

Young Citizens Assembly on Pollinators



Report on the Young Citizens Assembly on Pollinators - Online Participation

Executive Summary

To support the work of the Young Citizens Assembly on Pollinators, citizen perspectives were collected through two complementary **online participation tools**:

The **Citizens' Engagement Platform**, open from June 2025 to February 2026, collected contributions from across Europe, which were analysed thematically to identify key priorities. The **Public Dialogue Platform**, developed by Make.org, enabled Assembly members to ask questions directly to citizens. This process gathered input from 6,169 participants, generating over 26,000 votes and 15,500 comments.

Participants expressed **strong awareness** of pollinator decline and **widespread concern** about its impact on ecosystems, agriculture, and food security, with 90% reporting high levels of concern. They showed a large **willingness** to take **individual and collective actions**, including planting diverse pollinator-friendly plants, reducing meat consumption, choosing seasonal, local, or organic products, and supporting local producers. Protecting pollinators was seen as a **shared responsibility**, requiring coordinated political leadership, policies that consider future generations, enforcement, financial support for farmers, and support for citizen and community engagement. Accessible **information, education, and awareness-raising** were highlighted as essential to enable effective action and long-term behavioural change.

Pesticides were consistently identified as a **primary cause** of pollinator decline. Participants strongly **supported stricter EU regulation** of pesticides (82%), and highlighted the need to replace chemical inputs with natural or biological alternatives. Many reported adopting chemical-free gardening practices themselves, such as composting, homemade preparations, and permaculture methods.

Agriculture and land use were seen as key levers to reverse pollinator decline. Participants called for more **organic, diverse, pesticide-free, and local farming systems**. Intensive agriculture, monocultures, and overproduction were widely criticised for harming pollinators and ecosystems. Participants emphasised practices such as crop rotation, permaculture, and regenerative farming, alongside fair economic support for farmers. Participants also stressed **restoring habitats**, including flower strips, hedges, trees, and green spaces in urban and rural areas, linking habitat protection to ecosystem resilience and human well-being.

1. Introduction

Pollinating insects are essential to our food systems, our economies, and healthy ecosystems. Yet their decline is accelerating. This is why the European Commission established the **Young Citizens Assembly on Pollinators**.

To support the Assembly's work, citizen perspectives were gathered through two complementary **online platforms**. The **Public Dialogue Platform**, implemented by Make.org, enabled Assembly members to submit questions to the broader public, as well as the European Commission's **Citizens' Engagement Platform**, which provided an avenue for citizens across Europe to join the discussion and share their views on pollinators.

All contributions have now been analysed and are hereby shared with the members of the Young Citizens Assembly on Pollinators to help inform and guide their next steps.

1.1. The Public Dialogue Platform

The Public Dialogue Platform, developed by Make.org, is designed to **engage citizens in collaborative projects**, helping identify areas of agreement and potential improvements. Participation is structured to be as simple as possible: the platform is accessible and easy to use and ensures participants can quickly understand and interact with complex issues. Participants can respond via single-choice, multiple-choice, scale, or ranking questions, or share more detailed views in open text fields.

The Public Dialogue was created based on questions which the Assembly members wanted to submit to the general public. The platform was open to all citizens from **February 11 to February 22, 2026**, allowing broad participation. To reach audiences in multiple EU member states, a targeted **social media campaign** was carried out in **five countries** (Denmark, France, Italy, Poland and Romania) to inform people about the public dialogue and encourage participation.

After the participation period, the analysis phase began, examining responses and identifying key trends from citizens' contributions.

1.2. The Citizens' Engagement Platform

The European Commission's Citizens' Engagement Platform provides a space for Europeans to share their perspectives, in this case as an input to the Young Citizens Assembly on Pollinators. It allowed citizens to **exchange their views and experiences** on the decline of pollinating insects. The platform was available from **June 2025 to February 2026** and responses were analysed to identify key trends and themes, enriching the overall understanding of citizens' views.

2. Overview of participation in the Public Dialogue

This section presents the key figures from the online dialogue, including the number of participants, votes, and comments, as well as the main sociodemographic characteristics of those who took part.

2.1. Overall participation

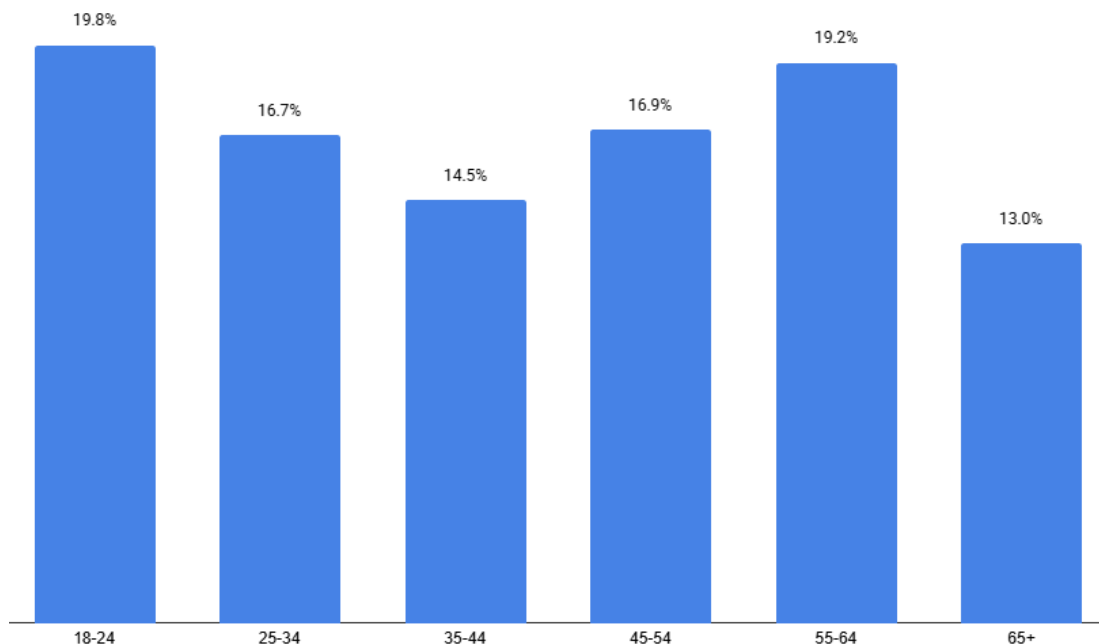
- **6 169** participants
- **26 151** votes
- **15 530** comments

Note: A participant is defined as a user who has taken at least one action on the platform, such as leaving a comment or reacting to a question.

