

**Question for written answer E-002941/2024**

**to the Commission**

Rule 144

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Subject: Urgent need to support beekeeping sector in the EU, especially in Greece

The Greek beekeeping sector is facing numerous challenges, such as the effects of climate change, rising production costs, unfair competition from low-cost imports, and imports of adulterated honey. All these factors have a detrimental effect on European honey. According to recent reports, more than 50 % of the honey that is available on the market has been adulterated with cheap imported honey, mainly from China and Ukraine<sup>1</sup>. On top of this, natural disasters and extreme weather events<sup>2</sup> have slashed honey production by more than 50 % this year, threatening the viability and livelihoods of beekeepers<sup>3</sup>. Despite support from the CAP 2023-2027 apiculture programme, the funding beekeepers receive is insufficient for the survival of the sector.

The EU must ensure that: (a) the European market is protected from adulterated products; (b) professional beekeepers receive financial support for losses resulting from climate change; (c) measures are put in place to strengthen education, innovation and research with a view to improving the sustainability and competitiveness of European beekeeping; (d) the granting of an annual pollination subsidy and the inclusion of beekeepers in the CAP eco-schemes are considered.

In view of this:

1. Does the Commission intend to put forward new measures to support the sustainability of European beekeeping and the fight against honey adulteration?
2. Will it examine the proposal for an annual pollination subsidy for each hive?
3. What initiatives will it take to support the beekeeping sector in Greece, where the effects of climate change are particularly acute?

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ekathimerini.com/news/environment/1250924/hive-of-doubt-beekeepers-battle-drought-and-fraud/>

<sup>2</sup> Physical disasters and extreme weather events, such as continuous drought and prolonged high temperatures, the devastating fires and the flooding which Greece recently experienced, hit beekeepers hard, leading to a serious drop in honey production – up to 50 % in some areas – and bee losses due to reduced flowering and pollen.

<sup>3</sup> The situation is particularly critical for Greek beekeepers, resulting in more and more of them leaving the profession. This poses a threat to honey production and the ecological function of bees as pollinators.