

EN
E-000076/2026
Answer given by Ms Lahbib
on behalf of the European Commission
(13.5.2026)

The Commission supports policies for families and carers, such as the Work-Life Balance Directive establishing paid parental leave¹, and the implementation of the Barcelona targets for 2030², which encourage Member States to increase participation in accessible, affordable and high-quality early childhood education and care. These actions also take into consideration demographic developments, including ageing populations³, as highlighted in the Demography Toolbox⁴. However, decisions involving taxation, such as tax breaks for families with multiple children, fall firmly within the competence of the Member States.

Article 33 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union⁵ stipulates that the family shall enjoy legal, economic and social protection. In addition, the 'Declaration of principles for a gender-equal society' annexed to the Roadmap for Women's Rights⁶ recognises in principle 4 the importance of promoting working conditions that facilitate the reconciliation of private, family and working life.

¹ Article 8(3) of the 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, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2019/1158/oj>.

² Council Recommendation of 8 December 2022 on early childhood education and care: the Barcelona targets for 2030 2022/C 484/01 https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:JOC_2022_484_R_0001.

³ Highlighted by Recitals 6 and 27 of the Work-Life Balance Directive.

⁴ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of Regions 'Demographic change in Europe: a toolbox for action', <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52023DC0577>.

⁵ Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, http://data.europa.eu/eli/treaty/char_2012/oj/.

⁶ Annex to the Roadmap on Women's Rights - Declaration of principles for a gender-equal society https://commission.europa.eu/document/7d965089-e332-473a-88a9-e246f214e3bf_en.