

**Priority question for written answer P-000324/2024
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Grace O'Sullivan (Verts/ALE)

Subject: The movement of non-native honeybees into Ireland

Ireland's native honeybee population, consisting of both wild and managed *Apis mellifera mellifera* (Amm), is being threatened due to the movement of non-native honeybees into the country and subsequent hybridisation.

In EU law, honeybees are treated in the same manner as fully-domesticated livestock with free movement permitted throughout Europe. However, whereas cattle or pigs are controlled in their mating habits and fencing in order to control distribution, honeybees mate freely between imported non-native and managed and wild Amm populations.

The Protection of the Native Irish Honey Bee Bill was introduced in Ireland in 2021 and seeks to ban the importation of non-native honeybees into Ireland. Upon advice from the Office of the Attorney General that an evaluation of proportionality and necessity by way of scientific assessment was required to substantiate the specific measure proposed in the Bill, an assessment was commenced by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine to procure that independent scientific evidence and data.

In this context:

1. Does the Commission object to Ireland imposing a ban on the movement of non-native honeybees into Ireland?
2. Can Ireland urgently impose an interim ban pending completion of the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine review ?

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