



BeeLife European Beekeeping Coordination  
ROMAPIS  
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# Neonicotinoid-Ban Derogations Limited, but still Persist in Romania

**BeeLife supports Romapis and Romanian beekeepers in rejecting the continuation of emergency authorisations for the use of neonicotinoid insecticides in maize crops.**

Six consecutive years passed in which the Romanian Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development granted emergency authorisations for the use of neonicotinoid-coating treatment for seeds of sunflower, maize, rapeseed and sugar beet crops. Finally, in 2020, the Ministry has taken a different position that brings bittersweet news. It has recently made public the decision to issue a new temporary authorisation for the use of banned neonicotinoids just for maize crops. The decision is a partial improvement when compared to previous years because it no longer includes other crops such as sunflower or rapeseed. However, it still lacks the required respect for the scientifically based decision to ban all open-air use of these insecticides in the European Union. Therefore, the ministry continues putting at risk the health of bees and other pollinators, affecting their role in ecosystems, and expanding the negative impacts of toxicity on the economic activity of Romanian beekeepers.

Considering the extension of the decision, seven years after the initial neonicotinoid ban in 2013, Romanian authorities are abusing the provisions of article 53 of EC 1107/2009. According to the working document on emergency authorisations issued by SANCO (10087/2013), **authorisations should be coupled with research that focuses on “non-chemical, chemical, combined or other solutions”, thus presenting alternatives to banned substances.** The constant grant of emergency authorisations, coupled with insufficient or incomplete notifications to the European Commission, reveals the troubling nature of the emergency authorisations in Romania. The lack of interest and commitment towards alternatives should be finally addressed, after seven years of derogations from European directives.

Romanian authorities have already been informed by the Commission services that, **according to EFSA assessment, some of the past derogations were not scientifically supported, particularly for maize crops.** It is riddling that the weakest case, and for which there are available non-insecticide alternatives, has been given a new temporary authorisation.



BeeLife stands together with Romanian beekeepers and rejects the persistent risk and abuse by the Ministry. The decision not only continues to put the health of bees and their pollination services in peril but reveals a remarkable disregard for European directives and due process.

At this time, we can at least expect that the reduction of the authorisation to only maize crops will be an indication of finally putting an end to derogations in Romania. The impact of neonicotinoids on bees, pollinators in general and the environment has been widely covered by scientific assessment both by European authorities and independent researchers. It is time to respect the ban and follow the scientific conclusions that point towards safer alternatives and stop the exploitation of Article 53.

**-ENDS-**

**Contact: Andrés SALAZAR, BeeLife European Beekeeping Coordination: [comms@bee-life.eu](mailto:comms@bee-life.eu)**

#### **NOTE TO EDITORS:**

**BeeLife European Beekeeping Coordination** is an association formed by professionals of the beekeeping sector from different countries of the European Union. Its main activity is the study of the impact on bees of environmental threats such as pesticides or genetically modified organisms (GMOs). BeeLife works for the protection of bees based on the principle that “bees serve as the canary in the gold mine” sounding the alarm that “something is wrong in the environment”. Not least, bees create 30% of all our food by pollinating fruits, vegetables and arable crops such as sunflower and oilseed rape, having an inherent value that the Coordination is working to protect.

**Romapis Federation of the Romanian Beekeepers Associations** is a full member of BeeLife European Beekeeping Coordination. It is an active agent for the beekeeping community in Romania and takes an active role in Romanian and European affairs such as the ongoing European Citizen Initiative Save Bees and Farmers.