



PARAdig: Dual-Track Careers for Para Athletes

Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



IO-2 Handbook

Tracking Beneficial Structures and Practices
in Seven EU Member States



PARA dig



**Dual-Track Careers
for Para-Athletes**

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1. PROLOGUE

*“It would amount to considerable progress
for sport in general
and disability sport in particular
if measures in support of dual careers
were applied equally for all athletes.*

This handbook is designed to help all who work across the world of education/work preparation and the world of talented and elite athletes with disabilities. This involves multiple disciplines in many sectors; to name just a few sectors, our research involved current and planned legislation, national and local government funding sources, social work, academic education, sports training, and of course, the families that make possible this ambitious dualism.

The project known as **Dual-Track Careers for Para Athletes (PARAdig)** was inspired by the original work included in the European Council Resolution on an EU Work Plan for Sport 2011-2014. This research and consultation crystallized into the landmark set of guidelines that was published in 2014, entitled Dual Careers for Talented and Elite Athletes. These guidelines highlighted the challenges faced by athletes trying to balance their academic learning and training for post-sports career readiness, and drew up guidelines and practices which together provided guidance on how countries can address the need for the all-important arrangements in place to help such athletes and avoid the situation where talented and elite sportspeople are forced to choose between education and sport or work and sport. While all talented and elite athletes were presumed to be included in the scope, the specific complications of this duality for athletes and students were not detailed or addressed.

As noted in Dual Careers for Talented and Elite Athletes (DCTEA), the research conducted between 2012 and 2014 could be framed with existing and emerging laws in the EU, but the then-27 member states were diverse and had become member states at different times. Some member states had also previously worked under sports competition and training regimes originated in the Soviet Union regimes, under which medal-winners were awarded life-long pensions and had no economic need to become employed. In 2014, the idea of dual career arrangements was relatively recent in the majority of Member States. An important product of the PARAdig project was the opportunity to update development of policies and support instruments in the seven member states of our consortium.

The PARAdig consortium of partners itself was structured in a way to reflect that diversity of country profiles and history within the EU member states. The main commonality of all nine partners from seven member states was the sharing of values around equal access and inclusion. The coordinating partner was **Aetoi Thessalonikis**, a non-profit organisation in Greece whose mission is to support people with disabilities and to help build pathways to social participation and inclusion. The other partners are **Champions Factory Ireland**, specialized in developing innovations in the field of sport, education, training and youth. We had two partners in

Bulgaria: **National Sports Academy “Vassil Levski”** in Bulgaria, a university that for 75 years has dedicated itself to sport, higher education and research; and the **Bulgarian Sports Development Association**, devoted to the development of sport and the improvement of sport culture in Bulgaria. The mission of non-profit **Mine Vaganti**, based on the island of Sardegna in Italy, is to promote intercultural dialogue, social entrepreneurship, social inclusion through sport, the social integration of migrants, and environmental protection; the **European Paralympic Committee**, whose mission, supported by both the Austrian government and the EU, was central to this project’s work. Partners also include three National **Paralympic Committees** from **Sweden, Croatia, and Serbia**, entities that are part of the Paralympic Movement under the **International Paralympic Committee (IPC)**, which is the governing body for the Paralympic Movement governed by the International Paralympic Committee in Bonn, Germany. Having a team knitted together through their common mission values, and able to call on diverse members of their respective networks has been immensely helpful to the original research we have conducted. For first-hand practical guidance the team has also been able to draw on the experiences of Bulgarian associate partner Wheelchair Basketball Club Levski.

1. INTRODUCTION TO THE PROJECT

The idea of Dual Track Careers has been actively developed and debated for almost a decade, and while these efforts to guide the sports sector did not exclude athletes with disabilities, their needs were not placed front and centre, with the result that effective long-term preparation for employability or self-employment as an entrepreneur/se is in practice not yet the norm, nor the expected standard outcome, especially given the global pre-occupation with the Covid-19 pandemic.

The **PARAdig** partners takes their lead and inspiration from the EU Guidelines on Dual Careers for Athletes, but bring a fresh and updated focus on the needs of athletes with a disability and the legal and policy environments they are living in. The first product of the consortium’s work is this handbook which delivers several important types of research with a view to identifying arising best practices uncovered during the research phase.

- Information on missing infrastructure, enabling policies and vehicles for the cross communication of education/sports training and all others implicated, including trainers, families, schools, mentors and coaches, sports organisations, social services, NGOs and relevant institutions.
- Updating of information on relevant legislation implemented in the seven EU member countries
- Getting an understanding of the availability of financial support or the lack thereof, and the types of resources available in the different countries.

The ultimate goal is to allow more young people with a disability to enter into the competitive sports and athletics arena, develop their sports skills, but also ensure that they will have relevant skills, training and qualifications to rely on when they start the second part of their still young lives and need to make a living.

Selective lines of “big picture” inquiry for each of the seven countries:



- Status of dialogue between the “talented” or “elite” sport system for school-age athletes, and the education system
- Status of transition of students with disability who are also talented/elite athletes to higher education, employment or entrepreneurial self-employment; how this status differs from talented/elite athletes without a disability.
- What if any specific arrangements do schools make for students to ensure they can keep up with the academic learning of their peers despite participating in matches and competitions?
- Are there any financial support funds or grants to help families pay for the travel, food accommodation costs during matches, sports tournaments and competitions?
- In each country, researchers will list EU-level and national level legislation that has gone into force and whose purpose is to help disabled students, since 2013.
- In each country, researchers will be sensitive to discrepancies in treatment accorded to intake of female students, intake of students with disability and the creation of sports opportunities for students with disability compare to their able-bodied peers.
- In the case of young elite athletes, the researchers will seek to understand whether formal contracts are made between the parties, whether the contract language is robust; and whether continuing education/preparation for university entry is allowed for in such agreements.
- In terms of interviews carried out in sports organisations such as federations, associations and clubs) the researchers will make best efforts to understand whether or not their leaders use their influence to encourage members to facilitate the dual careers of young elite athletes with and without disability.
- Researchers have also been asked to interview organizations that provide support to people with disabilities – this will include social services, coaches, NGOs and families to get a sense of the financial and logistical burdens they carry.

2.THE CONCEPT OF DUAL CAREERS IN SPORTS

The term “dual career” was invented to emphasise that very few talented or elite athletes can rely solely on their sports careers to provide them with a livelihood later in life. It refers to the constant duality during an athlete’s education and in the lead-up to a talented athlete gaining employment. There has to be ongoing academic study throughout an athlete’s youth so that he or she has recognised qualifications to show to prospective employers. However, for talented athletes, the pressure to be the best one can be, or the best in the field, is also intense.

It is now impractical and risky for young athletes in most EU member states to choose only one of the options, therefore the need for duality is automatic. This duality implies a great deal of discipline and extra hard work for any student active in sport, and even more commitments for the para-athlete student who has to accommodate the special logistics and extra prep time related his or her disability; dual careers also ask for a great deal of institutional tolerance to deal with the potentially complicated logistics of athletes juggling their commitments and the splitting of attention that a dual career implies. In many cases, the strain becomes too great and the field loses talented athletes because the students prioritize their academic learning, exams, etc., and drop out of sports. On the other hand, a candidate for employment that has had to organise, endure the discipline and still come out top of the class wins the respect and stirs employer interest in hiring such a clearly motivated and competent individual.

Some countries that are now member states of the EU have come to the

group with varying traditions for the training up of young talented athletes. Some have been groomed in specialised sports institutions to concentrate on their development as future medal-winning champions for their country. (Historically, a place has seldom been given to an athlete with a disability.) Later, these Olympic medal-winners can look forward to being financially supported for the rest of their lives thanks to their early achievements. Other countries have traditions that insist on a balance of athlete sports training and academic/other skills learning, made necessary by the lack of guaranteed post-career financial support. There is therefore a wide spectrum of scenarios among the EU member states.

3. THE EU GUIDELINES ON DUAL CAREERS OF 2012

The EU Expert Group on "Education & Training in Sport" approved the landmark "EU Guidelines on Dual Careers" to set out new policy recommendations in order to better support dual careers in high-performance sports. At that time, dual career arrangements catering to training and adequate education were still relatively recent in most EU member states.

The Council of Europe and the European Commission believe that it is important for all member states to gradually develop the conditions to support all talented and elite athletes, with or without disability, and to benefit from dual career arrangements, as framed in the EU Guidelines on Dual Careers that appeared in September 2012. As the name suggests, these Guidelines were not a binding instrument and they allow for and respect the diversity of competences in Member States in the related policy fields.

At the time, the EU policy Europe 2020 Strategy on preventing the early leaving of school and the drive to increase the numbers of university graduates in the EU was perceived to be well matched by the concept of Dual Careers. It was anticipated that both concepts would drive employability and render sports policies more efficient by retaining a greater percentage of talented and elite athletes in the sports system.

The three greatest challenges in smoothing and refining dual career ambitions at that time were:

- The safeguarding of the development of young athletes, especially of children in early specialisation sports, young people in vocational education and training, as well as disabled athletes;
- The balance between sports training and education and, at a later stage of life, the balance between sports training and employment; and,
- The end-of-sporting-career phase of athletes, including those who leave the system earlier than planned.
- We note that athletes with a disability were mentioned here, but these guidelines did not go into further specifics. Inspired by the guidelines, our project team working on "Paradigm Change for Para-Athletes" decided to do the follow-up work and update the status of talented and elite athletes with a disability, eight years on from the publication of Dual Careers for Talented and Elite Athletes. One of our first reflections was that the case of athletes with a disability might one day prompt the invention of a "tri-career" label, which will include the above aspects, but add on logistical and personal health aspects that call for management skills over complex logistics.

Before the bursting on the scene of the Paralympics Games in 1960 in Rome, and the Special Olympics in the USA in 1968, children and youth with disabilities had few prospects for discovering their potential skills and strengths in any field. Today, at least in the economically advanced countries, we are living in a changed world in which:

- Differently-abled young people go to school; and,
- At school there will be opportunities for them to try out physical education;
- Attending school is not just important for socialisation and getting an education: sports talent of all kinds may be uncovered and developed by physical education trainers and mentors who know what opportunities exist for a promising young athlete.

ADDED VALUE OF THE ORIGINAL DUAL CAREER GUIDELINES

The EU Guidelines of 2012 highlighted several areas where supportive legal infrastructure was yet to evolve for the development of dual track activities for athletes. There was previously no financial framework to support the development of dual track careers, something which had many consequences for families of able-bodied athletes, but presenting an insurmountable obstacle for the families of talented athletes with a disability, with their expensive logistical needs. And then there was another array of difficulties, at the operational level, according to the Guidelines: "In Member States where these arrangements have been developed for some time, they sometimes lack solid agreements between the sport system and either the educational sector or the labour market. They may also lack a legal framework or a sustainable governmental policy." We noted also that the Guidelines highlighted that disabled talented or elite athletes were being neglected "in particular in funding policies of both governments and sport organisations."

