


Procedure file

Basic information	
INI - Own-initiative procedure	1995/2108(INI)
The free movement of football supporters and measures against hooliganism	
Subject 2.20.01 Freedom of movement, right of residence, identity checks	
Procedure completed	

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	LIBE Civil Liberties and Internal Affairs	V ROTH Claudia	21/06/1995

Key events			
07/10/1994	Non-legislative basic document published	B4-0184/1994	
13/06/1995	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
24/04/1996	Vote in committee		Summary
24/04/1996	Committee report tabled for plenary	A4-0124/1996	
21/05/1996	Debate in Parliament		
21/05/1996	Decision by Parliament	T4-0232/1996	Summary
21/05/1996	End of procedure in Parliament		
10/06/1996	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	1995/2108(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 143-p5
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	LIBE/4/06673

Documentation gateway			

Non-legislative basic document		B4-0184/1994	07/10/1994	EP	
Document attached to the procedure		B4-0218/1994	10/11/1994	EP	
Document attached to the procedure		B4-0503/1995	31/03/1995	EP	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A4-0124/1996 OJ C 152 27.05.1996, p. 0004	24/04/1996	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T4-0232/1996 OJ C 166 10.06.1996, p. 0016-0040	21/05/1996	EP	Summary

The free movement of football supporters and measures against hooliganism

The draft report by Mrs Claudia ROTH was adopted by 15 votes to zero, but with 9 abstentions by the members of the PPE and the UPE following a vote on approximately one hundred amendments. The report noted that acts of hooliganism and violence before, during and after football matches, especially international matches, were a problem which was becoming more widespread and which had a cross-border dimension which should be dealt with at Union level. Current international preventive measures were taken on the basis of simple cooperation agreements between the Member States and were of a fragmentary nature. In addition, they had already given rise to complaints on the part of EU citizens who objected to the limitation on the free movement of persons and the absence of means of recourse. Mrs ROTH was conscious of the social and cultural aspects underlying the phenomenon of hooliganism and of the fact that there were groups of right-wing extremists which took advantage of football to spread violence, racism and xenophobia. But she also realized that not all football supporters were hooligans and that this undesirable phenomenon could not be fought at the expense of the fundamental rights of citizens (who enjoyed football) and the free movement of persons within the European Union. An additional difficulty was that the Commission should not present initiatives on this subject because she considered that the EU did not have powers in this area. However, the rapporteur considered that the EU and the Member States could help to implement an anti-hooliganism policy to contain the phenomenon and keep it within manageable proportions, while respecting the fundamental rights of citizens and their freedom of movement at European level. The report also considered that: - all-sitting stadia were unnecessary and that the installation of "cages" was dangerous, degrading and could incite violence; - the participation of women and children at sporting events should be encouraged by providing stands for families; - the highly successful "fan projects" as an excellent means of preventing violence and called for the development of such initiatives; in particular it: - called on clubs, national associations, the UEFA and the FIFA to fund supporters projects and for supporters projects to be funded by Community appropriations as part of EURO 96 and the 1998 World Cup; - proposed that initiatives be developed (exchanges, meetings etc.) in order to promote good understanding between supporters of opposing teams and for the supporters themselves to design strategies to eradicate violence; - strongly recommended that the Commission take measures against football clubs which only sold tickets as part of a travel package; - reiterated that players' behaviour during matches could be a deciding factor and called on them to abstain from any violent or aggressive behaviour and to openly voice their rejection of violence, racism and xenophobia, if necessary by refusing to play during any racist, violent or xenophobic demonstration; - reiterated its proposal to award three prizes each year to a team, a sports personality and a supporters club in recognition of their sense of fair play; - called on the media to help promote respect and fair play in sport, fight against aggressive and chauvinistic behaviour and avoid any "sensationalism" when reporting violence during sports events. As far as policing and the courts are concerned, the report: - called on the Member States to make provision for and apply suitable punishment to persons found guilty of offences, such as banning them from stadia for a given period; - considered that policing should be carried out by local police officers, accompanied during international matches by police officers from the place of origin of the away team, and that international police cooperation to fight against violence in stadia should be strengthened. Finally, the report called for the European institutions to take a number of measures: - the Commission should draft an exhaustive, comparative report on hooliganism as a multidimensional social phenomenon in the Member States and investigate the role of extremist organizations in violence in sport; - the Council should draw up a convention on the fight against violence at football matches under the third pillar; - the IGC should give the EU powers in the sports sector which would enable it to implement a pro-active, consistent and coherent Community sports policy.?

The free movement of football supporters and measures against hooliganism

Adopting the report by Mrs Claudia ROTH (V, D) on hooliganism and the free movement of football supporters by 285 votes to 152 with 21 abstentions, the European Parliament noted that football was part of our culture and an important social activity. It noted that sport, and football in particular, were activities in which millions of people had a keen interest and that this needed to be taken into account in national and Community policies. In this respect, cross-border acts of hooliganism and violence should be dealt with at Union level. While congratulating the Council of Europe on its Convention on the fight against violence during football matches, which the authorities, sporting federations and associations wished to implement, the European Parliament called for the following, as recommended in the Convention: . stadia designed to safeguard the safety of spectators (e.g. separate exits for supporters and access for police), . groups of supporters to be separated; . controlled ticket sales; . the installation of public address systems in stadia; . a ban inside stadia on alcoholic drinks, other dangerous objects and any form of symbol (banners etc.) with a racist content; . scanners at entrances to stadia. Parliament also considered that all-seating stadia were unnecessary and that stands should be provided for families (women and children). As far as social policy and prevention were concerned, Parliament supported the "fan projects" and the initiative taken as part of Euro 96 for a European supporters parliament ("Philosophy Football"). It called on the clubs, FIFA, UEFA and the Commission to provide financial support for this type of initiative by supporters. The Commission was also called upon to take action against clubs which only sold tickets as part of a travel package. Concerned at players' behaviour as a deciding factor in supporters' behaviour, it called for players to refuse to play during any racist or violent demonstration in the stadium and for a European day for fair play in sport to be organized and prizes to be awarded each year to a team, a sports personality and a supporters club in recognition of their sense of fair play. Initiatives to promote understanding should be organized together with fair play campaigns. With regard to the free movement of persons, the European Parliament considered that only persons whose previous behaviour was such that there was reason to believe that they represented a threat to public order should be punished. The

nationality of a supporter could not, per se, constitute grounds for refusing that supporter leave to enter a match. Parliament considered that the fact that a match was being held could justify border controls but insisted that such controls be effected on the basis of common standards. In particular, it deplored the fact that, because of fundamental legal differences between Member States, persons found guilty of football-linked offences could not be prevented from attending matches in other Member States. As far as policing and the courts were concerned, the European Parliament called on the Member States to apply legislation which made provision for suitable punishment, such as a ban from stadia, and to ensure that guilty spectators were identified and judged in the country in which the offence was committed. It also supported greater police cooperation at international level and called on the authorities responsible to give police forces adequate training. It drew particular attention to clubs, calling for those which openly tolerated expressions of violence and racial hatred to be punished. Finally, it hoped that an article on the fight against racism, anti-Semitism and xenophobia would be included when the TEU was revised. It called specifically for: . the Commission to draft an annual report on the impact of the measures taken to fight violence in sport; . research into the origins of hooliganism, the role of extremist organizations among supporters and the impact of the media; . the Council to notify it of action implemented by Member States as part of EURO 96; . the Council to draw up a convention on the fight against violence at football matches.?