

A2B Study Visit Report Vienna

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1. Introduction

As part of the AthletesToBusiness (A2B) initiative, the third Study Visit has taken place on 13 July 2010 in Vienna, Austria. It aimed at gaining a concrete understanding of dual career in Eastern European nations, identifying good practices and specific issues of concern.

Seminar participants came from the EU Member States Estonia, Hungary, Slovakia, Slovenia and hosting nation Austria. Serbia, applicant for EU accession and European Olympic Committees member also formed part of the session.

This report will analyse the given situation and current dual career programmes by nation, providing main strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. These are complemented by good practices and recommendations specific to each country. Since dual career was presented by different stakeholders: athletes, national authorities, educational institutions and sport organisations, conclusions may take on different outcomes depending on the perspective of the presenting party.

2. Dual Career in Austria

Michael Trinker – Austrian Sports Confederation

Monika Elsik – Institute for Economic Promotion of the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber

Kilian Albrecht – Olympic Skier, FIS Athletes Commission

2.1. Introduction

In the governmental sector, the Austrian sport system is formed by the Ministries of Sport and Education as well as regional sport organisations. The Austrian Sports Confederation serves as the major non-governmental sport organisation with member institutions of special significance such as the Austrian Olympic Committee, Sports Aid Foundation and Top Sport Austria.

With regards to dual career in secondary education, the system is arranged appropriately to meet the needs of top athletes; there are sport high schools as well as ski-oriented middle and upper schools running in cooperation with the Austrian Skiing Federation.

At tertiary level, the system only has a limited number of agreements with higher educational institutions and lacks special formal arrangements for athletes. When considering a dual career, Austrian sportsmen are left with little choice but to consider sports in the army or applying for scholarships.

2.2. Dual Career Programmes

WIFI Sporthilfe Academy

The Institute for Economic Promotion of the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber is undertaking the WIFI initiative to support top athletes with vocational education and training during their sports career. Services include individual capability tests, career counselling and end of career planning.

KA:DA – Career After Sport

Launched by the Austrian Sports Aid Foundation (Sporthilfe) in cooperation with the Austrian employment service (AMS), KA:DA is focusing on integrating top athletes with the labour market. Since its start in 2006, 240 athletes ran through the programme, 77% of them have successfully found employment. KA:DA, meaning career after sport, provides personalized counselling services and job application training.

KA:DA collaborates with the WIFI Sport Academy in looking for appropriate employment opportunities.

At present, efforts are ongoing with the Federal Ministry of Defence and Sport to institutionalize KA:DA in the interest to establish a professional counselling centre for Austrian top athletes.

2.2.1. Cooperation

- Austrian Sports Aid Foundation (Sporthilfe)
- Austrian employment service (AMS)
- Various ministries (sport, education)
- Businesses

2.3. SWOT Analysis

Strengths

- Running programmes
- Financial capacity
- Interest of athletes

Weaknesses

- Low level of awareness of sport organisations, coaches
- Low know-how
- No specific network
- No institutionalisation

Opportunities

- “Good” labour market
- “Good” structures of stakeholders
- Public support

Threats

- Budgetary constraints
- Limited effectiveness of dual career programmes
- No recognition of dual career programmes by stakeholders

2.4. Recommendations

- **Increase Awareness**

Recognition should be raised especially among sport organisations and coaches. Athletes having good contacts with their environment could spread information through word-of-mouth or serve as testimonials.

- **Facilitate Networking**

A dual career network should be established providing full involvement of coaches and different sport associations.

- **Establish Cooperation**

With the experience gained from past and current programmes, cooperation with sport organisations should be implemented to share know-how and initiate further activities. This should particularly work towards agreements with higher educational institutions.

- **Extend Programmes**

The extension of programmes should be supported by sharing knowledge and common measures to develop high quality programmes.

KA:DA should be institutionalized to provide a central body for dual career concerns.

- **Secure Financing**

Funding should be secured in order to develop further initiatives.

2.5. Good Practices

There is excellent cooperation with the Austrian Chamber of Commerce. Having a direct contact to the labour market it can facilitate to approach businesses.

2.6. Conclusion

The present situation on dual career in Austria is rather unfavourable and characterized by individual activity of athletes. Although, there are career programmes in place, awareness and general significance are of limited nature.

