

**EUROPEAN HANDBOOK FOR GENDER  
EQUALITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION IN SPORT:  
A PERSPECTIVE THROUGH THE ERASMUS  
+ WOMEN-UP PROJECT**

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**Acknowledgments:**

All researchers of EU partners from the University of Thessaly (Greece), UISP Comitato di Pisa (Italy), Collective Innovation (Norway), Istituto CO.RI. (Italy), Polytechnic Institute Viseu (Portugal), and Pamukkale University (Türkye).

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Madrid, 2023

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ISBN: 978-84-1170-562-2  
DOI: 10.14679/2213

## CHAPTER 4: DUAL CAREER OF A SPORTSWOMAN: PROBLEMS AND SUCCESSES

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DOI: 10.14679/2218

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Athletes invest in their athletic careers at different levels depending on their age and at specific periods of their careers. Therefore, they primarily want to maximize their physical, psychological, and social benefits with their participation in sports. In the same approach, they also want to compensate for potential costs such as injury, sacrifices in other areas of life, and one-way development in some areas. However, except for full-time professional athletes, most athletes pursue an education or profession alongside their passion for sports, and young athletes attend compulsory education and often pursue further/higher education or employment in later adolescence (Cartigny et al., 2021). At this stage, a dual career in the form of sport-education or sport-business offers a solution for balancing lives outside of sports and preparing for post-sport life. The athlete career literature suggests that athletes who seek/establish an optimal balance between sport and other areas of life continue to play sports and have less difficulty transitioning to a post-sport career. Talent development research also emphasizes that successful athletic talent development environments and organizational cultures greatly support and facilitate athletes' sport-education balance (Stambulova et al., 2015). In this context, a dual-career athlete is defined as an individual who pursues sports and educational and/or professional endeavors (Cartigny et al., 2021).

Sexist approaches in the Victorian era did not include women in sports due to the damage to their reproductive organs, the fact that men did not find them attractive or they had insufficient energy. Women's first participation in the Olympics was in 1900 (CSP Global), and in athletics competitions, in the 1967 Boston marathon, with Kathrine Switzer. So, it is well-known that gender differences in sports are an essential issue throughout women's sporting careers. For example, women earn less in their clubs and have more difficulty finding sponsors or grants (Morris et al., 2020). Thus, gender discrimination occurs during and after an athletic career and becomes a societal issue (for example, gender stereotypes) rather than a specific sports issue (López de Subijana et al., 2020). Ryba, Ronkainen, et al. (2015) conducted life story interviews with 18 talented Finnish athletes (16-20 years old/10 females, 8 males) followed by an integrative narrative-discourse analysis. As a result of this study, although all adolescent athletes desired to build dual careers, less than half of them were able to pursue dual careers after high school, and it shows that dual career discourse practices are organized according to gender duality and this strengthens the assumed normality of gender-based life choices rather than opening up the space of possibilities. In addition, Ekengren et al., (2018) stated that because of a semi-structured interview in which 18 Swedish professional handball players (9 women and 9 men) at the end of their careers examined both athletic and non-athletic career developments, female athletes chose additional jobs to support themselves financially compared to male athletes. For these reasons, it is essential to promote programs that focus on gender equality in sports throughout the sports career and the employability process (Lopez de Subijana et al., 2020).

In this context, the effects, advantages, and disadvantages of dual careers on the lives of athletes are discussed. In addition, the importance of dual careers for female athletes, what needs to be done to support athletes after retirement from sports, and examples of implementation are given. It is aimed to

draw attention to the difficulties experienced by female athletes in dual careers in sports as in many areas of society. Thus, it is aimed to contribute to sociological and gender studies.

As soon as each woman starts her sports career, the double career process begins as usual. It is important to include the dual career approach in this handbook, as other indispensable elements of life such as family, education, social and business life cannot be ignored while maintaining a sports life, which occupies an important place in terms of time, effort, and resources.

## 2. SCIENTIFIC BACKGROUND

"I know who I am in the water, but I don't know who I am out of the water" are the words of world-famous swimmer Michael Phelps from the documentary "The Weight of Gold". As it can be understood from these words, athletes often do not have an idea about what they are outside of the sport they are doing or what they will be after they retired. Many elite athletes fall into emptiness and experience psychological problems when they complete their sports careers. For this reason, for athletes to be mentally healthy throughout their sports career and after retirement, they should be supported to continue their careers with a dual career perspective.

