



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2014 - 2019

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*Plenary sitting*

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13.5.2015

B8-0458/2015

## **MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION**

further to Question for Oral Answer B8-0117/2015

pursuant to Rule 128(5) of the Rules of Procedure

on the Xylella emergency  
(2015/2652(RSP))

**Ivan Jakovčić**  
on behalf of the ALDE Group

**B8-0458/2015**

**European Parliament resolution on the *Xylella* emergency  
(2015/2652(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to the Oral Question to the Commission of 27 April 2015 on the *Xylella fastidiosa* emergency (O-000038/2015 – B8-0117/2015),
  - having regard to Council Directive 2002/89/EC of 28 November 2002 amending Directive 2000/29/EC on protective measures against the introduction into the Community of organisms harmful to plants or plant products and against their spread within the Community<sup>1</sup>,
  - having regard to the Scientific Opinion of the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) on the risks to plant health posed by *Xylella fastidiosa* in the EU territory, with the identification and evaluation of risk reduction options, published on 6 January 2015,
  - having regard to the Commission Implementing Decisions of 13 February 2014<sup>2</sup>, of 23 July 2014<sup>3</sup> and of 2015 as regards measures to prevent the introduction into and the spread within the Union of *Xylella fastidiosa*,
  - having regard to Commissioner Silletti’s plan for the *Xylella* emergency published on 16 March 2015,
  - having regard to Directive 2009/128/EC establishing a framework for Community action to achieve the sustainable use of pesticides<sup>4</sup>,
  - having regard to Rules 128(5) and 123(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas *Xylella* is a highly dangerous immediate threat to the production of certain crops, including olive, almond and peach trees, in addition to ornamental plants, and a potential threat to other crops, such as grapevines and citrus trees, and has led to devastating losses, with significant economic, environmental and social consequences;
- B. whereas the pathogen has inflicted vast destruction on olive trees in the southernmost province of Italy, Lecce, and is already causing severe damage to olive groves in other parts of the Apulia region, potentially threatening other crops and regions;
- C. whereas olive production is one of the Apulia region’s most important agricultural sectors, accounting for 11.6 % (or EUR 522 million) of the total value of agricultural production in the region and 30 % of the value of Italian olive production in 2013;

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 355, 30.12.2002, p. 45.

<sup>2</sup> OJ L 45, 15.2.2014, p. 29.

<sup>3</sup> OJ L 219, 25.7.2014, p. 56.

<sup>4</sup> OJ L 309, 24.11.2009, p. 71.

- D. whereas the presence of *Xylella fastidiosa* is causing severe economic damage, not only to olive producers but also to the entire chain of production (cooperative and private oil mills) and marketing;
- E. whereas more than one million olive trees have been attacked by the bacterium in Italy;
- F. whereas the first notification of an outbreak of *Xylella fastidiosa* was made by the Italian authorities on 21 October 2013;
- G. whereas the inspections carried out in Italy in November 2014 by the Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) of the Commission's Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety confirm that the situation has dramatically deteriorated and that a further spread of the bacterium cannot be ruled out;
- H. whereas the *Xylella* blight has already ravaged large areas of production in third countries, such as vineyards in California and citrus groves in Brazil;
- I. whereas no treatment is currently available to cure diseased plants in the field, and whereas affected plants tend to remain infected throughout their lives or to collapse quickly;
- J. whereas more than 300 different plants can host the disease, including asymptomatic wild plants, in the European Union;
- K. whereas cutting down affected production areas would not be enough to stop the spread of the disease and whereas phytosanitary measures can only be taken to eliminate the insects that are the vectors of *Xylella fastidiosa*;
- L. whereas EFSA has underlined that, given the difficulty in stopping *Xylella*'s spread once it affects a production area, preventive risk-based actions targeting the pathogen and focused on imports of host plants should be an integral part of the strategy to stop the spread of the bacterium;
1. Stresses the need for strong support at EU level for the measures taken by the Commission, in agreement with all Member States and in accordance with EU law;
  2. Considers that the Commission should ensure that the 2015 Implementing Decision is being implemented consistently in all affected Member States in order to stem the spread of the pathogen; points out that the Commission should facilitate these efforts when needed and offer expert advice to the Member States concerned;
  3. Points out that the effectiveness of contamination control measures vary from negligible to moderate once the disease is widespread, according to an EFSA study; maintains, in this respect, that eradication measures, as the last option, and the large-scale use of pesticides should be carefully implemented in view of their side-effects and potential risk to human and animal health; considers, in this context, that an impact assessment on the economic and health implications of all available eradication measures is urgently needed as well as an exchange of best agricultural practices for treating *Xylella fastidiosa* and similar pathogens;

4. Calls on the Commission to try and identify the source of the infection;
5. Urges the Commission, especially in view of the onset of summer, to take more effective measures to avoid the spread of *Xylella* in the EU, in particular by targeting the crops most at risk, while not neglecting other crops that could also be seriously affected by the disease;
6. Believes that imports of plants susceptible to being hosts of the pathogen into the EU should go through specific controls designed to detect the bacterium or be limited to plants originating from pest-free production sites which are surveyed and controlled; calls on the Commission, in this respect, to propose concrete measures aimed at streamlining controls of imports of these plants specifically targeting *Xylella fastidiosa* and to ensure that any additional administrative burden on the authorities and producers is limited;
7. Urges the Commission to promote intensified research efforts without delay, including by making funds available to research institutes, so as to improve our scientific knowledge of *Xylella fastidiosa* and to positively identify the pathogen causing the death of olive trees;
8. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to analyse the best means of kick-starting an economic and environmental recovery in the affected areas, which have sustained losses in terms not only of agricultural production, but also of cultural heritage and history;
9. Encourages the Member States to increase the number of regular inspections to prevent the spread of the disease outside the demarcated areas;
10. Asks the Commission to report annually to Parliament on the threat posed to EU producers by *Xylella* and other dangerous organisms;
11. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission.