

**Question for written answer E-008093/2013
to the Commission**
Rule 117
Martin Kastler (PPE)

Subject: The EU family strategy and the European Year 2014

Family friendliness is a decisive factor in the global competition for the most highly skilled workers. From a political perspective, coherent family strategies are needed in this area. As early as 2007, the German Council Presidency launched the European Alliance for Families. In April 2011, the Spanish, Belgian and Hungarian Presidencies, together with Poland, officially called for family policy to be raised to the status of a European concern, against the background of demographic change, the European social agenda and sustainable economic development. In March 2013, almost 400 Members of the European Parliament voted in favour of Written Declaration 32/2012 and called for a European Year for Reconciling Work and Family Life 2014. This position forms part of the official work programme of the current trio of Council Presidencies of Ireland, Lithuania and Greece (Council document 16994/12) and is shared by many non-governmental organisations.

1. Why did the Commission bring to an end its support for the successful European Alliance for Families in 2012? Why did the Commission replace it with the Platform for Investing in Children, which avoids the use of the term 'family' and, contrary to the subsidiarity principle, has an increasing focus on subjects such as childcare and education that come under national and regional authority?
2. What are the reasons why the Commission a) has not yet (by July 2013) made a proposal on the European Year 2014 and b) refuses to propose a European Year for Reconciling Work and Family Life 2014 in line with the clear calls from the Parliament and the Council?
3. What is the Commission's view on adding the concept of a child- and family-friendly society to the Europe 2020 objectives?