

**Question for written answer E-001702/2020
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: Call for the EU to support the Italian horticultural sector

The horticultural sector accounts for 5% of total agricultural production in Italy, involving some 23 000 companies and 100 000 workers.

This sector, as unfortunately other parts of the Italian economy, is in a very difficult situation because of the coronavirus pandemic, all the more so because recent provisions laid down by the Italian Government to limit the spread of the virus have led to the closure of florists and markets.

More specifically, the sector is a very seasonal one, in that some 90% of business takes place between the months of February and April. In springtime alone, 615 million pots, worth over EUR 800 million, are produced in Italy. The sales ban is thus leading to the collapse of the entire sector.

Can the Commission therefore say:

what instruments it intends to use to support this important agricultural sector;

whether it will consider providing specific funding to support horticultural companies, in order to enable them to pay their suppliers whilst at the same time protecting jobs?