Question for written answer E-000937/2021
to the Commission
Rule 138
Milan Brglez (S&D), **Tanja Fajon** (S&D), **Ivan Vilibor Sinčić** (NI), **Robert Biedroń** (S&D), **Petras Auštrevičius** (Renew), **Brando Benifei** (S&D), **Łukasz Kohut** (S&D), **Sara Cerdas** (S&D), **Lucia Ďuriš Nicholsonová** (ECR), **Dietmar Köster** (S&D), **Predrag Fred Matić** (S&D), **Mick Wallace** (The Left), **Markéta Gregorová** (Verts/ALE), **Maria Grapini** (S&D), **Günther Sidl** (S&D), **Piernicola Pedicini** (Verts/ALE), **Clara Aguilera** (S&D), **Alex Agius Saliba** (S&D), **Adam Jarubas** (PPE), **Eleonora Evi** (Verts/ALE), **Antoni Comín i Oliveres** (NI), **Dino Giarrusso** (NI), **Marc Angel** (S&D), **Fabio Massimo Castaldo** (NI), **Rosa D'Amato** (Verts/ALE), **Javi López** (S&D), **Martin Hojsík** (Renew), **Eric Andrieu** (S&D), **Tomáš Zdechovský** (PPE), **Manuel Pizarro** (S&D), **Ignazio Corrao** (Verts/ALE), **Luke Ming Flanagan** (The Left), **Maria Arena** (S&D)

Subject: Commission's plans to strengthen European public health and ensure a level playing field for SMEs in the industrial hemp sector

1 The Commission's Standing Committee in 1997 decided that foods containing parts of the hemp plant are not to be considered novel within the scope of Regulation (EC) 258/97. In 2019, however, this stance altered by updating the Novel food catalogue entries for Cannabis sativa L. (hemp) and cannabinoids (most popular CBD), which in essence puts hemp flowers, leaves and extracts thereof under Regulation 2015/2283 (novel foods). In this regard, what scientific and historical evidence was used in order for the Standing Committee to change its stance?

2 For CBD products, in order to be placed on the market, a safety assessment is currently due under Regulation 2015/2283. These costs amount between 350.000 and 500.000 EUR. Does the Commission foresee any possibilities to bridge these prohibitively high costs especially for SMEs (the main economic operators in the sector)?

3 Given the ever-growing public consumption of cannabinoids (predominantly CBD), with the purpose to ensure the protection of public health and to support science that is the foundation of the hemp sector if it is to compete globally, does the Commission plan to earmark funding under relevant research programmes in the current MFF to support scientific findings related to therapeutic effects of cannabinoids?