

WRITTEN QUESTION P-0514/04
by Bartho Pronk (PPE-DE)
to the Commission

Subject: Follow-up question to Written Question E-2133/02 on discrimination against international football referees on grounds of age

On 17 July 2003, I submitted a written question (E-2133/02¹) on discrimination against international football referees on grounds of age. The Commission indicated in its reply that 'a blanket age limit' is not 'a guide to physical fitness or ability' and that, 'where a certain level of physical fitness is required to carry out a particular job, appropriate tests may be used in the selection of candidates'. The Commission also stated that Directive 2000/78/EC² must be transposed into national law by 2 December 2003, except where an additional period of up to three years is requested. It was recently reported in the press that the well-known Italian referee P. Collina will have to stop refereeing when he turns 45, as the rules prohibit him from carrying on beyond that age. It would appear from this that UEFA has not amended its rules on this point (FIFA Article 4).

1. Does the Commission take the view that the fact that the Italian referee Collina has to stop exercising his profession because he is 45, even though he passes the relevant physical tests, is in breach of the provisions of Directive 2000/78/EC?
2. If so, what steps will the Commission take against FIFA, one of whose rules contravenes the provisions of this Directive?
3. What action will the Commission take against Member States that allow their citizens to work for organisations that include provisions in their contracts contravening European, and therefore also national, law in Italy, given that Italy did not request an additional period for the transposition of the provisions of Directive 2000/78/EC?

¹ OJ C 110 E, 8.5.2003, p. 32.

² OJ L 303, 2.12.2000, p. 16.