Nevertheless, there is effective cooperation with the Chamber of Commerce, conducting a sort of Sport Academy and current efforts focus to institutionalize the career after sports programme (KA:DA).

With regards to education, the system is well organized for athletes in secondary education, however there is lacking support and cooperation at tertiary level.

Recommendations include the establishment of cooperation and networking between stakeholders, better communication and extension of existing programmes as well as the procuring of funding.

3. Dual Career in Slovakia

Elena Malíková – Ministry of Education, Dept. of Education and International Affairs in Sport

3.1. Introduction

In Slovakia, the central authority of state administration responsible for sport is the Directorate General for Sport of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic. It supports, among other, sports legislation and nation-wide issues on sport, providing grants to non-governmental sport organisations. Concerning sport legislation, there are a number of acts containing responsibilities,

rights and duties of governmental bodies, public authorities and non-governmental sport bodies.

Having been centralized until 1989, the non-governmental sport sector is characterized by a large number of organisations. Among them, national federations are the most significant ones. The Slovak Olympic Committee has been governing the national Olympic Movement since 1992.

In the field of sport education, athletes' dual career is one of the issues given priority by the Slovak Republic. Beside state school educational programmes, there are school educational programmes which provide space for new learning activities and individual study plans.

Formal education in relation to sport is characterized by sport classes, sport secondary grammar schools and centres of Olympic preparation.

In 2004, the National Sport Centre was established under the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic providing educational programmes next to sporting preparation. As a government funded institution it supports the development of high performance sport in Slovakia... In addition, the Slovak Republic has ten centres of Olympic preparation, providing, among other, training and education.

3.2. Dual Career Programmes

Athlete Career Programme

In cooperation between Adecco and the Slovak Olympic Committee, an Athlete Career Programme has been founded in 2009, providing professional career services for Slovak top-athletes. As a fairly recent initiative, it still requires improvement in the fields of athlete participation, service delivery, and partnership establishment integrating businesses.

Educational Programme for Athletes

In 2007, the National Sport Center has prepared a two-year educational programme for athletes being 17 years and older, members of the national team (senior or junior category) and recommended by the national sport federation. This programme includes compulsory and facultative lessons. In interactive seminars and consultations, athletes can attend partial educational activities consisting of professional and personal development in areas such as personal marketing, team building and career planning.

3.2.1. Stakeholders of Dual Career

- Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic
- National Sport Centre
- Formal education authorities
- Non-formal education accredited subjects
- Slovak Olympic Committee
- Adecco
- Non-governmental sport organisations/national federations/athletes

3.3. SWOT Analysis

Strengths

- Partnerships between governmental and non-governmental sport organisations
- Legislation on formal and non-formal sport education

Weaknesses

- High number of sport organisations involved in sport education topics with no central coordination
- Strong dependence of non-governmental sport organisations on state budget and public funds
- Insufficient recognition of dual career although provided a solid base in the Slovak legislation on sport education

Opportunities

- Helpful existing structures to establish a high level dual career system for top athletes if provided the following conditions:
 - Efficient coordination mechanism of all recent sport educational activities
 - Partnerships with businesses
 - Awareness of all stakeholders
- Development of educational programme for athletes within sport classes, sport secondary grammar schools and centres of Olympic preparation
- Annual grants for national sport projects submitted by the national sport organisations allocated by the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic
- Recognition and validation of current certificated educational activities in the sport educational system
- Recognition of informal learning in legislation on sport education
- Partnerships between sport sector and business
- Interest of athletes to participate in educational programmes and pursue a dual career

Threats

- Political changes influencing top management of the National Sport Centre having indirect impact on sport education issues

3.4. Recommendations

- Further develop educational programme for athletes within the National Sport Centre
- Further enhance Athlete Career Programme within the Slovak Olympic Committee
- Create partnerships with businesses initiated by the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic in cooperation with the National Sport Centre and the Slovak Olympic Committee
- Develop mentoring for athlete-students in higher educational institutions
- Recognize informal learning in legislation on sport education
- Raise awareness of athletes' dual career within sport classes, sport secondary grammar schools and centres of Olympic preparation
- Create website and social network on dual career

3.5. Good Practices

- Strong support of Ministry of Education facilitates dual career initiatives
- A National Sport Centre centralizes training and education
- Annual awards of "Complete Athlete" handed out to sportsmen with good sporting and academic results inspire athletes

3.6. Conclusion

Sport in Slovakia is characterized by partnerships between governmental and non-governmental organisations at all levels. Further positive features are the strong support by the Ministry of Education and the existence of the National Sport Centre integrating both sports and education.

