



State-of-the-Art Summary Report

Olympic Committee of Bosnia
and Herzegovina



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Sport and Citizenship  Sport et Citoyenneté



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Integrating Sport



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SUMMARY

ELITE-in project was designed to implement a training programme which was a combination of 3 months online training and two thematic workshops.

According to the European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations Handbook issued by the European Commission Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion in September 2017, Transversal skills are relevant to a broad range of occupations and economic sectors. These skills represent *a core, basic or soft skills and are the cornerstone for the personal development of a person.*

Transversal knowledge, skills and competences are relevant in terms that they represent a starting point from which “hard” skills are developed and which are necessary for the successful integration into the labour market.

From this, one can conclude that transversal skills represent life skills, which when combined with the knowledge and expertise in a specific discipline lead to a successful labour integration.

Transversal skills can be divided into the following areas

- ✓ Cognitive
- ✓ Creative
- ✓ Managerial
- ✓ Relational
- ✓ Communication

Since ELITE-in project deals directly with the dual careers of athletes, specifically its interest is mostly diverted towards the skills athletes acquire throughout their dual careers, the following list of DC Competences was taken from the GEES Handbook for Dual Career Support Providers (DCSPs), and will serve as a database for the list of possible DC skills to be taken into consideration. The graph below represents some of the skills listed in the GEES Handbook and their correlation with the skills listed in the Questionnaire designed for the athletes.

GEES Handbook for Dual Career Support Providers list 38 DC competences, however for the sake of ELITE-in project and in correlation to transversal skills 10 skills were selected and inserted into the Questionnaire. The 10 skills are:

- 1) Ability to receive criticism
- 2) Understanding the need for discipline

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| 3) Use of habits and routines | 7) Understanding the need to obtain and assess results |
| 4) Time management | 8) Self-confidence |
| 5) Understanding the concept of personal responsibility | 9) Planning skills |
| 6) Team work | 10) Flexibility and adaptation |

Since ELITE-in project focuses on the integration of athletes into the labour market it is necessary to likewise include the skills and competences which employers consider important. Therefore, ELITE-in performed a research in a field which concerns employers' needs as well, specifically in a context of employability skills. For this reason the results of Erasmus + projects such as Skill Up, and Empowering and Activating the young Generation through the Learning of Employability Skills – EAGLES, were taken into account.

According to the published results of the above-mentioned projects, employability skills have been included, categorized in accordance to Skill up project results as:

Cognitive – analytical thinking, creative thinking and foreign language skills

Methodological Skills - learning to learn, decision making, results orientation, problem solving, self-management and digital skills

Social Skills - communication and interpersonal skills, team work, cross-cultural and diversity competence, team work, capability to cope with changes, conflict management and stress management

Job specific skills - Considering the ELITE-in project focuses on transversal skills which do not include job specific skills, the selected transversal skills belonging to first three categories are:

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| 1. Ability to investigate autonomously | 8. Oral communication |
| 2. Foreign language skills | 9. Written communication |
| 3. Management of new technologies and computing | 10. Non-verbal communication |
| 4. Competitiveness | 11. Presentational skills |
| 5. Ability to use and maintain social networks | 12. Global vision and internationalization |
| 6. Ethics at work | 13. Loyalty |
| 7. Cross cultural skills | 14. Persistence and Resilience in the face of problems |

The skills used for the development of the questionnaires have been designed as a combination of DC and Employability skills.

ELITE-in project was designed to research and provide with the opportunities of elite athletes integration into the labour market by valorising their transversal competences. In order to achieve one of its main aims the second Work Package *State-of-the-art and Best practices* aim towards recognizing the transversal skills and collecting the best practices of launching these transversal skills successfully in the labour market.

For the purposes of recognizing the transversal skills among the elite athletes the two set of questionnaires were designed. One questionnaire consisted of specific set of questions distributed to elite athletes, while the second one was distributed to employers.

The questionnaire intended for elite athletes was divided into four sections. **The first section** was intended to collect general information, such as age, gender, sport and education. **The second section** gathered information in regards to their current situation and most importantly, whether or not there is a link between formal education and practical skills required in the labour market. And the **third section** directly addressed the issue of skills by allowing the respondents to rate the skills as to their own experience from 1 to 5, (1) being not important, and (5) extremely important. An additional, **fourth section** was added at the end of the questionnaire intended to allow the respondents to state their own personal opinions as to which skills or attributes acquired in their course of being an athlete might be viewed negatively by potential employers, along with any other comments and suggestions.

The questionnaire intended for employers had the same structure as the questionnaire for elite athletes. The **first section** consisted of gathering data relevant to the profile of a company. The **second section** aimed at gathering data on the company's employment strategy in regards to elite athletes. **The third section** was intended to analyse 24 skills in regards to their importance in performing a job successfully, whether employers believed that elite athletes possessed the skill in questions and if the skills could be learned through practicing elite sport. And the final, **fourth section** was devoted to open questions, to be exact to seven questions intended to gather further information.

