those in the Lisbon Treaty and contained in the *acquis communautaire*, and secondly, all the contracting parties to the agreement, present and future members of the euro, should have the same right to fully participate in all euro summit meetings. Euro summit meetings should be in extended format. We all have to aim for fiscal stability, economic recovery, boosting solidarity and sustainable growth, as well as the employment of our citizens.

**Philippe Juvin (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (FR) The joint resolution on the conclusions of the European council meeting of 30 January 2012 was adopted by 443 votes to 124, with 75 abstentions. I, along with four other fellow Members of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats), voted against this resolution. While this text suggests some interesting initiatives, such as the establishment of a redemption fund and the introduction of a tax on financial transactions, it must be said that it once again calls into question the usefulness of the new Treaty which, let us not forget, came about thanks to the involvement and determination of the French President of the Republic and the German Chancellor.

**Krišjānis Kariņš (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (LV) I supported the resolution on the European Council meeting of 30 January 2012 because it stressed the role of the intergovernmental agreement on economic governance. This intergovernmental agreement calls for discipline to be observed by European Union (EU) Member States in setting their budgets. Such measures are necessary in order to restore investor confidence in Europe. Forecasts for the future in other EU States and in Europe as a whole also have an impact on Latvia's credit rating. Stability in Europe is important to Latvia, so that its purchasing power on all export markets may increase, and in order to prevent the banking sector and, consequently, access to loans, from being jeopardised. Europe must now carry out the reforms that Latvia and its people have already made.

**Constance Le Grip (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (FR) I chose to abstain from voting on the resolution on the conclusions of the European Council meeting of 30 January 2012 and the draft Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union. I fully endorse the European Council statements and am keen to express my satisfaction with the conclusion of the treaty. The strengthening of European economic governance and budgetary stability, prior to the implementation of financial solidarity introduced by this treaty, are, in my view, strong political actions. At the same time, I regret the fact that Parliament's resolution, adopted on 2 February 2012, refers to its previous resolution, adopted on 18 January 2012, in which it expressed doubts over the relevance of this draft treaty and criticised the proposed institutional structure. Similarly, I regret that the resolution adopted by Parliament on 2 February 2012 expresses reservations regarding the format of euro area summits set out by the treaty, which, on this matter, again seems to me to be appropriate.

**Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL),** *in writing.* – (FR) The joint resolution tabled by the conservative right wing, the liberals, the socialists, and the greens contains numerous contradictions. In fact, these serve to cover up the new Treaty's existence or to implement its highly dangerous content. Worse still, the joint resolution simply deems the new European Treaty unnecessary, as its requirements could be implemented through the Treaty of Lisbon. This ultimately amounts to approving it. I therefore voted against this text, which is being implemented without national parliaments' opinions, without consulting European citizens, and following a negative decision by Parliament itself a few weeks ago. I demand that the public be consulted, namely, where constitutions allow, by way of referendums.

**Jean-Marie Le Pen (NI),** *in writing.* – (FR) The Merkozy duo has managed to impose its 'golden rule' throughout almost all of the EU. This genuine austerity plan aims to sanction Member States that fail to meet the budgetary discipline requirements set by Brussels. The EU will thus introduce a genuine cycle of public finance surveillance that will take place annually, from spring. Mr Van Rompuy spoke to us of growth and investment in employment, but ultimately, the only thing to come out of this Treaty is a policy aimed at killing off growth and imposing oversight on national budgets. Not long ago, the Maastricht Treaty deprived us of our monetary sovereignty; now it is our budgetary sovereignty that is being taken away from us. This Treaty sacrifices European nations' desire for self-determination on the altar of European economic federalism. It is a victory for financial markets and ratings agencies over the EU Member States. The European Parliament's solutions will only bring more suffering to EU citizens who have already been severely affected by its policies. That is why we voted against this resolution.

**Bogusław Liberadzki (S&D),** *in writing.* – (PL) The outcome of the informal meeting of the European Council was the subject of a debate within the Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament. This outcome was received critically. We are still of the opinion that the fiscal compact does not strengthen the Community method, but rather replaces it with the intergovernmental method. We are critical of measures that diminish the role and relevance of non-euro area Member States. The question arises as to why Poland, for example, a country in which the economy is growing and workers are making numerous sacrifices, and where unemployment is still a problem – which implies that the nation is not living above its means – should be treated any worse than other countries that are experiencing difficulties, but are being favoured simply because they are members of the euro area. The role of the European Parliament in this new fiscal compact is a matter for concern. I voted in favour of the resolution drafted by the four political groups, as it reflects my position on the matter.

**Marisa Matias and Miguel Portas (GUE/NGL),** *in writing.* – (PT) I voted against this resolution. Although the resolution criticises the International Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union, particularly for the lack of measures fostering sustainable growth and promoting employment, the truth is that it ends up accepting it. The resolution also calls for the creation of project bonds and a financial transaction tax as measures for achieving budgetary stability. That is a reasonable concern. However, the document is marked by its acquiescence to an agreement that legitimises the inclusion of deficit ceilings in national constitutions, so making Keynesian policies and the very idea of socialism illegal. In this light, the confusion that this international agreement introduces to the EU legal system is a minor problem in comparison to the authoritarian philosophy that marks the Treaty of the 25.

**Mairead McGuinness (PPE),** *in writing.* – I voted in favour of this resolution which outlines and supports the conclusions of the Council informal summit on 30 January 2012 during which a new Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union was finalised by 25 of the 27 Member States. The Treaty aims to strengthen fiscal discipline through the introduction of stricter surveillance and more automatic sanctions and, in particular, through the ‘balanced budget rule’.

**Jean-Luc Mélenchon (GUE/NGL),** *in writing.* – (FR) The joint resolution tabled by the Group of the European People’s Party (Christian Democrats), the Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament, the Group of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe and the Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance confirms their agreement with the content of the Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union. It states that their representatives will approve and apply the strengthened golden rule and its integration into the constitutions of Member States.

As for the ratification of the Treaty, the idea of it having to be put to public vote by way of referendums once again goes completely unmentioned. I must denounce the doctrinal blindness of all those who advocate a liberal economy and austerity by voting in favour of or abstaining from voting on this text. For my group and I, the choice is clear: we are against.

**Nuno Melo (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) The Council should make an effort to find a solution to the sovereign debt crisis currently being experienced by the EU, and it should preferably be supported by everyone. The United Kingdom does not support one of the main points relating to this specific Council, which is regrettable. I consider it important that Parliament, in the shape of its President, be present at future meetings.

**Vital Moreira (S&D),** *in writing.* – (PT) I voted for the resolution on the new treaty, known as the ‘fiscal compact’, because I agree with it in broad terms. However, I have three objections, albeit isolated ones. Firstly, I consider it an exaggeration to state that ‘virtually all the elements’ of the treaty can be achieved within the framework of the EU Treaties in force, thus rendering this new treaty unnecessary. In truth, its most important items – first and foremost, the obligation for Member States to include binding rules on balanced budgets in their domestic legal systems – could not be the subject of EU legislation. Secondly, I agree that the treaty does not solve the Union’s current budgetary and economic crisis, but nor is that its purpose; rather, it is intended to prevent future crises. The present budgetary crisis could not be overcome without assuring creditors now that there will not be others in the future. Thirdly, while I entirely agree that a genuine ‘fiscal union’ is much more than budgetary discipline, also including the issue of joint loans for both the national budgets and the Union budget, I do not think it possible to omit the requirement for tax harmonisation. The very idea of the internal market is incompatible with ‘fiscal competition’ and ‘tax dumping’.

**Jan Mulder (ALDE),** *in writing.* – (NL) I voted in favour of this resolution even though I do not agree with the content of point 6.

**Younous Omarjee (GUE/NGL),** *in writing.* – (FR) Far from enabling an exit from the crisis, this agreement is an exasperated and forced submission by European Member States who reason in financial and speculative terms that hinder the proper functioning of our societies and the well-being of the people in them. Mr Sarkozy and Ms Merkel have imposed an ideological diktat on the other governments and on everybody in the EU without consulting citizens and have even bypassed the usual constitutional amendment process,

for which each Member State has its own, particular rules. Along with my fellow Members from the Confederal Group of the European United Left – Nordic Green Left, I have signed and tabled an alternative motion for a resolution. Our resolution is the only one to clearly reject this democratic show of strength that threatens to destroy the sovereignty of the peoples; it is the only one which clearly opposes the introduction of a new rule which sets the figure for Member States' structural deficits at 0.5% of nominal GDP and which will, in fact, result in permanent austerity throughout the whole of Europe; again, it is the only one to object to the proposed sanctions and to call for public consultation on this matter. I therefore voted in favour of the resolution that my Group and I tabled, and against the consensus held by the liberals, conservatives, socialist and the greens on this agreement.

**Alfredo Pallone (PPE),** *in writing.* – (IT) The resolution of the Group of the European People's Party (PPE Group) on the Council's conclusions of 30 January, for which I voted, aims to highlight Parliament's position with regard to the Council. The agreement reached can, and certainly should, be improved, but in the meantime, it is important to emphasise that a step has been taken in the right direction. The agreement on the fiscal compact reached by 25 out of 27 Member States attempts to bring government debt to within reasonable levels and to ensure that Member States manage to balance their budgets. It will probably be necessary to have an internal EU budget that moves towards a Union of European Member States that really will be capable of tackling crises, but, little by little, it seems that we are moving in the right direction.

**Marit Paulsen, Olle Schmidt and Cecilia Wikström (ALDE),** *in writing.* – (SV) We chose to vote in favour of the resolution, despite the passage in paragraph 6 concerning the introduction of a financial transaction tax in Europe. We do not think it is a good idea for Europe to introduce this tax itself without the United States and other financial centres doing the same. We consider there to be a big risk that the stabilising effects that we hope a financial transaction tax will have on the financial market will not be realised if the EU introduces such a tax independently. The risk of trade in shares, bonds and options transferring instead to less transparent and less open markets outside Europe is great. The proposal to introduce a European financial transaction tax is far too risky.

**Maria do Céu Patrão Neves (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) I voted for this resolution, which contains the European Parliament's conclusions on the European Council of 30 January 2012. The most important of the aforementioned conclusions is Parliament's recognition that budgetary stability is an important element of resolving the current crisis, but that relaunching the economy requires measures to increase solidarity and to promote sustainable growth and employment. The European Council already acknowledges this issue, but it is not going too far to stress the need for concrete and wide-ranging measures in this area.

**Franck Proust (PPE),** *in writing.* – (FR) I am delighted that the European Parliament has shown strong support for the new European treaty. This is an historic turning point: it will set the balanced budget rule in stone, thereby strengthening mutual trust between Member States. The economic governance for which we Members of the European Parliament have been calling for a long time is now becoming a reality. Nicolas Sarkozy and Angela Merkel have been hard at work from the beginning. The Franco-German pair shared the same view of the situation and proposed the same solution: if we are to recover from the economic crisis, we need to clean up our finances. The recovery will only happen if we lay solid foundations. My continuous support for this strategy has always been based on this idea. Whilst the vast majority of European governments have been pragmatic in their support

for the treaty, I note that the French socialists have isolated themselves once again within their own European political family. They have not succeeded in imposing their wish to renegotiate the treaty. It makes one question the credibility of their revolutionary ideas for a 'strong France within a strong Europe'.

**Paulo Rangel (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) The new International Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union, agreed at the European Council of 30 January, is far from the ideal solution, since it represents the strengthening of intergovernmentalism at the expense of the Community method. Whatever the case, it is important to remember that the final text represents a step forward, despite everything, and that it has been possible to make some of the amendments proposed by the European Parliament, so as to frame this treaty with the Community method to a greater extent: first and foremost, the commitment to incorporating the content of the treaty into the EU legal framework, but also the acknowledgement of the right of contracting parties with a currency other than the euro to participate in summits on the euro relating to the competitiveness and overall architecture of the euro area. Despite this progress, however, it should be stressed that solving this crisis will not just involve budgetary stability: there is also a need to move towards measures to increase solidarity among the Member States, and to promote growth and employment.

**Mitro Repo (S&D),** *in writing.* – (FI) I voted in favour of this important resolution as a matter of principle. The intergovernmental agreement that has now been signed is not the answer to the present crisis in Europe. The agreement may be described in three words: pointless, ineffective and wrong. It is fortunately ineffective, because it could have done more harm than good.

Although the EU Council did achieve a declaration on growth, Europe lacks concrete solutions on how to get out of the current recession and economic crisis. The European Parliament, which represents Europe's 500 million citizens, is not party to this agreement. Such a move does not unite Europe: it only serves to divide it further. In spite of this, Parliament got involved, and was able to influence almost every section of the agreement.

I am not opposed to financial discipline in Europe: indeed, I want to have a debate on accountability, growth and jobs. This agreement on 'stability, coordination and governance' does not represent European parliamentarianism. It would perhaps be more apt to call it the 'EU2' Treaty. The danger is that the European Parliament will take the place of national parliaments. It is time to look ahead and start to think about solutions to the present crisis. In Europe, we need growth, jobs and socially sustainable development.

**Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE),** *in writing.* – (ES) I voted against this resolution as it is a useless resolution for a useless agreement. The European Parliament had already requested that measures be taken under the Community method and a democratic stance be adopted to decide how to strengthen economic governance. The Member States did not want to heed that request and signed the so-called 'Fiscal Pact', which not only weakens our democratic institutions, but also enshrines economic measures that will not get us out of the crisis. The resolution approved in Parliament today is irrelevant, despite the fact that it recognises the importance of incorporating a tax on financial transactions and project bonuses, as it does not propose an innovative and more specific response to the crisis. The European Parliament should take a stand and demand a democratic process for exiting the crisis.

**Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE),** *in writing.* – (IT) The latest Council summit meeting discussed many measures of major importance. However, the most important of these is, without a doubt, the international agreement on the fiscal compact. As an Italian citizen, I am very pleased with this agreement that expresses faith in the euro area. The 17 countries with the euro will now meet at least twice a year, but at least once a year (and every time there are discussions about issues relating to the ‘institutional architecture’) they will have to open up to the other Member States. The summit also has the merit of having opened up discussions on an equally important issue, that of growth and employment, two key areas for relaunching the economies of all the Member States.

**Nuno Teixeira (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) During the debate in the European Parliament, the President of the European Commission said that it is extremely positive that 25 Member States have signed up to the fiscal compact, and that this agreement will help to clarify the role of the institutions and strengthen the Community method. The new International Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union should guarantee greater stability, since budgetary discipline will be stepped up and penalties will be automatically applied to countries failing to meet their targets. It is also important to stress inclusion in the constitution or similar legislation of the so-called ‘golden rule’, designed for structural deficits not to exceed 0.5% of gross domestic product (GDP) and for public debt to be below 60% of GDP. I am voting for this resolution because I fully agree that the European institutions and relevant Member States should adopt concrete measures intended to stimulate economic growth, to finance small and medium-sized enterprises, to create jobs, and to improve the workings of the single market. I agree with the resolution in advocating the creation of stability bonds and the approval of a financial transaction tax, better known as the Tobin tax.

**Alexandra Thein (ALDE),** *in writing.* – (DE) I abstained from voting on paragraph 6 of the motion for a resolution on the meeting of the European Council of 30 January 2012, calling for a road map for the introduction of stability bonds. I believe that such a road map would be wrong at present because it would simply ‘reward’ the excessive indebtedness of some Member States and lead to the morally unjustifiable joint and several liability of other Member States. Naturally, in the distant future, the euro area is interested in a joint liquid bond market as an alternative to the market for US dollar bonds, making the euro an internationally secure currency and replacing the dollar in this respect. The right conditions for such a move are still very far off, because, at present, some southern European Member States have no understanding of reasonable budgetary, fiscal and stability policies.

**Silvia-Adriana Țicău (S&D),** *in writing.* – (RO) I voted for the European Parliament resolution of 2 February on the European Council of 30 January 2012, in which Parliament takes note of the final text of the Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union and stresses the need for concrete measures aimed at economic recovery and boosting sustainable growth and employment.

The Treaty incorporates amendments previously requested by Parliament, in particular: an undertaking that the Community method will fully apply and that stability, coordination and governance will be implemented via secondary legislation, fully involving Parliament; recognition of the rights of the contracting parties whose currency is not the euro to take part in the euro summit meetings dealing with competitiveness, the global architecture of the euro area and the fundamental rules that will apply to it in future; the addition of a reference to the objectives of sustainable growth, employment, competitiveness and social

cohesion; a commitment to incorporate the content of the agreement into the EU legal framework within five years.

Parliament insists that economic recovery requires measures to strengthen solidarity and boost sustainable growth and employment. We call for the President of the Parliament to be extended a standing invitation and to participate fully in the euro area summit meetings.

**Rafał Trzaskowski (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (PL) On the one hand, the resolution highlights how much was achieved during the negotiations in terms of minimising the impact of the harmful provisions included in initial proposals, which were detrimental also to the European Parliament. On the other hand, the resolution still comprises a long list of our proposals, which the Member States have not taken into consideration or have considered only partially, such as, for example, the full participation in EU summits of countries with temporary derogations. The provisions of the fiscal compact are the result of a far-reaching compromise; much will depend on its implementation. The European Parliament's task is to observe this process and to make sure that it protects the Community interest.

**Derek Vaughan (S&D)**, *in writing*. – The governance treaty agreed by the European Council on Monday was, without question, a better solution than the previous agreement. It now takes into account issues that I feel are vital; the need to focus more on growth, demonstrating fiscal restraint and working within the normal EU system wherever possible. However, these improvements were somewhat overshadowed by the fact that, as stressed in the passed resolution, it would have been better to have reached an agreement under normal EU law. I sincerely hope that the European Council will take note of the concerns raised by the Parliament and bear this in mind in future treaties.

**Marie-Christine Vergiat (GUE/NGL)**, *in writing*. – (FR) In the face of an unprecedented attack on the sovereignty of the people, the European Parliament has today voted in favour of a resolution that says very little. The Heads of State or Government meeting in Brussels this week has come to an agreement on a draft treaty that includes the following: incorporating the golden rule into the Member States' constitutions; the reversed qualified majority rule (whereby a minority of States can take sanctions against a State that does not abide by the Maastricht criteria); the introduction of the automatic correction mechanism for national budgets, although the details of the criteria on which it will be based and the institutions that will oversee the system are yet to be finalised ... by the Commission. The Confederal Group of the European United Left – Nordic Green Left has once again opposed this denial of democracy. In response to the shift of sovereignty that has taken place without the slightest involvement of the people, the European Parliament has contented itself with asking for Parliament's President to attend euro area summit meetings. The only way to combat this anti-democratic austerity dogma is to mobilise the people and demand referendums.

**Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)**, *in writing*. – With some irony, I use a French expression to describe my reaction to this report: *déjà vu*. When will the European Parliament get it into its head that more Europe is not the answer to the current financial crisis? When will the European Parliament stop rearranging deckchairs on the Titanic and get down to the business of creating growth and jobs by completing the single market and promoting free trade with countries like India? And when, oh when, will the European Parliament realise that no matter how many resolutions it passes calling for an EU-wide financial transaction tax, that no such tax is going to materialise? The European Parliament may wail, gnash its teeth or whimper like a petulant child who wants a bicycle for Christmas, but it will not

change the fact that taxation is a decision which needs to be taken unanimously by the Member States and the United Kingdom will not relent in its opposition to an EU-only tax. This is why the FTT will not happen. There are countless other reasons why it shouldn't happen, first among which is the fact that even according to the Commission's own figures, it would be tremendously damaging to Europe's economy.

**Inês Zuber (GUE/NGL),** *in writing.* – (PT) Once they had overcome their momentary 'indignation' with the way in which the European Parliament was ignored in the decision relating to the fiscal compact, made through the intergovernmental treaty driven by the Franco-German directorate, the majority of the groups in the European Parliament – the Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats), the Group of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe, the Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance and the Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament – have adopted this decision supporting the Council's decisions, without any problems. In other words, they have approved the path of institutionalising and perpetuating ideas of so-called 'austerity policies', which are nothing more than a way of promoting the accumulation of capital and voting the people and workers into unemployment, exploitation and poverty. As for us, we are in no doubt that this path is not in the interests of the workers and people, so we voted unequivocally against this resolution.

#### **Motions for resolutions: B7-0043/2012, B7-0044/2012**

**Robert Goebbels (S&D),** *in writing.* – (DE) I have not voted against the motion for a resolution because I do not wish to add my voice to the baying pack of anti-European hounds. Nonetheless, I abstained in protest against such a foolhardy and dangerous development. The agreement between the 25 countries is outside the ambit of any of the EU's Treaties. Nonetheless, two key institutions, the Commission and the European Court of Justice, are to play an important role here. This is open to legal challenge. The Treaty is to apply to 25 EU countries, but will come into force once 12 countries have ratified it. What happens if a country fails to ratify it, or if a nation decides against ratification? Will the Treaty remain in force for all? The main element in the Treaty is its sole focus on austerity as a means for all policies. The German concept of a debt brake mechanism will not be applied in Germany until 2016 or 2019. No one knows whether this will work. Nonetheless, it is to be enshrined in constitutions throughout Europe. I am opposed to this,

#### **Motions for resolutions: B7-0017/2012, B7-0018/2012, B7-0019/2012, B7-0020/2012, B7-0041/2012, B7-0042/2012**

**Luís Paulo Alves (S&D),** *in writing.* – (PT) I am voting for the sanctions set by the Council to increase the restrictive measures already in place against Iran, since the country is demonstrating a severe inability to cooperate with the international authorities for monitoring nuclear activities. I also think all the diplomatic efforts available to the European External Action Service should be kept up: it should approach Iran for dialogue on a wider range of issues, not just the nuclear one.

**Pino Arlacchi (S&D),** *in writing.* – I voted for this resolution because, thanks to the adoption of the amendment tabled jointly by the S&D and the Greens, it clearly states that the outstanding issues with Iran over its nuclear programme must be solved peacefully and that a military solution to the conflict is not even conceivable. It is also of fundamental importance to reiterate that, contrary to some states already in possession of nuclear weapons, Iran is a member of the Non-Proliferation Treaty and, as such, allows for

inspections of its nuclear installations by the International Atomic Energy Agency. I support the Council double-track approach, but I believe that the sanctions must be carefully targeted at and proportionate to the objective pursued. The restrictive measures should be aimed at striking the power elites of a repressive regime, minimising as far as possible the adverse impact on the civilian population, especially the most vulnerable groups.

**Sophie Auconie (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (FR) Through this joint resolution, for which I voted, we are supporting sanctions against the Iranian regime. We are also expressing our condemnation of the fact that China and Russia persist in refusing to impose sanctions. We are backing Europe's additional restrictive measures, while at the same time supporting the Council in its 'commitment to work for a diplomatic solution to the Iranian nuclear issue in accordance with the dual-track approach'. We urge the Iranian authorities to respond positively to the offer of talks, and to cooperate with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Iran must return to the negotiating table as soon as possible.

**Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)**, *in writing*. – (LT) The EU foreign ministers have agreed upon additional restrictive measures against Iran in many sectors. A phased embargo of Iranian crude oil imports to the EU has been introduced, measures are being taken against the Central Bank of Iran, and further export restrictions have been imposed. These measures reflect the serious and growing concern regarding possible military dimensions to Iran's nuclear programme. There is no effective dialogue between the West and Iran and there has been a dangerous increase in tension in the Gulf region. However, the objective of the EU is still to achieve a comprehensive and long-term settlement, which would build international confidence in an Iranian nuclear programme that is designed exclusively for peaceful purposes. I agree that when tackling this issue, we should pursue a diplomatic solution to the nuclear crisis by all means and avoid armed conflict, and the humanitarian implications of the additional sanctions against Iran should be thoroughly evaluated and monitored.

**Zoltán Bagó (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (HU) In the interest of the European Union and its Member States, as well as international peace, I voted in favour of Parliament's resolution on Iran and its nuclear programme.

Over the past few months, Iran has acted on several points to undermine the European Union's efforts towards international peace. It did so, among other things, by continuously violating Articles 2 and 3 of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, shrouding its nuclear programme in secrecy, and threatening to block the Strait of Hormuz, which could have severe implications regarding the supply of crude oil to Europe given the Strait's strategic importance. This measure could also undermine the current, relatively peaceful situation in the region.

Based on the aforesaid, and on the report of the International Atomic Energy Agency, I believe that Iran's nuclear programme does not serve peaceful purposes, and that the penalties already imposed and those to be given effect on the basis of the Council decision of 23 January 2012 are therefore justified and serve a peaceful international world order and the interests of the European Union.

**Adam Bielan (ECR)**, *in writing*. – (PL) It is with great concern that I have been observing the development of the nuclear programme in Iran in recent years. Due to the country's ever decreasing willingness to cooperate in the area of international security, our direct participation and engagement in solving this problem is vital. An additional risk is the possible destabilisation of the Middle East, especially in view of the strained relations

between Tehran and Israel. I support the resolution and I back the call for the Iranian regime to stop work on the development of equipment that may be used to obtain nuclear weapons, and to respect UN Security Council resolutions as well as international nuclear non-proliferation agreements. I appeal to the Tehran authorities to return to the negotiating table. Only full cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the provision of indisputable evidence proving the peaceful nature of the activities which are being carried out may prevent a regional arms race and avert the threat to global peace and security.

**Mara Bizzotto (EFD),** *in writing.* – (IT) I voted for the joint resolution on the Iranian nuclear programme. I support Parliament's position, as it reminds Iran of its obligations entered into under international law with its commitment to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and expresses concern about recent developments in the matter that do not appear to be leading to a positive outcome. The process of uranium enrichment in Iran is continuing undisturbed, far beyond what technicians from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) consider necessary for guaranteeing civil energy supplies. Iran must comply with the many UN and IAEA resolutions as soon as possible, otherwise there is the risk of a dangerous escalation that would be anything but diplomatic, one which the whole world, particularly at a time of such serious financial crises and economic instability, would prefer by far to avoid.

**Sebastian Valentin Bodu (PPE),** *in writing.* – (RO) Iran's nuclear programme continues to have the attention of the international community focused on it, while the events of recent days confirm that we are far from identifying any solutions. The mission from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), intended to clarify the 'grey' areas in Iran's nuclear programme, ended on Tuesday without showing any obvious signs of progress. Although the IAEA's investigation has been ongoing for eight years, it has been unable to establish so far whether Iran's nuclear programme is purely for peaceful purposes, as has been constantly maintained by Iran's leaders, or for military purposes as well. I welcome the unanimous backing given by European Union foreign ministers last week to impose an embargo on Iranian crude oil, but this is only a first step. The reaction from officials in Tehran was to be expected, with the Iranian Parliament wishing to approve a bill suspending completely oil exports from Iran to Member States of the European Union before the European embargo on Iranian oil fully comes into force. This is why the steps aimed at continuing dialogue must be supported and increased so that these situations can be successfully resolved through diplomatic channels.

**Corina Crețu (S&D),** *in writing.* – (RO) The steps that Iran has taken towards obtaining enriched uranium for military purposes blatantly violate the UN Security Council resolutions and alarmingly inflame the tension in the Middle East. International pressure has not yielded any results so far, even if it has involved a European embargo on Iranian oil imports, a ban on contracts and freezing the assets of the Central Bank of Iran. These extremely tough sanctions present the Tehran regime with a clear option: either it gives in, bearing in mind the losses suffered from its second biggest client which used to take a quarter of its oil exports, or it resorts to military confrontation to get away from the economic pressure, based on the model Japan adopted in relation to the US during the Second World War.

The solution for overcoming this deadlock must only be diplomatic. This is why I insist on the EU continuing its actions aimed at resuming dialogue. I hope that the permission granted by Iran to the inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency is indicative of this.

**George Sabin Cutaş (S&D),** *in writing.* – (RO) I voted for this resolution on Iran because the European Parliament emphasises in it the need to find a diplomatic solution to the nuclear issue, while expressing its concern about the possible military aspect of Iran's activities involving uranium enrichment.

**Mário David (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) First of all, I should like to express my enormous satisfaction in saying that efforts to reach an understanding between the various parliamentary groups in this House have led to a vote on a single motion for a resolution. Our stance on such matters lends dignity to this institution, making our position stronger and therefore potentially more effective. Moreover, in relation to this, I should like to cite the first item in the resolution's preamble: 'whereas Iran has, by ratifying the [Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons], foresworn the acquisition of nuclear weapons and is legally bound to declare all its nuclear activities, including nuclear material, and place them under [International Atomic Energy Agency] safeguards'. In view of what is written in that paragraph, the hardening of the European Union's position is welcome and I hope that the actions of the international community, specifically Russia and China, will be in line with the values that they swore to obey on their accession to the UN, not just regarding this issue, but also in relation to other equally terrible situations; I am referring, specifically, to the Syria issue.

**Christine De Veyrac (PPE),** *in writing.* – (FR) I voted in favour of this resolution supporting the European Union's decision to impose an oil embargo on Iran. This measure will step up the pressure on a regime that is ignoring United Nations resolutions by pursuing a nuclear weapons programme. The oil embargo, spearheaded by France, is a solution that will protect against military intervention by countries that feel threatened, and against a flare-up in the region.

**Edite Estrela (S&D),** *in writing.* – (PT) I voted for the resolution on 'Iran and its nuclear programme' because I support the decision to adopt sanctions against Iran, but I also believe the EU should continue using diplomatic means to drive the Iranian Government to accept and respect United Nations resolutions.

**José Manuel Fernandes (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) This motion for a resolution concerns Iran and its nuclear programme, and replaces the motions by the Group of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe, the Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament, the European Conservatives and Reformists Group, the Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance and the Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats). The political situation in the Middle East, specifically the Persian Gulf, remains very complicated and still has serious consequences for the global economy as a result of the oil industry. Indeed, Iran's arrogance towards Western countries, and particularly the United States, is the driving force behind the development of a new conflict. Iran, proud of its noble past founded on the history of ancient Persia, is taking on the role of a great power: it is refusing to sit at the negotiating table with the international community and is not allowing access to independent inspectors who could evaluate the implementation of its nuclear programme. At the same time, following several condemnations from international organisations, like the UN Security Council – of which it is a member – and sanctions imposed by the EU and the US, it still fails to respect the most basic human rights. I voted for this resolution, as well as for other proposals already adopted by this Parliament, since the Iranian nuclear programme represents a threat to that region and the world.

**João Ferreira (GUE/NGL),** *in writing.* – (PT) The European Union's decision to impose more unilateral sanctions on Iran simply confirms its subordination to the militarist agenda of the US in the region, as well as the convergence of the geostrategic interests of the two imperialist blocs in the region. It should be remembered that these sanctions follow on from the movement of vast military resources to the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz. It is a decision that has contributed dangerously to escalating a conflict that, as is clear, has nothing to do with seeking peaceful solutions and diplomatic negotiations. This is a decision that seriously threatens Iran's sovereignty and the Iranian people's right to live in peace, and it could also have extremely negative economic consequences for several countries. These unilateral sanctions are also profoundly hypocritical, imposed as they are by nuclear powers like the US, France or the UK. Furthermore, the European Union has been continuing its close economic and military cooperation with Israel, one of the countries that has a nuclear arsenal and is acting completely outside the most basic principles of international law.

**Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D),** *in writing.* – (SK) It is quite indisputable that Iran is failing to fulfil its international obligations in the area of its nuclear activities. If its international obligations are to be anything more than a scrap of paper, they must be both enforceable and enforced. In this respect, it is right and proper that the EU has resorted to sanctions. It must be ensured, however, that the sanctions are effective and that the leaders of the regime, who can change things, suffer, and not ordinary Iranians who are not responsible for the situation.

Apart from sanctions, however, the greatest possible emphasis must be placed on the second dimension of diplomatic relations with Iran, that is, namely negotiations. Baroness Ashton, the ministers of the Member States and the Council should initiate a dialogue with Iran. This should not only be about the disputed and sensitive issue of Iran's nuclear programme, but also about other topics, such as stability in the region, relations with neighbours, and human rights.

If a consensus could be reached in one area, if a partnership of trust can be established, then there will be a greater chance of agreement in other areas, including the nuclear programme. I am therefore of the opinion that the diplomatic activity of European representatives with regard to Iran should be multi-faceted and should include efforts to emphasise diplomacy in the original sense of the word; that is to say, negotiations.

**Nathalie Griesbeck (ALDE),** *in writing.* – (FR) The European Union is firmly committed on a daily basis to promoting peace and security everywhere in the world, particularly through the voice of the European Parliament. Despite repeated calls from the international community, Iran is continuing to develop its nuclear programme. I therefore voted in favour of this resolution calling for new sanctions against Iran, primarily in the form of a phased embargo on crude oil imports. However, it is important that the sanctions are targeted in order to spare the Iranian people as much as possible and to force Iran's leaders to return to the negotiating table. The Iranian crisis must be resolved by diplomatic, not military means. This is the point I wished to reassert, together with my fellow Members of the European Parliament, by voting in favour of this resolution.

**Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE),** *in writing.* – I fully share this House's concerns regarding Iran's nuclear development. I represent the SNP, a party which opposes weapons of mass destruction, in principle, and rejects nuclear energy as a viable energy source.

**Juozas Imbrasas (EFD), in writing.** – (LT) I voted in favour of this document because the proliferation risks in connection with the Iranian nuclear programme remain a source of serious concern to the European Union. It is worrying that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) report claims that there is reliable information that Iran has carried out activities relevant to the development of a nuclear explosive device. Iran's enrichment activities potentially violate six United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions and 11 IAEA Board resolutions, as demonstrated by the recent start of operations to enrich uranium to a level of up to 20% in the underground facility in Fordow near Qom. Iran must immediately stop its development of enrichment technology, which is far beyond the necessities to ensure a secure fuel supply for civil purposes and demonstrates disregard for international concerns over clandestine military intentions. There is a need to enter into meaningful and constructive discussions in order to completely address issues of concern regarding the nuclear programme.

**Tunne Kelam (PPE), in writing.** – I voted in favour of this resolution. For years, Europe and the world have observed with growing concern the Iranian nuclear plans. Unfortunately, until now, these concerns have only resulted in declarations without actions. It is extremely important that Europe has now finally decided to act and to impose clear and real sanctions upon Iran. Iran has to stop any nuclear plans that have military components. And it has to allow independent international specialists to observe and have a close look at its plans. The IAEA has to be allowed to enter the Iranian nuclear sites to see the real situation. I find it very regrettable that similar sanctions cannot be imposed at UN level, due to the Chinese and Russian veto. The EU needs to push for consistent sanctions also at UN level and remind China and Russia of their obligations, and call especially on Russia to halt any proliferation to Iran contributing to the nuclear plans.

**Philippe Juvin (PPE), in writing.** – (FR) This resolution expresses the deep concern felt by the Members of the European Parliament over the potential military side of the Iranian programme. It is especially significant as it has been adopted at the very time that the European Union has decided to impose unprecedented, far-reaching sanctions on Iran, in the form of an embargo on oil imports from Iran and a freeze on the Iranian Central Bank's assets. As a member of the European Parliament delegation for relations with Iran and the Subcommittee on Security and Defence, and as someone who is particularly committed to these matters, I voted in favour of this resolution.

**Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL), in writing.** – (FR) I abstained from voting on this report. Although I am in favour of diplomatic and trade sanctions in order to put pressure on the Iranian regime to halt its nuclear weapons programme, I fear that this resolution could pave the way for military intervention that would be dangerous. We must devise sanctions that are targeted against individual Iranian leaders or specific economic sectors without harming the Iranian people. Under no circumstances must these sanctions pave the way for military action which, sadly, is the implication behind this report.

**David Martin (S&D), in writing.** – I voted against the idea of a military solution to the nuclear conflict with Iran.

**Mario Mauro (PPE), in writing.** – (IT) It is very serious that Iran has not yet complied with the obligations of all the United Nations Security Council resolutions. Tehran's uranium enrichment programme is also a source of considerable concern. I agree with the idea contained in the resolution for a gradual embargo against the Iranian regime. I voted in favour.

**Jean-Luc Mélenchon (GUE/NGL),** *in writing.* – (FR) The oil embargo may be an effective deterrent. However, we must not ignore the inevitable impact it will have on the Iranian people. This resolution also contains an implied threat of military intervention against Iran. What better to rally Iranians around the idea that they need nuclear arms in order to defend themselves, and what better way to radicalise the Iranian regime, just a few weeks before the general election?

This resolution has no spine. The sanctions must be aimed solely at political and economic leaders. The escalation of military tensions must stop. They must be replaced instead by a regional conference on peace and the denuclearisation of the Middle East under the auspices of the United Nations, and to real, progressive multilateral nuclear disarmament by all the nuclear powers.

**Nuno Melo (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) The risks of proliferation relating to the Iranian nuclear programme remain a source of deep concern for the EU, and we have to express serious apprehension about the declaration in the International Atomic Energy Agency report, according to which reliable information indicates that Iran has been undertaking activities relating to manufacturing a nuclear explosive device. It is essential that Iran immediately stop developing enrichment technology, which is far beyond the needs of ensuring a secure supply of fuel for civilian purposes, and ignoring international concerns about clandestine military intentions. If not, a phased embargo on imports of Iranian crude oil to the EU will have to be implemented and it will be possible for the contracts already concluded to be implemented until 1 July 2012. The Council should adopt the measures needed to alleviate the consequences of the embargo for the various EU Member States.

**Miroslav Mikolášik (PPE),** *in writing.* – (SK) The deliberate and systematic concealment of nuclear activities and refusal to cooperate with the International Atomic Energy Agency is leading to justified serious concerns that Iran really does intend to develop nuclear weapons. The repeated ignoring of the resolutions of the International Atomic Energy Agency, the UN Security Council and the European Parliament is, in my opinion, becoming sufficient reason to adopt additional sanctions against Iran.

I consider the conciliatory wait-and-see approach in the hope that Iran will one day return to the right path of its own accord to be unrealistic. Since Iran is not cooperating, and therefore proof cannot be obtained that it is not breaching its obligations stemming from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, it is necessary to act in the interest of protecting the peaceful coexistence of nations.

In this area, the Member States should act consistently with this objective and examine thoroughly whether, under their trading relationships, they have not exported technologies that might be used to develop nuclear facilities for military purposes. For these reasons, I support the adoption of the resolution of the European Parliament.

