

# PLENARY BOOKLET

## Identity and Democracy



**FEBRUARY 8 – 11**

**PLENARY SESSION**

**2021**

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# EUROPE'S VACCINE DISASTER



MARCO ZANNI, President ID Group

The EU's vaccination strategy is proving to be a failure.

The international press is currently reporting the picture of a clumsy Europe that is lagging behind on health recovery.

Without a solution to this problem, it will be very difficult to guarantee the Continent's economic recovery.

While other countries such as the US, the UK, and Israel are making rapid progress with vaccinations, the EU is being held back by its own wrong choices and bureaucracy.

Instead of admitting her own faults, President Von der Leyen has scheduled meetings behind closed doors, only with some political groups in the Parliament.

This behavior delegitimizes the European Parliament and the elected representatives of the citizens, but above all, it does not take into account the demands of millions of people who are asking for a way out of the health and pandemic crisis within a reasonable timeframe.

The EU must acknowledge its responsibilities and remedy its mistakes by renegotiating contracts with pharmaceutical companies and speeding up bureaucratic procedures.

For once, Brussels must show that it is up to the task, which so far it has only been able to do so in words.

It is not only the health of our citizens that depends on today's choices, but also their future.



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Marco Zanni, President ID Group, Italian delegation - LEGA PER SALVINI PREMIER

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# EU VACCINE STRATEGY, EUROPEAN IMPOTENCE

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Nicolas BAY, 1st Vice-President ID Group

At the beginning of the crisis, the EU had shown its limits: short-sightedness, hubbub, the cult of multilateralism... The failure was obvious.

Since then, Brussels has been doing everything it can to make up for it, especially with the vaccines.

But with what result?

The British are doing better, Germany and Belgium have been careful to buy (at lower prices!) doses in addition to the European grouped order, Hungary buys Sputnik V...

Many countries, including France, are bound hand and foot in the Commission-led scheme.

This is a new demonstration of European impotence.

This weakness is clearly making Ursula von der Leyen lose her footing, who almost caused a diplomatic crisis by asking for the re-establishment of a border in Ireland.

This is precisely what the Commission wanted to avoid by negotiating the Brexit agreement!

And how can we not mention the pathetic act of Josep Borrell in Moscow, which adds humiliation to impotence.

Having nothing to offer and after the EU was openly dubious about the Russian vaccine, Borrell went to beg for help which he did not receive.

Whatever the subject, the Commission is not a strategist.

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Nicolas Bay, 1st Vice-President ID Group, MEP  
French delegation - Rassemblement National

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# THE EXPORT RESTRICTIONS REVEAL THE EU'S HYPOCRISY

Jörg MEUTHEN, 2nd Vice-President ID Group



The EU tries to conceal its completely failed vaccination strategy with the latest vaccine export restrictions.

Originally the commission planned to prevent also any exports to the UK via Northern Ireland, thus to draw a hard border between the two parts of Ireland.

The criticism came promptly and the commission had to row back, claiming it has been a "mistake".

Though it is obvious: it was no "mistake", but intention.

With overt envy the EU stares on the effective British vaccination campaign.

The EU used the Good Friday Agreement — undoubtedly an historic achievement which secured peace, stability and reconciliation in Northern Ireland successfully — for years to pressure the UK during the protracted Brexit negotiations.

But at the next opportunity Brussels breaches this agreement for its own advantage, without turning a hair.

Another proof of the EU's shabby hypocrisy.



**The EU tries to conceal its completely failed vaccination strategy with the latest vaccine export restrictions.**



Jörg Meuthen, 2nd Vice-President ID Group,  
German Delegation - Alternative für Deutschland

# FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND FREEDOM OF PRESS



Marco CAMPOMENOSI, Italian Delegation

Freedom of speech and freedom of press - guaranteed by all modern democracies - are democratic ideals that have been damaged by the latest censorship shown by social media private companies following the arbitrary deletion of public accounts, as well as the blocking of highly respected national newspapers.

The latter restrictions underscore how tech giants have increasingly gained greater visibility than any government, possessing an immense power over public debate and demonstrating an abusive market-disrupting monopoly power.

