



MEMBER OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Strasbourg, 11th February 2019,

Dear Mr Infantino and Mr Juncker,

Football is the most popular team sport in Europe. It brings people together from all backgrounds to play, watch and enjoy the game. It developed as a European game and quickly attracted people and cultures from around the world. Today, its popularity has turned football into a leading global entertainment industry where Europe provides the centre stage on which players wish to perform and which fans want to watch.

The cultural heritage, social aspect and commercial value of the game installs a special responsibility to the organisations and stakeholders who have been tasked to govern the game. This requires not only a robust and enforceable regulatory framework in compliance with EU law but also a transparent and consistent application in line with principles of good governance in sports (as outlined by the 2016 Takkula report of the European Parliament).

The increased influence of money on the game has not been only positive. This comes at the detriment of a level playing field within and between competitions, players rights and interests, the development of youth players and the sustainability of the European diverse landscape of smaller and bigger clubs can both thrive. It leads to excesses in the form of exorbitant player agent fees and money laundering schemes involving fraudulent transfers.

Football is more than just a game and whatever challenges there are, the European treaties and fundamental freedoms need to be respected in any outcome of this process. Where self-governance and the autonomy of sport fail to deliver on the public interest, legislators will have to step in. We expect the European Commission to play an active role and provide concrete contributions to ensure sure that the principles behind the 2001 agreement with FIFA are finally being honoured through revised and new rules and regulation. That is why we will follow the developments closely and have asked several questions to the European Commission.

The outcome of the task force of the Football Stakeholders Committee working on the review of the transfer system, does not only concern the interests of the stakeholders present. There is the general interest in stake of the larger public that enjoys playing and watching football and that is why we require a transparent and responsible dialogue to address how it can guarantee the future of the game. Democratic processes are built on an open dialogue and are strengthened by their outcome. We believe that all stakeholders must safeguard football's deep cultural fabric, encourage innovation, develop suitable regulatory frameworks and respect the views of those at the heart of the game – fans included.

As Members of the European Parliament we take great interest to protect and safeguard the game which plays such a significant role for so many EU citizens. We expect to be part of a dialogue on the future of football.

With best regards,

Paul Tang, Bogusław Sonik, Santiago Fisas, Julie Girling, Marc Tarabella, Theodoros Zagorakis, Virginie Roziere, Tiziana Beghin, Tadeusz Zwiefka, Marc Joulaud, Ivo Belet, Petra Kammerevert, Alex Mayer, Brando Benifei, Demetris Papadakis, Karoline Graswander-Hainz, Eric Andrieu, Christine Revault d'Allonnes Bonnefoy, Sylvie Guillaume, Carlos Zorrinho, Ole Christensen, Norbert Neuser