**Alexander Mirsky (S&D),** *in writing.* – New sanctions, particularly an embargo on the import of crude oil to the EU, will help to persuade the Iranian Government to observe UN resolutions. Therefore, I would like to have sanctions to be aimed only at those responsible for violence and not to touch upon the population, especially the poor. The European Parliament calls on the Iranian authorities not to block the Strait of Hormuz, believing that such a step may result in regional conflict and provoke repressive actions from the international community. I support the Council of Europe in its determination to find a diplomatic resolution of the Iranian nuclear issue and achieve a reliable global solution. I voted in favour.

**Claudio Morganti (EFD),** *in writing.* – (IT) I voted for this joint resolution because it strongly condemns Iran for its nuclear programme and for the entire dangerous and destabilising strategy being conducted by its regime. Iran has never shown itself willing to actively cooperate with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). This fact is even more serious if you consider that Iran is among the signatories of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, of which it has blatantly flouted several clauses. The EU has done well to react strongly to the many provocations, and I support the choice of an embargo. We cannot tolerate the continuous threats to other countries, Israel first and foremost, which risk plummeting the situation in the Middle East, which is always a difficult one, into chaos. Europe must show that it is strong and united in order to combat any possible proliferation of nuclear weapons in Iran, because this would be a danger to the entire surrounding area and to the whole of the Western world.

**Radvilė Morkūnaitė-Mikulėnienė (PPE),** *in writing.* – (LT) The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) report has set off a danger signal for the whole world. The military dimension to Iran's nuclear programme poses a direct threat to the Middle East, above all Israel, and global peace and security. Iran is a member of the Non-Proliferation Treaty and the existence of a military dimension would therefore be a flagrant violation of international law. Due to the lack of cooperation from Iran, the 27 Member States of the EU have unanimously agreed new sanctions and continue to call for Iran to return to the negotiating table. Iran must immediately provide answers to all the questions that arise, resume negotiations, and provide IAEA inspectors with full access to documents, sites, infrastructure and people. Those Members of the UN Security Council providing nuclear technology and expert knowledge to Iran must freeze such exports, eschewing narrow economic and political interests and becoming aware of their responsibility to the world as guardians of global peace, because it is believed that they are cooperating to create a new global threat.

**Franz Obermayr (NI),** *in writing.* – (DE) The EU embargo will hit the civilian population in the short term. In the medium term, China will take the opportunity to use the capacities thus made available to cover its own growing energy needs. This would balance the losses from the EU embargo, so that there would be no further pressure on Tehran. In other words, the oil boycott would not achieve the desired effect and the EU would be placed at an even greater disadvantage in geostrategic terms. We will have precisely the situation that exiled Iranians have warned against: the measures will hit the wrong people and will fuel anger against the West in increasingly large swathes of the population. For this reason, the EU should seek to exert a moderating effect on both sides, using all its resources to avoid an escalation. The fundamental aim should be that there should be absolutely no nuclear weapons in the Middle East. Nonetheless, the security of Israel must be guaranteed. Since the motion for a resolution does not move in this direction, I voted against it.

**Rolandas Paksas (EFD),** *in writing.* – (LT) I believe that the European Union should take a firm stand and that all issues relating to Iran and its nuclear programme must be resolved by peaceful means. We cannot cross the point of no return. The use of military force and measures is not an effective means of resolving the conflict. It will not produce any results but will only exacerbate differences and increase tension. Military force cannot be used as an instrument for political pressure, particularly now as the world continues to experience economic instability. Consequently, we need to hold constructive negotiations and adopt decisions that satisfy the interests of both parties in order to ensure security of energy supply. It is also very important to ensure that tough sanctions, which should be imposed as a last resort, are effective, adequate and proportionate to the objective pursued.

**Alfredo Pallone (PPE),** *in writing.* – (IT) The resolution on Iran's nuclear programme approved by this Parliament gives voice to the EU's concerns about the possible military dimensions of the Iranian programme. The UN, EU and International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) have been applying sanctions and embargoes to Iran for years. Unfortunately, by not allowing accurate checks and only reporting part of their activities, the Iranian authorities have put the international community in a position in which it fears that the nuclear programme has a military purpose, which is why sanctions have targeted the oil, gold, diamond and currency markets. These sanctions are an attempt on the part of the international community to put pressure on the Iranian authorities in order to obtain compliance with the UN resolutions and a restarting of credible negotiations re-establishing faith in the civil aims of Iran's nuclear programme.

**Maria do Céu Patrão Neves (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) I voted for this joint motion for a resolution on Iran and its nuclear programme, which calls on the Iranian leaders to meet the country's obligations under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and urges the Iranian Government and the Iranian Parliament to ratify and implement the additional protocol and to implement fully the Comprehensive Safeguard Agreement.

**Paulo Rangel (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) Iran's nuclear programme has been one of the burning issues of international relations for several years. The data that have been disseminated suggest that, having committed to not acquiring or developing weapons of this sort as a party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, Iran is currently in breach of the obligations that bind it under that treaty. In view of the risks associated with weapons of this sort as regards the geopolitical balance in the region, for a start, there is justification for the adoption by the EU authorities of compulsory measures that will contribute to a rapid change in policy by the Iranian authorities. I voted for this motion for a resolution for these reasons.

**Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE),** *in writing.* – In favour. Although paragraph 4, which 'supports the new sanctions', was adopted, overall, the tendency of the resolution has developed very much in the direction of favouring a peaceful and negotiated solution. Three of our six amendments were equally adopted: Amendment 3 replacing 'eventual military intervention' by 'further escalation' (with 350 to 266 votes); Amendment 4 reiterating the EP position that the conflict has to be solved peacefully; Amendment 5 welcoming the recent IAEA delegation to Iran. Those that were rejected are: our Amendments 1, 2, 6 on the dangers of nuclear energy; reduction of oil and gas consumption in Europe; condemnation of all acts of aggression (against the UK embassy or against Iranian scientists or infrastructure).

**Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE),** *in writing.* – (IT) In the context of a dual-track strategy towards Iran, the sanctions agreed by the EU aim to put sufficient pressure on the Iranian authorities for them to comply with the UN and international Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) resolutions and to enter into credible negotiations that will restore complete faith in the exclusively peaceful nature of the Iranian nuclear programme among the international community. I support the embargo decision in view of the concerns that the Iranian nuclear programme has aroused in the international community due to suspicions that it has a military dimension, which have been accentuated since the publication of the IAEA's latest report on 18 November 2011. The conclusions of the Foreign Affairs Council also express concerns about the Iranian nuclear programme, illustrating the restrictive measures adopted and repeating the objective of finding a diplomatic solution to the problem and the request made to Iran to agree to the latest offer of discussions contained

in the letter sent to the Iranian authorities by Baroness Ashton on 21 October last. I hope that the situation can return to normal as soon as possible, also in view of the possible negative repercussions that the embargo would have on energy supplies to the EU.

**Marek Siwiec (S&D),** *in writing.* – I would like to express my deep concern on the situation in Iran and its nuclear power. That is why I had to vote against Amendments 3 and 4, which exclude every serious threat against the country that openly refuses to cooperate with the international authorities. Sanctions adopted by the Council are necessary as a way to convince the Iranian authorities to stop developing enrichment technology, but the diplomatic solution to the Iranian issue may not be sufficient and – as precisely said in the report – has not achieved its stated goals. I am deeply convinced that there is no better way to solve the conflicts than a peaceful way. But the European message should be clear and strong – the eventuality of military intervention will appear if Iran openly poses a threat to world peace, if Iran continues to develop its nuclear programme without providing all the information to the international community, with disregard of UN resolutions and without readiness to start a real international dialogue.

**Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI),** *in writing.* – (ES) I have abstained due to Amendment 4, as the last line should have been written in the following way: ‘unless a military solution is called for with the agreement of the United Nations and pursuant to the provisions of international law’.

**Nuno Teixeira (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) The deterioration of EU-Iran relations has been having undeniable repercussions since 2005. The Iranian authorities’ failure to cooperate with the competent authorities, specifically the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), over the course of the implementation of their nuclear programme has impeded the development of profitable relations between Iran and the international community. These differences, and the suspicion that the nuclear programme has military rather than peaceful aims, led the UN Security Council to adopt resolutions in 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2010. The recent phased sanctions on Iran imposed by the EU are in line with the latest IAEA rapporteur, of November 2011, who accuses Iran of developing nuclear technology for military ends. I completely support the imposition of new sanctions on the embargo on oil and associated products, but phasing the sanctions themselves demonstrates a lack of clarity and political will, since the full measure will only come into force in July, following reassessment in May. Iran’s threats, in particular, its threat to close the Strait of Hormuz, are clear indications that there is an urgent need to return to diplomatic negotiations, since stability in the region is essential to maintaining world peace.

**Dominique Vlasto (PPE),** *in writing.* – (FR) I voted in favour of this resolution in order to support the EU’s decisions to increase the pressure on Iran. Iran’s attitude is an affront and an act of defiance against our model of society, our values and our security. Iran’s belligerent language and its aim to acquire nuclear energy are an undeniable threat to world peace, especially in a highly unstable region. Nevertheless, while it is important to keep up the pressure on this despotic regime, we must continue the political dialogue; otherwise, we could face an escalation whose outcome is in no way certain. I share the worries of western leaders who are concerned about Iran’s influence in the region and its support for authoritarian and despotic regimes. I welcome the sanctions that the EU has decided to impose, and firmly hope that we can enter into honest negotiations and reach a rapid resolution of this crisis in the making. War is never the solution, and an armed intervention would have disastrous consequences. Lastly, I would like to spare a thought for the Iranian people, held hostage by dogmatic, bloodthirsty leaders who govern them by repression,

intimidation and deprivation. The EU must make every possible effort to soften this hard-line regime that has clearly gone mad.

**Inês Zuber (GUE/NGL),** *in writing.* – (PT) The European Union's recent decision to impose more unilateral sanctions on Iran simply confirms the imperialist nature of the EU and its complete subordination to the militarist agenda of the US in the region, which has already moved vast military resources to the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz. It is a decision that has contributed dangerously to escalating a conflict that, as is clear, has nothing to do with seeking peaceful solutions and diplomatic negotiations. In the current context, a potential military conflict would not just represent an attack on the Iranian people's sovereignty and right to live in peace, but it would have extremely negative economic consequences for several countries. It is also important not to forget that these unilateral sanctions are being imposed hypocritically by nuclear powers like the US, France and the UK, and that the European Union has continued its close economic and military cooperation with Israel, one of the countries that acts completely outside the most basic principles of international law. The resolution in question unequivocally supports sanctions on oil exports, which will clearly hit the Iranian economy and, thus, the entire Iranian people. We will not agree to this attack on the Iranian people.

**Report: Santiago Fisas Ayxela (A7-0385/2011)**

**Damien Abad (PPE)** , *in writing.* – (FR) I decided to support this report, as it aims to 'clean up' the world of sport in Europe, by creating a European database of hooligans, placing doping on a par with illegal drug trafficking and regulating the profession of sports agent. It is a non-binding resolution, in which Parliament calls for: 'supporters who have displayed violent or discriminatory behaviour', as well as homophobic or racist behaviour, to be banned from all European stadiums, and calls for the creation of a European database for this purpose. It calls for all fraudulent activities (match fixing, money laundering and illegal betting) to be made a criminal offence and for trafficking in doping substances to be placed on a par with illegal drug trafficking. It also calls for a licensing system to be introduced for betting agents, and for the profession of sports agent to be regulated by creating a European register of agents. It would state which players they represent and would require agents to have a minimum qualification.

**Luís Paulo Alves (S&D),** *in writing.* – (PT) I am voting for this report because the EU should make use of sport's potential for social integration, and for combating racism, intolerance and violence. The Union should, therefore, encourage all Europeans to participate in healthy activities. As such, sport should be retained as a compulsory subject in school curricula and everyone should have access to decent sports facilities. Moreover, in line with the concerns expressed by the Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament, I, too, believe disabled people should be given better access to sport, and protection for minors in competitive sport should be increased.

**Laima Liucija Andrikiienė (PPE),** *in writing.* – I voted in favour of the resolution giving the EP reaction on the European Commission's communication on sport of 18 January 2011, which is the first contribution to define new EU competences for sport. I support the Commission position as the proposed policy promotes an increase in the social role and a healthy lifestyle, combats doping and violence, gives benefits to the economy and will ensure better governance in sport. Furthermore, the report stresses the fact that sport can contribute to the strategic objectives of the European Union, given its educational and cultural value. However, in the future, the European Union has to create a future specific

programme on sport with a view to defining and supporting a real European dimension in sport. We, Members of the European Parliament, believe in actions at EU level such as a focus on doping, trafficking, mobility of athletes, racism and violence and on the fight against criminal activities such as money laundering, match fixing, human trafficking and exploitation of minors.

**Roberta Angelilli (PPE), in writing. – (IT)** Sport plays an important role in the lives of European citizens. There can be no doubt about that when you consider that public sporting events involve 35 million amateur sportspeople. However, sport also plays an important role in the European economy. As an industry, it provides work for around 15 million people and has an added value of around 3.65% of the EU's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Therefore, I believe it is necessary to promote sport in a European dimension, taking into account the benefits to people's health as well as on a social, cultural and economic level. Sport needs to be promoted to make it an activity accessible to all, and to develop its role in promoting peace, economic development, intercultural dialogue, integration and women's emancipation. Sport is also an effective way of reinforcing Europe's identity and, at a time such as this, it would be a good idea to dedicate a specific funding programme to it.

**Sophie Auconie (PPE), in writing. – (FR)** I welcome the approval of the report on the European dimension in sport as it finally recognises the value of sport as an important factor in the EU's economic growth. It talks, for example, about supporting sports for girls by removing all obstacles, including religious and cultural barriers. In this respect, one important change will be to ensure that women are better represented in sports governing bodies. The report also proposes to establish a blacklist of violent supporters, or 'hooligans', and to continue the fight against doping, illegal betting and match fixing. The European Parliament also wishes to ensure that high-level athletes receive a good education, so that sportspeople will have a secure future when they leave their career. Finally, the project for an annual 'European Day of Sports' will help to reinforce European identity through sport.

**Liam Aylward (ALDE), in writing. –** As the first parliamentary report on sport since the Lisbon Treaty gave the EU a new competence for sport, we were delighted to support the recommendations in this report relating to supporting volunteers and grassroots sports, strengthening improving access to training and education for coaches and athletes, promoting traditional sports, eliminating doping and tackling corruption and violence in sport.

The majority of the debate on this report has focused on Article 100 in relation to the use of the EU flag at sporting events. Given the flexible and voluntary nature of the final text, we voted to support this article. The text states that displaying the EU flag is entirely voluntary and up to the Member States and sports organisations to decide whether they will use this option. Given the 'entirely voluntary' nature of this option, we supported this text and the strong recommendations of the report on the future of sports policy overall.

**Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D), in writing. – (LT)** I voted in favour of this report. Sport creates significant added value throughout the EU because it contributes to smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and has great positive effects on social inclusion, education and training, as well as on public health. Sport also helps to reduce social security and health expenditure by improving the health and productivity of the population and by ensuring a better quality of life. I welcome the objectives set out by the Commission in its communication, particularly on the inclusion of compulsory sports lessons in all schools and greater support

for organisations that seek to integrate people through sport, particularly those at risk of social exclusion or people with a disability.

**Elena Băsescu (PPE), *in writing.* – (RO)** I voted for this report because it provides a valuable contribution to defining new European competences in the area of sport. I welcome the emphasis placed on the educational and cultural value of sport, in addition to promoting a healthy lifestyle. Especially as we are in an Olympic year, I should stress that the spirit of fair play and the peaceful nature of competition are key features of sport, allowing it to fulfil its social role. I condemn displays of violence, hooliganism and racism during sporting contests. They must be stamped out because they go against the very spirit of sport. I welcome the report's provisions in this area, including the proposal to ban supporters who have displayed violent behaviour from entering any stadium in Europe. I regret the violent incidents which have occurred at some football matches in Romania in recent months. I hope that the Law on combating violence in sport, announced right at the start of this year, will help eliminate this behaviour during sporting contests. I should point out that the law includes measures such as stiffer penalties and a significant increase in the size of the fines for acts of violence, not to mention additional training programmes for security staff and stewards.

**Regina Bastos (PPE), *in writing.* – (PT)** Article 165 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union gives the EU a new competence for sport. Sport contributes to achieving the EU's strategic objectives, as it highlights fundamental educational and cultural values. It is also a vector of integration, since it is open to all members of the public, regardless of their sex, ethnic origin, religion, age, nationality, social situation or sexual orientation. Sport is an important phenomenon and a social asset. For many, it is even one of the most important forms of recreation, promoting the active participation of the European public in society and helping to develop a feeling of social inclusion, in addition to the undeniable health benefits. This report also highlights the urgent need for a more active approach by the EU in the fight against doping, violence and intolerance, *inter alia*, and in the regulation of a broad economic sector that is growing rapidly and employs 15 million people, directly and indirectly. I voted for this report because I think the measures provided for therein contribute to developing sport and to realising the objective of giving it a European dimension.

**Jean-Luc Bennahmias (ALDE), *in writing.* – (FR)** Just a few weeks after the European Commission announced it would be creating a specific budget for sport, the Fisas report confirms that it is indeed a European issue. It is certainly high time we had a dedicated budget for sport. Although the sums involved are low compared with the amount of money that changes hands in the world of sport (EUR 30 million per year between 2014 and 2020), I welcome this step forward. The European Commission has taken note of the new provisions contained in the Treaty of Lisbon. The Fisas report highlights the fact that sport is a multi-faceted area that has a strong economic dimension and also plays a vital role in society. If we consider the need to value the role of volunteers, to prepare athletes through training for life after their professional sports careers, to combat illegal sports betting, to coordinate the fight against doping, or to regulate the profession of sports agent, there are certainly enough areas for action. These include areas on which I tabled amendments that were included in the final report, such as the protection of minors during international transfers and the need for cooperation between the EU and the Council of Europe, which is very active in the area of sports. Let us now move forward, therefore, on this new basis.

**Mara Bizzotto (EFD),** *in writing.* – (IT) Sport is vital for health and quality of life in our societies. The report stresses the beneficial aspects of promoting a sports culture, which is a sphere with an inseparable connection to the social dimension. As the rapporteur stresses, we must promote sport and support the creation of intra-Community networks and the exchange of good practice in the sphere of sport. Through sport, it is also possible to promote the social inclusion of disadvantaged categories such as people with disabilities, and to foster the human and social growth of young people. They are increasingly disorientated in a modern world devoid of reference points, in terms of values and humanity. Finally, the reference to the need to properly safeguard traditional, local sports seems to me particularly welcome. Today, large numbers of these are at risk of disappearing, although they represent an invaluable asset without which it will, in the future, be difficult to preserve our cultural traditions and our special local features and characteristics, which are a real added value in the history of our continent. I voted for the report.

**Vilija Blinkevičiūtė (S&D),** *in writing.* – (LT) I voted in favour of this report because sport is a sector that is growing very rapidly, both within the European Union and outside. Statistics indicate that the increase in sporting activity has created around 15 million jobs in the EU. The sport sector employs 5.4% of the working population, and it has an annual turnover of approximately EUR 407 billion, or 3.65% of Europe's GDP. Sport plays an important role in society and helps to strengthen social well-being because it boosts employment and integration and contributes to society and social development. The European Union was recently given new competence for sport and it is urged to contribute to promoting sport. In response to the Commission's communication 'Developing the European Dimension in Sport', the European Parliament proposes that at EU level, the focus should be on issues of international importance such as doping, trafficking, athlete mobility, racism and violence in sport. Parliament also proposes examining and addressing the issues of money laundering, match fixing, human trafficking and the exploitation of minors. There is also a proposal to create a European register of people who have displayed violent behaviour during games in the past. The discussion of such problems at EU level could make a significant contribution to their resolution and this would give the European dimension in sport real added value.

**Sebastian Valentin Bodu (PPE),** *in writing.* – (RO) The Lisbon Treaty has provided a new EU competence in the area of sport. However, this does not mean that a specific article has been created for it, but a legal basis is provided for sport in the section of the Treaties on education, vocational training and young people. Indeed, Article 165 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union stipulates that the EU's objective is to promote the European dimension in sport. Sport itself constitutes an important social activity and a public good. For many, it is one of the most important forms of recreation, whether they take part or are only spectators. One of the biggest benefits of sport is that it brings people together, no matter what their origin, background, religious beliefs or economic status. Sport promotes the active contribution made by European citizens to society and helps foster a sense of social inclusion. Doping remains a major threat to sport. The prevention of doping in sport must be based on a clear understanding of the complex nature of this problem, as well as on extensively combining the strategies of all the authorities involved in sport, with the aim of successfully eradicating doping in sport, which is acknowledged as being a serious problem that is detrimental to the fundamental principles of sport. This is why I think that the EU should be more actively involved in tackling doping.

**Vito Bonsignore (PPE),** *in writing.* – (IT) I voted for this report. Article 165 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) gives competence to the European Union in the sphere of promoting and developing the European dimension in sport. This actively contributes to the EU's strategic objectives through its cultural and educational value and, above all, as a vector of integration. Although many issues are strictly for individual Member States, the EU should focus its attention on big issues such as doping, the mobility of athletes, and racism and violence in sport. In addition, every effort should be made to determinedly combat all types of unlawful activity, such as money laundering, match fixing and exploitation of minors, which are a real threat to sport and the values it stands for. I agree with the rapporteur on the call to the Commission to organise a European Day of Sports every year to raise the public's awareness of the benefits of sporting activity. Sport is a public good that should be preserved and cultivated.

**Antonio Cancian (PPE),** *in writing.* – (IT) I voted for the Fisas Aixela report because I believe it is an important exercise in setting out priorities for European action in the sporting sphere. I welcome the reference to respect for the fundamental rights of athletes during checks conducted as part of anti-doping procedures. It is vital to ensure respect for these rights, specifically by identifying a Europe-wide procedure to protect athletes and not to leave room at the edges for arbitrary action, which could have extremely damaging effects on the athletes' careers. The use of biological passports as tools for investigation, rather than prevention, has given rise to highly discriminatory episodes, and led to the end of the careers of some athletes where the burden of proof has been reversed, even without clear evidence of doping. In such a situation, reversing the burden of proof that applies to an accused person runs counter to the fundamental principles of human rights and, in particular, Article 6 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). I should therefore like to thank Mr Fisas Aixela for his efforts to guarantee and protect not only the interests of sports federations and associations, but also the freedoms and fundamental rights of athletes.

**Silvia Costa (S&D),** *in writing.* – (IT) I voted for this important report on sport, which is a response to the Commission's communication on the subject and anticipates the proposal to create a sub-programme for sport in the 2014-2020 multiannual programming. As the Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament, we pushed for the following points: the adoption of sport as a compulsory subject in school curricula, the need to encourage women and girls from disadvantaged backgrounds to take up sport, focusing on sport as a driver of social integration and as a tool with which to combat intolerance, racism and violence, increasing the protection of minors in competitive sport, combating doping, the use of the European flag at all official sports events, the establishment of a European Day of Sports and the extension of the Erasmus programme to sports.

**Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D),** *in writing.* – (RO) Since sport helps achieve the EU's strategic objectives and is a factor contributing to integration, insofar as it is open to all citizens, regardless of their gender, ethnic origin, religion, age, nationality, social situation or sexual orientation, I think that sport must be made accessible to all citizens in many different settings, whether at school, at work, as a recreational activity or through clubs and associations.

**Mário David (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) The Treaty of Lisbon has given the European Union greater powers in the area of sport. This own-initiative report, for which I voted, represents the European Parliament's reaction to the Commission communication on sport of

8 January 2011. It highlights the urgent need for a more active approach by the EU in the fight against doping, violence and intolerance, and in the regulation of a broad sector that is growing rapidly and employs around 15 million people, directly and indirectly. I should also like to stress that I, like my group, the Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats), believe sport is part of human and social development. I therefore argue that the European Union will, in the future, have to create a specific programme for sport, with a view to realising a genuinely European dimension for sport.

**Christine De Veyrac (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (FR) I voted in favour of this report, which outlines the main elements of a future European policy on sport. Sport is now an integral part of human and social development. It contributes towards a healthy lifestyle, fosters intercultural exchange and has genuine educational value, especially for young people. The development of sporting activities within the EU will therefore benefit all our fellow citizens.

**Philippe de Villiers (EFD)**, *in writing*. – (FR) Like any good father, the European Parliament encourages us to play sport because it is good for our health, because sport 'brings joy' and strengthens social cohesion.

We should be grateful. Yet, there are some contradictions that we should point out.

Having encouraged the widespread use of online betting, it is now concerned about abuses of the system, of match fixing and corruption.

At the same time, the EU wants to protect the property rights of organisers of competitions and promote free access to broadcasts and information for all.

The European Commission is now proposing that it acts as a platform for the exchange of good practices and, ultimately, for organising sports events itself. Just as well Baron de Coubertin and Jules Rimet did not have to wait for the European Commission to create the modern Olympic Games or the Football World Cup.

Finally, probably to fight against so-called nationalism, the European Parliament recommends flying the European flag in stadiums and displaying it on athletes' clothing.

However, this overlooks the fact that the 2006 Football World Cup was viewed by 80% of the evening audience, whereas only 40% of voters took part in the 2009 European elections.

**Tamás Deutsch (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (HU) As a former minister for youth and sport, I am convinced that sport plays a determinant role in respect of both the economy and society. Sport represents a link between EU citizens, as anyone is free to practice it regardless of gender, ethnic origin, religion, age, nationality or social situation.

The economic added value of sport in the EU is extraordinary: it provides 15 million jobs (representing 5.4% of the active population) and accounts for 3.65% of European GDP. Furthermore, sport has a positive influence on Member State health care budgets as it favourably affects the health of European citizens. We must not forget about the potential role of sport in invigorating tourism either.

In light of the aforesaid, I agree with the rapporteur that the economic and social role of sport must be further reinforced. It would represent a significant step in this direction if sport could become a beneficiary of the European Structural Funds. Special training courses for outstanding sportspeople who wish to pursue studies in higher education are

indispensable. The fight against doping must continue unabated. Sport must be supported in education because (in addition to its numerous other positive effects) it facilitates the dismantling of social barriers and the integration of marginalised groups.

Sport is an effective tool in strengthening European identity. To this end, I support the rapporteur's proposal for the organisation of an annual 'European Day of Sports', the annual designation of a 'European capital of sport' and the creation of mobility programmes for young sportspeople where they can learn new training techniques while promoting dialogue among cultures.

**Robert Dušek (S&D),** *in writing.* – (CS) Article 165 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union gives the EU new powers in the area of sport. Sport is unquestionably important for European society, contributing to the maintenance of health, encouraging a positive form of competitiveness between young people, helping to maintain physical activity among the elderly and contributing to social integration. As a branch of the economy, sport contributes to economic growth and supports job creation. Sport also has many negative attributes, of course, such as doping or the violence and indiscipline of fans, which sometimes ends in brutal fights in stadiums or on the streets. In the matter of stadium violence, however, the report by Santiago Fisas Aixela does not offer any incentive for improvement or suggestion for change. I would therefore like to call on the Commission, the Council and the rapporteur to pay greater attention to this sensitive and complex topic. Some Member States have been more successful than others in dealing with stadium violence. Why not, therefore, make use of the potential that already exists? We must work together to find possible solutions. The report submitted to the plenary is generally balanced and beneficial, and, despite the aforementioned reservation, I will therefore vote for its adoption.

**Diogo Feio (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) In relation to sport, it is important to acknowledge its important aspects relating to society, culture and healthier lifestyles. However, it is also important to recognise that it has an extremely important economic dimension, as a creator of jobs, innovation and growth.

**José Manuel Fernandes (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) This report on the 'European dimension in sport', drafted by Mr Fisas Aixela, is coming out at a time when the world of sport is in mourning because of the tragedy that took place in Cairo, Egypt, at the end of a football match, where clashes led to more than 70 deaths and around 1 000 injuries. First and foremost, I should like to extend my condolences to the families of the victims and express my solidarity with all those who are victims of violence in sport. The advantages of sporting activity are unquestionable, both for those taking part and for society in general. It has undeniable benefits in terms of education; of health, benefiting participants, in terms of quality of life, and the state, in terms of savings on medical costs; of society, with thousands of volunteers working together on organising sports activities; and of the economy, as an activity representing 3.65% of European GDP and employing 15 million people. As such, I welcome the proposed measures; specifically, more sport on school curricula, establishment of the European Year of Sport, the new 'Erasmus for All' programme, and all means of combating doping and violence, such as the database of hooligans.

**João Ferreira (GUE/NGL),** *in writing.* – (PT) The report undeniably includes some good proposals. However, the majority of them are stated vaguely and are nothing more than good intentions. The role of sport in society in integration terms is acknowledged, amongst other correct principles. It proposes that there be 'a dedicated and ambitious budget for

sports policy' under the new multiannual financial framework, that sport be included on the curriculum at all types of school, and that gender issues be duly taken into account. However, it proposes that 'mass-participation' sport – an expression used to distinguish it from professional sport – be supported by contributions from lotteries. It also proposes a European-level 'supporters' database and bans any form of political expression by athletes during matches, but opens the door for sport to be used as a means of propaganda for the EU. We do not support these approaches and would distance ourselves from them.

**Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D),** *in writing.* – (SK) Article 165 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) gives the EU a new competence for sport, calls on the EU to contribute to the promotion of sporting issues, and stipulates that EU action should be aimed at developing the European dimension in sport. Current challenges for effective management in sport include the free movement of citizens and nationality of sportspeople, transfers of players, the integrity of sporting competitions and European social dialogue in the sport sector.

The communication entitled 'Developing the European Dimension in Sport', which the Commission adopted on 18 January 2011, states that EU action contributes to the overall goals of the Europe 2020 strategy by improving employability and mobility, though actions promoting social inclusion in and through sport, education and training, and European guidelines for physical activity.

The Commission is currently providing support to sporting projects and networks, either through motivational measures specifically aimed at sport, and, in particular, preparatory schemes, or through existing programmes in a number of relevant areas, such as lifelong education, public health, youth programmes, citizenship, research and technical development, social inclusion, combating racism and environmental protection.

I believe that, given its educational and cultural value, sport can make a significant contribution to the achievement of the Union's strategic goals.

**Elisabetta Gardini (PPE),** *in writing.* – (IT) Too often, still, the press reports incidents of violence connected with sporting events. Disturbances caused by supporters are seen throughout the EU, and measures backed by all the Member States must be adopted to combat this. In the text adopted today, we are asking, for example, for a ban to be placed on access to stadiums by fans guilty of violent and discriminatory behaviour. It is through action which is better coordinated and more efficient that we will avoid the occurrence in Europe of tragic violent incidents such as yesterday's episode in Egypt, where approximately 74 people died in the rioting that followed a football match. I agree that it is also vital to adopt a more active integrated approach in the fight against doping. As well as running counter to the principles of honesty and fairness in competitive sport, doping represents a serious threat to the health of both professional and amateur athletes. I therefore hope that the European Union can succeed in playing a more active role in protecting the integrity of sport, by tackling those challenges which undermine its important social and educational roles.

**Bruno Gollnisch (NI),** *in writing.* – (FR) Several parts of this report have left me puzzled. Those about the alleged discrimination that women systematically face in sport. True, you do not get any women in male football teams, it is a scandal! Those about using sport as a tool to promote the European Union. Those, which are somewhat confusing, calling for total freedom of movement and establishment for athletes on the one hand, while recognising as legitimate demands made regarding the national or local composition of

teams. It is true that this makes competitions a little more interesting. Those which advocate health insurance with a bonus/penalty system depending on whether or not you play sport. Now there is an idea – getting the layabouts to pay! Yet not a single word about some athletes' salaries, astronomically high amounts which bear no relation to the social value of those being paid them, and the impact of these outrageous practices on the image of sport. There are, however, a few good ideas, but to be frank, I cannot bring myself to vote for such nonsense.

**Louis Grech (S&D), *in writing*.** – I voted in favour of the report on a European dimension in sport because I believe that, in the constantly evolving economic dimension of the sports industry, immediate improvements on sport-related issues are needed in crucial areas such as free movement of workers and services, freedom of establishment, recognition of professional qualifications, intellectual property rights and State aid rules in order to guarantee that the sports industry draws full advantage from the benefits of the internal market. The EU and Member States should secure dynamic, good healthy living for European consumers and citizens by improving the social role of sports and actively involving all members of society in health-enhancing sport and recreational activities across Europe, particularly in the case of children, considering that obesity and other health-related illnesses are on the rise in younger age groups. Therefore, the Commission should allocate more health-related incentives and funds for projects, in particular, those involving cross-border sport activities. European citizens and, in particular, young people should be given more information related to the availability of sport programmes, projects, scholarships and training, which will help people make full use of the opportunities offered by Community programmes.

**Estelle Grelier (S&D), *in writing*.** – (FR) Mr Fisas Ayxela's report gave Parliament the opportunity to support the European Commission's communication of 18 January 2011 on developing the European dimension in sport, this being the Commission's first policy document on this subject since it became a Community responsibility. While I welcome the report's commitment to reminding us of the key values that playing sport can convey and suggesting the type of actions that should reflect the Community added value in this field, I wonder about the EU's current ability to effectively assume this responsibility. With only EUR 4 million specifically dedicated to sport each year (in the form of a 'preparatory action', in other words, a temporary action), the Union does not have the resources to effectively combat doping, to support sport for people with disabilities, to promote the development of a 'European identity' through sport, etc., an issue that must be addressed in the months ahead, when Member States are being asked to establish the EU budgetary framework for 2014-2020.

**Nathalie Griesbeck (ALDE), *in writing*.** – (FR) Sport is definitely one of the most powerful ways in which we can integrate the most disadvantaged and advance cross-cultural understanding. It is one of the key components of social action to promote personal integration and development worldwide. I therefore voted in favour of this report, which supports the economic dimension and the societal role of sport, urging and encouraging Member States and the Commission to do more to promote, support and foster its development across all sections of the European population, in particular, by enabling grassroots sports to receive support from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund (ESF). I also enthusiastically welcomed the inclusion of specific proposals in this resolution such as organising an annual 'European Day of Sports', the designation of a 'European capital of sport' every year, facilitating and promoting

mobility programmes for young athletes and sports coaches, and the suggestion to fly the European flag at major international sports events. Sport can help us promote our values. It is particularly important that we support it in all its dimensions, especially at a time when European values and solidarity have been undermined.

**Brice Hortefeux (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (FR) I welcome the adoption by a large majority of the report on the European dimension in sport. Sport is more than an activity. It plays a pivotal social role. It promotes integration, sociability, education and social cohesion. Sport also generates growth and employment. It currently accounts for 15 million jobs in Europe and 3.6% of European GDP. We should therefore not overlook this important dimension that helps strengthen our social fabric and achieve our public health goals.

**Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE)**, *in writing*. – I voted against paragraph 100 because I do not consider that the EU's popularity will be improved through silly measures such as the one suggested. Nevertheless, as a whole, the report is a good one and I welcome this House's support for the principle of national sports organisations.

**Filiz Hakaeva Hyusmenova (ALDE)**, *in writing*. – (BG) I gave my support to the motion for a European Parliament resolution on the European dimension in sport for a number of reasons linked to the substantial role and contribution of sport within a variety of areas. I would like to point out one aspect of sport, however, that I find particularly important nowadays: its integrating and educational role in regard to young people. Sport promotes integration and social inclusion; it teaches children how to work as part of a team and fosters tolerance and respect for others. In addition to sport's contribution to public health, its educational and social functions make it an attractive means of influencing people's behaviour.

I share the opinion that sport has the potential to help groups of young people who are vulnerable and at risk to get back on track, and this potential should be developed and supported. On the other hand, it is undeniable that we often witness violence and displays of aggression from supporters of different teams at sports events, especially in football. I support the need for strict and coordinated measures against such misbehaviour as it may not only have direct adverse consequences, but could also have indirect ones, such as negatively influencing the behavioural development of children and young people.

**Salvatore Iacolino (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (IT) I supported the Fisas Ayxela report because I believe that it highlighted well the main issues requiring intervention by the EU. The Treaty of Lisbon gives the European Union the task of developing the European dimension of sport by promoting cooperation between bodies responsible for sport and protecting the physical and moral integrity of sportsmen and sportswomen. Sport contributes to the attainment of the EU's strategic objectives, playing an important role in various sectors such as social inclusion, education, training and public health.

However, corruption, money laundering and other forms of financial crime affect sport at the local, national and international levels. Given the extent to which the sector is internationalised, corruption in sport often has cross-border aspects. The Member States should therefore take all steps necessary to prevent and penalise unlawful activities that compromise the integrity of sport.

In addition, with reference to illegal betting, it is vital for the Member States to develop instruments designed to foster cooperation between public authorities, sports authorities

and gambling operators in relation to cases of sports fraud, as well as tackling the issue of gambling addiction and the protection of minors in this sphere.

**Juozas Imbrasas (EFD),** *in writing.* – (LT) I welcomed this document because it urges the Commission to propose a dedicated and ambitious budget for sports policy under the future multiannual financial framework (MFF) given the public health, social, cultural and economic benefits of sport. Sport at all ages is an important area with great potential for improving the overall level of health of Europeans and therefore, the EU and Member States are urged to encourage involvement in sport and to promote a healthy lifestyle, fully exploiting the opportunities of sport, because ultimately, this will reduce spending on health care. I am pleased about the focus on disabled people, encouraging them to take up sporting activities and providing adequate funding to develop sport and competitions for people with disabilities, above all, by giving them access to sport and equal opportunities to participate in sport and use sports facilities adapted to the needs of disabled athletes free of charge. Sport plays an important role in ensuring social inclusion, public health and volunteerism across borders. It promotes physical activity and facilitates significant savings in terms of public expenditure on health.

**Philippe Juvin (PPE),** *in writing.* – (FR) Sport is an integral part of human and social development. Like my colleagues in the Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats), I am convinced that the European Union should create a future specific programme on sport. I voted in favour of this report, which was written following the Commission's communication entitled 'Developing the European Dimension in Sport'. To create a genuine European dimension in sport, the report recommends taking into account certain factors, in particular, the societal role of sport, encouraging a healthy lifestyle, the fight against doping, violence and intolerance and lastly, better governance in line with the principle of subsidiarity.

