

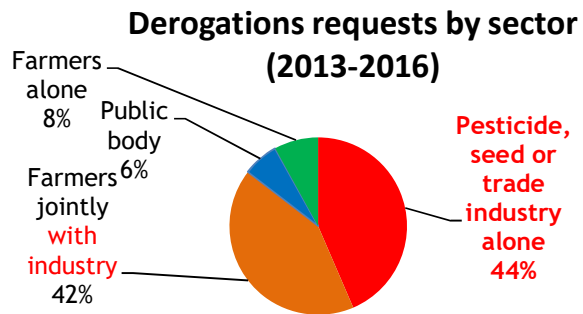
Bees at risk: 2013-2016 emergency authorisations of neonicotinoids and fipronil: How the ban is being circumvented

According to Article 53 of the Pesticide Regulation 1107/2009/EC, an ‘emergency authorisation’ for a non-authorized pesticide can be provided to farmers and public authorities in exceptional circumstances and when a danger cannot be contained by any other reasonable means. The aim of this Article is to help farmers in special circumstances.

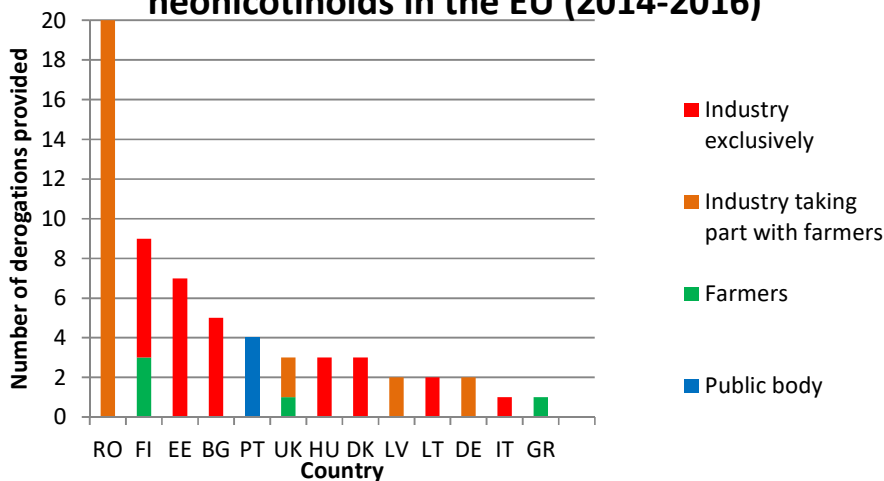
From 2013 - 2016, at least 62 ‘emergency authorisations’ have been granted by Member States for the use of bee-harming pesticides. Member states must ‘notify’ the Commission when they grant an emergency authorisation.

7 Member States protect industry’s financial interests: ‘notifications’ reveal that 44% of the emergency authorisations are applied for by industry alone. These requests come from Finland, Estonia, Bulgaria, Hungary, Denmark, Lithuania and Italy. If a company wants a bee-harming product back on the market, all it needs to do is make a simple request to these Member States.

Romania and Finland: worse pupils of the class: they provide nearly half the emergency authorisations in the EU.



Provision of derogations to the banned neonicotinoids in the EU (2014-2016)



Illegal: the majority of Member State notifications do not fulfil the basic legal requirements. They do not show that:

1. a ‘special or exceptional circumstance exists’;
2. there is ‘a danger which cannot be contained by any other reasonable means’;
3. the use of the bee-harming pesticide will be ‘limited and controlled’.

In 3 years the **European Commission sent only one letter of official complaint** to a Member State (Romania) to stop abusing the derogation system.

Conclusions:

1. The emergency authorisation process is continuously violated by Member States without reaction from the European Commission.
2. **Industry is involved in 86%** of emergency authorisations: The pesticide/seed/trade industries are circumventing the ban on neonicotinoids and at best the Member States are following a policy of laissez-faire
3. The ease of getting an emergency authorisation impedes the development of Integrated Pest Management. The abuse of the system prevents a move towards more environmentally friendly practices.
4. Very few applications were made by farmers alone (8%); mostly farmers made joint applications with pesticides/seed/trade industry (42%). These figures are indicative of the influence that the pesticides industry exerts on the agricultural sector, and the resulting lack of appetite for changes in farming practices.
5. The Commission must significantly strengthen the law and put in place strict rules to avoid the current systematic abuses by Member States. This will protect bees and support the EU’s move towards more environmentally friendly farming.