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## Foreign players in professional football leagues in the member states of the Council of Europe

Motion for a resolution  
presented by Mr Heynemann and others

This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only the members who have signed it

In many teams in professional football leagues in the member states of the Council of Europe, the proportion of foreign national is very high, over 50 % in some cases.

On the one hand, foreign players significantly help to enhance the appeal of league football; on the other hand, however, negative consequences are now also becoming apparent.

Since ever more foreign nationals are playing for clubs in the premier leagues and the proportion of domestic players is steadily declining, the pool of experienced league players available to national teams is shrinking, and it is increasingly difficult for talented young players to find places in the major league clubs.

In the European Union member states, limiting the proportion of foreign players in professional clubs is not possible due to European Union law (Article 39 of the EC Treaty, free movement of workers).

The purely national motivation in national games and international championships comes into conflict here with the sport's purely commercial orientation in the league clubs.

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe should take up this issue and help to develop a solution which includes the elimination for all member states of the conflict between the free movement of workers, on the one hand, and the principle of nationality, on the other.

Before any solution can be suggested, it is necessary to take stock of the proportion of foreign players in professional league teams in the Council of Europe's member states, and of the legal situation.

*Signed (see overleaf)*

*Signed*<sup>1</sup>:

HEYNEMANN Bernd, Germany, EPP/CD  
ALIGRUDIĆ Miloš, Serbia, EPP/CD  
BARGETZE Rony, Liechtenstein, EPP/CD  
FISCHER Axel, Germany, EPP/CD  
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NEGELE, Gebhard, Liechtenstein, EPP/CD  
OLSSON, Kent, Sweden, EPP/CD  
POURGOURIDES, Christos, Cyprus, EPP/CD  
PROROKOVIĆ, Dušan, Serbia, EPP/CD  
TEKELİOĞLU, Mehmet, Turkey, EPP/CD  
VAREIKIS, Egidijus, Lithuania, EPP/CD

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<sup>1</sup> SOC: Socialist Group  
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party  
ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe  
EDG: European Democratic Group  
UEL: Group of the Unified European Left  
NR: not registered in a group