

Honig-Verband e.V.
German Honey Association

Ms. Elena Yoncheva
Member of the European Parliament
SPINELLI 02G340
B-1047 Brussels

Brussels, 24 April 2026

Subject:
Request for a comprehensive, evidence driven examination of integrity within the honey market.

Dear Ms Yoncheva,

On behalf of the German Honey Association (Honig-Verband e.V.), we would like to refer to the statements made at the conference EU Honey Market Integrity: Trade Importance and Fraud Risks, held at the European Parliament on 22 April 2026 under your initiative, some of which are incorrect.

The concerns expressed in the referenced speech regarding the state of beekeeping and the integrity of the honey market merit your attention. At the same time, sound political decision-making requires a nuanced assessment in order to avoid misaligned policies, legal uncertainties, and unintended market distortions. Against this backdrop, the German Honey Association wishes to present the following points for objective consideration:

1. Food Fraud: Shared Responsibility instead of one-sided Accusations

Food fraud is a genuine risk in global markets. However, it would be politically and legally problematic to attribute responsibility to individual market participants or Member States without substantiated evidence or completed official investigations.

Sweeping allegations against entire sectors or associations undermine confidence in established control systems and hinder constructive cooperation between industry and science.

2. The Role of Legislators regarding Control and Verification Methods

Political decision-makers are bound by the principles of the rule of law. This means:

- New analytical methods for honey authenticity must be scientifically validated, standardized, and legally robust before they can be made mandatory.
- Divergent assessments of individual methods by Member States or associations do not indicate inaction but reflect lawful caution.
- Prematurely enshrining unverified procedures in legislation entails significant risks for legal challenges, the internal market, and enforcement practice.

Political responsibility hereby means prioritizing reliability over symbolism.

3. Trade Policy and Supply Security

International trade agreements serve multiple public interests simultaneously: supply security, price stability, foreign economic relations and crisis preparedness. The following aspects should be taken into account:

- European honey production structurally does not fully meet demand.
- Import restrictions without realistic alternatives would quickly increase consumer prices and limit availability.
- Trade policy decisions cannot be made in isolation for individual sectors but must be assessed in a broader economic context.

The task of policymakers is therefore to safeguard fair trading conditions, not to isolate specific markets, and to and to also provide stability for consumers.

4. Price Developments: A Differentiated View of Market Mechanisms

Falling agricultural prices are driven by multiple factors, such as

- international supply volumes,
- the market power of retailers,
- consumer habits and
- internal structural factors within beekeeping itself.

It would be politically reductive to attribute low prices solely to illegal practices. Support instruments must therefore be targeted, verifiable, and compliant with EU law.

5. Pollination Services and Support Policies

The importance of pollination for food security and biodiversity is undisputed. However, political measures should:

- distinguish between honey production and pollination services,
- remunerate ecosystem services transparently and measurably and
- avoid double or misdirected subsidies.

A blanket linkage between beekeeping support and pollination is technically insufficient and may undermine ecological objectives.

6. Responsibility of Policymakers

Combating food fraud is a core responsibility of the state. This includes:

- strengthening official food control authorities,
- ensuring international cooperation with countries of origin,
- harmonizing validated testing methods at EU level and
- creating clear and enforceable legal requirements rather than public accusations.

Political credibility arises from consistent regulation and oversight, not from escalating public allegations.

7. Concluding Remarks

The challenges of the honey market require political responses that are legally sound, evidence-based, and balanced.

A confrontational narrative between beekeepers, trade, and policymakers does not lead to sustainable solutions. What is needed is a cooperative approach that involves science, market actors, and authorities alike, and strengthens the internal market rather than fragmenting it.

We remain at your disposal for a technical and constructive exchange at any time convenient to you.

Best regards,

Honig-Verband e.V.



Frank Filodda
Chairman



Jeanette Gonnermann
General Secretary