

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002069/24
to the Commission
Geadis Geadí (ECR)
(15 October 2024)**

Subject: Addressing low birth rates

Statistics have come to light that reveal a further decline in the birth rates of EU countries. Specifically, according to reliable reports, the EU's fertility rate was 1.53 in 2021, while in Cyprus this figure stood at 1.39.

A birth rate as low as this is known to have devastating implications for a country's economy, owing to the effects of an ageing population, a shrinking workforce and an increased burden on healthcare and social welfare systems.

In light of the above:

Does the Commission believe that the increased flow of migrants from third countries to EU countries can help solve the problem?

Submitted: 15.10.2024

**Answer given by Ms Šuica on behalf of the European Commission
(27 February 2025)**

As stated in the communication on Demographic change in Europe: a toolbox for action of 11 October 2023 ⁽¹⁾, the choice to have children is a personal one, although it can be influenced by external factors (i.e. quality of life, availability of care and housing, as well as work opportunities and adequate income).

The toolbox, *inter alia*, aims to promote a better reconciliation of family aspirations and paid work, to increase the availability of childcare services to support parents with infants, to put in place working arrangements and work-life balance policies, and to explore the functioning of targeted tax and benefit reforms.

Nonetheless, due to the European population structure, the limited effectiveness of policies in this area and to the urgency of the needs the Honourable Member refers to in the introduction to the parliamentary question, enhanced legal migration pathways is a policy option included in the toolbox.

In this context, the Commission adopted an action plan to tackle labour and skills shortages in 2024, which highlights the benefits of linking together legal migration and employment policies, in order to attract talent from outside the EU to complement EU shortages ⁽²⁾.

⁽¹⁾ COM/2023/557.

⁽²⁾ Labour and skills shortages in the EU: an action plan, COM(2024) 131 final.