Laying out the difficulties and obstacles confronted by athletes and making explicit the need of a commonly understood framework clarifies the roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders; it also provided a platform from which to transform guidelines into the creation of programmed reforms and actions, and their financing. It also provided an opportunity to reiterate EU principles and contrast them with witnessed behaviours in the field.

The research component of the present project slightly extends this scope to "take the temperature" of progress in the development of dual careers in seven member states, with particular reference to athletes with disabilities.

DUAL CAREER GUIDELINE RECOMMENDATIONS

Below is an abbreviated list of the guidelines

Guideline 1 – Talented and elite athletes in amateur and professional sports, including athletes with a disability as well as retired athletes, should be recognised as a specific population group in the relevant policy areas.

Guideline 2 – Public authorities responsible for policy domains involved in the provision of sport, education, training, social and financial support and employment should consider the establishment of interdepartmental bodies or mechanisms to ensure the coordination, cross-sectoral cooperation, implementation and monitoring of dual career policies for talented and elite athletes including retiring elite athletes.

Guideline 3 – Authorities responsible for the implementation of dual careers should develop national guidelines for dual careers taking into account the EU Guidelines on Dual Careers and the specificity of the national sport and education system and cultural diversity. They should consider the use of agreements between stakeholders to promote dual careers. Where appropriate, such agreements could involve specific reward mechanisms, such as incentives for educational institutions or employers to recruit dual career athletes.

Guideline 4 – Public and private sports authorities should support the implementation of dual careers of different types of athletes in the activities of national/regional sports organisations through formal agreements which require a clear strategy, planning of activities and involvement of athletes, and make the allocation of funding conditional upon the inclusion of the dual career concept in their activities. The safety and welfare of young athletes should be a requirement of such programmes.

Guideline 5 – Responsible sports authorities should recognise sport academies and high-performance training centres as part of a coherent system of provisions for dual career athletes, including student-athletes from abroad, based on agreements between stakeholders, and secure the implementation of dual career services in these institutes.

Guideline 6 – Sport academies and high-performance training centres should only be recognised and supported by public and private sport authorities if some minimum requirements have been fulfilled.

Guideline 7 – Sport and educational authorities should promote the implementation of the dual career concept in contracts and codes of conduct for coaches and other members of performance teams. National sport organisations and international federations, as well as universities and vocational education and training institutes, should include the dual career concept in their education programmes for these professions.

Guideline 8 – Sport and public authorities should support stakeholders in dual careers to ensure that through supporting services and structures: Expertise on dual career topics is available and accessible to all stakeholders involved;

Dual career support (including support for career transitions and crisis-management and coping interventions) is available to all recognised talented, elite and retired athletes;

The quality and content of supporting services meet the demands of athletes.

Guideline 9 - Members of performance teams and experts delivering supporting services should be competent and qualified and free from any criminal record in relation to child, physical or sexual abuse. Qualifications and certification for professions in performance teams and dual career supporting services should be part of the National Qualification Framework for educational institutes with reference to the European Qualification Framework. European branch organisations in this field could support this process.

Guideline 10 – Public authorities and stakeholders should develop a framework for dual careers in sport and schools in which specific arrangements (e.g. flexibility, adapted curriculum, e-learning, supplementary tutoring, the use of facilities and sport services and supporting services) are included.

Guideline 11 – Educational and sport authorities could consider setting up specific opportunities for early specialisation sports in the school education system for young athletes under strict conditions that protect and safeguard the physical and mental development of young athletes, preferably in close cooperation with local clubs and with a transparent monitoring system.

Guideline 12 – Public authorities and stakeholders should develop a framework for dual careers in sport and vocational education and training (VET) institutes in which specific arrangements (e.g. flexibility, adapted curriculum, e-learning, supplementary tutoring, the use of facilities and sport ser-

vices and supporting services) are included.

Guideline 13 – Educational and sports authorities should promote cooperation between professional sports academies and VET institutes to organise dual careers in an effective and attractive way, including for students who have completed compulsory education.

Guideline 14 – Educational and sports authorities should encourage stakeholders in sport and institutes of higher education to develop and implement dual career pathways, including the content of the curriculum and the use of facilities and supporting services.

Guideline 15 – Public authorities should support the development of an accreditation system for educational institutes with a sport profile and involved in dual careers of student-athletes, taking into account the specific characteristics of the different types of education.

Guideline 16 – Educational authorities should promote and support cooperation among educational institutes to develop learning curricula, programmes and materials using either a shared Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) as a platform, or a shared protocol to be adopted for local VLE platforms.

Guideline 17 – Public authorities in sport and employment should set up a network of complementary public and private partners enabling elite athletes, including athletes with a disability, to combine in an optimal way their athletic and vocational careers in public services (military, police, customs etc.) and private businesses.

Guideline 18 – 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.

Guideline 19 – Public authorities and stakeholders in sport and education should promote balanced pathways for retiring athletes so that they can prepare for, initiate and develop a vocational career after the end of their sporting career.

Guideline 20 – Social partners should include dual careers on the agenda of the social dialogue at national and European levels (profiles of competences, education, services).

Guideline 21 – Sports, health and educational authorities should jointly support the development of health and psychological assistance, preventive and education programmes for athletes in the areas of life skills, injury prevention, healthy living, nutrition and recovery techniques as an element of the educational part of the dual career.

Guideline 22 – National sport organisations, health insurance schemes and the medical profession should improve communication based on athletes' health records, in full respect of data protection rules, to ensure a better flow of information about injuries as well as quick and accurate referrals to medical specialists at national and international level.

Guideline 23 – Public health authorities are invited to consider the revision of insurance provisions so as to provide employers, athletes-workers and retired athletes with added employee protection regarding sport-related injuries.

Guideline 24 – Public authorities and sport stakeholders should set up, or further develop, a coherent system of financial support for student-athletes in which the different stages of the dual career are recognised.

Guideline 25 – Within a coherent system of financial support for athletes, sports and educational authorities should develop and support a specific dual career scholarship programme for the educational stage.

Guideline 26 – Public authorities should create a specific status for non-professional high-level athletes (multi-sport status), granting them a minimum of health protection.

Guideline 27 – The European Commission is called upon to stimulate cooperation between national sport training centres and educational institutes from different Member States in order to support the development and availability of dual career policies for student-athletes from other Member States.

Guideline 28 – The European Union is called upon to consider creating opportunities within its programme for education and training to provide financial and organisational support for the development and implementation of dual career mobility networks of cooperating sports organisations and educational institutes on behalf of student-athletes who move from one Member State to another.

Guideline 29 – The European Commission is called upon to encourage and support the leading educational institutions and universities in Member States, in partnership with sport stakeholders, to participate in transnational consortia to develop shared curricula and educational programmes for elite sportspersons. Such programmes could involve common degree programmes, common modules within degree programmes, or shared curriculum resources.

Guideline 30 – Sports and education authorities, sports organisations and educational institutes should promote regular internal control and external monitoring of dual career facilities and supporting services including sport and academic results, qualifications and further education of staff, safety and accessibility of facilities and services, and functioning of internal codes of behaviour.

Guideline 31 – Sports authorities and national sport bodies should consider developing a national quality label for dual career services and facilities with reference to a European framework. The European Commission is called upon to support the development of a European quality framework for dual career services and facilities in collaboration with the representative bodies in this field.

Guideline 32 – Sports authorities should coordinate actions in cooperation with sports organisations to raise awareness among coaches, athletes and their entourage about the importance of dual careers and to support the setting up of representative athletes' committees and national athletes' organisations and their incorporation in the respective boards of sport organizations or social dialogue structures. Sport authorities should promote existing athletes' committees and organisations to spread information on dual career services to individual athletes during training and competitions.

Guideline 33 – The European Commission is called upon to support one or more European dual career networks bringing together stakeholders representing athletes, sports organisations, educational institutions, supporting services, national authorities, coaches and businesses, in order to further the dissemination and implementation of these Guidelines.

Guideline 34 – Sports and education authorities should have a monitoring and evaluation system in place, in cooperation with sports, education and athletes' organisations, to follow progress regarding the implementation of dual career policies. They should notably monitor the effectiveness and quality of the system of educational institutes with a sport profile, sport academies or sport centres run by federations, Olympic Committees or private companies and clubs. They should also support corresponding research.

Guideline 35 – The European Commission is called upon to support research regarding the international dimension of dual career programmes, in particular regarding the effects of transitions in athletes' lives, the safeguarding of the development of young athletes in early specialisation sports, the effectiveness of measures and supporting services in the Member States, and the re-entry process of European athletes into the labour market.

Guideline 36 – The European Commission is called upon to consider monitoring key developments in the field of dual careers of athletes at national and European level and to evaluate the implementation of these Guidelines on the basis of pre-defined indicators after four years.

5. BENEFITS OF DUAL CAREERS FOR ATHLETES, SPORTS AND GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS, AS WELL AS SO-

CIETY

BENEFITS OF DUAL CAREERS AT THE EU MEMBER COUNTRIES LEVEL

It has been estimated that students between the ages of 10 and 17 typically begin to feel that they have to sacrifice their sports development (training, competition, etc) in order to give more time to learning on the path to university. Dual career design that gives students enough flexibility and management tools to retain their sport activities alongside their academic learning ultimately help countries **refresh their pool of promising athletes every year**. Good pedagogy that instils in the students' minds the advantages of dual skillsets will also enhance their sense of responsibility as productive individuals, while still at school and beyond. In the case of students whose horizon is the Paralympics and the Paralympic movement, the same logic applies, the only difference being these students need more support in logistics management.

Perhaps less obvious is the benefit to member countries of benefits arising from the **cross-disciplinary mode of working**, both in their own ministries but also across borders, bringing trans-national learning, innovations and best practices. The building of Dual careers demands at minimum engagement in the sports, education, training/employment and finance domains. Dual careers thus give positive opportunities for countries to work together on common goals and not back away from complexity. Policy institutions building Dual Careers for talented and elite athletes will be complemented by the engagement of other organisations from commercial, public and non-profit organisations that will make for **more "joined-up" policy design** to ensure that the long-term non-sport related needs of the athlete are met, and **working against siloed thinking**.

