

**Question for oral answer O-000131/2013
to the Commission**

Rule 115

Doris Pack

on behalf of the Committee on Culture and Education

Subject: Home-grown player rule

On several occasions Parliament has supported the home-grown player rule as a means of contributing to competitive balance and to the training and development of young players.

The rule, which was gradually implemented by UEFA from the 2006-2007 season onwards, was given the green light by the Commission in 2008. The Commission stated that 'UEFA has opted for an approach which seems to comply with the principle of free movement of workers while promoting the training of young European players'. However, since the Commission considered that the rule risked having indirect discriminatory effects on the basis of nationality, it decided to carry out further analysis and commissioned an independent study on the matter.

The results of this study are now available. In the study the researchers note that 'our data supports the view that a modest increase in the quota could result in a modest improvement in competitive balance', so 'a case could be made that a slightly strengthened rule satisfies proportionality control on these grounds'.

While the researchers suggest that UEFA should first consider less restrictive alternative measures which would achieve the same objectives, they also encourage the EU to 'offer sports bodies a wide margin of appreciation when assessing rules that have been openly and democratically debated and agreed by representative sports stakeholders'.

Of course UEFA would be welcome to test alternative ideas (such as a larger redistribution of income between clubs) in open and democratic debates with clubs and players, but since it has been difficult to achieve a consensus on alternative ideas in the past, it seems unlikely that this will change any time soon.

Does the Commission acknowledge that the home-grown player rule was discussed in open and democratic debates and agreed upon by representative stakeholders?

In light of this, does the Commission agree that there is room to consider strengthening this rule?

What will the Commission do next in order to come to a more definite position on the home-grown player rule?

Tabled: 13.11.2013

Forwarded: 15.11.2013

Deadline for reply: 22.11.2013