



Study on honey bee colony mortality

An European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) project in 2009 indicated that the honeybee surveillance systems in the EU Member States were weak. There was a lack of representative official data at country level and comparable data at EU level to estimate the extent of colony mortalities.

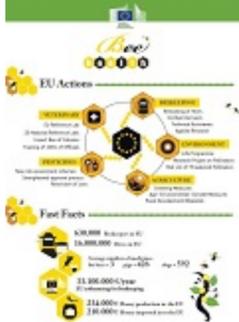
With the guidance  and technical assistance of the EU reference laboratory and the national reference laboratories, a new study (EPILOBEE , A pan-European epidemiological study on honeybee colony losses 2012-2013) addresses for the first time these weaknesses by harmonising the data collection methods.

It also assists the veterinary services to improve their capacity to undertake such surveillance. The methodology can be implemented and used as necessary, adapted to specific needs as appropriate for further work such as applied research, policy development, routine surveillance or to cross-check with data from other sources (e.g. from national or regional monitoring, from international standardised beekeeper surveys etc.). The EPILOBEE project was co-financed by the European Commission and by the 17 participating EU countries.

This surveillance project resulted in a wealth of data which is still being analysed. The study is a descriptive project of mortality of existing colonies in the surveyed apiaries. It is being repeated for another year to see trends.

Preliminary conclusions of the study

- Situation of colony mortalities appears to be better than previously expected.
- The honey bee colony mortality is higher than normal in certain countries, with significant regional (and possibly temporal) differences.

	
The EPILOBEE Study 	Infograph 