2.2. Participation by sociodemographic profiles

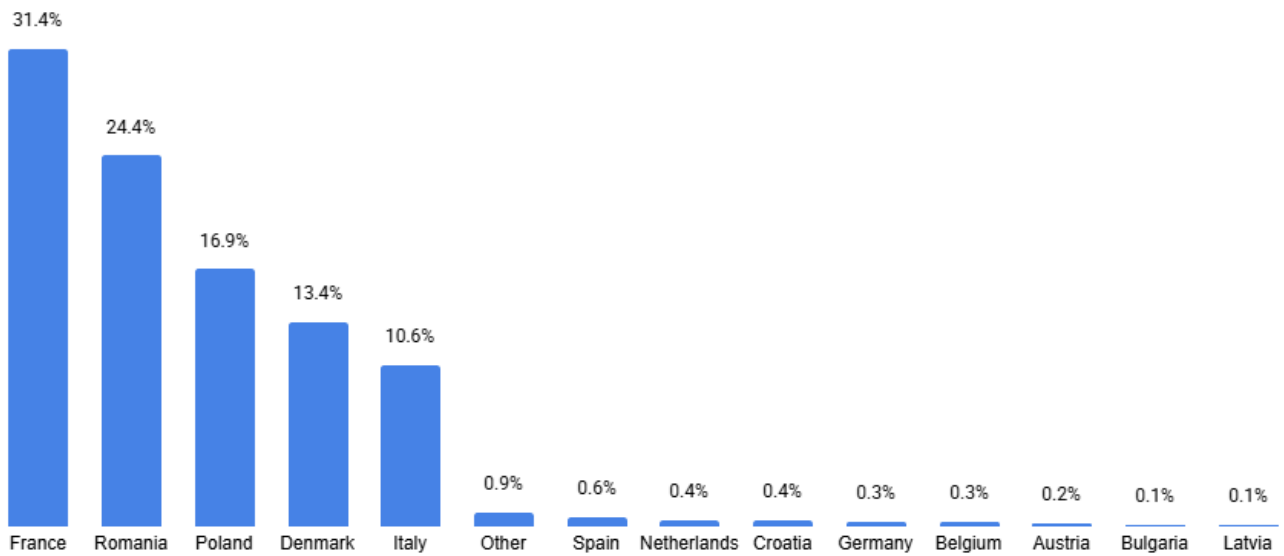
Participants were invited, on a voluntary basis, to answer four short questions to better understand who they are: their age, country of residence, living environment, and how often they see pollinators nearby. This section presents an overview of these characteristics, helping to understand whose voices are reflected in the results.

Question: What is your age?



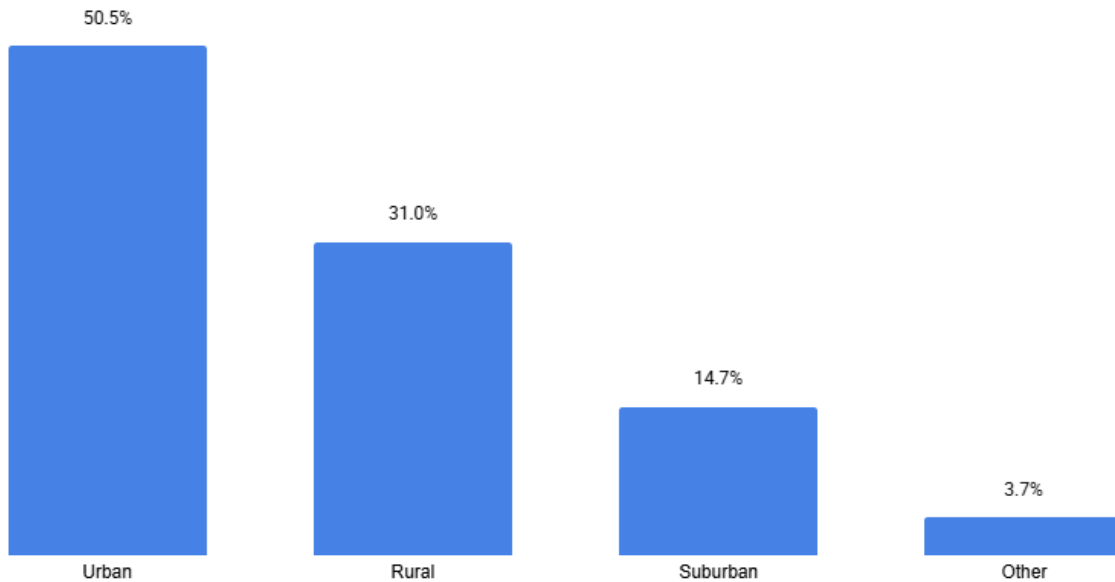
Note: People of all ages took part in the dialogue. Participants aged 18-24 were the largest group (19.8%), while voices from all other age groups were also well represented, most notably those aged 55-64 (19.2%).

Question: Which country do you currently reside in?



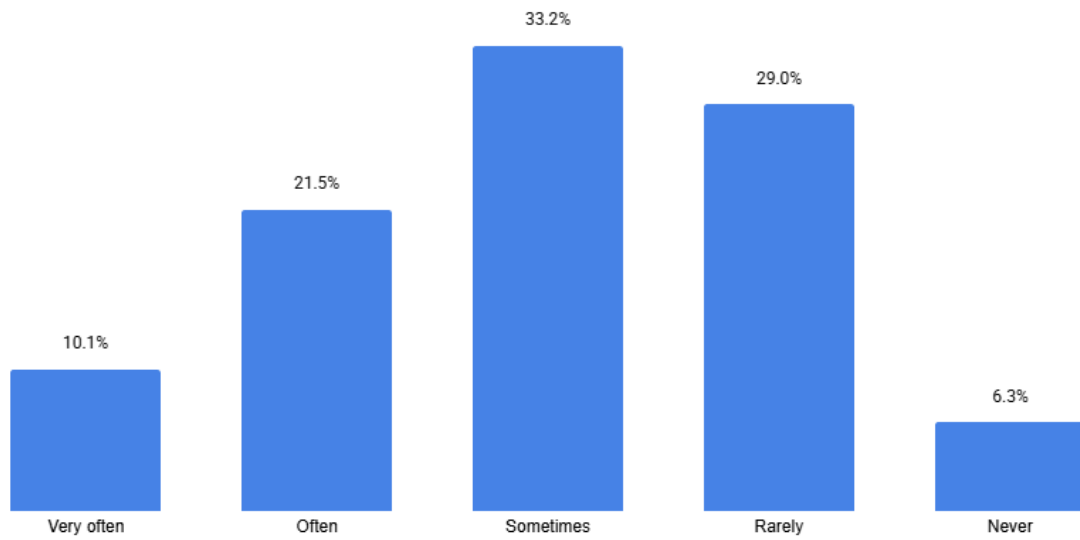
Note: The majority of responses came from the five countries targeted through social media campaigns: *France* (31.4%), *Romania* (24.4%), *Poland* (16.9%), *Denmark* (13.4%), and *Italy* (10.6%). Furthermore, Europeans from other countries (*Spain, the Netherlands, Croatia, Germany, Belgium, Austria, Bulgaria, Latvia*) also contributed, showing wider European engagement.

Question: What type of area do you currently live in?



Note: Participants come from a variety of living environments. Roughly half live in *urban* areas (50.5%), about one in three in *rural* areas (31%), and the rest in *suburban* (14.7%) or *other* (3.7%) types of areas, showing that voices from very different places are included.

