

**Question for written answer E-004256/2014
to the Commission**
Rule 117
Sergio Berlato (PPE)

Subject: Free movement of sports workers in the European Union

The Italian Basketball Federation (the 'FIP') introduced changes to the championships in the 2013-2014 season, making provision for just one professional championship and three national amateur championships.

In the top national amateur championship it became possible for each team to register two foreign players, fielding a line-up in which at least seven of the ten players named had trained in Italy.

In the DNB and DNC national amateur championships only players who trained in Italy may join clubs, thereby excluding players who trained in their country of origin.

The rules introduced to protect youth sports training centres, which state that a minimum number of team places shall be reserved for players trained in Italy, are legitimate. However, a rule which bars completely other players from joining clubs, as FIP regulations do at present in the DNB and DNC championships, conflicts with the principles of equality and free movement.

It has been established in EU case-law that when any athlete, even if officially an amateur, begins to receive a regular payment which is higher than a simple reimbursement of expenses incurred, he shall be considered as a worker with all the repercussions this entails.

Basketball players who take part in national amateur championships come to a financial agreement with companies which provides for payment of a monthly fee, in addition to any prizes.

In view of the fact, therefore, that there is a direct breach of EU legislation on the free movement of citizens and workers:

- Will the Commission point out to the Italian Basketball Federation that, whilst abiding by the rules protecting youth sports training centres in resolution No 1276 of 15 July 2004 of the Italian National Olympic Committee, it has to allow EU players who have trained in other EU countries to take part in all national amateur championships?