BENEFITS OF DUAL CAREERS AT THE SPORTS ORGANISATION LEVEL

As noted in the accompanying Research Report, adoption of the dual career concept can and does enhance governance in sports institutions. "DC policy and assistance programmes by national sports governing bodies is increasingly seen as part of their social responsibility and an indicator of good governance." Evidence of good governance often leads to more financial support from the public and from government, thus creating a virtuous circle of transparency.

BENEFITS OF DUAL CAREERS AT THE INDIVIDUAL ATHLETE LEVEL

The strong campaign of the EU that has led to the "norming" of need for inclusion of all in the member countries has been a widespread influence on the education and sports domains, nowhere more so than for school-age children with disabilities. This norming has logically led to **stressing participation** of this cohort in sports, which equally logically has needed to be accommodated alongside academic learning and eventual trainings and qualifications for joining the workforce or becoming an entrepreneur. Management of Dual Careers provides a framework but does not dictate the path.

For the young athlete included in sports, he or she will have the opportunity to find activities to excel in, even as a **wider social** life emerges based on **commonality versus "difference"**. Thus bolstered, the young student with a disability may start to envision his- or herself as a participant in action. Through training, he or she may aspire to Paralympic sports and start playing with other athletes in his or her country, or even in other member

²see https://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/sport/library/documents/dual-career-guidelines-final_en.pdf section on conceptual framework.

³see key findings section of Research Report, page 13.

states. He or she realises a new picture of his- or herself, based on **sports values such as perseverance, discipline and teambuilding in action, and a reverence for the powers of inclusion and fairness.**

If Dual Career policy is fully enacted for support of a local athlete with a disability, it will include funding for travel to other venues for away matches and competitions, and thus further widening the athlete's horizons. More important, it can **alleviate the pressure on the athlete's family** that sacrifices its own economic well-being in order to support participation in such events. Financial support programmes are key to preventing athletes with strong potential from falling through the cracks.

Benefits of dual career programmes (compared to athletes in programming that does not stress deliberate coordination between academic learning and sports) are numerous, and clearly emerged in the results of our research. The major benefits were:

- A more balanced lifestyle, and lowered stress/anxiety levels, leading to a greater sense of wellbeing; the twin focus helped counter the drive for academic success at the cost of rounded personal development;
- Developmental boosting attributed to improved conditions for developing life skills in the context of sport, education and other scenarios; improved skills in terms of self-regulation and development of a stronger sense of personal identity.
- Social life benefits listed the expansion of social networks, better peer relationships and access mutual support.
- In terms of the benefits related to post-sport career, benefits were improved career and retirement planning, transition and adaptation taking less time than previously, resulting in less danger of losing the sense of identity.
- Enhanced future employment prospects; higher employability and access to well-paid jobs⁴.

6. MAIN CATEGORIES IN DUAL CAREERS

As the lifespan of an athlete goes through different phases of needs, so must Dual Careers concepts cater to those phases of development. The successful result is competence and achievement in both athleticism and academic learning to the level of which the athlete is capable, affected by multiple other factors such as energy, determination, and the individual's potential for learning and performance; but no talented athlete should be cast aside for lack of inclusion, nor should the talented athlete be forced to choose between sport practice/competitions and learning and obtaining qualifications.

The double discipline asks a lot from any student, even more for the student with disability, but it also demands a lot of the infrastructure of a given geography. The more interactions that occur between the diverse parties involved in developing the Dual Careers concept, the more effective will be the outcome. Below are five different Dual Career scenarios involving different packages of arrangements

USEFUL INFRASTRUCTURE FOR EDUCATION AND YOUNG ATHLETES WITH DISABILITY

To allow dual careers to function in this scenario calls for the spirit of inclusiveness and imagination to envisage how to help more young athletes do well in sports and in their education. Assets for launching can include:

- Inclusive Young Athlete programs in schools that accept children with disability;
- Benefits that can be made to athletes who perform well, in terms of

⁴ see key findings section of Research Report, page13.

scholarships, free medical/insurance services, referral to specialized training centres;

- Special arrangements for academic learning or exams (to make up for lost in practice and competitions);
- For older students, special arrangements between high schools and work placement agencies, or commercial agencies such as Adecco, which works with champion athletes;
- Financial incentives to persist with sport career development, including for Paralympic athletes. Significant investment in dual-career trainers, ie. trainers who also teach academic subjects. Also mixing in of a “life coach” function teaching life management to older para-athletes transitioning to the workplace can be helpful; other innovative learning pathways.



USEFUL INFRASTRUCTURE FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION AND YOUNG ATHLETES WITH DISABILITY

- Networks for student athletes formed for para-athletes, for information and resource-sharing, along the lines of the A2B (Athletes to Business) network in Hungary, which sought to promote networking among stakeholders to push for adoption of dual careers for athletes without disabilities. Even more powerful are networks that leverage common interests among able-bodied and athletes with disability.
- Learning opportunities for athletes in courses mixing sports training and work preparation courses such as the Swedish training course known as *Elitdrottskolan* pioneering professional education for high schoolers with disability during their last three years, which can widen

commonality and generate stronger links among students while also becoming a base for professional linkage in their special sports fields (please see page 33).

- Online learning with chat facility or group assignments can also be a way to counter the sense of isolation for students with a disability.

ASSETS FOR TRANSITIONING-TO-WORK/ GOING INTO HIGHER EDUCATION AND YOUNG ATHLETES WITH DISABILITY

- Special certification and diplomas issued for athletes with disability on graduation from high school can assist them to move up to university despite their marks not being as high as their peers who had all their time available for study;
- Government programs that reserve a certain number of jobs to be taken up by athletes and para-athletes, etc.

These enabling practices can come from any aspect of the work being done around dual career ideas extending to athletes with disabilities, from ministerial level to grassroots social workers, and focused on any part of the timeline of the para-athletes, from first discovery as a child to insertion into employment/start-up entrepreneur.

CROSS-FERTILIZATION AS AN ASSET IN CONSTRUCTING INFRASTRUCTURE FOR EDUCATED YOUNG ATHLETES WITH DISABILITY

If the reader glances at the summaries of progress in the seven countries (starting on page 19), it will become evident that the countries making the most progress in starting the adoption of the Dual Careers concept, or developing ever more helpful additions and options to established Dual Careers programming have something in common: they are the countries that from the get-go insisted on carefully and gradually creating a mixed consortium. It often also needed a catalyst in the mix: most often, in this research, this has been the officially recognized Paralympic Committee that was awarded certain powers in exchange for becoming a quasi- government department responsible for looking after the interests of athletes with disability.

All the proven benefits above can be derived from agencies working together, sharing resources, communicating about particular candidate para-athletes and their cases, so as to optimize the treatment and prospects of the candidate, and come closer to realizing true inclusion and balanced dualism of sports and academic learning.

7. OBJECTIVES, METHODOLOGY AND THE SEVEN-COUNTRY REPORTS

The primary objectives of the research study were to:

- Gain insight in both active and retired para athletes' personal experiences of Dual Careers. In a context which is under-researched, this study intended to bring new country-specific knowledge of para athletes' pathways to Dual Careers (DC) in the seven partner countries.
- Unpack the broader context in which para athletes' DCs take shape: including a review of existing DC support structural arrangements, legislative provisions, policies and practices in both education and sport systems in the seven countries concerning para athletes' DC.
- To examine the role of key stakeholders involved in policy making and delivering DC support services in the seven countries.

Building on the conceptual framework the overall research consists of two main parts:

Policy context analysis aimed to examine the broader legislative, policy and structural environment within the seven partner countries in which para

athletes DCs take place (this is covered fully in IO-1, PARAdig: Dual-Track Careers for Para Athletes Research Report); and,

- Empirical field surveys with 181 active para athletes; 30 retired athletes; as well as representatives of 48 sport organisations developing parasports across the seven member states. (This will be found in the Paradigm Project Research Report.)

ORIGINAL RESEARCH BRIEF

The methodology for the cross institutional research was a holistic mapping exercise whose results will document all of the identified stakeholders with key questions formed by a collective group of partners, who, together cover all aspects of the working with para-athletes in seven countries. Based on the preparatory activities and preparatory research, all partners was equipped with the same questionnaires and had the same objectives, designed to:

- Understand the local legal/policy framework is for creating access to sports for young people with disabilities;
- Understand whether sports system institutions in each country's two largest cities were encouraging and organizing programming for young athletes with disabilities;
- Understand all of the stages in a young person's development as a young talented athlete of school age in terms of:
 - how he/she gets "spotted" as a potential athlete,
 - who does the "spotting", and if development of the young talent goes forward, apart from their family members, which local institutions, government agencies, government services are involved in supporting him/her?
- To determine whether there was any dedicated agency in the athlete's local government to oversee athletes with disabilities? Are there statutes and policy to guide relevant actions?
- Is there any form of financial assistance to help families pay for transport, travel around competitive events?
- What is the role of each stakeholder in first helping facilitate the entry of a talented young athlete?
- How do schools accommodate the trainings and events in a young athlete's sports career and ensure that work can be made up?
- Are there guidelines agreed for the responsibility for a young para-athlete who spends much time shuttling between school and sports venues?
- Is the country consciously developing the model for "dual coaches" who can mentor sports training but also teach academic subjects to both able-bodied athletes and para-athletes?
- What special provisions are being made to help the post sports career transition of able-bodied athletes in these seven countries? Are the same efforts being made with regard to para-athletes? Are any dedicated resources being developed to help the student/athlete transition?

The questions will be co-designed in group meetings, and thus touch on all the relevant points needed to map all relevant points, including the current interactions of the local stakeholders, some of whose responders may not even be aware of. Such discoveries will help drive the making of a mutually supportive and enabling network of stakeholders, another goal of this project.

Once all the results have been collected and all answers translated into English, our university partner NSA, specialized in sports-related research, will work on the analysis of the returning data, both as individual member states and also in aggregate, to drawn out meaningful quantifiable data,

Myndigheten för Delaktighet (Swedish Agency for Participation): <https://www.mfd.se/other-languages/>

Norberg, J. R. (2011). A contract reconsidered? Changes in the Swedish state's relation to the sports movement. *International Journal of Sport Policy and Politics*, 3(3), 311–325.

SCB, Statistiska centralbyrån Avdelningen för befolkning och välfärd SCB (Statistics Sweden, Population and Welfare Department), Report: Situationen på arbetsmarknaden för personer med funktionsnedsättning 2019 (The labour market situation for people with disabilities) 2019, p. 21 and 24: https://www.scb.se/contentassets/14e47b5fde424ca188ad70f4acbd7620/am0503_2019a01_br_am78br2002.



