

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-001971/26
to the Commission**

**Bert-Jan Ruissen (ECR), Margarita de la Pisa Carrión (Pfe), Stephen Nikola Bartulica (ECR), Aurelijus Veryga (ECR),
Christophe Gomart (PPE), Matej Tonin (PPE)**
(12 May 2026)

Subject: Commissioner Lahbib's urgent request to MEPs to lobby for abortion in Member States

During the exchange of views with Commissioner Hadja Lahbib in Parliament's Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality on Tuesday 14 April 2026, the Commissioner replied to questions on the state of play on 'My Voice, My Choice'. She stressed that the Commission has to respect the EU Treaties regarding abortion, that abortion is a national competence and that Member States can now voluntarily use ESF+ funds to pay for abortions. She urged MEPs, however, to lobby and apply pressure in their home countries to do so.

1. How does the Commission justify funding abortions, given abortion's exclusion from EU competence as reaffirmed by the Commissioner on 14 April 2026, deliberately breaching core Treaty principles of conferral, subsidiarity and proportionality?
2. MEPs are not lobbying instruments to be used by the Commission. In this context, on what legal and institutional basis does the Commission justify encouraging MEPs to exert political pressure at national level to advance its policy objectives in an area that lies outside EU competence?
3. The Commissioner stated that 10 Member States support the Commission's response to 'My Voice, My Choice'. Which countries were they?

Submitted: 12.5.2026

Answer given by Ms Lahbib on behalf of the European Commission
(29 June 2026)

As the Commission has expressed in reply to several similar questions⁽¹⁾ received by the Honourable Members of the Parliament, the Commission's follow up to the Citizen's initiative 'My Voice, My Choice' falls within the EU's supportive competence.

One of the specific objectives of the European Social Fund+, set out in Article 4(1)(k), is that of enhancing equal and timely access to quality, sustainable and affordable services, including the access to person-centred care including healthcare⁽²⁾.

Therefore, the European Social Fund+ can support initiatives that aim to ensure and enhance equal and timely access to healthcare services, including safe abortions.

In her response⁽³⁾ to the Honourable Members during the Structured Dialogue on 14 April, the Commissioner for Equality; Preparedness and Crisis Management reiterated that, while the Commission has clarified that the Member States can make use of the funds under the European Social Fund+ to support services providing safe abortions, it is now up to them to decide whether and how to make use of that possibility.

As mentioned also in the reply⁽⁴⁾ to the initiative, the Member States may do so on a voluntary basis. Member States may then submit their amended ESF+ programme to the European Commission for approval.

The 10 Member States that support the Commission's response to 'My Voice, My Choice' are Austria, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Luxembourg, Poland, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden.

⁽¹⁾ E-000443/2025, https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-10-2025-000443_EN.html; P-000238/2026, https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/P-10-2026-000238_EN.html; E-001327/2026, https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-10-2026-001327_EN.html; E-000990/2026, https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-10-2026-000990_EN.html; E-000991/2026, https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-10-2026-000991_EN.html.

⁽²⁾ Regulation (EU) 2021/1057 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 establishing the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1296/2013, OJ L 231, 30.6.2021, pp. 21-59, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/1057/oj>.

⁽³⁾ https://multimedia.europarl.europa.eu/en/webstreaming/committee-on-women-s-rights-and-gender-equality-ordinary-meeting-structured-dialogue-w-commissioner_20260414-0930-COMMITTEE-FEMM (10:52).

⁽⁴⁾ Communication from the Commission on the European Citizens' Initiative (ECI) 'My Voice, My Choice: For Safe And Accessible Abortion' (C/2026/1383), <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52026XC01383>.