The numbers are key in the fight against the coronavirus because people’s lives depend on the speed of the vaccination process. Unfortunately, the centralised vaccine procurement system is still not living up to the expectations of citizens and Member States, thereby risking the lives of European residents as well as a faster relaunch of the European economy. Speeding up the production of vaccines is vital for defeating the coronavirus, to which end we need to expand the capacities of existing plants within the European Union, and involve new manufacturers in the production chain, bearing in mind the diversification of production capacities. The EU cannot allow problems to arise in the supply chain, or for the production capacity to be insufficient.

The European Commission’s new ‘HERA incubator’ initiative is to be welcomed, in which the EU will work together with researchers, manufacturers and authorities to explore new coronavirus mutations and increase vaccine production capacity. In light of the above, I would like to ask the Commission the following questions:

What measures does the Commission plan to take to ensure production capacities are well spread out across the Union? Within the HERA incubator initiative, how does the Commission plan to involve pharmaceutical companies in Central and Eastern Europe in production?