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WP3 – FINAL SURVEY

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0. INTRODUCTION

0.1 GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Due to its growing economic and social impact, sport has gained an important place in European strategies and programmes. Sport related goods & services trades, benefits for personal and professional health, new sport-related jobs created in the labour market, economic return of increasing sport audience for public and private organizers: all these aspects are contributing to an even growing importance of sport in the European economy.

In line with these trends, the European Work Plan on Sport 2014 – 2017 had been launched in order to ensure a sustainable, integrated and fair development of the sport sector in Europe. The following key topics should be given priority by Member States and the Commission 1) Integrity of sport, in particular anti-doping, the fight against match-fixing, protection of minors, good governance and gender equality; 2) The economic dimension of sport, in particular sustainable financing of sport, the legacy of major sport events, economic benefits of sport and innovation; 3) Sport and society, in particular HEPA, volunteering, employment in sport as well as education and training in sport, including “dual career” promotion.

With relation to this last aspect, the EU Guidelines on Dual Careers of Athletes (Recommended Policy Actions in Support of Dual Careers in High-Performance Sport) identifies and proposes arrangements in favour of “athletes’ sporting careers, allow for education or work, promote the

attainment of a new career after the sporting career, and protect and safeguard the position of athletes”. In this framework, the AFTERMATCH project decided to focus on the “dark side of the moon”, the situation in which athletes experience a high risk of a traumatic and unproductive exit from the sport’s world: in other words, the project pays attention to the last part of an athletes career, especially for non professional athletes or for athletes not equipped with a safe “professional parachute” during the jump into the labour market, since the other “big issue”, the issues related to the need of “matching education & sport practicing”, very relevant indeed for the dual career promotion, is actually well analysed and faced. Acting this way means to focus on “pre-emptive exit strategy planning adoption”, on “evaluation and raising awareness about useful sport-related soft skills”, on “innovative exit-oriented training modules to be included in traditional federation’s paths”.

Athletes, during their sport career, are very busy with the need of merging sport practicing and education. This is the reason why AFTERMATCH project decided to act “indirectly” on athletes by means of intermediates: sport trainers, sport managers, teachers in sport schools or academies. All the project outputs are primarily targeted to these professional figures, considered one of the most relevant actor in sportsman and sportswoman’s behaviour and “approach towards life” definition: after families (sometimes “set apart” by the need of moving in other cities or regions) and traditional

teachers, these figures are the ones that spend more time with athletes and consequently the most influencing ones.

As stated by Adolf Ogi, the Special Adviser to the United Nations Secretary-General on Sport for Development and Peace, “Sport represents the best school of life by teaching young people the skills and values they need to be good citizens”. The AFTERMATCH partnership believes that, among these skills and values, sport must make athletes aware of the need for paving the way for an exit strategy by teaching the importance of building a future professional life during sport practicing. The present survey intends to increase the number of tools available for a stronger and more efficient action towards athletes, especially those close to the end of the sport career or excluded from the traditional “solutions” (not elite athletes, for example), aware of the fact that, even if a big slice of agonist athletes falls out from the “professional parachutes” at the end of the sport career, they own a set of sport – related competences that may help them during job search action.



0.2 Presentation of the AFTERMATCH project & partnership

As underlined in the introduction, one of the three main challenges identified by the EU Guidelines on Dual Careers of Athletes is “the end-of-sporting-career phase of athletes, including those who leave the system earlier than planned”. The Guidelines also states that Dual careers in sport encapsulates the requirement for athletes to successfully initiate, develop and finalise an elite sporting career as part of a lifelong career, in particular by taking up a role in society, ensuring a satisfactory income, developing an identity and a partner relationship.

The approach AFTERMATCH project proposes to reach these goals is to focus on “competences, acquired during sport practice, that can be successfully transferred in the workplace”, in order to offer athletes the opportunity to recycle and spend their knowledge in and for the labour market. This approach is based on both the following assumptions: A) the competences acquired during sport practice are transversal and could be an added value for everyday life in the community as well as in business oriented activities & jobs and B) there is a strong need of paving the way for a correct exploitation of these competence, by acting on a pre-emptive way through a specific knowledge building action towards who is in direct & every-day contact with athletes.

For this reason, the AFTERMATCH model will act mainly on “sport trainers / sport managers, as well as on teachers of sport schools or academies”, considered one of the most relevant “trait d’union”

for athletes between sport practice, education & employment. A recent survey titled “Analysis of the working conditions of professional sports players”, carried out by UNI Sport PRO with the support of EU Athletes Networks and the European Union, stated that “at some point in their career, sports players have undertaken some form of study while working as a professional and the courses followed are related to their occupation. However, despite country variations and differences between the four sports, it is clear that players are not aware of educational opportunities for life beyond their career in sport and that employers are more often than not, unwilling to support their employees to gain further qualifications and prepare for their career after they retire from sport”. This survey confirm the need for stakeholders to invest on new models able to directly involve the so-called “meso sector” in the dual career world and, most of all, to directly involve employers in order to raise their awareness about the issue.

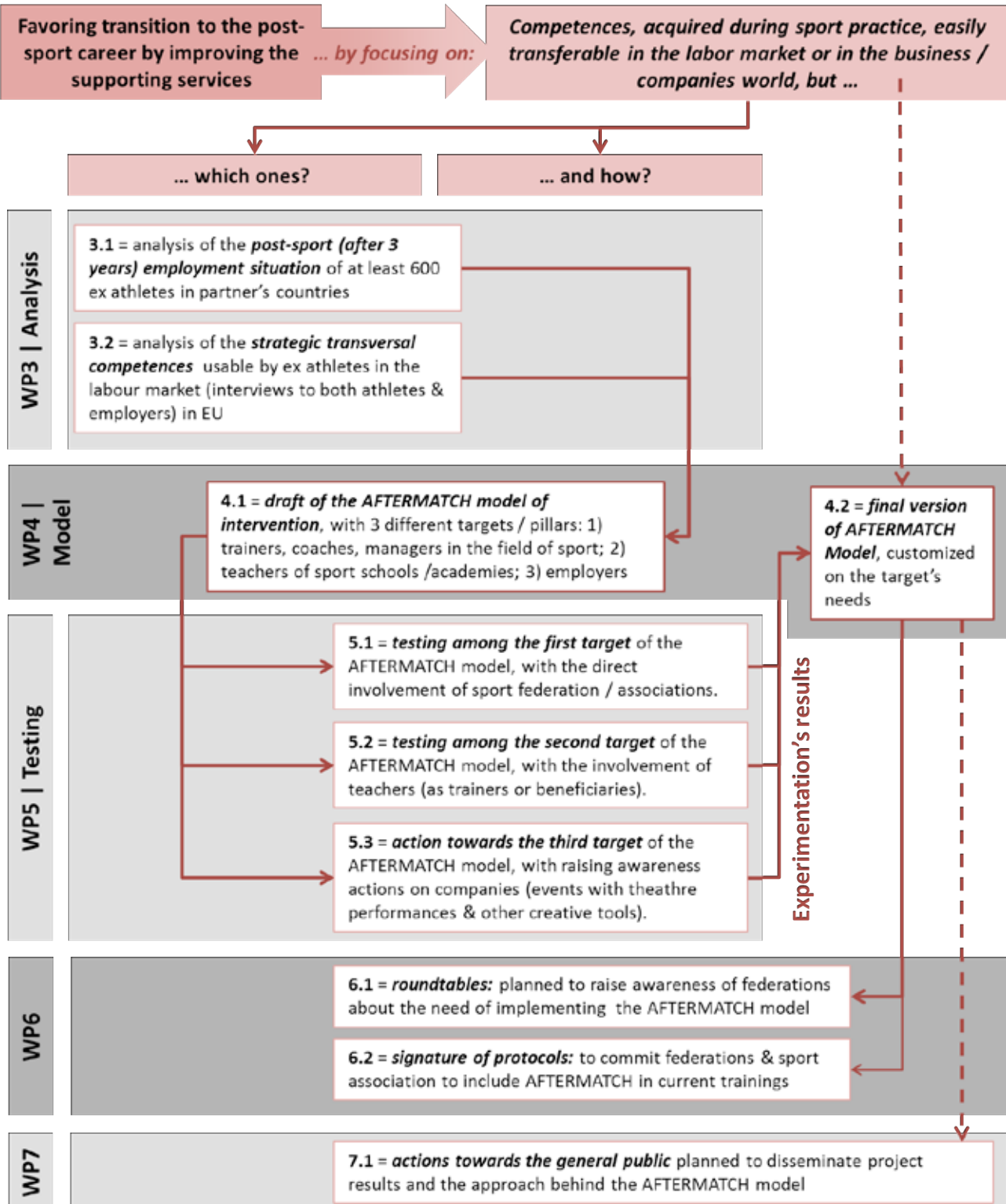
For these reasons, AFTERMATCH project intends to promote a positive behaviour among athletes by focusing on the enforcement of the competences & skills of teachers, trainers and sportive associations / federation managers towards the need for paving the way for an “exit strategy” after the end of the sportive career and by offering an opportunity for ex-athletes to have an innovative professional profile based on “sport related transversal skills” to be spent in private companies.

The project

The methodological approach chosen by the AFTERMATCH project partnership is quite simple. It originates from a simple question: “which competences, acquired during sport practice, can be easily transferable in the labour market and how?”.

The answer to this question is not equally simple and requires an articulated set of actions, from a small scale analysis (in order to be sure of starting from actual situations and needs, WP2) to a preliminary definition of a draft version of Model of Intervention (encompassing 3 main issues / pillars: sport trainers/coaches/managers, sport schools/academies, companies, WP3), from the experimentation of the draft Model (in 5 different EU countries, with the aim of customizing it, WP4) to the final definition of the Model itself (WP4.4), from the exploitation (raising awareness & signatures of protocols, WP6) to the dissemination to general public of the achieved results (promotional activities tailored at country level but coordinated at EU level, WP7). Figure 1 represent the “logical framework” of the AFTERMATCH project

THE AFTERMATCH PROJECT APPROACH



The Partnership

AFTERMATCH project gathers 2 different typology of partners: subject with great experience in education, training, vocational training and employment (Forcoop Cora Venice, EIM Maribor, Intermedi@ct) and sport federations / associations (the Italian Federation of Canoa & Kajak, the Master Federation of Ex Atletes of Bulgaria, the Sports Association in Maribor and the Towarzystwo Sportowe Iron Man in Poland). This choice had been guided by the needs of having a staff composed by experts in project management (content's management as well as financial & administrative management), experts in research, education, vocational training and career support, experts in "sport management" or "ex athletes", with a great experience is "sport-related issues", or sportsman / sportswomen.

Please find here below the AFTERMATCH partnership:



Forcoop CORA Venice / Italy - Coordinator

Forcoop Cora Venezia Sc has been operative since 1990 to design and implement training and guidance paths for people willing to (re)enter the labor market or for employed workers wishing to update or specialize their skills. Forcoop is accredited by the Veneto Region

(Italy) for Guidance, Lifelong learning, Higher education and Employment services.

Forcoop mainly operates in the area of Veneto region, but it is active at national and

European levels thanks to its memberships in CORA and Tandem Plus Network (<http://www.tandemplus.org/>), which is member of ENSA Network (www.ensa-network.eu/). The "core business" is VET and guidance: post-diploma and post-lauream training, lifelong learning and training courses for disadvantaged groups (women, youth, migrants, seniors), school and vocational guidance (coaching, counseling, personal branding development), skills assessment and validation, ad-hoc methodologies development and experimentation, self-entrepreneurship guidance and consultancy services. Website: www.forcoop.eu

FICK – Italian Federation of Canoa and Kayak / Italy - Partner



The FICK is the Italian Federation of canoe and kajak disciplines, officially recognized by CONI (Italian Olympic Committee) in 1987. It has 16.000 licensed active paddlers aged between 8 and 60 years old and it manages two Olympic disciplines, Sprint and Slalom Canoe, and other canoe disciplines like wild water canoe, sailing canoe, sea kayak. FICK joins the International Canoe Federation and the European Canoe Association (ECA). Website: www.center-rcv.org

EIM – Economic Institute Maribor / Slovenia - Partner



Economic institute Maribor, Human Resource Development Centre (eim, HRDC) is a non-profit organisation which support local employment growth, competitiveness and development of human resources, especially at the regional level. HTDC promotes the development of new and innovative training programmes for adults, adapted to the actual needs of companies, organisations, sectors identified by training needs analyses. Over the past 15 years, HRDC has delivered various development projects in order to increase competitiveness, competences and employability of unemployed and employed, develop local labour market, improve competitiveness of companies and regional economy, and promote social inclusion. It contributes to economic and social development by creating conditions, programmes and services for development of human potentials, by promoting and co-creating development policy, by innovative transfer of good practices, by development of services and programmes for companies, organisations and societies, for unemployed, young and older people and by raising awareness on the development of human potential and lifelong learning. Website: www.center-rcv.org



Sportna Zveza Maribor / Slovenia - Partner

Sports Federation of Maribor is a non-governmental, non-profit and independent organisation established in accordance with the Law of Associations, which brings together 180 societies and clubs in the area of the Municipality of Maribor, all of them working in the field of sport, recreation and healthy lifestyle. Established in 1976, it had the status of top level association covering sports organisations in the city of Maribor and also the representative negotiator who defends the interests of athletes, sports professionals, sports associations and clubs and all recreational citizens. Within the framework of its activities, Sports Association of Maribor carries out around 15 projects from various areas, all of them have the fundamental idea in sport. Website: www.sz-maribor.com



Bulgarian Masters Federation / Bulgaria - Partner.

Bulgarian Masters Federation (Federation of sports veterans) was founded in 1991 in Sofia, Bulgaria. The Federation unites the efforts of prominent masters and local clubs covering all areas of sports activities throughout the country. The main goal of the federation is to stand for and safe-guard the interests of veterans in sports and establish "Groups for Health" in the community, where veterans share their skills with amateurs of all ages. The Federation organises and takes part in various activities: conferences, round tables, sportive and gaming competitions and workshops, engaging a great number of veterans retired from active and competitive sport, and members of the wider community, attending the "Groups for Health". The BMF has established long-term links with

similar associations and took part in numerous international events throughout the world. The Federation has its own flag, logo, anthem, stamp and sign of honour. The President is Mrs. Zdravka Yordanova, former rower and Olympic Champion in 1976. The Board and the General Assembly consist of famous Bulgarian Sports people, many of whom are Members of the National Olympic Committee. Website: www.eufriend.eu/SportsBMF

Towarzystwo Sportowe Iron Man / Poland - Partner



T.S. Iron Man is a non-profit organisation working in the area of training, economic and social research, specialised in the fields of youth, sport and employment. The organisation was created in Gogolin in 2006 to respond to the challenges of the human capital management and socio-labour inclusion. T.S. Iron Man has a solid and multitasked team (Economy, Sport, Social Work and International Relations Policies) and has a high level of expertise within the framework of the European Union project management. In the

last 8 years T.S. Iron Man has collaborated with a wide network of professionals and associates all over Europe (social actors, NGOs, public and private training providers, public bodies and administration) with the aim to develop alliances and specific initiatives of exchange of experiences, knowledge, methodologies and results. T.S. Iron Man's main working fields are: training, especially professional training and adults education; employment, knowledge management; disadvantaged collectives; evaluation. It leads, coordinates and participates in the development and experimentation of training itineraries, contents and methodologies that promote innovation on the educational systems, as well as social and labour inclusion of vulnerable collectives. Being Poland one of the EU countries with a higher unemployment rate among the youngsters, also the specific social context makes the participation of T.S. Website: <http://www.tsironman.prv.pl/>

Intermedi@KT / Greece - Partner



Interactive Media Knowledge Transfer (InterMedi@KT) is a non governmental organisation working on vocational education, training and innovation. The main aims of InterMedi@KT include: the promotion of knowledge, vocational and adult training, the support to local development through alternative tourism, the promotion of science and advanced technologies as a tool for becoming better citizens and more competitive professionals and the strengthening of social cohesion. The organisation provides a

gateway for informing and educating young, existing and future entrepreneurs regarding their opportunities, challenges and risks and conducts research on a continual basis, in collaboration with multiple organisations and countries, in order to ensure innovation and sustainability. Located in Patras, Greece, it acts as an intermediate advisor providing essential information and appropriate guidance to end users. Means of communication mainly include web-based platforms and e-learning activities, internet, social media and mobile applications, as well as activities, training seminars, dissemination and sustainability strategies. InterMedi@KT experienced both as applicant and partner in European programmes in the field of education (Youth in Action, Grundtvig Learning Partnership, ERASMUS+ KA1). Website: <http://intermediakt.org/home/>

1. OVERVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE ART IN DUAL CAREER PROMOTION

1.1 The Aftermatch's approach to Dual Career

“Professional athletes are forced to live two times!” With these words the World Champion of Volleball Andrea Zorzi described the importance of paving the way for an “exit – strategy” after the sport career for all athletes. On the other side, it is also true than the issue of “dual career” had been deeply taken into consideration in the past by several European projects and initiatives, but the specific AFTERMATCH project approach derives from a careful and detailed analysis of the state of art revealing the following situation:

The great part of existing initiatives focused mainly on “combination of education and sport career” and on “young athletes” as main target: this preliminary research enabled the partnership to discover that many old or running projects and existing networks in the field of “dual career” in sport focus on the topic of “combination of education and/or work” during sport career, by targeting directly on young athletes (some examples: <http://www.dualcareer.eu/>, the very high level initiative <http://athlete.adecco.com> and the European Athlete Student Network, the SEY – Sport Employs YOUrope project). Differently, the AFTERMATCH project intends to focus specifically on “post sport careers and employment opportunities for ex-athletes”, by starting from examples like

www.vsportplus.eu or www.athletestobusiness.eu or the above mentioned <http://athlete.adecco.com> and moving forward with an innovative approach considering sport teachers, trainers & managers as the main driving force to promote a pre-emptive approach to job market for athletes and considering ex-athletes as a “valuable assets of competences & skills” useful for the business sector, to be preventively trained and prepared for a “second career”.

Secondly, as underlined in the Study QUALIFICATIONS / DUAL CAREERS IN SPORTS , “the responsibility of accompanying talented athletes during their developmental years and elite athletes during their high-level competitive years does not lie in a single person, institution, or specific context (Larsen et al., 2012; 2013). The meso dimension (orange colour in Figure below) comprises actors belonging to the family (e.g., relatives/partner/friends/peers), to the sport (e.g., coaches, managers, staff, dual career tutor), and to academic/work (e.g., teachers/professors, tutor, employers) environments having very strong, direct, very frequent, and bidirectional relationships with the athlete. To enhance the quality of the athlete’s dual career path, moderate,

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not necessarily direct, frequent, and bidirectional relationships between these stakeholders are vital: this is the focal point of AFTERMATCH project's action. In AFTERMATCH countries there is an effective lack of attention among teachers, trainers, sport managers and directors towards the issue of "dual career" when they educate & manage young athletes: despite sever efforts performed with similar initiatives and despite the existence of some "Protocols" for certain Federations (for example: the International Weightlifting Federation Guidelines on Athletes Careers) there is still a great need for

a stronger educational effort in order to give staff of sport associations / federation competences on "dual career", specifically in certain countries. In particular, in territories where there is a lack of Sport Academies or similar institutions or for athletes committed in disciplines where the Army does not offer an employment solution (such as "team sports" like volleyball, basketball, football and so on), there is a very strong need for a stronger sensibility towards a pre-emptive approach to a "second career" among sport federation and associations staff or at least for a more diversified employment offers for ex-athletes.

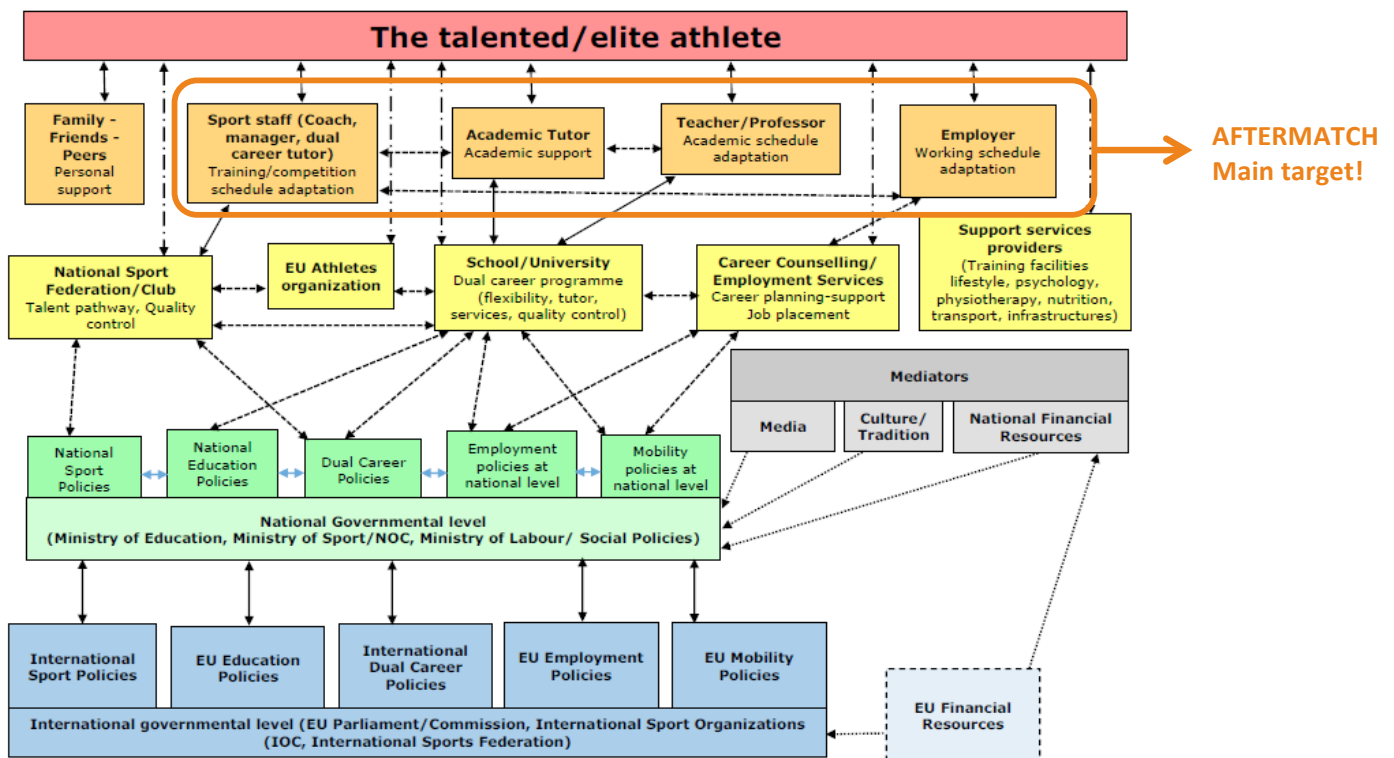


Figure 1: the stakeholders network, from the Study "QUALIFICATIONS / DUAL CAREERS IN SPORTS"

These are the reason why AFTERMATCH mission is to "fill the gap" in the dual career promotion activities by focusing specifically on "the end-of-sporting-career phase of athletes, including those who leave the system earlier than planned" through targeted training for teachers, trainers, directors and

managers of sport association & federation, with an eye on private companies & employers involvement.

1.2 The state of the art in partner's country

Recently the Directorate-General for Internal Policies (Policy Department B: structural and cohesion policies culture and education) released an important study in the field of dual career, titled "QUALIFICATIONS / DUAL CAREERS IN SPORTS" that represent a very detailed and complete analysis of the state of the art of legislation in eight different EU countries, even if limited to elite athletes. This document underlines how "the majority of Member States still provides limited support to the dual career of talented and elite athletes (...) Actually, only few Member States present well-organized

and extensive dual career systems ruled by formal agreements. Conversely, the majority of countries encompass fragmented actions and policies related to some aspects of dual career".

