

Procedure file

Basic information		
RSP - Resolutions on topical subjects	2016/2637(RSP)	Procedure completed
Resolution on trans fats (TFAs)		
Subject		
3.10.07 Animal and vegetable fats, oils		
3.10.10 Foodstuffs, foodstuffs legislation		
4.60.02 Consumer information, advertising, labelling		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	 Environment, Public Health and Food Safety		05/04/2016
		 SOMMER Renate	05/04/2016
		 SÂRBU Daciana	05/04/2016
		Octavia	05/04/2016
		 BAREKOV Nikolay	
		 JÄÄTTEENMÄKI Anneli	
		 HÄUSLING Martin	
		 PEDICINI Piernicola	
		 D'ORNANO Mireille	
European Commission	Commission DG Health and Food Safety	Commissioner ANDRIUKAITIS Vytenis Povilas	

Key events			

25/10/2016	Debate in Parliament		
26/10/2016	Results of vote in Parliament		
26/10/2016	Decision by Parliament	T8-0417/2016	Summary
26/10/2016	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2016/2637(RSP)
Procedure type	RSP - Resolutions on topical subjects
Procedure subtype	Debate or resolution on oral question/interpellation
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 136-p5
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	ENVI/8/06121

Documentation gateway

Amendments tabled in committee	PE587.689	01/09/2016	EP	
Oral question/interpellation by Parliament	B8-1801/2016	06/10/2016	EP	
Oral question/interpellation by Parliament	B8-1802/2016	06/10/2016	EP	
Motion for a resolution	B8-1115/2016	25/10/2016	EP	
Motion for a resolution	B8-1136/2016	25/10/2016	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading	T8-0417/2016	26/10/2016	EP	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary	SP(2017)54	29/03/2017	EC	

Resolution on trans fats (TFAs)

The European Parliament adopted by 586 votes to 19 with 38 abstentions, a resolution tabled by the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety on trans fats (TFAs).

Members recalled that trans fatty acids (TFAs) are a particular type of unsaturated fat mainly found in industrially produced partially hydrogenated vegetable oils. Many restaurants and fast-food outlets use TFAs to deep-fry foods because they are inexpensive and can be reused many times in commercial fryers.

Frequent consumption of industrially produced partially hydrogenated vegetable oils has been associated with an increased risk of cardiovascular disease, infertility, endometriosis, gallstones, Alzheimers disease, diabetes, obesity and some cancers.

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) recommends that TFA intakes should be as low as is possible within the context of a nutritionally adequate diet. The WHO recommends more specifically that consumption of TFAs should be less than 1 % of daily energy intake. However, a recent study compiling data from nine EU countries reports that higher intakes exist within specific sub-populations in some of those Member States

EU legislation does not regulate the content of TFAs in foodstuffs, nor does it require its labelling. The fact that unfortunately only one in three consumers in the EU has knowledge about TFAs shows that labelling measures have failed to be effective.

Under the circumstances, Parliament called on the Commission to establish within two years, an EU legal limit on industrial TFAs (as both an ingredient and a final product) in all food in order to reduce their intake among all population groups. The proposal should be accompanied by a thorough impact assessment evaluating the industrial reformulation costs that would be incurred by a mandatory limit and the potential for these costs to be passed on to consumers.

Members were concerned that vulnerable groups, including citizens with lower education and socioeconomic status, and children, are more inclined to eat food with higher TFA content.

The resolution also recalled that studies show that policies aimed at restricting the TFA are feasible, achievable and likely to have a positive effect on public health. Denmark successfully brought in a national limit of 2 % of trans fat in oils and fats in 2003.

The food industry was asked to prioritise alternative solutions that comply with health standards, such as the use of improved oils, new procedures for the modification of fats or combinations of substitutes for TFAs (fibres, cellulose, starches, protein mixtures, etc.).

