

**Question for written answer E-004514/2015
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Miguel Viegas (GUE/NGL)

Subject: Beekeeping surveillance programmes

It is estimated that 84% of plant species and 76% of food production in Europe depend on bee pollination, whose economic value is far higher than the value of the honey produced, amounting to 15 billion euros a year in the EU.

The decrease in the bee population observed in recent years has multiple causes: parasites, predators, intensive agriculture and climate change. This situation worries not only beekeepers, but also ecologists and economists specialised in the economic and ecological importance of bees.

The lack of reliable and comparable data on the number of hives, beekeepers and loss of colonies in the EU is one of the main impediments to effective action in combating excessive mortality in bees. The European Parliament has already proposed the creation of national surveillance systems – in close collaboration with beekeeping associations – and the development of standardised rules at EU level to enable comparisons to be made. Certain resolutions adopted in the European Parliament also advocate support for diagnostic laboratories and field testing on a national scale.

I would like to ask the Commission: what steps have been taken to improve surveillance and monitoring of the beekeeping sector in order to increase the strength of epidemiological assessments of bee populations within Europe?