Studies on dual-career athletes have emerged from work that recognizes the importance of a holistic perspective which is a life-span perspective that spans the athletic and post-athletic career and which includes transitions occurring in the athletic career as well as those occurring in other domains of athletes' lives and explores transitions in athletic development rather than focusing solely on athletes as athletes (Wylleman et al., 2004; Wylleman & Lavallee, 2004). The concept of dual careers, which involves simultaneously pursuing sports and education or professional endeavors, has become a particular focus in the sport psychology literature, with the European Union publishing recommended policy actions to support dual careers in high-performance sports (European Union Expert Group: Education and Training in Sport, 2012) and the *Psychology of Sport and Exercise* journal publishing a special issue on dual career development and transitions in 2015 (Stambulova & Wylleman, 2015). While recent research has shown that dual-career athletes are understood as a heterogeneous group, these studies have primarily focused on secondary or school-aged athletes (Cartigny et al., 2021). Cartigny et al. (2021) conducted the life story interviews of 17 dual-career athletes to create an overarching theory of dual career paths in sports. The findings that emerged from this study supported a categorization of dual career experiences into 3 pathways: a sporting pathway, an educational/vocational pathway, and a dual career pathway. Debois et al. (2015) emphasize that dual careers are developmental due to the nature of athletes, encompassing sport and education or career transitions at different stages of life, and the importance of adopting a holistic life course perspective when considering dual career athletes. Similarly, Stambulova and Wylleman (2019) identified a range of benefits of dual careers, including individual development, improved sports performance, and increased life satisfaction in the long term.

However, many studies continue to identify key gender constructs that influence athletes' experiences and decisions about their dual careers. For example, female athletes appear to be more likely to invest in education and dual career goals and identities, even though their motivation toward sports is like men (Aunola et al., 2018; Ekengren et al., 2018; Moazami-Goodarzi et al. 2020). While studies investigating the dual careers of athletes in handball, basketball, and football reported that, unlike their male peers, the majority of elite female players pursue or plan to pursue a dual career at the tertiary level (Ekengren et al., 2018; Tekavc et al., 2015; Harrison et al., 2022) provided further support for the claim that gendering the life careers of athletes is evident from adolescence to adulthood (Ryba, Stambulova, et al., 2015).

In addition to these gender differences, Baron-Thiene and Alfermann (2015) and Ronkainen et al. (2016) reported that female athletes experience more physical complaints and burnout than their male peers, and many women receive little emotional support from coaches and parents and feel lonely (Ryba et al., 2021). Such experiences may lead female athletes to decide to leave the sport and focus on education, work, and family.

The book "Athletes' Careers Across Cultures" is based on research conducted in 19 countries around the world, and the review of international career research from a cultural perspective points to 6 major challenges in athletes' career paradigms. Two of these challenges are particularly highlighted. First, a holistic perspective, the 'beginning-to-end' approach is illustrated with a developmental model on transitions faced by athletes at athletic, individual, psychosocial, and academic/vocational levels, which needs to be developed. This means that an athlete needs to be approached as a whole person, a whole career, and a whole environment. Secondly, projects should be developed in a sociocultural context, avoiding, for example, a perspective that focuses only on the athletic identity of the student-athlete and does not take culture into account (Stambulova et al., 2015).

As an example of a holistic approach to the athlete, the basic idea of the Swedish sport system is that elite athletes should be able to lead an everyday life in society when their sporting career ends. The dual career model, which emphasizes the importance of psychological, psychosocial, and academic development of adolescent athletes in addition to their athletic careers, was created through research conducted in National Elite Sports Schools (RIGs) designed with the win-win principle for these athletes, is as shown in Figure 1 (Stambulova et al., 2015). The model aligns age groups with sportive and professional career stages and indicates possible dual career paths during sport and after leaving the sport, with arrows indicating dual career transitions.

25+	Post-athletic career education ←	Discontinuation	→ Vocational post-athletic career
19-24	University	Mastery-2	→ Sport as work → Sport + work
16-18	RIGs (national elite sport school or relevant*)	Mastery-1	
13-15	Upper secondary school	Development	
10-12	Secondary school	Initiation (for delayed specialization sports)	
6-9	Primary school	Initiation (for early specialization sports)	
<i>Ages</i>	<i>Education</i>	<i>Sport</i>	<i>Work</i>

Figure 1 - Indicates age groups as aligned with possible dual career paths.