Dual career at an academic level has a solid base in the Slovak legislation on sport education providing several options for qualification in the field of sport. With regards to a professional career, dual career is running on the principles of individual activity and approach having no central coordination.

There is a need for improvement in communication between the stakeholders of dual career, namely the National Sport Centre, the Slovak Olympic Committee and national federations/athletes. Further recommendations include developing educational as well as professional career offers, raising general awareness, achieving recognition of informal learning in sport education legislation and creating partnerships with businesses.

4. Dual Career in Slovenia

Iztok Čop - Olympic Rower

4.1. Introduction

Slovenian sport is regulated by law since 1998 with the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport being the main governmental actor in sports. The Olympic Committee of Slovenia (OCS) and the Association of Sports Federations are the country's major non-governmental sport organisations.

With its election in 2006, the Slovenian Athletes Commission initiated discussions about dual career. Three years later, there was a tentative of creating an athlete friendly system with the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport but ongoing negotiations were the result instead of greater cooperation and dialogue.

Recently, concrete recommendations promoting the transition into labour life have been forwarded to national authorities and are still on hold for confirmation.

4.2. Dual Career Programmes

Athlete Career Programme

Initiated by the Olympic Committee of Slovenia and Adecco, the Athlete Career Programme provides athletes with professional career services such as free capability tests and job interview training. It also supports sportsmen to find employment and raise awareness of their working potential among companies.

This programme is well accepted by Slovenian athletes.

4.2.1. Cooperation

- Slovenian Olympic Committee
- Adecco
- Athletes Commission

Over the future, the Athletes Commission and Adecco have foreseen to approach enterprises in order to establish cooperation.

4.3. SWOT Analysis

Strengths

- Running programme
- Strong engagement of Athletes Commission

Opportunities

- Recommendations forwarded to national authorities by Athletes Commission
- Interest of athletes

Weaknesses

- Low level of awareness among stakeholders
- No specific network
- Low level of education and lacking working experience on the part of athletes

Threats

- Low support by national authorities, sport organisations, educational institutions
- Conservative educational system allows no room for athlete friendly arrangements
- Budgetary constraints
- Difficult employment situation

4.4. Recommendations

- **Provide Education Arrangements**

In the field of higher education, University systems should be adjusted in order to support athletes in their academic career. Services should include athlete tutors as well as flexible schedule and exam arrangements. To establish such measures, a positive mindset and willingness to change is required from both, national authorities and educational institutions.

- **Establish Cooperation with Businesses**

Cooperation with sport sponsors should be established providing non-paid career experience to active Slovenian sportsmen. In addition, occasional working arrangements should be set up for athletes to settle within the working world and provide access to potential future employers.

- **Achieve Support from National Authorities**

Open dialogue and support from the government and Ministry of Sport and Education should be guaranteed.

The following recommendations are currently on hold for acceptance:

- A co-financing tuition fee
- An extended quality level athlete status for two more years enabling athletes to keep an occupation at police or armed forces and extend social security for another two years.

The State should finance tuition fees for international class athletes placed 6-30 in the world rankings. Moreover, it should give a two-year scholarship to world class athletes being placed 1-6 in the Olympics and a four-year scholarship to world championship medallists.

It should also fund employment for Olympic medallists continuing their professional career in their sport and co-finance the basic salary of athletes occasionally working in any industry.

- **Achieve Support from Sport Organisations**

The NOC of Slovenia should consider dual career as a key topic and become an active actor in this process, also providing better technical support to the Athletes Commission.

- **Increase Awareness**

Generally, awareness should be spread among the stakeholders of dual career, in particular on the working potential of athletes. This also includes problem recognition by athletes of the changing circumstances caused by a future working career.

- **Continue Running Projects**

Running projects should be kept alive and upgraded based on experience and needs.

4.5. Good Practices

The Slovenian Athletes Commission is a very active player in putting dual career initiatives forward. It identifies areas of improvement and serves as a good communicator to the athlete, sporting and public environment.

