Question for written answer E-001358/2016
to the Commission
Rule 130
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Subject: Possible State aid case on the transfer of Gareth Bale to Real Madrid financed by bailed-out banks

In September 2013, the football clubs Real Madrid and Tottenham Hotspur reached an agreement on the transfer of Gareth Bale. The leaked agreement, which was extensively discussed in *The Telegraph* on 23 January 2016[1], suggests that Spanish banks were involved in this deal.

More specifically, promissory notes (see paragraphs 3 and 9 of the agreement) were issued to Tottenham Hotspur, which subsequently seem to have been sold on to Spanish banks, which have now ended up assuming the risk for Bale’s record-breaking transfer fee. In 2013, the then Member of the European Parliament Derk Jan Eppink (see Parliamentary question E-010002/2013) had already stated that one of the banks involved was Bankia, a bank saved through the ESM for no less than EUR 18 billion.

Is it correct to state that bailed-out Spanish banks were offering promissory notes to Tottenham to act as a guarantee, thereby indirectly placing the liability on Spanish and European taxpayers?

If this is confirmed, will the Commission take action under its competition law and State aid responsibilities?

If so, what are the next steps that it is planning to take?

1 http://www.telegraph.co.uk/sport/football/teams/real-madrid/12117546/Gareth-Bales-leaked-Real-Madrid-transfer-details-produce-more-questions-than-answers.html