

**Question for written answer E-000660/2016
to the Commission**

Rule 130

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Subject: Investigation into paternity leave

The European Union is suffering today from a demographic deficit that has been made worse by the laws in force at present. Notwithstanding that, the Commission seems to be losing interest in this issue as it has reconsidered its intention of reviewing the Parental Leave Directive, even though the latter facilitates demographic growth.

Parliament has now taken up the problem and concluded that this directive did not really achieve anything as 'only 10 % of fathers [take] at least one day of leave'. The main reason advanced for this is that leave schemes are not harmonised and therefore paternity leave is not always paid leave. Parliament has therefore concluded, unsurprisingly, that more Europe is needed.

Has the Commission really investigated the reasons why fathers do not feel able to take paternity leave, or does it plan to do so?

Has the Commission ever considered that this very low take-up figure for paternity leave is not necessarily due to a lack of harmonisation but may, rather, be a choice made by fathers, who are sometimes the sole breadwinner supporting their family?