

Question for written answer E-015689/2015
to the Commission
Rule 130
Arne Gericke (ECR)

Subject: Rural development, demographic trends and maternity care

Addressing the challenges faced by rural areas undergoing demographic change and mobilising local potential in rural areas more effectively are core objectives of the EU's rural and regional development policies (under the Leader programme, the European Regional Development Fund and the European Social Fund). In the light of demographic trends, particularly, the family-friendly nature of such policies is necessarily of central importance – and a key aspect here is that local maternity care should be available everywhere.

1. Does the Commission consider that family-friendly provision, including universally available maternity care, in rural areas is important in furthering rural development?
2. Under the current criteria, would the establishment of municipal or private midwife-run birthing centres or obstetric units in rural areas be eligible for funding from the Leader programme or the structural funds?