[pdf](#)

Social departmentet (Ministry of Health and Social Affairs) 2011. Sweden's Initial Report under the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Annex 1 minutes 2011-01-31 § 19

Special pedagogiska Skolmyndigheten (National Agency for Special Needs Education and Schools): <https://www.spsm.se/om-oss/other-languages/english/our-mission/> Swedish Agency for Participation: <https://www.mfd.se/resultat-och-upfoljning/kunskapsunderlag/funktionshinderspolitikens-utveckling/statistik-om-personer-med-funktionsnedsattning/>



and work with another Bulgarian partner BSDA to tease out the more qualitative results, contextualize them and compile the final report, with the whole surrounding partner researcher group answering any arising questions or affording opportunities to ask questions via email or phone calls. Publication will include a preface on goals of the present project and methodology, compilation of materials by country and data analysis, summary of findings, and index. The research feeds into both the main comprehensive Report and the Handbook on Good Practices.

AT-A-GLANCE INFORMATION ON LEGAL INSTRUMENTS AND NOTES ON BENEFICIAL STRUCTURING AND PRACTICES THAT EMERGE FROM THE 7-COUNTRY REPORTS

This section should be read in conjunction with the Dual-track Careers for Para Athletes pages 33-90. The following section on legislation, strategies and programmes in each partner country as of end-2020 has been designed as a resource for individuals and organizations that will in the future continue to work for the inclusion and support for all athletes, with and without disability, in all these countries. This Handbook provides updated information on legislation and policies that address and improve access to support for people with disabilities. The research has been compiled by all the 7 partners in the EU Erasmus+ funded project known as "PARAdig: Dual-Track Careers for Para Athletes".

REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA

EU member state since January 1, 2007

Background Stats from National Statistical Institute 2011 census statistics

Total population: 7,364,570. Economically active population aged 16-64 with disabilities: 68,000, or 27.1%; the equivalent for the same cohort without disabilities was 69.3%; employment rates were 22.5% and 59.1%, respectively.

SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS BULGARIAN PROGRESS TOWARD DUAL CAREERS

- As of 2020, Dual Careers opportunities for able-bodied athletes have mainly been realized in terms of employment for medal winners from the Olympic Games (OG) and European or global competitions. Such employment can be within ministries or as experts in charge of municipal sporting activities. LPES allows for top medallists (from OG or Paralympic Games) to receive a lifelong pension. Athletes who did not become such medallists often become coaches or manage sport clubs.
- Athletes who are students still have to be resourceful and rely on goodwill as in the pre-DC phase of sports development, the so-called laissez-faire approach. The athlete is vulnerable to the whims of sports organizations and schools or employers, and our research suggests poor familiarity with what it takes to launch the DC concept is slowing down reform. Within the employment market, obtaining flexibility in timetabling sport practices and competitions to is a matter of negotiation. Most athletes know they will have to have a back-up plan for their post-sport livelihood; to date, a lack of resources and capacity among sport organizations, coupled with the state's centrality, has prevented DC adoption. However, the Bulgarian Olympic Committee (classified as a national umbrella organization) initiated a first DC support project in 2020. This was SMART SPORT GOING FURTHER, an Erasmus+ project that supports the implementation of the European Union's dual career guidelines, embracing sport and education while linking them to the business sector by especially focusing on smart technologies⁶.

EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICES IN BULGARIA AND HOW

⁵see Paradig Project Research Report pages 35-45 for full report on Bulgaria.

⁶see <https://www.eusa.eu/news?two-olympians-present-at-eusa-dual-career-seminar> and also the blog of Smart Sport – Going Further at <https://smartsport.bg/>. Results and other links can be found at: <https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/projects/eplu-project-details/#project/590457-EPP-1-2017-1-BG-SPO-SCP>

THEY HELP/WILL ALLOW ATHLETES WITH DISABILITY TO TRANSITION TO A NEW PHASE OF ACTIVITY.

Country : Bulgaria	
Name and type of organisation	National Sports Academy "Vassil Levski", Sofia, Bulgaria
Description of the practice	<p>Individual Education Plan in National Sports Academy "Vassil Levski"</p> <p>The National Sports Academy "Vassil Levski" is a specialized higher educational institution in the Bulgarian university system with more than 70 years of history. The Sports Academy is the only university that is specialized in sports training and science in Bulgaria. The individual educational plan that the National Sports Academy provides for the elite athletes is shortened over time and in a synthesized form that allows the sport career development during the educational path of the athletes. Newly introduced distance learning platform is another possibility for professional athletes that can be used for athletes with frequent travel schedule</p>
Main contact	e-mail: uchebenotdel@nsa.bg , phone: +359 24014 206, +359 24014 207
Relevance to the para-athletes' dual career	The academic institutions are trying to find the best solutions to adapt their programme studies allowing young para athletes to follow their courses and thus targeting to attract a larger number of students as well as acquiring sport performance
Impact / outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to achieve a minimally restrictive environment for para-athletes; • offer individual approach to the needs of each student with a disability, so that their education can achieve the highest quality standard; • students with disabilities can also benefit from awards and grants from NSA "Vasil Levski";
References, sources of information (if any used)	http://www.nsa.bg/

Name and type of organisation	Ministry of Youth and Sports
Description of the practice	<p>Admission to the higher education without an entry examination</p> <p>The Physical Education and Sports Act (Art. 26, par. 5 of 02.08.2013) has implemented a modification to ensures that medallists from the Olympic Games, World and European Championships have the right to be admitted in higher educational institutions without passing the competitive examination. The admission is based on the proposal of the Minister of Youth and Sports and it is provided as a fixed quota separate from the approved number of the students admitted under the Higher Education Act.</p>

Main contact	Ministry of Youth and Sports 1142 Sofia Boulevard "Vasil Levski" 75 e-mail: question@mpes.government.bg http://mpes.government.bg/Pages/Contacts/Default.aspx
Relevance to the para-athletes' dual career	Public bodies in sport, are pursuing the idea of generating a coherent national strategy for implementing most of the EU Guidelines for para-athletes Dual Career.
Impact / outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to motivate elite athletes to complete their higher education to spread know-how about best ways to support the development of Dual Career for para and professional athletes
References, sources of information (if any used)	http://mpes.government.bg/Pages/Documents/Law/default.aspx

REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

EU member state since July 2013

Background Stats:

Total population: 4.12 million (as of September 2018, Central Bureau of Statistics of Croatia). Total population with disabilities: 511,281 (Croatian Institute for Public Health, CIPH). CIPH estimates that 66% of people with disabilities did not complete primary school or only graduated the primary level. Only 25% of people with disabilities graduated with a high school diploma and just three percent of the cohort attended university. As of mid-2020, the registered unemployed population numbered 150,651, of which 6,309 were people with a disability.

CONCLUSIONS CROATIAN PROGRESS TOWARD DUAL CAREERS

- Croatia was one of the earliest participants in the Paralympic Games and through this experience became sensitized to the benefits of Dual Careers; the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports championed the cause as early as 2009, when two projects defined the idea of “categorized athletes, after which they made recommendations on study conditions for these student athletes. They launched a series of projects to promote awareness of careers and post-sport careers, and by September 2017, the Croatian Olympic Committee proposed and adopted the “National Programme for the Development of Sports careers and careers after sports 2017-2020.
- This lengthy but eventually successful campaign was the outcome of work done by a number of disparate organizations at different levels, including the Croatian Paralympic Committee and its members; the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, the Ministry of Tourism and Sports, the Central State Office of Sports, the Faculty of Kinesiology (in three bases of Osijek, Zagreb and Split); associations of people with disabilities and schools for people with disabilities.
- As a good practice sidebar, this mixing of government and civil society in Croatia also worked well for an initiative launched by the Central State Office of Sports to intervene with programmed sports events for children and youth at risk of social exclusion and/or children with a disability, with funding provided by the European Social Fund in 2018.

- Under the Sports Act, the Croatian Paralympic Committee and their associates have created a training curriculum for jobs as leaders of sports or recreational activities for people with disability. There have been numerous other spin-offs of competence building activities for people with a disability, particularly in digital technology, event management and many exercises designed to build self-confidence and improve social skills.

EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICES IN CROATIA AND HOW THEY HELP/WILL ALLOW ATHLETES WITH DISABILITY TO TRANSITION TO A NEW PHASE OF ACTIVITY.

Country : Croatia	
Name and type of organisation	ZakladaParaolimpijac, Foundation
Description of the practice	Financial support for education
Relevance to the para-athletes' dual career	Every year, the ZakladaParaolimpijac raises funds on the basis of donations to support financially athletes with disabilities in the field of education.
Impact / outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education of athletes with disabilities; • Dual career development
References, sources of information (if any used)	https://paraolimpijac.hr/
Name and type of organisation	Rijeka Sports Association for Persons with Disabilities, Sport Association
Description of the practice	Strengthening the capacity of people with disabilities to enter the labour market. (acronym is ActivOSI.)
Relevance to the para-athletes' dual career	Education for athletes with disabilities (who are unemployed) to help them enter the labour market.
Impact / outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project activities educate and train athletes with disabilities in order to bring them closer to the labour market and to contribute to increasing their employment opportunities. Persons who participated in the project activities go through a training program for a leader of sports and recreational activities for people with disabilities. • The training was first conducted for target group of 15 adult unemployed persons with disabilities in Rijeka, and then for 15 adults in Zagreb. The participants were mostly athletes with disabilities who are in the HPOs sports system. • At the end of the education, the participants acquired a certificate for the position of leader of sports and recreational activities for people with disabilities, which is entered in the e-workbook

References, sources of information (if any used)	https://www.ssoi-rijeka.hr/hr/active-osi/ https://www.hpo.hr/ https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/Sports-Promoter/Activ-OSI-481012149096690/
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REPUBLIC OF IRELAND (ÉIRE)

Ireland joined the EEC (predecessor of the EU) in 1973

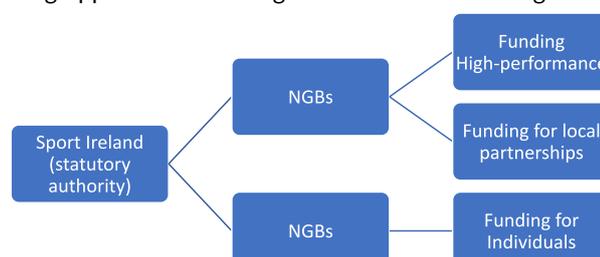
Background Stats from Central Statistics Office as of 2016

Total Population: 4,761,865; Total population with a disability: 642,852 (13.5%)

Disability rate for under 20s: 6.7%. The census determined that people with disabilities between the age of 15 and 50 were 37% more likely to have completed third level education, compared to 53.4% of the general population. At the other end of the scale, 13.7% of people with disability had no more than a primary-level education when compared to 4.7% of the general population. In terms of employment and the labour force, in 2016, there was again a significant disparity: 30.2% of people with disability participated in the labour force, compared to 61.4% of people without a disability in the work force.

SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS IRISH PROGRESS TOWARD DUAL CAREERS

- “Sport for All” is the theme woven throughout the Irish sports system, but care is taken to support individuals' needs with little need to make disability a stand-alone category for athletes. Although Ireland has its own Paralympic Committee, athletes of all types mostly interact with the National Governing Bodies (NGBs) of sport, which are funding and activity nodes under Sport Inclusion Ireland across the country.
- Sport Ireland, formerly the Irish Sports Council, is a statutory authority that oversees, and partly funds, the development of sport within Ireland. It is located at the National Sports Campus in the townland of Sheephill near Abbotstown House in Dublin.
- Sport Inclusion Ireland (aka Cara) is both the statutory authority for sports for people with disabilities, and also the national pan-disability sport organization providing a collaborative and partnership platform to increase sport and physical activity opportunities for people with disabilities across Ireland. It receives part of its budget from government and it also manages investment in high-performance sports athletes through the carding system (see below).
- Sport Inclusion Ireland works with key stakeholders at local and national level to improve the quality and number of opportunities for people with disabilities to take part in sport and other physical activities. It was set up in 2007 in partnership with Sport Ireland and the Institute of Technology Tralee with the primary goal of overlooking and coordinating the existing Local Sports Partnership Sports Inclusion Disability Programme (Cara, 2019). Since its inception, it has become a leader in supporting people with disabilities and offering capacity building opportunities through education and training. Cara's mission



is to “work in collaboration with the disability, sporting community and statutory bodies to provide people with disabilities with enhanced opportunities to the participate in the sport and physical activity of their choice.” It would appear to have become an essential part of the scenery, interfacing with all the stakeholders (including the NGBs) to ensure that the athletes with disabilities can play and compete in optimized conditions. It is in turn supported by its patrons (mostly enterprises) and fundraising efforts at the local NGB level. This could be an interesting operating model for other countries.

- The International Carding Scheme run by Sport Ireland provides financial support to athletes for their training and competition programmes. The most important benefit from this change is to allow athletes to fully focus on Olympic & Paralympic qualification and performance, and reduce the negative pressures associated with chasing funding criteria. The primary purpose of this funding is to support Irish athletes in reaching finals and achieving medals at European, World, Olympic and Paralympic level. The International Carding Scheme has increased from €1.9 million in 2018 to €1.934 million in 2019. From 2020 onward, the International Carding Scheme will be awarded as a two-year benefit⁷.
- Something else that stands out in the Irish model is the role of National Governing Bodies (NGBs) As of 2020, there were 58 NGBs across Ireland. recognised by Sport Ireland as being central to Irish sport. Sport Ireland is committed to developing strong and diverse NGBs that deliver for the sporting community in Ireland. A key focus of Sport Ireland is to assist NGBs to develop sustainable and effective structures to increase the number of participants and volunteers in sport. Sport Ireland invests in NGBs in line with its strategic priorities and investment is made with the specific aim of ensuring the long-term sustainability of NGBs. Since the publication of the National Sports Policy 2018 – 2027, core funding to NGBs has grown from €10.8m in 2017 to €13.8m in 2020.

EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICES IN THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND AND HOW THEY HELP/WILL ALLOW ATHLETES WITH DISABILITY TO TRANSITION TO A NEW PHASE OF ACTIVITY.

Country : Ireland	
Name and type of organisation	Charlotte’s Tandems

⁷see Sport Ireland website at <https://www.sportireland.ie/high-performance/high-performance-investment/individual-athlete-support/international-carding-1>

Description of the practice	Charlotte's Tandems is a registered charity with the Charity for England and Wales and is run entirely by volunteers, with two locations currently in Ireland – Newry and Donegal. Charlotte's Tandems provides free tandem bikes hiring services for people with disabilities or people with additional needs. The variety of bikes on offer ensure that bikes are available for various individual requirements and needs. It was initially started by Charlotte and her father Alex Reeves. Charlotte is non-verbal and has severe learning difficulties, autism, and challenging behaviours. Her parents found that cycling was one of the best ways to keep Charlotte active and happy. Charlotte eventually grew out of her tag-along bike in 2005 and her parents bought a tandem to cycle with Charlotte. Since there were no opportunities nearby for them to try one, they bought one without trying it before. Fortunately for them, Charlotte loved the tandem and the family wanted to share their experience with other families in their local area. UK's Tandem Club donated some tandems for them to lend out in April 2010. Their project turned it into a charity in April 2011 and in the summer of 2011, they began to source Regional Helpers. Charlotte's Tandems became a Registered Charity in July 2012. Cycling UK has also helped them with recruitment of volunteers which is essential for them to be able to provide tandem across the UK and Ireland. Families and friends can now try out a tandem for a couple of months for free, to see if they enjoy it too and decide whether to buy one for themselves.
Relevance to the para-athletes' dual career	The number of bikes offered by Charlotte's Tandems have likely gone up, as the bikes have been in high demand since the start of the COVID19 lockdown in both Ireland and the UK.
Impact / outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide bikes hire to the public that cater for the individual needs and requirements to use when they want. to ensure that cycling is accessible to all. • To ensure that we promote an inclusive cycling environment in the UK and Ireland. • To promote physical activity to people with disabilities or with additional needs.
References, sources of information (if any used)	http://charlottestandems.weebly.com/more-about-us.html
Name and type of organisation	Olympic Federation of Ireland (OFI)

Description of the practice	The Dare to Believe programme is a school activation programme that was launched by the OFI in February 2019 with the purpose of bringing Olympic values to the classroom. It was funded by the OFI and the International Olympic Committee and supported by the Athletes' Commission. has shown the important of goal setting in increasing motivation, persistence and achievement and the numerous benefits of sport - physical, mental and emotional. The aim of the programme was to promote benefits of sport to children in schools around Ireland in a fun and interactive way. Values of Olympism, Paralympics and the benefits of sport are shared with students and teachers and during the programme an Olympian/Paralympian sharing their sports journey with the class. A curriculum was developed as part of the programme that features five rings – Olympics and Paralympics, Healthy Mind and Body, Joy of Effort and Courage, and Respect, Responsibility and Equality, and Striving for Excellence.
Relevance to the para-athletes' dual career	In the first year Dare to Believe exceeded all its original goals with 5,000 schoolchildren across 60 schools passing through the programme, spanning 14 counties. During the recent COVID pandemic where all Irish schools were closed, the Dare to Believe created an online virtual hub to stay engaged with students and maintain their engagement with the students involved in the programme. One example of this engagement is through the creation of school challenges such as live circuit
Impact / outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educating students about the importance of having a healthy mind and body. • Improving participation rates of kids in sports across Ireland. • Teaching students that the joy of effort and striving for excellence in sport and other areas in life is something all kids, sporty or not, can experience and learn from. • Helping students to understand the importance of goal setting and its application to all walks of life, not just sport.
References, sources of information (if any used)	www.daretobelieve.ie

GREECE

Greece acceded to the EU in 1981

Total population in 2020: 10,423,054 (UN figures)

BACKGROUND STATISTICS FROM THE GLOBAL ACTIVITY LIMITATION INDEX

Number of people with severe/moderate disability: 24.7%, of which 13.5% were classified as severe. In the age range of 20-64 years, some form of disability was present in 14% of the population (or 889,389 people. In terms of the employment market, the employment rate for people with disabilities aged 20-64 was 24%. In 2020 the Greek employment market was still showing very high unemployment for young people in general, and it was naturally not different for those younger people aged between 25 to 39 with severe disabilities, more than 40% of these people could not access

employment.

Legislation and Policies related to support of people with disabilities: please see *Paradig Project Research Report pages 47 and 48*.

CONCLUSIONS GREEK PROGRESS TOWARD DUAL CAREERS

Between the aftermath of the Great recession of 2008 and the impacts of Covid-19, there have been some structural changes and notably significant growth in the number of organizations supporting para athletes. These include the Federation of Greek Wheelchair basketball associations, the Hellenic Sports Federation of the Deaf, and the latest addition, the Hellenic Athletic Federation of Kidney Patients and Transplants. Early established was the Hellenic Paralympic Committee. The National Sports Federation of People with Disabilities (EAOM) is the largest of all, covering 17 types of sports. Lastly is the Hellenic Association of Paralympic Winners form support of all Paralympians.

Dual Careers have not been a focus in Greece, where economic problems have paralysed further development. That said, both the Hellenic Paralympic Committee and the National Sports Federation of People with Disabilities work separately but side by side to support participation and manage administrative work leading to the recognition of players of individual sports. According to our researchers, EAOM strongly believes that there should be Greek cooperation with outside specialists in the development of dual careers. At the time of writing, the state organization General Secretariat of Sports did not have an officer in charge of dual careers for body-able athletes or athletes with disabilities.

EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICES IN GREECE AND HOW THEY HELPED/WILL ALLOW ATHLETES WITH DISABILITY TO TRANSITION TO A NEW PHASE OF ACTIVITY.

Country : Greece	
Name and type of organisation	The University of Peloponnese (Department of Sports Organization and Management), in collaboration with the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, the University of Thessaly, the Democritus University of Thrace, the Hellenic Olympic Committee



Description of the practice	<p>The training program is called “Dual Careers of Athletes” The main purpose of the program is to support current and older athletes in the development of their professional life, after the end of their athletic career. It includes Educational Counselling activities, incorporating International Practices on the Double Career of Athletes.</p> <p>The trainees will be able to choose the field of study they want, between Entrepreneurship and Sports Science, and then the thematic units that interest them (out of the 18 offered in total, 5 of their preference).</p> <p>The innovations that are adopted in this Educational Program and that contribute to the quality upgrade of the adult lifelong learning programs are many and important, with the main ones being the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible curriculum training methodology, with the possibility of choosing direction and specialization. • Emphasis on the certification of knowledge and skills of the trainees at the end of the program in their chosen field, through relevant innovative tools. • Utilizing the valuable but usually evasive experience of the older ones in the context of counseling. • E-coaching-mentoring consulting services, using digital consulting tools in the form of scenarios. • Full implementation of training and counseling programs, using new technologies. <p>Thus, with proper training and counseling, these athletes will be able to have a second successful career, as coaches - trainers, executives - managers in sports organizations or as entrepreneurs in sports and other related fields.</p>
Relevance to the para-athletes’ dual career	The program is specialized for people with disabilities. However, by adapting its individual themes as well as its electronic accessibility as the program is provided online, people with disabilities could also benefit from it.
Impact / outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The training of athletes in Entrepreneurship and Sports Science • The smooth entry of athletes into the labor market
References, sources of information (if any used)	http://www.dualathletescareer.gr/

ITALY

CONCLUSIONS ITALIAN PROGRESS TOWARD DUAL CAREERS

Guided by the Europe 2020 strategy, Italy is looking to new models of pedagogy that will accomplish the many tasks laid out in the Dual Careers recommendations regarding the development of dual careers. Such a development will prevent early school leaving, increase the number of high school

graduates, and strengthening students' employability. Law 107 (see above) has set a course of experimentation with digital technologies and customised educational paths – in the shape of a three-year trial programme set up by a Ministerial Decree. The goal is to develop innovative methods for high-performance athletes; the goal for the students is to help elite athletes manage and balance their sports activities with their academic studies. Another innovation resulting from Law 107 was a programme known as School and Work Alternation, which made schools work with enterprises and other actors and institutions. Under this programme, it became compulsory for students in the final three years of the upper secondary schools to attend trainings and get day-to-day work experience in a host structure, during 200-400 hours of attendance. For an elite athlete, therefore, he or she could fulfil his or her obligation at a sports establishment where they could be exposed to skills areas such as managerial skills, critical and systematic thinking, leadership and becoming result-oriented.