**Edvard Kožušník (ECR),** *in writing.* – (CS) I have played sport since early childhood. That was one of the reasons why I paid a lot of attention to the discussion of this report. It concerns me that the report tries to make politics out of sport, and completely loses sight of the essence of sporting ideals. Sport has historically been based on the voluntary involvement, spontaneity and, above all, enjoyment of those taking part. The attempt to truss it up with pan-European recommendations and pan-European institutions under the pretext of promoting universal bliss will, in my opinion, have an effect that is contrary to the rapporteur's expectations and assumptions. Sport naturally encourages integration, but it should not be misused for the artificial furthering of European integration. The idea of de-nationalising sport by giving greater visibility to EU symbols at the expense of national ones is just a feeble joke, in my opinion. That is one of the reasons why I have not voted in favour of this report.

**Morten Løkkegaard (ALDE),** *in writing.* – (DA) The Danish Liberal Party supports Parliament's report on the European dimension in sport, and it is happy with the compromise with regard to paragraph 100. This paragraph clearly states that it should be entirely voluntary and up to the Member States or sports organisations to choose whether they will fly the EU flag or display it on the clothing of athletes. The Danish Liberal Party is also pleased that enforcement of intellectual property rights is emphasised whilst taking into account freedom of expression and of the press, which must not, under any circumstances, be restricted.

**Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PL) Physical activity is a key element of a healthy and proper lifestyle, with sport constituting an important public health tool, and – I would go as far as saying – a significant factor in the reduction of public health expenditure. Regular exercise prevents and protects young people and the elderly against health problems, including obesity, cardiovascular disease, diabetes and even cancer. The promotion of a culture of physical activity and sport also contributes to improved mental health and well-being. In my opinion, we should develop clear and transparent guidelines within the EU regarding the inclusion of sport and physical activity at all levels of education. This is one of a number of reasons why I supported the report drafted by Santiago Fisas Ayxela on the European dimension in sport.

**David Martin (S&D),** *in writing.* – I voted for this report, which points out that the support and promotion of sport for people with intellectual or physical disabilities should be a priority in the EU, considering its important role in delivering social inclusion, public health and volunteerism across borders.

**Clemente Mastella (PPE),** *in writing.* – (IT) In acknowledging that sport has a European dimension, we believe that sports rules should comply with European Union legislation and, in particular, the EU's Charter of Fundamental Rights. On this point, we must certainly endorse the need for transparency and accountability in the governing structures. We therefore call on Sport Governing Bodies (SGBs) to adopt a zero-tolerance policy on corruption and to put into practice ethical codes based on moral integrity and a genuine concern for fair competition. We also call on the Commission and the Member States to adopt a harmonised approach against corruption in sport, and we stress that the fight against doping should be in full compliance with EU law, especially with the Charter of Fundamental Rights, privacy and data protection laws, and labour laws.

**Barbara Matera (PPE),** *in writing.* – (IT) I voted for the report by Mr Fisas Ayxela because I am convinced of the importance of combining sport with school education. The aim, which is not confined to a single State, but applies overall to all the Member States of the EU, must be to achieve greater harmonisation and, at the same time, to open up sport for all European citizens, without any kind of discrimination.

Sport is going through a crisis period, particularly as a result of the criminal activities connected with it. It is to be hoped that the European institutions can exercise greater control over the world of sport, given the abuses being seen. In order to tackle such abuse, regulation would, most probably, enable the standard of sports governance to be improved. Therefore, taking action to regulate the activities of sports agents and player transfers, as well as fighting fraud and doping, are all measures that should produce a useful result in these terms. Finally, establishing a 'European Day of Sports' and designating an annual 'European Capital of Sport' are, in my view, excellent tools for bringing citizens closer to sport.

**Marisa Matias (GUE/NGL),** *in writing.* – (PT) Sport promotes socialisation and recreation, and is one of the most important factors in the health of modern society. In recent decades, playing grassroots sport has been increasingly replaced with merely attending professional sports events. There is a need for a European approach to promoting grassroots sport and to regulating professional sport, as well as to banishing violence and doping from sport. This report is a step in that direction, so I voted in favour.

**Mario Mauro (PPE),** *in writing.* – (IT) The report provides a comprehensive vision of the challenges facing the world of sport today and offers some interesting ideas and suggestions

for tackling these problems. I also believe that the report makes a practical contribution to identifying measures to guarantee the sustainable funding of sport and the protection of the integrity of competitions in the future. However, recognising a right to enjoy sporting events through betting is not the only way in which to provide for the economic support and integrity of sport. EU Member States such as Italy use efficient systems for allocating funding and I believe that it is vital for them to be able to maintain their good practices, abiding by the principle of subsidiarity. I voted in favour.

**Mairead McGuinness (PPE),** *in writing.* – Although I supported the overall text of this report, I abstained from voting on paragraph 1 which urges ‘a dedicated and ambitious budget for sports policy under the future multiannual financial framework (MFF)’. Many major EU policy areas are facing substantial reductions in their future budget and, unless Member States increase their GNI-based contributions to the next MFF, achieving this noble objective of supporting an EU dimension in sport will, sadly, be very difficult.

**Nuno Melo (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) Sport is an important phenomenon and a social asset. For many, it is one of the most important forms of recreation, whether they take part themselves or are simply spectators. At its best, sport brings people together, no matter what their origin, background, religious beliefs or economic status. Sport promotes the active contribution of European citizens to society and helps foster a sense of social inclusion. Article 165 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union gives the EU a new competence for sport, calls on the EU to contribute to the promotion of sporting issues, and stipulates that EU action should be aimed at developing the European dimension in sport. The communication from the Commission is the first policy document issued in the field of sport after the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon, which gives the EU a mandate to support, coordinate and supplement sport policy measures taken by Member States. That is why I voted in favour.

**Alexander Mirsky (S&D),** *in writing.* – The very good aim is enhancing health through sport; its economic role; the organisation of sports, and fostering a sense of European identity through sport. Within those broad areas, more specific matters are addressed such as the role of agents in sports; dual careers for young sportspersons; violence at sports events; corruption and match fixing; anti-doping measures, and greater representation of women in sports’ governing structures. I voted in favour.

**Andreas Mölzer (NI),** *in writing.* – (DE) Sport is a worldwide phenomenon, and is therefore also an important economic driver within the EU. In addition, sport promotes public health and makes a significant contribution to people’s work-life balance. Professional sport has a dark side, however, which should not be ignored. Doping is an increasing problem and is threatening to spill over into amateur sport, too. Major sporting events foster national identity and support the economies of the individual countries involved. The report did not get my vote, which is to say I abstained from voting, because further measures by the EU are likely to result in there being less and less room for national identity, particularly in relation to the sporting fan base.

**Tiziano Motti (PPE),** *in writing.* – (IT) Faced with worrying figures showing that young people in Europe are becoming increasingly obese, leading some countries, such as France and Denmark, to bring in a tax on sweet fizzy drinks, sport is the best response that we can give. Our young people do not need to be taxed to understand that what they consume is detrimental to their health. Our young people know how to make their own choices, provided that there is an alternative. I voted for this report today, which puts sport forward

as a guide to an experience that brings people together and to a healthy lifestyle, because that is the alternative. However, more structures are needed for young people, and qualified coaches are needed, with qualifications that are certified and recognised in every country. Instructors, agents and players should be encouraged to practise mobility within Europe in order to facilitate an exchange of good practices. Healthy sport is sport in which people participate in order to act as a team and in order to win. In other words, it is the antithesis of the message given by doping and easy money, and by voting for this report, I voted against these.

**Siiri Oviir (ALDE),** *in writing.* – (ET) I supported the adoption of this report, and I consider it important to devote increased attention to developing and supporting sport at the European Union level, especially since Article 165 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union gives the EU new powers to support measures taken by the Member States in relation to sport. Sport is very important from the point of view of maintaining and promoting health, since the absence of physical activity has a detrimental effect on the health of Europe's citizens. Sport also has an extremely strong economic impact, providing work, directly or indirectly, for 15 million Europeans (5.4% of the working population) and added value of roughly EUR 407 billion. As a member of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality, I consider it important that studies be organised at the European level on the distinctive features of women's sport, the reasons why women and girls stop doing sports and the continued inequality with regard to sporting opportunities for women. The popularisation of women's sport should be improved, because it is clearly overshadowed by men's sport, and, as a result, many young girls unfortunately do not consider sport to be sufficiently important. Popular sport is the best way to prevent a number of diseases, and underestimating the role of sport in the advancement of society is a mistake we will later seriously regret.

**Rolandas Paksas (EFD),** *in writing.* – (LT) I voted in favour of this resolution because sport is not just a major public health tool, but also a social and cultural phenomenon as well as a dynamic sector of the economy. Sport is also an important tool in development policy. Consequently, the European dimension in sport also needs to be coordinated. An ambitious budget is required in order to achieve this goal. Given the benefits provided by sport, both the EU as a whole and each individual Member State must encourage citizens to become involved in sport and promote a healthy lifestyle. There should be a special focus on people with disabilities and their integration into sporting activities. I welcome the proposal that the profession of sports agents should be a regulated professional activity and that a European register of sports agents should be created which would help to protect athletes from the risk of conflicts of interest. Furthermore, in order to stop doping and other kinds of manipulation of sports events, we must constantly encourage Member States to exchange information, experience and best practices.

**Alfredo Pallone (PPE),** *in writing.* – (IT) Sport is commonly thought of in terms of competition and physical activity, but at the institutional level, the sports dimension should be interpreted in a much deeper way. The report by Mr Fisas Ayxela, with which I fully agree, emphasises the social value of sport understood as an instrument for social inclusion, around which the economy, work, health and so on revolve. The European Union is trying to expand the recognition of the importance of sporting activities and it is hoped that sports projects between Member States will increasingly be the product of social cohesion and improvement in citizens' lifestyles.

**Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE),** *in writing.* – (EL) The own-initiative report, which I supported, raises (among other things) the important problem of match fixing (Articles 55 to 57). In fact, it points out that, at my proposal, there will be a public hearing at the end of the year in the Committee on Culture and Education on this issue. Europe has faced serious corruption in sport, especially over the last two years. The match fixing scandals in Germany, on which the Commission has asked for UEFA's opinion, and similar problems in other European countries, such as Italy and Greece, are just a few examples. Within the framework of the Community's enhanced competences in the field of sport under Article 165 of the Treaty, the Commission has previously assured us that it intends to support cooperation between the public and private sectors in order to find ways of combating 'fixed' matches. It is important that the Commission inform us of the results that these efforts have had and if the Member States have made any progress in this direction.

**Maria do Céu Patrão Neves (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) This report is coming out in the context of the European Union's new competences in the field of sport, pursuant to Article 165 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. The Treaty gives the EU a mandate to support, coordinate and supplement sport policy measures adopted by the Member States. The Commission communication is the first policy document relating to sport since the Treaty of Lisbon came into force. Prior to these competences, the European Parliament had already promoted a number of documents in the form of resolutions on this subject, which the rapporteur is making use of to table Parliament's proposals. I voted in favour because I agree with the measures established for a huge sector that is growing fast, with a major impact on national economies, and that employs 15 million people, directly or indirectly.

**Marit Paulsen, Olle Schmidt and Cecilia Wikström (ALDE),** *in writing.* – (SV) Sport is an important element of many people's lives. We wholeheartedly support the initiatives presented in this report with regard to the focus on fair competition rules and the fight against doping and betting fraud, for example.

However, it is not possible to support all commendable initiatives financially from the EU budget, and at times of continuing economic difficulties, we believe that the demand for an ambitious budget for the sports sector in the EU's next long-term budget sends out the wrong signals. A responsible Parliament must carefully weigh up such a priority against other important and commendable priorities in order to determine how best to use taxpayers' money. For that reason, we are choosing to vote against paragraph 1 of the report.

**Rovana Plumb (S&D),** *in writing.* – (RO) The Commission communication is the first policy document on sport since the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, which gives the EU the mandate to support, coordinate and supplement sport policy measures taken by Member States. Sport itself constitutes an important social activity and a public good. For many, it is one of the most important forms of recreation, whether they take part or are only spectators. One of the biggest benefits of sport is that it brings people together, no matter what their origin, background, religious beliefs, gender or economic status. Doping, spectator violence and disorder remain, unfortunately, a Europe-wide problem, and there is a need for a European approach comprising measures designed to reduce the associated risks. Sport promotes the active contribution of European citizens to society and helps foster a sense of social inclusion, as it is an important and thriving economic sector which makes a significant contribution to growth and employment, exceeding the average growth

rates for value added and employment. However, the sustainable funding of sport is an issue which needs to be examined in closer detail.

**Paulo Rangel (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) As well as being an important phenomenon and social asset, sport is a vector of integration that promotes the active participation of the European public in society and helps to develop a feeling of social inclusion. It also represents a huge and quickly growing sector of the economy that contributes significantly to growth and jobs. As such, it is right that the EU and its Member States should adopt policies and measures supporting and promoting sport which will make it possible to tackle the main challenges faced in this area; for example: combating doping, violence and intolerance, the free movement of the public and sportsmen and women switching nationality, the legality of player transfers and the transparency of the associated transfers, European social dialogue in the sector, and the integrity of competitions. I voted in favour because I see these concerns reflected in the report.

**Teresa Riera Madurell (S&D),** *in writing.* – (ES) I applaud the approval of this report on the European dimension in sport. I want to underline the contribution of sport to the EU's strategic objectives, especially those related to the key values of education and culture. It is also an important vector of integration. I believe the reference to doping in the report is positive. Doping is an attack on the values of sport and puts sportspeople's lives at risk. It is a problem that I have reported on many occasions. In this plenary, I have already argued that the way to fight against doping is to work not just for fair competition, but also for the health of the citizens. I take this opportunity to reaffirm the fact that scientific investigations into doping need a European dimension. A combined effort is needed to more effectively identify and combat the increasingly more dangerous substances and processes that are used in doping. It is notable that there is a request within this report for the accession of the EU to the Anti-Doping Convention of the Council of Europe and I would like to reiterate the importance of European legislation against this dangerous activity.

**Crescenzo Rivellini (PPE),** *in writing.* – (IT) I should like to offer my congratulations on the excellent work carried out by Mr Fisas Ayxela. The entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon has led to a revolution in sport, because for the first time, it has created a legal basis specifically for this sector, Article 165. Therefore, we now need more coordinated action at European level to fight doping, violence in stadiums, match fixing and shady deals by sports agents. Through the creation of a 'European blacklist', Parliament is asking that fans who are known to be violent or who engage in discriminatory behaviour be banned from all European stadiums. In addition, to fight match fixing and money laundering, Parliament is asking that any fraudulent activity be treated as a criminal offence and that a licensing system be put in place for betting operators. Finally, the profession of sports agent should also be regulated, in the view of the European Parliament. In fact, in order to obtain a licence, agents will have to prove that they have certain minimum qualifications for the profession, that their fiscal residence is within the EU, and they will have to undertake to abide by a code of conduct.

**Robert Rochefort (ALDE),** *in writing.* – (FR) I voted for this report on the European dimension in sport, which is the first in this field to be adopted by Parliament since the Treaty of Lisbon entered into force. I welcome the fact that it highlights the important role of sport in promoting intercultural dialogue, public health, the integration of socially vulnerable people, the fight against discrimination, and even the emancipation of women. Another positive point is that the text recognises the importance of volunteers in sport

– some 35 million in Europe – and stresses the need to provide them with proper training. Naturally, the fight against doping is a key point in the text: we call, in particular, for prevention and information campaigns to be put in place and urge the Member States to treat trafficking in illegal performance-enhancing substances in the same way as trafficking in illegal drugs. The paragraph suggesting that the European flag be flown at major international sporting events held in the European Union has proved controversial. Considering that this would help strengthen European citizens' sense of belonging to the same group, despite the European project currently going through some dark times, I supported it being kept in the text.

**Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE),** *in writing.* – In favour. Article 165 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) gives the EU a new competence for sport, calls on the EU to contribute to the promotion of sporting issues, and provides that EU action should be aimed at developing the European dimension in sport. The communication from the Commission entitled 'Developing the European Dimension in Sport' is the first policy document issued in the field of sport after the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, which gives the EU a mandate to support, coordinate and supplement sport policy measures taken by Member States. It sets out the Commission's ideas for EU-level action in the field of sport. It proposes concrete actions for the Commission and/or the Member States: the societal role of sport, the economic dimension of sport and the organisation of sport.

**Licia Ronzulli (PPE),** *in writing.* – (IT) In order to fight doping, violence in stadiums, match fixing and shady deals by sports agents, we need more coordinated action at European level. The entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon has led to a revolution in sport, because for the first time, it has created a legal basis specifically for this sector. Today, through the adoption of this report, Parliament is asking that fans who are known to be violent or who engage in discriminatory behaviour be banned from all European stadiums. A proper Europe-wide database will be used by the national authorities to ensure that these bans are also in force for international matches. The Member States and the sports federations must also commit to adopting more decisive policies against racism and homophobia against athletes. The final text also suggests that trafficking in illegal performance-enhancing substances should be treated in the same way as trafficking in illegal drugs. I must point out that the final document asks for the EU to identify and eliminate all obstacles likely to prevent girls and women from doing sports. Better representation of women in sports federations could help to promote female participation in sport.

**Oreste Rossi (EFD),** *in writing.* – (IT) Following the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon, new competences have been granted to the European Parliament, as colegislator, including sport. The new European agenda on sport aims to promote physical activity for the benefit of a healthy body and mind, to support the fight against doping, and to ensure that everyone can participate in sport, with special reference to people with disabilities. In addition, the report sets itself the objective of preserving traditional and local sports, as items of cultural heritage. While I endorse the text, I consider it superfluous to emphasise that sport should allow immigrants and their host countries to interact, promoting integration. I believe that sport, at least, should be considered as something for all, and should not favour any ethnic group in particular.

**Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD),** *in writing.* – (EL) I voted in favour of the rapporteur's report because I consider sport to be an important activity with benefits for society, health and the economy. That is why I believe that promoting sport is crucial and that the EU should take action to help attain this objective and to develop its European dimension. Furthermore,

I believe that the Commission communication and the actions proposed seek, among other things, to promote sport and the provision of assistance to develop it. Finally, I believe that these proposals will make a positive contribution, resulting in greater attention being paid to issues that constitute a threat to sport, such as doping and violence (as evidenced by various episodes at football grounds).

**Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (IT) Developing a shared European dimension in sport is dear to the heart of the European Union. The Treaty of Lisbon gave the EU a mandate to support, coordinate and supplement sport policy measures taken by Member States. Sport itself is an important social phenomenon and a public good. For many, it is one of the most important forms of recreation, whether they take part themselves or if they are a spectator. European policies on sport must, in sporting terms, support the fight against doping, while from a cultural point of view, we need to take action to reduce spectator violence and disorder. We must not forget the importance of sport for public health. Indeed, this vote underlines the fact that sport is a major public health tool and a powerful factor for reducing public health expenditure, while also stressing that the positive effects of regular physical activity include the prevention of health problems such as obesity, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer and osteoporosis.

**Catherine Stihler (S&D)**, *in writing*. – Since the Lisbon Treaty came into effect, the European institutions have gained responsibility for sport. An EU-level approach allows us to tackle important aspects which affect all Member States, such as obesity and the role sport can play in tackling it. I support this report, which has many good elements. I am glad that wearing the EU flags at major sporting events is not compulsory and at the discretion of those taking part.

**Alf Svensson (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (SV) During the vote in the European Parliament on 2 February, I chose to vote against the report on the European dimension in sport. It is my view that sport is a national matter, and in Sweden, the Swedish Sports Confederation is independent and has a great deal of autonomy. With EU programmes and the introduction of a 'dedicated and ambitious budget for sports policy', sport will start to become a more supranational activity instead of being an independent and important element in civil society. Proposals for European coach education within the framework of the Lifelong Learning programmes, measures to enable the financing of sport through lotteries, payment of agents' fees in instalments and EU flags on sports clothing are examples of measures that I consider to lie entirely outside the realms of politics.

**Nuno Teixeira (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (PT) Article 165 of the Treaty assigns the EU a new competence relating to sport: the EU must contribute to promoting sporting issues and develop the European dimension of sport. In its first communication on this issue, the Commission is proposing concrete measures relating to the social role, the economic dimension and the organisation of sport. The European Parliament supports emphasis on the European dimension of sport, stressing issues like the resolution of major problems, the need for adequate management, its importance for tourism, the issue of fairness in sporting competitions, the budget, traditional games and sports, opportunities and jobs, training and mobility, cooperation with third countries and international organisations, and the European sporting identity itself.

**Silvia-Adriana Țicău (S&D)**, *in writing*. – (RO) I voted for the report on the European dimension in sport since, in accordance with Article 165 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the EU's aim is to develop the European dimension in sport by

promoting fairness and openness in sporting competitions and cooperation between the bodies responsible for sport, and by protecting the physical and moral integrity of sportsmen and sportswomen, especially the youngest among them. Sport plays an important part in the European economy as it directly or indirectly employs around 15 million people (5.4% of the working population) and accounts for 3.65% of EU GDP every year. Sport contributes to the population's state of health, and promoting physical activity and sport can help achieve significant savings in terms of public expenditure on health.

We call on Member States to incorporate physical education as a subject in the curriculum of schools of every kind, and underline the importance of participation in sports at all levels of education and in local communities, which should be encouraged to have sports facilities with suitable equipment.

I feel it is a good sign organising a European Day of Sport every year which promotes the social and cultural role of amateur and professional sport and the benefits of sport in terms of public health.

**Viktor Uspaskich (ALDE), in writing.** – (LT) I agree with the rapporteur that sport can encourage our citizens to contribute to society and help to strengthen the feeling of social inclusion. We can learn a lot from sport: the EuroBasket tournament recently held in Lithuania demonstrated the enthusiasm, goal striving and unity that is unfortunately lacking in Lithuanian politics and public life. Sport is poorly funded in Lithuania. This is understandable given the economic crisis affecting my country. However, we cannot simply blame the economic crisis for the poor funding of sport. Another problem is the weak administration of Lithuania's sports system. Last year, LTL 39 million (a little more than EUR 11 million) was allocated to sport in Lithuania. By contrast, Latvia's sports budget is almost double that amount. There is a need for greater transparency and better administration. Part of the problem is caused by the distribution of funds – while some larger Lithuanian sports federations receive the biggest proportion of funding, several dozen federations are left without a penny. The issue of the sustainable funding of Lithuanian sport should be examined more closely.

**Derek Vaughan (S&D), in writing.** – I voted in favour of this report as it takes positive steps towards ensuring fair play on and off the pitch. As a keen advocate of sports, the proposal promises to promote more cooperation between the 27 Member States on sporting issues such as a better exchange of information on hooligans to prevent them attending international matches. In addition, the report also guaranteed to tackle the trafficking of doping substances, match fixing, illegal betting and money laundering by making them criminal offences. The above proposals and others in the report will bring a higher degree of fairness to sport across the EU.

**Angelika Werthmann (NI), in writing.** – (DE) Sport not only promotes health, but also fosters social integration by bringing together people of different social, ethnic and religious backgrounds. For this reason, sports lessons should be promoted from early childhood and should be a permanent fixture in the curriculum of all educational institutions. For the same reasons, I also welcome the proposal from the rapporteur that a mobility programme should be established for young athletes and coaches in order to strengthen the European dimension in sport.

**Hermann Winkler (PPE), in writing.** – (DE) Our statement on the European dimension in sport paid tribute to the central role of sport in our society and its enormous contribution to human and social development. Most of the work done in sport is carried out on a

voluntary basis. This is something that cannot be emphasised often enough. For this reason, it is important to me that we should support the great efforts being made by people at grassroots level, while it is a key task for the future to anchor support for sport as securely as possible in all relevant funding programmes. Unfortunately, there is as yet no reference to sport in the draft regulations for cohesion policy, even though other areas are mentioned where sport can make an important contribution. I would call for sport to be expressly mentioned. This would give the Member States a good basis for their operational programmes. The proposal for a sports programme within the 'Erasmus for All' programme is also a good idea. I particularly welcome the idea that we should foster sport at grassroots level and as a voluntary activity, rather than promoting top-level sport. This offers an opportunity to combat potential social problems, such as racism, social exclusion, drug dependency or crime, while also promoting the enjoyment to be had in pushing oneself to one's physical and mental limits in a team.

**Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR), *in writing*.** – Yesterday, when I spoke out against this report in the Chamber, I was barracked and jeered by Europhiles because of my opposition to the recommendation to place the EU flag on sportsmen's uniforms. I was reminded via a blue-card question that the recommendation was purely voluntary. I replied that while it may be voluntary, there should be no such reference to the EU flag in sport, be it voluntary or otherwise. I find it increasingly difficult to persuade my constituents of the benefits of a single market when the EU time and time again takes every opportunity to both depart from the original objectives of a community of trading nations and also to impose a federal EU identity on its unwitting and unwilling citizens. Natasha Kuchinskaya, one of the first Soviet gymnasts to take part in the Olympics, described the USSR's attitude to sport as follows: 'Sport was considered the prestige of the government. If sport was strong, government was strong'. I am all for a strong trading bloc which creates growth and jobs, but we must resist the EU becoming a manipulative, propagandist superstate.

**Inês Zuber (GUE/NGL), *in writing*.** – (PT) Free and universal access to quality participation in sport is essential for the social and personal development of individuals, and is a right that should be guaranteed by each Member State through public funding for sports organisations, for schools and for popular associations. This last issue is particularly important for reports whose purpose is 'developing the European dimension in sport', since this cannot replace each country's cultural and sporting individuality. This report includes positive measures, although mainly in terms of intentions, that emphasise mass-participation sport and involvement in sport, without forgetting gender issues; in particular, it proposes 'a dedicated and ambitious budget for sports policy' under the new multiannual financial framework. However, we are bound to mention our concern about, and disagreement with, the proposals that amateur sport be financed essentially through contributions from lotteries, that a European-level 'supporters' database be created and that any form of political expression by athletes be banned during matches.

#### **Report: Carlos José Iturgaiz Angulo (A7-0335/2012)**

**Luís Paulo Alves (S&D), *in writing*.** – (PT) I regret that it was impossible to adopt more ideas regarding environmental surveillance. As this is, therefore, the minimum report, the Commission should monitor more carefully the transposition by the Member States of the EU directive on the protection of the environment through criminal law, to ensure that it is done promptly and effectively. It is important to implement exhaustive waste management plans within the framework of European legislation. For their part, it is to be hoped that the public authorities will be effective and thorough, particularly in the case of

education and health care matters such as this, since this is an issue that has been leading to a growing number of petitions from members of the European public.

**Laima Liucija Andrikienė (PPE)**, *in writing*. – I voted in favour of the resolution initiated by the EP (EPP Group) based on fact-finding visits and petitions of European citizens to the Parliament concerning the environment, in particular, the inappropriate application by the Member States of the Waste Management Directive (new plants, landfills and incinerators). Three main problems were identified: a lack of a sound environmental impact assessment and public consultations in the permission procedure for landfills; incorrect operation of waste management facilities and deficiencies in waste management systems. I agree that the EP, at EU level, should urge the Member States to speed up the transposition of the Waste Framework Directive into national law, that there should be reinforcement of the existing European Environment Agency for monitoring purposes rather than creating new instances, and that the Member States should be recommended to impose, in accordance with the ‘polluter pays’ principle, adequate and dissuasive fines and penalties for illegal disposal of waste, especially with regard to toxic and hazardous waste.

**Sophie Auconie (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (FR) Judging by the petitions we have received, the citizens of the European Union are concerned about Member States’ inability to have effective and sustainable waste management policies. The European Parliament has listened to you. Like a number of my colleagues, I have voted in favour of the resolution, which seeks to improve these policies. Even though they are often guaranteed by private interests, these companies provide a kind of public service. We have therefore called for clearer and more specific criteria for the location of landfills in relation to local housing, schools or health facilities. It is also about greater communication about the merits of pre-sorting waste, and driving home the point that, although adequate waste management can be expensive, it can attract investment and create jobs. Everyone remembers when ponds containing red toxic sludge were breached in Hungary leading to the devastation of a village, or the landfill, near Marseille, which, in 2008, was close to saturation, despite being well managed. The problem is therefore one that affects the whole of Europe.

**Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)**, *in writing*. – (LT) The European Parliament Committee on Petitions is receiving an increasing number of complaints about the inability of public authorities in many countries to deal satisfactorily with the problem of waste management. Failure to manage such issues and set priorities in this area has a negative impact on human health and well-being, but also on the outlook for the whole planet. Waste management is becoming a major political and social problem and people expect the European Union to deal with it. I agree that the Commission must take on a greater role and work more actively to identify systemic weaknesses in the implementation of waste-related directives by the Member States and take action against Member States if they fail to properly fulfil the obligations set out in EU legislation.

**Regina Bastos (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (PT) Most European citizens expect public authorities to provide efficient and effective public services in terms of health, education, transport and security. However, one issue that provokes a growing number of petitions is the apparent inability of public authorities in many countries to deal satisfactorily with the problem of waste management. Judging by the petitions received, the concern of many local communities is growing and this indicates that waste management is becoming a major political and social problem. This motion for a resolution urges the Member States to speed up transposition of the Waste Framework Directive into national law, as well as calling on national authorities to implement measures essential to combating the illegal

dumping of waste. It also calls on the Commission to monitor carefully the transposition by the Member States of the EU directive on the protection of the environment, so as to ensure that it is done promptly and effectively. I voted for this motion for a resolution because I believe the measures therein will contribute to better implementation of waste management policy in the future.

**Jean-Luc Bennahmias (ALDE),** *in writing.* – (FR) When the Waste Framework Directive was adopted in 2008, citizens overwhelmingly denounced the mismanagement of waste in Europe. This was only to be expected. They have every right to expect public authorities to provide public services that take their health and their environment into consideration. The apparent inability of certain Member States to manage their waste and, in particular, toxic waste, has led to a significant increase in the number of petitions on this matter. Waste management is a major political and social problem. With a systematic over-reliance on landfill, monitoring and control alone are not enough to prevent household waste being contaminated by toxic waste. We need to develop these policies as early in the chain as possible by making improvements to sorting, collection and recycling and encouraging waste recovery, and also by providing an effective tracking system for toxic waste. Landfills should be the last resort. The Iturgaiz report shows us that considerable efforts are still required and reminds us that it is crucial to encourage early dialogue between the authorities and citizens. Awareness among citizens is real; it is up to the public authorities to respond by dramatically improving waste management.

**Vilija Blinkevičiūtė (S&D),** *in writing.* – (LT) I voted in favour of this European Parliament report because many European Union citizens are submitting petitions regarding waste management and the majority of petitions concern waste management facilities. Through the petitions process, citizens are expressing the feeling that the public authorities are not in control of the situation and are sometimes not prepared to make the effort required to find solutions. The relationship of trust is damaged and there is a downhill slide towards open confrontation and paralysis, thereby preventing action. Furthermore, the majority of EU citizens expect public authorities to provide efficient and effective public services in the areas of health, education, transport and security. Thus, one issue that provokes a growing number of petitions is the apparent inability of public authorities in many Member States to deal satisfactorily with the problem of waste management. The European Parliament calls on the Member States to transpose the Waste Framework Directive into their national law without further delay and to ensure full compliance with all its requirements, above all, the requirement to establish and implement comprehensive waste management plans, as well as the timely conversion of all the set goals within the framework of European legislation. The Commission should also carefully monitor the transposition by the Member States of the EU directive on the protection of the environment through criminal law, to ensure that it is done promptly and effectively.

**Sebastian Valentin Bodu (PPE),** *in writing.* – (RO) EU policy on waste has evolved in the last 30 years through a series of environmental action plans and a legislative framework whose aim is to reduce the adverse impact on the environment and health and to create a resource- and energy-efficient economy. In some Member States, recycling and recovery are the main waste management options deployed, with a reduction in the use of landfill sites to a negligible level, whereas other Member States still use landfills for most of their waste. This also presents an economic opportunity. Indeed, in 2008, this sector recorded a turnover of EUR 145 billion, which accounted for roughly 1% of EU GDP and provided 2 million jobs. Compliance with EU policy would help create a sector providing 2.4 million

jobs and a total annual turnover of EUR 187 billion. If Member States recycled 70% of their waste, this could create at least half a million new jobs throughout Europe.

**Vito Bonsignore (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (IT) This report needed to be tabled as a result of the many petitions on waste management. I voted in favour of it in order to supplement the current legislation in force. The inability of many local authorities to manage waste disposal in the majority of Member States is certainly worrying. Furthermore, the fears of many communities for human health and the well-being of the land emphasise that waste management is becoming a real socio-political issue. An analysis of the current policies shows that only a few Member States are up to speed on the matter and even manage to generate profit by using advanced waste transformation systems. Instead, in the majority of the EU, we can see a worrying delay in implementing strategies for dealing with waste and an excessive dependence on landfills. Accordingly, we urgently need to put in place a coherent policy and work with greater determination to properly apply current legislation by setting out sustainable waste disposal plans. We need to do more, then, to respect the law and improve the waste management process in order to ensure more effective environmental protection and a more sustainable future.

**Philippe Boulland (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (FR) Our citizens are deeply concerned about waste. This report is a wake-up call to Member States. However, the European Commission must also play its part and verify that the Waste Directive is properly implemented. This issue needs to be made visible but also credible. It is of great concern that Member States do not appear to be controlling their waste management situation; only six Member States have transposed the Waste Framework Directive on time, and the large number of complaints received on the matter by the Committee on Petitions often shows the lack of transparency in the choice of landfill site. Parliament also wants to impose sanctions that act as a deterrent to companies linked to organised crime, preventing them from winning public contracts solely for enrichment purposes, on a market worth some EUR 75 billion.

**Andrea Cozzolino (S&D)**, *in writing*. – (IT) The report results from complaints submitted by European citizens and shows how weak the role of the European institutions and their directives can be if they are not adequately backed up by a comprehensive monitoring network. Accordingly, the report primarily represents an extraordinary demonstration of how a democratic process originating from the grassroots can work and bring results.

In particular, the report highlights the serious delays in implementing the Waste Directive in some areas of Europe, as well as numerous violations of it, including: excessive dependence on landfills, in breach of waste disposal policies; a lack of transparency in procedures for assessing the impact on the environment; and the inaccessibility of information for citizens. In any case, the recent issues affecting Campania – one of the regions discussed in the report – have shown that tangible results can be achieved if the EU method is pursued to fruition, using all the available – and perhaps coercive – tools, making it possible to overcome flaws and structural shortcomings.

The role of citizens and their petitions is to be welcomed, but even more so the ability of the European institutions to fully comprehend their strength and their role.

**George Sabin Cutaş (S&D)**, *in writing*. – (RO) Since the European Parliament has received numerous petitions concerning possible infringements of the European Waste Management Directive, I voted for this resolution requesting the implementation of the strategies in this area in each Member State and monitoring by the European Commission of compliance with the provisions on sorting and recycling. I also think that the benefits of proper waste

management for the environment and public health need to be promoted among the public.

**Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D),** *in writing.* – (RO) An unsatisfactory level of waste recycling not only affects the health of European citizens and the state of the environment, but also has an adverse impact on Member States' economies. At EU level, improving waste recovery and recycling could achieve savings of EUR 72 billion annually, and the turnover for the European sector for waste management and recycling would increase by EUR 42 billion a year and, last but not least, more than 400 000 jobs could be created by 2020. The last point is in line with the Europe 2020 strategy objectives for creating new jobs at Member State level. I therefore think that Member States must make efforts to speed up the introduction of waste management strategies, in keeping with the Waste Framework Directive (WFD).

**Mário David (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) One of the issues that has been leading to an increasing number of petitions is the environment, which is the largest group of petitions received, with waste-related petitions representing a significant subgroup of these. This seems obvious to me, since the problem of waste affects the citizens of the entire EU very directly, particularly as regards procedures for authorising new waste management facilities or operating existing ones, followed by concern about waste management in general: the 'Not in my backyard' syndrome. Apparently, the inability of public authorities in many Member States to deal satisfactorily with the problem of waste management could be a factor in the increase that has taken place. On the basis of 114 petitions which, fundamentally, indicate failings in waste management and the frequent inability of Member States to meet their legal obligations, this report recommends that the Member States should improve the application of waste management policy in the future, that they should speed up transposition of the Waste Framework Directive into national law, and that national authorities should apply necessary and suitable measures for combating the illegal dumping of waste. I voted in favour.

**Diane Dodds (NI),** *in writing.* – I agree that Member States need to ensure better implementation of waste management policy. I am adamant that enforcement is a critical factor, BUT, I firmly believe that this is an issue for each Member State rather than Brussels Bureaucrats. The Northern Ireland waste management strategy agreed that strong government leadership and effective implementation are crucial to success. As well as making an important contribution to sustainable development, waste management is being reflected in many areas of Northern Ireland government policy. It is the responsibility of individual Member States to apply the principles of sustainable development to waste management in ways that protect and enhance the natural and physical environment and the use of resources and energy as efficiently as possible. In Northern Ireland, we view waste as a valuable resource and, by 2020, we will be recycling and composting nearly 50% of our household waste.

**Edite Estrela (S&D),** *in writing.* – (PT) I voted for the report on the 'application of the Waste Management Directive' because the Member States should make every effort to transpose this directive quickly, and to ensure full compliance with all its requirements and with all the objectives set out in European legislation, with a view to protecting the environment and public health.

**Diogo Feio (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) One of the great problems today is how to manage the waste generated by industry, by hospitals, by our homes and by the entire dynamic of

modern life. Waste is created daily and has to be properly treated, so as to enable management that is efficient and sustainable, and that preserves the environment. Although waste management is a Member State competence, great discrepancies have been identified in how it is processed in the EU, so the report recommends, rightly in my opinion, the adoption of European guidelines in relation to this that enable greater harmonisation of waste management policies.

**José Manuel Fernandes (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) In a modern society in which the ‘throw-away’ mentality has gained ground, sustainable waste management is making progress, as was very clear during the debate and vote on the report on waste electrical and electronic equipment during the last plenary sitting. Following a series of petitions denouncing threats to the environment in a number of Member States, Mr Iturgaiz Angulo is tabling a report on the application of the Waste Management Directive, and related directives, in the Member States of the European Union. The public have a right to know how waste is processed. Human health and the environment are at stake. Despite strict European legislation, there are Member States in difficulties, some of which have had infringement cases brought against them. At a time of economic crisis, we cannot waste resources. It is therefore crucial to reuse, recover and recycle waste. I voted for this report because it has significant benefits, as regards environmental preservation and human health. It is not enough for us to have the best legislation in the world: it needs to be respected. We must view recycling as an opportunity to create jobs and boost the economy.

