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PP-505 [Beekeeping for Rural Development]

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EUROPEAN APICULTURE SECTOR POLICIES - POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE ELEMENTS FOR HEALTHY MARKET CONDITIONS

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Problem description: Currently, the dysfunction of the honey market has a devastating effect on the beekeeping sector in Europe where there are considerable variations from country to country when considering the market health described by indicators. Since policies are made to regulate markets, it would be expected that positive and negative elements of national policies would have a relation to market health.

Table 1: Honey trade balance in 2023 for selected countries, based on data of FAOSTAT for all selected countries, and compared with EUROSTAT based data for EU Member States. Countries are sorted descending after the FAOSTAT-based trade balance. No statistics exists for Kosovo.

	Faostat data				Eurostat data
	Exports, tonnes	Imports, tonnes	Population, 1,000	Per capita trade balance, kg	Per capita trade balance, kg
Bulgaria	10,991	3,226	6,796	1.14	-0.19
Serbia	1,510	377	6,773	0.17	
Türkiye	9,386	15	87,271	0.11	
Albania	4	50	2,812	-0.02	
Slovakia	1,694	1,814	5,518	-0.02	-0.17
Spain	27,352	31,005	47,912	-0.08	-0.18
Bosnia and Herzegovina	7	469	3,185	-0.15	
Denmark	2,826	4,154	5,948	-0.22	-0.28
Italy	5,730	24,361	59,499	-0.31	-0.08
Croatia	739	2,775	3,896	-0.52	-0.19
Germany	18,021	64,469	84,548	-0.55	-0.43
UK	2,268	50,917	68,683	-0.71	

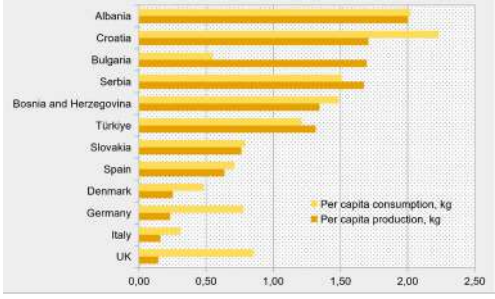

Figure 1: Per capita annual production and consumption (kg) of honey in selected BeSafeBeeHoney countries (Based on data of FAOSTAT, 2023, production figures for Italy based on FAOSTAT data for 2022).

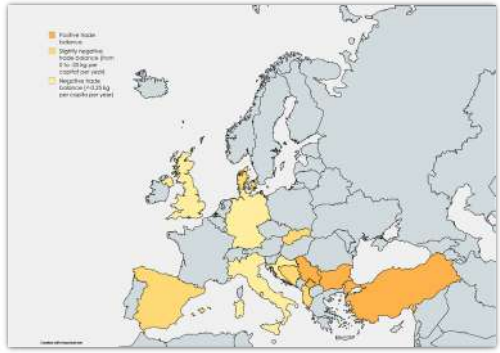

Figure 2: Countries represented in responses to the policy survey, coloured according the size of their honey trade balance.

Table 2: Promoting and deteriorating national policy examples for countries with positive, slightly negative and negative trade balance for honey.

	Number of responses		Comments
	Promotional policies	Deteriorating policies	
Positive	11	3	Three countries: Türkiye and Serbia - no national policies mentioned for Bulgaria
Slightly negative	11	6	Five countries: Bosnia & Herzegovina, Slovakia, Denmark, Spain and Albania
Negative	6	2	Four countries: Croatia and United Kingdom – Germany and Italy not mentioning national policies

CONCLUSIONS

Qualitative analyses of the policy survey responses gave reason to conclude that there is a **general perception of three major policy issues being determinative for a thriving honey market**, namely **I**) subsidisation, **II**) product classification and labelling, and **III**) regulation of the approval, registration and use of pesticides and veterinarian medicine.

Responses highlights challenges within the sector resulting from **irregular market mechanisms**, with indications that the predominant market channels operate largely beyond public oversight, contributing to concerns about effective regulation and control.

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BeSafe BeeHoney

PP-505 [Beekeeping for Rural Development]
European apiculture sector policies - positive and negative elements for healthy market conditions

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Background/PURPOSE: The demand for beehive products, especially honey, in the European market is growing. However, while the beekeeping sector faces many challenges, including bee diseases, colony collapse disorder and climate changes, the market shows severe signs of malfunction. The market price for honey is declining in the EU, the self-sufficiency with honey is only about 63%, and much traded honey, especially the imported qualities are suspected of adulteration. The aim of our study was to analyze the relations between positive and negative elements of national policies including legal frameworks and indicators for the health of honey markets, via selected examples from some countries.
Problem description: Currently, the dysfunction of the honey market has a devastating effect on the beekeeping sector in Europe where there are considerable variations from country to country when considering the market health described by indicators. Since policies are made to regulate markets, it would be expected that positive and negative elements of national policies would have a relation to market health.

METHODOLOGY: A survey was spread via the BeSafeBeeHoney project, COST action 22105. Respondents were asked to point at national and/or international policies which are either beneficial or counterproductive to a thriving apiculture and could point at maximum three the most important policies of each type. In addition, indicators for healthy apiculture markets have been proposed. The pristine data collected via the survey was supplemented with literature searches according to relevance.

Results and CONCLUSION: Survey responses were collected from 12 countries (Albania, Bulgaria, Bosna and Hercegovina, Croatia, Denmark, Germany, Italy, Serbia, Spain, Slovakia, Türkiye and United Kingdom). Based on the analyses of survey responses and other information, it can be concluded that differences in national policies have a low relation to the health of the honey market, which is more influenced by other factors.
Practical implications for beekeepers: Policy initiatives on EU and international level are necessary to improve the European honey market including beekeeper business. The knowledge and experience of beekeepers are essential for sustainable apiculture and advocating the most suitable policy and regulations in the beekeeping sector.