La Nuovastagione was a landmark project promoted by the Italian National Olympic Committee (CONI) and the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies which was designed to provide athletes with career guidance and support as they come to the end of their sport career. It was launched in 2016 for three years and its results are still under study. (For other pertinent projects, please see the Paradig- Project Research Report pages 74-84)

In Italy, there is no formal dual career policy; there are, however, initiatives, but none of these have to date been developed or managed at the national level. However, new national legislation can give room to new ways of approaching the needs of all athletes, as seen in the experimental initiatives enabled by Law 107.

EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICES IN ITALY AND HOW THEY HELP/WILL ALLOW ATHLETES WITH DISABILITY TO TRANSITION TO A NEW PHASE OF ACTIVITY.

Country : Italy	
Name and type of organisation	Italian Olympic Committee (CONI)
Description of the practice	<p>The general objective of the project practice was to implement the European Guidelines on Dual Careers (DC), especially focusing on the main competencies needed to develop a DC as well as a life after sport; and it also focused on the quality of services offered to athletes for their DC transitions.</p> <p>Based on the project research, it became clear that the key piece would be a professional provider of Dual Career support, a counselor specializing in Dual Career development. The data collected pointed out the most relevant skills in sport career transition success.</p>
Relevance to the para-athletes' dual career	<p>Researchers proposed some possible scenarios of sport and education challenges. For each scenario, athletes were asked to evaluate the most relevant competences to manage the situation. The skills proposed were considered by researchers as "transferable competences" to other contexts besides the sport one</p>
Impact / outcomes	<p>They found five main competences: - Life management - Emotion and mind management - Self-awareness and goal setting - Career Planning - Networking</p>
References, sources of information (if any used)	<p>The partners drew up a questionnaire to investigate which could be the key skills used by athletes to manage sport career transitions and how much they have developed them</p>

Name and type of organisation	The Italian University of Rome "Forlitalico"
Description of the practice	The main purpose of the project was to develop, transfer and implement an innovative EU Sport Tutorship Program for professional athletes in different European Universities, involving public authorities, sport-related organizations and educational actors, as a key stakeholder to accomplish the EU Guidelines on Dual Careers for Athletes. The goal was therefore to facilitate, through the Sport Tutorship, the integration of athletes into the University context by maintaining their sport career performance. The idea was to involve an athlete-friendly education and to extend the UCAM Sport Tutorship Program to other European Universities
Relevance to the para-athletes' dual career	Researchers made a comparative study of the sport and academic regulations implemented in each University, which includes an analysis of the situation (initial and final) in all Universities. The process covered an analysis of the problems identified, needs, and demands from students/athletes, as well as each Universities' own practices, methodology, and programs in the field of dual career
Impact / outcomes	The partnership developed the Sport Tutorship Program, in the form of a Manual/Handbook, which combines methodology, guidelines, best practices, recommendations and conclusions about how to realize a University Program around Dual careers. The implementation of this document was evaluated by the participating Universities, under the supervision of the partner "EuroPartnership Foundation". Workshops on Dual Career issues and on the Sport Tutorship program were organized. Target audience ranged from students-athletes, Sport Faculties' staff to public authorities and other sport stakeholders.
References, sources of information (if any used)	

REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

Serbia applied to accede to the EU in 2009 and was admitted in 2012.

STATISTICAL BACKGROUND FROM THE STATISTICAL OFFICE OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA (2011)

Total population at time of last census: 7,186,862. Population with disability (according to UN definition of disability): 571,780 (7.96%). Due to definition differences, some researchers add another 119,482 (or 1.66%)

Education-related: (based on a sampling of 564,856 persons over the age of 15 and predominated but people over 60):

- Of this group, 12.2% (69,043) had never attended primary school; of this number, female respondents accounted for two thirds of the total.
- Of the group, 27.2% finished secondary school (males 57.6 and females 42.9%)
- Of the group, 3.4% finished higher education (males 59.6% and females 40.4%); 3.2% (18,048) had university (or higher) degrees.

Employment: In 2012, the National Employment Agency released numbers relating to unemployment among persons with disabilities.

- The total number of economically active persons with disability was around 71,000;
- Unemployed persons with disability numbered 19,142, of which 14,605 had actively searched for employment.

CONCLUSIONS SERBIAN PROGRESS TOWARD DUAL CAREERS

- As a country that has put itself on a new trajectory since 2012, Serbia is in a gradual process of providing support for its population with disability. However, the recognition of the Paralympic Committee of Serbia (PCS) in 2016 has now given Serbia an umbrella organisation that is structurally linked to government. This has been done by choosing representatives of PCS who are members of commissions initiated by Serbia's Ministry of Youth and Sport, and who are working specifically on the evaluation of national sport federations proposals for the financing of sports programming and new venues. With Paralympic athletes and Olympic athletes given equal status in law, building blocks are being laid.
- Serbia is one of the countries that has rewarded its athletes and the athlete's coaches with an annual grant up to the age of 40 for those who have won medals at major competitions such as European and World Championships as well as the Paralympics. In 2020, 56 athletes with disability received this grant, eight of them being students. To be eligible for these prizes, the athletes had to show at least a moderate success in their school records.
- Our research shows that the obligations that are imposed on the PCS may be too great and there is a perpetual struggle to find funding and to get the necessary management skills to improve efficiency. Sports organizations for people with disability face the same struggles. The lack of funding has sometimes led to situations where a Serbia para athlete goes into international competitions without having won at the national level. (For more details on sports development in Serbia, please see pages 85-90 in the Paradig Project Research Report.)
- PCS is willing to promote the Dual Careers concept (DC) but it has understood that it will need relevant partners in order to interlink actions with education and employment. It has already set out their wishlist:
 - Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development
 - Ministry of Labour, Employment, veteran and Social Affairs
 - National Employment Agency
 - Local civic society focussed on disability and sport.
- As of 2020, PCS was formulating an 8-year Development Strategy intended to be folded into the National Strategy of Sport Development, which will include a chapter on DC programmes.

EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICES IN SERBIA AND HOW THEY HELP/WILL ALLOW ATHLETES WITH DISABILITY TO TRANSITION TO A NEW PHASE OF ACTIVITY.

Country : Serbia	
Name and type of organisation	Zvuci srca (Sounds of the Heart) , Humanitarian organization to provide support to people with mental disabilities.

Description of the practice	<p>NGO Decje srce from Belgrade established, supported by EU, cafe bar "Sounds of the Heart". Café bar is positioned in one of the Belgrade central municipalities, ideally positioned for short business breaks and private gatherings. Besides the usual café offers, they also sell different handcrafted products. 15 persons with different disability are full time employed together with their assistants.</p> <p>The café bar is daily used also as a workshop office for creative industries either for the members of the NGO or for the companies who rent it. The project had great promotion in local media.</p>
Relevance to the para-athletes' dual career	Model could be highly relevant to all athletes of the Special Olympics
Impact / outcomes	<p>Through the occupational therapy, using both their jobs (of waiters, bartenders or salespersons) and creative workshops, all employees with disability gained the higher level of self-respect and self-estimation.</p> <p>For now, the project is self-sustainable.</p> <p>The project could be replicated due its simplicity and effectiveness. Management found a very good location, well equipped and furnished and excellently promoted (information was published in all major Serbian media, not at once in all of them). All investment has been done with the support of local and Serbian Government.</p>
References, sources of information (if any used)	<p>NGO Decje srce's website: www.decjesrce.rs</p> <p>Many short video's on Youtube (in Serbian) at https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=Zvuci+srca%2C+jedinstven+kafi%C4%87+u+Beogradu+-+YouTube</p> <p>POSEBNI ČUBURSKI KAFIĆ: Zvuci srca za svakog gosta Novosti.RS</p> <p>(FOTO) (kurir.rs)</p>
Country : Serbia	
Name and type of organisation	Pehar-UP Cacak, a Limited Liability Company for professional rehabilitation of persons with a disability
Description of the practice	The company was established in 2005 by members of the Para Table Tennis Association of Serbia of paraplegic athletes, as a company delivering professional rehabilitation. The association managed to buy the tools and machines, it already had a business space. The members added production of sport cups, diplomas, medals and similar products, and later on, the developed a printing services to generate additional revenue and ensure the company's sustainability.

Relevance to the para-athletes' dual career	The athlete founders were fully aware of problems facing persons with disability, and of the benefits of occupational therapy and professional rehabilitation. They were able to get government support because their sport club was a member of the Para Table Tennis Association of Serbia. The members decided to start a company that could both offer services and also train and employ athletes with disability with skills related to professional rehabilitation, even as they were able to get fair pricing on the site and on the therapeutic equipment, which helps strengthened the company's sustainability.
Impact / outcomes	The company is self-sustaining, employing persons with paraplegia and offering professional rehabilitation. Pehar-UP is now recognized among the sport clubs and federations in Serbia as a reliable partner that offers excellent services with affordable prices.
References, sources of information (if any used)	References, sources of information (if any used) Website of Pehar-UP Cacak: www.peharup.com (2) PEHAR UP" Udruženje paraplegičara Čačak Facebook

SWEDEN

Acceded to EU in 1995.

Sweden does not keep any register that includes the number of people with disability.

Funka, a non-profit that works with most disability-related organizations, estimates that as of 2020, there were 515,000 people aged 16 and over who have a disability; almost 50% of these people are 75 or older. These estimates do not include the people work under the Deaflympics movement. As of 2020, Statistics Sweden (SCB) has embarked on new ways of counting and defining disability.

