

**Question for written answer E-003246/2015
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Ivan Jakovčić (ALDE)

Subject: The problem of uneven scientific infrastructure in the EU

It is known that the EU promotes economic and social cohesion among the regions of the Member States. This is the reason for the existence of the EU's regional policy with its funds. There is, however, another process which threatens long-term social and economic cohesion. The new EU Member States (former Eastern European countries) have less developed scientific research capacity due to many years of under-investment in science in relation to the rest of the EU. Scientific research groups in those countries are less competitive in comparison to other EU countries, partly because of their outdated and poorly developed scientific infrastructure. In addition, due to smaller salaries and lower opportunities for professional advancement there is an increasing outflow, especially of young scientists. It is clear that instruments in the framework of the Horizon 2020 programme are not sufficient to reduce the gap in scientific competitiveness between the old and the new EU Member States.

1. Is the European Commission thinking of developing special programmes to increase scientific research capacity in the new Member States so that they can catch up with the rest of the EU?
2. What instruments are you thinking of using to increase research capacity in those countries?