



27 November 2020

## COMMITTEE ON CULTURE, SCIENCE, EDUCATION AND MEDIA

### Football governance: business and values

#### Information note on the hearing of 4 December 2020

#### I. Background

Within the framework of the preparation of the report on “Football governance: business and values”, the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) will hold a hearing by videoconference on 4 December 2020 from 9.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.

The hearing will bring together high-level representatives from FIFA, UEFA, European Leagues, ECA, FIFPro and three fans’ organisations, i.e. Supporters Direct Europe, Football Supporters Europe and the Centre for Access to Football in Europe. The Enlarged partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS) of the Council of Europe will also participate.

The focus will be on three key questions, which are listed below. Two additional questions, i.e. “reinforcing the role of women and gender equality in football” and “co-operation and partnership between football organisations and public authorities” including the Council of Europe” are transversal issues.

Therefore, although they are not referred to explicitly in the following paragraphs, the rapporteur trusts that partners will consider, as required, both the gender dimension and the possible role that public authorities could or should play to help solve problems, when discussing the three questions below.

#### II. Key questions for the debate

##### 1. ***Solidarity v./ financial gaps → What concrete measures different stakeholders could adopt to strengthen solidarity within the football system and help reduce financial gaps?***

At present, football exists with too many wide gaps: between the professional football and the grassroots/amateur level; between the richest leagues and the others; the richest clubs and the others; and also between the richest players and the others. There is a need for greater solidarity (and a more balanced distribution of resources) within the football system to ensure its greater stability. Reducing financial gaps and aiming at greater solidarity within the football system should be given a new significance in the present context: financial disparities and ways to progressively reduce them should now be considered within the framework of the disastrous consequences that the Covid-19 crisis is producing.

##### 2. ***Young players’ rights → How different stakeholders can act, within their respective remits, but in synergy, to strengthen the protection of young players’ rights and better uphold their human development?***

Partners have developed, and keep on implementing, many programmes and projects to reinforce the protection of young players particularly, but not only, against the risks of exploitation and sexual abuse within the sports environment. These efforts are to be commended, but are they enough? The most vulnerable are the most exposed to these threats, and they are also those more in need of support for their human development. There is a need to upgrade national and local schemes for educating young players as persons

and citizens (and not only to enhance their professional skills). Again, the present crisis should alert all stakeholders to the importance of helping football players to acquire the competences required for them to have a place in society also beyond the period of their sporting career.

**3. Stakeholders' involvement in football governance → Are all stakeholders (and particularly fans and players) properly involved in football decision-making processes (at different levels) and what added value (or potential risks) could be generated by their enhanced participation in football governance?**

Stakeholders' – and more specifically fans' and players' – involvement in football decision making within the different governance settings (at local, national, European and international levels) is a question that has not been really dealt with by previous PACE reports on football governance. An aspect of interest for the rapporteur is whether giving fans and players a stronger voice and fostering their active involvement in football governance can also help develop community outreach and reinforce social responsibility.

### **III. Scenario**

**Opening:** Chairperson and rapporteur

**1<sup>st</sup> round table on “solidarity v./ financial gaps”**

- Introductory contributions by:
  - Charlie MARSHALL, Chief Executive Officer, ECA
  - Jacco SWART, Managing Director, European leagues
  - Giorgio MARCHETTI, Deputy General Secretary, UEFA
- Exchange, including interventions by other partners

**2<sup>nd</sup> round table on “young players' rights”**

- Introductory contributions by:
  - Joyce COOK, Chief Social Responsibility and Education Officer, FIFA
  - Alexandre HUSTING, Chairperson, EPAS
- Exchange, including interventions by other partners

**3<sup>rd</sup> round table on “stakeholders' involvement in football governance”**

- Introductory contributions
  - Jonas BAER-HOFFMANN, General Secretary, FIFPro
  - Antonia HAGEMANN, Chief Executive Officer, Supporters Direct Europe
- Exchange, including interventions by other partners

**Final round table**

- Final interventions by partners' representatives
- Wrapping up by rapporteur

**Closing of the hearing by the Chairperson**

#### IV. List of partners' representatives

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Functions</b>
FIFA	Joyce COOK	Chief Social Responsibility and Education Officer
FIFA	Emilio GARCIA SILVERO	Chief Legal and Compliance Officer
UEFA	Giorgio MARCHETTI	Deputy General Secretary
UEFA	Julien ZYLBERSTEIN	Chief of Governance and Stakeholder Affairs
European leagues	Jacco SWART	Managing Director
European leagues	Alberto COLOMBO	Deputy General Secretary
ECA	Charlie MARSHALL	Chief Executive Officer
FIFPro	Jonas BAER-HOFFMANN	General Secretary
FIFPro	Alexander BIELEFELD	Head of Global Policy and Strategic Relations
Supporters Direct Europe	Antonia HAGEMANN	Chief Executive Officer
Football Supporters Europe	Ronan EVAIN	Chief Executive Officer
Centre for Access to Football in Europe	Joanna DEAGLE	Managing Director
EPAS (Council of Europe)	Alexandre HUSTING	Chairperson
EPAS (Council of Europe)	Stanislas FROSSARD	Executive Secretary