The present chapter is meant to verify once again this assumption, by analysing in detail the situation in each partner country with reference to "dual career" policies and strategies existence and efficiency.

State of the art in Italy

Starting with the concept of work we would like to underline the situation that exists in Italy related to professional sport. The distinction between dilettantism and professionalism has always been much discussed in the universe of sport. Just think that the first editions of the Olympic Games were reserved exclusively for amateurs. The prohibition of professionalism has been removed over the years, depending on the discipline. At the moment only the Olympic boxing is only amateur in the other sports the difference has been completely removed. First of all we need to clearly define the two terminologies: the professional athlete is one who carries out challenging and prevalent sports activities to such an extent that it can not carry out other work. The economic return guarantees however to lead a comfortable life even after the end of racing career. Examples are to be found in football, motorsport, basketball, tennis, cycling, etc. They still represent

an elite in various sports universe. The semi-professional athlete, however, while managing to maintain economic activity during the period, anyway then he will be forced to engage in employment to support himself, when it will end a sports career. The amateur athlete is one who, in addition to sports, for which it receives a small reward (also in the form of reimbursement of expenses) carries out at the same time continuous employment or studying. In Italy the professional sportsman is who practices sports activities in favor of a sports club in return for payment with continuity within the disciplines regulated by CONI who recognizes professionalism.

The text base is the Law no. 91 of 1981 (as amended), which governs the sport employment. The sports employment relationship is governed differently from ordinary employment, for subjects, for the content of the performance and for the form of the contract.

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Only those athletes who compete in sports clubs affiliated to federations that have recognized the professionalism, can be considered as professional sportsmen. There are only six disciplines considered professional: soccer, golf, basketball, boxing, cycling and motorcycling... But only for men! The battle for the inclusion of women in professional sports goes on for years. Being professionals provides access to social security and health guarantees provided for workers in the sector. Including the severance pay at the end of the contract. This gender difference is regarded by many as unconstitutional. There is a need for deepening the relationship between schools/universities and high-level athletes in Italy: actually, the atypical profile of the “student-worker” is well recognizable, but specific policies have to be adopted at academic level as well as in the labour market, to allow the arrangement of job and study schedules. Conversely, not having a recognized status as atypical students, talented artists and athletes are not supported by specific policies and might encounter difficulties in their educational path because extra-curricular artistic or athletic activities might require a long time. Teachers demonstrate a divergent perception of student-athletes. In fact, some university professors show a negative approach toward this population, assuming that lack

of contact with the campus community, has limited opportunities to engage with faculty and to develop adequate academic competencies. Conversely, a positive teachers’ perception of student-athletes emerged more recently, considering them capable-to-excellent students and confirming a recognition of sport values that enhance personal qualities such as positive self-perception, commitment, personal organization, and dedication toward a particular goal.

Although in Italy the absence of formal cooperation between sport and academic bodies strongly relies on the individual negotiation between student-athletes and teaching staff, there is a lack of information on the actual teachers’ availability to structure individual and flexible paths for student-athletes enrolled in their courses. Italy currently has a policy for the recruitment only for “active” athletes in the public sector (military forces) rather than sports retired. The issue of athlete ‘dual careers’ in elite sport and education or work has received increasing attention over recent years from a whole range of stakeholders. Thanks to European guidelines several partners of the EOC EU Office are currently working on the project “Gold in Education and Elite Sport” (GEES).”



State of the art in Slovenia

In Slovenia “dual career” arrangements are designed primarily to overcome challenges of combining athletes sporting career with education, where both areas are the responsibility of the same ministry, Ministry of Education, Science and Sport. On the level of primary and secondary education the adjustments of the educational programmes for athletes are enabled with the Act on primary school, Act on upper secondary school (gimnazije) and Act on vocational and professional education, with specifics set by the minister in the Policy on adjustment of school obligations. Under that legislation athletes with the status of perspective or a top athlete can benefit from flexible timetables and exam dates, additional learning support and possibility to be absent for competitions. They can also enrol into sport class if the selected school has one organised, whereas some of them even offer on-line education. For each athlete the individual work plan is prepared in cooperation with the teacher, school counsellor, parents and the trainer, in order to reach optimal balance of all activities and obligations. It is generally known that young athletes have pretty good learning success, since they are better in balancing learning and sport contents. On the tertiary level the Higher Education Act leaves the higher education institutions themselves to clarify the possible adjustments for athletes in terms of study regime, forms and period for exams. Usually athletes can benefit from flexible arrangements on exam timetables, compulsory attendance and conditions for advancement. In 2015 the significant step towards a study of sport management, which will be intended only for the athletes, was made by the Faculty of Organisational Science in cooperation with top athletes and Olympic Committee of Slovenia

(OCS). Although the enrolment in the programme is not yet possible. All these measures encourage athletes to maintain their educational programmes and have good starting point for a career after sport career.

Just recently the Ministry, following the EU Guidelines on Dual Careers of Athletes, made available funds to improve employability and mobility on the labour market for athletes who finished their sport career, by offering financial support for their training and education.

To overcome challenges of combining athletes sporting career with work the Slovenian Ministry of Education, Science and Sport signed an Agreement on employment of top athletes and coaches with the OCS, which serves as a base for their employment in government institutions. In this way certain number of posts at Ministry of Defence – Armed forces, Ministry of Internal Affairs – Police forces and Ministry of Finance - Customs administration is allocated to top athletes during their sport career and also 1-2 years after the last top result. The quota for such employment is planned in the National Sport Programme and should reach the number of 150 by the 2023. The same programme envisages also promotion of the system for employment of top athletes and trainers in private businesses during the period from 2014-2023. Following the International Olympic Committee initiative also the OCS in cooperation with employment agency Adecco prepared a special program of supporting employment process of athletes. In 2005 they managed to support employment of 18 ex-athletes.

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Educational system in Slovenia offers pretty good conditions for the education of athletes and is well regulated. As a result, many Slovene athletes manage to successfully complete their education during or shortly after finishing their sport career. Despite significant flexibility in timetables, obligation deadlines and compulsory attendance as well as good cooperation of schools and sport associations, there are no real efforts made in terms of “paving the way for an exit strategy” by valorising transversal skills, providing support in career development and involving also employers. Therefore, specific focus should be put on additional content in professional education of teachers and trainers involved in dual career of athletes.

Although Slovenia has different measures in place regarding employment of athletes, there are still gaps needed to be closed. For instance, not enough athletes are offered the possibility of employment

in government institutions (ministries) during their active sport career due to the limited number of posts available. The increase of this number is already planned in the National sport programme which will certainly help to improve the situation.

From the private business sector, no strong preference to employ (ex)athletes is detected and no significant advantage of their transversal skills over the level of education or professional experience is given. Therefore, more efforts should be made to promote their employment in private sector. Public authorities should invite chambers of commerce and businesses to actively cooperate with sport organisations to raise awareness of dual careers in the labour market and encourage partnership with the business world. Furthermore, social partners should include dual careers on the agenda of their social dialogue.

State of the art in Bulgaria

The idea of developing possibilities in preparation for a dual career, became popular in Bulgaria several years ago as a trend for educating young people in a way that would offer Companies young employees with adequate skills and competences. At first it was popularized among government institutions, administrators and educators from general and vocational schools. Special seminars, presentations and discussions have been organized and lecturers from different countries (Germany and Austria) were invited to explain the essence and the benefits from the notion of the dual career implementation. There was a common acceptance and understanding of the social benefits both for employees and employers in a general sense. The

idea was, that companies would sign contracts with local schools, employing (internship) part time the students with a comfortable salary, giving them the possibility to learn the skills needed for the concrete enterprise (factory) and offering jobs after school to the ones that found the job good for them.

This, as mentioned above, was an offer, aiming at diminishing the rate of unemployment and offering well prepared workers for the companies. Yet, this did not give a variety of jobs to choose from, as students were qualified for the needs of a certain company only. It did not target young athletes specifically.

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The National Sports Academy has been really useful to its students (young athletes from different sports), by establishing the Career Centre, which to help students choose a profession, prepare for and find a job. Yet, the jobs to choose from are all from the sport field. The Centre employed as lecturers specialists from different sport disciplines at the NSA. They prepared students for employment in state, social and private institutions and organizations in the field of physical education, sports and tourism. The Centre gives orientation when choosing among possibilities of professional realization; consultation in preparation for job interviews - putting together a CV, motivational letter, and for participation in activities with legal relations with employers and helping students and ex-athletes to contact employers.

The target beneficiaries are: Graduating NSA students; Former graduates, athletes with an established professional realization in Bulgaria and abroad; state, social and private institutions and organizations in the field of physical education, sports and tourism. Potential employers: Big companies and SME. The Career Centre is funded by the national budget. (Priority activities of the NSA Career center aiming to help students in their career realization are free of charge). Specialized Branches of the National Sports Academy work on:

- Preparing an Analysis of the conditions and progress of processes in the labour market through means, such as: (consultations, work meetings, conferences, scientific research etc.);
- Production of informative material for alternative working possibilities in different fields of the physical education, sports and tourism;
- Organized and managed national and international events concerning career orientation and realization of students.

- Bringing together employers and candidate employees. Carrying out a number of national and international events fostering students' career orientation.
- Bilateral and multilateral events organized for matching students and interns with possible employers.

Bulgarian sport organizations (schools, clubs and federations) are mainly dealing with education and training of athletes in their active phase of their sports career. They have no obligation to manage and promote athletes' dual careers. The only specialized structure to tackle the dual career issue in Bulgaria is the Career Centre within the National Sport Academy. Their way of work with athletes is explained in detail in Chapter 6. Yet, the Centre, takes care only about the continuation of the athletes' career in the field of sports, as future trainers, coaches, administrators and other sport related professionals.

The specialized sport schools and the National sport academy are engaged in providing flexible education and training programmes for children and students, but they are mainly regulating the possibility of young athletes to undergo an effective learning process alongside the trainings. What is missing in respect to dual career preparation, is the regular and effective contact with firms and companies, ready to provide internship positions to young athletes, using their soft and transversal skills acquired during their sport activities and special education. There is a need of relevant sponsorship programmes for active athletes, from big national and international companies, who would profit enormously from engaging our top athletes, not only as faces for advertising, but also as people with (indignity, stamina and motivation, discipline, motivation and devotion.

State of the art in Poland

Sport is an integral part of life for many people, but it should be remembered that for this reason most of them have to live in two ways. They are forced to connect the role of a sportsman with the role of a student/employee. It was only several years ago that Polish sport associations became aware that they should care not only about the sport successes of athletes, but also about their education and work. This problem has always affected athletes, who are often faced with a hard choice between a further, uncertain sport career, providing them with an opportunity of high earnings, and everyday work, generating a more modest, but regular income.

The current structure of Polish sport is based on the existence of various sport associations and it is those organisations that should bear the burden of concern about the future of athletes, as that concern encapsulates their vital interest. Several projects pursued by state institutions and institutions of higher learning have brought no significant change in the situation of athletes; they were mostly analytical projects probing the situation and offering no solution to the problem whatsoever. The best athletes are awarded for their achievements with prizes and scholarships of the Ministry of Sport. Olympic medallists have a particularly good situation, being entitled to special pension benefits. However, they constitute only a small percentage of all the athletes, with the overwhelming majority having only themselves to rely on.

The lack of systemic dual career arrangements in Poland results in:

- Athletes abandoning a sport career after the junior phase;

- Postponing the end of their sport career even when their performance is clearly weaker;
- Lack of an athlete's preparation for a professional career after the end of their sport career.

The main problem is the lack of systemic arrangements enabling a person to combine a sport career with education and, subsequently, a professional career. Factors such as rigidly fixed work hours, the lack of complete availability resulting from training hours or a small number of sport facilities located near institutions of higher education contribute to a decision to abandon training despite talent and willingness. A very important factor is also access to psychological support, specialist physicians who are familiar with the specific nature of a given discipline or ordinary welfare and financial assistance. More and more often young masters, when considering their future, have to choose between education and taking up work and the professional pursuit of sport and representing their nation.

The basic barriers to combining education with sport identified in the course of analysing national documents include:

- Insufficient flexibility of the arrangements enabling a person to adjust their training commitments and trips to other training venues and competitions to their school/academic year plan.
- Too little support for student athletes from their sport associations.
- Insufficient level and instability of financing, which causes athletes to seek support from their families and become financially independent late in life or take up work, which, in turn, places an excessive burden and may negatively affect their

sport performance.

It is also distressing that, in the view of athletes themselves, they receive too little support from their sport associations. A recurrent motive in the survey was that of a sport association that takes insufficient care of athletes' needs and is badly managed and authoritarian. Many of those surveyed had a feeling that their associations acted in an opportunist manner, supporting athletes when they are successful and leaving them to their own devices when they are injured or have a worse season. At the same time, however, athletes mentioned that, e.g. the association paid for their equipment and trips

to other training venues and competitions or helped them obtain accommodation in dormitories.

That negative opinion also concerned, to a certain degree, university sport clubs affiliated with the Academic Sport Association. This may have a discriminatory effect on, especially, top class athletes, who sometimes have no possibility to participate in such competitions due to the specific nature of their training or a tight schedule filled with alternative competitions.

State of the art in Greece

Following the recent achievements of ESTPORT project (<http://www.sporttutorship.eu>), since 2015 there is no any fundamental institutional approach concerning the promotion of the status of students / athletes in Greece. This assumption is confirmed by the research "Structural Support of High-Performance Athletes' Education - Supporting Dual Careers in Greece", which states that "The current Greek sport education context seems to offer a relatively poor dual-career support when compared with other available structures in the world. More precisely, the secondary educational system supports only those who exhibit distinguished athletic accomplishments. This system excludes many who, although they are equally engaged in the demanding lifestyle of being an HPA, do not become elite". In most cases their Dual Career arrangements often depend on the goodwill of persons in key positions of their Institutions (e.g. faculty of Universities, thorough specific "career offices"): until recently, all the efforts to help Greek

athletes to shift from viewing the world as an athlete to a post-athletic perspective have met with limited degrees of success. So said, providing sufficient justifications, all student-athletes in Greece were allowed to miss 20% to 50% of classes for important athletic commitments; moreover, the Greek Ministry of Education also set out legislation to facilitate the enrollment of athletes with certain sport accomplishments in higher education institutions. These are realized by awarding additional points on top of the overall points athletes get in the university entrance exams taken by all high school students.

With reference to past or existing relevant practices, there is an evidence of a general failure of systemic actions in practical terms: specifically traditional "dual-career" initiatives such as "Athletic Schools" and "Mentor" (merely adopted from Sport Departments of Greek Universities), basically introduced in a pilot "status", actually failed due to the absence of a broader institutional framework

1. OVERVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE ART IN DUAL CAREER PROMOTION

that could support the concept of “dual-career” ensuring the existence of these initiatives for a long period. The sport’s world in Greece suggests that an effective “Dual-Career” model “should address not only the students-athletes but also all the relevant actors (faculty, coaches, parents, administrators, etc.) in order to ensure the development of effective skills and knowledge that is required to help student athletes optimize their personal and athletic goals”. The ESTPORT Project concludes that “Student-athletes – in Greece - need opportunities to develop a broad base of perspectives, knowledge, and experience to make appropriate career choices and successful life transitions. Therefore, it becomes more apparent than ever that a systematic approach based on general and sustainable institutional, financial and legal arrangements is required”.

With relation to the AFTERMATCH approach, aiming at targeting the so called “meso dimension” of dual career, only in 2006 in Greece the law 3479 has included the responsibilities for public institutions (Federations, Universities, Schools, etc...) to organize and realize regular training seminars for administrative and technical staff of professional football, establishing training centers and cooperation with such centers, for “former football players”, but this law yet it has never been implemented. Secondly, Sport clubs in Greece are private entities with a limited liability status and are under no obligation to safeguard athletes’ education.



The GGSS assumes that the following choices are available for athletes who have completed upper secondary education but have not yet been enrolled in a university:

*a) enroll in a vocational training program at a postsecondary education institution, or
b) apply to the Hellenic Open University, which uses a distance learning method to deliver six courses at the bachelor’s degree level. However, the number of applicants in the Hellenic Open University is quite high. For selection, each year, the university carries out a draw (Greek Open University, 2011). In 2009, 31,559 students applied for the 4,200 spots available (NEA, 2011).*

*Source:
http://www.shapeamerica.org/advocacy/upload/A-in-A_Jan-Feb-14.pdf*

1.3 Conclusions

The results of this little desk research about the situation of “dual career” in the 5 countries involved in the AFTERMATCH project partially confirms the scientific committee expectations: athletes and former athletes in all countries needs more support in order to combine sport career and professional life, in particular when sportspeople reach an older age. In fact, all countries showed that specific action has been implemented in the past in order to enable young athletes to merge education and sport, especially by means of specific agreements between Government and Higher Education Institutes (University in particular), while less attention had been paid to set up solution for helping athletes at the end of the sport career. Tutors in the Universities (in Greece), specific and tailored educational

programmes (the creation in Italy of the “Liceo Sportivo”) in recent years seems to demonstrate a higher attention to “dual career”. The most advanced country with relation to “institutional support to dual career” seems to be Slovenia, where thanks to the Act on primary school, the Act on upper secondary school (gimnazije) and the Act on vocational and professional education young athletes can benefit from specific “flexibility” during educational path; moreover, just recently the Ministry, following the EU Guidelines on Dual Careers of Athletes, made available funds to improve employability and mobility on the labour market for athletes who finished their sport career, by offering financial support for their training and education.



1. OVERVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE ART IN DUAL CAREER PROMOTION

Despite these recent improvements, the table below shows the most common problems:

COUNTRY	SPECIFIC PROBLEMS
GREECE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no fundamental institutional approach concerning the promotion of the status of students / athletes in Greece. • Sport clubs in Greece are private entities with a limited liability status and are under no obligation to safeguard athletes' education • "Dual-Career" model "should address not only the students-athletes but also all the relevant actors (faculty, coaches, parents, administrators, etc.)"
SLOVENIA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no real efforts made in terms of "paving the way for an exit strategy" by valorising transversal skills, providing support in career development and involving also employers. • Not enough athletes are offered the possibility of employment in government institutions (ministries) during their active sport career due to the limited number of posts available. • From the private business sector, no strong preference to employ (ex)athletes is detected and no significant advantage of their transversal skills over the level of education or professional experience is given.
ITALY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of information on the actual teachers' availability to structure individual and flexible paths for student-athletes enrolled in their courses • Only those athletes who compete in sports clubs affiliated to federations that have recognized the professionalism, can be considered as professional sportsmen. But only for men! • Since they are not having a recognized status as atypical students, talented athletes are not supported by specific policies and might encounter difficulties in their educational path. • Teachers demonstrate a divergent perception of student-athletes. In fact, some university professors show a negative approach toward this population, assuming that lack of contacts with the campus community, has limited opportunities to engage with faculty and to develop adequate academic competencies.
POLAND	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient flexibility of the arrangements enabling a person to adjust their training commitments and trips to other training venues and competitions to their school/academic year plan. • Too little support for student athletes from their sport associations. • Insufficient level and instability of financing, which causes athletes to seek support from their families and become financially independent late in life or take up work, which places an excessive burden and may negatively affect their performance.

1. OVERVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE ART IN DUAL CAREER PROMOTION

COUNTRY	SPECIFIC PROBLEMS
BULGARIA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bulgarian sport organizations (schools, clubs and federations) are mainly dealing with education and training of athletes in their active phase of career. They have no obligation to manage and promote athletes' dual careers. • The only specialized structure to tackle the dual career issue in Bulgaria is the Career Centre within the National Sport Academy. Their way of work with athletes is explained in detail in the "Good practice example from Bulgaria". Yet, the Centre, takes care only about the continuation of the athletes career as trainers, coaches and other professionals working for sports. • The specialized sport schools and the National sport academy are engaged in providing flexible education and training programmes for children and students, but they are mainly regulating the possibility of young athletes to undergo an effective learning process alongside the trainings. • What is missing in respect to dual career preparation, is the regular and effective contact with firms and companies, ready to provide internship positions and relevant sponsorship programmes for active athletes.

As underlined before, most of the efforts activated in all countries deal with "combining education and sports", especially at institutional level and the table above demonstrates that many of the problems are perceived in this field. Anyway, some countries start to face the problem of "ensuring a professional career to athletes at the end of the sport career", where

institutional support, as well as sport federations / associations support, are almost zero. In chapter 6 is possible to see a list of "recent practices", some of them business-oriented, that try to fill this gap, especially with experimental initiatives activated by Ministries, National Federations and private recruitment companies

2. SOFT & TRANSVERSAL SKILLS ARE THE KEY

2.1 What is a transversal skill? Definition

“Competence” has recently become a popular buzzword and it is because the world around us (and the situation in terms of our learning) is changing.

In today’s digitized globalized world, our lives are looking more and more like puzzles. Our life path is no longer straight and predictable. We live in societies that are diverse, highly mobile, and constantly changing. The same can be said of our learning path. What we learn at school (and even at university) no longer lasts throughout our professional life. Post-secondary degrees and diplomas no longer guarantee a successful professional career. The employment market is changing so fast that a course of study which is cutting-edge today can be completely obsolete tomorrow. It is likely that we will need to re-orient ourselves, find new work and new professions, not just once but at several different stages in our adult working lives.

What are skills and competences?

According to definition applied by the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), “skill means the ability to apply knowledge and use know-how to complete tasks and solve problems”. So, skills can be described as cognitive (involving the use of logical, intuitive and creative thinking) or practical (involving manual dexterity and the use of methods, materials, tools and instruments). On the other hand, “competence means the proven ability to

use knowledge, skills and personal, social and/or methodological abilities, in work or study situations and in professional and personal development.” They are described in terms of responsibility and autonomy.

While sometimes used as synonyms, the terms “skill” and “competence” can be distinguished according to their scope. The term skill refers typically to the use of methods or instruments in a particular setting and in relation to defined tasks. The term competence is broader and refers typically to the ability of a person - facing new situations and unforeseen challenges - to use and apply knowledge and skills in an independent and self-directed way.

In recent years, the Member States of the European Union have discussed a lot about skills and competences, learning, and the valorisation of skills and competences however acquired. In 2006 the European Commission put forward a recommendation that provided, for the first time, a European reference tool on Key Competences that outlined the different types of competences appropriate to each context and fundamental for each individual in a knowledge-based society. They provide added value for the labour market, social cohesion, and active citizenship by offering flexibility and adaptability, satisfaction and motivation.

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That framework sets out eight Key Competences, including:

1. Communication in the mother tongue;
2. Communication in foreign languages;
3. Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology;
4. Digital competence;
5. Learning to learn;
6. Social and civic competences;
7. Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship;
8. Cultural awareness and expression.

On the other side, the European Commission services launched the ESCO project in 2010 with an open stakeholder consultation. DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion – supported by the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop) – coordinates the development of ESCO. ESCO is the multilingual classification of European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations and is part of the Europe 2020 strategy. The ESCO classification identifies and categorises skills, competences, qualifications and occupations relevant for the EU labour market, education and training. It systematically shows the relationships between the different concepts. ESCO taxonomy and classification help us understand how we (as European citizens and professionals) should use all these terms and what differentiate, for example, hard skills from transversal skills and competences.

In general, hard skills and competences are referred to as a whole range of technical, job-specific skills, which are usually easily observed, measured, trained and are closely connected with knowledge. Among the “hard skills” ESCO identifies sector-specific and job-specific skills and competences. These skills and competences can be applied in a specific type of occupation either in a specific sectors

(sector-specific) or in a specific job position (job-specific). In between, ESCO defines cross-sector skills and competences, that can be transferred from one occupation to another, let’s say generally applicable hard and/or soft skills and competences (for example: application of knowledge, social interaction, etc.).