Question: How often do you see pollinators in your area?



Note: People see pollinators at different frequencies where they live. One in ten participants (10.1%) report seeing pollinators *very often* and 21.5% *often*. Most participants notice them *sometimes* (33.2%), while 29% see them *rarely* and 6.3% stated that they *never* see them.

3. Analysis of the results of the Public Dialogue

This section presents the results of the public dialogue, organised according to the working structure of the Young Citizens Assembly on Pollinators.

Results of closed questions, such as single-choice, multiple-choice, or scale questions, are presented using graphs, accompanied by summaries. Open-ended questions are analysed by identifying the themes that emerged across comments. The most common themes are presented in more detail, with illustrative quotes from participants to show their perspectives in their own words.

Part I - Key levers to reverse pollinator decline

Part I - General questions

Question (multiple-choice): *Protecting pollinators isn't only about policies - everyday choices also matter. Which actions to protect insects would you be willing to take yourself?*

(Total number of reactions: 1 574)



Description of the results: When given the option to select multiple actions, many participants said they would be willing to take action in their daily lives. Around two in three participants (67%) said they would *shop at a store that sells local products from farmers in their area*, while 50% said they would *grow food themselves or in a small local community*, 40% said they would *pay more for their food if they knew this would provide more income for farmers*, and 39% said they would like to *receive practical information or participate in local initiatives*. A small share of participants (4%) said *none of these* or that they were *not sure*.

Question (open-ended): *Why or why not would you be willing to take these actions?*

(Total number of comments: 1 720)

Main themes mentioned by participants:

1. Theme: To preserve biodiversity and the ecosystem

Participants are willing to take action to protect pollinators because they see it as essential for human survival and ecosystem health. They recognise that pollinators are a crucial part of biodiversity and the balance of ecosystems, and feel a moral responsibility to act urgently to repair the damage caused by human activity.

Showcase contributions

"I care about the environment and the beneficial relationship I derive from it. Over the years, I have seen the consequences of important natural changes, mainly losses. This worries me a lot, it is necessary to intervene to restore what has been lost to avoid losing it completely."

"I would be willing because without these insects a large part of the pollination they do would disappear, which means there will be fewer trees and flowers, leading to a continuous chain of losses."

2. Theme: To consume locally and support farmers

Participants are motivated to consume locally and support farmers because they see it as a way to promote fair remuneration, access healthier food, and reduce environmental impacts. Buying locally is viewed as a concrete action to protect biodiversity and pollinators, while also providing trust and traceability compared with large-scale retail.

Showcase contributions

"A few more pennies for shopping won't kill me, and support for local farmers will certainly be useful. Stopping buying in large supermarkets prevents the purchase of artificially pollinated fruits and vegetables, thereby helping insects."

"Ready to return to local products to lower my carbon footprint. To know the origin of what I eat. To have tasty vegetables and fruits that have developed in the sun and not in greenhouses. Not to have tomatoes all year round to rediscover the pleasure of eating them for a few weeks when they are in season. To ensure that farmers and market gardeners can live with dignity from their work. To have a minimum of food autonomy to reduce my expenses. To share moments and knowledge. To reconnect with my rural origins, with a father whose job was... a Gardener!"

3. Theme: Individual responsibility

Participants are motivated by a strong sense of individual and civic responsibility, believing that everyone has a role to play in protecting pollinators. Many see small, everyday actions as meaningful and cumulative, and some already integrate these practices into their daily lives. Participants also highlight practical constraints, such as cost, time or living conditions, that restrict people's ability to act.

Showcase contributions

"Everyone must participate to save the planet. The Earth is our home! Everyone has their share of responsibility, we must assume it."

"There is no small action; re-vegetating one's living space (garden, balcony), developing actions to plant fruit trees in your local area is a concrete action."

Additional themes mentioned: Protecting the future and future generations; Cultivating one's garden and planting flowers; Improving health through a healthy, pesticide-free diet; Acting out of love and respect for nature; Getting informed and raising awareness for a collective consciousness

Question (multiple-choice): Which of these changes to protect insects would you be willing to accept?

(Total number of reactions: 1 277)



Description of the results: When given the option to select multiple measures, participants were willing to accept a range of measures to protect insects. Roughly eight in ten respondents said they would accept *stricter EU regulations on pesticides, even if this led to higher food prices* (82%) or that they would accept *restrictions on the use of chemicals in private gardens* (78%). 63% said they would *eat less meat so that more land can be used for organic farming, nature restoration, or animal-friendly farming*, and a small share (3%) said *none of these* or that they were *not sure*.

Question (open-ended): In what way could you imagine yourself changing your behaviour (e.g. consumption and gardening habits) to help pollinators?

(Total number of comments: 1 434)

Main themes mentioned by participants:

1. Theme: Planting flowers, trees and melliferous plants

Participants highlighted the importance of planting a variety of pollinator-friendly and native plants, including melliferous flowers, fruit trees, and aromatic plants, with flowering spread throughout the seasons. For those without private gardens, shared gardens and greening of balconies or public spaces were suggested as collective solutions to support pollinators.

Showcase contributions

“Stop designing the garden to be ‘clean and aesthetic’ and instead sow a lot of field grasses and flowers that are food for pollinators and would be a safe haven for them to eat and pollinate”

“Plant many wildflowers between the beds to attract pollinators.”

2. Theme: Consuming local, organic, and seasonal products

Participants supported choosing organic, local, and seasonal products, with a strong focus on short supply chains. Many prefer buying directly from markets, local farms, or community-supported agriculture to know where their food comes from and support regional producers. There was rejection of the agro-industrial model, with intensive

agriculture and supermarkets criticised for pollution and environmental harm. While the higher cost of organic food was noted as a barrier, participants also expressed a willingness to pay a fair price for quality products.

Showcase contributions

“Certainly a consumption of organic products, which is in itself respectful of the environment and the pollinators themselves.”

“Buy more local products and only in season. Buy only organic and support all biodynamic agriculture”

3. Theme: Reducing consumption of meat and animal products

Participants advocate for a plant-based or flexitarian diet, with many having already reduced or eliminated meat from their daily meals. Reducing meat consumption is seen as part of a broader environmentally conscious lifestyle, often combined with buying local and organic products and practising chemical-free gardening. Participants also highlighted the connection between eating less meat and freeing up agricultural land for pollinator-friendly crops or rewilding.

Showcase contributions

“Especially eating less meat frees up larger areas that could be used for nature restoration and I really believe that the severe lack of nature plays a big role in the decline of pollinators.”

“I would consume, helped by some restrictive laws, much less meat. Then I would drastically reduce compulsive food buying. It would be a suite of laws disliked by the majority of the population, but absolutely necessary for survival. In the end, we all have to understand their necessity and the seriousness of the situation!”

Additional themes mentioned: Gardening without pesticides and chemical products; Creating habitats and wild spaces in the garden; Adopting natural gardening practices (permaculture, compost)

Part I - 1. Reducing pesticide use

Question (open-ended): Do you know about natural ways at no or low cost to protect your garden from pesticides?

