Ensuring food security and the long-term resilience of EU agriculture

2022/2183(INI) - 14/06/2023 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 447 votes to 142, with 31 abstentions, a resolution on ensuring food security and long-term resilience of the EU agriculture.

Challenges for the EU food sector

The COVID-19 pandemic and Russia's invasion of Ukraine have highlighted structural problems in the European agricultural sector and present significant risks for Member States' agricultural markets. The Council is invited to consider, in the context of the revision of the multiannual financial framework, speeding up the process of flattening CAP aid towards the EU average in order to empower farmers in Member States where this process has not yet been completed to cope with the current challenges.

Members stressed that immediate EU action is needed to **protect food security** against threats such as climate change and biodiversity loss. The EU needs to **strengthen its food security**, its strategic autonomy and the resilience of its agricultural sector and its entire supply chain by reducing its dependence on imports from third countries and diversifying the supply of critical imported products such as fertilisers, animal feed and raw materials.

Supply chains must not become a geopolitical tool to destabilise and undermine global food security, in particular in the most disadvantaged and vulnerable countries.

The Commission is called on to present without delay a **holistic strategic plan** to ensure food security for the EU, which could include the use of strategic food stocks. Members also stressed the need to identify new financial support to ensure European and third country food security.

Sustainable and resilient agriculture

The Commission is called on to:

- take the necessary measures to **provide production planning security for farmers**, as well as adequate financial resources and guarantees, making it possible to maintain and, if necessary, increase food production, strengthen sustainable farming systems, increase the diversity of EU food crops and increase product quality, while rejecting artificial, industrial imitations;

- ensure that farmland remains available primarily for **sustainable the production of food and feed** since this land contributes to biodiversity conservation while also contributing to food security and can also help reduce EU energy dependence;

- ensure that the future EU framework law on sustainable food systems promotes **social considerations and favourable food environments** where healthy and sustainable food options are the most available, affordable, advertised and attractive, and that it promotes short supply chains and the consumption of local and seasonal products.

European Green deal

Members believe that the European Green Deal could be a milestone in the EU's transition to a more sustainable economy and agriculture. However, they pointed out that some of the proposed measures could have unintended effects, which have not yet been properly assessed and identified at farm level. They therefore called on the Commission to carry out a full assessment of the **cumulative impact of the Green Deal's legislative proposals on the EU agricultural sector**, in a comprehensive and systematic way that covers all dimensions of sustainability.

Artificial intelligence and precision farming

Parliament called on the Commission to step up the use of sustainable digital innovation to modernise EU agriculture. It stressed that these new technologies can also offer European farmers alternative solutions to help them meet new requirements, particularly in terms of reducing pesticides and input reduction.

Combating food loss and waste

Around one third of all food produced worldwide is lost or wasted at some stage in the food supply chain from farm to fork. The Commission is invited to support campaigns to raise awareness among producers, consumers and retailers of the importance of avoiding all types of food waste and of the economic, social and environmental repercussions of waste.

International dimension

Parliament stressed the urgent need to bring EU trade policy into line with European sustainable food standards so as not to hamper the EU's competitiveness. It called for food and agricultural products to be the subject of a specific chapter in bilateral and multilateral trade negotiations and agreements.

Other recommendations

Members called for an ambitious and comprehensive European strategy on **generational renewal** in the agricultural sector. They called on the Commission to present a comprehensive EU protein and feed strategy and to define a long-term vision for achieving strategic autonomy in **fertilisers**, in order to encourage the industry to switch to more sustainable production methods. They condemned the EU's double standards on pesticides, which allow the export from the EU of dangerous substances that are themselves banned in the EU. They called on the Commission to guarantee reciprocity in international trade agreements, particularly with regard to agriculture and agricultural products.