

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002015/26
to the Commission
Cristina Guarda (Verts/ALE), Thomas Waitz (Verts/ALE)
(13 May 2026)**

Subject: Urgent measures against the threat to European beekeeping of the *Tropilaelaps* mite species

The parasitic mite species *Tropilaelaps* causes the rapid collapse of honeybee colonies, and its presence has been confirmed in Georgia and southern Russia. Its presence is also suspected in Ukraine and Türkiye, countries from which the EU currently authorises bee imports. In Asia, this parasite has caused losses of 30-90% of bee colonies. If the parasite spreads, it threatens catastrophic consequences for European beekeeping and agricultural production.

While Canada and the United Kingdom have already banned imports from Ukraine, and Poland, Romania, Hungary and Bulgaria have adopted national restrictions, the EU maintains the status quo despite evidence of illegal trafficking documented by the European Anti-Fraud Office and Europol.

In the light of this situation:

1. What comprehensive strategy does the Commission intend to adopt in order to protect the European beekeeping sector from this existential threat?
2. Is the Commission considering activating some of the immediate preventive measures requested by the sector, such as the precautionary suspension of imports from at-risk countries, molecular analysis of Ukrainian and Turkish honey samples, and the tightening of anti-smuggling controls, or even a complete temporary suspension of bee imports, as an extreme measure, if necessary?

Submitted: 13.5.2026

**Answer given by Mr Várhelyi on behalf of the European Commission
(22 July 2026)**

The Commission alerted the Member States at the regulatory Committee to the alleged presence of *Tropilaelaps* spp. in several third countries late last year ⁽¹⁾, ⁽²⁾.

Since then, the Commission contacted those third countries in writing, financed and co-organised a regional workshop with the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) in the autumn, and ensured that *Tropilaelaps* is on the agenda on the annual meeting by the EU Reference Laboratory for the National Reference Laboratories of the Member States.

Comprehensive EU rules apply for the entry into the EU of honeybee queens (slide 7 of the referred presentation in footnote 1). They are considered proportionate and fit for use, conform to international standards of the WOAH and to science.

The EU rules contain an additional specific element: additional obligations for handling consignments after the entry into the EU. The Commission is not aware of any major shortcomings in relation to the entry into the EU of consignments of honeybee queens from listed third countries.

In this legal framework, the competent authorities of the Member States must implement and enforce the rules, including by carrying out adequate surveillance ⁽³⁾, while operators must undertake surveillance of animals under their responsibility ⁽⁴⁾.

⁽¹⁾ Presentation: https://food.ec.europa.eu/document/download/e8c1b4ae-32b8-4a80-8f3d-aad884a8796c_en?filename=reg-com_ahw_20251215_pres-26.pdf.

⁽²⁾ Summary of Section AHW, agenda point A.02: https://food.ec.europa.eu/document/download/92105a63-5aa4-4908-8097-c7b7180cbcf3_en?filename=reg-com_ahw_20251215_sum.pdf.

⁽³⁾ See e.g., Articles 26-27 of Regulation (EU) 2016/429, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2016/429/oj> and Articles 3-7 of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/689, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_del/2020/689/oj.

⁽⁴⁾ Articles 24-25 of Regulation (EU) 2016/429, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2016/429/oj>.