(Total number of comments: 1 356)

Main themes mentioned by participants:

1. Theme: Using homemade natural preparations and products

Many participants are aware of traditional, homemade solutions for gardening and crop protection. Common practices include making plant-based preparations, using simple household products like black soap, vinegar, or baking soda, and applying physical barriers such as coffee grounds or crushed eggshells.

Showcase contributions

“There are a lot of homemade 'remedies' against pests. For example, garlic and hot pepper are two very good elements against pests in the tomato garden. Ash, milk, etc.”

“Yes, traps for snails, fermented plants for spraying, mixtures of oils, water and dish soap, for harmful insects.”

2. Theme: Practicing permaculture and companion planting

Participants highlighted permaculture and companion planting as ways to protect gardens naturally. Companion plants like basil can be used to repel pests from vegetables, while natural preparations like garlic sprays provide chemical-free protection. Many also emphasised supporting biodiversity by attracting helpful animals such as ladybugs, birds, or hedgehogs, improving soil through mulching and crop rotation, and diversifying crops to create a resilient, self-regulating garden ecosystem.

Showcase contributions

“Permaculture is an exceptional solution against pesticides - associating plants in the garden in ways that they can help each other against diseases and pests.”

“Many methods, for example from permaculture, help protect gardens from pesticides. For example, some plants act as natural repellents and can be planted near sensitive plants. In general, diversifying crops makes plantings more resilient and less sensitive to potential 'pests'.”

3. Theme: Enriching the soil with compost and natural fertilizers

Participants emphasised the importance of using compost, animal manure, and other natural amendments to enrich the soil and avoid chemical products. Common practices include turning kitchen and garden waste into compost, applying manure, and using household materials such as coffee grounds, wood ash, or eggshells.

Showcase contributions

“I make my own compost and fertilizer and remove weeds by hand where they are not welcome.”

“There are several organic methods to use in the garden that replace pesticides, for example, ash for tomatoes, banana peels and eggshells for the soil, meaning what we throw away as scraps can be rich for the soil and also for pollinators.”

Additional themes mentioned: Promoting beneficial insects and animals in the garden; Prioritize manual weeding and physical barriers; Leave wild areas and mow less often; Planting melliferous flowers, hedges, and local species

Part I - 2. Protecting land use and habitats

Question (open-ended): How do you feel about increasing flower-rich areas on farmland, more diverse farming, and leaving more space for nature?

(Total number of comments: 1 249)

Main themes mentioned by participants:

1. Theme: General agreement and perception of necessity

Participants expressed support for increasing flower-rich areas, promoting diverse farming, and leaving more space for nature. Many described these actions as urgent and essential, linking them directly to the health of ecosystems and human well-being. They see these measures as a vital step to protect pollinators and maintain the balance of nature.

Showcase contributions

"This is a great direction. We can live in harmony with nature if we only want to. It's not as difficult as many people think."

"I am completely for it, let's stop considering that we are alone on Earth and have priority over the rest of the living world."

2. Theme: Need to transform agricultural practices

Participants strongly criticised intensive agriculture and large-scale monocultures, viewing them as harmful to soil, biodiversity, and ecosystem resilience. They advocated for greater diversification, including hedges, flower strips, and a variety of crops, to create healthier landscapes. Alternative approaches such as organic, permaculture, and regenerative farming were promoted as more sustainable solutions.

Showcase contributions

"Much more varied agriculture. Smaller fields, more wild hedges and meadows with animals. Convert as much as possible to organic!"

"I see these measures as essential and common sense: expanding flower areas on agricultural land, diversifying crops, and creating space for nature are not just ecological gestures, but investments in the long-term resilience and health of the agricultural system. Flower strips attract pollinators, reduce the need for pesticides, and support biodiversity. Crop diversification makes land more resilient to climate change and diseases, and areas dedicated to nature restore the balance between production and life. Agriculture does not have to be in opposition to nature – they can coexist in harmony, with benefits for all."

3. Theme: Need to protect and give back space to nature

Participants agreed on the need to protect and give back space to nature, emphasising a sense of urgency and responsibility. Many linked nature protection to human well-being and survival. Contributors criticised habitat loss caused by urbanisation and intensive agriculture, and highlighted that nature and other species have a right to exist independently of human use.

Showcase contributions

"We are nothing without nature. We must increase natural and flowered areas."

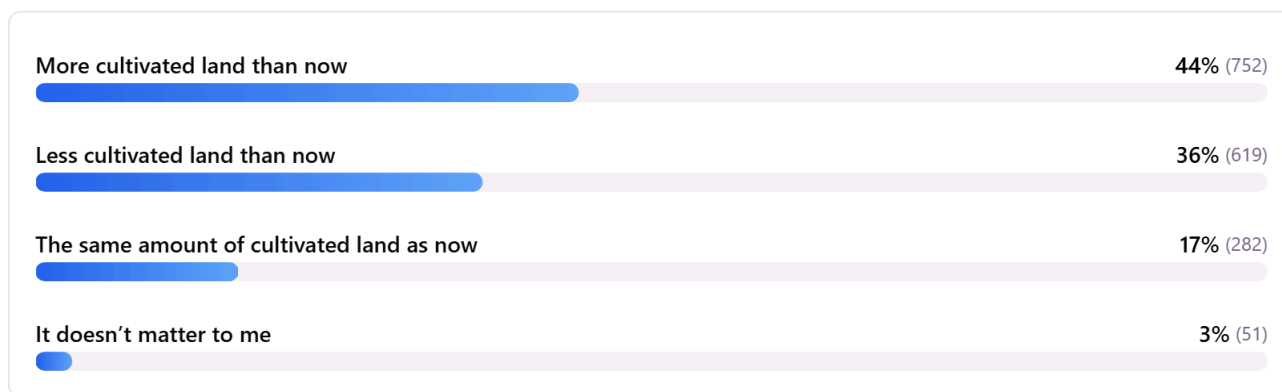
"I am for it. Humans have already encroached too much on nature, it's time to give it space and have plots in line with a biodiversity protection policy."

Additional themes mentioned: Greening cities and living spaces; Finding a balance between ecology and economy; Implement laws and support policies; Support biodiversity and pollinators; Limit urbanization and concreting

Part I - 3. Transforming agriculture

Question (single-choice): Your vision for agriculture in 20 years: In your ideal world in 20 years' time, would there be...

(Total number of reactions: 1 704)



Description of the results: Participants had different views on the amount of cultivated land in the future. 44% said there should be *more cultivated land than now*, while 36% said there should be *less cultivated land than now*, and 17% said there should be *the same amount of cultivated land as now*. A small share (3%) said *it does not matter* to them.

Question (open-ended): *What would the European agricultural system look like in your ideal world in 20 years' time?*

(Total number of comments: 1 158)

Main themes mentioned by participants:

1. Theme: Generalize organic and natural agriculture

Participants support a transition to fully organic and ecological farming that respects biodiversity, animal welfare, and natural balances. They advocate adopting practices like permaculture, crop rotation, and hedgerow planting, and ensuring farmers receive fair economic support. Many also emphasise refusing overproduction, reducing livestock farming, and promoting environmental education as part of a systemic shift toward sustainable agriculture.