### 3. TECHNICAL INFORMATION

One of the main factors affecting athletes' ability to pursue a dual career is the lifestyle conflicts arising from elite-level participation in sports. The career stage that elite athletes are in also affects the opportunity to devote time and energy to non-athletic careers. People with influence and authority in decision-making, such as coaches and managers in the sports environment, are also essential factors for dual careers (Ryan, 2015).

As the number of elite female soccer players in England increases, it is seen that the difficulty in having a dual career increases with the increase in their education level. At this stage, it is seen that appropriate support systems such as family and university play an integrative role in athletes who receive different levels of support from educational institutions and football clubs (Harrison et al., 2022).

The SportSClasses program, which has been implemented in Denmark since 2005, offers extra training to potential elite athletes. In addition, the age of employment in sports has been lowered from 15 to 12 to respond to the increasing competition in the world of elite sports. In Denmark, which ranks high in the United Nations Human Development Report, even in this program where the sport is offered in cooperation with educational institutions, it is seen that there are about twice as many male students as female students and that boys are four times more likely than girls to prioritize sport over education. This indicates a male-dominated structure in sports, which supports the hegemonic construct of masculinity in the media about physicality and competitiveness and does not provide equal opportunities for women (Skrubbeltrang et al., 2020).

Dual careers can offer elite athletes many social, developmental, financial, and health advantages. However, it can also be challenging to establish and maintain a balance between elite sports and academic education because individuals pursuing dual careers have psychological, psychosocial, and financial responsibilities as well as athletic and academic/professional elements (Harrison et al., 2022). In fulfilling these responsibilities, it is crucial to have competencies such as career planning, dual career management, emotional awareness, social intelligence, and adaptability (De Brandt, 2017). However (Karadağ & Aşçı, 2023), research findings on dual careers also reveal that student-athletes often experience negative experiences such as stress, overload and early dropout from sports or school, fatigue, and role conflict due to spending both time and energy to manage social roles.

Numerous studies have referred to the irrationality of pursuing dual careers due to the significant need for time and the intense pressure on physical and mental energy (Singer, 2008; Cosh & Tully, 2014; Tekavc et al., 2015). The ability to manage dual careers has been described as highly dependent on the support of others (Knight et al., 2018). As a result of the challenges experienced, dual career athletes have reported feeling compelled to compromise on one of their pursuits (Ryan, 2015; Ryba, Stambulova, et al., 2015; Tekavc et al., 2015). However, despite these challenges, dual-career athletes report sacrificing their sporting goals in favor of educational or professional goals due to barriers to reaching the highest level of sport, including the ability to sustain themselves financially (Brown et al., 2000).

Although studies have shown the disadvantages of pursuing dual careers, the advantages of pursuing dual careers have also been detailed. Research in the literature has demonstrated many benefits of pursuing educational or professional endeavors alongside sports, including a sense of well-being as a result of developing a multidimensional identity (Ryba, Stambulova, et al., 2015; Pink et al., 2018). The presence of an alternative focus also provides an environment of relaxation, providing an opportunity to unwind from the stresses and pressures of intense sports (Pink et al., 2015). Many higher education institutions encourage high-performing athletes to study at their institution, helping to support their personal and sporting performance (Brown et al., 2015). These benefits can continue in their lives after dual careers with increased life satisfaction (Lavalley & Robinson, 2007). Dual-career athletes have identified high motivation levels to pursue sporting and educational or professional endeavors to achieve these benefits (Cosh & Tully, 2014).

Individual factors at the micro level; parents, peers, and coaches at the medium level; educational institutions, national governing bodies, and government policies at the macro level; and international governing bodies at the global level are influential factors in dual career management. Strong relationships, open communication, and flexibility among these stakeholders, directly and indirectly, affect athletes' dual career experiences (Condello et al., 2019).

