

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000073/26
to the Commission
Gerald Hauser (P/E)
(12 January 2026)**

Subject: Dramatic demographic trend in the EU

Birth rates in Europe dropped to a record low in 2024. Euronews even speaks of the ‘road to extinction’. ⁽¹⁾ Since 2011, birth rates have been falling at an alarming rate. ⁽²⁾ In a published Czech study, a systematic analysis was carried out for the first time on data on birth rates in relation to women’s vaccination status. The incidence of live births by unvaccinated women was about 50% higher than by vaccinated women. ⁽³⁾ Mass immigration of unqualified, predominantly male immigrants to the EU will not save it from demographic collapse. In addition, the European Parliament is supporting the ‘My Voice, My Choice’ initiative that calls for widespread abortion care across the EU. ⁽⁴⁾ According to data from the World Health Organisation (WHO), over 73 million abortions are performed worldwide each year. Abortion is therefore the leading cause of death, ranking above heart disease and strokes. ⁽⁵⁾

What action will the Commission take to assist single mothers to ensure that abortion is not their only recourse?

Submitted: 12.1.2026

**Answer given by Ms Šuica on behalf of the European Commission
(23 March 2026)**

The Commission acknowledges the importance of addressing demographic trends in the EU. It also notes the challenges posed by declining birth rates and is committed to promoting policies that support families, whilst recognising women’s autonomy in deciding whether to have children or not.

The Demography Toolbox ⁽¹⁾ is the EU response to current demographic challenges. It includes a wide range of measures structured around four pillars, one of them devoted to help create favourable conditions for people to pursue their life and family aspirations, while fostering gender equality.

In this respect, taking into account the division of competences with Member States, the EU has put forward the Work-Life Balance Directive ⁽²⁾, the Pregnant Workers Directive ⁽³⁾, the Child Guarantee ⁽⁴⁾, the Council Recommendation on early childhood education and care ⁽⁵⁾ and the Gender Equality Strategy ⁽⁶⁾.

The Work-Life Balance Directive introduced the right to compensated paternity and parental leave, a right to carers’ leave and a right to request flexible working arrangements for all working parents.

The assessment of the implementation of the Work-Life Balance Directive, due in 2027, will provide an opportunity to assess whether the rules still fit the evolving working practices.

¹ <https://www.euronews.com/my-europe/2025/07/18/road-to-extinction-europes-birth-rates-hit-rock-bottom-these-are-the-least-fertile-countri>

² <https://de.statista.com/statistik/daten/studie/352936/umfrage/geburtenrate-in-eu-und-eurozone/>

³ https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-10-2025-002731_EN.html

⁴ <https://www.kettner-edelmetalle.at/news/demographischer-kollaps-europa-steuert-auf-historischen-geburtenrueckgang-zu-10-12-2024>

⁵ <https://www.1000plus.net/de-at/informieren/1000plusnews/abtreibung-ist-haefigste-todesursache-weltweit>

⁽¹⁾ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions Demographic change in Europe: a toolbox for action COM/2023/577 final.

⁽²⁾ Directive (EU) 2019/1158 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 June 2019 on work-life balance for parents and carers and repealing Council Directive 2010/18/EU.

⁽³⁾ Directive 92/85/EEC on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health of workers who are pregnant, have recently given birth or are breastfeeding.

⁽⁴⁾ Council Recommendation (EU) 2021/1004 of 14 June 2021 establishing a European Child Guarantee.

⁽⁵⁾ Council Recommendation of 8 December 2022 on early childhood education and care: the Barcelona targets for 2030 (2022/C 484/01).

⁽⁶⁾ https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/gender-equality/gender-equality-strategy_en.