

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004629/25
to the Commission
Carolina Morace (The Left)
(19 November 2025)

Subject: Risks to the European sport model posed by the proposed ‘NBA Europe’ project

The proposed ‘NBA Europe’, promoted by the US-based National Basketball Association (NBA) together with *Fédération Internationale de Basketball* (FIBA), would establish a closed league in Europe with permanent franchises and external corporate control. Such a structure risks undermining the European sport model, which is grounded in solidarity, community participation, youth development and equality, as enshrined in Articles 6 and 165 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union ⁽¹⁾ and in Parliament’s resolution on the European sport model.

This initiative could lead to the extraction of fiscal and economic value outside the EU, threaten the sustainability of grassroots and junior systems, marginalise women’s sport by prioritising commercial profitability over equality goals, and weaken the governance role of European federations in favour of a foreign entertainment corporation.

1. Does the Commission consider that ‘NBA Europe’ could amount to a monopolistic structure incompatible with EU competition and cohesion objectives?
2. How does the Commission intend to prevent the fiscal, social and governance extraction of value generated by European sport to non-EU entities?
3. Will the Commission assess whether ‘NBA Europe’ is compatible with the EU’s commitments to equality, solidarity, and the protection of cultural and sporting diversity across the Member States?

Submitted: 19.11.2025

Answer given by Mr Micallef on behalf of the European Commission
(2 February 2026)

Decisions regarding the organisation of sporting competitions are taken autonomously by sporting federations and organisations.

While such decisions must comply with EU law, the specificity and autonomy of sport, explicitly recognised in Article 165 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, must also be safeguarded.

With regard to the ongoing discussions surrounding the proposed ‘NBA Europe’, the Commission notes that current developments continue to highlight longstanding concerns, from a sporting perspective, related to closed league models.

It should be recalled that this would not be the first closed or semi-closed league operating in European basketball, and that the adverse effects of such models are well documented.

These include their impact on domestic competitions, on the principle of open sporting competitions based on sporting merit, on solidarity mechanisms between grassroots and elite sport, as well as on talent development and participation growth. These elements constitute core pillars of the European Sport Model.

Within the limits of its competences, the Commission will continue to call on new sporting competitions to respect the fundamental principles of the European Sport Model.

With respect to sport-related economic activities, the Commission recalls that these must comply with EU law, including the legal framework aimed at preventing tax base erosion and protecting the integrity of the internal market, notably against the diversion of value flows to third countries.

¹ OJ C 326, 26.10.2012, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/treaty/tfeu_2012/oj.