

EN

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Answer given by Ms Šuica  
on behalf of the European Commission  
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Family policies and policies to boost birth rates are a competence of Member States. In full support of Member States' competences, the Commission has put forward several initiatives, policy tools and funding opportunities to support families and parenthood in recent years.

In particular, the Demography Toolbox<sup>1</sup> is the EU response to current demographic challenges and includes a wide range of measures structured around four pillars. Its first pillar is devoted to help create favourable conditions for people to pursue their life and family aspirations. In this respect, an important measure is the Work-Life Balance Directive<sup>2</sup>, adopted by the Union legislator already in 2019 and the European Child Guarantee<sup>3</sup>. Other related initiatives include the European Affordable Housing Plan<sup>4</sup>, which aims to improve access to affordable housing for young people among other things. Furthermore, the Rural Pact<sup>5</sup>, the Rural Action Plan<sup>6</sup> and the Talent Booster Mechanism<sup>7</sup> aim to preserve territorial cohesion in regions particularly affected by declining population.

To support measures to mitigate the impact of demography, Member States can make use of existing funding instruments, such as the EU Cohesion Fund, the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund Plus and the Just Transition Fund. The proposal for the next Multiannual Financial Framework<sup>8</sup>, currently in the hands of the European Parliament and the Council, gives Member States the possibility to use EU funds for demography-related investments through the national and regional partnerships, but also in the competitiveness area.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52023DC0577>.

<sup>2</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2019/1158/oj/eng>.

<sup>3</sup> [https://employment-social-affairs.ec.europa.eu/policies-and-activities/social-protection-social-inclusion/addressing-poverty-and-supporting-social-inclusion/investing-children/european-child-guarantee\\_en](https://employment-social-affairs.ec.europa.eu/policies-and-activities/social-protection-social-inclusion/addressing-poverty-and-supporting-social-inclusion/investing-children/european-child-guarantee_en).

<sup>4</sup> [https://housing.ec.europa.eu/european-affordable-housing-plan\\_en](https://housing.ec.europa.eu/european-affordable-housing-plan_en).

<sup>5</sup> [https://ruralpact.rural-vision.europa.eu/rural-pact\\_en](https://ruralpact.rural-vision.europa.eu/rural-pact_en).

<sup>6</sup> [https://rural-vision.europa.eu/action-plan\\_en](https://rural-vision.europa.eu/action-plan_en).

<sup>7</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/policy/communities-and-networks/harnessing-talent-platform/talent-booster-mechanism\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/policy/communities-and-networks/harnessing-talent-platform/talent-booster-mechanism_en).

<sup>8</sup> [https://commission.europa.eu/publications/multiannual-financial-framework\\_en](https://commission.europa.eu/publications/multiannual-financial-framework_en).