Education: In 2019 the results for a study of persons receiving an education was undertaken by SCB and the Swedish Public employment Service were presented as follows:

- Persons with disabilities leaving school after upper secondary school amounted to 47%, as opposed to 39% of the general population
- About 46% of the population enter post-upper secondary education, as compared to 35% of students with disability.

Employment: In 2019 the results for a study of employed persons was undertaken by SCB and the Swedish Public employment Service were presented as follows:

- Within the total population aged 16-64, 79% (or around 5 million people) were employed. Of these, 11% (or 554,000) were people with disability.
- The employment rate for the general population was 79% and for people with disability the rate was 69%.

CONCLUSIONS SWEDISH PROGRESS TOWARD DUAL CAREERS

- As is often the case, hopes for implementation of Dual Careers in general and for talented and elite athletes with disability rests with the Swedish Paralympic Committee (PRC). Aside from the multiple sports-related tasks it performs (for more detail please see pages 90-98 in the Paradig Project Research Report), it has initiated a 3-year training course for young high-performance para athletes. It does this in a partnership with the Confederation of Sports. According to

our research, the programme “aims to prepare the young athletes for their careers within their sport and is seen as a contribution to their professional education.” The programme is known as Elitdrottskolan (EIS). The curriculum, taught over eight weekends, consists of Training Planning, Sports Psychology, Nutrition, Press Training, Anti-doping and Value Training. The course attracts young athletes from all parts of Sweden, thus covering both winter and summer competitive events. As of 2020, live face-to-face learning is complemented by homework and online learning adjusted to an athlete’s calendar of events. The training course accepts 20 students per class – with the major criterion for entry being a strong likelihood of becoming a Paralympic athlete within four to five years from their attendance in the trainings. (See more below)

- Another programme launched and managed by the PRC is known as Riksidrottsgymnasium (or RIGathletics) will likely become known as a precursor to full DC implementation. In this case, young para athletes combine their school studies with their training in athletics over 3-4 years. This programme is offered every year and class intake is up to 12 young athletes who if accepted, can train and study at RIGathletics. There is a male/female athlete ratio held at 60/40 and applications can be accepted from athletes who have a physical disability, a visual impairment, or an intellectual disability. The young athletes are housed close to the gym and school.

EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICES IN SERBIA AND HOW THEY HELP/WILL ALLOW ATHLETES WITH DISABILITY TO TRANSITION TO A NEW PHASE OF ACTIVITY.

Country : Sweden	
Name and type of organisation	Swedish Paralympic Committee
Description of the practice	<p>Elitdrottskolan (EIS) is a 3-year training programme offered to young high-performance para-athletes. The programme offered every second year consists of 8 weekends where the following is offered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training planning • Sports psychology • Nutrition • Press Training • Antidoping • Value training <p>EIS has an innovative concept due to the athlete-centred approach. The students coming from all-over the country have various backgrounds and represent all Paralympic sports (winter and summer sports).</p> <p>The face-to-face-learning seminars are supplemented by some homework and online learning, individually adjusted to the student’s/athlete’s</p>
	<p>training and competition schedule.</p> <p>The programme accepts around 20 students per class and one of the main criteria is that the applicant is evaluated as a potential Paralympic athlete within the next 4-5 years.</p>

Relevance to the para-athletes' dual career	The programme aims to prepare the young athletes for their careers within their sport and is seen as a contribution to their professional education. Many EIS-students are currently studying at university or are in their last year of High School.
Impact / outcomes	The athletes are trained to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Become 24-h athletes • Better plan their training and sports career • Give professional interviews and presentations • Connect young high-performance para-athletes from different sports
References, sources of information (if any used)	http://paralympics.se/elitidrottsskolan/ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hUBVj-6TRzI
Name and type of organisation	Swedish Paralympic Committee
Description of the practice	<p>Elitidrottsskolan (EIS) is a 3-year training programme offered to young high-performance para-athletes. The programme offered every other year consists of eight weekends where the following is offered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training planning • Sports psychology • Nutrition • Press Training • Antidoping • Value training <p>EIS has an innovative concept due to the athlete-centred approach. The students coming from all-over the country have various backgrounds and represent all Paralympic sports (winter and summer sports). The face-to-face-learning seminars are supplemented by some homework and online learning, individually adjusted to the student's/athlete's training and competition schedule.</p> <p>The programme accepts around 20 students per class and one of the main criteria is that the applicant is evaluated as a potential Paralympic athlete within the next 4-5 years.</p>
Relevance to the para-athletes' dual career	The programme aims to prepare the young athletes for their careers within their sport and is seen as a contribution to their professional education. Many EIS-students are currently studying at university or are in their last year of High School.
Impact / outcomes	The athletes are trained to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Become 24/7 athletes • Better plan their training and sports career • Give professional interviews and presentations • Connect young high-performance para-athletes from different sports

References, sources of information (if any used)	http://paralympics.se/elitidrottsskolan/ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hUBVj-6TRzI
Country : Sweden	
Name and type of organisation	Swedish Parasport Federation
Description of the practice	<p>Riksidrottsgymnasium (RIG) for Para Athletics is a unique programme where young Para Athletes combine their high school studies with their training in Athletics for 3-4 years.</p> <p>The programme is offered every year and altogether up to 12 students/athletes can study and train at RIG Athletics. A gender quota of 60/40. Applications are open for athletes who have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A physical disability • a visual impairment • an intellectual disability <p>The RIG-students participate in a comprehensive programme including training camps and competitions. The young athletes are accommodated close to the school and training facilities.</p> <p>The concept of RIG for young Para athletes is innovative; it is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The only RIG in Sweden exclusively for para athletes • Flexible in order to combine education and development as an athlete; • Convenient because accommodation is close to the training facilities and school; • Providing a practical internship within the school programme; • Offering unlimited access to training facilities; • Offering support in sport medicine, and; • Offering the support of expert coaches
Relevance to the para-athletes' dual career	The programme makes possible the development of a young participant's DC. Due to the flexibility to combine their sport career and their basic education, the athletes are prepared to further their studies.
Impact / outcomes	Better preparation for DC of Para athletes.
References, sources of information (if any used)	<p>http://www.hufb.se/gymnasium/torsbergsgymnasiet/torsbergsidrottsgymnasium/rigfridrottparasport.4.f4a4f4f15f6c7e6ddd65062.html</p> <p>General information about RIG (48 RIGs all over Sweden):https://www.rf.se/RFarbetarmed/Elitidrott/elitidrottspagymnasiet</p>

- In EU member countries that were formerly in the orbit of the Soviet Union sports system, and which have retained the practice of rewarding high performance medal-winning athletes lifelong pensions, prize money and positions in ministries and sports boards, the extension of financial support to talented and elite athletes outside the magic circle has been slow, and has barely touched the lives and hopes of para-athletes. Our research shows that certain countries have in a short space of time reacted favourably to the Dual Career concept because it promotes more inclusive view of sports and sporting achievement.
- Irrespective of political history or tradition, early experience of the Paralympics has in some cases propelled countries to find ways to re-characterize its diverse sporting population and provide support to the whole spectrum. Croatia has been such a case, but it has taken many years of hard work involving many organizations to get to the point of offering viable support to athletes with disabilities.
- Several EU member countries stated that Dual Careers were not yet officially adopted as a development goal, but the same country representatives offered examples of highly effective programming that espouse the values of Dual Careers. We envisage that best practices like the courses in Sweden known as Elitdrottskolan and Riksidrottsgymnasium will “trickle up” with the support of EU dissemination and the projects such as the PARAdig supported by the Erasmus+ line of funding.
- Reading through the trajectories of the seven countries, it is clear that progress in DC structural development goes faster where civil society and government work together. The inclusion of the Olympic and/or the Paralympic Committees can be a catalytic force for inclusion and support. The cases showing the greatest inventiveness in terms of bridging over gaps between needs and solutions have been spurred on by a sense of mission, in concert with administrations that can mobilise the means.

EFFECTS OF GOOD PRACTICES AT THE GROUND LEVEL - MICRO VIEW

1. EFFECTS OF GOOD PRACTICES ON EDUCATION

Every good practice that generates more opportunities for student athletes with a disability is gold dust, whether at the more macro level, as we have noted in Bulgaria, where legislation is gradually creating new opportunities for athletes and where the Ministry of Youth and Sport is working on getting elite athletes into university without having to pass the entrance exam; we also note the work of the premier Sports and Science University “Vassil Levski” pioneering higher education courses that more condensed and takes less time away from sport practice. (This is something mentioned by many students during our research.)

Another case is in Croatia, whose Ministry of Science, Education and Sports has championed the development of Dual Careers for athletes with disability after attending the early years of the Paralympics. Another good practice in higher education is being developed by the “Forolálido” University of Rome in Italy, which wants to create a Sport Tutorship Program for professional athletes in the various European universities, with emphasis on a smooth integration of athletes into universities and supporting them to keep improving their sport/athletics performance. This was a new path to realising the goals of the DC guidelines, and it seems the designers had also taken on board the need to involve a diversity of stakeholders. (See more on this in section 5, below.)

Our project’s thoroughgoing research captured the views of high school talented athletes concerning the possibility of realising true dual careers, and the feedbacks will enrich and inform those trying to set up DC as a universal educational and sporting standard. (To discover the specific questions and answers underlying the research, please see accompanying document Paradig Research Report, pages 99-138).

2. FINANCING DUAL CAREERS FOR STUDENTS

Croatia's Paralympic Committee has gone further than many to raise annual funds that will enable athletes with a disability to continue their education post attendance at school. As explained earlier, the Republic of Ireland as represented by Sport Ireland has also created some efficient models, working through the nationwide National Governing Bodies that in turn work with local sports groups to get more people involved with sport, regardless of whether they have a disability. Local communities pay to participate in their events and these funds are frequently matched by Sport Ireland, to ensure sustainability. As previously noted, the more stakeholders from different disciplines get involved in building Dual Careers, the easier it is to find solutions to this complex quest for balance between academics/preparation for employment and sport careers.

3. EFFECTS OF GOOD PRACTICE ON SPORT, INCLUSION AND SPORT VALUES

As mentioned in the very first quotation cited in this handbook, the EU Dual Careers guidelines state a conviction that the more profoundly and equally integrated athletes with disability become in the world of sport and athleticism, the more "considerable progress" would be made for all athletes and the whole sector of competitive sports.

The consideration given to the more complicated scheduling and infrastructural issues of athletes with a disability draws attention to the very effort in terms of core sports values: the will to include, the will to be fair, the need to work in teams in order to accomplish, the witnessing of the incredible perseverance and determination of athletes who overcome their disability, inspiring respect and awe – these are all positives in the sports fields.