Showcase contributions

“Sustainable agriculture linked to its territory, its climate, its seasons. Respectful of its environment and our health. Quality agriculture rather than quantity. A self-sufficient agriculture that takes up less space in natural areas and is at the same time in symbiosis.”

“Only organic farming. Back to a new way of thinking. Clear rules, laws. Clear consequences in the form of fines and punishment if not complied with. Clear incentives for the population to participate in helping to grow food/care for animals, planting trees/bushes/forest boundaries/field boundaries.”

2. Theme: Stop the use of pesticides and synthetic chemicals

Participants want to stop or drastically reduce the use of pesticides, herbicides, and chemical fertilisers, which they see as harmful to insects, biodiversity, and human health. Instead, they propose adopting alternative agricultural practices such as crop rotation, companion planting, mechanical weeding, or permaculture. Many also call for strong regulation and enforcement, including bans, stricter controls, and investment in research to develop effective chemical-free solutions.

Showcase contributions

“Absolute ban on pesticides with large-scale implementation of natural methods, use of GMO species only in cases where the mutation is necessary to combat massive pest attacks or determines the adaptability of the crop in infertile soils or reduces water consumption. Make it mandatory for local governments to set up community garden areas managed by citizen volunteers cultivated with natural methods, to encourage a move towards conscious agriculture, create corridors for pollinators, produce locally for the community. The products can go to the local market and local charities.”

“In my ideal world, European agriculture in 20 years would be responsible and sustainable: farmers would reduce pesticides and plowing, preserve biodiversity, apply crop rotation and companion planting, use drip irrigation and recirculate rainwater, and compost would naturally fertilize the soil. Education in schools would prepare future generations for climate change, combining modern technologies with the principles of permaculture.”

3. Theme: Promote short supply chains and local agricultural production.

Participants support local food production and shorter supply chains to increase food autonomy and reduce dependence on imports. They advocate for direct links between producers and consumers, such as buying from local farms or markets, and for the creation of urban farms, collective orchards, and school vegetable gardens. Strengthening local markets is also seen as essential to support farmers, guarantee fair remuneration, and make local food more accessible to communities.

Showcase contributions

“That everyone focuses on local agriculture around them, takes into account seasonal fruits and vegetables and above all reduces global trade to focus on the local scale.”

“Production of food where it is consumed, no competition on an international market. We produce ecologically what we need: we stop producing to throw away and break prices.”

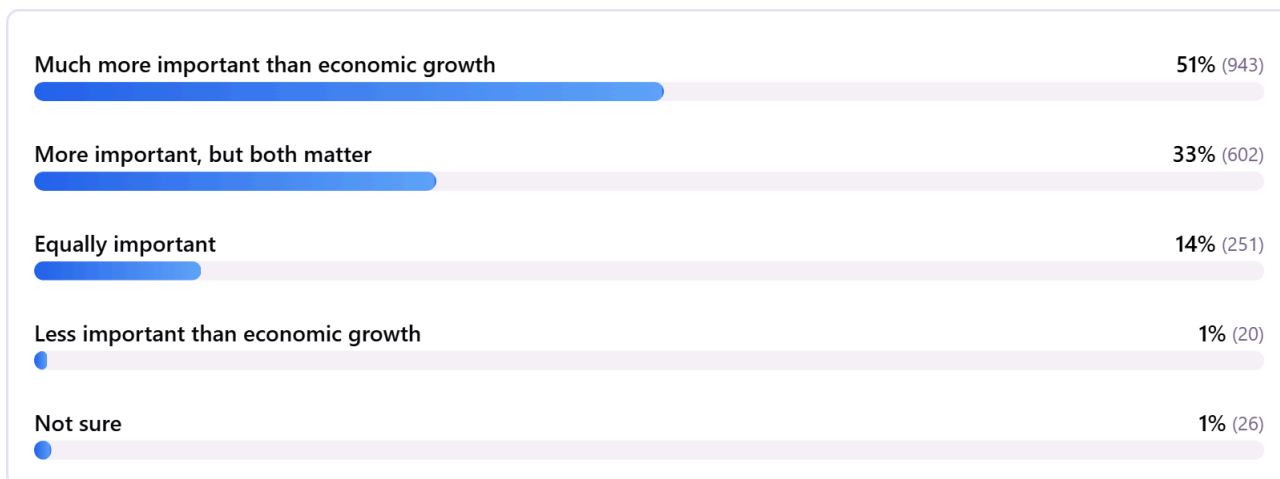
Additional themes mentioned: Replace industrial agriculture with human-scale farms; Restore biodiversity by replanting hedges and trees; End intensive farming and reduce meat consumption; End monocultures in favor of diversified crops; Ensure fair remuneration and recognition for farmers; Practice regenerative agriculture that protects soil health

Part II - What determines whether these levers can work

Part II - 1. Allocation of funding

Question (single-choice): Protecting biodiversity is essential for healthy ecosystems and our future, but economic growth also matters for jobs and livelihoods. How important is biodiversity protection compared to economic growth?

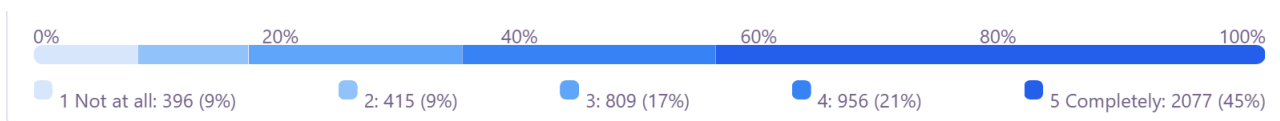
(Total number of reactions: 1 842)



Description of the results: A majority of participants (51%) said that biodiversity protection is *much more important than economic growth*, while 33% said it is *more important, but that both matter*. 14% said it is *equally important* as economic growth, 1% said it is *less important than economic growth*, and another 1% said they were *not sure*.

Part II - 2. Awareness and cultural change

Question (scale): *Insect populations in parts of Europe (for example Germany) have declined by 75% in recent decades. How aware were you of this decline before today?*
 (Total number of reactions: 4 653)



Description of the results: Participants reported varying levels of awareness about the decline of insect populations. 45% said they were *completely aware* (5 on the scale), 21% said they were quite aware (4 on the scale), and 17% said they were moderately aware (3 on the scale). 9% said they were slightly aware (2 on the scale), and 9% said they were *not at all aware* (1 on the scale).

Question (open-ended): *Have you noticed any changes in the number or type of pollinators in your neighbourhood?*

(Total number of comments: 1 906)

Main themes mentioned by participants:

1. Theme: General decline in the number of pollinators

Participants report noticing a sharp decline in pollinators, often based on personal experience. Many compare today’s situation with their childhood, point to the “windshield phenomenon” as visible evidence, observe a loss of species diversity, and describe a growing silence in nature, with fewer insects seen and heard.

