

Question for written answer E-006354/2016
to the Commission
Rule 130
Notis Marias (ECR)

Subject: An extra EUR 57 million needed for the European 'Work-Life Balance' Programme for infants and toddlers

The European 'Work-Life Balance' Programme funded by the NSRF offers free places in crèches for infants and toddlers.

Even though this year's budget for the above Programme has increased to EUR 193 million, compared to EUR 176 million last year, children from 36 769 families risk being excluded from crèches, since 84 800 places are being provided by the Programme this year which is not sufficient to meet the needs of 121 569 infants and toddlers whose parents have applied for places. Indeed, according to the final results issued on 24 August 2016, one in four children has been unable to find a place under the Programme and their parents are now at their wits' end.

According to a statement of the Central Union of Municipalities of Greece (KEDE), in order to ensure that the existing facilities of the Programme can continue to operate and to allow the possibility of operating new ones, for the school year 2016-2017, funding of approximately EUR 250 million - i.e. additional resources of EUR 57 million – needs to be found rapidly.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

What steps and measures will it take, in cooperation with the competent Greek authorities, to ensure that additional resources amounting to EUR 57 million are secured for the 2016-2017 period in order to allow the above programme to operate effectively?