For years, large tech companies claimed to be content-neutral. Nevertheless, it is now clear that these companies, their software algorithms and content moderation, do have a real-world political and social impact. Furthermore, they are democratically responsible for providing an open platform for free debate.

We, members of Lega, are deeply concerned about how companies - like Facebook and Twitter - wield the unchecked power to remove people from platforms that have become indispensable for the speech of billions, especially when political realities make those decisions easier.

Under this founding value, we requested an urgent debate on safeguarding the free democratic debate on social media.

Service providers cannot, under any circumstance, be the judges of democracy: it is the role of the law-makers to set the rules on what citizens and elected citizens' representatives can communicate on social media.

The European Union cannot allow such a precedent of unlawful censorship.



Service providers cannot, under any circumstance, be the judges of democracy!



Marco Campomenosi, Head of Italian delegation - LEGA PER SALVINI PREMIER

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# VACCINES: THE FAILURE OF THE EUROPEAN STRATEGY

Jérôme RIVIERE, French Delegation



At the initiative of France and Germany, Italy and the Netherlands, the 27 decided to entrust the Commission with the negotiations for vaccines, which jumped again on the opportunity to take a little more competence from the States.

We were going to be stronger, to negotiate more quantities, more laboratories, diversifying risks, paying less, and harmonizing vaccination on a European scale, so that we could preserve the sacrosanct freedom of movement of goods and people, even if they were subject to confinement with uncertain effects.

The rest of the story is well known: The countries of the European Union are at the bottom of the class, and the United Kingdom is well provided for by taking its own risk, both with Brexit and with a targeted purchase of vaccines.

In addition to the opacity on the prices and conditions of purchase of these vaccines, we learn through culpable indiscretions that the Commission has signed a sort of blank cheque to the laboratories: exempt from any health liability, this liability is transferred to the States.

The Commission cannot be guilty, since it has no competence in health matters.

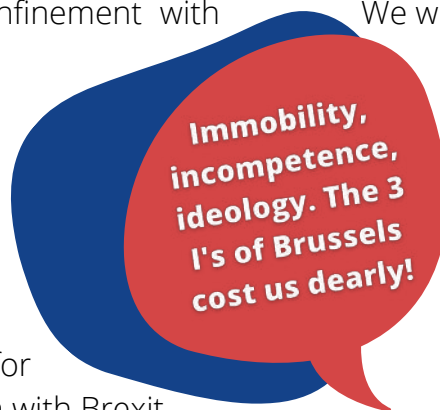
But then, why entrust it with the negotiation?

Such is the sad record of our institutions: the Brussels Commission was unable to see that the production and sale of a vaccine was becoming a major stake in the geopolitical struggle throughout the world.

The incessant bureaucratic and normative processes of which it has the secret have slowed us down.

We will be told that the UK or Israel paid a high price for their doses. But considering the price of a day's confinement, was it really necessary to hesitate?

Immobility, incompetence, ideology. The 3 I's of Brussels cost us dearly.



Jérôme Rivière, Head of French delegation -  
Rassemblement National

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# VACCINATIONS: A FAILED STRATEGY

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Gerolf ANNEMANS, Flemish Delegation

This week the European Union's covid-19 vaccination strategy is on the agenda for debate.

The vaccine story is not this Commission's first blunder, but it is certainly the biggest of its blunders to date.

In general, the decision of this Commission to misuse the Corona pandemic to break into the health policies of the Member States was a mistake.

Member States that had already gone a long way with their own initiatives, such as Germany or Italy, now complain that their naivety about the EU has driven them far too easily into the grasping, slow and bureaucratic arms of the Commission.

The almost religious dogma that all powers exercised at European level lead to better results, has once again been overturned by the facts.

That small Member States would have fared worse without the vaccine manipulations of the European Commission is a lack of faith in their own abilities,

and is perhaps only true in the case of Belgium, where the incompetence of the administrators even led to the destruction of the strategic stock of mouth masks, to make way for the set-up of reception capacity for candidate refugees, a consequence of another blunder of the EU: mass immigration.

