

**Question for written answer E-004092/2026
to the Commission**
Rule 144
Giuseppe Antoci (The Left)

Subject: New mothers: prevention of mental health disorders, access to psychological care and EU support for perinatal health

The pregnancy and postpartum period is a delicate phase in a woman's life when her mental health may be fragile. The perinatal stage¹ may be accompanied by depression, anxiety and obsessive compulsive disorders, or even, more rarely, postpartum psychosis – all of which carry possible consequences for the mother, newborn and the nuclear family as a whole².

Despite this, the mental health of new mothers receives scant attention. Social expectations, fuelled by assumptions of a 'maternal instinct', may lead to feelings of guilt and inadequacy, making it even harder to ask for help. The Commission has added mental health to the EU's list of priorities, with an emphasis on prevention, early intervention and access to psychological support³.

Parliament has also highlighted the importance of psychological care in pregnancy and of diagnosing depression and postpartum psychosis early, particularly in rural areas⁴. In Italy, despite the role played by family counselling and healthcare centres, early detection and service accessibility still leave a lot to be desired, particularly in inland, outermost and island areas, in southern Italy and Sicily⁵.

In view of the above and in light of the European strategy on mental health and EU4Health 2021-2027, can the Commission answer the following:

1. To what extent is perinatal mental health covered by EU policies and funding, and what other initiatives does it have in the pipeline?
2. What tools will it support for the prevention and early detection of psychological distress and for joined-up service delivery?
3. Will it step up the collection of comparable data, and have projects in Italy (particularly southern Italy and Sicily) received funding?

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¹ Spanning pregnancy and the first year after childbirth, the perinatal stage is often marked by major physiological, psychological and social changes.

² <https://www.epicentro.iss.it/materno/linee-guida-depressione-peripartum>.

³ https://commission.europa.eu/topics/public-health/european-health-union/comprehensive-approach-mental-health_en https://commission.europa.eu/funding-and-tenders/find-funding/eu-funding-programmes/eu4health_en.

⁴ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52017IP0028>.

⁵ <https://www.salute.gov.it/new/it/tema/salute-della-donna/depressione-post-partum>.