In the dual career process, parents are the most significant source of support for students' athletic and academic careers (Capranica et al., 2021). Parental support is primarily psychological, logistical, and financial. Following the stages of the athlete's participation in sport, the role of parents evolves from a leader to a follower/supporter. Parents (Tessitore et al., 2021) provide financial and moral support to their children and have expectations for their children's academic and athletic success. However, their excessive involvement in competitive environments can lead to problems between athletes, parents, and coaches. Suppose parents cannot control their reactions when looking out for their children's multidimensional benefits. In that case, they may cause burnout symptoms, especially in athletes transitioning to high school. Parents who experience stress from academic processes, competition, financial and time-related responsibilities, and time that cannot be allocated to other children can sometimes teach their children how to cope with problems through different strategic approaches.

An example of collaboration between stakeholders involved in the dual career pathway of athletes is the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) in the USA, which integrates sport with higher education. Another example is in the United Kingdom, where the English Football Association (FA) is providing vital support to the dual careers of female athletes by requiring all Women's Super League (WSL) teams to be full-time professionals in the 2018/19 season. The FA has also developed the Women's Super League Dual Career Academies, where WSL clubs are paired with a further education institution and the local university. The requirement for players in these WSL Academies to undertake an education or career alongside their football commitments is considered a step towards creating a dual career system for women's football (Harrison et al., 2022).

Stambulova et al. (2015), in their study of dual career experiences (including sport, education, and personal life) of school-age student-athletes, provided a basic framework for dual career projects by creating a developmental transition model and an athletic career transition model, ranging from prioritizing sport at one end (higher visibility of athletic identity) to prioritizing studies at the other end (higher visibility of student identity). The critical determinant of the quality of this transition/adaptation is the balance of student and athletic identity. In achieving this balance, career support services become meaningful, especially the empowerment approach, which helps develop female student-athletes' resources.

#### 4. PEDAGOGICAL GUIDANCE

The EU Guidelines on Dual Careers of Athletes (2012) are designed to contribute to the development of sustainable dual career programs for talented and elite student-athlete and employee-athlete. The guide, which includes examples of good practice, states that the design of dual career

programs for athletes should consider their individual needs, taking account characteristics such as age, gender, career stage, sports branch, and financial situation and that the responsibilities of athletes should increase as their careers progress. The guide also covers policy areas ranging from inter-sectoral and inter-institutional relations to sports development, health, education, finances, and employment.

Table 7 presents some projects that emphasize the importance of dual careers and include strategies to help competitive athletes successfully enter the labor market at the end of their sporting careers.

Table 7 - Aims of International Documents.

International documents	Aims	Links
White Paper on Sports (Commission of the European Communities, 2007)	Helping people to be employed in the labor market. Helping people to find a job within an organization (sports club)	<a href="https://eur-lex.europa.eu/EN/legal-content/summary/white-paper-on-sport.html">https://eur-lex.europa.eu/EN/legal-content/summary/white-paper-on-sport.html</a>
EU Guidelines on Dual Careers of Athletes (European Union, 2012)	Strengthening links between member states, assistance in the field of education	<a href="https://pasap.eu/files/dual-career-guidelines.pdf">https://pasap.eu/files/dual-career-guidelines.pdf</a>
EASTPORT (2014)	Establishing cooperation, supporting higher education (developing a teaching model)	<a href="https://www.jhse.ua.es/article/view/2023-v18-n1-efficacy-european-sport-tutorship-model-estport-dual">https://www.jhse.ua.es/article/view/2023-v18-n1-efficacy-european-sport-tutorship-model-estport-dual</a>
AtLETyC program (2016-2018)	Encouraging the acquisition of entrepreneurial qualifications	<a href="http://www.wus-austria.org/18/projects/120/atletyc-athletes-learning-entrepreneurship-a-new-type-of-dual-career-approach">http://www.wus-austria.org/18/projects/120/atletyc-athletes-learning-entrepreneurship-a-new-type-of-dual-career-approach</a>
DC4AC project (2015)	Highlighting dual career awareness, developing support criteria	<a href="https://tf.hu/en/international/international-projects/dual-career-for-athletes-dc4ac">https://tf.hu/en/international/international-projects/dual-career-for-athletes-dc4ac</a>
The AMiD Project (2018-2020)	Enhance Dual Career migration across Europe	<a href="https://researchfeatures.com/athletic-migration-dual-career-qualification-sports/">https://researchfeatures.com/athletic-migration-dual-career-qualification-sports/</a>
DONA Project	Dual Career for Women Athletes (DONA)	<a href="https://www.dualcareer.eu/dual-career-for-women-athletes-dona-project-started/">https://www.dualcareer.eu/dual-career-for-women-athletes-dona-project-started/</a>
ASAS Awards	Sport Ireland Institute	<a href="https://www.sportireland.ie/institute/news/SportASAS">https://www.sportireland.ie/institute/news/SportASAS</a>

Olah et al. (2022).

