



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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Plenary sitting

11.3.2013

B7-0141/2013

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on the statement by the Commission

pursuant to Rule 110(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on match fixing and corruption in sport

(2013/2567(RSP))

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on behalf of the GUE/NGL Group

**European Parliament resolution on match fixing and corruption in sport
(2013/2567(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the case law of the Court of Justice of the European Union and the Tribunal - in particular the judgment of du 8 September 2009 on the reference for a preliminary ruling - Article 49 EC - restrictions on the freedom to provide services - offer of games of chance via the internet - and the Commission's decisions on sports matters,
- having regard to the Presidency conclusions establishing a strategy to combat match fixing of 26 and 27 November 2012,
- having regard to the Council of Europe report of 5 April 2012 on the need to combat match fixing,
- having regard to Commission White Paper on sport (COM (2007)0391),
- having regard to its resolution of 14 April 2005 on combating doping in sport,
- having regard to its resolution of 29 March 2007 on the future of professional football in Europe,
- having regard to its resolution of 13 November 2007 on the role of sport in education,
- having regard to its resolution of 8 May 2008 on the White Paper on sport,

- having regard to the European Council's Nice declaration (annex 4 of conclusions) on the specific characteristics of sport and its social function in Europe which must be taken into account in implementing common policies,
- having regard to the European Parliament report of November 2011 on the European dimension in sport,
- having regard to Rule 110(2) of its Rules of Procedure,

- A. whereas physical and activity and sport are essential to the education and health of human beings at every stage of their lives, contributing to their social, physical and mental development and being essential to the self-fulfilment of all, and should therefore be considered a right;
- B. whereas the deregulation of numerous sports activities with competing clubs, the shift in the role of sport agents to that of mere brokers and the rapid increase in on-line betting over the last few years are detrimental to the underlying spirit, encouraging match fixing and corruption within this sector;
- C. whereas, in its report of 5 April 2012, the Council of Europe takes the view that 'the manipulation of sports results has taken on worrying proportions. The considerable sums of money involved in sports betting have encouraged the development of new forms of corruption, providing criminal organisations with a source of illicit profits and a means of laundering money from other illegal activities. As a result, this phenomenon not only taints the values of sport and harms the interest of the sports movement and betting operators but is also a threat to public order and the rule of law';
- D. whereas the ECJ judgment of 8 September 2009 stated that gambling is an area in which moral, religious and cultural differences may exist, which

means that the fact of an online gambling operator offering a service in one country is not sufficient ground for permitting it to operate in another Member State in the absence of Community harmonisation, given not only that states are entitled to regulate gambling but also that the adoption of general bans for the purpose of protecting the public is acceptable and does not create any distortion of competition, and given that the authorisation of gambling on a monopoly basis is proportionate to the aim of combating crime and 'has the advantage of confining the operation of gambling within controlled channels and preventing the risk of fraud or crime in the context of such operation';

- E. whereas, on Monday 4 February 2013, Europol announced that it discovered an extensive criminal network involved in fixing football matches across Europe, 380 matches being deemed suspicious in Europe and 425 referees, players, club officials and major criminals under investigation, with 50 arrests to date;
1. Reaffirms its attachment to sport as a means of self-fulfilment at both amateur and professional level; reaffirms the unity of the sporting community, both amateur and professional, and the need for financial solidarity between professional sport and sport for all within the federations;
 2. Stresses the need to ensure a definitive transition from sport defined in terms of market competition towards enhancement of the public service it provides, encouraging active public intervention;
 3. Stresses the need to promote voluntary sports activities, uphold sports associations in order to meet educational and democratic challenges and hence protect voluntary activities from any form of commercialization;

4. Calls on the Member States take effective measures to combat corruption and preserve the sporting ethos; therefore considers it essential for each of them to introduce strict rules regarding the financial regulation of clubs ;
5. Notes that the Council of Europe is planning to draw up a convention on measures to combat match fixing which is expected to be adopted in the second half of 2014 and calls on the European Union and its Member States to support this process fully;
6. Considers that betting on sport is a form of commercial exploitation of competitions and calls on the Commission and the Member States to protect their integrity by penalising unauthorised activities and in particular by recognising organisers' intellectual property rights with regard to their competitions; calls for the abolition of betting and takes the view that the European Union and its Member States should at least endeavour to ensure that such activities are organised on a state monopoly basis in accordance with the ECJ judgement of 8 September 2009;
7. Calls on the Member States to guarantee compliance with the declaration *‘on the specific characteristics of sport and its social functions in Europe which must be taken into account in implementing common policies’* adopted at the European Council in Nice in December 2000 ;
8. Takes the view that imposing a ceiling on sportspeople's earnings would promote good governance and ethics in sport as well as helping to fight corruption;
9. Takes the view that professional sport, events and media coverage (championships, displays, national and international sports events), the recruitment of young people, the pressure on them to perform and the use of

foreign players should be made to serve progressive humanist objectives for the benefit of all;

10. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and Commission, the governments and parliaments of the Member States and European, international and national sporting federations.