

**Question for written answer E-006095/2016**  
**to the Commission**  
Rule 130  
**Zoltán Balczó (NI)**

Subject: Comprehensive solution to problems in the apiculture sector

The importance of bees from an environmental point of view is beyond doubt: a large proportion of the most important plants used for human nourishment is pollinated by bees, which means they play a crucial role in the food chain.

In recent years there has been much concern in Europe and throughout the world about large-scale bee mortality. Although the reasons for this cannot be identified precisely, it is certain that human activity is in large part to blame. Insecticides and the unbalanced diet which can be caused by monoculture have a negative impact on bees' lives. They are also confronted by natural enemies such as viruses, parasites and even climate change.

In addition to these environmental issues, we must also consider the economic factors which affect the sector. In Europe 630 000 apiarists produce some 234 000 tonnes of honey every year. The low-quality, often fake honey from non-EU countries flooding European markets has a damaging impact on consumers as well as producers in the EU.

It is clear from the foregoing that the sector is facing complex problems which can only be solved through harmonised action at EU level.

I would therefore like to ask:

Does the Commission plan to tackle the problems faced by the sector through legislation or by developing a comprehensive strategy?