There are several projects on dual careers supported by the European Commission. The EMPATIA (Educational Model for Parents of Athletes In Academics) project ([www.empatiasport.eu](http://www.empatiasport.eu)) focuses on strengthening the role of parents as emotional, logistical, and financial supporters of their children's dual careers. The DONA project focused on the tendency of young athletes in adolescence to have difficulties fulfilling their sporting responsibilities due to academic requirements and social life and to drop out of sports. It is important to have a gender-specific approach to dual careers, especially as female athletes experience this situation more often. This project sought collaborations to ensure that female volleyball student-athletes benefit from a coherent environment of well-prepared dual career service providers in terms of sport, education, and the labor market (Capranica et al., 2021).

Almost all the projects focus on improving athletes' social and work-related skills and education. In addition, the issue of retirement from sports, supporting the employment of female athletes from a gender perspective, parental roles, and cooperation between sports clubs and other stakeholders in helping athletes cope with difficulties are among the outstanding topics.

## 5. GUIDANCE FOR TEACHING OR LEARNING THE TOPIC

### 5.1. Teaching Methods

The pedagogical guidance presents a teaching method of shared discovery learning using technologies and different groupings. Activities are proposed in which the resources provided must be explored, with a subsequent sharing and final reflection.

### 5.2. Learning Objectives Guidance for teaching or learning the topic

#### 5.2.1. Learning Objectives

- Understand the problems of student/working athletes,
- Learn student/working athletes' strategies to overcome career challenges and reflect on their experiences,
- Explain tips and tools for improving the careers of female athletes, in particular,
- Learn worldwide recommendations for dual careers.

#### 5.2.2. Suggested educational resources or activities

Lack of social skills due to closed training sessions and gender-based public and media pressure (fertility, emotional pressure) makes it difficult for female athletes to retire from sports and transition to employment from their athletic careers shorter than men. Therefore, the careers of female athletes should be analyzed in terms of gender, social role, social status, social power, etc., and the "Dual Career of the Athlete" model should be considered. This model is based on the training of elite athletes in amateur sports schools and is a current model with a comprehensive perspective that advocates cooperation with schools and universities in the education system (Zhu, 2023). Based on social realities, solutions for female athletes are tried to be produced in terms of Political Environment, Social Environment, Social Media, Social Beliefs, and Social Networks are as shown in Figure 2.

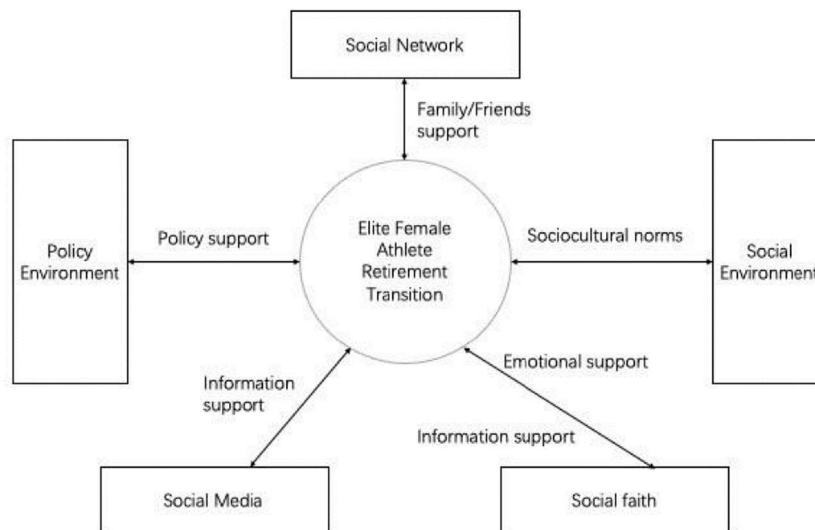


Figure 2 - Political Environment, Social Environment, Social Media, Social Beliefs, and Social Networks.

