

WRITTEN QUESTION P-0600/04
by Generoso Andria (PPE-DE)
to the Commission

Subject: Remuneration of amateur football managers

Football is a very popular sport in Italy which is played by large numbers of young people. The astronomical sums paid to professional footballers have created major problems for all clubs and have required government intervention in the form of the 'Spalma-debiti' decree allowing clubs to spread their debts over ten years.

This decree is now under close scrutiny by the Competition Commissioner Mario Monti.

Amateur football is a sport which gives young people the opportunity to develop their physical and mental skills in the open air and participation has always been unpaid or the amounts involved have been very small. The chairmen of amateur clubs also incur considerable expenses without any remuneration apart from their love of the game.

However, other managers in the football sector, from the President of the League to board members, are known to receive remuneration of thousands of euro in the form of per diem allowances to cover their expenses, which are questionable from the tax point of view and circumvent the provisions of Article 10 of the law governing the Italian Football Federation (FIGC) which says that the duties performed by officers shall not be remunerated and prohibits offices in the federation from being held by those who derive financial gain from their involvement in football.

Can the Commission say whether this situation amounts to a distortion of competition in a particularly sensitive sector or involves serious irregularities?