4.6. Conclusion

At present, dual career in Slovenia is at an elementary level. Despite considerable efforts of the Slovenian Athletes Commission to put dual career arrangements in place, lacking support from national authorities and sport organisations remains a serious obstacle.

As in most EU Member States, dual career works well up to secondary education. In higher education, however, appropriate arrangements are missing with the conservative education system placing an additional burden.

With regards to a professional career, the Athlete Career Programme is the only initiative currently in place to integrate athletes with the labour market.

Recommendations aim at achieving greater support in particular from national authorities and sport organisations, increasing general awareness, establishing arrangements regarding education and employment, and pursuing current activities.

5. Dual Career in Hungary

Judit Farkas – Semmelweis University

5.1. Introduction

Based on long time traditions, sport has played a significant role in the Hungarian society and is supported by leaders, like the President of the Republic of Hungary, Pál Schmitt, IOC member and Olympic Champion.

Hungary's major non-governmental sport organisations are the Hungarian Olympic Committee and the Hungarian Sports Confederation acting as an umbrella organisation for sports federations.

Due to long time traditions of integrating sports with education, programmes supporting the athlete's academic career have been quite successful. In particular, higher educational institutions successfully cooperate with the Hungarian Olympic Committee.

However, the transfer of athletes into the labour market has not been in focus in past, so initiatives got launched in the beginning of the new millennium.

Among athletes, the notion of dual career was only slowly established and direct support from various sport stakeholders was not provided or requested until 2002. In near future, a new Athletes Commission will be elected and drive dual career forward.

Partly due to the A2B questionnaire and related work, meetings with Athletes Commission members and the early dissemination, more and more stakeholders express their interest to learn about good practices and ways to get involved in dual career.

5.2. Dual Career Programmes

- **Academic Focus**

HOC „Olympic Pathway Programme”

Bi-lateral agreements initiated by the Hungarian Olympic Committee to involve higher educational institutions with an athlete's dual career have begun in 1995, marking its official start in 2002. Today, mutual agreements exist between 26 establishments, involving all significant Hungarian higher educational institutions, providing sportsmen with specific study arrangements and services. In turn, higher educational institutions receive positive publicity through the general media.

Budget mainly comes from the Hungarian Olympic Committee.

As central stakeholder, Semmelweis University hosts the management of the programme.

- **Labour Focus**

HOC Adecco Programme

Launched in 2005 by the Hungarian Olympic Committee and Adecco, the programme has so far supported 20 top level athletes with career building advice and national or international job placement.

Hungarian Sports Confederation - AXA Hungary, Insurance Division

This cooperation involves services such as career counselling and contains job offers with the AXA Hungary Insurance Division.

In addition to these programmes, contact to the National Alliance of Entrepreneurs has recently been established in the interest to find better ways of integrating athletes into the labour market.

5.2.1. Cooperation

- HOC and HEI
- HOC and Adecco
- National Sports Confederation and AXA

5.3. SWOT Analysis

Strengths

- Support of sporting topics by national authorities
- Strong support of higher educational concerns by Hungarian Olympic Committee; early action-taking in dual career (1995)
- Strong will and support from top leaders
- Successful combination of sports and studies
- Win-win situation for all partners (athletes, HEIs, sports)

Weaknesses

- Top-down movement has slow reaction in response to needs of athletes
- Lack of activity from athletes
- Sport clubs and sports federations have not included dual career in their short or long-term planning (HOC)
- "HOC Olympic Pathway Programme":
 - „Leopard pattern": Programme is only for the best
 - Relatively poor publicity
 - Lack of innovation in administration (need for statistics and studies)
 - For long term sustainability, higher educational institutions should contribute to budget (e.g. in providing reduced tuition fees)

Opportunities

- Possibility to build upon existing good examples of sport specific dual career solutions (e.g. Kayak-canoe Federation)
- Integrate more athletes in the Olympic Pathway Programme: medium/high level, younger/older age
- Awareness currently increases with higher number of citizens involved/working in sports
- A2B project dissemination can foster awareness and action taking

Threats

- Hungarian dual career programme could fall behind international standards if strategy, innovation and a nation-wide program is not provided
- Quality and quantity of core programme staff is not enough (better registration/data-management system, research)
- Lack of suitable financial resources
- Weak economic potential and low GDP
- Insufficient salary of Hungarian standard jobs; athletes consider international employment opportunities

5.4. Recommendations

- **Consider Sport Specific Measures**

Sport specific dual career options adapted to the peculiarities of each sport should be established. (E.g. Transition periods until athletes achieve age and athletic strength to participate in adult competitions could be bridged by academic education and professional career planning.)