Source: Zhu (2023).

As the awareness of the importance of career transitions has increased, studies and research on supporting athletes in their career transitions have also increased. Some career development programs developed by governing bodies and sports institutes worldwide to help individuals develop a professional career outside of sport and achieve their sport-related goals are shown in Table 8 (Wylleman et al., 2004).

Table 8 - Selected overview of career transition programs.

Program	Institute	Country
Athlete Career and Education (ACE) Program	Australian Institute of Sport	Australia
Athlete Career and Education (ACE-UK) Program	UK Sports Institute	UK
British Athlete Lifestyle Assessment Needs in Career and Education (BALANCE) Program	University of Strathclyde	Scotland
Career Assistance Program for Athletes	US Olympic Committee	USA
Making the Jump Program	Advisory Resource Centre for Athlete	USA
Olympic Athlete Career Center- National Sports Center	Olympic Athlete Career Centre	Canada
Olympic Job Opportunities Program	Australian Olympic Committee	Australia
Study and Talent Education Program (STEP)	Vrije Universiteit Brussel	Belgium
The Retiring Athlete	Dutch Olympic Committee	Netherlands
Wales Lifestyle Management Program	Sports Council for Wales	Wales
Whole-istic	American College Athletic Association	USA
Women's Sports Foundation Athlete Service	Women's Sports Foundation	USA
Athlete365 Career+	Cooperation between Turkish Olympic Committee Athletes Commission and International Olympic Committee (IOC)	Türkiye

### 5.3. Educational Resources

This section proposes that learners work in different groupings to try to answer the questions posed. For each question, it is proposed to search in different resources that students can find in Table 9.

Task 1. Work in pairs. Agree with your partner on the problems in the athlete-student or athlete-employee career.

Do the difficulties experienced by female and male athletes-students/athletes-employees differ? Discuss.

Task 2. Work in groups. Create a decalogue for the improvement of dual careers. To do this, you should consult the resources listed, select the ten best tips, advice, or tools and create a visually attractive poster.

Task 3. Exercise to connect and center yourself.

What difficulties did you experience/are you experiencing as an athlete-student/athlete-employee? How do you deal with these challenges?

Task 4. By consulting the resources listed, you should try to answer the following true or false questions. Once you have finished, discuss them with your classmates. At the end of the activity, a debriefing will take place.

1. A dual Career is the successful combination of education, training, or work with sport to enable an individual to reach his / her full potential in life.
2. It is not important to invest in a dual career because only 10% of high-potential athletes develop into an elite athlete.
3. Female athletes appear to be more likely to invest in education and dual career goals and identities, even though their motivation toward sports is like men.
4. Most of the athletes have a low level of education due to the exclusive sports practices.
5. Female and male athletes experience the same problems in their athlete-employee careers.

The solution to questions: 1: True; 2: False; 3: True; 4: True; 5: False.

Task 5. Access articles on numerous athletes and their career stories. Then choose one of the athletes and read his story. Then choose one of the athletes and read their story. Research more about the athlete's story.

Explain to other students what the athlete faced in her/his student/study career with sports, what his successes and failures were, what he went through, and how he overcame them.

Task 6. Once you have read and researched all the documents and resources shared, list three things you can do to improve both your sports and your student/study career.

Table 9 - Resources for the task and more information.