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**The naivety of the Member States has driven them into the grasping and bureaucratic arms of the Commission!**



Gerolf Annemans, Head of Flemish Delegation - Vlaams Belang



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# VACCINE DISASTER: VON DER LEYEN HAS TO RESIGN!



Harald VILIMSKY, Austrian Delegation

Although Ursula von der Leyen and her EU Commission are not responsible for health policy, they took over the vaccine negotiations on behalf of all EU members.

This led to a disaster: they messed up the vaccine allocation and negotiations, so that the Member States are ready to vaccinate but the vaccine is missing.

Blackened contracts, hesitant action and applying the austerity pen where a budget of billions of euros was prepared to fight the crisis, foreshadow what will happen, when the EU and its institutions regulate and determine health policy in Europe.

Much-maligned political leaders and countries like Trump or the UK, who were already predicted to be doomed by Corona, are successfully vaccinating their populations.

Because they negotiated better and reacted earlier.

Above all, they do not have an EU Commission behind them that accuses them of "vaccine nationalism" and makes the solution more of a problem for them.

Therefore "European solutions" are too often not solutions, but only an expression of an excessive Brussels centralism.

This is exactly the point of the Commission's vaccine debacle.

That is why, we demand the resignation of Commission President von der Leyen.



Harald Vilimsky, Head of Austrian Delegation - Freiheitliche Partei Österreich



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# UKRAINE'S ASSOCIATION TO THE EUROPEAN UNION

Ivan DAVID, Czech Delegation



Today's Ukraine cannot be accepted into an organisation which is committed to democracy. Ukraine's association with the European Union, is as unacceptable as Turkey's association, especially because there is no democratic change in Ukraine.

It is almost funny that the proposal to associate Ukraine with the European Union is being discussed a week after the ban on broadcasting three opposition television stations.


It is ridiculous that in the Report on the Implementation of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement, recital B states the conditions that the applicant country must meet (for example, respect for human and minority rights) and the following points state that the elections did not take place properly in accordance with democratic rules.

Not only are minority rights not respected, but neither is the burning of 41 political activists in Odessa in 2014 nor the murder of citizens by snipers on the "Maidan" has been properly investigated and tried, as the report itself states.

The continued political and material support of the clearly undemocratic government of Ukraine clearly shows the hypocrisy of the European Union's human rights declarations.

The European Union supports the current totalitarian government and at the same time declares that it is on the side of the Ukrainian people.

The association of present-day Ukraine with any democratic organization is unacceptable.



The association of present-day Ukraine with any democratic organization is unacceptable!



Ivan David, Head of Czech Delegation -  
Svoboda a přímá demokracie

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# An EU-wide minimum wage

Peter KOFOD, Danish Delegation



The European Parliament is calling yet another time for an EU minimum wage.

In the report on reducing inequalities with a special focus on in-work poverty, the European Parliament considers measures to tackle inequality, including the proposed EU directive on minimum wages, which aims to secure decent living standards for all wage earners in EU countries.

I share the view that wages are too low in many parts of Europe, but the EU lacks competence to legislate on issues regarding pay.

Pay is explicitly exempted from EU legislation, according to Article 153(5) in the treaty, and such proposals must respect national traditions and well-functioning models.

In Denmark, and several other EU-countries, wages are negotiated by the trade unions and the employers' organizations alone.

An EU-minimum wage directive would undermine a national labor-market model that's popular with both unions and employers in several Member States.

I would highly recommend the European Parliament and the European Commission to forget all about this initiative and withdraw the proposal.

I'm sure that the EU-scepticism will increase in several Member States, if the EU does not stop undermining well-functioning century-old models of collective bargaining.

