Resolution on Lyme disease (Borreliosis)

2018/2774(RSP) - 15/11/2018 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution tabled by the Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety on Lyme disease (Borreliosis).

The resolution was tabled by the EPP, S&D, ECR, ALDE, and Greens/EFA groups.

Noting that there is **no European consensus** on the treatment, diagnosis and screening of Lyme disease, Parliament expressed its concern at the alarming proportions of the spread of Lyme disease in the European population, with around 1 million citizens suffering from the disease according to the census methods used.

Whilst welcoming the **funding** allocated to date by the Union for research into the early detection and future treatment of Lyme borreliosis (some EUR 16 million through projects such as ANTIDotE, ID-LYME and LYMEDIADEX), Members called for additional funding of the methods for diagnosing and treating Lyme disease.

They asked the Commission to draw up a **European plan** to combat Lyme disease that is commensurate with the seriousness of this silent epidemic, and encouraged the set-up of a **European network** on Lyme disease that includes relevant stakeholders.

Members noted that the true burden of Lyme borreliosis in the EU is unknown due to the lack of statistics on this disease and the very wide variety of applied case definitions, laboratory methods used and surveillance systems. Furthermore, Lyme disease is still under diagnosed, in particular because of the difficulties encountered in the detection of symptoms and the absence of appropriate diagnostic tests. Under these circumstances, Parliament called on the Commission to:

- collect as much **information** as possible on Lyme disease screening methods or on treatments administered in the Member States;
- facilitate cooperation and the **exchange of best practices** among Member States in terms of the monitoring, diagnosis and treatment of Lyme disease;
- put in place **uniform surveillance programmes** and to work together with the Member States on facilitating the standardisation of diagnostic tests and treatments;
- recognise borreliosis as an **occupational disease** for agricultural and forestry workers, as well as for field scientists (such as biologists, geologists, surveyors or archaeologists);
- publish **guidelines** based on best practices within the EU with regard to the training of general practitioners so as to facilitate the diagnosis and screening of Lyme disease;
- introduce preventive tests and a method for **rapidly treating and monitoring** the course of Lyme borreliosis infections among professionals in the agroforestry sector and scientists involved in gathering field data.

Parliament recalled that all Member States, to varying degrees, are experiencing an upsurge in Lyme borreliosis, and called for **mandatory reporting in all Member States** for promoting individual tick prevention and control measures in order to contain the spread of the Borrelia bacteria.

It also asked Member States, with the Commission’s support, to set up an information and awareness **campaign to alert the population** and all those concerned to the existence of Lyme disease, first and foremost in the regions most affected by its spread.

Lastly, Parliament welcomed Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2018/945 on the communicable diseases and related special health issues to be covered by epidemiological surveillance as well as relevant case definitions that includes Lyme neuroborreliosis in the communicable diseases list.