On the other hand, transversal skills and competences are relevant to a broad range of occupations and sectors. They are often referred to as core skills, basic skills or soft skills, the cornerstone for the personal development of a person. Transversal skills and competences are the building blocks for the development of the “hard” skills and competences required to succeed on the labour market. Among those skills and competences, there are the 8 Key Competences identified by the E.C. They are usually intangible and closely connected with attitudes. The “measurement” and recognition of these skills and competences are still open issues in the European Union, however increasingly more efforts are made to give value and official recognition to such skills and competences.

Actually, in recent years our attitudes towards learning – and consequently towards the recognition of skills and competences, have been changing. In the past, educational policies and practices approached “learning” as something which ceased as soon as a young person left school and skills and competences were much related to job and occupation. More recently, however, these policies have changed to actively recognise and reflect the fact that learning takes place throughout our lives. With this has come new awareness that a large amount of our learning does not take place only inside the formal education system but also in other contexts (like in work experience, sport activities, volunteering, with family and friends, etc.) and as a

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result these other areas of learning are beginning to gain more respect. And labour market players, especially employers, have been developing an increasingly stronger awareness on the relevance of transversal skills and competences in the workplace – in the HR management policies and practices as well as in the recruitment and selection phases.

A recent video of the World Economic Forum confirms this increasing importance of “soft skills” for a successful employment path . The video lists down 10 fundamental soft skills for 2020:

1. Cognitive Flexibility;
2. Negotiation;
3. Service Orientation;
4. Capacity of Judgment and taking decision;
5. Emotional Intelligence;
6. Capacity of coordination with others;
7. Team Management;
8. Creativity;
9. Critical Thinking;
10. Complex Problem Solving.

In the following paragraph we will see how a significant number of these 10 soft skills belongs to the “competence’s box” of athletes and former athletes (es. goal setting, problem solving, team building, resilience).

2.2 Transversal skills in sport

During their sport career athletes acquire several transversal skills that can be applied to other areas of an athlete’s life – including the classroom and future working life. Such athletic transferable skills can be defined as abstract skills learned in the sporting environment that are applicable to other facets of life or to another career (Mayocchi & Hanrahan, 2000). Not only do those skills help athletes with all aspects of life, but they also provide athletes with an increased level of self-confidence. Some of the most widely recognizable transversal skills developed during the sports career are:

1. Goal setting

Athletes regularly set goals for themselves, providing a roadmap to follow for success. Writing down specific, measurable and realistic goals is a proven methodology that works not only in sports, but all aspects of life. Setting daily, short-term, mid-term, and long-term goals can help provide structure and ongoing feedback, with which the success can be measured in all areas of life.

2. Focus

Athletes have to learn self-discipline and

2. SOFT & TRANSVERSAL SKILLS ARE THE KEY

“blockout” distractions, like the crowd or the last bad play, while sharpening their focus on the things that are important and relevant.

3. Team building

Learning how to co-exist with teammates (even the ones you don't like) is a really important life skill. This includes effective communication, resolving conflicts, and development of problem-solving strategies together as a group. This ability requires focus often on team effort toward group goals to the sacrifice of ego and personal goals, leading a team through group effort and building team spirit. Through these athletes also develop loyalty and trust, in oneself and in the efforts of others.

4. Motivation

Athletes know the importance of motivation, especially during off-season drills and conditioning. They are used to work hard, do all the necessary things and continue to push themselves in order to be successful.

5. Resilience

Similar to sports, where athletes often face stress, frustration and failure, life test our character all the time, and what we do with the stress and adversity we face in life literally defines our success or failure. Resilience is simply the ability to bounce back, learn from successes and failures and move to the next hurdle, dropping negative baggage along the way.

6. Time management

During the sports career athletes develop ability to organise time with balancing a rigorous work load of full time athletics, travel, and school, maintaining good grades.

7. Confidence

Athletes are able to build their self-confidence through a winning mind-set, belief in self and team, often in high pressured situations.

8. Discipline and responsibility

Athletes develop strong commitment to practice, work hard and give maximum effort, while adhering to rules and guidelines, prioritizing tasks and responsibilities, which is widely expected at the workplace.

9. Evaluate abilities

Due to exposure to competition and constant comparison the athletes develop ability to evaluate, as they are able to receive and give criticism in effective ways, learn from mistakes and move forward, and also develop communication skills in speaking and listening.

10. Coaching – Self Coaching

This is crucial competence for who chose to be trainer, coach (also in companies), sport managers, but it is also important for being “the trainer of him or herself”: learning from mistakes, personal development, etc...

11. Problem Solving

This is the most similar competence between sport practice and labour market: every day, both sportsmen or sportswomen and workers had to do with problems, hurdles and difficulties to overcome.

Depending on the nature of sport that athletes are practicing there are some differences in competencies acquired, depending especially on “individual based sports” or “team based sports”. While playing an individual sport athletes learn to be

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self-reliant, how to be comfortable in the spotlight, how to motivate themselves and compete at their own pace, etc. On the other hand, while playing team sport the athletes learn to work as a team, accept decisions, understand others' different abilities and develop social interaction skills, respect for team mates, leadership skills and resilience through sharing positive and negative experiences.

Unfortunately, many athletes never identify their athletic transversal skills, or they don't connect the value of the skills they use in sports to life. Increasing athletes' awareness of their ability to transfer skills from sport to other areas of their life may be enough to affect adjustment to career transition (Mayocchi & Hanrahan, 2000). When athletes are successful in sport, their focus may become so narrow that they do not see how their skills may also be effective in a

non-sporting environment. Teaching athletes about skill transfer increases their confidence in their own ability to start a new career and may improve their ability to use their skills in different settings (Petitpas et al., 1992). Athletes may find that increasing awareness of their skills may help improve their athletic career by increasing their understanding of the role certain skills play in athletic performance (Mayocchi & Hanrahan, 2000). Athletes who have an increased understanding of the skills they have acquired through sport will be better able to explain these skills to future employers and outline how these skills will be useful in a non-athletic career (Mayocchi & Hanrahan).

2.3 Conclusion

Playing is a serious matter, some would say. In fact, skills and competences acquired through the sport career are invaluable resources for most sport disciplines, but they also help athletes to succeed in their studies or schoolwork, to qualify for a working career and to build and maintain healthy and satisfying personal relationships. So, it is of great importance to raise awareness and call for concrete action among sport organisations and associations. Recognising that sport can serve as a powerful tool for developing transversal skills and competences will not only improve the athletes' current athletic experience, satisfaction and performance, but supporting the development and improvement of such skills will inevitably have a positive effect on athletes' school-, private- and working lives. It further needs to be emphasized that being an athlete

is not an occupation that will last a life time, and thus it is essential to equip athletes with skills that will enable them to eventually move on to another career, that in most cases will take place outside the sport world. So, it is also sport federations' duty to face this challenge and equip their organisations with relevant programmes and initiatives.

In addition to that, we need to be aware, that according to the International Labour Organisation of the United Nations, youth are three times more likely to be unemployed compared to adults. Both developed and developing countries are failing to increase employment opportunities for young people. In 2009, approximately 78 - 90 million youth were unemployed. Over the next decade, one billion young people will reach working age. Providing

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them with the opportunity to secure employment is vital so that they possess the skills which can strengthen communities and nations, too. So, the knowledge, skills, health and physical abilities generally developed through sport experiences can benefit young sportspeople by improving their chances of finding employment, raising their level of income and making them more optimistic and thus motivate them towards their future.

On the other side, the labour market has been changing in the last decades, however employers' interest towards transferrable skills and competences has been increasing. Generally speaking, at European level all countries can count on systems supporting the recognition of transversal skills and competences and the valorisation of

all kind of learning experiences, however there is a widespread lack of a framework for the certification of non formal and informal learning, even if many efforts have been made to develop a European framework for the validation of skills and competences however acquired.

This notwithstanding, sport practice offers athletes facing today's highly competitive labour market for the first time the unique opportunity to stand out from the crowd, gaining the necessary skills and experiences which lead to employability.

3 THE AFTERMATCH SURVEY: A METHODOLOGICAL OVERVIEW

3.1 The reason behind this survey

As underlined in Chapter 1, a relevant number of actions and programmes had been put in place in the field of Dual Career in Europe, especially in the last 10 years, but few of them had been specifically focused on the “end of career” period. Even less actions took into consideration “which sport related skills can be fruitfully transferred and used for ensuring a better employment situation and how”, by involving directly employers. Sport related skills (hard & soft), innovative training methodologies and/or modules, public & private employers involvement, innovative target of the training action (sport trainers, sport managers, teachers in sport academies – schools, employers or HR managers). These are the “starting points” for the AFTERMATCH methodology elaboration.

In order to comply with this demanding goal, a preliminary research was necessary, since there was not enough information and data referred to these topics. The AFTERMATCH partnership decided to act on a double line: from one side, by collecting at least 50 short interviews to ex athletes in each of the 5 countries participating the project (Italy, Slovenia, Greece, Bulgaria and Poland), by using on-line forms, in order to obtain a general overview of the employment situation on the following topics: typology

of job; sector – tasks; level of earning; job stability; continuity with reference to the job experiences (if any) during the sport performance; level of satisfaction; level of utilization of knowledge / skills acquired during sport career. From the other side, by realizing 20 detailed interviews in each countries (10 to athletes/ex athletes and 10 to employers) in order to collect from one side the perception of athletes/ex athletes towards the quantity, quality and utility of the skills-bag acquired during their sport career and from the other side the perception of employers towards the most useful sport-related skills for HR and company’s performance empowerment.

Thanks to these 2 actions, the scientific coordinators of the project acquired enough information to match data coming from existing researches or practices (see Chapter 6) with “fresh and actual data”, especially for partner’s countries.

3.2 The methodological framework

Targets

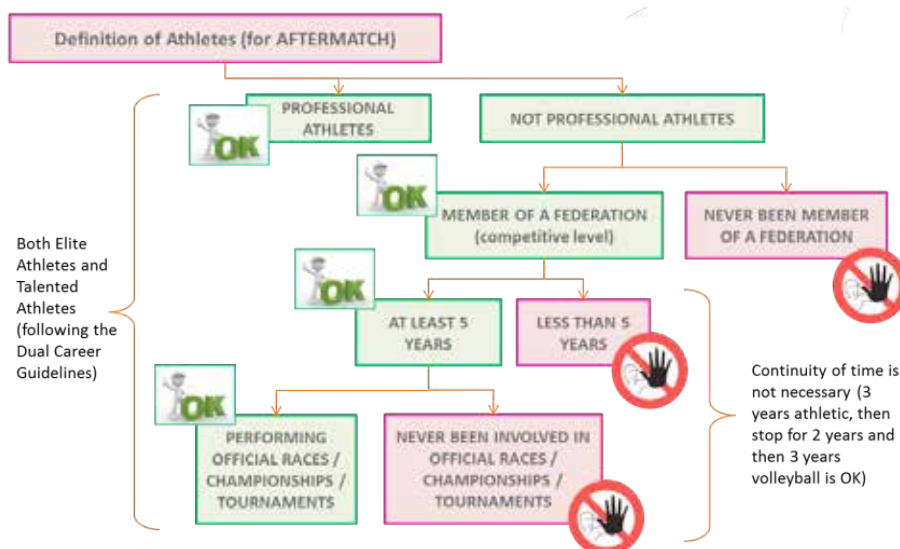
The first step in the planning process was to identify and clarify the target. The EU Guidelines on Dual Careers of Athletes Recommended Policy Actions in Support of Dual Careers in High -Performance Sport defines athletes as follows:

1. A talented athlete is an athlete recognised by a sport organisation as an athlete who has the potential to develop an elite sporting career.
2. An elite athlete is an athlete who has a professional contract with a sport employer or sport organisation or has a recognised status by a sport organisation as an elite athlete.

Moreover:

An elite athlete is defined as any athlete selected to represent their country in their chosen sport, at either junior or senior international level. Disabled

sport (also known as adaptive sport or parasport) is defined as sport played by people with a disability, either physical or intellectual. Professional sport is defined as a sport in which athletes receive payment for their performance. These definitions are too much “conservative” for the purpose and the aims of the AFTERMATCH project, since we agreed that also a person who performed sports under a federation, with several years of training / competition (at least 5) is to be considered an athlete for the project vision. So, AFTERMATCH definition of Athletes reflects the following picture:



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By acting this way, AFTERMATCH project considered eligible for the research also non professional athletes with a relevant period of “sport practicing” at agonistic level. The reason behind this choice is the fact that sport-related skills can be acquired also by not professional athletes during years of practicing, training and racing. Secondly, not professional athletes usually are “less protected” in terms of future employment: in fact, many of professional athletes in Europe are supported by public institutions (army), governmental institutions or national federations.

With specific reference to the “interviews”, the researchers tried to involve athletes and former athletes at an higher level, with the aim of involving them also in future dissemination activities as “AFTERMATCH testimonials”.



Objectives

Once defined the target, AFTERMATCH team analysed and defined with more details the final objectives of the reasearch action. The two branches of the research (questionnaires and interviews) had

been considered two complementary actions with specific and different goals, but converging into a unique final aim:

Objectives of the Questionnaires

to obtain a general overview of the employment situation on the following topics: typology of job; sector – tasks; level of earning; job stability; continuity with reference to the job experiences (if any) during the sport performance; level of satisfaction; level of utilization of knowledge / skills acquired during sport career

Objectives of the Interviews

to collect and analyse the perception of athletes/ex athletes towards the quantity, quality and utility of the skills-bag acquired during their sport career as well as the perception of employers towards the most useful sport-related skills for HR and company's performance empowerment



Specific Objectives of the AFTERMATCH research

- To match data coming from existing researches or practices (see Chapter 6) with “fresh and actual data”, especially for partner's countries;
- To create a “portfolio” of valuable sport-related soft skills to be spent in the labour market by ex athletes;
- To obtain also the “employers perception” towards the value of the sport related skills acquired during sport practices;
- To measure the perception of athletes and former athletes about the awareness of having such useful skills and about the possibility to spend them into the labour market;
- To create a “knowledge base” ready to be translated into “training modules” for raising awareness of athletes and former athletes on this topic, targeted to sport trainers, sport managers, teachers in sport academies – schools, employers or HR managers
- To identify the most suitable and effective training methodologies with respect to the different needs and requirements of the trainees.

Final Aim

To pave the way for the creation of an Innovative and Transferable model for increasing the employability of athletes and ex athletes

Tools

Questionnaires: analysis of concrete cases of post-sport careers in partner's countries

The first component of the AFTERMATCH research is composed by an easy-to-fill on line questionnaire dedicated to ex athletes, available in English and in all partner's countries languages.

The form, planned to carry out a general overview on the employment situation of former athletes in partner's countries as well as in Europe, contains a set of basic questions aiming at collecting some information about the level of education, the employment sector, the typology of job / tasks, as well as to monitor the level of satisfaction about the actual job and to measure the level of utilization of sport-related skills acquired during the sport practice. The results of the questionnaires will be deeply analysed in Chapter 4 of this survey.

Interviews: analysis of the key competences acquired during sport career and usable in the labour market

In order to harmonize and organize the collection of information and data through "in dept interview" a specific guide had been created by AFTERMATCH responsables (see Annexes) to conducting interviews with athletes and ex athletes. The technique used for interviewing athletes is the focused-narrative interview, very similar to a semi-structured interview. Special attention is paid to creating a communicative method and an environment of trust towards the interviewer. The interviewer must be able to show the validity and utility of his work and must be able to show his respect for the interviewee and everything he says. In this sense, a great deal of attention is paid to how the contact is made, to the preliminary

agreements based on which the interview will be conducted; the interviewee must be aware that his interview and everything he says has value and will be used in a serious and reliable research process. Hence, before the interview is conducted, care should be taken to establish the conditions for the interview. This technique seeks to minimize by all means any interference by the interviewer in the course of the narration, in order to allow the subject's own value system to emerge. There are three main aspects to the narrative interview:

1. The active role of the interviewer who, with his skill in terms of narrative process, has a chance to choose when and how to intervene to support the story based on occasional questions aimed at focusing, exploring, expanding, etc. The interviewer is not an entirely neutral figure, but participates in building up the research material and does so knowingly, that is, he is able to control his own involvement by gearing it to improving the quality of the material rather than influencing its content.
2. The length of the interaction, which cannot be completed in the span of one or two hours, but requires a period of time varying between a half-day and two full days, in which the interviewee can delve into his own memory in depth, with the possibility of repeating things he has said, changing his version of the facts, adding new information, remaining silent, wandering off course, attempting seemingly invalid associations.
3. Definition of the format of the material expected by the interviewer, which calls for a completed

3. THE AFTERMATCH SURVEY: A METHODOLOGICAL OVERVIEW

interview in which the interviewee recounts episodes from his own sports experience that he considers significant in regard to the research topic. Producing stories involves some rules, such as determining the plot, characters, problem, adventure, solution, moral (Greimas, 1983; Propp, 1928), that guide their production.

In short, the interviewee is completely free to delve into the contents of the stories from the entire scope

of his own experience, but to make them explicit he uses “rules” (the questions) shared in advance with the interviewer. Clearly the third character, the definition of the format of the expected material, is not among the standard approaches for an unstructured interview: in the narrative interview, the interviewee is asked to provide responses in the form of a narrative, or that take the form of one or more stories. The interview is organised into three distinct parts.

FIRST PART	SECOND PART	THIRD PART
<p>In the first (main narration), the interviewee is invited to “narrate” his/her own life (through a single initial stimulus) in order to raise his/her awareness about his/her life story. During this phase, the interviewer does not interrupt the narrative flow, but limits himself to a form of active listening (active listening), i.e., to demonstrating his (genuine) interest.</p>	<p>Subsequently, in the second part of the interview (internal questions), the interviewer raises narrative questions (i.e., aimed at evoking a memory rather than providing information and explanations) on topics, events or persons mentioned spontaneously, following the interviewee’s order and language;</p>	<p>Finally, in the third part (external questions), the interviewer asks questions on topics of interest to him, or seeks clarification of some aspects. It is not until this phase that the interviewer may ask non-narrative questions (information, opinions, explanations, etc.) since if he asks “descriptive or argumentative questions too soon... the biographer’s ability to produce extemporaneous narrative reports on his life may be seriously hindered”.</p>

These additional notes offer points for exploring to be used during the interview.

- Significant events in personal education/professional career;
- Significant moments in personal sport career;
- Personal professional growth;
- Future intentions in personal professional career, or life after personal professional career

3. THE AFTERMATCH SURVEY: A METHODOLOGICAL OVERVIEW

The interview is followed by a careful retelling by the interviewer and a very careful transcription. The interview is recorded so as not to lose out on significant aspects in listening and in transcribing notes. Each interview is saved in a single file with the interviewer's information and dates so that the interviewer can be contacted directly if it proves necessary to get clarifications for the final article. In order to cope with the project approach and to comply with the requirement of the future Model of

Intervention, the interviews had been performed with 3 different targets:

- Athletes
- Former Athletes
- Employers / HR Managers

As a result, interviews slightly differs with respect to the interviewed, both in terms of issues to be tackled and in terms of interviewer's approach. Please see these differences in Annexes.



4. QUESTIONNAIRES

The present Chapter contains the results of questionnaires submitted by AFTERMATCH partners to more than 250 former athletes in 5 different countries (Italy, Slovenia, Bulgaria, Poland and Greece) from April to June 2016.

In Italy and Slovenia anonymous answers were accepted. In Greece and Bulgaria all respondents presented themselves with their names and photos. Questionnaires can be found (in English) at the

following link:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeub7hf4j8cPXeiQ2VydGIM0lRYKaL6yx_eXN34V5aZ4l7UVQ/viewform?c=0&w=1&usp=send_form

4.1 Methodology

The project' partners performed analysis in different way. While Greece and Italy disseminated questionnaires through their channels and networks, in Poland the questionnaire was sent through direct emails, personal contacts and performed interviews and in Slovenia, combination of partner' channels and networks direct emails, personal contacts and interviews were used. The Bulgarian sport journalists were engaged to perform interviews with ex athletes. Italy: Questionnaires were disseminated by the Lead Partner, Forcoop Cora Venezia Sc, and FICK through their channels and networks. Direct emails, posts on Facebook pages, tweets as well as personal contacts and/or interviews were used to promote the survey for former athletes. The survey was available on an online Google Form, but there was also the possibility to fill in its printed version. Italian partners collected 52 answers, from 18th April until 31th August 2016. 11 respondents (about 23% of the whole sample) answered the survey anonymously.

Slovenia: Questionnaires in were disseminated

by the Partner Športna zveza Maribor through its channels and networks. Direct emails, personal contacts and/or interviews were used to promote the survey for former athletes. The survey was available on an online Google Form, but there was also the possibility to fill in its printed version. In Slovenia 50 answers were collected, from 6th April until 3rd May 2016. 11 respondents (84 % of the whole sample) answered the survey anonymously.

Bulgaria: The analysis of survey results in has been performed by the Project manager and the WP3 coordinator, based on 50 interviews with ex-athletes. The interviews were carried out by 7 sport journalists, working for different media. They were either previously sent by e-mail, or brought in a printed version, to be filled in person. The respondents demonstrated a readiness to answer all interview questions, giving permission to use their names, achievements, present positions and personal photos.

Poland: Questionnaires in were filled in several ways:

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direct emails, personal contacts and interviews. The questionnaires were available on a google disk by filling the online surveys, but there was also the possibility to fill in its printed version. In Poland, around 80 responses were gathered, from which 86 % were collected online. None of the respondents were anonymous.

Greece: Questionnaires were disseminated by InterMedi@KT through its' channels and networks. Direct emails, posts on Facebook & LinkedIn pages,

tweets as well as personal contacts and/or interviews were used to promote the survey for former athletes. The survey was available on an online Google Form, but there was also the possibility to fill in its printed version. Greek partners collected 50 answers, from 18th April until 30th June 2016. None of them was anonymous.

4.2 Results

Age of athletes

The average age of ex athletes participated in analysis were the highest in Bulgaria (52 years and 2 months) and the lower in Greece (32 years and 8 months). The youngest athlete interviewed in Bulgaria was only 17 years old and the oldest 76 years.

Duration of sport career

The longest average age of sport career had athletes in Poland (10 years), followed by athletes in Italy (8 years), Bulgaria (8 years), and Slovenia and Greece (5 years). The longest sport career had athlete in Poland (48 years) and the shortest in Greece (13 years).

Italy: The average duration of sport career of analysed athletes was 15 years and 2 months; the athlete with the longest career has practiced sport at a competitive level for 37 years, while the minimum duration was 5. Most respondents' careers (44 %) lasted up to 10 years, the 32 % of them had been elite athletes for more than 20 years, and the remaining 23 % had sport career between 5 and 10 years.

Slovenia: The average duration of analysed athletes

was 13 years and 8 months; the respondent with the longest career, practiced sport at a competitive level for 40 years, while the minimum duration was 5. Most respondents' careers (58 %) lasted between 11 and 20, the 38 % of them had been elite athletes for 10 years or less, and the remaining 4 % had a career that was longer than 20 years.

Bulgaria: The average duration of sport career lasted 17 years and 6 months, the shortest being 8 years and the longest 48 years. The type of sport has been decisive for the duration of the athletes' sports career (longest in shooting and athletics, such as running and high jump).

Poland: The average duration of the sample's career is 26 years and 1 month. The longest career was 48 years, while the shortest duration was 10 years. The longest career (average 23 years) was in 2 age groups between 31-50 age.

Greece: The average duration of the sample's career was 13 years and 2 months; the respondents with the longest career, practiced sport at a competitive level for 25 years, while the minimum duration was 2 years. The number of respondents' careers that lasted up to 10 years was 20 (40 %), the 14% (7 of them) had been elite athletes for more than 20 years,

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and the remaining 46 % (23 of them) can count on a shorter career (from 2 to 10 years long).