- **Extend Academic Support**

By investing into quality and quantity of core staff, the academic support athletes achieve could be improved.

- **Provide Favourable Domestic Labour Conditions**

There should be a way of co-financing athlete employment in order to make domestic labour more attractive.

- **Increase Awareness Among Athletes, Businesses, Educational Institutions**

There should be greater publicity of existing programmes and benefits athletes can bring to the labour market.

On a European level, sport has to become better on explaining to higher educational institutions what their return on investment of hosting student-athletes could be.

5.5. Good Practices

National authorities are in favour of supporting initiatives in top level sports.

Olympic Pathway Programme:

- Good cooperation between Hungarian Olympic Committee and higher educational Institutions
- Strong will and support from top political, GO and NGO sport leaders
- One stakeholder – Hungarian Olympic Committee – has initiated the programme
- One stakeholder – Semmelweis University – is managing the programme

5.6. Conclusion

Dual career in Hungary is still in a beginner's phase. There are currently three programs running with regards to dual career involving the Olympic Pathway Programme which is successfully combining high level sports with tertiary level education.

With regards to transfer into labour life, there is larger room for improvement.

The long sporting tradition as well as great support and activity from both government and sport organisations provide a good base for future initiatives. In addition, a number of stakeholders has expressed keen interest to develop knowledge on dual career.

Recommendations include to consider sport specific measures, extend academic support, provide favourable domestic labour conditions and to raise general awareness.

6. Dual Career in Estonia

Priit Vene – Estonian Olympic Committee

6.1. Introduction

In Estonia, the central authority of state administration responsible for sport is the Department of Sport of the Ministry of Culture. In 2006, Estonian sport has been regulated by a new law, comprising, among other, financing of sport and support for Olympic champions.

As major non-governmental umbrella organisation, the Estonian Olympic Committee is supporting dual career in two ways: promoting the education of athletes and supporting athletes to become coaches. It has an annual budget of is 0.5 million € for educational programmes in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Research.

Culturally, the Estonian society values sports highly. Therefore, higher educational institutions are quite flexible concerning sportsmen's needs. There are no specific support programmes promoting transition into labour life but relationships between top athletes and firms are relatively close.

6.2. Dual Career Programmes

- **Academic Focus**

Estonian Olympic Committee Scholarship Programme

In 2003, the Estonian Olympic Committee in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Research, launched a programme for supporting athletes' education with an annual budget of 50 000 €. Per semester, about 30 top athletes having been on national teams for a minimum of three years or shown great efforts of fair play are granted scholarships.

- **Labour Focus**

Coach Education Programmes

The Estonian Olympic Committee has formed a Professional Qualifications Committee for different sports in cooperation with sport federations and holds the status of the body awarding coach qualification. This allows athletes to consider a coaching career following their sports career.

6.2.1. Cooperation

- Estonian Olympic Committee
- Union of Athletes
- Ministry of Culture
- Ministry of Education and Research

6.3. SWOT Analysis

Strengths

- Good cooperation between Estonian Olympic Committee and Ministries

- Functioning system of coaches education and qualification system

Weaknesses

- Considerable lack of objective data in the field of dual career

Opportunities

- Special educational programs for sportsmen to become sports administrators underway
- Existing relationships between athletes and businesses
- Public support of sport issues

Threats

- Decreasing sports financing by state and local authorities
- Low paid jobs in sports sector

6.4. Recommendations

- **Collect Objective Data about Sportsmen in Dual Career**

With this data, the current system could be analyzed and improved.

- **Develop Career Counselling Services**

Develop the career counselling system for athletes in order to supply a more personalised approach.

- **Support Sport Related Professions**

Create a qualification and educational system specific to sport related professions (sport managers, marketing specialists, club administrators, etc.).

6.5. Good Practices

The Estonian Olympic Committee has implemented three programmes supported by European Union Structural Funds. (See appendix for further details.)