**João Ferreira (GUE/NGL),** *in writing.* – (PT) This report tackles the problem of applying the Waste Management Directive and related directives in EU Member States, on the basis of complaints and petitions submitted to the European Parliament by groups of citizens, specifically from Greece. The rapporteur makes a series of observations that we consider positive, relating, in general, to waste management, to environmental protection and to raising public awareness. However, some aspects of the report are less positive and are bound to elicit comment. The report makes it clear that waste management is a public responsibility, but one that is frequently ensured by private entities. It does not hide that there are two multinationals controlling this business in two or three Member States, making money by the bucket load. Unfortunately, this model is not clearly rejected in the report, as was necessary. Moreover, the report mentions the 2007 directive. However, this directive has a problem: a failure to distinguish between toxic and normal waste has led, in some cases, to situations in which large companies produce toxic waste in ways that are incompatible with the primacy of public health and environmental protection interests.

**Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D),** *in writing.* – (SK) The majority of European citizens expect public authorities to provide effective and efficient public services in health, education, transport and security. An area that causes an increasing number of petitions, however, is the apparent inability of public authorities in many countries to address the issue of waste management in a satisfactory manner.

The European Union has adopted many laws applicable in all Member States in order to ensure the existence of a legal framework for dealing with the inevitable consequence of our modern lifestyle, that is, items discarded as waste from households, work, hospitals, industry and so on. Inadequate management and an inability to prioritise efforts in this respect not only have negative consequences for human health and well-being, but also have a negative effect on the environment in the broadest sense of the word.

Analysis of the waste management policies implemented in the EU Member States provides very different information. A number of Member States are very advanced, and no petitions were received from their citizens in which problems relating to waste management were indicated. Many other EU countries, however, lag far behind in the implementation of waste strategies. I believe that, in order to improve the effective management of waste, it will be necessary in the future to help improve the implementation of policies in this area.

**Mathieu Grosch (PPE), in writing. – (DE)** This report deserves wholehearted support, as it continues to push towards a sustainable, efficient waste management strategy. There has been a large number of petitions relating to waste management facilities. It therefore makes sense to summarise the main problems in a report in order then to be able to tackle them in a practical way. These main problems include a lack of environmental impact assessments and existing shortcomings in the waste management systems. I welcome the fact that the Member States are expressly called on to speed up their implementation of Directive 2008/98/EC on waste. The Waste Framework Directive contains important regulations which provide for the protection of the environment as well as human health.

Shortcomings in the waste management systems cause environmental damage, such as the pollution of groundwater. This pollution does not stop at borders, but has a cross-border effect. For this reason, the Member States must do everything they can to implement the existing directives for the sake of the health of their own populations and to protect neighbouring regions.

**Juozas Imbrasas (EFD), in writing. – (LT)** I welcomed this report because most European citizens expect public authorities to provide efficient and effective public services in the areas of health, education, transport and security. However, one issue that provokes a growing number of petitions is the apparent inability of public authorities in many countries to deal satisfactorily with the problem of waste management. Member States must ensure that a full and mandatory environmental impact assessment is conducted before any decision is taken to establish or construct a new waste facility, notably, an incinerator or methanisation plant, or, in the worst case scenario, a new landfill. The Commission is encouraged to propose clearer and more specific criteria for the location of landfills in relation to local housing, schools or health facilities in order to ensure more robust guarantees against potential risks to human health and the environment, bearing in mind that there are a large number of variables and local considerations that need to be taken into account. I believe that meeting legally established recycling and prevention targets requires the active participation of civil society, improved stakeholder participation and increased public awareness. The recommendations contained in this report should contribute to better implementation of waste management policy in the future.

**Philippe Juvin (PPE), in writing. – (FR)** The main concern voiced by European citizens who have petitioned the European Parliament is the environment, and, in particular, the application of the Waste Management Directive in Member States. Following several fact-finding visits in Ireland, Italy, France and Spain, the Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats) has supported the idea of an own-initiative report dealing with the incorrect implementation of EU legislation by Member States and inadequate waste management facilities. Finally, the text urges Member States to speed up the transposition of the Waste Management Framework Directive into their national laws. I voted in favour of this report.

**Jarosław Kalinowski (PPE), in writing.** – (PL) The increasing volume of waste is the result of a modern lifestyle, and is a problem that involves each and every one of us, from major industrial plants right down to individual households. Waste is dangerous both to human and animal health, as well as to our planet's ecosystem. It is also an equally important issue for rural areas, which generate many types of waste, and where sometimes electrical or particularly hazardous asbestos waste, for example, is dumped next to municipal, biodegradable waste. These areas require proper systems for the regular collection of this waste, and such systems should be accompanied by practical information campaigns.

As we read in the report, the advances made in waste management policies differ quite significantly between individual Member States. In countries such as Austria or Denmark, waste management is very advanced, while other countries, mainly the new Member States, still lack proper legal regulations and administrative procedures. It is, therefore, necessary to implement a harmonised waste management policy.

**Petru Constantin Luhan (PPE), in writing.** – (RO) Numerous petitions submitted recently to the European Parliament highlight that an ever increasing number of local communities are concerned that waste management is becoming a major political and social problem. The very credibility of EU legislation is at stake.

The waste industry in the European Union is a public responsibility, frequently managed by private interests and multinational companies, which handles 60% of household waste and 75% of waste from businesses, with an annual turnover of EUR 75 billion. This is precisely why the European Commission must propose clearer and more specific criteria for locating environmentally-friendly landfills and their proximity to residential areas, schools or hospitals.

I supported the position of the rapporteur precisely because of the measures to combat any infiltration of the waste management system by organised crime and to prevent any links between organised crime and the waste industry or public authorities.

Another important proposal made in the report is that, after allocating the waste treatment funds to companies, the local and/or national authorities must implement effective financial monitoring of the use of these funds.

**David Martin (S&D), in writing.** – I voted for this report, which encourages the Commission to fully recognise the linkage of effective environmental legislation regarding historical heritage sites and the conservation and promotion of biodiversity – such as that contained in the Water Framework Directive and the Habitats and Wild Birds Directives – with the EIA and Strategic Environmental Assessment Directives and with legislation regarding the management of waste.

**Clemente Mastella (PPE), in writing.** – (IT) In recent years, a majority of European citizens have used the petitions system to complain about the inability of public authorities in many countries to deal satisfactorily with the problem of waste management.

Even though the European Union has adopted a broad raft of legislation, applicable in all Member States, to ensure that a single legal framework is in place, judging by the petitions received, the concern of many local communities is growing. This indicates that waste management is becoming a major political and social problem and that people expect the European Union to adopt new measures on this issue.

In this report, we once again denounce the major delays in many other Member States on implementing waste strategies and, in this vein, the excessive dependence on landfills. We ask for a rapid change of attitude to this problem so that EU regulations do not continue to be breached.

**Barbara Matera (PPE), in writing.** – (IT) I am voting in favour of the report by Mr Iturgaiz Angulo because I think that the problem of waste disposal is a priority issue that the Member States cannot and must not fail to tackle. Applying the European Waste Directive is essential in order to ward off environmental disasters and health risks.

According to the European Commission, Europeans produce 3 billion tonnes of waste each year. Such quantities require us to make a frank assessment of the environmental impact of landfills and the correct functioning of waste management plants.

The problems facing some Member States in transposing the Waste Framework Directive are also regrettable. I agree with the appeal made to the Commission for more careful monitoring of the transposition process. The issue of waste disposal does not only affect health but also falls within the scope of fighting the infiltration of organised crime in the waste management and disposal process. Accordingly, I cannot but take a positive view of the move to strengthen the European Environment Agency, which will not only contribute to substantial improvements in the environment but also to providing politicians and citizens alike with important and reliable information.

**Mario Mauro (PPE), in writing.** – (IT) I am voting in favour of the report by Mr Iturgaiz Angulo. The issues raised in the petition are all pertinent and will definitely assist the Commission in its work. The correct implementation of the Waste Management Directive is essential for dealing with what has now become a political and social problem of major importance. A huge chunk of the credibility of the European institutions is at stake over this issue.

**Mairead McGuinness (PPE), in writing.** – Eurostat figures from 2009 show that EU citizens produce, on average, 513 kg of municipal waste per person per year; In Ireland, the figure was between 700 and 800 kg per person. By the end of 2009, EU infringement cases related to waste constituted 20% of all environmental infringements. A resource-efficient Europe is one of the flagship targets of the Europe 2020 strategy, and the Waste Framework Directive introduced a 50% target for recycling of municipal waste, to be met by 2020 in all Member States. I welcome the Commission's increased support for the directive with resources to improve implementation and enforcement in the EU waste *acquis* at national level. I voted in favour of this report.

**Jean-Luc Mélenchon (GUE/NGL), in writing.** – (FR) This report reminds Member States of their obligation to comply with the waste hierarchy in waste management. It insists that non-accredited landfill sites are closed immediately and points out that landfill should be the last resort. I support all these points. I nevertheless find it regrettable that the text is too complacent when it comes to waste incineration, a highly polluting technology that benefits large industrial groups to the detriment of reuse, recycling and renewable energies. It also backs the privatisation of waste management in Europe, which explains the predominance of this harmful technique. It is high time we introduced environmental planning that will silence market forces and ensure respect for priorities deemed to be in the public interest.

**Nuno Melo (PPE), in writing. – (PT)** Most European citizens expect public authorities to provide efficient and effective public services in terms of health, education, transport and security. However, one issue that provokes a growing number of petitions is the apparent inability of public authorities in many countries to deal satisfactorily with the problem of waste management. The European Union has adopted a broad raft of legislation, applicable in all Member States, in order to ensure that the legal framework exists to deal with the inevitable result of our modern lifestyle, in terms of all the things we discard as waste, from our household, from our place of work, from our hospitals, from our industries and so on. It is obvious to all that failure to manage such issues, and failure to prioritise efforts in this respect, produces not only negative effects on human health and well-being, but also on the viability of the planet and its environment in the broadest sense. Lessons should be learned from such examples, however, and the recommendations contained in this report should therefore contribute to better implementation of waste management policy in the future.

**Alexander Mirsky (S&D), in writing. –** An analysis provides very contrasting information. A handful of Member States, including Denmark, Netherlands, Austria and Sweden are very advanced; indeed, no petitions have been received from citizens in these countries expressing any concern about waste management. However, many other EU countries are far behind in their implementation of waste strategies and, in this context, the legacy of the past, and an excessive dependence on landfill options, linked to the need to change attitudes towards waste disposal, has caused serious breaches of EU legislation to occur. The directive is timely and very important.

**Andreas Mölzer (NI), in writing. – (DE)** The EU generates 2 billion tonnes of waste, of which 40 million tonnes is classed as special waste, every year. What might be helpful, therefore, is the combination of an increase in recycling rates together with strict controls on exports of electronic waste and a shifting of the cost burden on to those who cause the waste. However, this increases the risk that businesses will save on disposal costs by shipping electronic waste to Africa or other areas by calling it 'development aid'. Measures to avoid waste are much more important and, in this context, in ordering everyone to use toxic energy-saving bulbs, the EU has hardly covered itself in glory in this respect. I have taken this into consideration when voting.

**Claudio Morganti (EFD), in writing. – (IT)** The issue of waste management is, without doubt, extremely important and rouses the rightful interest and attention of citizens, who have expressed their opinions on the subject through some 114 petitions submitted to Parliament over the last six years. Monumental divergences currently exist between the Member States, with some – few, in truth – completely in line with European regulations, while the remaining majority still have much work to do in order to reach an acceptable status in this field. It is almost a given that a majority of the petitions received from Italy relate to waste management in Naples and Campania. This incredible situation has been going on for many years and for various different reasons, including appalling political and administrative management and the widespread infiltration of the Camorra. The report quite rightly highlights the fact that rubbish is big business and that organised crime aspires – dangerously – to get its hands on it, thereby necessitating the utmost vigilance of all concerned, especially local administrators and politicians.

**Radvilė Morkūnaitė-Mikulėnienė (PPE), in writing. – (LT)** In the resolution we adopted today, we drew attention to two very important aspects. Firstly, the Commission and the Member States must devote more attention to raising public awareness of the need for and

benefits of waste management. Some Member States are lagging behind when it comes to waste sorting, above all because the public are not convinced of its benefits. Secondly, the environmental impact assessment (EIA) process has a significant effect on transparent waste management. When designing and building waste management facilities (above all, incinerators and landfills), a lack of transparency and public ignorance during the EIA leads to waste crises or even disasters (as demonstrated by real examples in Italy, Spain and other countries). During the next review of the EIA Directive, we must therefore really ensure that the public is adequately and genuinely involved in consultations, that public opinion is taken into account, and that the process itself is transparent and independent.

**Tiziano Motti (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (IT) I voted in favour of the resolution on waste management because guaranteeing that our citizens' health and well-being are protected is of fundamental importance. The 177 infringement procedures opened by the EU reveal that there are thought to be 619 illegal landfills across the European Union. Our citizens are asking for clarity and procedural transparency, and the number of petitions that Parliament receives on waste and landfills speaks volumes: between 2004 and 2010, 114 petitions alleging breaches have been declared admissible. Forty per cent of these concern the authorisation procedure for new plants and another 40% relate to the operation of existing ones, not to mention landfills and incinerators. Figures from Eurostat show that EU citizens produce, on average, 513 kg of waste per year. The questions raised by citizens during the public consultation process and the Environmental Impact Assessment on planned locations for new landfills often concern alleged violations of protected areas, as in the case of the landfill in the Vesuvius national park, or fears over a negative impact on health and well-being. Europe should provide incentives for citizens who are inclined to pre-sort their waste, thereby allowing taxes to be lowered and reducing the impact of waste processing on the land and on citizens.

**Franz Obermayr (NI)**, *in writing*. – (DE) Each year, a whopping 2 billion tonnes of waste, including 40 million tonnes of special waste, is generated in the EU, which is an enormous amount, particularly in view of our population. If we continue along this path, the rising disposal costs will soon mean that we will be drowning in our own waste. Alternatively, we could follow the US model and simply ship our waste electrical and electronic equipment to the developing world as 'development aid'. In addition, many materials can only be recycled to a limited extent because they can only undergo the recycling process a limited number of times. In other cases, only a small proportion can be recycled. It is of central importance that we should take control of downcycling, the practice of transporting or illegally storing waste throughout Europe. What might be helpful, therefore, is the combination of an increase in recycling rates together with strict controls on exports of electronic waste and a shifting of the cost burden on to those who cause the waste. Even more important are preventive measures to avoid waste, something that is not given enough consideration in the report. Ordering everyone to use energy-saving bulbs has actually generated more waste, not less. In addition, the amount of hazardous waste produced by nuclear power stations should not be underestimated, while the final resting place of this waste is still undecided. On account of these considerations, I have abstained from voting.

**Rolandas Paksas (EFD)**, *in writing*. – (LT) I welcome this resolution. Firstly, in order to properly implement the Waste Management Directive and related legislation and establish effective waste management strategies, infrastructure and facilities, appropriate financing should be allocated from the Cohesion Fund or the European Investment Bank. Furthermore, Member States must carry out inspections, monitoring and other necessary actions at all

stages of the waste management chain. I believe that we must establish common EU standards for colour-coding categories of waste, which would be used for sorting and recycling. It is also very important to ensure that mandatory environmental impact assessments are conducted before any decision is taken to establish or construct a new waste facility, particularly a landfill. Furthermore, local authorities should engage in a constructive dialogue with local communities in order to reduce their resistance. Local populations must have a guarantee that permitting and operating authorities are respecting the rules correctly and transparently. I believe that the Commission must impose dissuasive fines for the illegal disposal of waste. There should also be more of a focus on the influence of all types of organised crime on environment-related offences.

**Maria do Céu Patrão Neves (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) I voted for this resolution, which urges the Member States to speed up transposition of the Waste Framework Directive into national law, as well as calling on national authorities to implement measures essential to combating the illegal dumping of waste. This European Parliament resolution on the issues raised by petitioners in relation to the application of the Waste Management Directive, and related directives, in the Member States of the European Union also calls on the Commission to monitor carefully the transposition by the Member States of the directive on the protection of the environment, to ensure that it is done promptly and effectively.

**Rovana Plumb (S&D),** *in writing.* – (RO) I firmly call on the Commission and Member States to promote greater awareness among the public about the environmental benefits of efficient waste management, notably by advising them of the importance of pre-sorting waste, of the real cost of collecting household waste, as well as of the financial gain obtained from recovering this household waste, while achieving the objectives of the road map to a resource-efficient Europe and for greenhouse gas reduction. I think that close cooperation between Member State authorities and the European Parliament's technical committees (Petitions and Environment, Public Health and Food Safety) in dealing with the direct concerns of citizens at local level would provide an excellent opportunity to facilitate dialogue between the responsible authorities and local communities on priorities as regards the implementation of waste management strategies. This could provide, in some cases, an effective remedy when this may be useful in resolving local disputes and in taking effective measures to combat any infiltration of waste management by organised crime and against any link between organised crime and this industry or the public authorities.

**Paulo Rangel (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) The European Parliament has been receiving various petitions on the initiative of members of the European public, giving account of local problems relating to waste management. Given that there is already regulation on this issue in place at EU level, there is a need to question the effectiveness of Union law at responding to public needs on the ground. Following site visits by a number of Members, therefore, there is a need to identify the points where the Waste Management Directive can be improved, on the one hand, and those where it has not been properly implemented, on the other. I therefore voted in favour of this report.

**Crescenzo Rivellini (PPE),** *in writing.* – (IT) I would like to congratulate Mr Iturgaiz Angulo on his excellent work. Efficient waste management can attract investment and create jobs. Greater investment is required in order to set up efficient waste management facilities and thereby generate wealth and jobs. In particular, the recycling industry has the potential to provide half a million jobs in Europe. In order to reduce health risks, we also need clearer rules on the creation of landfills and their minimum distance from schools, houses and hospitals. We also need a waste classification system in order to help citizens

to understand the waste cycle and thereby increase recycling rates. Lastly, to improve the fight against the infiltration of waste management by organised crime, we need an effective financial monitoring system for EU funds granted to enterprises by local and national authorities.

**Robert Rochefort (ALDE),** *in writing.* – (FR) Between 2004 and 2010, 114 petitions were filed relating to breaches of the Waste Management Directive, including more than ten from France, which accounted for the majority of petitions relating to environmental issues, and which, in turn, were the primary source of petitions. Waste management is an issue that affects us directly; shortcomings in the system – lack of awareness, administrative capacity and financial resources in particular – should be dealt with as best and as quickly as possible. I welcome Mr Iturgaiz Angulo's proposals on this matter. The use of Cohesion Fund resources and direct financing from the European Investment Bank is indeed necessary, as is strengthening the role of the European Environment Agency. Finally, I fully support the idea of establishing a European standard for colour-coding on packaging to facilitate sorting. Recycling also receives my full support, as this is an issue that I recently raised in one of my questions to the Commission.

**Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE),** *in writing.* – In favour. A main objective for us was to point out that rational and efficient waste management strategies and practices which follow the waste management hierarchy are not only necessary for the protection of human health and the environment, but also the most beneficial from the point of view of economics, raw material resource and employment policy. In this, we consider that we succeeded reasonably well. A second objective was to ensure that the report is explicit about the serious problems related to criminal activities and corruption in the field of waste management, in particular, when toxic and hazardous waste is involved, and the need to improve monitoring by the Member States in order to combat this. Taking an amendment by the rapporteur for plenary into account, the report can be considered satisfactory also in this respect.

**Licia Ronzulli (PPE),** *in writing.* – (IT) The adoption of this report highlights the fact that efficient waste management can attract investment and create jobs. It is therefore suggested that it would be worth encouraging greater investment in order to set up efficient waste management facilities and thereby generate wealth and jobs. Indeed, the recycling industry has the potential to provide half a million jobs in Europe. This House asks the Commission to set out clearer rules on the creation of landfills and to decide on their minimum distance from schools, houses and hospitals in order to reduce health risks. We also propose a colour-coded system for classifying waste, thereby helping citizens to understand the waste cycle and increase recycling rates. It is also important to improve the fight against the infiltration of waste management by organised crime, perhaps through the adoption of an effective financial monitoring system for EU funds granted to enterprises by local and national authorities.

**Oreste Rossi (EFD),** *in writing.* – (IT) I am in favour of the report because, in recent years, the issue of waste management has been raised by citizens in petitions sent to Parliament due to the inability of public authorities in many countries to deal coherently and properly with the issue. Over the last few years, various missions have been undertaken to collect information on the affected Member States, which includes Italy and the situation in Campania. Unfortunately, in many places, the business of waste management is in the hands of organised crime. I think it is right to intervene directly, punishing those who do not respect the rules and giving citizens truthful responses, educating local authorities and

ensuring the application of the regulations, within the bounds of the principle of subsidiarity.

**Matteo Salvini (EFD),** *in writing.* – (IT) I voted for this report. The text lists many of the problems relating to the application of the rules on waste management. The references to respect for the principle of subsidiarity are quite correct, as – even more so – are the references to the major interests that see the Mafia and organised crime in general involved in waste disposal, especially in some regions. Everyone is monitoring the situation in Campania, but we must also underline that in Italy – especially in northern regions around the Po, but also in some cases in the South – there are instances of excellent management of the waste cycle, which can set an example for the whole of Europe. In order to achieve these results, it is very important that local citizens improve their selection of local politicians.

**Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE),** *in writing.* – (IT) Europe produces 1.3 billion tonnes of waste each year, excluding agricultural waste. However, waste in general should not be confused with urban waste. In overall terms, Europe's waste is accounted for as follows: 29% from mining activities, 26% from manufacturing, 22% from construction and demolition, and 14% from urban waste. Europe therefore produces 198 million tonnes of urban waste. Since the population of the EU is 375 million, each European citizen produces 527 kg of waste each year. Despite the efforts made on recovery and recycling, landfills are still the most common solution, accounting for 54% of rubbish. The recycling and composting chain accounts for 27% of urban waste. The remaining 19% of waste is incinerated, with or without energy recovery. The problem of waste disposal is only one aspect of the issue. I feel I must emphasise that the quantity of waste that we produce is the result of our unsustainable lifestyle. Our current systems of production and consumption must be altered in order to minimise pressure on the Earth's non-renewable resources. Essentially, the production of waste is one of the best indicators of our progress towards sustainable development.

**Nuno Teixeira (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) The European Parliament has been receiving various petitions, with environmental issues eliciting the greatest public interest, specifically, those directly relating to waste management. The belief that there is a need to adopt a position on the matter at hand follows on from a number of visits to Ireland, France, Italy and Spain. I am voting for this report, since I believe the Member States should implement an advanced waste management strategy and ensure better compliance with the legislation in force. I would also argue that European governments should involve members of the public living close to waste management infrastructure, cooperate more closely with local and regional authorities, and establish strong ties with the European agencies that are very knowledgeable about waste management, such as the European Commission's Directorate General for the Environment, the European Environment Agency or the European Union Network for the Implementation and Enforcement of Environmental Law.

**Silvia-Adriana Țicău (S&D),** *in writing.* – (RO) I voted for the resolution on the issues raised by petitioners in relation to the application of the Waste Management Directive and related directives in the Member States of the European Union.

In the 2004-2010 period, 114 petitions were submitted to Parliament, reporting possible breaches of the waste management regulatory framework from the following Member States: Italy, Greece, France, Spain, Ireland (more than 10 petitions each), Bulgaria, the UK,

Poland, Romania (3-10 petitions each), Austria, Hungary, Lithuania, Malta, Portugal and Slovakia (1 petition each).

According to a survey carried out for the Commission, roughly 2.6 billion tonnes of waste are generated every year in the EU, which is roughly six tonnes of waste per capita, while roughly 90 million tonnes of waste are classified as hazardous. The same survey highlights that many Member States lack sufficient capacity for preparing waste management plans and for carrying out inspections, controls and other actions required to implement waste legislation properly.

The resolution calls on the Commission and Member States to establish and implement comprehensive waste management plans, including the adoption of all the goals set by the specific European legislation, as well as solutions for the necessary funding.

**Derek Vaughan (S&D),** *in writing.* – I voted for this resolution as it supports two issues that are vitally important to Wales. With the correct investment in efficient waste processing, we can provide opportunities for both employment and revenue enhancement while ensuring respect for the environment through reuse, recycling and recovery of energy from waste. In addition, I also support a common EU standard for colour-coding categories of waste for sorting and recycling. This should simplify the process, in the hope of making it easier for citizens to understand waste processing, and would help to increase recycling rates.

**Dominique Vlasto (PPE),** *in writing.* – (FR) The vote on this report, which I supported, sends a clear signal for a strong EU initiative on waste management. The large number of petitions received on this issue highlights the concerns of citizens on the matter, concerns that I have shared for many years now. The European legislative framework is relevant, but nonetheless leaves out a number of major issues, such as innovative methods for the recovery, reuse, recycling and disposal of waste. This is, in my view, a key issue, both for its impact on the human health and well-being of Europeans, but also for the environment and sustainable development. I had questioned the Commission on what it was doing to reduce and recycle packaging waste associated with consumer products and on the need to eliminate food waste, which is a significant source of waste and an imperative of solidarity with the poorest citizens. I therefore call again on the Commission to make strong proposals for sustainable waste management throughout the supply chain. This is what Europeans expect, which I think is only fair.

**Angelika Werthmann (NI),** *in writing.* – (DE) The unsatisfactory nature of waste management in many Member States is damaging the health of our citizens and will lead to enormous environmental costs in the long term. The full implementation of EU secondary law in this area and more efficient monitoring by the Commission are therefore essential. Furthermore, citizens must be better educated on the segregation of waste and the long-term implications of inadequate waste management.

**Inês Zuber (GUE/NGL),** *in writing.* – (PT) This report has some positive elements, particularly the denouncement of abusive situations, whilst also tabling proposals intended to reduce and realise the so-called 'waste hierarchy'. However, we would stress the mistaken perspective of almost exclusively making individuals responsible for the environmental situation we are experiencing, which is a panacea that will not resolve this systemic problem on its own, the argument being that waste management is a public responsibility for private profits; it is certainly interesting that it praises two multinationals responsible for such management in two or three Member States, without relating their extraordinary profits,

or the increase in complaints throughout Europe. There is still no distinction between toxic and normal waste, which means there are no restrictions in place to control the pollution rates of large companies, on the basis of studies that consider the average waste produced per 'individual', putting families and businesses into the same category. Waste management is fundamental to protecting the environment and human health. However, we are not forgetting that serious environmental problems do not result from isolated acts, but rather result from the capitalist system, which does not consider the means it uses to seek maximum profit.

**Report: Regina Bastos (A7-0006/2012)**

**Luís Paulo Alves (S&D),** *in writing.* – (PT) I am voting for this report. All the versions of the Daphne programme have been very successful, so it makes sense to continue supporting it, since it is the programme that has been supporting small projects relating to subjects that require particular attention from society and from the NGOs that implement them on the ground, such as raising awareness about the situation of victims of violence and about the commercial exploitation of children. I also believe there will be the opportunity to include gender-equality projects, as my political group advocated.

**Laima Liucija Andrikienė (PPE),** *in writing.* – I voted in favour of the resolution reporting the Daphne programme's success and suggesting a number of improvements to correct imbalances that have arisen, e.g. in the breakdown of projects between Member States. I agree that this EU initiative, running from 1997, was undoubtedly beneficial to EU citizens and, therefore, the Daphne objectives in the new programme should be maintained. I agree to the proposal to maintain the Daphne programme for smaller NGOs and also to the list of programme intervention in recital K containing a list of types of violence against women and children, including sexual abuse, rape, domestic violence, prostitution, trafficking and violation of women's health and reproductive rights. The success of this programme over 15 years indicates how extremely important for EU, and especially Lithuanian, citizens is the continuity of the programme.

**Roberta Angelilli (PPE),** *in writing.* – (IT) The Daphne programme is the only EU programme seeking to combat all kinds of violence against women, children and young people within the Union. From 2014 onwards, it will be integrated into the rights and citizenship programme. As we seek a balance between administrative simplification and protecting the rights of citizens, it is quite right that the programme be assured the same level of funding as before and that the objective of combating violence against women and children be reinforced as a priority of the rights and citizenship programme, even though this is not explicitly mentioned among the specific goals in the Commission communication on the proposal for a regulation establishing the rights and citizenship programme in the 2014-2020 period. Lastly, I think that the objectives of the Daphne programme ought not to become less of a priority and that we need careful monitoring from the Commission to avoid overlap with other Community programmes so that we do not weaken a successful programme in an area in which more can and must be done.

**Elena Oana Antonescu (PPE),** *in writing.* – (RO) The continuation of the Daphne programme is justified based on the programme's previous success in supporting the initiative, campaigns and policies for preventing violence, along with the studies which have shown that inadequate funding for previous versions of the initiative has considerably limited its success, which is noticeable in any case.

Violence against children, young people and women still remains one of the biggest challenges to European society. Ninety-eight per cent of European citizens are aware that this problem exists, while more than two thirds of European citizens (68%) think that the European Union must take a more active involvement in preventing and tackling violence against these vulnerable groups. In addition, the spread of new forms of violence against vulnerable groups due to the expansion of access to new communications technologies demands a robust response from the European Union. Continuing the programme provides a useful tool for achieving the objectives set out by the Europe 2020 strategy for combating social exclusion and by the European Commission's strategy for equality between women and men 2010-2015.

**Sophie Auconie (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (FR) Established in 1997, the Daphne programme has been a genuine success. It is the only European programme which, for nearly 15 years, has aimed to combat violence towards women, children and young people. This programme covers over 500 projects, and greater cooperation from NGOs in a variety of fields, such as sexual, psychological and physical violence in institutional, school or family settings. It also includes projects dealing with the prevention of child pornography and the risks children face in surfing the Internet as well as the health needs of women who are victims of trafficking and female genital mutilation. I therefore naturally agreed with the motion for a European Parliament resolution calling on the Commission to continue funding such projects. I particularly welcome this report because the programme for the 2014-2020 period aims, among other things, to reiterate the need for legislative measures at European level to eradicate gender-based violence. My struggle for women is therefore carried out at both national and European level.

**Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)**, *in writing*. – (LT) The goal of the Daphne programme, established in 1997, is to combat violence against children, young people and women. Bearing in mind the success, effectiveness and popularity of the Daphne programme, we must ensure that it continues and receives sufficient funding. The new-generation programme will pay special attention to women, children and young people who, because of social exclusion and marginalisation, are particularly exposed to the risk of violence. I welcome the calls for the Member States to gather data on violence against women at regular intervals in order to clarify the extent of the problem in the EU, and for the Commission to channel more funding into projects aimed at alerting the public, particularly groups at risk, to new forms of violence linked to the growing use of online social networks (threats, psychological pressures, bullying, Internet child pornography). These are more insidious than other forms of violence, but just as likely to cause physical or mental injury.

**Vilija Blinkevičiūtė (S&D)**, *in writing*. – (LT) I voted in favour of this European Parliament report because the Daphne programme is the only programme of its type whose goal is to combat violence against women, children and young people throughout the European Union. The Daphne programme has been a genuine success since its launch in 1997, both in terms of its popularity with stakeholders (beneficiaries, public and academic authorities, NGOs) and in terms of the effectiveness of the projects funded by the programme. It is therefore vital to ensure continued funding for the Daphne programme in order to maintain the measures currently in force and introduce new measures that will be effective in combating all types of violence against children, young people and women. Daphne is an extremely important instrument for raising the visibility of the issue of violence against women and providing the possibility for women's organisations and other engaged stakeholders to develop their work and their concrete actions in this field. The Daphne

programme will, from 2014, be incorporated into the rights and citizenship programme, but it is essential to ensure that the programme's objectives, in particular, that of combating violence against women, are retained in the 2014-2020 period among the objectives of the new rights and citizenship programme. Furthermore, bearing in mind the success, effectiveness and popularity of the Daphne programme, we must ensure that significant funding continues for the new-generation programme.

**Vito Bonsignore (PPE),** *in writing.* – (IT) I voted in favour of this report, as I agree on its goals and purposes. Since 2007, the Daphne programme has formed part of the more general 'Fundamental Rights and Justice programme' and is the only programme in Europe to combat violence against the most vulnerable people in society. In fact, the objective of Daphne is to contribute to the protection of children, young people and women against all forms of violence and to attain a high level of health protection, well-being and social cohesion. NGOs showed a great deal of interest and involvement in the programme and submitted a far higher number of proposals than could be funded. However, the interim report of the Daphne programme 2011-2013 necessitates a few essential amendments to ensure correct application until its expiry. Greater participation from the States that joined up from 2004 and more effective dissemination of the projects' results could also be helpful. Lastly, we need to refocus the programmes on the EU's policy priorities by funding, for example, fewer projects but selecting ones on a larger scale.

**Philippe Boulland (PPE),** *in writing.* – (FR) The importance of the Daphne programme is plain to see. This is the only programme aimed at combating violence against women, children and young people on a European scale. We therefore need to provide sufficient funding not only to tackle the real needs involved in the fight against all forms of violence, but also for projects aimed at alerting the young in particular to new forms of violence linked to the growing use of online social networks (threats, psychological pressures, bullying, Internet child pornography). We also need to make sure that the Daphne programme's objectives are retained in the rights and citizenship programme, and that the administrative burden is eased and grant application procedures simplified to encourage small NGOs to propose Daphne projects.

**Jan Březina (PPE),** *in writing.* – (CS) I firmly believe that the Daphne programme has significant added value for the EU, allowing various organisations in the Member States to cooperate on preventing and reducing violence, and to benefit from the exchange of knowledge and best practice. Projects funded under Daphne III have created associations and permanent structures which will continue to support target groups in the longer term, and which have prompted policy changes at national and EU level. I consider it important to pay particular attention to projects aimed at eradicating 'honour' crimes and female genital mutilation. The Commission should allow the funding of national projects involving small non-profit organisations, as they play a crucial role in identifying less well-known, taboo or new problems, and in finding innovative ways to tackle them, as well as in protecting and supporting victims.

**Andrea Češková (ECR),** *in writing.* – The ECR Group is united in its condemnation of violence against women and children. We are supportive of the aims and objectives of the Daphne programme and are particularly keen to see it extend to areas such as preventing violence through online social networks (paragraph 10), honour killing and female genital mutilation (paragraph 13). The ECR Group supports a strong position with regard to violence against women and we want to work collaboratively alongside national governments to make policies which will help eradicate violence against women. We voted

against part 2 of paragraph 17 to show that we oppose further legislation at EU level which would interfere with Member States' own criminal justice systems – we do firmly believe that individual Member States have overall responsibility for their own criminal legal systems.

**George Sabin Cutaş (S&D),** *in writing.* – (RO) I voted for this report as violence against children, young people and women is a scourge of our society. According to several studies on gender-based violence, roughly 20-25% of women in Europe have been physically abused at least once, and 26% of children and teenagers stated that they had been victims of physical violence during childhood. However, most times, the victims of physical or verbal aggression are not bold enough to confirm this openly, which makes it difficult to compile relevant statistics. This is why I think that it is of paramount importance for us to provide adequate funding to the Daphne programme, used with the aim of preventing and tackling violence against women, as well as against children and young people.

**Vasile Viorica Dăncilă (S&D),** *in writing.* – (RO) Given that the Daphne programme is the only one of this kind at European Union level aimed at tackling violence against women, children and teenagers, I think that it is vital to continue funding this programme in order to maintain the measures already in force and to adopt new viable measures for combating every type of violence against children, young people and women.

**Mário David (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) Since it was created in 1997, the Daphne programme, promoted by the EU and implemented by various NGOs from the Member States, has shown itself to be an important instrument of the policy for combating violence against women, children and adolescents, who are – along with the Union's older citizens – the most vulnerable groups in the population.

Although it is considered a success, in line with the mid-term review, the report suggests some changes to the Daphne programme by 2013 with which I agree: increased participation in the programme by the newer Member States and those with few projects approved; increased publicity for approved projects to promote benchmarking; and increased adaptation of the programmes to the EU's priority goals, by funding a lower number of larger projects. I shall conclude by congratulating my party colleague, Ms Bastos, on the work she has done on such an important subject that requires ever greater involvement from the European institutions in combating and eradicating this incomprehensible and shocking form of violence against the most vulnerable groups of our population.

**Christine De Veyrac (PPE),** *in writing.* – (FR) I voted in favour of this report which proposes maintaining funding to combat violence against women and children. The European Union should support these vulnerable population groups, who are still all too often subject to physical and psychological abuse, even in our developed countries.

**Diogo Feio (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) The Daphne programme is the EU programme combating violence against women and children. This type of violence covers a number of serious violations of fundamental rights, such as sexual abuse, attacks on physical integrity and domestic violence, psychological violence, harassment or coercion, the trafficking of women and their exploitation for prostitution, among other examples of aggression that need to be resolutely condemned by the Member States. I condemn all violence, but especially that used against those who are more physically, socially, economically or emotionally vulnerable, such as children and often women too. That is exactly why the Member States must seek to eliminate all forms of violence against women

and children, in particular, trafficking for sexual exploitation, violation of their sexual self-determination and attacks on their physical integrity. Finally, I must clarify the fact that the internally accepted definition of 'sexual and reproductive rights' includes abortion, so I voted against the reference to it in item K of the preamble.

**José Manuel Fernandes (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) This own-initiative report, by my colleague Ms Bastos, concerns the 'Daphne programme'; more specifically, the progress made and future prospects. This is the only European programme intended to protect women and children. Cases of violence used against women are well known and have a steep cost: in Europe alone, domestic violence costs over EUR 16 billion per year. New information technologies mean we are witnessing a new type of violence online, specifically over social media. There is an urgent need to take measures to prevent discrimination against women. I welcome the adoption of any measures that safeguard the objectives of this programme and keep funding levels high. I also hope the projects will be shared out fairly between all the Member States. I should like to congratulate the rapporteur on the work she has done, which I consider excellent. I am voting for the proposal to keep the 'Daphne programme' for the 2014-2020 period.

**João Ferreira (GUE/NGL),** *in writing.* – (PT) This report rightly acknowledges the importance of the Daphne programme in combating violence against children, young people and women. Since there is a proposal that actions funded by this programme be included in the 2014-2020 multiannual financial framework as part of the future rights and citizenship programme, the report urges that the latter should include the objective of 'combating violence against women' and retain the same level of funding that the Daphne programme has had to date. We are bound to point out the risk that, under the new conditions just proposed, this objective is not diluted and 'lost' in the midst of so many others. We therefore believe that specific funding should be in place for the Daphne programme and that this funding should be greater than for the previous programmes, in view of existing needs. Given the importance that small women's organisations, trades unions and various other NGOs have in defending and promoting women's rights and combating the violence affecting them, we think the report needed to set out clear measures enabling these organisations to access the programme's funds.

**Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D),** *in writing.* – (SK) Set up in 1997, the Daphne programme has made its mark as the only EU programme seeking to combat violence against women, children and young people. Since it was established, the programme has thrown light on new forms of violence. Parliament has pointed out in numerous resolutions that the Daphne programme has been underfunded so far, and has stated its intention of ensuring that it has sufficient funding so that it can tackle the real problems.

In 2000, the Daphne initiative was transformed into a multiannual programme covering the period 2000-2003 and allocated funding of EUR 20 million. The programme aroused a great deal of interest, both in the European Union and in various international bodies working to stop the commercial sexual exploitation of children.

The Daphne II and Daphne III programmes were launched in 2004 and 2007 respectively, with an average annual budget of EUR 10 million for Daphne II and EUR 16.7 million for Daphne III, which formed part of the general programme 'Fundamental Rights and Justice'. I believe that the objectives of the programme, that is to say, to prevent and combat all forms of violence against women, children and young people and to create a coordinated, coherent and effective EU policy, are still relevant to the current needs of the target groups.

**Catherine Grèze (Verts/ALE),** *in writing.* – (FR) I voted in favour of the report on the achievements and future prospects of the Daphne programme because I believe that the definition of violence against women must include the word ‘prostitution’.

**Nathalie Griesbeck (ALDE),** *in writing.* – (FR) Between 20 and 25% of women in the European Union have experienced physical acts of violence at least once during their adult lives and more than 10% have suffered from sexual violence involving the use of force. Similarly, 26% of children and young people report physical violence. Given the extent of this violence, the European Daphne programme was set up in 1997 to protect these women, these young people and these children and since then, it has been a genuine success. The resolution that we adopted, and which I, of course, supported, welcomes the actions carried out within this programme and calls for their renewal for the 2014-2020 period. More specifically, I would like to highlight certain aspects: our resolution firstly calls for more funding to be channelled into projects aimed at alerting the young to new forms of violence (social networks, Internet child pornography, etc.). Our resolution goes on to encourage NGOs to take part and get involved, given their crucial role in supporting victims. Finally, it is important that this instrument should retain its name and its independence to maintain the visibility of the programme, and it also needs a budget which is at least on a par with that of the previous programme.

**Brice Hortefeux (PPE),** *in writing.* – (FR) The Daphne programme is the only European programme explicitly aimed at combating violence towards women, children and young people. This programme has existed since 1997 and has enabled the funding of more than 500 projects, studies and campaigns, particularly on the risks children face surfing the Internet, on stopping child pornography ... This programme has been a genuine success but unfortunately, it is applied very unevenly by the Member States. That is why I welcome this report, which proposes to maintain the Daphne programme’s objectives in the new rights and citizenship programme for the period 2014-2020, and which recommends better targeting of projects, also taking into account new forms of violence linked to the use of online social networks.

**Juozas Imbrasas (EFD),** *in writing.* – (LT) I voted in favour of this document because it aims to strengthen the impact of the programme and the Commission is encouraged to continue to pay special attention to women, children and young people who, because of social exclusion and marginalisation, are particularly exposed to the risk of violence. I also agree with the provision that more funding should be channelled into projects aimed at alerting the young in particular to new forms of violence linked to the growing use of online social networks (threats, psychological pressures, bullying, Internet child pornography). These are more insidious than other forms of violence, but just as likely to cause physical or mental injury. Our goal and that of European and national policies is to prevent and combat violence against women, children and young people.

**Philippe Juvin (PPE),** *in writing.* – (FR) I voted in favour of this report on the achievements and future prospects of the Daphne programme (European programme combating violence against women and children, which is to be incorporated into the new rights and citizenship programme over the period 2014-2020) as it means that we can identify a certain number of imbalances which have become apparent since it was set up in 1997, while continuing to insist on the need to maintain the objectives of this programme and the resources it receives to guarantee its effectiveness.

**Elisabeth Köstinger (PPE)**, *in writing.* – (DE) Each year, the Daphne programmes receive about EUR 17 million for measures to combat violence against women, children and young people. These programmes are intended to promote projects dealing with all aspects of violence, such as violence in the home or in schools, violence in the workplace, or sexual exploitation for commercial purposes, as well as human trafficking. This is the reason why I voted in favour of continuing with the Daphne programmes.

**Constance Le Grip (PPE)**, *in writing.* – (FR) I voted in favour of Ms Bastos's report on the achievements and future prospects for the European Daphne programme. The Daphne programme was launched in 1997 and has provided support for a large number of projects throughout the European Union, aimed at combating violence against women, children and young people. As this kind of violence is still as relevant today as it was in 1997, I think it is important to maintain the objectives and funding of a programme such as this. Of course, it is also necessary to adapt it to new forms of violence which have arisen, particularly those linked to the growing use of online social networks, which are more insidious than other forms of violence, but just as likely to cause physical or mental injury to its victims.

**Petru Constantin Luhan (PPE)**, *in writing.* – (RO) Between the time the Daphne programme was launched and now, more than 500 NGOs, public authorities and institutions have successfully implemented projects funded by this programme. The projects have aimed to provide protection to children, young people and women against all forms of violence, as well as achieve a high level of health protection, well-being and social cohesion.

Although the Daphne programme will be included in the rights and citizenship programme from 2014, I think that it is vital to preserve the programme's initial objectives, along with the objectives of the new rights and citizenship programme. At the same time, in order to achieve our targets, we need to maintain its funding at a level comparable to that for previous programmes or even at a higher level. Annual balanced distribution would ensure continuity between the objectives and the actions undertaken so far. The programme's profile also has to be maintained as part of the new generation of programmes, bearing in mind its successes, efficiency and popularity at the moment.

**Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska (PPE)**, *in writing.* – (PL) The Daphne programme, which aims to protect and combat violence against women, children and young people, is extremely important and necessary in the European Union. According to the statistics, between one-fifth and one-quarter of all women in Europe have experienced physical acts of violence at least once during their adult lives, and one-tenth of European women have experienced sexual violence involving the use of force. There can be no doubt that, owing to political and legislative differences between Member States, the rights of women within the EU are not protected equally. In my opinion, we should develop a network for international cooperation between projects across the entire European Union with the aim of combating violence. For this reason, I voted in favour of the report on the Daphne programme drafted by Regina Bastos.

**David Martin (S&D)**, *in writing.* – I welcome this report, which points out that preventing and combating violence against women, children, and young people is still as pressing a concern today as it was in 1997, the year when the Daphne initiative was adopted. Since it was established, the programme has thrown light on new forms of violence, including violence at day nurseries, ill-treatment of the elderly and sexual assault among teenagers.

**Clemente Mastella (PPE),** *in writing.* – (IT) We support the refinancing of the Daphne III programme in order to be able to contribute to the protection of children, young people and women against all forms of violence. Many goals have been achieved in recent years. The European Union has strived to ensure a high level of health protection, well-being and social cohesion, promoting the development of Community policies, particularly in the fields of public health, human rights and gender equality.

In future, special attention must be paid to actions to protect children's rights and to fight trafficking in human beings and sexual exploitation. In this vein, we also hope for improved dissemination of the projects' results and are putting forward some measures to make the management of the entire programme more efficient.

**Barbara Matera (PPE),** *in writing.* – (IT) I voted in favour of the report by Ms Bastos because the Daphne programme – which has been in operation since 1997 and is now in its third iteration – is the only EU programme for funding projects to combat all violence against women, children and young people.

The Daphne programme has had increasing success over the years and particularly in terms of the people, universities and NGOs involved. It has had a genuine impact in Member States through effective projects to combat all forms of violence against women. Numerous projects funded under the Daphne programme have helped to eradicate forms of sexual, psychological and physical attacks on women in various areas of civil society, such as at work, in schools and in families.

The Daphne programme often suffers from a lack of adequate visibility. We therefore need to invest more in communications campaigns so as to facilitate access to project funding from the Daphne programme for an even greater number of national and local authorities, and to find new partners in all EU Member States.

**Marisa Matias (GUE/NGL),** *in writing.* – (PT) Given that violence against women continues to persist and take on new forms, without forgetting that it is still women who suffer most from inequality in economic crises like the one we are experiencing today, there is an unquestionable need to fund programmes that enable all forms of gender violence to be combated or contribute to reducing inequality between women and men.

**Mario Mauro (PPE),** *in writing.* – (IT) I voted in favour of Ms Bastos's report. I agree on the need to ensure greater dissemination of the projects' results and to put in place measures to make the management of the entire programme more efficient. It is true that the results have been good. That is why we need to continue down this road. Improved interaction between the Member States would certainly benefit the Daphne programme. I agree on the proposal to ask the Member States to gather data on violence against women on a regular basis in order to clarify the extent of the problem.

**Mairead McGuinness (PPE),** *in writing.* – I voted, on this occasion, in favour of the words 'violation of sexual and reproductive rights', mentioned in recital K of this report. I would usually not support the term 'reproductive rights', which some say is synonymous with abortion. In this report, however, about the Daphne programme – a Community action programme to fight violence against women and children – 'reproductive rights' are mentioned in a different context. I could, therefore, support the text.

**Nuno Melo (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) Set up in 1997, this programme has made its mark as the only EU programme seeking to combat violence against women, children and young people. In 2000, the Daphne initiative was transformed into a multiannual programme

covering the period 2000-2003, and allocated funding of EUR 20 million. The programme evoked a great deal of interest, both in the European Union and in various international bodies working to stop the commercial sexual exploitation of children. The Daphne II and Daphne III programmes were launched in 2004 and 2007 respectively, with an average annual budget of EUR 10 million for Daphne II and EUR 16.7 million for Daphne III. The general objective of Daphne III is to contribute to the protection of children, young people and women against all forms of violence and to attain a high level of health protection, well-being and social cohesion. This is done by promoting the further development of Union policies, particularly in the fields of public health, human rights and gender equality, and by encouraging actions to protect children's rights and to fight trafficking in human beings and sexual exploitation. With this type of initiative, the EU is putting itself at the forefront of combating violence against women, children and young people.

**Miroslav Mikolášik (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (SK) The use of Internet social networks and their anonymity contributes to the spread of violence committed against women, children and young people. The Daphne programme makes a significant contribution to improving the protection of children who are particularly vulnerable and who may suffer not only consequences that harm their physical integrity, but especially long-lasting and serious psychological consequences.

However, my interest in the consistent protection of children, be it before or after birth, does not allow me to agree with the incorrect and misleading labelling of so-called sexual and reproductive rights as a basic human right, since this category includes abortion. I emphasise that the basic human right is the expressly recognised right to life, and therefore there is no such thing as a basic human right to abortion, as many documents subtly try to imply to their unwary readers. The incorrect and imprecise formulation of so serious a topic does not permit me to do other than to demand, in the strongest terms, a correction and a proper explanation.

**Alexander Mirsky (S&D)**, *in writing*. – The Daphne programme was set up in 1997 with the aim of combating violence against women, young people and children. The initiative was taken by the NGOs, the Parliament, the Commission and specialists in the field. The objective was to enhance the cooperation at European level. I supported the report, since five years ago, I initiated a similar project in the Latvian Parliament. I hope that this report will give impetus for a solution of the problem.

**Gay Mitchell (PPE)**, *in writing*. – I abstained on the words 'violation of sexual and reproductive rights' in recital K of this report. I would normally vote against 'reproductive rights' as some claim this is synonymous with abortion. However, 'reproductive rights' are mentioned here in a different context. Therefore, I abstained rather than voted against.

**Andreas Mölzer (NI)**, *in writing*. – (DE) Daphne is an EU programme that cofinances projects designed to prevent violence against children and young people and women. The definition of violence is very broad and encompasses sexual abuse, violence in the family, economic exploitation, transportation, discrimination against disabled people, migrants, minorities and more. The current programme, 'Daphne III', receives funding of EUR 16.7 million per year and is very highly regarded beyond the EU. I abstained from voting because this report does not indicate which of the problems identified in the interim report are already under consideration for action by the European Commission and what the nature of this action is to be.

**Elisabeth Morin-Chartier (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (FR) I voted in favour of this text combating violence against women and children. The Daphne programme is the only European programme to contribute to the protection of children, young people and women against all forms of violence and to attain a high level of health protection by promoting the further development of Community policies, particularly in the fields of public health, human rights and gender equality, and by encouraging actions to protect children's rights and to fight trafficking in human beings and sexual exploitation. I hope that, in the future, it will still be possible for associations to continue to be fully involved and supported, because they play a crucial role in identifying less well-known, taboo or new problems, and in finding innovative ways to tackle them, as well as in protecting and supporting victims. I also hope that action will be taken to alert the young to new forms of violence linked to the growing use of online social networks.

**Tiziano Motti (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (IT) I voted in favour of the resolution on the 'Daphne programme: achievements and future prospects' because I am pleased with the significant results achieved thus far by the programme, even though I maintain that there is still much work to be done in the field of combating violence against women. I think it should not be possible for us to read studies that estimate that a fifth of the female population have been physically assaulted at least once in their adult life and that more than one tenth have suffered sexual violence. Furthermore, 26% of children and young people report physical violence in childhood. Daphne has certainly had a positive outcome: the Commission has funded 500 projects since 1997, which have managed to keep up with the times and with technological developments, for example, by funding initiatives against cyberbullying, while also focusing on lamentably long-term issues such as female genital mutilation and the prevention of sexual grooming. Accordingly, I hope that the new justice and rights and citizenship programmes that will encompass the Daphne programme will take account of the results obtained thus far and the sense of waging war on violence that this mythological name still evokes to this day.

**Siiri Oviir (ALDE)**, *in writing*. – (ET) The Daphne programme has justified its existence for years, and the projects implemented within the framework of the programme have been fruitful. I therefore consider it important for this programme to continue in order to combat violence against children, young people and women, even though this will take place in the context of the rights and citizenship programme from 2014. One important point mentioned in the report involves the shortcomings in the gathering of data regarding violence against women: insufficient and irregularly gathered statistics prevent the acquisition of a broad overview, and this, in turn, makes it impossible to develop better solutions in combating violence against women. I voted in favour of this report and I support the idea that the Daphne programme must continue in one form or another and that its targeted financing must not be reduced. The Daphne programme and its objectives are well-known, but in order to ensure that the programme remains as relevant and effective as it is now, several new objectives must be established; for instance, the elimination of honour crimes and female genital mutilation.

**Rolandas Paksas (EFD)**, *in writing*. – (LT) I welcome this resolution on the achievements and future prospects of the Daphne programme. It should be noted that this programme is very important and necessary for stopping violence against women, children and young people throughout the European Union. Attention is drawn to the fact that such violence includes all kinds of human rights violations. Consequently, we constantly need to improve the spread of programmes across the Member States as well as cooperation between various

organisations. Furthermore, in order to eradicate and reduce gender-based violence, legislative measures inevitably need to be applied at European level and significant funding must be allocated.

**Alfredo Pallone (PPE),** *in writing.* – (IT) The Daphne programme is the European programme fighting violence against women, children and young people. Over recent years, many EU Member States have joined the programme, but regrettably, we must hope for better dissemination of the projects and their results. The programme focuses primarily on the risks that children face in surfing the Internet, children's behavioural problems, the health needs of women victims of genital mutilation, and stopping child pornography. The text in question proposes some measures to make the programme's management more efficient, with projects on a larger scale through more targeted funding.

**Maria do Céu Patrão Neves (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) Set up in 1997, the Daphne programme has made its mark as the only EU programme seeking to combat violence against women, children and young people. The Daphne III programme (2007-2013) was part of the general programme 'Fundamental Rights and Justice', and its general objective was to contribute to the protection of children, young people and women against all forms of violence and to attain a high level of health protection, well-being and social cohesion by promoting the further development of Union policies. The rapporteur, whom I would congratulate on her work, has concluded that the outcome is very positive with only a few adjustments needed. She believes it is necessary to improve dissemination of the projects' results and proposes some measures to make the programme's management more efficient. I voted for this report because I agree with the above.

**Rovana Plumb (S&D),** *in writing.* – (RO) The Daphne programme was launched in 1997 with the aim of combating violence against women, young people and children. The initiative was adopted by NGOs, Parliament, the European Commission and experts in this field. The aim was to enhance cooperation at EU level. All Member States can take part in the Daphne initiative. In 2000, the Daphne initiative was transformed into a multiannual financing programme covering the period 2000-2003. The programme aroused interest both in the European Union and in various international bodies, and the funds allocated were used to stop the commercial exploitation of children. The Daphne II and Daphne III programmes were launched in 2004 and 2007 respectively, with an annual budget of EUR 10 million.

I voted for this report because I support the need to introduce the Daphne programme from 2014 as part of the rights and citizenship programme and to preserve its objectives in support of combating violence against women in the 2014-2020 period, in addition to the objectives of the new programme where gender equality and combating violence against women are not specifically mentioned.

**Paulo Rangel (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) The Daphne programme was created in 1997 with the purpose of encouraging cooperation between various NGOs, so as to combat violence against women, children and young people. This is a project based on balancing cooperation between the public authorities and private organisations, with the former playing a coordinating role and the second operating on the ground. As such, the development of this programme should take these two dimensions into account. On the one hand, it needs to be guaranteed that all the Member States will encourage or contribute to the programme; on the other, use needs to be made of the results of these NGO projects on areas like female genital mutilation, bullying and online risks to children, which could be translated into a

singular portrait of the communities in which these political decisions are being implemented. I therefore voted in favour of this report.

**Robert Rochefort (ALDE)**, *in writing*. – (FR) The Daphne programme, which was set up in 1997, could be called a success, as much on account of its popularity amongst interested parties as on account of the effectiveness of the actions that it has funded. It is the only European programme to tackle violence against women, children and young people, and consequently must be renewed until 2020. That is why I voted for Ms Bastos's draft report on the achievements and future prospects of the programme. Indeed, I support her wish to see it extended and also her wish for smaller NGOs to become more involved in the future. Their participation is essential because they have daily contact, they are close to people, and therefore they are the best placed to identify any less well-known difficulties or taboos. I also believe, and the text stresses this, that they have a considerable capacity for innovation which should not be overlooked. Finally, I welcome the desire for a better distribution of funded projects – the difficulties addressed by this programme unfortunately exist without distinction in all Member States.

**Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)**, *in writing*. – (ES) I have abstained, because despite the fact that this report deals with basic issues regarding funding programmes against gender-based violence, some aspects involve matters that require significant debate in our groups. I refer, for instance, to the opposing of sexual and reproductive rights, or the contentious issue of how to deal with prostitution. To my understanding, these matters have not been defined clearly.

**Licia Ronzulli (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (IT) Since 1997, Daphne has been the only European programme that helps to combat violence against women, children and young people. Starting life as an initiative, Daphne has become a *bona fide* multiannual programme whose goals are to contribute to the protection of children, young people and women against all forms of violence and to attain a high level of health protection, well-being and social cohesion. These objectives can only be reached through the promotion and development of effective EU policies, from public health to human rights and gender equality, and by encouraging actions to protect the rights of children and to fight trafficking in human beings and sexual exploitation. Daphne has funded in excess of 500 projects on many issues: From the risks children face in surfing the Internet to the health needs of women victims of trafficking in human beings, and from female genital mutilation to stopping child pornography. Through the adoption of this report today, Parliament highlights the targets that have been reached so far and asks the Commission to continue supporting the programme.

**Oreste Rossi (EFD)**, *in writing*. – (IT) The EU's Daphne III programme sets out to protect children, young people and women against all forms of violence and sexual exploitation. NGOs, public authorities and institutions from the 27 Member States can join the programme. The Commission has set about funding this programme, providing EUR 16.7 million and last year releasing an interim evaluation report on the programme, which found, above all, that the Member States do not all participate to the same extent. I abstained for these very reasons, because I hope to see greater transparency in the dissemination of the projects' results.

**Joanna Senyszyn (S&D)**, *in writing*. – (PL) I wholeheartedly supported the report on the Daphne programme. Violence against women is one of the main and most serious symptoms of discrimination, and the objective of the Daphne programme is precisely that

of highlighting the issue of violence against women as well as combating it. It allows women's organisations to carry out projects and undertake action in this field. Around 500 projects funded under the programme have made a large contribution to raising public awareness of the problem of violence. They have initiated national debate and social campaigns regarding this issue and they have contributed to individual countries undertaking legislative initiatives aimed at combating violence. For example, Belgium and Ireland have established national research centres to investigate violence against women.

First and foremost, the Daphne programme has helped to raise awareness of important issues relating to violence, and has played a role in initiating a debate on ways of combating this problem. Considering the growing popularity of online social networks in recent times, and the resulting new forms of violence, funding for the Daphne programme should be increased. It is also important to extend the group of beneficiaries of the programme to include small non-profit women's organisations that operate at local level, and are therefore closest to the victims.

**Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (IT) This programme has shown itself to be indispensable over the years and has a noble goal: preventing and combating all forms of physical, sexual and psychological violence against children, young people and women. Violence against women, for example, is scarcely a feature of public discourse, is underestimated, and is often hidden and played down in society. Instead, in order to put effective political, legislative and cultural defences in place, we need contemporary society to be fully aware of the severity and tragic nature of this phenomenon. My vote in favour of the text helps to underline the importance of a programme that has already developed more than 500 projects. I hope that the amendment to the new 2014-2020 multiannual financial framework will see the Commission confirm its intent to renew the newly generated funds under the auspices of two proposals for a decision, which it ought to table in mid-November 2011, as part of the package on the 2014-2020 multiannual financial framework.

**Catherine Stihler (S&D)**, *in writing*. – This report is so important in making progress for women's rights. At a time when national governments are cutting funding for women's shelters in an attempt to create a 'big society', it is so important that the European Parliament continues to pass progressive reports such as this one, which I voted in favour of.

**Nuno Teixeira (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (PT) The Daphne programme is the only EU programme seeking to combat violence against women, children and young people. There have been several Daphne initiatives, one after the other, and they can today be viewed as positive overall. However, as the rapporteur points out, some changes are needed and should be considered for the programme's future, such as the risks of Internet use for children, certain little known behavioural problems that lead young people to self-harm, the health care needs of women trafficking victims, female genital mutilation, preventing child pornography and the phenomenon of bullying in schools.

**Silvia-Adriana Țicău (S&D)**, *in writing*. – (RO) I voted for the Daphne programme report because it is the only programme that aims to combat violence against women, children and teenagers across the European Union. According to studies on gender-based violence, roughly 20-25% of women in Europe have been victims of physical violence at least once in their life, and 26% of children and teenagers have been victims of physical violence during childhood.

The Daphne programme is a vital tool for combating violence against women and providing the possibility for women's organisations and other stakeholders to implement concrete actions in this area.

More than 500 projects have been implemented by the Daphne programme since 1997, with a great deal of interest in the programme being attracted from NGOs, which have sent a huge number of proposals to the Commission to be funded from the programme's budget.

Continued funding for the Daphne programme is vital in order to maintain the measures currently in force and adopt new measures for combating violence against children, young people and women. We call for the administrative burden to be eased, grant application procedures to be simplified and the time between the publication of calls for projects and the signing of contracts to be reduced, in order to allow as many NGOs as possible to propose and implement projects through the Daphne programme.

**Viktor Uspaskich (ALDE), in writing.** – (LT) I strongly support the Daphne initiative, which aims to combat violence against young people and women, even by providing a small amount of financial support and sharing experience. I am therefore greatly concerned that the report highlights that certain Member States, including Lithuania, are very poorly represented in the Daphne programme. According to data provided by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in Lithuania, 63% of Lithuanian women have experienced physical or sexual violence or a threat of such violence. The vast majority of these women stated that the experience gave them feelings of hatred and powerlessness. Of greatest concern is the fact that only 10.6% of all victims contacted the police about serious incidents. According to Lithuania's Women's Issues Information Centre, the police and the courts avoid domestic violence cases unless the victim has been badly beaten up or murdered. Police measures against the offender are often limited. The help given by the network of crisis centres to the victims of violence is not enough. In 2011, there were 15 crisis centres and six shelters for battered women in operation in Lithuania, but they do not cover the whole country and only two of them are funded by municipalities. This problem is too great for it to be left to NGOs. Politicians should take decisive action.

**Derek Vaughan (S&D), in writing.** – This resolution has my full support as it highlights the very important issue of the elimination of violence against women, children and other vulnerable groups. The Daphne funding programme has provided valuable financial assistance for a number of successful projects across Europe. It is essential that, as the only European programme dedicated specifically to this issue, funding continues to be provided to allow the programme to go from strength to strength. I believe that, if the programme is integrated into the rights and citizenship programme from 2014, as the European Commission proposes, the profile of the Daphne programme will be significantly reduced. This would prove to be detrimental to the fight against violence against women and would undermine all the hard work that has been achieved so far.

**Marie-Christine Vergiat (GUE/NGL), in writing.** – (FR) By voting for this report, the European Parliament spoke out against the Commission's plan to incorporate the Daphne programme with other programmes in a vast rights and citizenship programme with a lower budget for the 2014-2020 period. Since 1997, the Daphne programme has played an essential role in supporting those working on preventing and combating violence towards women, children and young people, and also in enhancing cooperation between Member States in this area. The proposal submitted by the Commission is likely to

compromise seriously the objectives set out for it, especially in terms of access to funding for associations and particularly small associations. I also welcome the fact that it has highlighted the importance given by the programme to people facing poverty and social exclusion, particularly women and young Roma, who are particularly exposed to the risk of violence. The report also underlines the impact of sexual stereotypes in the area of gender equality and the consequent need for targeted actions to combat this by means of awareness raising, particularly amongst the young. To my mind, that is the first battle in terms of gender equality. I welcome the fact that the report emphasises this area as a priority.

**Angelika Werthmann (NI),** *in writing.* – (DE) The Daphne programme can look back on a 15-year success story involving over 500 projects to combat violence against women, children and young people. Nonetheless, there is a need to integrate the Member States that acceded in 2004 more closely and to focus on ‘new’ challenges, such as social media and cyberbullying. Despite the effectiveness of the Daphne programme, I believe that legal measures are essential in this area. For this reason, I voted in favour.

**Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR),** *in writing.* – The ECR Group is unified in its condemnation of violence against women and children. We are supportive of the aims and objectives of the Daphne programme and are particularly keen to see it extend to areas such as preventing violence through online social networks (paragraph 10), honour killing and female genital mutilation (paragraph 13). The ECR Group supports a strong position with regard to violence against women and we want to work collaboratively alongside national governments to make policies which will help eradicate violence against women. We voted against part 2 of paragraph 17 to show that we oppose further legislation at EU level which would interfere with Member States’ own criminal justice systems – we do firmly believe that individual Member States have overall responsibility for their own criminal legal systems.

**Anna Záborská (PPE),** *in writing.* – (FR) I voted against recital K which mentions, in particular, the existence of a ‘human right to abortion’ being part of sexual and reproductive health. However, there is no such right. This resolution shows that the Daphne programme has been used for aims of social engineering: even the European institutions no longer differentiate between ‘sex’ and ‘gender’. If ‘gender’ is commonly accepted as the social expression of sex, no discrimination based on ‘gender’ could be proved. That makes combating violence against women impossible. I am sorry about that.

**Inês Zuber (GUE/NGL),** *in writing.* – (PT) This report rightly acknowledges the importance of the Daphne programme in combating violence against children, young people and women. Since there is a proposal that this programme be included in the multiannual financial framework 2014-2020 as part of the future rights and citizenship programme, the report urges that the latter should include the objective of ‘combating violence against women’ and retain the same level of funding that the Daphne programme has had to date. However, in order to ensure that this objective is not diluted and ‘lost’ in the midst of so many others, we believe that specific funding should be in place for the Daphne programme, and that this funding should be greater than for the previous programmes. In view of the importance that small women’s organisations, trades unions and NGOs have in defending and promoting women’s rights and combating the violence affecting them, we think the report needed to set out clear measures enabling these organisations to access the programme’s funds.

**Report: Norica Nicolai (A7-0429/2011)**

**Luís Paulo Alves (S&D),** *in writing.* – (PT) I am voting for this report since it raises in quite a timely fashion a fairly sensitive subject that should be debated: the situation of women and children in situations of armed conflict. First of all, it is important to involve more women in the prevention, mediation and resolution of conflicts, but also as leaders of military and peacekeeping operations. Perhaps this will also help to reduce the weaknesses of which they are the target in many war zones, since there continue to be many female victims of violence and sexual exploitation.

**Roberta Angelilli (PPE),** *in writing.* – (IT) Women have always been exposed to greater risks than men, and where public order is not guaranteed – especially during times of war – they need greater protection and assurances, including with regard to the increased risk of suffering abuse, sexual assault and various other gender-based crimes. Through its institutions and agencies, the European Union must promote the ratification and implementation of the 1998 Rome Statute (for the International Criminal Court) by developing countries as a necessary step towards protecting women's rights during times of war and averting the impunity of perpetrators. In order to bolster the rights of all women, we must guarantee access to education and information for women from childhood, as well as qualified, local assistance for victims of violence, not to mention suitable compensation in line with national and international laws. Lastly, I am convinced that the creation of a Special EU Representative for Women, Peace and Security within the European External Action Service (EEAS) will bring greater coordination with our counterparts in the United Nations.

**Charalampos Angourakis (GUE/NGL),** *in writing.* – (EL) The report is dangerous and misleading for women from the working and grassroots classes because it calls for them to become aggressors and victims in the imperialist barbarity of war. Although the report recognises that most war victims are women, the solution it proposes is to increase the number of female soldiers in imperialist armies and interventions, claiming that this will reduce aggression in armed conflict. This is a very defiant call. The aggression of imperialist armies is not a question of the gender composition of troops; it is an inherent characteristic of imperialism. Wars are born of the very capitalist system that is born and reproduces through war. The EU itself and the governments of the Member States are actively participating in the imperialist carve-up of the world in order to safeguard the profitability of the plutocracy which murders women, men and children in imperialist wars the world over, from Africa, Asia and the Middle East to the Balkans. The Greek Communist Party is fighting so that the anti-imperialist and fighting women's movement can pave the way for a reversal of the capitalist system which gives birth to imperialist barbarism.

**Elena Oana Antonescu (PPE),** *in writing.* – (RO) The impact of conflicts on civilians continues to be disproportionate if we take into account the variables of gender and age. The clashes taking place over the last decade have affected and continue to affect predominantly children, women and the elderly. Hunger, epidemics and violence against civilians continue to produce more victims than actual military clashes. At the same time, it is worrying that acts of violence and abuse against these groups are still regarded in some regions as legitimate instruments of military confrontation. The overall picture is even more alarming if we take into account that only 10% of the personnel in peacekeeping missions are women. Supporting the gender dimension by making the EU's financial and institutional support conditional upon including representatives from women's organisations in the negotiating process, as well as including a more consistent

representation of women in the negotiating team, may offer appropriate strategies for achieving the objectives of the EU Plan of Action on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Development.

**Sophie Auconie (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (FR) I am proud that the European Parliament has taken up the issue of women, peace and security, as peoples' mentalities simply have to change. It was therefore only natural for me to support this resolution which aims to enable women to participate in full in peace negotiations and proposes to create a Special EU Representative on Women, Peace and Security. This report makes us aware that women are not only victims in the case of conflicts. They can also sometimes be key actors in peace processes. 'Women in the military who patrol on an equal footing with men send a strong image to local women', explained the rapporteur Norica Nicolai. It rightly considers that 'the inclusion of more women in the prevention, mediation and resolution of conflicts' is essential. From a gender equality perspective, more women should be included in the military, both in leadership positions and at ground level, and it is crucial to have high-ranking women officials.

**Elena Băsescu (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (RO) I voted for Ms Nicolai's report as violence against women has increased in present-day conflicts. I should emphasise the importance of acknowledging female role models among the peacekeeping forces in order to highlight their contribution to the mission's success.

They play an important role in the army organisation through the courage they display on the front line.

At the same time, we must raise awareness among the public and decision makers about the sexual abuses committed in war zones. I, too, support the initiative for setting up specialist clinics for administering to victims any medical and psychological care they require. Women also need to be involved in rebuilding conflict zones. Their active involvement on the ground can ensure respect for the gender balance within institutions.

**Regina Bastos (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (PT) The situation experienced by women in armed conflict zones is intolerable, particularly in Africa. Sexual violence against women continues to be used as a weapon of war. These crimes have disastrous physical and psychological consequences for the victims, who are often rejected by their communities. This report robustly condemns these crimes and stresses the need for national authorities to bring an end to impunity for the perpetrators of these acts and to strengthen justice systems so that they can be sentenced. It also highlights the need to promote education for the emancipation of women, and for campaigns to raise awareness of respect for women's dignity. It also underlines the importance of increasing the number of women in peace-negotiation processes, as well as in military peace-building operations, particularly in leadership roles. Finally, it emphasises that institutional gender equality mechanisms and commitments should be put in place in post-conflict situations in which reconstruction and reintegration activities are being carried out as a first stage towards protecting and promoting women's rights. I voted for this report for the above reasons.

**Mara Bizzotto (EFD)**, *in writing*. – (IT) This report deals with an issue that is surely worthy of attention. Women and children are, without doubt, the most vulnerable people during and after wars, because they are often subject to sexual and other abuse, physical mistreatment and psychological violence. Even though the general approach is to be welcomed, since it calls for greater focus on the education and schooling of women in times of war and proposes greater commitment in the field of gynaecological and health

care assistance for these vulnerable persons, the report proposes some specific measures with which I do not agree. For example, the creation of a Special EU Representative for Women, Peace and Security, with the ensuing bureaucratic and administrative apparatus, obviously carries an expense that does not seem justifiable, given the existence of an organisation within the UN that already works precisely in the field of sexual violence and armed conflicts. This is a duplication that offers no useful assurances and certainly will carry extra costs compared with today. Another problematic issue – again for budget reasons – is the proposal to open new budget items for Gender Advisors within the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). That is why I decided to abstain on this report.

**Vilija Blinkevičiūtė (S&D), in writing.** – (LT) I voted in favour of this European Parliament report because sexual violence in the form of mass rapes, human trafficking and other forms of sexual abuse of women and children is still unacceptably used as a tactic of war in conflict regions around the world. In addition, the power vacuum that emerges in post-conflict areas can lead to a deterioration of the rights of women and girls, as witnessed in Libya and Egypt. The effects of wartime sexual violence, both physical (risks such as sterility, sexually transmitted diseases, etc.) and psychological, are devastating for the victims, as the latter are often stigmatised, rejected, mistreated and considered to be dishonoured, and, in many cases, are excluded from their communities or sometimes even murdered. The families of the victims are also hit particularly hard, as sexual violence is considered a humiliation. Of great concern is the fact that in most cases, the perpetrators of sexual violence go unpunished, as demonstrated by the example of Colombia, where, in a situation of armed conflict, sexual violence against women is a systematic and concealed practice and the perpetrators enjoy almost total impunity. This form of violence should therefore be viewed as a war crime. A Special EU Representative on Women, Peace and Security should be created in order to improve this situation. The creation of such a post would make policies and actions in all areas more coherent and efficient, and the United Nations would have a liaison point that would facilitate seamless cooperation.

**Anna Maria Corazza Bildt (PPE), in writing.** – (SV) We voted in favour of the report on women's situation in war because it is important to draw attention to the vulnerability of women and children in war situations, as violence, rape and persecution are increasingly used as major weapons. The various acts of violence suffered by children and their mothers affect fundamental social functions in the long term and are a major cause of systematic violence against women. The report proposes the possibility of the future creation of a Special EU Representative, similar to those in the UN, who is to be responsible for issues relating to women and security.

**Corina Crețu (S&D), in writing.** – (RO) The need to involve women in every stage, from conflict prevention and crisis management to post-conflict rehabilitation, has been increasingly highlighted during the discussions at high-level forums. Involving women in the security sector and in the peace-building process is vital to ensure the success of these efforts, and excluding women from these processes makes it impossible to provide an appropriate response to the concerns of the entire population. With regard to peace negotiations, women account for less than 8% of participants and less than 3% have been signatories of the agreements concluded. EU support for peace processes must be made conditional upon the involvement of women in the international teams conducting peace negotiations. In modern armed conflicts, around 90% of victims are civilians, with women frequently being victims of rape, used as a weapon of war, and of sexual exploitation, used as an extreme means of survival. This is why I have called for special attention to be focused

on pregnant women and mothers of young children with regard to the provision of food, clothing, health care services, transportation and evacuation, in order to avoid unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases, as priority areas under the Development Financing Instrument for the 2014-2020 period.

**George Sabin Cutaş (S&D),** *in writing.* – (RO) I voted for the report on women's situation in war because it calls for the prevention of abuse against women during conflicts and for their involvement in peace processes. In a situation where women continue to be the main victims of armed conflicts, with gender violence very often being used systematically as a war tactic, strategies are required to prevent these acts of violence, to afford protection and assistance to victims and to prosecute the perpetrators.

**Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D),** *in writing.* – (RO) Since history has shown that waging war appears to be a highly male-dominated activity and that, therefore, there is reason to expect that the particular skills of women in terms of dialogue and non-violence might contribute in a very positive way to peaceful conflict prevention and management, I think that the European Union's support for peace processes should be made conditional upon women's participation in the international teams conducting peace negotiations.

**Diogo Feio (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) Brutality to the most vulnerable is, unfortunately, one of the stand-out characteristics of armed conflict. Despite all the international conventions on the subject, by bringing out the worst in human beings, wars demonstrate that the law is not sufficient to halt the destructive impetus and that, however much men seek to set limits on it, the hatred of the Other present in these situations ends up overcoming reason and mercy. The situation of women in armed conflict situations is particularly difficult. Psychological or physical violence – often of a sexual nature – and the multiple humiliations to which they are subjected are used as weapons for demoralising adversaries and destroying the social fabric of their homeland. This type of violence leaves deep and permanent scars, and the fact that it is so intimate instils in the communities that suffer it an inevitable desire for vengeance that is only appeased with great difficulty. The European Union should remain aware of this phenomenon, should continue robustly combating the repugnant and lamentable situations that strike defenceless women, and should seek means to help them and to raise awareness in societies of the need to change their attitude in this regard.