Educational level

One of the most important questions in our survey concerned the educational status of the interviewees. We were interested in co-relation between the level of education of the athletes, their sport achievements and professional realization.

Concerning the level of education, it can be concluded that former athletes analysed by this survey were well educated in all observed countries, with the exception in Slovenia. While the highest level of education belongs to the interviewed athletes from Bulgaria (79 % of them has master's degree), the lowest share of those with master's degree belongs to Slovenia (only 12 %). On the contrary, the highest share of those with bachelor's degree belongs to Slovenia (42 %), followed by Greece (36 %), Poland (almost one quarter), Italy (19 %) and Bulgaria (13 %). Only in Poland athletes had education on primary level (5 respondents) and in Italy (1 respondent). Education on PhD level had three athletes in Italy and one in Bulgaria and in Slovenia.

Employment status, type of employment and job stability

The highest share of employed former athletes belongs to Bulgaria (76 %), followed by Greece (60 % of all respondents), Poland (58 %), Slovenia (54 %) and Italy less than half (46 %). On the other side, in Italy 37 % of former athletes were running their own business or were freelancers, in Poland 34 %, Greece (30 %), Bulgaria (24 %) and Slovenia (22 %). Others were running their own businesses or were freelancers.

Analysing type of employment among employed and owners/freelancers, it was found out that the best

position on the labour market had ex athletes in Bulgaria where 90 % of them have permanent job, followed by Italy (84 %), Poland (75 %) and Greece (70 %), while the situation in Slovenia was less "stable" (58 %), where the percentage of former athletes with a temporary job was the highest among analysed countries.

The highest share of unemployed former athletes was noticed in Slovenia (almost one quarter of all respondents), followed by Italy (17 %), Greece (10 %) and Poland (only 8%), while in Bulgaria among interviewed former athletes none of them were unemployed. Further on, we analysed the impact of education level to employment status of former athletes. It was found out that education did not affect the employment status very much.

Regarding the stability of job, those with permanent, full time employment considered their jobs stable or very stable (in Poland 94 %, in Italy 88 %, in Greece 86 %, in Slovenia 82 %, and in Bulgaria 69 %). The employees with temporary job were more careful about the stability of their jobs, stated that they consider them as "stable enough" or "a little stable" (in Greece all of respondent, in Slovenia three quarters, in Bulgaria 60 % and in Italy 43 %, while in Poland they seemed to be optimistic regarding their job despite temporary employment as 92 % of them considered their job stable or even very stable).

The choice of being a "free-lancer" or "entrepreneur" seems to be more frequent in Poland (34 %) and Italy (37 %), but in Italy this employment situation is perceived as "less stable" than in Poland (47 % against 92 %). The countries where having a free-lancer / entrepreneurial role is perceived as "very safe" are Bulgaria, Poland and Slovenia.

4. QUESTIONNAIRES

Satisfaction with actual job, job position, employment sectors and continuity with previous sport discipline

It is quite interesting that despite the lower level of employment's stability, in Poland the general level of satisfaction of former athletes with respect to the actual job is quite high (98 % of the sample declared medium – high satisfaction), while the lowest level of satisfaction had been detected in Slovenia and in Bulgaria.

Comparing results in all observed countries it can be stressed out that the higher satisfaction (level 4 and 5) with actual job was noticed in Poland (85 %), followed by Italy (77 %). The lowest satisfaction with actual job was noticed in Bulgaria (only 56 % were satisfied), in Slovenia (63 %) and in Greece (69 %); last three countries were above EU average which was 75 %.

After having explored the employment situation of former athletes in the 5 countries involved in the AFTERMATCH project, the survey included the connection between sport and labour market, with a focus on which skills acquired during sport career, most suitable and used in the professional career after sport.

Former athletes had been asked first to define the level of continuity between the sport practiced and the job done after sport career: results underlined that the highest level of continuity had been detected in Poland (54 % of the respondents), the lowest in Bulgaria (only 16 %). Those results can be correlated to the ones coming from the Table 5 in the annexes section.

In all countries, the highest percentage of respondents is grouped in the sector “sport, leisure and tourism” (ranging from 15 % to 30 % in all countries), with

a peak in Slovenia (31 %). Particularly interesting is the case of Poland, where former athletes seem to choose “education & teaching” as the preferred job career (59 %): this may be a justification of the high level of connection between sport practiced and job. The level of connection between sport practiced and job is also a matter of “how many skills and competences” acquired during sport career a former athlete can transfer and use in the labour market.

Except for Slovenia, where only the 55 % of the sample perceived a high level of application of the skills acquired during sport practice, in the other countries the percentage ranges from the 72 % in Poland, 74 % of Bulgaria, to the 79 % of Italy, reaching the 86 % in Greece, showing that sport-related skills are effectively useful for the labour market.

Transferable skills

But which are these skills? The proposed skills were chosen by researchers according to the ESCO classification of transversal skills and competences . Table 6 reflects the former athlete's view. Communication, team working and problems solving are at the top of the list, followed by creativity and commitment.

Those results can be better visualized in the Figure 8, collecting all the choices of the former athletes involved in the 5 countries: the picture confirms communication and team working as the most useful skills, followed by problem solving in joint place with creativity, immediately followed by leadership and commitment.

4.3 Conclusions

Based on the results of the online survey, it can be concluded that the post-sport career does not seem problematic in any partners' country, although the situation differs from country to county.

Italy: Most respondents have a stable job and are satisfied with it; they are also quite pleased with the level of utilisation and "exploitation" of the experiences previously acquired through sport, and they seem quite aware of the great potential and the wide range of skills and competences that can be developed through the practice of a sport at an elite level.

Slovenia: The employment situation of ex-athletes does not differ much from employment situation of general population in Slovenia, the athletes also obtain a solid educational background which is helpful to them when they make the transition to post-sport life. Perhaps it was a bit surprising that more ex-athletes aren't employed in sports, but the number of coaching jobs, which are paid well enough to be able to make a living, isn't high, so although many ex-athletes are in some way active as coaches or in other sports functions, most of them need to have "regular" jobs. The encouraging information from the survey was, that the ex-athletes are aware



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of skills acquired during their sports careers and can use them in their post-sport situations even if the actual job doesn't have much resemblance with their previous sport.

Bulgaria: The post-sport professional realization of athletes has unveils some specific problems. The employment situation of ex-athletes does not differ much from the employment situation of the general population. Athletes in their majority have a solid educational background (mostly bachelors and Master's university degrees), and are employed or are running their own businesses. They are aware of skills that they acquired during their sports careers and are willing to use them in job, although a lot of them are not very positive about the full utilisation of their skills and working capacities, regarding their sportive

achievements and ambitions as a level higher, than their present position offers

Poland: The post-sport situation isn't very bad, however most of ex-athletes had to obtained a solid educational background to be able to find a job which would be connected or let them share job with their sport interest. Since most areas of the sport does not generate high earnings and the cost of living are very high, most of Polish ex-athletes need to have regular jobs even if they are in some way active as coaches or in other sports functions. Many developed their own businesses associated with the sport. Most of the Polish ex-athletes obtained solid educational



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background which was very helpful to them when they make the transition to post-sport life.

Greece: Most former athletes have a stable job and are satisfied with it; they are also quite pleased with the level of utilisation and “exploitation” of the experiences previously acquired through sport, and they seem quite aware of the great potential and the wide range of skills and competences that can be developed through the practice of a sport at an elite level.

for suitable jobs in the public sector and support initiatives facilitating the involvement of business with sponsorship agreements, offering athletes the opportunity to gain working experience in their enterprises; providing employment opportunities ranging from internships, part time, and fulltime employment.

CLIMB YOUR PERSONAL MOUNTAIN

The ex-athletes suggest that more appropriate measures should be established to strengthen collaboration between business/enterprises and athletes, raising awareness on existing initiatives to open access to links with the labour market: national authorities should elaborate a programme for recommending high level athletes

5. INTERVIEWS

This chapter presents a summary of more than 126 interviews with Athletes, Former Athletes and Employers / HR Managers of companies in 5 different EU countries:

Interviews with athletes, former athletes and employers

ITALY

4 interviews with athletes
15 interviews with former athletes
15 interviews with employers / HR responsables

SLOVENIA

5 interviews with athletes
5 interviews with former athletes
10 interviews with employers / HR responsables

POLAND

6 interviews with athletes
9 interviews with former athletes
4 interviews with employers / HR responsables

GREECE

3 interviews with athletes
5 interviews with former athletes
5 interviews with employers / HR responsables

BULGARIA

5 interviews with athletes
30 interviews with former athletes
5 interviews with employers / HR responsables

TOTAL

23 interviews with athletes
64 interviews with former athletes
39 interviews with employers / HR responsables

The Chapter had been divided in two main paragraphs: the first dedicated to Athletes & Former Athletes and the second specifically dedicated to companies and HR managers. The two groups represents the “two

sides of the labour market” and had been treated separately in this phase of the project.

5.1 Athletes & Former Athletes

The transversal analysis of the interviews among athletes and former athletes collected in 5 different European countries (87 interviews), with a very diversified sport background (basketball, football, tennis, arch, rugby, waterpolo, Tae Kwo Do, etc...), shows a first very significant and evident data, often partially hidden in the answers: the sport career related risk is a peculiar one, it is composed by a set of profiles strictly interconnected, like a very tight tissue that dress the situation in “defeat oriented” trend. The ghost of the sport career risk is made of:

A) Professional risk: even if every professional field foresses specific risks, the sport career related risk increases the risk of personal failiure, the highest probability of negative impact of dangerous and esogenous circumstances and the structural crisis (or stagnant situation) of certain minor sport disciplines;

B) Physical risk: it relates the possibility of a sudden physical limitation or injury preventing a high level and successful performance or, worst, a complete stop of the sport career. Injuries are the typical examples of accidents, but also ageing and physical consumption (for endurance sports);

C) Social risk: it deals with the diffculties sportsman and sportswoman find in managing relationship with their networks when the sport career is going to come to an end. As we can see later, this risk can be reduced by a careful and efficient “network management” from an early stage;

D) Identity risk: it deals with the impact a “professional failure” (deriving from endogenous or esogenous reasons) may have in the management of the “personal branding”. A professional crisis hit a very important nerve of the personal identity and paves the way for a set of consequences: a different self-perception, a possible loss of self-confidence, difficulties in managing transition and changes.

Sport career leads to a “matter of identity”: once the professional change occurs, identity is deeply touched and runs the risk of being damaged if the “change” is not managed in a proper way. The “identity gap” linked to the retirement from sport career may seem like a “jump into nothing”, especially for people with a weak will or with weak goals, where the challenge is often to start a job very different from their own passions and wills. The above mentioned specificities of the “sportman or sportwoman profile” are a basic element of a structural and persistent condition

5. INTERVIEWS

of uncertainty, still not enough managed by sport federations.

“Inside the Federations there are many politicians and is very hard to enter and to give a contribution; there is a need for something more: institutions should valorize more and more their athletes and talents, by ensuring them a professional future (...) why private companies in some cases valorize sport’s talents, while federations (who created them!) didn’t? I’m a little bit disappointed!”

(Rachele Sangiuliano, ex volleyball player, Serie A).

“Since I am member of the Federation (Federcalcio nrd), I’m involved in the Italian Association of Football Players (AIC) that usually organizes training courses post-career, but only for football players over 30; moreover, this action is not very “supported and considered”... I think that this kind of initiatives should involve athletes of 20 years, because a young guy should know as soon as possible that Football is not forever, but only for a very limited period of life. Many times football players find themselves in difficulties for a general lack of information (...) but I can be considered “Lucky”, because my Association gives me some advice, even if little.”

(Jacopo Fortunato, former football player, 26 years).

Sport professionals meet uncertainty, most of the time with a real awareness and accompanied only by a lot of positivity, immediately when they chose the agonistic sport career. The fundamentals of their profession, based on a full-physical efficiency cycle and on a constant mental focus, pave the way for a problematic management of the transition from sport career to post-sport career. Second life, in fact, is a path full of different kind of hurdles and

variables. From the possibility to go on working in the field of sport, from the possibility to find a job in no connection with the sport’s world, the above mentioned “super specialization” often prevents athletes from having a normal personal training path during his or her life and this is most of the time the main deficit when it’s time to re-invent him or herself.



Jacopo Fortunato

How to combine sport & education

The answers to the interviews with former athletes concerning the connection and complementarity between sport & education vary from country to country: the difficulties related to combining “sport & education” seems higher in Italy, where former athletes declared that “studying was often done during downtime (moving around on the bus / train) or before school started (getting up at dawn) or at night” or that “very often the athletes are forced to combine study and sport with their own resources (car, parents’ help) or by using public transport (bus, train, etc.)” and also that “some teachers, having noticed a considerable number of absences due to the sports activity practised, encouraged the student to abandon their studies”. The opposite situation had been detected in Slovenia and in Poland: in Slovenia former athletes declared that “the school system provides the talented athletes

with an opportunity to enrol in a sports class on a secondary level of education which enables them greater flexibility to combine sport and study”, while in Poland “the majority of respondents did not have a problem to connect school with the athletic career. Talented athletes were always supported by their teachers”. In Bulgaria, despite some natural and unavoidable efforts asked to athletes (in particular at an early stage) in order to combine sport & study, “in most of the bigger Bulgarian cities there were opened specialized schools for children and youth with distinguished sport talent” and, concerning higher education “the sportive path leads them to the National Sports Academy (NSA), where they graduate with a bachelors, or Masters’ degree”.

Why did you choose this specific sport?

Families and friends, together with teachers and in some cases “sport and gym teachers” (Bulgaria, Poland and Slovenia) are the main factors for athletes and former athletes to choose a sport instead of another. This action, in order to be successful, must be accompanied by a certain level of “structure’s availability” in the neighborhood. A good push for

performing a specific sport is also played by “big events and national victories”: a Bulgarian athlete declared “When I played my first match at a big stadium, the emotion was overwhelming. Then, after the great success of Bulgarian football in 1994, it became a matter of honour for us to practice sport, to compete and win”.

Sport-related skills as “soft skills” to be used in the labour market: are athletes and former athletes aware of that?

With regard to the awareness of former athletes towards the ownership of “soft skills”, the great part of the interviewed seems fully aware of having developed a useful basket of competences (transversal competences) deriving from sport practicing, with the exception of some Italian former athletes, who declared that “despite the partial awareness that I have accrued competences and soft skills, they will be able to provide a marginal contribution once relocated, if applied within a new work context, especially one that is far removed from the world of sports”. Italian’s former athlete’s negative perception about acquired soft skills persists also regarding the analysis of the specific skills and their usefulness: even if 3 main transversal competences had been identified (Commitment, Team building and Leadership), Italian former athletes declared that “these abilities are seen as important mostly for the sports career and with a marginal usefulness when they need to be transferred to another professional context”. On the opposite, the former athletes interviewed in Slovenia and Bulgaria mostly said that “most of the (soft) skills are useful and relevant to their future post-sport career”; here below, a list of identified skills in the two countries:

- Team work;
- Communicability;
- Resilience;
- Discipline;
- Psychological strength;
- Drive for victory;
- Fair play;
- Respect for partners and rivals;
- Will power;
- Endurance to high pressure;
- Organization;
- Dexterity;
- Pursuit of goal;
- Resolve and responsibility;
- Ability to build up and follow plans;
- Willingness to work hard;
- Self-confidence;
- Setting and achieving goals;
- Attitude towards hard work;
- Persistence.

An interesting assumption derives from the analysis of Bulgarian interviews: “athletes and former athletes consider important transferable skills, as for example in finance, marketing and communication, developed naturally and without even realising, while managing their own sports career”.

It’s very clear, however, that the “know how” behind the athlete’s career has a very specific nature. It can be considered an extreme case of “learning by doing”, during which a person reaches a very high degree of practical knowledge supported by a very low degree of theoretical knowledge. Skills acquired during sport practices cannot be considered “immediately useful” for the labour market (with the exception of sport-related jobs), since they are in most of the cases “soft skills”: the AFTERMATCH survey underlines how in most of the cases athletes and former athletes are not equipped to valorize them or, sometimes, are not aware of them. So, interviews reveal that the profile of the “athlete” is something

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like a “paradox”: he or she is a very specialized and qualified professional profile that, at the end of the sport career, owns an “competence and experience bag” hardly transferable to the labour market. The immediate consequence is the need for tools helping the athletes or ex athletes to “manage the metamorphosis”, both in terms of “social actors” (relationship with family and friends, relationship with media, networking, etc...) and in terms of “identity”, in particular when the professional career post sport seems to be very far away from the sport’s world.

“I wish a long career in next years; I really don’t know what to expect after 35... anyway, I can imagine myself only in the football world, even if I’m aware that things may change; I’d like to teach kids and to give them my experience and actually for me it’s very hard to think about a life outside the football field, it’s something like a mission (...) it’s hard to go away from the team and the group. If I could, I’ll stay in the football world”.

(Matteo Buratto, football player, 22 years).

“I’m 26 and I’d like to be a football player for yeras, I’ll do my best; I won’t change anything I did in the past. I’d like to be in touch with people (...), my dream is to open a “wine-shop”, I know that we are facing a crisis and that it won’t be easy: many restaurants and bars are closing, but it’s my dream and I want to start with some training course of “sommelier”; in Turin I learnt to appreciate wines. I’d like to be in touch with people, behind the desk in a bar, talking with clients... ok, sometimes I have negative moments of reflection about my life, but in the end I see myself in the future like that”.

(Jacopo Fortunato, football player, 26 years).

Concerning whether and how the target group perceive a specific relation between the sport practiced and the competences developed, many interviewed in different countries (Greece, Slovenia and Poland) believe that there are differences between “team sports” related skills and “individual sports” related skills: for example, in Greece “basketball and football athletes indicated that communication, team work, leadership and problem solving is already part of their everyday trainings/ practices and so they prioritized as competences, while Tae Kwo Do athletes indicated self determination, focus, precision and devotion as their top competencies”. Once again, specific attention deserves the Italian case, that revealed that from one side “there is no real awareness that relates the sport practised with the competences developed” and from another side “it would seem that the alert level with respect to the perils of joining the labour market at a later date are underestimated or scarcely even considered”, in strong contrast with other’s countries feelings, especially in Greece, where “family background is the main factor of post sport career awareness at this age ... all of them are already in studies and determined to follow higher education/ faculties courses”.

Thinking about an “exit strategy”: wether, when and how?

In connection with the previous paragraph, athletes and former athletes had been asked whether and how they became aware of the necessity to pave the way for a professional career after the sport: with the exception of Italy, where “there is no real awareness of what will happen in the years to come, when a post-career phase comes about. For some of them, the horizon is so far off they can’t even manage to conceive such an eventuality”, in the other countries athletes and former athletes “become aware about the need to plan for the future during their sport careers (Slovenia)” or “declared to have thought about their future career while still active competitors (Bulgaria)”, with a focus on “education” in Poland, where athletes and former athletes “if are aware that they should pave the way for a career, most of them focus on education”. Generally speaking, the great part of the sample underlines that they desire to work in “sport-related jobs”: in Slovenia, as an example, “the primary goal so far is to stay in their sport (mostly as a coach)”.

Analysing when athletes and former athletes start to think about a “post sport career”, the Italian athletes and former athletes seems to underline as there is no propensity to think about what to do with their life, whether professional and not, when their career ends; one of the athletes interviewed in Italy declared “I’ll start thinking about it a little later”, while another “I’m too young now to think about what will happen to me in twenty years’ time”. Almost on the same mood the Bulgarian contribution, where athletes usually start to think about their life beyond sport after several years of self-assertion in the field of the sport they practice and especially after reaching what they perceive as the peak of their

career; they start being more and more aware, that after a climax, comes a natural slide down, due to age and physical exhaustion. Also a significant part of Slovenian and Polish athletes and former athletes identify the “turning point” in the event of an injury or when they perceive that there are no more chances to compete at high level, even if in Poland the high rate of sportman or sportwoman coming from sport schools or academies reveals an “early awareness” of the importance of thinking about an exist strategy, generally declining it as “sport-related jobs”.

So said, professional / agonist athletes or former athletes, living year after year in a world that is completely “disconnected” from the real labour market, are very worried about their future. Notwithstanding, the awareness of the need for an “on-time management” of the transition is very vivid. Many of them started professional training paths, with apprenticeship programmes; many others started to activate a “second professional life” side by side with the sport’s one; others succeeded in having a job in the sport’s sector (as director, trainer, managers, etc...).

"I was fully aware that sport career is not never ending; sometimes you can hide this fact to yourself, but when you have an age you must deal with it because my sport does not enable you to live all your life with what you earned (Basked)... you must deal with your future professional life!"

(Massimo Guerra, former basketball player, A serie)

"I started training as "safeguard" in an airport; I started studying only last year, I did 6 weeks of training, now I'm in apprenticeship before the hiring (...). For the first time in many years, I feel a little scared, but I have the support of a very optimistic person that always encourage me. Only one job is not enough!"

(Marco Coletti, rugby player, 31 years).

What favour dual careers effective application? The importance of networks

The first and most important element emerging from the question "whether the target group recognises the importance of their personal network in supporting their transition to the post-sport career" is that family is actually the real pillar sustaining the whole "dual career" system in all selected countries: following the Slovenian answers, "the most important people that were supporting the athletes in their transition to the post sport careers were their family members", and so in Poland, where interviews revealed that "the majority of respondents received support from their families, both in terms of economic as well as personal support". Family is the cornerstone also in Bulgaria, where "the athletes in their majority recognize as most important, the initial support of their families". Together with families, friends are the second network in terms of importance: from the Italian interviews, "it clearly emerges how the network of friends and acquaintances is the only real way to allow a given professional relocation".

At the same time, institutions and federations are not playing such a supportive role for athletes and former athletes: in Italy, for example, "neither the relevant organisations nor the institutions have to date structured support networks to help out athletes at the end of their career", while in Slovenia "all interviewed athletes stated that they didn't receive any support during the transition from their sport federation to the labour market"; similarly, in Poland "none of the respondents received the support of sports organizations". The situation is quite different in Bulgaria, where the institutional and federation support seems more present and perceived: a former athlete interviewed declared "I have always felt supported by our institutions, and now, as a president of the Bulgarian Shooters Union, I have to take care and offer support to other promising athletes, to find their future realization", while another affirmed "I have the support of the Bulgarian Athletics Federation".

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By analysing the Italian interviews, a list of “missing services” had been created: a course introducing them to the labour market; the possibility of taking part in training days, again inherent to the labour market; the possibility of organisations and federations performing linkage activities between the athletes and networks of companies interested in their profiles to give the former the opportunity to gradually join the professional world and build a satisfactory post-sport career.

In general terms, the “social capital” cultivated during the sport career is crucial and in many cases acts as “substitute” for the lack of dual career paths promoted by institutions and Federations.

“Since I was out for an injury for many times, I developed a different view of the future. I had the occasion to meet several people dealing with a specific business activity (cakes factory), with commercial and distribution activities, with foreign markets... they became my “teachers”.

(Andrea Seno, former serie A football player).

5.2 Companies (HR)

One of the aspects that characterize the most the AFTERMATCH approach to dual career is the particular attention to the “other side of the moon”: the labour market. The scientific committee of the project believes that it is quite unproductive to discuss about “sport – related skills” and their adherence with the labour market without a clear perception of how these skills are considered by employers, or by the HR responsible of the contacted companies.

For this reason, partners decided to interview at least

“I hated my first job; I was dead with it, I became like a plant (...) I did 90 kilometers going and 90 going back for an unpleasant job, for a job that was very far from my expectations, it dealt with “tourism”... but I tried. Results arrived thanks to my personal network of knowledges”

(Rachele Sangiuliano, former serie A volleyball player).



Rachele Sangiuliano

5 employers / HR managers in each country (Italy, Slovenia, Greece, Poland and Bulgaria), with semi-structured interviews. At the same time, companies had been asked to become “project’s testimonials”, together with famous athletes or former athletes, because there is a need for a stronger promotion of “positive examples” of employers who trust athlete’s background of competences and who valorize sport-related skills.

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Back to the interviews, the survey analyzed the following issues:

- 1) Whether the target group considers sport as a relevant issue to be dealt with during the selection process, underlining any differences among sports (for example, individual vs. team sports);
- 2) Whether the target group highlights any relations between the typology of sport practiced by candidates and the specific job they apply for;
- 3) What soft / transversal skills the target group considers as the most strategic for their company environment;
- 4) What soft / transversal skills acquired by athletes during their sport career are considered as the most useful and relevant by the target group;
- 5) Whether the target group considers as a relevant issue the values sportspeople can bring into the company environment and what values in particular the target group thinks the sportspeople can “instil”;
- 6) Whether the target group considers sport as a useful and relevant metaphor to be used in the company environment, highlighting any specific initiatives involving sport within the companies;
- 7) Summarise any findings concerning the differences between large companies and SMEs with regards to the relevance of hiring (ex)athletes, their availability to recognise competences acquired in formal & non formal or informal contexts, etc;
- 8) Whether the target group considers the sport practice during the professional career as relevant (for example, for health issues,...).

Sport – related skills and the selection process

The majority of those surveyed confirmed the significance and positivity of sport, as an additional criterion affecting the final outcome of recruitment. This attention is increased if the selector had sport-related experience in his or her life, in particular in Italy and in Bulgaria. Sports background as a significant soft skill developer and their points of view highlighted different but equally important aspects of that.

For what concerns differences among sports, different situations had been detected between countries: Italy and Slovenia indicate no difference between individual sports or team; in Greece

individual sports were mentioned among HR's preferences, especially individual sports that allow athletes to work on their self-confidence, sports that shape the person into an all-rounded well-balanced individual growth. When someone plays as member of a team there is a positive effect on his/her psychology: in Bulgaria for example, most of the companies prefers team sports, because of the organization skills, communicability and responsibility of team players, while a minority of the sample prefers individual players, because of their will for perfection, ambition and resilience.

In Slovenia companies that are recruiting expect

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from candidates' similar soft skills as are expected from high level athletes. And if the employer is an ex athlete the tension to look for soft skills developed during the sport is so much stronger. Almost all employers ask candidates which kind of sport they practice and at which level: the reasons behind this question lie in competencies and values resulting from sport activities; going into details, these competencies and values belongs to the category of "transversal competencies" like self-care, team working, personal competencies and attitude, health and wellbeing, but also some more related to specific jobs, like manual dexterity. However not in

all countries this is a usual practice.

"I always ask a candidate if they practice sport because I find this to be one of the major facts that talks about person's quality of life"

(HR Manager, ...)

Good in a specific kind of sport means good for a specific job: is this true?

The survey has not demonstrated the suitability of particular sport disciplines to specific jobs. Nevertheless, the interviewed pointed out some links between a specific job and the fact that the future workers played an "individual or team sport": team sports are preferred when the working environment asks for an high degree of "team working", while individual sport experiences are requested when the working environment requires endurance, problem solving, loneliness in decision making.

There is a consistent trend in recognizing that those who practiced sport at a high level tends to show a good development of skills such as: results orientation, resilience, teamwork. It seems that when company's owners and HR managers are former athletes themselves, they usually point out the sport they have practiced. Generally speaking, it seems that employers respect the specific characters of the different sports, it seems that they are aware of

the fact that sports help developing extra-ordinary qualities, such as: strong will for victory through hard labour and restless effort until the last minute; discipline; team work; fair play. Especially in Bulgaria, employers respect sports which are raising the spirit of the nation and setting a good example for young people (sportsman and sportswoman are seen not only as "good workers", but also as "examples" and "testimonials" for the good brand of the company).

Sport career gives a bag full of “soft skills”: which are the most useful in the labour market?

Several studies of sport psychology identify different soft skills developed during the sport career, like communication, performance orientation, responsibility, discipline and control. The analysis of answers of the target group confirmed that those are also the ones considered as the most useful and relevant in the working environment. Particularly important seems perseverance, followed by willingness to work hard, goal orientation and responsibility, resilience, stress management, teamworking, frequently self-assessment. Other useful and relevant soft skills acquired by athletes mentioned by the target group are also engagement, focus to success, motivation, effectiveness, not giving up, focus, ambition, organisation, out of the box thinking, marketing skills, diligence, self-confidence, active listening, time management, discipline, loyalty, optimism, healthy habits (eating and sleeping).

“This is hard to define. It very much depends on athlete’s personality and the job, he/she should do” said an HR Slovenia’s company.

Employers indicated that a long-time commitment on sport, whether it had brought any success or not, demonstrated specific interpersonal skills, usable by employees of various levels: worker’s soft skills are an important part of his or her contribution to the success of an organization, since they are increasingly considered by employers as “complementary” to standard qualifications.

The soft / transversal skills considered as “the most

strategic” for companies are:

- Goal orientation;
- Self-initiative;
- Communication/relationship skills;
- Willingness to learn;
- Team-oriented approach / teamwork;
- Multitasking;
- Organisational skills.

According to the frequency of answers, these are followed by:

- Willingness to work hard,
- Responsibility,
- Innovation,
- Creativity,
- Knowledge of the world / different cultures / ideally multilingual,
- Local market.

More rarely mentioned skills were:

- Perseverance,
- Patience and dedication,
- Vision,
- Motivation,
- Ethnicity,
- Effectiveness,
- Success,
- Eager to learn and ability to absorb information and knowledge,
- Subordinating individual interests to the common good.

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More in depth, Greek research shows that sport-related skills are helpful especially for entry level candidates: in fact, usually they are worried to prove relevant experience, but their interviewers know that they are not experienced; since it is their “will to learn” that will get them hired, having a strong sport experience at quite high level means having a competitive career from the past, dedication but also more patience towards work efforts, because they have known the importance of patience when competing professionally.

A very interesting aspect emerges from the research notes in Bulgaria, concerning the “different approaches with relation to the different types of company”: for example, the tourist companies look also for good ability to manage groups and take care of unskilled mountaineers, or rafters; they appreciate balance and reasoning, good communication skills and ethical attitude. Multifunctional companies (production, transportation, logistics and sales) instead need people specialized in various sectors: specific skills and knowledge about technology, but are also prepared to open possibilities for qualification and specialization of interns in all fields of the business. They want to distinguish the fast learners, and skilled persons promising to become best specialist and long term professionals.

On the other side, logistics, consultancy and PR companies look for people with friendly attitude and abilities to work with clients. Anyway, in Bulgaria all companies, wheather big or small, prefer to hire people with specific skills and knowledge, having initial qualification and adequate education.

In the Polish survey the target group indicated that athletes, focused on the achievement of sport goals and subordinating their life to the pursuit of a result, are considered “interesting employees”, due to the following soft/transversal skills:

- Ability to identify personal weaknesses and strengths;
- Ability to identify the weaknesses and strengths of one’s team, ability to analyse and discuss that assessment, ability to devise actions aimed at remedying those weaknesses;
- Sense of responsibility for one’s own team;
- Having clear requirements concerning other persons within one’s own team;
- Clear formulation of goals and work methods;
- Self-discipline, punctuality;
- Strong understanding of team work;
- Time management ability, short- and long-term planning.

Sport experience brings values for life: which one of these values can be useful for companies?

With relation to this question, we have collected different “views” in different countries. In Slovenia and in Poland, employers are confident that sportspeople may bring into companies several positive values, very are appreciated in the working

environment. Among them, we can list the following: focus, result orientation, discipline, perseverance and team working. Less mentioned values are responsibility, competitiveness, hard work and positivity. Additionally, employers also highlighted

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health, effectiveness, ambition, enthusiasm, creativity, diligence, self-confidence, organisation, preparedness, proactivity, ethics, devoutness, self-control, commitment, engagement and “being the best”.

“Most of the top-level athletes developed competitiveness, goal orientation, winning attitude and communication. When they are competing in “team sport” also team work, team communication.”

One of the most important values emerging by the Italian environment is the respect of colleagues and “opponents” (both internal and external to the organization), together with the “uniform’s devotion” and the “awareness of the importance of the organizational history”.

In Greece it is interesting to notice that all the interviewed declared that the pre-set interview forms used by the companies did not include question / information about eventual sport practiced and that they seemed very interested about the possibility to add such info in the future. Moreover, it might be worth mentioning that, regardless the level at which one can be practising sport, physical activity is crucial for both physical and mental health/wellbeing and

could therefore be an added value in a candidate’s profile. On the contrary, some of the Greek HR interviewed are on a completely different position: for them, “asking something about their sport career” can be considered “personal questions”, which do not necessarily reflect how someone would be at their job: for these HRs, generally asking personal questions which are non-related to a job interview at times can seem intrusive. And when they do, most of the times, sports are used as an ice breaker for interviews and an indication of personality.

Finally, in Bulgaria some interesting considerations about “networking” were found: elite and other high performance athletes are in most cases able to combine sport and professional careers having prepared themselves during their studies and active sport career. They have the opportunity to establish international networks, relevant to their professional goals. Companies gain from hiring such high-class employees, due to their accumulated extraordinary skills combined with the determination to excel in whatever they do. High-performers, have a positive and goal oriented attitude, which can contribute to the company’s success. Their sport acquired skills and drive for perfection increase workplace diversity and provide for the business success.

Sport’s metaphore: is it useful for companies and HR managers?

Everyone says that there is a daily reference to the metaphore of the sports world while on the job (not only in the context of training courses). Considering the above mentioned soft skills, “teamwork and leadership for group management” and “self

determination” are the fields in which sport’s metaphore is more useful and relevant. This is also true for the 10 % that uses sport during recruitment/selection processes: in general, a lot of companies support sport activities of their employees and

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some others also ensure favourable conditions for practicing sport (hiring sport facilities, offering co-financed membership fees, enabling in-company facilities, ...).

In some cases, different tournaments and sport games are organised between companies (usually within specific sectors e.g. banking sector). In this cases companies employing (ex)athletes certainly have the advantage in achieving good results. Sailing, basketball, golf and mini soccer are the best known. Also other sport activities, such as dance-artistic festivities or outdoor excursions are often used.

In Poland the following benefits of such combination were listed:

- Hiring former athletes;
- Hiring active athletes, to the extent that it is possible for them to combine work and training;
- Marketing cooperation with sport clubs and individual athletes.

Big company vs SME: is there any difference towards hiring athletes or former athletes?

The survey did not reveal any differences in attitude between large and small-sized companies with regard to hiring athletes. Due to the lack of systemic arrangements the attitude of a given company is a result of the practice of its HR department and often depends on the individual views of the recruiting person or the management. The recognition of formal and informal competences depends on company practice. One may expect that, in the case of hiring athletes, just like in the case of other employees, large companies are more flexible and

Many of the companies surveyed support the sport activities of their employees at amateur level, ensure that there are conditions for the pursuit of sport and provide financial support by paying the costs of the rental of sport facilities and purchase of equipment.

The social function of sport, workforce integration and the improved employee health and social atmosphere were emphasised.

are willing to invest in the supplementation of formal qualifications.

In Italy seems more usual for big companies to use of training actions that include "sports as a metaphor", but this is also linked to the fact that big companies invest more systematically in training actions.

In Slovenia almost all companies involved in the interviews would be very happy to hire a sport champion but this seems to be harder then expected:

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only in two cases they managed to hire a champion and only one succeeded in “keeping the champion in the company”, due to the difficulties in balancing work and sport career. When thinking about possible champions to hire, companies highlighted different characteristics and transferable competencies (like self-motivation, self-discipline, perseverance, hardworking, solving problems, communication, commitment, goal orientation and positivity). But in case of larger companies, all these cannot replace the educational level (although they partially agree on the fact that it could compensate weak professional experiences). On the other hand, smaller companies are more open to recognise transferable competencies acquired during the sport career as the ones that could replace in some ways a low educational level or weak professional experience. They even see the advantage of having (ex)athlete in their company in context of company promotion, visibility and image.

“Yes, strong sport experience can replace weak professional experience. Most important are soft-skills, professional competencies can be acquired by on the job training.”

Research in Greece highlights that companies believe that both the University and an active sports life, teach you the same values:

- 1) It does not matter if you are talented or smart; it is the amount of effort you input that makes you successful;
- 2) It does not matter how many things you think you know, you always have more to learn, so there is always room for improvement;
- 3) Practice makes perfect;
- 4) Students and athletes are open to follow (professor or coach) and once they master what they practice, they become able to lead.

It really depends on many factors such as:

- Duration of his sport career;
- The years of experience required for a specific job;
- Evaluation of the candidate’s feedback on why he decided to do a career change.

Specifically in Bulgaria the social system, including the labour market, is not in close co-relation with athletes’ results. The sportive, professional and other lifelong accomplishments of many top level athletes come as a result of their own ambitions, skills and efforts, helped mainly by their families, coaches and other sport support staff, who have believed in them and finance them (especially at the beginning of their career). For that reason, SME find it hard to sustain a semi-professional type of team sport within their premises and from time to time organize small scale competitions with other companies of similar size. When such companies are lucky to have employed an ex- athlete, they in most cases give him / her two, or more hours per week to participate in trainings and competitions at Masters level.

Sport practicing during professional career: is it good for employers?

The majority of employers (90 %) declare a great concern about employees' health and "company sport projects" are one of the ways in which they care about the health of their employees – in their own interest. In the remaining 10 % there is a half of the sample that still recognizes the benefits of those who practice sport in health and working efficiency.

In Slovenia employers are implementing programs for promotion of health and wellbeing in their working environments as this is also required by law and the (ex)athletes can be a valuable resource for setting up or even running sport programmes.

In Bulgaria there are companies, especially the

ones with a greater number of employees, which are organizing exercise groups for physical fitness, mainly for health improving reasons, when the job requires long sitting at a desk in front of a computer. Some hire part time trainers, dancing teachers and massage specialists. It is a pity only that such companies are still not a majority. For the employees, companies often provide dancing, gymnastics, or skiing courses twice a week. Having ex-athletes on their team, companies can showcase the values of their organisation. By increasing diversity in the workplace, the engagement and retention of employees improves. Showing commitment to the development of athletes, they emphasizes their commitment to society at large.



6. Best Practices

The aim of this chapter is not having a massive and detailed best practices and policies analysis in the field of dual career promotion and implementation in Europe and worldwide: many other institutions, teams and projects did that in the past with very interesting results. See for example the study “QUALIFICATIONS / DUAL CAREERS IN SPORTS”, realized by the University of Rome Foro Italico (Capranica Laura, Guidotti Flavia) for the Policy

Department B: Structural and Cohesion Policies of the European Parliament, where a comparative analysis of the most relevant approaches concerning dual careers in different EU areas offers an interesting picture in which “only few Member States presented well-organized and extensive systems, whereas the majority of countries encompass fragmented actions and policies related to some aspects of dual career for talented and elite athletes”.

6.1 Introduction

The AFTERMATCH project carried out a small scale best practices collection in the 5 partner’s countries with the sole aim of discovering innovative and brilliant approaches and tools for favouring the implementation of efficient dual career – friendly initiatives, as well as to increase the effects of new or of already existing actions, operating through different channels, towards the final beneficiaries: athletes and former athletes. Secondly, the partnership intended to verify the effective need for a new approach, the AFTERMATCH approach, by analysing some relevant trends in existing initiatives. Each partner had been asked to collect at least 2 “national – level” and at least 1 “European – International level” practices. This little survey enlightened some basic points:

- 15 over 17 practices collected deal with “paving the way for an exit strategy after sport career” and targeting both to “sport-related jobs” (5) and to “all jobs” (10);
- Among the practice focusing specifically on “life after sport strategies”, there are some (5) trying to

- solve this challenge by guiding athletes and former athletes to “sport-related profiles and positions”;
- Eight practices collected targets only on “elite athletes”, but 5 other are open to all athletes;
- Very few practices (3) try to connect sport’s world (federations, associations and athletes) with companies and the business world;
- Very few practices (4) targets “coaches, sport managers and sport teachers” as main actors.

Even if small-scaled, the AFTERMATCH best practices analysis confirmed the need for a “different” action in the field of dual career, an action planned to be innovative (both in terms of targets and of beneficiaries) as well as complementary with other existing initiatives or programmes. In fact, the third aim of this little best practices collection is also to find out potential “channels” through which the AFTERMATCH model can be known, promoted and used.

From a quantitative perspective, the AFTERMATCH partnership collected 17 practices:

Best Practice 1					
COLLECTOR	COVERAGE	TITLE	WEBSITE	PROPONENT	TARGET
SI	Europe	Player Development Manager (PDM) project	https://www.euathletes.org/campaigns/pdmn-and-dual-careers.html	EU Athletes Network	27 player associations in active membership of EU Athletes and their elite sportsmen and woman
OBJECTIVES			RESULTS		
To improve the governance of the player associations members of EU Athletes with regards to how they support elite players prepare for their dual careers outside after sport.			In project a best practice governance model of Player Development Managers (PDMs) was developed and promoted within the 27 player associations in membership of EU Athletes. PDMs fulfil one of the core remits of player associations through direct contact with elite athletes at their place of work. Their main role is to provide support and advice to players about education and preparing for the end of their sporting careers.		
FUNDING			DURATION		
Commission, Preparatory actions in the field of sport			11 months (2014 – 2015)		

Best Practice 2					
COLLECTOR	COVERAGE	TITLE	WEBSITE	PROPONENT	TARGET
SI	Europe	Comprehensive support to Athletes in Boarding Football Classes” project	www.gimnazijsiska.si	Gimnazija Šiška, Aljaževa, Ljubljana	Young football players in education
OBJECTIVES			RESULTS		
To <i>encourage students, to set objectives, recognise their values and learn how to most effectively plan their time</i> . Therefore, is the most important task of involved teachers, trainers, educators, and sport and pedagogical coordinators, to educate students for successful balance of school and sporting commitments.			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programme including comprehensive care providing optimal conditions for a maximum professional and sport progress of a young athlete (obtaining the education and development of sport career at the same time). Interdisciplinary integration of not-sport related subjects with sport ones, resulting in higher level of motivation and interest of students in not only sport related topics but in the subjects in general. 		
FUNDING			DURATION		
National budget (Act on upper secondary school, Policy on adjustment of school obligations)			2000 – on going		

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Best Practice 3					
COLLECTOR	COVERAGE	TITLE	WEBSITE	PROPONENT	TARGET
PL	Poland	Support and development of sport education for student athletes at the Opole Univ. Of T	http://azs.po.opole.pl/	KLUB UCZELNIANY AZS PO (OUTech Sport Club affiliated with the Academic Sport Association)	Student athletes from various sport disciplines, intended for the best athletes in disciplines that are often underfunded.
OBJECTIVES			RESULTS		
The primary objective of the programme is, in addition to ensuring optimal training and competition participation conditions for the best student athletes, to enable them to complete physical education studies and their gradual introduction into the profession of teacher – coach.			They are in Opole, thanks to OUTech, the OUTech Sport Club affiliated with the Academic Sport Association and the government of the City of Opole, it has been possible to create a joint support programme . The possibility to train in optimal conditions, funding of the training process and study opportunities all make it possible to increase the probability of a smooth transition from being an active athlete to becoming a teacher – coach.		
FUNDING			DURATION		
Budget of the Ministry of Sport and Tourism, Academic Sport Association, OUTech and Local Government (City of Opole)			2012 – ongoing		
Best Practice 4					
COLLECTOR	COVERAGE	TITLE	WEBSITE	PROPONENT	TARGET
PL	Poland	“Sport+” studies project	www.wszc.pl	Higher School of Management and Coaching (Sport Faculty)	Elite athletes from Poland (mainly representing sport games)
OBJECTIVES			RESULTS		
To provide elite athletes the studies (under- and postgraduate). These mechanism of dual career, achieved for last 6 years, consists of: online education; great studies programme focused on athletes and sport’s needs (and not only) marketplace; system of internships and workshops that athletes can make in their clubs between training sessions; individual study path for every athlete; personal tutor for every studying athlete.			Undergraduate e-degree Sport+ aimed ONLY at sportsmen and –women and coaches (three pathways: Management of a Sports Organisation, Management of a Sports Team, Complete Development of a Young Player), postgraduate degrees: Sports Game Analyst and Manager of a Football School/Academy – those are already underway and have enjoyed a lot of interest, online courses on our UpYourlevel platform (an interactive, e-learning platform administered by our University)		
FUNDING			DURATION		
Higher School of Management and Coaching budget; Act on higher schools act, “Sport” Faculty Programme			2009 on going		

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Best Practice 5					
COLLECTOR	COVERAGE	TITLE	WEBSITE	PROPOSER	TARGET
PL	Poland / Germany	Support and development of sport education for students of the Reg. Centre for Youth Training of the Opole Football Ass. in Prószków	www.pomologia-proszkow.pl	Zespół Szkół im. J. Warszawicza (J. Warszawicz School Complex)	Young footballers from sport schools
OBJECTIVES					RESULTS
<p>The objective of this good practice is the skilful planning and management of sport and school education for a selected group of athletes. The primary objective of the programme is to educate young athletes and prepare them to perform various roles in adult life. Ensuring optimal development conditions, examining the potential and planning a sport career are an essential element of the activities of the whole staff of coaches, supervisors and teachers.</p>					<p>The programme also includes diagnosis of the potential as well as forecasting and development of sport talent, taking into account the planning of a sport career and the possibility of choosing an alternative path of professional development. The whole training staff, supervisors and teachers work on personal development and the acquisition of skills necessary in adult life for each of the students, on an individual basis, in accordance with their recognised needs and potential.</p>
FUNDING					DURATION
Budget of the Ministry, Polish Football Association and Local Government Education System Act, Sport Act					2004 – ongoing
Best Practice 6					
COLLECTOR	COVERAGE	TITLE	WEBSITE	PROPOSER	TARGET
PL	Poland	Project Higher Qualifications – Football Coach	www.pzpn.pl	PZPN (Polish Football Association)	Active and former professional league footballers
OBJECTIVES					RESULTS
<p>The primary objective of the whole Programme is the skilful transition from a career as a player to that of a coach. Coaching course curricula also provide instruction on planning one's life after the end of one's career. Contacts with the mass media make it possible to understand the work of journalists and, often, to take up the work of a sport commentator.</p>					<p>Organisation of specialist coaching courses for former and active professional players; Training footballers to practice the profession of sport commentator and sport organiser; Preparation for the role of a youth educator (UEFA sport coach); Combining the practical experience of players with training theory on selected levels of their playing career.</p>
FUNDING					DURATION
Polish Football Association, DFB, UEFA UEFA Coaching Convention, Sport Act					2008 – ongoing