This initiative could serve as a good practice example for NOCs within the European Union in achieving funding for dual career related activities.

6.6. Conclusion

As sport is socially valued in Estonia, dual career in higher education and professional life is running fine, although, there are no specific agreements in place. Current programmes promoting a dual career are the Olympic scholarship and coach education initiatives.

Due to the lack of objective data, the present system does not entail a systematic approach but is built on everyday experience.

Good cooperation with stakeholders, especially national authorities is a major strength and solid base for further action. In this regard, Estonia, one of the smallest nations in the EU, has successfully attracted EU Social Funds to promote educational programmes.

Recommendations include overall enhancing dual career related data collection, developing career counselling services for athletes and further supporting sport related professions.

7. Dual Career in Serbia

Miloš Milenković – NOC Serbia

7.1. Introduction

The governmental organisation of sport in Serbia is formed by the Ministry of Youth and Sport and the Sports Federation of Serbia. The most relevant non-governmental sport organisation is the Olympic Committee of Serbia having existed for 100 years. By recognizing the central problem of school interruption and sporting break-off leaving athletes without a clear life perspective, the Olympic Committee of Serbia has begun to implement dual career initiatives.

With regards to higher education, the present status of athletes is similar to non-athlete students. In the interest to develop a more flexible approach, contact has been established with the Ministry of Education.

For a professional career post sports, an Athlete Career Programme serves to integrate athletes with the labour market.

7.2. Dual Career Programmes

Athlete Career Programme

In 2009, the Serbian Olympic Committee and Adecco started an Athlete Career Programme. Currently, 11 sport federations, 70 athletes and 30 coaches are part of the initiative. Present actions include seminars for athletes facing a dual career. Although, so far, there has been no success in achieving internship placements with the labour market, the programme is progressing and well accepted by athletes.

7.2.1. Cooperation

- NOC Serbia
- Adecco
- Sports Federations
- Ministry of Education
- NOC Serbia sponsors and partners

7.3. SWOT – Analysis

Strengths

- NOC Serbia strongly supports dual career initiatives, desire to succeed
- Athlete Career Programme enhances cooperation and networking
- Partnerships with IOC and Adecco

Weaknesses

- Budgetary constraints
- Lack of coaches recognition

Opportunities

- Coordination with Ministry of Education

- Athletes 2 Business partnership
- Sponsors and partners improvement
- Coaches improvement

Threats

- High unemployment
- Economic crisis
- Law on education - status of athlete

7.4. Recommendations

- **Approach Government**

Closely work with the government and more specifically the Ministry of Education in the interest to develop flexible educational programmes for athlete-students.

- **Provide a Budget**

Achieve a budget and resources for the Athlete Career Programme and further initiatives, possibly from the IOC, including a NOC full-time employee for dual career.

- **Encourage Coaches to Support Dual Career**

Draw away coaches from focusing on sports results only but educate them in seminars how to support athletes in their dual career ambitions.

- **Set up Partnerships with Businesses**

Establish regular contacts between athletes and companies providing athletes with the opportunity to build their professional career with different trainings and tutorial approach from younger age (18-22) until retiring from sport.

7.5. Good Practices

There is a variety of stakeholders involved in the Athlete Career Programme including the Ministry of Education, the Serbian Olympic Committee, NOC sponsors and partners, the Athletes Commission, Adecco as well as sports federations and coaches. Cooperation between national authorities and non-governmental sport organisations is efficient.

7.6. Conclusion

Dual career in Serbia is still in a beginner's phase. It is characterized by determination of initiators spreading the message to their partners, as well as partnership and coordination between governmental and non-governmental stakeholders.

While dual career at an academic level is on an initial level, it is developing towards larger cooperation between the NOC of Serbia and businesses with regards to professional life.

However, there is a general need for improvement in all fields of the programme and recognition from the wider society is required in order to provide a more holistic approach.

Recommendations include approaching government to introduce a new member to the law on education and the IOC to provide a budget for dual career. Moreover,

partnerships with the business world need to be established and the athlete's sporting environment should be approached for supportive action.

