
Falling birth rates: EU Commission, toolbox launched to help States manage demographic change

The European Commission comes to the aid of States in demographic crisis by providing a set of policy tools aimed at managing demographic change and its impacts on the EU's society and economy. Indeed, at a press conference today, Vice-President Dubravka Šuica announced the publication of the Communication that explains what regulatory instruments, policy frameworks and funding are available to Member States. The EU's global approach to demographic change is based on "four pillars". The first one is "support parents" by "better reconciling family aspirations and paid work" and by ensuring "quality childcare" and a good work-life balance. Then comes support for younger generations so that they can "thrive, develop their skills" and easily access the labour market and affordable housing. The third pillar is empowering older generations, with measures that range from sustaining their welfare to promoting appropriate labour market and workplace policies. The fourth pillar focuses on the response to labour shortages and brings together controlled regular migration and "harnessing talents from within the EU". The toolbox needs to be applied in line with the "territorial dimension of demographic shifts", the Vice-President stressed, ranging from demographic decline to population ageing, passing through unaffordable housing and the "brain drain". The aim of the toolbox is that demographic change "does not become an obstacle to the EU's economic growth and competitiveness" worldwide. With this Communication, the Commission responded to the invitation of the European Council which, in its Conclusions at the 2023 Summit, had urged the European Commission to develop guidelines to help Member States face demographic challenges.

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