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Best Practice 7					
COLLECTOR	COVERAGE	TITLE	WEBSITE	PROPONENT	TARGET
PL	Europe	UpYourLevel	www.upyour.pl	Higher School of Management And Coaching (Sport Faculty)	Athletes, sport coaches and managers
OBJECTIVES			RESULTS		
To give coaches, teachers and parents competencies and tools in different areas of holistic development of young athletes so they can later educate these young athletes for successful balance of school and sporting commitments. To help professional athletes to learn whenever and wherever they want (i.e. at home between training sessions).			The platform is also focused on providing the great tool of dual career for elite athletes: the way is specific "training courses".		
FUNDING			DURATION		
Private / Commercial			2014 – on going		
Best Practice 8					
COLLECTOR	COVERAGE	TITLE	WEBSITE	PROPONENT	TARGET
IT	Europe	V SPORT + / Strategies for a Competent Workforce	http://www.vsportplus.eu	European Observatoire of Sport & Employment (EOSE)	National Sports Federations, Vocational or technical colleges and providers, Higher Education Institutions
OBJECTIVES			RESULTS		
Ensure a successful dissemination of the LLL Strategy at all levels to reach all relevant stakeholders; Encourage and support the transfer and implementation of the LLL Sport Strategy at all levels; Stimulate changes within vocational education to ensure it is fit for purpose and aids employability and mobility Develop a Cross Sectoral Valorisation Framework to raise awareness of the LLL Strategy for the Sport & Active Leisure Sector			The 7 steps model (http://www.vsportplus.eu/wp/lll-strategy/7-steps/) provides a framework for the development of a strategic approach to ensure that vocational education, training and qualifications (VET system) exist to support the development of this workforce and to also ensure that the sector of Leisure and Sport delivers its potential. Indeed the model aims to bring together the education and employment stakeholders in a collaborative approach to ensure that VET provision is fit for purpose and in line with the needs of the workforce.		
FUNDING			DURATION		
FACEA – LLP – Call for Proposals 2011 Key Activity 4 – Multilateral Projects – Dissemination & Exploitation of results			29 months from 01/11/2011 to 31/03/2014		

6. BEST PRACTICES

Best Practice 9					
COLLECTOR	COVERAGE	TITLE	WEBSITE	PROPELLENT	TARGET
IT, BG, SI	World	The Athletes Career Programme - Bringing elite athletes together with great companies	http://athlete.adecco.com/	International Olympic C., International Paralympic C., ADECCO	Athletes preparing for retirement and career transition. Public & private employers, big international companies, SME, organizations and federations.
OBJECTIVES			RESULTS		
<p>Career Development: discover who you are and where your interests lie and define the best career path. Defining what tools, skills and career options can put you on the road to achieving goals. Job Placement: opportunities out there for intern- or traineeships and job placement, personalised advice and guidance built on Adecco's long-standing employment expertise. Companies' Involvement and benefit: access to a pool of world-class talent for intern or traineeships and full or part-time employment.</p>			<p>The ACP has reached over 28,000 elite athletes from more than 185 countries. We have held trainings and workshops with 15 to 18 year-old athletes at the Summer and Winter Youth Olympic Games and we support both active and retired elite athletes working together with National Olympic and Paralympic Committees in countries and regions where Adecco has a presence - and even beyond through Outreach training activities.</p>		
FUNDING			DURATION		
International Business Consulting Network.			2004 ongoing		
Best Practice 10					
COLLECTOR	COVERAGE	TITLE	WEBSITE	PROPELLENT	TARGET
IT	Singapore	Sports Excellence (Spex) Education Scheme and Sports Excellence (Spex) Career Scheme	https://www.sportssingapore.gov.sg/newsroom/media-releases/2013/11/13-partners-join-athlete-support-schemes-to-give-team-singapore-athletes-comprehensive-support	Singapore Sports Institute (SSI) - Athlete Services Department (ASD)	This scheme is intended to support only national athletes as carded by SSI.
OBJECTIVES			RESULTS		
<p>Spex Education Scheme: Objective: To implement a comprehensive athlete support system designed to help athletes achieve their academic aspirations without compromising their pursuit of sporting excellence. Spex Career Scheme: This network comprises a diverse group of employers who will offer career development support in the form of providing internships, apprenticeships, job placements and flexible workplace practices.</p>			<p>The programme currently has 33 corporate partners from 19 industries, including DBS Bank, food and beverage company Sakae Holdings and environmental solutions provider Hyflux. Deloitte Singapore, one of the 33 spexBusiness Network partners, separately collaborated with Netball Singapore to offer employment and education opportunities to the nation's netballers. The Football Association of Singapore also started a career scheme in 2014, where eligible players who apply for upgrading courses can get subsidies of up to 50 per cent. More than 81 athletes from 27 sports have secured either internships or full-time jobs through these schemes.</p>		
FUNDING			DURATION		
Singapore Government - Ministry for Sport - Governative Programmes			Permanent		

6. BEST PRACTICES

Best Practice 11			
COLLECTOR	COVERAGE	TITLE	WEBSITE
IT	Italy	LA NUOVA STAGIONE (the new season)	http://www.lanuovastagione.coni.it/
OBJECTIVES		RESULTS	
The New Season is a project promoted by CONI and by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies in order to guide and support Athletes during their professional choice at the end of the sport career. A very important and innovative project, three-years long, with the objective of valorizing the competence acquired by athletes during their sport career, by merging them with the new trends and request of the actual labour market . Specific “call for athletes” are launched each year in order to be selected for the program.		<p>A – Information and Communication Campaign B – Welcoming and Definition of Guidance Paths in order to define personal-professional-educational skills, at evaluating the athlete's need for creating a tailored training and professional path. C – Definition of Training Paths Line C.1 Basic training for all athletes at the end of the sport career Line C.2 Specific training in “sport management” Line C.3 Specific training for self-employment and entrepreneurship in sport sector. D – Definition of Employment Paths Line D.1 Apprenticeship measure in companies Line D.2 Self Entrepreneurship measures E – Monitoring & Evaluation</p>	
FUNDING			
Ministry of Labour and Social Policies			
DURATION			
3 years (2015 - 2018)			
Best Practice 12			
COLLECTOR	COVERAGE	TITLE	WEBSITE
GR	Greece	Dual Athletes Career Initiative	http://www.dualathletescareer.gr/
OBJECTIVES		RESULTS	
The main goal of this educational program is to support the active and former athletes to develop their careers in the areas of sports science and sports business at the end of their sporting career. The main object of the educational program is the design, implementation and evaluation and flexible service program of distance education and coaching -mentoring, addressed to current and older athletes and ensure: a) the transfer of selected knowledge and practice in areas of their interest, b) cultivating the skills required for their second profession c) certification of acquired knowledge and skills and d) Advice on the implementation phase.		As part of the implementation of distance counseling it was used in general the potential of social networking. More specifically, the operation of the portal is supported by extensive use of social media (facebook, twitter, LinkedIn) to promote the purpose of distance counseling and public extension that monitors and participates. This action includes the development and operation of an Internet Portal, which will provide advanced content management functionality (content management) and providing personalized functionality to each user. In particular it contains multimedia material, interactive training material and also will host a public discussion tool (forum).	
FUNDING			
GR Ministry of Education - ECF			
DURATION			
2004 and ongoing			

6. BEST PRACTICES

Best Practice 13					
COLLECTOR	COVERAGE	TITLE	WEBSITE	PROPOSANT	TARGET
GR	Europe	The European Athlete as Student (EAS) network	http://www.dualcareer.eu	European Athlete as Student (EAS) network	universities, sports schools and other educational establishments
OBJECTIVES					
The main aim is to support European athletes in combining high performance sport and education. Supporting the "dual career" means that the EAS-Network strives to optimise the training conditions for athlete/students but also that their future gets secured by making it possible for them to get an education or vocational training, so that they have a safe platform to start from when their sports career is over.					
FUNDING			DURATION		
FACEA – Lifelong Learning Programme – Call for Proposals 2011 (EAC/49/10) Key Activity 4 – Multilateral Projects – Dissemination and Exploitation of results			2004 and ongoing		
Best Practice 14					
COLLECTOR	COVERAGE	TITLE	WEBSITE	PROPOSANT	TARGET
BG	Bulgaria	Career Centre of the Nat. Sports Academy "Vassil Levski"	http://www.nsa.bg/en/page.11	Prof. Petar Bankov, Ph.D	Graduating NSA students; Former graduates, athletes with an established professional realization; State, social and private institutions in the field of physical education, sports and tourism. Potential employers: Big companies and SME.
OBJECTIVES					
The Career Centre of NSA "Vassil Levski" aims at the following: - Orientation of the students in the educational degrees "Bachelor", "Master" and "Doctor" when choosing among possibilities of professional realization in social and private organizations; - Consulting students in their preparation for job interviews - putting together a CV, motivational letter, interviewing also for participation in activities with legal relations with employers; - Exploring possibilities for employment of professionally trained specialists in the field of physical education and sports. Giving information to students about availability of suitable jobs. - Planning and carrying out scientific and practical researches in the field of the career realization of students; - Co-ordination of student probation programmes for professional realization ; - Helping students and ex-athletes to contact employers ;					
FUNDING			DURATION		
The National budget. (Priority activities of the NSA Career center aiming to help students in their career realization are free of charge).			Ongoing /current		
RESULTS					
Analysis of the conditions and progress of processes in the labour market through means, such as: (consultations, work meetings, conferences, scientific research etc.); Production of informative material for alternative working possibilities in different fields of the physical education, sports and tourism; Organized and managed national and international events concerning career orientation and realization of students.					

6. BEST PRACTICES

Best Practice 15						
COLLECTOR	COVERAGE	TITLE	WEBSITE	PROPONENT	TARGET	
BG	UK	Athlete Career Transition (ACT) Ltd_“Pathway”	http://actpathway.com/	Athlete Career Transition (ACT) Ltd	Athletes, business entities, experts	
OBJECTIVES				RESULTS		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of Career Pathway, individualised to the needs, aspirations and expectations of each athlete. Creation of a defined career pathway for the athlete to experience a seamless transition between retiring from professional sport and entering a specific career route. Creating a combination between the inputs from the athlete, the Business Partner, education partner and the ACT Advisory Panel, for achieving best results. To transform assessment around the world with a portfolio of leading-edge assessments underpinned by extensive research. To comprise psychology, business consulting and IT specialists, sharing the a passion for innovation and exceptional customer service. To provide consultancy services to many other firms both in the UK and internationally, developing an international network of legal advice. The end goal of the ACT pathway is to prepare, guide and support the athlete to a point where they have made a successful transition from professional sport into regular life and full time employment. 					<p>Athletes Career Transition. ACT has developed a specific ‘Career Pathway’ that is individualised to the needs, aspirations and expectations of each athlete. Every Athlete is different and ACT develops a completely unique pathway for each athlete, regardless of their age or stage of career. The ACT career Pathway is structured in a way to allow flexibility for the athlete to continue to remain 100% committed to their sporting career, whilst fully utilising the down time that every elite athlete experiences. There is frequent monitoring of the individual’s progress by ACT, the Business Partner and the athlete, with total focus on ensuring that maximum benefit for the individual and the Business Partner is achieved.</p>	
FUNDING		DURATION		Private / Commercial		Ongoing/current
Best Practice 16						
COLLECTOR	COVERAGE	TITLE	WEBSITE	PROPONENT	TARGET	
IT	Italy	EduCARE Sport	http://educare.bnl.it/educare-sport.aspx	CONI - Comitato Olimpico Nazionale Italiano + BNL (BNP Paribas)	Athletes, former athletes, sport entrepreneurs.	
OBJECTIVES						
<p>EduCare Sport intends to “train” athletes for “new competitions”: enterprise and management, that require business & management oriented skills. Athletes are able, with this initiative, to play the card of “start-up a business”, supported by the project team during a specific training path. Moreover, the CONI will be responsible of a specific training module focused on the “sense of the challenge” and on the “perseverance”, typical aspect of an athlete’s character, but translated into useful tool for new and positive professional goals. EduCare aims at give athletes a specific training on motivational and economic-financial issues, on how to use skills acquired during sport practicing in the professional life, on which tools an athlete can use to start-up a personal business, with an eye on microcredit.</p>						
FUNDING						
Private (Bank) and public (CONI)						
DURATION						
From 2015 Ongoing						
RESULTS						
<p>EduCare Sport is part of a wider programme of “financial education” carried on by BNL (Group BNP Paribas) since 2008, able to involve more than 230k people, more than 8k companies and able to organize more than 5k events all around Italy. EduCARE Sport had been launched in 2015 (May) and is active.</p> <p>The “model” Educare Sport , composed by a set of “free meetings” plus 3 different modules: 1) Psycο – Attitudinal Module: in charge of CONI; 2) Economic – Financial Module, in charge of BNL; 3) Microcredit for Entrepreneurship Module, in charge of PerMicro. .</p>						

6. BEST PRACTICES

Best Practice 17					
COLLECTOR	COVERAGE	TITLE	WEBSITE	PROPONENT	TARGET
IT	Italy	GEA Tutor	http://tutor.geaworld.com/	Gea World	Athletes, former athletes.
OBJECTIVES					RESULTS
<p>Gea Tutor is a “tutorship programme” carried out by a team of high-level professionals, able to support and train athletes in a comprehensive way: from the pension system to the fiscal duties, from the “personal budget planning” to the support in completing / better using their educational background, till the awareness of the fact that they won’t be cared anymore by the medical staff of the team / federation. The basic programme is composed by a set of 20 individual meetings at home for 1 year. The goal is to train athletes by using the simplest and more complete way in all the relevant issues: financial planning, personal budget management, physical situation and family relationship building / improving.</p>					<p>http://tutor.geaworld.com/download/Programma-Gea-Tutor.pdf: this is the link to the “training programme” of the Tutorship action, with all the topics listed.</p>
FUNDING				DURATION	
Private / Commercial				2014 - Ongoing	

6.2 Is AFTERMATCH going in the right direction?

As anticipated in the paragraph 6.1, the analysis of the collected practices in the 5 EU countries involved in the AFTERMATCH project (Italy, Greece, Slovenia, Poland and Bulgaria) lead us to the following assumptions:

A) 15 over 17 practices collected deal with “paving the way for an exit strategy after sport career” and targeting both to “sport-related jobs” (5) and to “all jobs” (10)

The AFTERMATCH analysis shows a quite positive scenario with respect to the activation of targeted actions dealing with “life after sport” in partner’s countries: 15 over 17 practices include actions, initiatives and tools for empowering athletes, former athletes and the “meso sector” (managers, teachers and trainers) for the “jump” out from sport practice and into the professional world. Among these 15 practices, only 5 limits the potential labor market to “sport-related jobs”, while the others pave the way for a more generalistic approach to labour market. Even if the effectiveness of these practices is not clear enough (they are quite recent), we can say that the situation is “not so bad” and many initiatives and actions are going in the right direction.

The relative small amount of practices targeting only “combination of sport & education” collected by AFTERMATCH partners is due to the fact that the main aim of the research was to identify and analyse mainly actions targeting “post sport career” and many existing classic dual career programmes (usually managed by Universities) had not been taken into consideration.

B) Among the practice focusing specifically on “life after sport strategies”, there are some (5) trying to solve this challenge by guiding athletes and former athletes to “sport-related profiles and positions”.

One third of the practices focused on supporting athletes and former athletes in choosing their professional paths opts for “keeping sportsmen and sportswomen” in the sport sector: “Support and development of sport education for student athletes at the Opole University of Technology”, “Sport+ studies project” and “Project Higher Qualifications – Football Coach” in Poland, as well as the European project “V SPORT + / Strategies for a Competent Workforce” and “Dual Athletes Career Initiative” in Greece are focused on the valorization of sport-related skills in order to be ready for sport-related jobs: sport managers, coaches, sport trainer, etc...

With reference to the AFTERMATCH goals, these practices are useful indeed.

In fact, “sport-related jobs” are a good “doors” for athletes and former athletes, since it’s easier for them to valorize and use not only soft & transversal skills (see chapter 2 of this Survey), but also technical skills. Notwithstanding, the AFTERMATCH project intends to put more efforts on the other side of the labour market, where it is less easy for former athletes to find a job in continuity with the sport performed, by acting also on “HR Managers and companies” in order for them to be more aware of the soft and transversal skills acquired during sport practice, not only by elite athletes.

C) Eight practices collected targets only on “elite athletes”, but 5 other are open to all athletes

Excluding the 4 practices targeted to the “meso sector” (managers, teachers and trainers), 7 practices over 13 are exclusively dedicated to elite athletes with specific programmes. The AFTERMATCH approach is to offer a Model able to be functional to all the athletes and former athletes spectrum, independently if he or she is an “elite athlete” or a simply agonist who performed sport activities for a long time. The idea is that sport-related skills can be valorized and helpful in the labour market with no reference to the “level of success”. Of course, an elite athlete has the opportunity to play also the “celebrity” card.

For this reason, we tried to collect also (and in particular) practices targeted to all athletes: “EduCARE Sport”, “The new season” and “GEA Tutor” in Italy, the “Career Centre” of the National Sports Academy “Vassil Levski” in Sofia (Bulgaria) and the “Dual Athletes Career Initiative” in Greece are programmes welcoming all kind of agonists, even if there are significant differences among them in terms of “management” (public driven or private / commercial) and in terms of sub targets (students or former athletes).

D) Very few practices (3) try to connect sport’s world (federations, associations and athletes) with companies and the business world.

Project Higher Qualifications – Football Coach (PL), The Athletes Career Programme - Bringing elite athletes together with great companies (International, with ADECCO), Sports Excellence - Spex Career Scheme (Singapore), EduCARE Sport in Italy (with a Bank): these are the only best practices collected trying to create a permanent network, a channel for cooperation between sport federations and companies / banks in order to improve the

occupability of athletes.

The AFTERMATCH project considers crucial the involvement of companies in a potential Model for increasing the occupational opportunities of athletes and ex athletes. For this reason, part of the Model will be devoted to “raise awareness” of HR Managers and Company’s owners, with specific targeted actions elaborated in an innovative way (see the example of “Porte – Doors” theatre performance).

On the other side, 3 best practices collected use “dual career support” as a business: GEA Tutor in Italy, Athlete Career Transition (ACT) Ltd “Pathway” in UK and UpYourLevel in Poland. These companies offer training and individual support for athletes and former athletes in order to help them to improve their chances to find a good career after sport and are particularly interesting for AFTERMATCH project because of the fact that they foresee a specific “training path” for the beneficiaries, that will be deeply analysed by the project’s team.

E) Very few practices (4) target “coaches, sport managers and sport teachers” as main actors.

One of the most evident finding emerging from this small-scale best practices research is a low attention to the “MESO dimension” of the Dual Career system, but this dimension is the most important for the AFTERMATCH project. Coaches, trainers, teachers in sport schools or academies, sport managers are the “clue” for an effective preparation of athletes to a post-sport career. They are in constant contact with them, at school as well as in the pitch / field, and in some cases they spend more hours with them than the families. The idea is to include “AFTERMATCH Model” in the regular and official training schemes of Sport Federations, Sport Schools and Academies, Sport Association Networks with the power of “training the trainers”.

6.3 Interesting tools and solutions

After an overview of the collected practices, the AFTERMATCH project decided to list down all the interesting tools and solutions emerging from them,

in the light of a potential inspiration for the next project steps (WP4 - Model Creation and WP5 - Model Implementation):

Practice	Tool / Solution	Why is interesting
Player Development Manager	Model of Player Development Managers (PDMs) , developed and promoted within the 27 player associations in membership of EU Athletes. PDMs fulfil one of the core remits of player associations through direct contact with elite athletes at their place of work. PDM's main role is to provide support and advice to players about education and preparing for the end of their sporting careers.	Because this "profile" can be interested in getting in touch with the future AFTERMATCH model and may be a "good channel" for introducing the model towards sport associations and federations.
UpYourLevel	The online interactive e-learning platform , focused also on providing the great tool of dual career for elite athletes: the way is specific "training courses".	This practice is interesting because is one of the few developed as a business and focused on "on distance tools".
V-Sport Plus Project	The 7 steps model (http://www.vsportplus.eu/wp/III-strategy/7-steps/) provides a framework for the development of a strategic approach to ensure that vocational education, training and qualifications (VET system) exist to support the development of this workforce and to also ensure that the sector of Leisure and Sport delivers its potential.	This practice is interesting because it creates a MODEL that could be very inspiring for the creation of the AFTERMATCH model. It also creates "Ambassadors"... similar to AFTERMATCH "testimonials".
The Athletes Career Programme	The Programme has reached over 28,000 elite athletes from more than 185 countries with a complete employment plan focused on 3 different services : career development, job placement and companies involvement.	It is planned for athletes with disabilities. It is developed in cooperation with a Recruitment Agency at International Level. It involves directly big companies.
Sports Excellence (Spex) Career Scheme	Creates a "network of companies" : this network comprises a diverse group of employers who will offer career development support in the form of providing internships, apprenticeships, job placements and flexible workplace practices.	The idea of creating a "network of companies" supporting the Model of Intervention is in line with AFTERMATCH project

6. BEST PRACTICES

Practice	Tool / Solution	Why is interesting
LA NUOVA STAGIONE (the new season)	This programme launch a “call for athletes” with which the recruitment will be implemented. A technical employment agency is involved for ensuring individual support to athletes.	Since the programme is brand new and “institutionally driven” (by Minister & Olympic Committee together), it’s a good opportunity for promoting the AFTERMATCH Model in Italy as “complementary” with respect to the call.
Athlete Career Transition (ACT) Ltd	ACT has developed a specific ‘Career Pathway’ that is individualised to the needs, aspirations and expectations of each athlete.	The AFTERMATCH project is interested in “how the company created the training contents” and how do they are delivering training.

The table above reveals a good number of “ideas” and “solutions” inspiring AFTERMATCH scientific team. Together with the results of Questionnaires

(Chapter 4) and Interviews (Chapter 5), this will be the knowledge base for the AFTERMATCH Model definition and testing.



7. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATION

Sport is a value based sector directly linked to ethical leadership and to the development of professional skills . The knowledge, life skills, health and physical abilities generally developed through appropriate sport experiences can benefit participants by improving their chances of finding employment,

raising their level of income and making them more optimistic and willing to volunteer in the community . Both questionnaires and interviews, as well as the short best practice analysis, carried out in the framework of the AFTERMATCH project and presented in this survey, confirm these assumptions.

Suggestion

In line with the UNOSDP document, the partnership agrees on fact that “to harness sport’s potential for community renewal through employment, recommends that sport and development actors in communities should: • Develop a sport and employment plan; • Support the creation of new employment opportunities in the sport sector; • Adopt a policy of local recruitment and provide local opportunities for related skill development, training and qualifications; • Provide local opportunities to increase employability and transferable skills through sport; and • Demonstrate the impact of sport and employment projects”.

Youth unemployment is one of the main social and economic challenges of this decade. Whilst youth entrepreneurship is far from being the solution, it is likely to be part of a response. Youth work (non-formal learning) enables young people to develop the entrepreneurial skills that are important in their daily lives, in the work place, and when establishing a social or commercial activity. However, the role of youth work in sport context fostering entrepreneurial learning has rarely been a topic of inquiry in its own right. The relationship between the two has been either assumed or contested, but not thoroughly examined.

Non formal education in sport to fight youth unemployment (YOUrope project, 2014)

State of the art in partners countries

Overall, it is evident that national contexts are diverse and that different actors (stakeholders) took initiatives in promoting dual career in particular countries (ministries, educational institutions, sport associations) with similar objectives.

The different legal frameworks that exist or not exist in this area and institutional support resulting thereof, seem to be an important building block for creation of the support environment for promotion of the dual career path. Only a few measures/initiatives

were identified that address support to athletes in transition to labour market (e.g. Slovenia, Bulgaria). This confirms the relevance of this project's specific endeavour.

In case of Italy an important issue was raised, which is perhaps beyond the intended scope of the project: the equality of opportunities for men and women athletes regarding the access to support in dual career. This is also an important point addressed in the European Union Work Plan for Sport (2014-2017).

Situation of former athletes regarding education and employment

The educational level of former athletes seems to be at quite high level and similarly, also the employment situation does not seem very problematic with the exception of Slovenia and Italy. In case of Bulgaria, a correlation between sport career, education level and

job was made: according to results it was concluded that athletes with exceptional sport achievements tend to be better educated and can find better jobs both in public or private sector.

Transversal skills acquired in sport

Overall, the survey results (questionnaires combined with the interviews) showed that the athletes/former athletes could identify skills acquired in sport that are transversal and could be applied in their post sport career. Former athletes relied mainly on the support of the family in their transition period from sport to employment; more support from federations would be welcome. Athletes and former athletes thus confirmed the assumption related to the need for more support in the transition processes by sport

federations, clubs ect. It was useful that in case of Italian interviewees a list of 'missing services' was created that can be further worked on.