8. Conclusion

This study visit has illustrated that in the majority of participating countries, dual career is at an elementary level. Obviously, there is a shared will of implementing dual career measures and most countries have identified own ways of putting first efforts in place, like the Olympic Pathway Programme in Hungary or the Sport Academy initiative in Austria. The majority has also implemented an Athlete Career Programme supported by the IOC.

However, participants commonly stressed the importance of increased engagement and a more integrated approach.

In Eastern European nations, there is a strong relationship between governmental and non-governmental organisations in the field of sport. When running well, like in Estonia, Slovakia or Hungary, this is a solid basis for further initiatives. However, if there is missing support, as seen in Slovenia, this can place an additional obstacle.

In most States, the system is adequately arranged for athletes up to secondary education; however, transfers from secondary to higher education as well as to the labour market still need considerable development.

Hungary and Slovakia can be seen as good practice examples for integrating dual career with an academic education by solid support from national authorities (Ministries of Education) and partnerships with educational institutions or sport centers.

In Austria, Slovenia and Serbia, there is a need for improving the higher educational system with regards to combined studies and training.

Concerning the labour aspect of dual career, effective partnership arrangements with businesses still need establishment. While specific career programmes are running in Slovenia, Slovakia, Serbia, Hungary and Austria, there appears to be room for improvement on job placement in all nations.

Moreover, all countries share a need for better communication of dual career issues. This includes spreading recognition among athletes, raising knowledge of existing programmes, increasing public awareness and moreover promoting the benefits of athletes in the labour market.

Furthermore, sport organisations, in particular in Slovenia and Austria, should become more active and all could make better use of European Structural Funds (see Estonia) to carry out initiatives helping athletes to pursue a successful dual career.

Although, cooperation between certain stakeholders of dual career is running fairly well, the establishment of larger networks integrating all stakeholders could facilitate greater coordination of existing activities and promote their extension.

The results generated from this Study Visit will flow into the final handbook on dual career.

9. Appendix

Estonian Programmes Supported by European Structural Funds

The below projects were supported according to a National Strategic Reference Framework Priority 1 measure 1 - Educational system supporting the flexibility and employability of the labour force and providing opportunities of lifelong learning for all.

Project 1 (Dec 1, 2004 – Feb 28, 2007)

Partner Associations and Federations: athletics, gymnastics, basketball, skiing, volleyball, judo, karate, wrestling, tennis

Activities:

- Basic Programme of Level and Complementary Education For Coaches
- Curricula for levels I, II, III – general knowledge + particular sports speciality
- Teaching materials for levels I, II, III
- Pilot courses for 9 sports specialities at level I (general knowledge + sports speciality)
- Web based register for curricula and teaching materials
- Web based testing centre for coaches

Project Budget:

153 400 EUR (2,4 mil. EEK)

Support from ESF (European Social Fund) 75 % → 115 000 EUR (1,8 mil. EEK)

Project 2 (Dec 1, 2005 – Feb 28, 2008)

11 new partner federations: football, cycling, bodybuilding & fitness, handball, shooting, chess, orienteering, yachting, rowing, swimming, dance-sport

+ 9 partners from previous project

Activities:

- Improvement of general knowledge teaching materials for level I
- Curricula and teaching materials in 11 sports specialities



- Pilot courses for 11 sport specialities on level I (general knowledge + sports speciality)
- Pilot courses for 9 sport specialities on level II (general knowledge + sports speciality)
- Web based register of coaches
- Improvement of web based register of curricula and testing centre for coaches

Project Budget:

230 100 EUR (3,6 mil. EEK)

Support from ESF 75 % → 172 600 EUR (2,7 mil. EEK)

Project 3 (Jan 1, 2006 – Aug 31, 2008)

7 new partner federations: table tennis, hiking, box, riding, floorball, badminton, triathlon + 11 from previous project + 9 first project

Activities:

- Complementary education courses on levels VI-V
- Publication rights for teaching materials on levels VI-V
- Improvement of general knowledge teaching materials on level I
- Curricula and teaching materials in 7 sports specialities
- Pilot courses for 6 sport specialities on level I (general knowledge + sports speciality)
- Pilot courses for 9 +11 sport specialities on level II-III (general knowledge)
- Improvement of web based testing centre and register of coaches

Project Budget:

345 100 EUR (5,4 mil. EEK)

Support from ESF 75 % → 255 600 EUR (4 mil. EEK)