Description	Link	Task
Supporting dual career in Spain: Elite athletes' barriers to study	<a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S1469029215000539">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S1469029215000539</a>	1
How Can Sports Clubs Support a Talent's Dual Career?	<a href="https://library.olympics.com/Default/digital-viewer/c-206544">https://library.olympics.com/Default/digital-viewer/c-206544</a>	1-4
Improving Dual Career	<a href="https://euathletes.org/project/pdm-dual-careers/">https://euathletes.org/project/pdm-dual-careers/</a>	2
The 2021 FISU World Conference: Dual Career, Digitalisation, and Women in Elite Sport	<a href="https://glitzsport.com/the-2021-fisu-world-conference-dual-career-digitalisation-and-women-in-elite-sport/">https://glitzsport.com/the-2021-fisu-world-conference-dual-career-digitalisation-and-women-in-elite-sport/</a>	5-6
Phoebe Snowden: Dual Career Athlete shares her experiences as a woman in STEM	<a href="https://www.kcl.ac.uk/news/phoebe-snowden-iwd">https://www.kcl.ac.uk/news/phoebe-snowden-iwd</a>	3
How my sports psychologist helped after a career-ending injury	<a href="https://www.ncaa.org/news/2023/5/15/features-how-my-sports-psychologist-helped-after-a-career-ending-injury.aspx">https://www.ncaa.org/news/2023/5/15/features-how-my-sports-psychologist-helped-after-a-career-ending-injury.aspx</a>	1-3-5
New dual career guides launched for players in the women's and girls' talent pathway	<a href="https://www.vercida.com/uk/articles/the-fa-dual-pathways-gender-balance">https://www.vercida.com/uk/articles/the-fa-dual-pathways-gender-balance</a>	5-6
Helping Talent Shine in Education and Sport TASS Dual-Career Accreditation	<a href="https://aspire2becoaching.co.uk/tass-dual-career-accreditation/">https://aspire2becoaching.co.uk/tass-dual-career-accreditation/</a>	6
Guidelines to Promote the Dual Career of Athletes-Students	<a href="https://morethangold.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/MTG_1-WEB-Def2.pdf">https://morethangold.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/MTG_1-WEB-Def2.pdf</a>	6
Dual-Career Resources	<a href="https://development.bwfbadminton.com/player/career-pathway-scholarships-opportunities/dual-career-resources">https://development.bwfbadminton.com/player/career-pathway-scholarships-opportunities/dual-career-resources</a>	6
Dual career pathways of transnational athletes	<a href="https://www.academia.edu/23778516/Dual_career_pathways_of_transnational_athletes">https://www.academia.edu/23778516/Dual_career_pathways_of_transnational_athletes</a>	6
Focus on Female Athletes: Creating Better Options for Second Careers	<a href="https://japan-forward.com/focus-on-female-athletes-creating-better-options-for-second-careers/">https://japan-forward.com/focus-on-female-athletes-creating-better-options-for-second-careers/</a>	5

On Best European Practices and Effective Systems in Dual Career of Athletes	<a href="https://smartsport.bg/templates/default/pdf/SurveyonbestEUpracticesonDCA.pdf">https://smartsport.bg/templates/default/pdf/SurveyonbestEUpracticesonDCA.pdf</a>	6
Action plan to develop athletes' Dual Career Program in Estonia	<a href="https://library.olympics.com/default/digitalCollection/DigitalCollectionAttachmentDownloadHandler.ashx?parentDocumentId=185091&amp;documentId=185093&amp;skipWatermark=true&amp;skipCopyright=true">https://library.olympics.com/default/digitalCollection/DigitalCollectionAttachmentDownloadHandler.ashx?parentDocumentId=185091&amp;documentId=185093&amp;skipWatermark=true&amp;skipCopyright=true</a>	6
Sports scholarships	<a href="https://www.worcester.ac.uk/about/academic-schools/school-of-sport-and-exercise-science/performance-sport-and-sports-scholarships/sports-scholarships/">https://www.worcester.ac.uk/about/academic-schools/school-of-sport-and-exercise-science/performance-sport-and-sports-scholarships/sports-scholarships/</a>	1-6
Dual Career For High-Level Sports Students	<a href="https://www.sport.polimi.it/en/facilitations-for-students/dual-career">https://www.sport.polimi.it/en/facilitations-for-students/dual-career</a>	4
RWTH Aachen supports "dual career"	<a href="https://hochschulsport.rwth-aachen.de/go/id/mihx?lidx=1">https://hochschulsport.rwth-aachen.de/go/id/mihx?lidx=1</a>	5-6
The FA's New Dual-Career Program	<a href="https://www.ourgamemag.com/2018/05/24/the-fas-new-dual-career-program/">https://www.ourgamemag.com/2018/05/24/the-fas-new-dual-career-program/</a>	6
Awesome Sportswomen Also Holding Down Regular Jobs	<a href="https://hochschulsport.rwth-aachen.de/go/id/mihx?lidx=1">https://hochschulsport.rwth-aachen.de/go/id/mihx?lidx=1</a>	1-5-6
Exploring dual career opportunities as a professional athlete	<a href="https://www.premiersportsnetwork.com/news/exploring-dual-career-opportunities-as-a-professional-athlete">https://www.premiersportsnetwork.com/news/exploring-dual-career-opportunities-as-a-professional-athlete</a>	5-6
Athlete365 Career+	<a href="https://olympics.com/athlete365/careerplus/">https://olympics.com/athlete365/careerplus/</a>	6