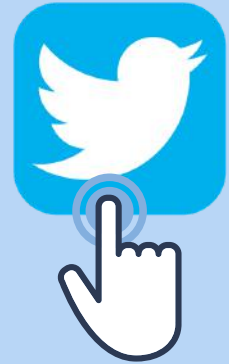


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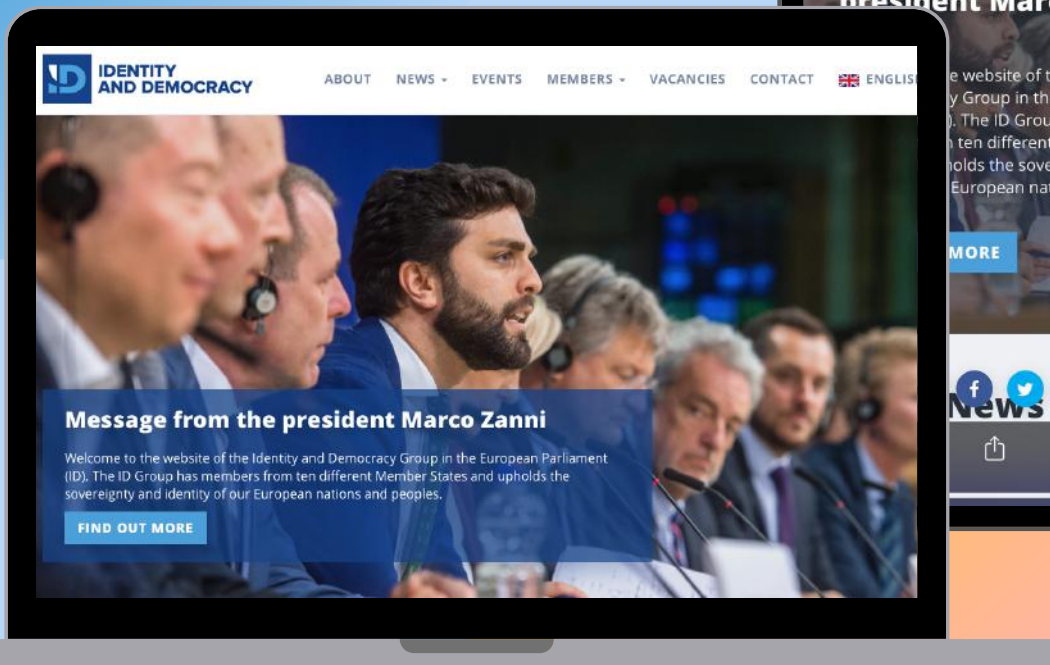
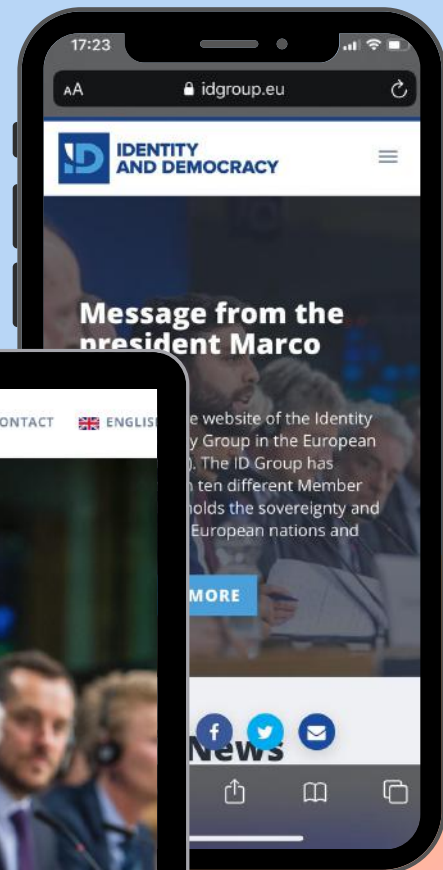


Peter Kofod, MEP Danish Delegation -  
Dansk Folkeparti

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# Defending the Identity of peoples and the Sovereignty of nations!

The Identity and Democracy group, founded in June 2019, has 75 members in the European Parliament, coming from 10 countries: Italy, France, Germany, Austria, Flanders (Belgium), Czech Republic, Finland, Denmark, Estonia, the Netherlands



**IDENTITY  
AND DEMOCRACY**

**IDENTITY AND DEMOCRACY GROUP**

## **BRUSSELS**

Zweig Building – 07K014  
60 Rue Wiertz  
B-1047 Brussels

## **STRASBOURG**

Louise Weiss Building – T04055  
President Robert Schuman Avenue 1  
CS 91024  
F-67070 Strasbourg Cedex

**[WWW.IDGROUP.EU](http://WWW.IDGROUP.EU)**

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