

**Question for written answer E-004309/2014  
to the Commission**  
Rule 117  
**Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)**

Subject: Girls' rights

On 19 December 2011, the United Nations General Assembly adopted Resolution 66/170 declaring 11 October as the International Day of the Girl Child and recognising girls' rights and the unique challenges girls face around the world. For its second observance, this year's Day will focus on 'Innovating for Girls' Education'.

The fulfilment of girls' right to education is first and foremost an obligation and a moral imperative. There is also overwhelming evidence that girls' education, especially at secondary level, is a powerful transformative force for societies and girls themselves: it is the one consistent positive determinant of practically every desired development outcome, including reductions in mortality and fertility, poverty reduction, equitable growth, social norm change and democratisation.

While there has been significant progress in improving girls' access to education over the last two decades, many girls, particularly the most marginalised, continue to be deprived of this basic right. Girls in many countries are still unable to attend school and complete their education owing to safety-related, financial, institutional and cultural barriers. Even when girls are in school, perceived low returns as a result of poor-quality education, low aspirations, or household chores and other responsibilities keep them from attending school or from achieving adequate learning outcomes. The transformative potential for girls and societies promised through girls' education is yet to be realised.

1. How does the Commission intend to interpret and give meaning to this year's International Day of the Girl Child?
2. What projects does the Commission have in place to encourage the transformation of cultural norms inside and outside the EU?
3. How many girls are there in the EU under the age of 18?