

**Question for written answer E-009016/2012  
to the Commission**

Rule 117

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Subject: Action plan for the effective regulation and supervision of on-line betting

Michel Barnier, the Commissioner responsible for the internal market and services, announced at a press conference held by the European Parliament in Brussels on 27 June 2012, that he would propose the Commission adopt, by the end of 2012, an action plan for the effective regulation and supervision of on-line betting in the European Union in order to better protect consumers and the public.

Mr Barnier emphasised, at the press conference, that one of the priorities of this future action plan would be the combating and prevention of fraud and that, in that respect, the integrity of sport would be one of the main elements on which efforts should centre.

We would like to put the following questions to the Commission on this subject:

1. Without in any way wishing to distinguish the 'pari mutuel' from other forms of legal betting authorised in EU Member States, does the Commission share the view that this type of betting, which is essentially used for betting on horse racing, is a model that is particularly fraud-proof since the bookmakers' earnings are in no way connected with the results of the races or with their winners and losers?
2. Does the Commission also recognise that if this model is to continue, in the Member States that so wish, then it is vitally important to preserve the 'retour filière' (returns to racing) mechanism – i.e. for part of the income from bets to be channelled back into the horse racing industry?
3. Similarly, does the Commission acknowledge the need to remove the legal uncertainty it created by opening infringement proceedings (still pending) against the 'returns to racing' system introduced by France following the abolition of its monopoly on betting on horse races?
4. Does the Commission not agree that the financing contributed by 'returns to racing' in fact plays a substantial part in ensuring the existence not only of horse racing in the Member States, but also of national equestrian industries more broadly as, unfortunately, has been amply demonstrated by their disappearance in many European countries in recent years?