4. EFFECTS OF GOOD PRACTICES ON TRANSITION TO THE WORKPLACE

In the context of the "National Programme for the Development of Sports careers and careers after sports 2017-2020", the Croatian Paralympic Committee has created a work-related training curriculum for jobs such as leaders of sports or recreational activities for people with a disability. There have also been training sessions on digital technology, event management and many exercises designed to build self-confidence and improve athletes' social skills. Without the national programming, this would not have been realised, and shows how effective actions still need the support of formal legislation or state-approved programming. We could say the same of the relationship of government sanction and the fundraising for para athletes pioneered by the Croatian Paralympic Committee. (see above under "Financing Dual careers for Students").

In Greece, a country ravaged by sustained unemployment, many able-bodied young people have been suffering since the great recession of 2008, and the situation for athletes with disability is even more difficult. As a response, several of Greece's most renowned academic institutions together with the Hellenic Olympic Committee to create a training programme to help current and former elite athletes find their way to a new profession and livelihood. They have produced an online learning system "Dual Careers for Athletes" which is adapted to former athletes preparing to launch their post-sports careers. The main deliverables of this system are a flexible curriculum offering many study options under the two main themes of Sports Science and Entrepreneurship, certification attesting to the accomplishments of the student, provision of mentors (sometimes older ex-athletes) and e-coaching. In a word, support at an uneasy time in an athlete's life. It is expected that most of these graduates will become coaches, trainers, managers of sports organizations, or entrepreneurs in sports.

A more private initiative is that of Rijeka Sports Association for Persons with Disabilities, Sport Association, also working in Croatia, but which is focused on training and certifying athletes with a disability. Playing to the students' existing strengths, the association trains them in disciplines they partially know, with the difference that the students who complete the course acquire certifications as a leader of sports or recreational activities. This can give retiring athletes a leg-up to employment in the Republic of

Croatia.

The good practices we found in Serbia were highly pragmatic and firmly focused on the need for sustainable employment for those with disability, and work that was manageable for the employees. Both were entrepreneurial and innovative – one a café that was also a workspace rented out to companies, and the other a centre for professional rehabilitation for athletes run by table-tennis athletes who were all paraplegic. In the case of the rehabilitation centre, we see a success built on a diversity of supporters and stakeholders and sustained information flows to find clients. For more on Good Practice, see section 5 below.)

5. EFFECTS ON CROSS FERTILIZATION OF IDEAS AND SOLUTIONS

The “Foroltálico” University of Rome drive to make Dual Careers work well in Europe’s universities involves bringing public authorities, educational actors and experts, as well as sports organizations into the conversation. As was previously demonstrated in the case of Croatia tirelessly working to convince disparate groups at different critical times for support, a complex structuring calls for a diversity of stakeholder typologies, skills and resources.

The Serbian project employing athletes with disability at the end of their sports careers was enabled by a bold reach-out for assistance by the Para Table-tennis Association, asking the sports club (under which the association was registered) to support the purchase of the equipment to outfit the rehabilitation centre, based on the human capital of trust built up between the club and the association over time. The Sports Club stayed involved and was able to further leverage its participation to bring in additional grants from local government.

As noted several times in this handbook, realising well-functioning dual careers can be highly challenging, but a varied board with an appetite for brainstorming and leveraging different assets and capabilities can make for success.

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE TEXT

ACTIVOSI	RIJEKA SPORTS ASSOCIATION\
BPF	BULGARIAN PARALYMPIC FEDERATION
CAO	CENTRAL APPLICATIONS OFFICE
CARA	SPORT INCLUSION IRELAND
COC	CROATIAN OLYMPIC COMMITTEE
CONI	ITALIAN NATIONAL OLYMPIC COMMITTEE
CSO	IRISH CENTRAL STATISTICS OFFICE
DARE	DISABILITY ACCESS ROUTE TO EDUCATION
DC	DUAL CAREERS
DCTEA	DUAL CAREERS FOR TALENTED AND ELITE ATHLETES
EAOM	NATIONAL SPORTS FEDERATION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES
EU	EUROPEAN UNION
HPO	CROATIAN PARALYMPIC COMMITTEE
HŠSS	CROATIAN SCHOOL SPORT FEDERATION
IHREC	IRISH HUMAN RIGHTS AND EQUALITY COMMISSION
IPC	INTERNATIONAL PARALYMPIC COMMITTEE
LHE	LAW ON HIGHER EDUCATION
LPD	LAW ON PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

LPES	LAW ON PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORT
MYS	MINISTRY OF YOUTH AND SPORT
NDA	NATIONAL DISABILITY AUTHORITY
NGB	NATIONAL GOVERNING BODIES
NGO	NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATION
OG	OLYMPIC GAMES
PARADIG	DUAL-TRACK CAREERS FOR PARA ATHLETES
PCS	PARALYMPIC COMMITTEE OF SERBIA

ANNEX ONE

LAWS, ACTS, POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES
RELEVANT TO DUAL CAREERS FOR ATHLETES

Act on Categorization of Athletes and the Rulebook on Criteria for Awarding Prizes (Croatia)

Act on Integration of People with Disabilities (Bulgaria)

Athletes and Education 2012-2016 (Croatia)

Categorized Athletes in the Education System (Croatia)

Constitution of the Republic of Bulgaria

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability (as signed by Sweden, Conforming to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.)

Corporate Income Tax Act (Bulgaria)

Decree on National Recognitions and Awards in Sports (Serbia)

Decree N° 90 of the Council of Ministers (EU)

Employment Promotion Act (Bulgaria)

Higher Education Act/Law of Higher Education (Bulgaria),

Irish National Children's Strategy (2001)

Labour Code (Bulgaria)

Law 107/2015 art 1. para 7 (Italy, related to the right to study of practising competitive sports)

Law on Local Taxes and Fees (Bulgaria)

Law on Personal Income Tax (Bulgaria)

Law on Physical Education and Sport (Bulgaria)

Law on Pre-school and School Education (Bulgaria)

Law on Protection against Discrimination (Bulgaria)

MUIR D.M935 of 11/12/2015 (Italy, regarding experimentation in schools for teaching models supported by digital technology)

National Agency Education for Special Needs Education and Schools coordinates the government's efforts to help children meet their educational goals. (Sweden)

National Disability Authority Act of 1999 (Ireland)

National Disability Strategy Implementation Plan 2013-2015 (Ireland)

National Programme for the Development of Sports Careers and Careers after Sports 2017-2020 (Croatia)

National Programme on Employment and Vocational Training of People with Permanent Disabilities (Bulgaria),

National Sports Policy 2018-2027 (Ireland)

National Sports Programme 2019-2026 (Croatia)

National Strategy for Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (Croatia)

National Strategy for People with Disabilities 2016–2020 (Bulgaria),

National Strategy on Disability (Sweden, on the guiding principle of 'Design for all, Accessibility for all')

Operational Programme for Effective Human Resources 2014-2020 (Croatia)

Serbian Law on Sport (2012) (Serbia. All sports venues and school playgrounds accessible for persons with disability; recognition of the equal legal standing of the Olympic and Paralympic athletes in terms of their rights and obligations)

Social Security Code (Bulgaria)

Sports Act (Croatia)

Sport Disability Inclusion Charter (Sport Inclusion Ireland/CARA)

Strategy 2025 launched by the Swedish Confederation of Sports (focusing on commitment to athletes in modern sports clubs, reinforcing sport inclusion, innovation in practice and competition, equality makes for successful sports, and strong leadership in sports.)

Strategy 2025 but formulated by the Swedish Paralympic Committee dedicated to the community with disability, with three objectives: Swedish parasport is recognized as an innovative and strong player within the Swedish sport movement; Sport Activity becomes lifelong for people with disabilities; and Swedish Parasport leads Parasport toward success at the Paralympic Games and at other international parasport competitions

Swedish Agency for Participation coordinates progress in the drawing up of legislation in the disability field.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (as signed by Republic of Croatia)

United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (as signed by the republic of Ireland 2008, ratified 2018)

Updated Employment Strategy 2013–2020 (Bulgaria)

ANNEX TWO

LIST OF INFORMATION RESOURCES CONSULTED FOR COUNTRY RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS

REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA

Council of Ministries. (2000). Decree No 90 on the conditions and order for granting scholarships to full time students, PhD students and postgraduate students from state higher schools and scientific organisations. [Postanovlenie 90 na Ministerski Savet za uslovijata I reda za predostavjane na stipendii na studentite, doktorantite i specializantite ot darzavnite visshi uchilishta I nauchni organizacii]. Retrieved from: http://hsi.iccs.bas.bg/projects/phd_support/documents/stipendii-na-studentispecializanti-i-doktoranti.pdf

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Ministry of Education and Science. (2014). National Strategy for Life-Long Learning for the Period 2014–2020. [Nacionalna strategija za uchene prez celiaivot]. Retrieved from: <http://www.strategy.bg/StrategicDocuments/View.aspx?Id=880>

Ministry of Education and Science. (2018). Law on Vocational Education and Training. [Zakon za profesionalnoto obrazovanie i obuchenie]. Retrieved from: <https://www.mon.bg/bg/57>

Ministry of Education and Science. (2019). Law on Higher Education. [Zakon za visseto obrazovanie]. Retrieved from: <https://www.mon.bg/bg/57>

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physical education and sports 2018–2020. [Nacionalna programa za razvitie na fizicheskoto vazpitanie i sporta 2018-2020]. Retrieved from: <http://mpes.government.bg/Pages/Documents/Strategies/default.aspx>

CROATIA

Croatian Paralympic Committee. URL: <https://www.hpo.hr/>

National sports programme 2019 – 2026. URL: https://narodnenovine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2019_07_69_1394.html

Sports Act. URL: <https://www.zakon.hr/z/300/Zakon-o-sportu>

National Strategy for Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities URL: https://ravnopravnost.gov.hr/UserDocImages/arhiva/preuzimanje/dokumenti/nac_strat/Nacionalna%20strategija%20izjedna%C4%8Davanja%20omogu%C4%87nosti%20za%20osobe%20s%20invaliditetom%20od%202017.%20do%202020.%20godine.pdf

The Ministry of Tourism and Sports of the Republic of Croatia. URL: <https://mint.gov.hr/>

The Central State Office of Sports. URL: <https://sdus.gov.hr/>

Paralympic Foundation. URL: <https://paraolimpijac.hr/>

ActiVOSI. URL: <https://www.ssoi-rijeka.hr/hr/active-osi/>

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/Sports-Promoter/Activ-OSI-481012149096690/>

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

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