Key facts about Europe's honey market (infographic)

Which countries produce the most honey? How much does the EU import? Where does it export to? Find out more about the EU's honey market with our infographic.

The European honey market in figures

The European Union is the world's second biggest producer of honey after China. Every year, about 600,000 beekeepers and 17 million beehives produce about 250,000 tonnes of honey.

However, the production does not cover the demand: About 200,000 tonnes of honey were imported into the EU in 2016, mainly from China, which accounts for about 40% of EU imports. Compared to their competitors elsewhere, EU beekeepers face relatively high production costs and the limited EU exports are priced higher than imports into the EU. On average, one kilo of honey imported in the EU in 2016 cost €2.23 while one kilo of honey exported to countries outside the EU cost €5.69.

The importance of bees

While the EU's apiculture sector is small, it is important for agriculture, food security and biodiversity as bees pollinate cultivated crops and wild plants.

Outbreaks of animal diseases, intensive agriculture, exposure to chemicals as well as habitat loss and adverse climatic conditions can threaten the productive capacity of beehives.
Protecting bees and honey producers

The European Parliament is calling on the European Commission and EU countries to come up with new measures to protect bees and help beekeepers. MEPs especially call for a better protection of bee varieties, more financial support for beekeepers, as well as a ban on harmful pesticides and action against imports of fake honey.

Members will vote on the report by Hungarian EPP member Norbert Erdős on Wednesday 28 February and vote on it the following day.

Read more on the report in our article.

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Honey market
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Bees play an important role in Europe's ecosystem