

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002878/25
to the Commission
Daniel Buda (PPE)
(15 July 2025)**

Subject: Contamination from microplastics

Contamination from microplastics is becoming an increasingly serious public health issue. Recent studies have revealed the presence of microplastics in various food products, which can have negative effects on human health. Microplastics have also proved to be an emerging threat to bee populations. ⁽¹⁾ Honey bees pollinate 80% of agricultural crops and wild flowers and, together with other pollinators, contribute EUR 22 billion to the EU's agricultural economy.

1. Has the Commission initiated research and implemented regulations to monitor and limit the presence of these contaminants in the food chain?
2. How does the Commission monitor the presence of microplastics and other contaminants in food, and what measures are planned to reduce this risk?
3. Microplastic contamination often originates from third countries that do not manage waste adequately, and citizens are not sufficiently aware of the problem. How is the Commission investing in effective cooperation with third countries, and how is it contributing to public awareness campaigns to prevent contamination of the EU with microplastics originating from waste generated outside Europe?

Submitted: 15.7.2025

**Answer given by Mr Várhelyi on behalf of the European Commission
(12 September 2025)**

1. The Commission is aware of publications on the presence of microplastics (MPs) in food. Following a mandate by the Commission, in 2016, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) published a statement ⁽¹⁾ identifying data gaps on the presence of microplastics and nanoplastics (MNPs) in food and their effects on human health that required further research to enable a safety risk assessment for consumers. At the EFSA scientific colloquium on MNPs in food ⁽²⁾ in 2021, it was confirmed that still further efforts are needed to generate the data necessary for such assessment. As currently standardised and harmonised analytical methods are lacking for the monitoring of MPs in food, the Commission has been funding research under the EU's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme ⁽³⁾.
2. Once suitable analytical methods are available, the Commission may recommend monitoring the presence of MPs in food. In case EFSA identifies health risks due a certain contaminant in food, the Commission may establish maximum levels, which are enforced via official controls. EFSA scientific colloquium on MNPs in food in 2021 confirmed that further efforts are needed to generate the data necessary for a comprehensive human health risk assessment. Recently, a scientific article was published providing a systematic global review of trends, health risks, and implications for consumer safety of microplastic contamination in fish ⁽⁴⁾.
3. The Commission promotes adequate waste management and circular economy in third countries through its development cooperation as well as in bilateral and multilateral engagement. It aims at agreeing an ambitious Treaty to fight plastic pollution across the planet.

¹ <https://www.rewild.org/press/bees-under-threat-solutions-for-survival>

⁽¹⁾ EFSA Journal 2016;14(6):4501, <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/4501>.

⁽²⁾ EFSA Supporting publication 2021: EN-6815, <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/event/update-scientific-colloquium-25-coordinated-approach-assess-human-health%20>.

⁽³⁾ <https://cusp-research.eu/>.

⁽⁴⁾ <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpolbul.2025.118279>.