

ROLES

All stakeholders in sport, including the federations, clubs, player associations, leagues and government agencies, have a role to play in promoting good career transition for sportsmen and women.

A partnership approach between all stakeholders is required for clearly agreed goals and commitments.

Player associations have direct relationships based on knowledge and trust with their member athletes and are in a unique situation to develop and implement dual career and career transition programs.

Where athletes are workers and are collectively organized, dual career support should be subject to national collective bargaining and European social dialogue. As in other businesses, the right to dual education and vocational training needs to be a principle in sport-employment relationships.

Financial considerations are important to help ease career transition into a second career. The importance of sport specific pensions and saving schemes are significant and should be promoted.

OUTLOOK

Most players will have at least 30 years of economic activity ahead of them when they retire from their sporting careers. A successful dual career and reintegration into the labor market will benefit not only the individual, but also society as a whole. It is increasingly recognized that helping players prepare for

career transition reduces stress and creates more rounded individuals and that this can improve sporting performances. Ignoring or failing to master the challenge would cause a serious loss in human capital and limit the athletes' contribution to society.



RECOMMENDATION

All stakeholders (government agencies, sports federations, leagues, clubs and player associations) should agree to work together to produce and promote agreed dual career support for sportspeople with clearly agreed goals and commitments.

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Dual Careers and Career TRANSITION for Athletes

Common Position
of the European Elite Athletes
Association

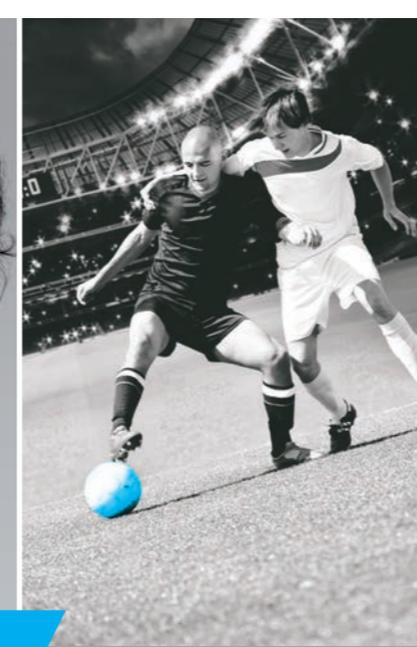


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Too many elite athletes reach the end of their sporting careers unprepared for career transition. Tailored education opportunities and support services facilitating a successful transition into a second career are essential during and after the sporting career.

THE PROBLEM

A career in elite sport is short, fragile and time consuming. Most successful sporting professionals will have to retire around the age of 30 and will therefore need to find a new job and role in life. The issues are worse for trainees that fail to make the grade as professionals and for players who suffer a career ending injury. Parameters of the job (e.g. short-term contracts, frequent-traveling, etc.), expectations of immediate success and extreme commitment to the profession tend to discourage preparation for life after sport.



WHAT IS NEEDED

Elite athletes need to be defined and respected as a specific population group, taking account of the common parameters and different designs of athletic careers.

Athletes' access to dual career programs is variable and often determined by their relationships with sporting organisations or employers, an athletes' personal level of success or the distinction between individual and team sports.

Sustainable dual career programs need to be systemically developed and implemented and universally accessible for all elite athletes.

A successful transition requires access to education and support systems tailored according to the peculiarities of an athlete's career, both before and after retirement.



Some of the basic requirements for athletes include :

- Continued access to part time education for young athletes
- Early information on the challenges of a dual career and career transition
- Flexible secondary and tertiary education and vocational training opportunities
- Career advice and tutoring – particularly flexibility of schedules and curricula and distance/virtual learning formats
- Transition skill development/assessment (image awareness, transfer of skills, CV development, etc.)
- Health and safety – immediate and long-term physical and mental health is basis for reintegration into the labour market
- Financial support – pension schemes, career ending injury insurance, social security, unemployment, direct support (scholarships, stipends, etc.)
- Financial and business advice
- Internship and job placement programs

