

**Question for written answer E-006038/2020  
to the Commission**  
Rule 138  
**Liudas Mažylis (PPE)**

**Subject:** Involvement of Central and Eastern European researchers in the development of sustainable chemicals

On 14 October 2020, the Commission presented the EU Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability, which aims to promote the development and use of sustainable and non-toxic chemicals. While the term 'safe and sustainable' will be further defined, it is promised that the development of sustainable chemicals will be promoted through existing programmes and policies. Unfortunately, a situation already exists in which Central and Eastern European scientists are being excluded from EU research projects. Such exclusion may also increase proportionally as the number of projects increases. The best illustration of the problem is that the Lithuanian researcher Professor V. Šikšnys, who was the first to demonstrate the potential of CRISPR-Cas9 (the so-called genetic scissors), was not included in the list of winners of this year's Nobel Prize. The likely reason is that the discovery was not made in a laboratory at a globally renowned university. Another example is the existing inequalities in cancer research between countries in Western Europe and those in Central and Eastern Europe. This may be one of the factors that reduce the availability of cancer treatments in Central and Eastern Europe and lead to increased mortality rates. Cancer research centres should not be concentrated in Western Europe alone.

Can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. What concrete steps does the Commission plan to take so that scientific projects on sustainable chemicals, as well as other scientific projects, are not carried out exclusively in Western Europe?
2. What measures will be taken to reduce the gap between scientists in Western Europe and those in Central and Eastern Europe in the implementation of scientific projects?