

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002771/23  
to the Commission  
Filip De Man (ID)  
(21 September 2023)**

*Subject:* Investigating anthropological decline in the EU

Falling PISA scores, falling IQ (Reverse Flynn Effect), addiction to screens, obesity, depression, ADHD, increased use of opioids and psychotropic drugs and psychostimulants, falling testosterone levels, falling fertility rates, and the long-term effects of 'house arrest' — lockdown — during the COVID-19 pandemic: these are all factors that point to Europe's anthropological decline. The EU and, by extension, the whole of Europe are losing their place in the world at a lightning pace, and future generations of Europeans risk paying the bill.

1. What resources is the Commission earmarking for investigating those factors and how they are evolving?
2. Has the Commission investigated possible causes of this decline, such as mass migration and decades of egalitarian policies?
3. What action is the Commission planning to take to halt anthropological decline within the EU?

Submitted: 21.9.2023

**Answer given by Ms Kyriakides on behalf of the European Commission  
(7 December 2023)**

Despite the absence of a definition of 'anthropological decline', hence a phenomenon that cannot be measured nor can it be associated with specific factors, the Commission, is fully committed in supporting the wellbeing of current and future generations of European citizens, and is taking action on the factors referred to.

Horizon Europe <sup>(1)</sup> and Horizon 2020 <sup>(2)</sup> (H2020) fund research in the indicated areas, including on poor learning outcomes in basic skills <sup>(3)</sup>, mental health issues like drug addiction, digital addiction, depression and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.

In H2020 <sup>(4)</sup>, a call topic <sup>(5)</sup> was published to study the behavioural, social and economic impacts of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

The Commission through its Directorate General 'Joint Research Centre' (JRC) maintains the 'Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Knowledge Gateway' <sup>(6)</sup> which provides information on topics related to the promotion of health and well-being, including obesity prevention. The JRC will conduct a study on the factors influencing fertility rates in Member States by April 2024.

The 'Healthier Together' initiative <sup>(7)</sup> supports Member States in implementing effective actions to reduce the burden of major non-communicable diseases.

In June 2023, the Commission also adopted a communication on a comprehensive approach to mental health <sup>(8)</sup> with financing opportunities worth EUR 1.23 billion under multiple financing programmes.

In October 2023, the Commission adopted a communication <sup>(9)</sup> presenting the various EU policy tools available to Member States for managing demographic change and its impacts on EU's society and economy.

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<sup>(1)</sup> [https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe\\_en](https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe_en)

<sup>(2)</sup> [https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-2020\\_en](https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-2020_en)

<sup>(3)</sup> Including projects SCIREARLY: <https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101061288>; LETSCARE: <https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101059425>; CLEAR: <https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101061155>

<sup>(4)</sup> [https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-2020\\_en](https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-2020_en)

<sup>(5)</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-details/sc1-phe-coronavirus-2020-2c>

<sup>(6)</sup> [https://knowledge4policy.ec.europa.eu/health-promotion-knowledge-gateway\\_en](https://knowledge4policy.ec.europa.eu/health-promotion-knowledge-gateway_en)

<sup>(7)</sup> [https://health.ec.europa.eu/non-communicable-diseases/healthier-together-eu-non-communicable-diseases-initiative\\_en#:~:text=The%20European%20Commission%20has%20launched%20in%20December%202021,of%20major%20NCDSand%20improve%20citizens%E2%80%99%20health%20and%20well-being](https://health.ec.europa.eu/non-communicable-diseases/healthier-together-eu-non-communicable-diseases-initiative_en#:~:text=The%20European%20Commission%20has%20launched%20in%20December%202021,of%20major%20NCDSand%20improve%20citizens%E2%80%99%20health%20and%20well-being)

<sup>(8)</sup> [https://health.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2023-06/com\\_2023\\_298\\_1\\_act\\_en.pdf](https://health.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2023-06/com_2023_298_1_act_en.pdf)

<sup>(9)</sup> [https://commission.europa.eu/system/files/2023-10/COM\\_2023\\_577\\_1\\_EN.pdf](https://commission.europa.eu/system/files/2023-10/COM_2023_577_1_EN.pdf)