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

While participation in sports at the elite level brings unique skills and experiences, the need to invest in areas of life outside of sports should not be underestimated. This holistic perspective is supported and defended by the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training dated December 19, 2011, which states that “The necessity of making efforts through education and training to improve the human rights and fundamental freedoms of every individual and every segment of the society, and the necessity of approaching athletes with a vision of lifelong learning, especially as individuals who have served and benefited the society through sports”. In addition, gender equality in sports is one of the priorities of the United Nations in the field of society and development (Zhu, 2023).

In addition to their sports careers, female athletes want to continue their education and professional careers. The main reason for these requests is that, despite the increase in the professionalization of women in sports, they still have a lower chance of earning sufficient income from sports and being employed in sports compared to men. For the same reasons, female athletes reduce the priorities they give to sports in the later stages of their education career; that is, they reduce their sports careers from the professional level to the hobby level (Harrison et al., 2022). This financial situation is one of the unique challenges women face in the dual career field.

Stambulova and Wylleman (2019) noted that the dual career literature predominantly focuses on student-athlete populations. However, more research is needed on dual career situations in sport and work, as employment comes to the fore in earning income as a source of livelihood after the student period, especially for female athletes.

Studies show three general overarching factors emerge in athletes' experience and career goals in dual careers. These are individual (i.e., physical conditions, psychological conditions), interpersonal (i.e., social mediators, coping strategies), and external (opportunities, supports, obstacles, financial resources)

(Li & Sum, 2017). While these factors improve and prevent dual careers in sports, they emphasize the importance of both the individual and the environment in facilitating the dual career experience.

Despite the increasing number of women pursuing professional sports careers, there are still important issues regarding dual careers. There is a significant pay gap between male and female players. Fewer women than men can transfer their skills into well-paid coaching and management roles after retirement. Female athletes experience financial difficulties, even when they achieve equivalent success to men. For these reasons, especially for female athletes, it is not enough to focus solely on their sporting careers, and it becomes more important to pursue dual careers (Harrison et al., 2022).

Female athletes need to be analyzed in terms of gender, social role, social status, social power, etc., and more research is needed to develop specific interventions to explore and improve in-depth the career transitions, hopes, and challenges of female athletes around the world to reduce gender differences in career progression.

Finally, there is a need to disseminate good practices of educational programs that aim to improve the educational, social, and work-related skills of athletes and that have been created in various countries to help athletes reach the professional career transition. With these programs' help, athletes' lifestyles should be improved through goal setting, time management, repeated practice, and preparation for professional retirement. Activities involving research, group work, and reflection are recommended for female athlete students.

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## 8. ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

1. What is the definition of a dual-career athlete?

- a) **An athlete who pursues sports and educational or professional endeavors simultaneously**
- b) An athlete who focuses solely on their sports career
- c) An athlete who pursues multiple sports simultaneously
- d) An athlete who transitions from sports to a career after retirement

2. Why is the concept of dual careers important for athletes?

- a) It allows athletes to focus solely on their sports career without any distractions
- b) **It helps athletes balance their lives outside of sports and prepare for post-sport life**
- c) It ensures that athletes prioritize education over their sports career
- d) It prevents athletes from experiencing psychological problems after retiring from sports

3. What challenges do female athletes often face in their dual careers?

- a) Difficulty finding sponsors or grants
- b) Physical complaints and burnout
- c) Little emotional support from coaches and parents
- d) **All of the above**

4. How does the gender imbalance manifest in the sport and education system?

- a) Girls receive more support from educational institutions than boys
- b) **Boys are more likely to prioritize sport over education compared to girls**
- c) Girls have equal opportunities as boys in sports and education
- d) Boys face more difficulties in pursuing dual careers than girls

5. According to the EU Guidelines on Dual Careers of Athletes, what should be considered when designing dual career programs for athletes?

- a) Individual needs of athletes, including age, gender, and career stage
- b) Financial situation and sports branch of athletes
- c) Inter-sectoral and inter-institutional relations
- d) All of the above**