

Letter to the editor

The CREATE project without parietaria pollen: can it be true?

The March issue of *Allergy* featured an interesting article by Dr van Ree: 'The CREATE project development of certified reference materials for allergic products and validation of methods for their quantification' (1). It represents, in our opinion, a great effort and a decisive step to achieve a 'shared' standardization of allergen extracts for the diagnosis and treatment of allergic disorders.

Nevertheless, *Parietaria* pollen and its allergens were not mentioned on the manuscript.

Thousands of patients, both adults and children suffer from seasonal asthma and rhinitis caused by sensitization to pollens of

the Urticaceae family (*Parietaria judaica* and *Parietaria officinalis*) (2); in Croatia, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Spain, Turkey, and in other Mediterranean countries, *Parietaria* pollen is a common cause of sensitization to inhalant allergens.

The pivotal role of *Parietaria* (pellitory-of-the-wall) in the Mediterranean area along with that of Grass and Olive tree was confirmed recently (3, 4).

In this context, the risk for the authors of the CREATE project, seemingly without allergens of Urticaceae family, is 'to cut off', by the technological and scientific progress, the patients in South of Europe.

We agree with the authors that the current system of allergens' standardization is not tenable as an international system of standardization; however, in our opinion, a 'yardstick' for *Parietaria* could also be used by the researchers to improve, in future, symptoms and quality of life of the patients allergic to allergens of Urticaceae family.

G. B. Pajno¹, G. Barberio¹, P. Ruggeri²
Departments of ¹Pediatrics and
²Respiratory Diseases, University of
Messina, Messina, Italy

References

1. van Ree R, Chapman MD, Ferreira F, Vieths S, Bryan D, Cromwell O et al. The CREATE project: development of certified reference materials for allergenic products and validation of methods for their quantification. *Allergy* 2008;**63**:310–326.
2. D'Amato G, Spieksma FT, Liccardi G, Jager S, Russo M, Kontou-Fili K et al. Pollen-related allergy in Europe. *Allergy* 1998;**53**:667–678.
3. Bousquet PJ, Chinn S, Janson C, Kogevinas M, Burney P, Jarvis D. European Community Respiratory Health Survey I. Geographical variation in the prevalence of positive skin tests to environmental aeroallergens in the European Community Respiratory Health Survey I. *Allergy* 2007;**62**:301–309.
4. Valenta R, Twaroch T, Swoboda I. Component-resolved diagnosis to optimize allergen-specific immunotherapy in the Mediterranean area. *J Investig Allergol Clin Immunol* 2007;**17**:36–40.