**José Manuel Fernandes (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) We are constantly hearing stories of wartime human rights violations, which the available details almost always give Machiavellian features; for example, there are 16 rapes per day in the Congo conflict. Their weakness means women and children are amongst the main victims. Girls and women are often repeatedly raped in front of their impotent family members, which is hugely traumatic for husbands and sons, in addition to the physical and psychological consequences for the victims. It is, therefore, of the greatest urgency to adopt a code of conduct to be applied in war zones and refugee camps. Moreover, it is crucial that the perpetrators of such war crimes be arrested and brought to trial, so that they do not go unpunished. I am voting for this report, drafted by Ms Nicolai, which advocates protecting women from any form of violence, as well as their increased participation in military negotiation processes, which currently stands at less than 10%, since their presence is essential in dialogue with other women in conflict situations. The EU cannot lose this opportunity to put this problem on the foreign policy agenda.

**João Ferreira (GUE/NGL),** *in writing.* – (PT) The subject of this report is important and timely. This report should be valued, in that it draws attention to the specific issues of women in war zones, such as, *inter alia*, increased vulnerability in conflict situations, sexual violence and rape. Some recommendations are made for tackling the aforementioned dangers, by preventing them, and for properly considering gender particularities in military conflicts. However, the entire report is imbued with an undisguisable militarist vision, which is quite explicit when advocating better conditions for women in the military and civilian missions undertaken by NATO. However, what was needed was the unequivocal rejection of these missions and their consequences for women, whether those taking part in the conflict directly or their civilian victims; it also needed firmly to advocate peace and peaceful conflict resolution, which is an area in which women could, in fact, make an inestimable contribution.

**Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D),** *in writing.* – (SK) Only limited progress has been made in the last ten years reflecting the participation of women in public administration. In some cases, quotas were adopted and the number of women in representative institutions increased, but in spite of the efforts made, the participation of women in peace negotiations, with few exceptions, is still less than 10% of the formal participation. Women in the military nevertheless play an important role as role models and mediators of intercultural exchange, and are an encouraging motivation for local women, breaking down the stereotypes of local men and communicating better with local women.

In most countries, unfortunately, little importance is attached to gender equality and women's rights because the gender issue is seen only as a minor issue, and cultural, religious and socio-economic customs are used as an excuse for hindering progress in this area.

It is therefore necessary to emphasise the gender perspective early in the planning of civilian and security missions, because it may be expected that the particular skills of women in terms of dialogue and non-violence could be a very positive contribution to peaceful conflict prevention and resolution.

I believe that it would be appropriate for Parliament to appoint a permanent rapporteur for gender equality and women's rights in the area of EU external relations who will also be responsible for gender identity and non-discrimination.

**Bruno Gollnisch (NI),** *in writing.* – (FR) The first concern of the report is, curiously, women's participation in peace negotiations on the basis, amongst other things, of a sexist stereotype: men make war, women are better at talking. So be it. Only then is there the denunciation of the situation of women in times of war, and particularly the rapes to which they increasingly fall victim, rapes which have become, in certain parts of the world, fully-fledged weapons of war. The rapporteur asks for these rapes to be considered as war crimes and for there to be no impunity for those who commit them. She is quite right. However, I seem to remember that there is a 'law of war', which, shocking as that term may seem, has maintained that for a long time. The rapporteur also asks for the 'adverse effects of armed conflict on family life' to be limited. Frankly, I do not know what to make of a remark like that. Simple naivety? Good intentions? The only way to limit such consequences is to avoid war.

**Catherine Grèze (Verts/ALE),** *in writing.* – (FR) I voted in favour of this report for a number of reasons. First of all, because it asserts the role of women as victims during armed conflict. Then, and this is a particularly important point, it recognises and promotes the key role they play during peace processes. Finally, we can be pleased that this report

encourages the European Union to adopt a leading position on the international stage in combating the sexual violence suffered by these women and girls during times of war.

**Brice Hortefeux (PPE),** *in writing.* – (FR) When we think of the alarming situation of women in conflict zones, when we read the overwhelming United Nations reports on sexual violence against women, and particularly the mass rapes of women in the Democratic Republic of Congo which are viewed as acts of war, then it becomes a matter of urgency for the international community to think about the means to fight effectively against these odious acts. That is why I welcome the adoption of Ms Nicolai's report, which raises our awareness of this worrying matter. It is high time that we took concrete measures to put a stop to this violence and to ensure that the women who fall victim to it have access to treatment and to psychological and legal counselling.

**Anna Ibrisagic (PPE),** *in writing.* – (SV) We Swedish Conservatives in the European Parliament voted today against the own-initiative report on women's situation in war, as we believe that the introduction of specific budget lines in the EU and the creation of a new Special EU Representative responsible for issues relating to women and security are not the right approaches to take. The introduction of more financial resources for issues relating to women will not necessarily improve equality. Instead, we want to work to enhance UN Security Council Resolution 1325 at EU level.

**Juozas Imbrasas (EFD),** *in writing.* – (LT) I welcomed this document because I believe that women in the army and/or civil organisations involved in peacekeeping operations play an important part as role models, as intercultural mediators, and as empowering incentives for local women and stereotype dispellers for local men. Emphasis needs to be placed on gender from the very outset of planning civilian and security missions. On many occasions, history has shown that warfare is a highly male-dominated activity and that there is therefore reason to expect that the particular skills of women in terms of dialogue and non-violence might contribute in a very positive way to peaceful conflict prevention and management. Commission, EEAS and Parliament delegations must find ways to promote the signing, ratification and implementation of the 1998 Rome Statute (for the International Criminal Court) by those developing countries that have not already done so, as a necessary step towards protecting women's rights during times of war and ending perpetrators' impunity.

**Cătălin Sorin Ivan (S&D),** *in writing.* – I voted for this report because it touches upon a serious problem, sexual violence against women and children in situations of armed conflict. I want to underline three important points. First, it strongly condemns the continued use of sexual violence against women as a weapon of war equal to a war crime, recognising the deep physical and psychological wounds that such abuses leave on the victims. Second, the rapporteur calls for the inclusion of more women in the military, both in leadership positions and at ground level. Third, the report stresses that education plays a key role not only in empowering women and young girls, but also in combating discrimination.

**Philippe Juvin (PPE),** *in writing.* – (FR) I voted for this report on women's situation in war, focusing more specifically on the impact of armed conflict on women, particularly the use of sexual violence against women as a weapon of war. In particular, I supported the provisions on the reproductive and sexual health of women and the protection of their rights.

**Elisabeth Köstinger (PPE),** *in writing.* – (DE) Sexual violence in the form of mass rape, human trafficking and other forms of sexual abuse of women and children is still used as a tactic in warfare in regions hit by conflict. I have voted in favour of the European Parliament resolution in order to send out a clear signal against these conditions.

**Constance Le Grip (PPE),** *in writing.* – (FR) I voted in favour of Ms Nicolai's report on women's situation in war. It seems to me important that the European Parliament focuses its attention on the impact of armed conflict on women, especially the sexual violence they may suffer. Used as a weapon of war, rape is a war crime: it is therefore our duty to condemn it and to ensure that those who commit it are prosecuted, tried and punished for their acts. The effects of sexual violence, both physical and psychological, are traumatic and devastating for the victims, who are often stigmatised and rejected by their communities. A further section of this report concerns the role of women in conflicts and peace negotiations. A more important role for women in the military, in civilian peacekeeping operations and in peace negotiations would have added value in political dialogue and the empowerment of women in regions in conflict.

**David Martin (S&D),** *in writing.* – I firmly believe in the inclusion of more women in the prevention, mediation and resolution of conflicts and I welcome the fact that to this end, the rapporteur is calling on the EU and Member States to include more women in the military, both in leadership positions and at ground level. It is crucial to have high-ranking women officials from a gender equality perspective, but it is also very important to have women in civilian operations because they liaise better with the local women.

**Barbara Matera (PPE),** *in writing.* – (IT) I voted in favour of the report on women's situation in war because it is essential to ensure the safety of women who decide to take the brave career path of involvement in war. In many conflict areas around the world, sexual assaults, including mass rape and other forms of abuse such as trafficking human beings as a war tactic, are still common, and women are the main victims. These intolerable acts of violence have serious psychological and physical effects on victims and their families. We need to be harder when punishing the perpetrators of criminal acts against women in times of war. Impunity must not be negotiable and there should be no peace without justice.

Furthermore, judicial proceedings against the perpetrators of violence against women in war are often too slow, creating further distress for the victims. Lastly, it is important to increase the participation of women in decision-making roles on peace processes and in defining security measures. Women are often more sensitive to the needs of society and can make a real contribution to peace-building operations, particularly when it comes to requirements connected to children, schools and hospitals.

**Marisa Matias (GUE/NGL),** *in writing.* – (PT) Countless crimes are committed against women and go unpunished in the context of armed conflicts. There is therefore a need to step up prevention of this type of crime and to ensure there is no impunity. Inequality between men and women should also be combated in these situations, not least by assigning a more active role to women in peace negotiation missions, for example, as well as in processes involving the political and democratic reconstruction of post-conflict countries.

**Mario Mauro (PPE),** *in writing.* – (IT) I agree with Ms Nicolai on the need for women to have a greater role in military and civilian operations in war zones. Women are pillars of the community and are irreplaceable in terms of building and maintaining peace. I voted in favour.

**Nuno Melo (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (PT) I believe there is a need to include more women in the prevention, mediation and resolution of conflicts. To this end, the EU and Member States should include more women in the military, both in leadership positions and on the ground. It is crucial to have high-ranking women officers from a gender equality perspective, but it is also very important to have women in civilian operations because they liaise better with local women. In the peace-building phase, the participation of women is crucial because, as pillars of the community, women are much more attuned to societal and practical needs than men: it is the women who spend most of their time in the villages or towns and therefore have more knowledge of the practical necessities which should be included in the peace-building projects, such as market infrastructure, health clinics, accessible schooling systems, etc. That is why I voted in favour.

**Louis Michel (ALDE)**, *in writing*. – (FR) Violence against women in war is abominable. I am particularly committed to combating these deadly practices. As Co-President of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly, I have already raised this issue twice with the Joint Parliamentary Assembly (JPA); once during the plenary session held in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in November 2010, and a second time during the regional session held in Cameroon in April 2011. As President of the Jean Rey Circle, I also presented the international Jean Rey Prize to Doctor Denis Mukwege for his action to support these women in the DRC. These women are not only victims; they want to be the authors of change and the authors of a better destiny for their children, especially for their daughters. We must also pay tribute to their commitment to a fairer society that is more respectful of human rights. The European Union is by their side, regularly taking measures to combat any form of discrimination against them. The creation of a post of Special EU Representative on Women, especially the appointment of such a representative, will provide greater coherence and efficiency to its policies.

**Alexander Mirsky (S&D)**, *in writing*. – This report refers to UN Resolution 1325 and aims to combat sexual violence against women and children in situations of armed conflict. In favour.

**Andreas Mölzer (NI)**, *in writing*. – (DE) The situation of women is largely precarious during armed conflicts. Unfortunately, UN resolutions are not always respected by the combatants. When the life of a person, above all, of a woman or a child, is seen to be of little intrinsic value, there is a greater danger of them becoming the victims of (sexual) violence. It is only if the perpetrators are pursued and the risk of punishment is very high that potential aggressors will be deterred from attacks. It may make sense to deploy more women in establishing contact with local women. The proposal to give women a greater role in preventing conflict, acting as intermediaries in conflict and resolving conflict, is praiseworthy, but will only work if women enjoy a certain respect in society based on their role. Since the measures proposed are not completely practicable or fully thought out, I am unable to vote unreservedly in favour of the report.

**Elisabeth Morin-Chartier (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (FR) I voted in favour of this report because, in armed conflicts, it is often the women and children who are the main civilian victims of the warring sides. I refer, in particular, to the use of mass rapes as a weapon of war and to sexual violence, which often go unpunished. This report stresses the role and the place of women in the military and in civilian peacekeeping operations, especially the role they can play during conflicts and peace negotiations. The report also calls for zero tolerance for sexual violence and the sexual exploitation of children and women in armed conflicts and refugee camps. It also strongly condemns the use of sexual violence against women

as a weapon of war equal to a war crime. We call for an end to impunity for perpetrators of sexual violence and for women who are victims of ill-treatment and violence to be able to lodge complaints with international courts under conditions compatible with their dignity.

**Radvilė Morkūnaitė-Mikulėnienė (PPE), in writing. – (LT)** Under conditions of armed conflict, women and girls often become easy targets. Violence against them has long-term consequences both for the victims themselves, their families, and for their communities and, ultimately, societies. In some countries around the world, sexual offences and other kinds of violence against women are justified, devised and encouraged as a tactic of war to demoralise the enemy. The definition of war crimes should therefore also be extended so that sexual crimes are considered to be the same as other war crimes and it is impossible to avoid responsibility for such crimes. At the same time, the positive role women play in conflict prevention and reconciliation is not sufficiently understood or exploited. I therefore voted in favour of this report, which draws attention to the multifaceted nature of the problem and sets out many proposals, the implementation of which would, I believe, enable greater progress to be made in protecting women and children from sexual violence during armed conflicts.

**Siiri Oviir (ALDE), in writing. – (ET)** I believe that special attention should be devoted to the gender dimension in societies which are experiencing or emerging from conflict situations: since society consists of both men and women, the well-being of all of its members must be taken into consideration in the restoration or reconstruction of states. To ensure that post-war society is not designed predominantly by men, for the benefit of men and with a solely male ethos, and to ensure that the nascent social order does not perpetuate gender stereotypes, women must increasingly be involved in the regulation of military situations as negotiators, peacekeepers, higher-level military officials and other opinion leaders. In addition to increasing the participation of women in international teams, I also support the measures listed in Norica Nicolai's report on women's situation in war to ensure the safety of women as defenceless parties in military situations. A third but no less important point I would like to emphasise is the importance of dealing with the cases of rape perpetrated during war or their prevention; this is not merely a question of physical violence, but also of the lifelong ruinous effect of rape on the female psyche and health and on family relations. The level of severity of rape perpetrated during war must also be emphasised in the subsequent prosecution and punishment of the perpetrators of such crimes.

**Rolandas Paksas (EFD), in writing. – (LT)** I believe that we must make every effort to stop any kind of sexual violence in conflict regions around the world. Consequently, there is a need to provide for specific measures enabling women to be more effectively protected against various kinds of sexual crimes. Adequate funding must be allocated to achieve these objectives. We also need to stop discrimination against women and eliminate stereotypes through promotion policy and employment awareness campaigns. All people should be appointed to appropriate posts according to their skills and competence, regardless of their gender. It should be noted that not just EU but also developing countries must take certain steps to protect women's rights during times of war and end perpetrators' impunity. These countries must sign, ratify and implement the Rome Statute as soon as possible.

**Alfredo Pallone (PPE), in writing. – (IT)** I voted in favour of the report on women's situation in war because I think gender equality is an essential element of the equality and

freedom of us all. Furthermore, just as in politics and in business, we are seeking to promote the central role of women in international conflict situations. The aim is to see women have a role in the upper echelons of conflict resolution diplomacy, civil assistance for the needy and social reconstruction. We are also working towards a plan for appointing a Special EU Representative for Women, Peace and Security.

**Maria do Céu Patrão Neves (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) I voted for this report, which encourages the inclusion of more women in the prevention, mediation and resolution of conflicts, and also emphasises the presence of women in civilian operations because they liaise better with local women.

**Rovana Plumb (S&D),** *in writing.* – (RO) The report refers to UN Resolution 1325 and aims at combating sexual violence against women and children during armed conflict. I voted for this report because women must have an increasingly active involvement in peacekeeping operations, both at the prevention stage and in conflict mediation, particularly through occupying leading positions both within national governments and at political level. At the same time, they must also be included in civilian operations as they are much better communicators than men on the ground. Women must also be involved in the peace-building phase because, as the pillars supporting their communities, they have a much better perception of the practical needs which the peace-building projects should address. Although there has been a rise in the number of women in representative institutions, women's participation in peace negotiations remains low at below 10% of those formally involved. The report strongly condemns the use of sexual violence against women as a weapon of war. This is why one of the main calls made by the rapporteur is for the post of Special EU Representative on Women, Peace and Security to be created.

**Paulo Rangel (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) Raising public awareness of gender equality was one of the great achievements of the 20th century. However, true parity between men and women requires the institutional structures of various entities to be reorganised and it is crucial, from the gender equality point of view, to promote the inclusion of more women in prevention, mediation and resolution of conflicts, and to ensure their involvement in civilian operations. It should be noted that the EU already has a range of policies relating to women, to peace and to security, as well as gender taskforces and focal points relating to women and security. What it lacks, however, is a central unit able to coordinate all these disparate actions, so there is a need to move towards creating the role of Special EU Representative on Women, Peace and Security. That is why I voted for this resolution.

**Jean Roatta (PPE),** *in writing.* – (FR) The Committee on Development, on which I sit, worked with the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality, which was responsible for this report on women's situation in war. This report deals with the responsibility of women in peace negotiations as well as the impact of armed conflict across the globe on women. The report recommends the creation of a post of Special EU Representative on Women within the European External Action Service (EEAS) and calls on the Member States to put in place action plans to improve the situation of women in conflict countries. As I agree fully with the actions to be taken to improve the situation of women, I voted in favour of this report.

**Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE),** *in writing.* – (ES) I voted in favour. This report is positive for three reasons in particular. Firstly, because it recognises and promotes the role of women in peace-building, looking to view them not only from a victim's perspective, but also in terms of the important role they fulfil as peacemakers. Secondly, because it

again calls for the Commission to create the post of Special EU Representative on Women, Peace and Security to chiefly watch over the rights of women during conflict and to defend and support them during peace negotiations and dialogue. Thirdly, because it affirms the importance of establishing a code of conduct for EU personnel serving in military and civilian missions in conflict zones, primarily to clarify that regardless of the circumstances, sexual violence is always a crime.

**Tokia Saïfi (PPE),** *in writing.* – (FR) In some armed conflicts, the warring sides have a formidable weapon at their disposal, that of mass gang rape. In the Democratic Republic of Congo (formerly Zaire), rebel groups in the east regularly commit this type of abuse. Other practices follow, with equally dramatic physical and psychological consequences, such as sexual slavery and human trafficking. The Peace and Security cluster is one of the main pillars of the strategic partnership between the European Union and the African Union. In August 2011, the European Commission decided to provide a further EUR 300 million to be used, *inter alia*, to finance civilian peacekeeping missions. I voted in favour of this resolution because it urges European stakeholders to coordinate our efforts more effectively to protect women during times of war. Although funds have been mobilised and highly-qualified teams are being deployed on the ground, the violence continues and is even intensifying. The rapporteur's recommendations concerning prevention, urgency, special attention and punishment must be implemented as quickly as possible.

**Joanna Senyszyn (S&D),** *in writing.* – (PL) As a member of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality, I endorsed the report on women's situation in war. Among the many valuable observations and recommendations contained in the report, two matters are of particular significance.

Firstly, in view of the mediatory skills of women, they should, amongst other things, be included in international teams leading peace negotiations and they should hold positions of leadership and positions related to management and training.

Secondly, during a war, women are at particular risk of all kinds of physical violence, particularly sexual violence. In relation to this, it is necessary to increase cooperation with and aid to national and local women's organisations. These organisations are most aware of the degree of danger to women and can give earlier warning of such situations and take preventative action.

It is crucial that the perpetrators of violence against women bear responsibility for their deeds. The perpetrators must not be left with a feeling of impunity, and the victims must not be left with the belief that they are alone in their tragedy and that no one is really helping them. In accordance with the resolution, the question of eliminating impunity should be one of the main subjects discussed at peace negotiations. I also support the establishment of women's clinics to deal with sexual and psychological violence in war zones.

**Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE),** *in writing.* – (IT) Even today, women still account for less than 10% of the official participants at peace negotiations, with very few exceptions. This is despite the creation of the post of UN Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict. All too often during wars, women suffer repeated sexual assaults in the form of mass rapes, human trafficking and other forms of sexual abuse of women and children. Meanwhile, a deterioration of the rights of women and girls is seen in post-conflict situations, as witnessed in Libya and Egypt. Through this vote, EU support for peace processes must be made conditional on women's participation in the international teams leading peace negotiations. This will ensure that progress will be made with a view to

permanent inclusion of women leaders, local women's rights organisations and civil society groups at the negotiating table throughout the peace process.

**Catherine Stihler (S&D),** *in writing.* – Along with the Bastos report on the Daphne programme (A7-0006/2012), I welcome this report which lays the foundations for greater protection of women in war, including a recommendation for a special EU representative on women's peace and security.

**Michèle Striffler (PPE),** *in writing.* – (FR) Sexual violence and mass rapes, used as a weapon of war, are, unfortunately, on the increase throughout the world. In the Kivu region, in the east of the Democratic Republic of Congo, I saw for myself the terrible impact they have on the lives of the women and girls who are the victims of these atrocities. In these development cooperation programmes, it is imperative that the European Union focuses on reproductive and sexual health and the protection of the rights of women during times of war. In the face of such atrocities, reproductive and sexual health must be addressed and not treated as a no-go area. That is why I voted in favour of maintaining paragraphs 17 and 19 and for the report in its entirety.

**Nuno Teixeira (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) In this document, the rapporteur urges the EU and the Member States to include more women in the military, both in leadership positions and on the ground. It is crucial to have high-ranking women officers from a gender equality perspective, but it is also very important to have women in civilian operations because they liaise better with local women. It should also be emphasised that EU indicators need to be included in national plans so as to ensure a set of uniform standards across the EU related to gender and security. I voted for the document for these reasons.

**Silvia-Adriana Țicău (S&D),** *in writing.* – (RO) I voted for this resolution on women's situation in war because I think that the human rights of women and girls are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights. Sexual violence in the form of mass rape, human trafficking and other forms of sexual abuse committed against women and children is still used unacceptably as a war tactic in conflict regions around the world. The effects of violence, both physical and psychological, are devastating for the victims, as they are often stigmatised, rejected, mistreated and considered to be dishonoured and, in many cases, are excluded from their communities and sometimes even murdered. We call on the authorities to identify and punish those who commit atrocities against women (rape, murder and infanticide) and children in conflict zones. Closer cooperation is needed with local women's organisations in order to establish an early warning system and possibly enable them to prevent or reduce the incidence of abuse themselves. We call on the EU's budgetary authority to increase the financial resources allocated for promoting gender equality and women's rights in the future Development Financing Instruments for the 2014-2020 period.

**Marie-Christine Vergiat (GUE/NGL),** *in writing.* – (FR) I abstained on the report on women in conflict situations. This report contains a number of positive points. It condemns the situation of women in conflicts, during which they are particularly subjected to discrimination and violence. It highlights the role of women in peacekeeping and calls for the number of women in peacekeeping operations, especially in leadership positions, to be increased. However, this report is very ambiguous as regards the military. Putting more women in the military, even in positions of responsibility, cannot be regarded as a factor for peace. That is why I preferred to abstain.

**Angelika Werthmann (NI)**, *in writing*. – When women and girls are consistently targeted during conflicts, we cannot be silent. Sexual violence in war areas is mainly perpetrated by armed groups that use it to humiliate, intimidate and dominate women, girls and entire communities. Therefore, I voted in favour of it. Its adoption will promote a zero-tolerance policy against sexual exploitation of women and girls.

**Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)**, *in writing*. – Women who are raped or sexually abused by those in authority during times of war and conflict are subject to abuses to women that shall not be tolerated. I wholly support the aims and objectives of this report; I agree that there should be assistance and support for those women who have been abused and attacked; I also agree that there should be more women in peacekeeping operations in areas where conflict is occurring. I have always opposed EU interference in matters of national security and military matters and I am reluctant to see the EU spend more money on replicating envoy positions that already exist in one form or another and it is for that reason that I voted against paragraph 30 calling for the creation of a special EU Representative on Women within the EEAS. Overall, however, I believe that the focus of this report is on preventing and supporting women in times of war and I am pleased to be able to support this report.

**Anna Záborská (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (SK) Women in armed conflicts are often powerless in the face of physical and psychological violence. The European Union repeatedly emphasises that it stands on the side of these women and I have no doubt that this will continue.

However, we can discredit even the best intentions in the name of liberal ideology. If we are trying to adopt this report in order to help women in armed conflicts, I would like to ask: how does the promotion of abortion help them? Because, alongside many good proposals, this report also calls for the promotion of specific measures such as 'programmes providing health courses and easily accessible literature, notably on reproductive and sexual health, targeting women and men, and awareness-raising campaigns tailored to suit the cultures of the people for whom they are intended'. Calling the killing of unborn children the protection of reproductive health does not change the fact that the attempt to export, at any price, the liberal culture of death discredits us in the eyes of those we want to help. Our help thus becomes ineffective and, ultimately, pointless.

**Inês Zuber (GUE/NGL)**, *in writing*. – (PT) The positive aspects of this report reside in its drawing attention to the vulnerability of women, in particular, in situations of war and armed conflict. Women are often the first victims of war, and are the targets of sexual violence, rape and other forms of aggression. We consider it important to make any recommendations that impede and prevent such aggression, so there is a need to ponder this serious problem specifically, as the report advocates. However, we cannot support the resolution's statements that defend militarism and militarisation and put a positive spin on them, such as 'Calls for the EU and the Member States actively to promote an increase in the number of women in [...] military [...] operations'. We are against imperialism, militarism and war, and we advocate a world of progress, peace and cooperation between peoples. We would therefore distance ourselves from the tone of this report.

**Report: Norbert Neuser (A7-0442/2011)**

**Luís Paulo Alves (S&D)**, *in writing*. – (PT) I am voting for this report because its purpose is to increase the EU's political will to achieve universal energy access by 2030. To this end, there should also be a financial commitment that will help to achieve this goal. The European

Union has been very dedicated to development aid and it seems to me that it should continue to be so, paying particular attention to this field of energy, because the UN has already stated this issue's importance in combating inequality in the world.

**Laima Liucija Andrikiienė (PPE)**, *in writing*. – I voted in favour of the resolution aiming to support the objective of universal energy access by 2030, bringing greater attention to how the international community could generate funding (USD 756 billion by 2032) for central and more sustainable forms of energy generation across the world. I agree that the debate on sustainable energy access and consumption should be in parallel with the eradication of poverty with the establishment of a specific 'energy and development' programme within EU development cooperation policy. Moreover, the use of renewable energy resources should be at the heart, as they can offer an economic solution in developing countries with benefits to health, the environment and local development, as well as the fight against climate change. We, Members of European Parliament, call on the developing countries to commit seriously to the goal of universal energy access, and recommend increased assistance to ministries of energy in developing countries to enable them to make the case for support, including the development of long-term sustainable energy strategies and improved regional cooperation in energy matters.

**Roberta Angelilli (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (IT) I voted in favour of Mr Neuser's report. Ensuring universal access to electricity by 2030 is an ambitious goal; luckily, Europe has the means to achieve it. I share the concern over adding this target to the post-2015 Millennium Development Goals, and over considering it a prerequisite for reaching the MDGs by 2015. That said, electric power plants and the necessary structures for distributing and using electricity must be promoted through solutions that are compatible with the reality on the ground, bearing in mind that small and medium-scale solutions could be more suitable for developing countries. I think that this project ought to be developed via cooperation between the public sector and the qualified experience of the private sector. Lastly, in order to ensure sustainability, we need to promote and effect exchanges of best practices.

**Pino Arlacchi (S&D)**, *in writing*. – I voted for this text as it makes clear that the Millennium Development Goals will not be achieved unless substantial progress is made on improving energy access. The World Energy Outlook 2011 of the International Energy Agency (IEA) emphasises that worldwide, about 1.3 billion people have no access to electricity. Access to sustainable energy sources and modern energy services is a prerequisite for economic growth and social development, as well as for the realisation of several of the rights contained in the 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and other international human rights and environmental legal instruments. In addition to that, although there is no Millennium Development Goal specifically related to energy, I strongly believe that energy should move to the forefront of the debate on eradication of poverty. For this reason, the Commission and the Member States must endorse and commit to support the UN's recently established international target of universal energy access by 2030, and align their policies and development cooperation with this objective. By this same means, we also ask for the establishment, within EU development cooperation, of a specific 'energy and development' programme, with special focus on universal energy access.

**Sophie Auconie (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (FR) The UN designated 2012 as the International Year of Sustainable Energy for All. This offers an important opportunity to act, now that universal energy access by 2030 is a fundamental objective announced by the UN Secretary-General. The European Union wants to be an active participant in this programme.

That is why I welcome the approval of Mr Neuser's report on EU development cooperation in support of the objective of universal energy access by 2030. This is about giving access to modern energy services to populations which have so far been deprived of them. It is also about focusing on sustainable energy, reducing dependence on fossil fuels, and pursuing a decentralised energy strategy to ensure that energy is accessible in remote areas. It is further evidence that the urgently needed change in direction in global energy trends is under way. Finally, the reason why I fully support this project is that it is closely bound up with the action to combat climate change.

**Liam Aylward (ALDE), in writing.** – (GA) The Millennium Development Goals will not be achieved unless significant progress is made on improving energy access. Worldwide, there are 1.3 billion people who have no access to electricity, and 2.7 billion who have no clean cooking facilities. This creates indoor smoke in houses: a serious problem responsible for over 1.4 million premature deaths.

An increase of 1% in current energy consumption is all that is needed to achieve the Millennium Development Goals in developing countries. Access to sustainable, up-to-date energy services must be ensured in order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and eradicate poverty.

I fully support the rapporteur's recommendations in relation to the establishment of a specific 'energy and development' programme within EU development cooperation, with special focus on universal energy access. The EU must strengthen development cooperation by sharing information on and technological experience of energy matters with developing countries.

**Jean-Luc Bennahmias (ALDE), in writing.** – (FR) Energy is a major European, even global, issue. For reasons of resources, supply and efficiency, energy policy must be developed on a large scale. After Durban last December, the Rio + 20 summit, which will take place next June, will be the opportunity actually to link cooperation to development and energy issues and to propose objectives on how to reduce energy poverty and a road map for achieving universal access to energy. These are global challenges. However, they must be combined with local energy strategies. We need to think about local production, because it reduces costs and promotes the combination of different production methods. In this regard, I welcome the adoption of paragraph 37 which 'calls on the Commission and the Member States neither to fund nor to otherwise encourage the use of nuclear power in developing countries', given the serious concerns raised by nuclear power and the fact that we need to make the transition on the basis of an energy mix.

**Vilija Blinkevičiūtė (S&D), in writing.** – (LT) I voted in favour of this report because energy services impact upon all aspects of people's lives and livelihoods – without access, whole communities are condemned to poverty. By contributing to the Millennium Development Goals, the European Union must therefore constantly find ways of contributing to universal access to energy services as effectively as possible. In its resolution, the European Parliament puts an emphasis on maximising the use of renewable energy resources and therefore calls for EU financial aid to be allocated to promoting the use of these resources in particular. The European Parliament also points out that the European Energy Facility is one of only a few financial mechanisms operating internationally and it is therefore necessary to review the mechanism's effectiveness and efficiency when drawing up the new multiannual financial framework (2014-2020). In its report, Parliament also underlined that effective partnerships will need to be established between the public and

private sectors, communities and local government in order to develop access to sustainable energy services. In addition, Parliament recognises that the public sector alone will not be able to meet all the financing needs required to develop energy access, and therefore draws attention to the importance of private investors and market-oriented reforms for the energy sector.

**Jan Březina (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (CS) During the last decade, financial assistance targeting energy access for the poor has been modest. EC aid, the third largest fund in the world, has contributed modest amounts of money for energy access for the poor. The bilateral aid cooperation provided by EU countries in the area of energy has had its primary focus on economic growth and environmental objectives, rather than on energy access for the poor, and a similar situation can be seen with other important bilateral aid cooperation programmes (the US, Canada and so on). Climate change financial mechanisms have also contributed very little so far to energy access for the poor. The financial gap in the provision of universal energy access is large. The International Energy Agency states that the investment necessary for providing universal energy access by 2030 amounts to USD 756 billion, or USD 36 billion per year. Whilst this figure sounds unachievable, it represents just 3% of total projected spend during the period and could be financed through the cooperation of international funds, private/public partnerships, bank finance at multilateral, bilateral and local levels, microfinancing, loans and targeted subsidies.

**George Sabin Cutaş (S&D)**, *in writing*. – (RO) I voted for the report because I think that providing universal energy access must be a focal point of the global discussions and measures aimed at eradicating poverty. I am concerned that 1.3 billion people do not have access to electricity and 2.7 billion do not have clean cooking facilities. In sub-Saharan Africa alone, around 70% of inhabitants have no access to electricity. If we want to make tangible progress in this area, 3% of global investments must be channelled into the energy infrastructure right up to 2030. On the other hand, we must make sure that people really benefit from the subsidies provided, such as the fossil fuel subsidy.

**Edite Estrela (S&D)**, *in writing*. – (PT) I voted for the report on 'EU development cooperation in support of the objective of universal energy access by 2030' because it tables proposals to improve inclusion of the target set by the United Nations of universal access to modern and sustainable energy sources by 2030 in the European Union's development cooperation policies.

**Diogo Feio (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (PT) Universal access to energy sources is still not a reality throughout the world. In large parts of the planet, people face serious difficulties in accessing them and in having them available in sufficient quality and quantity such that they can be guaranteed a life of minimum comfort in which obtaining energy ceases to be one of a family group's main preoccupations. As the world's largest donor, the European Union should be aware of this inequality and contribute to minimising it. To that end, it should seek to help the countries and people in greatest need, to enable energy access and, wherever possible, to boost opportunities for the beneficiaries of the aid themselves to generate and manage their own energy. It will be hard without more and better energy access to successfully eradicate poverty from many areas of the globe. It therefore falls to the European Union to make part of this collective effort, which the authorities of the countries in receipt of aid cannot themselves shirk. It should be required of these that they put the received funds to proper use and that they make an effort to spread energy access amongst their citizens, particularly amongst those in greatest need of it.

**José Manuel Fernandes (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) The Western world considers access to energy a right, like water. However, there are many countries where energy access is still a mirage, especially India and the African continent. As such, it is crucial to adopt measures that catalyse the investments enabling achievement of the goals set for 2030; that is, universal energy access. This report, drafted by Mr Neuser, concerns the need for cooperation within the European Union on achieving the aforementioned goal, and it could not be more timely, since we are at the start of 2012, designated International Year of Sustainable Energy for All by the UN. I welcome the proposed measures, particularly the encouragement of private investment and the inclusion of universal energy access as a Millennium Development Goal from 2015. It is essential to invest in energy efficiency and in green energy production. I welcome the adoption of this report, for which I voted, and I hope that the EU will very soon fund private individuals' projects for the installation of equipment intended to produce energy from renewable sources.

**João Ferreira (GUE/NGL),** *in writing.* – (PT) This report tackles the issue of promoting energy access in developing countries, within the framework of EU cooperation policy. The report makes some relevant observations on the scale of the problem of energy poverty and the resulting negative implications for achieving development goals. The importance it gives to the need to adapt energy supply solutions to the specific conditions of developing countries, whilst emphasising decentralised solutions, renewable energy and the autonomy of these countries, also seems correct to us. Regrettably, however, the major contradictions that run through this Parliament also come out quite clearly in the report. In the end, what eventually predominates here is a completely subverted vision of the role of development cooperation, which is transformed into business opportunities for EU countries. There is a well-known tendency to interfere in the sovereign choices of developing countries, imposing models identical to those in the EU: the deregulation and liberalisation of markets – it advocates 'market-oriented reforms in the energy sector', 'public-private partnerships', etc. – that have led to situations of exclusion from access to energy in Europe. Although we recognise the urgent need to step up cooperation in this area with developing countries, we cannot vote for this report.

**Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D),** *in writing.* – (SK) Access to modern energy services is a fundamental prerequisite for poverty reduction and sustainable human development. Without access to energy, whole communities are constrained to a life of poverty. To begin to address this, in September 2010, the UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon, launched the target of 'universal energy access by 2030'. He underlined the importance of energy access in poverty reduction and the role of energy services in meeting the Millennium Development Goals.

Significant global investment is forecast for the energy sector over the next two decades, projected at a total of USD 26 trillion – just 3% of that sum would achieve universal access to energy by 2030. In recent years, substantial efforts have been made to foster private investment for energy access. However, aside from the economies in transition, very few developing countries can demonstrate progress on scaling-up access to energy for the poor. Financial assistance for energy access for the poor has been only modest, and it is therefore necessary to increase private sector involvement.

I likewise believe that, by demonstrating and enhancing political will and financial commitment in particular, the EU can play a key role in achieving universal energy access by 2030.

**Catherine Grèze (Verts/ALE),** *in writing.* – (FR) Since the start of my term of office, I have endeavoured to promote cross-disciplinarity and to create links between the different EU policy areas concerning development. This report, which I followed as shadow rapporteur, is one of many examples. I voted in favour of this report because it encourages the European Union to move towards genuine universal access to energy, but not to just any energy: renewable energy, reducing our dependence on fossil fuels in particular; decentralised energy, guaranteeing access to energy in rural areas; and small-scale energy, condemning large infrastructure projects like the Belo Monte dam, which have unsustainable social and environmental impacts. We can also welcome the fact that the European right, which had attempted, in the Committee on Development, to persuade the Commission and the Member States to fund and to encourage the use of nuclear power in developing countries, failed in plenary.

**Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE),** *in writing.* – Whilst the EU is in the middle of a grave economic crisis, it is easy for issues in the developing world to fall off the agenda. The objective of universal energy access by 2030 is a worthy one and I support the aims of this report.

**Juozas Imbrasas (EFD),** *in writing.* – (LT) I voted in favour of this document because access to modern energy services is a fundamental prerequisite for poverty reduction and the promotion of sustainable human development. Without a dramatic intervention to improve the situation, around 67% of the population will still lack access to electricity in 2015. During the last decade, financial assistance to provide energy access to the poor has been modest. Bilateral cooperation between the EU Member States providing aid in the area of energy has primarily been focused on economic growth and environmental objectives, rather than on energy access for the poor. Transparent and democratic participation by civil society, local authorities and regulators in the energy sector is important to enable them to supervise the provision of universal energy access, to ensure good governance and fair competition, and to curb corruption.

**Philippe Juvin (PPE),** *in writing.* – (FR) The objective of universal energy access by 2030 was launched within the framework of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). I voted against Amendment 37, which calls on the Commission and the Member States neither to fund nor to encourage the use of nuclear power in developing countries.

