

**Question for written answer E-003131/2026
to the Commission**
Rule 144
Elena Kountoura (The Left)

Subject: Tackling the low birth rate and demographic challenges in the EU with binding European measures and adequate funding

The EU is facing an acute and ever-worsening demographic crisis, with birth rates below the required population replacement level for many years¹.

The increased cost of living, economic uncertainty, precarious employment, the difficulty of securing stable and quality employment, the inability to balance work and family life, and the ever-increasing cost of raising children are important factors that dissuade young people from having children and make it difficult to create and support young families.

The problem is more pronounced in certain Member States such as Greece², as well as in island, mountainous and remote areas, where declining births and an ageing population, combined with an increasing number of permanent residents who are leaving, especially young people, are all factors that are accelerating demographic decline and leading to depopulation³.

With this in mind, can the Commission answer the following:

1. Does it plan to propose a European action plan to support families, in particular large families, single-parent families and those in vulnerable situations, as requested by the European Parliament?
2. How does it intend to support the response to demographic challenges in the provinces, islands, mountainous and remote areas of the Member States with the lowest birth rates and the highest risk of depopulation?
3. Does it plan to put forward a holistic European strategy to tackle the demographic problem, with mandatory measures, measurable targets and adequate funding?

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¹ According to Eurostat figures, the fertility rate in Europe fell to 1.34 children per woman in 2024, which is well below the 2.1 rate considered to be the population replacement level, and the number of births dropped to 3.55 million, the lowest recorded in recent decades.

² Specifically, Greece has one of the lowest fertility rates among the EU Member States, with 1.24 births per woman and it has the fourth oldest population in the EU, with a median age of 47.2. What is more, according to the OECD's 'Health at a Glance 2025' report, in 2050 Greece is expected to be the oldest country in the EU (https://www.oecd.org/content/dam/oecd/en/publications/reports/2025/11/health-at-a-glance-2025_a894f72e/8f9e3f98-en.pdf).

³ In Greece, at least 51 islands have become depopulated since 1950 and more are expected to meet the same fate over the next 20 years (<https://www.naftemporiki.gr/society/1795599/dimografiko-apo-to-1950-erimosan-51-mikra-nisia-ti-empodizei-tin-epistrofi-ton-neon-kai-to-paradeigma-tis-tiloy/>).