Showcase contributions

“Yes, before, around my house on the same flowers that still grow today, there were many more pollinators, and over a few years, I noticed a drastic drop.”

“Yes. Much less sound from the insects when I walk outside in our garden and see fewer insects in the garden. When I drive, there are not as many insects on the car’s windshield as there were just 10 years ago.”

2. Theme: Specific disappearance of bees and butterflies

Participants report a visible decline in bees and butterflies, often based on everyday observations in their gardens, balconies, or local surroundings. Many compare the present situation with the past and point to changes in species balance, with fewer bees and more wasps and hornets being observed.

Showcase contributions

“Yes, there are definitely fewer. There are fewer of them. Especially wild bees, bumblebees, and butterflies.”

“I have the impression that there are fewer insects than before, especially in summer. I see bees and butterflies less often than a few years ago.”

3. Theme: No observed change or difficulty in observation

Some participants reported difficulty noticing changes in pollinator populations. Urban living, limited attention, or lack of knowledge often made it hard to observe trends, while others, especially in rural or preserved areas, saw no decline or even stability. Many also distinguished between knowing about the issue through media or studies and actually seeing changes in their own surroundings.

Showcase contributions

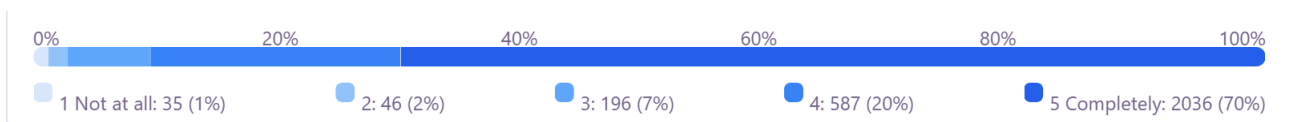
“Honestly I haven’t personally noticed the decline, but the scientific evidence says there has been one.”

“I live in the woods at 1000m, in my garden I have a lot of biodiversity: fruit trees, aromatic herbs, wild flowers, mountain flora, vegetables and I love bees. I have 20 hives and there are butterflies and many bumblebees. I’m lucky here.”

Additional themes mentioned: Observed consequences on biodiversity and fruit production; Invasive species like the Asian hornet

Question (scale): *The decline of pollinating insects can impact crops, food production and our food security. How concerned are you overall about the global decline in pollinators (e.g. ecosystems worldwide, European agriculture, food security)?*

(Total number of reactions: 2 900)



Description of the results: A majority of participants (70%) said they were *completely concerned* (5 on the scale) about the global decline of pollinators. 20% said they were quite concerned (4 on the scale), 7% said they were moderately concerned (3 on the scale), 2% said they were slightly concerned (2 on the scale), and 1% said they were *not at all concerned* (1 on the scale).

Question (open-ended): What do you think are the main causes of pollinator decline and what effects does it have?

(Total number of comments: 1 940)

Main themes mentioned by participants:

1. Theme: Use of pesticides, chemical products, and pollution

Participants identified pesticides, herbicides, and other chemical products as the main cause of pollinator decline and the pollution of air, water, and soil. Many highlighted the broader consequences, including reduced biodiversity, fewer food sources for insects, and risks to food production and human health.

Showcase contributions

"I believe the main cause is the large-scale use of extremely toxic pesticides. Because of this, bees are neurologically affected and can no longer find their way back to the hive and thus die. The lack of pollinators affects crops, leading to lower production and higher food prices, and consequently reduced access to food and increased poverty levels."

"Too many pesticides are used in agriculture, spraying trees, leaves, flowers with solutions dangerous for bees."

2. Theme: Habitat destruction and urbanisation

Participants identified urbanisation and soil sealing as major causes of habitat loss, noting that meadows and forests are being replaced by buildings and roads. Agricultural and gardening practices, including intensive use of pesticides and poorly managed green spaces, were also criticised for harming insects. Many highlighted the consequences, including reduced pollination, threats to food production, and a weakening of biodiversity and ecosystems.

Showcase contributions

"Destruction of wild pollinator habitats (we have about 490 species of bees alone) and other pollinating insects, lack of proper education in this area. The development of public transport, the concreting of large areas by developers instead of caring for nature. Terrible."

"First of all, habitat destruction. If something large is built (apartment block/hypermarket/mall), not enough plants are planted back (or almost none at all) to help pollinator habitats."

3. Theme: Intensive agriculture and monoculture

Participants identified intensive agriculture as a major threat to pollinators. The widespread use of pesticides, insecticides, and herbicides was seen as directly harmful, while monocultures and standardised landscapes were criticised for creating food deserts and depleting soils. Many also noted the destruction of natural habitats, such as hedges and flower meadows, and pointed to the industrial agriculture model as prioritising yield and profit over ecosystem health.

Showcase contributions

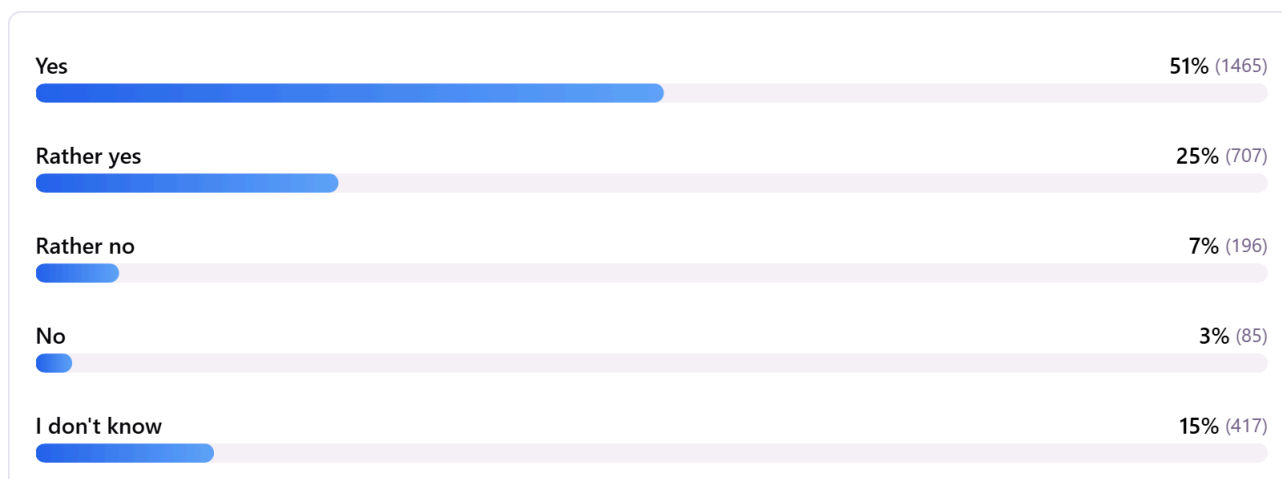
"It is agriculture that is the cause of this. The consequence of their use of pesticides, growth promoters, and monoculture destroys the opportunities for insects."

“Fields with monoculture are far too large. Too much insecticide is used in agriculture.”