The perception of former athletes on potential for application of these skills seem to vary quite a lot between countries (e.g. Slovenia vs. Bulgaria - both analyses showed the respondents had highest share of jobs in the leisure, sport & tourism sectors, but significantly different scores regarding application of skills acquired in sport in their job).

Best practice collection

From collected practices it can be concluded that already certain approaches and tools exist that could be used and promoted further in the Aftermatch model.

Overall the survey, which focused to a great extent to the perceptions and experience of former athletes, athletes and employers and HR managers, confirmed

the main assumptions of the partners regarding the identification and also awareness about the sport acquired soft skills, their transferability and the need for more support to athletes in transition to post career (provided by sport clubs, federations, and indirectly by employers being aware of their potential).

Tips and topic ideas

Based on the survey findings the following points can be further discussed and involved in the model itself; findings and challenges derived from the survey should focus on most relevant ones for specific target group addressed and be used as introduction to the model.

Specific topics to be included in the model might be:

- Risks associated with sport and uncertainties faced by former athletes in transition from sport career to post sport career, in particular the 'identity gap' – i.e. the importance of being aware not only the transversal skills, but also other important factors influencing this transition;
- Perceptions of interviewees (athletes, former athletes, employers) relating to differences in skills that can be acquired from individual or team sport, to what extent this is relevant and for whom/More detailed presentation of most commonly identified sport acquired transversal skills to reach a common understanding of their meaning;
- Strengthening awareness of athletes about variety of choices: it is 'natural' for an athlete to think about a job career connected with sport and yet, it is also important to work on opening of horizons for

opportunities outside sport;

- Examples of support services that can be provided by different target groups addressed in the model (build on example from Italy), potentials of how relevant actors could work together in providing this support (e.g. federations and employers)
- Consider capacities of trainers, coaches, teachers, managers and former athletes to work with (young) athletes: In which situations and how can they best educate athletes on the need for exit strategy? What competence they need to be effective at their work? How will they be able to monitor own performance?
- It is assumed that those interested in adopting the model will be looking for very practical and concrete solutions that can be easily and effectively applied. Besides awareness raising, this should be the focus of modules, e.g.:
- Examples (stories, testimonies) of how specific skills were used in practice by former athletes not only within module B, but also for modules A, C (assuming this can be collected from narrative interviews or be further developed on their basis, perhaps a few video testimonials can be produced?)
- Questions, exercises, tasks, events to be used by trainers and coaches to raise awareness of athletes on skills and their 'imprint' for post career application

7. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATION

- Tools for HR managers (e.g. questions to be asked in interviews in relation to sport experience and skills);
- Consider what skills are needed to implement the concepts deriving from the Porte-Door performance when inviting the former athletes and how the module should be prepared to allow for multiplication. If this module is not used by countries – what could be the alternative to still address the target group of employers/HR managers;
- Explore opportunities to involve promoters of identified best practices into Aftermatch model development in order to build on tools identified as useful for the model;

- Findings of the country contexts and data collected including best practices give also the possibility to raise awareness on the need for improvement of national (legal) frameworks supporting dual career paths - in terms of strengthening the advocacy capacities of sport federations towards policy makers to introduce/reinforce legal and institutional support. Discuss if capacities exist to address this area within the model.

Conclusions

The survey carried out by the partners has been prepared using different methods and tools which helped collect numerous quantitative and qualitative data. The research part of the project developed very interesting and useful information. The most important thing is that all three assumptions made in the project application.

The so called meso-dimension (e.g. trainers, coaches, etc.) is supposed to play the highest relevant role in creating the conditions for a successful exit strategy of the athlete from his/her sport career; it is important in the development of the model to keep in mind and consider that targets coming from the meso-dimension will be the testers and beneficiaries

of the model; the model will underline and use their contribution with the aim of the success of the project. For the further progress of the project, it might be very helpful to think about different entry levels of a future programme, as each athlete has an individual demand of help. A lot of athletes might be able to find their way mostly on their own, whereas others are struggling. This might also be already a question of which type of sports.

In the end, the survey through its contents explored and findings is likely to provide a solid base for the development of the Aftermatch model.

8. ANNEXES

Dual career local situation FORM

This very simple form is meant to give an homogeneous collection of “information about the state of art of dual career promotion” in your territory. As mentioned in the Minutes of the Meeting in Sofia, this chapter of the survey should bear an “AFTERMATCH approach” to dual career, by describing the fact that we are facing dual career not in terms of “enabling athletes to practice sport and to study / to work at the same time”, but in terms of “paving the way for an exit strategy” by valorising transversal skills and by involving also employers.

So said, this little “desk research” should focus on legislation, governmental initiative, stakeholders

cooperation frameworks (among different actors), etc... aiming at:

- Initiatives implemented with sportsman and sportswomen during their sport career (also in cooperation with schools or academy);
- Promoting “exit strategies” after sport careers;
- Favouring positive behaviours of employers towards ex athletes;

Each partner is expected to create a 4000 character maximum text in the following box:

1)	Which is the situation / state of art of “dual career promotion” in your country?
	<i>2000 characters</i> ...
2)	Which are the gaps / problems related to the actual situation? How this situation may be improved?
	<i>2000 characters</i> ...

Questionnaires

TASK

Each partner carries out a desk analysis of post-sport careers (3 years from the end) of at least 50 ex athletes in different disciplines by focusing on the following indicators (not exhaustive list):

- Typology of job;
- Sector – tasks;
- Level of earning;
- Job stability;
- Continuity with reference to the job experiences (if any) during the sport performance;
- Level of satisfaction;
- Level of utilization of knowledge / skills acquired during sport career.

DEFINITIONS

The EU Guidelines on Dual Careers of Athletes Recommended Policy Actions in Support of Dual Careers in High-Performance Sport defines athletes as follows:

1 A talented athlete is an athlete recognised by a sport organisation as an athlete who has the potential to

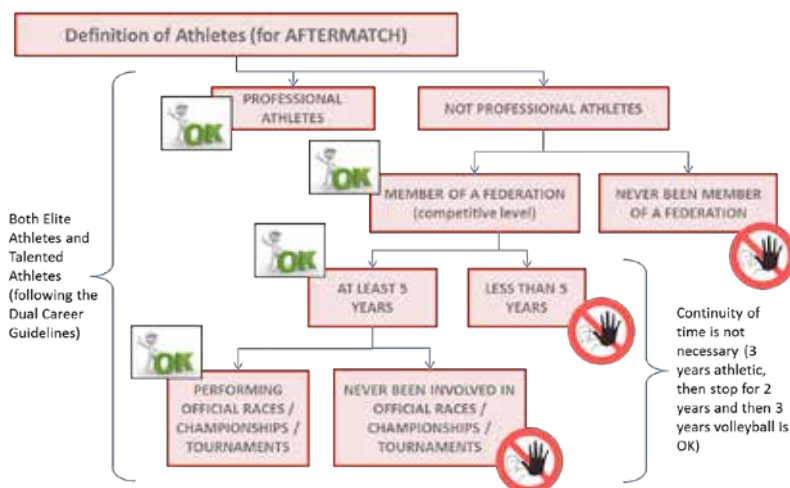
develop an elite sporting career.

2 An elite athlete is an athlete who has a professional contract with a sport employer or sport organisation or has a recognised status by a sport organisation as an elite athlete.

Moreover:

An **elite athlete** is defined as any athlete selected to represent their country in their chosen sport, at either junior or senior international level. Disabled sport (also known as adaptive sport or parasport) is defined as sport played by people with a disability, either physical or intellectual. **Professional sport** is defined as a sport in which athletes receive payment for their performance.

These definitions are too much “conservative” for the purpose and the aims of the AFTERMATCH project, since we agreed that also a person who performed sports under a federation, with several years of training / competition (at least 5) is to be considered an athlete for the project vision. So, AFTERMATCH definition of Athletes reflects the following picture:



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NOTES

- If you have a “sport team”, it is possible to interview more members of the team
- Ex athletes: we mean AT LEAST 3 YEARS after the end of the sport career

THE FORM FOR DATA COLLECTION

The present interview scheme is to be transferred in a “google form”

	EX ATHLETES FORM
COUNTRY	
NAME & SURNAME	
AGE	
SPORT	
YEARS OF ACTIVITIES AS ATHLET (FOLLOWING AFTERMATCH DEFINITION)	
LEVEL OF EDUCATION	
EMPLOYMENT SECTOR	
TYPOLOGY OF JOB/TASKS	
IS YOUR ACTUAL JOB IN CONTINUITY WITH YOUR PREVIOUS SPORT DISCIPLINE? AND WITH SPORT PRACTICE IN GENERAL?	
LEVEL OF SATISFACTION OF YOUR ACTUAL JOB	
LEVEL OF UTILIZATION OF KNOWLEDGE / SKILLS ACQUIRED DURING SPORT CAREER	
NOTES	
E-MAIL FOR RECEIVING PROJECT NEWSLETTER AND INFO (optional)	

Interviews

TASKS

A set of interviews (at least 20 in each country, 10 to athletes/ex athletes and 10 to employers) is carried on in each involved country in order to collect from one side the perception of athletes/ex athletes towards the quantity, quality and utility of the skills-bag acquired during their sport career and from the other side the perception of employers towards the most useful sport-related skills for HR and company's performance empowerment.

A. GUIDE TO CONDUCTING ATHLETE INTERVIEWS

The technique used for interviewing athletes is the focused-narrative interview, very similar to a semi-structured interview. Special attention is paid to creating a communicative method and an environment of trust towards the interviewer. The interviewer must be able to show the validity and utility of his work and must be able to show his respect for the interviewee and everything he says. In this sense, a great deal of attention is paid to how the contact is made, to the preliminary agreements based on which the interview will be conducted; the interviewee must be aware that his interview and everything he says has value and will be used in a serious and reliable research process. Hence, before the interview is conducted, care should be taken to establish the conditions for the interview.

This technique seeks to minimize by all means any interference by the interviewer in the course of the narration, in order to allow the subject's own value system to emerge. There are three main aspects to the narrative interview:

1. The active role of the interviewer who, with his skill in terms of narrative process, has a chance to choose when and how to intervene to support the story based on occasional questions aimed at focusing, exploring, expanding, etc. The interviewer is not an entirely neutral figure, but participates in building up the research material and does so knowingly, that is, he is able to control his own involvement by gearing it to improving the quality of the material rather than influencing its content.
2. The length of the interaction, which cannot be completed in the span of one or two hours, but requires a period of time varying between a half-day and two full days, in which the interviewee can delve into his own memory in depth, with the possibility of repeating things he has said, changing his version of the facts, adding new information, remaining silent, wandering off course, attempting seemingly invalid associations.
3. Definition of the format of the material expected by the interviewer, which calls for a completed interview in which the interviewee recounts episodes from his own sports experience that he considers significant in regard to the research topic. Producing stories involves some rules, such as determining the plot, characters, problem, adventure, solution, moral (Greimas, 1983; Propp, 1928), that guide their production.

In short, the interviewee is completely free to delve into the contents of the stories from the entire scope of his own experience, but to make them explicit he uses "rules" (the questions) shared in advance with the interviewer. Clearly the third character, the

definition of the format of the expected material, is not among the standard approaches for an unstructured interview: in the narrative interview, the interviewee is asked to provide responses in the form of a narrative, or that take the form of one or more stories.

How the interview is organised

The interview is organised into three distinct parts.

In the first (main narration), the interviewee is invited to “narrate” his/her own life (through a single initial stimulus) in order to raise his/her awareness about his/her life story. During this phase, the interviewer does not interrupt the narrative flow, but limits himself to a form of active listening (active listening), i.e., to demonstrating his (genuine) interest.

Subsequently, in the second part of the interview (internal questions), the interviewer raises narrative questions (i.e., aimed at evoking a memory rather than providing information and explanations) on topics, events or persons mentioned spontaneously, following the interviewee’s order and language;

Finally, in the third part (external questions), the interviewer asks questions on topics of interest to him, or seeks clarification of some aspects. It is not until this phase that the interviewer may ask non-narrative questions (information, opinions, explanations, etc.) since if he asks “descriptive or argumentative questions too soon...the biographer’s ability to produce extemporaneous narrative reports on his life may be seriously hindered”.

The interview is followed by a careful retelling by the interviewer and a very careful transcription. The interview is recorded so as not to lose out on significant aspects in listening and in transcribing notes.

Each interview is saved in a single file with the interviewer’s information and dates so that the interviewer can be contacted directly if it proves necessary to get clarifications for the final article.

Notes

These additional notes offer points for exploring to be used during the interview.

- Significant events in personal education/ professional career;
- Significant moments in personal sport career;
- Personal professional growth;
- Future intentions in personal professional career, or life after personal professional career

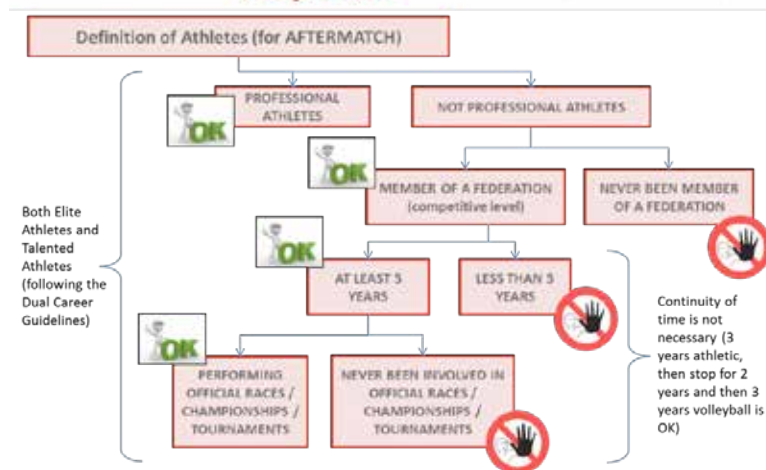
NARRATIVE INTERVIEW: LIFE STORIES OF FORMER ATHLETES

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to our study on AFTERMATCH - LIFE BEYOND SPORT PROJECT, whose general objective is *to promote a positive behaviour among athletes (young), by focusing on the enforcement of the competences & skills of teachers, trainers and sportive associations / federation managers towards the need for paving the way for an “exit strategy” after the end of the sportive career and by offering an opportunity for ex-athletes to have an innovative professional profile based on “sport related transversal skills” to be spent in private companies.* The project, funded by the Erasmus Plus Sport programme, aims to “fill the gap” in the dual career promotion activities by focusing specifically on “the end-of-sporting-career phase of athletes, including those who leave the system earlier than planned” through targeted training for teachers, trainers, directors and managers of sport association & federation, with an eye on private companies & employers involvement.

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The AFTERMATCH definition of Athletes reflects the following picture:



For the sake of the present INTERVIEW, we only considers “Elite athletes” as defined in the European Dual Career Guidelines or “high-level” athletes (performing at national level). Moreover, it is welcome to interview athletes aged from 25 onwards, in order to have a more significant feedback.

INTERVIEW (for Ex-Athletes)

INTRODUCTION (main narration)

1. What do you remember about your earliest years?

CENTRAL PART (internal questions)

2. What is your first memory associated with sports?
3. How did you come to take up sports?
4. What did you like about sports the first time you played?
5. What do you remember about school while you were playing sports?
6. What is the most important thing your family gave you?

7. What were the most crucial decisions in your life?
8. What did you learn the most from sport? Can you give us an example?
9. What did you enjoyed the most about your sport career?

SPECIFIC PART (external questions)

10. What personal skills have you developed while playing competitive sports?
11. How did you imagine your future when you were playing competitively?
12. When did you first start to be concerned about what you would do after your sports career?
13. What conditions helped you transition from a sports career to a post-sport career?
14. What skill learned during sports career has been the most useful for your post-sport career?
15. What obstacles did you encounter in the transition from sports career to post-sport career, and how did you overcome them?
16. How much are you satisfied with the results you’ve achieved after your sport career?

- 17. How do you see your professional future right now? What makes you at ease / what gives you hope?
- 18. How much have you felt supported by institutions (such as federations) in the transition from sport career to post-sport career?
- 19. Have you any other suggestions?

INTERVIEWEE IDENTIFICATION

FULL NAME	
AGE	
SEX (M or F)	
COMPETITIVE-LEVEL SPORT PLAYED (chose the right one)	<input type="radio"/> Individual sport <input type="radio"/> Team sport <input type="radio"/> Member of national team (adult category) <input type="radio"/> Member of national junior team <input type="radio"/> Member of national team (both adult& junior) <input type="radio"/> Ranking on European Championship <input type="radio"/> First Division athletes
NUMBER OF YEARS OF COMPETITIVE SPORTS PLAYED:	
CURRENT OCCUPATION	
INTERVIEW LENGTH	
INTERVIEWER DATA	
INTERVIEWER NOTES	

INTERVIEW (for Athletes)

A) INTRODUCTION (main narration)

1. What do you remember about your earliest years?

B) CENTRAL PART (internal questions)

- 2. What is your first memory associated with sports?
- 3. How did you come to take up sports?
- 4. What did you like about sports the first time you played?
- 5. What do you remember about school while you

were playing sports?

- 6. What is the most important thing your family gave you?
- 7. What were the most crucial decisions in your life?
- 8. What did you learn the most from sport? Can you give us an example?
- 9. What did you enjoyed the most about your sport career?

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SPECIFIC PART (external questions)

10. What personal skills have you developed while playing competitive sports?
11. How do you imagine your future when you are playing / performing competitively?
12. Did you ever start to think about what you would do after your sports career?
13. How do you see your professional future right now? What makes you at ease / what gives you hope?
14. Have you ever been supported / informed by institutions (such as federations) in managing your dual career?
15. Have you any other suggestions?

FULL NAME	
AGE	
SEX (M or F)	
COMPETITIVE-LEVEL SPORT PLAYED (chose the right one)	<input type="radio"/> Individual sport <input type="radio"/> Team sport <input type="radio"/> Member of national team (adult category) <input type="radio"/> Member of national junior team <input type="radio"/> Member of national team (both adult& junior) <input type="radio"/> Ranking on European Championship <input type="radio"/> First Division athletes
NUMBER OF YEARS OF COMPETITIVE SPORTS PLAYED:	
CURRENT OCCUPATION	
INTERVIEW LENGTH	
INTERVIEWER DATA	
INTERVIEWER NOTES	

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR EMPLOYERS

The semi-structured interview calls for a grid showing the topics that need to be dealt with during the interview.

It may be arranged as a list of topics or a sequence of general questions.

Although there is a fixed, common outline for all, how the interview is conducted can be changed based on the replies given by the interviewee and based on his individual situation. In fact the interviewer may not

bring up issues not specified in the outline, but may develop some topics that arise spontaneously during the interview should be believe that these topics promote the participant's comprehension.

For example, it may happen that the interviewee anticipates some answers, and so the interviewer may need to change the order of the questions.

In short, the grid is a sort of enclosure within which the interviewee and the interviewer are free to move around, enabling the latter to deal with each topic

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that may be necessary for narrative purposes.

The unique feature of the unstructured interview, also called an on-depth or free interview, consists of the individual nature of the topics and the trajectory of the interview. In this specific form of interview, the content of the questions is not predetermined, but varies from participant to participant; the only established factor is the general topic.

Other topics associated with the general topic arise spontaneously during the interview. The interviewer's task is to present the topics of the talk, allowing the interviewee, who alone takes the initiative to talk, to expound on his point of view.

In addition, the interviewer must ensure that the conversation does not turn to irrelevant topics; but when the interviewee alludes to topics worthy of attention for the study, he can encourage him to explore them. In this way, given a general topic, each interview becomes unique in its content, duration, and type of relationship established between interviewer and interviewee.

Conducting an interview is not at all simple: its flexibility means it is difficult to identify general rules for conducting it properly.

However, guidelines can be identified and summarised in 10 points (Corbetta, 1999):

- Preliminary explanations
- Primary questions
- Probe questions

- Repeating the question
- Repeating the answer
- Encouragement, expression of interest
- Break
- Request for more information
- Language
- Interviewer's role

SEMI -STRUCTURED INTERVIEW FOR EMPLOYERS

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to our study on AFTERMATCH - LIFE BEYOND SPORT PROJECT, whose general objective is to promote a positive behaviour among athletes (young), by focusing on the enforcement of the competences & skills of teachers, trainers and sportive associations / federation managers towards the need for paving the way for an "exit strategy" after the end of the sportive career and by offering an opportunity for ex-athletes to have an innovative professional profile based on "sport related transversal skills" to be spent in private companies. The project, funded by the Erasmus Plus Sport programme, aims to "fill the gap" in the dual career promotion activities by focusing specifically on "the end-of-sporting-career phase of athletes, including those who leave the system earlier than planned" through targeted training for teachers, trainers, directors and managers of sport association & federation, with an eye on private companies & employers involvement.

COUNTRY	
NAME&SURNAME	
COMPANY	
SECTOR	
POSITION/ROLE	

1. When you hire interns or entry level employees what are the primary things you are looking for?
2. Which skills are strategic for your business/ company?
3. Which sports / disciplines do you most admire? For what reasons?
4. Which sports champion would you like to hire in your firm and why?
5. Did you ever hire high-level sportsmen / sportswomen? Did you notice an added value for your firm / company?
6. What values does a top-level sport instill?
7. In general, which of the skills of a competitive athlete (elite athletes) are most useful for your professional work?
8. During your job interviews, did you ever ask candidates which kind of sport they practiced and at which level?
9. Do you think that a strong sport career / experience may replace in some ways a low educational level or a weak professional experience?

all cases where it is wished to use data obtained in a study (for example, video and audio recordings, responses to questionnaires or interviews, and so on), the consent of those who participated must be obtained, and they must also be informed correctly and adequately regarding all aspects of the study that might lead them to withhold consent. The name, institution if any and scientific and professional standing of the person conducting the study must also be clearly indicated.

SUGGESTIONS for choosing athletes and employers:

- AGE OF ATHLETES: better if adults (also for authorization);
- RESPECT EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES: try at least 30% of women (better 50%), also for athletes
- TRY TO INVOLVE 5 HR MANAGERS & 5 ENTREPRENEURS
- TRY TO BALANCE ATHLETES AND EX ATHLETES
- DO NOT TRANSLATE THE WHOLE INTERVIEWS!
Please use the “key finding template” created by WP3 leader.

