

EN
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Answer given by Mr Várhelyi
on behalf of the European Commission
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The EU recognises the demographic challenges posed by declining fertility rates, which constitute a complex phenomenon with deep socio-economic roots¹.

Member States are responsible for the definition of their health policies, the organisation and delivery of health services and medical care, and the allocation of the resources assigned to them².

They can use the European Social Fund+ to support access to infertility treatments for persons in vulnerable situations if the rules set out by Member States allow for this³, and the European Regional Development Fund to invest in the necessary health infrastructure and equipment. These funds are implemented in line with the principle of shared management between the Commission and national authorities⁴. Any decision must comply with relevant regulations and the objectives of cohesion policy in this area.

The EU4Health programme has been funding actions, among others, addressing sexually transmitted infections⁵, a major cause of infertility, and the safety, quality and efficacy of therapies applied in the field of assisted reproduction⁶.

Horizon Europe⁷ also offers funding, to private or public organisations from Member States, including grants for collaborative projects in its Cluster 1 ‘Health’⁸ which may also include actions on infertility⁹.

In the Multiannual Financial Framework 2028-2034, the proposed European Competitiveness Fund¹⁰ has a strong focus on healthcare and health technologies. The support under its Health, Biotech, Agriculture and Bioeconomy window would allow to prioritise health promotion and

¹ Low fertility in the EU: A review of trends and drivers - Knowledge for policy:

https://knowledge4policy.ec.europa.eu/news/low-fertility-eu-review-trends-drivers_en.

² See Article 168 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

³ See Article 4(1), point (k), of Regulation (EU) 2021/1057 - The European Social Fund Plus Regulation:

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/1057/oj/eng>.

⁴ Currently, Romania’s cohesion programme for health finances a measure in the field of reproductive health with more than EUR 16 million.

⁵ https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/projects-results?order=DESC&pageNumber=1&pageSize=10&sortBy=es_SortDate&keywords=sti&programmePeriod=2021%20-%202027&frameworkProgramme=43332642.

⁶ EuMAR - European monitoring of Medically Assisted Reproduction, 2021 WP – HS-g-17.3.1 Call for proposals: action grants to organise and collect data to understand the safety, quality and efficacy of therapies applied in the field of assisted reproduction and based on haematopoietic stem cells.

⁷ https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe_en.

⁸ https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe/cluster-1-health_en.

⁹ For more information including on relevant calls see at the EU Funding and Tenders Portal at:

<https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/home>.

¹⁰ European Competitiveness Fund: https://commission.europa.eu/publications/european-competitiveness-fund_en.

disease prevention across the life course, including in the field of reproductive health.