Additional themes mentioned: Climate change and its consequences; Human activity in general; Lack of flowers and plant biodiversity; Lack of knowledge and respect for nature; Inadequate policies and regulations; Invasive species and predators

Question (single-choice): Do you think rising temperatures directly affect the survival of wild pollinators?

(Total number of reactions: 2 870)



Description of the results: A majority of participants think that rising temperatures directly affect the survival of wild pollinators, with 51% saying yes and 25% saying *rather yes*. 7% said *rather no* and 3% said *no*, while the remaining 15% said they *don't know*.

Part II - 3. Enforcement, implementation and interest groups

Question (single-choice): Who do you think should be primarily responsible for protecting insects?

(Total number of reactions: 1 795)



Description of the results: Most participants believe that responsibility for protecting insects should be shared, with 83% answering *all of the above together*. 6% said *local authorities or municipalities*, 5% said the *European Union*, 5% said *national governments*, and 2% said *not sure or other*.

Question (single-choice): Do you agree that today's policies should consider the needs of future generations?

(Total number of reactions: 1 873)



Description of the results: Almost all participants agreed that current policies should take future generations into account. 92% said *yes* and 6% said *rather yes*. Only 1% said *no* and 0% said *rather no*, while 1% said they *don't know*.

Question (open-ended): What kind of support would you expect from the government/local authorities? Should other actors take responsibility?

(Total number of comments: 1 209)

Main themes mentioned by participants:

1. Theme: Collective responsibility and citizen action

Participants emphasised that responsibility for protecting pollinators is shared by everyone, from individuals to institutions. Many expressed mistrust of governmental bodies, viewing citizen-led action through associations, NGOs, or community groups as the most effective way to create change. Contributors also highlighted the importance of coordinated efforts, involving citizens, organisations, businesses, and authorities at local, national, and European levels.

Showcase contributions

"Yes and no, everyone must, governments and authorities must legally protect and facilitate protection, NGOs must do their part, but also the common person must lend a hand and want this change, like volunteering, donating... and the fact that a family educates their child or children in this spirit is a great help."

"We should all intervene, from the youngest to the oldest... from the rich to the poorest... from the most powerful to the simple citizen."

2. Theme: Regulation and prohibition of pesticides

Participants called for strong action from national and European authorities to regulate pesticides, with many demanding an immediate ban on synthetic chemicals. There is an expectation that political leaders must take the lead and establish binding rules.

Showcase contributions

"Introduce regulations limiting or banning the use of herbicides and pesticides harmful to insects."

"EVERYONE should take part of the responsibility, but the highest authorities should lead the way with legislation. All toxins must be removed from our nature - we also get sick from them ourselves."

3. Theme: Financial support and subsidies

Participants highlighted the crucial need for financial support from national, local, and European authorities, particularly to help farmers transition to ecological and pesticide-free practices. Many stressed that subsidies should compensate farmers for potential losses and enable investments in nature-friendly agriculture.

Showcase contributions

"Support for farmers so that prices do not increase excessively, but so they can implement more ecological agriculture and so that many small farmers develop, not just corporations that do not care about nature."

"Financial aid for amateur beekeepers because it takes a lot of time to properly care for the hives, protect them and treat them... a person who works full-time spends 1/4 of their salary on their hives"

Additional themes mentioned: Promoting public education and awareness; Political will and fight against lobbies; Control and enforcement of laws; Management of habitats and green spaces; Promotion of sustainable and organic agriculture; Supporting and relying on research and scientific expertise; Development of the local economy and short supply chains

Question (open-ended): What would motivate you to become more involved in pollinating insect protection?

(Total number of comments: 1 347)

Main themes mentioned by participants:

1. Theme: Information, awareness and education

Participants highlighted a strong need for clear, factual information about pollinator decline and its consequences. They called for practical, easy-to-follow advice that people can apply in their daily lives, as well as early education in schools to raise awareness among future generations. Suggested actions include large-scale awareness campaigns, practical guides, and clear labelling on consumer products to help citizens make informed choices.

Showcase contributions

"I think that many people are not aware of this problem and do not know what could help, greater media coverage of the issue, with examples of activities that could benefit pollinators."

"Greater awareness of what their absence leads to and how close we are to a real threat."

2. Theme: Protection of nature and biodiversity

Participants said they would be motivated by a stronger awareness of the connection between human survival and biodiversity, along with a deep respect for nature and the intrinsic value of all life. Seeing the decline of species firsthand and understanding the importance of ecosystem balance also encourages action.

Showcase contributions

“What motivates me is not an external reward, but the awareness that without pollinators, our entire way of life collapses. I am motivated by the desire to leave behind a healthy community and a functional green space, not a ‘concrete desert’. However, what would motivate me most is a proportional reaction from the authorities and neighbors. It is frustrating to be the only one (along with a 90-year-old lady) taking action, while the rest are spectators. A real collaboration, based on correct technical solutions like Bti, would be the biggest motivating factor to move to the next level of involvement.”

“The love of nature and the desire to live in cities that are more in harmony with nature and greener.”

3. Theme: Collective action and community engagement

Participants said they would be more motivated to protect pollinators if they could act as part of a group rather than alone. Seeing others get involved also encourages participation, creating a positive dynamic. Many highlighted the need for structure and organisation, such as associations, local groups, or concrete projects, and suggested workshops, community gardens, or municipality-supported programmes to provide guidance, resources, and a framework for collective action.

Showcase contributions

“I don’t know. Maybe if more people got involved and the fight didn’t feel so ‘powerless’ when most people don’t pay attention to the fact that they might go extinct.”

“I would be more motivated to get involved by the clear awareness that without pollinators, life as we know it gradually degrades — fewer fruits, less diversity, less living beauty. I would also be encouraged by positive examples around me: urban gardens, local campaigns, involved people. I would be more active if I saw that my small gestures (plants on the balcony, avoiding pesticides, supporting local producers) matter and are part of a common movement. Involvement becomes more natural when you feel you are part of a living ecosystem, not just an economy.”

Additional themes mentioned: Preservation of the future and future generations; Practical support and concrete actions; Political and regulatory action; Health and food quality; Financial support and economic incentives; Visibility of impact and results

Question (open-ended): What measure do you think would be most effective in helping pollinators in your neighbourhood or municipality?

(Total number of comments: 1 238)

Main themes mentioned by participants:

1. Theme: Plant more pollinator-friendly flowers, trees, and hedges

Participants support planting more pollinator-friendly flowers, trees, and hedges in every available space, including gardens, balconies, roadsides, and public areas. They emphasise planting diverse, local, and pollinator-friendly species to provide food and habitats. Practical proposals include converting lawns or roundabouts into wildflower

meadows, distributing free seeds or young plants, involving schools in planting projects, and reintroducing hedges and trees that support pollinators.

Showcase contributions

“Planting wildflowers preferred by pollinators in public spaces, along paths, sidewalks, roads, and in certain areas of parks, and of course in people’s yards.”

“Providing seeds for honey plants and using them on all low-productive or fallow lands (e.g., phacelia, red clover), planting trees with high honey value on all surfaces considered non-arable (Acacia, evodia, paulownia, etc.).”