The Questionnaires were distributed online and have contained a clear Privacy statement which ensures that all the questionnaires are to remain anonymous. Therefore the analysis of the results didn't include names of athletes and employers. The names could be used only for the purposes of contacting these individuals or companies in implementing project activities that are to follow.

The research included/reached 89 athletes and 55 employers from 7 countries, as it follows: Spain, Portugal, Lithuania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Slovenia, United Kingdom and Italy.

Athletes were from the following sports: Rowing, Athletics, Karate, Football, Swimming, Canoeing, Cycling, Triathlon, Handball, Judo, Water polo, Basketball, Trail Running, Muay Thai, Volleyball, Dancing, Table Tennis, Weightlifting, Modern Pentathlon, Boxing, Alpine skiing, Shooting, Fitness, Rugby, Tennis, and Rhythmic Gymnastics. When it comes to the employers, they come from public and private sectors.

Based on the analysis of the research results, 12 skills are derived as relevant by athletes and employers. Those skills are: Understanding of the concept of personal responsibility, Understanding of the need for discipline, Ethics at work, Team work, Self-confidence, Time management, Persistence and resilience in the face of problems, Ability to receive criticism, Competitiveness, Flexibility and adaptation, Understanding the need to obtain and assess results, Management of new technologies and computing.

The possible definitions of listed skills have been presented in the table below.

SKILL	DEFINITION
1. Personal responsibility	Commitment to the task at hand
2. The need for discipline	Confidentiality of information and/or concerns expressed by others
3. Ethics at work	Honesty and forthright; Completing the his/her own share of the workload; Responsible for his/her own mistakes
4. Team Work	The ability to work cooperatively and flexibly with other members of the team with a full understanding of the role to be played as a team member
5. Self-confidence	Belief in oneself and standing up for one's own rights
6. Time management	Ability to control and effectively use time in order to accomplish specific activities, especially to increase effectiveness, efficiency or productivity.

7. Persistence and resilience in the face of problems	Ability of not giving up, coping and rising to the problems at hand
8. Ability to receive criticism	Ability to accept constructive criticism for improvement, while when faced with unfair criticism one has the ability to withstand the pressure
9. Competitiveness	A state in which one has a strong desire to succeed and be more successful than others
10. Flexibility and adaptation	Ability to adapt to new situations, improvise and adapt new strategies so as to meet the challenges at hand
11. Understanding the need to obtain and assess the results	The ability where one expresses a desire to get things done well and the ability to observe in order to make appropriate judgments
12. Management of new technologies and computing	The ability to effectively manage new technologies where one constantly keeps track of new advancements

By the same methodology, additional study was conducted with athletes and coaches from 16 countries: Portugal, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Swiss, United Kingdom, Lithuania, Romania, Malta, Cyprus, Poland, Croatia, Greece, Norway, Belgium, Ireland and France. The total range of responses was 34 athletes and 80 coaches. The results of this research pointed out that the most important transversal skills are:

- According to Athletes, first five skills are: (a) Persistence and resilience; (b) Ability to receive criticism; (c) Understanding of the need for discipline; (d) Understanding of the concept of personal responsibility; and (e) Self-confidence.
- According to Coaches, first five skills to an athlete's dual career are: (a) Persistence and resilience; (b) Understanding the need for discipline; (c) Understanding of the concept of personal responsibility; (d) Ability to receive criticism; and (e) Self confidence.

From the above setting, it is evident that athletes and coaches have the same perception of the skills that are most important for a dual career. The only difference between these two categories is the order of skills, which is a negligible difference considering that the top 5 skills are the same by both categories. General conclusion of this additional study points out TOP 5 skills established by the coaches and former athletes, finally consolidated as:

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|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Persistence and resilience; 2. Understanding of the need for discipline; 3. Ability to receive criticism; | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Understanding of the concept of personal responsibility; 5. Self-confidence. |
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The value of extended research is reflected in the following facts:

- ✓ The findings of the research with athletes and coaches correspond to the findings of the previous research with athletes and employers;
- ✓ Extended research increases the relevance of findings by confirming the link between the findings. Some of the findings are overlapping and some of them are demonstrating interrelated linkages.

Looking back among 12 skills derived from the first research, TOP five are:

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Personal responsibility 2. The need for discipline 3. Ethics at work | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Team Work 5. Self-confidence |
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Within the Table below blue coloured cells are identical ones from both studies, showing that 3 out of five main skills are the same. Besides that it is important to note that remaining two skills also have linkages, meaning that “Persistence and resilience” is interrelated to “Ethics at work” and “Ability to receive criticism” is inherent part of “Team work”.

No	1 st research (elite athletes and employers)	2 nd research (former athletes and coaches)
1.	Personal responsibility	Persistence and resilience
2.	The need for discipline	Understanding of the need for discipline
3.	Ethics at work	Ability to receive criticism
4.	Team work	Understanding of the concept of personal responsibility
5.	Self-confidence	Self-confidence