
EU Parliament: Europe seen from the East. Iohannis (Romania's President), responses to citizens to curb populism

(Strasbourg) This is “a crucial year” for the fate of the European Union. We need to continue “with joint and supportive actions”; reiterate and respect “our common values”; and deliver to the benefit of citizens to avoid “nurturing populism”. The President of the Republic of Romania, Klaus Iohannis, has come to Strasbourg to address the EU Parliament in the context of the “This is Europe” debate series. The speaker brings an Eastern perspective from a country, he said, which “is one of the best examples of the EU’s transformative power”, one that brought and is still bringing “indisputable and concrete benefits” to his nation. Iohannis (a Romanian from the German minority and long-term mayor of Sibiu) explains what has been achieved through the EU policies and funds: infrastructure, modernisation of the economy, and the Erasmus programme which “has already benefitted 600 young Romanians”. “Europe is an area of unity, security and prosperity”, which has demonstrated its ability to respond “to unprecedented challenges such as the pandemic, the war in Ukraine”, and is now once again being tested by the conflict in the Middle East, climate change, economic transformations, migration. “We also witness a crisis of values”, and Euroscepticism and mistrust in the EU are on the rise. For this reason, we need to concretely address the risk of a “decline of Europe”.

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