2. Theme: Educate and raise awareness among all audiences, starting from school

Participants emphasise the importance of educating and raising awareness about pollinators for all audiences, starting in schools and continuing for adults, farmers, and policymakers. They highlight practical, hands-on learning through workshops, gardening, or building insect hotels, alongside information campaigns to change perceptions and overcome fear of insects.

Showcase contributions

“Municipal-social projects and meetings organized in every village and city, expansion of education in school as a requirement in the youngest classes during nature/biology lessons. Promotion on banners and posters displayed in larger cities.”

“I think educational actions would work here, e.g., meetings with specialists: sample topics: garden without chemicals, wild pollinators, a rich garden (biological diversity in the garden), promotion of 'wild places' in gardens, e.g., in the form of a competition for residents (instead of the current competitions for the most beautiful garden), observation of pollinators (e.g., photography culminating in an exhibition, promotion of citizen science projects.”

3. Theme: Ban pesticides and synthetic chemicals

Participants call for a ban or strong reduction of pesticides and synthetic chemicals, citing risks to pollinators, human health, and the environment. They advocate replacing chemicals with natural or biological alternatives. Education and citizen involvement are also emphasised, with proposals to train farmers, involve schools, and support local initiatives like shared gardens or “zero pesticide” municipalities.

Showcase contributions

“Total ban on pesticides, total ban on sales, and all the toxins found in shops and with authorities and private individuals must be collected and destroyed in a responsible manner.”

“Chemical insecticide sprays should be reduced or eliminated, or natural substances should be used that exclude harm to bees.”

Additional themes mentioned: Reduce concreting and create more green spaces in the city; Create wildflower meadows and leave wild areas; Develop shared gardens and community projects; Adapt green space management (late mowing, sensible mowing); Install beehives and shelters for insects; Support organic farming and local beekeepers

Part III - Our role in the governance of biodiversity in Europe

Question (open-ended): Is there anything you would like to share with decision-makers about protecting insects?

(Total number of comments: 1 036)

Main themes mentioned by participants:

1. Theme: Make courageous political decisions and act urgently

Participants emphasise the urgent need for courageous political action, stressing that immediate measures are necessary to prevent further damage. Many express frustration with the gap between scientific knowledge and the slow pace of decisions, criticising policymakers for lacking the courage to take difficult but necessary steps. The comments also reflect deep concern about the long-term consequences for humanity and the planet if decisive action is not taken.

Showcase contributions

"Insects are vital to the food chain. Have the courage to preserve them politically, otherwise we are heading towards the destruction of our living civilization."

"Yes, take action now on the difficult decisions. Our groundwater is polluted and plants and animals are suffering. It cannot continue as if it will solve itself."

2. Theme: Recognize the vital link for our food and our survival

Participants want decision-makers to understand that protecting insects is essential for human survival and food security. They urge urgent action, highlighting that the decline of pollinators threatens ecosystems, agriculture, and the balance of nature, and call for moral responsibility and decisive measures to safeguard them.

Showcase contributions

"That everyone realizes that without insects, including pollinators, we are doomed."

"It's about to be the last call if we are to save the insects. They are not only at the bottom of the food chain but also the most important for pollination. Saving the insects is an economic safeguard for the future. And it is overwhelming to deal with the consequences (food security, biodiversity, etc.) if the insects disappear. Imagine no birds, larger animals also disappear. No flowers or fruits..."

3. Theme: Protect and restore biodiversity and habitats

Participants urge decision-makers to protect and restore biodiversity and habitats. They call for preserving remaining natural spaces, creating more green and flowered areas, and recognising the essential role of all species in maintaining ecosystem balance. Many also emphasise a moral responsibility to repair past damage and safeguard nature for the future.

Showcase contributions

"It is necessary to take pollinators into account in biodiversity respect measures because it is easy to give in to speciesism and be content with protecting only what we see."

"It is the insects that work for the entire ecosystem. They are our most important workers... and they don't even need to be paid, so the money they don't earn in labor can be suitably spent on their living conditions. That is, more green areas."

Additional themes mentioned: Stop the use of pesticides and chemical products; Prioritizing the environment over economic interests and lobbies; Educate and raise

awareness among the public, especially young people; Thinking about future generations and the legacy left behind; Support sustainable agriculture and beekeepers; Strengthen laws and ensure their enforcement through controls

4. Insights from the Citizens' Engagement Platform

To support the work of the Young Citizens Assembly on Pollinators and open the debate to all citizens, the European Commission launched a **multilingual online consultation** on the Citizens' Engagement Platform. Running from **June 2025** to **February 2026**, this participatory process invited citizens to exchange their views and experiences on the decline of pollinating insects.

Overall, the Citizens' Engagement Platform gathered **23 citizen contributions**, accompanied by **10 comments** and **24 endorsements***. This part of the report presents an analysis of the contributions collected throughout this participatory process. These contributions have been organised according to three key dimensions, which were identified through thematic clustering of the topics that were discussed most frequently.

* All contributions are publicly available on the Citizens' Engagement Platform.

1. Dimension: Governance & systemic reform

Topic 1.1: Scientific monitoring & data-driven policymaking

This topic underscores the need for robust scientific research as well as long-term monitoring, to inform evidence-based policy interventions to protect pollinators (e.g., pollinator observatories and AI-supported biodiversity tracking).

Topic 1.2: Governance & policy coherence

Contributions point to structural weaknesses in current governance frameworks and call for stronger political leadership, regulatory enforcement, and more coherent policies aimed at protecting pollinating insects (e.g., stricter EU biodiversity legislation and enforcement of pesticide bans).

Topic 1.3: Funding & bureaucracy reduction

This topic focuses on the need for accessible funding mechanisms and incentives, as well as simplified administrative processes to enable grassroots action and agricultural transition (e.g., grants for local initiatives, simplified funding applications, and financial incentives for sustainable farming).

Topic 1.4: Social justice & economic fairness

Contributions stress that ecological transitions must be socially equitable and economically viable, particularly for farmers and rural communities.

2. Dimension: Social Mobilisation & cultural change

Topic 2.1: Citizen engagement & volunteering

This topic highlights the importance of active public involvement in pollinator protection through participatory practices and community-based initiatives (e.g., citizen science projects, community gardens, and school programs).

Topics 2.2: Education, awareness & cultural change

Contributions emphasise long-term behavioral and value change through environmental education and broad awareness-raising campaigns to promote positive attitudes toward insects and biodiversity.

3. Dimension: Ecological transformation

Topic 3.1: Habitat protection & restoration

This topic emphasises the restoration, creation, and connectivity of diverse habitats as a key strategy to support pollinator survival and resilience (e.g., wildflower meadows instead of lawns, green roofs, ecological corridors, and urban gardens).

Topic 3.2: Reduction of pesticides & transformation of agricultural practices

Contributions stress the urgent need to reduce chemical inputs and shift toward more environmentally-friendly farming systems to reduce pollinator mortality and ecosystem degradation (e.g., banning certain pesticides and promoting organic farming).