Informed Consent

According to the legislation of each country, before starting the recording there are some ethical rules that interviewers and researchers must follow. In

Best Practices collection FORM

Dear partners,

this very simple form is meant to give an homogeneous collection of “best practices” in your territory and beyond. As mentioned in the Minutes of the Meeting in Sofia, these best practices are not intended to cover the whole spectrum of the “dual career” issue, but a more limited framework, with a special attention to initiatives, programmes, projects:

- Valorizing and enlightening the value of the transversal skills acquired during sport practices for the job career after sport;
- Favouing the “exit” from the sport career towards the labour market;
- Valorizing the importance of “thinking about the future job” also during the sport practice;
- Creating a model for the valorization and use of soft-transversal skills acquired during sport practices for the job career after sport;
- Promoting the cooperation between employers (public and private) and sport association / federation in the field of “ensuring a good job career after sport”;

Each partner is expected to collect:

- Up to 2 best practices coming from its own country;
- Up to 2 best practices identified outside the partner’s countries;

CRITERIA FOR BEST PRACTICES

(the selected practice must be “closed” and realized, not ongoing, with concrete and measurable results)

1. Rights-based approach
2. Relevance
3. Positive and Measurable Impact
4. Potential for replication and extension (adaptability)
5. Degree of integration into mainstream work and processes
6. Innovation/creativity/originality.
7. Broadly base and participatory (public private)
8. Sustainability
9. Effectiveness & Efficiency
10. Reinforcement of capacity of regional/ local partners

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1)	Title of the practice profile
2)	Contact Details
	<i>Responsible:</i> _____ <i>Tel:</i> _____ <i>Fax:</i> _____ <i>E-Mail:</i> _____ <i>Website:</i> _____ <i>Other Info:</i> _____
3)	Practice theme/issue tackled by practice
4)	Geographical Coverage
5)	Duration
6)	Information on proponents, implementing agents, applicants
7)	Aims and Objectives of the Practices
8)	Description of the Practice
	<i>Target beneficiaries</i> <i>Financial Framework</i> <i>Legal Framework</i> <i>Main outputs</i>
9)	Results achieved and impact (by outcome indicators)
10)	Lessons Learned (in your opinion, no need for interviews to responsible... why did you selected this as a Best Practice?)
	<i>Possible success factors</i> <i>Difficulties</i>

Chapter 4 annexes

Table 1: The average, minimum and maximum age of athletes

Country	Average years	The youngest athlete	The older athlete
ITALY	38 years 8 months	20 years	61 years
SLOVENIA	37 years 0 months	20 years	57 years
BULGARIA	52 years 2 months	17 years	76 years
POLAND	42 years 0 months	19 years	62 years
GREECE	32 years 8 months	17 years	49 years

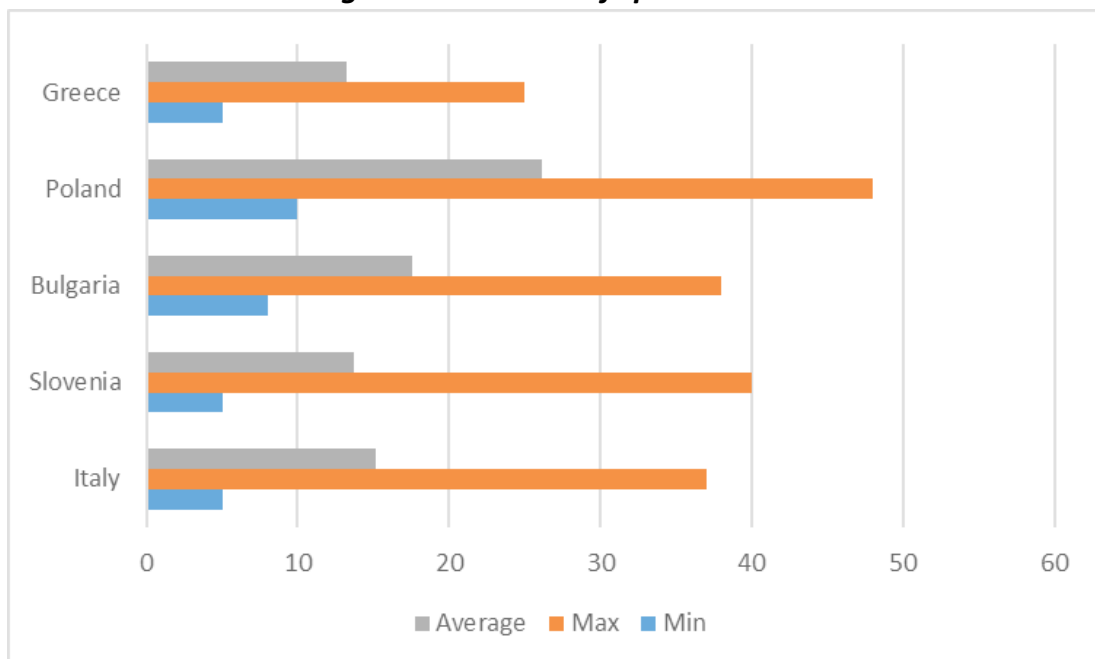
Figure 1: Duration of sport career

Figure 2: Level of education

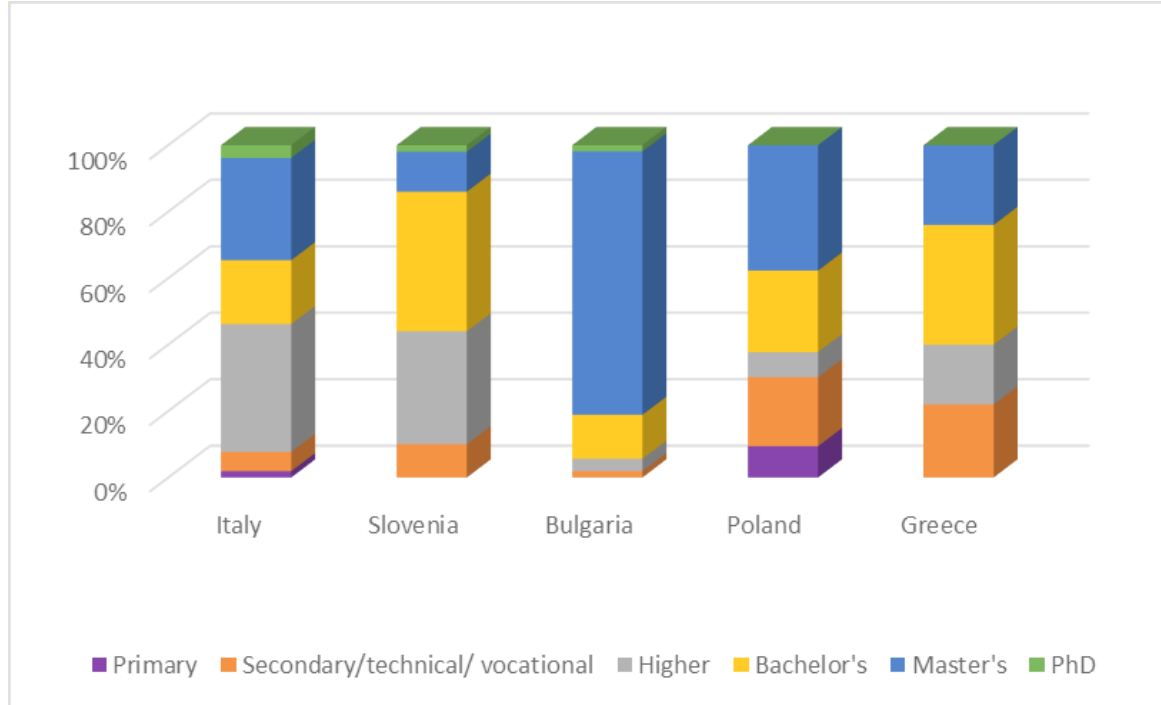
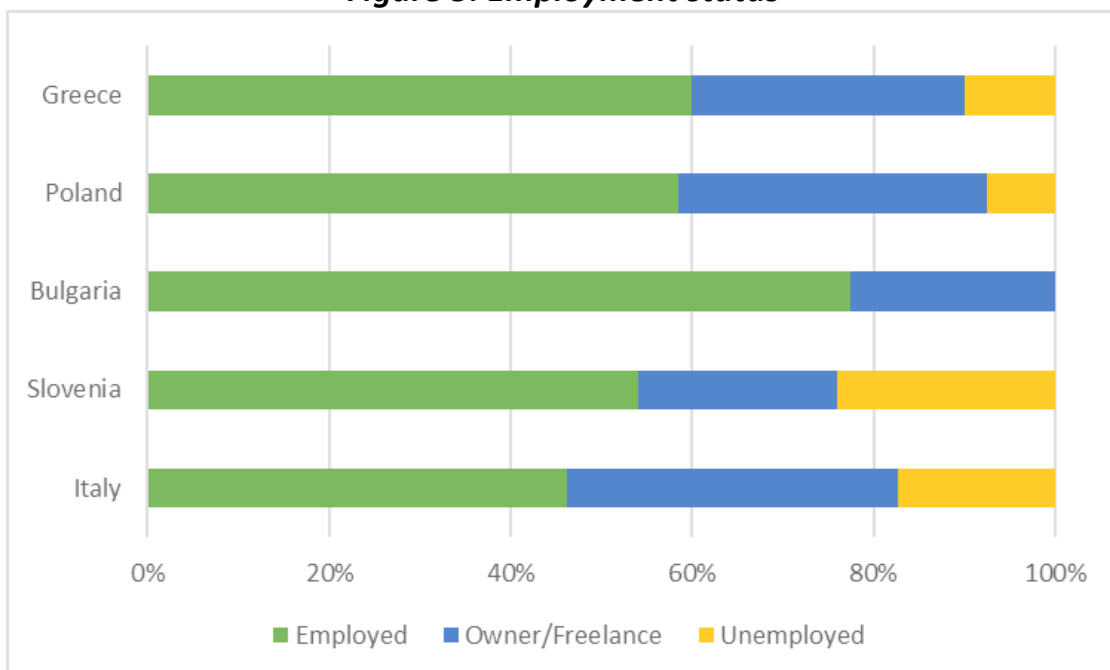


Figure 3: Employment status



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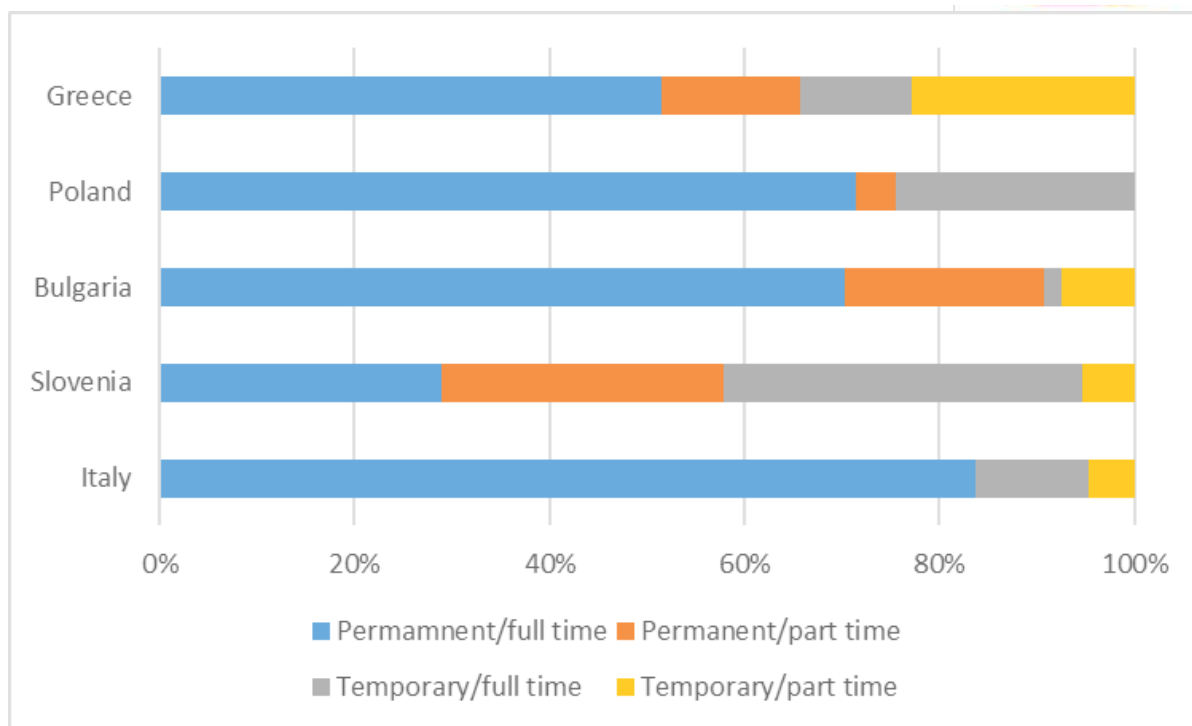
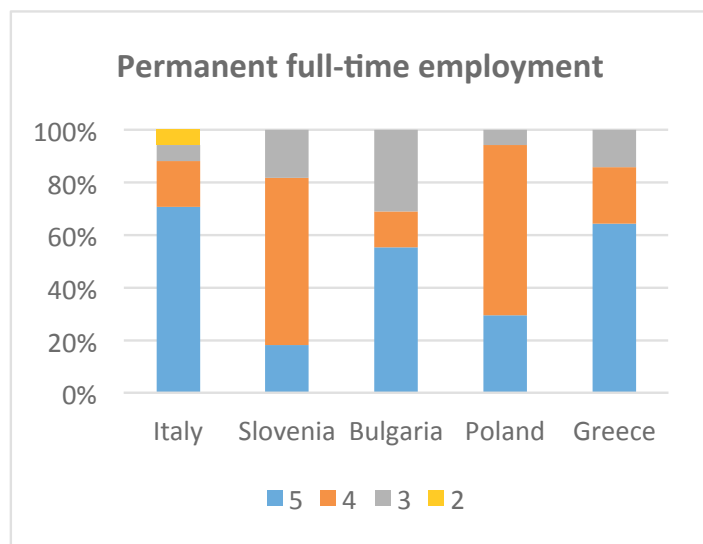
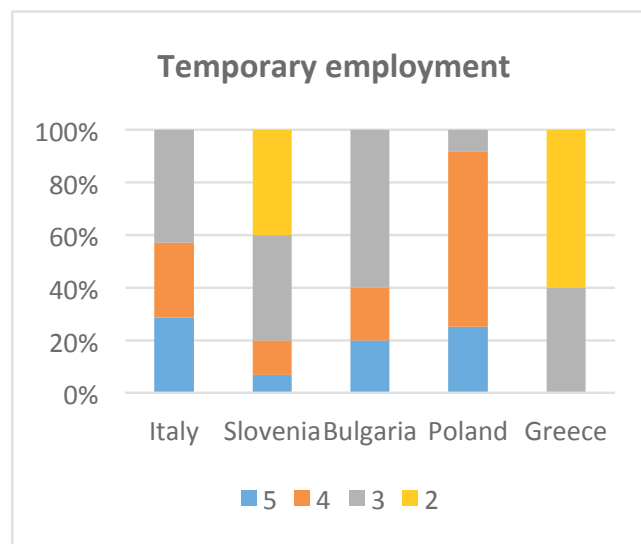


Table 2: The correlation between education and unemployment

Country	Total No. of unemployed	Primary education	High technical/vocational	Higher education	Bachelor	Masters	PhD
ITALY	9	0	0	6	1	2	0
SLOVENIA	12	0	0	7	5	0	0
BULGARIA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
POLAND	4	2	0	0	2	0	0
GREECE	5	0	2	1	1	1	0

Figure 4: Job stability – permanent employment**Figure 5: Job stability – temporary employment**

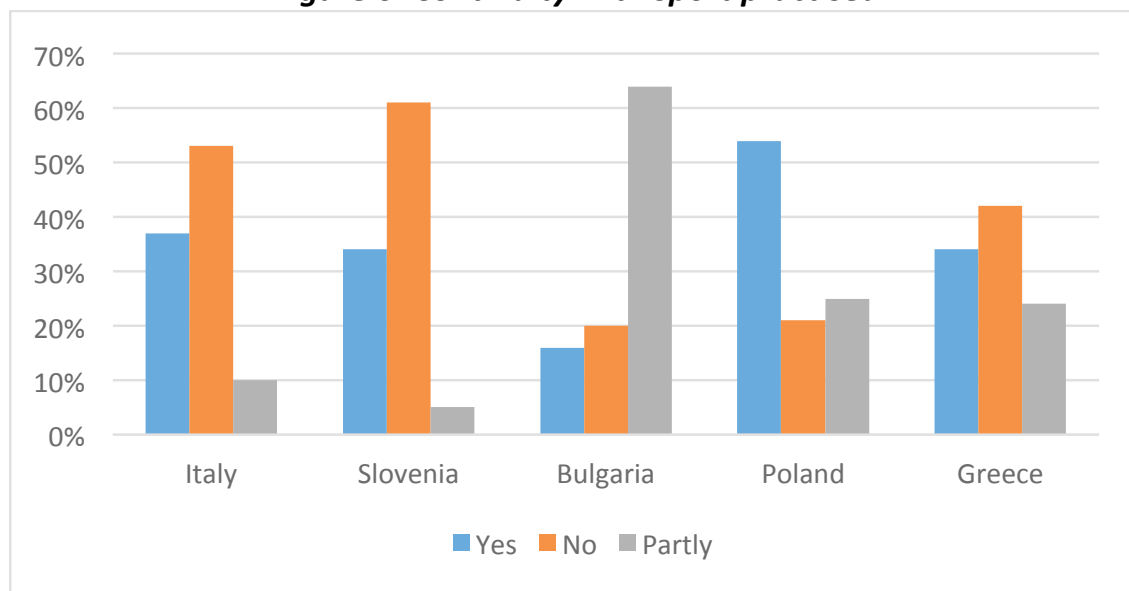
5 = very stable; 4 = stable; 3= stable enough; 2 = little stable; 1 = not stable at all

Table 3: Job stability of owners / free lancers

Country	NOT STABLE	STABLE ENOUGH	STABLE / VERY STABLE
ITALY	15 %	32 %	53 %
SLOVENIA	18%	0 %	82 %
BULGARIA	0 %	0 %	100 %
POLAND	0 %	28 %	73 %
GREECE	8 %	38 %	54 %

Table 4: Level of satisfaction with job (1 = very low and 5 = very high)

	1	2	3	4	5
ITALY	2 %	2 %	19 %	49 %	28 %
SLOVENIA	3 %	13 %	21 %	39 %	24 %
BULGARIA	8 %	16 %	20 %	20 %	36 %
POLAND	0 %	2 %	13 %	33 %	52 %
GREECE	2 %	5 %	24 %	41 %	28 %

Figure 6: Continuity with sport practised**Table 5: Job position and employments sectors**

COUNTRY	Job position and employment sectors
ITALY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (28 %) Sales, marketing managers • (22 %) Sport sector • (20 %) Technicians • (11 %) Armed forces • (11 %) Business consultant • (8 %) Researcher
SLOVENIA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (31 %) Leisure, sport and tourism • (10 %) Public services and administration • (7 %) Accountancy, banking and finance • (7 %) Engineering and manufacturing
BULGARIA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (22 %) Leisure tourist and sports sector • (22 %) Self-employed • (18 %) Media and web • (16 %) Public services and admin • (8 %) Education, university lecturers/teachers • (8 %) Foundations and federations • (4 %) Army and police • (4 %) Lawyer and doctor

POLAND	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (59 %) Training and education • (13 %) Recreation and sport • (5 %) Marketing, advertising and PR • (5%) IT, media and internet • (3 %) Business, consulting and management • (3 %) Transport and logistics • (3 %) Law • (3 %) Sales • (2 %) Energy and utilities • (2 %) Public service and administration
GREECE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (21 %) Leisure, sport (coaches and trainers) and tourism • (17 %) Teaching / Training Activities • (7 %) Public services, of which 80% in armed forces • (7 %) Administration and logistics/banking

Figure 7: The level of application of skills acquired during sport career to job

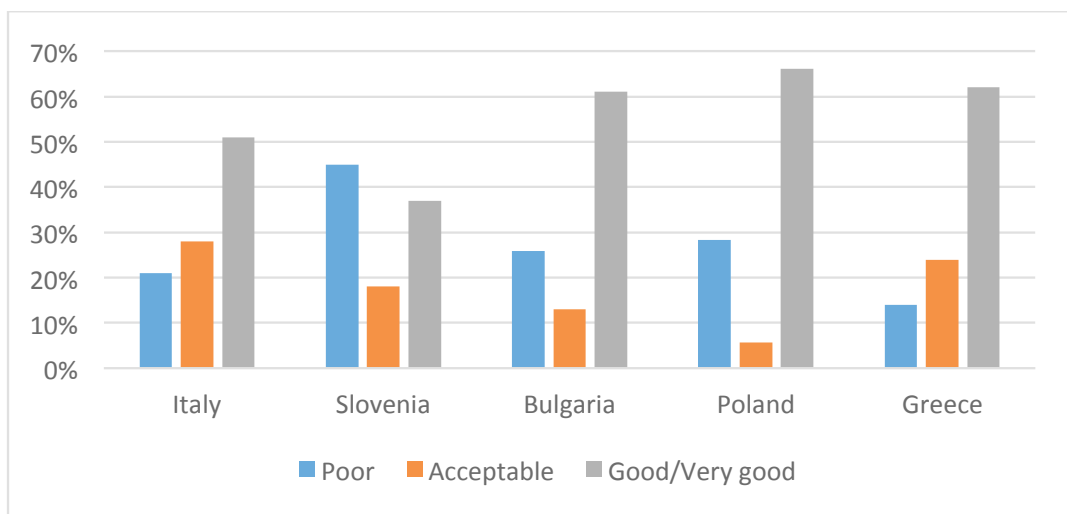
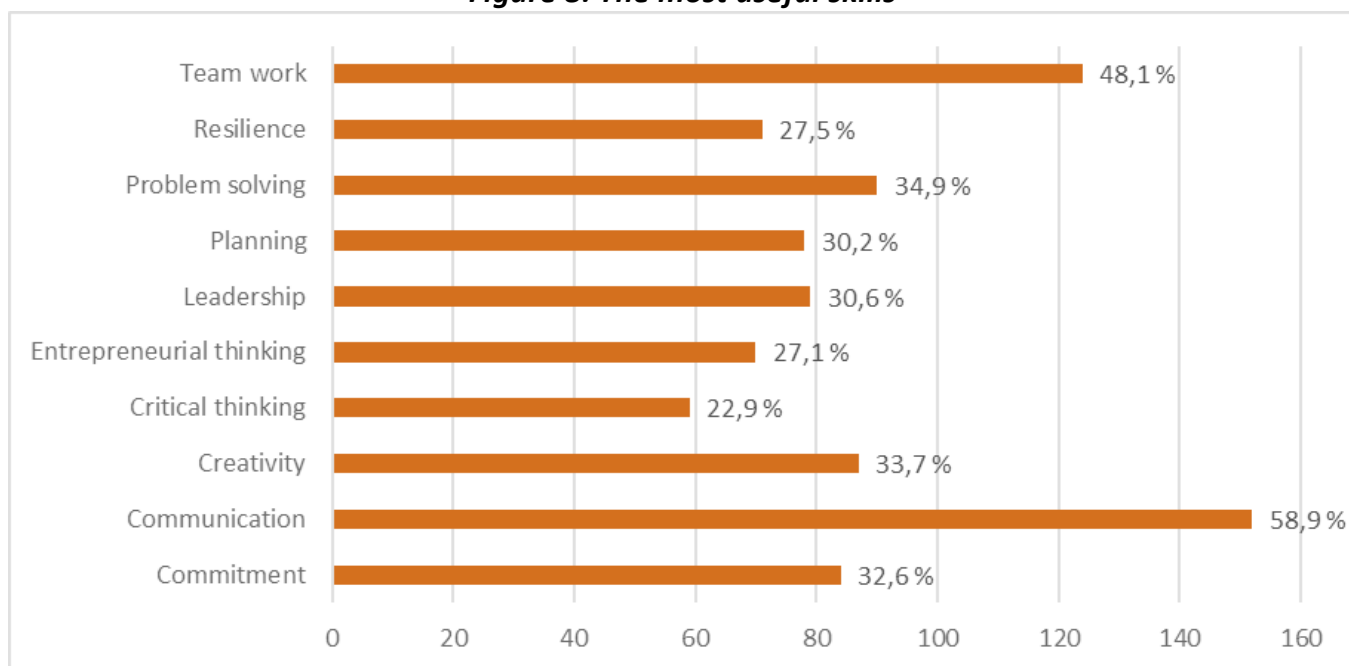


Table 6: The most relevant skills

	ITALY	SLOVENIA	BULGARIA	POLAND	GREECE
Communication	25	25	24	49	29
Team working	22	7	36	31	28
Problem – solving	26	19	16	15	14
Creativity	10	15	10	29	23
Commitment	21	2	11	40	10
Leadership	11	13	20	26	9
Planning	15	16	16	21	10
Resilience	13	10	21	22	5
Entrepreneurial thinking	7	12	13	26	12
Critical thinking	7	6	20	16	10

Figure 8: The most useful skills

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