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COLOSS Vespid & Virus Spring Meeting in Vienna

Researchers from various European countries met to share knowledge and updates on honey bees viral diseases and invasive hornets

By Matteo Giusti

The spring meeting of the two COLOSS Task Forces—Vespid and Virus—was held in Vienna on April 16th – 17th.

The event brought together researchers and technicians from various European countries to exchange knowledge and updates on key issues related to bee health, particularly concerning viruses and predatory hornets.

The first day opened with a joint session dedicated to bee viruses, with special attention to the possibility of interspecific transmission.

A central topic was the status of the invasion of *Vespa velutina* in Europe, with contributions from Portugal, Slovakia, Hungary, and Italy, specifically referencing experiences from the regions of Piedmont and Tuscany. Updates on monitoring and containment strategies were presented.

In the Vespid group, discussions focused on operational challenges related to containing the species and potential solutions to adopt. In addition, sharing experiences among the different partners provided an update on the progress of activities across various countries. The meeting reinforced the intention to strengthen international collaboration, including the goal of creating and continuously updating a European map of the expansion of *Vespa velutina*.



Researchers at work during the meeting (Photo by: stopvelutina.it)

On the virology side, a citizen science project on acute paralysis virus (APV) was presented, Other contributions were on studies on the relationships between bee viruses and the wax moth, as well as between bee viruses and hornets.

The meeting confirmed the importance of an integrated approach to studying the factors that affect the health of *Apis mellifera* colonies, highlighting how the synergy between the Vespidae and Virus Task Forces represents a key element in addressing current challenges in modern beekeeping—from managing the spread of invasive alien species to controlling pathogens.

Source: www.stopvelutina.it