**Filip Kaczmarek (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PL) I endorsed the Neuser report. Access to energy can indeed have a great effect on development. True, sustainable and socially inclusive development will be impossible without making energy access universal, and such development will only be possible on the condition that energy is made available not just in a technical sense, but also in an economic sense. It is also very important for energy projects in developing countries to be constructed based on business models. If such projects are not guaranteed to be permanent and sustainable, they do not lead to achievement of the intended objectives. Another important aspect is concentrating on modern projects which use renewable energy sources that are adapted to local needs and create local growth potential.

**Petru Constantin Luhan (PPE),** *in writing.* – (RO) Public access to modern energy services is a basic condition for reducing poverty and promoting sustainable development. However, according to the global statistics for 2011, published by the International Energy Agency, around 1.3 billion people do not have access to electricity. Given that energy services have a direct impact on every aspect of people's lives and livelihoods, I think that the international

community needs to focus much greater attention on the importance of energy access, and development policies must be aligned with this objective. At the same time, the European Union must devise, as part of EU development cooperation, a specific programme for 'energy and development', with the main aim of facilitating universal energy access. This will enable us to make a significant contribution to raising the standard of living of those currently affected, as well as to eradicating poverty across the world.

**David Martin (S&D)**, *in writing*. – I voted for this report, which points out that the MDGs will not be achieved unless substantial progress is made on improving energy access, which requires an estimated annual investment of USD 48 billion by 2030, which is equivalent to around 3% of the global investment in energy infrastructure projected over the period to 2030 and would result in a modest increase in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of 0.7% by 2030.

**Clemente Mastella (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (IT) Access to modern energy services is a fundamental prerequisite for poverty reduction and sustainable human development throughout the world. Energy services impact upon all aspects of people's lives and livelihoods – without access, whole communities are constrained to a life of poverty. The importance of energy access demands greater attention from the international community.

During the last decade, financial assistance for energy access has been modest. The bilateral cooperation between EU countries concerning aid in the energy sector has had its primary focus on economic growth and environmental objectives, rather than on energy access for the poor. It will not only be necessary to increase funding through the European Development Fund and the EU Energy Facility, better targeting the poor and those in isolated areas, but we must also make greater efforts to invest in small-scale decentralised energy and, at least initially, to reduce profit margins. Only by showing political will and financial commitment will the European Union be able to play a fundamental role in achieving the UN's goal of universal energy access by 2030.

**Marisa Matias (GUE/NGL)**, *in writing*. – (PT) The view of this report is that access to modern energy services is a fundamental prerequisite for poverty reduction and sustainable human development and that, without access to these services, entire communities will be condemned to a life of poverty. It also takes the view that access to modern energy sources promotes school attendance and learning, because it facilitates both communication and access to basic needs. Modern fuels also improve environmental sustainability. Better access to modern fuels reduces the inherent emphasis on transporting wood and frees up precious time, particularly for women, so expanding their employment opportunities. The report tackles these problems, so I voted in favour.

**Mario Mauro (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (IT) The vastness of the funding gap that needs to be filled in order to provide energy access for all must not leave us indifferent. The goal of universal energy access is one of the most difficult challenges there is, but it is a just battle that we must all fight together. That is why I voted in favour of Mr Neuser's report.

**Jean-Luc Mélenchon (GUE/NGL)**, *in writing*. – (FR) This report calls on the Commission and the Member States to work towards the objective of universal energy access by 2030 and, in general, to fight to eradicate energy poverty. It also calls for special attention to be paid to local sustainable development projects and for nuclear power not to be funded. It also notes with concern that large hydropower infrastructure remains a focus for the World Bank and the European Investment Bank (EIB). I very much share these concerns and support these recommendations. I also appreciate the reminder that EU aid must not be tied to the involvement of, or used to subsidise, EU businesses. I do, however, regret the

fact that this text restricts itself to a market approach and public-private partnerships, the limitations of which it nonetheless condemns.

**Nuno Melo (PPE), in writing. – (PT)** Access to modern energy services is a fundamental prerequisite for poverty reduction and sustainable human development. Energy services impact upon all aspects of people's lives and livelihoods, and without them, whole communities are constrained to a life of poverty. The importance of energy access demands greater attention from the international community. The two principal mechanisms for EU cooperation for energy access are the European Development Fund (EDF) and the EU Energy Facility. It is important to note that 90% of EDF funds are allocated through the mechanism of national and regional indicative programmes, which are negotiated with beneficiary countries and regions. The EU Energy Facility, established in 2005, is a cofinancing instrument that calls for proposals from government and non-government actors. It is crucial to enhance political will and financial commitment if the EU is to play a fundamental role in achieving universal energy access by 2030.

**Alexander Mirsky (S&D), in writing. –** The aim of this report is demonstrating and enhancing both political will and financial commitment from the EU and thus playing a fundamental role in achieving universal energy access by 2030. In that sense, the report is very timely and useful.

**Andreas Mölzer (NI), in writing. – (DE)** There is a fundamental link between poverty and access to modern energy supply services. It would, however, be unrealistic to assume that we can effectively combat poverty with access to energy. In this context, one might consider the privatised water supply service in developing countries, which can easily lead to a situation where the poor cannot afford water. This problem should not be ignored when it comes to electricity, which replaces conventional fuels such as gathered wood, etc. Nonetheless, improved energy supply can lead to economic growth and thus reduce poverty by creating new jobs. If we continue in the same way with the reforms in the energy sector that we have been pursuing for almost three decades now, then 67% of the population will still have no electricity by 2015. To date, progress has only been made in this regard in a small number of developing countries. Since supplying energy to the poor is not a profitable business, private investors have only improved energy supply to the productive and commercial sectors. This is something that will only change through the appropriate subsidies. As the report is extremely critical of this, I have voted in favour of it.

**Franz Obermayr (NI), in writing. – (DE)** Access to modern energy supply services is vital in order to reduce global poverty and to guarantee sustainable human development. Energy supply services impact on all aspects of life – the lack of access to energy mostly condemns people to a life of poverty with no prospects. For this reason, the importance of access to energy must be given greater recognition by the international community. As the report is a step in the right direction, I have voted in favour of it.

**Rolandas Paksas (EFD), in writing. – (LT)** I welcome this resolution because access to modern energy services is a fundamental prerequisite for poverty reduction and sustainable human development. Every state is responsible for access to universal services, but not every developing country is capable of independently ensuring universal energy access for the poor. The EU's contribution in this area must therefore be particularly robust and significant, including financing, capacity building, technology transfer and governance reform. The EU must draw up clear and precise guidelines on environmental sustainability criteria and implement other initiatives that would ensure access to modern, sustainable

energy services for all. It should be noted that currently, insufficient attention is being paid to developing countries and financing aimed at increasing energy access for the poor is insufficient.

**Alfredo Pallone (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (IT) In line with the goal of ‘universal energy access by 2030’, launched by the United Nations Secretary General, the European Union is developing a common policy for the development of energy systems. Energy is at the foundations of modern life and affects all our lives. The international community therefore takes an interest in it, bringing in policies to improve energy development. I, too, believe that the goal of achieving global energy coverage is a necessary prerequisite for poverty reduction and sustainable development. The role of energy services is essential for achieving the Millennium Development Goals since energy development can ensure wealth, access to information, education, health and gender equality, not to mention environmental sustainability and development in general.

**Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (EL) I voted in favour of the own-initiative report, which provides a comprehensive picture of the problems and challenges faced by people, especially in developing countries, in terms of energy access. The report rightly points out that access to modern energy services is the *sine qua non* to poverty reduction, to sustainable human development, and to meeting the UN Millennium Development Goals. Interestingly, provision has been made for important global investments of close on USD 26 trillion to be made in the energy sector over the next two decades, while just 3% of that sum would suffice to achieve universal energy access for mankind by 2030. Nonetheless, many developing countries have failed to improve energy access for the poor, mainly because this particular investment is not a profitable business activity if there are subsidies. In the meantime, as financial assistance from the EU, the third biggest donor in the world, relating to energy access for the poor has been modest, the report proposes certain targeted measures for more effective EU assistance to citizens in the developing world with no energy access.

**Maria do Céu Patrão Neves (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (PT) This report concerns EU development cooperation in support of the objective of universal energy access by 2030. In fact, access to modern energy services is a fundamental prerequisite for poverty reduction and sustainable human development. Energy services impact upon all aspects of people’s lives and livelihoods, and without them, whole communities are constrained to a life of poverty. The importance of energy access demands greater attention from the international community. As such, and in view of the measures proposed in this document in pursuit of the objective of universal energy access, I voted for this report.

**Maurice Ponga (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (FR) In an effort to promote and to allow access to energy in developing countries insofar as this access contributes to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), I feel that it is important for the European Parliament to respond to the United Nations General Assembly’s declaration of 2012 as the ‘International Year of Sustainable Energy for All’. However, Norbert Neuser’s politically biased report refuses developing countries the right to be free to choose their energy policy by calling on ‘the Commission and the Member States neither to fund nor to otherwise encourage the use of nuclear power in developing countries’. I therefore voted against this paragraph which imposes choices on developing countries by limiting the energy sources to which they can have access. Nuclear power is a clean energy source that could give millions of citizens in developing countries access to basic services such as mains electricity.

**Paulo Rangel (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) In September 2010, the United Nations Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon, set the target of universal energy access by 2030. Indeed, energy access is crucial to the pursuit of many of the Millennium Development Goals. Of the various obstacles to universal access to these services, funding difficulties are the main cause of the supply gap. There is therefore justification for these goals to be taken into account in the process of allocating funds available for European development aid: firstly, because this will bring the objectives of the EU authorities' actions in line with those of the UN and, secondly, because access to energy can, in general terms, have a multiplier effect on aid awarded by improving basic production conditions. I therefore voted in favour.

**Teresa Riera Madurell (S&D),** *in writing.* – (ES) Energy access is a fundamental prerequisite for poverty reduction and for enabling human development. The report reflects this and I therefore voted in its favour. In 2010, the United Nations launched the target of 'universal energy access by 2030'. According to the International Energy Agency, one and a half billion of the world's population have no access to electricity. It is estimated that the energy required to provide energy for all would not involve a significant increase in overall consumption or in emissions. EU development aid has traditionally concentrated on economic growth and environmental objectives. Energy access for the poor has not received the attention it deserves. The report we have approved today is, therefore, to be applauded, given that it requires universal energy access to be one of the objectives of EU development aid. The objective is to consolidate the EU's political will and financial commitment to play a fundamental role in achieving universal energy access by 2030.

**Jean Roatta (PPE),** *in writing.* – (FR) The objective of 'universal access to energy by 2030' was launched in the framework of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In developing countries, households generally spend a high percentage of their budget on the purchase of low-quality fuels for heating and cooking compared with households with access to electricity and to liquid and gas fuels. In developing countries, sustainable energy access for the poor faces a number of barriers, notably: the inability of the poor to pay for the services, investment costs, connection costs and no national capacity to produce the energy generation equipment and spare parts required. The report stresses that, whilst none of the MDGs are specifically related to energy, access to modern, sustainable energy services for all is a prerequisite for achieving the MDGs. We now need to bring energy to the fore in the debate on the eradication of poverty, by establishing a specific programme focusing on 'energy and development' within the framework of the European Union's development cooperation policy. It is for these priorities that I voted in favour of this report.

**Robert Rochefort (ALDE),** *in writing.* – (FR) Over a third of the world's population is without clean cooking facilities and 1.3 billion people have no access at all to electricity. Convinced that poverty reduction also requires increased access to energy, I supported the report on EU development cooperation in support of the objective of universal energy access by 2030, launched by Ban Ki-moon, the Secretary-General of the United Nations. Both the Commission and the Member States must support the development of public-private partnerships in the field of energy, along with technology transfer – in particular, those related to energy efficiency – whether this be between partner countries in the South or between Europe and the South. The text correctly states once again that responsibility for access to universal services, especially affordable energy for poor and remote populations, remains that of the State. We therefore urge the Commission to issue

a communication on development cooperation this year in support of universal energy access and to report annually on progress made in this respect.

**Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE),** *in writing.* – In favour. Access to modern energy services is a fundamental prerequisite for poverty reduction and sustainable human development. Energy services impact upon all aspects of people's lives and livelihoods – without access, whole communities are constrained to a life of poverty. The importance of energy access demands greater attention from the international community. To begin to address this, in September 2010, the United Nations Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon, launched the target of 'universal energy access by 2030'. He underlined the importance of energy access in poverty reduction and the role of energy services in meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

**Tokia Saïfi (PPE),** *in writing.* – (FR) According to the International Energy Agency, some 1.3 billion people have no access to electricity. The General Assembly of the United Nations has therefore designated 2012 as the International Year of Sustainable Energy for All and has set itself the goal of energy access for all by 2030. I supported this report because access to modern energy services is essential to the realisation of several fundamental economic, social and cultural rights. From lighting to cooling, from access to information to access to communications systems, electricity is essential and determines income generation. The challenge for the European Union is to reconcile developing countries' access to energy with respect for the environment. These countries have a huge potential for renewable energy that we must exploit by offering sustainable energy services at affordable prices. To this end, a transfer of technology between Europe and the countries of the South is a priority vector and the involvement of the private sector should not be overlooked. In addition to the environmental aspect, targeting local energy will allow poor, rural populations without access to the traditional distribution grids to benefit from energy services.

**Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE),** *in writing.* – (IT) The United Nations General Assembly has proclaimed 2012 to be the International Year of Sustainable Energy for All. At this point of reflection, it is undeniable that access to modern energy services is a fundamental prerequisite for poverty reduction and sustainable human development. Maximising the use of renewable energy sources represents the ideal path for the international community to take to achieve universal access to modern energy services, while combating climate change. In reality, this vote on energy has various goals: to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; achieve universal primary education; promote gender equality and empower women; reduce child mortality; improve maternal health and the situation regarding HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; ensure environmental sustainability; and develop a global partnership for development.

**Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI),** *in writing.* – (ES) I have abstained in relation to paragraph 37, as it is taken for granted that security and sustainability concerns exist in developing countries.

**Catherine Stihler (S&D),** *in writing.* – I supported this report, which explored avenues for universal energy access. I abstained on paragraph 37 as I felt I could not support the wording.

**Michèle Striffler (PPE),** *in writing.* – (FR) Access to modern energy sources is a fundamental prerequisite for poverty reduction insofar as it influences many aspects of the lives and livelihoods of the people and communities concerned. In the context of energy

access in developing countries, I believe that the focus should be on renewable energy sources, as proposed at the 'Grenelle de l'Environnement' in France. I therefore voted for retaining paragraph 37 of the report which calls on the Commission and the Member States neither to fund nor to otherwise encourage the use of nuclear power in developing countries, given the serious security and sustainability concerns raised by this energy source.

**Nuno Teixeira (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (PT) Access to modern energy services is a fundamental prerequisite for poverty reduction and sustainable human development. They impact upon all aspects of people's lives and livelihoods, so they demand greater attention from the international community. The European Union should cooperate in accessing energy for the poorest, and contribute to funding it. The EU Energy Facility is the EU's largest funding mechanism for energy cooperation. However, in comparison with the funding gap in relation to energy access or with funding the necessary aid, the scale of this fund is fairly small. As such, by demonstrating, and enhancing both political will and financial commitment, the EU can play a fundamental role in achieving universal energy access by 2030.

**Silvia-Adriana Țicău (S&D)**, *in writing*. – (RO) I voted for the resolution on EU development cooperation in support of the objective of universal energy access by 2030 because I think that not having access to energy services means no provision of decent living conditions, and this has a particular impact on women and children. In the least developed countries, only a minority of the population has access to the electricity grid, and small-scale, off-grid energy solutions offer the only viable way to provide universal energy access in the coming years. Renewable energy sources, and especially small off-grid solutions, have huge potential for providing reliable, sustainable and affordable energy services for the poor, particularly in rural areas of developing countries. The resolution urges the Commission and Member States to endorse and commit to supporting the (UN-created) international target of universal energy access by 2030, and to align their policies and development cooperation with this objective. It also encourages the Commission and Member States to support, through development cooperation and suitable financial instruments, the transfer of technologies, including technical knowledge, information, and good practices, appropriate for the delivery of modern energy services to the poor.

**Viktor Uspaskich (ALDE)**, *in writing*. – (LT) The report presents important measures aimed at combating local electricity shortages and great poverty in the developing world. Some of the predictions made by the rapporteur are cause for concern – in 2015, probably around 67% of sub-Saharan Africa will still lack access to electricity. Although perhaps it is not quite the same, ordinary Lithuanians are also going through a difficult period. According to Eurostat data between the second half of 2009 and last year, Lithuania saw the highest jump in the price of electricity – 31%. Meanwhile, the EU electricity price rose 5.1% over the same period. Since 1 January 2012, the price of electricity in Lithuania has increased by LTL 0.014/kWh. The decommissioning of the Ignalina Nuclear Power Plant was one of the conditions for EU accession and this has significantly altered the structure of electricity generation in Lithuania – the Ignalina power plant met 70% of Lithuania's electricity requirements. Our leaders do not have a comprehensive and realistic electricity strategy for Lithuania. At the beginning of 2010, Prime Minister Andrius Kubilius stated that nothing bad would happen following decommissioning. We are ready to supply as much electricity as is required. Although nothing bad has happened, the electricity situation for the majority of Lithuanians has become worse.

**Marie-Christine Vergiat (GUE/NGL),** *in writing.* – (FR) Today, the European Parliament has adopted a report on the development policy launched by the UN in September 2011 on ‘universal access to energy by 2030’. This objective is based on the idea that access to energy services is a fundamental prerequisite for poverty reduction and sustainable human development. I voted for this report, which sets out positive principles for managing the two principal mechanisms for EU cooperation for energy access: the European Development Fund and the EU Energy Facility. These funds are negotiated with the beneficiary countries as part of bilateral or regional agreements, based on the cofinancing principle. The European Parliament calls particularly for proposals from governmental and non-governmental players, in order to ensure that funds are put to better use and are better tailored to local requirements. Besides, in this text, the European Parliament admits the *de facto* failure of the commercial approach to the field of energy in the developing countries. The text states indeed that ‘Lessons from the past need to be taken into consideration: history shows that past strategies on energy access have been implemented with strong government commitment and with investment of public funds’.

**Derek Vaughan (S&D),** *in writing.* – This report highlights many of the tools that the EU can put in place to ensure that everyone has access to energy. The report builds on the UN target of universal energy access by 2030, which will have a huge impact on the lives of millions of people in the developing world. Access to energy will have a positive affect in achieving the Millennium Development Goals and I fully support this report as it brings attention to this important debate. As the report states, I hope that the Commission will now issue a communication on development cooperation in support of universal energy access.

**Angelika Werthmann (NI),** *in writing.* – (DE) Universal access to electricity is the key to combating global poverty. Efficient energy systems enable cost-efficient production and allow drinking water pumps to be operated. These reduce the physical burden on women and children and give them enough time to make use of educational opportunities. Modern cookers reduce the health hazards of smoke, cause fewer hazardous emissions and enable dirty drinking water to be boiled and purified. In addition, modern communication technologies ensure faster access to medical care. For this reason, I voted in favour.

**Inês Zuber (GUE/NGL),** *in writing.* – (PT) This report tackles the issue of promoting energy access in developing countries, within the framework of EU cooperation policy. It makes some relevant observations on the scale of the problem of energy poverty and the resulting negative implications for achieving development goals. It is also important to mention the importance it gives to the need to adapt energy supply solutions to the specific conditions of developing countries, whilst emphasising decentralised solutions, renewable energy and the autonomy of these countries. If these were the report’s objectives, we would support it. All things considered, however, what ends up predominating is a completely subverted vision of the role of development cooperation, which is transformed into business opportunities for EU countries here. There is a well-known tendency to interfere in the sovereign choices of developing countries, imposing models identical to those in the EU: the deregulation and liberalisation of markets that have led to situations of exclusion from energy access in a number of countries and allowed states to be frozen out of this important strategic sector.

**Report: Olle Schmidt (A7-0014/2012)**

**Luís Paulo Alves (S&D),** *in writing.* – (PT) I am voting for another annual report produced by Parliament, since it is a thorough document on issues relating to taxation that reflects well on how it can prevent the internal market from running smoothly, and because it makes very specific suggestions. That being the case, I would stress the importance of combating tax fraud and tax havens, thereby increasing fiscal transparency; cross-border tax obstacles should also be abolished for the benefit of the EU public, as should fiscal dumping, discrimination and the double taxation of EU citizens and companies, given the incompatibility of tax systems.

**Laima Liucija Andrikiienė (PPE),** *in writing.* – I voted in favour of the resolution concerning the EP annual report on taxation issues. The report focuses on the tax initiatives taken by the Commission during 2011 and on areas where further initiatives are necessary in order to improve the functioning of the single market and to create a more competitive Europe. The report also stresses that improvement of the single market and, eventually, some tax harmonisation could be key factors for encouraging growth and job creation; that tax policies must aim to foster European competitiveness and lower costs for European business, namely for small and medium enterprises. I agree with the rapporteur's proposal that the EP should ask the Commission and Member States to cooperate further on their respective tax policies against double taxation, tax fraud and tax evasion in order to increase transparency and reduce loopholes and uncertainties for businesses and citizens with regard to tax collection. To make the taxation process more coherent, I support the EP call upon the Commission in cooperation with the European Parliament to establish an EU definition and list – taking into account, as a first step, the OECD definition and list of tax havens or secrecy jurisdictions.

**Sophie Auconie (PPE),** *in writing.* – (FR) This report is aimed mainly at getting rid of the tax barriers that are acting as significant obstacles to growth and employment whilst, in this period of crisis, this is perhaps what we most need. Tax harmonisation in Europe is the keystone for growth and competitiveness for our small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). These barriers must be removed, especially as bureaucracy and the tax systems weigh particularly heavily on SMEs. This report shows us that these measures have led to a reduction in the tax obstacles related to cross-border operations and the elimination of distortions of competitiveness from which companies suffer, even within the European Union. This report, however, is also about preventing double non-taxation, tax fraud, tax havens and increasing tax transparency. Finally, it also sets out numerous recommendations, from the need to simplify VAT regimes to the importance of a low tax level, not just for the social welfare of families and households, but also for competitiveness and new jobs.

**Regina Bastos (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) This report is intended as an instrument for cooperation on developing initiatives to improve the single market and create a more competitive Europe. It tackles fiscal problems faced by European citizens and businesses, the reform of which could contribute to improving their daily lives. The report, for which I voted, essentially focuses on the following issues: solving problems with double taxation and issues with obtaining allowances, tax reliefs or deductions; promoting better access to tax information and eliminating cross-border tax obstacles to the benefit of EU citizens; examining areas where further tax coordination may be necessary and where the EU can play a role; discussing the problem of eliminating discriminatory tax rules in Member States that are in conflict with the fundamental freedoms guaranteed by the EU Treaties; and solutions to prevent tax avoidance and tax abuse, and increase tax transparency. This report

also stresses the need to evaluate the tax implications of the European Semester and calls on the Commission to table a report on this issue in 2012.

**Mara Bizzotto (EFD), in writing. – (IT)** The report aims to declare Parliament's faith in the proposal for fiscal harmonisation in the EU. Indeed, it is thought that the current system, based on different national tax systems, creates bureaucratic difficulties and unequal treatment of businesses, giving rise to the need to bring in a uniform tax system and give the European Union power over tax. Possible tax harmonisation is also seen as a driver of growth and jobs. I do not agree with these arguments since it is competition – including between national tax systems – that creates opportunities for businesses and workers within the common market. The diversity of the tax systems also ensures that the Member States will seek, as far as possible, to change their regulations on the subject in order to try and attract jobs and business. Instead, we should encourage fiscal federalism, which might be a tool for achieving greater economic efficiency in the EU. We should also insist on the proposal to simplify value-added tax, reduce the red tape faced by companies and introduce tax incentives for small and medium-sized enterprises. Given the underlying theme of the report, advocating tax harmonisation in the EU, I voted against it.

**Vilija Blinkevičiūtė (S&D), in writing. – (LT)** I voted in favour of this report because with it, the European Parliament is publishing its annual tax report for the first time in order to contribute to the European Commission's work in this area. Indeed, the current economic and financial crisis has led to a significant rise in public debt in the Member States, and sound fiscal consolidation, together with fairer and more targeted distribution of the tax burden, is therefore necessary to ensure fiscal credibility. In this case, where the situation demands both expenditure restraint and tax increases, the most important thing is to give priority to growth-oriented tax changes. In this context, it is also particularly important not to forget that now more than ever, we have to ensure that the automatic stabilisers of the welfare state continue to operate alongside tough austerity measures in all countries in order to ensure growth and social cohesion. The European Parliament is therefore in favour of closer coordination of tax policies in the European Union, which would help reduce costs and the administrative burden on citizens and businesses, and underlines the need to simplify VAT regimes in order to eliminate double taxation and bureaucracy for employers.

**Vito Bonsignore (PPE), in writing. – (IT)** I voted in favour of the text presented by Mr Schmidt. For the first time, Parliament has decided to publish an annual tax report. The objective of the report is to feed in to the work of the Commission work programme for 2012, focusing on the tax initiatives taken by the Commission during 2011 and on areas where further initiatives are necessary in order to improve the functioning of the single market and to create a more integrated and competitive Europe. We therefore need further tax coordination among Member States and a careful examination of the areas where the EU can play a crucial role that may have a direct, positive effect on the daily lives of many European businesses and citizens. The question of tackling discriminatory tax rules in Member States that are in conflict with the fundamental freedoms guaranteed by the EU Treaties is of key importance. Lastly, we must provide strong support for campaigns and measures to prevent tax avoidance and abuse, and to encourage tax transparency.

**Anna Maria Corazza Bildt (PPE), in writing. – (SV)** We Swedish Conservatives and Christian Democrats in the European Parliament voted today in favour of an own-initiative report on the annual tax report. It states, among other things, that 'fiscal federalism' might be a useful tool in order to achieve self-responsibility in tax management at regional level.

We would like to emphasise here that this passage is not referring to a tax at European level, but rather merely to a tax in Member States, such as in Sweden, where we collect tax at municipal, county council and state level.

**George Sabin Cutaş (S&D)**, *in writing*. – (RO) I voted for this report as I think that we need to improve the taxation system at EU level. Cross-border activities carried out by European citizens and businesses are still hampered by barriers preventing growth and employment. We cannot talk about integrated taxation unless there is proper coordination of tax policies in the EU. I also endorse the position of the rapporteur, who mentions that the main function that tax systems have is to finance public services: education, health care services, public transport and infrastructure, as well as to remedy social inequalities by ensuring a fairer distribution of income and wealth.

**Rachida Dati (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (FR) This report is the European Parliament's first annual tax report, marking the growing role of our democratic assembly in the Union's decisions, which is something that I welcome. It puts forward a number of proposals aimed at relative tax harmonisation in the targeted areas, with the aim of lifting some barriers which, even today, are hindering mobility and economic performance. Moreover, I welcome the attention paid in this report to the avoidance of tax fraud.

**Christine De Veyrac (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (FR) I voted in favour of this text, which allows us to assess the European Union's action on taxation and to put forward ambitious proposals for further tax harmonisation in Europe. Such legislation would allow us to avoid double taxation and limit legal uncertainty as regards tax collection for our companies and fellow citizens.

**José Manuel Fernandes (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (PT) This report, drafted by Mr Schmidt, concerns the annual tax report – the first published on this issue by Parliament – and is intended to complement initiatives designed to make the internal market run more smoothly and the European Union more competitive. Tax policy affects everyone and has positive and negative aspects. Obviously, paying taxes is costly to all, but states need revenue to pay for public services such as health care, education, social security, the military, the emergency services, etc. In the current crisis situation, all measures that boost economic growth should be considered. It is therefore crucial to support cross-border mobility and prevent the double taxation of the companies or citizens of one Member State that work in another, whose costs can rise by 50%. Differentiated taxation is an obstacle to mobility, so EU-level tax harmonisation is desirable. I voted for this report, since it makes an important contribution to improving European legislation on taxation, both by preventing double taxation and by combating tax evasion, thereby increasing transparency throughout the process.

**João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)**, *in writing*. – (PT) The report's initial considerations are positive: for example, that the role of tax systems is to fund public services like education, health care, infrastructure and public transport, to reduce social inequalities and to ensure a fairer distribution of wealth; or that taxation is still a matter of national sovereignty and that the structures of the Member States' tax systems should be respected. We also consider some of the considerations on small and medium-sized enterprises positive. However, the report's few positive aspects are not enough to change an overall vision that is very negative and even profoundly contradictory with the initial considerations.

In this regard, the report argues that there is a need to harmonise EU tax policies and increase Commission controls on budgetary procedures, it advocates fiscal federalism and

promotes the European Semester. In other words, it backs the subversion of the role of the tax system enshrined in some national constitutions, as happens in Portugal, putting it at the service of the reproduction of inequalities and of the accumulation and concentration of capital by big business and the financial sector, and justifying the rejection of the state in a series of areas of economic and social life. Despite the highlighted contradictions, it is pure and hard neoliberalism that predominates. Obviously, we voted against.

**Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D),** *in writing.* – (SK) The EU's internal market, with mobility of persons, services, goods and capital, is not fully functioning and there are still areas that need to be improved. EU citizens and businesses that are working and operating cross-border experience tax obstacles that are leading to significant barriers to growth and employment on the EU's internal market, and these barriers must be removed for this reason. This is how to ensure a more competitive Europe that creates growth and employment.

The current economic and financial crisis has led, however, to a significant rise in public debt in Europe and, in this context, the automatic stabilisers of the welfare state remain more relevant than ever. Effective taxation is of fundamental importance for public authorities so that they can fulfil their tasks and obligations as well as citizens' expectations. Sound fiscal consolidation, together with fairer and more targeted distribution of the tax burden, is necessary to ensure fiscal credibility, and the reduction of debt requires both expenditure restraint and tax increases, while growth-oriented tax changes must be given priority.

The question of tackling discriminatory tax rules in Member States that are in conflict with the fundamental freedoms guaranteed by the EU Treaties is also of key importance. I firmly believe that it is necessary to prevent tax avoidance and tax abuse and, likewise, to increase tax priority.

**Bruno Gollnisch (NI),** *in writing.* – (FR) Nowadays, thanks to the rules that you yourselves have laid down, beginning with the free international movement of capital, services and goods, 'captive' taxpayers, in other words, workers and SMEs, are increasingly burdened, whilst the wealthy and the multinationals gleefully practise 'tax optimisation'. Do you need reminding that this term obscures wholly amoral, abusive practices that are, however, perfectly legal, at least according to your rules? Admittedly, a country such as France would need a real tax revolution to boost the purchasing power of its people, the dynamism of its companies, the contribution of imports to the public purse, imports which cost us thousands of jobs each year ... The solution though is not tax harmonisation at European level nor the creation of new taxes at Union level, as the report recommends. As for the part dealing with the scourge of tax fraud, and especially of tax havens, it is astonishing that it does not mention any of the European markets that gladden the heart of finance, such as Luxembourg, the City of London, etc.

**Gunnar Hökmark (PPE),** *in writing.* – (SV) We Swedish Conservatives and Christian Democrats in the European Parliament voted today in favour of an own-initiative report on the annual tax report. It states, among other things, that 'fiscal federalism' might be a useful tool in order to achieve self-responsibility in tax management at regional level. We would like to emphasise here that this passage is not referring to a tax at European level, but rather merely to a tax in Member States, such as in Sweden, where we collect tax at municipal, county council and state level.

**Juozas Imbrasas (EFD)**, *in writing*. – (LT) I welcomed this document because I believe that low taxes are not just essential for the social welfare of families and households, but are also important for the competitiveness of new jobs. However, there is also a need for controlled and efficient public spending and stable public finances. The Commission's proposals regarding taxation must contribute to European competitiveness by eliminating distortions of competition, which arise from the various taxation systems in place. The Commission and Member States must cooperate further in establishing their respective tax policies against double taxation, tax fraud and tax evasion in order to increase transparency and reduce loopholes and uncertainties for businesses and citizens with regard to tax collection, especially when it comes to their respective administrative procedures for filing tax returns. Member States should look to reduce the tax compliance costs for SMEs, where possible, by streamlining procedures and reducing bureaucratic costs. It is clear that Member States have different corporate tax bases, which may, in practice, function as cross-border trade barriers to growth and employment.

**Philippe Juvin (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (FR) I voted in favour of this report on the European Parliament's annual tax report as it is a balanced report that reminds us that taxation always falls within national sovereignty, whilst proposing new initiatives to improve the operation of the internal market and to increase European competitiveness. I particularly supported one provision criticising the fact that some Member States have concluded agreements with third countries that allow tax evasion.

**Anne E. Jensen (ALDE)**, *in writing*. – (DA) The Danish Liberal Party voted in favour of paragraph 11 because we believe that it makes sense for local authorities – such as municipalities in Denmark – to levy taxes themselves in order to finance their expenditure, as this will achieve a higher degree of accountability in expenditure policy.

**Krišjānis Kariņš (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (LV) I supported the resolution on the annual tax report. Although the resolution emphasises the elimination of double taxation, a significant section is also allocated to the simplification of tax administration in the European Union. The resolution stresses the need to simplify the application of taxes on labour because of ever increasing mobility, and also to reduce the obstacles for businesses carrying out cross-border transactions. Export markets are important to Latvia's businesses. However, they are not always accessible, because of high costs and a lack of information. The resolution is a step in the right direction, since it calls on the European Commission to draw up legislation to reduce these barriers and simplify tax administration for Latvia's export businesses. On the basis of these considerations and also the fact that the imposition of double taxation should be eliminated, I tabled amendments to this resolution, which were adopted and included in the resolution's final text.

**David Martin (S&D)**, *in writing*. – I welcome this report's suggestions on how to prevent tax avoidance and tax abuse and how to increase tax transparency.

**Clemente Mastella (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (IT) For the first time, Parliament has decided to publish an annual tax report in order to feed in to the work of the Commission work programme for 2012. We focused on areas where we think further initiatives are necessary in order to improve the functioning of the single market and to create an even more competitive Europe. We also wish to emphasise the importance of the tax problems that affect EU citizens most directly in cross-border situations within the EU, such as double taxation, allowances, tax reliefs or deductions from foreign tax authorities.

Furthermore, we have called for further tax coordination and a greater role for the European institutions. We think that the question of tackling discriminatory tax rules in Member States that are in conflict with the fundamental freedoms guaranteed by the EU Treaties is also of key importance and call for the harmonisation of the methods for preventing tax avoidance and tax abuse, as well as those focusing on tax transparency in all 27 Member States.

**Mario Mauro (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (IT) I voted in favour of the report on the annual tax report. In order to ensure that the move to full integration is not curtailed, we urgently need to bring in measures to tackle discriminatory tax rules that are in conflict with the fundamental freedoms guaranteed by the EU Treaties.

**Mairead McGuinness (PPE)**, *in writing*. – This report focuses on the tax initiatives taken by the Commission during 2011; it also suggests areas where further initiatives are necessary. Although the report notes that taxation is a matter for national and, in some cases, local sovereignty, it does 'stress' that some eventual tax harmonisation could encourage growth and job creation. It is for this reason that I abstained in the final vote on this report.

**Jean-Luc Mélenchon (GUE/NGL)**, *in writing*. – (FR) I agree with this report's call to clamp down harder and quicker on tax evasion and fraud. I also agree with the view that we need to tackle tax havens together, rather than settling for bilateral agreements on this issue.

I do not agree, however, with transferring the Member States' decision-making powers on tax policies to the EU, nor with greater scrutiny of budget procedures by the Commission, nor with safeguarding the social market, nor with the reduction in public spending and nor do I welcome the European Semester. I therefore voted against it.

**Nuno Melo (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (PT) The core functions of tax systems are to finance public services, such as education, health care, infrastructure and public transport; to protect public goods, by incentivising the production and consumption of environmentally friendly products, for example; and to reduce social inequalities by ensuring a more equal distribution of income and wealth. However, taxation is still a matter for national, and, in some cases, local sovereignty, so the different structures of the Member States' tax systems should therefore be respected, meaning Treaty change would be necessary in order for decision making on tax policy to be transferred from national to EU level. Therefore, an increase in scrutiny of budgetary procedures by the Commission should be mirrored by greater democratic scrutiny by the European Parliament.

**Alexander Mirsky (S&D)**, *in writing*. – It is very good that the report focuses on subjects related to taxation insofar as they are impeding the good functioning of the internal market. Nevertheless, even though the structure could be improved and the focus shifted, thanks to good negotiations with the rapporteur, important points are taken like acknowledging Commission proposals like the CCCTB, FTT, energy taxation, VAT, recognising the need to reduce expenditure as much as raising public revenues. I am in favour.

**Andreas Mölzer (NI)**, *in writing*. – (DE) Two of the problems facing the internal market are tax abuses, on the one hand, and tax disadvantages for EU citizens crossing national borders, on the other. Likewise, we still have discriminating tax regulations that breach existing EU Treaties. In an effort to combat this, the Commission has decided to introduce an EU-wide annual tax report. I did not vote in favour of this report because I fear that by

coordinating tax policy, the EU will be further intruding into national law to an unacceptable degree.

**Siiri Oviir (ALDE), in writing.** – (ET) I supported the recommendations presented in this report because I consider it important to call upon Member States to make their taxation systems more supportive of economic growth. I believe that it is regrettable that in conditions of economic crisis, some Member States, including my home country Estonia, have left less-fortunate families to bear the heavier burden through increases in indirect taxes. Such a policy is, however, contrary to European guidelines, for instance, the directive on value-added tax, and it impedes economic development and increases social inequality. From the point of view of the development of the European economy, it is certainly very important to reduce the bureaucracy that is particularly characteristic of the larger Member States, as well as to prevent double taxation for companies and private individuals and to establish a single consolidated tax base for corporate income tax.

**Rolandas Paksas (EFD), in writing.** – (LT) Low taxes are not just essential for the social welfare of families and households, but are also important for ensuring the competitiveness of new jobs. Attention is drawn to the fact that taxation is a matter of national sovereignty. Every Member State must therefore aim to reduce the tax burden with a particular focus on SMEs. It is also very important for the tax policies of both the EU and the Member States to be directly targeted against double taxation, tax fraud, tax evasion and abuse. I believe that the Commission's proposals regarding taxation must, above all, increase the EU's competitiveness and ensure the effective functioning of the single market, but under no circumstances must they increase the administrative burden. VAT regimes also need to be simplified and bureaucracy reduced. Bearing in mind the interests of citizens and businesses, we need to establish a clear, transparent and stable tax environment which will remove remaining cross-border tax obstacles, discrimination and double taxation in respect of citizens and businesses.

