

**Question for written answer E-006602/2020
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Susanna Ceccardi (ID)

Subject: Commission intervention to combat the spread of *Vespa velutina* in Europe

The Asian hornet, also known as the yellow-legged hornet or *Vespa velutina*, belongs to the Hymenoptera order and originated in South-East Asia.

Since the early 2000s, the presence of this insect has also been reported in Europe, first in France and later in Italy. Asian hornets are real killers of bees, which account for some 50% of their mainly protein-based diet. The hornets are also dangerous for fruit trees, which are their second main source of food.

In Italy, the presence of this insect was most recently reported a few days ago by honey producers in the Lunigiana area, in northern Tuscany.

Lunigiana produces the first Italian honey that obtained Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) status from the European Union – the highest possible recognition for a product that is typical of a certain region. The area of production comprises the 14 municipalities in the Lunigiana area, the typically mountainous landscape of which has diverse vegetation that is very valuable from a beekeeping point of view.

In view of this, will the Commission take measures to combat the spread of *Vespa velutina* in Europe and Italy in order to protect honey producers and the bees themselves?