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Answer given by Mr McGrath
on behalf of the European Commission
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EU consumer protection rules do not prevent price changes by market operators, including in the event ticketing sector and when implemented via dynamic pricing. Consumers are protected by the transparency requirements of the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive¹ (UCPD) and the Consumer Rights Directive² (CRD). Furthermore, the UCPD prohibits misleading practices. EU consumer law directives are transposed into national law. Member States' authorities and courts are responsible for enforcement in individual cases, including as in the context of major sporting and cultural events. The Commission may propose in the upcoming Digital Fairness Act³ additional rules regarding price marketing.

Dynamic pricing by dominant undertakings can fall within the scope of Article 102 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union if it amounts to the imposition of excessive prices. However, whether pricing is excessive depends on the relationship between a dominant undertaking's costs and profits rather than on pricing mechanisms. The Commission has in the past investigated excessive pricing by dominant undertakings including in the pharmaceutical and energy sectors⁴. The Commission remains vigilant as regards possible excessive pricing abuses and stands ready to intervene in appropriate cases also in light of its priorities⁵.

Through policies and programmes including Erasmus+, the Commission promotes a European Sport Model grounded in values such as fairness and solidarity. The upcoming Commission Communication on 'A Strategic Vision for Sport in Europe: Reinforcing the European Sport Model' aims to strengthen good governance principles, notably stakeholder representation including fans⁶.

¹ Directive 2005/29/EC, <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2005/29/oj>.

² Directive 2011/83/EU, <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2011/83/oj>.

³ Subject to the impact assessment, the Commission plans to propose the Digital Fairness Act in the fourth quarter of 2026, for more information: https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/14622-Digital-Fairness-Act_en.

⁴ Case AT.40394 - Aspen; and case AT. 39816 - Upstream gas supplies in Central and Eastern Europe. In both cases, the Commission accepted commitments by the dominant undertaking that allowed bringing prices to lower, competitive levels.

⁵ For completeness, the Commission has received a complaint by Euroconsumers and Football Supporters Europe, which alleges that the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) abused its dominant position by imposing excessive ticket prices as well as opaque and unfair purchasing conditions on European fans ahead of the 2026 World Cup. The Commission is examining the complaint in line with the applicable rules and cannot comment on ongoing cases.

⁶ For more information: https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/14741-A-strategic-vision-for-sport-in-Europe-reinforcing-the-European-Sport-Model/public-consultation_en.