**Alfredo Pallone (PPE), in writing.** – (IT) The tax report presented by the Commission at last gives us the chance to set out a common tax strategy, in line with what will be established by the European Semester. I think Mr Schmidt's text is an excellent starting point which, despite some divergences, such as the proposal for a tax on financial transactions rejected by the United Kingdom, can strengthen the European tax system. The first objective must be to balance the budgets of all Member States, then to reconcile the budget system with policies for growth and therefore promote convergence between national economic policies.

**Maria do Céu Patrão Neves (PPE), in writing.** – (PT) This report tackles fiscal problems faced by European citizens and businesses, the reform of which could contribute to improving their daily lives. The main objective is to contribute to the Commission's work programme for 2012. The most important of these measures, for which I voted, are those tabled to prevent tax evasion and tax abuse, and to increase tax transparency.

**Paulo Rangel (PPE), in writing.** – (PT) Taxation is one of the burning issues on the political agenda in any state, so the adoption of the budget is the key moment in the life of a parliament right from the start. This problem is bound to be of interest to the public authorities. I therefore welcome the fact that the European Parliament has decided to table an annual taxation report for the first time, so contributing to the Commission drawing up a more balanced EU taxation policy: circumstances in which increased cooperation between Member States is justified, the abolition of discriminatory taxation rules and

increased tax transparency are some of the issues covered. I voted in favour because I believe this initiative benefits Union political activity.

**Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE),** *in writing.* – In favour. On the positive side: clear statement (paragraph 1) based on a Green amendment that the core functions of the tax systems are to finance public services, such as education, health care, public transport and infrastructures; protect public goods, by incentivising, for example, the production and consumption of environmentally-friendly products; bring down social inequalities, by ensuring a more equal distribution of income and wealth. We support the message that double taxation of businesses and individuals needs to be overcome. As for tax evasion, our very demanding amendments were condensed into a few paragraphs: generalisation and extension of automatic information exchange; notify and make public tax rulings (which would help to make company tax dodging public); and, last but not least, a call to the Commission to establish an EU definition and list of tax havens (secrecy jurisdiction), in the absence of a meaningful international list. (A meaningful list would contain a few EU Member States ...) On the negative, however: relatively weak language on the need for tax harmonisation, and a few anti-tax bits and pieces slipped into the final report (need for low taxes, contrasted with ascertainment of need for tax increases a few paragraphs further down ...).

**Debora Serracchiani (S&D),** *in writing.* – (IT) I voted in favour of Mr Schmidt's annual tax report, which calls on the Commission to make proposals that will contribute to European competitiveness by eliminating distortions of competition which arise from the various taxation systems still in place.

In terms of cross-border issues, the differences in the tax 'excises' on a number of products, such as fuel, drinks and cigarettes, can easily create cross-border competition distortions.

The current economic and financial crisis has led to a significant rise in public debt in Europe, the reduction of which requires both expenditure restraint and tax increases, as well as streamlining of tax systems. Accordingly, we need to adopt measures that can make the national tax systems more favourable to common growth, ensuring that tax differences do not give business in one country an undue advantage over competitors in other countries.

**Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE),** *in writing.* – (IT) The current Danish Presidency has said that it is ready to concentrate its efforts on securing an agreement to amend the directive on the taxation of savings and the related agreements with Switzerland and other third countries. I must express my satisfaction on this, given a recent written question I posed to the Commission on the issue. Each Member State could recoup many millions of euro from such an agreement. This understanding could create a unique opportunity to consolidate the policy on financial markets by treating assets in line with tax legislation. Capital and earnings on capital held in Switzerland by citizens who reside in a Member State, and which have not been declared to the tax authorities, represent a little treasure trove that could instead fund initiatives for development and growth.

**Nuno Teixeira (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) In November 2011, the European Commission published a report entitled 'Double taxation in the single market', intended to resolve the serious problems of double taxation in the European Union. In view of the problem in question, I am voting for this report, since I believe there is a need to adopt new instruments and new solutions in order to combat double taxation and achieve greater fiscal coordination within the EU. I believe the European Parliament should suggest the implementation of new measures intended to prevent fraud and tax havens, and that it is

crucial to abolish cross-border territorial obstacles, as well as the double-taxation discrimination to which some individuals and businesses are subjected in the European Union.

**Silvia-Adriana Țicău (S&D)**, *in writing*. – (RO) I voted for the report on the annual tax report because I think that we must provide our citizens with a competitive Europe that generates economic growth and jobs. Taxation is still a matter for national and, in some cases, local sovereignty. I should emphasise that an increase in the scrutiny of budgetary procedures by the Commission must be mirrored by better democratic scrutiny by Parliament. We call on Member States to adopt a more growth-friendly approach to taxation by improving taxation methods and shifting towards less distortionary taxes, while safeguarding the social market objective. A low tax level is essential not only for the social welfare of families and households, but also for competitiveness and creating new jobs. Improving the single market and some tax harmonisation measures could be key factors for encouraging economic growth and job creation. In this regard, we await with interest the Commission's proposals for removing cross-border tax obstacles for EU citizens. We welcome the fact that the Commission intends to step up its efforts to ensure that all EU citizens have access to the information and advice which they need on tax regulations within the EU.

**Marie-Christine Vergiat (GUE/NGL)**, *in writing*. – (FR) This report once again is drumming into us the idea that excessive public debt is at the root of the financial crisis and that we need controlled, efficient public spending. It even goes so far as to stress the need for the Member States to apply measures to increase their taxes, without saying which ones, but we can easily guess. In other words, it is the same old song again. A few references to combating tax fraud and the distortions of double taxation are not enough to convince me to do other than withhold my support from such a report, especially as it dares to mention 'social welfare' but, it goes without saying, there is no reference to the necessary tax harmonisation from above, nor to the need for social convergence, nor even to the support required by industry and SMEs, let alone a rejection of any social or environmental dumping.

**Angelika Werthmann (NI)**, *in writing*. – (DE) We need better coordination between the tax systems of the Member States in order to reduce costs and administrative effort. In the interests of the proper functioning of the single market, we also need to remove all cross-border tax obstacles, making it easier for people to invest and work in other Member States. I have voted in favour.

**Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)**, *in writing*. – I voted against this report because I do not believe that fiscal federalism will promote greater economic efficiency. While I supported the initial aims of the report, such as preventing double taxation, tax fraud and use of tax havens, the conclusions were too federalist. As an MEP for London, the EU's leading financial centre, it is my duty to protect national fiscal sovereignty so that the UK is able to provide a competitive business environment.

#### **Report: Andreas Schwab (A7-0424/2011)**

**Luís Paulo Alves (S&D)**, *in writing*. – (PT) I am voting for this report, which demonstrates that EU competition policy has brought benefits for European businesses and citizens. In any case, it is very important that greater price transparency to the benefit of consumers be encouraged. I would also stress the need for state subsidies to be allocated in the most

judicious way possible, so as not to distort the level playing field or make it less transparent. Finally, like the report, I believe there is a need for greater European coordination, so as to properly evaluate the extraordinary liquidity injections that the European Central Bank has made, since these will not have been coordinated as well as is possible with state subsidies pursuing the same objective.

**Laima Liucija Andrikiienė (PPE),** *in writing.* – I voted in favour of this resolution welcoming the Commission report on competition policy 2010. To celebrate the 40th anniversary of the report on competition policy, this year's edition begins with an overview of the major developments of competition policy and enforcement over the past 40 years. I agree with the rapporteur that EU competition policy has brought numerous benefits in terms of consumer welfare and has been an essential tool to eliminate obstacles to the free movement of goods, services, persons and capital. I agree on the emphasis that the ongoing consolidation in the banking sector has actually increased the market share of several major financial institutions and, therefore, the Commission has to maintain a close watch on the sector in order to enhance competition in European banking markets. We, Members of European Parliament, recall the Parliament's invitation to the Commission during the early steps of the implementation of the third energy package to closely monitor the level of competition; it also asks the Commission to intensify the efforts that it is making in order to open up competition in the credit rating agencies sector.

**Elena Oana Antonescu (PPE),** *in writing.* – (RO) The improvement of trading practices at EU level will also have a positive impact on the operation of the food supply chain. Enhanced quality transparency is vital for boosting competition on the single market, increasing consumers' level of awareness and offering them the opportunity to make a proper choice. I think that we need to actively monitor developments in commodity-related markets and present ambitious legislative proposals in revising the framework for the Markets in Financial Instruments Directive and the Market Abuse Directive, in order to tackle speculative practices which adversely affect European industry and distort the single market.

**Sophie Auconie (PPE),** *in writing.* – (FR) I welcome the Commission's annual report on EU competition policy, which sets out the benefits brought to consumers as an essential tool for removing obstacles to the free movement of goods, services, persons and capital. The measures taken in the field of competition are helping to support financial stability and to maintain the conditions for fair competition within the internal market. Given the nature of the crisis and of the measures adopted to remedy it, our rules and mechanisms relating to public support have been adapted and have formed the spearhead of the strategy implemented by the Commission. All of the provisions introduced by the Commission in relation to telecommunications and transport, for example, ensure services at the best price. I welcome this European Union policy; it is a constructive and stabilising factor in the real economy in general.

**Liam Aylward (ALDE),** *in writing.* – (GA) The EU competition policy has brought numerous benefits in promoting consumer rights, and it is also vitally important in encouraging the economic growth of the single market and in eliminating obstacles to the free movement of persons, goods and capital. The welfare of the small and medium-sized enterprise sector must be promoted in the European Union for the purposes of sustaining a strong, competitive single market. I fully support the rapporteur's recommendations in relation to the establishment of a regulatory framework on funding and payment issues in the SME sector.

I welcome what the report says on fostering competition in all sectors of the market – not least in the service sector, which constitutes 70% of the European economy – and on encouraging the establishment of new companies and services. All stakeholders in the internal market must give priority to the welfare of consumers and the small and medium-sized enterprise sector in order to restimulate the internal market and the future growth of European economies.

**Elena Băsescu (PPE), in writing.** – (RO) I voted in favour of the Schwab report because I think that support should still be given to removing the barriers to trade in the EU progressively. It is vital to maintain a level playing field on the financial and industrial markets. An effective policy in this area will help make the EU more competitive globally. The distortions caused during the crisis need to be remedied. State aid must not be used to distort competition. I should stress that the excessive provision of aid has resulted in imbalances in public finances. At the same time, illegal practices and the abuse of a dominant position must be eliminated from the credit rating agency sector. I urge the Commission to actively monitor competition in the energy sector. I should point out that the three biggest operators in this sector account for roughly 75% of the electricity market.

**Regina Bastos (PPE), in writing.** – (PT) EU competition policy has brought many benefits in terms of consumer well-being, and it remains a key instrument in removing obstacles to the free movement of goods, services, people and capital. Competition policy remains crucial to preserving the single market and protecting consumer interests. Emerging from the crisis will require new commitment to policies of growth and to making the EU more competitive internally and globally. This report, for which I voted, tables recommendations regarding the following aspects of competition policy: control of State aid, proposing a permanent regulatory system and an end to temporary measures, insofar as the economic situation allows; anti-trust measures, even in times of crisis, since trusts can cause serious problems in the future; encouraging the Commission to participate in the International Competition Network. Finally, it calls on the European Commission to publish the competition work programme at the beginning of each year, including a detailed list of the binding and non-binding competition instruments expected to be adopted during the coming year and of the public consultations envisaged.

**Mara Bizzotto (EFD), in writing.** – (IT) The report offers an overview of competition policy in the EU, analysed over the period of the current financial crisis. The rapporteur, Mr Schwab, quite rightly emphasises that competition – including and especially in difficult times – offers a way out of the crisis and of economic stagnation. Mr Schwab asks the Commission to facilitate exchanges and contact between the EU institutions and consumer associations on issues related to competition. He also reiterates that cartels are detrimental both to the correct functioning of the market and to consumers – the end users of the goods and services produced. Lastly, Mr Schwab dutifully encourages openness and competition in the crucial and delicate sectors of energy and ratings agencies. I therefore voted in favour of the report.

**Vilija Blinkevičiūtė (S&D), in writing.** – (LT) I voted in favour of this report because competition policy is an essential tool to enable the European Union to have a dynamic, efficient and innovative internal market and to be competitive on the global stage. The European Parliament welcomes the fact that the Commission responded to the eruption of the crisis in a prompt and reasonable manner by adopting special State aid rules and using competition policy as a crisis management tool. The huge amount of State aid given during the crisis in the form of, for example, guarantee schemes, recapitalisation schemes

and complementary forms of liquidity support on bank funding have contributed to severe imbalances in public finances. The Commission should further investigate the competition situation in the retail sector, in particular, the consequences of alleged abuse of market power by dominant retail chains with negative consequences for small retailers and producers in the agriculture and food market. The European Parliament also believes that competition policy should contribute to promoting and enforcing open standards and interoperability in order to prevent the technological lock-in of consumers and clients by a minority of market players.

**Lara Comi (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (IT) I voted in favour of this report because I believe that the competition policy is a very important tool for the recovery of the global economy, which has been held back by the previous economic and budgetary crises. The policy has brought numerous benefits to the various Member States in terms of consumer welfare and the elimination of obstacles to the free movement of goods, services, persons and capital. In this regard, State aid has played a crucial role in improving the way the markets work, cushioning the effects of the crisis on the real economy. In my view, State aid should be allocated in such a way that does not distort competition and that ensures resources are invested in research and innovation. In addition, in order to further stimulate competition, market transparency must be increased to benefit consumers and the economy in general.

**Anna Maria Corazza Bildt and Anna Ibrisagic (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (SV) We Swedish Conservatives and Christian Democrats today voted in favour of an own-initiative report on the annual report on EU competition policy. The report contains a passage stating that the Commission should work to bring about the separation of the banks' retail deposits and investment banking activities. We are sceptical about such a proposal, as we do not believe that this would necessarily create a better financial sector, while, at the same time, economies of scale and synergy effects would be lost.

**George Sabin Cutaş (S&D)**, *in writing*. – (RO) I voted for the annual report on EU competition policy because I felt that tighter regulations are needed in this area, especially at this time of crisis. Competition must be encouraged, particularly in the energy, credit rating agency and banking sectors. The issue of the banks regarded as being 'too big to fail', which have received State aid during the crisis, needs to be resolved. I find it surprising that these institutions are eligible to have access to unlimited liquidity, while the European Central Bank constantly expresses its reluctance to become the creditor of last resort for Member States.

**Rachida Dati (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (FR) Despite raising the possibility of adopting a horizontal instrument on collective redress, which would threaten the European Union's competitiveness if its scope were too wide, I found Mr Schwab's report to be satisfactory overall. It especially shows the need for improved monitoring of companies that are potentially systemic by controlling mergers and the need for increased monitoring of certain at-risk sectors. These are all essential keys to competitiveness that will work in favour of recovery in the countries of the Union. That is why I decided to vote in favour of this report.

**Christine De Veyrac (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (FR) I voted for and supported this report which, basically, aims to defend increasing competition within the European Union. Improved price transparency and the fight against collusion and abuse of dominant positions are fundamental policies that must be consolidated. This report also encourages the

Commission, which is already doing a considerable job of protecting the consumer, to go even further in some sectors, for example, by introducing more competition in the field of credit rating agencies.

**Anne Delvaux (PPE),** *in writing.* – (FR) The European Commission's annual report on EU competition policy 2010 clearly shows that the recent consolidations in the banking sector have, in fact, allowed several financial institutions to increase their market share. I voted in favour of this report, as it very clearly urges the Commission to continue to keep a close watch on developments in the European banking sector. As for the fines and transaction procedures where a breach of anti-trust rules or anti-competitive behaviour occurs, I, too, believe that the fining policy is an important tool for deterrence and enforcement.

**Edite Estrela (S&D),** *in writing.* – (PT) I voted for the report because I consider it balanced in the way that it approaches state subsidies to companies, as well as in the way it proposes to regulate mergers and acquisitions of companies in the various sectors of the economy.

**Diogo Feio (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) EU competition policy is not just a key policy that truly underpins the European legal framework, but it also constitutes the basis of a successful internal market and a sustainable and competitive economy. That is why I consider it important that the Commission inform Parliament about its development and implementation, and that this be done using annual reports. While it is true that European competition policy is one of the most successful competition policies and a model copied by other jurisdictions, the reality is that there are still areas of the European market in which it is still crucial to ensure more competition and the smoother running of the market. I am thinking, above all, of the markets that are decidedly oligopolistic, as well as of the much discussed case of the ratings agencies. In addition, the energy market, the Internet and new technologies should be looked at by competition policy. Finally, I hope that Commissioner Almunia will continue the good work he has been doing.

**José Manuel Fernandes (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) This text, drafted by Mr Schwab, analyses the annual report on EU competition policy for 2010, in the report's 40th anniversary year. As one of the EU's aims is the operation of an effective and efficient single market, competition policy plays a key role, both by stimulating competition between companies and by ensuring price stability. This situation only benefits consumers. Despite the changes to the way it operates, many aspects still need improvement, such as controlling State aid that distorts markets and is only acceptable initially as a response to the crisis, combating monopolies, transparency in how the banking sector operates, public procurement, the energy market, air transport, etc. It is also essential to make progress with revising the Markets in Financial Instruments Directive and the Market Abuse Directive. I welcome the adoption of this report, which demonstrates that EU competition policy should continue and develop, since it has improved Europeans' quality of life, and facilitated the movement of people, goods and services.

**João Ferreira (GUE/NGL),** *in writing.* – (PT) This report underlines the importance of EU competition policy for preserving the single market. It advocates the market moving forward and competition for the services, energy and transport sectors, *inter alia*. It advocates the abolition of 'obstacles to the free movement of goods, services, persons and capital'. We know what the result of this free, otherwise known as liberalised, movement of capital has been.

The Member States with weaker economies and their people are now really feeling the effects of the speculation on and extortion of resources and capital flight caused by this 'free movement'. We also know the effects of 'competition in the single market' on the destruction of weaker productive systems, the colonisation of national economies by large foreign companies and the increased dependence of countries like Portugal. The report emphasises the 'temporary regime applicable to State aid' and calls on the Commission to maintain State aid to the banking sector beyond 2011. It advocates a range of instruments for intervening in and incentives for solving the crises of banks in difficulties. That is advocacy of continuing the process of transforming private – bank – debt into public debt, for which the public is called on to pay. An entire neoliberal programme is being announced here. Obviously, we voted against.

**Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D),** *in writing.* – (SK) The financial and economic crisis which broke out in autumn 2008 has not yet been overcome and financial turmoil and recessionary fears have once again become acute in recent months. Between 1 October 2008 and 1 October 2010, the Commission took more than 200 decisions on State aid for the financial sector. In 2009, the nominal amount of aid to the sector used by Member States constituted EUR 1 107 billion, and the maximum volume of Commission-approved measures since the beginning of the crisis until 1 October 2010 amounts to EUR 4 588.90 billion.

Sizable amounts of State aid given during the crisis in the form of, for example, guarantee schemes, recapitalisation schemes and complementary forms of liquidity support on bank funding have contributed to severe imbalances in public finances, while it is still unknown how far-reaching the impact of this State aid will be, in particular the impact of guarantees provided to banks.

Protectionism and non-enforcement of competition rules could deepen and prolong the crisis even further. Competition policy is an essential tool to enable the EU to have a dynamic, efficient and innovative internal market and to be competitive on the global stage. I firmly believe that it is important to foster competition in all sectors, and that efforts for global convergence of competition regulation and the activities of the International Competition Network are of great significance.

**Ildikó Gáll-Pelcz (PPE),** *in writing.* – (HU) The European Union is undergoing rapid and dramatic changes. Although with varying degrees of probability, some challenges and issues can be predicted: recovery from the crisis, the consequences of global competition, and the difficulties of managing sustainable development. There is no doubt, however, that the EU will also need to face yet unforeseen difficulties. At the same time, it is also apparent that ever since the beginning of its existence, competition policy has always been able to cope with major changes in its environment, backed by the stable framework of the Treaty.

Due to its flexibility and adaptability, EU competition policy remains one of the greatest assets of the European Union. This is one of the reasons why I find it important that with the adoption of the guidance on the Commission's enforcement priorities in applying Article 82 of the EC Treaty to abusive exclusionary conduct by dominant undertakings, we managed to incorporate an economic approach focusing on consumer well-being into the implementation framework of anti-trust measures.

I support the measures drafted by the rapporteur, Mr Andreas Schwab, because the efficient use of EU competition policy instruments both within and outside the borders of the EU is in the interest of all European citizens and is therefore a duty of the European Parliament.

**Louis Grech (S&D),** *in writing.* – The Commission's 2010 report on competition policy marks the 40th anniversary of this report. EU competition policy has played a major role in removing barriers to the free movement of goods, services, people and capital, and has also reinforced the single market and consumer interests. I particularly welcome the parliamentary report's acknowledgement that the Commission should actively engage with consumer associations to ensure that competition policy always works in the interest of consumers. As I have consistently argued, the rejuvenation of the single market clearly requires moves away from protectionism. However, I am concerned that the report does not find the correct balance between granting a level playing field to all economic operators and the need to apply competition rules appropriately, given the unique realities of small-island Member States on the periphery of the Union. In all cases, competition rules should take into consideration how they will affect European citizens and consumers, and should ensure that access to essential services is maintained.

**Jiří Havel (S&D),** *in writing.* – (CS) A functioning single market is one of the cornerstones of the EU, and its maintenance and associated monitoring during the ongoing crisis, the impacts of which are closely connected to a functioning financial market, are therefore acquiring greater significance. In the period from 1 October 2008 to 1 October 2010, the Commission took more than 200 decisions on State aid for the financial sector. In 2009, the nominal amount of aid to the financial sector used by Member States constituted EUR 1 107 billion, or 9.3% of EU GDP. This aid will undoubtedly continue during the crisis, and I therefore applaud the fact that the Commission has introduced a requirement applicable from 1 January 2011 onwards to submit a restructuring plan for every beneficiary of a recapitalisation or an impaired assets measure, irrespective of whether the bank is considered to be fundamentally sound or distressed. The Commission should therefore ensure the orderly restructuring of banks, with shareholder and bondholder involvement, prior to the injection of public capital. I also consider it vital for the Commission to carry out an *ex post* analysis of the impacts of ECB support received by the banks during the crisis and other public interventions. Overall, it can be said that the report submitted by Andreas Schwab represents a clear analysis of the annual competition report and reflects the comments of the European Parliament, and I therefore recommend it for approval in the version submitted.

**Gunnar Hökmark (PPE),** *in writing.* – (SV) We Swedish Conservatives and Christian Democrats today voted in favour of an own-initiative report on the annual report on EU competition policy. The report contains a passage stating that the Commission should work to bring about the separation of the banks' retail deposits and investment banking activities. We are sceptical about such a proposal, as we do not believe that this would necessarily create a better financial sector, while, at the same time, economies of scale and synergy effects would be lost.

**Filiz Hakaeva Hyusmenova (ALDE),** *in writing.* – (BG) Since its beginning in 2008, the financial and economic crisis has shown us that we need to have more suitable and flexible rules in the areas of State aid, public procurement, mergers and monopolies. By giving my support to the motion for a European Parliament resolution on the annual report on EU competition policy, I therefore favoured the stance supporting the need for reforms in these areas. Competition is an essential driver of the single market which allows us to move

goods, services, persons and capital freely. On the one hand, it allows consumers to make the best possible choice and, on the other, it stimulates economic development. I also share the view favouring the need for a more thorough analysis of the functioning of the markets and of the competition in key sectors such as energy, telecommunications, transportation and raw materials, which have a serious impact on the economy as a whole. Another area of great importance to consumers is the food market, where we witnessed problems related to the rapid price escalation. I also support the need for additional efforts to open up competition in the credit rating agencies sector, which I believe will improve the transparency of their actions.

**Juozas Imbrasas (EFD)**, *in writing*. – (LT) I voted in favour because protectionism and non-enforcement of competition rules would only deepen and prolong the crisis, whereas competition policy is an essential tool to enable the EU to have a dynamic, efficient and innovative internal market and to be competitive on the global stage. Notwithstanding all the efforts to cope with the economic crisis, cartels remain the most serious threat to competition, consumer welfare and the proper functioning of markets, and consequently cannot be accepted, particularly during an economic crisis. EU competition policy has brought numerous benefits in terms of consumer welfare and has been an essential tool in eliminating obstacles to the free movement of goods, services, persons and capital. Competition policy continues to be an essential tool for preserving the single market and protecting consumer interests. The combined effect of robust principles and flexible procedures has enabled competition policy to be a constructive and stabilising factor in the EU's financial system and in the real economy in general. I believe that improved price transparency is essential for stimulating competition in the single market and offering real choice to consumers.

**Philippe Juvin (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (FR) I gave my support to this report on the European Commission's annual report on EU competition policy, in which one section is given over to a discussion of the introduction of a European system of collective redress in competition policy.

**Krišjānis Kariņš (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (LV) I supported the European Parliament's resolution on the annual report on EU competition policy because I believe that it correctly points to deficiencies present in the energy market. Competition between energy producers, which would ensure the lowest possible prices for heating and electricity, is in the interests of the people of Latvia and the European Union as a whole. Unfortunately, competition in the energy market is still subject to significant limitations because the largest market participants continue to occupy dominant positions. In some Member States, such as Latvia, there is still a monopoly on the gas market. It is in the interests of Latvia's people to end this monopoly and provide a gas supply at as low a price as possible, ensuring stable economic growth. It is therefore important for the European Parliament to continue to alert us to these deficiencies in the energy market.

**Constance Le Grip (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (FR) I wished to support Mr Schwab's report on the annual report on EU competition policy in 2010, presented by the European Commission. We should, of course, remember that the competition policy is one of the essential tools for removing from within the EU obstacles to the four freedoms; namely, the free movement of goods, services, persons and capital. This policy also contributes to the defence of major objectives: the internal market and the consumer interest. However, Parliament especially calls on the Commission to incorporate in the regulation a detailed basis for calculating fines, along with new fining principles, and to review its fining

guidelines. The size of these fines may have very damaging consequences on the survival of European companies. This is a position that I wished specifically to support.

**David Martin (S&D),** *in writing.* – I voted for this resolution in which Parliament urges the Commission to link the extension of the temporary State aid to the banking sector beyond 2011 with enhanced and more stringent conditions related to the reduction of the balance sheet composition and size, including a proper focus on retail lending, as well as stronger restrictions on bonuses, distribution of dividends and other crucial factors; it deems that these conditions should be explicit and should be assessed and summarised on an *ex post* basis by the Commission.

**Clemente Mastella (PPE),** *in writing.* – (IT) We take a positive view of the annual Commission report on competition policy 2010. I think that EU competition policy has brought numerous benefits in terms of consumer welfare and has been an essential tool in eliminating obstacles to the free movement of goods, services, persons and capital. We believe that competition policy is an essential tool for preserving the single market and protecting the consumer interest, even though we think it is important to make some changes and adjustments to update a number of rules in order to deal with new challenges.

It is our view that the combined effect of robust principles and flexible procedures is essential, and that this has enabled competition policy to be a constructive and stabilising factor in the EU's financial system and in the EU's real economy in general.

Furthermore, we would emphasise that, with a view to completing the internal market, there should be greater consistency in consumer rights across the Union. We also point out that a well designed system for collective redress can contribute to consumer confidence and thus to the smooth functioning of the internal market and online trade, boosting the competitiveness of the European economy.

**Mario Mauro (PPE),** *in writing.* – (IT) Mr Schwab's consumer rights-oriented approach to competition is to be welcomed. That is why it is necessary to increase scrutiny of anti-competitive behaviour in all commercial sectors and to open formal proceedings where appropriate. I voted in favour.

**Nuno Melo (PPE),** *in writing.* – (PT) The European Union has been facing a serious economic, financial and social crisis, and the European institutions have adopted various policies with a view to solving existing problems. I consider competition policy a key measure in combating the crisis, whose purpose is to create an internal market that is more dynamic, effective and competitive at international level. I am voting for this report, since I agree that there should be greater transparency in terms of the prices used by companies, that specific measures should be created to solve the banking crisis, that more research and innovation grants should be awarded to companies, and that there should be oversight of mergers. I would highlight as a positive the emphasis given in the report to fostering competition in all sectors and not just the service sector, which accounts for 70% of the European economy.

**Alajos Mészáros (PPE),** *in writing.* – (HU) The Commission report on competition policy 2010 was fundamentally influenced by the elimination of the recent processes of the economic crisis and their consequences. Ever since, the beginning of the building of a Community competition policy has been an essential foundation of economic cooperation.

Today, we must also find a solution to market movements distorted by the crisis through appropriate regulation. The Commission attempted to respond effectively to the economic

crisis, adopting rules on State aid while remaining within the framework of competition policy. I agree with the rapporteurs' opinion that a global convergence in competition rules is also necessary.

The report covers several sectors, and among these, the call to implement the internal energy market package as soon as possible in order to realise an open and competitive single market in energy is justified. Furthermore, in order to protect the interests of consumers, it is just as important to introduce effective cost analysis at all stages of the food supply chain. The adoption of Commission rescue and restructuring guidelines for the banking sector is also inevitable, and the consideration and application of these guidelines will need to be monitored.

I agree that temporary State aid to the banking sector should be linked to more stringent conditions in the future, and I also agree with the idea of more ethical retail lending. The market distortions caused by the crisis can only be remedied through common determination at EU level. I voted in favour of the report of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs because I believe that competition policy is a key factor for the development of the EU into a dynamic, well-functioning and innovative internal market and for strengthening its competitiveness on the global market.

**Miroslav Mikolášik (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (SK) The financial and economic crisis that broke out in autumn 2008 persists, and Member States face the threat of a long-term recession. I agree with the view that protectionism and non-enforcement of competition rules will not contribute to the solving of the crisis in any way. On the contrary, a properly conceived competition policy should help to build a dynamic and innovative internal market that will successfully face global competition.

Even in times of crisis, cartels remain the most serious threat to competition, consumer welfare and the proper functioning of markets, and therefore, the imposition of fines as a means of enforcing the applicable laws is justified. I believe however, that the Commission should examine each case with great care and ensure that the amount of a fine does not irrevocably jeopardise the economic viability of the enterprise concerned, leading to its bankruptcy and liquidation and substantial job losses as a result.

The crisis situation requires that the answers to the challenges raised take account of the complex economic and social context and do not further penalise EU citizens.

**Alexander Mirsky (S&D)**, *in writing*. – EU competition policy has brought numerous benefits in terms of consumer welfare and has been an essential tool in eliminating obstacles to the free movement of goods, services, persons and capital. I am in favour.

**Rolandas Paksas (EFD)**, *in writing*. – (LT) Competition policy is a very important crisis management tool. It has also helped to build the single market and has contributed to boosting the EU's economic growth. Given its important contribution, a new permanent regulatory system for the application of State aid rules needs to be established with enhanced and more stringent conditions, particularly in those cases where aid is given to the banking sector. However, it is very important that State aid allocated does not distort competition but boosts entrepreneurship. Furthermore, competition policy must be pursued on the basis of a holistic approach to the internal market, with a particular focus on citizens, consumers and small and medium-sized enterprises. I believe that the Commission urgently needs to establish a European framework to address the problems of failing banks, which

would allow a prompt response to difficulties that have arisen and the adoption of more effective decisions.

**Alfredo Pallone (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (IT) Competition policy and strengthening the internal market need to be a priority for the EU, especially at a time of crisis like the present, when it is crucial to make the most of the potential offered to us by the Union. I also hope that the new strategy will increase the protection of cross-border transactions, especially for online products and services, and support financial inclusion. Given the highly specific nature of the various sectors, such as the financial sector, it is important to make distinctions in order to best meet individual needs. However, in doing so, I hope that the principles of competition and the free market will equally be borne in mind, as a more protected and responsible consumer needs to be able to count on the efficiencies that an open and competitive market deliver.

**Maria do Céu Patrão Neves (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (PT) The benefits brought to us by European Union competition policy in terms of consumer well-being are visible. In fact, EU competition policy is a key instrument in removing obstacles to the free movement of goods, services, people and capital, and remains essential to preserving the single market and protecting the interests of consumers. I agree with most of the recommendations regarding competition policy made by the rapporteur, so I voted for this report. I would just highlight the measures for controlling State aid, the anti-trust measures and the encouragement given to the European Commission to participate in the International Competition Network.

**Paulo Rangel (PPE)**, *in writing*. – (PT) An economic model of free competition is crucial to the workings of the internal market. However, in order to secure it, there is a need for the public authorities to protect certain conditions fundamental to its smooth running. As such, the presentation of the annual report on EU competition policy is a singular moment for rethinking the solutions and policies adopted, identifying successes and weaknesses. In this context, the following are noteworthy, *inter alia*: the particular concern with State aid to certain economic sectors, which could result in increased power for some market operators, such as the banking sector; the attempt to prevent the capture of the regulator by the regulated; the need for greater price transparency; and, finally, also by way of example, the importance of removing obstacles to the competition market from the various national legal systems.

**Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)**, *in writing*. – In favour. The report adopted in ECON focuses this year on two main issues: the temporary State aid framework for the financial sector and anti-trust policy. The report also contains a chapter on specific sectors as well as some specific procedural demands addressed to the Commission related to its annual report on competition policy. All in all, the rapporteur made an excellent good job. In contrast with other years, he managed to limit the scope of the report and focused on specific and well-targeted assessments and demands addressed to the Commission instead of a broad and non-structured collection of general statements. Most ECON Green amendments were integrated in compromises or voted as such.

**Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)**, *in writing*. – (ES) We have voted this morning on the Schwab report in relation to the 40th European Commission annual report on EU competition policy. During the debate on 15 December, I lauded the majority of its content whilst also warning of the risk that it would be severely compromised if it did not include aspects in relation to the collective exercise of private actions, so that the victims of

competition infringements can obtain compensation for the damage caused. The approved text, with an amendment that has been co-signed by the members of the competition policy group, reflects the current consensus of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs with respect to the broad guidelines that should apply to the legislative proposal for collective actions for damages due to the breach of EU legislation to defend competition, announced as part of the Commission's work programme for 2012. As set out in my Amendment 29, these were stated in Parliament on 29 March 2009 during the White Paper debate. Coordination within the EU in terms of the right to the collective exercise of private actions will be essential for providing compensation for the damages sustained by consumers and companies, and to guarantee the efficiency of EU competition law.

**Czesław Adam Siekierski (PPE), *in writing*.** – (PL) We have adopted, today, the important report on the annual report on EU competition policy. This is now the 40th report, because this policy is one of the Union's core policies and is very important for the operation of the single European market, and, as I said before during the debate, the single market is the foundation of economic success in the Union. I am pleased that the Commission, and particularly the Commission of Mr Barroso, has been very active in the area of regulating the conditions of competition in the financial markets. The work of the monitoring and supervision agencies which have been established will certainly help in bringing discipline to the financial markets. The measures taken by the European Commission with regard to the telecommunications market have also brought positive results. However, we have to be aware of the need for new regulation of the services market, and also of the energy and food markets.

**Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE), *in writing*.** – (IT) The financial and economic crisis which broke out in autumn 2008 has not yet been overcome. In fact, financial turmoil and recessionary fears have once again become acute over recent months. In such a context, competition policy may be an added value, and may become an instrument for managing the crisis. The climate is quite favourable and people are cooperative, as evidenced by the excitement characterising consumer associations that operate in the field of European competition law. This vote is a step in the direction of improved price transparency, which is essential in stimulating competition in the single market and offering real choice to consumers. The many measures to be adopted also need to include the provision of a performance scheme to guarantee transparency of service pricing.

**Nuno Teixeira (PPE), *in writing*.** – (PT) In recent years, the European Union has been facing a serious economic, financial and social crisis, and the European institutions have adopted various policies with a view to solving existing problems. One of the most crucial measures adopted to combat the crisis is competition policy, whose purpose is to create an internal market that is more dynamic, effective and competitive at international level. I am voting for this report, since I agree that there should be greater transparency in terms of the prices used by companies and more research and innovation grants should be awarded to companies, and because I advocate the adoption of specific measures to solve the banking crisis and oversight for mergers. I would highlight as a positive the emphasis given in the report to fostering competition in all sectors and not just the service sector, which accounts for 70% of the European economy.

**Silvia-Adriana Țicău (S&D), *in writing*.** – (RO) I voted for the resolution on the annual report on EU competition policy because I think that the following measures are required at EU level: completing the internal market for all modes of transport; achieving an open and competitive single market in energy; improving price transparency and increasing

competition on the roaming market; and improving the level of consumer information and protection. We call on the Commission to monitor the level of competition in the energy sector and issue guidelines for improving access to the energy grid for renewable energy sources. We should stress the need for competition on the roaming market and for improving price transparency, in addition to removing the differences between roaming and national tariffs by 2015. In order to ensure a level playing field across the EU, we call on the Commission and Member States to implement the Services Directive and e-government systems, thereby removing the barriers preventing the provision of cross-border services. We call on the Commission to actively monitor developments in commodity-related markets and present ambitious legislative proposals with the aim of tackling speculative practices which adversely affect European industry and distort the single market. Last but not least, an interconnected, interoperable and efficient transport network is essential for fair competition during the completion of the internal market.

**Dominique Vlasto (PPE),** *in writing.* – (FR) To serve the general interest better, we have now been fighting for 40 years against cartels, abuses of dominant position and illegal State aid. This founding policy has allowed healthy competition between companies and now ensures that consumers can have better quality and a wider choice of products and services at more affordable prices. We must, however, continue our efforts in markets which, up to now, have been little known but which have been brought out into the light in the crisis over excessive bonuses. Consequently, I unreservedly support this report, which sets out a valid diagnosis of the ratings agencies. Their defective assessments in 2007 and their publishing errors in 2011 have aggravated the historic crisis that we are experiencing and have shown us the need to put an end to this oligopoly. In order to establish more accurate, more responsible diagnoses, we must have greater competition in the financial analysis field, whilst boosting the credibility of the small agencies. This regulation will not, in any respect, be a way for Member States to renege on their commitments to controlling spending. It is merely about ensuring that the global finance thermometer is working properly.

**17. Corrections to votes and voting intentions: see Minutes: see Minutes**

**18. Decisions concerning certain documents: see Minutes**

**19. Written declarations included in the register (Rule 123): see Minutes**

**20. Forwarding of texts adopted during the sitting: see Minutes**

**21. Dates of forthcoming sittings: see Minutes**

**22. Adjournment of the session**

*(The sitting closed at 14.10)*